

THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

**REGIONAL
VICE PRESIDENT
HANDBOOK**

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT HANDBOOK

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Written and Edited by Ronald Mullin

Data Entry by Marilyn R. Harlow

FOREWORD

This Handbook is provided by the AIS to be used as a guide for the Regional Vice President. With twenty-four regions, it is not possible to cover every situation for every region, but it is hoped that this booklet will be helpful to the RVP. It is constructed in such a way as to allow easy revision. It should be the property of the region and should be handed down from one RVP to the next.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in this handbook:

- “RVP” for Regional Vice President
- “AIS” for The American Iris Society
- “JT” for Judges’ Training
- “RYC” for Regional Youth Chair
- “YA” for Youth Advisor

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Written and edited by Ronald Mullin

Data Entry by Marilyn R. Harlow

Contributors: Allen Ensminger, Hilda Crick, Walter Machulak, Shirley Paquet, Carol Ramsey and Ellene Rockwell.

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Contributors who all were serving their regions as RVPs at the time: Joanne King, Bobbie Shepard and Ruth Wilder.

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Revision committee chair and editor: Riley Probst, AIS Director and RVP Counselor

Contributors: Riley Probst; Jean Morris, AIS Director & Youth Chair; Anner Whitehead, AIS Membership Secretary; Fran Evers, past RVP; Jim Morris, past RVP; and Tom Gormley.

October 2010 Revision

Revision committee chair: Rita Gormley, AIS Director and RVP Counselor

Contributors: Tom Gormley, AIS Membership Secretary; Judy Keisling, AIS 1st Vice President and Judges’ Chair; Paul Gossett, Convention Liaison; Jeanne Plank, Immediate President and AIS Policy Chair; Brad Kasparek, AIS Affiliations Chair; Jody Nolin, AIS Affiliates Liaison.

Contents of this Handbook should be revised only under the authority of The American Iris Society Board of Directors.

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**THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY
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INTRODUCTION

The AIS Board of Directors establishes the Regions of the American Iris Society. This group may adjust the regional boundaries from time to time, but such changes are rare. The Regions and their activities are major forces in the development and improvement of the society. Any member of The American Iris Society who resides within the geographic boundaries of a Region is automatically a member of that Region. Only the members of The American Iris Society may be members of a Region. Members of the American Iris Society are the only members of a Region with voting privileges in AIS issues both National and Regional. From the members of each Region, one person is selected every three years to serve as the Regional Vice President of that Region. This person is the executive officer of the Region and is the main link between the members of the Region and the AIS Board of Directors.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide helpful information for the Regional Vice President or any person who is considering serving as an RVP. Problems that are unique to a Region will still arise, but the basic rules and regulations are presented in the following pages along with suggestions and ideas.

To assist the Regional Vice President with planning, an Annual Timetable is provided on the next few pages.

ANNUAL TIMETABLE

JANUARY

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary mails printout to RVP & Membership Secretary, if known, showing the complete listing of Region members as of December 31.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.
- RVP sends letter to delinquents encouraging them to renew.

Judges Training Activities

- Judges appointments commence effective January 1.
- Judges who are in need of training during the year in order to be reappointed as judges should be notified by the RVP so that they will have plenty of time to get the required training.
- Judges who were listed as not having voted a timely ballot during the past year should be reminded by the RVP that they need to be sure to vote on time this year. The RVP might want to delay this notification so that it is nearer the time when the judge will be voting.

Affiliations Activities

- RVP reviews applications for Affiliation as they are received from Region clubs and mails them promptly to the AIS Affiliation Chair.

FEBRUARY

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends list of additions and corrections to the Region membership for January.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

Judges Training Activities

- Delinquent judges are suspended February 15.
- AIS Awards Chair begins mailing Official Ballot to AIS judges beginning with southern Regions.

Bulletin Editor Activities

- February 15 is deadline for material for the April AIS *Bulletin*

Affiliation Activities

- The consolidated Applications for Affiliation and RVP Report forms for each club or society are due to the AIS Affiliation Chair by February 28.

