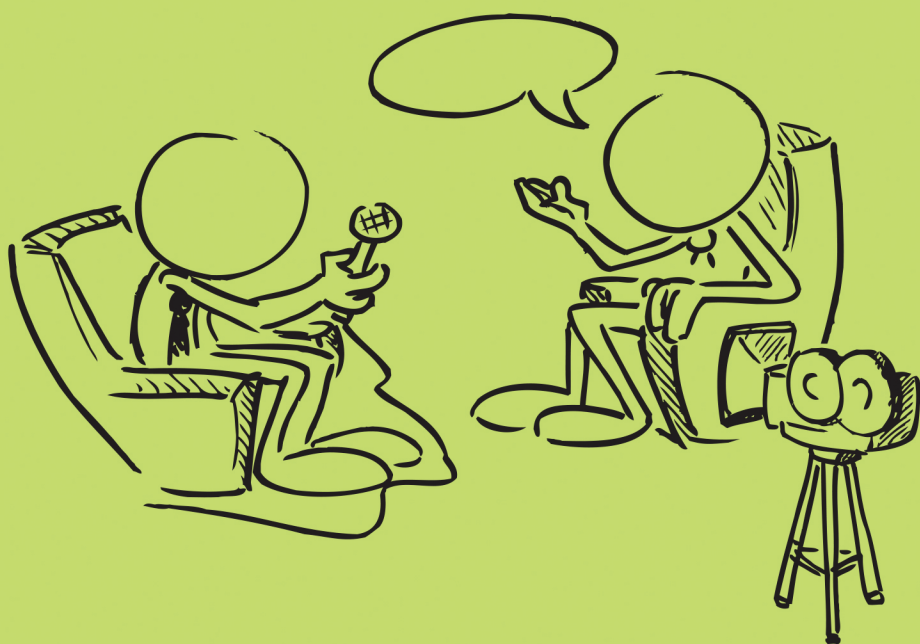


Media OUTREACH

How to Get Your Stories in the Media

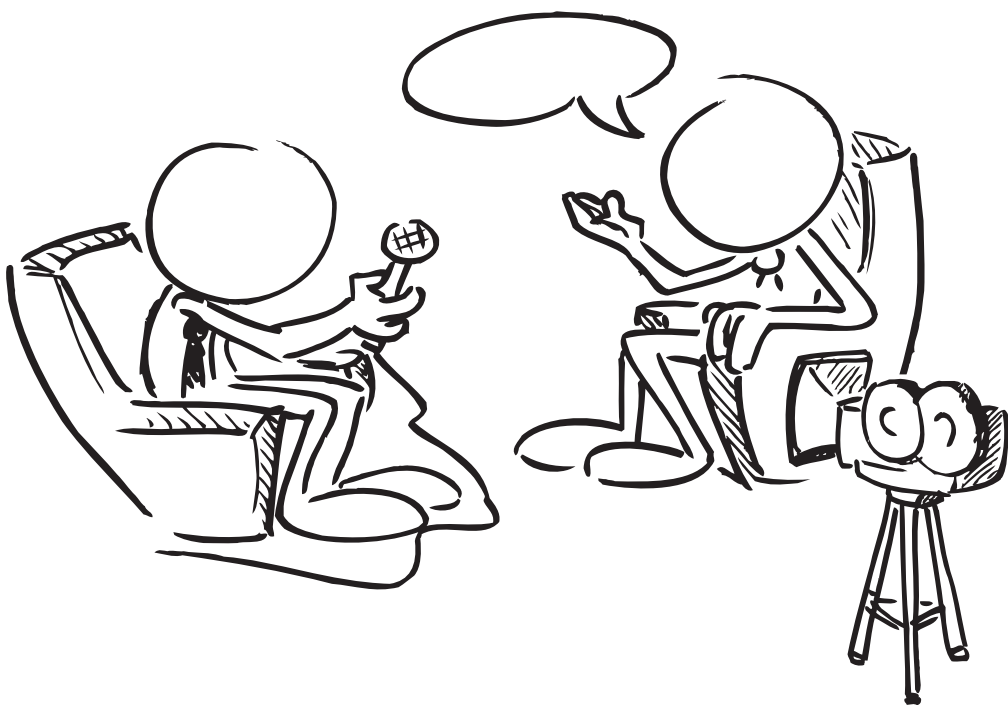


BY GEORGE JOHNSON, JR.

Media

OUTREACH

How to Get Your Stories in the Media



BY GEORGE JOHNSON, JR.

Media Outreach **How to Get Your Stories in the Media**

by George Johnson, Jr.

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PREFACE

Strategic communications and media outreach are tools of the trade for public relations professionals attempting to earn a moment of the public's interest for their clients. These tools, however, are often imprecise and yield varying degrees of success. And, with the change in what many newsrooms now consider news, the job of the public relations professional is made even more challenging. Those in the profession use various strategies in order to achieve a level of success and these strategies differ by region and by market. Why? The reason is as simple as the individual manning the assignment desk in the newsroom on any given day, and as complicated as what some markets consider news of interest.

When attempting to garner attention and coverage for their clients, the successful public relations and communications professional must consider types of stories being pitched (suggested to journalists), demographics of a given market and market size. There are factors that come into play when planning strategies for communications and media outreach that will impact upon the success or failure of one's efforts. Knowledge of those factors and appropriate planning can improve the odds for achieving the desired outcomes.

According to a comment cited in *Hold the Press* written by John Maxwell Hamilton and George A. Krinsky, Eileen Shanahan, a Washington bureau chief for the *St. Petersburg Times*, said, "We in journalism seldom cover anything but the failures, fostering in our readers and viewers the conviction there is no hope – no point in even trying to fix any of the things that are so terribly wrong in our country, or even improve them a little." According to these same authors, well-known pollster George Gallup says, "journalists are preoccupied with negative news at the expense of balanced reality."

