



## Why Quilt Judges Are Not The "Quilt Police"

by Beverly Fine, NQACJ

**Both quilt judges and the "quilt police" can strike fear in your heart. Some think they are one in the same. There are important distinctions.**

**Quilt Police** believe there is only *One Right Way* to do things. They believe rules must be followed. They focus on the less than perfect, rather than the achievements of the quilt-maker. Quilt Police may discredit a quilt with machine quilting, or fusible raw-edge appliqué, or paint as not a "proper quilt." Quilt Police speak their minds without regard to who might be listening.

**Quilt Judges** dedicate themselves to learning many different techniques, trying their hand at as many as possible. They empathize and understand the difficulty in any particular technique. Quilt judges are cheerleaders, urging competitors to work toward their own personal best. Sarah Thornton, writing in *Seven Days in the Art World*, quoted Nick Serota, "Judges themselves are invisible, but they know that their decisions will be keenly felt."

Every quilt judge, perhaps every quiltmaker, can relate to Linda Luggens' joy in discovering that her grandson saw greatness in her work. ❖

## First Place Winner

by Linda Luggen

***I'm not one who talks about awards and ribbons received. I have several I'm proud of, none more than the one received last week.***

It had been a while since I had been into my sewing room. My intent was to just straighten up. I have a quilt on the design wall; I've been struggling with what type of border would be appropriate. Suddenly, something caught my eye.

It was the most beautiful ribbon I have ever been awarded. A pink ribbon with the words "First Place Winner 2010." There was also a note saying, "I love your quilt, Grandma. October 2010. From Dan" My eyes filled with tears. I had never been so moved by any other recognition.

I wrote a thank you e-mail. He replied, "I was bored and I went upstairs to look at your new flooring and

I wandered into your sewing room. I looked at your quilt and, for some reason, I thought it was one of your best. So, I found your scrap box, got your scissors, and made it."

Besides sharing my good fortune, I believe this puts our work into perspective. When we make quilts, we may hope for a big award. The most important reward we receive is the happiness we get in making and sharing them with our loved ones. The same is true in judging. What may not look like a first place winner in competition, is a first place winner in someone's heart. We should treat it as such. ❖



**RIGHT:** Author Linda Luggen with her grandson Dan.