MARCH

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends list of additions and corrections in Region membership for February.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

APRIL

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends Full Regional Membership Report for March.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

AIS Convention Activities

- RVP attends AIS Board of Directors Meeting and other required meetings at the convention. (Convention could be held in April, May or June)

MAY

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends list of additions and corrections in Region membership for April.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

AIS Convention Activities

- RVP attends AIS Board of Directors Meeting and other required meetings at the convention.
(Convention could be held in April, May or June)

Bulletin Editor Activities

- May 15 is deadline for material for July AIS *Bulletin*.

JUNE

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends list of additions and corrections in Region membership for May.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

JULY

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends Full Regional Membership Report for June.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

Judges' Training Activities

- AIS Official Ballot deadline is July 1. Judges voting after this date are counted as having not voted.
- July 31 is end of Judges year for all activity reports.
- AIS Awards Chair provides AIS Judges' Training Chair with a list of judges who voted late or did not vote at all. Those who have failed to vote a timely ballot for the second consecutive year are dropped as AIS judges.
- Activity reports should be mailed to all judges so that needed information can be accumulated by August 1. Apprentice, Garden/Exhibition and Master Judges who have failed to return an Activity Report for the second consecutive year are dropped as AIS judges.

Awards Activities

- Symposium ballots arrive on the AIS website. RVP will begin receiving votes to count.

AUGUST

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends list of additions and corrections in Region membership for July.
- RVPs confirm regional Life Members in writing to AIS Membership Secretary.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

Judges' Training Activities

- July 31 is end of Judges year for all activity reports.
- AIS Chair of Judges mails Judges' Reports to RVP containing information about judges in the Region to the RVP or designated Regional Judges' Training Chair.
- RVP completes information for the following year's appointments.

AIS Bulletin Activities

- August 15 is deadline for material for October AIS *Bulletin*.

SEPTEMBER

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends list of additions and corrections in Region membership for August.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

Judges' Training Activities

- The AIS Judges' Chair is to receive the completed Judges Reports RVP by September 1.
- National Chair of Judges will confirm eligibility for recommendations for judges and make any required changes with the RVP. AIS Judges' Training Chair and AIS Membership Secretary will work together to determine if recommended judges qualify on membership basis.

Awards Activities

- Symposium Ballots are to be received by the RVP no later than September 1.
- Results of Symposium Ballot voting should be in the hands of the appropriate AIS Symposium Chair by October 1 – sooner, if possible.

OCTOBER

RVP Activities

- By October 20th each Region shall select a candidate for RVP annually and the incumbent RVP shall submit that name in writing to the RVP Counselor and to the AIS Secretary for presentation to the AIS Board of Directors.

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends Full Regional Membership Report for September.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

Awards Activities

- Results of Symposium Ballot voting should be in the hands of the appropriate AIS Symposium Chair by no later than October 1.

NOVEMBER

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends list of additions and corrections in Region membership for October.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

Fall AIS Board of Directors Meeting

- RVPs (incumbents and new nominees) should attend AIS Fall Board Meeting.
- AIS Board of Directors normally approves RVP candidate or reappoints nominee.
- RVP appointments become effective.
- AIS Board of Directors approves roster of judges for the next year. Any Region that has not made recommendations will be listed with no judges in the AIS *Bulletin* in January.

AIS Bulletin Activities

- November 15 is the deadline for material for the January *Bulletin*.

DECEMBER

Membership Activities

- AIS Membership Secretary sends list of additions and corrections in Region membership for November.
- RVP sends welcome letter to new members and transfer ins.

Affiliation Activities

- AIS Affiliation Chair mails two forms for use in applying for Affiliation.

SELECTION OF THE REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

At one time the RVP who was in office selected his or her successor. Prior to that, the AIS Board of Directors selected the RVP. As the Regions became better organized and the members became more involved in the operation of AIS, the selection of the RVP became a regional activity.

