



UPDATE

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Ed Sweeney DSO-PA 11NR was kind enough to forward the following advice and tips created by Chris Mauer, ADSO-PA 1SR, who is a member of the media. She works as a Producer at CNBC in New York. Regardless of your experience, you will find this information very helpful.

WORKING THE MEDIA

RESEARCH THE MEDIA

-Do your homework. What radio and TV shows are out there? What newspapers are in your area? Don't forget the weekly shoppers and other small publications.

WHO'S WHO IN THE TV MEDIA Or, who are all these people? **NEWS DIRECTORS**, or whoever is in charge of the newsroom.

You need a good contact to pitch story ideas at the TV stations. Depending on the size and/or management of the station; you will need to know the name of the person who fills this position. Whatever their title, remember they are professionals and their obligation is to their station management and to their viewing audience. In other words, we should ask for them by name, but then we must give them something of value. **NEWS.** So, what do all these titles mean? What do they do?

Field Producers are good contact in larger stations. They often do all the "grunt" work for the reporter (including setting up the stories, conducting interviews, writing the story, and editing the story).

Segment Producers are found in larger stations, a segment producer is in charge of an entire segment of a show. They may book live interviews, or set up field stories.

Reporters are good contacts in any size station whether they work with a field producer or not.

Assignment Editors may not be found in small stations. This is a good contact for medium to large stations.

RADIO

NEWS DIRECTOR in radio are the same as in TV stations. You want to know the name of whoever is in charge of the newsroom, or news broadcasts.

Reporters are good contact in any size station. You will find that most radio stations do not have a roving reporter. They do, however, conduct interviews by phone, and most would love to have you come on down and pre-record a segment.

HOW TO DEVELOP CONTACTS

Find out the name and number of the appropriate contact.

WHAT TO SAY

"Hi, I'm (your name) of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Is this a good time to talk or are you on deadline? When is the best time to call?"

If the reporter/producer/editor is not on deadline, offer to send them a list of feature story ideas. Find out if they like to get news releases by snail mail, e-mail, phone calls, or fax.

Ask what types of stories they are interested in?

Explain what the Coast Guard Auxiliary is. Most people don't know.

Bait the reporter's interest.

Be short and to the point. Media personnel are busy.

Don't exaggerate. The news media can usually sniff out when someone is pitching a "non-story."

Take no as "no!"

Keep your new contact's name, address, and preferences on a file card or a separate notebook.

CONTINUED

LEAVING MESSAGES ON VOICE MAIL

"My name is (your name) of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. My number is (give your number SLOWLY and CLEARLY). I have a great local story I'd like to tell you about. Please call me at (repeat the number again SLOWLY and CLEARLY)."

Never leave a long phone message. Don't describe the story in length because the reporter is BUSY and will probably hit the delete button after ten seconds and you will now have little chance of interesting the reporter upon a follow-up call.

SENDING INFORMATION

The sooner you notify the media about your event, the better. Reporters plan ahead. It is often "first come, first serve." If you are sending a fax, always follow-up with a phone call. Some newsrooms have "community fax machines" and receive hundreds of faxes a day. Unless your contact knows you have sent something, chances are they will never receive it.

HOW TO PITCH A STORY

Look for the "local angle" for local and regional newspapers and TV stations

Sell your contact on the widespread appeal of a story.

Just because something is important to you, doesn't mean it interests the general public

Don't tell the reporter their job. Never insist on who they should interview. You may "suggest" a good contact, but don't insist.

Often the reporter can do something unique. Who can turn down an airplane ride aboard a Coast Guard Auxiliary facility? Or a boat ride aboard a Coast Guard icebreaker?

Suggest "Evergreen stories" as features. (human interest, local hero, other general timeless)

Local TV stations are often starved for stories on weekends. Make contact with the weekend assignment editor and reporters and tell them you have LOTS of story ideas for "slow news days."

THE TV//RADIO//NEWSPAPER SAYS "YES"... NOW WHAT?

Make a follow-up phone call before the story and ask if the reporter needs any additional information or has any questions.

Provide as much information as possible.

Never give the media a list of "interview questions" however, you can send them "suggested talking points."

Point out to newspapers and TV that there will be "photo opportunities." "Grin and Grabs" (shaking hands) should be avoided if possible, particularly for the visual medium of TV. Actions shot opportunities are preferred.

Know when to relinquish control.

HOW TO FOLLOW UP

Thank the station/newspaper for coming.

Follow up with a brief thank you call or note.

Praise the reporter for a job well done and suggest another possible story.

