# INTRODUCTION

**The line of communication for Women’s Ministries is important for both in-church and public awareness. Long-range planning is essential for both.**

So let’s get right to the heart of advertising by looking at various ways to reach both audiences. First, let’s give a name to our upcoming program or seminar by giving it a working name. How about this? “Women Alive! for Christ.”

Actually, this title, “Women Alive! for Christ” (WAFC), could be used for any of the programs you prepare. For instance, WAFC can be used with a stress seminar, financial classes, a nutrition school, or any other program you are offering. This title can provide continuity as an ongoing part of your advertising.

What are the various methods of advertising available?

## Bulletin Inserts/Fliers

Usually bulletin inserts or fliers precede any other kind of advertising within the church as well as in your community. It is advisable to start your church advertising about three months in advance of the program. These are excellent forerunners to tell everyone something good is about to happen!

**Where in the community do you distribute your fliers?**

* Public distribution racks are the best place to start
* Hotels and motels
* Restaurants
* Grocery stores
* Laundromats
* Beauty salons
* Chamber of Commerce
* Anywhere you can obtain permission to place them.

You can send fliers to several women’s clubs and organizations, requesting the material be announced and/or offering to supply them with copies for their membership. This is also a good opportunity to invite partnership if you are developing a program that can be supported by non-SDA or community organizations. Of course there is always a time for religious-specific events, but it is good to begin with events that are general and community driven.

Everything about a Women’s Ministries bulletin or flier should be short, clear, and upbeat.

Because you want a professional look, it is preferable to have bulletin inserts and fliers designed by a professional designer.

It is best to take an idea to a printer, have a mock-up made, and then take it to the Women’s Ministries planning committee for group approval before placing the printing order.

If you have a local logo or use the General Conference logo, incorporate it into all your printed materials.

## Speakers to Advertise “Women Alive! for Christ”

Women’s Ministries spokespersons should be women who are friendly and winning. Such women are probably the most effective advertising.

**Speaking for Women’s Ministries can include:**

* **Making announcements at church services and other functions**
* **Speaking to community groups and service clubs such as Rotary**
* **Participating in radio and television community service and “special spot” segments**

Suggestion: Women who are not trained speakers or who are reticent about speaking publicly might want to take a local speech class or join a speaker’s group.

If trained speakers are available, they might be invited to tell about “Women Alive! for Christ” to specialized support groups such as singles, widows, divorcees, disabled or abused women. Often such contacts can be made through hospital chaplains. Your pastor or his wife could be helpful with such contacts. It is also excellent to join one or two local service groups to develop your personal network.

**3. Reach the community**

* **Public Service Announcements –** A public avenue often overlooked is to list your organization and its special community outreach programs with your city/government’s services and events calendar. This is especially important if you are having an ongoing program such as Adventist Big Sisters or programs to meet the challenge issues of women.
* **Newsletters –** Newsletters of various local entities often are open for announcements of your community events, especially if the events are no cost. Free or low cost/free programs are attractive.
* **Community Events –** Rent space—sometimes it’s free—at such events as bazaars, business expositions, fairs, and community health booths. You can find some way to advertise Women’s Ministries events at almost every event with booths.

This kind of exposure is best done four to six weeks in advance of special events if possible. Of course, if “Women Alive! for Christ” is an ongoing program and not a one-time event, the time element may vary.

* **Booth Display –** Be sure your booth display is professional in appearance, not hastily thrown together. Again, a graphic artist can help with the design of both the booth and signs.
* **Banners –** They can be used in countless ways including at your booth and by “marching women,” especially in parades. A group such as Women’s Ministries, carrying a “Women Alive! for Christ” banner will be welcome for most community parades or other hometown events.
* **Parades –** Consider joining a local parade to present a community service project, such as food or clothing collection, or health seminars.
* **Media –** When dealing with the media, the contacts are similarly done. It is preferable, for good relations and to assure proper handling, to call or inquire in person about the requirements for each newspaper, radio, or television station. Keep a record of each newsmaker’s requirements.

In most cases, press releases of public service announcements are sent to the community events editor of newspapers, and program director of radio and television stations.

Mail your release or public service announcement so it arrives in the time frame specified. A contact with the managing editors of newspapers and the program managers of radio and television stations, offering to have someone appear on local programming to explain “Women Alive! for Christ,” can benefit their publishing and/or broadcasting.

Don’t feel you are begging. They are searching for newsworthy ideas. Your Women’s Ministries program may be just what they want. If not, they will still be aware that Adventist women are interested in helping the community.

Keep in mind that the media and the community are always interested in stories which tell how to make the world a better place to live, work, rear families and help others. “Women Alive! for Christ” can do that in a many-faceted ministry.

Suggestions: Women’s Ministries can become involved with government or state departments, or communication groups for public involvement with health-care events, nutrition seminars, childcare programs, financial workshops, how-to babysitting classes for teens, and inner-city care for the poor and homeless.

