



# Storytellers Manual

## Being a part of Our Story

WEIU features the heritage and spirit of local communities from the perspective of the residents in the Our Story program. Grab your camera and take to the streets as you document the people, places, and happenings that make your area special. This is your opportunity to share the unique features of your town. Profiles of organizations, arts, schools, attractions, and local folklore make great stories and give viewers a sense of your area.

*No experience is required, just enthusiasm.*

## Meet the WEIU Our Story team

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## How it works

WEIU will ask you to pick one topic for a story to be featured in the show. Events, people, places, happenings...all great stories to share! We want stories to highlight the great heart of your town. Every story needs photos & video, which you'll need to collect. WEIU will provide advice, but you provide the video and photos. Make sure the video and photos correspond to everything you want to tell in your feature. You can also use archival photos or video if needed.

## What happens next?

Each story feature needs one spokesperson to appear on camera for a WEIU interview with our producers. On the production day, we'll talk to you about the footage you gathered in a casual, on-camera interview. The interview will tie the story together & add the personality that makes this show special. Don't worry; we'll make you look and sound like a pro! On that same day, WEIU will collect your video and photographs. Then we'll take your video and interview & edit it all together. Once we've edited your pieces, we'll invite you to an exclusive premiere screening of the show and you'll be invited to the WEIU studios for the night of the live broadcast. You won't want to miss this! You'll see how your community responds to the show as they phone in their support for your feature.

## Want to know more?

You'll find more information such as helpful hints on creating your story, updates on the project, and contact information on our website:

[www.weiunet.net/ourstory](http://www.weiunet.net/ourstory)

You also can call anytime or send an email to the production team. Sharing local stories is part of the spirit of public television. Through viewership support, we're able to bring you all your favorite programs that you find on WEIU. And the Our Story program truly makes this your local station as you help create material to broadcast! Thanks for joining the team and have fun!



## Tips for Shooting Video

It's wonderful to be part of an energetic and committed team, especially when it involves your neighbors and friends. What better way to nurture a sense of belonging and pride in your community than by telling others why it's so special. This project capitalizes on both your enthusiasm and knowledge of your story. To help you tell the story more effectively we've asked our videographers at WEIU to share some of their secrets and strategies for successful videotaping.

### ***Video Tips***

- If possible, change the aspect ratio setting on your video camera to Widescreen (16:9) instead of Full screen (4:3). Please DO NOT select "letterbox" or "pan-scan"
- Scope out a scene before starting to record it. Then develop a plan and see which vantage points provide the best views.
- All shots should be 10 seconds long or more. The more you can shoot from different angles and focal lengths such as close up, medium wide and really wide. We need at least 20 different shots of a variety of people, places, items, etc. to piece together a 2-minute video story.
- Use a tripod when possible because few people like to watch rocky, unstable images. When a tripod isn't available, use other solid objects to stabilize the shot – e.g., lean against trees, set your camera on a table top, or even sit in a chair and use the armrest to help make the video steadier.
- Resist the temptation to do a lot of "panning" and "zooming" with your camera. It's best to physically move your camera from one place to another in order get an angle that shows additional items you want to include. If action is included in your shot, let things move inside the picture instead of moving the camera or zooming. Make sure that your camera is level and the scene looks straight in the viewfinder.
- If you plan to interview someone, do so in a quiet setting and make sure that the camera is within 3-4 feet of your person. Use an external microphone when available.
- Shoot a sequence of shots rather than long shots that depend on camera movement like zooms and pans.
- To create more visual excitement for your shots, try shooting from a variety of angles or perspectives.

- When shooting inside, try to use areas that are well lit. Don't be afraid to bring additional lighting into a dark room. If it's hard to see detail in the viewfinder, extra light will help reveal it. Avoid shooting a person with bright light (such as a window) in the background. The camera will adjust for the bright light and make your subject darker. Detail shots are especially powerful when edited into a series. They provide the viewer with unique visual information and they can have high emotional impact. Don't be afraid to get close.
- People make the greatest subjects. No matter what you're shooting, don't forget to shoot people as well. To the extent possible, try to get people in your shots "acting naturally." Hamming it up for the camera, while quite natural for some people, will not usually make the final cut.
- Many cameras include a feature that imprints the date and time of a recording on the video. Please turn this feature off.
- If you're shooting with a DVD camera or are delivering video from a past event or program, please make sure that the DVD has been "finalized." This allows DVD's to be played in machines other than the one it was created on. If we can't play it at WEIU, we can't use it.

- Though we would prefer that you shoot video, please don't hesitate to use a still camera or give us photos that you already have about a subject. We can add motion to stills in order to lend them a level of visual interest they don't ordinarily have. Ideally, we'd love to have your photos delivered to us on a CD, but we can still work with photo prints.
- Give some thought to the significance of your topic and why you chose it. We will tape a short interview with you and ask you to provide general details about your subject. You may bring notes, but we will ask you to not read directly from them.
- Make sure all video and/or photos are your creation. We cannot use copyrighted material without written permission from the rights holder.
- If you interview someone, you'll need to have them sign a release form. We will provide them for you, but if you don't have one, just email any member of the team and we'll get one for you.
- Remember anyone under 18 appearing on camera is considered a minor and will need written parental consent.

### **Log Sheets**

Important: Make sure to fill out and hand in a log sheet with your footage. Please list the sequence of shots and accurately describe any locations or persons that need to be identified. Here's a sample of the video log sheet we'll need you to complete as you gather footage for your story.

## Our Story Video Log Sheet

Story Name \_\_\_\_\_

Videographer \_\_\_\_\_

Subject	Shot Description	Shot Length
Main Street	Wide shot looking east	:15
Main Street	Close up, Main street sign	:10
Main Street	Medium Shot, shoppers walking down street	:30
Main Street	Medium Shot, people sitting at table eating lunch	:15

## Mark your calendars

Interviews

Date:

Your Interview Time:

Location:

Preview For Project Volunteers

Date:

Time:

Location:

Live Television Premiere

Date:

Time:

Location: WEIU-TV and LIVE online at [www.weiu.net](http://www.weiu.net) and WEIU studios