NEWSLETTER EDITORS' GUIDE

GETTING STARTED

1. **<u>Recruiting</u>** <u>for editors and other volunteers</u>

   o Many of the chapters **advertise** for newsletter editors and distribution volunteers through their chapter newsletters. Others find that **personal contact** with prospective candidates is more effective, but finding that "prospective candidate" tends to be a problem. It is harder to say "No" face-to-face than by phone. Also, don't wait until the position needs to be filled. **Find a back-up** that can learn the software and/or your distribution process BEFORE your newsletter editor or distribution volunteers resign, and/or get sick, etc. Invite potential candidate(s) to assist the current editor and make it a fun, engaging experience.

   o Make sure you have **support, guides and training in place** (or know where to obtain training) to help recruit volunteers. It always helps to have documentation to show a candidate what they will be required to do. A narrative of your process is a good tool to have. This website is also a good recruitment tool. Most questions about the process are answered here.

   o The current newsletter editor should have **sample newsletters** to show prospective candidates so they will have an idea of what is expected. Mention that there is always room for creativity following a discussion with the president or board members ahead of time. Chapter newsletters will be posted on this website to showcase a variety of styles.

2. **<u>Finding a printing company and every year or so evaluate their cost and performance</u>**

   o Chapters have lists of companies with whom they have worked with over the years, but it never hurts to take a look at other companies to compare costs and services. It never hurts to have a list of services that your current company can provides or other companies evaluated. Look for a company that can provide labeling, mailing, and delivery in addition to printing. You never know when you might need these services; especially if someone cannot perform duties needed for a smooth distribution process. One chapter uses CHI Centers for printing and folding at a reduced cost. CHI Centers support handicap individuals so the costs are very low. It might be useful to include such organizations in your cost comparisons.
      ▪ Services that might be needed (NOTE: Many services require additional fees from the printer except emailing of newsletter to your printer):

- *Addressing from a file*. Printing companies usually have this capability at a cost; you send them a file and have them print the addresses on your newsletter.
- *Delivery to a member.* Sometimes a volunteer may not be able to pick up the newsletters for labeling and/or mailing because of something that happens at the last minute. This is a good service to have in such a case.
- *Email of newsletter from your editor to the printer.* Most chapters currently email their newsletters to the printer, but some hand-deliver the hard copy of the newsletter. In case of bad weather or other circumstances, it is always nice to have the capability of emailing in the file. Check to make sure the printer has this capability even if you don't currently use this service.
- *Know the costs of all services your printer provides.* Keep the cost sheet handy in case you need to use any of their services.

NEWSLETTER EDITORS' DUTIES

1. It differs from one chapter to another what duties a newsletter editors does. In some chapters, newsletter editors compose the articles, complete the layout, work with the printer, and mail the newsletter and/or email them. But in most chapters, the newsletter editor works with other members to coordinate the submission of articles to the newsletter editor, work with others to edit, and the editor sends to the printer when the newsletter is finished. Other volunteers work on the distribution process, either by mail or email.

2. It would help each chapter if they had a written process in place to show to new newsletter editors and distribution volunteers. Recruitment of newsletter editors should include information about their duties, so documenting the process to show the recruit would be helpful. This process should include who reviews articles before submission to the printer, who compiles articles (may be different from authors of articles), who submits to the printer and works with printer on printing the newsletter, how the distribution process works for both hard-copy and email copy, and who pays for mail permits and when they are due. Most chapters have articles from their presidents, legislative representatives, budget officers, service officer, etc. Also it will help to have a newsletter file to give to a new newsletter editor containing a completed newsletter with any associated graphics.

SOFTWARE, IMAGES AND PHOTOS

1. Does your editor know your current software? If not, you might want to consider using other software. There are many available, but some have training readily available at local sites which is a benefit. Check out what training is available in your area before you buy software. Check your current software for capability to do graphics easily or other publishing functions. This may determine whether or not you purchase new software. There are some reasonable packages available for use and easily learned.

Microsoft Word is used by many chapters as well as Microsoft Publisher. Adobe has a design package that is taught at many local sites, Adobe InDesign. On the contacts page, the chapter software package is listed for many chapters.

