How to Create a Lions District Newsletter *

District Newsletter Suggestions are on this webpage: https://lions4-a1.org/creating-a-district-newsletter/
Club Newsletter Suggestions are on this webpage: https://lions4-a1.org/creating-a-club-newsletter/

STEPS IN CREATING YOUR DISTRICT'S NEWSLETTER (BULLETIN)

- **Request Articles, Photos, Event Flyers, etc.** from your members by a certain deadline/date. Ask them to submit photos of high quality and in a .JPG format if possible. Send a monthly email reminder. Reply that you've received their email. Develop an email "group" can include District's Cabinet, Club Presidents, Secretaries, and key members. Send out about a week beforehand. Update your "group" with each new Lion-Year.
- **Save emails** that come in during the month in a separate folder**.**
- **Start doing the newsletter** – Either work on it periodically during the month or start on a certain day – for example: If you want to publish it on the 1st of each month, have a deadline of the 25th and start it then.
- **Open a word-processing document** – do a word search to find one if needed - Word Processors like Google Cloud/DOCS, Microsoft Office 365, iCloud Drive, OpenOffice - Free, etc. Or you decide to use an online program to create an Emailed-Newsletter – see RESOURCES section for suggestions.
- **Open a Template –** Either use a blank document or my .DOCX example DOWNLOAD. Customize it to your District's needs! I like using 2 columns because it's easier to print off with less white space – and the width seems nicer for reading on a cell phone. Templates/examples are found in the RESOURCES section below.
- **Save** the document as the new month's newsletter <u>first thing</u> to update the existing template. You can use your District's name and year/month – like this: *District-4-XX-Lions-Newsletter-2026-11.docx*
- **Fonts -** Use a standard font throughout the newsletter, such as "Calibri 11 point" (better for those with dyslexia) or "Arial 12 point" (better for low-vision readers.) Paragraph headings can be sized to 14 or 16 point and BOLD.
- **Two Columns –** It looks like traditional newspapers, but might be easier to read on cell phones because it has narrower columns.
- **One Column –** It looks more modern than two columns, but uses up more space. May be more appealing to younger people.
- **Line Spacing Options –** Set for 1.0 and single-spaced. Suggestion: use left-alignment, not full-justification. Hint: two spaces between sentences is outdated and not suggested!
- **Add a Page Header** – with the title of your newsletter, page number (starting on page 2) and month/year.
- **Use Screenshots** if you want to. **<u>Edit as you go.</u>**
- **Add to your Quick Access Toolbar – These are my FAVORITE keys !!!**

  - ¶ *<u>Paragraph</u>* symbol - very helpful to *"Show paragraph marks and other hidden formatting symbols"* – can be turned on and off – doesn't show on the final document
  - *<u>Undo Typing</u>* symbol - helpful to quickly *"undo"* an unintended entry
  - *<u>Clear All Formatting</u>* symbol - helpful when copy/pasting from somewhere else
  - Aa *<u>Change Case</u>* symbol - change from lower case to upper case, etc.
  - + - *<u>Zoom</u>* symbol - change font from larger to smaller size, etc.

CONTENT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR NEWSLETTER

- **Masthead** – Include the Lions logo or a photo of your District's logo AND your current District Governor's PIN. Information on the LOGO's Guidelines can be found in the RESOURCES section below. Include a link to your District's WEBSITE & SOCIAL NETWORKING pages (Facebook, Instagram, etc.).

