



NEW EDITOR GUIDE

Prepared by S.C.R.I.B.E. Editors for Rock Club Editors



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SPECIAL CONGRESS REPRESENTING INVOLVED BULLETIN EDITORS

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Foreword

This document is the result of S.C.R.I.B.E. members participating in a group discussion on the S.C.R.I.B.E. Discussion Group, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Scribefolks>. We began with the basic intent of sharing our experiences as rockhound bulletin editors in an effort to attract and guide new editors in this fun and rewarding service to their clubs.

With the introduction of new techniques and technologies, our document may never be finished but will continue to grow in the manner we intended.

With gratitude to the original contributors:

- Dan Fontaine, Editor, Gem and Mineral Society of the Virginia Peninsula
- Beth Heesacker, Northwest Regional Vice President
- Sheryl Sims, Editor, Mineralogical Society of DC
- Betty Cain, Rocky Mountain Regional Vice President
- Mark Nelson, President
- Doug Arnold, Past President

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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As the editor, you have a key role in communicating within and outside your club. Having a professional looking bulletin is important to support continued engagement of current members and recruitment of new members. Your duties typically include:

1. Supporting communication within your club, with other clubs, and with the Federation.
2. Producing a bulletin containing information specific to the needs of your club.
3. Distributing your bulletin via website/e-mail/snail-mail to all club members.
4. As approved by your club's Board, distributing your bulletin to other individuals and organizations; e.g., Federation, S.C.R.I.B.E., and other clubs.

GETTING STARTED

You are considering volunteering or have recently volunteered to be your club's bulletin editor. Some skills and responsibilities that help with your transition to and performance as editor are noted below.

1. Skills: As editor, you should be comfortable with communicating verbally and in writing. You also should be comfortable with the computer skills needed to produce and distribute a bulletin. Suggested editor skills include:
 - a. Have good computer skills using your choice of editing software. (Note: A survey of editors at the January, 2015, S.C.R.I.B.E. meeting showed that most of the editors found Microsoft Publisher to be the easiest to use, with Microsoft Word as second. You may use the S.C.R.I.B.E. Yahoo Group to discuss the pros and cons of various software applications or how to use certain software capabilities.)
 - b. Have the ability to use the Membership Committee Chairperson's spreadsheet or database to develop and maintain an e-mail distribution list.
 - c. Possess good note taking skills if reporting on meetings or other events. If not in attendance, ask someone to take notes for you (your club reporter).
 - d. Picture taking skills; e.g. proper lighting and framing. Proficiency with graphic/photo editing software.
 - e. Good grammar and spelling. You will be writing some of the articles and editing articles by club members. Editing skills are important to better ensure that your bulletin reflects well on your club.
 - f. Ability to use the Internet and other reference material to confirm statements made in articles and to investigate potential copyright violations.
 - g. Artistic sensibility for layout process. (Note: Use the American Federation's bulletin award scoring criteria and other bulletins for examples. Use the S.C.R.I.B.E. Yahoo Group to discuss concerns or uncertainties.)
 - h. Understand appropriate methods to obtain and capture articles and pictures appropriate for the bulletin. (Note: See the S.C.R.I.B.E. website for copyright guidance. Also, be

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sensitive regarding pictures of people included in the bulletin; obtain permission as needed to include them in the bulletin, especially from parents of Pebble Pups. Ask parents to sign a hardcopy photo release at the beginning of the Pebble Pup year.)

- i. Commitment to meeting deadlines. Meet with the Board to determine the optimal frequency and date to publish and distribute the bulletin. Getting the bulletin distributed on a consistent schedule reflects well on the club; e.g., club members may expect to receive the bulletin around the middle of the month.
2. Access to editing/publishing tools (desktop publishing software, printer, camera, etc.). This is necessary to perform the duties of editor. As editor, you should always have your camera and a notepad when you attend a club activity unless your club has a designated photographer. Bulletins are more interesting when photos of club events are included.
3. Contact the club's Board to understand the editor's budget and the process for expense reimbursement. During your first year as editor, you will likely receive an editor's budget from the club's Board. During the year, make sure you carefully track your expenses and retain receipts for reimbursement from the club's treasurer. If you have an expected expense that is not included in the budget, it is suggested that you obtain permission from the Board before spending on the item. By the end of the year, you should have good knowledge to draft a proposed editor's budget for the next year. Editor expenses may include, but are not necessarily limited to:
 - a. Printer ink or toner cartridges
 - b. Printer paper
 - c. Staples and tape
 - d. Label stock for address labels
 - e. Postage stamps
 - f. Envelopes
 - g. S.C.R.I.B.E. membership dues
 - h. Diamond Dan membership dues
 - i. Club brochure printing, unless there is a Public Relations (PR) chair in the club
 - j. Club poster printing, unless handled by PR chair
 - k. Hard copy photos for club historian
 - l. External storage of bulletins, clip art, photos (memory sticks, DVDs, CDs, binders, cloud, etc.)
 - m. Rewards, prizes, or certificates for club members who contribute articles to the bulletin
4. Participate in exchanging bulletins with other clubs within and outside of your Federation. Read these bulletins for ideas, formats, and articles to use in your bulletin.

