How to think about publicity for each event

NOTE: I have revised this so it can be used both for RGT and for LTC. Obviously some ways to doing publicity are not appropriate for some events. You can figure that out. AND when you find better ways to do this, please change the text for the next person!

1. General stuff - get the information ready

Basic Information: all forms of PR have to have the same stuff – write it out, check everything. Then check it again. You may want to change the order, BUT you need ALL of these.

a. Day of the week, date, time (check and check again)

b. Location – put in street address, or building if it is well known, e.g. Leverett Library. If a place/trail entrance that is hard to find, "just south of mailbox #....." works.

c. Speaker and title (or if no speaker just title). Work on the title to make sure it reflects what is going to happen - and grabs attention - and is OK with the presenter/person in charge

d. Brief description of topic/activity (max 2 sentences) you know the drill, trying to make it catchy but so folks will know who it is really for.

e. Anything participants should bring ("binoculars so we can go outside" "gloves, clippers if you have them")

f. Sponsored by (Rattlesnake Gutter Trust or Leverett Trails Committee or whomever), be especially careful to include co-sponsors. If you use Leverett Trails Committee, include "which is co-sponsored by the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust and the Leverett Conservation Commission"

f. for more information:

if RGT - [www.rattlesnakeguttertrust.org/events](http://www.rattlesnakeguttertrust.org/events)

if LTC – [www.rattlesnakeguttertrust.org/LTC-events](http://www.rattlesnakeguttertrust.org/LTC-events)

For LTC, also give ComCom number and email:

413-548-1022 x3, concom@leverett.ma.us

(I don’t give home phone numbers unless the event has a required registration)

because most upcoming events will be listed on the home page of the website, you can also just use www.rattlesnakeguttertrust.org

g. FREE. Obviously this would not be added to a work party, but if might be added to a talk. The paper takes it out if they only put in free events. Note. RGT traditionally does not charge for events. Changing that would be a Board discussion.

2. For Web (even if you will not be actually putting it on the web, you need to know what to submit to the RGT web person)

1. There are two Events pages: one for RGT-sponsored events, a second for LTC-sponsored events. Over time you can change that system, but the RGT Board and the ConCom should both say it is OK. The original plan had been to have the town website carry the LTC events with RGT having a link (and vice versa) but the town website was not strong enough to handle that.

a. On the page that is sponsoring the event, put the write-up described above. You can fancy it up by adding a photo etc. Or you can put a copy of the poster on the page (see below) but if there are a number of events coming up, taking up that much space is hard on the events listed below the poster.

b. On the other page, put a one-line title with an embedded link to the other page. (It is less confusing and it is less work since if you have to make a change, you only have one description to worry about.) The web-person will do this, but be sure to mention it.

3. When to put up the event? As soon as the planning is complete. The events go in sequence, so it doesn't take time and attention from one planned earlier and saves you time.

4. When to take it off the web - as soon as the event is over.

5. What to do with the photos from the event. (Even if you won't be actually doing the web part, I think it is helpful to understand how it gets done.) And it is your responsibility to get those photos to the web-person.

In WordPress, there is a gallery function that allows you to put the MEMORY REDUCED photos into a list of photos that can be shown with the "click to see next slide" (reduced memory photos look fine on the screen, are faster to load, and WordPress won't accept big memory stuff.

Putting up a photo gallery after a program, exhibit, or work day is often really special to the folks who worked so hard. And it is a nice way to say thank you and to encourage others to join next time. I usually leave the photo galleries below the event listings for about 6 months and then move them down to the archive. Might want to ask for changes in that procedure.

Giving credit for photos. My policy has been to give the photographer's name, unless it was me, since I would have too many.

Getting permission for the photos. REALLY IMPORTANT. ALWAYS check with the school before posting any photos. And if you have a group together, then say "I am planning to post these, without names on the website, let me know if there is a problem." (There is surely a more formal way to do that, I just never have used it.)

3. Town newsletter

Know deadlines (on website and previous newsletter). Early is always appreciated. Send to Lisa Stratford, the town clerk (townclerk@leverett.ma.us). Make subject line clear ("for June newsletter:) and send both as text inside the email and as an attachment.

One reason to get it in early is that gives Lisa time to ask questions. If I have a long entry, I usually add a note saying, cut if you need to (and she does. never a problem)

Town newsletter cannot have any fancy formatting, fancy print or any illustrations

Send RGT items in separate email from LTC items (coordinate if 2 people doing them to make sure you are not duplicating)

Keep short – but needs all the stuff listed for in #1 (well, not street address unless unusual place).

4. Friday Post, Leverett elementary school (avoid using a Friday before vacation week)

You would, of course, only want an event in the school newsletter if you really wanted families at the event.

