



Barb Loweman | leading her community to better circumstances

Altrusa International Media Guide 2012-2013

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Altrusans are very special people.

They care deeply about their communities, their countries, their world, and their fellow human beings. They strive to improve things and solve problems everywhere, working on community projects involving children, students, and senior citizens. People all over the world have been helped because caring Altrusans were there.

Our public image should be at the top of the list, right? So why isn't that the case? Because Altrusans, by and large, are modest people doing good things without thought of personal gain. While modesty may be a virtue, we are losing opportunities to give even more needed services — and do them on a larger scale with larger groups.



In today's world, "Getting the word out" about who we are and what we do is an absolute must! For Altrusa this should not be difficult! Our organization is made up of the leaders in our communities who are continually accomplishing worthwhile goals. Shine the spotlight on ourselves. Think of Public

Relations as being just as important as anything else we do as a club. Blow your own horn - not to be patted on the back or to be glorified, but to keep the name "ALTRUSA" in the public eye.



How many times have you heard someone say "Altrusa? What's Altrusa?" Should anyone still be saying that now as we celebrate so many years of service?

When members ask, "Well, what can I do?" pull out this Media Guide as a starting point. Use it as a resource to assist you in doing a fabulous job of making your Altrusa club well known in your community!

Chapter One: **YOU Are Public Relations!**

Within the community **you** are the Public Relations team of Altrusa. Your club, and what it does, your members, and who they are, are what matter the most to the people to whom you provide service.

Be sure the word gets out — both before you present a fundraising event to generate interest and after a project is completed to promote what has been accomplished. It can lead to future information about Altrusa in every news release. Wouldn't it be great if everyone said, *"Altrusa? Oh, I heard about Altrusa on the radio or television or read about them in the paper."* or *"Aren't you the group who did the terrific job of opening a home for homeless teens?"* Instead of *"Altrusa? What is Altrusa?"*



Spread the word on everything you do, every way you can. Don't be humble! Use newspapers - daily, weekly, supermarket sheets, whatever. Remember local radio stations and cable TV stations can give you free coverage in the form of PSAs, Public Service Announcements. Have your president or chairman available for interviews for print or broadcast media. Make it your business to know what programs exist where this is possible. Never miss an opportunity to include

information about Altrusa when promoting a particular project. Enter the 21st century. Use your fax, email, online computer capabilities (such as your club website, Facebook page or Twitter), and every cutting edge communication tool you have access to. Don't overlook the simple things! Talk about Altrusa activities to your friends. Not only may it lead to new members, it will generate support for a project when you need it.

It's easier than you thought it was, isn't it? You may come up with even more ideas. Please send them to other clubs. If you do, we can pass them along to others. After all, we're proud to be Altrusans, so let's tell the world!

Public Relations consists of presenting an image to the public of who and what you are.

Much has been written about the use and process of public relations such as:

- ❖ Informative member newsletter
- ❖ Effective use of media - local newspapers, radio, television - advertising programs, fundraisers and club activities
- ❖ Other opportunities and methods for community recognition/acknowledgement



Remember that **YOU** are the best
PUBLIC RELATIONS a club can have.

- ❖ Do you wear your pin at every Altrusa meeting and function?
- ❖ Do you wear your pin at work? (This is a very good way to solicit members.)
- ❖ Do you proudly display your membership certificate on the wall of your office?
- ❖ Is your Altrusa newsletter available in your office or other public places to

provide information on your club to your friends and associates?

- ❖ Do you talk with your friends and others you come in contact with regarding your club, your projects, and the contacts you have made?

What you say, what you do, and how you conduct yourself reflects on your individual club and on the Altrusa organization as a whole. **BE PROUD TO BE AN ALTRUSAN.**



ELEVATOR SPEECH

On the tips of everyone's tongue should be the same, clear, uniform message, in answer to the commonly asked questions –

“WHO IS ALTRUSA?”

“Altrusa is an international non-profit organization, making our local communities better through leadership, partnership, and service. We are civic-minded people who strive to create better communities worldwide.”

“WHAT DOES ALTRUSA DO?”

“Giving over 1 million volunteer hours annually throughout countries spanning the globe, our focus is literacy along with specific projects unique to individual communities.”

After giving this message, further dialogue should illustrate individual club achievements and activities in the local community.

KEY POINTS FOR INCLUSION IN A POSITIONING STATEMENT, MEDIA RESPONSE, ETC.

- ✓ *Altrusa – Leading to a Better Community* (this is our tagline)
- ✓ Leadership and service in action in local communities spanning the globe.
- ✓ Literacy as an area of focus, with specific projects unique to individual clubs.
- ✓ Personal growth of members with many opportunities for leadership skills development

PSA (PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT):

With locations in countries worldwide, Altrusa is made up of civic-minded members who find great joy in enhancing the lives of others. With an area of focus on literacy, a variety of additional needs are met as specific to their local communities. We welcome the involvement of new members who want to advance their skills, meet new friends, volunteer alongside community leaders, or simply want to add meaningful new experiences to their lives. Contact us to guide you in the process of becoming an Altrusa leader.

