



Prince Edward Island 4-H

Club Reporter Guide

Club Name: _____

Club Reporter: _____

Year: _____

4-H Pledge

I pledge

My HEAD to clearer thinking

My HEART to greater loyalty

My HANDS to larger service

My HEALTH to better living

For my club, my community and my country.

4-H Motto

Learn To Do By Doing

4-H Emblem



So What is My Job Exactly?

The Club Reporter is responsible for keeping the 4-H community and the community at large up to date on activities within the club. This is done through club newsletters, local newspapers, radio and maybe even television. The Club Reporter allows for the easy and accurate exchange of information between the club and other groups. It is a good idea to inform your 4-H Representative of club activities that may be able to be announced on radio or in any news releases.

As Reporter, I will:

- Provide newspaper and radio with information on club activities
- Prepare newspaper and radio advertisements when requested by Club Executive and the membership
 - Work on all articles promptly after club events
- Notify President and Vice President as far in advance as possible of any meetings I may have to miss
 - Follow parliamentary procedure
 - Help fellow club members to follow parliamentary procedure
 - Give credit to others for the jobs they do
 - Attend as many 4-H meetings and activities as possible
 - Be enthusiastic

The Club Reporter's Duties are:

- to take notes at the general meetings and send these highlights to the District 4-H Officer so they can include it in any newsletters. The reporter should only send reports that would be of interest to others such as successful activities, great, new fundraisers or recruiting plans.

Note: not all districts have newsletters, so this may not be applicable to some clubs.

- to publicize any upcoming events within the club so the community has a chance to know what events to watch out for. This can be done by notifying local papers, magazines, church bulletins, and radio and TV stations. This not only informs members of the community, but it might also help recruit new members.

- to organize committees to help publicize any and all 4-H events in your club in order to get new and different ideas,

- to keep a scrapbook of photos and clippings of your club and its members. It's a great way to keep an interesting history that every member, and even non-members would enjoy.

- to make sure that your club is aware of 4-H events and socials taking place in the community so all can take part.



Where to Begin

Establishing Media Contacts

The first thing you will need to do is to develop contacts at local newspapers, radio stations, television stations, and community and school newsletters. Introduce yourself as the new Club Reporter for the local 4-H club. See the back of this guide for a complete list of media contacts.

One-Year Calendar of 4-H Events

It is very important that you keep a one-year calendar of upcoming 4-H events such as fundraisers, announcements of Atlantic, National and International travel programs and scholarships, Achievement Day etc. This can be discussed during club meetings early in the club year. This calendar will ensure you never miss promoting or reporting on an event.

What is news?

People can be news

Events can be news

Your 4-H club activities involve people and events....

NEWS!!

If a member of your club receives a scholarship or a trip, that's news. If a member of your club wins a public speaking competition, that's news.

If your club is planning a fundraising event, that also is news. These types of news have a place in your local newspaper, on your local television and radio stations, during your school announcements, in church bulletins, and on your community bulletin boards.

Topics in which community newspapers, television and radio stations are often interested include:

- members who have earned trips, scholarships or awards at any kind of competition (such as Public Speaking, Fairs and Exhibitions etc.)
- community service projects the club is planning
- special events that the club is organizing, such as Fun Days, etc.

These are the topics about which you may choose to write a press release.

Are there any events or activities that will require community participation, such as fundraising activities? These events should be promoted with print ads, posters, or on radio or TV.

Where to Promote a 4-H Event

There are a few questions you should ask yourself before deciding where and how you are going to promote an event. Here are a few examples.

- Do the members of my club live in one or several communities?
- If so, which communities will I promote the event in?
- Is there a newspaper in those communities?
- Is there a community centre, a radio and/or television station?
- Where are the sponsors of the event (if any) located?

Armed with this basic knowledge, you can decide which events to promote in each community, where to promote these events, and how best to promote your club and its events.

Press Releases for Newspapers

A press release can be used to promote an upcoming event or to report on an event that has already taken place. The key to having your press release used in the local newspaper is to provide a complete and well-written piece. The first step is to get the facts. You should begin with the “Five W’s and How”:

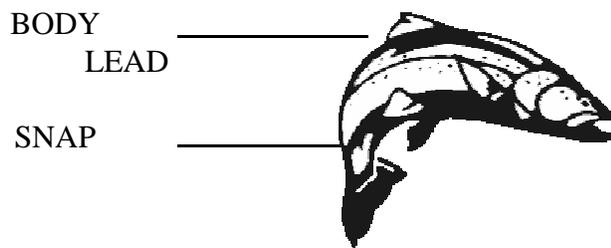
- WHO did it happen to?
 - WHAT happened?
- WHEN did it happen?
- WHERE did it happen?
 - WHY did it happen?
 - HOW did it happen?

With these questions answered, you have the basic facts of the story. You can then add the details.



Fish Technique

Here's a technique that might help you write your release. It is commonly known as the "Fish Technique".



With the fish's head, you'll get the editor's attention. You should present the basic details of the event and answer as many of the five W's as you can in this first paragraph. This is called the lead.

