

## Section 3 - NEWSLETTERS & OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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Newsletters

Writing Effectively

Other Communications

Telephone

E-mail & the internet

**Newsletters & Other Communications****Newsletters****why ?**

Sooner or later your chapter will probably decide that you need a newsletter. A newsletter, however, is not an absolute necessity--it is a chapter project, like any other, and should be evaluated in the same way. If the main activity of the chapter becomes working on the newsletter, it's time to reevaluate the goals of the group. You may need more action and fewer words.

A newsletter can serve your chapter in many ways:

- Announce meetings and other activities
- Report on recent chapter activities
- Cover local space news
- Share information about local resources
- Improve communication among members and between officers and members
- Publicize your group
- Aid chapter growth Improve morale
- Promote communication with other chapters
- Serve as a permanent chapter record
- Help members to develop writing, editing and organizational skills

But before you put yourself and your chapter on the newsletter treadmill, carefully consider where these purposes fit on your list of priorities and what kind of newsletter will best fill YOUR needs.

**kinds**

They can range from a single-page, handwritten notice distributed at meetings as needed, through the cut/paste/photocopy newsletter of varying quality, to an e-mail newsletter, and to a monthly, multi-page, type-set, semiprofessional publication mailed to hundreds of individuals and organizations.

A newsletter can be your chapter's best friend--it can also be a monster that devours all your energy, time and money!

Start out small. It is easy to move up to something fancier as you gain experience, but embarrassing to have to cut back and admit that you bit off more than you could chew. Anyway, just think how great future issues will look compared with the first ones!

Don't be afraid to experiment with different formats and production methods. Have members gather samples of different kinds of newsletters to study.

**schedule**

You don't HAVE to put out a monthly newsletter. It could go out whenever the editor has enough timely news to print: However, when your chapter grows beyond an initial small group, members should be able to expect to get the newsletter at regular intervals.

If your officers are organized enough to schedule chapter activities several months in advance, it certainly is less effort and expense to publish bimonthly or even quarterly. However, it is likely that you will have to circulate news between issues (see "Phone Trees" elsewhere in this section).

Does your chapter have a slow season, during the summer or at exam time? Are the November/December holidays too hectic for your editorial staff? Instead of a full twelve-issues-per-year

schedule, you may prefer to do ten or eleven issues by combining July and August and/or November and December.

Whatever schedule you choose, make sure you get each issue out ON TIME! A beautifully-done, big newsletter will not impress your members or the public if it arrives too late.

### **super-editor**

Your chapter may be blessed with an experienced editor or with an energetic member who is eager to put out "the best newsletter NSS has ever seen!". (Maybe this potential "super editor" is you.) While no one wants to throw cold water on such enthusiasm, the officers and membership cannot afford to sigh in relief, assume the newsletter is in good hands and move on to other business.

First of all, unless this is a handwritten, passed-around notice, no one person should have to gather all the news and information, type it up, format the newsletter, produce and distribute it. Not only will this method bum out the most dedicated member in time, but either quality or schedule is likely to suffer.

Your editor may take such an arrangement on willingly, out of ignorance of what it involves, or because he or she cannot (or is unwilling) to delegate authority. It is vital that your chapter avoid this, if for no other reason than your editor may suddenly be unable to continue because of a job, school or family crisis and no one else is likely to want to step into such a demanding position.

### **a learning experience**

The above warning must be modified somewhat to take into account the fact that writing, editing and publishing a newsletter, like other chapter activities, can provide your members with an opportunity to learn valuable skills. They can then use these skills to advance both NSS and their own careers. While this benefit does not justify an otherwise impractical newsletter project, it should be considered during an evaluation.

### **image**

While your newsletter does not have to be a masterpiece, it does represent your chapter to members, prospective members, the media, community leader, and the general public. What kind of an image do you want to project? What kind does it actually project?

Even if you can afford a top-of-the-line publication, does that give a spend-thrift image to a local volunteer, educational organization? Or does your group look sloppy, disorganized, fanatic, unrealistic, cliquish or self-important?

Unless you plan to keep the newsletter strictly for members only, which is difficult (hand delivery, burn-on-reading?), it is a good idea to keep nasty internal disputes out of it. Reading a newsletter can lure in a new member, but not if it reflects an organization in combat with itself. It's best to consider material in the newsletter to be in "the public domain" since even the press may get a hold of it.

### **a temptation**

Local newsletter editors face a great temptation: As long as they're paying postage to send out a newsletter, why not send out a big, fat newsletter? And if there's not enough local chapter news to fill it up, use national space news, general space articles, physics lessons, anything space-related. Makes sense, right?

Not really. If it truly took no extra time or money to do, it would make sense to include national news in a local newsletter. But our time and money are very limited, and newsletters eat up a lot of both. Think of it: all around the world many separate chapters could spend time and money writing, editing,

typing, photocopying and mailing similar general articles to very small mailing lists. It's inefficient; an immense duplication of effort.

So editors: Be ruthless! Ask yourself whether this item belongs in a local publication, or whether it has the potential to interest a national readership. If the latter, urge the writer to send it to *Ad Astra*, which is always looking for good material. Encourage the local members to write for outside publications, too. The general public's need to hear about space development is greater than any NSS member's.

### copyright warning

Even if your newsletter is a small, members-only publication, you may be in violation of the copyright law if you reprint articles, cartoons and other copyrighted material. Assume that everything is copyrighted unless you know otherwise and get permission from the source.

In the U.S. you can copyright your newsletter if you wish by putting the copyright symbol © followed by the year and your chapter's name on each issue. To give full protection to a special publication, you can send a copyright form and fee to the Copyright Office of the Library of Congress, even after publication.

Your group might want to encourage reprinting of your material, but should specify in each issue that permission is required, material cannot be used out of context and a copy of the publication must be sent to your editorial address. Other NSS chapters may be exempted, if you wish.

### gathering material

Once your chapter decides what kind of newsletter to publish and picks an editor, he or she will probably find that it is easier to sit down and write about chapter activities than to get members to do so. Resist the temptation! It takes extra effort to train a pool of member/reporters, but it is well worth it! Even non-typists and non-writers can at least gather complete information for the calendar. You will soon be grateful for the help and probably find that this method also cements your group together as more members share the feeling of accomplishment.

General appeals for articles either go unheeded or result in four separate ones about the same event. Ask specific people to do specific, small jobs and tell them how much you need. If you want two paragraphs or one hundred words on the library exhibit, be sure to say that, or you may get three laboriously handwritten pages two days after your deadline!

Once you have picked a format and production method, members' submissions should be typed in that format whenever possible. The best way to let them know what you need is to type detailed instructions in the exact format you need, including line length, titles and spacing. Send this out with your next newsletter.

### deadlines

Your newsletter may never get out if you don't set deadlines and stick to them. You can use an easy to remember one, such as: the tenth of each month or the first Friday. Publish each deadline prominently on your newsletter's calendar.