Chapter Two: **Convincing Newspapers to Print Your News**

GIVE YOUR STORY A LOCAL ANGLE

It may take several press releases to different papers to capture this angle. For Example, if you are doing a literacy project — include a note about how many illiterate people there are in your county.

Hint: *Do not email unless this is the preferred way the editor wants to receive information.*

Have a “Go-to-Person” who is the club press contact. Nothing beats walking the article in personally.

The more you follow up, the greater the chance of the article being picked up. After submitting an article, call the editor to see if the article was received, and if not, re-submit. You might want to offer exclusivity of coverage of 3 to 5 days for a project of general interest.

Divide press prospects into three groups: prime prospects, smaller prospects and others. Call the smaller prospects first to practice your presentation. Next, call the prime prospect. Last, call others, especially if you can tell them one of the bigger publications has deemed this press release newsworthy.

Make use of other local publications. For instance, if you have a project about literacy, contact other organizations who might be interested in the same thing. In this example, send a release to your local libraries to post or put in a newsletter, to the board of education, for their newsletter, and to your local PTA. Church newsletters are a very good way to talk up your project or fundraiser. Some large companies have newsletters and might be

interested in what you are doing.

FIND A HOOK

Snare your audience’s attention by finding a hook. A hook is any new information about a club activity, stated in a catchy way.



Include some general background about Altrusa (and a link to your club website) whenever an article is submitted. You should present your main information first, and then add a paragraph about what Altrusa is. Whether this last gets included in the final publication isn't as important as letting the editor know more about who Altrusa is. (See sample Public Service Announcements at the end of this guide).

SUBMITTING PHOTOS TO THE MEDIA

Newspapers prefer photos of people doing things, not just lined up smiling at the camera. They like an “unposed” look. So try to take pictures of members rolling dough, sorting books, making signs for an event, etc. and the likelihood of having them printed will be much greater.

You can submit either black and white or color photos to the media. When submitting printed photos, these are not returned to you unless you specifically request it. If you want it returned be sure to put full address and identification information on the back of the

photograph.

Photos with not much contrast will not reproduce very well, so try to use ones with some “snap”.

All photographs need a caption. Every caption tells the story of the photograph. When writing a caption, start with a “kicker” or introductory phrase to get the reader’s attention. The first sentence should tell what is happening in the photograph, and it should contain a verb.

Everyone in the photograph should be identified by name. Today’s readers are impatient and want to read in short bursts rather than long articles.



Altrusans made over 1,500 apple dumplings during the weeks leading up to Applefest. The money raised from the sale of the dumplings provides shoes for school-age kids who do not have warm footwear to wear to school. Assisting with this worthwhile project were volunteers from surrounding Altrusa clubs, Kohl’s employees and others.

Chapter Three: **Working with Radio and TV**

SOUND PRAISE FOR RADIO

Did you know that the “average person” spends almost five hours a day reading, listening to, and watching various media? 85% of this time is spent on “ear media”, such as radio and TV; 15% of time is spent with “eye media”, such as newspapers and magazines.

Radio is an “ear medium” and boasts the fastest rate of return between hearing the message and responding to it. When considering radio, don’t forget stations in larger cities around your town, they often have loyal listeners in your community!



Radio offers a wide range of radio formats each catering to a specific segment of the population. And radio shows are usually in need of interesting, informative guests. If you can communicate your knowledge in a clear, informative and enjoyable way, you are desirable to them.

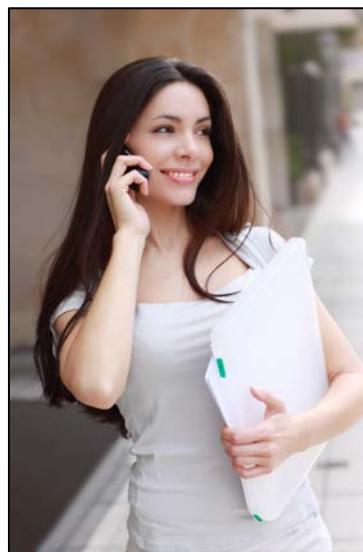
Surveys show that 30% of all radio/TV producers are interested in those who speak on topical issues. Think about what your club does that might fit into that category. Ideas might revolve around a current fad, or an event (like prom or graduation) that happens every year.

THE PITCH

When approaching, get to know the audience and demographics you are trying to influence. Ask the Sales/Marketing department for a media kit. This usually gives breakdowns on the demographics of their listeners such as age, income level, family and economic status.

For example, when wanting to ask for donations for an event, you might well want to use a different station than the one used to reach the people you want to serve.

After analyzing the audience and deciding on an approach, call the producer or host/hostess of the show. **BE BRIEF.** Identify yourself immediately. State the reason you are calling. Give reasons why you think you should be on their show (and don’t argue if they say “no”). Leave contact information and thank them for their time. Go on to your next call.



