

Postal Newsletter

Press

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

NATIONAL POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

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You can't please everyone

By Tony Carobine, President

An old man, a boy and a donkey were going to town. The boy rode on the donkey and the old man walked. As they went along they passed some people who remarked it was a shame the old man was walking and the boy was riding. The man and the boy thought maybe the critics were right, so they changed positions. Later they passed some people that remarked, "what a shame, he makes the little boy walk." They decided they both would walk! Soon they passed some more people who thought they were stupid to walk when they had a decent donkey to ride. So, they both rode the donkey! Now they passed some people that shamed them saying how awful to put such a load on a poor donkey.

The boy and man said they were probably right so they decided to carry the donkey. As they crossed a bridge, they lost their grip on the animal and he fell into the river and drowned.

The moral of the story? . . . If you try to please everyone, you will eventually lose your ass.

In some ways, this fable is not unlike the situation occasionally faced by editors. We sometimes have to make tough decisions in the course of our duties that will be condemned or ridiculed by others, but appropriate if our own integrity and credibility and that of the publication are to be upheld. While we may not be able to please everyone, there are some things that can be done to demonstrate a commitment of maintaining a publication of the highest ethical quality and honesty.

Anyone who undertakes the job of editor shoulders an awesome responsibility. In their quest to communicate with the membership, editors (and their associates) perform a variety of tasks; including: writer, copy editor, photographer, typesetter, printer, labeler, and administrator, to name a few.

The physical production of a paper is only part of an editor's responsibility, however. He or she must not only develop a knowledge about the "mechanics" of publishing, but also be familiar with various laws that affect a union publication; such as libel, copyright, internal union election laws and federal election regulations. And, as caretaker of the "voice of the union," an editor must be fair and impartial to ensure the paper is serving all members.

One way an editor can maintain an atmosphere of fairness and credibility (plus avoid a lot of personal aggravation) is by instituting, with membership approval,

various policies or constitutional language involving the union publication.

The most notable is an Editorial Policy governing the type of material that will or will not be accepted. The importance of an Editorial Policy and Editorial Policy Committee cannot be emphasized enough. Sooner or later material will be submitted for the paper that is questionable. Absent an Editorial Policy or Editorial Policy Committee, it makes the job of editor much more difficult. As a result this often leads to unnecessary turmoil and perhaps the editor's

*Please see **You can't please everyone**, page 2*

Des Moines, Iowa site of 2017 PPA Conference

The Meadows Events & Conference Center at Prairie Meadows Hotel, Race-track & Casino will be the site of the 2017 Biennial Conference of the APWU National Postal Press Association.

Hosted by the Iowa Postal Workers Union, the conference will take place from Thursday, August 3 through Saturday, August 5, 2017 with a pre-conference session on Wednesday, August 2.

A guestroom rate of \$129.00 per day single or double occupancy will be in effect throughout the conference, in addition to three days before and three days after the actual meeting dates. Current tax rate is 12%. Prairie Meadows will provide free shuttle service from Des Moines International Airport, complimentary Internet access and no charge for parking a vehicle.

Commenting on behalf of the PPA Advisory Council, PPA President Tony Carobine said, "We encourage PPA members, APWU officers and interested members to plan now on joining us in Des Moines on August 2-5, 2017. The PPA Conference is a gathering you won't want to miss."

Further details will be forthcoming as they become available.



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This publication is 100% union printer produced: Union typeset, Union layout, Union printed.



A reminder about copyright

Get permission or purchase a subscription

Mainstream media newspaper or magazine articles are copyrighted and therefore require the consent of the owner of the copyright before an editor reprints it in his or her publication. Usually, the publication owns the copyright if the article was prepared by a staff writer or reporter. Permission must also be obtained for use of any material from syndicated columns, individually copyrighted articles and articles which are published under the "byline" of the author. Copyright protection extends to pictures, cartoons and comic strips as well.

