

PLANNING A SHOW – A BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK

Who Loves Poultry This Much? Do You ??? “Enough to be a help “ ??

WHAT has gone on behind the scenes ?? “There’s more than what meets the eye !”

Who are the people that put on a poultry show? Have you ever walked into a showroom and wondered where to put your bird? Have you ever given a thought of what it takes to set up the room so *someone does know* where you should put your bird? How do they know where to assign your bird a cage? Who writes out the coop tags that go on each and every individual cage? How do the judges know which birds they are going to judge? Have you ever noticed the person walking along with the judge with a clip board in his hand? Do you know what he is doing and why he’s doing it? How do they know where they can find a judge and hire him? Who took the time to set up the cages in an orderly fashion much less the bases that hold the cages and the shavings or wire that the cages set on. What is the person doing behind the desk? Where did the cages come from? Are they owned, borrowed and where do you store all of them? Who is the person that spends the time making up the basic entry form you fill out to return to the show secretary?

- 1 Usually your local poultry club or your local fair sponsors a poultry show. If you enjoy raising and showing poultry it is always nice to join a local club, support them and learn about what it takes to put on a show. These are the people that work so hard to plan and bring together lovers of the poultry fancy. Ask about a membership when you attend a show.
- 2 **Once a year** during a specific meeting of the poultry club or fair, everyone sits down and figures when they want to have their show. Where to borrow cages if the club doesn’t own them, vote on the judges that they would like to invite to judge the show, plan a day to set up the showroom, ask for volunteers to help set up the showroom. They might ask for a person to be superintendent of the show and ask a person to volunteer to be the show secretary. Sometimes the same people have done the superintendent and secretarial job for years and it might be nice to volunteer to help do the paperwork. Who will take over if something unforeseeable happens to either person? Do you know how it’s done? It’s not the easiest job but more than one person in a poultry club should have the knowledge to take the reins if needed. Normally the secretary or superintendent would be happy to teach you. Volunteer your time, that’s what makes a poultry club successful. If you would like to be a part of your local fair or poultry club, contact them and offer to volunteer. They will be pleased to hear from you too. YOU are the poultry club and people like you.

- 3 **The Secretary's Job:** The secretary of the show is the person that sets up the layout for your entry form. Then it is taken to a print shop and copies are made. Once they have been delivered to the print shop she goes back to pick up the finished product. The secretary will make out the envelopes, fold the entry form, stuff it in the envelope, seal the envelope, stick a stamp on the envelope and then make a trip to the post office to mail them out. In the meantime, she is answering her phone, taking down the names and addresses of anyone that calls her to ask for an entry form to be mailed to them. She also is in charge of contacting all the breed clubs asking for a meet at your show. Any idea how many breed clubs there are in the United States?

Once the entry forms have been returned to the secretary, she's opened all those envelopes, sorted them and checked them all for errors that might need to be corrected. Perhaps someone forgot to put the variety of the bird on their form, forgot to mail their entry fee along with the form, forgot to put if the bird is bantam or standard fowl. If this is the case most times she will have to call or write to this person or several persons to get the corrections. Who pays for these calls? The club normally – there goes some of your club monies.

- 4 **The secretary** then sets down, counts the total number of birds entered in the show, looks at every individual entry form and makes a list of the type of birds being shown, in the bantam class, in the large fowl classes, turkeys, ducks, geese, etc and in the youth classes. This information is shared with the superintendent who is in charge of setting up the showroom. The secretary then has to type up a list of exhibitors and assign each of them an exhibitor number. She then makes out a coop tag, for every single entry. On each coop tag she writes in the breed name, the variety of the bird, and the exhibitor number. There is no room for error on these cards so time and concentration must be taken. Once this is done and your secretary has checked and double checked her work, she then sorts all the coop tags into classes. How does she know what bird goes into which class? If she's done this job for year's she's probably memorized them but for the most of us, we refer to the American Poultry Association's Standard of Perfection and the ABA Standard. Once this job is complete the secretary must then make out the judges sheet for each class. She has to once again, list the breed, the variety and the exhibitor number of each bird in the showroom. These are then correlated and at the time of the show, she passes them out to the judge or his clerk so they can begin their jobs. Following several days or weeks of work the information the secretary has correlated is passed on to the show superintendent.

- 5 **The Show Superintendent's Job:** *One* of the superintendent's job is to plan the showroom layout. This person has to know the length of each row, how many cages can fit on each row which means knowing the length of the bantam cages and the large (standard) fowl cages. From the works of the secretary he will know if there are 420 large birds and 640 bantam birds in the open show. He has to figure out where to place the cages all in one room in the order of their respective classes. Depending on the size of the building and the length of each row, he has to figure if they will all fit in a single deck set up or will they have to be double decked. Don't forget, he has to separate the room to fit the youth show area, the turkeys and waterfowl also. This is the just beginning of his job. This is all worked on before he and his volunteers show up at the showroom to begin work. Sound confusing? Once you get to the showroom to set up he usually has the floor plan well planned out. If the superintendent is lucky there are not many changes from year to year on the basic set up of the showroom so he has a well of experience to work with. But there is always that wrench that gets thrown into the works.
- 6 **The day of set up has arrived!** Arrangements have been made by the superintendent to meet his volunteers (you??) at the showroom. Hopefully the volunteers follow through on their commitment and show up to help. They begin by setting up the bases used to set the cages on. More than likely the volunteers and the superintendent have to carry them into the showroom prior to setting up. All of the cages for a poultry show are collapsible, therefore, once the cages have been carried inside from storage then have to be put together. This is a good job for younger folks and seniors that might not be able to do heavy lifting. The cages are then set upon the bases where the superintendent has instructed the volunteers to begin. Once all the cages are set up it's time to put shavings in each individual cage. Then comes the water cups and feed cups. These have to be carried to each cage and set inside for the exhibitor to use when he coops his birds in. Once that is done "Champion Row" is set up and decorated. Work areas have to be set up for the secretary and superintendent, visitors that might have wares to sell, perhaps a raffle table, an area for food and drinks and chairs to relax in, if you're lucky.

- 7 **The superintendent is the boss of the show.** If problems arise, such as sick birds that must be removed from the showroom, the superintendent is the person that handles this problem, which is not always an easy decision to make, but it is his responsibility to ensure the showroom is as safe from communicable diseases as possible. It is the superintendent's responsibility to ensure that all birds shown in his showroom have been certified as flock clean by the NPIP inspectors. It is his responsibility to hire an inspector to be on hand to do a blood check of any birds not flock tested. If, by any chance, there are changes that require being made on a coop tag, it is the superintendent's responsibility to ok this change. Exhibitors must never change a coop tag, they should contact the superintendent and the secretary must be informed of the change!!!!!! It's very hard and **discourteous** to bring a replacement bird to a showroom the day of the show and ask the superintendent and the secretary to change coop tags, move other exhibitors birds around. Think twice before you do. The work caused is very stressful and most times the staff doesn't want to hurt your feeling. Be courteous and don't even think of doing it. Days in advance would be more appropriate, before the showroom is done.
- 8 We all have it happen, that bird comes into feather, is ready to show and the other has gone out of feather. Next time!