After all this, you won't just get booked on the phone. They will usually want you to send them a media kit. This should include:

- ❖ Press release
- ❖ History of your club
- ❖ Your personal biography
- ❖ Testimonials/endorsements
- ❖ Reprints of articles about your club
- ❖ Altrusa International brochure with club insert
- ❖ An audio or video tape about your club or event
- ❖ Tip Sheet (this is a list of 15-20 questions your host/hostess might want to ask you about your topic).



Be familiar with the show on which you want to appear. Know the hosts' name and manner of interviewing. Know the format of the show. Know the likes and dislikes of the interviewer. If this is a call-in type format, have 3 or 4 Altrusans ready to call in with pre-arranged questions.

Be ready to answer questions in short snippets, so they can be slipped into the

conversation. Take prepared notes so you don't have to remember statistics under pressure. Use index cards for these notes as paper can rustle.

Give something away free. This might be tickets to your event, or if you make apple dumplings, they can get 2 apple dumplings for free — or whatever, but it's best if the give-away is somehow tied to your event.

Chapter Four: Club Newsletters That Get Read

Producing your Altrusa club's newsletter can be rewarding and challenging. Although the primary aim is to communicate club news to members, it can also recognize members and club achievements, educate and motivate your members. How can you, as an editor, achieve these goals and also make your newsletter sparkle with originality? Here are some easy steps toward starting or improving your Altrusa club's newsletter.



CALENDAR OR LIST OF EVENTS:

One of the primary purposes of a newsletter is to generate interest and participation in the activities of the local club. A calendar can easily be clipped and hung on the refrigerator (a place of honor in most homes). It serves as a tickler to remind members of upcoming events. The grid format is recommended because it is visual and easy to read. Members' birthdays, special holidays, etc. may also be used to flesh-out the material.

MAKE YOUR PUBLICATION LOOK INTERESTING

Visual appeal is extremely important. An attention-grabbing layout is far more likely to attract readers than long columns of uninterrupted type. Experiment with bold designs, and - if possible - use color. Don't cram too much information into the

nameplate or on the front page. The name, a subtitle that clarifies the topic or audience, the name of your local club, number and volume number are sufficient. Use bold headlines for the lead article. Use the daily newspaper as a layout guide to make sure the publication's pages look newsy.

Add photographs whenever possible to add interest to the pages.

Keep the design clean, inviting, and easy to read.

Dividing your publication into departments creates a sense of continuity and ensures that the publication regularly covers topics of importance within the organization. Devoting a column in each issue to a specific project or committee guarantees equal coverage to various groups within the club. When cleverly designed, departments also add to a publication's visual appeal.



VARY THE TYPE:

Use Franklin Gothic (easily downloadable for free) – Demi for headlines in all caps, Franklin Gothic Book for the body. This single font can be varied for interest by changing the size, the color, boxing it with a different colored background, italicizing, etc.

SNAPPY HEADLINES:

Newsletter editors need to bear in mind that people have a short attention span when it comes to reading material. Writers have a few short seconds to grab the reader's attention with their headlines. While some headlines, like **"FREE MONEY"** draw the reader into the copy following, others are dull and do not entice the reader into reading further.

As of this printing, a free online headline analyzer (headline must contain at least 4 words) can be found at www.aminstitute.com/headline/index.htm

The 6 most influential words for print are:

FREE (as noted above)
NEW
AMAZING
NOW
HOW TO
EASY

Using any of these 6 in a headline increases the likelihood that the article will be read.

COLUMN WIDTH:

A 2 ½" width should be the maximum size for a single newsletter column. Anything beyond that width is not reader-friendly and creates eyestrain (unless the point size of the type is exceptionally large). When a reader has to draw their eyes along six inches to read the text, then back six inches to the next line, then proceed another six inches – well, you get the picture. By the time you read a half page of copy, your eyes are exhausted because they've had to scan almost 24 feet at a close range. The reader may be inclined to put the newsletter down, not because it's boring, but because the eyes are too tired to go on reading. Note: Regarding online newsletters, horizontal presentation is often better than column spacing.



ADVERTISING:

Advertising is an excellent practice when budgets are tight. This revenue can certainly be used to improve the quality and appearance of a newsletter, not to mention offsetting postage costs. A full year of issues could be sold as a one package deal – and shouldn't be a tough sell. Most members are a desirable target customer group from a marketing standpoint.

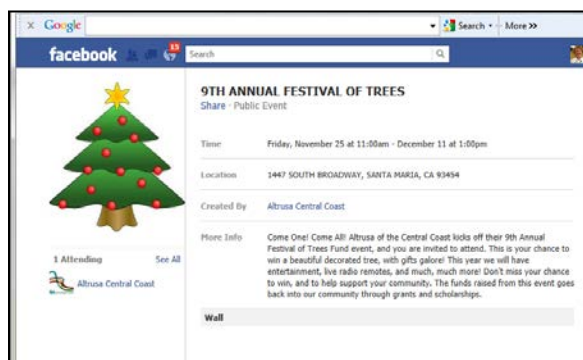
Chapter Five: Use Facebook to Advertise Your Events

Are you involved with an event? This event could be either a service project or a fundraiser. Why not use Facebook to promote the event?