Are these observations true? What are the chances of getting coverage for stories generally considered to be positive and of benefit to the community? Given choices between positive and negative, which stories will the public more likely see in the media? Studies have shown that positive community news stories are fighting and sometimes losing a battle for space in local newspapers and airtime on radio and television stations. When these types of stories are run, they are given less prominence than news stories many consider to be negative, such as shootings, stabbings, automobile accidents, and general stories about loss of life.

Some of the examples I use in this manual include references from various media relations campaigns I've conducted while being employed with the North American Division. Given the odds against positive stories, I've been able to find success in pitching stories in various media markets. This manual will give you examples of how to successfully plan a media relations campaign and will help you to develop your own media relations plan.

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered how stories appear in the local newspaper, television news program, or even on the radio? Oftentimes, it is a person just like you or I sending information to the media alerting them to what is going on.

How wonderful it would be if more of the stories that were produced spoke about the positive things that are happening all around us. How many positive things can you think of that are happening right in your organization or things that your organization is doing for its local community?

In the past, when I have shared with reporters story ideas about the Seventh-day Adventist Church, some have responded, “What is a Seventh-day Adventist?” These news possibilities that I am sharing with them are a form of witnessing to many whom for the first time would be learning about the Seventh-day Adventist Church through a news story. WOW. What a powerful witnessing tool!

In the book *Evangelism*, Ellen G. White said, “Let every worker in the Master’s vineyard study, plan, devise methods to reach the people where they are. We must do something out of the common course of things. We must arrest the attention.” I believe that the power of the news story can and will “arrest” the attention of the public and witness to many.

Would you like to learn how to witness in this way? Here are steps that will help you to share story ideas with your local media.

WHAT IS MEDIA RELATIONS?

Writing in the March 2, 2012 edition of *The New York Times*, advertising columnist Stuart Elliot reported that out of 1,447 votes cast from January 11–23, 2012, the winning definition of public relations was definition No. 2, stating: “Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.”

According to MediaRelationsBlog.com, media relations is defined as those activities that involve working directly with persons responsible for the editorial (news and features), public service, and sponsored programming products of mass media.

If you apply this definition to your organization, media relations can help you to:

- Become **credible** to your public/community
- Promote **understanding**
- Increase **visibility**
- Create a **positive image**

What if more people in our community believed in what we are doing or offering?

What if more people understood what our church-related organizations are about?

What if we were seen as being helpful to those around us?

What if more people knew about us and did not confuse us with other denominations?

Media relations can help your organization to accomplish these goals.

Guidelines to Media Relations

Before you develop your media relations campaign, it is wise to determine your location's ranking on the Designated Market Area (DMA) list. The DMA list lets you know what areas can receive the same media offerings of television, newspaper, or radio

programming. In my media pitching endeavors, it helps me to understand my chances in whether I will “pitch a home run” with my story or strike out.



Local Television Market Universe Estimates

Estimates as of January 1, 2013 and used throughout the 2012-2013 television season

Estimates are effective September 22, 2012

Rank	Designated Market Area (DMA)	TV Homes	% of US
1	New York	7,384,340	6.468
2	Los Angeles	5,613,460	4.917
3	Chicago	3,484,800	3.052
4	Philadelphia	2,949,310	2.583
5	Dallas-Ft. Worth	2,588,020	2.267
6	San Francisco-Oak-San Jose	2,502,030	2.191
7	Boston (Manchester)	2,366,690	2.073
8	Washington, DC (Hagrstwn)	2,359,160	2.066
9	Atlanta	2,326,840	2.038
10	Houston	2,215,650	1.941
11	Detroit	1,845,920	1.617
12	Seattle-Tacoma	1,818,900	1.593
13	Phoenix (Prescott)	1,812,040	1.587
14	Tampa-St. Pete (Sarasota)	1,806,560	1.582
15	Minneapolis-St. Paul	1,728,050	1.513
16	Miami-Ft. Lauderdale	1,621,130	1.420
17	Denver	1,566,460	1.372
18	Cleveland-Akron (Canton)	1,485,140	1.301
19	Orlando-Daytona Bch-Melbrn	1,453,170	1.273
20	Sacramnto-Stkton-Modesto	1,387,710	1.215
21	St. Louis	1,243,490	1.089
22	Portland, OR	1,182,180	1.035
23	Pittsburgh	1,165,740	1.021
24	Raleigh-Durham (Fayetteville)	1,150,350	1.008
25	Charlotte	1,136,420	0.995
26	Indianapolis	1,089,700	0.954
27	Baltimore	1,085,070	0.950
28	San Diego	1,075,120	0.942
29	Nashville	1,014,910	0.889
30	Hartford & New Haven	996,550	0.873
31	Kansas City	931,320	0.816
32	Columbus, OH	930,460	0.815
33	Salt Lake City	917,370	0.803
34	Milwaukee	902,190	0.790
35	Cincinnati	897,890	0.786
36	San Antonio	881,050	0.772
37	Greenvll-Spart-Ashevll-And	846,030	0.741
38	West Palm Beach-Ft. Pierce	794,310	0.696
39	Grand Rapids-Kalmzoo-B.Crk	720,150	0.631
40	Las Vegas	718,990	0.630

Note: The DMA listing may or may not change slightly each year.

As I've been conducting media relations campaigns, I've developed a step-by-step process that I follow. You may find these steps helpful as you develop campaigns.

STEP #1: IDENTIFY YOUR MEDIUM

Where will you try to have your story reported? Will it be the local daily newspaper, a local radio station, or a local television news station? Each of these entities has a different reporting style and you must understand the types of stories they report on before pitching your story to them.

