

## Best Practice #040, Web Site

Heading: Chapter Communications

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Gold Country Woodturners is a new chapter. We wanted a web site that was no cost, required only basic PC skills, made sharing and backup of web site responsibility easy, had secure access where needed, encouraged collaboration, and helped us maintain a secure, paperless document archive (by-laws, roster, meeting notes, correspondence.) We noticed that many chapter web sites, while beautiful, were not current or timely, and suffered when the web master and his/her special skill or software was no longer available. We do not send out a newsletter. All news and information is on the Website. Everyone either has Internet access or is helped to get access at a library.

Our web site, at <http://www.goldturners.weebly.com> isn't fancy, but we aim for it to be readable and well organized. It doesn't require traditional "web master" skills or software. Pictures and links are easy to include and formatting and publishing to the web are straightforward. Work on individual pages can be shared. For example, the treasurer can maintain the roster, and the secretary can maintain the meeting notes. They can back each other up easily.

We use four tools supplied free and reliably from **Weebly** and **Google**:

1. **Free web address** at <http://weebly.com> provides an understandable web address and an easy to create, attractive, "portal" to our home page, which rarely changes. You can, if you wish, easily purchase a so called "domain name" from Weebly such as we have done with <http://www.goldturners.com>

2. **Internet based word processor** <http://docs.google.com> is a Web based tool that can be accessed and used from any Internet connected PC, even at the library. It has free, well backed up storage on the Internet. Any one who has used a word processor can use it. Documents can be published to be accessible to anyone, as web pages, or remain private, accessible only to e-mail accounts with a password. We do this to secure our roster and member specific information. Documents can also be saved as PDF or DOC files. An alternative is to use Weebly for your entire site. Weebly has some services that Google Docs lacks, and vice versa.

3. **Internet based spreadsheet also from** <http://docs.google.com>.

We use this for our roster. It is password protected "View Only" for members. Spreadsheet updates are made by the secretary and treasurer who are authorized by specifying their e-mail addresses and passwords. They have to sign in. Because it is a spreadsheet, it is easy to copy the most current list of addresses (column only) from the roster for mass mailings. You can't do that with a multi-column web page table. Here is an example spreadsheet: [Roster](#). [This example roster is in table format. You would have to set up a Google Docs account (e-mail address and password) to view and use it as a spreadsheet.] We have a single e-mail and password (e.g. chaptername@gmail.com,

password "xxxxxx") that is used by all members and is changed yearly for security. As described above the web master has a separate account.

**4. Photo Editing and Web storage:** We also use Google's Picassa to edit, crop, and sharpen photos of Chapter images as seen on our Gallery Page. It is available for free download at <http://picasa.google.com/> Once the photos are ready they are uploaded to the to the web as explained here: <https://www.google.com/accounts/ServiceLogin?service=lh2> If you use the same email and password as explained in 3. above for spreadsheets then all chapter members can use a common login to share, and have their own individual albums as a part of the chapter's gallery. This is something you should perhaps defer till you are comfortable with the first two steps above.

**First Steps:**

Set up a free dummy e-mail address at Gmail.com such as "[chapternamewebmaster@gmail.com](mailto:chapternamewebmaster@gmail.com)" for use by the web master only. Use this to create a weebly.com web address. Then use the same email to create a chapter account on Google docs. Start with just one or two documents or web pages, and link them to and from your Weebly page. Settle on a document style and a page naming system. You will soon become confident with the editing, linking, and image features, and can build a more complete site. You will require a high-speed connection and a reasonably fast computer.

Questions welcomed. Another example that uses this technique is the PM3520 Tips site: <http://mustardmonster.weebly.com>

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