

A Dozen or So Fund Raising Ideas for Local Rose Societies....

- **Sale of Rose Plants—Large Modern and OGR roses:**

There are two different ways to succeed in selling large rose plants.

A. Locate a nursery willing to sell to a local society on a wholesale basis. (*Contact ARS Headquarters for a list of such nurseries.*) You will find price breaks at ten plants per specific variety, sometimes at 20, or other numbers. Develop a list of varieties you think would be of interest to your membership. Order from the nursery—be sure order is confirmed before advertising the plants. Non-patented varieties will generally be sold to the local society at \$xx.xx per plant; patented varieties will vary from \$xx.xx to \$xx.xx, with the most recent varieties at the higher end. Select a mix of patent and non-patented plants. Sell the plants to your members, friends, and neighbors at a price slightly lower than mail-order costs, and definitely lower than local nursery potted plant prices. Be sure to include shipping costs of approximately \$xx.xx per plant in your pricing. You will need a central pick-up area, with a specified date. Profits of about \$xx.xx per plants gives your membership a bargain compared to mail order and local nursery prices.

Your list of available roses should be published at least three months prior to your rose ‘Pick-up’ day; checks must accompany orders. Since there is usually period of time between shipping and billing, if you deposit checks immediately in a savings account, or any other interest accruing account, a bit more money can be made before bills come due.

B. Publish a list of available roses and prices; take orders and then place your order with the nursery. This method is less profitable than the first because not enough roses of a particular variety may be sold to obtain a good price break, or the variety may be sold out before your order is placed. The chief advantage is that all commitments to purchase are made before the roses are ordered.

- **Sale of Rose Plants—Miniatures**

A miniature rose sale is easier than selling the larger varieties because issues of storage and delivery are not as complex. However, because the mark-up on miniatures is smaller, there is less profit as well. Because miniatures are shipped in pots and can be sold year round, the venues for selling them are not limited to rose shows or monthly meetings, but may include any public function where local rose societies are involved. (*Contact ARS Headquarters for a list of nurseries willing to sell miniatures to local societies on a wholesale basis.*)

- **Sale of Blooms At a Rose Show**

See the detailed and meticulous article on selling blooms at a rose show by Baxter Williams, (http://www.ars.org/Members_Only/wb-RoseSale.pdf) on the ARS web site. Variations from that theme include selling regular sized blooms from the show at its conclusion for a dollar a stem, and miniatures at half that price. Grouping three stems in small disposable vases may be sold in multiples of five dollars. Or, arrangements may be sold during the show—about as quickly as they can be created.

- **Sale of Rose Related Items at a Rose Show**

Rose stationery, rose jewelry, or other items with a rose motif can be purchased wholesale to be sold at the registration or hospitality areas at a rose show or any other place where the local society is a visible participant. If the venue has high passerby traffic, this will be especially remunerative. Other items of interest might include: vases, pruning shears, or society-produced booklets on rose care.

- **Sale of Products Bought in Bulk to Rose Society Members**

Fertilizers and mulches purchased in large quantities from suppliers may be less costly than if purchased by an individual. These items bought in large quantities can be re-packaged into smaller ones and sold at a profit for the local rose society. It is a win/win/ situation because the individual is enabled to purchase only the quantity needed, which is frequently unavailable in smaller packaging.

Mulches may sometimes be purchased from local sources. Picking up these items usually requires a local society member with a truck as well as an available supply of free labor to load the materials as well as to distribute it. However, a careful program of pre-ordering may provide the opportunity for a healthy profit for the local society.

- **Silent Auctions**

Members bring white elephant items they no longer want. All items are placed on a table. During a social hour at a meeting, members place bids on small pieces of paper beneath the items until an appointed time. The highest bidder receives the item. One variation is to have a lined piece of paper with open bids so that each successive bid is automatically higher than the preceding one. At a designated time, all bidding ceases and the last name on the paper with the highest bid receives the item.

- **Sale of Auction of Artistic Items**

The donation of an artistic work by either the artist or a member may well provide the opportunity for a sale or raffle over an extended period of time culminating in the final drawing or bidding at the annual meeting. Among the items that generally do well—depending on the tastes and mores of the local rose society members—are:

- Needlepoint rose articles
- Oil paintings of roses
- Watercolors of roses
- Quilts
- Dried Rose Arrangements
- Christmas wreaths
- Terrariums
- Hooked rugs
- Garden services such as landscaping

- **Live Plant Auctions**

A. Many rosarians grow plants other than roses, including everything from companion plantings to competitors. These plants growing from cuttings, divisions or layering may provide a significant source of income to the local rose society, especially if the auction includes rose related materials.

B. Another possibility, depending on the location of the local rose society as well as the interests of the membership, is the auction of live rose plants. See the observations of Jim Delahanty (http://www.ars.org/Members_Only/wb-RoseAuction.pdf) on the local rose auction scene in Southern California on the ARS web site for more detail.

C. *In either case, a good auctioneer is essential.*

- **County and State Fair Winnings**

Many county and state fairs offer prizes for winning specimens in their garden shows. Ask your members to enter as many specimens as possible and to donate the winnings to the local society.

- **Garage or Rummage Sales**

Run garage or rummage sale out of a member's garage with materials obtained from society members. Encourage the donation of materials still useful albeit unwanted by the donor. This has the double benefit of helping to clean out closets and cabinets to free up home space, but also enables the local society to benefit from the activity. Place an 'ad' in local newspaper, radio, and internet sources of information. Be sure to hold the sale over both days of the weekend.

- **Sales on e-bay**

Sales of items on eBay may have a portion of the proceeds donated automatically to the local rose society. Alternatively, the local society may qualify for having all of the proceeds of sales of items donated. See the excellent and seminal article by Lou Little (http://www.ars.org/Members_Only/wb-making-money.pdf) on the ARS web site. This fundraiser has the benefit of obtaining funds from non-members of the society, thus opening another and different revenue stream.

- **Food Sales**

Take advantage of the culinary skills of your members by enlisting the efforts of your best chefs and bakers to provide baked goods, candies, cakes, breads, pickles, jellies, preserves, or marinated mushrooms for food bazaars. Check local fairs, malls, and other places where foods might be offered. Even if there is a fee for the cost of the display space, the profit might well justify the expenditure--especially if the items are otherwise unobtainable.

- **Garden Tours**

Arrange a Garden Tour of gardens where roses are prominently featured. The gardens could be those of either members or non-members. Although some gardens might not feature roses as prominently as others, the overall theme of the tour should be predominantly one of rose appreciation and usage. Provide three or four gardens, with tickets to be sold at the first garden on the tour, or at each location if the tour is to be self-conducted. Advance ticket sales permit the addition of light refreshments or an afternoon tea which would command a higher ticket price.

Emphasize that the tour is for the benefit of the local Rose Society, a non-profit organization and feature that in the publicity in both the media and local nurseries.

- **Rose Travel**

Organize a one or two-day regional or statewide tour of public and private rose gardens or rose nurseries by either bus or a large van. This fund-raiser has the additional benefit of providing an opportunity for local rosarians to get to know one another, while visiting some of the great rose facilities in the area. For non-members, the cost can include a one year membership in the sponsoring rose society.