When researching the programming that is available in your market, consider the following elements in each medium:

- Newspaper – Find out if the paper is a daily or weekly, and also find out how often certain columns print
- Radio – Community announcements, talk shows, quick news bite interviews
- Television – Public affairs shows; morning, afternoon, evening, night news shows (this includes weekday and weekends)
- Internet – Some media outlets only put some stories on the Internet



Homework

Watch your local news station's news program (morning, noon, evening, or night), read your local newspaper, and listen to your local radio station's programming. Determine what types of stories they cover. Do you think you have a story of interest?

Story Ideas

News entity: _____

Stories covered: _____

News entity: _____

Stories covered: _____

News entity: _____

Stories covered: _____

STEP #2: CONSIDER YOUR STORY

Think about the story you would like to see reported on the television news station, printed in the local newspaper, or reported on the local radio station. Will it be about religion, health, education, youth, etc.? All of these (and more) are areas that the Seventh-day Adventist Church can speak to.



Homework

Schedule some time to speak to the leaders of your organization. Find out if the things being done in their ministry areas are newsworthy. Here are some examples of what types of stories may be interesting to your local media:

- Adventist Community Services being active in the local community
 - Church providing unique needs-based programming (i.e. cooking classes, health fair, financial seminar, or famous guest speaker)
 - Mission or service trip taken by members
 - Awards given by church to local community service leaders (police, fire, etc.)
 - Pastor leaving, new pastor arriving
-

STEP #3: OUTLINE SELLING POINTS

There are three main things that determine newsworthiness or news appeal. These things will help you decide on what angle you will spin the story.

Impact

What impact might this story make to your local community or your organization?

Oddity

What is unique about your story? Is this something different that the local viewing area has never experienced?

Proximity

Is there anything happening in your area that you can relate to your particular story – something dealing with nearness in place, time, order, occurrence, or relation?

Let's take for example the International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Below is what I used to help "sell" the story to the local Oshkosh media:

- Impact – "The largest camping extravaganza in the Adventist Church's history"
- Oddity – "The Pathfinders will try to break the Guinness World Record for the most teeth brushed simultaneously"
- Proximity – "The North American Division President, who is a native of Wisconsin, will be speaking during one of the nights at the Camporee"



Homework

Think of some selling points for your story.

List selling points for your story ideas

Story idea 1: _____

Selling points: _____

Story idea 2: _____

Selling points: _____

Story idea 3: _____

Selling points: _____

STEP #4: SELECT EXPERTS

If the media decides that your story idea will be one they want to pursue, you will need to have people in mind for them to interview. Identify those who can be quoted in the story. This may require that you conduct a pre-interview to ensure that the person(s) you selected will be comfortable during an interview.

Write down all the names and contact information of who will be interviewed once your story is picked up by the media. You'll want to have all of the information handy before the media comes.



Homework A

Create your list of experts. (See page 10 for an example.)

Homework B

Since you know what story idea you are sending to the media, develop questions that you could ask your expert. You can also develop message points (i.e. canned statements) about your organization. Listed below is a statement about the Seventh-day Adventist Church:

- The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a Protestant church with approximately 17 million members worldwide which includes more than 1.1 million members in North America. The Seventh-day Adventist Church seeks to enhance quality of life for people everywhere and to let people know that Jesus is coming again soon.
-

Identify Experts on Various Topics

Here is an example of a topical list that I have created for the North American Division office. It helps me decide what story ideas I may want to share with the media.

Sample Topical Experts List for Community/Humanitarian Services

Sung Kwon

***Executive Director of North American Division Adventist
Community Services***

Topics/issues: faith-based initiatives, role of church in social action, challenges facing community development and nonprofits, role of nonprofits in organized disaster response work, leadership development and urban ministry, ways to engage in community transformation

Joe Watts

Adventist Community Services Disaster Response Director

Topics/issues: disaster preparedness and response, mass care, donation management

Sandra Brown

***Adventist Community Services Tutoring and Mentoring
Coordinator***

Topics/issues: challenges facing youth learning abilities, liability involved with youth training programs, government and community initiatives for youth education

Marilyn Renk

Adventist Community Services Elder Care Coordinator

Topics/issues: education and services related to aging, health, finance and social issues for seniors in the church and community in collaboration with community-based elder care programs

Justin Vibbard

***Adventist Community Services Youth Empowered to Serve (YES)
Coordinator***

Topics/issues: youth serving others

Steve Willsey

Adventist Community Services Crisis Care Coordinator

Topics/issues: emotional and spiritual care for traumatized survivors of disasters and other critical incidents

Develop your experts list

Name: _____

Title: _____

Contact information: _____

Topics/issues: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Contact information: _____

Topics/issues: _____

STEP #5 WRITE THE PRESS RELEASE

Determine the timing that you will contact the media and whether your story idea deserves a media advisory (a very brief announcement of the event to the media/public that arouses their curiosity). This is always followed by a press release, a more in-depth description of the event that could be used by a newspaper as a stand-alone story, and/or a press kit. Be certain to use quotes from your experts that will highlight the angles you are using to support the story. Get all of your selling points in the story while maintaining the theme.

Pitch Paragraph

When sending a press release, include a pitch paragraph. It introduces the importance of the story you are pitching. The goals of the pitch paragraph are to:

1. Gain attention
2. Give the essential facts
3. Call to action

This pitch paragraph was written to the religion editor of the *Dallas Morning News* to alert him to an event that was being hosted by the NAD's Youth Ministries department. You'll notice that I was able to point out statistics that showed why the youth department was hosting this specific event – a prayer conference. Indeed, this paragraph succeeded in doing so – gaining a mention in the blog.

Pitch paragraph

Beginning of press release

Good afternoon Bruce:

Some statistics have shown us alarming reports about our youth:

According to the Marin Institute in California, everyday on average of 11,318 American youth try alcohol, 6,488 try marijuana, 2,786 try cocaine, and 386 try heroin. The Advocates for Youth in Washington, DC, say the U.S. has a higher teen pregnancy rate, a higher HIV prevalence rate in young men ages 15 to 24, and a higher HIV prevalence rate in young women ages 15 to 24. And according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics about 400,000 people dropped out of high school (in the U.S. between October 2004 and October 2005).

