

June 12, 2014

From Brent Newman, CEO, Grundy County Housing Authority:

“Kudos to Christina Chapman, Editor at the Morris Daily Herald for doing a truly spectacular job at the inaugural Non-Profit Tools for Success convened by the Community Foundation of Grundy County. I've gone to probably at least 497,283 hours of training - seriously - this was among the best I have ever attended. Christina did a GREAT job, and it was terrific to see so many of our non-profit colleagues gathered in such a collegial, informative environment.

In fact, Christina's tips were SO useful, I want to share my notes with you. These notes are provided without any warranty, express or implied, as a courtesy. I expressly disclaim liability for any errors, omissions, inaccuracies, or information which may cause dizziness, nausea, vomiting, or in any way may make your hair hurt.”

DO:

1. Be succinct. Space is limited, especially with the new format of the Morris Daily Herald.
2. Send photos attached to your e-mails, and in .jpg format.
3. Be sure to include the names of the people in the photo you attached to your e-mail. If children are pictured, be sure to include their ages.
4. Be sure to include in the subject line the registration date if you are announcing an event.
5. Send action photos! Posed photos are infinitely less likely to be used.
6. Always give an address for events.
7. Always write in the 3rd person; avoid use of the "I" and "We", except when quoting people.
8. Try to give a new angle to a recurring event. ie - This year ABC Non-Profit will hold its annual fundraiser for the 7,000th time, HOWEVER this year ABC will Blah, Blah, Blah. In the entire history of the event ABC has never Blah, Blah, Blahed, but they decided to do it this year because...
9. Make sure the top three paragraphs of your press release contain the most important information.
10. Make sure the first paragraph explains your event, its location, date, and time.
11. Make sure you write at a 6th grade reading level.

12. Remember you can run advertisement to say thank you, or you may submit a Letter to the Editor (limited to 400 words). Please don't ask the newspaper to run a thank you article for your organization.

13. Send "Stand Alone" photos. Such photos may not merit an entire article, but can have up to 5 sentences explaining their content.

14. Include a telephone number where you can be reached AFTER HOURS!

15. Keep your Facebook page updated! The newspaper often uses FB posts to find out about events in the community.

16. When you make comments from notes you have written at an event, send those notes to the newspaper. Those notes are sources of quotes and will save the paper a ton of time.

17. Remember to submit your press releases as soon as far ahead of time as possible, at least 2 weeks is good. If you have sent the e-mail very far in advance, it's perfectly fine to send a FRIENDLY reminder regarding your submission.

17. REMEMBER: the deadline for publication in the following day newspaper is 8:30 p.m.

#### DON'T:

1. Use special fonts or formatting. Plain text e-mails which can be cut and pasted are the best!

2. Assume people know anything regarding your event, even if you have had it 9,364 times - always include an explanation.

3. Call the paper demanding to know when your article is going to be published. You may, however, feel free to put a paid ad in the newspaper if you need something published on a specific date.