

PRESS RELEASE SAMPLES

The good, the bad and the ugly

The following releases were sent to editors in Wisconsin. Comments in red indicate what was done well and what wasn't. Some releases have been edited for length. Critiques by David Steinkraus (david@davidwords.com).

1)

**HEAD: VETERANS MUSEUM KICKS OFF 2014
WITH NEW EVENTS AND SPEAKERS**

MADISON, Wis. (Feb. 27, 2014) – From new art exhibits and prints, to guest lectures on the Civil War and Vietnam, the Wisconsin Veterans Museum in Madison has a large array of new events and happenings not to miss this spring. The best part – all museum programs are free and open to the public. Come for a night of history and storytelling to enrich your mind and learn something new. All programs are hosted in the Wisconsin Veterans Museum 2nd floor Education Center at 30 W. Mifflin St. – unless otherwise noted below.

WHAT: “Not At Ease” Traveling Exhibit Program at the Neville Museum (panel discussion)

WHEN: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 --- 7pm (Exhibit runs now through June 1, 2014)

WHERE: Neville Public Museum, 210 Museum Place, Green Bay, WI

Not at Ease: A Veteran Print Project, provides a forum for 20 female veterans from Wisconsin to share their stories by pairing them with 20 artists, who created an edition of prints inspired by the resulting dialogue. Join us on the evening of March 11 at the Neville Public Museum in Green Bay for a panel discussion with female veterans featured in this traveling exhibit. Stop by the Neville Museum and view this exhibit on display from Feb. 22--- June 1, 2014.

Good summary tells you what you're about to see. Also notice the following: This was sent a week before the first event, allowing plenty of time for an editor to find a place for it to run and for people to plan a trip. Each section has a description and the basic what, when, where in boldface for easy scanning or for an editor to pick out only events that may be close. There were more items listed, all similarly formatted. With these visual cues, the press release could be quickly condensed to fit available space.

2)

HEAD: **STEVE SPINGOLA RETURNS TO COLD JUSTICE ON MARCH 7**

Set your DVRs for Friday, March 7, at 7 p.m., when retired Milwaukee Police Department Homicide Lieutenant Steve Spingola returns to TNT's **Cold Justice**.

Known by his colleagues as "the sleuth with the proof," Steve spent 15 of his 30---year MPD tenure chasing down cold---blooded killers.

Earlier this year, the crew from **Cold Justice** requested that Spingola assist in the 1997 murder of Victoria Hollingsworth, 28, of Chattanooga, Tennessee.

"In the Hollingsworth case," said Spingola "one wouldn't necessarily have to be Sherlock Holmes to ascertain the suspect. The key was to develop enough evidence to get the killer to crack."

Did the crew at **Cold Justice** ultimately prevail and bring Victoria's killer to justice? Tune---in on March 7 to learn more.

Good summary in the first paragraph. Any editor in Wisconsin immediately knows this may be of interest, and it's accompanied by the date and time. The headline could be improved because not everyone may instantly recognize the name. An alternate would have been: "Milwaukee detective returns to Cold Justice on March 7." But in five paragraphs this release manages to talk about the event, the time, the crime, and even ends with a teaser.

3)

HEAD: **CHAMPIONS CROWNED AT THE 2014 US YOUTH SOCCER ODP
CHAMPIONSHIPS CAL SOUTH TEAMS SWEEP
TWO YEARS STRAIGHT**

PHOENIX, Ariz. (March 2, 2014) — Champion teams were crowned Sunday at the 2014 US Youth Soccer Olympic Development Program (US **Youth Soccer ODP**)

Championships at the Reach 11 Sports Complex in Phoenix, Ariz. California South teams swept all titles in the 1997 and 1998 Boys and Girls age groups, for a historical second consecutive year. **US Youth Soccer ODP Champions:**

**1997 Girls Champion – California South South 1997 Boys Champion –
California South South**

1998 Girls Champion – California

1998 Boys Champion – California

Sent to a Wisconsin newspaper, but no Wisconsin teams were involved. So why is this in a Wisconsin editor's inbox?

4)

HEAD: **SO YOU WANT TO BE A FEMALE FARMER?**

Hi [editor's name],

Did you know that the amount of women farmers in the U.S. has grown 19% from 2002? **No, and I see no reason why I should care. Stay away from teaser questions like this. People do not answer as the writer expects, and the default answer is to say "No" and click Delete.** According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, of the 3.3 million farms operating in the U.S., more than 1 million are being operated by women. Like in technology, females are beginning to find a larger role in an industry that has been male dominated for so many years.

I'm at the end of the first paragraph and there's still no hint about why I have received this or what I am supposed to do with it.

Why the growing interest? For Clare Hintz, a Northern Wisconsin organic farmer, it was her experiences during childhood spent at a friend's farm that instilled in her a love of farming. Now, getting her Ph.D in agriculture, Hintz is looking to understand why other women choose to farm and how they persist over time. A recent Audubon Toyota TogetherGreen grant recipient, Hintz is currently working on a story building exhibit that will spur conversations about agriculture and watershed protection. The exhibit, funded by Audubon Toyota TogetherGreen, will feature 20 female farmers who have successful businesses, exemplary ecological practices, and play vital civic roles in their communities.

Since the number of female farmers has grown in the past years and is projected to increase in the coming years, I'd love to offer you an interview/profile opportunity with Hintz and her upcoming exhibit. Please let me know if that'd be of interest to you or if you'd like more information.