In about five weeks (February 28-March 4), youth and youth leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will convene at the Dallas Convention Center for the first-ever Youth Prayer Conference sponsored by the Church. Why prayer? The Church's leaders believe that prayer is the key that will keep youth out of these alarming statistics. And prayer is what will be focused on during this conference.

Enclosed is the news release about the Just Claim It Youth Prayer Conference. If you are interested in this story, please contact me at (301) 680-6057.

George Johnson, Jr.
Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Adventist Church Hosts Youth Prayer Conference in Dallas

(Silver Spring, MD) The Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America will host its first-ever World Youth Prayer Conference on February 28-March 4, 2007, in Dallas, Texas. Themed "Just Claim It: Experience the Power of Prayer – Claiming Communities for Christ," youth from all over the world will participate in this power-packed experience to claim the power of God in their lives.

Crime, violence, drugs, and sexual immorality have plagued our homes, communities, schools, and even churches. "The purpose of this Prayer Congress is two-fold. First it will draw serious attention to the challenges of youth by reintroducing them to a love relationship with Christ. Second, it will empower them to reclaim their cities through service to others while bringing a message of hope," said James Black, Sr., director of youth ministries for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America.

The pitch paragraph succeeded in gaining a mention in a blog. This email correspondence was received on February 2, 2007.

Dear Mr. Johnson,

We have posted an item about your conference on our religion blog <http://religion.beloblog.com/>

I'm sorry, but we aren't able to cover the conference. In general, we seldom do religious event coverage per se, as Dallas-Fort Worth attracts many, many conferences and gatherings. While we recognize that these are very important to the participants, we can't staff them.

I will forward your information to the Metro Desk in case they're looking for a photo opportunity during the week.

Best wishes,
Linda Crosson
Assistant Editor
Business/Classified/Religion
The Dallas Morning News

Press Release

Below are the ingredients to a successfully written press release:

- Include all pertinent contact information for yourself or the main contact person (work and/or cell phone numbers and email addresses)
- Use an attention-getting headline
- 1st paragraph should include your who, what, when, where, why, and how
- 2nd paragraph should include information that helps people understand WIIFM (what's in it for me)
- 3rd paragraph – quote organizers
- 4th paragraph – continue with rest of background information.

Contact: George Johnson Jr.,
Office: (301) 680-6057

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

YOUTH TEAM BIKES 1,000 MILES TO CAMPING EXTRAVAGANZA IN OSHKOSH
Bike for Life selects Hinsdale, Illinois, as one of their stop points

"I just flew in from North Carolina and boy are my arms tired." For the Bike for Life team change "flew" to "biked" and "arms" to "legs" and this statement would stand true. This biking team will be traveling approximately 1,000 miles to the Seventh-day Adventist Church sponsored International Camporee in Oshkosh, WI, being held August 10-15.

In all, nine cyclists (ages ranging 13-52) will be making the trip – three female teens, one male teen, and five adults. Team members represent Faluda, South Carolina; Hendersonville, North Carolina; Morganton, North Carolina; Canton, North Carolina; Crossville, Tennessee; Asheville, North Carolina; and Newton, North Carolina.

The team will meet on July 26 at the Waynesville, North Carolina Seventh-day Adventist Church to pack equipment. They will depart on July 27 from Hot Springs, North Carolina at 7 a.m.

The team will be biking approximately 80 miles a day (except Saturdays) until they reach Oshkosh. "This is a great opportunity to remain physically fit," said Cari Frock, director for the Bike for Life Team.

Bike for Life has been participating in long distance cycling since 1999 – to the same destination of Oshkosh, WI. Since then, the bikers have participated in summer excursions. To train for the big summer event, the bikers participate in two 80-mile group rides. "This ensures that the bikes and riders are ready for the tip," said Frock.

During the trip, the team will pass out literature about the Seventh-day Adventist Church and invitations for Bible study. They will also wear t-shirts and jerseys that say "Do you know where you are going. "The saying on the shirt gives the kids an opportunity to witness, letting others know that they are heaven bound – and that they can be heaven bound too," said Frock.

Bike for Life plans to arrive to Oshkosh by August 9 for the Camporee - that's hosting 30,000 people.

For interview and photo opportunities with Bike for Life, please call George Johnson Jr., assistant director for media relations, at (301) 680-6057.

####

Bike for Life travel stop points

July 27

Knoxville 1st Seventh-day Adventist Church
3611 Kingston Pike
Knoxville, TN

July 28

Cookeville Seventh-day Adventist Church
3129 Deerhaven Dr. North
Algood, TN

July 30

Highland Academy
211 Highland Circle Drive
Portland, TN

July 31

1st Baptist Church
145 S. Main
Greenville, KY

August 1

1st Seventh-day Adventist Church
17840 Volkman Road
Evansville, IN

August 2

YMCA
2010 College Avenue
Vincennes, IN

August 3

Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Avenue
Charleston, IL

August 4

Paxton Fire Department
310 North Market
Paxton, IL

August 5-7

Hinsdale Academy
631 East Hickory
Hinsdale, IL

August 8

McHenry, IL

August 9

St. Henry's Parish
412 N. 4th Street
Watertown, WI

Tuesday

The Daily Newspaper of the Upper Cumberland

Herald-Citizen

102nd Year - No. 177

Cookeville, Tennessee, July 27, 2004 - www.herald-citizen.com

14 Pages

Adventist bike riders in Algood Wednesday

By JILL THOMAS

HERALD-CITIZEN Staff

Tomorrow nine riders biking 1,000 miles from North Carolina to Osh Kosh, Wisconsin, will be spending the night in Algood.

The group, ranging in age from 13 to 52, is riding 80 miles a day and plan to reach Wisconsin by Aug. 8, just in time for the week-long International Camporee, a youth meeting attended by 30,000 Seventh Day Adventist young people.