Also, labor cartoons, graphics, and news or feature articles originating from various

entities and sold on a subscription basis are copyrighted by their owners as a means of protecting the monetary value of the material. It is a violation of copyright law to use this material (such as reprinting it from another paper) without a subscription and payment of the required fee.

Please keep in mind that the monthly Huck/Konopacki Labor Cartoons provided to publication and website editors who are members of the PPA, while copyrighted, can be reprinted in the union publication or posted on a website. The PPA pays a subscription fee that allows for use of the cartoons by PPA members.

Be vigilant . . .

Editors come in contact with subject matter for their publications on a regular basis. So it helps to always be on the lookout, as writing is an ongoing endeavor. When this happens, immediately collect the details and develop them into an article for the paper. Employing this technique is especially helpful to the editor because substantial portions of the paper can already be completed when the paper's

deadline arrives. This will allow the editor to concentrate on other work that needs to be done on the paper and make his or her life less stressful. Being on the lookout for subject matter can also be helpful to other officers. They may not know what to write about. With the editor keeping a watchful eye, he or she may be able to help these individuals select the subject matter for their articles.

You can't please everyone

Continued from page 1
credibility being called into question. Conversely, with an Editorial Policy and Editorial Policy Committee previously approved by the membership, the editor not only has a procedure to rely upon, but direction as to how the situation should be handled. (For more information on this subject, see *Editorial Administration* in the Member Resources section of the PPA website.)

An editor's job description in the organization's constitution, defining the editor's duties and responsibilities is another area that should be addressed. By doing so everyone in the organization will have an understanding of what the editor's position entails. This is yet another way to avoid future conflict that can work to harm the editor, publication and the union.

These two areas regarding the administration of local or state publications repeatedly cause the most contention. When you think about it, we have enough problems with the forces out to destroy our livelihood. We don't need conflict between each other. Taking the time to set procedures in place that can avoid such conflict is time well spent.

The moral of this story? It's not possible to always please everyone when making decisions regarding the administration of a union publication. However, ensuring there are procedures in place to address such matters will go a long way in maintaining your integrity as an editor and the credibility of the publication. Anything less and we are not serving the best interests of the owners of the union publication – the membership!

Are all of your talents being used?

By Edward Brennan,
Secretary/Treasurer

After the Postal Press Association Awards Banquet in Madison last August, a relatively new editor asked me how to best prepare for the 2017 PPA Awards Program. I answered her that using all of the talent available to her in her local is the key to producing a high quality publication.

Members working with their editor use their talents to help make the local or state publication the information forum which they are intended to become. Members with cartoonist talents can submit monthly labor cartoons on subjects relevant to current local or state postal issues. Members with photographic talent can enrich the publications with photos from meetings, installations, protests, etc. The union publication belongs to the members and the contributions of the members can make a publication great and possibly an award-winning journalistic gem.

Besides the supplemental support given by photos and cartoons, the officers



and members can even greatly add to the meat of the newsletters with editorials, officer's reports and feature stories that add substance to the events and issues that affect their office or the postal service in general.

Editors could use their publications to solicit the expertise of their members for the good of the local or state organization. Is there a member who has a degree in journalism or English, or public relations who could write for the paper? Is there a skilled cartoonist or a photographer? Is there a member with medical training who could inform the members on health issues? Is there a skilled negotiator who could inform the members on contractual issues?

Anyone with these and other relevant

talent should be sought out and used by the editor. It shouldn't be the job solely of editors to publish the newsletter by themselves. After all, the newsletter is the property of the members and they should all use their talents to make it the best looking and

etc. When it comes to making the publication something members want to receive and something that keeps them informed, one of the best ways to make that happen is to get the members themselves involved.

People join an organization for the ben-

“Working together and having a part in the production of an educational and important part of unionism can fuse the members into a stronger and more informed and efficient organization.”

informative publication that it was created to become.

Once the editor has assembled a staff of qualified and highly skilled members who are willing to contribute to THEIR paper, that same editor will hear less complaining about the publication having nothing in it of value and more members looking forward to the next issue and more members being informed on issues that have an effect on their jobs. Working together and having a part in the production of an educational and important part of unionism can fuse the members into a stronger and more informed and efficient organization.