I have to get all the way to the end of this convoluted paragraph before finding out they'd like an interview done about a project that is not done. I don't know if any local women farmers are involved, which would increase their chances of getting an interview. What I do know is the person assembling the project lives far from the publication to which this release was sent, and I know this release is headed for the trash.

5)

2014 EVENING OF HOPE [BUY YOUR TICKETS](#)

LIVE

BREAKING NEWS

CNN CNN NEWS ANCHOR TO SPEAK AT EVENING OF HOPE

2014 EVENING OF HOPE - 2014 EVENING OF HOPE - 2014 EVENING OF HOPE - 2014 EVENING OF HOPE - 2014 EVENING OF HOPE

This just in... Emmy-winning anchor **Suzanne Malveaux** from **CNN** will be attending the 21st Annual Evening of Hope as a guest speaker. While she's traveled the world and has amazing stories to tell, she'll be here to share a more personal story about ALS.

If you haven't done so already, make your reservations soon. Like today's news, tickets for this March 8th event will be gone before you know it.

For more information, go to Beatahs.org

Saturday
MARCH 8th

*Hyatt Regency
Milwaukee*

[RESERVE A ROOM](#)

As a graphic idea, this is well done. It copies the CNN look and is a clever adaptation of the CNN website. As a press release it fails. Although it mentions the date and place, there is no time, and an editor would have to expend a fair amount of effort following all the links in order to gather simple background information about the organization, its cause, the event, the guest speaker, where people can obtain tickets, and what those tickets will cost. In other words, an editor or reporter would have to write the news release. That won't happen.

6)

HEAD: **THE FOOT---STOMPING MUSICAL REVUE,**

AIN'T MISBEHAVIN',

OPENS MARCH 16 IN THE REP'S STACKNER CABARET!

MILWAUKEE, WI [March 3, 2014] – A Tony Award-winning tour through the legendary Fats Waller songbook, *Ain't Misbehavin'* dives into the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, the golden age of honky-tonk dives, swing music and stride piano players. Considered “a tribute to the timeless appeal of Waller’s music” by *The New York Times*, *Ain't Misbehavin'* includes classic Waller hits like “Loungin’ at the Waldorf” and “I Can’t Give You Anything but Love.” *Ain't Misbehavin'* was conceived by **Murray Horwitz** and **Richard Maltby, Jr.** and will be directed by **Rep Associate Artist Dan Kazemi**, who was the Musical Director of *End of The Rainbow*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Forever Plaid* and *Ragtime* this season at The Rep.

One of the most popular, well-crafted musical revues of all time, *Ain't Misbehavin'* is simply unforgettable and will be performed in the now-signature Rep style, with a group of five “Quadruple Threat” actor/singer/dancer/musicians. The cast features **Britney Coleman, Christopher James Culberson, Kenney M. Green, Bethany Thomas** and **Erin Willis**. *Ain't Misbehavin'* runs in the Stackner Cabaret from **March 14 – May 18** and opens **Sunday, March 16**. The Executive Producers for this production are **Greg and Rhonda Oberland** and the Associate Producers are **David and Camille Kundert**.

What’s good: The dateline because an editor knows exactly where this takes place.

What’s bad: Notice the apparent conflict of dates: the headline says “opens March 16” while the text says it begins March 14 – but opens March 16. The original release ran eight pages, and you had to dig to learn the first two days are previews.

The location is not clearly stated; you have to assemble it from bits of information. All the names in bold face and their credentials get in the way of the essential information of what’s happening and when.

The rest of this press release had too much information. There were extensive biographies of the cast and crew, and every date and time for every performance. Near the bottom was the important summary information of who, what, where, when, why, and at the very bottom was the ticket price and how to buy one. This makes an editor’s job harder, and the risk is that the editor will quickly strip out everything in the middle, including something the writer may have wanted to see in print, in order to create a manageable and concise news item.

7)

**HEAD: "KIDS RUN TO READ"
TAKES LOTS OF LITTLE STEPS FOR LITERACY**

New event for kids will be held at the 2014 Summerfest Rock 'n Sole Run

MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin (March 3, 2014) – Officials from SHARP Literacy Inc. and Summerfest Foundation Inc. announced today that the first annual "Kids Run to Read" fun run will be held at 10:00 am on Saturday, June 14 at Henry Maier Festival Park. The event, which will benefit both organizations, will be held at the 4th annual Summerfest Rock 'n Sole Run presented by BMO Harris Bank. Milwaukee Wave Head Coach Keith Tozer and his wife Kelli are serving as chairpersons of the event.

Children ages 6-12 are invited to participate in the one-mile race. In its inaugural year, the race will be capped at 250 registered participants and will include the following age categories: 6-7 years, 8-9 years and 10-12 years. All young runners will receive a T-shirt, race bib suitable for coloring, race bag filled with goodies, finishing medal, and healthy snack at the finish line. Race bibs will be coded to match the parents of each participant. Although parents will not be permitted to run with their children, they will be encouraged to cheer on their small athletes from the course or greet them at the finish line – the same impressive finish line used by Summerfest Rock 'n Sole Run participants.

Represents a good, concise use of words. In the first paragraph are the date, time, and place, a description of the event, and a mention of the sports coach who is a featured attraction. You also learn this is the inaugural event. The second paragraph has more details. In the third—edited out here—is information about registration.