The body of the fish represents the body of the release. You should answer the remaining five W's and the HOW. This is where you will fill in any remaining details. The body of a press release should be no more than two to three paragraphs long.

The fish's tail is used to end the story with a snap! This should be no more than one paragraph.

Once you have written the rough copy of your release, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is the information accurate and complete?
2. Is the "lead" effective? Will it catch the editor's eye?
3. Have you used too many adjectives and fancy language? If so, try to take out any extra words.
4. Have you provided contact information such as individual to contact, address, phone, fax, email etc?

Once you have answered these questions, you are ready for the final copy. Using the following formatting rules will ensure that your press release will be easy for editors to use. The easier it is for them to use, the more likely they are to use it!

- It should be typed with a standard font (Times New Roman or Arial) or handwritten neatly.
- Use wide margins of one inch at the top, and about one and one half inches at the sides and bottom of the page. This leaves enough room for the editor to jot down information for the typesetter.
- Centre the words PRESS RELEASE near the top of the page. Below that should read FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. This indicates the story can be used as soon as possible.
- Below this should be your suggested headline. Keep it as short as possible.
- Before your first sentence, in parentheses, write the date that you are sending the press release, and the location it comes from.
- The body of the release should be double-spaced
- At the bottom of the page, include contact information, in case anyone has any questions. You should include your name, your club name, your address, your telephone number, and your email address - if you have one that you use often.

General Writing Tips

There are four general good writing habits that make up the core of all effective writing. These good habits will help you stick to your main point, eliminating useless words and sharpening the useful ones.

1. Be Active

You can write in the passive voice or the active voice. The passive voice is weak and impersonal. The active voice is strong, direct and clear. The active voice also uses fewer words than the passive voice. However, if diplomacy or tact is required, the passive voice is suggested.

Passive: Our report was published by Canadian Council

Active: Canadian Council published our report.

2. Be Brief.

Make every word count. Avoid unnecessary words, as they can bury the message. Just be sure to include necessary facts.

3. Be Clear

Use every day words. They'll carry your message forcefully.

4. Be Positive and Specific

Use positive words. The positive form is usually shorter and more direct. Look for sentences with the word "not" in them. Rewrite your work to take it out. For example, use "forgot" instead of "did not remember" or "late" instead of "not on time". Avoid vague words that contain no information for your reader.

Vague: Some members won awards.

Specific: Three members won awards.

Clear writing does not require rare talent and extraordinary skills. Writing to communicate, not mis-communicate, involves a little thought and some common sense. Consider what you want to communicate, think of the reader as you write, and develop these four good writing habits.



Important Tips to Note:

- Work on your article as soon as possible. News is only news if it is recent and up to date. Plus, by postponing articles, you may forget and miss important details.
- Each story or article has three parts - the beginning, the middle and the end. The most important facts go first. The beginning should include the significant point of who, what, when, where and why. The middle portion of the story should answer the remaining who, what, when, where and why you did not answer in the first part as well as explaining how the things happened that made up your story. The last section can be used to give additional details.
- For hand written articles, use lined paper. Write on every second line. Write on one side of the paper only. Leave wide margins at the side when writing your first draft.
- Use name of people, 4-H Clubs, events and locations
- Use past tense for those events that have already happened. Use a future tense for those events that are coming up.
- Use a short, catchy title. Use 4-H in the title if possible.
- Read your first draft. Ask yourself, “Does it flow properly, is it clear, are there spelling errors, is the story or article too long?” If the story or article need to be changed, change it by writing in the margins and in between the lines.
- Make sure your facts are correct. Double-check the spelling of names of people, places, events, clubs, executive titles, addresses and telephone numbers.
- Read your article again. Ask yourself, “Are the who, what, when, where, why and how answered and do the sentences need to be shortened?” Avoid the use of a lot of “ands”. Most sentences do not require the use of more than one “and.” If possible, replace them with periods and start a new sentence.
- Ask someone else to read your story or article. Others can often spot problems or errors you may have missed. Make any changes you agree with.
- Print or type your final copy. Use double space. Proofread your article - it should be error free.
- Using a computer for articles and sending them by e-mail makes it easier for the newspaper to submit the article.



Sample Press Release

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

DUNSTAFFNAGE-MARSHFIELD 4-H CLUB ACHIEVEMENT DAY IS HERE AGAIN

(May 29, 2006. Marshfield, PE) Preparations are underway for the Dunstaffnage-Marshfield 4-H Club Achievement Day, to be held Saturday June 3 at the home of Fred and Wilma Flintstone. This will be an opportunity for members to display to their parents, friends, peers and community, the projects they have worked hard to complete over the past 4-H year.

The Achievement Day is a required part of the 4-H program. To be credited with a completed 4-H year, a member must complete the communications project, a club community project, a club agricultural awareness project and at least one life skills project, and display their project at the club Achievement Day. "Learn To Do By Doing" is the 4-H motto and Achievement Day gives members the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned by doing. Although some Achievement Days include competition, 4-H members gain confidence and personal esteem as they display, and take responsibility for their own project.