With these thoughts in mind an editor could even entice more members to contribute by literary events such as special months where the editor explains what a good editorial is made of and then asks members to submit editorials on relevant issues for the next paper.

This could also be done with other items such as feature stories, photos, cartoons,

effits they can get from it and their belief in the principals that the organization represents. They grow and prosper along with the organization when being accepted by that organization and by being given an active role in the workings of that group. By enlisting the knowledge and dedication of our members we strengthen the group as a whole and will even be the envy of non-members.

All of us have members in our local and state union bodies that possess unknown talents that have never been made available because they have never been sought out. Does your publication read like a phone book? Do members anxiously await your next issue? Are your members informed on the issues and active in your union? If not then the time to seek out their talents is now. Seek them out and make them part of your staff. Make your publication a source of pride. Then you can answer your own question – what is the best way to prepare for the next PPA Awards Program?

Better listening skills

Most people speak at a fairly rapid clip about 125 words a minute. But the human brain works even faster than that, so many of us aren't good listeners, because we can get bored and our minds may wander. How to keep the brain and ears in sync?

From the very first words of the conversation or presentation, keep an open mind, rather than anticipating what the speaker will say. To avoid getting sidetracked with

other thoughts, concentrate on the content by weighing the evidence as the speaker continues, or by taking notes. It also helps to listen for ideas, and to ask for clarification. Be objective and seek out facts, rather than prejudging unwelcome information.

When people concentrate on what others say, they work together more efficiently, develop better relationships, and avoid costly or embarrassing mistakes.

2016 APWU National Elections

APWU National Election Committee adopts rules

Following are rules adopted by the 2016 APWU Election Committee pertaining to union publications in accordance with Section 401(g) of the Labor Management Reporting & Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA) as Amended which states: "No moneys received by any labor organization by way of dues, assessment or similar levy, and no moneys of an employer shall be contributed or applied to promote the candidacy of any person in any election subject to the provisions of this title. Such moneys of a labor organization may be utilized for notices, factual statements of issues not involving candidates, and other expenses necessary for the holding of an election."

Section 401(g) of the LMRDA prohibits the use of union or employer funds to promote the candidacy of any person in an APWU National Election. The following rules, while not all encompassing, are offered in an attempt to preclude the most common types of Section 401(g) violations.

- Local/state union publications prepared, printed, and distributed at union expense may not be used to promote or attack the candidacy of any member in the election. Publications include newspapers, magazines, websites, letters or other similar type of communications.

- The inclusion of candidates' campaign statements, press releases, photographs or announcements in a union publication is prohibited unless all candidates for the same office are specifically advised and offered a substantially equal opportunity.

- Articles which are used to praise or criticize a candidate are prohibited. With regard to the printing of photographs of candidates (other than those covered in the previous item) local/state publications should only contain such photographs when they are directly related to a timely news event being reported. Local/state officers who have their own columns in union publications cannot use their columns to promote or oppose an individual's candidacy.

- A local/state union publication has the right to accept paid political advertising from candidates for specific offices or all offices. If it is decided to accept paid political advertising, the local/state affiliate must provide a notice and rates to all candidates

for the office(s) in which the local/state affiliate has decided to accept advertising. The advertisement must contain a statement that it is paid for by the candidate.

- Local/State union publications may print, without comment, membership endorsements, provided such endorsements of candidates are voted on at a regular membership meeting. Publications with endorsements cannot be disseminated beyond the normal mailing list utilized by the local/state affiliate.

- APWU national, state, or local union property and resources, including but not

limited to, union offices, computers, websites, telephones, automobiles, supplies, and printing and reproduction equipment may not be used for campaigning. Union property cannot be used for posting, storage, or distribution of campaign literature, for campaign meetings or campaign press conferences. Union funds may not be used to rent property or meeting rooms for such activities. No union logo or stationery may be used in campaigning for or against a candidate. This includes using any union logo for campaign-related purposes, including press conferences.