NOMINATION METHODS

No particular method of choosing an RVP is recommended in this booklet since most Regions have established guidelines. These vary greatly from Region to Region. Robert's Rules of Order Revised lists the following common methods for obtaining candidates for office:

- Nominating committee
- Open nomination or nomination from the floor
- Petition

Nominating Committee

Many Regions use a nominating committee for finding a candidate for RVP. These committee members are appointed by the RVP or elected by region members. The members of the committee are almost as important as the person they choose as the candidate for RVP. Any member of the committee should be familiar with the requirements of the office and should be familiar with the members of the Region who might be considered. These committee members should carefully consider the talents and qualifications of the candidates. For the next three years, the fortunes of the Region will be under the guidance of the candidate chosen. In large Regions, committee members may not be personally acquainted with all the members of the Region who might be suggested to them. Instead of choosing or eliminating a nominee based on the statements of a few people, the committee should learn about the nominee's local club work. Some people work diligently for the local club but have been given little attention on the regional level. Sometimes, a candidate may not work for the local club. The committee members should make sure that the facts available are accurate before deciding that a nominee should be eliminated from consideration. The selection cannot be made in a matter of minutes if the committee wants to find the best available candidate.

Open Nomination

Regions may also obtain candidates from nominations that are presented by members during the general membership meeting if one is held to elect the new RVP and other officers. Open nomination can also be used in conjunction with the candidates presented by the nominating committee if permitted by the regions by-laws.

Petition

Members may also generate a petition to have a particular candidate presented for consideration if permitted by the regions by-laws.

RVP QUALIFICATIONS

Any person under consideration should have been a **member** of The American Iris Society for **at least five years**. Since the RVP will be doing AIS work, it is important that this minimum membership requirement be followed.

Perhaps more important than the number of years is the amount of involvement in activities which has indicated an ability to perform adequately. The candidate should be aware of the tasks, duties and responsibilities for which the RVP is responsible. It is always an honor to be asked and some people will be flattered into accepting the job whether they know what will be expected of them or not. Any person under consideration should have the following capabilities:

- An ability to perform **administratively** should be evident. This skill can be evaluated in those people who have served as club president, regional officer, show chair, or in other jobs which require organization, tact, and delegation of duties.
- One of the most important qualities in a potential RVP is a **willingness to serve**. This not only includes the desire to hold office, but far more importantly, a dedication to serving the Region and AIS. Many people are willing to take a job, but those who put service above self-interest are the kind of people who should be sought.
- Any **leader** is successful only if he has the support of those he serves. To earn this support, one must develop a rapport with Region members. Those who select a candidate for RVP should keep in mind that the person selected should be friendly, of even temperament, and willing to serve all members of the Region.
- There are many occasions when the RVP will be called upon to communicate with a variety of people. The ability to **communicate in writing and verbally** is a very important attribute that will help the RVP to be successful. However, not everyone is a good speaker or letter writer, but **true sincerity** shows when the members have a chance to meet the RVP. Being natural, enthusiastic and never afraid to ask for help from those with the needed knowledge will go a long way to making an RVP successful.
- **Cooperation** is another keynote to success. The RVP who organizes the Region and gets other people involved is moving in the right direction. The selection of people for the various jobs should be based on their ability and willingness to perform. One who is just seeking a "title" may not be a wise choice.
- The RVP will have some setbacks during his/her administration, so the candidate should be a person who is capable of **accepting** these **setbacks graciously**. Those who hold grudges, refuse to speak to those who have disagreed with them, feel superior to others, or like or dislike members because someone else likes or dislikes them already have many difficulties to overcome. Starting with such a deficiency might prove too much to overcome.

Since the RVP is the person who recommends judges and is responsible for seeing that the national rules are enforced, it is highly recommended that the person selected be an **AIS judge**. While not a mandatory requirement, an accredited judge definitely has an advantage over a non-judge. In any event, an RVP must have a basic knowledge of AIS rules for judges and be dedicated to their enforcement.

The RVP is also the main link between the AIS and the Region. It is important that the candidate have the ability and willingness to attend the annual **AIS National Convention** held in the spring and the **AIS Board of Directors Meeting** held in the fall. Attendance at the Board of Directors meetings and various other meetings held during the convention keep the Region informed about AIS policy and direction and the AIS informed of issues that may arise in the Region that require AIS input.

GEOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS

Sometimes geographic restrictions are placed on the selection of an RVP. Some Regions require that the office of RVP be rotated among the states in the Region. Members should be careful not to make these restrictions so rigid that a less qualified RVP might be chosen just because no truly qualified candidate is available in a designated locale. Often a very active area will have many qualified candidates. It is also not advocated that members from one area be chosen only because of their intense interest. However, restrictions should be made carefully when making residency in a state or other geographic area criteria in the selection of an RVP. The qualifications of the candidate are more important than his or her address.

APPOINTMENT AND TERM OF OFFICE

Each Region shall select a candidate for RVP annually and the incumbent RVP shall submit that name in writing to the RVP Counselor for presentation to the AIS Board of Directors. This notification should reach before October 20. The nominee's name will be presented to the Board of Directors at the November meeting. As a general rule, the nominee of the Region is approved. The AIS Board prefers to leave the selection to the Region's members, and rejection of the nominee would be done only under extreme circumstances.

AIS Regional Vice Presidents shall be appointed annually by the AIS Board of Directors at its fall meeting. The term of office for a Regional Vice President is for one year beginning at the date of appointment, and no AIS Regional Vice President shall serve more than three successive years. The initial appointment term of office is one year; but with two re-appointments, which usually occur, it may extend the entire continuous terms to three years. Eligibility to return to office for one who has served three successive years as an AIS Regional Vice President is reinstated after the individual has been out of that office for one year.

Members of the Region may request that an RVP not be re-appointed. Such an action requires documented evidence of detrimental acts, signed by members of the Region or by regional officers acting on behalf of the Region. If an RVP resigns or is unable to serve, the Region members will be asked to nominate a replacement. The term of an RVP who does not pay AIS dues ends automatically. The preferred policy for dealing with the selection or removal of an RVP is for the Region to have very clear guidelines, in writing, which detail the steps to be followed.

THE RVP AND AIS DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The first duty of an RVP is promotion of AIS. This is best accomplished by an enthusiasm for the organization. Enthusiasm is contagious and the RVP who is dedicated to doing all that is possible in selling AIS to Region members has made his or her job easier.

The job of the RVP is very important to the advancement of the Region and AIS. No handbook can answer every question and it should be remembered that this is merely a guide. The Directors of AIS are available at all times to help with problems that can arise. These people have been involved in AIS work long enough to have encountered most problems that arise within a Region. The best advice for an RVP is not to make exceptions. The minute an exception is made regarding the rules in one situation, another person will demand an exception be made in his or her situation. AIS rules are not so stringent that the dedicated member cannot follow them. In extenuating circumstances, AIS provides relief for the person who really is unable to complete requirements. This should be the decision of the AIS Board of Directors. It is difficult to imagine the volume of work that is given to some of the officers of AIS. One must remember that these people do AIS work in addition to jobs, home duties and family responsibilities. The RVP should not expect too much from the parent organization and its volunteer workers. He or she is reminded that his or her Region is a part of that organization and exists to PROMOTE AIS, not to be promoted by AIS. Resources available to AIS are not unlimited, so Regions should do all they can to save money for the parent organization. Some Regions make financial contributions to AIS, while others are unable to do this. While AIS does not expect financial donations from Regions without means to do so, neither should some Regions expect others to pay for providing them with supplies, etc. The RVP should work toward making his Region self-sufficient.

There will be numerous occasions when the RVP will need to interact with AIS representatives-officers, directors and chairs. The RVP plays a significant role in the American Iris Society and consequently has certain responsibilities that coincide with this role. The following pages identify the interactions that occur between the RVP and these AIS representatives.

AFFILIATIONS CHAIR AND THE RVP

Local iris garden clubs within a Region can request to become affiliated with AIS and the Region in which they reside. These clubs are known as Affiliates. There are certain criteria that a local club must meet before it can become an Affiliate. The RVP plays a significant role in verifying that the local club meets the specified criteria. It is also the responsibility of the RVP to encourage affiliation of appropriate local garden clubs, as this is an excellent way to promote membership, AIS, the Region and iris in general.

