

Here are some tips for writing press releases and working with local media.

**Some basics:**

Compile a list of local media and email addresses and phone numbers. You may start with a few and it can always grow. While everyone still receives mail delivery, you will likely want to send your releases as a bulk email. It saves time and money and everyone in the media communicates via email.

You need to include: Who, What, Why, Where, When and How. In journalism, these are known as “The W’s and the H.” The unofficial “W” is “Wham” – if there is something that makes your event a must-attend event to the press, hammer it home.

**Before an event:**

At least two weeks prior to the event, type a press release. Include the W’s and the H, and the Wham, if you have one. If it’s a fundraiser, they might attend. If it’s a fundraiser where you’re giving \$5,000 and a new wheelchair to a local disabled child, you have a greater chance of getting the press there. This is your chance to dispel the bromide of “The Moose is the best-kept secret.” Get your word out, and the press will occasionally come.

A press release can be as basic as:

**Who:** WOTM Chapter 1234

**What:** Scholarship presentation for 5 local high school seniors. Scholarships will total \$8,000 to seniors from Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln High Schools. (The dollar amount is the Wham...)

**Where:** Moose Lodge 7890 (give the address and directions if it’s difficult to find.)

**When:** Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2017

**Why:** The Moose is dedicated to community service as one of our core missions.

If you have photos of the kids to generate interest, attach them. If you have a quote from an administrator or senior regent about how awesome the event will be, include it.

Give the press a reason to come out. A Tommy Moose presentation is great – but let the press know why Tommy Moose matters and the impact that plush Moose can have on a traumatized child. Then maybe they’ll come out and interview the fire chief about it.

Be sure to include your contact info.

**After an event:**

Remember you are providing information to the press to an event they didn’t attend and may not have prior knowledge of. Do not assume they know anything about you, the Moose or your event.

Attach photos. Make them jpeg format, 4x6 is a good size and 200-300 dpi is a good resolution. If you have someone in the lodge or chapter with a professional camera, ask them to take photos. If you use a cellphone, make sure it takes good photos. Ask people to pose, check the photos after you take them to make sure they're good. The press will not run a blurry photo.

List names left-to-right and with correct spellings of names and titles of everyone in the photo. Do not skip names. Someone who says "I don't want my name in the paper" needs to be excluded from the photo. You have to ID people.

As with a pre-release, give the W's and the H. Tell them what you did, when you did it, how much was raised, etc.

Include your contact information.

### **Radio and Television**

There aren't as many local radio stations as there used to be. But if you have one or more in your area, include them in your list of media to receive your emails. Invite them when you're doing a carwash to support local Special Olympics. Get someone there to interview members about how they love the Moose and what it does for children and seniors – this is when you sell the organization. Be creative. Arrange for them to do an on-air promotion – first person to come in and mention the station's name gets half-off their carwash.

TV is toughest of all, because they want to see things as they happen, and they will want it to be a pretty big happening. That said, it's not impossible. If the Supreme Governor is visiting – let them know. That's a big deal to a lodge – and the press will pick up on that.

### **Build Relationships:**

Call the newspaper, get the name of the person who handles community events and arrange a meeting. Ask that person how they'd like to receive things. Find when their deadlines are. No one runs something that happened a month ago. Be friendly. "You never run anything" is a bad way to start the conversation. You're building a relationship.

Remember all media organizations are busy and most are short-staffed. They will not be able to attend all of your events. Do not take it personally if they do not come to your event and be positive with your next release. Whether or not they attend, remember that you are building a relationship, and it is important to send them things so they know you exist and are doing things.

**Promote on your own Social Media:**

If you have a Facebook page, include a posting about the event. Include photos in the lodge newsletter. Get people talking about your event and remind them of the next event that is planned.

**Send to Moose International too!**

Finally, add [editorial@mooseintl.org](mailto:editorial@mooseintl.org) as a place to send photos and information after events happen. Moose International has the Heard of Moose page on Facebook and Moose magazine runs items in the Community Service and Lodge & Chapter News sections. The Fraternity wants to know the cool things that you are doing.