First, create a Facebook page for your club.



Next, create an event, and a page under the club page just for the event.



Take the time to invite as many friends as possible to your event. When a friend says they plan to attend, that information shows up in their news feeds for *their* friends to see. This

multiplies the effect of your announcement by the number of friends your friends have.

Many other Facebook pages that are in some way related to your event (libraries, schools and bookstores, if your event is literacy for example) love to have user-generated content (UGC) posted to their walls. Post your event in these related pages to help increase exposure.

Spend a few minutes each day updating and engaging with folks on related pages. Most pages want others to share their info if it pertains to their target market. Don't post on someone's wall simply to self-promote – greatly frowned upon in the social community. Facebook and social media are about creating relationships, with networking as a by-product of a successful relationship. However you can promote a fun event that their target market might find fun and interesting, which is now adding value.

Post comments, photos and videos. Do this pre-event and post-event.

The net results? A very active page that will grow in followers by leaps and bounds!


Cost? The time, energy, and love of committed committee people.



Chapter Six: Use LinkedIn to Reach Potential Members

The use and interaction of the linked groups, found in LinkedIn, is a fun and exciting piece of social networking. Where else can you freely interact with an audience of your peers or potential members all looking to bounce ideas off of each other? In an ever increasing virtual world, meaningful interaction can be had through groups and discussions consisting of your potential members.

LinkedIn is directed more at professional users than is, say, facebook. LinkedIn provides excellent tools for learning how to use their tools: <http://learn.linkedin.com>

On Altrusa's home page, one of the icons you will see is for LinkedIn.com 

With LinkedIn you can never tell how a discussion will grow so participating in several at one time is a good idea. Some discussions die on the vine while others spread like wildfire so it's important that you participate in several discussions in several groups if you want to

reach the most people. With social media group discussions you must jump in head first. Don't be afraid of saying the wrong thing. Everything in the discussion is personal opinions backed up (hopefully) by statistics and facts you find and read. If you agree with a post say so. If not, voice your dissent in a friendly manner.

Use discussions to ask questions of Altrusans from around the world about problems, ideas they may have, etc.

One last bit of advice. You should try interacting in the groups prior to posting a question of your own. It helps to establish that you can add value to the conversation. Once established, you'll find others will want to read what you write and participate in discussions that you start. Thus begins the interaction cycle which will eventually lead to actual members and valuable professional connections.

Chapter Seven: **8 Reasons to have an Altrusa Website**



- ❖ A Web presence is a great way to promote your organization and to inform potential members or supporters about your organization's services and fundraisers.
- ❖ Educate visitors - Include articles on the history and purpose of Altrusa.
- ❖ Shows Leadership – potential members want to know they are joining a “going somewhere” organization, and that includes going somewhere technologically.
- ❖ Interact with members – Make it a place members can get current information.
- ❖ Provides Instant Legitimacy – potential members want to know that this organization is a legitimate, well-organized group.
- ❖ Use surveys to learn what people are interested in when visiting your site.
- ❖ Level the Playing Field - Having an online presence will enable you to compete with much larger and better-capitalized service organizations.
- ❖ People Expect It - In today's world, the Internet is the fastest growing source for information. Without a web presence, your club risks never being found by prospective members.

Now Let's get Started!

- ❖ use International's Sitefinity resource, which is hosted by International. Get the current pricing structure from International for costs.
- ❖ use a District provider, under International's Sitefinity, if your district acts as webmaster for all clubs in the district
- ❖ have a knowledgeable member make a free website with www.Weebly.com or another free provider so long as you follow the style of the brand guidelines.
- ❖ pay a local pro to set up - might be pricey.

Chapter Eight: QR Codes – What ARE They?

What is a QR Code?

Quick Response Codes or QR codes are the next generation of bar codes. Where bar codes are one dimensional, QR codes are 2 dimensional and can hold more information. These codes can be read with a smart phone that has a QR code reader installed on it.

What do they do?

A QR code is a way to share information like locations, messages, contact information, web links, youtube video's, phone number, images or just about anything via mobile devices.



Why should I use QR codes?

A QR code helps increase your presence on mobile devices by promoting your website, special event, blog, article, facebook or other online social networking sites, etc. In many ways it also acts like a business card. With QR codes, it simply means that the line between being offline and online is now blurred. With a smart phone you can connect to anything that is online, no matter where you go via a QR code.

You can scan these barcodes with your smart phone, to get more information about what interests you. Maybe you see an event flyer or

article that has a QR code on it. If you scan the code, you can get all the information including things like who, what, when, why and where. It's just like if you have a bottle of wine at a restaurant that you really like, you can scan the code for more information and store it on your phone. When you get home, you will have all of the information you need to recommend it or even buy it.