Cookeville's pastor, Virgil Covel, was in the Carolina Conference in 1999 when the first Bike for Life team trained for its first trip to the North.

"I was impressed that these young people were riding 80 miles a day. It got me to thinking about doing this for exercise. Now I see that the two leaders of the group are ten years older than I am.

"That has inspired me again ... this time to keep biking," he said.

Covel biked about 2,000 miles last year, and has lost over 50 pounds since he began cycling.

The nine riders will be arriving in Algood between 2 and 3 p.m. tomorrow. They will be passing out Seventh Day Adventist literature and invitations for Bible study. And they will be wearing t-shirts that read, "Do you know where you're going?"

"The message is that we're on our way to Heaven and so is everyone else. That's the message we want people to take with them," said George Johnson, Jr., the church's assistant director for media relations.

The nine will be welcomed by some church members who will take them home to use their showers and then return them to the church.

"We offered to feed them and to let them stay overnight in homes, but they wanted to stay together and to stay in the church. And they brought their own food," Pastor Covel said.

Wednesday night they will be the featured guests at Vacation Bible School. And they will feed themselves breakfast on Thursday morning before they take off on the next leg of their journey — to Portland, Tenn.

Weather

Weather forecast for Putnam

The Bike for Life Team from the Carolina Conference began their journey to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, on July 26, 2004, for the International Pathfinder Camporee. Each day they biked approximately 80 miles - and I spoke with the leaders of the team each day to make sure they were still biking and to let them know what media entity was coming their way. This article was printed during the first leg of their journey and was printed on page 2 of the Herald-Citizen in Cookeville, Tenn.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: George Johnson Jr., assistant director for media relations
Office: (301) 680-6057

30,000 PEOPLE TO SET-UP CAMP IN OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN
Seventh-day Adventist Church sponsors one of the largest youth gatherings in its history

OSHKOSH, WI - They will come and pitch their tents. They will come and roll out their sleeping bags. They will come and sing songs all while meeting old and making new friends from around the world. They are the expected 30,000 Pathfinders that will "set up camp" August 10-14 at the Experimental Aircraft Association's (EAA) Campgrounds in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Themed Faith on Fire (FOF), this camporee will provide its participants a unique learning experience that many will cherish.

Sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its Center for Youth Evangelism, located in Berrien Springs, Michigan, Pathfinders will participate in pin trading, honor learning, marching/drilling exhibitions, archery, talent showcase and sporting activities just to name a few. One of the major components to the Camporee is the community service projects. Attendees will participate in neighborhood clean-up initiatives, painting and restoration projects in the surrounding communities of Oshkosh. "Service to others is the commission that Christ gave us and in many of the parables that Jesus shared, the theme was to serve others," said Joe Watts, community service coordinator for the Camporee. "When Pathfinders participate in community service projects, they learn the joy of service to others, civic responsibilities, and the satisfaction of a job well done."

This is not the first time that the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Pathfinder delegation has visited the EAA campgrounds. In August 1999, the Discover the Power Camporee was held at the EAA campgrounds. "The EAA has a proven record of hosting large events and it has a great safety record and a fantastic plane museum, which will provide an education experience for our children," said Pastor Ron Whitehead, director for the Center for Youth Evangelism and executive director for the Camporee. "These are all reasons why we chose the EAA for the Faith on Fire Camporee."

Before the Camporee

Pathfinders from all over the world (more than 100 countries including England, Singapore, Brazil, Japan, South Africa, Kenya, and more) have been planning to attend this camping extravaganza for several months. Some clubs have been selling pizzas, washing cars, hosting yard sales/flea markets to raise money to attend the event. According to the organizers, the largest delegation is coming from the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Approximately 250 volunteers will arrive during the week of August 2 to assist in grounds preparation. The Camporee staff, which includes 600 individuals, will also meet daily to finalize last minute details. "These meetings will provide a daily briefing on the latest FOF news," said Whitehead. "This will help if any of the leaders have specific questions about any area of the Camporee," he said. Pathfinder Clubs will then arrive as early as Monday morning to set-up camp for this 4-day event.

- more -

page 2

During the Camporee

Pathfinders will have the opportunity to participate in approximately 75 honors and activities will each day. Pathfinders will also have the opportunity to sign-up for class times and will receive an honor at the end of the instruction time.

While at the EAA campgrounds, The Seventh-day Adventist Church will try to etch its name in the Guinness Book of World Records™ with the “Largest Game of Leap Frog,” “Most Balloons Popped by a Single Arrow,” and the “Most Teeth Brushed.” “In addition to these being three fun and exciting events, the ultimate purpose is to promote and foster teamwork with our Pathfinders,” said Kevin Costello, coordinator for the Guinness activities.

In addition to community services projects in the surrounding area, Pathfinders will have the opportunity to participate in a wider community outreach with people in Kenya, India and the Philippines. Bibles will be collected (as well as a \$1 shipping fee) each night – a goal of 100,000. “This amazing harvest of God’s word will truly be a highlight of the Camporee,” said Whitehead.

About Pathfinders

Founded in 1946, the Pathfinder Club is a worldwide organization sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church that can be compared to the Boy and Girl Scout clubs. Its target audience is both boys and girls ages 10 to 15.

There are approximately 2 million Pathfinders around the world which includes 30,000 Pathfinder Clubs that are operated in 150 countries. The clubs encourage mental, physical, and spiritual growth in weekly meetings. Club meetings consist of group worship and class work for honors which develops new skills and hobbies. “For more than 50 years the Pathfinder ministry has trained thousands of youth for service to their communities and churches,” said Pastor James Black, director of youth ministries for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. “The club structure provides a fellowship bond that allows Pathfinders to keep each other spiritually encouraged and it fosters accountability,” he said.

