

Community Journalist Reporter Sheet

Request to become a Reporter on The Rapidian

(If you are writing for a nonprofit, sign up for a nonprofit account and check out our Nonprofit Reporter Sheet)

What should I write about?

What gets you talking or are issues that you see are of interest to your community? What local events, elections, meetings, happenings etc. do you think the community should be informed about or that you want to inform yourself on? You don't have to be an expert, just interested!

Deadline/Timing:

If your piece is time-sensitive and based around an event, having it to your editor and published a week or more before the event is ideal. Even if your piece is evergreen, give yourself a timeline so you follow through!

Tips: Starting off:

- *Write like the reader has no idea about your topic or event or no initial interest. It is your job to convince, inform, educate and intrigue them.*
- *Inverted News Triangle: Write the most important details of the piece first and foremost, then follow up with other relevant info then lesser details. Writing the easiest part first (event details, the information you know and are most passionate about) is also a good way to start an article as you can build around that and flesh it out.*

Who, What, When, Where, Why *(Put in the address of your event or your neighborhood in cridata.org to find what neighborhood your event is in and if relevant, remember to put the location of the event in your article):*

Article Type: *(News, Local Life, Opinion, Nonprofits, Voices)*

Tips: Getting info: If you are asking people/a business/a group for information, tell them you are a community reporter for The Rapidian. Be proactive about calling and emailing in advance to get quotes or information in a timely manner.

Are you reporting or writing an opinion?

(An opinion has statements from the writer that someone can agree or disagree with. A report just has the facts and different perspectives and quotes from other people interviewed.)

- **News:** *Be sure to include all the facts with none of your own perspective or bias while including varying perspectives from multiple groups, experts, institutions and community members.*
- **Opinion:** *Addressing counter arguments or including them in your piece makes for a more well-rounded opinion. It shows you have considered counterarguments and done research to engage them and support your perspective nonetheless.*

Quotes: What are some things other people are saying about your topic or event?

(Ask 1-3 people for their perspectives and add them to your piece: try to ask questions that will give people insight on your topic or event and spark interest)

Extra details, tips, counterarguments, information:

How long is your piece? *Typical Rapidian news pieces are 400-600 words long, though a community profile, commentary, or Voices piece can be a bit longer. Try to keep it under 1000 words!*

Photo: *(Up close horizontal shots of people and food are the most appealing on social media! You can use your smart phone or a local photographer. Permission is needed for images so don't just grab whatever picture you find on the internet!)*

Links and credit: *Be sure to have links to sources, social media, events, references or information about topics, people and events mentioned in your piece.*

For questions on this form, how to write for The Rapidian or how to make a reporter account, email info@therapidian.org