

SO YOU WANT TO START A NEWSLETTER?

A TOOLKIT FOR RWB NETWORK GROUPS

WHY START A NEWSLETTER?

A NEWSLETTER CAN HELP YOUR GROUP:

- Stay connected without relying on social media algorithms
- Keep members informed and engaged
- Build excitement between events
- Turn casual supporters into active participants
- Share your group's personality and voice
- Create consistency and rhythm for your community
- Highlight wins, opportunities, and local issues
- Build trust over time

“At Good Trouble Tulsa, our newsletter is one of our most important tools for keeping our community connected and energized.”

— Teresa Gawey, Good Trouble Tulsa

START SIMPLE

Your first newsletter does not need to be perfect. Start with a few consistent sections and grow over time.

SUGGESTED STARTER SECTIONS

- Welcome note
- Upcoming events
- Take action section
- Community-specific issues
- Helpful resources
- Ways to connect

REMEMBER:

Done is better than perfect.

A simple newsletter sent consistently is more valuable than an elaborate one that never gets finished.



CHOOSING A NEWSLETTER PLATFORM

There's no "perfect" platform! The best one is the one your team will actually use consistently.

FREE & LOW-COST PLATFORM OPTIONS

PLATFORM	COST	BEST FOR	PROS	CONS
Canva	Free / Pro plans	Visual newsletters	Easy drag-and-drop design, beautiful templates	Limited email analytics on free plan
Mailchimp	Free up to 1,000 email subscribers	Growing groups	Professional templates, analytics, automation	Free plan has limits and branding
Substack	Free, potential paid subscriber options could allow for groups to raise money	Writing-focused newsletters	Very easy to use, simple publishing	Less visual customization
MailerLite	Free up to 1,000 subscribers	Beginner friendly email lists	Clean interface, automation tools	Learning curve for advanced features
Beehiiv	Free / Paid	Community growth	Modern design, referral tools	Some features locked behind paid plans
Constant Contact	Paid only	Larger established groups	Great support and templates	More expensive
Google Docs + Gmail	Free	Very small groups	Extremely simple	Hard to scale and track
ControlShift Email Tools	Included with the network platform	All groups can use this function	Integrated with your group platform	Limited design flexibility



COMMON NEWSLETTER SECTIONS

CORE SECTIONS

- Welcome message
- Group mission or values
- Upcoming events
- Calls to action
- News or political updates
- Event recap
- Ways to connect

COMMUNITY-BUILDING SECTIONS

- Member spotlight
- Volunteer appreciation
- Photos from events
- Milestones and wins
- “Good news” section
- Polls or questions

EDUCATIONAL SECTIONS

- Explainers on current issues
- Resources and toolkits
- Digital literacy tips
- Protest safety
- Book recommendations
- “Read / Watch / Do”

FUN & INTERACTIVE SECTIONS

- Fun fact
- Quiz or trivia
- Reflective question
- “Top 5” lists
- Community recommendations



PRO TIPS

1. Keep It Scannable. Most people skim newsletters.

- Headers
- Bold text
- Short paragraphs
- Bullet points

2. Consistency Matters More Than Frequency

3. Build a Rhythm/Routine

4. Make it a Team Effort: Delegating sections prevents burnout.

Possible roles:

- Writer/editor
- Event updates
- Community liaison
- Graphics/design
- Fact checking
- Proofreading

5. Use analytic data to track what is working and what is not

Many email tools show:

- Open rates
- Link clicks
- Most popular sections

Use this feedback to learn what your members care about.

TIPS FROM GROUPS DOING IT WELL

“With the firehose effect created by this administration, we were finding ourselves feeling more often like we were in reactive mode rather than proactive...We hope we help our readers by sparking motivation and giving them a few tools to take action and make change happen.”

— Carrie Knapp

“A few things we always keep in mind: we lead with content that both engages and informs. We always include clear resources and calls to action so people know exactly how to plug in. We keep the tone warm and casual, because this is a community of friends doing hard work together. We put real care into the visual presentation so it’s inviting to open. And most importantly, we make sure every reader feels that they are a vital part of a growing movement doing meaningful work right here in Tulsa and in our state. We celebrate the actions our members are taking, because positive reinforcement keeps people showing up.”

— Teresa Gawey, Good Trouble Tulsa