Talk with the LES secretary, Kate Rice, about procedures she would like you to follow for:

a. individual events to be listed in the Calendar - especially deadline and how to send to her

b. fliers to be included in the packet - number she needs, deadline, etc (If doing fliers, do black-and-white to keep down cost, but also make sure the flier you designed looks good when only black-and-white). You have to print the number she needs and get them to her by the deadline.

c. LES website - ask Kate what she would like, this is a nice place to have PR

5. Newspapers

Deadlines vary: I go with the least forgiving – check them out, but at the moment it is a full week before the special section is published (so Wednesday before publication - work back from date of the event. Some have a shorter time limit, but I make less errors when doing them all at once. There is even a case to be made for doing it even earlier, since it might get in for 2 weeks in a row.

Format variation: For a while, I tried to change the wording to match each format. I think that is a waste of time. Just do it as clean text so they can put it in their format. If they don’t put it in - or screw it up, talk to them about a better way.

It pays to look at each paper occasionally to see if they have changed their format or their email address, or deadline or whatever. I also check to see if stuff goes in and if it got in the right place so I can do the next one batter.

Email format and (at this time) what to put in subject line:

Greenfield Recorder:

To: features@recorder.com

Subject: Arts and Entertainment (if you want it under a specific subheading, given them that information too - check the paper to see what the categories are - they tend to change occasionally)

Hampshire Life:

To: calendar@gazettenet.com

Subject: Hampshire Life (again the issue of under what subheading)

Amherst Bulletin: (note address is same as Hampshire Life, but send separately to each)

To: calendar@gazettenet.com

Subject: Amherst Bulletin

Montague Reporter

To: reporter@montaguema.net

Subject: Arts and Entertainment (if it really is, otherwise, say "Briefs" which works nicely)

Springfield Republican

I don't do this one - can't even find a copy of the northern addition.

Format for description (see page 1) – I put the description both in the body of the email AND as an attachment. Don’t know if attachment is useful or even if they are allowed to open an attachment.

Below the description, I used to add “ If you need more information," and then add my name, email, and phone number. No one ever contacted me so I stopped adding it.

And then I proof-read (especially day of week, date, and time) one more time.

If you have a photo or drawing that would be especially appealing for the papers, you might want to contact ONE of the papers to see if they want it - making it clear they are the only ones who would get it. (If they say no, go to the next.) If you do this, really have to do it 2 weeks ahead.

6. Fliers and Posters

Same stuff needed as for everything else – you can use pictures, of course, but still need same stuff.

Where to put Poster and Fliers (always with permission):

Town hall

I tend to put stuff on the little table to the left of the door to the lower room.

Some posters also go on the stairway bulletin board. (The stepladder in in the coat rack area.)

I also sometimes take fliers on Friday morning and put them on the non-used table for the Senior Lunch

Library

Always talk with Ashley Blais and Sue LaClaire about what is appropriate.

Poster: need two copies so it can go back-to-back on the door, and show on both sides.

Fliers, put small ones (4/page cut up) at the front desk. (IF you have asked and have their permission)

AND ask what they want for their website - it is a great way to get more PR.

Post Office - always ask permission for one poster on their bulletin board

School – if appropriate - I usually don't (except when we put poster in Friday post, then extras go around the school)

Co-op - good luck finding a space on the outside bulletin board. Only rarely do I leave fliers if it is something especially "north leverett"

Returnable Shed at Transfer Station. I never remember to do that - nor is there a very good place for it.

Leverett Crafts & Arts - if it is appropriate, check with someone, let them put it where they want it.

Perhaps some other place, don’t know

Take down after the event. (town hall and post office. Library usually does it themselves, Co-op does it themselves, LTC if you have included them - might check.

8. Email notices

In the old days, RGT sent a green postcard to all members in September and again February with all the events planned during that half of the year. The mailing was expensive and the deadlines ruled our lives. And everyone (mostly) got email.

SO, whoever is going to send this email out, needs the same clean, totally accurate copy you used in all the places above.

RGT now sends a program emailing to members clustering two or three events. It does not send reminders. The mailing is sent so folks don't see other people's emails. The membership list is updated continuously as new folks join RGT.

LTC has a mailing list of folks that have asked to be on the email list. Again, folks don't see anyone else's email address. (I use BCC, probably more elegant ways.) It is usually sent out as soon as work days or other events are planned - ideally with a few in one mailing, but that is not always possible. AND a reminder is sent out a few days before. New names are added on request (either at an event or from an email request to info-ltc@rattle.... (Names are, of course, taken off if someone requests that - usually folks who have moved away.)

9. Other publicity

Sometimes the topic or speaker are sufficiently interesting that a newspaper can be enticed to send a reporter or photographer. That's great. Sometimes it is possible to get the article in before the event i.e. publicity, sometime not (but still good press for RGT, speaker, topic).

The obvious questions are : What have I left out? What can be done more easily and elegantly? PLEASE change this document so the next personal responsible doesn't have to re-invent this stuff.

Mary Alice, MAY 2016