

## **BLUE RIBBON YEARBOOKS**

The Scale of points for judging yearbooks was revised in 2003 to encourage more originality and to recognize achievement. Here are some suggestions for a useful and award-winning yearbook:

**Appearance/convenience:** Material may be placed in any order most logical and useful to your members.

**Membership Roster:** If state and national dues are paid on associate, inactive or honorary members, they are counted in total membership; don't crowd list; email and fax numbers are very helpful.

**Programs:** A good variety of programs helps to attract and keep members. Give speaker's name, brief qualifications, program titles, type of program. Example: "Deep in the Dark Forest." Jane Elmore, owner of Elmore's Nursery, presents a slide program on native trees.

**Monthly Study:** In addition to main program, club may have 5-10 minute monthly study given by members.

**Activities Optional:** Teas, field trips, tours of gardens, luncheons, workshops. Ways & means and fund raising events are not projects.

**Projects:** Projects involve actual membership participation that benefits the community and further NGC goals and objectives. Continuing projects show dedication and new projects add enthusiasm.

The study of birds at a meeting is a program or part of a monthly study. Members feeding birds at home is not a project. Club members helping school children make bird feeders for their school is a project. Establishing a bird sanctuary at a public park is a project.

A Flower Show is a project educating the public. Work to help our parent organization/s such as hosting a district or state convention or selling Vision of Beauty Calendars is a project. Donations to food banks or scholarships, etc. are projects. "Encouraging member to..." is not a project. "Support state project" is too vague; explain how the club actually participates in the project.

**Project Descriptions:** Give a brief word description as to who benefits, how members are expected to participate, the chairman etc. Examples:

Ames Senior Facility – members give monthly garden related programs and provide refreshments for approximately 45 residents at senior residence center. Jill Johnson, Chairman.

Donate \$50.00 to state scholarship fund, 9<sup>th</sup> year (option to give number of years). Options add interest and are not required.

**Style:** Decorative cover paper; allow ample room for programs and roster; take advantage of bold type for emphasis; don't mix too many font styles to avoid busyness; colored pages; dividers, ribbon bookmark.

**Graphics:** Computer clipart or hand drawn graphics carry a theme; do not overuse or mix clipart styles.

**Theme:** While not required, if a theme is chosen by the president or club, it may be carried out in the cover, graphics, clever titles of programs, quotations etc. State and national presidents' themes are optional.

**Monthly pages:** Make meeting date large and easy to read; allow one page for each month; important dates on same pages as monthly meeting as reminder, roll call subjects.

**Roster & Member Information:** May list NGC judges and consultants, list offices held in other gardening organizations, memberships in related organizations, birthdays.

**Other options:** Former club presidents, design, horticulture or nature tips, bylaws, memorials, awards won last year, budget, club history, club library, conservation list, local/state legislators, related organizations information, poems, photos of members working on projects, coupon to local nursery etc.

## EXTRA CLARIFICATIONS

**"Projects"** should involve actual membership participation that benefits the community and furthers NGC goals and objectives."

Many clubs will list: "Encouraging members to feed the birds in the winter". This is not a project. Also, a study of birds at your monthly meeting is not a project—it is part of your program. Establishing a bird sanctuary at a nursing home is a project. Working with scout troops to make bird feeders is a project.

"Encouraging citizens to recycle" is not a specific; encourage is not actual participation. Explain what the club actually does such as letter writing, door-to-door campaigning or lobbying for city council to provide curb-side recycling.

Programs and workshops for members and selected guests are not projects; they are part of your own members' education. Give a program at nursing home, library, school or involve the community and it is a project.

We've added as projects, things that benefit our parent organizations: The sale of Vision of Beauty Calendars, hosting a district/state convention. Taking refreshments to Council meetings is not enough to be a project.

**Is It Fund Raising or a Project?** A club will have fund raisers such as a luncheon and then use the money to pay room rent, the speakers at your monthly meeting, buy the napkins and coffee cups for refreshments, buy the outgoing president a gift, make donations, sponsor youth poetry contest, etc. This money supplements the dues in our budget.

The fundraiser or luncheon itself is not a project; the "cause" is the project. Fund-raising is part of the project, just as the committee meetings, the work with the landscape architect, the meeting with the nursing home coordinator, and digging plants

from our yard for the "Butterfly Garden Project" are part of the project. The "Nursing Home Project" benefits from the money you raise.

Clubs also donate money outright to Food Banks, Nature Conservancy, State Scholarship Fund, homeless shelter, books for library, etc. So, please take credit and list your generous donations. You may list them separately or with the other projects. (The dues paid to your council, district or state are not donations).

**Example** of how you could list a donation: Jones High School Scholarship: \$500.00 from proceeds of May Style Show & Luncheon; May 19, Sarah Thomas, Chairman.

**In-kind Donations:** Some companies will give "in-kind" donations. Rather than give your club cash, Wal-Mart may give your members broken bags of mulch from the garden department. A company may "give" you the services of an employee from their accounting department to help with a big fund raising event. Your club might draw landscape plans for four Habitat for Humanity houses and arrange for Lowe's to give the mulch and three trees. Your members didn't actually dig the holes or buy the plants. You gave your services and that is referred to as an "in-kind donation."

**Dropped Requirements:** Clubs will no longer have to put CP#1, CP#4, etc., on monthly pages of the yearbook, and no longer have to guess percentage of participation or how many members will attend the "weed pulling day."

**Required** information about NGC, Region, State and Club officers may be put wherever you want it in the yearbook; however, sometimes we don't find the club's own president until page 11. It's your yearbook, put information in order most useful to your members.