

# An Oracle Handbook

*Improving press coverage, photography, writing articles and press releases*

*For*

*District Directors of Public Relations  
and Chapter Reporters*

of

*Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.*

*Prepared and written by*

**Brother Milbert O. Brown, Jr., MA, BSJ**  
*International Editor of the Oracle*

*Brother Glenn Rice, BSJ*  
*International Assistant Editor of the Oracle*

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## **“An Oracle Handbook”**

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- B. Omega Psi Phi Editorial Board Guild lines for the Oracle**

## Tips On Interviewing

### I. Pre-Interview: Prepare

- A. Learn about news source; arrange interview
- B. Learn about topic; decide angle
- C. Write down questions-in logical order

### II. Interview

- A. Break the ice-easy Questions first
- B. Keep your tentative angle in mind
- C. Be flexible-shift angles if a better one emerges and story permits
- D. Show interest, enthusiasm
- E. Observe
- F. Don't cross-examine with Question and Answers, Questions and Answers
- G. Keep the interview enjoyable
- F. Listen to person or persons you are interviewing
- I. Understand and don't be afraid to ask additional questions
- J. Take notes: names, quotes, figures, etc.,
- K. Don't let the interview get off course
- L. Get second interview with other sources
- M. Ask: "Is there anything else?"

### III. Post-Interview: Finish shaping the story

- A. Complete your notes, fill in the gaps
- B. Conduct other interviews, if you need additional information
- C. Outline the story
- D. Begin writing the story

## WRITING THE NEWS STORY

Most news stories written in the “Inverted Pyramid” form is often referred to as  
The five “W”s: **WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY**

The Inverted Pyramid became popular because it saves the reader time.

The widest part of the Pyramid represents the lead sentence or opening paragraph, which contains the gist or climax of the story. The rest of the story tapers off from the climax to the least important facts.

1. The Lead--is the most important sentence in a story. The emphasis of the lead depends on which element you choose to feature.
2. The Bridge--is the connecting sentence or paragraph, between the lead and the body of the story. The bridge brings in significant details that are not suited for the lead but are too important to place in the body of the story.
3. The Body--supports the lead by telling the story in detail. It explains and elaborates the facts in the lead and adds other details not summarized in the lead.

### **An example of a simple story including the lead, bridge and body.**

1. The lead---Brother John Smith, 39, was killed Tuesday when his small aircraft crashed in an open field near Detroit Airport.
2. The bridge---According to an eyewitness, the plane’s engine sputtered and the jet fell into a nose-dive, crashing to the ground.
3. The body--- Brother Smith, a life member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., was a former U.S. Navy pilot who flew over 18 missions in Operation Desert Storm.

Other details—Brother Smith was a naval ROTC instructor at the University of Michigan, and an active duty U.S. Navy officer with the rank of Lt. Commander. He was initiated into Omega through the Rho Chapter, J.C. Smith University. He was an active member of Nu Omega Graduate Chapter (Detroit, MI).

## **THE SUMMARY LEAD**

This typical lead tells what the story is about. It may answer any one or all of these questions:  
**Who, what, when, where, why and how.**

### **An example:**

**Fifty Omega brothers quickly piled sandbags on the banks of Lake Michigan yesterday to prevent flooding.**

**Who-----Fifty Omega brothers**

**What----piled sandbags**

**When----yesterday**

**Where---banks of Lake Michigan**

**Why----to prevent flooding**

**How---quickly**

## **SIX WAYS TO VARY THE LEAD----in some news and feature stories**

### **BACKGROUND**

A capacity crowd of about 8,000 filled the Omega Gymnasium last night and witnessed the Omegas triumph over the Alphas in their basketball game.

### **QUESTION**

Ever play checkers against a computer? Well, you will have a chance to do just that when the Omega Chess Club opens its membership to all students on Tuesday at 6pm at the Omega Cultural Center.

### **EXCLAMATORY**

All elephants hiding in the corridors of the Omega Center, watch out! Brother Jim Black may be your downfall.

Brother Black, who has just returned from an African safari displayed a huge elephant tusk.

### **ALLUSIVE**

You say you have never seen a purple cow. Then, come to the Fifth Annual Omega Exhibition of Modern Art and you will see purple cows aplenty--and gold cows and green cows, too.

### **SUSPENSE**

The houselights are dim. A hush comes over the crowd. The music begins and the curtains part. Eight men enter from the dark carrying a golden lamp.

### **QUOTATION**

“Discrimination is not only unjust, it is economically stupid,” said Brother Tim Jones, Grand Keeper of Finance in a speech at the Omega Grand National Conclave.

## **VARYING THE LEAD**

### 1. BEGIN WITH A NOUN:

Handbooks were issued to all members

### 2. BEGIN WITH A PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE:

**In competition with other Omega chapters, Beta Chapter...**

### 3. BEGIN WITH A PRESENT PARTICIPLE:

**Headlining the first evening program...**

### 4. BEGIN WITH AN INFINITIVE:

**To celebrate the approaching initiation of...**

### 5. BEGIN WITH A CLAUSE:

**Unless changes are introduced...**

## FEATURE WRITING

The **feature story** is an interesting, but not necessarily timely, article that stresses the information more from a human-interest angle rather the news angle. The story may relate to the general news of the day, or it may be something that will do just as well next month or next year.

The feature story is also a mixture of fact and opinion. The feature story should inform, instruct and most importantly entertain the reader.

Feature writing is less rigid in structure and allows the writer to inject his own personality and creativity into a story. The lead sentence of the feature story should entice the reader into the story.

After the lead, there are valleys and peaks of information in the feature story. The valleys and peaks represent anecdotes and illusions used to amplify the story.

### Types of Feature Stories

- 1. Human interest feature**--appeals to reader's emotions by offering the reader a glimpse of the successes and predicaments of ordinary human beings.
- 2. Historical feature**--informative news feature about past events.
- 3. Informative feature**--requires the writer to do research or have specialized knowledge of a particular subject
- 4. Personality feature**--concerning the life, interest and accomplishments of a well-known or interesting person.
- 5. Autobiographical feature**--features that deal with life or personal experiences of the writer.



## **Editorial Writing**

An editorial is an article in a publication that gives the writer's point of view on a subject.

### **A. What it is and what it can do**

1. The editorial is the mouthpiece of the publication
2. The writer has an opportunity to say what he thinks within reason.
3. They can act as a safety valve; a means of "letting off steam" rather than resorting to less desirable methods.

