



**Effective Newsletters – It’s NOT Rocket Science!**  
**by Nancy Berry and Lori Fry**  
**Presented at 2004 *Faith in Action* National Conference**

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**Why don’t all programs do a regular newsletter?**

- I don’t have time!
- I don’t have the money!
- I don’t know how!
- No one reads newsletters.

**Why bother with a newsletter? To help you fulfill your mission!**

- Reach individuals needing *Faith in Action*
- Reach individuals waiting for a meaningful volunteer opportunity
- Reach individuals and organizations looking for meaningful ways to invest their donations locally
- Reach professional health care & social service providers needing resources for their patients and clients
- Keep your stakeholders involved and informed
  - Volunteers
  - Care receivers
  - Donors
  - Referral sources
  - Public officials
  - Faith community
  - Civic organizations

**How do I start?**

- Be clear what you want to accomplish.
  - Get people to read it!
  - Reinforce relationships with stakeholders
  - Develop new relationships
  - Remind others what *Faith in Action* does and how to access its services
- Recruit help
  - Volunteer(s) with experience writing, editing, formatting, doing mailing lists
  - Board committee to help determine types of articles, format, mailing list, whether bulk mail permit is worthwhile
  - Church or printer to donate duplication, printing, collating, folding
  - Volunteers to collate, attach labels, sort for mailing



- Delegate what you can and get started!

### **Evaluate your gifts/strengths.**

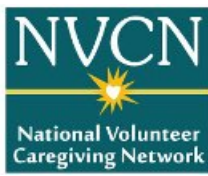
- What do you want/need to control?
- What can you delegate?
- What skills do you have to have from someone else (editing, proofreading, layout, etc.)?

### **Content**

- Illustrate mission – warm, fuzzy, personal
- Recognize contributions – financial, volunteer caregivers, church support, in-kind, memorials, etc.
- Fund development – special event, why invest in *Faith in Action*, explain why funds are needed, etc.
- Testimonial from care receiver OR volunteer
- Information of interest to disabled individuals, family caregivers, etc.
  - Hints to prevent falls
  - Phone numbers for Alzheimer’s Association, Area Agency on Aging, home-delivered meals
- Calendar of events – including local support groups, community-wide events, FIA fund raisers, volunteer training, senior fairs, or events of interest to your care receiver group
- Standard information included in every issue
  - Address, phone #, e-mail, web site
  - Director’s name and contact info, if different
  - List of partner churches and/or board members
  - List of services offered by *Faith in Action*
  - Logo
- Contribution envelope at least annually
- Length – more is not necessarily better

### **Format**

- Paper and ink color/contrast
- Font size and type style(s)
- Photos/clip art
- White space
- Columns
- Bullets vs. paragraphs
- Balance – left/right; up/down
- “Z” path/placement
- Justify or not
- Change vs. consistency
- Borders & frames



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### **Mailing List**

- Volunteers, including board, advisory committee, and fund raisers
- Care receivers – active and inactive
- Churches in service area – pastor & secretary
- Public officials – federal & state legislators; mayor(s) & city council; county board; township officials
- Libraries
- State, county, and local agencies which serve your target population – public and private
- Health care providers – physicians, pharmacies, home health agencies, homemaker agencies, hospices, nursing homes, hospitals (social service, physical therapy), mental health providers

NVCN suggests that you conduct a web search of volunteer caregiving programs to peruse newsletter content and styles utilized by your colleagues.