

Show 'n Tell 7: Running (away) For Office

Hello. My name is Tim. And I am a rosaholic.

Chorus: Hello, Tim.

I know I'm supposed to talk about what offices I am willing to run for, and I think it is fairly sneaky of the Board to have a Show 'n Tell meeting in order to get the blank spaces on the ballot filled. But I'm going to tell you right up front: I WONT DO IT! And here's the reasons why. In order to be a rose society officer:

1. You have to be nice to people. I have lived seven decades being nice and I am sure tired of it. I don't come to rose society meetings to be nice. I come in order to talk roses, boast a little, show what's growing in the garden, and to look at the pretty girls of fifty or so. Once in office, people think your time is their time. All the fun of being old is taken away. You can't bark at them, needle them, belittle them, or give them false information. You have to be an ambassador of roses. Strange people call you at strange hours and you can't pretend you are the bus station and give them phony departure dates and fares. You can't embarrass the newspaper delivery boy by screaming that you are tired of your paper being late because his ballet lesson ran over. Of course, these days the teamster delivering the paper gets out of his SUV and just decks you with his ballet slippers.

The last time I was president, people started noticing that I wasn't being nice to people early on. I think it was the second day of a very long year.

2. You think funny. What I want to think about is whether the new roses will get mildew early or late or both. Instead, when I watch the news about the earthquake, I wonder whether we lost any members. When the fire occurred at the airport, I wondered if our meeting room was still standing. I actually voted against the school bonds so that our society's model community rose garden wouldn't be plowed under for something as useless as a new high school. Being an officer of a rose society makes your priorities veer sharply from the normal and the respectable to the kind of blood vendettas associated with the Corleone family.

3. You care about money. When it is your own money, you can be a little careless. Like I stopped adding and subtracting in the checkbook ten years ago. When the nice lady from the bank calls, I just tell her the missus is a spendaholic and transfer money from the savings account to make up the difference. With a rose society there is something called a treasurer. She actually asks for receipts for moneys spent. If I kept receipts, I would balance my own stupid checkbook. When it is other people's money, you have to be careful how you spend it. I don't have to be careful how I spend money. I'm a rosarian. I have spent money on sprays, lotions, poultices, plasters, powders, bombs, mists, waxes, and purees—none of which worked. A rosarian is a kid's lollipop waiting to be licked by anyone who mixes Tabasco and olive oil and calls it kickapoo joy juice.

4. You don't have any fun at a meeting. You worry about whether someone has a key to the meeting place. Whether the speaker will show up or get lost at the four level interchange. Whether the refreshments will again be voted the most important event at the meeting. Whether you should take the speaker to dinner and what food intolerances they have. Whether the business meeting should precede the speaker or whether you

run the risk of losing a quorum afterwards. Whether the raffle lady is still sober at the end of the meeting. Whether people will call the raffle an 'opportunity drawing' or risk the wrath of the Attorney General. Whether you will remember that Vilma Banky wants to talk about selling Christmas wreaths at the June meeting. Whether Mae Marsh will be off her meds again and ask ten minute questions of the speaker.

5. You have to go to Board meetings. The Bylaws require that there be at least four meetings a year. Yeah, right. There is a reason that the President is called the Chairman of the Bored and it ain't phonics. You get to listen to old 'Pop' Swizzlestick reminisce about how the society started with just him, and a few others who used to meet in each other's houses and didn't need meetings, agendas, dues, or officers because 'we wuz all just friends.' Of course, he tells this story at every board meeting. And Vinnie Mueslix jabbers on about how if you just chaws your own tobacco and spit on the bugs, you don't have to spray evil petrochemical products and pollute the environment....We still have the Vinnie Muselix Memorial Spittoon and trophy to store between rose shows and the last one occurred eight years ago. But the sad truth is that Board meetings take place at night. The last time I drove at night I wound up on the tarmac at Camarillo and three people tried to board my car for Denver.

I won't drive at night any more. I won't fly to Denver. And I won't run for office. So there.

JD

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