Affiliation with the American Iris Society is based on a calendar year and expires on December 31 of each year. The affiliation process starts during December with membership verification being completed in January and February.

Annual Affiliation Process

At the **end of each year**, the AIS Affiliations Chair will send two forms for each local club in the Region to the RVP.

Application for Affiliation with the AIS. This form is completed by the local club. There is one form for each club. When they are received from the Affiliations Chair, the RVP sends one to the President of each local club. The presidents of the local clubs return these completed forms to the RVP along with a list of the local club's members. The RVP should request that all members be listed exactly as they appear on the AIS membership list. It is impossible to know, for instance, if Sarah Smith is the Mrs. John Smith listed on the membership list. (Note: The local club

membership list is not required if the local club is opting to pay the \$50 affiliation fee instead of meeting the AIS membership requirement.) The deadline for returning applications to the RVP is **February 15** of each year.

RVP Report to the Affiliations Chair. This is completed by the RVP. When the Application for Affiliation forms are returned by the local club presidents, the RVP must verify that all of the officers of a club requesting affiliation are members of AIS. He or she must also verify that the members on the local club's membership list have their AIS membership up to date as reported by the local club president. Upon verifying this information using the membership list provide by the AIS Membership Secretary, the RVP completes the RVP Report to the Affiliations Chair and returns it along with the completed Applications for Affiliation to the Affiliations Chair. It is **not** necessary to send the local club membership lists. This process often involves a significant amount of communication between the RVP, the local club presidents and the AIS Membership Secretary. These applications must then be sent to the AIS Affiliations Chair by **February 28**. This allows time to clear up any questions that may arise before final approval of the affiliate application.

Check your AIS membership status: Need to know your membership expiration date? Need to lookup the expiration date for club members or your Region's members for Affiliation? Easy and quick. Please go to: www.aislookup.org

When a club has been approved for affiliation, the AIS Affiliation Chair sends a notice to the club. Notices are also sent to the RVP, the AIS Membership Secretary and the AIS Exhibitions Chair. A list of approved affiliates for the year is listed in the July AIS *Bulletin*. The Affiliates Chair reports on them by Region at the Spring AIS Board Meeting.

Rules of Affiliation

In 1997 the AIS Board confirmed the following requirements for affiliation with AIS:

- All officers of the local club must be current members of AIS.
- Any officer whose membership expires shall cause the club to lose affiliation for the remainder of the year.
- The club must participate in the AIS system of registration and awards and must adhere to AIS show rules.
- Affiliation fee of \$50 (check payable to AIS)
 - Fee waived if there are at least 10 AIS members and 50% AIS membership
 - Fee waived if 40 or over AIS members
 - Fee waived the first-year for a new affiliate

At this same time in 1997, the AIS Board eliminated the minimum requirement that an Iris Club needs at least 10 AIS members to be an Affiliate.

NOTE: An AIS Youth member is a full member with all the rights and privileges afforded adult members.

Ongoing Changes during the Year

It is necessary that changes in officers of affiliates be reported to the RVP by the local club. The RVP, in turn, reports these changes to the **AIS Membership Secretary** and the **AIS Affiliations Chair**. It is an AIS rule that the club's copy of the AIS *Bulletin* must be sent to the president of the local club. This is one reason that it is very important that the list of officers is always current. The RVP should also pay careful attention to whether the officers of an affiliated club are maintaining AIS membership as required by the rules of affiliation in AIS. When a club president does not pay dues before the deletion date, the club is

automatically dropped from the list of affiliated clubs. Such a deletion could mean that the club would be ineligible for reinstatement for a full year.

Importance of Affiliation

The RVP should encourage clubs to affiliate with AIS. He or she should know the values of such affiliation to the club and to the Region. Affiliated clubs tend to promote AIS and thus the Region benefits through increased membership and increased iris activity. Members of affiliates are also better informed about what is happening in the iris world, and they tend to become more involved in regional and national activities. RVPs are encouraged to organize and support affiliates in all major population centers in the Region. This will make the experience of irising more interesting to AIS members and will encourage more activities within that area. It will also help to build AIS membership and this benefits everyone.