2. Graphics will be available on the Newsletter Editors' website (under construction) for download. This will make it easy to use another chapter's graphics in yours. Photos can also be shared on this site. If you have a graphic or picture you want to share on this website, please email to NARFE409@hotmail.com. Currently the Federation photographer places the Federation event photos on a website for people to use. The photographer emails the URL for the site to the President and newsletter editor of the Federation to use in various ways in the Federation newsletter. Download into a Word document to size the picture or graphic before inserting into your newsletter. This will save your time on formatting your newsletter.

OTHER SUPPORT TOOLS

1. There are many teaching **books** to learn software. You can look on-line at Amazon.com or other bookstores. Search by the name of your software and many selections are to be found. You can buy used books at a very modest price, so you can buy more than one. The chapter should pay for the books if they are reasonable and can be given to the any newsletter editors that will named in the future. If you put the book titles in your Newsletter Process document, you will know what is available as a resource for chapter editors.

2. A **list of newsletter editors** is included on the "Contacts" [Addendum A] in this Federation Guide. Sample newsletters have been requested to be distributed to newsletter editors as well as chapter presidents. This will allow editors to see what other people are doing with their newsletters. If they have questions regarding a newsletter, they can look up the newsletter editors' phone number on the "Contacts" page. If you can't find an answer to a question, talking to another editor is helpful.

3. Another tool that would be helpful to editors is a **written guide** for the newsletter process within your chapter. This is discussed in Newsletter Editor's **Duties** section of this website. This tool will be very helpful to both newsletter editors and distribution volunteers to understand who is doing what in the process.

4. One chapter recommended finding **students to help** with your newsletter layout and graphics. Many schools have service credits that students need to fulfill before graduation. Contact your local high school or college to see if a student might be interested in helping with your newsletter. Most students have great graphics skills and might be willing to help design your newsletter layout or other documents you use in your chapter such as pamphlets, advertisements, etc. They also may be able to assist you in folding, labeling, and other items in your distribution process.

5. Many chapters would like to have their **newsletters on the Maryland Federation website**. Some chapters do have their newsletters available on their websites, but not all chapters have websites, so having a page dedicated to newsletters would be helpful. We will work with Barbara Jacobs (Federation webmaster) to have the chapter newsletters on the Federation website in the future.

6. At the October 2012 Training Session, newsletter editors requested **distribution of chapter newsletters to newsletter editors** in addition to the distribution of newsletters to chapter Presidents. This might eliminate the need for newsletters to be posted on the website; but other member might like to see what other chapters are doing, so posting newsletters still might be a good thing to do. All editors agreed that it would be helpful to see what other editors were doing with their newsletters. If they saw an article or graphic they would like to use, they could contact the newsletter editor of that publication to obtain the information they wanted to use. They agreed that this method would be easier than going to the Maryland Federation website to see newsletters but would like both options.

7. Another request coming from the October 2012 Training Session was a request for **graphics for legislative articles** in newsletters. A request has been sent to the graphic's person at NARFE Headquarters. She has helped with other requests, so hopefully she will be willing to help us with this request. Please check our graphics page on our website when it is published. If you have a graphic you would like to offer for use by other chapters, please email the file to narfe409@hotmail.com.

8. Other editors requested **clip art** and a discussion followed on how to use Google clip art as well as Microsoft clip art. Some clip art is placed in the "Software, Graphics, and Images" page on this website. If you have other clip art you would like to submit, send to NARFE409@hotmail.com. There was a recommendation to download clip art into Word document to size the clip art before inserting into your newsletter. Some of the clip art comes in a large size, so sizing in a Word document and dragging the clip art in the size you want into your newsletter makes the process much easier for formatting.

9. Another request coming out of the October 2012 Training Session was a request for a **checklist for the newsletter process**. As chapter checklists are developed, they will be published to the Newsletter Editors' website which is under construction.

10. **Articles from other newsletters** can enhance your newsletter too. By reading other chapters' newsletters, you might see something that would be interesting to your chapter; their speakers might be something you want to include in one of your meetings.

