

# *Bos'n's Pipe*



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## *M E M O R A N D U M*

*TO: Phoenix Sail and Power Squadron Bridge and others*

*FROM: P/D/C Lee Whitehead, SN*

*SUBJECT: Bos'n's Pipe*

*DATE: 14 Feb 2009*

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Preparing materials each month for the *Bos'n's Pipe* may be new to you, so I have prepared a style sheet and some tips that I hope will be of help to you and to me. I hope the following will clarify our procedures

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thanks.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'LW'.

# Style Sheet for Squadron Officers and other contributors

(A work in progress)

## **Introduction:**

Through the years, the *Bos'n's Pipe* evolved into the publication it is now through the generous contributions of many people. This style sheet is an effort to help you make contributions to the publication more uniform and to ensure the highest quality and understanding possible for our members.

## **Role of the Editor**

There can be only one editor for a publication. His or her job is to try to make the newsletter uniform and pleasant for members to read. The editor probably is the only person who sees everything that is submitted and goes into each issue. As a result, the editor is frequently called on to add or delete material to avoid repetition or to add information that the person who submits information would have included because of its appropriateness. For example, the editor frequently adds a congratulatory note from the commander when a member has earned it. Other times events occur after an officer submits his or her report, and your editor will bring those comments up to date. A couple of times there was a screw up, but the editor always takes the blame for this.

## **The Front Page**

Ideally the front page should be used to promote upcoming Squadron events, particularly boating events and general membership meeting programs. It's also the best place to congratulate hard working folks and use photos that are really great. With advance planning, the *Bos'n's Pipe* can be used to promote membership attendance at meetings by letting members know of future programs. Once in a great while we even run photos of upcoming speakers. We would like that to become the normal way we do business.

## **Photos**

Photos are an important part of our publication. The preferred format is unedited electronic formats. Hard copy photos, though rare these days can be scanned into a digital form for inclusion in the newsletter and returned to the person submitting them. They are not harmed in any way. Color is preferred, and enhances the online version of the publication, but the snail mail edition is only black and white because of costs and other factors.

Photos are interesting because of the people in them, so photos of people are the most sought after. Photos of people on boats involved in boating activities are

best of all. Please identify all the folks in the photo with their names, usually identified from left to right. The best photos are those of people having fun. Scenic photos are less desirable unless there are people included.

### **Online and Printed Editions**

Efforts have been made over the past couple of years to increase readership on line as an alternative to printing and mailing. One of the techniques we have employed recently is to include content—primarily photos—on two pages that do not appear in the printed version. The other advantage is that color is the norm online. There's another: the online version is typically (although not always) available a day or two before the printed version is mailed. It is also possible to update the online version at any time unlike the print version which is finished when it is printed.

Currently, the *Bos'n's Pipe* is printed by your humble editor's former employer, which has advantages and disadvantages. The two primary advantages are the cost—about one-third that of AlphaGraphics and the like—and we normally get same-day delivery. The issue is sent via e-mail, and is printed from the electronic file, which provides much higher quality. The disadvantage is we are a low priority, and when there are more urgent jobs for my employer, they go first. And then there are holidays when their print shop is closed. The January issue, for example, is printed as soon after their offices open after the holidays, and that can be four or five days into the month.

### **Content**

Through the years, it has been a problem that officers report the same material that is found in minutes of the Executive Committee, and in some cases, officers all report the same thing. That doesn't encourage folks to read on through the whole paper.

Here's a brief review of officers' roles. Their reports should reflect their responsibilities.

### **Commander**

The Commander is the principal officer of the Squadron and is usually the only officer who enjoys the "big picture" of Phoenix Power Squadron and USPS activities. He or she is the officer who is most in contact with D/28 and USPS through correspondence and attendance at district and national meetings. The squadron commander reports to the D/28 executive officer. As such the Commander is the only source of information from these organizations through their hierarchy, and he or she should share appropriate information with the membership. The immediate vehicle to achieve this goal is through the

Commander's Report in the *Bos'n's Pipe*. The Commander also serves as an *ex officio* member of all committees, but except in unusual circumstances, the committee reports (Except for the Executive Committee) should come from the appropriate squadron officer responsible for that committee.

It is appropriate for the commander to thank our folks and to congratulate them on their achievements.

### **Executive Officer**

The Executive Officer is regarded as the "external officer" and typically supervises the boat show, change of watch, cooperative charting, liaison, legislative, public relations, radio technical and safety committees. Ideally, the work of these committees would be presented by their respective chairmen; however, it may also be appropriate for the executive officer to reinforce or add to the committee chairmen's reports. Because we usually don't hear from committee chairs, this may be the source for most of the ExO's column.

The executive officer presides at meetings in the absence of the commander.

### **Administrative Officer**

The administrative is described as the "internal affairs" officer, and may have the most fun and the most work in the squadron. Typically, these committees are supervised by the administrative officer: membership, membership involvement, boating activities, meetings and programs, entertainment and operations training. The administrative officer should report the meetings programs as well as ensure that information about squadron boating activities are reported in a timely manner in the *Bos'n's Pipe*.

### **Educational Officer**

Lots of work here. The nomination of the SEO has to be approved at the D/28 level, so it is clear USPS takes this officer and his or her duties seriously. And no wonder. We all depend on and appreciate the work of the SEO, and we are all eager to volunteer to help whenever asked.

The SEO manages all the educational activities of the squadron including the public Boating class. There are a lot of changes taking place in educational activities, and the SEO should keep members informed of these changes and what they mean as a practical matter.