Say what?

By Hank Greenberg,
Honorary Member,
PPA Advisory Council

Here are just a few examples which appeared in an 'Inc.' article about the misuse of words when talking or writing. (With a million words in the English language mistakes are bound to happen).

1. Irregardless

Not sure how "irregardless" came into our vocabulary, but the correct word is "regardless."

2. Literally

This word means "exactly" and "without exaggeration," but many people use it to exaggerate a point. When you say "I literally died right there," you can understand the other person's surprise to see you are alive and well.

3. Supposably

It may be easier to say "supposably," but the correct spelling and pronunciation is "supposedly" with a "d."

4. Preemptory

The correct word is "peremptory," and it means "leaving no opportunity for refusal." You may confuse this word with "preempt," which means "to prevent."

5. Heightn

People tack on the "th" because of the similar words length and width. But the correct spelling and pronunciation is "height."

6. Anyways

It may seem like a small issue, but the correct word is "anyway."

7. Adverse vs. averse

These two words are easy to confuse because they both mean something negative. Adverse means "unfavorable," while "averse" means "having a feeling of dislike."

Example: "I had an adverse reaction to the medication." "She is averse to hard work."

8. There vs. their

People often confuse these two sound-alikes. "There" is a location, while "their" is a possessive.

Examples: "We are going there next week." "Their house was robbed while they were away."

9. Affect vs. effect

These two words can be tricky. Remember that "affect" is usually a verb and "effect" is a noun that means "the result of something."

Example: "I wonder how the storm will affect our plans." "The storm had the effect of delaying all flights."

10. You know

Somehow, "you know" has crept into the English language at the end of every sentence. "You know" seems to have replaced the period. (This did not appear in the article but I thought it was worth adding to the list).

Hope you find the above examples interesting as well as informative and agree that words should be a bridge, not a block.

The essentials of clear writing

Proper grammar, punctuation and spelling are only a small part of successful writing.

Of course, you should have on hand a manual you can refer to when you have questions about proper English style. Most of the rules have good reasons behind them and by following them you can avoid needlessly confusing your readers.

But writing in proper English does not guarantee that your articles will be understandable and convincing. Clear, journalistic writing requires practice and it also requires following the principles described below.

Avoid rhetoric and overstatement. When you tell a friend a successful joke, you don't finish it by explaining why it was funny. In the same way, the facts of your articles should speak for themselves. If you have to spell out the moral in overblown terms, you haven't told the story very effectively, and some people may feel you are telling them what to think.

Let other people say it. Quote union members and officers telling what happened and what they think about it.

Use facts or comparisons people will remember and repeat. A successful article has details which will be repeated by

readers to other workers, friends and family members.

Use plain language. Don't use bureaucratic phrases and long-winded sentences to try to sound important. ("At the present time, it is our intention to develop and initiate such a program as soon as circumstances make it practicable.")

You'll gain much more respect by showing how clearly you can communicate. ("We plan to start the program as soon as we can.")

If you must use jargon, explain it. After you have been active in the union for a while, you may forget that many people don't know some of the specialized terms you have become familiar with.

Show the article to someone who knows nothing about the subject matter. Sometimes a writer is too close to the subject and makes assumptions the reader wouldn't make. Try your article out on a member who is not particularly active in the union or a friend, neighbor, husband or wife. If there is something they can't understand, maybe it should be explained better.

In the same way, if you are having trouble writing something clearly, try to explain it to someone verbally. By the time you've found the right words for them and

answered their questions, you'll probably have a better idea of what to write.

Put extra effort into the headlines and "leads" (beginning of articles). The quality of the headline may determine how many members decide to read your article.

Before writing the headline and lead, ask yourself two questions: What makes this story interesting? How does this story affect my readers?

Often, it is easier to answer those questions after the rest of the story is written.

Both the headline and lead should give your readers a good idea of the subject of the story. But that doesn't necessarily mean you have to clutter up the very beginning of the story with every fact about who, what, why, when and where.

