

Moderating the Lasqueti E-mail List

The Lasqueti E-mail List serves about 350 people with a Lasqueti connection. Messages sent to the list may be moderated to maintain the list's nature and purpose. This document serves as a guide for new moderators and to the wider Lasqueti community who use the list.

What is the list's purpose?

To serve as a general bulletin board for the wider Lasqueti Community - a convenient, accessible way to send and receive information relevant to us.

What is moderation?

A list moderator simply ensures messages sent to the list are consistent with the list's purpose. List moderation is never used to censure opinion or block access.

Who can post?

Anyone with an e-mail address can post - posts from non-subscribers are always carefully moderated, and generally treated with greater suspicion.

Who can subscribe? (i.e., who do those messages go to...)

Anyone with a personal connection to Lasqueti and its community.

Moderators: a Lasqueti "connection" should be interpreted widely and liberally, but should be verified in some way.

Who can serve as a list moderator?

Any list subscriber with an even-temperament, regular (daily) access to e-mail, who has the confidence of the list subscribers. The list can be jointly moderated.

Best Practices for posting messages to the List

- post via lasqueti.ca
 - news items, events, and all classified ads you post at <http://lasqueti.ca/node/add/> are automatically sent out to the list. Posting on the site helps keep our community calendar and classifieds section up-to-date and organized.
 - post long articles on your lasqueti.ca blog (<http://lasqueti.ca/node/add/blog>) and just send the link to your article (web address / URL) to the list for interested readers
- always use a meaningful subject line (good e-mail etiquette in general)
- be considerate to those who get the "daily digest" e-mail:
 - avoid repeatedly sending long articles
 - post a link rather than pasting text from online articles
 - remove irrelevant "reply quotes" or long signatures from your message
- to contact the list moderators or administrator, do not reply or send a message to the list itself - direct your message to:
lasqueti_maillist-owner@lists.lasqueti.ca

What types of content are "consistent with the list's purpose":

- any manner of announcements, news, events, comings, goings, services offered, or "classified ads"
- opinion pieces or political diatribe, appeals for activism or good recipes, satire or entertainment, poetry or prose, advice or admonition, ...
- anything at all that might amuse, inspire, educate, titillate, or otherwise serve to inform the wider Lasqueti community (but please keep posts concise)

What types of content are likely to trigger a moderation request:

The purpose of most moderation is to keep the list, particularly the "daily digest", useful, concise, accessible, and easy to read.

Moderators cannot edit posts, only accept or reject them.

Moderators may request that a sender edit and re-send a message to preserve the digest's readability.

Moderators may ask you to edit posts with :

- irrelevant or missing subject lines
- long, irrelevant "reply quotes" or signatures, or similar extraneous text
- incomprehensible or garbled text

You may also be asked to post long articles on the web and send a link to the list readers (see "Best Practices" above)

What if you disagree with the moderator's request?

If you decline to make the requested edits, the moderator will publish your article as-is and the court of the list readership at large shall render your fate...

What types of content are likely to be rejected?

Free speech is restricted in Canada by liable and hate crime legislation, and the list subscribers have expressed a strong desire to keep spam, scams, and marketing pitches (not to mention an excess of ranting and raving) off the list.

Moderators will reject messages that are:

- hateful or contain hate speech or generally direct hatred at any individual or group
- potentially libelous or slanderous
- obvious spam or mass-marketing
- suspected scams

The above criteria are applied liberally, erring on the side of rejecting messages that might be so interpreted by a layperson. List moderators are not trained to make judgments about legality, and in no way take responsibility for any published or rejected content on the list - whole responsibility lies with the sender.

If your message is rejected, the moderator will provide a reason. You can edit and re-send your message, or contact the list administrator with your grievance:

lasqueti_maillist-owner@lists.lasqueti.ca

What's the grievance or dispute resolution process?

It seems unlikely that, if everyone is acting in good faith, there should arise a conflict that can't be resolved with rational discussion.

However in a case where no such resolution can be found, it is within the moderator's prerogative to simply reject and refuse to publish the article on the list. In most cases, moderators should, instead, choose a less drastic resolution, such as to publish a comment airing their concerns just ahead of approving the article so list readers can decide for themselves whether they wish to read or ignore it.

Ultimately, any such conflict would be adjudicated by the list subscribers at large - there is no higher court here. A heavy-handed moderator would need to be replaced by someone more even-tempered, who is willing to take on this task. A pesky poster who cries injustice when, in fact, very few wish to receive their posts, for whatever reason, ought to be condemned by the list readers themselves.

By-passing the moderation queue

It is possible for moderators to grant special status to some list subscribers so that their posts to the list by-pass the moderation queue and go directly to the list subscribers. This has two potential benefits:

- eliminates the delay introduced by holding the message for moderation;
- reduces the amount of traffic requiring the attention of the list moderator(s).

This is largely a procedural issue, and should be used at the convenience of the moderator(s), to reduce their workload.

Moderators may use the following criteria to grant this status:

- user is a subscriber to the list (all posts from non-subscribers should pass through moderation);
- user is a “regular” contributor to the list (i.e., has posted more than once);
- user has demonstrated consistent application of the list Best Practices, described above, in ALL their messages to the list;
- user has never sent spam or forwarded scams or other malicious content to the list;

Moderators should revoke this status immediately (return user to moderation) if the user sends a message to the list that:

- deviates significantly from the list Best Practices;
- would have been rejected or would have benefited from moderation;
- contains spam or a scam or other malicious content.

Moderators should return ALL list traffic to the moderation queue if there is evidence that hacked e-mail accounts or other malicious online activities may cause spam, scams, or other deleterious materials to be sent to the list via un-moderated subscribers.