

PUBLISHING A NEWSLETTER

Once your group has compiled a mailing list, your next step may be to send regular mailings to your members and other interested individuals, alerting them to your group's plans and activities. A newsletter is a great way to send out all the information you want to distribute at one time.

Newsletters take many forms, from a simple photocopied sheet to a sophisticated five-page glossy booklet. The scope of your newsletter depends on the time and money you are willing (or able) to spend, but any style you choose will ultimately benefit your park by raising neighborhood interest.

WHY PUBLISH?

A newsletter gives your group—and your park—presence in people's minds. A printed newsletter describing your activities says "We exist!" to community members, politicians, and potential donors. There are many reasons to put out a newsletter:

- ✓ to find new members
- ✓ to publicize activities
- ✓ to reach a wider audience
- ✓ to create ties to local businesses
- ✓ to gain neighborhood recognition for your group

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Before you start writing, come up with a catchy title for your newsletter that reflects your group's focus and concerns. For example, the newsletter of the Dog Run Committee of the Carl Schurz Park Association is titled, "The Scoop." The Friends of Pier 84 call theirs "A View From The Pier."

IDEAS FOR ITEMS

- ✓ What's new—Stories about park activities, gardening, neighborhood news, and more local happenings
- ✓ Save the date—promote your next meeting or clean-up by announcing the dates
- ✓ Membership/Donation information—let people know how they can become members and that you need donations to improve the park.
- ✓ A list of your group's officers and a phone number or address where you can be reached
- ✓ A list of hotline numbers, such as your Park Supervisor, or the local police precinct
- ✓ Advice column—have a group member who knows about gardening or dogs, for example, give advice about their area of expertise.
- ✓ A history of your park
- ✓ A kids corner—think up games or science information for kids. Or allow them their own page.

DELEGATE, DELEGATE

A newsletter should be a group effort; be sure more than one person is working on the project. Writing, copying and mailing on a regular basis is a lot of work. Some time-saving tips:

- ✓ Set up a newsletter committee; have each member choose the job he or she wants to do.
- ✓ Invite guest columnists to write about issues of particular interest. For example, "Dog Run," the magazine-style newsletter of the Washington Square Park Dog Run Association, invites local veterinarians and dog trainers to contribute articles.
- ✓ Excerpt parks-related articles from your local paper—with their permission, of course.

PAYING FOR IT ALL

- ✓ To defray costs, try approaching local business and asking them to sponsor your newsletter.
- ✓ In exchange, offer to print a thank you and/or an advertisement. Businesses are often happy to support community newsletters, especially if they get something in return.

EXPAND YOUR REACH

Newsletters are a great way to reach more of your neighbors and let them know what you're doing in the park—but only if lots of people read them!

- ✓ Print extra copies of your newsletter and leave stacks in local cafes, bars or bodegas.
- ✓ Post them on neighborhood bulletin boards.
- ✓ Most important: **always** include a phone number or address so that new people can reach you if they want to get involved.