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RESOURCES

As a gem and mineral society club editor, you are fortunate to have access to many resources for information to support your editor duties and articles to include in your club's bulletin.

Some of these are described below:

1. S.C.R.I.B.E.:

S.C.R.I.B.E. is an international organization of bulletin editors of amateur gem, mineral, and earth science societies. S.C.R.I.B.E. exists to improve communication and public relations among gem and mineral societies, their federations, and other related organizations through involved bulletin editors; and advise and assist new editors with old ideas and old editors with new ideas while providing editors a share in all ideas for publishing better bulletins.

- a. Website: If you are interested in a community of editors from other gem and mineral societies, S.C.R.I.B.E. is tailor made for you. Please bookmark or click on the following link: <http://scribe.rbnet.net/>.
- b. Copyright Guidance: The S.C.R.I.B.E. website has guidance on copyright with which you should become familiar.
- c. SCRIBE Newsletter: The SCRIBE Newsletter provides information helpful to editors in the publishing and distribution of their club newsletters. (Note: Only the newsletter is SCRIBE not S.C.R.I.B.E.)
- d. Bulletin Evaluation Service: S.C.R.I.B.E. provides a Bulletin Evaluation Service to its members. This non-competitive judging, a test run, provides valuable advice to help editors improve the quality of their bulletins before they enter their Regional Federation competition. See the S.C.R.I.B.E. website for more information.
- e. Yahoo S.C.R.I.B.E. Discussion Group: S.C.R.I.B.E. members now have the opportunity to participate in a free, online discussion group which can be used to:
 - i. Initiate and participate in online discussions related to members' bulletin editing responsibilities;
 - ii. Share editing tips, techniques, and horror stories;
 - iii. Swap photos, files, polls, calendars, links, and more with members;
 - iv. Receive important announcements from S.C.R.I.B.E.; and
 - v. Generally keep in touch with fellow editors.
 - vi. To join and participate in the S.C.R.I.B.E. Discussion Group, please bookmark or click on the following link: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Scribefolks>.

2. Federation Websites: AFMS and Regional Federation Websites, e.g., EFMLS: Always check your federation newsletter for articles of interest to club members to reprint in your club's bulletins. The federation website also includes items like upcoming workshops and conventions. If your club is a member, permission to reprint any article in AFMS and regional federation newsletters is granted as long as the source author and document is referenced.

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3. Your Club Website: Your club website and Facebook site may contain a large number of pictures to leverage for the bulletin.
4. Club Activity Photos: Members like to see lots of photos in the club bulletin of other members and club activities, especially field trips. Your camera should always be nearby and used frequently during club activities. A photo release statement should be part of your annual membership document. Junior and Pebble Pup photos should not contain identification info that could possibly disclose their location; i.e., Mrs. Peterson's First Grade Class, our President's two sons, Johnny and Jimmy (especially if the President's address is listed in the bulletin), etc.
5. Sample Past Club Bulletin for Template: It is always easier to create your initial bulletin from a previous club bulletin. Get an editable, electronic version, if available, to simplify setting up the template for your first bulletin.
6. Other Rock-related Websites: Many gem and mineral articles are available on the web. Always be sensitive to copyright restrictions rules, before using anything from the web.
7. Club Members: Rockhounds are known to be a friendly group. Your club probably has more experienced rockhounds that may have some insights and/or possibly be willing to mentor you.
8. Possible Mentor: If the past editor is still in your club, search them out for some advice and guidance, especially for your first bulletin; but don't be afraid of change. Club members may also have knowledge of resources and/or contacts in other clubs that may be helpful.
9. Articles for Bulletin: Club members may go on a "family" rock collecting field trip. The bulletin is a great place for them to share their experiences and some new rock collecting sites for other club members. Continually spread the message that you are on the hunt for bulletin articles. Ask club members to share their pictures and to give you a draft article for the next bulletin.
10. Diamond Dan *Mini Miners Monthly*: Reverend Darryl Powel (A.K.A. Diamond Dan) is the Junior Committee Chair of the Eastern Federation and creator/publisher of the *Mini Miners Monthly* newsletter that contains articles and activities about minerals, crystals, and mineral collecting for our younger club members. For a small annual fee, you will receive monthly issues of Diamond Dan Publications' *Mini Miners Monthly*. The following guidance was provided by Diamond Dan Publications:
 - a. With a subscription, Diamond Dan Publications has granted permission to use select *Mini Miners Monthly* articles in your club's newsletter, when accompanied with the following credit: "Used with permission from Diamond Dan Publications. www.diamonddanpublications.net."
 - b. Diamond Dan Publications considers your subscription as editor to be a club subscription. You may share your *Mini Miners Monthly* as long as you do not just forward the issue to the entire club (e.g., forward to only Pebble Pups leaders).