Source: Local Marketing RoadMap by Terri Dieckhaus

Below is an actual example for why we need to shorten the URL or web link for a QR code. The below example is a club with club pages under district twelve:

Full URL:

<http://districttwelve.altrusa.org/District-Clubs/District-Twelve-Washington/Centralia-Chehalis-Washington/Centralia-Chehalis-Club-News.aspx>

Shortened URL using goo.gl:

<http://goo.gl/N4Czw>

Some good video Training for QR Codes

3 Best Practices for Creating Reliable QR Codes:

<http://youtu.be/uQj-kHsK7XQ>

How to create QR Codes and share them:

<http://youtu.be/I30DYPQ66TY>

How to make QR Codes

<http://youtu.be/3wpnrf6Dg6k>

Chapter Nine: Taking Great Photographs

All information is more interesting when photographs are attached. Almost everyone today owns a digital camera or a phone with a camera. Dropping digital pictures into newsletters is as easy as point, shoot, and download to cut and paste.

When holding an event, contact the media first, advising them of the event. They may send a photographer. If they do, don't tell him/her what to do — just cooperate. If one of your members is taking pictures, be sure you provide left to right identification. Use proper names, not nicknames. Make sure all members are dressed appropriately for the event and, if posters/banners are available, they should be prominently placed to be seen in the picture.

Be sure to get photo release forms signed. For your club members, a good idea is to have them sign a release that can be used for any event. Some facilities, such as nursing homes, have releases that all residents sign when checking in. Frequently school performing groups also have general releases. Make sure you check — don't just assume. Photo releases are on the International website and can be downloaded and printed to have handy when doing special events.

If you are using general photography in a publication, select photographs that convey our three brand drivers: Clarity, Flexibility, and Inclusion. Ask yourself these questions: Is it **clear** what is going on in the photo? Is it **inclusive** of our membership? Can it be used in a variety of pieces (this is the **flexibility** component)? When selecting photographs from events held in your club, district or at the

International level, try to select pictures that adhere to the following guidelines.

Avoid common group photo mistakes and problems:

- ❖ One or more subjects always seem to be looking away or in different directions
- ❖ Subject blinking
- ❖ A key person is missing from the photo
- ❖ Different moods in the group; some smiling, some serious, some playing up to the camera, etc.
- ❖ The group being too close/too far away, or not fitting into the frame.



GET IN CLOSE

Try to get in as close as you can to the group you are photographing. The closer you can get the more detail you'll have in their faces—something that really lifts a shot.





POSE THE GROUP

In most cases your group will pose themselves pretty naturally, but there are other things you can do to add to the photo's composition.

If the event is centered on one or two people, such as a membership induction or an anniversary, make them the central point by putting them in the middle of the group. You can add variations to your shots by having everyone look at the camera, then everyone look at the person/couple.

Tell everyone to raise his or her chins a little. They will thank you later when they see the shot without any double chins!

CONSIDER THE LIGHT

In order to get good detail in your subjects, you will need to have sufficient light. Consider using a flash if the lighting is marginal and you are close enough for it to take effect, especially if the main source of light is coming from behind the group.

If it is a bright sunny day and the sun is low in the sky try not to position the sun directly behind you or you'll end up with a collection of squinting faces in your shot. On the other hand do NOT shoot into or even close to the sun!

PREPARE

People don't like to be kept waiting, so think ahead about some of the following aspects of your photo:

- ❖ Scope out the location of your shot beforehand.
- ❖ Think ahead about how you will pose people, and frame your shot.
- ❖ All heads clear and in view.
- ❖ Make sure everyone you want in the shot is notified a few minutes ahead of time
- ❖ Make sure your camera is on, has charged batteries, and is on the setting for group or landscape, with red eye eliminated.

LOCATION

The setting for your group shot can give the photo context. For example a shot of club members in front of a completed community project means more than a shot of them in front of a brick wall. Another reason for choosing locations carefully is that it should not have distractions that will take away from the photo.

Avoid setting up a group shot directly in front of a window where your flash might reflect back in a way that destroys your shot.

One of the best ways to achieve successful photos is to take multiple shots quickly. Switch your camera to continuous shooting mode when taking group shots and shoot in short bursts. You will find that often the first shot will not be good but the 2nd or 3rd one will look more relaxed and generally better.

Also, shoot some frames before everyone is ready. Sometimes the organization of a group shot can be quite comical, with people telling each other where to go and jostling for position.

Also mix up the framing of your shots a little if possible by taking some shots that are wide focal length and some that are more tightly framed.

TAKE CONTROL

Do not be afraid to take control of the subjects. It is important that you keep talking to the group, let them know what you want them to do, motivate them to smile, tell them that they look great and communicate how much longer you will need them.

Also important is to give your subjects a reason to pose for the photograph. For example, at a District Conference you might motivate people to pose by saying “The district governor has asked me to get some group shots” or at a community event “Let’s take a group photo to celebrate our accomplishments”.

Another very useful line to use with groups is “If you can see the camera lens, it can see you”. This one is key if you want to be able to see each person’s face in the shot. A good place for subjects to look is right over the photographer’s head. This insures that they are looking straight out, at the camera but not into it.