### content

Much of your newsletter will consist of regular features:

**CALENDAR:** A list of chapter and other space-related events. An actual calendar that members can post is popular

**ARTICLES:** Highlights of upcoming and recent events

**EDITORIAL:** Communications from the editor or officers

**MEMBERSHIP FORM:** Don't lose an interested possible new member because they don't know how to join.

Try to keep your writing tight and informative and put the most important information on the front page. Editors go crazy when they hear a member say, "Was that in the newsletter? I didn't get to finish it last month." A large newsletter should have a table of contents or "In This Issue" listing on the first page.

### **advertising**

Set a standard policy about advertising. Do you want to finance your newsletter through ads? You may have to guarantee a minimum circulation for your ad rate. Will you accept only certain kinds of ads? Give special rates or free ads for members or corporate supporters? These are not easy decisions.

### **copy protection**

You can't get an attractive newsletter from messy copy. Your best bet for generating attractive, readable copy is via a laser printer. "Bubblejet" or "inkjet" printers are nearly as good and definitely less expensive. If you must resort to typing, typists should use good, white paper, a dark black ribbon and clean the machine's typeface when needed. Use a consistent type size, pica or elite. Electric typewriters produce copy of more uniform darkness than do manuals.

Word processors are wonderful time-savers because material can be quickly edited or corrected, but check what kind of printer you will have to use. Printers generally have a "resolution" expressed as Dots Per Inch (DPI) 300-600 is standard and will suffice for most type and graphics. A glossy magazine will usually use 3,600 printers to render photo-quality images. Dot matrix can be hard to read, especially if it does not print descenders (the parts of letters like g, j, and p that go below the line). Fortunately, these are a dying breed in this day and age. You may be able to store your copy on a disk and use someone's compatible letter quality printer to print your master. But be sure to try out all equipment before you need it!

Readability is increased by using two columns instead of typing across the page and by justifying the right edge of the columns (making the last letter of each line fall directly under the one above). Most typewriters give an equal space to thin and fat letters. Typeset copy is proportionally spaced and more pleasant to read. If you reduce your typed copy with a photocopy machine in order to get more on a page, make sure it is still readable.

### **format**

You can design a master copy of your newsletter's masthead using word-processing or desktop-publishing software or manually paste it up with rub-on letters, and graphics tape for lines and boxes or you can invest in a printed one. Avoid large dark areas if your newsletter will be photocopied. Don't forget headlines for your regular features.

### **manual paste-up**

Once your copy is complete, arrange it on sturdy sheets of white paper along with your masthead, page numbers, and clear black and white art. A dab of rubber cement will hold them in place, and they can still be rearranged as needed. Once your masters are complete, follow the photocopy guidelines found elsewhere in this chapter.

If your newsletter is printed, shop around for the best price and completion time, as these can vary greatly. Make sure you know when it will be ready. Get your masters back (some printers file them), you may want to reuse parts in the future.

**mailing**

Unless you pay the printer to collate, staple, fold and address your newsletters, these jobs can be done by members--see "Work Parties," "Mailing Labels," and "Bulk Mailing" elsewhere in this Handbook. The secretary should have mailing labels ready. Someone must also get stamps, run the postal meter or sort zip codes for bulk mailing.

You might decide to have a Copy Editor who produces the masters and a Production Editor who is in charge of the printing and mailing. This method prevents overloading one member, but demands teamwork and rigid deadlines so that the newsletter is ready for the work party.

If all your chapter members have e-mail access, you might want to consider producing your newsletter as an electronic file and distributing via the Internet. If you do, be sure to keep at least one hard copy on file.

**Writing Effectively**

(Editor's Note: Every member should read the following section whether you write for a chapter newsletter or not. Use it as a guide to help you to write for *Ad Astra* or your local papers. Non-writers can use it to evaluate their chapter's newsletter program. ANY member who may be interviewed by a reporter can use an understanding of interviewing, and writing techniques to NSS's advantage.)

A good newsletter is not just a bunch of reports tossed together to tell readers what is going on. It is a tangible, concrete, specialized newspaper the text of which is assembled, composed and designed with the purpose to inform, remind and entertain a specific group of people.

Few people can appreciate the problems involved in publishing a good newsletter, with "good" meaning useful, informative, interesting and unusual. A newsletter is a piece of communication, and above all, it is people communicating to other people, not people communicating to themselves. A dull newsletter is usually read only by those who wrote it.

**before you publish**

1. **CONSIDER IMAGE**--An editor should decide what image of NSS he wishes to project, what audience he wishes to target, what information he wishes to transmit, and how he will present it.
2. **SELECT A STAFF**--The key individual on a publication staff is the editor who must be talented in writing, diplomacy, motivating others and maintaining a budget. But an editor needs contributors, otherwise he'll burn out. Contributors or writers provide the bulk of information, and must possess talents in determining newsworthiness, interest, pertinent detail and grammatical construction.
3. **DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITY**--An editor may assign tasks as well as accept unsolicited material. In any case, he has the ultimate say-so on what is published. If the newsletter is poor, he'll be blamed. He must be a writer himself to understand the task and what comprises good elements. He must also know when to reject an article and deal diplomatically with a contributor to encourage rewrites and additional effort. He must adhere to his budget by restricting some articles, editing others and working within specific, allotted space constrictions. A publication out of financial control is loose, sloppy and disastrous to a chapter's image as well as its treasury.

A writer must learn that first-draft, hand-scribbled articles will reduce his editor to a blubbing heap. If the poor manuscript habits continue, he may find his articles constantly rejected. Typed, double-spaced texts expedite an editor's duties as well as leave room for editorial remarks for improvement.

4. **ESTABLISH FORMAT AND STYLE**--If only one person writes the newsletter, format and style will be consistent. When several people contribute, the editor must assure the integrity of style which includes

language, grammar and focus. Not all articles need be serious, yet style must be consistent except for letters to the editor and personal essays.

Format determines the regular arrangement of articles. Readers do not appreciate having to search all over the newsletter for the regular feature articles. One common logical format can be broken into three parts:

- a. Forthcoming meeting announcement, Report on the previous meeting
- b. Feature articles, Regular departments, Ancillary reports, Filler items
- c. Personal essays, Editorials

Print format should be columnar with right-hand justification, not all across the page in long lines with jagged right margins. Columns are gentle on the eyes. Newspapers learned this long ago. Consistency is extremely important. Keep the logo, title, articles, etc. in the same order always. Arrange the items in any manner. Just maintain consistency.

**5. SELECT A SIZE THAT FITS THE CHAPTER**--An oversized newsletter filled with drivel tells the reader something about that chapter. Such a padded newsletter says the chapter wastes too much time and money.

Too few pages crammed with chopped up information says something else. An overloaded newsletter says the chapter doesn't devote enough time to the publication to explain what activities have occurred.

Base your newsletter size upon your chapter activities. Big is not necessarily better. Report in quality, not quantity. Such attention will definitely establish a positive impression on the reader.