NEWSLETTER LAYOUT AND CONTENT

1. NARFE Headquarters website contains "Tips and Templates for Federation and Chapter Newsletters" located at: http://www.narfe.org/member/articles.cfm?ID=844. The site contains **suggested topics** and contains two **templates** for your use.

2. "Tips and Templates…" also contains **copyright** information. They state, "Any article or story disseminated by NARFE Headquarters may be reproduced, with attribution. Some chapters like to reproduce articles from other sources, and generally, this may be done without violating copyright regulations if the source is credited." Please take time to review this web page for information and topics relevant to publication of your newsletter.

3. Publishing software generally comes with **templates** that any editor may use for their newsletter. Most chapters have a defined format for their newsletters, but an editor also might like to change what they are doing. The templates offered are very easy to use, edit, and change. This is where taking a *Continuing Education* course might be beneficial to you as you get started with templates or designing your own template. Look in your software and try using another template to see what happens! But generally all you need to do is ask your previous newsletter editor for newsletter files to simply copy onto your computer and use as a template for your newsletter. You then have the chapter masthead and most of their graphics to get started with little effort.

4. As stated in "Other Support Tools" section, having other **newsletters from other chapters** is a good way to see what other chapters are doing. You might see something you like that is different from what you are doing and change is not always bad… Be open to new ideas for your newsletter.

5. Chapter 1122 requested suggestions for obtaining **topics/articles** for chapter newsletters. After reviewing some of the newsletters here are some suggestions:

   o Check on the Maryland Federation website for ideas and articles.
   o NARFE Headquarters uses GEMS and NARFE "News Watch" to disseminate news items. Chapters routinely use these as news sources.
   o "Tips and Templates…" on NARFE Headquarters website has other suggestions. Please review their list for further ideas.
   o Read other chapter newsletters for ideas or articles. If you use articles from another newsletter, please use the proper bibliography information.
   o Speakers at chapter meetings may have newsletters/or an email distribution lists containing information that may be of interest to members. Ask them when they attend your meeting if they have such resources.
   o Check on your local government websites for news. They also may be email news alerts.
   o Look on government facilities that are in your area or where members work(ed) for news and community events. Subscribe to their newsletters to routinely see what is happening at their organizations.
   o Register on your U.S. Representative and/or Senator's websites. Some have email news alerts. Representative Chris Van Hollen sent out an alert several days ago to check your home on the Maryland state tax website that handles the Homestead Tax database reminding all to register by Dec. 31 if they haven't done so yet. So as you can see you might have been able to use that fact in your newsletter.

If you have other ideas for acquiring information for articles, please send the information to NARFE409@hotmail.com.

DISTRIBUTION

Hard Copy

1. *Process:* In at least one chapter, the newsletter editor distributes the newsletter by email, but in most chapters other volunteers distribute the newsletter to members by mail and email. The following contains descriptions of how chapters complete the distribution process. Check to see what your chapter does.

   Many chapters have **volunteers** to pick up the printed newsletter from the printer. If the printer does not **address** the newsletter, the volunteers use labels to apply to the newsletters. The labels are either obtained from NARFE National Headquarters (HQ), then printed by the chapter themselves from the Headquarters database merging that information into MS Word, or printed from a database kept within the chapter. Instructions to print labels using MS Word and the Headquarters database can be found at:
   http://www.narfe.org/member/articles.cfm?ID=2044&CFID=524252&CFTOKEN=87004623. Many chapters obtain their labels from HQ. HQ does charge a fee for this service; it is approximately $22 for each set varying by volume of newsletters.

   Some chapters also put on the **seals** on the newsletters (small opaque disks put on the edges required by the Post Office), but most chapters have their printers complete this task. If you have trouble obtaining volunteers to work on your distribution, your chapter might want to look into paying for this service. Newsletters now need two seals on their mailings.

   Once the newsletters are complete and ready to be mailed, a volunteer usually **picks up** the printed material for mailing.   Then other volunteers help to **label** the newsletters at this point in the process. The newsletters must be **sorted by zip code** also, but if the printer addresses your newsletters, they do this as part of that service. Also chapters that print their labels usually sort the labels by zip code before printing, so their newsletters are also sorted when labeling is completed. Once the labeling or addressing is complete, the newsletters are taken to the Post Office for **mailing**.

