

# JUDGING MATTERS



Newsletter of the Garden Clubs of Ontario Judges' Council  
January 2017

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## WEBSITE:

[www.gardenclubsofontario.ca/  
judges-council.html](http://www.gardenclubsofontario.ca/judges-council.html)

## CONTACT US:

[judgescouncil@gmail.com](mailto:judgescouncil@gmail.com)

On behalf of the Judges' Council Executive, I wish you a very Happy New Year. May all your flower show entries come together in reality as in your imagination and may all your judging assignments be enjoyable. To help you be prepared, see page 5 for a review of some of the items that improve the judging experience.

If you've run into an interesting problem at a show, a situation in judging that makes you think or wish for a second opinion, please share it with us. We'll consult several judges and the answer/suggestion will be published in an upcoming newsletter. Send your "conundrums" to [judgescouncil@gmail.com](mailto:judgescouncil@gmail.com) and tell us how you handled the situation. Please don't hesitate to forward suggestions for programs and the newsletter to me as well.

Please remember our website is a resource. You can direct members of your club/society to the list of accredited judges, download your 2018 Accreditation Renewal form and stay informed of up-coming events.

We are very excited about our 2017 program which promises to be inspirational and informative.

*Heinke*

## JUDGES' COUNCIL EXECUTIVE 2016 – 2018



Heinke Thiessen  
CHAIR



Elizabeth Schleicher  
SECRETARY



Cathy Faber-Rowlands  
TREASURER



Judy Zinni  
DIRECTOR



Michael Erdman  
DIRECTOR

## 2017 SEMINARS

### Spring Seminar & Workshops, April 11th & 12th, 2017

Internationally recognized floral artist and co-author of 'A Fresh Look at Judging', Hitomi Gilliam will present our design program, including demo and workshops.

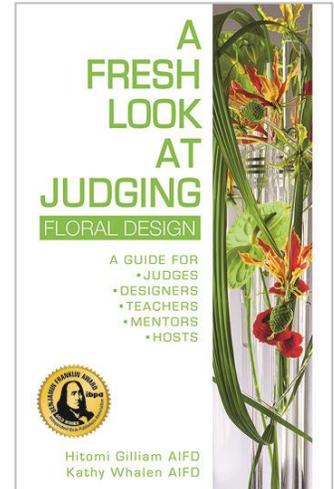


PRESENTATION: April 11, 2017, morning

WORKSHOPS:

- 1) April 11, 2017, afternoon
- 2) April 12, 2017, morning
- 3) April 12, 2017, afternoon

Both afternoon workshops will have the same content. Each workshop is limited to 30 participants. All materials will be supplied. Prices are not available at this time as the exact content and associated materials costs have not yet been determined.



The workshops have all been filled, however, names are currently being entered onto a waiting list.

### Fall Seminar, October 24th, 2017

The program will focus entirely on horticulture. A practice judging element will once again be included in the program. Members will be asked to enter specimens to support the show and thereby may earn credits towards their 2018 Accreditation Renewal.

## OHA JUDGES LIST

The Ontario Horticultural Association has established a process that allows non-OHA certified judges to be listed on the OHA website page that currently lists their certified judges. The process came about as a result of the OHA policy to only use OHA certified judges at all OHA sanctioned events.



In certain areas of the province, in particular the GTA, this policy created some difficulties for societies and districts as there are areas where there are no OHA Judges but numerous GCO Judges. In order to assist in areas such as these and where it is not feasible to run OHA Judging Schools, the OHA has approved the expansion of their Judges Registry to allow judges who have qualifications other than OHA credentials to be listed on the web site.

If you would like to be added to the OHA Judges' list, you must complete an application and return it with payment to Sharon Nivins, Judges Registrar, at the address listed on the application. The fee for the 3 year term is \$10. Applicants must be a member of a horticultural society or garden club recognized by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the OHA. The application form is attached to this newsletter for your convenience.

**PLANT FEATURE: RHIPSALIS** by Judy Zinni

At the Judges Council session in October, we had a very nice show of cacti and “other” succulents. One genus seemed to confuse a number of us (as to the class in which to place it) – is *Rhipsalis* a cactus or other succulent?

Cacti are stem succulent plants that have raised, bumpy areas (called areoles, which are modified branch buds) from which spines and flowers erupt. The areoles contain small hairs called “wool”; in some genera these are very small and difficult to see.



So, does the genus *Rhipsalis* have succulent stems, with areoles and wool? The answer is “yes”, so *Rhipsalis* is a cactus.



spines on new growth

*Rhipsalis* are native to the South and Central America and the Caribbean; concentrated especially in Brazil. *Rhipsalis* have also been found in Africa, Madagascar and Sri Lanka and it is widely believed that seeds were dispersed by birds from the Americas; *Rhipsalis* is the only cactus naturally found outside of the Americas. The name means “reed” or “wickerwork”, as the tangled branches give the appearance of wickerwork. In some *Rhipsalis* the spines may only appear on juvenile growth. Although we think of cacti as being desert dwellers, *Rhipsalis* cacti are actually epiphytic (in trees) and live in the tropical rainforest. This is likely why they make good houseplant subjects, as they do not require the intense light that many other cacti need. There are a good number of species

available for purchase, and are sometimes listed as Mistletoe Cactus.