One good size with which to begin is a standard 8 1/2 x 11 inch sheet. The text can be printed on one full side and on two-thirds of the back with the remaining third left blank for addresses. As the chapter expands, move to an 8 1/2 x 14 inch sheet. Your size and format will remain consistent, and the cost will stay low because the newsletter uses only one sheet. The next stage of growth can move to an 11 x 17 inch sheet. Nothing will be wasted. The newsletter will continue to look familiar.

You can always move back to the smaller sheets without blatantly showing that your chapter was less active that month because the reduction in size is less obvious.

**6. SELECT A PRINTER**--Fast-paced, high-volume printers are available almost everywhere. Select one that deals with rapid printing for small businesses and organizations. Plain white, single-sheet, two-sided printing is not expensive.

**7. SET DEADLINES**--Stick to the deadlines: one for articles, one for the printer, another for mailing. The deadline for planning the next newsletter should be the day after mailing the last one. Ah, there is little rest.

**8. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**--The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees freedom of political, social, academic and commercial speech. However, to preserve this right, discretion and good judgment are required on the part of the publisher.

An editor must scrutinize his material for false information, invasion of privacy, negligence, libel and slander. Any one of these possibilities is cause for litigation. An editor has responsibility to assure that his publication is accurate, substantiated, nonintrusive and unembarrassing.

Each state has different statutes, either by legislation or common law; thus, an editor should be aware of torts and damages which may result from his publication.

An NSS newsletter is a public transmission of information and is not immune from social responsibility.

### **story considerations**

A story should combine two or more of the following considerations. [Editor's Note: By understanding that a reporter must satisfy these requirements, you can use them to your advantage whenever you are trying to get media coverage or want to get a certain message included when you are being interviewed.]

1. **APPEAL**--People are most concerned about events that affect their interests. Since NSS newsletter readers are interested in the space program, targeting that audience is easy. Make the story appealing to the reader.

2. **IMPACT**--Determining the value of a story is based upon how many readers it will affect. An editor must also consider how serious the impact of a story will be upon the reader. That impact may range from provoking action and interest to provoking reactions of amusement. Somehow the story must touch the reader.

3. **PROXIMITY**--The closer an event is to one's hometown, the more newsworthy it is. Some events may have national impact, but local links always lend it greater appeal. Use *Ad Astra* for articles that have national appeal.

4. **TIMELINESS**--In a monthly newsletter, fast-breaking news is rare. However, an editor should keep pace with his chapter's activities.

5. **PROMINENCE**--Certain names have import to an NSS newsletter. An editor can familiarize his readers with those names by concentrating on his local membership. His readers will attribute credibility to the individuals mentioned, and learn to recognize them as prominent within the local NSS.

6. **NOVELTY**--Unusual events or human interest stories capture attention as they entertain. Clever reports and descriptions always have appeal.

For example, in a report on a local NSS party, don't make the party sound dull by listing who was there, what happened, and how much fun they supposedly had. Liven it up by **SHOWING** the party in print. "I feel pregnant," Jim Reed complained about his stuffed condition after consuming the entire supply of macaroon cookies. While he and Don Drennan hovered over the goody table, Barb Roberts, Rich Cassidy and Steve Cook heated the Handbookchen with a lively conversation on what might happen if a dog should wag its tail in zero gravity. The names interspersed throughout this human interest story say something about the people present at the party. Make a story entertain the reader.

### types of stories

1. **HARD NEWS REPORT**--Characterized by the inverted pyramid with the important details summarized in the lead, and the bulk of the account tapering away underneath. This rigid construction, although designed for the hard news of a daily publication, can be bent to accommodate articles and features.

2. **ARTICLES AND FEATURES**--These terms are nearly synonymous, and both deal with events, movements, trends and processes, all with an emphasis on people. These stories are factual or fictionalized accounts based on fact. But they are more of a reading experience than the straight news report. They contain more style and grace as well as more of the details a hard news reporter would consider frivolous.

3. **INTERVIEWS**--These are reports based upon a question and answer session. Perhaps once in a lifetime, a writer can publish them in the Q & A format. Only Playboy does this tolerably well because it devotes much time and effort probing the individual.

Q & A is merely the basis for the interview report. Arm yourself with as much information as possible about the subject personally and professionally. He will appreciate it. Phrase your questions so that the answers are open rather than closed, even if you know the answer he will provide. He just might say something clever. NEVER guess at what he meant. Probe deeper. Verify. Pay attention to your subject. Don't just listen. Watch his reactions. What he says may not be as important as how he says it. Toss in some of your own personal reflections even though they will not be in the report.

The interview, if treated as a conversation, can be enjoyable for both reporter and subject. If he relaxes he'll open up. A good report from an interview says something about that person, not just what he said.

4. **FILLERS**--These can be on anything that falls within the newsletter style. The information can be trivial or profound, but most of all, complete and short. If it's incomplete and short, perhaps the material should be expanded into an article to fill it out.

5. **ESSAYS**--These items are brief, tightly structured, highly focused personal pieces which often reflect the author's personality. Use of the first person narrative ruins a standard report. However, in the essay, it can be valuable because the reader has an opportunity to meet the writer.

- a. The **INFORMATIVE** essay teaches and deals with practical matters.
- b. The **INTERPRETIVE** essay puts information into perspective and concentrates on "why" without adding opinion.
- c. The **OPINION** essay is usually called an editorial. It applies persuasive reasoning to information, and may deal with either controversial or practical topics.
- d. The **HUMOROUS** essay informs, interprets and/or opinionates. Whether gentle or biting, such an essay better be funny, which is not easily accomplished. It can cover humorous subject matter, but more often its humor lies in literary phrasing which includes irony, parody, understatement, exaggeration, etc.

### writing a story

1. **THE TOPIC**--An idea for a story may be so obvious that you miss it. Pay attention because a seemingly trivial event may blossom into a story. But if it's not there, don't try to bleed one out of it.

Once you have an idea, focus in on it. Don't deviate no matter how spectacular the information may be. Rambling from one separate point to another will detract from your theme. If the information is so great that you can't part with it, make it a separate story.

2. **TITLE**-- The title must say something about the text. It should tease the reader into pursuing the article. "NSS Holds Spaceday" can be turned into "NSS Blasts Off With Spaceday" or "Armstrong walks on the Moon" can become "A Real High Plains Drifter".

3. **THE LEAD/OPENING**--The lead establishes or hints at what will follow. Being the most critical part of an article, the lead must be designed to capture the reader's attention.

Dr. Jerome Williams addressed NSS at the October general meeting. He talked about computers and the way they are changing our daily lives.

This dull lead can be changed by using something the speaker might have said during his lecture.

"It's like Gutenberg's press all over again," claims Dr. Jerome Williams. "The illiterate will be left behind." Addressing the NSS October general meeting, Dr. Williams reflected on how computers may be revolutionizing our thinking patterns and our abilities to cope in a changing society.

This new lead attracts the reader with a punching quote. It contains language to make the reader feel he has a personal stake in the topic. The quote says something about the speaker, and shows he expects profound changes for the average citizen. But if quotes don't work because they are dull or inappropriate, use language.