2. *Commercial Mail:* The United States Postal Service has an excellent website to learn what commercial mailing (or bulk mailing) is all about called "**Business Mail 101**." The site found at: http://pe.usps.com/businessmail101/. If you still have questions, go to your local Post Office to discuss any questions you may still have. The licenses that you need and the forms can be found on the Business Mail 101 website. The funds are paid every year; some chapters in a geographical area can share the license. Before a chapter can obtain bulk mailing rates, it must mail 200 or more newsletters. So check on the USPS website and/or your local Post Office for other regulations you might incur. Since USPS

regulations change often, Chapter 581 finds changes at http://allrightmailing.com/index.php?page=news. This site lists changes that have been made and details the changes.

There are many regulations associated with commercial (bulk) mailing, so also check with the USPS National Customer Support Center located at: https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=locatorslookups. One is in Baltimore, another in Washington, D.C., so check to see which location handles your commercial mail. The local Business Service Network within the USPS National Customer Support Center can be searched for by zip code on this site. The location contains address and phone number information for your local contact.   The representatives at these locations should be able to answer questions regarding advertising and what needs to be included in the process such as title, volume, and number on your newsletter if you include advertisements and any other questions you may have regarding commercial mail.   Your local Post Office may also be able to answer your questions. You might want to begin there first.

3. *Advertising:* Advertisements within your newsletter also may cause you to add other items to your newsletter before distributing. One chapter said that you must have a volume and issue number on your newsletter if you sell advertising. Another chapter said that the commercial mailing rate is cheaper if you have a title, volume and issue number on your newsletter. As stated previously in **Commercial Mail**, check with your USPS Business Service Network manager at the USPS National Customer Support Center or your local Post Office to answer these questions.

Email Distribution

1. *Process:* Many chapters are in the process of converting much of their distribution to email. Most chapters are currently doing both, hard copy distribution and email distribution. As an example, one chapter emails their new members with a "**Welcome Email**" discussing the chapter and attaching their current newsletter letting members know how it will be mailed to them. They do this automatically for new members. The chapter has had no complaints. If the "Welcome Email" goes through without being kicked backed, they are then added to the group email for newsletter distribution. This also is where your chapter might add a question asking **how you found out about NARFE** and forward the response to your Public Relations and Membership chairs.

   Some chapters are having difficulty addressing the email distribution effort, but if they talk to other chapters, they will see that they are not having problems with this process. If you do have people that balk at having the newsletter received by email, simply keep them on the hard copy list. If chapters are not receiving negative feedback, it might be worth trying within your chapter.

2. *Incentives:* Another reason to receive your newsletter by email is that you can make your email newsletter **LONGER than the hard copy**. Include more articles and graphics; it can be as long as you want with no printing charges for increased pages. You

could use that as an **incentive tool for transitioning your members to email distribution**. Chapter 1372 gave this as a suggestion and said it works for them. Let your members know the email copy is longer and contains more information, and hopefully they will hopefully WANT to transition to email. A recommendation from Chapter 581 stated to be careful that the email version might become too long if you choose to use a longer version than the hard copy, so they suggest being reasonable in the length of your newsletter if you decide to increase the size of your emailed newsletter.

Another incentive to receive by email is to **include graphics and pictures** in the chapter newsletter. They show in color on the email copy and your newsletter is more fun to read. So take a look at including color in your newsletter and be creative!

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The following are learning centers and helpful resources. Editors agree that the best training is doing, but knowing the software is a big help! The following suggestions in that regard might help.

<u>Learning Centers</u>

The following is a listing of places that offer non-credit courses for continuing education and development. This is not an all inclusive listing, but simply what is easily found on the internet. If you have a source for training that is not listed below and would like it included, please email Linda Adams at narfe409@hotmail.com with the name of the vendor, location, and course title/description. The list is alphabetized by the county or city indicated in bold type.

Community College of **Allegheny County**, *Community Education.* The courses for Community Education are offered on-line through ed2go.com. The courses offiered by the Community College of Allegheny County are: Microsoft Word, beginning and intermediate, and Adobe Photoshop and InDesign. The Community Education courses are listed at: http://www.ccac.edu/default.aspx?id=137111.