If you are describing the outcome of a meeting with management, for example, the readers first want to know that issues were at stake, what positions were taken by each side and what is likely to happen next. Exactly where and when the meeting occurred, who attended and a more specific account of what was said can wait until later in the article.

Captions should be short and indicate the point of the picture. Why did you include the picture? How do you want the reader to interpret it?

Let's say you publish a photograph of union stewards having a discussion during a workshop on contract enforcement. As far as the reader is concerned, the workshop was important because it may result in better handling of his or her grievances and that's what your caption should emphasize.

A caption which says, "Local 100 stewards attended a training session at the union hall" does not convey the message.

A stronger caption would be along this line: "Local 100 stewards at a recent training session discussed ways to document grievances on job classifications."

Let people know what they should do after reading the article. Let's assume you've convinced your readers that what you had to say was important. Now, what are they supposed to do about it? Whether the next step is a protest rally, a volunteer get-together to plan a union program, discussion between members and their shop stewards, letters to politicians – tell people what you want them to do.

Pre-convention workshops planned

The PPA will be participating in the pre-convention workshops sponsored by the APWU Research & Education Department being held on **Friday, August 19** at the Swan & Dolphin Hotels, Orlando, Florida.

Two half-day workshops will be presented by the PPA. **Reaching the Membership – Communicating at the Local Level:** Examines the importance of information sharing using various mediums with special emphasis on the process of producing a member-oriented, high quality, highly read, union publication. (10:00 am -1:00 pm)

Legal Issues and Union Communications: A review of editorial policies, union regulations, libel, copyright and federal election laws that apply to hardcopy and electronic forms of communication. (2:30 pm -5:30 pm)

More information on the workshops, as well as the online registration process can be found on the APWU's website at, www.apwu.org "Pre-Convention Workshops."



More than just a smile

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words, and in a publication's limited space that can be an important plus. But, if the photos that you print are blurred, cropped wrong or just downright dull, your effort may be wasted. And you may even lose some readers.

Photos also serve other functions. They break up blocks of type, they add a "face" to the story and they improve the publication's appearance. A picture of a new building, a new piece of equipment or the people involved in a project adds interest and helps readers relate to the words.

Here are a few simple, common-sense approaches for the use of photos:

Photo opportunities: They're the pre-arranged award ceremonies or planned events. And those pictures are important to your readers.

"Spur-of-the-moment" or candid shots: These make your newsletter really stand out. Be alert for possibilities in unusual and even routine situations, then shoot quickly before the chance vanishes.

A simple axiom to remember about photos – and stories – is that if the subject interests you, it will probably interest your readers.

A word about people shots. Try to avoid the usual standing-face-front-and-displaying-a-plaque-type pose. Smiling people looking straight at the camera make for a boring shot. Put action in the picture if you possibly can. Photograph the recipient showing the plaque to someone or hanging it on a wall, for example.

The right choice

Typically you'll be able to choose from several usable pictures of the same subject. Make sure the shot you pick is not blurred, that people aren't caught in unflattering positions and that shadows or sunlight don't distort the subjects.

Cropping and sizing

Once you have the picture, you have to decide how much of it you want to use. To keep your photos clean, sharp and to the point, crop out people or things not necessary to the intent of the picture.

Next, how large or small should the photo be? That calls for a delicate balance. In addition to the question of space avail-

able, you'll want to be sure that the photo isn't so small that you'll have your readers squinting – or so large that the photo overwhelms the story. Remember, the photo is there to complement the story, not overshadow it.

Photo layout

Photos positioned on a page in vertical and horizontal rows are deadly dull. If you want to run several photos on a page, arrange them to break up the type in an asymmetrical but eye-pleasing way. For guidance, study how newspapers and magazines display their pictures.

For a stand-alone photo – one that tells the story in the caption – keep the writing lively and to the point. If the photo was composed well and interestingly, it should convey the thrust of the story at a glance.

Credits

Somewhere in your publication, usually in small type under (or alongside) the photo, credit should be given to the photographer.