David Ciano reported his interview with Dr. Luke Smith in *THE RECORD*.

Change this dull, uninformative lead to say something about the subject.

David Ciano discovered the other side of Luke Smith, and reported his interview with the controversial doctor in *THE RECORD*. This new lead says something unique about Smith, and may entice the reader to find out who this man is.

4. **QUOTES AND ATTRIBUTION**--Not everything uttered is worth quoting directly. Use direct quotes only if someone says something distinctive or important, or if he says it uniquely. But do remember that the prodigious use of direct quotes does not let you off the hook in your social responsibility, even if someone with credibility says something wrong or slanderous, unless your story is about the erroneous statement.

Paraphrasing takes ordinary statements and condenses them into a tract of information. Most of your text will be paraphrased material.

Partial quotes are justifiable if they are not taken out of context or arranged in such a manner that the speaker never would have lumped them together the way you have composed them.

Single-word quotes should never be used because quotation marks round a single word imply that the writer means the opposite of the term or less than the term means. If you like the word but can't stand the rest of the sentence around it, simply drop the quotation marks since you are paraphrasing and attributing the statement anyway. Another way to get around this dilemma is to specifically point out that the speaker calls something "a something-or-other".

Paraphrasing does not mean you change every word. You can still use those of the speaker. But in any case, always attribute your information to some source. Never make a statement that does not point to the speaker's having said it, whether quoted directly or not.

One nature of the quote that many inexperienced writers ignore is that the quote makes a statement about the speaker as well as states what the speaker has said. Attribution is, with rare exception, in the present tense unless the speaker has since changed his mind (which means you better qualify that point) or is dead. In other words, Dr. Williams discussed computers at the meeting (past tense), but he makes statements about them (present tense). The event is in the past; statements reflect ongoing feelings or values.

5. **THE CONCLUSION**--The ending should resolve the article, not kill it with weak drama, redundancy, or contrivances to duplicate the lead. Neither should endings leave the reader dangling. Endings are tough to write. Ernest Hemingway wrote the ending to "Farewell To Arms" 39 times before he was satisfied.

Endings don't always summarize, but they should somehow signal "the end" without cutting off the reader. Once again, quotes are handy.

His ambitions and goals described, Dr. Thornhill says, "We have to have clear thinking, combined perhaps with the imagination of a poet to really develop and use space for mankind."

If the speaker hadn't said "imagination of a poet", this quote would be plain. In that case, you should paraphrase his statement when using it as an ending.

According to Dr. Thornhill, space has profound potential to benefit all mankind. But, he adds that for wide development of the new frontier, clear thinking is the key.

In this conclusion, the writer has used language to summarize Thornhill's values and feelings better than Thornhill himself did. But then again, that is the power of the press.

### rules for good writing

1. **PRECISION**--Say what you mean. Use words wisely. Understand semantics and new connotations. Don't get carried away with jargon, or use literary innovations unless they are indeed cleverly turned phrases that don't distract from content.

2. **CLARITY**--If it takes a Nobel Prize winner and a philologist to decipher your written word, your report is not clear. Avoid convoluted complex sentences, misplaced modifiers and ambiguity. Watch grammar and spelling. Don't clutter reports with unnecessary adjectives and adverbs. It is easy to write what you think you want to say, but difficult to write what you want to mean.

3. **PACING**--This is a definite skill. It manipulates rhythm, cadence and flow to create mood. Short sentences have impact. They make the reader stop to think. They lend drama. Long sentences are relaxing and lead the reader along. Read your story aloud a few days after you've written it. It probably won't sound the same, and will need refurbishing.

4. **TRANSITIONS**--Bridges from one paragraph to another can be words, phrases or sentences. But they must contain signals and transport memory from the preceding paragraph. Well-written transitions are hardly visible. The writer knows they are there because he labored over them. To the reader, they should appear natural.

5. **SENSORY APPEAL**--Some details are appropriate. Some aren't. Knowing when a detail helps a story separates the wordy writer from the skillful one. Details can be distracting. They are important only when they say something about an event or person and capture an essence that could never come across in print otherwise.

### stumbling blocks

1. **TRADEMARKS**--Companies guard trademarks jealously to prevent their products or services from acquiring a generic application to all similar products. Such was the downfall of linoleum and aspirin which at one time were trademarks which the companies foolishly did not protect. For example, use "photocopy" not "Xerox" (which is not a verb anyway).

2. **CAPITALIZATION**--Most errors in capitalization occur with place-names and titles. For example, when using "mecca," think hard. Are you referring to a place or a literary device? As a city, "Mecca" is capitalized. As a literary device, it is not. Also, Moon and Earth are place-names, and therefore capitalized. Titles precede a name and such courtesies are capitalized. Following a name, they are not.

She spoke with NSS President Karen Datillo.

She spoke with Karen Datillo, president of NSS.

Sometimes a qualifier is not a title. Sometimes it is.

She spoke with physics professor Don Aaron.

She spoke with Professor Don Aaron, physics instructor.

Also, "astronaut" is not a title anymore than "soldier" is. The rank is the title.

She spoke with astronaut Lt. Elizabeth Johnson.

3. **QUOTES**--Capitalization, punctuation and enclosure depend on several factors such as using the entire quote, paraphrasing or enclosing partial quotes.

If the words to be quoted represent a complete sentence, the written quote must appear as a complete sentence. If the words to be quoted represent part of a complete sentence, they must appear as only a piece of the sentence. If the words to be quoted are paraphrased, they cannot appear within quotation marks. Writers may also insert qualifiers within brackets, or signal the omission of words with an ellipsis.

The following are examples of a particular statement made by a speaker. The writer is reporting that statement.

A. Barb Stein claims, "The idea is radical but important" (This is a quote representing a complete sentence made by Stein.)

B. Barb Stein claims the idea is "radical, but important". (This is a quote representing part of a sentence made by Stein. The word "idea" comes from the writer who is summarizing a concept.)

- C. Barb Stein claims the idea is radical, but important (This is not a direct quote, but paraphrased material.)
- D. Barb Stein claims, "The idea [a space station] is radical, but important". (This quote represents a complete statement made by the speaker, however the writer has inserted a qualifier in brackets, not parentheses which imply a parenthetical statement made by the speaker.)
- E. Barb Stein claims a space station is "radical, but important". (The writer has added explanation like in (D), but included it in the text without editorial brackets.)
- F. A space station, Barb Stein claims, "is radical, but important". (Beginning with a phrase breaks monotony. But be careful! Omitting the comma after "claims" means that the beginning phrase modifies Barb Stein. She certainly isn't a space station.)
- G. Barb Stein claims, "The idea is radical, but important ... ." (The ellipsis shows that the writer deleted something else that Stein said which he chose not to include.)

Use all quotes carefully. Capitalization and punctuation are guideposts as to what was actually said. In any case, whatever is enclosed within quotation marks must represent word-for-word what the speaker said, unless the writer spots and error in grammar which would embarrass the speaker if printed. A quote must never be taken out of context or re-created in the wrong place.

