

## **Lawyers Club News Article Guidelines**

**Re: Lawyers Club News (Newsletter)**

**Effective Date:** October 13, 2015

Lawyers Club News is a news publication; therefore, we follow standard news style for all articles. All articles – except for the President’s Message op/ed column – should be written in objective news style and should *not* contain statements of the writer’s opinion or opinions generally.

In addition to articles about Lawyers Club events and projects, Lawyers Club News currently publishes or has published certain regular features that appear each month or on a regular schedule, including:

- President’s Message – an opinion-editorial column written by the Lawyers Club’s president
- About Us – a collection of short news items about members’ activities and accomplishments
- Member Profiles – a profile of one or more Lawyers Club members who have demonstrated excellence in their service to Lawyers Club or in furthering the mission at their firms or in the greater community
- Leadership Opportunities – an article providing information about openings on government and non-profit boards and commissions as well as opportunities to take leadership positions in other law-related organizations
- Award Opportunities – a column that solicits nominations for upcoming awards and highlights awards of interest to Lawyers Club members
- Lawyers Club Supporters – a house ad listing Lawyers Club’s sponsors, President’s Circle members, patrons, and sustaining members
- Legislative Update – executive summary of pending or enacted legislation that is of general interest to the membership of Lawyers Club because the subject of the regulation relates to the mission of Lawyers Club
- 30 Years Ago in the Lawyers Club News – article highlighting the progress of Lawyers Club based on what happened in the past told through a recounting of the content of the newsletter issue of the same month, 30-years prior
- Website Corner
- Social Media Corner

Lawyers Club News also welcomes ideas and suggestions for articles. To suggest an idea, or volunteer to write an article, please email the Editor or Assistant Editor.

The president reserves the right to make executive decisions on content. Article revisions will not be sent back to the person who submits the article, and we do not promise to publish unedited submissions.

Follow these format and style guidelines for all articles submitted to Lawyers Club News. These guidelines ensure that Lawyers Club News articles have a consistent, easy-to-read news style. Please understand that each issue of the newsletter includes 20 to 35 articles. Your assistance in making sure that your article is in the correct format reduces the need for editing and is greatly appreciated!

### **Who Writes for Lawyers Club News?**

**Ensure that anyone assigned to write an article is a current Lawyers Club member.** We typically do not run articles written by non-members.

**Do not assign a person to write an article who is going to be mentioned in the article.** So, for example, do not have a committee chair or member write an article if that person is going to be mentioned or quoted in the article. If you must have that person write the article, we will not include his or her byline.

### **What are the submission deadlines?**

Lawyers Club News is published monthly 11 times a year, with a combined July/August issue. The deadline for each issue is the first of the month prior to that issue (i.e. September 1 is the deadline for the October issue), except that the deadline for the September issue is July 15.

### **Format:**

**Articles submitted must fit the following word count limits.** These word counts include headline and byline, and vary depending on whether an author photograph and/or photograph from the event is included.

#### **FULL PAGE:**

- all body text: 1040
- with author photo: 990
- with author photo and larger introductory paragraph: 930

#### **HALF PAGE:**

- all body text: 490

- with author photo: 430
- with author photo and larger introductory paragraph: 410

**Articles should be e-mailed to the editor as a Microsoft Word document attached to the e-mail.** Do not submit articles in PDF format. Do not type articles in the body of an e-mail, other than when submitting brief information for an About Us item.

**Articles must be in Microsoft Word, using Times New Roman 12-point font.** Articles should be single-spaced, with left justification, with one return between each paragraph. **Do not use any other font, point size or style** – NO indents, NO centered text, NO columns, NO boldfaced print, NO anything other than plain text. When you add in formatting, you create extra work for the editor to strip out the formatting.

**Please send the actual article in ready-to-be published news format.** Do not send press releases or e-mails describing what you want to be published.

**Enter only one space – not two spaces – after each sentence.** This is different from the rule for business correspondence and legal pleadings.

**Do not include any track changes in your submission;** only final versions of the articles, which has been previously approved by the committee chair(s) and/or section Vice President.

**At the top left of your submission, include the issue date, brief article description, and word count.**

*Example:*

Lawyers Club News September 2009  
September Luncheon Article  
412 words

**You may include a suggested headline, but it is not necessary.** If you do want to suggest a headline, note that headlines should be brief sentences including a subject and a verb. Some headline style rules: (1) Always use the present tense; (2) Use downstyle, capitalizing only the first letter of the headline and the first letter of proper nouns; (3) Do not use articles such as “a” or “the;” (4) Generally, omit prepositions such as “and.”

*Example:*

Lawyers Club honors legal legends, today’s leaders at 2014 Annual Dinner

**Include your byline.** Do not include “Esq.” or any courtesy titles in your byline.

**Include an ID tag in italics at the end of the article, identifying yourself.** ID tags should be brief and identify your employment and/or your position, if any, with Lawyers Club. Do not include details about your area of practice.

*Example:*

Jane Smith is a partner at Smith, Jones and Taylor and is a member of Lawyers Club’s Fund for Justice Committee.

**Submit photos in high resolution .jpg format.** Headshots typically should be approximately 4 MB (400 KB). If photographs are submitted, include the names of each person in the photographs at the end of the article after the ID tag.

**Style/Content:**

**Lawyers Club News currently follows AP Style**, which is the standard style used by newspapers and magazines. For those who are interested, AP Style is set forth in the AP Stylebook, which is available online at [www.apstylebook.com](http://www.apstylebook.com) and in bookstores.