Anne Arundel Community College, *Continuing Education,* **Anne Arundel County**. They have non-credit courses for Word, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign. The schedule of classes is located at: http://www.aacc.edu/noncredit/. They have a terrific selection of continuing education classes.

Baltimore City Community College, *Continuing Education,* **Baltimore City**. There are courses offered in: Microsoft Publisher, Microsoft Word and Adobe Photoshop. The listings and schedules are located at: http://www.bccc.edu/Page/465.

The Community College of Baltimore County, *Continuing Education,* **Baltimore County**. The schedule for continuing education courses is found at: http://www.ccbcmd.edu/ceed/schedule/index.html. The non-credit courses include: Microsoft Word, beginning through advanced; Adobe Acrobat X, InDesign, introduction through advanced; and Adobe Photoshop.

Carroll Community College, *Continuing Education,* **Carroll County**. The courses offered are: Microsoft Word, level 1 and 2; Publisher, level 1 and 2; Adobe Photoshop, level 1 and 2; and Adobe InDesign, level 1 and 2. The schedule of courses is located at: http://www.carrollcc.edu/assets/publications/noncreditschedule/pdf/2012/fall2012extracts/InformationTechnologyOffice&Workplace_fall2012.pdf.

College of Southern Maryland, *Continuing Education.* Courses that are offered are: various Photoshop courses; Word at various levels; and InDesign. The catalogue is located at: http://www.csmd.edu/pdf/interactivepdfs/Fall2012CommEd/. This college services **Charles County, St. Mary's County** and **Calvert County** amongst others.

Frederick Community College, *Institute for Learning in Retirement,* **Frederick County**. The current catalogue is located at: http://www.frederick.edu/download/CE/ILRFall2012Schedule.pdf
The catalogue contains a new course on Microsoft Publisher. Check the Frederick Community College catalogue if you are interested in college courses.

Hagerstown Community College, *Continuing Education,* **Hagerstown City** and **Washington County**. The computer courses for Publisher and Word are located at: http://www.hagerstowncc.edu/coned/areas/computers/hands-on.   The schedules are located at: http://www.hagerstowncc.edu/coned/schedules. These are non-credit courses.

Harford Community College, *Continuing Education,* **Harford County**. The courses offered are: Microsoft Word, Microsoft Publisher, and Adobe Photoshop and InDesign. The catalogue can be found at: http://www.harford.edu/schedule/noncr_coursemenu.asp?FA=ContEd&FD=. The space between "noncr" and "coursemenu" contains an underscore you do not see in the printed text.

Howard Community College, *Continuing Education,* **Howard County**.   Various levels of Word are offered as well as various Adobe courses including Photoshop and InDesign. The course descriptions and schedule of classes is offered at: http://coned.howardcc.edu/schedule_of_classes/PDF/Fall12Noncredit-FINAL-080712.pdf

Montgomery College, *Training Solutions for Business and Industry.* **Montgomery County**. The current catalogue is located at: http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/wdce/brochures/business.pdf
The classes here include Adobe Photoshop, web design, and other social media courses. They did not have a specific course for Microsoft Publisher or other publishing software, but check occasionally to see if they have added any that might apply to your software.

Prince George's Community College, *Non-credit Courses,* **Prince George's County**. The courses offered are: Word, beginning and intermediate; various Adobe courses including Photoshop; and InDesign to name a few. The schedule of classes is located at: http://www.pgcc.edu/Programs_and_Courses/Class_Schedules.aspx.

Worcester-Wicomico Community College, *Continuing Education (Non-credit Courses),* **Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset Counties.** The courses offered for desktop publishing and graphics: Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Acrobat Professional. They offer MS Word courses also. The schedule of class is located at: http://www.worwic.edu/ . Their on-line courses are offered through http://www.ed2go.com/worwic.