If the quote is taken from an auxiliary source such as a publication, the writer should never mislead the reader into thinking the statement came from his notes. He must attribute the quote to the proper source.

4. **PUNCTUATION: COMMA AND HYPHEN**--Judgment is required when using hyphens and commas. Commas separate thoughts. Hyphens connect them. If used incorrectly, either can alter sentence meaning. Think about these examples:

- a. No one complained, because the mission failed. No one complained because the mission failed.
- b. Fifty, odd members attended. Fifty odd members attended.

5. **DANGLING CONSTRUCTION**--Writers should pay strict attention to what their phrases modify:

- Not using clear terms, the report was ambiguous. (wrong)
- Not using clear terms, the writer wrote ambiguously.
- Not written in clear terms, the report was ambiguous.

6. **AMBIGUITY**--This results when two interpretations are possible. Explanations may be necessary.

- I can't say he was too delightful. (wrong, unless he was a bore)

7. **WRONG COMBINATIONS**--Some words cancel each other out:

- We cut our budget up to \$100. (wrong)
- We cut our budget by \$100.

8. **DOUBLE-MEANING WORDS**--Writers should watch out for homonyms and changing semantics.

- Her appeal was unavoidable. (wrong, unless she was enticing)
- Her plea was unavoidable.

- Dr. Jones exposed himself at the meeting. (wrong, unless he happens to be a flasher)
- Dr. Jones revealed his feelings at the meeting.

9. **JARGON**--Known as "gobbledygook," jargon is used most often by knowledgeable illiterates who refuse to or cannot communicate with anyone but their peers or themselves. An NSS newsletter must translate some technical material and make it palatable for the lay audience.

By the onset of the final conference, exogenous variables had pressured the on-hand supply to such a notable degree that the end-result was the cessation of our proprietary enterprise. (What does it mean?)

By the end of the day, we sold everything. (Translation)

10. **REDUNDANCY**--Repetition is useful when making a point; however, in word-combinations it is ludicrous: true facts, few in number, killed dead, final conclusion.

#### don't's

1. Don't assume your readers know what you are writing about. To assume technical knowledge on the part of the reader is to exclude him from useful information. Teach and inform while you entertain.

Of the entire space shuttle, the orbiter and its two SRBs are reusable. The SRBs are jettisoned into the ocean after expending their fuel and completing their purpose: to assist the ET during launch. At present the ET is discarded; however, its future use in orbit is under consideration.

Rewrite:

Of the entire space shuttle, the orbiter and its two solid rocket boosters are reusable. The orbiter returns like a conventional aircraft in a controlled glide. The SRBs are jettisoned into the ocean where they await recovery by ship, after having expended their fuel and assisted the external tank during launch. At present the ET is discarded; however, its future use in orbit is under consideration.

This rewrite explains a little more of what occurs. It defines terms unobtrusively within the text. Imagine that you are the average reader and write for that person, not yourself. Some material will need more explanation than others. To decide how much, simply consider who will be reading the material.

2. Don't underestimate your reader. Using the last example, note that some terms explain themselves, such as "orbiter" and "boosters". There is no need to insult the reader.

3. Don't assume the reader will draw the same conclusions as you. Maybe he won't. If you want him to draw a specific conclusion, unobtrusively lead him there.

4. Don't use information or generalizations you can't support or defend. Don't even imply a statement and hide it with ambiguity. Get facts, statistics and quotes from credible sources. The reader will get the feeling that the writer checked everything out carefully, paid attention to details and can be trusted in his reports.

5. Don't write if you know little about the topic. Get help. Don't mislead the reader by oversimplifying. Know your topic so you can instruct and inform while you entertain.

6. Don't bog down with a plethora of facts and details. Boggling down is the opposite of oversimplifying. Too much information slows down an article, wastes space and shows that the writer does not know how to select pertinent information. The data may be great but not suitable for the story's focus.

The space transportation system was designed to truck cargo to and from space. It is made of aluminum .. (etc)... Capable of doing microgravity experiments, the orbiter has carried research for companies, and universities... (etc) ...The on-board computers, located on the flight deck...(etc)...Launched into space by an external tank and two solid rocket boosters, the orbiter...(etc)...

This article has no focus except the STS which is comparable to writing the history of the world. Nothing much gets explained. The background research involved must have been time-consuming. However, because of the facts, details and lack of focus, the reader loses out. The writer must focus upon one specific point such as construction, cargo capabilities, benefits or whatever. In other words, break the information down into neat little morsels that the reader can digest easily without feeling bombarded.

7. Don't fall in love with what you write. If your clever phrase, sentence, or description is so cute or so dramatic that you'll kill to keep it in the article, drop it. Such contrivances are distracting, counterproductive and jarring. They will ruin your piece.

NSS members awaited the opening of the science convention. They muffled their frozen ears against a hale and bitter wind which tossed crinkled leaves across the sidewalk in swirls of red and yellow. In the cold, they awaited a chance to bathe in the radiance of astronaut Bob Smith.

The phrases here concentrate on the cold not the event or reason for attending the convention...and radiance? Please! Just cut out all the poetic stuff and get on with the story.

8. Don't forget to write, rewrite and edit until you know nothing is wrong with your article. Mistakes stick out like sore thumbs. Weak passages collapse the structure of your piece. Clumsy construction causes the reader to stumble through the drivel.

Vacuum had leaked from the experimental canister. Astronaut Smith tried to salvage the test, when he noticed the malfunction, twisting the scaling mechanism, and as the principle investigator, Houston agreed he could terminate the experiment

This report says that something happened, but the reader is left in the dark. Maybe the writer knows, but he failed to explain. The comma behind "test" is improper. Construction is not parallel. The qualifier refers to the wrong antecedent. Also, vacuum doesn't leak. Please, don't do violence to science.

Astronaut Smith noticed a malfunction in the experimental canister which had lost its vacuum when air leaked in. Attempting to salvage the test Smith twisted the sealing mechanism then, as principle investigator, decided to terminate the experiment. Houston concurred with his decision.

The rewrite contains three self-contained sentences. The construction is parallel and follows the sequence of events. It also emphasizes that Smith had decision-making powers. The action at Houston becomes a separate sentence.

9. Don't burden the reader with your ego. Are you integral to the story? Did you do something of global proportions? Notice that writers of *Time* and *Newsweek* are right in the thick of the action, but never once use "I," "me" or "my". In other words, if someone else could have written the story, if you're not famous and if you're not the most interesting character in the article, don't write in the first person singular. Such reports sound like "How I Spent My Summer Vacation". The first person singular is appropriate only for personal essays, never reports.

10. Don't preach. When a reader is propagandized, he'll tune right out.

11. Don't give blow-by-blow reports. Give only the significant activity, quotes or facts. Don't tell the reader more than he needs to know.

- Susan Smith opened the meeting.
- John Benson read the minutes.
- Larry Ciola gave the treasurer's report
- Lisa and Frank discussed their trip to the Chicago Space Symposium.

