

August 16, 2013

Focus Group: Chapter Vice Presidents and Program Reps

All Chapter Vice Presidents and representatives to the Program Committee were invited to attend and encouraged to send a representative in their place if that was not possible; 7 Chapters were represented.

Introductions

Discussion Guidelines

Objective Guidelines

How did you get your position? Did you volunteer? If so, why?

OFF Target: First participant said that, “In the beginning of the Guild, there was no structure so everything was done by a consensus so now there is a fear that LRP will tell them what to do and some people don’t want to be told what to do.” *Responses from other attendees:* “with 800 members you need some sort of structure” and “[our chapter] has bylaws but recognize uniqueness of each chapter.” *Apparently this was brought on by the presumption that LRP or “higher authority” intended to tell them what to do which is obviously (to us) not the intent.*

- Generally, Chapters with Bylaws have Nominating Committees that ask people to take on an office
- Said Yes, when asked, because it isn’t fair to have some who do everything
- We need to do more to get snowbirds to participate; stop using part-time residency as an excuse to opt out
- Agreed to participate upon becoming full-time resident to pay back; to share responsibility
- Volunteered because she thought it would be interesting
- Because it helps you to know what is going on
- Accepted because she had support; VP does Chapter and PR does Programs

For Chapter Vice Presidents: what are your responsibilities and does being a VP put you in line to assume the role of President?

- Take over for President, when absent
- Creates monthly Chapter newsletter w/Calendar
- NO, NO ... VP does not lead to Presidency

What issues and problems do you have as Vice President?

- Wanting to share all information about upcoming workshops but without a sample, what use is it to mention since she felt unprepared to answer member questions
- Didn’t know responsibilities of the job because there are no bylaws
- Conflict in Chapters about communication; some meetings weekly, some monthly means there can be a delay from learning about workshops at the Program Committee meeting and then sharing it with Chapter members [MJP: apparently some Chapters

have a delay that means their members are too late to register for more popular workshops]

- Getting to realize now that there is a problem getting information from the Guild (Program Mtg) to members; therefore, most members are not interested in going to workshops
- Hand sewers keep working over speakers at meetings
- It is time for younger members to step up and do their share

Program Reps, how do you share?

- Some wait for next Chapter meeting (when monthly, some weeks after the Program Meeting, this can be a problem)
- Use Program Minutes
- Notebook of upcoming programs at sign-in desk
- Put workshop fliers on Chapter Bulletin Board
- Tried Bulletin Board but that doesn't get snowbirds so sends emails
- Monthly newsletter Use Program Minutes to share information
- MJP: Guild News Photos on website show speaker's trunk show and In-House teachers as well as member Show-n-Tell items

How do you come up with ideas for Guild programs?

- Polled Chapter members
- Looked through magazines
- Work with other Florida guilds; previously not done but could minimize or share costs for travel expenses

What issues/problems to do encounter?

- *Suggestion:* Need feedback from participants – use an Evaluation form
- Heard “too expensive” but classes at Houston are \$70-\$80; cost for national instructors is negligible compared to the information they impart; well worth it
- Need to categorize classes for Beginners, Intermediate, Advanced, etc.
- If a person had a bad reaction to a workshop she will not go back, ever again
- Members opt out because of the venue; need to use machine and irons make the lights dim and not enough extension cords
- Too hard to “schlep all the stuff” to workshops; especially the older members
- **Sidebar comment:** Ruth Mazurski mentioned her meeting with Pam Henry (The Villages Recreation Department) about the lighting and electric problems. They cannot come up with any newer center location but the Guild is on the list for Eisenhower Regional Recreation Center when that is completed (although that will be very far south).
- Some new members just do not believe they are good enough at quilting to take a class or workshop; not comfortable doing that; *Response:* In one Chapter, a quarter to half of the members come back from workshops and show other members their work and explain what they learned; should encourage members to share final projects at Guild Show-n-Tell
- *Suggestion:* Put the calendar year schedule on bookmarks to hand out to members

- Not a fair registration process. *Suggestion:* Don't accept registration for workshops until each one is on the website to help equalize the time between announcement and registration; not fair now since there is such a disparity in passing along the information
- When a popular workshop is announced, it would be fairer to sign up on-line [MJP: meaning that there is a time delay between signing up with a Chapter rep and getting registration actually accepted and doing it on-line would make it first-come/first-served ... although that is not an option and would never be accepted by those without ready computer access.]
- *Suggestion:* Add a registration date (or dates of registration period, from-to?) to workshop flyers and on the website

Were there any “Ah-ha” moments from today’s meeting?

- Sending emails to all Chapter members would eliminate the delay problem between the time of the Program Committee meeting and a subsequent Chapter meeting; and make sure snowbirds get the same opportunity

Focus Group Feedback Questionnaire: Chapter Vice Presidents and Program Reps

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1. The agenda was clear			3	9*
2. The objectives were appropriate			4	9
3. The location of the meeting			3	10
4. The amount of information shared			4	9
5. The opportunities for participation and sharing			1	12

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*One participant did not complete the rating section.

Was the focus group worth your time?

Yes (10)

- Definitely
- Good to share/hear how things are done
- Good to hear what others had to say
- Lots of info to share
- Good information
- Program people should get together again to discuss issues of Guild and Chapters, separately

What went well in this focus group?

- Good structure and discipline in conversation; suggestions of others helpful
- Everyone had a chance to speak and be heard
- Some good ideas, Ah-Has and points to ponder
- Expressing concerns for different problems
- Sharing of ideas
- Stayed on track
- Good comments and sharing
- Esther did a wonder job of managing the focus group. Got everyone involved, great recap of people's comments and keeping side discussions at bay
- Esther was great, included everyone! Thanks!
- Great facilitator
- Sharing of ideas

What could have gone better?

- This was great; many things discussed with food for thought
- Well done!!
- Identifying level of classes
- More time!
- I think it went very well
- Separate ideas for Guild programs and workshops and Chapter programs and workshops