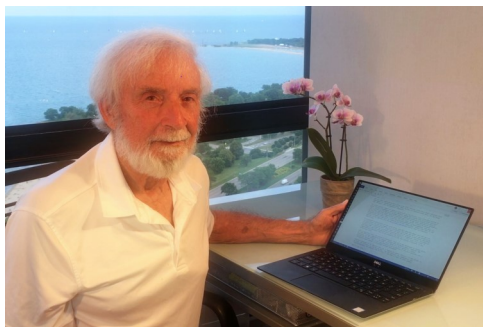


Newsletter Committee & TowerTalk

by Bob Shamo, chair



In this Newsletter Committee report, I'll talk first about how TowerTalk is planned, written and produced, then about how I see it positioned in a building so well served by digital media.

The earliest Park Tower News we have dates from 1979. By whatever name, our newsletter has always blended news of the building, its residents, and the Edgewater community.

Stories nowadays are written by three committee members, a published author who is not on the committee, and occasional but important pieces by guests, management, and board members.

The most fun for me have been the human interest stories like the *Recently Rehabbed* columns featuring innovative unit renovations, and *Park Tower Profiles* highlighting a few of our many interesting residents.

While there is some duplication of material from the website, most newsletter material is original. Take for instance our annual year-end charting of PT sales and lease prices; Tim Patricio's recent series on budget preparation; and the three *Condo Ownership Today* stories that will wrap in the Sep-Nov issue .

The committee works from an online Google Sheets storyboard. Any idea can be listed, to be picked up later by an interested writer, assigned to a forthcoming issue, and then tracked through completion.

Four to six modestly-sized ads are usually sufficient to offset production costs.

The committee meets once per quarter to plan issues for Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. The copy due-date is one month prior to publication, allowing about three weeks for editing and layout in Microsoft Publisher.

A fourth week is saved for printing in black/white by the management office and door-dropped to our 700+ residential units. A color edition is then uploaded to the website, with live links to related resources. All issues since 2012 are on the website's Library page.

I'll be leaving the Newsletter Committee in the fall after nine years, the last five as chair, editor and layout person. TowerTalk has been a labor of love and a chapter of my life that would never have happened had Jean and I not found our way to Park Tower.

But looking ahead, I'm realistic. Our association's needs are exceedingly well-served by www.PTcondo.com, PT News & Updates, and SMS messaging. These digital media can be spontaneous, flexible, edited on the fly, and even accessed on multiple devices.

Is TowerTalk still worth the effort? Yes, I think so, if done well and read by most residents. We've had some interesting suggestions: shorter and less ambitious; publish less often; online only with webpage instead of newsletter formatting.

In my nine years on the Newsletter Committee, we have always tried to make TowerTalk reflect the high quality of the building and the people who live and work here. If you have ideas for simplifying its production or increasing readership, please let me, the Board, or Management know. **TT**

This Committee Focus piece will appear in the Sep-Nov 2020 issue of TowerTalk. Bob can be reached at (773) 413.9456 or bobshamo@rcn.com