- Ann requested volunteers for a lunar mock-up.
- John said he had a good time at the NASA seminar.
- We set our picnic date for June 10.
- We decided to buy more NSS bumper stickers.
- Frank showed a NASA video tape and discussed technical problems in space.
- The meeting closed after Marsha announced her lecture at the Library.

A reader's reaction to this report is ZZZZZZZZZZ. It shows a real active group in the dullest manner possible. No quotes, no description, nothing. It's trivial and unimaginative. Never discuss chapter business reports. People will receive that information at the meeting. Write reports on the events that are forthcoming or past. The writer of this blow-by-blow report has missed too many goodies and should be canned. He ignored the thrust of the meeting. He said nothing about the people, only reported what they did or will do in very cryptic terms.

Concentrate on the NASA tape since that was the highlight of the meeting. Forget who opened or closed the meeting. Such details are not interesting, even to those who attended.

### things to remember

1. **A STORY HAS FORM AND STRUCTURE.** It flows from lead through the body to the conclusion. It need not be sequential, however it does require a beginning and an ending. Establish your thread in the beginning and follow it through to the end without deviation.
2. **SEEING IS BELIEVING.** Images are a key factor to explaining events, processes or data. Try to visualize without detracting from your subject. Use metaphors, similes, analogies, contrasts, comparisons or examples to explain. Think of Johnny Carson's "It was so \_\_\_\_," which is followed by "How \_\_\_\_ was it?"
3. **PEOPLE ARE ROUND, NOT FLAT.** People say things. They laugh, sigh, groan, hint, warn. People make up NSS. Watch them. Listen to what they say and how they say it.
4. **YOUR NEWSLETTER IS YOUR IMAGE.** A professional-looking newsletter shows a professional NSS. A sloppy newsletter shows a sloppy NSS. Be neat, consistent and clear.
5. **WORDS CAN GET IN THE WAY.** Learn to be thrifty with words. If you can say something in four words instead of eight, do it. Verbosity is not economical.
6. **GET YOUR FACTS STRAIGHT.** Ask rather than assume. Rely on notes rather than memory. If you're only 99.9% positive, look it up.
7. **MASTER THE MECHANICS.** Remember your high school English classes. You took them for a reason, now use the information.

### summary

This section on producing an effective newsletter shows a few of the methods which may work. They are not gospel, just proven. The techniques are a mixture of news reporting, magazine writing, fiction writing and rhetoric. Such a blend works well for a monthly publication designed to reach out to people.

Although the explanations of the source-receiver/writer-reader relationships have been brief, they should establish a good working foundation for comprehending how communication succeeds or fails.

Writing an effective newsletter boils down to achieving clarity and stimulating interest while reporting data. You can attract members with a good newsletter which is a link in the chain to chapter growth and consolidation.

### Other Communications

#### importance

Sometimes when we get very busy with all the projects that need to be done, we neglect the basic communication that makes our chapter an effective unit. While many of the communication tools mentioned here may seem like bureaucratic paperwork, our activities will generate a lot of paper anyway. We might as well coordinate and use it to our best advantage. Always remember that future workers can not learn from our successes and failures if we can not communicate with them.

#### phone or e-mail trees

Useful for rapid communication between newsletters, vital for chapters with no newsletter. They enable your leadership to find out what members are thinking at the same time. They are also cheaper than mailings since the cost is mainly in member's time if the calls are local. There is also a national NSS phone tree of which a U.S. chapter should be a branch.

#### check lists

A useful habit to encourage is the writing of check lists from the very beginning of a chapter activity. Not only will a check list remind members of what needs to be done, when and by whom, but will produce ready-made documentation for future reference. (So avoid scribbled notes on the back of envelopes.) If the activity is complex, it is a good idea to get copies of a detailed check list to all your workers. You can clearly mark a member's responsibilities on their copy and encourage them to record important information, such as addresses and phone numbers, on it. Whoever writes the final record will find that these check lists make the job far easier and the record much more useful.

#### duty slips

If you are having a booth, SpaceFair or other kind of extended activity that involves many members, different locations or shifts of workers, confusion and potential foul-ups can be avoided if you use duty slips to let everyone know when and where they must be. These can be a schedule with the person's times and location marked in red or a special sheet for each worker. You can also add equipment or other items that the member is to bring, phone numbers of those he will be working with, security arrangements, etc. If either the chairman or worker must change a schedule, they should write it on the duty slip (or a copy) and make sure the effected person gets it instead of depending on a verbal message. If a computer is used to schedule a complex activity, it can probably also print out duty slips and schedules.

#### routing slips

Often your chapter contact, president or others within your chapter receive letters, newsletters, magazine articles and other material that should be circulated among your leaders or active members. Some things should be reprinted in your newsletter. The rest is often passed around at meetings, making it difficult to insure that everyone who should see it actually does. If you clip a sheet on the front of an item with a list of members who you want to see it, each person can check their name off and see that it gets to the next member on the list. Be sure to note if the item must be circulated in the order listed or exclusively to the people on the list. You may also want to include where the item goes when everyone has finished it--back to you, into a certain officer's file or the chapter library, etc.

#### agenda

Nothing is more frustrating than having a business meeting where nothing is accomplished or important business is left undone. Your president can avoid this by making an agenda. It does not have to lock every tiny item to be covered into an inflexible timetable, but a basic outline of topics and time schedule will help the meeting to run smoothly. Let members know how to suggest items to be included BEFORE the

meeting and always leave some time for unexpected matters. If the meeting group is going to be large or the schedule very tight, you should mail a copy of the agenda and timetable to everyone before the meeting. Topics that must be covered at that meeting can be starred, in case the agenda must be changed during the meeting. The secretary can use it as a basis for the minutes, taking notes of any alterations. You may want to place controversial items that will generate much discussion after routine business that must be handled and might otherwise be overlooked.

### **calendars**

The single most popular feature of a newsletter is the calendar of up-coming events. If your chapter does not print a newsletter, you may want to at least have a written calendar of chapter and other local activities of interest to your members. It can be handed out or written on a large paper and posted at meetings. If your calendars are heavily scheduled, you may want to assign the job of keeping it current to someone other than your newsletter editor, secretary or president. A large master calendar should be brought to all planning sessions.

### **meeting & message books**

The downfall of efficient chapter communication is often all those little pieces of paper that disappear and never get to the right person. This can be avoided by keeping notebooks at your membership table, in your work box, library cabinet and wherever information is being gathered. They will give a permanent record of who attended meetings, requested or gave information, borrowed items, needs something, etc. Don't let people rip a sheet of information out of the notebook (use a bound notebook instead of a spiral one). If they copy it instead it will be available if needed again. Date the start and finish of each notebook and keep used notebooks with the chapter records. Also encourage active members to keep a notebook by their phone and bring it to meetings.

