



**COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**

Sonoma County 4-H



OFFICER TRAINING MANUAL

EDITOR

**DUTIES
AND
SUGGESTIONS**

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EDITOR

CLUB NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Communicating with club members, leaders and parents is essential for the success of a 4-H club. Members, leaders and parents need to know what is happening within the club. It is also important that 4-H members receive acknowledgment for their work and accomplishments. The editor is responsible for publishing a monthly newsletter and distributing it to all club members and leaders.

DURING THE CLUB YEAR

- Publish monthly newsletter that reports member accomplishments.
- Include important information: Members responsible for the Flag Salute, 4-H pledge, Project Reports, Set-up/Clean-up, Refreshments, Presentations, Committee Reports.
- Ask members to write stories for the newsletter about events, projects and community activities.
- Provide a column in the newsletter for the community club leader.
- Provide a Club and County Calendar of Events.
- Publish your newsletter at least 10 days prior to your general meeting.
- Tip: send your club member via email, saves postage, paper and time.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICERS

One person can handle communications for the club, or the work can be done by a team that could include a reporter, a historian, a newsletter editor; and a photographer. The size and needs of the club will determine how many communications officers are elected or appointed. These officers are responsible for keeping club members and the community informed about the good work that the club is doing, so that the club will gain community support and respect. It is also important to keep 4-H parents informed about upcoming events and ways in which they can support the club.

Most clubs have at least a club reporter and a club historian; these officers often assume the duties of club photographer and club newsletter editor. Some clubs also have a website officer who posts 4-H information on the World Wide Web.

CLUB REPORTER: General Duties

The club reporter is responsible for informing the community about club activities. The reporter keeps the public informed by writing news stories about the club and sending

During Club Year

- Make note of club activities or events that would make good news stories.
- Write and submit news releases about 4-H activities and events to newspapers and radio and television stations. Allow 2-3 weeks lead time.
- In a story, highlight a person or unusual event, and make it interesting!
- Keep a scrapbook of all articles submitted and any published articles. (This can be done by the club historian, if your club has one.)
- Report at club meetings about news items that were printed, or broadcast.
- Display articles that were printed.

THE REPORTER

- Keeps reports factual
- Gives accurate information
- Reports who, what, when, where, why, and how
- Uses full names and checks spelling
- Write in the third person

EDITOR

CLUB NEWSLETTER EDITOR: General Duties

Communicating with club members, leaders and parents is essential for the success of a 4-H club. Members, leaders, and parents need to know what is happening within the club. It is also important that 4-H members receive acknowledgment for their work and accomplishments. The editor is responsible for publishing a monthly or quarterly newsletter and distributing it to all club members and leaders.

During Club Year

- Publish monthly or quarterly club newsletters to report about member accomplishments.
- Ask members to write stories for the newsletter about events, projects, and community activities.
- Provide a column in the newsletter for the community club leader.
- Provide a club program calendar in the newsletter.

REPORTER AND NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

- Rule 1: Make sure you know when the article is due.
- Rule 2: Include the five “W’s” in your article: Who, What, When, Where, Why.
- Rule 3: Be certain places and times are correct.
- Rule 4: Be creative.

Suggestions:

- Ask someone to read your article and tell you if they understand what you’ve written.
- Ask someone to check your spelling and punctuation. It relieves the editor of a lot of stress if you turn in a great article.
- Be creative.
- Editorials and president’s messages may be in 1st person (I, me, mine, we, etc.).
- All other articles should be in 3rd person (he, she, him, her, they, their, etc.).
- Project news will probably be written in first person (we did..., mine was..., etc.).

Suggestions for articles:

- Interviews
- Demonstrations
- Program for meetings
- Project Fair
- Club Social
- Judging Night
- Record Book information
- Horse shows, animal shows
- January Jamboree
- Special Person of the Month
- Focus on Project
- Article about a coming holiday
- Birthday Column
- Recipes
- Artwork
- Puzzles
- Items for sale
- Services for sale
- Committee reports
- Doggie Daze
- Fairs
- Weather
- Contest participants
- ChickenQue
- Biographies
- Project news
- Special meetings
- Club officer
- Junior/Teen Leader
- Newsletter guidelines

