

Rules for News & Views as established in 1999

Here are the rule which have made News & Views such a successful discussion group. It is hoped that everyone will review these rules and that any new person joining the group will be given a copy of these.

If you have a topic you would like to have discussed, write it on the white board behind the moderator as soon as you enter.

When the meeting opens, after the announcements, the moderator will read each topic and ask for a very brief explanation of what it means.

When the topic has been explained, the moderator will ask the group to vote by a show of hands if they wish the group to speak on the topic. The numbers choosing each topic will be written to the left of the topic. The four topics receiving the greatest number of votes will be discussed at that meeting (provided time allows).

Beginning with the topic receiving the greatest number of votes, the person who put up the topic is asked to give an introduction to the topic, not to exceed 3 minutes. Then members will raise their hands to indicate an interest in speaking. The moderator will give the names to the recorder who will list those interested in participating in the order they are noticed. Members may raise their hand at any time during the discussion to indicate a desire to speak.

No one may speak more than 3 minutes nor more than once per topic. If a speaker exceeds the 3-minute limit, and is reminded by the moderator that his time is up, he is expected to finish immediately.

There are two exceptions to the one time only rule. If a member has knowledge of facts which to those speaking are not sure of, he may ask to give a "point of information." This privilege should not be used for opinions. And, at the discretion of the moderator, and with the permission of the group, a person may speak a second time for one minute after everyone else has had a first chance to speak.

When all those wishing to speak have spoken, the member who introduced the topic will do a brief "wrap up," not to exceed one minute, and the next topic will be introduced.

Role of the Moderator

This is a volunteer position. No one is forced to be moderator. We are grateful to those who are willing to serve, and do not expect anyone to serve more than two consecutive weeks, or two to three times during the year. The moderator's job is to move the meeting along and enforce the rules, politely reminding anyone who exceeds the 3-minute time limit that time is up, and reminding anyone tempted to debate or attempting a second turn that he has already spoken. The moderator must be watchful so as to add the names of those who raised their hands mid-discussion. The moderator cannot comment on the opinions of others or summarize the discussion of a topic. The moderator may add topics if the list is short, but only introduce them.

These rules have made News & Views a winning discussion group which has lasted for nearly two decades. It is hoped all members, new and old, will remember why and respect these rules in the future.