

Intro to Online Appendices E1 and E2: Two Examples of News Releases About a Visiting Playwright

With the exception of a few modifications to fictionalize the dates and locations, the following two releases are the same releases Bradford Little Theatre used to promote playwright residencies. All three were printed in their entirety by the local paper.

Notice the similarities between the two news releases. A news release like this essentially follows a formula, so by including two examples, you can see that formula in action.

Online Appendix E: A News Release About a Visiting Playwright

Notice how much lead-time this offers?

The logo is big and eye-catching. Having your address next to it makes your address easy to spot.

If you're going to include your web address on things, make sure the web page is always up to date.



Albeeville Community Theatre
PO Box 007
Albeeville, NY 12345
www.albeeactors.com

November 5, 2003
For Immediate Release

Contact: Chris Mackowski
555-555-1212

Albeeville Community Theatre Hosts Playwright-in-Residence

ALBEEVILLE, NY—Albeeville Community Theatre (ACT) will host visiting playwright R.G. Rader early next month as part of the theatre's seventh season.

ACT will present a public staged reading of Rader's play *Heart-Beat* on Friday, November 21 starting at 7:30 p.m. at the Albeeville Public Library. Rader will be on hand to talk about the play with audience members. There will also be a wine-and-cheese reception.

"We're pleased to continue our tradition of presenting original works," says ACT President Darren Felshaw. "A reading like this gives an author the chance to hear his play in front of an audience for one of the very first times. It's a helpful and essential part of the play development process. It isn't often that local audiences can participate in the creation of art like this, so it's really an exciting opportunity to see how a new play is shaped and developed."

Heart-Beat tells a story of love found in one of the most unusual and haunting of places, the space between life and death in a coma. "These lost souls, trapped in limbo, must discover the true nature of love," says ACT Vice President Stan Stubinski, who will direct the reading. "For them, love really is a matter of life and death."

Admission to the reading is \$1, although admission is free for ACT patrons. Tickets will be

(more)

Editors find it helpful to have space to jot notes.

Get your theatre's full name in the lead, followed by an abbreviation.

If the editor cut out everything after the second paragraph, readers would still have the information they need to attend.

Here's a great example of a quote used to educate the reader. It's not "fluffy."

The plot synopsis is short and sweet and tucked smoothly into the release. The quote from the director gives a hint of the play's mood and ambience.

Titles that precede a name are capitalized. Titles that follow a name are set off by commas and left lowercase: ...says Stan Stubinski, vice president of ACT, who will direct.

Online Appendix E: A news release about a visiting playwright (cont.)

Use a header to tie page two back to page one. The blurbs should be brief reminders of who the release is from and what it's about.

ACT/PLAYWRIGHT VISIT (page 2 of 2)

available at the door.

Also as part of Rader's visit, he will conduct a morning workshop with theatre students and creative writing students at the Albeeville Area High School. In the afternoon, he'll visit with students at Mt. Dew University.

In the spring, in cooperation with season sponsor WBLT radio, ACT will present Rader's *The Wind Behind Us*, a radio play that tells the heartwarming tale of an elderly couple who share a journey into town and into their past. Slated for production in Toronto in late 2004, Albeeville audiences will get to share in a sneak-preview of the script, performed by a local cast.

Rader divides his time between work as a professor, playwright, poet, and actor. He has had plays produced in New York City and New Jersey and has been writer-in-residence at the William Carlos Williams Center for the Arts. He is presently playwright-in-residence with Arrowhead Theater Company in New York City. In addition, he is the author of two books of poetry with his third collection to be published this winter. He holds degrees in philosophy, theology, and writing and lives with his wife, Mary-Jane, and son, Jason, in Passaic, New Jersey.

Now celebrating its seventh season, Albeeville Community Theatre promotes, encourages, and produces community-based theater in the greater Albeeville area. By making theatre available and accessible to the public, ACT provides opportunities for community participation, appreciation and education, thus enriching the community and increasing interest in the arts.

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Here's extra, related information in case the editor wants it--but it's not essential to the story. But if you have the chance to smoothly plug an upcoming event, take it.

Always include some biographical information about the person. Work some of it into the release, and save some for the end, which can act as a "standard paragraph" for the person. Follow it with your own standard paragraph.

