

HOW TO WRITE AN ARTICLE



A BEST PRACTICE GUIDE FOR IMPROVED
ARTICLE WRITING, PHOTOGRAPHY, AND STORY
EDITING.

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INTRODUCTION

This presentation will highlight and reinforce the protocols and guidelines for submitting articles and pictures to the Oracle and for our 5th District newsletter, The Legend. Please refer to this document when preparing articles for publication. This document will prove to be a valuable reference source and help you produce a quality submission to The Oracle and The Legend. A good article tells readers about important events or news. The opening or lead paragraph of a article answers six questions:

1. Who?
2. What? (What happened)
3. When?
4. Where?
5. Why?
6. How?

REMINDER: We are all amateurs and are nor subject matter experts in article writing and photographs. The intent of this document is to provide coaching and ideas to help produce better material for The Oracle and The Legend.

HOW TO WRITE AN ARTICLE

1. Come up with a good story idea. This can be as simple as covering a local event, or as complex as an in depth investigation of a political scandal.
2. Gather a notebook, pen, and a voice recorder if possible. Venture to the location where you will be gathering your facts or conducting your interview.
3. Begin your research for the story. Write down possible questions. Then attend the event, or schedule and perform your interview.
4. Come up with a good introduction of one or two sentences that will interest the reader and give them an idea of what the article will be about.
5. Begin writing the meat of your story. Be sure to cover the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the subject. Most news articles are between 200 and 500 words.
6. Edit your article and come up with a suggested headline. Send these to the editor for review.
7. When writing about a Brother: be sure to include when/where initiated and Omega facts.
8. Articles need to be current i.e. as the Oracle catches up to quarterly publications articles should cover previous time frame forward. Articles over 6--12 months will be heavily scrutinized for relevance.

QUICK FORMATTING FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES TO THE ORACLE

Most stories are written in the “Inverted Pyramid” form is often referred to as the "Five W's": WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY. The Inverted Pyramid became popular because it saves the reader time. The widest part of the Pyramid represents the lead sentence or opening paragraph, which contains the gist or climax of the story. The rest of the story tapers off from the climax to the least important facts.

An example of the beginning of a simple article

The Lead: Brother John Smith, 39, was killed Tuesday when his small aircraft crashed in an open field near Detroit Airport.

The Bridge: According to an eyewitness, the plane’s engine sputtered and the jet fell into a nose-dive, crashing to the ground.

The Body: Brother Smith, a life member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., was a former U. S. Navy pilot who flew over 18 missions in Operation Desert Storm.

Other Details: Brother Smith was a naval ROTC instructor at the University of Michigan, and an active duty U. S. Navy officer with the rank of Lt. Commander. He was initiated into Omega through the Rho Chapter on the campus of J. C. Smith University. He was an active member of Nu Omega Graduate Chapter (Detroit, MI).

COMPONENTS OF AN ARTICLE

Writing an article can get relatively easy if you can just picture a triangle in your mind. This simply means, you need to use the inverted pyramid technique at all time.

Here's how you can easily write newspaper articles:

Headline: This is where you tell your target readers what your article is all about. In here, you should be able to capture the attention of your readers while you tell them what's in it for them. It must be short, punchy, and it must be very descriptive.

Byline: This tells the readers who wrote the story.

First paragraph: This is often called the lead paragraph in newspaper article writing. This must contain all the why, how, where, when, who, and what elements of your story. It's important that your readers understand your article by simply reading your first paragraph. This is because research and studies show that a huge percentage of people reading newspapers do not read articles in their entirety.

Offer further explanations: In your succeeding paragraphs, you will need to give your readers supporting details that will help them better understand your story. You can include quotes from people who are considered authorities on your chosen story. For example, if you are writing about a murder, you would want to get statements coming from the police and witnesses. These can make your articles sound stronger and more catchy.

Include additional information: This is optional. If you are writing about a one time event, you don't need to include additional information. However, if there were related stories written in the past, you will need to give your readers some background information.

ORACLE ARTICLE EXAMPLES

5TH DISTRICT NEWS

Theta Alpha Alpha and Epsilon Phi Chapters

Provide Services

Food was distributed to over 600 Bowling Green, KY families by Theta Alpha Alpha Chapter in June 2018. The chapter partnered with Feeding America, a nationwide organization that provides hunger relief to people in need.



Theta Alpha Alpha and Gamma Theta Chapters provided two \$750.00 scholarships to two local area students. The funds will assist them in pursuing higher education. One of the students included Diamond Beachamp of Glasgow High School. She plans to attend

Families receive enough food for about four or five days which translates to about five filled bags. The food is a combination of donations, such as frozen chicken from Perdue, and U.S. Department of Agriculture government commodities, including canned vegetables.

Feeding America serves 42 counties in Kentucky and provides food to 220 organizations. A total of 16,700 people per week benefit from food and 12.5 million meals are distributed yearly. About 20,000 to 25,000 pounds of food a month is available for residents of Warren County. Food is also distributed to 13 organizations within the county. Omega men passed out boxes of food items to families which includes frozen chicken, assorted drinks, snacks bags and canned food.

