

# SHOW TABLE

OHA JUDGING COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER



Dear Societies

A full year and a lot of time gardening has passed by since our inaugural newsletter. We hope you found it informative. Thanks to all who sent us inquiries. We hope our answers proved helpful.

- **Who are We?** We are a committee of The Ontario Horticultural Association. We are made of up of a number of District Directors and members with judging experience. Current committee members are Penny Stewart (Chair) Kathryn Lindsay (Vice Chair) Jim Mabee (Judging School/Updates Coordinator), Sharon Nivins (Judges' Registrar), Roland Craig, Jane McDonald and Sandra Hartill.
- **What's happening with OJES?** The project to update the Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards send out a survey to all OHA Judges and Societies in the spring of this year. The next phase is to have all the survey data reviewed. Subcommittees have now been set up and are being chaired by OHA and GCO Judges' Council judges and experts in the field of Horticulture and Design. The subcommittees will digest all the information and make recommendations and the final step will be to combine the work of all the subcommittees and have a final redraft ready for final editing. It is a time consuming process but the end result will be a better resource for all of us to use.
- **Who is and isn't a certified Judge?** Please consult the OHA web site [www.gardenontario.org](http://www.gardenontario.org) for the list of all OHA certified judges that are willing to have their names published in the OHA Registry (from the OHA home page, under the Resources tab/Judging; scroll to the bottom of the page). All that is needed is to enter the word Judges in the search box and the list comes up. This list is kept up to date by the Judges' Registrar. The list of Garden Clubs of Ontario Judges' Council GCO/RBG judges is also provided at the bottom of the page.
- **Best Practice in Selecting a Judge:** We hope that by making the list of Judges easy to access that Societies will be sure to use it. The judges set out in the web list are certified by OHA and in good standing. We recommend that you follow the best practice of not using the same Judge year after year. There are many new judges being certified so why not give them an opportunity to judge your shows. You can also check with local Judges; they are a wealth of information.
- **Judging Schools When and Where?** Our Judging School/Updates Coordinator has all the information on the OHA website or can be contacted by email at [judgingschoolcoordinator@gardenontario.org](mailto:judgingschoolcoordinator@gardenontario.org)
- **Need help with your Show Schedule or Planning a Show?** Be sure to read OJES and check with your local Judges; they are a wealth of information.
- **Have a Question about Flower Shows or Judging?** Contact us by email at [ohajudges@gmail.com](mailto:ohajudges@gmail.com)

**HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS WE HAVE RECEIVED AND OUR ANSWERS. WE HOPE THIS WILL BE USEFUL INFORMATION FOR YOUR MEMBERS**

**Q:** What happened to the Newsletter? I have only received one since last September?

**A:** It is new and the number of times to be published is still being worked on. We will have one after the Convention for sure, fall seems a good time to follow up after convention and after vacations are over. A second volume in spring will be considered if we have enough additional information or requests for specific topics to be covered.

**Q:** How do you judge a "child's" arrangement when it looks very much like an adult has done most of it?

**A:** This is a very difficult question. You don't want to discourage children who have done all the work themselves but you also don't want to be accusing a child of getting too much help. As with adults if it is on the table and was passed by the show committee, then you have to judge it. There is no easy way other than to have a quiet word with the Show Chair afterwards.

**Q:** How do I judge a design with artificial flowers or foliage?

**A:** Read the schedule carefully. If it is permitted in the rules then you judge based on the principles and elements. If the schedule indicates no artificial or says follow OJES then you would have to disregard the design but add a very kind comment that lets them know that either the schedule and or OJES does not permit artificial materials. Some fairs do have a section for a design done with artificial flowers and here again the elements and principle applies just like a design with live plant materials.

**Q:** Are there any sanctions in place for judges found not complying with good judging ethics? Can a Society put questions of this nature to the OHA Executive?

**A:** There is no formal complaint mechanism set up by the OHA to deal with Judging Ethics. However, the OHA now has a Judging Committee so the concern could be communicated to the Committee for its consideration. The easiest way is to make sure you do not ask the Judge in question to judge again. Word does get around about a Judges reputation.

**Q:** When Judging scented Roses how do you prevent scents from overcoming your sense of smell and making it difficult to select?

**A:** Bring a few coffee beans in your pocket and smell them between the different entries. It helps to clear your nose.

**Q:** If a photography class asks for flowers, should it be interpreted as more than one?

**A:** A photo with just one flower should not be disregarded. Again you are looking for overall artistic merit of the entries.

**Q:** How do you judge a sunflower seed head?

**A:** It is a single horticulture specimen, to be judged according to OJES under Vegetables and/or Fruit, One Entry (p. 68) with scale of points –Condition (freedom from blemish) 40 Form and Colour 30 Size (typical of cultivar) 20 Distinction 10.

The Alberta Judging & Exhibiting Standards

([http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex19/\\$FILE/200\\_47\\_2012.pdf](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex19/$FILE/200_47_2012.pdf)) has a lot of guidance for judging fruits and vegetables although not for sunflowers specifically.

**Q:** Once a judge has made a decision, it has been recorded by the clerk, ribbon placed, and the winner announced. Would it be unethical for the judge to change their mind the next day and change the prize list?

**A:** Yes it would be unethical and unprofessional. As a Judge you need to carefully make a choice and once that choice has been recorded and announced you should not change your decision.

**Q:** Should a Judge be soliciting judging jobs?

**A:** No OJES is clear on page 17 Judges should NOT solicit assignments.

**Q:** In an "Any other Perennials" class at a fair, the following specimens were entered: Hydrangea, Spirea, Butterfly Bush and a bedraggled heliopsis? Are Hydrangea, Spirea and Butterfly Bush considered Perennials?

**A:** Hydrangea, Spirea, and Butterfly Bush are all Shrubs. Shrubs are defined as woody perennial plants. So yes, they qualify as an "Any other Perennial". You would also have to look carefully at the schedule to make sure there was no other class such as Flowering Shrub that they should have been entered in. Often an "Any Other Perennial" class is listed as Any Other Perennial (not listed above). It could be specified as "herbaceous" or "woody".

**Q:** Should Clerks be talking while judging is on going?

**A:** OJES Page 18 states that clerks should not offer advice or unwanted information and should not follow judges too closely unless invited. The Show Chair or designate should be available. If a clerk is distracting you, politely ask them to stay back a bit and refrain from comment as it distracts you from giving full attention to your job at hand. A quiet word with the Show Chair afterwards may help in making sure the Clerk does not distract in the future.

**Q:** Is it ethical for a Judge to judge one Division and enter another Division.

**A:** OJES Page 17 states Judges should not have entries in the Division they are judging but this implies it is OK to enter another Division. However, this raises the question of whether or not a Judge can stay objective if they, when placing entries in one Division can see entries being placed in the Division they are judging. They may in walking in see an entry being carried in and recognize the competitor or a container. This is why it is likely best to have a Judge who has no knowledge of the venue or who is competing. This is why Judges are instructed at Judging School to arrive only a few minutes before and stay out of the competition area until they are asked to enter. This way there can be no perception of any bias.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Penny Stewart, On behalf of the OHA Judging Committee