BEING NEIGHBORLY (BeNe)
ADMIN TEAM GUIDELINES

CATEGORIES OF ADMIN RESPONSIBILITIES

There are two equally important categories of responsibility. Everyone on the team should own responsibility for one or more of these tasks.

- Managing activity on the BeNe Facebook group
    - Membership
        - Confirm residency
        - Inviting new members as needed
        - Removing members as needed
    - Pinned post and calendar post updates
    - BeNe cultural cultivation. #culturalcultivation #fun
        - Monthly banner photo contest
        - Just For Fun... and game posts
        - NAKtivist Think Tank oversight
        - Value of sharing, kindness, etc. content
        - Simple and sustainable living content
    - Ongoing community wide project development & awareness (examples below)
        - Emergency Preparedness
        - Garden Share
        - Rock painting
        - Making mats for the homeless
        - Other group specific projects
    - One time or annual projects
        - Easter egg hunt
        - Baking contest
        - Kid's Craft Fair
        - Seed and plant exchanges
        - Garden tours
    - Assure needed follow through on all
    - Online project development with empowerment focus (see process details below)
    - Rules and culture monitoring
    - Featured Neighbor write-ups
    - Lending Library oversight
    - Chatroom oversight

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- o Project leadership
- Engaging with the community
  - o Initiating and building relationships with key individuals and organizations
    - ▪ Finding areas of overlapping interests
    - ▪ Develop plans to support partners
  - o Managing media exposure
  - o Proving team with insights about community partnership challenges and potential

ADMIN SKILLS and QUALITIES
Ideally, the team will seek individuals who bring most of these skills and qualities to the work.
- Communication skills
  - o Writing
  - o Presenting
- Planning
  - o Goal setting and tracking
  - o Problem analysis and solving
- Interpersonal skills
  - o Commitment to and ability to exemplify all BeNe values
  - o Willingness to share limelight, responsibility, process and decision making
  - o Preference for working cooperatively as part of a team
    - ▪ Listening, helping, respecting, sharing, participating
  - o Patience, poise, tact, empathy, positive attitude, flexibility
  - o Willingness to be consistently and gently firm as needed
  - o Conflict resolution and resilience
  - o Creative
  - o People oriented
- Knowledge
  - o Technical
    - ▪ Facebook basics
  - o Local community dynamics
    - ▪ Strengths and weaknesses of city, key player and organizations
  - o Knowledge of or interest in learning sustainability and simple living tools and strategies
  - o Financial recordkeeping (rarely needed)

DECISION MAKING
- The only area where there can no debate involves the non-negotiable topics: our vision, mission, values, rules and use of the Facebook platform explained in the pinned post example. However, any approach for upholding those principles is equally viable.
- While the lead of each project and task area is the primary decision maker for that area, they should consistently share the status of their work especially when there is a change. The team approach is valued in all the work we do.
- All team members share the responsibility to assure that everything done is a manifestation of our vision, mission and values.
- While 100% agreement isn't required for a decision, flexibility and respect for other's views when not in conflict with BeNe philosophies is a must.
- When an agreement is difficult to find, commit to a process that everyone agrees to up front. Follow the process for an easier route to a shared decision.
- This approach requires that everyone involved shares a commitment to shared decision making.
- Project progress must be shared regularly to give team members an opportunity to participate.

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- Remember to regularly engage in team training that builds better communication, listening and facilitation skills. Anyone can initiate these trainings.
- Decisions often flow from acknowledged expertise which is a valid approach.
- Encouraging and respecting self-directing and self-managing work approaches is critical.

TEAM SIZE

- OVERALL PROS AND CONS OF EXPANDING TEAM SIZE
  The team's ability to share leadership and responsibilities can be jeopardized by having too few or too many admins.
  - Having too few team members overburdens other team members.
  - Since a non-hierarchical leadership approach requires high levels of communication, coordination and negotiation, too many people can frustrate and stagnate the process.
  - Studies show that 4 or 5 on a team is optimal depending on factors listed below.
- CONSIDERATIONS FOR ADDING A SPECIFIC NEW TEAM MEMBER
  Ideally when considering the addition of a new admin, these questions will be discussed.
  - What skill set does the potential new admin bring?
  - Where are the gaps in the current division of responsibilities and do their skills fill those gaps?
  - How do the existing team members feel about their existing responsibilities and work load?
  - The current scope of the group's goals is also an important consideration.