As in June, the chapter surpassed their mark of selling hamburgers and hot dogs during Theta Alpha Alpha's fund raiser for the Relay for Life event. The chapter joined the American Cancer Society of Warren County at the Relay For Life event held at a Bowling Green High School.

the University of Louisville majoring in nursing. Austin Brown of Bowling Green High School also plans to enroll into the University of Louisville. He plans to study sports administration. Brown said, "many minorities excel in sports, but we are only encouraged to strive to play professionally and not exposed to the many different career paths in the sport industry."

In conjunction with Mid-South's Commission on Aging, Epsilon Phi Chapter solicited funds from Memphis residents in purchasing electric fans for elderly citizens.

In June, the chapter purchased over 400 fans stocked at the Memphis Walmart. The local TV Station, WHBQ Fox 13 provided coverage of the fan project during their early morning, mid-morning and evening newscasts. The TV station also created an informational poster that was featured on Facebook. The chapter's fan project was established in 1998, when Brothers Joel Weathers and Commodore Primous presented the idea to the chapter in order to provide heat relief for the elderly.

5TH DISTRICT NEWS

A Moment in Omega History

Rev. Benjamin Hooks

Omega's Reverend Judge Benjamin L. Hooks, a Memphis native, was the fifth son of Robert and Bessie Hooks. The younger Hooks first attended LeMoyne College, but graduated from Howard University in 1944. Shortly after graduation Hooks enlisted in the U.S. Army. He earned the rank of staff sergeant and after his discharge from the military, he enrolled into DePaul University's College of Law graduating in 1948.

In addition to his Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree, Brother Hooks was ordained as a Baptist minister in 1956. A year later, Hooks joined Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

The Tennessee Governor appointed Hooks as a judge the criminal court division. He was the first Black judge in the State of Tennessee's history. In 1972, Hooks was appointed by U.S. President Richard M. Nixon as a member of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) becoming the commission first Black member. In 1977, Bro. Hooks served as the executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He was awarded the NAACP's Spingarn Medal in 1986.

Brother Hooks was initiated into Omega through *Epsilon Phi Chapter in 1942*. Bro. Hooks entered Omega Chapter in 2010.



Phi Gamma Gamma Chapter's Brother Antonio Wheeler served as the volunteer coach for the Vikings Flag Football team.

Chapters Essential Part of the Community

In May 2018 Phi Tau Chapter's Brother Willie Peale, Jr., was a corporate sponsor of an educational program titled "Blue And Gray in Black and White." The historical presentation focused on the American Civil War. The event by the Frankfort Arts Foundation was held at Kentucky State University.

Omega's Pi Gamma Gamma Chapter hosted their 28th Annual Terry Looper Basketball Camp on July 28th. The event was held at the Patterson Park Community Center in Murfreesboro, TN.

The camp was open to boys and girls ranging from ages five to 17. The event provided fundamental basketball instruction, teamwork and sportsmanship. The free camp featured coaching instruction from the Middle Tennessee State University coaching staff.

The chapter also provided a community cookout after the camp activities. Pi Gamma also provided schoolchildren with new backpacks filled with school supplies for the upcoming school year.

PHOTOGRAPHY STANDARDS

1. Photographs should be in JPEG format and at least 300 dpi resolution.
2. Photographs should be sent via email as an attachment
3. *Do not embedded within the Microsoft Word document.*
4. Include the title of the article, dates, times, the name of the chapter, city, state and name of the writer for all articles.
5. Photographs should be submitted as separate attachments in the largest format available.

PHOTOGRAPHS MUST CAPTURE EVERY ELEMENT OF THE SCENE

Photographs should serve to tell a new element of the story through action. In short, each photo should have an element of action; simply asking a subject to pose for the photo doesn't cut it in the world of photojournalism. There must be an element of action or movement in every photograph; something must be "happening" in every frame.

Many inexperienced photographers will focus on one element of a story. The best photographers will capture every element of the scene. At a fire, the novice photojournalist will photograph the actual structure as it burns. Meanwhile, the professional photographer will also capture the exhaustion of the fire fighters as they strip off their heavy, soot--covered gear, the expressions of anguish on the fire victim's faces as they embrace, and the street sign with the emergency vehicles in the immediate background.

At a fire scene, for instance, there's so much more than the actual fire. There's the worried and curious neighbors, the fire fighters lugging their gear back to the fire truck, the cordoned--off neighborhood, the traffic from cars being detoured around the fire scene, and the homeowner who comes home to find they've lost everything. You need to capture all of that as a news photographer. Treat the scene as multi-dimensional.

POOR QUALITY PHOTOGRAPHS



Poor Lighting



Poor angle, subjects not uniform



Blurred shot



Out of Focus

QUALITY CANDID PHOTOGRAPHS



Good action shot



Good posed picture



Good action shot



Good Intense action

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

GOOD

Digital Camera pictures

300 word or less articles

Action Pictures

Pictures worth 1000 words

Articles in last 12 months

Separate attachments

Concise relevant

Properly formatted in word

Putting thought into article

NOT GOOD

iPhone pictures

1000 word articles

Posed pictures

Pictures that need 1000 words

Articles 12 months or older

Pictures embedded in word document

Not concise non relevant

Non properly formatted

No thought just writing

EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION GUIDELINES

We submit all articles received from our chapters to the Editor to The Oracle.

The Editor to The Oracle and his staff determine what articles are published in The Oracle, not the DDPR.

The DDPR reserves the right to reject any article or to make any editorial changes deemed appropriate for publication in the 5th district newsletter, The Legend.

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