

## PROGRAMS

### VFRW FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

First and foremost programs at all levels should complement and contain the stated objectives of the organization which are:

- Political education and activity
- Support of the Republican Party's principles
- Recruitment and support of Republican women for elective office
- Election of Republican candidates
- Facilitation and cooperation among individual clubs

The first order of business for a new president is to formulate a program schedule for the following year in conjunction with the 1<sup>st</sup> VP and an appointed committee. Some clubs use their executive board for this activity. This body will lay-out a plan and may ask for further ideas from the general membership.. The plan should be widely publicized and some clubs will then put the schedule in their annual directories.

In addition to considering general club objectives, the planning and execution should encompass the Presidential Objectives for the year and the activities that occur annually. For example, the VFRW requires each club to encourage its members to participate in a Legislative Survey. There may be questions on that survey that need explanation, which could lead to inviting a speaker on that subject. There is also a requirement to discuss Women's Health issues, which is another possible program and speaker. Other programs may be built around the need to elect a nominating committee that will always take place in October.

I have been compiling from members state-wide a list of speakers and program suggestions, which is attached. It is an Excel doc that can be amended and added to as more ideas come forth. If you cannot open this please let me know and I will send you the information in a pdf doc.

Cooperation with other clubs is a terrific way to garner more attention and involve more people. In my area of Northern Virginia we have enlarged that principle to include our three contiguous Congressional Districts for programs and we have found it works brilliantly. We not only have larger audiences, but some potential speakers are more apt to respond if they are guaranteed more attendees. Of course there are districts where this is more difficult-the fifth and the first for example. However, the clubs at each end of those long districts can easily be folded into their neighbors as we in the 11<sup>th</sup> do with Prince William RW, which is actually in the 1<sup>st</sup>.

As with all club activities, the leadership must be coordinated and cooperative to work efficiently, effectively, and for the benefit of the whole. It also must have an objective or a yearlong goal that provides cohesion and purpose to the organization through its activities.. For Virginia this is always an election in November. However, other issues need to be addressed as well. The club, whether at the local, state, or national level has to hold the interest of its members and be relevant to their lives. At some level it also has to be purposeful and fun given that this organization is all-volunteer. There needs to be a general sense of predictability as to meeting time, place and purpose as well as innovative thinking about programs and activities. The trick is to balance variety with predictability, custom with innovation, and this balancing act is an ongoing process that generally requires some amount of tweeking. As long as there is constant communication officer-to-membership, and membership believes everyone is being considered, you will have successful programs and agendas.

Much of the following comes from the NFRW web site and from Immediate Past President Fay Williamson's 2010 Leadership Guide. There is some repetition, but these pages can be a useful go to guide for ideas and procedures.

## STEPS TO EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS

Always keep in mind that we are a political organization and that every program should give each person something political to take with them from every event. Each activity should relate to the objectives and purposes of the Club, State and National Federation.

1. The club president appoints the Program Committee early in the year so the planning process can begin to set dates and goals for the year and to have a brainstorming session for program ideas.
2. Program committee members should include persons who will follow through, and members, both old and new, with varied interests and talents.
3. The committee should consider the why, who, what, when, where and how for each program, as well as how each idea fulfills the club's objectives.
4. The committee will review the Club, State and National By-laws to determine the number and types of meetings required and notates those on the club calendar.
5. The committee will review the requirements for both State and National Achievement Awards and incorporate those in the planning process.
6. Election dates and major community events should also be considered when planning. These dates should also be entered into the club calendar.
7. After discussing other program ideas with club members, the Program Committee finalizes the plan and presents it to the Executive Committee or membership (depending on the Club's By-laws). Once approved, the program should be made available to the membership, potential members, county and state GOP, media, and your community. It is also good to share your "Year's Program at a Glance with the state and national organizations
8. This process of planning does not produce a static document or calendar as unexpected things always arise. What it does do is two important things. It makes the management of the club much easier for everyone and it builds confidence through certainty in that management with the membership and for potential members.
9. Questions to consider when planning your Club's yearly program.
  - a. How does this specific program relate to our purpose?
  - b. Will our members be interested or would I be enthusiastic about the topic or speaker?
  - c. Is the program timely?
  - d. Is it informative?
  - e. Is the program unique and not duplicated by other groups. Would it be a better activity with other groups?
  - f. Is the program relevant and will it have value for the membership?
  - g. Does the year provide balance and variety?
  - h. Have we reviewed past years to avoid duplication? Are there programs in the past that are valuable and require duplication?
  - i. Do we use a variety of presentation formats, i.e. speakers, panel discussions, debates, field trips?
  - j. Have we fulfilled our By-laws and Achievement Award requirements?
  - k. Are our programs designed to encourage women to give politics a high priority in their busy lives?
  - l. Does our program reach a broad segment of our membership and appeal to potential members?
  - m. Does our yearly plan have a focus?
  - n. Do we provide an orientation program for new members that include history, our goals/purposes, how members can be involved, and the importance of our Republican Women's club?
  - o. Have we considered the monthly programs in correlation with the projects we do, i.e. a trip to the legislature following a program meeting on current legislative issues and/or legislative procedures?
  - p. Have we scheduled programs on different days and times so that at least once during the year each member will have the opportunity to attend?
  - q. Do we provide for member participation and interaction at every meeting?
  - r. Have we utilized resources of our State and National Federation?
  - s. Do we foster fellowship and encourage networking at each meeting?
  - t. Are we creative in giving titles to our programs for promotion?