Photo files

How often at the last minute have you wanted a photo to make a story stronger or to fill a "hole" but found that it was too late for a shoot? You can eliminate that last minute scramble by keeping a photo file that can yield a suitable shot at a moment's notice.

If you haven't the time to take pictures yourself, ask for help from amateur photographers in your organization. For little or no cost you can usually get willing "shooters" whose work will add that extra pictorial dimension to your newsletter.

Eleven ways to put together a publication that gets read

1. For maximum impact and readability, use a sans serif typeface for headlines and a serif typeface for body copy.
2. Avoid using all caps in headlines – it hinders reading. Instead, use lower case.
3. Use verbs in the present tense, rather than past or future, to give headlines a greater sense of immediacy and impact.
4. Keep related words together when headlines run two or more lines and avoid breaking lines at awkward or misleading points.
5. Break up text with subheads to help readers scan material quickly and provide visual interest to your piece.
6. Sprinkle your articles with quotes from sources. If you don't have the time to interview, ask three questions in a memo and provide spaces for your interviewee to write answers (make sure to give a response due date). This makes the information gathering and writing process easier for you. Plus, you give readers information from a real person with a real voice.
7. Use captions to link photographs and illustrations to a story. For maximum readability, place captions below the artwork. Include small photo credits to show appreciation for photos contributed by fellow members.
8. When using graphics, keep in mind that a single, large illustration is generally more appealing than numerous, small illustrations placed randomly about the page. However, several individual, but related graphic images may be grouped together for a very effective message.
9. When wrapping text around a graphic, edit out unsightly, irregular spacing between words and excessive hyphenation.
10. Use visual cues to guide readers to sections of your publication that appear as regular features. For example, show hands clapping at the head of a column entitled "Kudos."
11. Want two ink colors in your publication, but your budget doesn't quite cover it? Preprint a year's supply of your newsletter stock using a second color on the nameplate.

Who cares about headlines?

How often have you written what you consider to be a fine article, only to discover that a handful of people read it? In this article you may have researched a problem with management that everyone should be aware of or it could be a piece on some accomplishment that your local should be recognized for, yet very few know it. For the life of you, you cannot seem to understand why. Well, maybe it is the way you titled that particular article.

Headline writing is one of the most important areas that part-time journalists have to work on. With just a few extra minutes, you can come up with a suitable headline that will grab your readers' atten-

tion and make them want to read the piece that you or another officer worked so hard to produce.

One common practice repeated over and over in PPA affiliated publications is the use of the same headline for each regular contributor. Headlines like "President's Report" or the "Editor's Corner" are just a few. On other occasions the writer's name will be incorporated into a catchy slogan that identifies the writer. The problem is that repeated column headings say nothing about the content of the article.

With just a little more time, a suitable headline could be run that will let the reader know something about the article. The use

of bylines like "President's Report" can still be used but would be secondary to the main headline. A proper headline may mean the difference between whether or not an article gets read, especially if readers see a headline that lets them know that the article contains useful information.

What do you do if your contributors write a little about several subjects in their articles? This is a regular occurrence with officer reports but it should not be a problem. All you have to do is pick the topic they wrote the most about, or what the most important subject is and write your headline based on that. Subsequent subjects can be identified by using subheads in the body of the article.

We need to do all we can to entice members to read the union publication. Devoting a little more effort and imagination into creating interesting headlines will increase readership and therefore be time well spent.

Positive attitude equals better health

It's a simple philosophy, but one that can have vast repercussions. Research shows that most illnesses, including headaches, backaches, heart disease, and digestive ailments, can be caused or influenced by our feelings. A positive attitude will help you work better, too. Optimism gives you energy and enthusiasm.



Next time you're ready to give in to the blues, try these tips.

1. Don't take everything so seriously. There are few problems that have truly monumental consequences.

2. Try to see the positive aspects of problems. You can find a bright side in almost every situation – if you look hard enough.