### **B. Purpose of an editorial**

1. to influence (convince or persuade)
2. to inform
3. to interpret (give background)
4. to show appreciation
5. to inspire
6. to entertain

### **C. Qualities of an editorial**

1. Interest (capture and hold interest of reader)
2. Brevity (relatively short)
3. Force (speak with the voice of authority)

### **D. Choosing a subject**

1. must be specific
2. avoid the trivial
3. emphasize the Why or How
4. must understand the situation thoroughly
5. must analyze the causes of the problem or the situation

### **E. Writing the editorial**

1. Be positive in your statements, avoid preaching
2. Use suggestions rather than commanding or scolding
3. Use illustrations and examples to make a point
4. Avoid pointing out a moral--let it be subtle

## **Thinking Pictures**

**Photography is one of the most powerful mediums of communication. A poor photograph can reduce a great event to a poor representation of that event.**

Photographs of Omega activities and events present the dedication, brotherhood and social action of the Fraternity to the public.

### **Pictures must say something**

Pictures of brothers standing around posing say very little about the importance of an Omega event or a social action activity. A viewer responds to the message communicated by the content in the photograph. The content is the most important element of a good photograph.

### **Picture Planning**

As a photographer, before you pick up the camera and start photographing, you should have formulated in your mind what you want to say with your pictures.

So, it is very important to take more than one picture of five Omega brothers looking at the camera. If you take a picture of five brothers.

(please get their names and the chapters/districts they are all from.)

### **People make pictures-not the product**

People photographs can be the easiest or the most difficult to take. By adding the human element, it is easier to make photographs more interesting. Always include Omega brothers in photographs, not just the product (such as: books, foods, clothes, etc.).

**Candid Photography is the art of photographing an event or activity that is spontaneous. Also candid photography gives the viewer a sense of realism.**

If you are photographing your chapter's tutoring program have an Omega brother actually tutoring a student, rather than having the subjects looking at the camera. This method of photography again is called "**candid photography.**"

## Cameras vs. Cameras

Many people think that by buying an expensive camera it will make them a better photographer. That's like saying that by buying a BMW you will overnight become a better driver.

My best advice for camera purchases is to start out simple.  
Your initial camera should be a basic (point and shot) digital camera for under \$100.

If you like photography, then you can buy a better camera with interchangeable lens for taking pictures of Omega moments.

Avoid Polaroid cameras as the prints are almost never clear and are bad for reproduction in publications. Film cameras were once great, but the cost of reproducing an image and converting the analog files to digital files is very time consuming and expensive.

**Digital Cameras**— are great and a must for today's technology.

How many mega pixels do you need? More mega pixels mean better clarity and detail and allow you to use larger print sizes.

3 to 5 mega pixel digital cameras will produce a very good 5x7 print.

6-7 mega pixel digital cameras will produce very good 8x10 prints.

8-10 mega pixel digital cameras will produce very good prints up to 16x20

Optical zooms range from 3x to 12x. For taking photographs of family, friends and Fraternity activities, a 3x zoom is fine. If you are photographing distant subjects you may consider a more powerful zoom.

If you are e-mailing pictures make sure you have an idea of the size of the picture.

Example: 72 dpi files can be emailed quickly, but generally publications need at least a 200-300 dpi files. **FOR MAGAZINES IT'S 300 DPI (RESOLUTION).**

When sending pictures never embed them into a word file. Digital files should be sent as single jpg files.

Examples:

(A) 3<sup>rd</sup> District-Founders-Iota Iota-2.JPG;

(B) 3<sup>rd</sup> District-Founders-Iota Iota-2.JPG

## **Caption Writing for Photographs**

Caption writing is the marriage of pictures and words. Captions are also referred to as cut lines. Caption for photographs are a must.

For Omega's publications and historical archival file, caption information is always needed. Ten to 20 years from now, it is important for the Fraternity's historical committee and or the Oracle Editor to have an idea who, what, where and when events were happening in photographs.

A good caption adds context, perspective and relevance. A good caption will also add information that is not in the picture or in the story, making the entire journalistic package more compelling.

### **Captions for all pictures**

Remember to include caption information for all pictures submitted to Omega publications. If the picture is emailed, attach the information to the email.

Captions can also be embedded into your digital images through photo shop program's (file info) field, but you should submit a copy of the information with the story/because many brothers do not have photo shop type programs.

### **Tips for good picture captions**

1. Who, what, when, where and why (journalism's Five W) is a simple method one can use when writing complete picture captions.

Example: Former Grand Basileus Brother Tim Jones talked to the media at the Just Federal Building Monday, July 20, 2013. Brother Jones was found not guilty on all counts in his federal corruption trial in Little Rock.

Who: Brother Tim Jones, a former Grand Basileus  
 What: talked to the media  
 When: July 20, 2013  
 Where: Just Federal Building in Little Rock  
 Why: found not guilty on all counts of his corruption trial

2. Identify subjects: Always identify subjects from left to right. Also expand the context of the photograph by providing extra information such as (national/district office, member's home chapter and years of service in the Fraternity).

### **Example 1:**

***Omega's former national photographers James Witherspoon (7<sup>th</sup> District), John Williams (10<sup>th</sup> District), Manny McCrae (3<sup>rd</sup> District), and Reginald Braddock (12<sup>th</sup>***

*District) stand together as they view their photographic work presented in a special exhibition at the Omega National Museum in Washington, D.C. on July 17, 2011.*

*Grand Basileus Robert Woodson also presented the four Omega men with the Fraternity's "Gold Medal of the Arts" award at an evening ceremony on Saturday, July 20, 2011. This year marks the Fraternity's 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary.*

3. Quotes also help give the picture relevance, which is not always clear to the reader.

**Example 2:**

*"It's great honor to receive this award during the Fraternity's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary" said Brother John Williams. Brother Williams, one of Omega's legendary photographers was presented with Omega Psi Phi's "Gold Medal of Arts" award at the Omega National Museum on Saturday, July 20, 2011 in Washington, D.C. Williams from the 10<sup>th</sup> District was appointed as Omega's Official National Photographer in 1973.*

4. Do not point out the obvious by using such phrases as looks on, is shown and pictured above.  
Also don't use gestures, Yeah.
5. Don't editorialize: The caption writer should never make assumptions about what someone in a picture is thinking.
6. Continue the story begun by the picture: make a caption mini-news story.

Example (poor): Brother Tim Johnson gets ready for practice.

Example (good): Brother Tim Johnson prepares for his afternoon dance practice. "Since I won the state ballroom dancing competition last year," he said, "I look forward to practice because I want to win again." Brother Johnson, a 30-year Omega Life member has been involved in ballroom dancing throughout the state of Michigan for over five years. Johnson, a professor of dance at the University of Michigan practices at the Ann Arbor campus' dance studio.

7. Be specific: Supply concrete details for each caption:

Example (poor): Brother Whitman jumps and throws toward first.

Example (good): Brother Steve Whitman avoids a rolling slide and makes the throw to first base to complete the ninth inning double play. Whitman's throw sealed Omega's 3-2 win over the Kappa's in the first round of the Fraternity Summer Baseball League Playoffs.