NEWSLETTER GUIDELINES

- Logograph
 - Neat and attractive
 - Easily identifies newsletter when one looks at front page
 - Lists date of issue and/or volume
 - Gives newsletter title
- Format
 - Appropriate for contents
 - Has interest to encourage reader to read contents (headings, artwork)
 - Overall appearance/creativity
 - Good use of space
- Spelling and Grammar
 - Accuracy
 - Appropriate for age of editors
- Neatness & Readability
 - The newsletters can be prepared in many ways...
 - Cut and tape
 - Computer
 - Professional layout
 - ...but all should be neat and easily readable.
- Editorial
 - In every issue
 - Contents pertain to 4-H matters
- Creative Corner
 - Can be 4-H items
 - Can be non-4-H items
- Member Articles
- Project News
- Club News & Activities
- Club President's Message
- Club Leader's Message
- Activity/Project Leader's Message
 - Should be concise
 - Contain who, what, where, when, why and how
 - Should show who the article is written by (type person's name by article)
 - Be careful not to use preprinted materials from the 4-H Reporter, County, or other as pages of the newsletter
 - Use correct terminology for the subject being written on

CLUB NEWSLETTER AWARD

County Club Council has established a Club Newsletter Award to be given at Achievement Night each 4-H year. A gold, blue or red award will be given to the club editors using the Danish System of judging. Twenty-five (\$25.00) will be given to the club with the most outstanding newsletter.

The criteria for judging the newsletter will be as follows (included in each newsletter):

CLUB NAME & NEWSLETTER HEADING	5 points
EDITORIAL	15 points
CLUB PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	5 points
CLUB LEADER'S MESSAGE	10 points
CLUB NEWS WRITTEN BY MEMBERS	15 points
CALENDAR	10 points
CREATIVE ACTIVITY CORNER	10 points
FORMAT (consistent layout)	10 points
SPELLING & GRAMMAR	10 points
NEATNESS & READABILITY	10 points

Notes:

1. Please DO NOT submit originals or paste-ups; only issue copies as mailed or given out to club members and leaders.
2. At the time each issue is published, submit one copy to the county 4-H office.
3. An adult may do the typing of the newsletter, but a 4-H member must do the editing.
4. Submit issue copies with signed Newsletter Award Information Sheet at back of copies in folder for judging.
5. All newsletters will be judged equally regardless of access to technology.

NEWSLETTER AWARD INFORMATION SHEET

Name of club: _____

How many years have the members of your club been publishing the newsletter?

- A. One B. Two C. Three D. Four E. Five or more

Does your club...

- A. Mail its newsletters to the members? B. Give them out at meetings?

Name(s) of editor(s)

Name(s) of typist(s)

How many newsletter issues were published in your club this 4-H year? _____

(Please submit a minimum of seven issues for competition – if less published, submit number published. DO NOT submit originals or paste-ups; only issue copies as mailed or given out to the club members and leaders.)

Are you limited in any way when producing your newsletter? (club budget, number of pages, who is asked to submit articles, etc.) If yes, briefly explain below.

Special comments:

Dated: _____

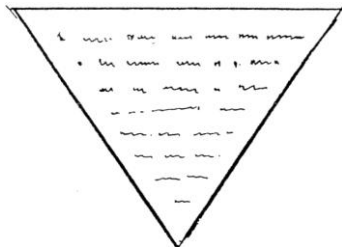
Signatures:

Editor(s): _____

Community Leader: _____

(To be filled out and submitted by County deadline)

TIPS FOR NEWS WRITING



...Lead. Includes who, what, where, when, why. Most important facts.

...Next most important points.

...Least important point at end (Editor may drop this if he must shorten article).

* Keep leads lively. Try different types of openings when writing your story.

Simple statement: 1400 Sonoma County 4-H'ers will observe National 4-H Club Week during the week of September 26-October 3.

Startling statement: Anything from Entomology to Food Preservation covers the interest of Sonoma County 4-H'ers.

Question: What is 4-H? 4-H is a youth program based on the needs and interests...

Quotation: "4-H Clubs provide one of the finest opportunities for young people to develop leadership," states Joseph H. Bigwell, local president of the...

Imperative: Remember National 4-H Club Week, September 26-October 3 in your community!

* NAMES, NAMES, NAMES. This is what makes a good news story. Use the names of club members, leaders, and local people involved in your club projects and activities as much as possible. Spell names correctly. Use a first name and family name, or two initials in place of a first name. Example: Milton Brown or M.J. Brown.

* Remember the ABC's of good writing – be...

ACCURATE BRIEF CLEAR

* Check with your editor about DEADLINES to make sure your story gets in print on time.

EDITOR

SUGGESTIONS FOR NEWSLETTER SET-UP

Front Page

- A. Logo, date, club
- B. Headline story – important happening; awards received, event to take place in the near future, etc.
- C. 4-H news – local, county

Second Page

- A. Editorial
- B. President's message
- C. Community leader's message
- D. Interview
- E. Focus on project

Third Page

- A. Committee reports and news
- B. Reports on past events

Fourth Page

- A. Creative articles
- B. Items for sale, trade

Fifth Page (and sixth, etc.)

