

Newsletters And Flyers

Section Notes

There are separate headers within this section for Newsletters, Flyers and Bulk Mail to help you with several types of documents and mailing options.

Newsletters

A newsletter is a communications media for members as well as non-members and an advertisement for the shag club to all readers.

Content

Your newsletter can one of the single most important parts of your club. It is how you keep your members informed, and interested in the club and its activities. Event recaps, current events, future events, interesting things, fun things, committee opportunities and other ways to be involved are all good. Shag lessons, committee chairs' and Board Members' names and phone numbers (and email addresses), membership and party application forms, members' birthdays and other significant personal announcements are also appropriate. You may or may not want to print the club's financial information, since you are probably mailing to other clubs or non-members.

Frequency

Try to keep your members informed and enlightened, but not over-burdened by just more paper. The newsletter can also serve as a reminder for upcoming meetings. If you have a limited treasury, it is important to consider the printing and mailing costs of the newsletter when establishing a publication schedule.

Editor

The Editor needs to be someone with a commitment to do the job, writing talent, free time, organizing skills, and a computer. Access to a copier or a print shop is a must. Here are a few points:

- Spelling And Grammar: Double check it. This is what the shag world sees about your club.
- Keep it positive. Do not publicly scold or embarrass someone even if they deserve it. If you absolutely have to address a negative issue, address it in person, to the group. The newsletter (to reinforce a point) is your club's face to the world, both inside the shag world and also for potential new members.
- Give credit to authors (even yourself). Don't assume that because you are editor, folks will know you wrote it if you don't put your name on it. If you use material from other shag clubs (or from anywhere, for that matter), be sure to cite your source! Not only is it polite and ethical, it's also legal.

- Make the print large enough for reading by the over-40 crowd.
- Solicit articles and ideas from the membership.
- Don't waste space and therefore \$\$\$.
- Use humor and fun to keep it light, entertaining, and motivating.
- Set a deadline for submissions that is workable for you.
- If someone submits a piece, use it. Don't turn down material unless it is negative or not in the best interest of the club.
- Think big. It's in print. It's everywhere.
- Staples get caught in the postal department machinery. Don't use them to fasten shut your newsletter. Fasten it closed with an adhesive "dot" (available at office supply stores) or a piece of tape.
- Different weight paper is available for copying the newsletter. You can mail 5 (or 6) pages of normal weight paper for a standard one ounce stamp (currently 33 cents). Six or more pages will cost you more. Whatever you use, be sure to check your paper's weight so you will know your limits now and in the future.
- If you want to include pictures (and everyone loves them in a newsletter), tape the pictures to paper or use the DryLine rollers with the repositionable adhesive. (These look like the Dryline liquid paper dispensers.) Have Kinko's (or similar place) make a camera-ready copy for you. This does not cost too much. Then photocopy the page(s). You will get the gray shades that make a picture usable in a newsletter format. You can also copy them directly. But in either case, to make the photos look good, the copier must be able to reproduce "gray scales", not just black and white. (Only more expensive machines have this capability.)
- If you have the capability, using a scanner or digital images may make the process easier to format and print the initial copy.
- Make sure the month and year are on the newsletter (or months and year if you do it bi-monthly) or the quarter and year if you do it quarterly. This is very important to you, and to the other clubs who make their mail available to club members during club meetings. The dates help determine what is "current".
- Make sure the name of the town where your shag club "lives" is on the newsletter. Include a mailing address and contact phone number and/or email address for the club, your officers and committee chairpeople.

- If your club has a website, or a 24 hour hotline recording phone number, be sure they are in the newsletter in a visible place.
- Consider breaking up the space. Text going from side to side of a full sheet of paper is not inviting to read.
- Choose a good font. "Times" and "Times New Roman" are among the most readable fonts.
- Give kudos to your members for the work they do, competitions they enter (even if they do not place) and special occasions. It's the best way to encourage participation.
- Recognize and appreciate your DJ's, dance instructors and the facility where you meet and dance.
- Include a calendar of events, locally and within reasonable driving distances (what is "reasonable" when it comes to shaggin'?). www.shagdance.com is a great source for this information. You can even copy the information from the web, and paste it into your newsletter document.
- Look for newsletter tips and advice on the web. You can do a search to find help, or try <http://www.tcp.ca/1997/9705/9705Trai/newslett/newslett.htm>
- To raise money to pay for the newsletter, consider selling ads for members' businesses, area lounges, etc. to publish in the newsletter.
- Consider mailing your newsletter (and announcements you'd like them to publish) to the other clubs' newsletter editor and the president. Unfortunately, many presidents (or members) who get the club's mail do not share it with the membership during meetings or other club gatherings.
- Have someone other than yourself proof the newsletter prior to publishing. Don't count on your computer's spell-check to pick up all problems.

Printing

Some clubs have members with access to copy machines or other equipment to help produce their newsletter. Others use professional print shops.

If you pay a business to help produce your newsletter, try to get their best price. Remember, your club may be non-profit and be able to get further discounts.

Try to negotiate a "per page" price instead of paying separately for each piece of the process, or paying a different rate for photo and text pages. This way your editor can

instantly calculate the cost of the publication, including postage. This can present numerous advantages when trying to decide what to include in the newsletter.

