

## **TROPHIES**

It has been said that exhibitors don't care about trophies. The fun of competition is the main reason they exhibit. However, if a show gives out beautiful, useful or unusual trophies, then the exhibitors may be inclined to return. It is human nature to remember the beauty of the awards table, and to want to claim beautiful trophies for your winnings.

Most rose shows offer trophies of crystal, maybe silver, or special crafts. Plan how many trophies you need to buy, and establish a budget on how much you can spend. This will be the limiting factor on deciding which trophies to buy. Relatively inexpensive, good quality crystal can be purchased at local manufacturers warehouses. A normal budget for crystal, for a large show with a lot of classes could run over \$1,000. This is where trophy donations, money donations, and a fundraiser are so important.

Some shows have offered trophies of windsocks, linens, cheap plastic toys, etc., but don't get too creative in your selection. A gift certificate is a good trophy, but please make sure you do not place it in a class where the winner could be from out of town, such as in the judges' class. Certificates or good pruning tools make excellent novice trophies. The major winners of the Show - Queen of Hybrid Teas/Grandifloras, Queen of Floribundas, Queen of Minifloras, Queen of Miniatures and Best in Show receive the biggest trophies. The King and Princess of each of the four Courts would receive the next biggest trophy followed by Dowager Queen and Victorian Queen. Plan a price range for each trophy and purchase accordingly. That way you can stay within your budget.

A strong suggestion is to have a Court of Honor for the hybrid teas, minis, minifloras and floribunda sprays. You do not need to have a trophy for these, but the exhibitors like to see the next several runners up in each category, and it is a thrill for a beginning exhibitor to get one of their entries up on the table.

Begin advertising early in your bulletin for trophy donors. Mention them in your bulletin if they donate. Also proudly display their names on a banner at your show. Other sources of trophies are stores, shops, nurseries, etc. Some will donate a trophy for a specific class. A very successful program is to have your members obtain ownership of a specific rose class trophy, such as Dowager. Print their names in the schedule under the class for which they specifically donated the trophy or money.

When you purchase the trophies, keep all of the receipts, especially if you need to be reimbursed. If you are the trophy chair, you should be looking for trophies all year round. Sometimes department stores will have huge sales on crystal pieces. Get them! It is better to buy and store, than to pay double or triple the price later.

Think of the exhibitor when you make plans for the presentation of trophies. Many have driven long distances and have been up since the wee hours of the morning. Most societies move the trophy presentation time to 2 p.m. when judging is over and everyone has had a chance to eat lunch and look over the show. If time allows, a list of show winners can be printed and available. This is especially helpful for the public if they are interested in buying plants of the winning

roses. Have a good presenter give them out. Use a microphone if necessary, especially if the presentation is in a noisy, public place such as a mall. Also, make sure that the presenter is interesting. The last thing you need is someone who tells a story for each trophy, or reads them off like a machine. The celebration for the winners you hoped to portray may fall flat with a poor presenter. Remember, the public is listening.

When the trophies are handed out, the exhibitor should not have to search for the box it came in. One of the best systems is to mark the trophy and its box, with small dots with the class number written on them. Store the boxes under the table where the exhibit is placed for easy access, or at another table where a person will hand the exhibitor the box after receiving the trophy.

To have an impressive trophy table, provide stands for the trophy cards/certificates. You can purchase plastic stands, or cut and paint small blocks of wood with a saw cut at a slight angle so the a printed card leans back slightly. It is a good idea to have a small strip of paper with the class number on it so you can find the proper place when you return with the winning rose and the filled out trophy cards and certificates.

A subject that can be controversial is perpetual trophies. Some exhibitors choose to take the perpetual trophies with them, and others would rather not bother with polishing the silver or washing the crystal, storing, and being responsible for returning the trophy the following year. Be certain you have a policy regarding these perpetual trophies: can the trophies be taken by the winner? Who is responsible for engraving the winner's name? Do you have a record of who has received these trophies so they can be found the next year?, etc. It is a good idea, especially for district shows, to provide a "keeper" trophy for the winner.