**California Democratic Council**
**2016 Sponsored Website Project**
**March 3, 2016**

TO: All CDC Sponsored WP Websites
FROM: CDC Tech/IT Committee
SUBJECT: Logon/Update Procedures

It is extremely important to keep your website's WP programming technically updated and your sites security tight. In the past little was said about these processes but today, as the sites are evolving into more and more complexity and hacking malware attacks more prevalent, updating must become a *standard procedure*. This is done by the Club Webmaster or Content Manager keeping WP updated to the latest version, keeping your Active Plugins updated to their latest versions and utilizing the WordFence options to keep security tight.

In addition to the technical updates, it is very important to keep the content of your posts and pages updated and current. Posts appear in the center column of the Home page. They accumulate in date order with the newest at the top. The slider shows a thumbnail of the post with a link to the full post provided. A page is stored under one of the heading items and is a more static item than a post. Club Officers item under the About Us heading is a good example of a page which does not change very often. Widgets, on the other hand, are usually some sort of short term notices and need to be maintained accordingly.

**The Top Black Line**

Certain of these procedures refer to the top black line on your website dashboard page. This line begins with the WP logo which is a "W" icon followed by a house icon and the club name. There may be several additional icons on this line:
1) circling Arrows with a number beside it – this indicates that there are updates required and the number of updates (includes both WP and Plugin updates);
2) a talk bubble with a number beside it – this indicates that there are comments which need to be moderated and the number of comments;
3) The + New lets you add a post, media, page, event or user quickly;
4) UpdraftPlus lets you quickly access the backup system. Simply click on the appropriate icon to access the item;
5) The new WP-Optimize plugin allows quick optimization of the website and database.

**General Procedures**

1) When you log in IF you note a problem immediately contact Tech/IT. There are time limits on certain issues which could affect our ability to recover your site;
2) Log into your site at least once per week;
3) Always check the top black line for indications that there are updates or comments;
4) We strongly suggest that you optimize the site at least once a week to keep it in great operating shape and to delete deadwood accumulation;

5) We also strongly suggest that you go into your "Media" section and delete pictures and pdf files no longer needed in order to free up space on the server;

6) Check the www.cdcusersgroup.org site for notices and possible content copy;

7) Be sure to take notes at the club meeting and write simple what went on article – you may want to post the minutes in the "About Us" section;

8) When responding to comments – assuming that you have them turned on – understand that someone took the time to comment so give each a proper response unless it is simply trash.

9) We have added a new security plugin to ALL of our sponsored websites called WordFence. Check this item heading on the dashboard and review the traffic stats and login attempts. You will be surprised that may login attempts will come from other countries especially Russia and China – these may be hack attacks. In any event, I strongly suggest that you block the URLs from foreign countries using the tools in WordFence.

**Update items:**

1) **WordPress (WP)** updates its main program approximately numerous times per year. The current WP version is 4.4.2 as of 03/03/2016. Each time an update becomes available you will see a notice on the front page of the Dashboard page. You can determine your organization's current WP version anytime by logging onto your website and clicking on the "W" logo in the top left hand corner on the Dashboard page.

2) **Plugin** updates are notified on the top black line when you are in Dashboard mode. You will see an icon on the top black line next to the club name which looks like a pair of rotating arrows with a number beside it. This number refers to the plugins/themes which have updates pending. To access the plugin update list click on the Plugins item in the left hand column. Updates will have a notice beneath the description.

**Backup Procedure:**

1) Our hosting company makes daily backups and maintains them on their system for seven (7) days. You do not have access to these backups. IF you update either WP or a Plugin and then experience a problem, IMMEDIATELY contact CDC Tech/IT so that we can restore your website to a date prior to the update. You can then address the problem with an operating website and dashboard. This is *time critical* since once seven (7) days elapse, the website update set prior to the update causing the error is erased and no longer available. Once this happens if there is a problem which cannot be solved and you are not using the UpdraftPlus backup plugin, your website is lost and the only solution is to tear it down and start from scratch which is a time consuming process.

2) If you utilize the installed back up system, Updraft, you should make your own backup prior to any updating of either WP or Plugins to assure a current backup. Then if a new update causes a problem or the site becomes inoperative after an update you can

restore to that backup before the update was done and then address problems with an operating website and dashboard. The actual backup files are maintained on the server so you will have to contact CDC Support to activate them.

Normally, if you keep your site programing up to date you will never have any problems with issues such as Fatal Errors or Memory Exceeded.

**Security Procedure**:

We have noticed an increase in hacking attempts on our sponsored websites. These attacks can be monitored utilizing the WordFence plugin. You should familiarize yourself with this plugin by reviewing the material provided on its various pages. At the top of each page, just below the the page heading you will note a "Learn More About". We strongly suggest that you take time to review these topics which will answer your questions and give you great insight into security maintenance of your site. In addition, WordFence has a great site at www.wordfence.com which has full information on the plugin in addition to a sign up for alerts which we also strongly recommend.

**An Important Addition to your Website:**

Social media has come about rapidly as *the* way to communicate between people all over the world. Your club should strongly consider (if it does not have one already) an operating Facebook page with a link to your Website. These items will then work together to bring your influence to your service community and link you to the nation at large. Imagine the possibilities!

**CDC Tech/IT Committee(s) and You:**

We here at the Tech/IT Committee(s) are committed to providing our affiliated members with a top quality, current version WordPress website which represents the world's window into your Democratic Organization. It is up to your club organization to provide the content and materials which brings the site alive and of interest to the local community. Together we can provide an important link in the education of the Democratic Voters in your service area.

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