I don't know about you, but I learned a lot. You don't have to be a media expert to write for the PA UPDATE. Send your ideas, things that worked for you, twists, and techniques, to me. I am easy to find. Nick at dsopad7@ucnsb.net



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PUBLICATIONS

Some Helpful Hints from your Publications Liaison

Some of us have just returned from the National Conference in Orlando (NACON 2002) and have lots to report. Others who did not attend could ask for reports to include in their newsletters and publications.

So much went on that it would be impossible to report everything in one article. Why not entice members to get ready for the next National Conference by giving them each month, for the next few months, highlights of the happenings.

Many people think that these conferences are just for officers. On the contrary, they are for everyone. At one of the workshops I attended, it was announced that this was for members and not for officers, although officers were invited. This workshop gave members the opportunity to learn about AUXDATA and how it applies to individuals and flotillas. It was a very good workshop filled with information that was easy to absorb. **That is the kind of information the membership needs to read in your publication.**

The readers of your publication need to learn information that is timely, and given in an easy to read format. Speak to your readers as if they were sitting next to you in your living room. You don't need to go overboard on explanations, just give them the facts in a concise manner without leaving a lot of empty spaces for them to fill in.

Lots of good photographs and graphics are available for you to capture and download into your articles. Just go to the Coast Guard Auxiliary web pages and look for **AUXimage** found on Future Web. This site has loads of good photos that are easy to access. Use your Auxiliary site for the best and most accurate information available.

"Every person takes the limits of their own field of vision for the limits of the world." (Arthur Shopenhauer.) Expand your horizon. Don't be limited by your own field of vision.
Till next month,

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PHOTOGRAPHY

“What kind of film shall I use and what speed?” is the first question I am asked at my seminars, follow by, “What do you use?” I will try to guide you on the first question and answer the second one later.

Film brands and types

There are over 100 different brands of film on the market today and more coming out monthly. I have used Kodak, Fuji and Costco's brand, Kirkland, which is made by Agfa.

Film types are color negative (for prints), color positive (for slides) and black and white in both slides and prints. Just make sure when you purchase any brand of film to get the right type, such as 35mm print film for prints etc. Some of the packaging looks the same on print and slide film.

Almost all – 95% – of the images taken by amateur photographers are taken with color negative (print) film. Slide film (color positive) is generally used for slide programs; photography exhibits in some galleries and some photo contests. The color, clarity and overall quality of slide film seem to be better than print film. You can have prints made from slides and slides made from prints but the cross-over images are never as clear as the original. Prints from print film, of course, is easier to show and share with others and you can have many photos made from one negative without losing the clarity or color. Just decide what you will be using that day or try all of them to see which one you prefer.

Film speed

Film speeds start at ASA25 and go way up to 6400. Here is a hint (rule of thumb): the faster the film speed, (higher number) the more grainy and less color your photograph. And the slower the film speed (lower numbers) the better the color and less grain. Most cameras today have DX Coding, which automatically tells the camera the ASA (speed) of the film you installed. Higher speed films allow you to stop action and keep your subject sharp (not blurred).

If you have plenty of light, a slow speed film can do the same as high speed film. If possible on manual mode, shoot at 1/250th of a second or faster to allow for light and camera shake. Also set the camera on F/8 or higher for depth of field. One disadvantage of the “point and shoot” camera is that once the DX is read and the film speed is recorded, your camera is on “program mode” and you can't control the speed, f/stop or depth of field (what's in focus). You do as it says, point and shoot. I will be talking about depth of field, f/stops and action photography in up-coming articles.

Out of focus prints may be the result of not enough light and camera shake and too slow a speed film can cause this problem. Try a faster film if you experience this. It is wise to carry different speeds of film in your camera bag so you can try different ones in any given situation. Be brave, try a few and compare the difference.

In low light, use faster film speed. I recommend ASA 400 to Kodak MAX 800. And in bright light use a slower speed. I recommend 100 ASA up to 400 ASA. You learn the most from doing, making mistakes and trying again. But what a joy when you get that “PERFECT PHOTO”

Purchase your film in six packs. They are less expensive. Keep your film and batteries in a plastic zip-lock bag in the refrigerator. Be sure and take them out an hour or so before you use them. Remember to carry extra batteries in your camera bag.

According to the local photography store and processing lab, most people use 200 ASA or 400 ASA color print film.

OK, what film do I use? Well, I have tried most of them. But I use Kodak Gold 100 ASA Color Print film usually 24 or 36 exposures. I have used this for many years and I am always pleased with the photographs.