TIPS

- COACHING
  o When you coach someone about anything, always share about the situation with your admin teammates. Be sure to let everyone know if you needed to delete a post or remove a member and explain what happened.
  o Every coaching message should have 3 parts:
    - Say something positive. "How nice of you to be so caring about your friend that you want to post a gofundmerequest for them."
    - Explain what you need to do based on the situation. "Sadly, I need to delete your post since our rules don't permit us to ask for money for anything or anyone."
    - Offer what IS ok to do. "What would be great is if you set up a mealtrain for that person or if you listed other ways that neighbors could help your friend."
  o Only if the person asks, explain the reason for the rule. "We are building a culture that values the connections so everything we do is set up to encourage that type of support."
  o If someone blocks you or becomes abusive, you may remove them from the group. But, take care to not get too sensitive if they just are explaining that they disagree. However, after all has been explained, they are still required to follow the rules.
- COMMUNICATION
  o Make all your posts as short and to the point as possible. If there is a lot of information to convey, break it into logical pieces and post it with a hashtag to tie all the pieces together. Make each post about one topic or one request. Long, detailed posts will be read by some but not most. Shorter posts will assure broader coverage.
  o With each post include a picture to grab attention.
  o Set up a closed Facebook Group for your admin team. Only current admins should be member of this group.

- o If there is a reason for you to do a task that is normally done by another team member, contact them first to avoid confusion.
  - o Share project progress at all stages of the work. This sharing should always happen with your teammates and also with the community. Sharing is the HOW part of our work.
  - o Share documents created by uploading to your file section
- Track your accomplishments and media coverage
  - o If you need to estimate an accomplishment, always estimate low to assure creditability and to avoid setting your group up for future disappointments or failures.
  - o Share your results and media coverage on the admin support Facebook group.
- EXAMPLE OF THE IDEAL BeNe PROJECT APPROACH
  - o Having a wonderfully completed project is wonderful for the community but having a wonderfully completed project that is the result of shared decision making, pooling of resources, and many member contributions is beyond wonderful. It is us accomplishing our vision.
  - o When everything is done for people they tend to watch to see what will be done next. When people see others getting involved, many also want to get involved. Don't take away the community's opportunity to share pride in ownership by doing everything yourself.
  - o Imagine how your project would be described by the media upon its completion. How many names would be mentioned? To make it a BeNe ideal project, consider having one of your project goals be to seek the contributions of as many people as possible rather than just one or even just a few. Attempt to not have any admins seen as the primary contributor even if that means working quietly behind the scenes. Make it a shared experience and a shared success!
  - o To summarize this process:
    - The source of the project idea comes from the community
    - Many people are invited to own small tasks.
    - Post frequent updates on project status and frequent acknowledgement of individual contributions are posted on the main feed.
    - A coordinator provides the planning framework and the follow through needed to keep everything on schedule.
    - After the project, photos and gratitude for all the contributors and participants are generously posted on the BeNe feed to encourage group ownership and pride of accomplishment.
  - o Below is an example of the process used to organize our BeNe: LS baking contest
    - Admin posted: Just for fun… asking what job you would like to have?
    - Neighbor answered: baking contest judge
    - Admin asked: Who would like it if we organized a BeNe baking contest so she could experience being a baking contest judge?
    - Lots of neighbors answered: Resounding yes. That would be fun!
    - Admin asked: who would like to be a contestant
    - Lots of people said they would.
    - Admin asked: who else would like to be a judge
    - Three more neighbors volunteered to be judges.
    - Contestants and judges were thanked.
    - Admin set up suggested holding the event at a local park since it's free there.
    - Admin asked people to choose date / time
    - All interested members responded with their preferences
    - Admin posted about location / date / time / judges / contestants
    - Admin posted request for someone to bring tables and table cloths
    - Member volunteered to bring tables and table cloths
    - Admin posted request for someone to create event signs
    - Member volunteered to make the needed signs
    - Admin updated planning post to include event info including names of all contributors

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- Admin requested for someone to make over the shoulder banners for judges and contestants
- Two different people volunteered to make the banners
- Admin updated the event post with additional member names
- Admin created BeNe Facebook event for baking contest so it would display to a wider audience
- Admin bumped thread with working details for event planning including names associated with each task
- Admin followed up with all volunteers in PMs and sometimes on the event planning thread to assure that everything and everyone was on track. Some adjustments were made with the contestant list.
- Admin requested someone to MC
- Someone volunteered to MC
- Admin requested that someone bring nametags.
- Someone volunteered to bring nametags
- Admin requested people to seek and / or donate prizes for the winning contestants
- Several people gathered and contributed prizes.
- Admin asked someone to create judging criteria and sheet.
- Proposed judging criteria we posted for feedback
- Final judging sheets were created
- Admin asked someone to be photographer for the event.
- Someone volunteered to take pictures.
- Admin repeatedly posted event planning thread updates with credits to all the different contributors
- The day of the event arrived and all went wonderfully. One of the judges couldn't make it but a new person jumped in to fill that role.
- The pictures taken by the event photographer were posted on the feed and everyone was delighted. Many people said they wanted this to be an annual event!
- One of the baking contest pictures won first place in the next month's photo contest and became the BeNe: LS banner picture for a month!
- SUCCESS on so many levels!!!