If there are more photographers than just you then wait until others have finished their shots and then get the attention of the full group. Otherwise you will have everyone looking in different directions.

Of course you don’t want to be a dictator when posing your group or you could end up with lots of group shots of very angry people

LARGE GROUPS

Large groups can be very difficult to photograph as even with staggering and elevating, you may end up being a long way back to fit everyone into the shot.

One solution is to find a way to elevate your position as a photographer. When photographing an event with a large number of attendees and the organizer wants one big group shot, arrange for a ladder to be present to take a shot looking down on the group. In doing this you can fit a lot more people in and still remain quite close to the group (you end up with a shot with lots of faces in focus and fewer bodies). It also gives an interesting perspective to your shots, especially if you have a wide focal length.

SMILE

Yes, YOU should smile! There is nothing worse than a grumpy, stressed-out photographer. Have fun and enjoy the process of getting your shots and you’ll find the group will too.

RECOMMENDED SIZES FOR POSTING PHOTOS ON WEBPAGES

If you have a web person posting photos on your website, recommended sizes for thumbnails are 176 by 132 pixels at 72 dpi. For full-size photos, 2.5 by 3.5 inches at 72 dpi. For posting on the Sitefinity sites under International, be sure to check size requirements first. These are guidelines, you may have to adjust the photos up or down in size to make the photos appear consistent and so that important features are not cropped out.

Chapter Ten: **18 Great PR/Image Building Ideas**

Image building comes at all levels of our organization. However, what is done at the club or grassroots level is usually the most productive.

- ❖ Put up flyers and posters on kiosks, bank bulletin boards, community bulletin boards, town halls, etc. for any event you are having. Have members put them up in their places of work or business.
- ❖ Make up a one-page newsletter for distribution to your community explaining your club's mission and activities. Deliver these to libraries, municipal buildings, doctors' offices, garden clubs, craft centers, fitness clubs, grocery stores, banks, etc. Have members put them out at in their place of work or business.
- ❖ Promote Add an Altrusa Month. Buy advertising space the local newspaper. Ask members to wear their pins that month. Ask members to hand out their Altrusa business card or an Altrusa brochure to at least 10 people that month.
- ❖ Write letters of thank you for support of Altrusa projects in the letters to the editor section of newspapers.
- ❖ Make every effort to recruit an employee from at least one media outlet. Send all media outlets information about Altrusa and the club's contact person.
- ❖ Keep your club's webpage updated on a regular basis. If you don't have a club webpage, develop one! Best option is to use one of the International website options for clubs or Districts.
- ❖ It is important that all club members think in terms of marketing. Identify each member's ability to market and the level at which they are comfortable marketing Altrusa - person to person, distribution of flyers, contact with public media, etc. Every member has something that they can contribute to club image-building. Each and every member needs to find out what that is.
- ❖ Put Altrusa brochures on the events bulletin board in community centers, or as a part of a "Welcome Wagon" package for new residents. If neither are available the club could develop a new Altrusa project which provides community information packets to new residents. Local real estate offices have a listing of new homeowners/renters.
- ❖ Develop a community recognition award from your Altrusa club to the community-at-large.
- ❖ Provide the local library or local schools with pretty bookmarks about the importance of literacy. Be sure that Altrusa is displayed at the bottom as the sponsor of the bookmark.
- ❖ Provide every member with elevator speech about Altrusa they can use when talking about Altrusa to prospective members.

- ❖ Five Steps to Club Success - Step 1: find your target audience (look in the right places and talk to them to gauge their interest); Step 2: make a name for yourselves (make sure that your projects well advertised); Step 3: plan ahead (every club needs a public relations plan); Step 4: set up shop (make sure all your members have what they need); Step 5: keep track of how you are doing.
- ❖ Find an item to sell that can be identified with your club, i.e. "Be an angel, buy an Altrusa Angel to support...", "buy an Altrusa Coloring Book to support...", "buy an Altrusa Rose to support...",... other ideas are homemade candies, homemade dry soup mixes, homemade dry brownie mixes, homemade vinegars, etc. etc.
- ❖ Contact local businesses and companies. Ask them to suggest people in employment that would make a good Altrusan. Community involvement makes employees feel good, but it's also good for business too.
- ❖ Use Altrusa International brochure "Encouraging Employee Volunteerism". Put it in the hands of Directors of Human Resources, in public libraries, in waiting rooms, etc.
- ❖ Cause-related marketing boosts corporate sales as it develops public awareness, targets new markets, improves the corporate image, boosts morale and commitment, differentiates the company from its competition, improves customer loyalty and contributes to building a better community. Build a relationship with your local bookstore or book publishing company, i.e. local Create-a-Book publisher, as part of their "cause-related marketing" strategy.
- ❖ Sponsor an ad in newspapers by your club or in combination with other local service clubs, i.e. "Give Thanks by Giving to Others", a seasonal message from Altrusa, from Lions, from Rotary, etc. (other local service organizations). Use the same seasonal message on banners for display in members' offices and places of business, in short radio or TV spots, etc. If the bank or store puts up the banner have volunteer forms available for sign up for your next service project. Let people join you in your service project before asking them to join the club.
- ❖ E-MAIL PRESS RELEASES. Increasingly, editors say that they prefer e-mail press releases instead of press kits and faxes that clutter their desks. Keep the e-mail to two or three paragraphs. Use the subject line to describe the actual topic - for example, "New Altrusa Club Forming" - rather than a vague description, such as "Valuable Information Included". Also, many newspapers have on-line submission of articles and pictures. Follow the same rules as for emails when submitting.



