



Bill Stoller's

# Free Publicity

The Newsletter For PR-Hungry Businesses

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## A Publicity Insider's Success Story

### A Freelance Wish Reaps National Publicity

Fellow Publicity Insider, Gina Rubel combined her networking & PR acumen to score major publicity for her non-profit client by resourcefully working with a freelance writer. Let's see how she did it:

**Welcome Gina ! Who do you work for & what do you do?**

I am the owner and operator of Furia Rubel Communications ([www.furiarubel.com](http://www.furiarubel.com)). We are an integrated PR firm just outside of Philadelphia specializing in legal communications. We also work with nonprofit associations, school boards, authors, health care providers and a host of other service-based businesses.

**Can you tell us about your client?**

Twilight Wish Foundation ([www.twilightwishfoundation.org](http://www.twilightwishfoundation.org)) is a one-year-old nonprofit association that grants wishes to seniors under the poverty level to bring them joy and celebrate their contributions to life.

**What publication did you secure publicity in?**

Twilight Wish Foundation was featured in the October 19, 2004 *Family Circle* as a "Woman Who Makes a Difference."

**Tell us how you put Family Circle and the Twilight Wish Foundation together.**

The word began to spread very quickly about Twilight Wish Foundation, both locally and regionally, but we hadn't yet pitched a national outlet. Early in 2004, I met a woman, Leah Ingram, who is a freelance writer who focuses on life celebrations. Leah called me because she

wanted to learn more about the Bucks County Women's Business Forum. As Leah and I were talking, I invited her to attend our next meeting, and told her I'd like to introduce her to Foundation Director Cass Forkin, who would be a perfect candidate for a celebratory feature in a magazine like *Family Circle* for which Leah freelances often.

It's just more proof that "you never know who you're going to meet." Please forgive the cliché but in this case, it is absolutely true.

**What type of materials did you send? Photos? Products?**

I directed Leah to the Foundation's website. With limited funds, we decided to use the website as a tool for communicating with all publics: donors, wish recipients, sponsors, volunteers, and of course, the media.

**What did the article look like?**

The article, titled "Women Who Make a Difference: Twilight Wishes Making Dreams Come True for Seniors," was beautiful. It had a very large photo of Cass surrounded by five volunteers all wearing branded T-shirts. The article continued two pages later with another full page of copy and a photo of Cass and our local Senator during at a Senior Celebration Event with two wish recipients.

**When the article appeared, what was the Foundaton's reaction?**

Cass called me the day the magazine hit the stands and told me she was elated. She immediately purchased 25 copies!

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## A Publicity Insider Success Story... *continued from page 1*

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**How has the article affected the Twilight Wish Foundation?**

**Within two weeks after the article appeared, Cass said she received inquiries from potential volunteers in 38 states who would like to start chapters!** Even two months after the magazine hit the stands, Cass is still receiving calls, letters and emails on a daily basis from people all across the country.

**Why is it important to work with freelancers?**

If you don't target freelancers, you're missing the boat. Most consumer magazines have long-standing relationships with freelancers with whom they rely for new ideas and great stories. Often people call the editor of a big magazine and send a pitch but it falls on deaf ears. That's because there are thousands of pitches a day and it's virtually impossible for any editor to be able to review every one. It's the freelancers who can walk the story directly in the door, they know what the editors are looking for, and they know how to sell (pitch) it so that the editor will give them the go ahead to write the story.

**How do you go about finding freelancers? How do you know what they're writing about?**

First and foremost is to know the target audience you're trying to reach with your story, and find the publications that reach those audiences. Then read those publications and find out who is writing for them. The Family Circle article featuring Twilight Wish Foundation states clearly, "Leah Ingram is a writer and book author in New Hope, Pennsylvania, who specializes in celebrations." It can't be any clearer than that.

A second way to locate freelance writers is to conduct an Internet search with the search terms, "freelance writer," then the magazine name(s) you'd like to target and the specific topic you'd like to cover. Freelance writing is a business and today, most freelancers maintain their own websites so it's not hard to locate them. It is, however, important to understand how they want to be contacted -- most will provide contact instructions on their sites. Since many freelance writers work from home, the typically don't like to receive telephone pitches and prefer email, snail mail or faxes.

A third way to locate freelance writers is to subscribe to a database service like Bacon's. It's not inexpensive but the returns are amazing. Just think what it would cost to run two full pages of advertising in Family Circle compared to having a two-page article published; not to mention the credibility factor that goes along with the publicity.

And finally, it's important to subscribe to industry newsletters such as Free Publicity because you never know who is going to be featured in the Partyline & Media Profile sections. It's inevitable that one of the contacts will eventually be the perfect person to contact with a story idea.



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