

## How to write an effective press release

One of the most difficult tasks assigned to any WI member is that of Public Relations Officer.

The reason for that is simple: few of the women entrusted with this enormous responsibility have had training as a journalist or public relations expert. As a result, the majority don't know how to write a press release that gets to the heart of the matter, without including information that most newspapers consider irrelevant.

In other words, if your branch has just donated \$500 to a local playground, your press release should begin with *that* information and *not* who poured tea at the last meeting.

We hope the following guidelines will assist you in the writing of a press release that will present your WI branch's achievements to the community in the best possible light.

### How to write a press release

A press release is a common way to send information to the media. It can tell of an upcoming meeting or special event and can easily be made interesting and exciting by following these steps:

1. If you're a novice at writing press releases, write down everything that could possibly be said, including all the fullest details.
2. Choose the facts that answer WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY and HOW. Arrange them in short sentences with active verbs.

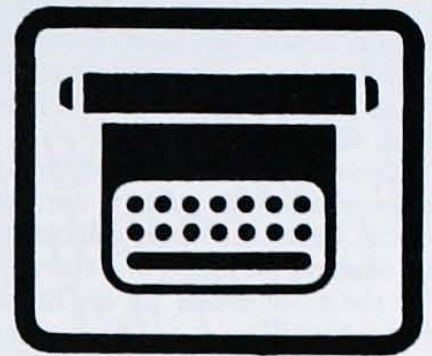


Use lots of verbs and few adjectives.

3. Develop a catchy opening. The first sentence or two are the most important ones.
4. Keep your press release to one page of typing. Throw away those extra, unnecessary details before you put them in. Have someone read it over and give suggestions.
5. Check and doublecheck your press release for grammar, spelling, punctuation and accuracy.

There are some other points you should keep in mind before sending the press release to the media. Obviously, if you send it in covered with ink blotches and on a piece of crumpled paper, your chances of having the release used are lessened. Remember to:

- type or print (very clearly), double-spaced.
- use only one side of the sheet and use wide margins.
- put the name of your organiza-



tion; your name, address and telephone number; and the telephone number of another officer in the upper left-hand corner of the first sheet.

- begin to type 1/3 of the way down the first sheet. This space at the top of the first sheet is for the headline, the editor's instructions and perhaps a rewrite of the first few sentences. (The editor will sometimes rewrite if he or she thinks the same story has been sent to other papers.)
- don't split words at the end of lines, nor sentences at the end of pages. Try to end with complete paragraphs.
- if more than one page is needed for the press release put (MORE) at the bottom of the first sheet and number the following sheets.
- following pages should also have the name of the organization and release date at the top.

## *The woods would be silent if only best birds sang*

(continued from page 8)

nuclear arms; the disallowance of sex offenders to be allowed parole or mandatory supervision; tighter restrictions on pornography; the prohibition of pornography on T.V.; the endorsement of Agriculture Canada's seed preservation policy; and the restoration of full indexing of old age security in Canada.

### Results of Tweedsmuir Competitions

In the first section under history, the name of the competition was **People Who Put My Community on the**

**Map.** First prize went to Orwell WI of Prince Edward Island. Second prize went to North Shuswat WI of British Columbia. Third prize went to Woolwich Ever Faithful WI of Ontario.

In the needlepoint category, first prize went to Lynne Hopley, of Manitoba, second prize Mrs. E. Jenkins of Ontario, third prize to Maisie Hanna of Saskatchewan.

In the cultural category, which was an essay, first prize went to Audrey E. Howard of Munson, Alberta, second prize to Mrs. H. Viola Clark of

Markdale, Ontario, third prize went to Mrs. E. Jean Reilly, West End Branch, Ontario.

Winners of the Cairine Wilson for their house log — first prize went to Eileen Brake, second prize to Jean Payne and third prize to Milley Johnson. The winner of the Inez Derby Scholarship was Judith Mills of Newfoundland and winner of the Hazel Stiles Scholarship went to Elizabeth Smith of Pine Lake, Alberta.

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