



**SARNIA COMPUTER USERS' GROUP**

**CONSTITUTION**

## Introduction

The Sarnia Computer Users' Group was founded in May of 1982 at a meeting of enthusiasts eager to expand and share their knowledge of this relatively new and rapidly growing technology. In 1994, the then Executive Committee decided, in their wisdom, to put together a Constitution, listing a set of policies, definitions and guidelines. They considered, based upon more than a decade of experience, that it would be both helpful and necessary in directing the group in the future. This draft document was put to the membership for their consideration, then approved in January 1995, and thereby became the Constitution of SCUG. It has remained, with a few minor changes, to the present time.

At the Executive Meeting on Oct.3rd 2005, the need for a Constitution Review Team (CRT) was discussed in light of some changes necessary in job descriptions etc. The mandate was also expanded to encompass a wider update, as seen necessary. The committee consisted of the Chairman Ian Hunt (Vice President), and members, Tom Deepröse (Secretary), Iain Smy (Publicity) and Val Conway (Non Executive Member).

The Constitution should be regarded as a work in progress. It has been, and will continue to suit the changing needs of the members and the rapidly growing technology. It is always open to input or challenge from any member.

# The Constitution of the Sarnia Computer Users' Group (SCUG)

## Table of Contents

|      |       |  |
|------|-------|--|
| 1.0  | ..... | Name   |
| 1.1  | ..... | Location                                     |
| 2.0  | ..... | Purpose                                      |
| 3.0  | ..... | SCUG Values                                  |
| 4.0  | ..... | Qualification for Membership                 |
| 5.0  | ..... | Types of Membership                          |
| 6.0  | ..... | Rights and Obligations of Membership         |
| 6.1  | ..... | Rights                                       |
| 6.2  | ..... | Obligations                                  |
| 7.0  | ..... | Membership Fees                              |
| 8.0  | ..... | Executive Officers                           |
| 8.1  | ..... | Elected Officers                             |
| 8.2  | ..... | Non-Elected Positions                        |
| 8.3  | ..... | Executive Compensation                       |
| 9.0  | ..... | Elections                                    |
| 9.1  | ..... | Eligibility                                  |
| 9.2  | ..... | Nominations                                  |
| 9.3  | ..... | Election Process                             |
| 9.4  | ..... | Removal and Replacement of Executive Members |
| 10.0 | ..... | Financial                                    |
| 10.1 | ..... | Audit  |
| 10.2 | ..... | Budget                                       |
| 11.0 | ..... | Meetings                                     |
| 11.1 | ..... | General Meetings                             |
| 11.2 | ..... | Executive Meetings                           |
| 11.3 | ..... | SIG Meetings                                 |
| 11.4 | ..... | Quorum                                       |
| 12.0 | ..... | Special Interest Groups                      |
| 13.0 | ..... | Newsletter                                   |
| 13.1 | ..... | Distribution                                 |
| 13.2 | ..... | Content                                      |
| 13.3 | ..... | Advertising Guidelines                       |
| 14.0 | ..... | Amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws     |
| 15.0 | ..... | Dissolution of SCUG                          |

## **1.0 Name**

The non-profit organization described in the following articles of constitution shall be known as: "The Sarnia Computer Users' Group" or "SCUG".

## **1.1 Location**

Postal correspondence will be received at the club address listed in the Newsletter. Publication of the postal address and other contact information shall be at the discretion of the Executive.

## **2.0 Purpose**

To promote, encourage, and assist SCUG members in the understanding and use of computers, software and peripherals at work and at home.

## **3.0 SCUG Values**

SCUG is an equal opportunity organization and does not tolerate any discrimination, positive or negative, real or perceived, towards any member, guest or supplier of services or goods. Any member asked to vote on a matter that could present a conflict of interest, shall declare that conflict and abstain.

## **4.0 Qualification for Membership**

Membership in SCUG is open to anyone interested in computers and computing at any level of understanding.

## **5.0 Types of Membership**

- 5.0.1 Member - Anyone whose current membership term is no more than 1 month in arrears is a member in good standing, hereinafter titled a Member.
- 5.0.2 Associate Member - The partner or family member of a current paid-up Member of SCUG, who is a resident with said Member, is entitled to become an Associate Member.
- 5.0.3 Lapsed Members - Members who are more than one month in arrears are deemed "lapsed members" and relinquish all rights and obligations listed in Item 6. Lapsed Members can rejoin SCUG as per current SCUG procedures.
- 5.0.4 Guest Members - Persons who wish to attend meetings and do not fall into

the above three categories are welcome to attend a limited number of meetings as Guests. Guests must register at their first meeting and are then entitled to attend all General and SIG Meetings for three (3) consecutive active months. Member's Rights as listed in Item 6.0 are not available to Guests. If the Guest wishes to continue to attend after the three month period or wishes to take advantage of membership privileges during that period, they will be required to become a Member.