- A. Project news

Separate Page

- A. Calendar

SUGGESTIONS FOR ARTICLES BY MONTH

October

Welcome
Achievement Night
4-H Week
Junior Leader Training
Harvest Fair
Project Leader Training
Name new members, leaders, etc.

Halloween Party

November

Thanksgiving (celebration, food basket?)
Record Book Info
Western Regional Leaders Forum

December

Christmas (party, community service, caroling, etc.)
CA State Leaders forum, report from adults who went)
All Skills Day

January

All Skills Day
Judging Clinic and Day
Cloverdale Fair
Camp Chaperones and Staff sign-up
January Jamboree
All Star criteria

February

Begin pushing ChickenQue
ChickenQue poster contest instructions
Judging Days
Record Book info
Camp, campers and general info

March

Results Cloverdale Fair
County Demo Day
ChickenQue tickets, committees, cakes
General camp info

April

Election of Officers, qualification
Dress Revue
Record Book info
Petaluma Fair
ChickenQue

May

Results – All Stars, Demo day, etc.
Report on ChickenQue
Sonoma County Fair entry due dates, etc.

Doggie Daze

Officers

June

Club party, tour, trip, etc.
Congratulations to graduates
Sonoma County Fair

REPORTING 4-H CLUB NEWS

Information; Tools; Improve Your Educational Program

Adapted from an article by Harold B. Swanson and Jo Nelson

So you're reporting 4-H news!

Congratulations! You have one of the most important jobs. A lot depends on you, so here's what you'll do for 4-H Club work and yourself.

Help keep parents and others interested in what 4-H does.

Build morale in your own club because members will be proud to see what they reported in the paper.

Point out good 4-H work, thus inspiring other clubs.

Get the thrill of seeing what you write in print. Even the best-known reporters on our large daily papers and magazines still enjoy seeing what they write in print. So will you!

HERE'S HOW YOU START

There's nothing better than getting your reporting tips from' the man or woman who is the expert in your home-town - your local editor. So, if possible, stop in and see him.

Tell him you're the 4-H reporter. Ask him how he wants his "copy," when he wants it, and what he wants.

Of course, you will also want to talk to your 4-H Advisor, or local leader. They, too, have lots of ideas on how you should go about being a 4-H reporter.

Now that you have gathered a few tips, you are ready to put your news story on paper. Here are a few rules:

1. Write your story right after your meeting and get it immediately to your editor. For pre-publicity you often need to contact the paper four to six weeks in advance. If a meeting was held two weeks ago, it isn't news anymore. Getting your story in on time is a must for a reporter!
2. Put your name and address at the top of your first page. Then the editor can reach you.
3. Write clearly, making each letter distinct and printing all names. Leave space between lines. If you have a computer, it's best to type your story, double spacing it.
4. Write or type on one side of the paper.
5. If your county office doesn't furnish you with forms, use a plain sheet of paper. Start your story about one-third of the way down the first page (to give the editor room to add a headline). Number each page. If the story isn't complete on one page, write "more" at the bottom.
6. Always write in the third person. In other words, don't use "I" or "we" or "you."
7. Keep your sentences and paragraphs short. Make each paragraph complete in itself.
8. Double-check your spelling, being triply sure you've spelled names right. Names make news, so get them complete, correct – not just John, but John Jones.

EDITOR

All this is very fine, you might say, but it tells me only how to put my story on paper. But how do I write the story? Let's look at two things: First, what is news? Second, how do I write it?

WHAT IS NEWS?

Your 4-H news really is timely information about unusual and important things your club or county and its members are doing.

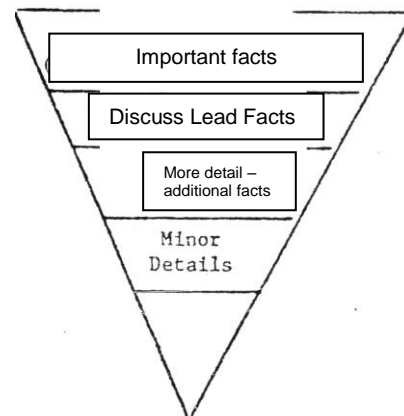
Meetings are generally your most important news. Often you'll want an advance story telling what's going to happen. And you'll always want a follow-up telling what happened.

Remember, too, that a news story is not the same as a secretary's report of a meeting. Leave out such things as the meeting being called to order, the roll taken, and the secretary's report read and approved. Write down the interesting, different things that people want to read.