Brother Whitman, a member of Detroit's Nu Omega Graduate Chapter is a former All-American baseball player from Howard University. He now plays baseball throughout the summer with other fraternal organizations in the Detroit area.

## **Preparing a story for the Oracle (EXAMPLES)**

### Simple steps for beginning to write an Oracle story

- \*Our first mission is to tell the reader about “The Great Omega Story” through our words.
- \*Before beginning to write one line for an Oracle story, try to let artful word combinations and or the subject’s words recreate the event.
- \*Sometimes write the basic information about the story, then write the (top or lead).
- \*Other times simply write the lead first, then the body of the story.
- \* Also re-edit the story several times, changing the lead and rewriting the body of the story.

### **Feature story example:**

A pair of long dark-hued hands gently touched the light colored pearl piano keys. Almost simultaneously fingers quickly tapped the ebony keys, softly producing a celestial musical prelude that set the mood.

The lights in the church’s sanctuary were dimmed, but rays of light beamed when the performers’ voice harmoniously soothe the ears of an audience of over 1500 people.

Grammy Award Winner Darius Brooks was the featured performer at Rho Gamma Gamma Chapter’s Purple and Gold Gospel Explosion on March 18, 2006. Brooks joined four other gospel choirs for the Omega event that was held at the Christ Universal Temple Church on Chicago’s south side.

The opening performance was delightfully presented by the youthful sound of the Saint Aibie Children’s Choir. Their songs were pure and clear as their young faces radiated with a spiritual glow.

The twenty voices from the Mighty Warriors Choir echoed from the 200-foot church ceiling as they began singing, “I got to move in the right way.... Heaven is my goal.”

### **A news story example—that begins with the keynote speaker’s words (a quote).**

“We are here to recognize members of our great Fraternity as well as the members of the community who are striving to make a difference in the lives of Black people,” said Brother Warren Lee.

Brother Lee, Omega’s First Vice Grand Basileus spoke at Rho Gamma Gamma Graduate Chapter’s annual Founders Day and Achievement Week Celebration. Over 70 Omega men neatly fit into their black tuxedos on November 19<sup>th</sup> for the evening event.

Eleven of Rho Gamma Gamma’s new Omega men were also presented with their new Fraternity pins at the Founders Day and Achievement Week Celebration held at Chicago’s downtown Hyatt Regency Hotel. Chicago’s NBC-TV reporter, Brother Art Norman served as the event’s Master of Ceremony.

Brother Lee challenged the audience of 200 people to look up and leap out of their set condition. Omega’s Lee dramatized how a group of frogs were placed in a large container and because of negative thinking, the frogs were conditioned not to look up and leap out to become free.

## **Editing and rewriting an Oracle story**

### **First draft:**

On August 1, 2006, Alpha Omega Rho Chapter (Denver) of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., volunteered for the 32nd Sickle Cell Disease Association of Colorado (SCDAC) Walk/Jog/Bike-A-Thon. Not only did the chapter volunteer, but also they were an official co-sponsor of the event-this was achieved by the chapter donating \$500. An additional \$100 was donated by a couple of other brothers. Several other Black Greek Letter Organization (BGLO), as part of the NPHC of Denver, were available to assist with the setup of the Health Fair, the stage, music setup, the event tables and banners, and clean up.

As most of you know, Sickle Cell primarily affects people in the Black community. Here's information from the SCDAI website about the Trait "Sickle Cell Disease (African-Americans) 1:500 births, (Caucasians) 1:58,140 births.

The weather was pretty bad this year with the rain. So, the public participation was not vast, with a couple of hundred showing up to walk, jog, or bike in the beautiful Denver Riverfront Park.

### **Rewritten and edited version**

Alpha Omega Rho Graduate Chapter joined the Sickle Cell Disease Association of Denver as co-sponsors of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Walk, Jog and Bike-A-Thon on August 1, 2006.

Hundreds of people including members of the National PanHellenic Council served as volunteers for the event's health fair. Many bikers, runners and walkers braved the Saturday morning rain held at Denver's beautiful Riverfront Park.

The purpose of the chapter's social action event was to raise funds and the awareness of the sickle cell disease that dramatically affects the African-American community nation-wide.

According to the Sickle Cell Disease Association of Denver, the disease affects 1 out of 500 African-American babies in the United States. The disease affects only 1 out of 58,000 white newborns.

***Note: you can get basic information about the sickle cell disease from their website, or the director/spokes person at the event. Always try to personalize your stories with solid quotes from people on the scene.***

"We want to bring the focus of this disease to the forefront in the Denver community," said Brother James Johnson, Alpha Omega Rho's chapter social action chairman. Brother Johnson also said that because his chapter has an on-going commitment for find a cure for the sickle cell disease, the chapter has donated \$500 for the event. Alpha Omega Rho Chapter has over 200 members, and is located in the Greater Denver area.

***Note: again always try to get quotes from Omega brothers and other public officials at events.***

## MULTIMEDIA REPORTING AND SOFTWARE

Multimedia is the mixture of text and graphics with motion and sound, including video, audio, animation and still photographs.

Today, many publications, radio and TV stations are building multimedia projects to connect with a growing consumer base that now obtain their information through the Internet. Reporters are presenting more stories through audio reporting and online blogs. Video and audio reports are also featured with graphic illustrations and photograph galleries. Also multimedia reporting is used by many publications as a secondary and or a new method to report the story featuring live sound/video.

Some of new multi-media products that you should be familiar with if you would like to feature Podcast interviews and or video on your chapter's website or design an interactive newsletter.

### Some the special software includes:

- a. **Audacity Sound Editing** (a free program) for editing voice and music. Another program is Adobe Sound booth with is generally part of an Adobe Master Collection.
- b. **For editing video**---Mac-platform (Final Cut pro X or Final Cut Express)—for PC's (Adobe Premiere Pro) keep in mind both of theses program are the professional program with a high learning curves and expense (around \$300). You can get less expensive programs from your video camera software, or from the web free, but theses are the best. Please also check out Photo elements (priced at around \$80).
- c. **Newsletters/Design**--If you are designing your chapter newsletter, you can use your Word program under newsletter templates, but the program has design limits. A better design program for your newsletter is Publisher. A more advanced design program is InDesign. InDesign is more expensive with all the major bells and whistles. The Oracle is designed using the InDesign software.
- d. **Website designing**—Some free website design application includes: [www.Weebly.com](http://www.Weebly.com); [WWW.Wix.com](http://WWW.Wix.com) and Word press. You can then order a domain name through [www.godaddy.com](http://www.godaddy.com)
- e. **Picture editing programs**—The most popular photo-editing program is Abode Photoshop. You also use Abode Bridge that couples with Photoshop. You can get a less expensive photo editing (gallery type program) like the free Picasa ([www.picasa.com](http://www.picasa.com)). Light room is also a good photo program, but I recommended it for professionals during high-end work.
- f. **Word/grammar correction program**—One of the more popular word correct and grammar check program is called **Grammarly**. You can try it out as a trial for 10 days. It cost around (\$90), but it is well worth it. ([www.grammarly.com](http://www.grammarly.com))

Information prepared by the Editor of the Oracle, Bro. Milbert O. Brown, Jr.