## **6.0 Rights of Membership**

### **6.1 Rights**

6.1.1 All Members in good standing have the right to:

- 6.1.1.1 Access "Members only" areas of the SCUG website
- 6.1.1.2 Attend all General Meetings and other SCUG sponsored activities
- 6.1.1.3 Receive a SCUG Newsletter and the Disk of the Month at each General Meeting
- 6.1.1.4 Join any Special Interest Group (SIG)
- 6.1.1.5 Nominate and vote for members of the Executive
- 6.1.1.6 Become members of the Executive
- 6.1.1.7 Propose and vote upon amendments to the Constitution.
- 6.1.1.8 Vote upon any matter requiring a vote of the general membership including all non-budgetary expenditures
- 6.1.1.9 Bring guests to both General and SIG Meetings, subject to by-laws and policies.
- 6.1.1.10 Bring their partner and resident family members (i.e. Associate Members) to all meetings. Note: only one Newsletter, Disk of the Month and vote allowed per membership fee.

### **6.2 Obligations**

6.2.1 All Members in good standing are obliged to:

- 6.2.1.1 Declare their abstention from voting on a matter that could present a conflict of interest.
- 6.2.1.2 Make themselves available, within their physical limitations, for the occasional work group, such as meeting set-ups and dismantling organized by the Vice President.
- 6.2.1.3 To speak out if they feel that item 3.0, on discrimination, is being breached.

## **7.0 Membership Fees**

All membership renewals become payable on the Members anniversary date. The fees of any Guest Member wishing to become a Member become due and payable following the expiry of their Guest Membership pass.

Changes to annual membership fees shall be determined by a majority vote of the Executive and shall be announced at a SCUG General Meeting and in the SCUG Newsletter at least two months in advance of the effective date.

## **8.0 Executive Officers**

Executive Officers are elected for a one-year term. Elected officers are required to attend two thirds of the Executive Meetings. Non-elected officers are not required to attend Executive meetings. Executive Officers may be contacted by published contact information. Any Executive member asked to vote on a matter that could present a conflict of interest shall declare that conflict and abstain.

### **8.1 Elected Officers**

#### **8.1.1 President**

The President or Delegate shall:

- 8.1.1.1 Chair all General and Executive meetings
- 8.1.1.2 Receive correspondence to the club and reply where appropriate
- 8.1.1.3 Report on matters arising to the membership
- 8.1.1.4 Prepare agendas for General and Executive Meetings
- 8.1.1.5 Liaise with user groups, media, manufacturers, distributors and with organizations able to provide speakers for General Meetings

8.1.1.6 Organize accommodations for all General and SIG meetings

8.1.1.7 Organize and run monthly Compuprize draws.

#### 8.1.2 Vice-President

The role of the Vice-President will be to assume the duties of the President if the President is unable to fulfill them and to assist the President in any and all of the President's duties as directed by the President. The Vice-President is responsible for a committee of Executive Support persons who may be required to manage special functions such as elections and meeting set-ups and dismantling.

#### 8.1.3 Secretary

The Secretary's role is to record, distribute and archive minutes of all Executive Meetings. Minutes of the Executive Meetings must be readily available to the Editor of the Newsletter for publication in the next newsletter. The Secretary will record and archive all external correspondence.

#### 8.1.4 Membership Secretary

The Membership Secretary will maintain an up-to-date database of all Members, Associates and Guests containing freely given information required by SCUG. All information is exclusive to SCUG and is not divulged to any outside agency. Membership lists and labels will be produced as required.

#### 8.1.5 Treasurer

The Treasurer's role is to assume responsibility for the receipt and disbursement of all monies as directed by the Executive. The Treasurer has the authority to pay any true debts of SCUG as they become due and shall have joint signing authority with either the President or Vice-President, at the direction of the President. The Treasurer will also be responsible for preparing an annual budget

#### 8.1.6 Software Librarian

The Software Librarian will prepare, test and demonstrate software that may be legally distributed to the Members at the General Meetings and prepare and distribute the Disk of the Month.

#### 8.1.7 Newsletter Editor

The Newsletter Editor will produce and distribute to the general membership a monthly newsletter containing all information pertinent to the functioning of SCUG such as minutes of the most recent Executive meeting, Treasurer's financial summary and other items of interest to the membership.

#### 8.1.8 Public Relations Coordinator

The Public Relations Coordinator role is to prepare and place all advertising required by the Executive and will maintain a current list of all pertinent media contacts and deadlines.

