

COUNCIL OF BARRINGTON GARDEN CLUBS

February 15, 2000

Dorothy Nelson
430 Vintage Drive
Lake in the Hills, IL 60102

Dear Dorothy:

I have been involved with the Council of Barrington Garden Clubs - much as I hate to admit- for the last twenty-five years and during that time have witnessed many changes in the area. As Secretary of council for the past two years, I have had a greater involvement and have re-acquainted myself with its activities and projects. In the course of these two years it has become apparent to me that the available "woman power" is shrinking along with the number of clubs who are members of the Council.

The focus, finances and membership of the individual clubs vary greatly and as the committees and programs of the Council have grown several clubs have felt they could no longer remain members. This is unfortunate since the very reason for the Council's existence is to facilitate communication among all the Barrington Area clubs and to be able when the situation presents itself to act in concert for the good of the entire community.

During the past year several Council members have discussed the necessity of assessing the focus of the Council. I introduced this subject at our January 12 meeting and asked that you discuss this topic with your club. To stimulate this discussion, I am submitting the following:

1. Incorporate National Garden Week into the Educational Focus Committee
 - Consider a monetary award to a high school student in horticulture or environmental science. The money could come from funds that have been generated by the EFC.
 - Arranging to hang a banner does not require a separate committee.

2. Expand the Beautification Committee
 - a. Pinpoint areas of the community that could use some attention
 - b. Cleanup of roadsides that are not part of the Adopt-a-highway project.
 - c. Consider a weekly column or even a newsletter once or twice a year that would publicize these concerns
 - d. Invite reps from Chamber of Commerce, BAHS. Village government, etc. to discuss their goals and needs

3. Consider a community Flower Show every 2-3 years, possibly in conjunction with another organization. In 1988 the Council held a very successful show in conjunction with the BAHS Winterscapes.
4. Establish an award for Distinguished members. Could be given each year to a person or persons who have given outstanding and continued service to the Council.
5. Increase inter club information - share project and program info and give evaluations that could be helpful to other clubs. Foster joint programs when applicable.
6. Evaluate all projects with the thought that some might be better served by being under the auspices of an individual club. The Council has served as a catalyst and promoter for many worthwhile projects and programs; however, they might not require the Council's on-going involvement. A project might be better continued by an individual Club or other organization; in some cases it may have run its course and it is time to move on to something else.
7. Encourage non-member clubs to attend as non-voting members with the hope that they would choose at some point to participate as full members. The Council is not an exclusive organization, rather an open forum for sharing ideas and doing as a group that which would be difficult for one club. In some respects the Council has become another Garden Club with many of the same demands. There is just so much time that is available for these activities.
8. Drop all additional assessments not needed for the general administration of the Council (i.e. Arbor Day, National Garden Week). It is important to note that the Council is not, by its nature a fund raising organization. It should basically collect only those funds needed to maintain the organization and not accumulate excess funds. This means that it should only raise money if needed to support a mutually agreed upon project and if there is a resulting surplus, should decide upon a project for its use.

9. Discontinue Arbor Day

Why dissolve Arbor day:

1. Difficult or impossible to get members to continue with project as initially conceived.
2. Schools are ambivalent about the project
3. Schools are running out of room - a few have requested shrubs! This is ARBOR DAY
4. Although difficult to establish - survival rate of all donated trees is thought to be low.
5. Cost of program as now being administered has increased dramatically.
6. Member clubs have generally not supported a raise in the Arbor Day assessment.

7. Other groups, organizations and businees have started to recognize Arbor Day and have established thier own programs.

Conclusion:

The Council has achieved it's goal of increasing awareness of Arbor Day and educating the general population to the importance of trees and no longer needs to participate in or promote this program. We suggest that the individual clubs might continue with some similar program as fits their membership.

We shall be discussing these issues and any other thoughts and ideas that arise at our next meeting on March 8 - 9:30 am at the library. If there is anything you wish to have included please let me know in advance. You may either drop it in the mail or FAX it 847-381-8432. I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patricia M. Ballot
President, Council of Barrington Garden Clubs