

Creating a Press Release



CREATING A PRESS RELEASE

Local newspapers are always happy to receive news items about local organizations and residents. Many artists are too modest to toot their own horn about their art and their accomplishments, or have no idea how to do it. Tooting a horn on their behalf not only makes them feel valued as a member, it raises awareness for your chapter as well.

Occasions for a press release

Consider sending a press release with photos to your area newspapers about any of the following:

- Announcement of your chapter show and opening reception
- Announcement of your chapter show's award winners
- Recognition of your members whose work is accepted into the International Exhibition or Explore This! or wins awards in those
- Announcement that your chapter will participate in an upcoming event, such as exhibiting in a booth at an art festival, donating artworks to a charity auction for an animal shelter, having a drawing class at a retirement home, or joining forces with another art group to host an art event
- Announcement about who will be the presenter at your next chapter meeting, their background and what they will demonstrate, and mention that guests are welcome to attend

The press release template

Press releases have a well-defined format which simplifies the writing process and ensures that journalists who read dozens per day instantly pick up the essential information. You can find an example in the Addendum at the end of this document. Then just use the template file, Press-Release-Template.docx, to jumpstart your press release writing! Here's what a press release should include:

The diagram illustrates a press release template with the following sections and callouts:

- 1. Logo**: Points to the top left area labeled "[YOUR LOGO HERE]".
- 3. Release Date**: Points to the text "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE".
- 2. Your Contact Info**: Points to the contact details: "Contact: [Your Name & Organization]", "Phone: [Contact Phone Number]", and "Email: [Contact Email Address]".
- 4. Headline**: Points to the main headline "[MAIN PRESS RELEASE HEADLINE]".
- 5. The "Deck" (Subheader)**: Points to the italicized sub-header "[Italicized Sub-header]".
- 6. Dateline**: Points to the dateline "[CITY, STATE, Month Date—]".
- 7. 1st Paragraph**: Points to the first paragraph of the body text.
- 8. Body Paragraphs**: Points to the subsequent paragraphs of the body text.
- 9. Boilerplate**: Points to the boilerplate text "[Your Business Name] is a [Boilerplate description...]".
- 10. End Notation**: Points to the "###" symbol.
- 11. Final Note**: Points to the final note text: "If you would like more information about this topic, please call [Name] at [Phone number], or email [email address].".

1. Contact Information: Should look like this:
Contact: John Smith, (include signature status, job title as appropriate)
Phone: 555-555-5555
Email: john.smith@email.com

2. Logo: Use the appropriate CPSA logo (not the CPSA logo):
- A district chapter logo for chapters
(available in “For DC Presidents” folder at Dropbox)
 - The member of CPSA logo for individuals
(available at <https://www.cpsa.org/membership/member-logo/>)



3. Release Date: Not all press releases contain a release date, but if you decide to include one, put it at below your logo on the left margin. This should either say “FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE”, or “FOR RELEASE ON [date] AT [time]”.
4. Headline: The headline should grab the reader’s attention and be short and to the point. Use language that is unambiguous and easy to understand. Type bolded.
5. The “Deck” (Subheader): This is optional, an elaboration of the headline, without repeating the headline. Type in italics.
6. Dateline: Separated from the 1st paragraph by a dash. The location should be in all caps, and formatted like so:
7. 1st Paragraph: This contains the who, what, when, where, why and how, just the facts, a general idea of the story.
8. Body Paragraphs: The rest of the story you introduced in the headline and first paragraph. Use short 2-4 sentence paragraphs. Include any photos and quotes here.
9. Boilerplate: Standard information about CPSA and your chapter, which is the same on all press releases.
10. End Notation: If your press release uses more than one page, each page should end with “-more-“ centered at the bottom. The final page should end with “###”.
11. Final Note: Although you already included your contact information at the top, this is the place to say something like “If you would like more information about our event, please call [name] at [phone number] or email [email address].”

Tips for writing a press release

- Make the subject line clear, factual, and have it summarize the point of your release. Your subject line should pique interest.
- Write in third-person (he/she/they).
- Cover “the five Ws”: Who, What, When, Where and Why/How.
- Limit it to two pages, or 400-500 words in length.
- The first paragraph is crucial: be sure to clearly explain the point of the press release at the very beginning. Make it riveting!