## OMEGA PSI PHI GUIDE TO WRITING PRESS RELEASES

*Prepared and written by Brother Glenn Rice, Assistant Editor of the Oracle*

*Sometimes the news media can seem like an impenetrable fortress. A racist one at that, you might say, after unsuccessfully trying to get our fraternity's news into your local newspaper or aired on a radio, television or cable station. The black press, it might seem, is sometimes even unwilling to publish gratis news items, demanding instead a fee for publication of what seems legitimate news of use to the community at large. And, when the! @\$%^&\* Print something; too often they screw it up, making errors large or small. The media only seem to want "negative" news...*

Sometimes the above scenarios have some truth to them. Maybe you've lived one of the situations described here. The news media can sometimes be thickheaded or unwilling to consider submissions from quarters outside their Eurocentric comfort zones. Sometimes, they are even racist.

There's hope however. It's not impossible to get Q" P<j> news delivered to a larger audience; it does help, though, to learn a couple PR tricks of the trade. The following brief guide is intended to offer a few publicity tips to aid chapters in efforts to access the media. It's organized into Do's-and Don'ts. The following advice is gleaned from an insider's decade spent in the media business. Please take it in the spirit given. Good luck.

### DO'S

- **Explain our organization.** Never forget that general society (read many, if not most, non-African Americans) have no idea what Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. is about. Mention fraternity and they think about the movie "Animal House." Mention Pan-Hell and they think of a church sermon about damnation. Many white college graduates aren't even aware that people remain affiliated with Greek-letter organizations after graduation. Your chances of getting published or aired are much better if you include a paragraph or two explaining what Omega is about, what it does, where it does it, the volunteer nature of our efforts to reach back, etc.
- **Remember- timing is everything.** The black press traditionally has thrived on running articles about events that have already occurred. The mainstream press generally frowns on after-the-fact coverage. To put it bluntly: they don't care if it's already occurred. Chances are much better to gain publicity or press coverage of an event that's still to come. So, send out press kits in advance – not too far in advance or too close to an event date. The former means your materials likely to get lost before the event; the latter means it may be too late to schedule it for publication. About two weeks in advance of an event's usually about right. A reminder phone call to assignment editors *early in the workday* about 3-7 days before the event doesn't hurt. Try not to call in the afternoon or evening; that's when deadlines bear down and journalists are most distracted.

- **Proclaim news, news, news.** A chicken dinner is likely not news. Volunteering to help youth may well be newsworthy. Chances of publication are much better if we seek to publicize events or activities that the general public would find interesting. How many people besides Pan-Hell folk really care how many new brothers go through intake (unless one or more of them are famous)? People would be more interested in our scholarship fund-raising or other philanthropic, community building activities.
- **KISS.** You know what this means. "Kiss it simple..." Nothing will get a press release File 13'd faster than leading it with a paragraph that goes something like "The grand and illustrious, noble, enlightened brethren of..." Write like that, journalists smell a BS job and are likely not to read further. Simple, declarative prose shorn of superfluous verbiage works best toward your goal of gaining publicity.
- **Write like a journalist.** You don't have to be Hemingway, but keep in mind some basics of effective writing. Use simple, short sentences in active voice that move quickly to a point. Keep paragraphs short. For that matter, keep the entire press release short. One page is ideal; three is pushing the limit of editors' time and endurance. Use your spell-checker and watch your grammar. Use simple words, not the eight-syllable ones that win points with college professors. Lastly, put the most important facts or news first in a press release. Don't bury the excitement by trying to build up to a grand conclusion. Think of the article as an inverted pyramid-the base, or widest part, with the most information, should be at the top, not bottom.
- **W,W,W,W,W,H:** This is the acronym for the basic rule of writing news. It describe what most people most likely want to know when reading/watching the news. **Who** did something? **What** happened? **Where** did it happen? **Why** did it happen? **When** did it happen? And **how** did it happen? Answer those questions and you've likely covered the important bases.

## DON'TS

- **Don't be bellicose.** Write a press release or cover letter excoriating the media for its perceived racial bias and you'll pretty much guarantee non-coverage. Sound basic? It happens – often. Nobody wants to read a letter requesting publicity that begins: "Although your publication normally only prints negative news about African-Americans, perhaps you'll consider running this item..." Uh, uh. It won't happen. The Norman Vincent Peale- esque "positive thinking" approach will work a lot better.
- **Lapse into inside baseball.** See the point above under dos about the need to explain things to a general audience, not an audience of college-educated African-Americans. It's worth repeating here: explain whom we are and what we are trying to do. Phrases like "Pan-Hellenic" or "Basileus" are apt to confuse editors, not to mention the general public.

Making the News: a reference guide for community, civic and fraternal organizations.

### **Why a reference guide?**

Imagine you're surrounded by a dozen children, and each one of them wants your undivided attention. That's what the typical reporter or editor faces each day. But journalists need you and your organization; they must hear from you in order to present issues as accurately and as fairly as possible. And community groups need journalists to get their information out at little or no cost.

So how can you catch the fleeting attention of a reporter or editor for your program, event or story idea? You don't need contacts in high places. You just need creativity and energy, and to be quick, concise, and convincing. Like one of those dozen children, you need to demonstrate why you should get more attention than the others.

This guide will give you simple explanations of the most widely used methods for communicating with the media, and clear examples of those methods put to use.

Beyond that, you should develop a relationship with at least one person at each of your local media outlets, and representatives from your local minority journalism association. Just as journalists are obligated to get the story right, you should feel obligated to seeing that they have the best information to start with. This guide, Making News, will help you do that.

### **The Basics: 6 Steps to Generate Coverage**

To increase the chances that your story gets covered, follow these steps.

#### **1. Decide What Kind of Coverage You Want**

If you simply want to inform the public about an upcoming event, send out your information to those news organizations that routinely list upcoming events in community calendar format. For radio or television, also consider sending a public service announcement.

If you want to stir up public action on a community issue, like poor public housing conditions, for instance, then you need a more sophisticated approach. Besides sending out a news release, hold a news conference in front of a dilapidated housing project to show the conditions there. Present statistics on violations of safety and fire codes and crime.

## **2. Find a News Angle**

Make sure what you are pitching stories that has some news value, and connect it to an event or issue that is in the news or will make news. It could be as common as a battle over a zoning change or a fund-raising drive for a homeless family. It would help if you show something that strikes a nerve, like demonstrating that the zoning battle will affect a wide segment of the community, or that the family was living in a middle-class suburb for nine months before a parent's illness wiped out their savings. That reminds people of the precarious nature of their lives, no matter what their economic standing.