Here's what most members want to know about his activities. A timely schedule of classes being offered: where, when and who to contact to enroll. They also want to see the SEO thank class chairmen, proctors and others who participate, and they would like to know who passes what courses. A lot of "attaboys" and "attagirls" are also appropriate for the SEO's column.

Please note that it is educationala officer. Your humble editor has spent most of his life typing "al" probably more than any other two-letter combination.

## Secretary

Normally the Executive Committee Minutes serve as the report of the squadron secretary. Our minutes carry much more information than is normal, and that is probably good. The minutes, as they appear on the website are the official version. The Secretary should note corrections and additions will be published the following month. Official actions, such as motions, should be worded exactly as presented whenever possible, including the name of the maker and any appropriate assignments of responsibility to fulfill the results of the vote. “Old Business” is really *unfinished business* and should be so noted. Motions should be presented in this format: **MOTION**: That the squadron nominate the *Bos’n’s Pipe’s* editor for knighthood. Moved by Lee Whitehead; **DEFEATED** by a vote of 0–7. P/D/C Frank Fitzgerald, AP, was asked to convey these results to HRH Queen Elizabeth II and Whitehead’s children.

## Treasurer

Normally, the treasurer’s report is presented in the Executive Committee Minutes. Treasurer’s reports, however, are regularly made available at general membership meetings. This information should include the balance of the various accounts as well as any unusual receipt of funds or disbursements. It is not necessary to report routine receipts or disbursements in the *Bos’n’s Pipe*.

## Other reports

There are other reports that are included in the *Bos’n’s Pipe*. These have been reports from the safety officer, radio technical officer, membership officer (changes in the directory) and others. In addition, the *Bos’n’s Pipe* also continues information about D/28 activities, primarily conferences and council meetings. And we are particularly blessed that so many of our members submit articles for inclusion. They are almost always used if they arrive in time to make the deadline.

## Style

We follow the Associated Press rules for style and grammar. Basically, it covers the use of numbers, capitalization and punctuation. The numbers, one through nine, are spelled out, and all other numbers are digits. Capitalization and punctuation are “spare”; that is, capital letters and punctuation are used only when absolutely necessary. Sometimes run-on sentences are broken into two or more sentences, and other grammatical lapses are corrected. Note in the above that the semi-colon is outside the quotation marks. All other punctuation is normally within those marks.

Paragraphs in newsletters are usually one or two sentences—forget your high school English teachers who taught you about introduction, body, and summary—because short paragraphs are easier to read in our two-column format.

We follow the USPS rules regarding time and date except in stories dealing with social events. We occasionally use USPS abbreviations, but normally we spell out words because our goal is clarity.

### **Publishing data**

Our goal is to have the *Bos'n's Pipe* printed on the last day of the month, and the deadline for articles is generally the last Monday of the last full week of the month. It takes about a week to prepare material. Oddly, your editor has a life outside USPS, and sometimes that interferes. Check the deadlines in the masthead which is found on the last page. Printing is on a “toner” or high quality xerographic printer. The text is generally quite good, and the quality of photographs is also pretty good. The originals of the photos are very much better than the printed version. The *Bos'n's Pipe* length is held to 12 published pages or six sheets of paper. Twelve pages cost 42¢ to mail; an additional 27¢ for more.

### **How to get stuff to the editor**

There are several ways to get information to the editor.

1. **E-mail**—The e-mail address for the *Bos'n's Pipe* is easy to remember. It is [BosnsPipe@aol.com](mailto:BosnsPipe@aol.com). Reports can be sent either in the body of the message, or preferably as an attached file in Microsoft Word for windows.
2. **FAX**—Most FAX machines are not compatible with your editor's because we are hooked up through Cox, and not a telephone modem. Consider FAX old technology that we have moved beyond. (It makes me feel old just typing this.)
3. **U.S. Mail**—It still works. Try it when all else fails. We'll even take a diskette with the information already in a word processing format. Of course, we return the diskettes. Eventually. But when it comes to mail; that means the material has to be re-typed. Errors and editing are easier at this stage. And if the mail comes right at deadline, it might not be included.
4. **The spoken word**—There are times when your editor will take dictation over the phone. It is better to do this than not have essential information for the members, but try to make this a last resort. Here's where typos and misinformation is likely to occur.

### **Typos**

They happen. They happen usually when information is received at the last minute. The editor apologizes in advance for these transgressions.

### **Typography and format (Don't let this scare you.)**

The type used in the *Bos'n's Pipe* is 11 pt. Bookman Old Style. The leading (space between lines) is set at 13.2 pt., (single lines) the default setting for most word processors. (This style sheet was prepared using that font.) Headlines are typically 14 pt. Arial Bold. Cutlines (the short descriptions found under photos) are set in 10 pt. Arial. The initial paragraph in each story or column is not indented, but other paragraphs are indented 0.15 inches. Columns are 3.5 inches wide.

Unless the material is prepared in Word 2003 or later for Windows, please do not include any formatting in other word processing prepared stories. Normally, the editor's first chore is to delete all the formatting, columns, tabs and other techniques used to make a story look good on your monitor. So the time you spend preparing a good-looking story is just about the same time your editor takes to strip it all out. It is really a barrier to quickly inserting your material into the *Bos'n's Pipe*.

### **A final note**

Go back to the first page. It says this document is "A work in progress." We welcome your thoughts. Please let me know. This document used to be presented to every new bridge but 10 years ago we stopped. Perhaps we should resume this informal policy.

### **Thanks for your help**