So, next time we see a *Rhipsalis* in a show, we now know it belongs in a cactus class (if this is separate from the “other” succulents class).



flower

## CONUNDRUMS

**Q. There has been much debate, particularly as related to fruit and vegetables, over the extent to which insect damage should affect placement, since most people are now growing organically. An example would be some scabs on an apple. Scabs really don't affect the nutritional or taste of the produce. Similar situations arise with Lily Beetle damage & Rose issues. Are we still looking for perfection?**

**A.** All other things being equal, a blemish here or there would only be worth a few points off the exhibit. You might also consider how difficult it might be for the exhibitor to find a "perfect specimen". If you have an apple tree, there would be many fruits to choose from; so an exhibitor shouldn't have a problem exhibiting, for example, 3 good apples in a class.

We should also consider that good cultural practices are good cultural practices, regardless of being organic or otherwise. As an example, one cannot effectively stop Japanese beetles from eating roses, except by relentless picking and drowning. Wouldn't it be preferable to reward that practice and not have to deal with a half chewed specimen, since the latter situation means that the grower did not do their job of protecting their rose? In the first days of organic produce, people wouldn't buy the ugly, blemished things offered for sale at exorbitant prices. Organic farmers learned quickly and now produce good looking fruit and vegetables that anyone would buy based on appearance alone. In other words, organic should not be a synonym for lazy.

**Q. Are cut vegetables allowed in a design? i.e. a Brussel sprout cut in half sideways so you can see the shapes inside.**

**A.** OJES does not address cut vegetables, only fruit. The likely reason for the focus on fruit is that fruit is usually soft and sweet, which leads to rapid deterioration in substance/appearance when cut, attraction of insects and odor. When using vegetables, as with any other plant material, the exhibitor needs to ensure the material remains fresh for the duration of the show.

Cut or whole vegetables that appear dried out or otherwise unattractive over time should be replaced as we do with deteriorating flowers and foliage. If necessary, they should be treated (egg white wash etc.) to prevent attracting insects. For a show that is at a society/club meeting and only a few hours in duration, cut vegetables should not be a problem.

**Q. If a schedule includes a class for hanging/trailing succulents as well as a cactus class, where should you place *Rhipsalis*?**

**A.** The cactus class. The plant family (Cactaceae) is more specific than "succulent" or form (trailing) so the cactus class would be more appropriate. If there are multiple entries of trailing cacti, the class could then be subdivided by form. Of course, the classification committee could decide otherwise – all cacti are succulents after all. The important thing is that all the hanging/trailing cacti end up in the same class whether it's the cactus class or the trailing succulent class.

## BE PREPARED *by Judy Zinni*

I have always loved the saying that esteemed judge Bette Hall, now retired, noted during a lecture when I was in floral design school: be thorough, be kind, be gone! I think another "be" to add to the beginning of the list is "be prepared". Just as good Girl Guides are prepared, so are good judges.



The following are items that I take with me when judging; some of you may not see the value in some items, or you may feel other items that are not listed are essential. Here they are:

### **Mandatory:**

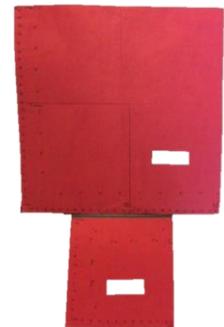
Show schedule with address of show venue, Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards 2003 book (OJES), pen, pencil with an eraser, a cell phone and the show convenor's cell phone number (in the event that you are delayed or having trouble locating the show venue)

### **My Top Essentials:**

Clipboard (mine has a compartment under the writing surface, to conveniently store items), Post-It Notes (to write comments on), measuring tape.

### **Other Items:**

- o small flashlight (in case the lights in the show room are dimmed for a concurrently running presentation – it happens, and to aid inspection of hort specimens)
- o Reference books to refer to when judging hort or to identify specimens
- o Other judging reference books (only as a reference – the schedule is the law of the show, and OJES or another stated standards book as listed by the schedule are the definitive standard)
- o Bottle of water
- o Comfortable shoes
- o Support hose or compression socks (I find these really make a difference at a bigger show)
- o My homemade "miniature" and "small" design space guides (at some flower shows there may not be a floral design passing committee, so the judge may need to determine if designs are within the required dimensions) (these were made using a coloured file folder – I used red for high contrast – then I cut to the appropriate size and noted dimensions by hand)



*Good judging to you all in the upcoming year!*