

Judges' Training and Recertification

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Expertise in almost any field is difficult to maintain in the face of a changing world. Most of the learned professions and technical jobs now require a minimum number of hours of continuing education or recertification or both.

In view of the fact that this change has occurred rapidly within the last few years, this may be an appropriate time to discuss, study and attempt to arrive at a formal method of maintaining and improving the expertise of orchid judges.

There are two aspects of judging to consider. The first is maintaining and increasing our expertise in evaluating orchids; the second is participation.

The maintenance and improvement of expertise is difficult. Whether additional training or recertification would accomplish this is not certain, but it is worth the attempt. The Handbook on Judging and Exhibition specifies a number of hours of scheduled training required, but this is difficult to enforce vigorously at the present time. I would like to suggest an alternative way (or ways) of training. A list of activities, each worth a given number of points, could be generated, and every judge would be required to accumulate a certain number of points on an annual basis. Some of these activities include seminar attendance; seminar participation as a speaker or organizer; out-of-region judging (both AOS and ribbon) at shows or regional judgments; attendance at training sessions at monthly judging in the home region; judging shows (both AOS and ribbon judging) in the home region; and other activities directly related to judging.

There are a number of other activities in which judges participate, that contribute to continuing education. Categories of point accumulation could be defined as activities related to judging, such as those mentioned above and activities that are more self-directed.

The second category could include activities such as speaking at societies and garden clubs; service in elected and appointed capacities in various orchid organizations; visiting large orchid nurseries; and attendance at, or presentation to, general orchid workshops and home study (with a definite limit on the last item). A suggested list of possible items that could be utilized to assess points is offered here. The list is by no means exhaustive and additional suggestions are encouraged and welcomed.

Any recommendations for a major change in one's life is bound to be controversial, and the spirit in which this is offered is for consideration and discussion of the problem - not as a finished product.

The problems that face us, in my opinion, are becoming more noticeable. There are judges who do not participate sufficiently to either maintain their expertise or to be of value to the AOS judging system. In deed, their expertise and judging standards are the same as when they finished their training! By using this point accumulation system, the question of participation will be of less importance, as a certain level of participation will be required in order to accumulate sufficient points during the year in question. This paper offers an approach to correcting deficiencies in the system with the least pain. As representatives of the American Orchid Society and the judging system in particular, we should all strive to perform as capably as we are able. We owe it to the AOS membership we serve.

Category I (Direction application ? Minimum 15 points)

Attending judges' training at monthly judgments ? 1 point each

Attending judges' seminars ? 1 point per unit

Presentation at a judging seminar for training ? 5 points each

Out-of-region monthly judgments or shows ? 2 points each

Exhibit at show ? 2 points each

Individual organizing and chairing a judging seminar ? 3 points

In-region shows ? 1 point each

Group exhibit at show ? 1 point each

Category II (Indirect application ?No minimum requirement)

Presentation to non-judges, such as societies or garden clubs ?1 point each

Service in elected or appointed capacity ? 1 point per year served

Visiting commercial orchid nurseries ? 1 point each per year

Attendance at and/or presentation to general orchid workshops ? 1 point each

or 1 per hour, or per talk

Homestudy ? 1 point for each hour (maximum 5 to apply toward requirement)

Require ___ points per year, of which 15 must be Category I