#### 8.1.9 Review Coordinator

The Review Coordinator acts as a liaison between the supplier and reviewer and insures adherence to the Review Guidelines.

#### 8.1.10 Webmaster

The Webmaster's role is to prepare and maintain SCUG's Website and any associated files and services and is responsible for domain name issues such as renewal, insuring registration information is up to date etc.

### **8.2 Non-Elected Positions**

#### 8.2.1 Past President

The Past President's role is to orient the new President in their duties and to advise when called upon. This position is ex-officio and nonvoting.

#### 8.2.2 Executive Support

The Executive Support refers to volunteers that assist in tasks required by the Executive.

### **8.3 Executive Compensation**

All elected members and SIG Leaders will have their renewal fee waived for a period equal to their term.

## **9.0 Elections**

The nomination and election of officers is to be held annually under the direction of the Vice-President. Candidates for election may be nominated for several positions but may be elected to only one office. There will be no stipulation as to number of terms a member may serve. Nominations for positions are to be held during the May meeting and elections will be held at the June meeting. The newly elected Executive begins their annual term in office July 31st.

## **9.1 Eligibility**

To be eligible to run for an Executive position, a person must be a Member or Associate Member of SCUG and willing to attend at least two thirds of the General and Executive Meetings.

## **9.2 Nominations**

At the April General Meeting, or earlier if the Executive considers it necessary, the Vice-President shall ask for volunteers and nominations from the membership for each position on the Executive for the next year, with the same request published simultaneously in the newsletter and on the website. Candidates must indicate their acceptance to the Vice President.

## **9.3 Election Process**

The election is to be held at the June General Meeting, after allowing 15 minutes for any last minute names being put forward. Nominations will then be finally closed.

9.3.1 Voting will be in the order that the positions are listed in the Constitution.

9.3.2 Members will be provided with a paper ballot listing the candidates for each position to be filled, with space for any last minute additions.

9.3.3 Only Members attending the meeting may vote. No proxies or mail-ins will be accepted.

9.3.4 Any Executive position with only one nominee will be acclaimed by show of hands.

9.3.5 Ballots will be collected and counted by the Executive Support personnel not running for election, with the results being posted before the end of the meeting.

9.3.6 If there is no candidate for a position, the office will be filled by appointment by the joint efforts of both the current and newly elected Executive at their transitional meeting.

#### **9.4 Removal and Replacement of Executive Members**

If for any reason a member of the Executive is unable to or unwilling to perform their elected duties, they may be removed by the following process:

9.4.1 A motion would be brought forward by a member of the Executive at the next General Meeting to remove the said member.

9.4.2 Two-thirds majority of Members present must approve this motion.

9.4.3 The Executive will handle the filling of the vacant position.

#### **10.0 Financial**

The Treasurer is responsible for:

10.0.1 keeping a general ledger which is to include a record of income and expenses.

10.0.2 a monthly financial statement which includes: the date of the report, the balance on hand, all receipts since the last report, all expenses since the last report, the current balance, year-to-date expenses and receipts.

10.0.3 keeping separate files for:  
bank statements, cancelled cheques, invoices and receipts, deposit slips, cash receipts, financial reports.

10.0.4 Maintaining records for a period of 7 years.

10.0.5 Preparing a financial statement at the end of each fiscal year which will include: an Income and Expense Statement and a Balance Sheet.

The fiscal year will run from August 1st to July 31st in the following year.

#### **10.1 Audit**

An annual audit will be performed by a qualified person to verify the accuracy of financial records at the end of the fiscal year. The auditor, who cannot be a member of the Executive, will be selected and approved by the Executive. The Treasurer shall be excluded from the selection process. The auditor agrees to audit the SCUG financial records for a nominal fee.

## **10.2 Budget**

The budget is to be approved by the executive in the first fiscal quarter and included in the Newsletter for the information of members.

## **11.0 Meetings**

**11.1 General Meetings** will be held not less than once a month with the exception of the “inactive” months of December, July and August. Members will be alerted to any changes, due to weather etc., by e-mail.

**11.2 Executive Meetings** are to be held the week following the General Meeting. A transitional meeting between the outgoing and incoming Executive Committees will be held at an agreed upon time and location during the summer months.

**11.3 SIG Meetings** shall be held at a time and place agreed upon by its members.

**11.4 Quorum** Any General or Executive Meeting requiring a vote will require a quorum of 50% plus one of the voting members.

## **12.0 Special Interest Groups**

A Special Interest Group, known as a SIG, is an extension of SCUG focusing on a specific computer related topic. Members who have a common interest in a particular aspect of computing may petition the Executive to form a SIG wherein they can share experience and further their knowledge.

