



ACC CRAFT MARKET CHICAGO

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E D I T O R ' S
L E T T E R S

Celebration and a Surprise

IF YOU'RE GOING TO THROW a really big party, it helps to have 1,500 exhibitors and 7,000 buyers on your guest list. And what better occasion to celebrate than having grown and thrived over 20 years of existence as the Buyers Market of American Craft.

It was Wendy Rosen who started the Buyers Market in 1982 and Wendy who orchestrated the festivities during this year's winter show to mark her 20th year as a wholesale craft show promoter. What Wendy didn't know was that a plot was brewing among gallery owners and exhibitors intent on celebrating *her*. For a month, via phone and e-mail, about 30 of them worked out the details to hijack the NICHE Awards on Feb. 17. From the look on Wendy's face as ringleaders Nancy Markoe and Joey Peters, of Nancy Markoe Fine American Crafts, commandeered the ceremony within minutes of its start, it came as a complete—and extraordinarily successful—surprise.



After the coup: Nancy Markoe (left) and Joey Peters pose with an elated Wendy Rosen following the 2002 NICHE Awards.



Izabela Sanchez, left, shows off her new NICHE Award for Fiber: Surface Design. It was a cloak that garnered a top NICHE Award for artist Robert McCandless, center. A jubilant Nancy Goodenough, right, celebrates her award in the enameled metal category.

Three parts tribute and one part roast, exhibitors and gallery owners alike took to the podium in conga-line fashion to propose fitting names for an award to honor the woman who made the Buyers Market happen. The rapid-fire deliveries even included two songs and a wine tasting, capped by the presentation of the Wendy Award by artist Stuart Abelman, who created the elegant glass sculpture especially for the occasion.

The 2002 NICHE Awards presentation did eventually get back on track, with performance artist and emcee Joyce Scott at the podium to honor this year's professional and student winners. In all, it was a fine occasion, filled with love, laughter and lingering memories.

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