### **correspondence log**

A vital part of a positive chapter image is answering correspondence with outside individuals and organizations, as well as members, in a prompt and professional manner. If every item that is received is immediately entered in the correspondence log book, with a date, it is then a simple matter to note if a reply or action is called for, if it has been passed on to someone else, when it is answered and by whom and where the item has been filed. Whenever necessary, it is easy to track down a particular item and check on its disposition. You can also evaluate how correspondence is being handled in general, if the corresponding secretary needs help and locate any snags in the system that need to be dealt with.

### **records & documentation**

As stated frequently in this Handbook, the importance of keeping good records can not be overemphasized. Events such as meetings, exhibits, booths and speeches are temporary. Only through good documentation can past events be used as credentials to stimulate a chapter's growth.

Decide which of the methods and tools covered here fit the needs of your chapter and make sure that each is assigned to a reliable person.

The basic rule to follow is "Record As You Go!". The usefulness of your records will be in direct proportion to the length of time between the event and its documentation. Assign this job to someone at the beginning of each activity. Rotate this task among members. This can be a good method of helping a new member become actively involved because they get to know everyone. They may want to collect schedules and duty slips from workers in a large envelope at the end of an event and at the next meeting.

Your secretary should bring an envelope to each meeting where members can put items that should be kept for the records, such as clippings of press coverage, thank yous and chapter reports.

The newsletter editor should keep the masters of each issue in his files and several copies in the chapter files.

Just as important as compiling the information is being able to find it when you need it. Newly elected officers, in particular, often do not even know who has what. If you do not have an office or storage cabinet, you may want to have everyone make a list of what chapter materials they have, or even have a meeting to gather them in one location to be catalogued and assigned. Ask members to store these chapter materials separately at their home or office so they can be easily located and transported. The chapter could provide large manila envelopes or even file boxes for this purpose.

### **presentation book**

This is a special kind of chapter record that is prepared for non-members. Its primary use is as a public relations tool and so should be as professionally done as possible. In it you will keep those documents, letters, clippings and photographs that will best convince outsiders of the quality of NSS and your chapter. Include written requests to your chapter for speakers and commitment and thank you letters from exhibit site locations. The notebook can be organized so that each major event forms a distinct section.

Keep it current. A new chapter can have its letter of recognition from the Chapters' Coordinator, NSS literature and perhaps photocopies from *Ad Astra* outlining the activities of other chapters. These can be replaced and augmented as you accumulate material about your own activities. Don't hesitate to ask people for formal program or display requests and thank yous on their letterhead. These help to establish your credibility and can be used as leverage with others, such as potential contributors and exhibit locations.

### **scrapbook**

This is the opposite of your Presentation Book. It is an internal record for your members and can be informal and fun. It also has the serious purpose of helping new members fit into the group by understanding its background. You may want to have a party once a year when everyone brings in photos, clippings and other items, puts that year's scrapbook together and looks through old ones.

### **regional communication**

This usually consists of contacts between members of different chapters by letter or phone, newsletter exchanges and regional conferences. These communications provide moral support for existing chapters, help the formation of new ones and the potential for cooperative ventures. Regional Organizers can encourage and improve this exchange by establishing a communications network within their region. But the most effective way to develop a good network is by getting members together at conferences. (See "Beyond The Chapter" in this Handbook.)

NSS Chapters can best contribute to better communication within the Society by sending their newsletters, updated list of officers (including addresses and phone numbers) and upcoming activities to Headquarters. You can serve as the eyes and ears of NSS by letting Headquarters know about relevant local events and sending in clippings, especially those that refer to the Society. Letters to the editor of *Ad Astra* can be used to communicate with the entire NSS membership and chapter news should be sent to the editor of *Inside NSS*. If your chapter is having any problem or must become inactive, be sure to let your Regional Organizer and NSS HQ know, so you can receive help or see if another local member is interested in taking over, and assure that the listing will be current for inquiries.

### **NSS annual report**

Follow the guidelines sent out by the Chapters' Coordinator. Filing your report by the deadline is especially important if you want to be included in the Society's I.R.S. tax status. Keep a copy of your annual

report for your chapter's records. If you are a new chapter, get a copy of the forms, so you can set up your accounting and records system using the same format. This will make it easier to write your first annual report.

### connect

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### telephone

The Telephone - by Bennett Rutledge

A Chapter is essentially a structure of ideas: aspirations, budgets, challenges, commentaries, dislikes, enterprises, gripes, hopes, invitations, leadership, opportunities, proposals, requests, schedules, troubles, views, zealotry, and money. (Yes, money is also fundamentally an idea!)

A telephone is a tool that allows your ideas to quickly go where you are not. It allows you to spread your ideas among many people quickly. With a few extra options, it allows you to hold impromptu meetings while no two of the people involved are within miles of each other, or to have a meeting of minds when only a single human being is involved at any given moment. Most people in the world have access to, if not ownership of, a telephone. The basic principles of its use are understood by almost everyone. This makes it one of the most democratic technologies around, and sometimes preferred for chapter use to the more sophisticated computer BBS system or Internet.

#### Your Chapter Contact

The single most important use of the telephone will be as the contact point with the outside world. While not necessarily an officer, the chapter contact should be the most stable, settled person in your core group.

Someone who is not likely to move or drop out of the chapter over the years. Since some of the material you will be distributing can be stored in a public or school library file drawer for years, it is important that the phone number remain good for that time.

#### The Network Within the Chapter

The most frequent use of the phone will be calls between chapter members. I have found that a well-functioning chapter has conversations among officers, committee folk, and project teams averaging once a week or more. These can range from a 15 second check on whether a project is on track, to an hour or more helping a stalwart on the edge of burnout remember why we're doing all this in the first place.

Most important in this category is to have regular (at least twice a year) contact with all the basic members. The ones who don't show up for regular meetings are especially important to invite to any major events and to the election meeting. Even with our chapter's low quorum rules, this often makes the difference between having lame ducks, and having officers with a mandate to act, for a month or more.

#### Contact with the National Organization

You also can use the telephone as a resource by calling your Regional Organizer with questions, your Regional Board Member with ideas or suggestions, or NSS Headquarters with requests. Sometimes you will also be called by the Regional Organizer, looking for information about what your chapter has been

up to lately. Phone numbers and main contact info for all chapters are published in every other issue of *Ad Astra*, and are listed at <<http://www.nss.org/chapter>>."

### Reaching the Public at Large

The most obvious use under this heading, sitting down with a phone book and calling everyone in town, is not recommended. "Cold calls" as they are known in telemarketing, are considered difficult even by the pros. Avoid

calling anyone when you don't have some previous contact or some relationship to start from.

Having this relationship in mind helps you to plan the call in advance. As soon as someone picks up the phone you can tell them where they know you from. Even when calling the local paper to put in an announcement about

your Discovery Day activities, mention the meeting schedule they've been running for you. In many jurisdictions when you are calling people, you are required to say who you are and what group you are calling for the very

first thing. This applies even when you call people who, for example, signed up for more information at your last mall table. (There may be other rules, too, such as no calls before nine a.m. or after nine p.m. The first place you should check is your local phone book.)