Benefits of Affiliation

Three very important benefits of affiliation are as follows:

- The club will receive a set of AIS show medals each year (one silver and one bronze) for each approved show held. Rules for staging exhibitions are specified in the AIS Judges' Handbook.
- The club will receive a set of AIS Youth show medals each year (one youth silver and one youth bronze) for each approved show held as long as the minimum youth exhibitor/entries requirements are met. These requirements are specified in the AIS Judges' Handbook.
- Affiliate clubs are entitled to one free set of rental of slide sets from the Iris Program Resources (Slides & Digital) Chair each year. The rules for ordering slides are listed on the AIS website.

AWARDS SYSTEM AND THE RVP

The RVP is a vital part of the AIS awards system at two different times during the year. First, he or she reminds judges to vote the Official Ballot and informs them of the procedure to follow if they do not receive a ballot. Second, he or she receives, tabulates and reports the AIS Tall Bearded Symposium results from the Region.

Official Ballot

The AIS Awards Chair mails the Official Ballot to all the judges in early spring. These ballots are to be returned to the AIS Awards Chair or designee by **July 1**. If a judge does not receive a ballot or misplaces it, a duplicate can be provided by the **AIS Awards Chair**. The judge himself must make application for the duplicate ballot. Failure to request a duplicate means that the judge is counted as not having voted for that year. Should this be the second year in which no vote is recorded for that judge, he or she is dismissed as an AIS judge. For this reason, the RVP must be sure that all judges in the Region are aware of the submission deadline and the rules for obtaining duplicate ballots.

Apprentice judges receive copies of the ballot that are marked "Void. " Apprentices should be aware that these are for study only. The RVP should be able to answer their questions about the ballot and its purpose in their apprentice training activities. The RVP must have thorough knowledge of the rules for judges as they appear in the Handbook for Judges.

AIS Tall Bearded Symposium Ballot

The AIS Tall Bearded Symposium Ballot will be posted on the AIS Website and all AIS members are encouraged to participate. RVPs are asked to make sure all Affiliates are aware of where this ballot is to be found and print necessary copies for their members. A notice will be printed in the AIS Bulletin so all members will have access to this information.

Instructions on the website state that the ballot indicating is to be returned to the RVP of the Region in which the member resides. When the RVP receives these ballots he or she is required to tabulate these votes as quickly and as carefully as possible and report the results in a timely manner to the **AIS Symposium Chair** or designee. An RVP who fails to report the results of voting in his or her Region has excluded the Region members from having a voice in the choosing of the most popular tall bearded irises. The deadline for the RVP to receive Symposium Ballots from members is **September 1**. Generally, the RVP waits a few days for late arrivals that were postmarked by the deadline. The results of Symposium Ballot voting should be reported to the Symposium Chair by **October 1**--sooner, if possible. The RVP may want to send the regional results to the regional editor for printing in the regional publication.

All memberships that receive a symposium ballot are eligible to vote it. This includes not only memberships belonging to persons, but also memberships belonging to affiliates, clubs and libraries.

Without the help of the RVP, the awards structure of AIS suffers, particularly in the case of the Tall Bearded Symposium Ballot.

BULLETIN EDITOR AND THE RVP

Regional Newsletter and Potential Bulletin Writers

Regions with regional newsletters or bulletins are encouraged to send complimentary copies of their regional publication to all AIS Officers and Board Members to keep them informed of happenings in the regions. Particularly the *AIS Bulletin* editor needs a copy to assist him or her in locating people who are qualified to write articles for the *AIS Bulletin*. If the RVP knows of some person who is highly qualified, he or she might suggest that the *AIS Bulletin* editor contact that person to write an article.