About the Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a mainstream Protestant church with approximately 13 million members worldwide which includes 1 million members in North America. The Seventh-day Adventist Church seeks to enhance quality of life for people everywhere and to let people know that Jesus is coming soon again.

####

Editors: For more interviewing and photo opportunities, please call George Johnson Jr.



Canoe craft: Cedar ribs make artistry hardy as tradition



Ancient Egypt falling on EAA

Campground to be pyramid

BY JEFF BOLLIER
of The Northwestern

The Experimental Aircraft Association may be the Mecca of flight, but an international church youth group is turning the EAA campgrounds into ancient Egypt for four days.

Hundreds of volunteers have erected a 42-foot tall pyramid on the grounds and will bring in real camels, fake palm trees and other decorations in connection with Faith on Fire, the theme of the Pathfinders Camporee.

Faith on Fire will tell the biblical story of Joseph, an Old Testament son of Jacob and Rachel, who was sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers, but ended up saving the people of Egypt by seeing famine ahead in the dreams of the Pharaoh.

The Pathfinders Camporee will bring 30,000 10- to 15-year-old boys and girls from around the world to Oshkosh for honor badges, community service activities, marching and drilling exhibitions and a whole lot of fun from Aug. 10-14.

"They love to feel they can contribute something," said Sandy Roberts, daytime activities director for the Camporee. "We don't have to push them at all in the area of

By the numbers

Pathfinders Camporee by the Numbers

- 75 -- different honors and activities visiting Pathfinders can choose to participate in
- 600 -- volunteers it will take to operate the campground and daily activities
- 1999 -- the last year the Camporee was held in Oshkosh
- 30,000 -- visitors to Oshkosh attending the Camporee
- 100,000 -- Bibles the Pathfinders will attempt to collect during the four-day event
- 2 million -- Pathfinders around the world

community service and outreach. They're raring to go."

Pathfinders Camporee Executive Director Ron Whitehead said choosing to bring the Camporee back to Oshkosh -- the last gathering was held here in 1999 -- wasn't a hard decision. The event is held every five years while regional and state Camporees get held annually.

"This community hosts us so well. It embraced us," Whitehead said. "We had to add a lot more activities and this year, having come back to the community, we're using more

CAMPOREE, PAGE C4



STEVEN HERMAN, 8, of Modesto, Calif., lays down while working. Hundreds of Pathfinders took over the Little Oshkosh playground to sand, stain and repaint it as part of their community services projects.

CAMPOREE: Focuses on outdoors skills, worship

FROM PAGE C1

In addition, the group will try to break two records in the Guinness Book of World Records. At 9:30 a.m. Thursday, the group will attempt to play the world's largest game of Leap Frog and at 6:15 a.m. Friday the group will attempt to set the record for most teeth brushed.

Whitehead said the volunteers and staff members couldn't be happier to have the Camporee in Oshkosh again. "It's a great location to bring in that many people for camping," he said. "The people at EAA bend over backwards to support young people and we

Pathfinders parade

- **What:** The Pathfinders parade and rally in the city
- **What:** Will begin at 2 p.m. Saturday
- **Where:** At the Oshkosh Convention Center and head north on Main Street to Irving Avenue where they'll head east to Menominee Park, where the parade ends.

appreciate it. We feel real comfortable here."

Jeff Bollier (920) 426-6688 or jbollier@thenorthwestern.com

This reporter scheduled to do a pre-story on the Camporee as soon as I arrived in Oshkosh. After meeting with him face-to-face, we were able to go over the press release and outline various story possibilities. He was able to pass this information to his editor. This article was printed in Section C1 of the Oshkosh Northwestern.

Media Advisory

A media advisory alerts the media to what is happening in a smaller format. It lists only the who, what, when, where, why, and how. This is sometimes done before a press release when you want to whet the appetite of the reporters.

MEDIA ADVISORY

**Contact: George Johnson Jr., assistant director for media relations
Office: (301) 680-6057**

**30,000 PEOPLE TO SET-UP CAMP IN OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN
Seventh-day Adventist Church sponsors one of the largest youth gatherings in its history**

OSHKOSH, WI - They will come and pitch their tents. They will come and roll out their sleeping bags. They will come and sing songs all while meeting old and making new friends from around the world. They are the expected 30,000 Pathfinders that will “set up camp” August 10-14 at the Experimental Aircraft Association’s (EAA) Campgrounds in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Themed Faith on Fire (FOF), this camporee will provide its participants a unique learning experience that many will cherish.

About Pathfinders

Founded in 1946, the Pathfinder Club is a worldwide organization sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church that can be compared to the Boy and Girl Scout clubs. Its target audience is both boys and girls ages 10 to 15.

There are approximately 2 million Pathfinders around the world which includes 30,000 Pathfinder Clubs that are operated in 150 countries. The clubs encourage mental, physical, and spiritual growth in weekly meetings. Club meetings consist of group worship and class work for honors which develops new skills and hobbies. “For more than 50 years the Pathfinder ministry has trained thousands of youth for service to their communities and churches,” said Pastor James Black, director of youth ministries for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. “The club structure provides a fellowship bond that allows Pathfinders to keep each other spiritually encouraged and it fosters accountability,” he said.

About the Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a mainstream Protestant church with approximately 13 million members worldwide which includes 1 million members in North America. The Seventh-day Adventist Church seeks to enhance quality of life for people everywhere and to let people know that Jesus is coming soon again.

Editors: More information will follow in the weeks ahead. For interviewing and photo opportunities, please call George Johnson Jr.

NEWS release

Official press release from the
World Headquarters of the
Seventh-day Adventist Church



12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD
20904-6600 USA
Phone: +301 680 6300
Fax: +301 680 6312
www.adventist.org

Media Contact:
George Johnson Jr., Media Relations Director
Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America
Phone: +1.301.610.6057
Email: george.johnson@nac.adventist.org

Garrett Caldwell, Media Relations Director
Seventh-day Adventist world church
Email: CaldwellG@gc.adventist.org

June 24, 2010 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Atlanta mayor and religious leaders give greetings at Seventh-day Adventist Church world Session

WHEN: Friday, June 25, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

WHERE: Georgia Dome, Atlanta, Georgia.