For more information on Dunstaffnage-Marshfield 4-H Club Achievement Day, or any other 4-H event, please contact:

Frisco the Fox
Club Reporter
Dunstaffnage-Marshfield 4-H Club
Marshfield, PE C1A 7J7
Phone: (902) 555-4747
Email: frisco@home.com

Public Service Announcements

Effective Radio Promotion

Writing for radio and television is similar to writing for a newspaper. You need to begin with the five W's and HOW. Then you add more detail to make the story complete. When you mail in a story, it should be in a format similar to a news release.

However the difference between newspaper and radio and television is important. The first difference is that your story has to be much shorter. The average radio news clip is between 20 and 40 seconds long. The second difference is that your listeners, cannot go back to get any information they missed the first time. This means your "lead" should include the most important facts and still be interesting enough to catch your listeners' attention.

Effective Television Promotion

If your television station is willing to do a public service announcement about your event, or put the event in the community event calendar, be sure they have the event title, time, place, cost, contact person name and phone number.

If you have the opportunity to be interviewed on TV, be sure your appearance is neat and clean. Prepare by asking the reporter beforehand what type of questions he/she plans to ask. This will give you the opportunity to think about your answers.

Here is a sample of a public service announcement (PSA):

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT **CANADIAN 4-H COUNCIL**

October 2006

For more information contact:
Chris Forrest, Communications Manager
(613) 234-4448
email: cforrest@4-h-canada.ca

BROADCAST AT WILL

Time: 30 seconds
Words: 57

Join 4-H Members across Canada in celebrating more than 90 years of fun during National 4-H Month in November. With hundreds of exciting projects to choose from, 4-H has something for everyone. Find out how you can get involved in your area. Check out 4-H Canada on the web today. 4-H - it's more than you ever imagined.

Clip Art

End notes

Remember that, as a highly visible member of your club, your attitude and actions will impact on the entire club. Be positive, enthusiastic, respectful and fair to everyone, and you can expect the same in return.

If you have any questions about your job, your Overall Leader and your District Officer are there to help you. Just ask them!



GOOD LUCK IN YOUR TERM AS CLUB REPORTER!

**Prince Edward Island 4-H
Media Contacts**

<p>Cornwall Herald 28 Wolfe Avenue Cornwall, PE C0A 1H0</p> <p>Phone #: 629-4830 Fax #: 628-1716 E-mail: info@cornwallherald.ca</p> <p><i>This is a monthly issue. It goes to print on the 3rd week of the month.</i></p>	<p>Eastern Graphic c/o: Heather Moore P.O. Box 790 Montague, PE C0A 1R0</p> <p>Phone #: 838-2515 Fax #: 838-4392 E-mail: eastgraphic@islandpress.pe.ca</p> <p><i>This is a weekly issue newspaper, and is distributed on Wednesdays.</i></p> <p><i>Send articles by e-mail. They do not require a hard copy.</i></p>
<p>The Northern Star c/o Paul Blacquiere RR #2 Hunter River, PE C0A 1N0</p> <p>Phone #: 963-2505 Fax #: 963-2920 E-mail: paul.blacquiere@pei.sympatico.ca</p> <p><i>This is a monthly issue. It is distributed on the last Tuesday of each month and goes to print on the Wednesday, a week before distribution. (No Wordperfect Documents)</i></p>	<p>Journal Pioneer c/o Jocelyne Lloyd P.O. Box 2480 Summerside, PE C1N 4K5</p> <p>Phone #: 432-8239 Fax #: 436-0784 E-mail: newsroom@journalpioneer.com</p> <p><i>This is a daily issue newspaper.</i> <i>Send articles by e-mail & a hard copy by mail.</i></p>
<p>The Guardian c/o: Carolyn Drake 165 Prince Street Charlottetown, PE C1A 4R7</p> <p>Phone #: 629-6036 Fax #: 566-3808 E-mail: lifestyles@theguardian.pe.ca</p> <p><i>This is a daily issue newspaper.</i></p> <p><i>Send articles by e-mail & a hard copy by mail.</i></p>	<p>Please Note for sending items to The Guardian. The Guardian is happy to receive information from clubs, whether it is in the form of public service announcements, news releases or pictures. However, it would be best for clubs to contact Carolyn in advance (629-6036) of sending information to the Guardian so she can tell them if it is something she can use, or if it is too long. Also, if a club wants to book a picture with The Guardian, they call Bill McGuire at 629-6038 to set this up.</p>
<p>West Prince Graphic c/o: Jean Kenny P.O. Box 339 Alberton, PE C0B 1B0</p> <p>Phone #: 853-3320 Fax #: 853-3071 E-mail: jean.kenny@westprince.com</p> <p><i>This is a weekly issue newspaper, and is distributed on Wednesdays.</i></p> <p><i>Send articles by e-mail. They do not require a hard copy.</i></p>	<p>Island Farmer c/o: Andy Walker P.O. Box 503 Cornwall, PE C0A 1H0</p> <p>Phone #: 628-6933 Fax #: 628-1431 E-mail: awalker@islandtelecom.com</p> <p><i>This is a bi-weekly publication. The deadline is every 2nd Friday and is published the following Wednesday.</i></p> <p><i>Send articles by e-mail & a hard copy by mail.</i></p>