YouTube Sites: www.youtube.com. YouTube has various training videos which are helpful and do not cost anything. Try searching on http://www.youtube.com.com site to see what others webinars/videos are available to learn your software. Below are just a few sites on YouTube that might help you.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHqkjejSA24 Microsoft Publisher 2010

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tsrc-Es0kyg&feature=related How to Create a Newsletter in Adobe Photoshop, Part 1. This is the first part of a series. For more information or other tutorials visit www.psd2mail.org

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUYIxHfFlhg&feature=related How to Use Microsoft Word to Create a Newsletter.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXUByTUgmYY&feature=BFa&list=SPDBBA7D2FB11A8851 The second part of this series. She says this is a series on videos at her website www.shortcutqueen.com, but I couldn't find them!

ADDENDUM A

FEDERATION NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Chapter Number and Name		Editor	Phone No.	Email Address	Software
126	Western Charles/ Indian Head	Jeannette Green	301-645-3319	jeangreen@aol.com	Works
251	Annapolis	Meg Clarke	443-904-5023	maarston.clarke@yahoo.com	MAC InDesign (graphic designer used)
258	Bethesda/Chevy Chase	Maxine Lesniak	301-951-3405		
		Judy Welles	301-229-8110		
264	Hyattsville	Jana Over	301-779-5120	jtover@aol.com	
306	Hagerstown	Ed Wurmb	301-791-5542	ecwurmb@myactv.net	
357	Takoma Park	Marcia Taylor (Joyce Gant's email)	301-5899-1913	joyce07@verizon.net	
409	Frederick	Louis Popowsky	301-371-6648	popowsk@yahoo.com	Word
410	West-Mar	Donnie Gibson/Tom Lyons	301-724-7824;301-777-1463	harleyfolks@atlanticbb.net	
422	Laurel	Barbara Hemming	203-614-6443	No email; hemmisur@aol.com	
581	Gaithersburg	Tom Kitchens & wife	301-515-8984	tak.narfe@verizon.net.	
		Larry Lange			
969	St. Mary's County	Pat Myers	301-884-8714	pameyers@md.metrocast.net	
1122	Northern P.G. County	Barbara Smith	301-441-1989	bsg.smith@verizon.net	Publisher 2010
1127	Rockville	Leonard Mordfin	301-230-0226	mordfin@msn.com	
1143	Leisure World	Barbara Walter	301-598-8882	redslittle@verizon.net	
1260	Southern P.G. County	Marilyn Hughes	301-274-4656	skipjack99@webtv.com	
1261	Delmarva	Jim Towles	410-749-4741	jjmtowles@aol.com	
1363	Bay Area	Jo Anne Groves	410-867-2207	jo.groves@comcast.net	
1372	Tidewater	Jean Sadler	410-827-9397	jean@geomethods.com	
1427	Calvert County	Max Munger	410-326-9024	maxmunger@verizon.net	Word
1519	Glen Burnie	Stan & Barbara Jacobs	410-969-5980		Adobe InDesign
1522	Calvert County	Carleston Brown* hearing impaired; use email		brow1723@atlanticbb.net	
1734	Howard County	Steve Huza	410-381-5319		
1747	Greater Bowie/Crofton	Jessica Forman	843-347-9287	jessicaforman@yahoo.com	
1770	Bel Air	Editor; recruiting now			

1887	Wheaton/Glenmont	Jay Schulman	301--949-1844	jschull@verizon.net	
1888	White Oak	Betty & Ken Putkovich	301-879-0152	AuntQ1776@msn.com	
1892	Aspen Hill	Cathy Hobbs (temp)	301-924-4633	cathy.hobbs@fda.hhs.gov	
1936	N.W. Baltimore Metro	Henry Thomas	(410) 281-2051	dau01@comcast.net	
1972	Waldorf/La Plata	Jim Lish	301-888-2482	jlish11@verizon.net	
1990	Catonsville	Alice Raatjes	410-744-4586	hmalraatjes1@verizon.net	
2166	Eastern Baltimore Area	Chuck Booth		bcbooth3@verizon.net	
2262	Upper Marlboro	Sharon Cummings	301-627-4419	shcu@comcast.net	
2274	Ocean Area	Ted Page, photographer and comp. specialist	410-352-3749	arinoc@aol.com	
2306	Carroll County	Marie Detweiler	410-795-7466	marie.detweiler@gmail.com	
MD FED	MD Federation	Linda Adams	301-253-4740	grams38@verizon.net	Microsoft Publisher 2010