

Captions define what we see—*never* publish a photo without them

WE'VE ALL HEARD the saying, "a picture is worth a 1,000 words." That may be true, but when creating your DTP publications for ministry, it is very important to ask, "which 1,000 words?"

If you don't have a caption under a picture, you probably haven't communicated the true message of the picture. No photograph is self-explanatory; without a clear caption, people will make up

their own meaning for the photo. It may not be what you intended.

On the other hand, if you put a clear, complete caption under a photo, it can tell the entire message you want to communicate, invite people to a ministry event, promote a program, or inspire folks in their walk with God.

Photos are always a powerful drawing piece in a publication. People may

not always read the articles, but they always look at the pictures. Use a clear complete caption under the picture to then make sure you are getting your message across.

In the sample illustrated, the photograph is from the Inspirational Images Photo CD by Proclaim Communications (for how to order, see p. 2), notice how the varying captions cause the picture to "say" a 1,000 different words.

Application: How to get the most out of your photos and captions

- **Select a photo that represents the message you want to convey.** Ask yourself: what is the most important message you want to get across? Is it to market an event? To get folks to think about an issue?

- **Summarize the message in your caption** after you've decided on the most important message. If you want a response, ask for it in the caption.

- **A photo of one person to illustrate an event is much more effective than a photo of a group.** Picture how differently the effectiveness of the illustrated photo would have been if instead of having one boy with his fish, you would have just lined up all the kids by the lake and published a group picture.

Group pictures don't say anything visually. Edit them like you would a story that has too many words.

- **Print your photos large enough for people to see what is going on.** If you can't see the expressions on faces or easily tell people apart, you've probably printed the picture too small.

- **Always print your captions next to your photo.** If you don't, our minds won't store the message and the picture together and you've lost the power of the caption.

Caption options

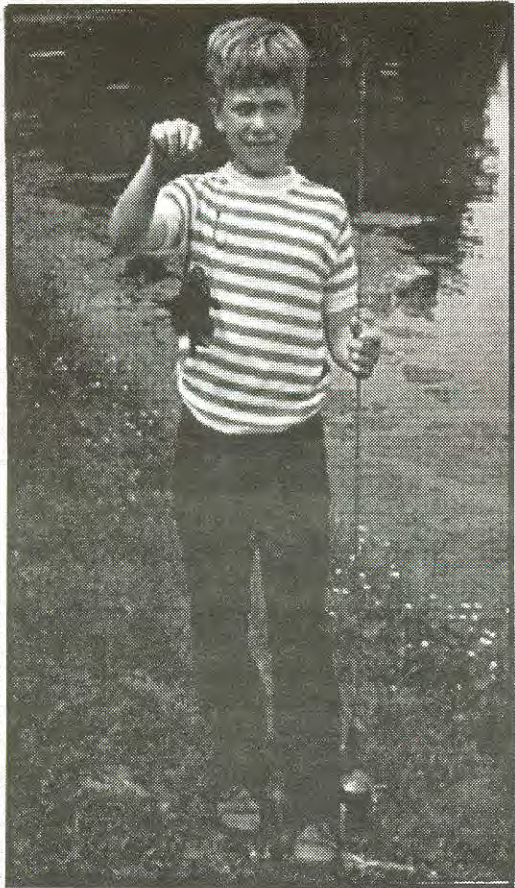


photo: Proclaim Communications

1. Identifying caption

Kevin Myers, from Olathe, Kansas exhibits the first fish he caught at the Ol' Fishin' Hole at Camp Lazy Days. The "First Fisherman's Camp" teaches boys 6-10 how to have fun fishing.

2. Marketing caption

Attention kids! If you've never had experience fishing and you'd like to learn, we've got a place for you! Our Ol' Fishin' Hole will turn anyone into a successful fisherman just like young Kevin Myers here. Sign up now!

3. Questioning caption

What was a flesh-eating piranha doing in the Ol' Fishin' Hole?

4. Bible-lesson caption

It makes a person proud to catch a fish and it isn't always easy to land one. We need to remember to not only have fun at the Ol' Fishin' Hole, but to learn how to be "fishers of men" like Jesus taught His disciples to be.

5. Pull quote caption

"I was scared to try fishing!" says Kevin of his first fish-catching prize, "but my counselor helped me and made it easy and fun!"

6. Thought-provoking caption

When was the last time your life was this carefree? Come to the men's breakfast and learn about "Recapturing the Art of Having Fun."