- **Suggested Headings** – I change the colors of the Fonts, Outlines, and Shading/Fill with each newsletter, example: brown and orange colors in the fall.
  1. **Events Calendar** and **Ongoing Events** - should have dates and a brief description of upcoming meetings, service projects/activities, and fundraisers. Use links whenever you can. Maybe have fliers stored online and use the hyperlink to save space. Identify whether they are your District, MD4, or Lions International events. Put the Club's name at the end of the wording for their events.
  2. **District Governor's Message** – copy/paste/edit and include their recent photo/headshot
  3. **Main Information Section** – Go through the emails you've received by your deadline. Put the name of the person submitting the article at the end – or the beginning.
     a. Updates on District events (like Student Speakers Contest) (future and past)
     b. Endorsed Projects updates
     c. District Chairperson and Committee Reports (like Vision, Membership, and Environment)
     d. Photos/wording posted on your District's Facebook, Instagram, or other social media
  4. **Upcoming Events Section** (in date order) – Only include events from District – MD4/California – LionsUSA – Lions International, etc. (not Clubs' events) with fliers and descriptive wording. Highlight the date.
  5. **Cubs', Zones', and Regions' News Section** – if suitable
  6. **Alpha and Omega Leos' News Section** – Ask the Leo Advisors for information to be sent to you. Let you know when they've posted on social media. Be aware of posting photos or identifiable information to under-age children who haven't signed waivers – Alpha Leos have parent/guardian signatures done yearly.
  7. **Clubs' News Section** – Upcoming Club Events and Fundraiser Flyers or (wording who/what/when/where). Ask clubs to add you to their newsletter/bulletin emails <u>or</u> send in write-ups with photos and captions – they can make the article more interesting and help low-vision or blind readers. If possible, give the article and photo "credit" when it's done by someone other than the newsletter's editor. See suggestions below**.**
  8. **Directory -** Contact Information **-** Include a list of your District's Board/Officers in case people have questions. For confidentiality, ask the member if it's okay to have identifying information (like email, phone, birth year, or District's financial report) if it is emailed to non-members or posted on the internet! Maybe list clubs in the district and their websites.
- **Copy/Paste information and events** from Multiple District Four, LionsUSA, LION Magazine, District Digest, Lions International etc. – get on their mailing lists.
- **District's Social Media -** Share your information with your District's Facebook/Instagram/etc. administrator and copy/paste information from your District's accounts!
- **Clubs' Social Media -** Facebook – Instagram, etc - Ask clubs to submit items they've posted on social media.
- **Photos** with captions, **Logos**, and **Clip Art** can increase the reader's interest – a page that's only full of print could be boring! Crop, lighten, or darken photos if necessary. Add hyperlinks to your photos and clip art when available. When inserting .JPG or .PNG files, you can change/set the "Text Wrapping" box to *in-line, tight, in front of text*, etc. Photos can be straightened, enhanced, lightened, etc. with your computer's photo or paint program. Follow guidelines for <u>copyrighted</u> photos and clip art in the RESOURCES section below.
- **Other District's Newsletter Information** – Copy/paste items, including events, clip art, or articles of interest to your district. Sign up to be on their email list. Here's the webpage with links to the Districts in California: https://md4lions.org/council-of-governors. *Sadly, several Districts in California's MD4 Lions have sections on their websites for Newsletters – but they are from several years ago.* ☹
  o District 4-A1: https://lions4-a1.org/whats-happening/newsletters/
  o District 4-L4: https://www.district4l4.org/news/ Join Email List LINK
  o District 4-C1: https://www.district4c1lions.org/manelion
  o District 4-C4: https://lions4c4.org/posts/category/district/thread
  o District 4-C5: https://sacarealionsclubs.com/pride/
  o District 4-L2: https://e-district.org/sites/4l2/page-11.php (half-way down the page)
  o District 4-L5: https://district4l5.org/newsletter

- **How to Become a Member –** As Membership is so important, maybe on one of the last pages, include information for prospective members and the Lions International's MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION as a photo/JPG and/or add this link: https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/v2/resource/download/79863797
- **Deadline –** Insert a message to your readers to please email items they would like in the upcoming newsletter by (deadline) date. Maybe the 25th of each month if it's going to be distributed on the 1st of each month.

COMPLETION OF YOUR NEWSLETTER

- **Edit your Document as you go -** like spelling, grammar, punctuation, lengthy paragraphs, etc.. Being thorough and consistent helps with readability. Correct the wording in submitted articles that is incorrect or out-of-date, like using "MyLion" instead of "**Lion Portal**" or "Lions Clubs International - LCI" instead of "**Lions International**". Suggestion: DON'T use Auto-Correct! There are tools in the word processing programs and https://www.grammarly.com/. Also have someone else edit your document – See "Editor's Editor" below.
- For **ACCESSIBILITY,** it's suggested to put *Alt Text* and *Image Descriptions* on the photos and clipart for those who are blind or have low vision. https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/edge/learning-center/how-to-turn-on-automatic-image-descriptions/
- **Make your Newsletter Visually Appealing** - Be aware of where you have white spaces. Don't lose your reader/audience as they scroll through an area that's only white! Align the content to the bottom of each page. To do this, either increase the size of the photos/fonts on the page, rearrange another article in its place, or add clipart/photos/fillers that are Lions-related. Limit use of NON-Lions-related articles, photos, crossword puzzles, or clipart. Space in your newsletter is invaluable - make every inch count. See RESOURCES section.
- **Save your Document** as a .PDF document. Sending a .DOCX document might be very large and difficult to send in an email and it might be viewed with different margins, etc that make it look different than you intended! To view it, some people may not have purchased the same program that you used to make the newsletter, like MS Publisher (.PUB) or MS Word (.DOCX). There are free .PDF readers – do a word search. See RESOURCES.
- **Double-check** your .PDF document to make sure the photos/pages are lined up as you want them.
- **Editor's Editor** – Ask someone else to read it for corrections. Email them the .PDF version. They can tell you the page/column/wording that could be changed over the phone. Then re-save your document as a .PDF.
- **Distribution Frequency** – It's suggested to send out at least once a month. Being consistent helps members and the public know what to expect.
- **Email Distribution List** – Email the newsletter to those listed in the RESOURCES section below.
- **Add Newsletter to your District's website** – Add a tab to your District's website. Upload each newsletter in a timely manner. Example - here is the link to District 4-A1's Newsletter webpage: https://lions4-a1.org/whats-happening/newsletters/
- **Email out the Newsletter on time!** – Have the subject line remain similar – "District XXX Newsletter Month/Year". Write them a brief note and include an option to "Unsubscribe" from your emails.
- **Make a "Words and Photos Only" Edition?** – I make an edition with only words and photos in a larger font and only one column. This is good for those who are blind or have low vision. And some people like reading it in this format! The number of pages is usually doubled, so it is less appropriate to print off. I take the original document, save it with a different name, select all, clear all formatting, change to one column, increase font size, bold the headings, and re-arrange photos if more than one can fit on a line. See examples HERE.

