



Media Outreach for Chapters During Izaak Walton League 100th Anniversary

The national office can offer guidance and resources to help promote your chapter and the League's 100th anniversary with local media.

Available now

- Template for press outreach about the 100th anniversary
- 100th anniversary logo
- Two-page summary of the League's history
- 100th anniversary chapter resource page

Beginning in January 2022 and continuing, we will have:

- A short video that celebrates the League, its accomplishments, and our vision for the future
- Articles in each issue of *Outdoor America* about our history and vision for the future
- Weekly content on social media about the League's legacy
- A 100th anniversary celebration at our 2022 national convention
- 100th anniversary sales items available for purchase

Raising awareness through press outreach

Press outreach refers to working with journalists to get coverage in a newspaper, radio station, TV channel or other news media. There are no guarantees about results from press outreach, but media outlets want and need interesting local or regional stories to report. Each chapter and division has stories, insights and information that would interest local news consumers.

Build a relationship or at least awareness with local journalists

Now is a good time to start building relationships or awareness with the press, if you don't have those relationships already. This can be as simple as notifying local news media a few times a year about activities at your chapter or trends in outdoor recreation, stewardship, shooting or whatever is going on.

There is a great section in your Izaak Walton League Chapter Manual on communications and marketing with a lot of good tips about how to promote your chapter's activities and events. See Unit 6.

To capitalize on our 100th anniversary in 2022, you may want to compile a one-page history of your chapter. In the meantime, you should be promoting other events at your chapter, especially as COVID restrictions ratchet down, explaining that the League is involved in all types of outdoor activities. And as you do that, again, right now is not too soon to mention to reporters that in 2022 we're celebrating 100 years of protecting and enhancing the glory of outdoor America.

The goal of 100th anniversary press outreach: focus on past, present, future

This anniversary is really an opportunity to talk about our rich history, our current work and the role we can play in the future – in the next century of the League.

It's a reminder about the deep concern of the people who founded the League in Illinois in 1922, who were very passionate and motivated about protecting waterways and wild places for future generations. So we can touch on:

- The past – How your chapter and the League's legacy fit into your community's history
- The present – Raise awareness about the role your chapter now plays in the community
- And the future – The continuing, forward-looking role of your chapter in conservation, recreation, youth programs and so on

More specific story ideas to pitch: conservation, recreation, water quality, shooting sports, youth activities

Explain how your chapter and the League have been at the vanguard of conservation for many decades in terms of outdoor recreation, clean water programs, anti-litter campaigns or other specific programs your chapter has been involved in.

Invite reporters to an interesting event or meeting at your chapter that illustrates your role in the community. That might include:

- A stream cleanup or monitoring event
- Gun safety instruction
- Managing natural areas to preserve native plants or remove invasive plants
- Programs that introduce youth to outdoor traditions

Handouts: Who you are – your history and current activities

Provide a history of your chapter that highlight events that reflect the services or leadership roles the chapter has offered through the years. The League has also created a short history handout that sums up some of our achievements as a national organization.

Tactics for pitching local reporters

Individual emails to reporters, one by one, are probably the most effective way to begin a conversation. We encourage ongoing outreach to local press to foster awareness about your chapter.

Letters to the editor or guest editorials (op-eds) are welcome at many newspapers if they speak to issues that interest the community. The topic could be your history, a current project, or thoughts about the future of conservation, among others.

How the national office can help

The communications staff at League headquarters is available to help.

- We can review your materials, discuss ideas and review tactics with you.
- We can also generate lists of reporters and news outlets to contact.

For help with any of these topics, contact Michael Reinemer, Communications Director, Izaak Walton League of America, mreinemer@iwla.org, 301-548-0150 ext. 220.