Chapter 3

Getting the Word Out

How do you reach people to let them know about your network and the events you are hosting? You’ll want to develop ways to promote the network itself, including who you are, where and when you meet, and who to contact for more information. Key factors for success are to cultivate relationships with various types of mass media outlets (social media, newspaper, radio, other organizations), know how to structure an effective press release and public service announcement, and develop a variety of marketing tools (such as brochures, social media presence, and email listserv campaigns).

Working with The Media

Cultivating a successful relationship with “The Media” requires that you pitch to what they and their audiences are interested in. First, call your local papers and other media outlets (radio, newspaper, forest landowner organizations) or check their websites to find out in what format they like to receive information, who you should send it to, and what kinds of events they like to promote. Ask local journalists what kinds of events they might like to attend or cover in more detail (participate in and write a story).

Also, try to get the most mileage out of your efforts as possible; for example, publish an article in your own newsletter and also in your local American Tree Farm chapter’s or local Extension Service office’s newsletters. You and others can readily distribute digitally an event announcement you create online (for example, on a website). We will discuss online marketing and social media in further detail later in this chapter.

The Press

Before you send out your first event announcement, you’ll want to think strategically about how and when you want the information to print.

Do you want folks to read about the event before it happens?

You want the newspaper to get the word out to people that your event is happening on a certain date and time. Are there regular supplements that list upcoming events (a harvest guide, a summer guide, an adult learning guide) in which your event could be announced?
**Should you send a press packet in anticipation of reporters attending the event?**

Send a press packet if you want reporters to be there to experience, learn, and write about the event. Think of activities that might be fun for them and interesting to their audience.

**Would you like to promote your network after the event occurs?**

For post-event coverage, typically you’d send the newspaper photos with captions (think of the “big check” photos you’ve seen in the paper, or “plaque” presentation photos). People love to look at photos of other people to see if they know them, and it’s a great way to get people to know about your network.

Or, you might want to “pitch a story” to your local newspaper about your network that’s not about a certain event but is interesting to their audience. Are there writers for local magazines, tabloids, newspapers, or TV stations who would like to cover your work in one of their regular columns or features? Are there local or regional newsletters that might run your story (Extension Service, homeowner association bulletins, Audubon, chamber of commerce, Wild Turkey Federation, etc.)?

**Developing a press release for print media**

Most local and regional newspapers will run critical information for an event in their “Calendar of Events” section. Contact the person in charge of press releases. Ask when he or she needs event information and if the paper requires a specific format. Usually, a press release is sent 4 or more weeks before the event, and the paper runs it 2 to 3 weeks prior.

If you are sending the press release by email, it’s best to avoid mass messages. Instead, address each recipient directly. The subject line of your email should read “Press Release: Title of your Press Release.” Be sure to attach the document and copy the press release into the body of the email.

Use the guide on page 23 to help structure a successful press release. Always remember to proofread for grammar and spelling, and keep the press release to one page in length. If you include photos, attach each individually to the email; and at the bottom of the press release, after the “###,” add the words “Photos Following.” Be sure to include a caption and photo credit for each photo.

You can also find tips online for writing successful press releases: [http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Press-Release](http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Press-Release)
**STANDARD PRESS RELEASE STRUCTURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Standard title:</strong></th>
<th>PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong></td>
<td>Date you send press release.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact information:</strong></td>
<td>Group name and contact information including person to contact, phone number, and email.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Headline:</strong></td>
<td>Attention-grabbing, with a brief summary of the event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtitle:</strong></td>
<td>Briefly summarizes the press release.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First paragraph:</strong></td>
<td>Key information: what, when, where, and why someone would want to come. Should stand alone if the person reads no further.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body:</strong></td>
<td>This is where you present the most important information, including answers to who, what, when, where, and why. If your event requires registration, clearly state this and how people should register. If there is a fee, state that here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion:</strong></td>
<td>Include a brief summary about the network, your mission statement, and some key background information. You may also choose to repeat the contact information here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>###:</strong></td>
<td>Centered in the middle below the last text, add “###” to signify the end of the press release.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Photos:</strong></td>
<td>PhotoRetreat1. Caption: “From left to right: Jane Doe, John Smith.” Photo credit: Joan Jones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See the sample press release on page 25.
Delaware Highlands Conservancy announces Native Plants Walk, June 2

Hawley, PA and Bethel, NY - The Delaware Highlands Conservancy, the Pike County Scenic and Rural Character Preservation Program, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA-DCNR), and the U.S. Forest Service at Grey Towers are offering a free Native Plants Walk from 9 am to noon, Saturday, June 2, 2012 at the Camp Speers-Eljabar YMCA in Dingmans Ferry, PA. Renowned author and botanist Dr. Ann Rhoads will lead the walk and answer questions about the plants found in a wetland community.