### **What makes a story 'newsworthy?'**

1. It's new, fresh, different or trendy.
2. It's timely.
3. It's unusual.
4. it's able to arouse deep human emotions --love, hate, fear, that people can identify with. The closing of a long-standing neighborhood diner. A neighborhood project that brings together feuding teenagers.
5. It's of broad interest to consumers, investors, workers.

## **3. Determine Which News Outlets to Approach, and How to Approach Them**

Host people want coverage by the major metropolitan dailies and network television. Don't ignore weekly community papers and smaller broadcast radio and television outlets, which are more likely to use your material. Read, watch and study as many local news organizations as you can. Know which ones are more likely to champion the underdog in case where someone got a raw deal. Also learn to link reporters' names with certain kinds of stories. If you're still in search of the right person, call the newsroom for assistance in locating the person who is most likely cover the area of your story: the "'Neighborhood'" editor or the "'City Hall'" bureau, for example.

## **4. Call the Appropriate Person**

If the story is about a certain neighborhood, call a reporter who covers that area. Call the sports editor, not the city editor, For a sports-related story. Also, consider calling the columnists, who are paid for their opinions and can advocate your cause. When pitching an idea to television stations, make sure there is some visual element to your story. Television stations often need news on weekends or holidays; your event has a better chance of coverage if it's held on a three-day weekend.

## 5. Watch Your Timing

To ensure your chances of coverage, select a good time and day for your event:

\* Avoid scheduling the event on a day when some other major event is happening, like an election. Instead, consider scheduling it on a weekend or holiday.

\* For newspapers, schedule your event in the morning, so reporters have plenty of time to meet deadline.

\* If your event is visual, such as a large demonstration, consider scheduling it during the evening hours when local news is broadcast, so the event can be covered live. If you aim for live, on-air coverage, make sure your spokesperson is articulate and succinct.

## 6. Be Prepared for Coverage

Before alerting the media, be prepared to handle reporters. If your event requires a press pass or ticket for admission, have them ready. If you have a speech, make a text of it available to reporters. Have the right spokesperson on hand to answer questions. Make sure someone is available after hours. A pager can be especially helpful in making yourself readily available to reporters.

Let's look at how you get news coverage of your organization's activity. You can consider this over the time spectrum: before, during and after an event. We'll also look at the bigger picture of how you get acquainted with the news media professionals in your community.

### The Associated Press Daybook

By alerting the Associated Press wire service about your event, you can alert dozens of other local news outlets at the same time. Don't use the daybook as a substitute for contacting media outlets individually; while it is an effective way of encouraging blanket coverage, it's still important to make a direct contact. The daybook reaches radio and television stations and all large and small daily newspapers that subscribe to the AP. Assignment and city editors throughout each region usually check it each day. To get an item on the AP daybook in your area, call the nearest Associated Press bureau.

When you call the local bureau, ask to put an item on the daybook, and have a fax prepared to send immediately.

## **Community Calendars**

Most news outlets WILL be interested in:

1. Fund-raising events held by non-profit groups for charities and other worthy causes.
2. Fairs, lectures, films, seminars, workshops, dances, concerts and meetings of general interest to the outlet's audience that are open to the public. In most cases, the event must also be free, or of minimal cost.

Most outlets WILL NOT be interested in:

1. Notices of regular organizational meetings
2. Meetings or events that are closed to the public
3. Events that involve a large admission cost

## **The Public Service Announcement (PSA)**

A PSA is a brief announcement broadcast on radio or television stations as a public service. There is no charge for the broadcast, however the service is typically reserved for not-for-profit organizations. Contact the public service director at your radio or TV station about your organization, the services it provides and the best ways to promote it.

You must send your produced (finished version) PSA to the station at least a month before you want it to air

## **The Media Advisory**

A Media Advisory is a notice that informs local media of an upcoming event. It should be sent out at least a week before the event is to take place.

It should be very brief and simple, containing only the most pertinent information, because you're simply trying to attract them to report about your event.

## **EXAMPLE**

Here is the information for a community event.

Tomorrow Cyber visions will hold its third Cyber Day, an event that gives children between the ages 8 and 16 an opportunity to learn about the Internet. Members of Cyber visions, a student group of Chicano computer engineering majors at the University of Texas at Austin will teach children. The event will be held from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. in the computer labs in the Student Union on the university campus. The event is \$5 per child. The money will go to cover lunch costs. About 20 spaces are still open. For more information, call 555-555-5555. More than 200 children are expected to attend.

Here is the same information put into a media advisory:

THE NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION

Name of Contact Person:                   FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Telephone number:                         Date

MEDIA ADVISORY

EVENT: Cyber Day, annual Internet training session for children ages 8 - 16  
 WHEN: Saturday, Sept. 30, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 WHERE: Student Union, the University of Texas at Austin  
 SPONSOR: Cyber visions, a student group of Chicano computer engineering majors at the University of Texas at Austin.  
 DETAILS: 200 children are expected. 20 spaces are still open. Cost, \$5 per child, will cover lunch.  
 For more information, call 555-555-5555.

#####

### **The News Release**

A news release announces or reports an event that is taking place. It answers the typical media questions: who, what, when, where, why and how. Emphasize the 'why;' it can convince a harried editor that your event is worth reporting.

Keep the release as short as possible. Releases for most major events, like fairs or rallies, can be told in one page. Major stories or issues may take more space. If the release is more than one page, type 'more' at the bottom of the first page, and put 2-2-2-2 at the top of the second page (and 3-3-3-3 and so on). Indicate the end by *typing* '#####' on the final page.

Whenever possible, address your release to an individual. If you don't know the appropriate editor or reporter, call in advance to learn his or her name. For this, you can call the city editor at major daily newspapers, the news editor at television stations and the news director at radio stations.

Calling in advance will help you direct your release to the proper person, and will help you tailor your efforts to meet that person's deadline, and just may win you a valuable ally in publicizing your organization's activities.

Mail your release at least two weeks before your event. Follow up that effort with a telephone call to make sure the release was received. For television and radio, call three days before the event. For newspapers, call a week ahead.

To write a news release, start with the most important information in the first paragraph, and include other details in each succeeding paragraph.

**EXAMPLE**

Here is the information for an event:

Great Expectations is planning to hold a Masquerade Ball on October 30th to raise funds to give to 50 graduating high school seniors throughout the metropolitan Detroit area. The ball, held from 6 p.m. until 1 a.m. at the Mayfair Hotel downtown, is expected to raise more than \$250,000. Among those expected to attend are the Mayor and several members of the Detroit Pistons Entertainment will be provided by surprise celebrity guests and local children's chorales. Dinner will be served. Great Expectations planners say this will be the biggest event to date at least 900 people have bought tickets so far. They have held nine Masquerade balls in the last 9 years, and have given more than \$2 million to the scholarship program and \$1 million to Detroit students in general. Students will be awarded the \$4,000 scholarships at a special ceremony in January. Students must apply and enter an essay contest to win. Tickets are \$300 per couple, \$175 per individual. For additional information, call 555-5555-5555.