The next stage of the conversation reminds them what the society is about in general, and what you are specifically out to do with the call today. Be sure you can explain to the person what the project is about in

general, what specifically you want them to do for you, and what doing it will do for them.

Make your request, and then record their answer! You must have a record of everyone who said yes, and everyone who said no. You'll need to keep track of who you reached, and who you didn't. You need a record of who moved, and what the new phone number is, so you can update the master list. Finally, you need a record of who said "Never call me again," so you won't.

The telephone is a way to reach many different people with little effort. But it also presents yourself to them. It is possible to alienate a lot of folks very quickly with the telephone. Always, always, be polite when calling anyone on NSS business. Don't say anything you wouldn't say to them if you were face-to-face and noticed they had a baseball bat handy. After all, the telephone is, for the space of your call, the face of NSS for them.

### computer-assisted communication

#### The NSS Chapter and its Opportunities OnLine

Since the widespread adoption of the Internet, activists have found that online tools apply well to grass-roots activities and campaigns. The Internet has offered a strong tool for gaining membership, increasing

public accessibility, and increasing support for the common goal (in our case, space exploration). The 'net has also served as a powerful information source, offering a library of resources larger and more extensive than any "real world" alternative.

Space activists have an additional benefit from integrating the Internet into their activities. The popularity of space exploration is much greater on-line than in other comparative mediums. The top three subjects

on the World Wide Web (based on search engine reports) are sex, sports, and space. Tapping this interest can lead to extended off-line support.

The National Space Society encourages all its chapters to take advantage of all on-line resources. This includes establishing a chapter "homepage" (aka website) and establishing e-mail lists. The following sections should help you take the first steps to getting your chapter on-line.

**How To Get Access:**

The first step to getting your chapter online is to find a Internet access provider (ISP). Currently, the National Space Society does not provide online access for its chapters, but does provide links to your websites once you have one established.

Polling your membership should be the first step to finding online access. Very often a member of your chapter will have or know someone who does have access to the Internet. Many of these personal accounts offer resources (such as space to set up a website) that the individual may not use. Donations from your members can offer many benefits, but among the most valuable, it will create another integral chapter member (as webmaster or online manager).

If using a chapter member's account is not an option several low cost (or free) options exist:

1) CONTACT YOUR LOCAL UNIVERSITY and ask (as a non-profit organization catering to their student body) for an account on their system. Many universities offer small accounts to local organizations to help strengthen the bond with their communities. If not free, you may be able to work out a low-cost, monthly fee.

2) LOW COST OPTIONS include using the major on-line services (America Online, Compuserve) or local Internet Service Providers. The National Space Society does have an area on America Online (1-800-4-ONLINE) and recommends the service to its members and chapters. Local service providers can be found in your yellow pages under "Internet" or "Internet Services."

3) IF YOU HAVE ACCESS but do not have resources for a website or e-mail lists, free services do exist.

A list of these resources can be found at:

[http://www.yahoo.com/Business\\_and\\_Economy/Companies/Computers/Internet/Free\\_Services/](http://www.yahoo.com/Business_and_Economy/Companies/Computers/Internet/Free_Services/)

**Building A Website:**

Once on-line, your chapter is encouraged to create its own website. These pages will not only allow others in NSS to track your activities, but will allow you a convenient way to promote your chapter to your community.

Once again it is a good idea to poll your membership to see if anyone has any experience in building websites. If no one does, there are many books on the subject ranging from the "Quick Start" to the extensive 600 page reference manual, and selection should be based on your interest and time allocated to creating your pages. Several software packages also exist to allow website creation in the same manner you would layout a newsletter. If your chapter already has a newsletter, these software packages may be a way to facilitate creation of your website.

In addition, a list of guides for creating your own site can be found at:

[http://www.yahoo.com/Computers\\_and\\_Internet/Internet/World\\_Wide\\_Web/Information\\_and\\_Documentation/Beginner\\_s\\_Guides/Beginner\\_s\\_HTML/](http://www.yahoo.com/Computers_and_Internet/Internet/World_Wide_Web/Information_and_Documentation/Beginner_s_Guides/Beginner_s_HTML/)

You may also wish to look at several of the other sites created by NSS chapters. A list of these chapter sites can be found at: <http://www.nss.org/html/sites.html>

NSS PROVIDES... The National Space Society will be happy to provide you with an electronic version of our logo as well as other national artwork (where applicable) on request. E-mail the NSS On-Line Manager, Robert Pearlman, at [online.manager@nss.org](mailto:online.manager@nss.org) to receive these and other official NSS resources.

**E-Mail Access:**

The basic rules for websites can be followed for e-mail accounts and lists. A list of guides to creating e-mail lists can be found at:

[http://www.yahoo.com/Computers\\_and\\_Internet/Internet/World\\_Wide\\_Web/Information\\_and\\_Documentation/Mailing\\_Lists/](http://www.yahoo.com/Computers_and_Internet/Internet/World_Wide_Web/Information_and_Documentation/Mailing_Lists/)

**National Space Society On-Line:**

Aside from your own chapter's resources on-line, the National Space Society does provide several websites and e-mail lists:

NSS National Website: <http://www.nss.org/>  
 NSS Chapter List: <http://www.NSSchapters.org/chapters/>  
 NSS America Online area: keyword: NSS  
 NSS HQ email: [nsshq@nss.org](mailto:nsshq@nss.org)

**Mail Lists of the National Space Society:**

You can subscribe to e-mail lists maintained by NSS HQ by sending mail to [MajorDomo@NSS.org](mailto:MajorDomo@NSS.org) (see commands below). Most are moderated.

NSS-Announce - Brief info, news, and events about National Space Society  
 SpaceViews - SpaceViews & other newsletters of NSS  
 Space-Projects- News of local Chapters & special projects YOU can help with  
 NSS-Discuss - Discussion & questions related to NSS (unmoderated)

Subscriptions requests are handled automatically by the MajorDomo list-server program. The subject line is ignored. The body of the message should contain commands such as:

help - send more information about commands  
 info <list\_name> - mail me a description of a list  
 UNsubscribe <list\_name> - remove me from a list  
 Subscribe <list\_name> - add me to the named list  
 Subscribe <list\_name> <my-address> (full name) - (see below)

It uses the return address from the header of your message. If your return address is incorrect or contains a temporary workstation name - you should specify your preferred email address on the 'subscribe' line, followed by your name in parentheses. For example: `subscribe NSS-Announce JSmith@company.com (Jane Smith)`

**Important to Remember:**

**NSS HQ now maintains its master list of chapter contact information online at the website. Chapter officers are responsible for updating chapter contact information (Chapter Contact, Address, Phone #, E-mail Address, etc.) via the NODAC Web site at: <http://www.NSSchapters.org/nodac/>**

**If your chapter does start its own website, please e-mail NSS at [<nsshq@nss.org>](mailto:nsshq@nss.org) with your website address so that we may update our list and link to your pages from our website.**