The walk will be within the 450-acre portion of the Camp Speers-Eljabar YMCA property, recently protected with a conservation easement funded by the Pike County Scenic Rural Character Preservation Program and PA-DCNR.

Rhoads’ books include “The Plants of Pennsylvania,” “The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania,” “Trees of Pennsylvania,” and, most recently, “Aquatic Plants of Pennsylvania.” Rhoads was the director of botany for Morris Arboretum and taught botany at the University of Pennsylvania.

This walk is open to the public, but prior registration is requested. To reserve your space and receive directions, call the Delaware Highlands Conservancy office at 570-226-3164 or email info@delawarehighlands.org.

###

PHOTO FOLLOWING:

Photo Description: Dr. Ann Rhoads (far right) with a group of interested participants on the 2011 Native Plants Walk. Photo by Barbara Yeaman.
**Radio and television**

Send your announcements to radio or television programs that fit with your mission. What regular local programs might be interested in covering your work? Is there a segment on conservation? A regular outdoor program? (By the way, you can reuse your video and radio spots on your website, on your computer at events, etc.)

**Developing a public service announcement for radio**

Contact the person in charge of public service announcements (PSA) at the radio or TV station. Ask when he or she needs event information from your group and if the station requires a specific format. Most often, a station won’t charge to promote events that are free and are offered by a nonprofit group—but it’s always best to ask. Again, if you can cultivate a relationship with local radio and TV stations before sending them your information, you’ll know that you’re sending what they want, when they want it.

The key to developing a PSA is to keep it short (less than 100 words), easy to read (use a larger font), and no more than 30 seconds long. The announcer will read exactly what you write, so read it aloud before you send it and time yourself. Feel free to add more detail below the PSA or add photos, but keep the body of the PSA big, bold, clear, and short. Start with your main message in case they only have time to read half of what you include.

**Standard public service announcement structure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard title:</th>
<th>PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>Date of public service announcement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact information:</td>
<td>Group name and contact information including person to contact, phone number, and email.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headline:</td>
<td>Attention-grabbing, with a brief summary of the event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body:</td>
<td>This is the part of the PSA that will be read on the air. Include the date and time of the event and any other information to help people find out more, such as a web address or telephone number. Include key information on what, when, where, and why someone would want to come. This key information should stand alone if the announcer reads no further. Remember: short and easy to read in 30 seconds or less.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion:</td>
<td>Include a brief summary about the network, your mission statement, and some key background information. You may also choose to repeat the contact information here.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See the sample PSA on page 28.
STANDARD PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT (PSA)

Standard title: ________________________________________________________________

Date: ______________________________________________________________________

Contact information: __________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Headline: ___________________________________________________________________

Body: ______________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Conclusion: ________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT October 2011
For Immediate Release
Contact: Jake Hendee 570-226-3164

WILDLIFE AND THE FOREST ECOSYSTEM FIELD DAY

Learn how you can manage your woodlot for songbirds, wild turkey, ruffed grouse, white-tailed deer and other wildlife. A “Wildlife and the Forest Ecosystem” field day will be held on Friday, October 21 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Promised Land State Park Headquarters at 100 Lower Lake Road, Greentown, PA.

The workshop is sponsored by the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, Pike County Community Planning, and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

This event is open to the general public. Registration is required along with a $5 registration fee. For information and registration call the Delaware Highlands Conservancy at 570-226-3164 or e-mail info@delawarehighlands.org.
Creating a sense of community

How do you bring people in so they feel like they belong to your community and can stay up to date even if they are not attending face-to-face sessions all the time? If everyone in the group wears the same T-shirt at an event, it shows you are united and helps people discover and recognize their connectivity. Social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) allow many people to follow activities, “monitor” what’s going on, share their responses, and stay connected, even from home.

