

On Punctuation Day: Calling all !.;;? editors

August 19, 2005

Monday marks the second National Punctuation Day, created to promote awareness of . . . ellipses - dashes! exclamation points and such.

Jeff Rubin, owner and publisher of the California-based company The Newsletter Guy (www.thenewsletterguy.com), created the holiday to help promote good writing skills.

To prove how serious Rubin is about this mission, his Web site, Rubin includes descriptions, explanations and examples of the various kinds of punctuation.

The ode to punctuation we like best is from Lewis Thomas's "Notes on Punctuation" in the 1979 book *The Medusa and the Snail*:

"Sometimes you get a glimpse of a semicolon coming, a few lines farther on, and it is like climbing a steep path through woods and seeing a wooden bench just at a bend in the road ahead, a place where you can expect to sit for a moment, catching your breath."

If you're a punctuation fan who likes to put your money where your mouth is, you'll also be interested in Rubin's T-shirt collection:

"A semicolon is not a surgical procedure."

"An ellipsis is not when the moon moves in front of the sun."

"It's not possessive." (Get it?)

Still, our favorite related T-shirt of all time is this one: "Is there a hyphen in anal-retentive?"