- Try to include a quote from someone involved with your event, such as the DC President, a judge, a gallery representative, etc. This adds a human element to your release.
- Try to spin a local angle into your release. This gets the local press excited to be involved.
- **PROOFREAD!** Remember you are sending this to professional journalists!
- Always provide access to more information via links to websites or social media pages. Guide the news writer rather than make him have to search for information.
- Include your contact information (name, phone number, email address).

Tips for formatting a press release

- Use a standard font like Times New Roman or Helvetica.
- Bold the headline and italicize the sub-header.
- Use 1” margins.
- Save it to PDF format.

Tips for sending a press release

- Mail or email your release to the journalist or publication with an attention-grabbing subject line.
- If it’s about an upcoming event, invite the journalist to your event!
- If it’s for an upcoming event, send your release to local newspapers, magazines, bloggers, news stations, arts councils, visitor bureaus, event listings, local art stores, frame shops, anyone who can help spread the word about your event!

EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

On the next page you can see how a finished press release might look. You can easily create one in Word using the file called Press-Release-Template.docx provided with this document. The template is set up so all you have to do is type the appropriate information into the designated areas of the template.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jane Doe, President
CPSA District Chapter 000
Phone: 555-555-5555
Email: xxx@xxx.com

Local Colored Pencil Artists are Making Their Mark

Artists from the local chapter of the Colored Pencil Society of America garnering top awards

IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO, March 17, 2018—Two members of the local chapter of the Colored Pencil Society of America (CPSA) have won top awards in two different exhibitions. In 2017, Jane Doe received Best of Show in the Non-Signature Division of the 2017 ArtSpectations online competition. In the beginning of 2018, Suzie Que was awarded the EXPY and CPSA Great Explorations Best of Show Award in Explore This! 14.

These exhibitions bring in hundreds of entries every year, and winning top prizes in both brings national attention to Idaho Falls. Mary Smith won with her piece entitled “Sunny Afternoon,” a small drawing that details a white shed with a lilac tree in front shadowing it. The piece is small, measuring only 9 x 13 inches. The juror, John Jones from Ontario, Canada, commented about the small piece, “Complexity of subject matter, intense textures (varied but similar), compositions specifically celebrating a focal point despite the surrounding atmosphere of the “place”—all these usually cause grandiose failures in the ultimate rendering. “Shed a Little Light” throws all that commentary back into my face. Thank you for daring me to eat my words. Takes guts to do something like this.”

Suzie Que attained her top prize with her piece “Princess Heart Strings”, a pop-surrealist piece depicting a woman holding her colorful heart in her hands. The juried CPSA Explore This! online exhibition encourages artists to experiment with adding other media along with colored pencil, working in three dimensions, or use surfaces not typically for colored pencil. Hunt’s piece is a mix of colored pencil, acrylic paint, and wood stain on a hand-cut poplar board approximately 3 feet by 4 feet in size. “My work is figurative, I strive to humanize whatever I draw within,” she states. “I want people to realize there is more than one side to a person.” Suzie was recently given the honor of being one of the artists chosen to be exhibited in the 10th Annual Juried Exhibition at the Idaho Falls Arts Council. The exhibition runs until June 3, 2018.

About CPSA

Founded in 1990, the Colored Pencil Society of America is a nonprofit organization for colored pencil enthusiasts working to promote colored pencils as a fine art medium by sponsoring exhibitions and workshops, being involved in product research, and educating the public in general. The organization strives to elevate the medium, educate others about it, and encourage innovation with its use. The organization has over 1,800 members from around the world, with a significant number in the United States of America. Members can be a part of 22 different local chapters. More information can be found on their website: www.cpsa.org.

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About CPSA District Chapter 217

CPSA District Chapter 217 of Idaho Falls provides support for local members in the region through monthly meetings, a yearly member exhibition, and workshops from nationally respected artists. The general member meetings are the fourth Thursday of every month, where the programs offered vary from workshops, critique sessions, and business knowledge related to art. Meetings are held at St. John's Lutheran Church, 290 7th St., Idaho Falls, at 7 p.m. To keep up with their events, visit their Facebook page: <https://fb.me/cpsachapter217idahofalls>.

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If you would like more information, please contact:

Jane Doe, President, CPSA DC 000, 555-555-5555, xxx@xxx.com
Mary Smith, 555-555-5555, xxx@xxx.com
Other names, if desired