You should be able to negotiate a price of roughly twelve or thirteen cents per piece of paper used for a completed book style newsletter. This includes running the two sided copies, collating, folding and stapling. (This does not include putting on seals, labels and stamps.) Remember, each piece of paper is four "pages" using this format. At twelve cents per piece of paper, a 20 page completed book style newsletter (five pieces of paper) would cost 60 cents to have made.

Fliers

Fliers are a great way to spread the word about your events. They can be distributed at a variety of local events, left in restaurants and clubs, put on community bulletin boards, and mailed to other dance clubs. Below are some points to remember to make the best use of your fliers.

1. Put the following information on each flyer (Required):
 - Name of the event
 - Date and time of the event
 - Location of the event
 - Cost of the event
 - Name of sponsoring shag club
 - Phone number, email address, etc. to get more information
 - Registration form or information
 - Hotel name and phone number for room reservations (if applicable)
2. Put the following information on each flyer (Optional)
 - Name of DeeJays
 - Name of workshop instructors
 - Menus
 - Free pour, BYOB, or cash bar information
 - Agenda
 - A map or directions to the event
3. To make your flyer stand out among the many on a table of flyers, print it on colored paper...but make sure it is easy to read....dark colors with black print are difficult to read. You can also print the flyer on legal length paper to make it "different."
4. To have the flyer ready for inclusion in a newsletter (yours or other shag clubs'), provide the Newsletter Editor a clear copy on 8.5x11 inch paper. You should also provide a reduced size copy, probably 5.5x8.5 for newsletters that use a "folded in half" book format. Remember, if too much detail is on the flyer it not only makes it hard to read, it makes it impossible to read when reduced. Make sure to send your flyer (to be used for reproduction) on white paper. Red, blue, green and other colors are impossible to copy.

5. Sending a copy (or copies) to other club presidents is a fine idea. But, you may also want to consider sending a separate copy to newsletter editors. Remember that a reproduction (copy) of your flyer can only be as good as the original used.

Keep it simple but complete, don't make me search for information I need. The flyers can be fun and creative, but must be complete to be effective.

Bulk Mail

If you mail 200 or more pieces on a regular basis, it may qualify as bulk mail.

To get bulk mail rates:

1. You have to apply for a permit number. There is a \$100 one time fee.
2. You have to pay a \$100 annual fee.
3. Then you have to set up a postal account, to have the postage deducted from. A beginning amount would probably be \$300.00.

Rates

Basic rate is 23.5 cents per piece for up to 8 pages.

The local rate is 21.4 cents per piece for up to 8 pages. This only applies if everything is local, but most newsletters are not.

Minimum rate is 18.6 cents per piece for up to 8 pages. If you have 150 or more pieces in a 220?? zip code, they would be sent at this rate.

IRS Non-Profit Status

According to the Postal Guide, your IRS Non-Profit status may not mean a thing to the Post Office if you are a "social club". But, it doesn't hurt to apply. Application is free, and if they say approve it, the price per piece could drop even more.

How To Use Your Bulk Mail Permit Number

1. Place the permit number on your item to be mailed. You can do this by using most word processing soft ware. Just draw a box and type inside the box the following message—PRESORTED STANDARD US POSTAGE PAID , then type the name of the post office that you will be using, then type PERMIT#_____. (what ever number you have been assigned) See example below:

PRESORTED STANDARD US POSTAGE PAID Name of Your Post Office PERMIT # _____

How to sort your Bulk Mail

1. Run off your labels sorted by zip code.
2. There are four different groups of bulk mail:
 - a. 10 or more pieces of mail with the same five digit zip code
 - b. 10 or more pieces of mail with the same three digit zip code
 - c. 10 or more pieces of mail in the same ADC location (Pick up an ADC location chart from the post office)
 - d. Mixed is everything else, placed in zip code order
- a. Each one of these has a special color coded sticker, that is placed in the lower left corner of the first item in the bundle.

Five Digit	Orange D
Three Digit	Green 3
ADC	Pink A
Mixed	Brown MXD
3. All bundles must be double rubberbanded, one in each direction. No bundles under 10 pieces unless Mixed.
4. If you are mailing something like a newsletter or one sheet folded in thirds, you may either staple or tab them. (Mailing labels cut in half make great tabs, but you can also buy stickers at office supply stores made for this purpose.) Presorted mail does not go through a mail machine, therefore staples can be used.
5. Set up an account with the post office. You will have to pay each time.

There is an entire book on bulk mailing that can be obtained from the Post Office. The Post Office also offers classes on Bulk Mail. When in doubt ask your bulk mail office clerks. They can be very friendly, helpful and patient. This Bulk Mail sounds easy, but it can take months to really get it correct. This is also a time consuming task. It can take one person six hours to fold, seal, label and sort approximately 400 newsletters.

Conclusions

The initial \$200 would take several months to recoup, but in the end you could save money. But there are limitations on how many items you have to mail, etc. Also, bulk mailing takes more effort.

On the other hand, mailing first class ensures more timely delivery. If you want to ensure members get their publication quickly (perhaps to remind them of a meeting), this is your best option.

Chose whatever method works best for you and your club.