Who: The following special guests will be present for the evening service at the Georgia Dome:

The Honorable Kasim Reed, Mayor of Atlanta
Bishop Keith Whillmore, The Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta
Colonel Terry W. Griffin, The Salvation Army
Tom Evans, Presbyterian Church (USA)
Rabbi Frederick Reeves, The Temple
Dr. Jamie Jenkins, United Methodist Church
Monsignor Henry Gracz, Roman Catholic Church

Note:

If you are interested in this story, please call George Johnson Jr.

About the General Conference Session:

The 59th General Conference Session is a business meeting of the global Seventh-day Adventist Church from June 24 to July 3, 2010 in Atlanta. Occurring every five years, General Conference Session gathers representatives from the church around the world to elect leadership and determine the focus of mission. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a mainline protestant denomination with over 16.3 million members in 206 nations around the world. The church's headquarters is in Silver Spring,

End



Homework

What type of reporter would want to receive your release? Even though you represent a religious organization, there are various reporters or producers that report on different areas of interest. Find out who you need to send the release to at the radio station, newspaper, or television station and how they would like to receive it (i.e. email or fax). Google television news stations, newspapers, and radio stations in your area. This will help you find contact information for the places where you will send your stories.

Call and connect with your media contacts. Let them know that you are the communication leader and you would like to assist them with stories about your organization. Ask them what types of stories they are needing.

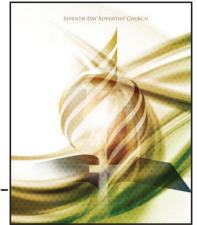
Also ask them how they would like to receive the story. Will they want the story by postal delivery, fax, or email? With all three methods (and I sometimes use all three), here are some things to consider:

Postal Delivery

I have chosen this method when I am sending additional information about the organization such as brochures and flyers. Make sure that your information is presentable. The North American Division Office of Communication has created a media kit folder and brochure that you are able to utilize. This will, in a presentable way, help you to introduce your new media contact to your organization and how it is related to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Media Kit Folders

This glossy folder features the Seventh-day



Adventist Church name, logo, and contact information. It also includes an inner slot for your business card. Simply insert your press releases, media announcements, etc. to assemble a professional press kit. Available from AdventSource at www.adventsource.org or 402.486.8800

Catalog #250100

However, you must consider:

1. How long will it take for mail to be delivered to the media outlet? Make sure you account for holidays and weekends.
2. When you mail a hard copy, the information has to be retyped into the news entity's computer. This could take time and possibly cause a delay for it to be placed into the system in which they consider story possibilities.

Fax

Although some news entities still utilize fax machines, here are some things to consider:

1. Sometimes people forget to reload the fax machine with paper. The time that you decide to send your release could be the time when the fax machine at the media entity is out of paper.
2. Someone at the media entity has to remember to check the fax machine for news releases.
3. When you fax, the information has to be retyped into the news entity's computer. This could take time and possibly cause a delay for it to be placed into the system in which they consider story possibilities.

Email

Consider the following when you are emailing your pitch:

1. Make sure your email subject line is catchy. Make the journalist want to open your email. Remember, you are just one of many people who are pitching stories, and their inboxes are full of pitches just like yours.
2. Do not add attachments to your email. I've found that journalists will not open attachments for fear of viruses.

Media Contact List

Media outlet: _____

Contact's name: _____

Job title: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Stories needed: _____

How to submit stories: _____

Media outlet: _____

Contact's name: _____

Job title: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Stories needed: _____

How to submit stories: _____

Media outlet: _____

Contact's name: _____

Job title: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Stories needed: _____

How to submit stories: _____

STEP #6: MEDIA OUTREACH AND FOLLOW-UP

Once you have sent your media advisory or press release to the media, make a phone call. This is the personal pitch which allows you reach out to individual editors and writers to convince them that your story deserves coverage. Here are three things to remember when placing your calls:

- Be excited about your story idea.
- Don't promise what you can't deliver.
- Be respectful.

BALANCING ACT



PETER THOMSON/LA CROSSE TRIBUNE
A group of 13 unicyclists and bicyclists, known as "The Wylie Bunch," begin their journey Friday morning to Oshkosh, Wis., as they ride out of Riverside Park.

ONE-WHEEL WONDERS

Unicyclists begin
160-mile trip to
Oshkosh camporee

By ED HOSKIN
La Crosse Tribune

Cycling about 160 miles over five days might not seem such a feat, until you consider it will be accomplished on one wheel.

A group of unicyclists bound for Oshkosh, Wis., left La Crosse's Riverside Park early Friday, and they weren't even taking the most direct route.

"It's not very practical, but it will be fun to say you did it," said 18-year-old Tyson Hallock of Rockland, Wis. "I'm doing it for the bragging rights, pretty much."

Riding a unicycle that far is definitely

more challenging than a bicycle, and not just because it requires greater balance. "You have to keep peddling all the time," Hallock said.

Thirteen people affiliated with an area church group left La Crosse on unicycles or bicycles, and at least three of the five unicyclists were planning on going all the way on one wheel.

The three one-wheelers are two brothers — Tyson and Trever Hallock — and a cousin — Brennan Hallock.

The unicyclists plan to arrive in Oshkosh on Tuesday traveling between 30 and 50 miles each day. Two other unicyclists will join up along the way.

"It's hard to learn, but it impresses peo-

ple a lot," said 15-year-old Brennan Hallock, also of Rockland. "A lot of people think it's cool, they get interested and the come riding with us."

The Hallocks are members of the Coulee Region Juggling and Unicyclin Club, which meets Thursday nights at the Salvation Army in La Crosse.