**Follow a news/feature article style in your articles.** A news article has a lead – a one-sentence first paragraph – that includes the Who, What, Where, When and Why of the article. A news article uses an inverted pyramid style, putting the most important and compelling information at the beginning of the article and the least important or compelling information at the end.

**Never begin your lead with the date of an event – such as “On July 12, Jane Doe spoke at a Lawyers Club luncheon ...”** Instead, focus on the most interesting point: “Jane Doe challenged Lawyers Club members to push their firms to adopt more family-friendly policies at a Lawyers Club luncheon on July 12.”

**Do NOT write like a lawyer.** Write in the style of the articles that you read in the newspaper – with simple, straightforward sentences and a clear presentation of information. Do not be wordy. Do not use jargon. Be clear and to the point.

**Write in the objective third-person.** Do not write in the first-person and avoid using first-person pronouns.

*Example:*

“Join Lawyers Club for the Halloween Read-In,” not “Join us for the Halloween Read-In.”

**Do not include editorializing or opinions in your articles.** Although many articles are intended to promote upcoming Lawyers Club events or to describe past events, please avoid including “puffery” – generic opinion statements in the articles, such as “Everyone had a fantastic time,” unless such statements are within quotes attributed to a source. The articles read better and have more credibility when they are written in a straight news style. Statements such as “Be sure to attend what promises to be a fun-filled event” will be deleted.

**Include ALL relevant information in each article.** Include a description of the event, date, time, location (including street address), name and title of speakers, title of program (if applicable), cost (if applicable), CLE credit (if applicable), contact information for RSVPs or more information, Web address for more information (if applicable), etc. For pre-event articles, at the end of the article, please include all the event details in bullet form as follows:

What:  
When:  
Where:  
Cost:  
Registration:  
Sponsor and/or Host:

When writing after-the-fact articles about events that have happened, include the description of the event, date, location, name and title of speakers, number of participants, sponsors, amount of money raised if a fundraiser, all other relevant facts and figures, and quotes from speakers and/or participants. (See below regarding quotes.)

**Include direct quotes in most articles – and *always* in articles reporting after-the-fact about events that featured guest speakers.** When writing an article about an event that featured a speaker or speakers, such as monthly luncheons, the article should consist almost entirely of direct quotes from the speech. The article’s format should be: a lead summarizing the overall speech or program, followed by sentences summarizing or paraphrasing the most important topics interspersed with direct quotes on each of the important topics. When writing articles about other subjects, such as upcoming programs or after-the-fact articles about events that did not feature speakers (such as the Red White and Brew or the annual golf tournament), interview relevant sources and include some of their comments in quotes.

**Talk to sources to get quotes, rather than having them e-mail you written quotes.** What people say when talking is *always* more interesting and natural-sounding than what they put in writing. When you speak to a source, avoid saying that you “need a quote.” Instead, simply tell them you want to ask them a few questions about the subject of the article and that you’d like to include some of their comments in the article. You do not need to offer to have them review their quotes

after you've written the article, but if they ask, you can read them back your notes of the quotes you think you might like to use.

**Quotes should be complete sentences, rather than partial quotes.**

*Example:*

Good: "We were incredibly pleased with the turnout at the fundraiser," Smith said.

Not-so-Good: Smith said she was "incredibly pleased" with the turnout at the fundraiser.

**When quoting a source, always set off the quote in its own paragraph** after a sentence introducing/transitioning to the quote. Identify the source immediately following the first sentence of the quote.

*Example:*

San Diego County Bar Association president Richard Huver introduced Community Service Award winner Erika Hiramatsu, praising her for extensive involvement in and service to the community.

"Erika is an extraordinary individual," Huver said. "She has been a longtime and active member of Lawyers Club, and she is well known in the community for her commitment to mentoring young women and young attorneys."

**Do not use courtesy titles such as Mr., Ms., or Dr.** On first reference, identify individuals by their relevant title, employment or Lawyers Club position. On second reference, identify individuals by last name only. In general, do not capitalize position titles or job titles of individuals.

*Example:*

"Lawyers Club president Deborah Dixon said ...," NOT "Lawyers Club President Deborah Dixon said ..."

Then, throughout the rest of the article: Dixon introduced the panelists.

**Do not use ALL CAPS.** Do not use all caps for names of firms, businesses, etc. within the text of an article, regardless of whether the firm's logo uses all caps, unless the name is an acronym. News style does not copy logos within the text of articles.

*Example:*

U.S. Grant Hotel, not U.S. GRANT Hotel.

**As a general rule, do not allow prepublication review of your articles – do not send your articles to the subjects for advance review.** If a committee chair has asked you to write an article about an upcoming event, the committee chair must review the article before you submit it, but please do not send your article to any others – including people you are profiling – for review. Prepublication review of articles is not necessary (our articles are not particularly controversial) and normally is inappropriate. In addition, articles are edited after they are submitted, so you do not want to have sources review a draft that is not the final version. Of course, please fact-check your articles with your sources by asking any necessary follow-up questions to ensure that the information in your articles is accurate. An exception to this general rule may exist where the subject requires pre-approval, for instance if the subject is a public figure such as a senator or other diplomat.

**Current Related LC Documents:**

The Lawyers Club News Article Guidelines is a related document to the Lawyers Club News (Newsletter) Policy # V a.

**Considered by the LC Board of Directors on:**

July 8, 2010; October 13, 2015