Don't forget to let the editor know you're done.

When you send a release like this, it's usually helpful to have a photo of the person that you can send along with the release. Unless you specifically ask the paper to return the photo, they'll probably hang on to it.

Online Appendix E2: A Second Example of a News Release About a Visiting Playwright

The wording is slightly different, but the template is essentially the same for the lead paragraph.



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PO Box 007
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www.albeeeactors.com

November 5, 2003
For Immediate Release

Contact: Chris Mackowski
555-555-1212

Albeeville Community Theatre Welcomes Playwright-in-Residence

ALBEEVILLE, NY — Albeeville Community Theatre will host playwright-in-residence Bridget Harris next week for a staged reading of her play “Mother’s Day.”

The reading, co-sponsored by the Albeeville Public Library, will be held on Friday, November 7 in the library’s community room. Admission to the reading is \$2 for the general public and free to ACT subscribers.

“Mother’s Day” tells the story of Tina, who has returned to her parents’ home after several years away. Her father is dying of lung cancer and her mother has just had a hip replacement that didn’t go well. Through direct monologues spoken to the audience, conversations with her parents, flashbacks to earlier times, and readings of her mother’s poetry, we learn of Tina’s troubled childhood, her father’s alcoholism, her mother’s Catholicism, the impact of both of these on their family life, and her parents’ current failing health.

As Tina grapples with thoughts of her mother’s life, her father’s life and her own, she learns to see things from their perspectives and gains insight that could lead to forgiveness.

“Mother’s Day’ will touch any baby boomer facing the issues of caring for elderly parents and more importantly, resolving long-standing conflicts with them,” says ACT Board Member

(more)

Mention any co-sponsors as soon as possible. One of the benefits of co-sponsorship is free publicity, which is why many organizations do it.

Membership has its privileges. Remember that when creating your marketing strategies.

The plot synopsis is important because readers aren’t familiar with the play at all. Give them an idea of what to expect.

Notice the format so far? It’s the same as the first example: Lead paragraph, then the 5Ws (who, what, where, why, when). It varies for the third paragraph by putting the plot synopsis next because it provides context for the quote.

This synopsis is long. The paragraph break here makes it easier to read and digest. It also adds emphasis to the ideas in this sentence because the sentence stands alone.

Online Appendix E2: A Second Example of a News Release About a Visiting Playwright (cont.)

The quotes add information and explain the play's relevance without adding fluff.

ACT/VISITING PLAYWRIGHT (page 2 of 2)

Diana Armistead, who will direct the reading. "There comes a time when, for everyone's sake, we take another look at our childhood and see our parents as not just our parents, but as people, flaws and all, just trying to live their lives as best they can. It is in this second look that we often find love, acceptance and forgiveness both for them and from them."

The reading will be followed by a discussion session. Audience members will have the chance to ask Harris questions about the play and her creative process; Harris will also solicit feedback from the audience about ways she can improve the script. A reception will follow and refreshments will be served.

"This is a great opportunity to learn more about how a play is created," says Armistead. "In fact, it's a way for our audiences to become a part of the play development process. The feedback Bridget takes away from the discussion will help her in her revisions, so people can have a direct impact on the future shape of the play."

Also as part of her residency, Harris will meet with freshmen writing students at Mt. Dew University and with theatre students at Albeeville Area High School. She will also appear on WBLT's "Liveline" program on Thursday, November 6 at 12:35 p.m.

Harris has an MFA in playwriting from Goddard College. She is a member of the Dramatists Guild and Pittsburgh Playwrights Theater Company. Her work has been performed at Goddard, Pittsburgh Queer Theater, and at Penn Theater in Pittsburgh. She works as freelance writer and editor. Her essays and feature articles have appeared in publications across the country including "USAir Magazine."

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Food attracts people, so don't forget to mention it if you're going to have it.

Another quote for context. The first example had two quotes; this example has two quotes. And see how this quote shows your mission statement in action?

Notice how the pattern continues? Other info about the residency, then biographical info about the playwright, then the theatre's standard paragraph. It's an easy-to-follow formula.

Nothing wrong with promoting your other promotional efforts, especially if the radio station is a media sponsor.