

## Ripples

Life's an adventure. If a psychic with a crystal ball had sat me down when I graduated high school in 1970, and told me, "First you are going to be a scientist. Then you are going to be an attorney, and then you are going to be a publicist," I'd have laughed my silly head off. That was the year I dropped out of college, hopped on a ten-speed bicycle, went cross-country through Canada and then hitchhiked around the country for a year.

I ended up going back to school where after six years I got one degree, and then two years later another, and then landed a job working for the federal government as a hydrologist in the wilds of central Idaho.

And that's how I found the world of publicity.

I wrote my first news release after getting sick on a little tiny microscopic bug called *Giardia lamblia*. I did some original research with federal funds and discovered that due to inadequate water treatment, there was a small scale epidemic of giardia going on in the western US. To publicize the finding and help people deal with the situation I wrote an article and sent out my very first news release. The first four words of that news release were "*Don't drink the water!*"

Here's what happened.

The local newspaper in Salmon, Idaho (circulation 2,700) published the article. I was interviewed by the Associated Press. That made a splash as the article was published in newspapers across the country over and over and drew attention to the disease and the risks of drinking wild land water. They christened it 'backpacker's disease' and it became pretty widespread knowledge that drinking out of streams and creeks was a risky thing to do.

It took ten years, but US government eventually passed regulations requiring upgrades to non-community water supply systems, and people drinking water from water systems in small towns all over America are now protected at a much higher level.

And a couple of other things happened.

Woody Allen wrote a play. The title of it was *Don't Drink the Water*.

A popular light beer company did a commercial which had two very good looking Hispanic college students talking to one another and one says to the other, "*you can drink the light beer in America, but don't drink the water*".

And I experienced the exhilarating feeling that comes from sending out a news release that causes ripples in human consciousness and shares knowledge with people from coast to coast.

It was the quest for this feeling that motivated me to create a news service to help people get the word out. I would write news releases and then I send them out to custom targeted media lists. Voila. People get publicity.

It's a remarkable business. You get to work with some of the most creative and brilliant people in the world. It goes way beyond the fact that you can make money. It's all about what happens when you give ideas to others.

I learned that I'm just here to help showcase and share their creative efforts and the fruits of their labor. That's my role in life. There's pleasure in getting to share so many good things in a way that can benefit so many others. In fact, the real satisfaction comes in seeing what happens. Some of the releases result in significant publicity either in major media or noteworthy publicity on a national scale. Many of these are of broad general interest while others are industry-specific. Some publicity results in significant financial gain. Sometimes what a client seeks is public knowledge and political action.

My business took several years to create-day by day, word-by-word, release-by-release. It's amazing to think that this business captures the best of the collaborative efforts of hundreds, if not a few thousand people, overall. But it does.

To all of you I stand in admiration and say 'Bravo!' Together we have reached out and touched and minds and hearts of millions of people again and again. To all you incredibly creative people, thank you for bringing me your works and for allowing me the honor to work with you. It is a privilege to assist you and to know you.

I still love to get that feeling of throwing rocks in the pond and watching the ripples flow.

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