

Boyle McCauley News
Editorial Guidelines
Revised June 2014

Thank you for your interest in contributing to *Boyle McCauley News*. The paper could not continue without its dedicated volunteer writers and photographers. Here are some guidelines to help you make your submissions fit the style and needs of *BMC News*.

Editorial Mandate

The editorial mandate of *Boyle McCauley News* is to focus on the positive aspects of our community, report on community events, and profile people in the community doing innovative and interesting things. The paper is also realistic about the challenges in the area and discusses these issues in a family-appropriate, solution-based way, with input from community members.

Editorial Deadlines

BMC News publishes ten times a year, with December/January and July/August as combined issues. The editorial deadline is the 12th of the month. For example, the deadline for the February issue is January 12. There may be some flexibility in special circumstances, but articles submitted after the deadline will normally not be able to be used because of our tight publication schedule.

Article Length

Articles should be between 300 and 500 words. If you feel your article needs to be longer than 500 words, please consult with the Editor.

Article Content

Your stories should always communicate information that readers will find useful, stimulating, or entertaining. If your story is about a personal experience, it should include concrete details. The story as a whole should stay focused around a main point or theme you wish to communicate.

Also, try to avoid too much opinion in an article. The editorial in every issue already summarizes the theme of the issue and provides an overview. If you wish to offer a personal opinion on something, such a piece is more appropriate as a Letter to the Editor.

Your articles should offer real and specific information about Boyle Street or McCauley, both neighbourhoods, or about a particular event, person, social issue, etc. that will be of interest to our readers. In other words, when making statements in your articles, back them up with facts and research. Avoid making accusations against others and especially naming names. Such behaviour could result in making the paper – and the writer of the article – vulnerable to legal action.

News stories should include all of the details (the five “Ws”: who, what, when, where, and why) and quotes from people involved where relevant.

Letters to the Editor vs. News Articles

To summarize the above: Letters to the Editor are generally based on a personal opinion about a situation or event. News articles are intended to convey information and contain hard facts, without added commentary that is the personal opinion of the writer.

More About Content

Boyle McCauley News goes into most of the homes in the area, and as a result we have to be conscious of maintaining a tone appropriate for family readership. Avoid the use of expletives (swearing) as well as graphic depictions of violence.

If you are unsure if a story idea is appropriate, consult with the editor beforehand. In most cases, story ideas can easily be adapted to fit our mandate.

When you submit your work, please submit only your final draft with all of your research and fact-checking complete. When a writer submits a story, then submits another version with additions or corrections, there is a risk of the wrong version being used. As well, time would have been spent editing the first version only for it to be replaced by a new one.

Where space is an issue during the layout phase of production, priority is given to articles dealing with community news and events, thematic and seasonal material, as well as items of a time-sensitive nature. Other features may be held for publication in the next available issue if they are not time-sensitive and do not contain information relevant to a specific month.

Style/Fomattting

These are some basic style guidelines to keep the paper consistent. For more detailed style specifics, refer to the most recent issue of the *Canadian Press Stylebook*.

- It is Boyle Street (not just “Boyle”).
- It is McCauley (not MacCauley).
- When referring to the entire area, it is Boyle Street and McCauley.
- **Format:** .doc is preferred, sent as an attachment.
- **Titles:** Titles of books, plays, and movies are in *italics*. Titles of songs, poems, essays, or short stories are “in quotation marks.”
- **Canadian Spelling:** *BMC News* uses the Canadian spelling for words such as “flavour,” “neighbour,” and “colour.”
- **Punctuation:** Periods and commas go within closing quotation marks “like this.” Other kinds of punctuation (dashes, colons, semi-colons, question marks, exclamation points) are placed outside quotation marks, unless they are part of the quotation. As well, please use only **one** space between sentences. Otherwise, we have to strip out the extra spaces during the layout process.
- **Serial Comma:** *BMC News* uses the serial comma in a sentence containing a list. This means that a comma is used before the final “and” in a sentence. For example: I went to the store and bought a container of milk, a stick of butter, and a loaf of bread.
- **Numbers:** Numbers from one to nine are spelled out as words. Numbers 10 and above are presented in numerical form (10, 105, 3012) except at the beginning of sentences.
- **Dates and Times:** The format for dates is: March 20, 2007. For times: 5:00 p.m.

Photographs

Stories should be accompanied by photographs wherever possible. Photos should be 300 dpi and submitted in digital format. Hard copy photographs should be scanned at 300 dpi. If you do not understand these technical terms, talk to the Editor and she’ll help you out.

Photos taken in public spaces and at public events are usually fine without getting special permission from the people in them. However, permission should always be obtained for photos of children (from their parents/guardians). We do not print photographs of vulnerable people (such as homeless people) without their permission.

The main thing to bear in mind is to submit photographs that are larger, rather than smaller. Small photos do not reproduce well in print.

Submit the photos exactly as they come off of your camera. We can handle editing them. As well, if you require photos be scanned and do not have access to a scanner, we can take care of that for you. We can also arrange for a photographer to take photos if you do not have a camera. Just make sure to contact the Editor regarding your needs well in advance of the deadline.

If you don’t know how to get the photos off your camera, talk to the Editor. We have a card reader in the office.

Photos that single out individual people should be accompanied by a Photo Permission Form which should be filled out and handed in to the Editor.

Editing

Submissions may be edited for clarity and length. In some cases, the Editor will work with the writer to revise the piece. Contributors are welcome to discuss editorial decisions, but abusive messages and comments will result in the contributor's services being terminated. The Editor is the front line of the paper and will normally make decisions about editorial matters. Disagreements will be taken to the Board of Directors, which has the final say.

Privacy and Consent

When you make a submission to the paper, you are consenting for that piece of work to appear in both the print and online editions. Issues are converted into PDF format and archived indefinitely on our website. As a result, be mindful when including personal information such as phone numbers and addresses.