Make Altrusa Known! Do one of these ideas TODAY!!

Chapter Eleven: **Get Personal**



A great way to gain participation/support for your event is to offer to speak to other groups about your event.

In Akron, Ohio Altrusans hold a “Princess Night” to provide prom outfits for girls who cannot afford them. They use personal shoppers and previously had enjoyed the participation of University of Akron Sororities, until this fizzled out to nothing. So the Altrusa club offered to have two Altrusans come and give the sorority a 10-minute presentation about Princess Night. They agreed, and the next time Altrusa needed help, they got plenty.

This concept could be used for companies that let you talk to their employee groups, etc.

Speaking goes a step beyond print, because the audience (captive, by the way) can interact with you, understanding how Altrusa and

they might be able to work together

If you are not an experienced speaker, you might want to join a Toastmasters group to help overcome shyness and nervousness. There are chapters in most areas.

SAY THANK YOU

Don’t forget to thank those who help you out! Send notes to anyone who contributes either time or money or other support. If it is a big event, print a special club brochure for the event that lists important contributors. Printing framed certificates of appreciation are another way of thanking special contributors.

Another good strategy is to have special stickers made up which announces the business as an Altrusa supporter: “This business is a proud sponsor of Altrusa International Inc., of XYZ”. If you can, place it near the door at eye level or on the door handle itself (ever tried opening a door without first looking at the handle?).

But whatever method you use, be sure to say thanks in one manner or another!

Chapter Twelve: Give Your Writing Punch

DESTROY THE TOP TEN TROUBLE SPOTS

The mission is to find as many sloppy, lazy, and boring words as possible in the articles in your newsletter. After you find these trouble spots, eliminate them. Editing can transform a so-so article into an effective, well-rounded presentation.

Think of editing as a challenge. Like a youngster playing a video game, you can search and destroy with your red pen or pencil. If you're laying out your publication on a computer, try using your software's "find" feature to help locate trouble spots. Then zap them into oblivion with a touch of the key.

All of the following items contribute to poor communication and need to be destroyed. So grab your newsletter and begin your mission!

- ❖ Excessive use of punctuation: Sometimes the use of exclamation points, underlining, italics and the like create emotion that the words themselves lack. Try rewriting, using more powerful words to say what you mean.
- ❖ The word "that ": Read the sentence without it. Usually the meaning will not be changed. For example, replace "Zapping trouble spots mean that you'll have a better article" with "Zapping trouble spots means you'll have a better article."
- ❖ The overused "I": Beginning too many sentences with 'I' bores an audience. Remember, people live to read their own names or references to "you". As in, "You can master the universe if you follow this advice" not "I have some advice I'd like to give."
- ❖ Words that end in "-ly": It is wise to avoid adverbs since they tend to make articles bland. For a more vivid account, describe the action. For example, instead of "the alien quietly took over the world", try "the alien oozed into each computer, gaining control over the world one terminal at a time".
- ❖ Connectors: "and," "but," "then," "furthermore," "perhaps," "however," "because" are often used unnecessarily. Eliminate the connecting words and you'll have two strong sentences instead of one weak one.
- ❖ Pronouns such as "he", "hers", "theirs": When you're talking about more than one person or thing, pronouns tend to confuse. You know "she" is your president's daughter and not your president, but your readers probably don't.
- ❖ Overused, vague words like "rather," "thing," "lots," "quite a few," "stuff," and "some ": These are often the sign of a lazy writer. Take the time to find more precise words. Get rid of the clutter.
- ❖ Language that offends: Eliminate the obvious sexist or racist phrases and choose words from your audience's point of view.
- ❖ Long sentences: Short, descriptive sentences are more interesting for readers than sentences that seem to run on forever, because those reading lose track of what you are saying before you get to the end of the sentence and therefore your point is lost somewhere among all those words. Simplify!!

- ❖ Sentences that begin with “There is” or “There are “: Start sentences with an action verb, and your listeners are more likely to pay attention. (Example: Rather than saying: “There are 37 members in the Altrusa Club of ____.” Re-phrase it to read: “The membership of the Altrusa Club of ____ includes 37 Individuals dedicated to making a better community.”



Chapter Thirteen: **Useful forms, Sample Press Releases, etc.**

PRESS RELEASES

Be sure to put the *who, what, where, when, why, and how* in the first paragraph. Include a contact name and telephone number(s) and be sure the contact person has agreed to accept that role.