In your contact with editors or program directors, point out the positive aspects of what your Women’s Ministries is doing. However, never “preach” about it.

You might want to suggest that you have noticed a certain reporter (mention a specific name) does exceptionally well with this type of reporting, and ask if she might be assigned to cover your news.

By doing this you aren’t being aggressive, yet you are showing that you are acquainted with their programs and the work of their reporters.

## Breakout Session Assignment

During this time, it would be good for the women who are learning how to advertise Women’s Ministries to also learn how to prepare a press release. Ask each one to put a press release together by applying the basic writing skills taught in the writing seminar. All the following information must be included:

* **What:** “Women Alive! for Christ” seminar for divorced women, “Putting the Pieces Together”
* **When:** Tuesday, May 26, 2003, 7-9 p.m.
* **Where:** Brownhill Medical Center Auditorium, 75 Brown Hill Drive, Brownsville
* **Why:** To help women in divorce crisis to make the transition from marriage back to singleness; socially, sexually, spiritually
* **Who:** Dr. Marianne Bayliner, Christian Family Counselor
* **How:** Seminar limited to 30 attendees for group interaction with presenter and each other.
* Include telephone number (765-1234) or website

## 4. Advertise Through Your Personal Community Involvement

Nothing advertises as well as what you do. An appropriate way to advertise Women’s Ministries is to become involved with your community.

Join groups which promote the arts, such as music clubs, which in turn support budding musicians. Self-improvement groups and service clubs are other options which serve and provide individual growth. Rubbing shoulders with women in the community other than church members helps build friendships.

Be a volunteer; it could be joining the food team at a homeless shelter or working with Hospice. Whatever your God-given talent is, show willingness to serve on committees and boards if you are asked.

Do things for the community which aren’t directly Women’s Ministries related, but simply what a woman of the local Seventh-day Adventist church, involved with Women‘s Ministries, wants to do as an individual.

## 5. Principles to Remember

For Women’s Ministries to be completely effective, you need to reach out beyond your own church family and serve the community—with obvious caring—offering programs and personal services needed by women.

* **Be aware of your audience.** What will interest the secular mind, as well as the spiritual? What can your “Women Alive! for Christ” plans do for them?
* **Do research and brainstorming** with non-church members to discover community needs before selecting your program.
* **Good records are important when advertising through public contact.** Keep accurate records, telephone numbers, and contact names, including their positions/titles.
* **Dress appropriately**. For instance, if you have a booth at a fair you will probably wear casual clothing, but meeting with a television station manager would call for business attire.
* **Because Women’s Ministries is a woman’s group**, if you are interviewed and questioned about the role of women, make statements that show value for both genders. Being *for* women does not mean being *against* men.

**Sample Press Release**

Your name Immediate Release

Daytime phone number

Word count

Women’s Stress Seminar at Health Department

Do you ever feel like a fried piece of meat, pressed by a limp piece of lettuce, a tomato slice and two pieces of half-burned toast?

“The Sandwich Woman” is a no-cost (or if a fee is charged mention it later in the release) seminar to help women cope with the sandwiched feeling. The two-hour seminar (or whatever time frame) presented by (name, title or other I.D. such as) Eleanor Bussy, M.D., a woman’s health specialist, is slated for (time) 7-9 P.M., Monday (date) April 10, (place) at the Moomey Health Department auditorium, 1700 Main Street.

Due to breakout sessions to be facilitated by female nurse practitioners, attendance is limited to 40 (or whatever number). To register, call 545-9876 by Friday, April 7.

**Discussion:**

What caught your attention in this press release? If you are a stressed out woman —a sandwich woman—you might think, “This is what I need.”

Why would this seminar appeal? The seminar is being held at a public facility, by female medical personnel, at a reasonable time, for little or no cost, and breakout sessions give personal attention to the attendees’ needs.

This kind of a press release can catch the attention of newspaper, radio, television editors, and program directors who might want to obtain interviews for articles, live program coverage, or follow up the program with “after” articles.

# About the Authors

**Betty Kossick** continues to enjoy an active career as a writer/journalist. Her byline appears in various publications both for the secular press and the religious press. She is a feature writer and columnist for Zephyrhills News and East Pasco News in Zephyrhills, Florida. She's also a columnist for the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Communication Department. She and her husband have lived in five states and enjoyed community involvement everywhere they've lived. One of her most treasured recognitions is the annual "Celebrate Women Award," presented to her as woman’s a role model by the O.A.S.I.S./Family Resource Center for Abused Women and Children in Cadillac, Michigan. Her motto is "Others."

**Frenita Buddy** develops and consults on new programming as Production Director for Hope Channel's studios in North America.  As a host and an award-winning producer, she has worked in television and radio in both secular and Christian environments.  She’s also “Aunt Frenita” to thousands of children around the world in weekly animated podcasts available at [www.gracelink.net](http://www.gracelink.net).  Frenita is a graduate of Oakwood University (College) and Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.