Obituaries and Memoriums

The *AIS Bulletin* publishes obituaries for persons whose leadership and dedication to the ideals of the Society are of genuine and obvious distinction. Among such persons are: RVP's; hybridizers who have received at least three Awards of Merit (AM) or one higher award; and Directors and Officers of AIS. If such a person resided within a particular RVP's Region at the time of death, it is helpful for the RVP to notify the *AIS Bulletin* editor. The Editor of the *Bulletin* has discretion to edit all obituaries for length and may publish an obituary for a prominent irisarian who does not meet the criteria stated above. Members not meeting these requirements are listed by name only. If desired, space may be purchased at the then current rates of publication of an obituary for person(s) not meeting these criteria. The paid obituary will carry the printed statement "Paid for by friends of"

The AIS Membership Secretary informs the *Bulletin* Editor of deceased members so it is important that the RVP inform the Membership Secretary when any member passes away.

Missing Bulletins

At times, a member will fail to receive a copy of the *AIS Bulletin*. If that person is a member of AIS in good standing, the RVP should advise him or her to contact the AIS Membership Secretary and request a new *Bulletin*. Contacting the Editor merely delays the process. *Bulletins* that are returned by the Post Office are sent to the AIS Membership Secretary. Returned *Bulletins* always cost the Society money. All members should be reminded to keep the AIS Membership Secretary informed of any change in address.

CONVENTION LIAISON AND THE RVP

Should a convention be scheduled within the Region during an RVP's term, or if one is scheduled soon after his or her term ends, it is the RVP's duty to keep the AIS Convention Liaison informed regarding scheduling, hotel and other pertinent information.

The year before the convention, the Board of Directors should have a schedule of planned meetings so that this may be reviewed to see that everything has been scheduled that needs to be. The AIS Convention Handbook gives full details on the operation of a convention. A copy of the AIS Convention Handbook can be obtained from the AIS Storefront or the AIS Convention Liaison person and/or downloaded from the AIS Web Site under Convention/Activities, AIS Conventions.

EXHIBITIONS CHAIR AND THE RVP

The Exhibitions Committee Chairs are responsible for approving show schedules, filling orders for show supplies, receiving show reports, and sending out medals and exhibition certificates. It is the responsibility of the RVP to assist the Region's affiliate clubs to comply with all AIS show rules.

Show Schedules

Any AIS sanctioned show's schedule must be pre-approved by the AIS Exhibitions Chair designated to approve Show Schedules. If a show schedule is submitted that does not meet AIS regulations, the schedule will be returned and the club needs to have time to revise it before it is distributed to the members. The key is to start this process early and the RVP should encourage all affiliates and their show chairs the importance of doing so. Remember the person responsible for approving show schedules is a volunteer and receives an enormous amount of show schedules each year that require review and approval.

Show Supplies

Show supplies are ordered from the AIS Exhibitions Committee Chair responsible for Show Supplies. When a show is approved, the sponsoring organization will receive a Show Supply Order form from the Exhibitions Committee Show Schedules Chair..

Show Reports

The club sponsoring the show is responsible for sending the report with the show results to the AIS Exhibitions Committee Chair designed to receive show reports so the results of all the shows can be compiled and published on the AIS website. A copy should also be sent to the RVP. The RVP should urge show Chairs to send Show Reports immediately after the show. The importance of legibility in these reports should be stressed. They should be typed or written in legible handwriting. Accuracy is vital on seedling numbers, names of winners, etc. If the AIS Show Reports Chair requests additional information, the RVP should always respond in a timely manner.

Show Awards

After receiving the show report the AIS Exhibitions Committee Chair who received the show report returns the appropriate medals and certificates to the sponsoring club to be presented to the winning exhibitors.

JUDGES' TRAINING AND THE RVP

Responsibility of the RVP to AIS

The RVP plays an important role in respect to AIS Judges, as he or she is the person who recommends judges along with the Regional Judges Training Chair and both are responsible for seeing that the national rules are enforced. This is a significant responsibility and an RVP must have a basic knowledge of AIS rules for judges and be dedicated to their enforcement. The RVP and Regional Judges' Training Chair must be sure that all judges meet the AIS standards. The RVP has significant interaction with the AIS Judges' Training Chair if he or she chooses to do this job.

