

## ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR FLOAT JUDGING

**Originality - 20 points:** We do not have the luxury of having brand-new floats every year. Many of the floats appear year after year with modifications. This does not necessarily mean that the original design lacked originality. The question refers to each year independent of any previous year: does the float we're seeing this year have an interesting design? **Example of Originality:** Some years back, we had a float that depicted a 13-foot tall Mother Dragon; and, behind her in a little wagon was a Baby Dragon. The float even punned on "Draggin' Dragon." This would, in our opinion, show Originality. A plain box float with a few decorative touches would, in our opinion, be quite nice; but, would not necessarily show originality.

**Use of Color - 20 points:** Does the use of color on the float help to carry out the idea or theme or concept of the float? It could be obvious, as in the use of pinks and greens to carry out a Spring time idea; or, the use of reds, whites and blues to carry out a patriotic theme. Or, it could be less obvious, as in the use of silvers, blacks and whites to send a message of sophistication; or, the use of nursery colors to decorate a float with a child's theme. And, of course, the colors worn by the float riders are very much a part of the color scheme. **Example of Use of Color:** Our own *unjudged* Queen's Float is nearly all white with touches of gold and green. It gets its color from the shades of pink in the clothes of the float riders; and, in our opinion, the color scheme helps to carry out the idea of simplicity, of tradition and of the elegance of a springtime wedding or coronation.

**Spectator Appeal - 25 points:** What draws the eye of the parade spectator? In our opinion [in descending order]: 01- the float riders, especially if they are costumed and moving and doing things like dancing, singing or interacting with one another; 02- movement of the parts of the float; such as windmills or teeter-totters or flowing water; 03- interesting float props created by the float builders such as unicorns or eagles or outsized toys; 04- interesting float props simply added to the float such as flags, banners and balloons; and, 05-bright colors in general; glitter; confetti; colored foil. Humorous depictions are crowd pleasers; but, complexity can sometimes be missed when it is remembered that "spectator appeal" is judged by the casual spectator [not the judges] in 30 seconds. That is all the longer a float will be in front of a spectator. **Example of Spectator Appeal:** our own *unjudged* Riverboat float has appeared in the parade with a live country rock band performing on the show deck; with both the upper and lower side decks lined with children in matching costumes; with a brass bell clanging; a steam whistle blowing and with a giant paddlewheel on the back turning as the float moves. We would consider all of these depictions to have spectator appeal.

**Excellence of Design/Structure - 25 points:** In our opinion this is much more than just a question of: is the artistic design of the float well balanced? It should include: Is the float more than a simple box? Does it have a difficult design that probably required the input of engineers and designers and carpenters? Does it show unusual strength for handling float-riders; or, does it allow for unusual movement of float parts. Does it show float props in unusual and difficult positions by use of techniques such as cantilevering? Does it show the use of unusual materials such as steel which were then decorated to disguise their use? Or, heavy rubber mats; or, spray foam; or, plywood and cardboard molded into unusual shapes? Or, the interesting use of fabrics? **Example of Excellence of Design/Structure:** our own *unjudged* Old Town/Ferris Wheel float has a very intricate design that allows children to enter at the front at "George Washington's Headquarters;" pass through an inside door into the tower at "Rouss Fire Hall;" climb an inside stairway; exit onto the roof of the old "Eagles Club" building; pass through the ferris wheel; drop through a trap door into the old "Elks Club" building; exit the old "Elks Club" into the merry-go-round; cross the merry-go-round and enter the hot dog stand on the front of the float. That, in our opinion, is a very excellent design/structure. It required hundreds of hours of work to produce this effect.

**Execution of Current Year's Theme - 10 points:** What we value most is a total float concept based on the theme. It is nice when any float has added signs with the Theme logo on them; or, has children wearing Theme t-shirts; but, if they appear to be simply added to a float that has little to do with the actual Theme, we don't value that as much. **Example of Execution of a Past Theme:** In 2011, the Festival Theme was "Timeless!" Our own *unjudged* Theme Float featured top hats, white gloves, branches of apple blossoms, a gold pocket watch without hands and tickets to the Queen's Reviewing Stand of 1925. The entire float and every part of it were designed to carry out the idea that the Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival® is timeless. We would consider this to be an attempt at a total float concept of a Theme. We would place more value on this than a float that had, for example, a circus theme and had simply added theme logos to the sides of the float.