- u. Do our programs provide motivation for action?
- v. Do our programs reflect change rather than the status quo?
- w. Do we play up the special bond - Republican Women – that binds us?
- x. Do our programs start and end on time? Do we make it easy for people to participate?
- y. Will our programs attract new members and have publicity potential?
- z. Will our programs build credibility and visibility for Republican Women?

Consider having a “speak out.” Give your members a chance to tell you what you are doing right and what is lacking. Listen to them and invite them to join the Program Committee. Employ their commentary into constructive planning for more dynamic programs.

Remember: Just because every member does not come to every meeting does not necessarily mean she is not interested. Let her know she is missed.

Most important maintain timely communication: officers to officers, officers to committees, officers to members, and encourage member to member relationships-especially across districts. The more we speak to each other, the more we understand each other and the more effective we can be in action together.

## **PROGRAM ARRANGEMENTS**

1. Once the speaker has been agreed upon, the Club President or Club Program Chair should contact the speaker.
2. When the speaker has accepted the engagement, a letter from the President or Chair should:
  - a. Acknowledge the acceptance
  - b. Confirm in writing the date, time, location, subject matter (mention topics to be stressed and avoided, if any) and approximate length of the speech. Describe the general makeup of the audience.
  - c. Ask for biographical information and a glossy photo for media releases.
  - d. Indicate whether there will be a question and answer session following the speech and whether the media will be attending the program.
  - e. Note the type of dress for the occasion.
  - f. Mention other dignitaries who will be present.
  - g. Ask if you may have an advance text or excerpts so maximize media coverage can be obtained.
  - h. State when and where the speaker will be met and by whom.
  - i. Tell where the speaker is to stay if applicable.
  - j. State how travel expenses are to be handled. Honorarium and other expenses must be discussed prior to the event.
  - k. Indicate any other plans for the speaker i.e. media conference, etc. during the visit to your Club.
3. Contact the speaker a few days before the meeting to finalize details of the visit.
4. It is the responsibility of the Program Committee to take care of the logistics of the event, e.g., registration, decorations, lighting, refreshments, publicity, the head table, etc.
5. At the meeting:
  - a. Greet your speaker upon arrival. Introduce the speaker to others who will be participating in the program.
  - b. Given the tight schedule of a speaker, she/he should speak at an assigned time before the business meeting but invite the speaker to stay for they meeting if they prefer.
  - c. Make certain all equipment needed by the speaker is available and working.
  - d. Be brief but sincere when introducing your speaker. The speaker’s credentials should be established in the introduction.
  - e. Maintain control of the audience following the speech. If there is a question and answer period, do not permit one person to dominate or embarrass the speaker.
6. After the meeting:
  - a. If time allows, the speaker should be permitted to meet with members of the audience.

- b. Send a note of appreciation to the speaker and persons helpful in arranging the program. If print media has given the program coverage, send it to the speaker.
- c. The Program Committee should evaluate the meeting and make recommendations for future program reference.

## **PURPOSE OF AN INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of an introduction is to introduce the speaker to the audience and the audience to the speaker in order to establish a common bond between them.

It is a mini-speech, usually about a minute long that contains the element of any speech: an opening, a body, and a conclusion.

The **OPENING** is when you address the audience to grab their attention.

Wait until the audience is quite and expectant before speaking. An intro that no one hears defeats the purpose of having the speaker in the first place.

The **BODY** of the introduction should tell the audience who the speaker is by giving background on the speaker's qualification and experience with the topic.

Learning something about the speaker helps the audience identify and empathize with the speaker and therefore be more willing to listen.

Use the speaker's name several times in the intro to identify the speaker to the topic.

Make sure your information is accurate by contacting the speaker before-hand and asking for a short bio.

Finally the **CONCLUSION** is when you welcome the speaker to the podium, lead the applause, and then take a seat.

## **INTRODUCING A SPEAKER-FVE BASIC GUIDELINES**

**ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE** – grab their attention

**REFER TO THE SPEAKER** –tell the audience who the speaker is and prepare them by giving some background on their experiercer, qualifications or special interest in the topic

**REFER TO THE TOPIC** – explain how the topic is relevant to the audience and how they stand to gain from listening

**MAKE CLEAR WHAT IS TO FOLLOW** – for example note-taking, Q&A period etc

**WELCOME THE SPEAKER** – lead the applause, invite to the podium, sit down

## **INTRODUCTIONS – DO’S AND DON’TS**

**DO** – be brief but adequate—it is an introduction not a speech; topic, why of interest to the group, why speaker is qualified

**DO** – be accurate-make sure of name pronunciation and facts

**DO** – be sincere-convey interest to the speaker and audience

**DO** – be aware of the occasion and audience—if you add humor or other asides make sure they are appropriate.

**DO** – show by your manner that you are looking forward to the speech and that you have confidence in the speaker

**DO** – end intro by clearly and distinctly saying speakers name

**DON’T** - be elaborate with praise

**DON’T**- give the speaker’s life story

**DON’T** - give the speech yourself