Each SIG Group will elect their leader annually at the last meeting of the year. The Executive will then have final approval. The SIG Leader’s primary duty will be to chair all meetings and encourage others in the group to contribute to the group via discussions or assisting in the meetings with their knowledge pertaining to various topics.

Each SIG Leader shall be responsible for arranging any equipment or supplies needed at the meeting. SCUG, as the parent group, will fund the SIG. Each SIG Leader will ensure that each attendee is in possession of a valid Membership card or Guest Membership pass and that the latter is current. Any new Guest Membership pass issued by a SIG leader must be reported to the Membership Secretary.

Each SIG Leader shall provide a monthly written report of their activities to the Newsletter Editor for publication.

### **13.0 Newsletter**

The SCUG Newsletter will be published monthly with the exception of the "inactive" months of December, July and August.

### **13.1 Distribution**

A copy of the SCUG Newsletter will be available to all Members at the General Meeting. Any Newsletters that have not been picked up by a Member will be available at the next meeting or can be mailed to Members' homes at an additional cost to the Member. Newsletters will also be available via the Website with a two-month delay.

### **13.2 Content**

The following will be included in every issue of the SCUG Newsletter:

13.2.1 Executive Names and contact information

13.2.2 President's perspective and calendar of events

13.2.3 Summary of the minutes of the Executive Meeting

13.2.4 Summary of the monthly financial statement

13.2.5 Report on Software

13.2.6 Software disk prices

13.2.7 SIG reports

13.2.8 Advertising rates

13.2.9 Disclaimer: "The SCUG accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions in the Newsletter. Advertisements are paid for and should not be considered as endorsements by SCUG ."

### **13.3 Advertising Guidelines**

13.3.1 Advertising in the Newsletter is subject to the approval of the Executive and, if accepted, will be at the current published rate.

13.3.2 Members and Guests can provide flyers or advertising materials at any meeting, subject to the Executive's prior approval, provided the entire cost is borne by the supplier.

### **14.0 Amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws**

**14.0.1** Any Member who proposes an amendment to the Constitution shall submit it in writing to the Executive. The Executive will notify the individual at which Executive meeting the proposed amendment will be on the Agenda and at which their attendance will be necessary for any discussion to take place. This discussion and decision by the Executive shall be completed within forty-five days of receiving the proposed amendment.

**14.0.2** Should the proposed amendment be rejected by the Executive, the Member may then assemble a petition of no less than five names, including their own, to support the taking of the proposal to the membership at the next General Meeting. The President shall allow a ten-minute presentation/discussion time limit that may be extended at the President's discretion. A vote of the general membership will then be held, under the conditions detailed in the Item 11.4.

**14.0.3** Should the Executive accept the proposed amendment, the Secretary shall present a notice of the proposed amendment in the Newsletter at least one month prior to the General Meeting where it is to be discussed and voted on.

**14.0.4** A general membership vote on a proposed amendment will require a quorum and approval by 75% of the Members present. Voting shall be by show of hands tallied by the Executive Support group.

### **15.0. Dissolution of SCUG**

**15.0.1** The dissolution of SCUG requires a formal written motion by a Member to be presented to a current member of the Executive. The Executive Committee will call a special Executive Meeting to be held within forty-five days, with thirty days notice of such a meeting to be given to all Executive members.

- 15.0.2** Acceptance of the motion will require the unanimous agreement of a quorum of the Executive. If rejected, notice of this decision must be published in the next SCUG Newsletter.
- 15.0.3** If accepted by the Executive, a meeting date will be set and all SCUG members will be informed by email and a notice on the SCUG Website. Approval of the Executive's decision by the membership will require a 75% majority vote of attendees. If the decision is rejected by the membership, an election will be called.
- 15.0.4** In the event of dissolution of SCUG, the Executive shall organize a closed auction to dispose of SCUG's assets to the current Members.
- 15.0.5** The Secretary shall give notice to the current membership by email and a notice on the SCUG Website of the date, time, place and list of assets to be auctioned. The auction shall be open only to Members and conducted under standard auction practice but with no reserve bids. All Members shall have equal opportunity to bid. All items shall be disposed of, no matter how low the bid.
- 15.6** Monies generated from such, along with any cash reserves and monies held in bank accounts, will first be applied to any outstanding liabilities. The balance will be donated to a local service group or charity mutually agreed upon by the Executive.
- 15.0.7** The organization known, as SCUG shall be declared dissolved and exist no more.
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*Passed: January 1995.*

*Amended: October 1995; November 1998; September 24, 2002; and **February 28, 2007.***