Here is the same information put into a news release format:

**THE NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION****NEWS RELEASE****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Name of Contact Person:**

**Telephone number:**

**Date:**

DETROIT - Tickets are available for the 10th Annual Great Expectations Masquerade Ball, a scholarship fund-raiser on Friday, Oct. 30, at the Mayfair hotel on Rosa Parks Boulevard in Northwest Detroit. Proceeds from Ball, which is expected to raise more than \$250,000, will go toward \$4,000 scholarships for dozens of high school seniors.

The event, which will be from 6 p.m. until 1 a.m., will feature entertainment from several local children's chorales and guest appearances from local celebrities. Other expected guests include the Mayor and several Detroit Pistons. Tickets, \$175 per individual and \$300 per couple, include the cost of dinner.

Scholarships will be awarded at a separate ceremony in January. To be considered for scholarships, and \$1 million toward educational programs for students in all levels.

For more information on the Ball and on the scholarship program, call 555-555-5555.



## **The News Packet**

A news packet can save reporters time in gathering background information about your event and your organization. In addition to the news release, a packet can include fact sheets or pamphlets on your organization, biographies of key people, photographs, texts of speeches, reproduced copies of previous press reports on your topic. Put materials together in a folder or simply paper clip them together, placing the news release on top.

## **News Conferences**

Sometimes your story requires more than just a news release. How do you know?

1. News conferences let you talk to all the media at once. This can be especially useful for breaking news stories when your spokesperson have time to answer calls from individual reporters throughout the day.
2. A news conference can also force news outlets to cover your story to prevent their competition from getting exclusive coverage of your story. Also, news conferences are often visual, and therefore useful to television stations.

### Tips for a Successful News Conference

1. Send a release to news organization announcing the news conference at least a day in advance.
2. Schedule your news conference in the morning--between 9 and 11 a.m. is best.
3. Select a place large enough to accommodate from 30 to 50 people. Make sure it has multiple outlets for electronic equipment.
4. Pick one or two spokespersons to make official statements. They should be knowledgeable about your news development to field questions completely.
5. Designate a press liaison who makes sure the media have accurate information. He or she should hand out news releases and steer media representatives to the spokespersons.
6. Start on time. Limit presentations to 10 minutes; allow 20 minutes for questions.
7. Prepare a written statement and try not to deviate from it. That statement, or a shortened version, should be handed out with a news release.

Be careful not to overuse this technique; reporters will be less likely to cover future news conferences if the earlier ones were unnecessary.

## Pitching stories

Here is how you can get the media to focus on something important in your community, but that is not centered on a specific event. If you know of someone who is doing something good, or of an issue that should be made public, don't keep it to yourself! News doesn't have to be serious, controversial or negative to be worth covering. It can be humorous, unique, or simply an unusual way of coping with what otherwise is a normal situation.

Contact the city editor of your newspaper or the news director of your radio or television station. When you call, be very brief and to the point. Follow the news release format and jot down pertinent information ahead of time to refer to it during your conversation. Be prepared to be interviewed by a reporter on the spot. If you send a note, follow the news release format. Your note should be no more than a few paragraphs long.

Here are some ways to know if an issue or a person might warrant coverage.

- \* If there is a trend in an industry or a group of people. (For example, a steep drop in the number of students suspended from school for disciplinary reasons.)
- \* If you think a continuous news story is missing a certain perspective. (For example, in an article about the city budget battle, one small reference is made to potential cuts in funding for the upkeep of community centers. It makes sense to pitch a story on one local center, showing how it would miss the money.)
- \* If you want to know why something is the way it is. (For example, why does an abandoned car remain a blight on a street for weeks, when officers are seen doling out tickets in the area daily?)
- \* If you think a person goes above and beyond the call of duty (a librarian who holds free weekly English tutoring sessions).

## Talking to Reporters and Editors

Some tips:

1. Before you call, make sure your story is so important that it can't be handled through a news release alone. One of the best ways to judge is to observe the types of stories that get major coverage in that outlet.
2. Do your homework; be prepared to demonstrate why your story is newsworthy.
3. Know which reporter or editor is responsible for that type of story. If you're unsure, call the organization's newsroom and speak with a member of staff. Find out when the outlet's deadlines are.
4. If your story is not immediate, consider writing a letter to the specific reporter or editor first.
5. When you call, immediately state who you are and why you are calling. Refer to your letter if you sent one.

6. Get to the point. Be prepared to be interviewed on the spot.
7. If you are interviewed, state your key points first.
8. To increase your chances of being quoted, use bold, descriptive language. Keep sentences short and simple.
9. Be honest and candid. If you don't know an answer, say so, but offer to help the reporter find out more.
10. Don't assume the reporter knows the topic. Restate key points for emphasis.
11. If the interview is on TV, look at the reporter, not the camera.

**In your own words:**

**Letters, Editorials, Public Affairs Shows**

**Letters:**

Letters to the editor are often the quickest, easiest and most widely used method for ordinary citizens to get their ideas published.

**Tips for Letters:**

1. Type on 8-1/2 by 11-inch paper, double-spaced. Include your name, address and phone number.
2. Be brief.
3. Make your letter as newsworthy as a press release. A letter does not have to respond to a published story. It can be on any topic that might interest readers in general. (If it responds to a published story, send it promptly.)
4. Be creative. If the subject lends itself, try to be catchy, or humorous if appropriate.
5. Stick to the facts and the issues. Avoid personal attacks.
6. Don't send the same letter to more than one publication.

**Radio and Television Editorials**

Broadcast outlets occasionally air guest editorials by individuals, usually in response to a station editorial. Many stations encourage rebuttal viewpoints. You can get on the air by calling the editorial director or producer. Most stations tend to favor editorials from spokespersons representing established and reputable organizations. If selected, be prepared to go the station for taping. Prepare what you want say in advance. Be accurate and concise. Stick to the facts and issues. Be creative.

**Talk Shows and Public Affairs Programming**

You or your group may seek a guest appearance on a local talk show, news or feature magazine show or on-location public-affairs show. Watch and listen to various shows to determine which ones are more likely to have you as a guest. Write a letter to the show's producer (not the host) preferably a month before you want to appear. State why your story would interest that show's audience. You must "sell" your position the same way you would sell it to editors in a news release. Call the producer a few days after he or she should have received your letter.