Newsletters give updates, but they are sent out less frequently than social media updates, and are limited in how they engage people; you can’t hold a discussion with a newsletter, but you can with an article posted on Facebook! Consider what information your community needs as well as how comfortable community members are with online social media when you decide what communication tools you’ll use.

Email

Compiling your list of email contacts and sending group emails announcing events and distributing relevant information is a powerful and efficient way to communicate within the group. Email has the added feature of allowing interaction and discussion threads. There is a great example of an email thread regarding chainsaw use on the Women Owning Woodlands national website:
http://womenowningwoodlands.net/content/oregon-wownet-email-chain-preferred-chainsaws

There is a risk that some members of the group might not appreciate receiving too many emails, so you will want to be selective, or wait and send several announcements in one email. For the Oregon WOWnet, for example, we aim to send one email every one to two weeks that lists several upcoming events and links to interesting news and other stories. You will want to use a listserv tool or service that prevents your emails from being put in the receiver’s spam folder (and have the added bonus of providing analytics and crisp, attractive formatting.)

Social media

Social media, when used correctly, can be a helpful tool for cultivating community online. Consider where your participants are currently spending their time online to help you decide which social media tools (such as Facebook, Pinterest, and Twitter) are right for your group. It is always best to meet people where they are already most comfortable.

You can use social media a number of ways to create an online center for information and resources for your group. Below, we explore two tools’ features and capacity for cultivating community.

Facebook

What it is

Most individual Facebook connections are made based on existing relationships among family, friends, and professional networks. Subscribers are people who have opted to “like” a page.

What it can do

Business pages connect marketers and community organizers based on their shared interests. Group pages offer another way for woodland networks or
communities to keep in touch and share resources, such as links to interesting articles, photos, and upcoming events. Group pages can be set up with either public or private settings.

Delving deeper

“Facebook business pages” rely on page administrators to share content that subscribers may read and respond to in their news feed. The good news is that you can have several page administrators, which lessens the burden on any one person to post and monitor the page. For example, the Women Owning Woodlands Network Facebook page currently has five page administrators who take turns posting and sharing content, responding to comments, and keeping the page relevant.

It’s important that page administrators pay attention to the timing and content of their posts. Facebook uses an algorithm (a fancy word for formula) that gives preference to certain types of content, and a post’s visibility increases with user engagement. In other words, page subscribers are more likely to see a post that has been liked, commented on, and shared. And while you want users to comment, like, or share posts on your page, as an administrator you can customize settings to include more or less capacity for users to post content directly to the wall. (This might only be necessary if you get inappropriate postings. This has not been much of an issue for woodland network groups; it is more of an issue for large businesses.)

“Facebook Events” offers another way for business page administrators and individuals to alert their community of an upcoming occasion. Events may be field trips or in-person meetings, or “virtual meetings” held via the internet. To make “Events” visible, it helps to invite individuals who like your page.

“Facebook groups” enable a page administrator to invite members, who are then automatically subscribed to the group’s discussion. Anyone can post content to the group, and all of that content is visible to group participants. Participants receive notification when someone adds content to the group. Users may easily request to join a group, opt out of a group, or both; approval to join is dependent upon the group page administrator.

Here are some tips and recommendations:

- With others in your network steering committee, determine whether a “page” or “group” is the best approach for your purpose.
- Commit to posting content regularly and moderating the conversation.
- Post questions to foster conversation.
- Invite people to events using Facebook, and encourage them to respond and invite others.
- Include many photos in your content mix. They perform best with Facebook’s algorithm to gain visibility.
- Add a Facebook link to your email signature.
• Share the link in e-newsletters.
• Encourage people to “Like” you on Facebook.
• Business page administrators should “like” partner organizations and encourage the same from them for optimal visibility.

You can find much more “getting started” information from Facebook online at http://www.facebook.com/help.

Twitter

**What it is**

Twitter is a tool called a “microblog.” It is for sending very short messages—posts (called “tweets”) are limited to 140 characters. They also often include links to photos, stories on websites, blogs, and digital news services. Twitter users may follow any public account—they do not have to request a friendship or connection.

