

Promoting Your Unit - Scouting for News Stories

Public Relations - How to Make it Happen



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Contact Info: Boy Scouts of America, Hawk Mountain Council, 5027 Pottsville Pike, Reading PA 19605
610-926-3406

Here are some tips to help make news stories happen for your unit:

Developing your news story:

1. Determine which papers are best to contact about your event (use the media contact list)
2. Talk to your local editor about the newsworthiness of your event
3. Give editors at least several days lead time to schedule coverage (a general rule is to give papers one week's notice)
4. If the paper cannot schedule coverage, write up your story as a press release and submit it with photos
5. Send your story copy or announcement via email
6. Answer the questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? And sometimes How?
7. Submit your announcement as part of the email message or as an attachment done in Microsoft Word
8. Spelling counts, particularly scouts' n ames on photos (left to right)
9. To protect your Scouts, don't give too much individual youth information
10. Avoid using youth ages with their names
11. Avoid giving specifics about where a youth lives or goes to school
12. Phrase it like - "David Jones, son of Jon and Thelma Jones, earned his..." and not stating where the Jones family lives
13. Always get parents' permission to use a child's name and photo in the newspaper

Using photos (remember a picture is worth a 1,000 words)

1. Set digital cameras for BEST IMAGE or HIGHEST QUALITY
2. Newspapers use only high resolution (often one or two megabytes)
3. Make sure lighting is good
4. Avoid taking photos of people in front of windows (your subjects will be too dark)
5. Use your camera's flash to light the subject
6. Be sure the subject is in focus
7. Use candid photos for kids actually working on a project or an activity...get close
8. Use posed photos for shooting award presentations...get close to the group
9. Don't try to shoot whole bodies, the papers and readers want to see faces...not feet
10. Take lots of photos so you can pick the one that is best to submit (and only send one or two)
11. For large group activities, don't try to get the entire group - that's just a snap shot
12. For large groups, try to get a close up of a boy and parent working together or a few boys working together - that's a photograph
13. Remember the saying "*a picture is worth a thousand words*" ...submitting good quality photos will help to get coverage (even if it's only the photo with a compelling caption)

We want your story ideas.