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DEVELOPING YOUR FIRST BULLETIN

1. Access your regional federation website (e.g., EFMLS) and download guidance and scoring criteria for the annual Bulletin Contest. This will provide a good checklist for bulletin format and content.
2. Establish a filing structure on your computer for monthly bulletins and related material used in developing the bulletin. The name of your bulletin should identify either the name of the club or bulletin and the month and year of the issue (such as “Pomona Rockette June 2015”).
3. Establish a filing structure for emails received with files for the bulletin, e.g., directory for the bulletin in your inbox; subdirectories for finished emails (by month), new content for emails not processed, and new calendar information.
4. Develop a bulletin template. This will include standard content and headers and footers that will be included in each bulletin such as mast head, banners, content, list of officers, committee chairs, page numbers, president’s article, new member welcome, and so on.
5. Use S.C.R.I.B.E’s Yahoo Groups to chat about concerns, uncertainty, and areas for which you would like guidance.
6. Develop articles from sources noted in the Resources section of this Guide..
7. Proofread the bulletin:
 - a. Immediately after you draft an article.
 - b. Again as you are finalizing the bulletin.
 - c. By a second person, if available (you can easily miss something).
 - d. Save to a Portable Data Format (PDF) file to reduce file size and lock content. Depending on the software you use, this is as simple as choosing “Save As” from the menu and changing the document extension to pdf.
 - e. Send out the final draft PDF of the bulletin file to the club Board for any comments before publishing (recommended). Be sure to include a “reply by” date for their input.

PUBLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION

1. To keep costs down, distribute the bulletin by e-mail to as many club members as possible.
 - a. Establish an e-mail contact list for distribution to club members. Work with your membership chair or club secretary to maintain your list of e-mail and/or home addresses of bulletin recipients. Does your club send its bulletin to local rock shops, schools, libraries, and visitor centers? These are good sources of new members.
 - b. Include the federation newsletter editor, S.C.R.I.B.E. editor, and if they wish, other editors in your federation (as exchange bulletins) on distribution.
 - c. Develop a friendly, forwarding e-mail and distribute your bulletin as a PDF file.
2. Distribute a hardcopy of the bulletin by snail mail to club members who do not have e-mail. Note: Solicit another club member to help with this task, if needed.
 - a. Determine if the club budget supports color or grayscale printing.

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- b. Form a good working relationship with your local printer, if you use one.
 - c. One first class stamp will probably cover mailing of a 12-page bulletin (double sided--six sheets without envelope or five sheets with envelope). Additional pages may require the 2nd ounce stamp that covers about 20 pages (double sided—10 sheets).
 - d. Determine the folding and taping procedures from the post office for your particular bulletin size and format.
 - e. Print mailing labels, attach them to the bulletin, and take them to the post office (this is where a helper is most valuable).
3. Archive and Template for next bulletin:
- a. Have the webmaster post the bulletin to the club website, if requested by your club.
 - b. Back up your bulletin on a memory stick (thumb drive), cloud, CD/DVD, or external hard drive, and keep the backup in a safe place.
 - c. Periodically (perhaps once a year), make a CD/DVD backup of all your bulletins, along with all other electronic resources (such as photos, clip art, etc.) and give the backup to the club's secretary or historian for safe keeping and emergency recovery.
 - d. Archive the file to print paper copies to submit to the Federation Bulletin Aids chair for the Bulletin Awards.
 - e. Use past month's bulletin as template for next month. (Note: Ensure that month, issue number, etc., are updated as needed in both the header and footer or elsewhere on the page.)
4. Submit your bulletin, original articles, poems, cartoons, etc. each year to your regional federation for the Annual Bulletin Contest. Most federation Bulletin Editor Advisory Chairs (BEACs) give award certificates to all entries submitted to the contest. Announce these awards and present the certificates and scoring sheets to your local club, thanking those who submitted items to the bulletin whether they won an award or not since all the contributions make your bulletin valuable to your club. You select the items entered in your federation's contest; therefore, most of the judges' feedback apply as much to you as the editor as it does the authors. You may want to read them before passing along to the authors. Encourage club attendance to the federation's Editors/Webmasters Breakfast.