**What it can do**

Some people use Twitter to communicate with their friends or spread local news. Some who have many “followers” use it as a research tool to send out questions to their community. For example, let’s say you are in the market for a new chainsaw. You could send out a tweet (and post this question to Facebook, for that matter) asking about favorite saws, experience with particular brands, and recommended bar length. This gathering of information from your community’s knowledge and experience is called “crowdsourcing.” Some people use Twitter to let their community know about products and events. Others choose not to send out information. Instead, they use Twitter just to listen to (“follow”) tweets that are useful to them.

**Delving deeper**

What to tweet? Consider your community: What are they interested in? What tone do you all use when you talk to each other? It’s important to put some personality into your tweets as well as factual, interesting content and links to more information. An optimal mix of tweets includes a variety of content, lots of links, and a consistent voice. Sending the same messages over and over does not perform well on Twitter. Connecting your purpose for using Twitter with the interests of the people in your network builds trust and a community of followers.

“Twitter Lists” offers a way to create a list of people who are interested in a specific topic. While there are public and private listing options, we recommend making them public so that more people can subscribe to the list. This is a great way for Twitter users to find information on their topic without having to follow many individual users. A good list can increase the visibility of your own account (as the creator) as well as provide a valuable resource to others.
Here are some tips and recommendations:

- Set up your account using your full name, an easily recognizable account name, a photo, and a biography with a link to more information.
- Include links and photos in most of your tweets.
- Follow others who share your interests. Don’t be shy.
- Consider building a “Twitter List” to connect those who share your passion.
- Add a Twitter link to your email signature.
- Share the link in e-newsletters.
- Encourage people to “follow” you on Twitter.

You can find many online and community courses to increase your comfort level and experience with the various social media tools.

**Website**

You can rely on a website to contain information about your group that doesn’t need to be updated often, including your mission statement, when and where you typically meet, and how to contact the group. Websites are a fairly high-overhead endeavor and almost always rely on a technologically savvy and enthusiastic volunteer for a professional and well-maintained product. If you have neither funding nor a volunteer but would like a web presence, ask other local organizations if they would host a page for you.

**Other materials**

It’s nice to have a toolkit of pieces you can use to describe your group and your work to potential new members, legislative officials, funders, the media, forestry and natural resources professionals, potential presenters, etc. Examples of these materials could include:

- Brochure and a separate “Events” list that can be updated regularly and inserted in the brochure. People can post the “Events” list on their fridge.
- Newsletters

**Assess the need**

As your group grows, you can monitor its needs and what makes sense from a marketing perspective. You may just start out by promoting programs through the press, other like-minded organizations, or other easy-to-find means and get a great turnout. To keep the momentum going, consider your time and technical and financial resources, and look into adding pieces to your marketing toolkit (for example, a brochure or a Facebook page). It all depends on how you and your group would like others to learn about you and participate in your activities.
Interpreting your Timber Cruise  
Hyla Woods, Timber, OR  
January 21, 9 am - 12 pm

DETAILS
30151 NW Timber Rd, Timber, OR  
Hyla Woods – owned by Pam and Peter Hayes  
Directions: Hwy 26 to Timber Junction; turn South on Timber Rd. Go approx. 1.7 miles and turn into driveway on right (just past cedar fence).

RSVP:  
(541) 766-6750 or chrissy.lucas@oregonstate.edu  
Info: womenowningwoodlands.com

AGENDA
We will gather in the cabin at Hyla Woods to learn how to understand what a cruise report tells you about your timber. We will go through what the various units, numbers and abbreviations on a timber cruise mean. If you have a cruise report from your own property, bring it with you to work with. We will also talk about when is the right time to have a timber cruise done, and options for updating an old one. Time and weather permitting, we will tour Hyla Woods and see some of the interesting projects that the Hayes family & friends have underway! If you have time, bring a lunch and we will continue the conversation after noon.

Consider Carpooling! Send an email to the WOWnet listserv or post on the WOWnet Facebook page and see who can join you!  
https://www.facebook.com/orwownet  
wownet@lists.oregonstate.edu

Women Owning Woodlands Network was formed by Oregon State University Extension Service and women woodland owners who wanted to:  

• Recognize the growing number of women taking a wide array of active woodland management roles.  
• Support and increase women’s access to forestry-related information and encouraging communication through state and local networks.  
• Raise basic forestry and decision-making skills through hands-on activities.
Oregon WOWnet session on cultivating shiitake mushrooms.

Photo by Amy Grotta, © Oregon State University