

Order of the Arrow Lodge Publications Judging Comments

Target Audience for Newsletters

New Arrowman

Is the publication convincing him to attend Lodge functions, work on a committee, or do special work for his Scout unit?

Experienced Arrowman

Must keep him interested & involved in Lodge Activities

General Public

Newsletters do inform the public, usually those in Scouting who have an interest but no involvement in the Lodge.

Articles and *Blurbs*

Articles allow the writer to expand on a topic & engage the reader.

Articles should be bylined & substantially written by youth.

Blurbs are basically short information bursts.

Good newsletters should have a mix to these two but the emphasis needs to be on the articles.

National Competition Judging is based on the following standards.

Fifteen Points Maximum

Who, what, when, where, why and how needs to be covered in the first paragraph of every article.

Ten Points Maximum

Variety of Articles

Each issue should have a wide variety of articles that provide information of real interest such as past & future events, opportunities to provide service, Lodge activities, Brotherhood, unit elections, camp promotions, how to achieve service in Scout units, individual recognition, Indian crafts, Scouting Crafts, and etc.

Proof the Newsletter/Bylines/Youth Writers

One or more youth followed by an adult or adults should proof for errors, omissions and appropriateness. Use the computer to spell check the final copy. Provide bylines at the beginning of articles & include the position of the writer. Clearly define writer as to youth or adult. As many youth as possible should contribute.

Neat/Clean/Front Page Appropriate for a Scouting Publication

The front page needs to contain the main news stories – the items the editor desires all readers to know. Letters from the chief, editor, adviser or others belong on an inside page.

5 Points Maximum

Masthead/Table of Contents

Newsletters reflect the history of the Lodge and its events. The masthead must contain name of newsletter, lodge name & number, council name & number, date of publication (list months covered by this issue), and web-site if available.

Table of contents should appear on the front page. Newsletter name & date should appear on each page along with a page number.

Columnar Format

Use columns & be reasonably consistent. Correct columns do not need boxes or lines, which clutter the page thereby causing the paper to be hard to read.

Roster

An identification/communication/roster of lodge officers, chapter chiefs, committee chairmen, key advisers &/or others including telephone numbers & e-mail addresses should be in each issue. Some lodges produce a directory of members but most of the above information needs to be readily accessible to anyone reading the newsletter.

Letters or Editorials

Each issue should contain a letter from the chief, & the editor & any other appropriate letters. These do not belong on the front page.

Use of Initials &/or Acronyms

Always identify the meaning of initials at the beginning of an article, blurb or other writing & then it is permissible to follow with initials. The new Arrowman does not know what NOAC, LSDS, LLDS etc means. (Older Arrowmen may not know either).

Registration Forms

This is a good place to practice who – what – when – where – why – how. Always include cost of event, deadline for registration, and mailing address to send the fee & form. Do not put registration forms on the back of news articles or other registration forms. A separate insert is really best.

Show improvement

Every publication can improve with practice & should strive to do so.

Humor, Puzzle, Cartoon, Quiz

The above items add fun to the newsletters & make the youth look forward to reading each issue as soon as it arrives. Be creative!

Graphics

Learn how to use these to the advantage of a good publication not just to fill up white spaces. Do not break copyright laws. Graphics used over & over began to look tired & will make your publication look very tired.

Regular, Punctual Publication

Like a magazine subscription, a lodge newsletter must be published on a regular, punctual, and well-defined schedule.