

## August 2015 Guidance on Opportunities: Media Outreach Tips

### Appreciative Icebreaker:

- What do we mean when we talk about *media*? What about *media outreach*?
- How would more media coverage help your League? What would be possible if you were more visible in your community?
- What is the smallest change you could make to your outreach that would help reach the greatest number of new people?



### Media 101 Recap:

For the purposes of this guidance, when we talk about media we are referring to both traditional media (e.g., newspapers, local news stations) and social or new media (e.g., blogs, Facebook, Twitter).

While there are differences in how you approach the different media platforms, there are a few common elements.

- **The Hook** – All good stories need a hook, i.e. something that draws the reader in. Your hook is what makes the story relevant right now. Tie your message into the great work that League has done and is continuing to do in your community.
- **The Content** – Regardless of platform, your content needs to be engaging. Good content needs very little adjusting across the platform. You can link to a news article or post on your website from Twitter and Facebook with just a short, but engaging, summary. Don't worry about reinventing the wheel!
- **Visual Appeal** – Include pictures and video! Avoid large blocks of text when possible.

For more media basics, look for past visibility guidances at <http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/manage-your-league/visibility>.

Be sure to also check out the 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Toolkit, a great hook to tie in with your local League, at <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/95th-anniversary-toolkit>.

Past Convention materials are also a great resource <http://forum.lwv.org/page/presentations-training-materials-convention-2014>.

Questions To Ask:

So you are familiar with the basics, now what? Ideally, you want to reach as many people as possible by using multiple platforms, but sometimes this is unrealistic. How do you figure out which platform is the best option for each event or outreach?

- What is the outreach for?
  - An event...
    - **Who do I want attending the event?**
    - If it is a networking opportunity, can I connect with a young professionals group in my area and use their network?
    - If it is a forum on fracking, what platform will inform the appropriate officials, environmental groups or other stakeholders about this forum?
  - Celebrating a success...
    - **What groups benefited from your win?**
    - If the League swayed the zoning commission on an issue, is there a neighborhood listserv or Facebook group you can share this success with?

The key to being strategic with media outreach is targeting. Who do you want to know and what is the best way to reach out to them? This can require some out-of-the-box thinking. Do be careful with your assumptions. For example, while many younger people use Twitter, don't assume that Twitter is the only way to reach them or that you will only be reaching young people.

Words Matter:

Again, while content will vary, there are some key words that help to enhance our media messages. Research has shown us that words matter.

<i>Use</i>	Women's voting rights	<i>Not</i>	Woman suffrage
<i>Use</i>	League neither supports nor opposes candidates or parties	<i>Not</i>	League is non-partisan
<i>Use</i>	Engages in public policy issues	<i>Not</i>	Engages in the political process
<i>Use</i>	Local, state & federal government	<i>Not</i>	3 levels of government
<i>Use</i>	LWV provides information	<i>Not</i>	LWV informs people
<i>Use</i>	"Join" – as in participate with	<i>Not</i>	"Join" means become a local member
<i>Use</i>	National network of League supporters	<i>Not</i>	Volunteer members, donors & online activists