## **Lodging Complaints**

News organizations generally aim to be fair and accurate in their news coverage. But sometimes journalists make mistakes. If you believe a story contains factual inaccuracies, contact the organization immediately, even if they seem to be minor mistakes. Bringing mistakes to the attention of a news organization may prevent them from happening again. Here are some ways to lodge a complaint:

1. Determine exactly what is wrong with the story. It is inaccurate, is it biased, or incomplete? Prepare evidence to back your argument.
2. Call the reporter first. State your problem, but don't automatically assume it was the reporter's fault. Listen to his or her perspective.
3. If you believe the story was inaccurate or misleading, ask for a correction, clarification or retraction.
4. Write a letter to the editor.
5. If these measures still do not solve the problem, contact the organization's management. At newspapers, try to speak with the city or supervising editor, the managing editor or executive editor or the publisher. At broadcast outlets, ask for the news or public affairs directors, or the station managers.

## **General Do's and Don'ts**

Some tips for building and keeping good media relations: Do: Give as much information as possible.

Do: Double check times and addresses; give directions if necessary.

Don't exaggerate; you will lose credibility. Let the facts speak for themselves. If you want to state opinions, attribute them to somebody or use direct quotes.

Don't: Promise something you cannot deliver (listing celebrities

if they have not confirmed they will be there).

Do: Cultivate relationships with reporters and editors in both

print and broadcast media.

Don't: Badger reporters or editors. If they want to pursue the

story, they will call you back.

Do: Always list a contact person and contact telephone number.

Don't: Lie; if you do, you're certain to destroy a crucial link to the coverage you want.

Do: Have people on hand to deal with media inquiries during your event.

Do: Consider how you can make your event or issues appeal to the masses.

Don't try to spin the story. Good reporters will get both sides of a story, and trying to hide something will encourage them to seek it out with even more determination.

Don't: Ask a reporter to read a story a copy of the story in advance of its publication. .

Do: Consider yourself a resource. You may be asked to help with issues related to your organization's events.

## **ORACLE MAGAZINE EDITORIAL GUIDLINES 2014**

The Oracle is the official publication of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. This publication is charged with providing a quality membership magazine, which is representative of the high standards of the organization, and contains substantive and informative materials for its readers. The magazine was first published in 1919, with Brother Stanley M. Douglass (Alpha Chapter, 1915) serving as the first Editor of “The Oracle.”

### **ALL Chapter Materials Must Be Sent to the District Director of Public Relations**

All articles and pictures must be delivered via email to the District Director of Public Relations (DDPR). All items must reach the DDPR before each district’s set deadline. The DDPR duties include gathering all information from undergraduate and graduate chapter within his district.

After, the DDPR does the initial editing of received district materials; he then advances his district’s information to the Office of the Editor of the Oracle.

Email: [Editortotheoracle@opph.org](mailto:Editortotheoracle@opph.org)

### **SUBMITTING MATERIALS TO THE DDPRs (before advancing info to the Editor to the Oracle**

Please establish a slug (District, title, chapter) with all articles and photographs. This makes it easier to search for each District’s materials.

**Examples—Articles:** (10<sup>th</sup> District-Fatherhood-Delta Iota); (10<sup>th</sup> District-Omega Chapter-Bro. Mike Brown) and **Photographs:** (10<sup>th</sup> District-Social Action-Delta Alpha. Jpg)

**Labeling the second picture from the same story/series:**

(10<sup>th</sup> District-Social Action-Delta Alpha-2. Jpg)

### **FORMAT FOR ARTICLES**

All articles should be in Microsoft Word format, 12pt font, with Times New Roman font. Also, each article should include a simple title, name of the chapter, the city and state.

Each written piece should include the name and contact information (number, email) of the reporter.

All articles should be single-spaced and ready for editing before the stated deadline. Articles should be no more than 500 words in length.

### **CONTENT**

Articles should highlight the importance of the mission of the Fraternity, the District, and or a chapter.

The content should present topics including: community service programs, fatherhood initiatives, mentorship programs, and all mandated programs.

Other articles should also feature: achievement/recognition by Omega men, leadership conferences, and Brothers who joined Omega Chapter.

Still, other material could include stories about financial, health, or policy issues as it relates to Black men and the membership.

Undergraduate chapters are encouraged to submit articles featuring their outstanding activities on or off campus.

## **STYLE**

Start news releases and articles with a dateline, which includes: Name of the city and state, e.g. (WASHINGTON, D.C.).

Capitalize Chapter when used in conjunction with the name of a chapter, e.g. Nu Omega Chapter. All other references to chapter should be lowercase.

When the word "Fraternity" is used to refer to Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., the letter "F" should be capitalized.

Avoid personal opinions and editorial statements.

A maximum of three articles per chapter will be allowed per publication edition. To improve chapter articles, more than two related short article items could be combined into a single story.

All articles must be reviewed for clarity, correct spelling, grammatical perfection, and proper syntax. Also, submitted materials should be scanned for viruses prior to submission.

The Editorial Board reserves the right to reject any article or to make editorial changes deemed appropriate.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Pictures must be in a digital format. If you need to use older printed pictures e.g. (for Omega Chapter Brothers) you must scan the image into a digital format by flat bedding it from your printer. In some cases we can use scanned PDF files.

All pictures should be saved as JPEG files, *with a 300 dpi resolution if at all possible.*

Photographs should be sent as single attachments. PLEASE do not embed pictures into word documents.

Do not permit individuals to be photographed in attire that is inappropriate. Fraternity paraphernalia with canine (dog) references, lewd images, and profanity themes is considered inappropriate attire, and has no place in our beloved publication, the Oracle.

Also photographs of brothers “throwing up the hooks,” tongues out, or wearing gold boots (other than a step-show competition) will not be accepted.

Do not have pictures that are taken with subjects in front with a cluttered background. Move the subjects to a suitable background.

Avoid taking pictures of large groups. Limit your group to 10 to 12 people. In some cases, a chapter picture often has over 30 people. Avoid submitting chapter pictures for the Oracle, but look for a different method of telling the story rather than having people holding certificates, and standing in a large group. The best picture often requires advance thinking.

When a photograph exceeds five people, indicate the notable speaker (s), and state appropriate names and titles.

Photographs of Omega’s Supreme Council, District officers, Chapter officers (past and present) should be listed in the photograph caption. Also included should be each person’s name, the title of the elected or appointed office.

Each photograph selected to the Oracle should include a detail caption. Each caption should include: Who, What, Where, When, Why and sometimes how. The five “W”s is basic method of presenting journalistic information and newswriting. ***PLEASE SEE PAGE 12-13 FOR MORE DETAILED CAPTION WRITING EXAMPLES.***

All captions should be submitted with the image(s) in a separate word document, or with the related article. When possible, all digital images should include the caption information in the digital files’ metadata.



### **Brother Milbert O. Brown, Jr., International Editor of the Oracle**

**Milbert O. Brown, Jr.** seemed destined to have a career in journalism. As a shy second grader, Brown told his parents that he aspired to become a reporter after writing his first story featuring President John F. Kennedy. His teacher, Ms. Piggy assigned Brown as the classroom reporter to improve his confidence. The Gary, Indiana native later purchased his first camera by selling Grit newspapers to his neighbors. By age 12, he was photographing and writing about his family—later the world.

