



# TOOL TIME

Number 18

*Tips, tools, and timely tidbits to make your publishing job easier*

## Write Here, Write Now.



**Bruce Braithwaite**  
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**T**he most effective and important communication between a missionary and his supporters is the NEWSLETTER.

You may have heard various jokes involving the misapplication of John 13:27 where Jesus tells Judas: "What you are about to do, do quickly" (NIV). Well, this is no joke. It has a very serious and practical application for each of us. We need to quickly, regularly, faithfully, and purposefully write, prepare and send newsletters to our supporters.

In case you are not aware, some missionaries have not

been faithful in sending newsletters. Many churches and districts have expressed concern that they are not hearing regularly enough from their missionaries. The result is that the AGWM Executive Committee took the following action: *"Moved that we approve policy that missionaries only receive allowance for newsletters if they send at least four newsletters, one each quarter, with copies going to AGWM" (05/25/04 EC)*. In practical terms, this means if you don't send out a quarterly newsletter, you will not receive \$80 of your monthly disbursement.

The question then arises, *What can I do about it?* The answer is simple. Write to your supporting churches and friends, and make sure you send a copy to Rev. David Lee at AGWM.

Here are some suggestions you may find helpful: Don't make the newsletter a major production. **Three or four good, solid paragraphs and a couple of key photos to illustrate what you have said will easily fill a page or more.** Presto, you have a newsletter! Personally, I believe the best newsletters are short, concise, positive and colorful.



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Another technique that makes the task easier is to: think of a **good, close friend or relative, and write to that individual.** Once you are comfortable with what you have said to that person, replace the name and send it to the rest of your address list. This helps you make the tone of the letter warmer and friendlier.



If you do not have good mailing or printing facilities where you are located, **Life can assist you by coordinating your newsletter production.** GPH has recently started a mailing service that missionaries can use, and there are several other local firms and/or individuals who can provide the help you need. That assistance might include editing, an attractive layout of your text and photos, and a PDF; having your newsletter printed; and/or sending the finished product to someone who will handle your mailings and/or manage your address list for you. If you need any kind of assistance, feel free to write or e-mail us for additional information.

## E-mail Newsletters

**F**or those who are adept in using a computer, consider occasionally using e-mail newsletters. **Cost and speed are certainly a plus factor with this method.**

However, consider some of the negative factors too. If you send the e-mail newsletter to a church, you are dependent on their office staff to see that it gets forwarded by e-mail or printed and delivered to the appropriate missions person. Not every church has a quality printer or skilled individuals who will forward your letter in a timely manner.

An e-mail newsletter is just like another form of newsletter. **It should have an attractive, colorful layout that includes photos. Before you send it, embed the photos and graphics in a PDF format.** This will lock your content and layout in place and greatly reduce the size of the file. Then send the PDF file as an attachment.

Some companies offer e-mail newsletter services. Typically, they provide a template which you use to fill in your text and photos. Then they send the file in HTML format to your intended recipients. AOL and most, but not all, e-mail providers can properly display HTML documents so those on your address list will be able to read and print out your newsletters.

An interesting article on writing e-mail newsletters, with ideas and free services listed, can be found at [http://www.riches.com.au/articles/writing\\_email\\_newsletters.htm](http://www.riches.com.au/articles/writing_email_newsletters.htm)

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