Members help each other learn to juggle or unicycle, and they ride about town and even play basketball on unicycles.

"It's mostly just practice," one of the club's founder's, Rick Hallock, said of unicycling. "It's a question of being able to get the balance and not thinking about gettin

"It's not very practical, but it will be fun to say you did it. I'm doing it for the bragging rights, pretty much."

TYSON HALLOCK, Rockland, Wis.

See UNICYCLISTS, A-2

UNICYCLISTS TREK TO OSHKOSH

From A-1
your balance because you don't have time to think."

Rick Hallock, Tyson and Trever's father, said he first became interested in unicycling about 15 years ago when his wife, Twyla, bought a "cheap" unicycle at a sale.

"I learned to ride it, and then it got thrown back in the garage," Rick Hallock said. "Tyson found it (years later,) and I told him if he learned to ride it, I would buy him a better one."

The Hallocks have done other road trips on unicycles,

but none this far.

"It's kind of a tradition," Rick Hallock said. "We get a lot of (motorists) stopping and trying to ride the unicycle. Real often, they'll get their video cameras out and tape us."

As members of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Rockland, the Hallocks also are members of the church-affiliated Coulee Region Coyote Pathfinder Club.

The club is similar to the Boy Scouts in that youth members are encouraged to gain badges.

And that is where the Oshkosh trip comes in, as

Pathfinder Club members from all over the world are meeting there next week for a camporee.

The local unicyclists will hold a program on the one-wheeled activity in the hope of gaining a badge.

Derek Bohner, 12, of West Salem, Wis., was planning to ride part of the way on a unicycle until he got tired, and then switch to a bicycle.

The group was taking bicycle trails and county highways.

Ed Hoskin can be reached at ehoskin@lacrossetribune.com or (608) 791-8226.

I called the city desk and pitched this story angle by phone. The editor was very interested in this team's determination to unicycle 150 miles. This story was printed on the front page of the La Crosse Tribune (La Crosse, Wisconsin, on Saturday, August 7, 2004).



Homework

Develop a phone call log-book so that you keep track of when you place your calls. While at the International Pathfinder Camporee I learned the following while keeping my phone log: Never call to pitch stories to a television station during busy times. This would be during 9-10 a.m., as well as the hour right before any of the newscasts. Production meetings for the day usually take place around 9-10 a.m. Phone call pitches worked best when I had their undivided attention.

Also remember to keep your phone calls brief. Journalists are extremely busy, so you should make sure your phone pitch is polished and ready.

Sample Phone Log

Media outlet: _____

Phone: _____

Time when you called: _____

Summary of call: _____

Media outlet: _____

Phone: _____

Time when you called: _____

Summary of call: _____

Media outlet: _____

Phone: _____

Time when you called: _____

Summary of call: _____

Media outlet: _____

Phone: _____

Time when you called: _____

Summary of call: _____

STEP #7: PERSISTENCE

Remember the saying “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again?” This can be true in your quest for pitching stories to the media. Reporters are often busy on other stories and may not have been “appropriately” focused on your conversation the first or second time around. Call them again, if necessary! Sometimes the third time is the charm but it is also helpful to look for other writers in the newsroom who may be more interested than the one you spoke with earlier.



Homework

If you notice, many of the stories that take advantage of news times during the week are those related to the government as well as crime. There are other stories during the weekdays, but it would appear that these take the majority of the time and space. Consider (if possible) for your story idea to happen over the weekend – when the media is searching for nice human interest stories.

Also consider your time. If it isn't of the utmost importance to television stations, you should reconsider the timing of when your story is occurring. Having it occur during or near the broadcast's live times may not be a good idea.

STEP #8: SAYING THANK YOU

At this point hopefully you have gotten the media to see that your story idea is newsworthy and you are reading the results in the local newspaper, watching the results on your local news station, or listening to the story on your local radio station. Be sure to send the reporter, producer, or editor that you worked with a thank-you letter. The North American Division Office of Communication has created thank-you notecards that match the media kit folder and brochure. Use this to write the thank-you note and let him/her know that you are appreciative of his/her efforts and that you would like to sit and speak with him/her more about future story ideas.

Now that you have your foot in the door, have more story ideas ready to send to your new media contact. Keep in contact with the reporter so that you maintain a healthy relationship.

Adventist Notecards

These attractive notecards feature the Seventh-day Adventist Church logo on the cover. The inside is blank for your message. Perfect for thank-you's, invitations, and other professional church-related uses. Envelopes included. Sold in packages of 25. Available from AdventSource at www.adventsource.org or 402.486.8800



Catalog #250015

CONCLUSION

Strategic communications and media outreach differ by region and by market. The public relations and communications professional must take into account types of stories, demographics, and market size. There are factors that come into play when planning strategies for communications and media outreach that will impact upon the success or failure of one's efforts. However, knowledge and proper planning can improve the odds for garnering the desired outcomes/results.

Although the goal of media relations is getting your information out to the public, it goes further than that. It's about building and maintaining a relationship with the media.

Thank you for what you are doing to do to increase the media presence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I believe that contacts made through your efforts will be used to connect people in your community with Jesus.

Have you ever wondered how stories appear in the local newspaper, television news program, or even on the radio?

This manual will give you examples of how to successfully plan a media relations campaign and will help you develop your own media relations plan!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

George Johnson, Jr., a native of Baltimore, Maryland, graduated from Columbia Union College in Takoma Park, Maryland, in May 1997 with a BS degree in communication emphasizing in public relations/journalism and broadcast media. Johnson has been employed with the Seventh-day Adventist Church since 1997. Johnson began working in the NAD Office of Communication in October 2002 as the assistant director for media relations for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. In July 2006, he became the associate director in the Office of Communication. In October 2010, he was elected communication director at the North American Division's Year-end Meeting. Johnson also serves as the executive producer of the SONscreen Film Festival and the executive director of the Society of Adventist Communicators.



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
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