

# On Blogging Well

Friday Freebie No. 2

## Blog Blossoms — Things to Blog about When (you think) There's Nothing to Blog About

1. Check out [Chase's Calendar of Events](#). You can view events, festivals, celebrity birthdays, and all sorts of crazy facts for each day of the year. Pick an item, do a bit of research, and spin it with your blog's focus. Example — October 8 is Alvin C. York Day. I hadn't heard of him either, but I Goggled him and found [this link](#). He was a World War I hero. If your blog is about patriotism, you just hit the jackpot. He had a sweetheart. If you write about romance, viola! He was converted to Christianity. If you write for a religious audience, there ya go! York was a family man, cattle farmer, became paralyzed later in life — and the list goes on. One guy's story can be slanted toward dozens of blog niches. Want a print copy of Chase's so you can plan ahead? I picked up a used out-of-date copy from Amazon.com because a current issue would've set me back more than I wanted to pay.
2. If you write about current events and contemporary issues, there's no better place to search for blog fodder than [Twitter's Trending Topics](#). October hasn't even reached double digits yet, but people are already tweeting away about Halloween. Twitter's search page lists the top topics that are trending as well as a search box. If you already have an idea you want to blog about, type keywords into the box and see what people are saying about it at this very moment.
3. People who frequent blogs usually enjoy reading books, too. A few clicks at [Amazon.com](#) will give you (depending on which link you choose from the front page) a list of bestsellers, new releases, editor's picks, and sometimes other choices. Maybe books aren't your deal. Fair enough. Pick one of the day's top titles and then head back over to your Twitter search page. Instead of blogging about the book, instead cover what people are *tweeting* about it.
4. This one's almost too easy, but here goes: [Google News](#). It doesn't matter if you write about current events, politics, sports, entertainment, business, or technology — this page has the top stories about what's happening today on the topic.
5. Wanna blog about blogging? Stop by [Word Press Planet](#) and see what they're blogging about. This is an aggregation of blogs that discuss WordPress. (My personal favorite WP blogger is [Lorelle](#).)

6. This may be a bit of a stretch, but you can actually blog about topics that you find OFFline, such as your **daily newspaper**. In my small town, the front page boasts stories of a new state lottery (whether you're for or against it, you can come up with a blog post), a main street icon who's selling out to begin semi-retirement (personal interest), an arrest made in a recent arson-related fire (relationships — the man was "angry" at his ex-girlfriend and burned her mother's business), and the emergency evacuation of a school due to a gas leak (safety, parenting). The key to making posts about such stories more interesting is to pick up the phone and do a couple of interviews. Ask some locals: Did you watch the fire? Ask some parents: Did the encouragement of a teacher help calm your child during the evacuation? Ask the chamber of commerce: What will the downtown district do with another empty building now that so-and-so retired?
7. **There are the obvious places to search for stories:** [Digg](#), [Technorati](#), [Delicious](#), etc.
8. **And the not-so-obvious:** Here's journalism tip I learned by accident — find a link between two stories, whether online or offline. A tornado ripped through our community a few years ago and my place of employment was set up as a temporary Red Cross shelter and subsequent general gathering place for cleanup volunteers, media, and curious passersby. A state TV anchor, whose face I'd seen on the news many times, marched in my office, seeking directions to the most devastated area, which I gave. A few minutes later, another reporter showed up. A newbie. She asked if there was anyone with special needs who may have been personally affected by the storm. Or a local celebrity. Or athlete. A young man who at the time was a senior in high school had just signed with a D-1 college to play football. His home was destroyed. I hesitated to get into my neighbor's business (being friends with his parents and all), but told her where his mother worked. "If she's there, maybe she'll talk to you." That little bit of innovative thinking on her part landed a great personal interest story about our hometown hero while the other TV crew panned an area of anonymous tornado debris. The moral of this tip — find the STORY, not the facts, and you'll touch the hearts and tweets of your readers.
9. It may seem kind of far-fetched, but some great stories — and at least one [book deal](#) — have come from [Ebay](#) auctions. Check out the Daily Deal and the Most Popular sections. People love a great deal, so why not blog about it?
10. **Blog Shares** — Most blogs have a blogroll of some sort on their sites. If you have one (or even if you don't), an easy-to-write post is to list blogs you frequent. Give a brief description of the blog and tell your readers why you read the blog and what they can gain from reading it.