RESOURCES FOR PUBLISHING YOUR NEWSLETTER

- **District Newsletter Template / Example:** DOWNLOAD https://lions4-a1.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/template-district-newsletter.docx – it's found in this folder https://lions4-a1.org/creating-a-district-newsletter/
- **Club Newsletter Template / Example:** https://lions4-a1.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/newsletter-template-example-club.docx

- **Other Examples** are found on Microsoft's Word Program. Go to "New Document" and search for "Newsletter." A "Zone" Newsletter Template can be found at Lions International's link - https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/v2/resource/download/132182435%20
- **Distribution List:** Email the newsletter to club members, community leaders, supporters, Zone and Region Chairs, and other service/non-profit organizations. Members' emails are accessed on the Lion Portal.
- **Photos (stock) and Clipart:** Be sure to follow public copyright licensing instructions. It could have a Creative Commons License: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative_Commons_license. For example, go to Google.com>Images>User Rights>Creative Commons Licenses. They may require you to "give appropriate credit" to person who made it. Follow their instructions to site the source. More information found on page 16 of this document from Lions International - titled "Club Brand Guidelines: https://cdn2.webdamdb.com/md_wCNDBjM1EE12.jpg.pdf?v=1.
- **Convert a .PDF file to a .JPG photo:** Do word search for "convert pdf to jpg" - Example: https://www.adobe.com/acrobat/online/pdf-to-jpg.html or find others in the Microsoft Store, etc.
- **"Lions Club Members: Pubic Image, Graphics & Ideas Hub"** - *(a Private Facebook Group)* - LOTS of graphics, but they're "not for the promotion of events, etc." When signed into Facebook, here's the link: https://www.facebook.com/groups/505820860031646/
- **Photo Library:** Found on Lions International's website - download may take a while. https://www.dropbox.com/sh/m1x9hoq4cllddjl/AAAZEL-J9iIt_QYjd350TDSUa?dl=0
- **District Logo**: For help making a unique District Logo with **AI**, California Lions/MD4 Marketing Committee has information on "Personalized CA Lions Logos". Download: https://e-district.org/userfiles/1578/file/Lions%20Club%20Personalized%20Logo%20Available%20Now(2).pdf
- **District Pins** are found here: http://clpta.org/district-club-pins/
- **Lions' Logo and Brand Guidelines:** The logo was updated in 2009. The lion doesn't have a red tongue and the font is now "sans serif." Website: https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/resources-for-members/brand-guidelines

  "Correctly using the graphic elements, verbal tone and personality developed by Lions International will ensure that all clubs are communicating clearly and effectively with a unified voice." Download the Brand Guidelines: https://www.lionsclubs.org/resources/81104618
- **Crossword Puzzles and Word Search:** Make your own Lions-related puzzles with websites like this: https://www.education.com/worksheet-generator/reading/crossword-puzzle/. Here's a link for *Lions Puzzles* and *Lions Word Search*: https://wordmint.com/public_puzzles/192767.
- **District 4-A1 Marketing/Publicity/Advertising Webpage**: https://lions4-a1.org/whats-happening/members-page/publicity-ideas/
- **California Lions Marketing Website:** https://www.e-district.org/sites/california_lions_marketing_committee/index.php
- **Lions International's Marketing Webpage:** https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/resources-for-members/resource-center/club-marketing
- **Online Newsletter Editor's Suggestions** (or do a word search for others):
  - https://www.constantcontact.com/blog/how-to-write-a-newsletter-email/
  - https://mailchimp.com/resources/email/email-newsletter-examples/
  - https://www.wildapricot.com/blog/mobile-friendly-newsletter
  - https://www.linkedin.com/advice/1/how-can-you-design-email-newsletters-visually
- **Emailed Newsletters - Marketing Platform Examples** (or do a word search for others):
  - MailChimp - https://mailchimp.com/pricing/free-details/
  - Constant Contact - https://www.constantcontact.com/pricing
  - Benchmark Email - https://www.benchmarkemail.com/

Questions? Reach out to District 4-A1 Newsletter Editor, Lion Gail Cates.

✳ NOTICE / DISCLAIMER: Websites listed are suggestions/examples ONLY - and are NOT meant to be recommendations or to imply they are endorsed by District 4-A1 Lions.