

□ 10 tips to get your press release used

1. Get to know the decision-makers at your local newspaper. (If they aren't already in your club, invite them. At least ask them to give a program. If you become a familiar face to the local news reporter/editor, your news is more likely to draw that person's attention.)
2. Beat the deadlines. (Don't wait until the last minute to submit news. The earlier someone gets information, the more likely the newspaper is to use it. Make sure you learn what the deadlines are.)
3. Tell them what's unique about the news you're presenting. (Everyone has a street festival, but not everyone has racing pigs.)
4. Provide the newspaper with good contact information. (If they have a question, they don't have time to work too hard to catch up with you □ □ .)
5. Make it brief. (The newspaper is not looking for the best-written press releases with the most flowery prose. Hit the 5Ws [Who, What, When, Where and Why] and get out.)
6. Follow the newspaper's rules for submission. (If they require press releases be sent via e-mail, do it that way.)
7. Send releases regularly. (Newspapers aren't offended by frequency. The squeaky wheel really does get the grease.)
8. Suggest follow up coverage ideas. (The less the newspaper editor has to dig for an interesting story angle, the more interested he or she will be.)
9. Follow up with a phone call. (This gives you an opportunity to make sure the right person received it and to lobby for its inclusion.)
10. Put the local connection at the top of the press release. (Make it easy for the editor to figure out why he or she should be interested.)

Author: Rotarian Johnny Whitfield (Wendell), Managing Editor, Eastern Wake News