Steps in writing the story:

1. Collect all the information. Your guide in doing this is the big six – WHO? WHAT? WHERE? WHEN? WHY? HOW? After getting your material together, test it to see if you have the facts by making sure you've answered those questions.
2. Study all your facts carefully and arrange them in order of importance. Ask yourself: What was the most important and interesting fact about the event? Tell about that fact first.
3. Write your "lead" or first sentence of the story. The lead is either a short summary of the entire story or an account of the most important thing that happened. Make it interesting and attention-getting.
4. Now write the rest of your story, putting down the facts in order of importance. Build your story with the most important facts first.
5. Always use simple language, leaving out your opinion and never making fun or reporting rumors.

Now your story will look like a sort of up-side down pyramid – something like this:



See how you built, putting the most important fact first and then working down to the least important fact. Then if your editor has to shorten your story, he can cut out the end paragraphs without hurting your story too much.

TO HELP YOURSELF DO A BETTER JOB

1. Call on your local editor.
2. Get stories in promptly.
3. Keep a scrapbook of clippings of your stories.

Tips on advance stories:

When you have a public meeting scheduled, you'll want to write a story to draw a crowd. Beginning with the purpose of the meeting is good. But don't start like this: "A meeting of the Busy-Bees 4-H Club will be held..." If you do, you'll kill interest right away.

Here's a better way to start:

"Special entertainment and demonstrations will be featured at a public meeting of the Busy-Bees 4-H Club at 7:30 pm, May 24, at the Silver Lake School, according to John Jones, president. Everyone in the community is invited to attend."

You could then give further details on the meeting if they are important.

And now the follow-up story:

You should have a follow-up story after every 4-H meeting. That story should deal with the most important part of the meeting. If the club reorganized at this meeting, the story might start this way:

"William Johnson was elected president of the Busy-Bees 4-H Club at Silver Lake School at its regular meeting Monday, May 24.

Other officers elected were Mary Smith, vice president; Roger Lee, secretary; Elsie White, treasurer; and Ralph Olson, reporter."

Suppose the club had decided to put on a special safety hazard hunt. Then your story might start this way:

"The Busy-Bees 4-H Club will conduct a special safety hazard hunt on the farms of its members June 2. This was decided by the club at its regular meeting Monday, May 24, at the Silver Lake School."

And there are many other ways this meeting report might start. It might start with the title of a talk or demonstration, a quotation from a talk, a summary of the reports given, important decisions, or in many, many other ways.

PUBLICIZING AN EVENT

Ever worked long and hard on an important event and only a few people showed up? What went wrong? Perhaps you didn't give a fair share of effort to publicizing your event.

Events and meetings are special kinds of communications. They can accomplish what press, letters, radio, and television, or even personal communications, alone, cannot. But these media are important in getting the kind of publicity your event deserves. So, use publicity channels appropriate for the specific meeting.

Publicizing Activities – General Principles

- Have a good reason for holding the event.
- Plan it well ahead of time and announce the date early.
- Have an active committee.
- The event must appeal to the self-interest of those you wish to attend; gear publicity to them.
- Use various channels to reach your audience. But stress those most likely to reach your intended audience, and don't expect one news announcement or one radio report to do the job.

Media – Some of Your Choices

All of these are routes to people you'd like to reach. Use this as a checklist.

- Newspaper
- Radio Spots
- Television Spots
- Newsletters
- Circular Letters
- Posters
- Leaders
- Individual Letters
- Individual Visits
- Telephone Calls
- Table "Tents"
- Welcome Wagon
- Libraries
- Place Mats
- Door Stuffers
- Free Tickets
- Community Calendars
- Bulletin Boards
- Shopper News
- Service Clubs

PUBLICIZING AN EVENT, CONT.

Get the facts out. With your planning committee, set the date, place, time, an purpose of the event; who's in charge; who will conduct activities. This is enough information for your first news story.

Give Information. Plan and write a second news story if there is time. Tell about the kinds of things that will happen. If you have both dailies and weeklies to serve, you may wish to write different stories.

Involve Others. To reach people in surrounding communities, try to bring people who live there into your story. Quote the committee member from the community in announcing the meeting. Names "localize" the story for news editors.

Deadlines. The deadline Thursday may be no later than Monday. The dailies need your copy one or two days AHEAD of publication. Check radio/TV deadlines.

Get Pictures. If you - or a cooperating newspaper or TV station - can, be sure to take action pictures of your participants on the scene.

Cover the Event. Your job is not done yet. If it was newsy enough to tell the readers about in advance, it is newsworthy for a follow-up - IMMEDIATELY AFTER.