



gleaner

nwadventists.com/contribute

Why Should I Write for the Gleaner?

As a growing spiritual community of believers we need regular encouragement, inspiration, and education to maintain our common identity. The news from your church, school or ministry is unique, and unless someone local writes about it, the rest of us may never know. Your story will share ideas we can try in our own local communities, and it will help us all stay connected as an extended Northwest family, working together on God's great commission.



North Pacific Union
of Seventh-day Adventists

How Should I Write?

Here are a few basics and examples of the stories and style of writing that we are looking for.

- DO use a news article style of writing — putting the who, what, where, when of the event in your first paragraph or two, adding additional comments or information towards the end.
- DO include a comment or two from other participants or attendees — what they thought, what they gained from the experience.
- DO consider describing the impact of the project or event on individuals, the church or the community.
- DO submit your story as soon as possible. We want to publish articles online before the print edition.
- DON'T use "passive voice" — "The seminar was presented by Ron Smith." Instead use "active voice" — "Ron Smith presented the seminar."
- DON'T describe a weekend event by narrating chronologically through each speaker and topic of the weekend. Instead, describe the main focus, one or two highlights of the event and why this impacted the church or community.
- DON'T write a promotional story about an upcoming event. We only use stories that describe events that have actually occurred.
- DON'T editorialize, sermonize, or fundraise in a news article. Report the facts, but don't preach.
- DON'T include terms or phrases that only Adventists can interpret. Write as if you were presenting this to your local community newspaper.

How Can I Illustrate the Story?

A good photograph will draw attention to your story. Conversely, a poor quality image may encourage readers to quickly move on to something else.



Here are a few tips:

- Send three or four photos with your story, divided between vertical and horizontal orientation. This gives us and our designer some creative alternatives.
- We prefer close up, active subject matter, rather than posed shots.
- Poorly lighted photos or those that are not sharply focused cannot be used.
- If your story includes comments from one or two individuals, or highlights a main speaker, try to include a good quality photo of each.
- Provide correct and complete captions that provides a connection to the story. Those captions should be included at the end of your submitted story and numbered to correspond to each photo you submit.
- Ensure the images submitted have large enough resolution for print. For specific tip on images, go to gleanernow.com/contribute/photos.



How to Submit the Story, and What Happens After That?

We welcome all news stories sent directly to our *Gleaner* office. **Here are some points to remember:**

- Submit your story with photos via email to info@nwadventists.com or through our website nwadventists.com/contribute.
- All stories with photos and captions must be submitted by our published deadlines. Due to limited space in the print edition, some stories may be held over for a later issue or online web published.
- Be sure to include your contact information. We occasionally need additional details to complete the story.
- The local conference communication director prioritizes all stories from their conference for the print edition.
- Once each story is copy-edited to size, the layout team at Guildhouse Group goes to work in presenting proofs to the *Gleaner* editorial team for review.
- The editing and design process takes, on average, about three weeks each month.

This lead sentence grabs our interest and provides basic facts of WHAT, WHERE, WHEN and WHO.

Quick summary of the evening establishes the credibility of the speaker and adds to the basic facts about the event without laboring over details.

Nice comment that amplifies the purpose of the event.

Effective finish with another "testimonial" that underscores how this one event fits into the big picture.

Submit stories like this...

When Joyful Grove Adventist Church members invited their community to join them during the evening of April 27 for a vegetarian cooking demonstration, they were amazed with the response.

More than 150 members and guests packed into the church multi-purpose room to watch Betty Crockpot, local registered dietician, demonstrate the making of seven simple recipes. Crockpot shared samples of the completed dishes and invited candid response. At the end of the evening, she also presented each person with a new vegetarian cookbook.

Church members enjoyed the opportunity to connect with new friends from the community. "I sat next to the assistant manager of the market where I shop," said Alice Fillibuster, Joyful Grove project coordinator. "As a result of this seminar, he's planning to stock some new vegetarian items."

This is the most recent in a series of community-wide presentations sponsored by the church. "We were placed in this town to make a difference," said Hardy Plank, pastor, "and we now have friends in the community who realize we really care about their quality of life."

Jane Doe, participant
888-234-5555
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Don't submit stories like this ...

Betty Crockpot was invited by the Joyful Grove SDA Church to present a cooking school in the church multi-purpose room. The event was coordinated by Alice Fillibuster, with help from Myrtle Gluten and Buck Wheat.

The evening began with Pastor Hardy Plank introducing Crockpot to the group and offering a brief prayer.

Crockpot then presented seven delicious recipes to the group. The first was black bean soup which she said was a nutritious way to begin a meal. It was low in sodium and high in calcium. The second recipe was a three-bean salad, tossed with a low fat avocado vinaigrette, followed by a vegan patty consisting of garbanzos, onions and olives. Other featured recipes included a refreshing fruit drink and a sugarless dessert. Everyone seemed to really enjoy the samples provided. The program was finished by Pastor Plank presenting a brief talk on how physical and spiritual health are related.

This event was successful due to the tireless work by Fillibuster, Gluten and Wheat who did a great job. Sister White says we should be more active in health evangelism. It's important for us all to reach out and help our communities learn the right way to live.

When did this happen, and did anyone actually come?

Who really is Betty Crockpot and why is she the main presenter?

An unnecessary narrative of details, uninteresting to most readers.

This is "editorializing" and not an appropriate part of a news story.

What Should I Write About?

Look through your latest *Gleaner* and analyze what others have written about. Note which stories and photos attract your attention. Here are several ideas among others that may help you get started.

- A seminar or other special event that successfully reached members of your church and the community
- A milestone event (anniversary, dedication, mortgage burning) at your church or school
- An achievement by a member, student or group within your organization
- A local or global mission project or trip carried out by your members or students

What Length of Story Should I Send?

Generally we recommend an average of 200–300 words and a maximum of 500. One designed news page of the *Gleaner* can fit one 500 word story, or two 250 word stories, etc. How much we edit your story depends on several factors, including space available, how unique your story is, how many good quality photos you have available and what priority your conference communication director assigns to it. If you have a story idea you think is unique, contact us or your communication director for advice before writing the story. That may save you time and frustration, and make sure it gets a little extra attention once it's submitted.

What Goes on the Gleaner Website?

Many readers don't realize that our *Gleaner* website at NWAdventists.com is updated quickly. Stories that involve breaking news, disaster relief information, etc., can be published to NWAdventists.com within a matter of minutes. They may also be eventually printed in the regular print edition of the *Gleaner*. Otherwise, all stories in the print *Gleaner* are also included within that issue on the website. At times we can include a longer version of the story with more photos, since space is not an issue online.

One Last Note

Don't be offended if your story is edited or cut down in size. It happens to us all — even the editor gets his articles whittled and whacked at times. The editing process is no respecter of persons! Your stories are so important to us and to each of our Northwest members. We love to hear from you. If you have any questions or need some additional tips on what we're looking for, do not hesitate to call or email us. You can find more specific guidelines for writing, photography and article submission online at NWAdventists.com/contribute.

Our Team at Your Service



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