One of Brown's first major Omega influences was his fifth grader teacher, Vernon G. Smith. Smith drove a purple car and he had some funny looking yellow symbols attached to the front of the car. During class, one day, Brown would learn that those funny symbols were Greek letters, and that Mr. Smith was something called a Que. Nine years after his initial exposure to Omega, 19-year old, Brown was initiated into Omega Psi Phi through Upsilon Beta chapter at Ball State University in May 1976. One of the highlights of his early Omega experience was during his second week as a member of the Lampados Club. He met Omega royalty, Grand Basileus Judge Marion C. Garnett and Brother Burnel E. Coulon, the Tenth District Representative.

In the mid-70s, he entered Ball State University, and worked on the college newspaper from the start as a designer, writer and photographer. He graduated in 1978, with a B.S. in Journalism. Later, he taught high school journalism before accepting a graduate scholarship to Ohio University's prestigious School of Visual Communication. After completing his Master of Arts degree in 1982, Brown embarked on a career in journalism that spanned over two decades.

During his distinguished career, he served as a newspaper visual editor, photojournalist, and as a public affairs writer for several public information agencies. His career afforded him the opportunity to work at some of the best newspapers including: the *Chicago Tribune*, *Boston Globe*, and the *Washington Post*. While at the Tribune, he shared the **Pulitzer Prize in Journalism for Explanatory Reporting** as a contributing staff member in 2001.

Of the hundreds of assignments Brown has covered during his journalism career, the two most notable is his coverage of South Africa's first all-race election and the subsequent inauguration of Nelson Mandela as the President of South Africa in 1994. During his month-long reporting in South Africa he was member of the Foreign Correspondents Association. Later, Brown was one of six U.S. journalists selected by a joint committee from the National Association of Black Journalists and the United Nations to cover Liberia's presidential elections as a 2005 United Nations Overseas Reporting Fellow.

Brother Brown first served on the Oracle Editorial Board in 1998, as the Tenth District Director of Public Relations. On the chapter level, Brother Brown was his undergraduate chapter's (Upsilon Beta) historian. On the graduate level he was the chapter photographer for (Chi Kappa Intermediate Chapter); Rho Gamma Gamma Graduate Chapter's chapter reporter, and Vice-Basileus. Because of his outstanding work, the chapter and the Tenth District selected him as the "Omega Man of the Year." He also was the recipient of the Tenth District's Citizen of the Year Award, the Stanley Douglas Editor Award, and the Langston Hughes Writing Award. Recently, Tau Pi presented Brother Brown with the "Founders Stand-In Award," during the graduate chapter's 2013 Achievement Week.

Of all of his many awards, Brother Brown's most treasured honors are the "International Graduate Omega Man of the Year" (2000) and the "International Citizen of the Year" (2002) awards. Brother Brown was presented both awards at the Omega Grand National Conclaves. Brother Brown comes from a long-line of Omega men. Bro. Brown is one of 10 Omega men in his family including his brothers, Bro. Cedric L. Brown of Zeta Phi and Bro. Marvin C. Brown, Sr., of Eta Gamma.

Since leaving Chicago, the newspaper industry, and relocating to Maryland in 2009, he works as a multi-media consultant, and a college instructor. As a faculty member he teaches courses in design, multi-media, photography and reporting. Brother Brown is also a Decosta Graduate Scholar, and doctoral candidate (ABD) in Higher Education Leadership at Morgan State University. He is currently completing his dissertation that will examine are college Black males more successful if they are involved in a supportive minority male initiative (mentoring) program on campus.

Bro. Brown, a life member is an active member at Tau Pi Graduate Chapter (Columbia, MD). That early appointment as the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade reporter made an indelible impression on Brown, as it first prepared him to serve the Fraternity in a special way as the next International Editor of the Oracle.

**Brother Glenn E. Rice, International Assistant Editor of the Oracle**

Brother Glenn E. Rice was elected the 30th Eighth District Representative for the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. in May 2008, and served in that capacity until April 2010.

As District Representative, Rice supervised 39 graduate and undergraduate chapters in the Great Plains region. Those states include New Mexico, North and South Dakota, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Iowa. Furthermore, Rice served the region on the fraternity's Supreme Council.

Most recently, Rice served as the Marshal for the 2013, International Leadership Conference held in Kansas City, Missouri. The conference, which is held every other year, provides training emphasizing the Fraternity's global mission of community service, philanthropy, youth mentoring, economic development and career development.

In addition, Brother Rice serves as chairman of the Fraternity's Public Relations and Communications Committee. Through this committee Brother Rice works to promote the good works of Omega externally and internally, as well as effectively manage and protect the Omega brand. During a 45-day period, Rice served as the interim Grand Keeper of Records and Seal.

Before be elected the Eighth District Representative, Brother Rice served three one-year terms as the Eighth District Keeper of Records and Seal. He also has served on various international committees and facilitated a variety of fraternal workshops. Brother Rice severed separate terms as chairman of the district's Scholarship and Reclamation committees.

As a member of Omicron Xi chapter, Brother Rice served as Vice-Basileus and currently is chairman of the chapter's Scholarship Committee. Before that, he served six terms as chapter Keeper of Records and Seal as well as Keeper of Finance and Editor to the Oracle. He was initiated into the Fraternity on Sept. 20, 1996 and is life member 6797.

Rice has been a reporter for *The Kansas City Star* since 1988. He currently reports on law enforcement and the legal system and county government for the Missouri desk of The Star.

Rice graduated from Central Missouri State University in 1986 earning bachelor's degrees in journalism and political Science. He is a lifelong resident of Kansas City.

From August 1999, to July 2003, Rice served as the national treasurer for the National Association of Black Journalists. He also served two terms as Region 8 director and was a member of the NABJ board of directors. Most recently, Rice was chairman of the association's Elections Committee and was a member of its Finance Committee.

Rice has received numerous journalism, fraternal and community service awards. Brother Glenn Rice will serve as the International Assistant Editor of the Oracle beginning Summer 2014.

## ***Contact Information for Oracle Editors***

**Brother Milbert O. Brown, Jr. (International Editor of the Oracle)**

**Home address: 6406 Lochridge Rd. Columbia, Maryland 21044**

**312-303-7593 mobile\* (best number)**

**410-531-1116 home**

**Email: [editortotheoracle@oppf.org](mailto:editortotheoracle@oppf.org)**

**Other email: [oeditorbrown@gmail.com](mailto:oeditorbrown@gmail.com)**

**Brother Glenn Rice (International Assistant Editor of the Oracle)**

**Email: [glenric@gmail.com](mailto:glenric@gmail.com)**

**816-560-2543 mobile**