FORMATTING A PRESS RELEASE

- ❖ If submitting in hard copy format, type on standard, letter-sized paper, double-spaced. Type on only one side of the paper.
- ❖ Know that most media outlets today prefer press releases sent to them electronically.
- ❖ Include contact information: name and telephone number with the name and address of your club.
- ❖ If you include a headline, type it in caps, in Franklin Gothic Demi font. The headline summarizes the content of the release and must contain a verb.
- ❖ Use wide margins: one and one-half inches on the left, one inch on the right, one inch at the bottom. Begin typing the information one-third to one-half of the way down the page, the space allows the editor to make notes and assign a heading.
- ❖ Indent paragraphs.
- ❖ Eliminate confusion. It is best to write the event day and date, i.e. Friday, April 10. Let the editors change the date to fit their style. Don't use abbreviations or terms unfamiliar to most readers.
- ❖ Be sure your release mentions any costs, restrictions, and/or deadlines. Individuals won't appreciate arriving at an event only to find that it required advanced ticket purchases.
- ❖ If continuing to a second page, type "more" centered under the last line of copy on the first page. On page two, type the page number and slug line (a one-word description of the title/story) two inches from the top of the page, flush left.
- ❖ Center the termination symbol "# # #" under the final paragraph.
- ❖ Pay attention to deadline dates. Does the community calendar require information two weeks in advance? Factor the deadline into your schedule.

MODEL PRESS RELEASES

The media prefers a certain format for press releases. Below are 4 sample releases for your club to use in developing its own press releases.

MODEL PRESS RELEASE FOR CLUB AWARDS:

Contact: Altrusa International, Inc. of (club name)

(Name, office)

(Address)

(Area code, telephone number)

LOCAL ALTRUSA CLUB RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL SERVICE AWARD

The (name and description of award) has been awarded to the (club name) for (name of project or reason for award). The award recognizes (brief description of the award, who conferred it, and why it was established, how often it is given, etc.) It was received by (name of person or group) at (the name of event and location) on (date).

(Description of the project or performance by the club to merit the award, and persons in the club responsible for the achievement. How the award will affect the club, the community and/or beneficiaries of the award. Relate the relevancy of any past projects or performance leading to this award.)

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MODEL PRESS RELEASE FOR OFFICER ELECTIONS:

Contact: Altrusa International, Inc. of (club name)

(Name, office)

(Address)

(Area code, telephone number)

(FIRST AND LAST NAME) OF (CITY, STATE/PROVINCE) ELECTED (OFFICE)

OF ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL, INC., OF (CLUB NAME)

(Club city)—(First and last name), (title), (company name), (city, state), was elected (office) for 20__ – 20__ of Altrusa International, Inc., of (club name). The election took place during the club's annual business meeting. During her/his upcoming term of office (last name) will emphasize (name and briefly describe the focus, goals, beneficiaries, etc., of upcoming community service projects.)

Active in Altrusa since invited into membership in (year), (last name) currently serves as the club's (office currently holding, if any). Previously, (last name) served as (list of previously held officers or committee chairmanships).

Other elected officers include (first and last name), (title), (company name), (city, state), for president-elect; (use similar pattern for other officers).

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MODEL PRESS RELEASE FOR A FUND RAISER

Contact: Altrusa International, Inc. of (club name)

(Name, office)

(Address)

(Area code, telephone number)

ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL, INC., OF (CLUB NAME)

RAISES (NUMBER OF DOLLARS) TO BENEFIT (BENEFICIARY)

(Club city)—Members of Altrusa International, Inc., of (club name) continued their local tradition when they (describe event). This year over (amount of money) was raised and more than (number) people participated.

For the last (number of years), Altrusa International, Inc., of (club name) has (sponsored, co-sponsored, organized, etc.) this event. Members have raised more than (amount of money) directly for (beneficiary).

In addition, Altrusa International of (club name) has (developed, advocated, supported, etc.) programs on behalf of (list major past and present projects, i.e., displaced homemakers, elderly women living alone, etc.)

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MODEL PRESS RELEASE FOR A MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY:

Contact: Altrusa International, Inc. of (club name)

(Name, office)

(Address)

(Area code, telephone number)

LOCAL ALTRUSANS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

(Club city)—Members of Altrusa International, Inc., of (club name) continued their local tradition of community service by participating in the (year, i.e., tenth) annual Make A Difference Day, Saturday, (date). (Describe the event, how many participated, beneficiaries of the activities.) (Identify if grant money was received from Wal-Mart.)

Make a Difference Day, the largest day of helping others, is sponsored by USA WEEKEND and is held in partnership with the Points of Light Foundation. For the last (number of years), Altrusa International, Inc., of (club name) has participated in this annual event. In addition, Altrusa International of (club name) has (developed, advocated, supported, etc.) programs on behalf of (list major past and present projects, i.e., displaced homemakers, elderly women living alone, etc.)

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