

# A Picture-Perfect Designer

*Wedding contest winner turned local celebrity increases profits with her grand-prize gazebo.*

WITHIN THREE WEEKS OF LEARNING she'd won the contest and before she had even received her portable gazebo from B & C Mortensen Wood Products, the grand prize won by floral designer **Carolyn Valenti** in *Florists' Review's* 1999 Picture-Perfect Weddings contest, Ms. Valenti had the gazebo rented for an upcoming wedding. How's that for making the most of her new prop and her new-found celebrity?

## A STAR IS BORN

Not long after *Florists' Review* announced Ms. Valenti as the winner of its first Picture-Perfect



Ms. Valenti's husband and sons set up the beautiful Porta Zebo, graciously donated by our friends at B & C Mortensen Wood Products, so Ms. Valenti could take pictures and begin to promote her newly acquired wedding accessory.

Weddings contest, her local newspaper ran an article on her achievement, emphasizing that she'd won against international competition and had been featured in a well-known, international publication.

Soon after the newspaper story was published, folks all around the Dalton, Mass., area took notice of Ms. Valenti. "Everywhere I went," she said with a laugh, "people stopped to congratulate me." It seemed everyone in the Berkshires had read the article.

And while Ms. Valenti's floral design talents are well-known among the area's wedding facilities and brides-to-be, she thinks the publicity will lend to her credibility. "I've added both the newspaper article and the article from *Florists' Review* to my portfolio to show to prospective clients," Ms. Valenti reports.

And since about half of her clients are from outside the area, many of them will not have read the newspaper article, so presenting it along with the *Florists' Review* coverage may help convince some bridal customers that she's the florist for them.



Brides seek Ms. Valenti, in part, for her signature garden-style, open-flower design work.

## GRAND PRIZE TO PROFITABLE PROP

Although Ms. Valenti plans to rent the beautiful gazebo primarily to her bridal customers, she is considering the possibility of renting it to other floral designers as well. In this case, she'll rent it for a flat fee, which will be pure profit.

However, when she rents the Porta Zebo to her clients, Ms. Valenti will rent it decorated, so the price will include a rental fee, the floral decorations enhancing the Porta Zebo, and the labor to complete the work. Ms. Valenti's first Porta Zebo rental is priced at around \$600. ■