

### **MAKING THE NEWS**

- News must be *newsworthy*; not a bid for free advertising.
- Objectively decide the main angle of the piece of news you are presenting; make your announcement concise and focused.
- Let your audience know why it is important for them to have this information.
- The media is not there to help you or your organization; the media is there to deliver the news.
- Do what is necessary to make the editors' and journalists' jobs as easy as possible to do.
- Think like a reporter.
- Make sure the substance of your press release is worth a press release.

### **WRITING THE NEWS**

- A press release should be no more than one page long.
- It should be written in an inverted pyramid form.
- The actual content of the press release should be easy to identify on the page. If necessary mark where it begins and where it ends.
- Use concise, factual language.
- Use direct quotes to identify and distinguish most important factual statements and authoritative opinions.
- Press release should be written in the third person 'voice.' Do not use 'I', 'we', 'us' unless in the context of a direct quote.
- Do the work for the reader. Draw the conclusions you wish the reader to draw. (eg. "I should attend this event/workshop, etc., because I can see how it will help me get to connect with my community or get to know my community's history.")
- Provide all the necessary contact information. Again make it as easy as possible for a reporter/editor to do their job,

- Understand each archive as a 'gateway' to a wealth of useful information for the media both to other archives and to illustrative material.
- Never underestimate the power of a picture. If possible provide illustrative material with your press release to all print media. The older or more unusual a document may be, the better.

### **THE TECHNICALITIES**

- Write a newsworthy headline no more than 10 words long.
- All pertinent information pertaining to the story should be contained in the first paragraph. These questions must be answered: who, what, when, where, why. And sometimes, how.
- The first 10 words of your press release are the most important.
- The hook is your first sentence. It has to grab the editor's and readers' attention immediately. Example of a bad hook: On Saturday, October 21, the \_\_\_\_\_ Archives will be opening its doors to the public between 2 and 5 p.m. Example of a good hook: You think you've got a problem with clutter, the \_\_\_\_\_ Archives is up to their roof top in it. To see for yourself etc.
- State the news item first then identify who made the statement. Not the other way around.
- Read your statement as a 'reader'. Does it answer the questions you would have or give you the information to contact someone who can answer your questions? Would you go to this event?
- Deal with facts, not feelings.

**YOUR LETTERHEAD**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**APRIL 3, 2005**

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**BUSTING YOUR CLUTTER**

You think you might have a problem with too much clutter, the \_\_\_\_\_ Archives is up to their rooftop in it. “We want to invite everyone in the community to come and view our clutter this Saturday, April 3 between 2 and 5 o’clock. We’re sure people will find it as interesting as the contents of their grandmother’s trunk. And we just might be interested in the contents of their grandmother’s trunk, as well,” said \_\_\_\_\_ archivist Jane Smith. The archives are located at 214 Huron St.

“On a more serious note,” said Ms. Smith, “We are interested in what treasures may be lurking in basements and attics in our town. Adding to our collective knowledge of our town and its history is of benefit to everyone.” The archives contain extensive material for those looking to do a genealogical search as well as an array of interesting paper and photographic materials.

“We often have people looking to restore some of the older homes in town and often we can provide them with material which helps in the restoration process.”

Saturdays open house will include a number of photographic displays, a short demonstration in how to use the archives and other treasures.

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**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT JANE SMITH  
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