3. Smile. It's easier than frowning, which requires 78 muscles. A smile uses only 14.

4. Use positive people as role models. Focus on someone who seems to make the best of any situation. This person can show you how he or she maintains that attitude.

5. Learn to accept situations over which you have no control. It can be frustrating to see a problem that needs fixing, but sometimes it is either inappropriate or simply impossible for you to help.

6. Be satisfied with results once you've done your best. You can't do any better, so don't focus on your limitations.

7. Be part of the solution. It's more challenging – and inspiring – to try to fix problems than just to point them out and dwell on them.

8. Take time to reward yourself. You deserve appreciation, from yourself, as well as from others.

9. Expect the best, not the worst both of people and situations.

10. Appreciate the good things that happen. Stop focusing on what is lacking in your life. Count your blessings, not your troubles.

It's not always easy to maintain a positive attitude. Like most things, it requires work. But the results are worth it!

Names make news

People like to read about people they know. Has any local union member made community (or national) headlines? Been chosen for outstanding accomplishments? Or has been recognized by a civic group for special community contributions?

Do any members have unusual hobbies? Or has anyone faced an unpleasant or dramatic work situation that was resolved in a way that other members ought to hear about?

Are there any new volunteers in the organization who should be recognized in the local union newsletter? What about recognizing longtime members?

Has any local union member made an outstanding contribution by bringing more members into union activities?

These are just a few of the many ways to use members' names in the newsletter. In doing so, you will be on your way to increasing the readership level of the publication and bringing about a greater awareness of the union as an organization made up of real people!

An editor's checklist

Following are some helpful questions about publishing a newsletter that editors should periodically ask themselves.

1. Have I compared my newsletter with other local union newsletters?
2. Am I exchanging newsletters and observing what other local unions are doing?
3. What is my "trivia quotient?" I know that a little "nonsense now and then is relished" etc., but do I use too much?
4. Have I tried anything new lately?
5. Do I consider my readers when preparing my newsletter? Or do I create editions that only I could love?
6. Have I used illustrations lately? (Or, conversely, do I use too many of them?)
7. Am I sufficiently appreciative of the editorial help I get?
8. How often do I confer with my local officers? Is there a "reporter" I haven't heard from for some time?
9. How often have I printed a story my readers won't find elsewhere?
10. Have my pictures been carefully and conscientiously cropped?
11. Am I satisfied with the name of our publication?
12. In looking over past headlines, how do they strike me?
13. Am I still satisfied with my printer and his/her service? Can I do better elsewhere? Is it union? (Or could poor service possibly be the result of my inadequate preparation?)
14. Do I confirm all my "facts" before I print a story?

15. Do I make a special point of spelling names correctly?

16. How would I possibly feel about our newsletter if I came across it in a stack of other, similar publications?



17. Do I use enough white space in my layout? Is our publication easy to read?

18. Are my news items presented objectively?

19. Do I separate "news" from editorials?

20. Do I bring reporting and editorializing down to the reader? Or do I write over their heads and assume the reader is as familiar with the subject and details as I am?

21. To assure interest and larger read-

ership, can I say what I want to in fewer words?

22. Are my local (state) officers aware of the value and importance of the local (state) newspaper?

23. Do I "edit" an article if it is loaded with lengthy, boring statistics, repetitions, etc. (without changing the intent of the article)?

24. Do I include articles dealing with community issues? (Keep in mind that the member is a citizen, voter, neighbor, etc.)

25. Do I keep an up-to-date mailing list?

Observations and suggestions

Don't write anything you don't believe yourself. Regardless of the position you take in future articles, no one will believe you if they have lost faith in your integrity.

You will keep faith with your readers if you adopt the posture of an objective reporter. Keep in touch. Always go out of your way to find out what the rank and file member is thinking. Listen and then report what you have learned, and back it up with facts.

You cannot develop good editorials by reading only your own paper. Read everything you can get your hands on. This will give you a well-informed opinion based on all sources of information.

Your paper should provide: inspiration, education, varied opinions and provide direction. Be proud of your paper. It represents you, your union and the Labor Movement!