Appointment of a Regional Judges' Training Chair

A RVP may appoint a regional Judges' Training Chair, which is an acceptable alternative. If this alternative approach is selected it is still the RVP's ultimate responsibility to make sure that the Region complies with AIS rules and regulations pertaining to judges. The selection of the regional Judge's Training Chair should be carefully considered and a qualified and responsible person selected should the RVP choose to delegate this responsibility. The selected person should of course be an accredited AIS judge. He or she should be a person who keeps up with the latest AIS rules concerning judges and their training and one with whom the RVP can communicate. The maintenance of training records requires administrative ability and this should also be considered when appointing this chair.

Promoting and Encouraging the Region's Judges

Both the RVP and regional Judges' Training Chair should make sure that all judges and prospective judges understand their duties and responsibilities. The rules should be given to all judges and changes should be added when necessary, especially if the Region has more requirements than AIS does. If the Region does have additional requirements, a copy of those requirements must be supplied to the national Judges' Training Chair.

Both the RVP and the regional Judges' Training Chair should identify members within the Region who have the interest and are willing to make the commitment to become an AIS judge. The individual identified should own a copy of the most recent Handbook for Judges, have a garden, be free to travel and able to afford the position of judge. Once identified the individuals should be encouraged to pursue becoming an AIS judge.

Classification and Eligibility Requirements of Judges

The American Iris Society has several different classifications for judges. A member is eligible to be named as an apprentice judge after he or she has completed three years of consecutive AIS membership. This is based on a calendar year since all appointments are effective on January 1. A member, who has a "join" date of January 2007, will be eligible for appointment as of January 1, 2010. A person, who has a join date of July 1, 2007, will not be eligible for appointment until January 1, 2011; a July 1, 2007 "join date means eligibility may begin on January 1, 2008. Certainly, no RVP would recommend a judge unless certain requirements had been fulfilled before the time of the recommendation. The AIS Handbook for Judges should be reviewed for rules that should be followed by anyone who aspires to become an apprentice judge

The first appointment for a judge is as an **Apprentice**. If the Apprentice can complete the AIS requirements and any extra requirements made by the Region within one year, he or she may be recommended as a Garden/Exhibition Judge. An Apprentice Judge has three years in which to complete the Apprentice requirements. One who has not completed the requirements within that time is deleted from the list of judges

The second level for a judge is the **Garden/Exhibition** Judge status. These are the people who do the bulk of the judging in The American Iris Society. These judges must receive 5 hours of training which must include at least 2 hours of in-garden training at an AIS approved school each three year period and must return an Activity Report and vote the official ballot at least every other year. Failure to return a timely Activity Report and/or vote the Official Ballot for two consecutive years results in immediate dismissal as a judge.

After accumulating 15 years of service, the judge becomes a **Master** Judge. The 15-year timetable for becoming a Master Judge begins as soon as the member is approved as an Apprentice Judge. This person has all the same duties as the Garden/Exhibition Judge. This judge must receive three hours of training which must include at least 1 hour of in-garden training at an AIS approved school every three year

period. The only way this credit can be earned is by attending an AIS approved school either as a student or as an instructor. The Master Judge may tutor an Apprentice Judge. However, the training of an Apprentice does not count toward the requirement of three hours training for the Master Judge. The Master Judge is required to return a timely Activity Report and vote the official ballot at least every other year. Failure to return a timely Activity Report and/or vote the Official Ballot for two consecutive years results in immediate dismissal as a judge. A Master Judge may request to be classified as a Retired Judge at any time.

A **Retired** Judge does not receive an Official Ballot. Retired Judge may not judge in an accredited show, nor may a retired judge present a for-credit judges training course or tutor apprentices. A Retired Judge may choose to return to the status of Master Judge. To make this change, the judge must complete any requirements that are currently in effect for the Master Judge. A review of the AIS Handbook for Judges or contacting the AIS Judges' Training Chair will help the RVP to determine what steps to take for this change of status.

Emeritus Judges may be appointed by the AIS Board of Directors as special recognition for outstanding service to AIS. They may vote the Official Ballot, judge at shows, conduct judging schools, tutor apprentices or do any of the other things done by Garden/Exhibition and Master Judges. Emeritus Judges are not required to return Activity Reports, vote the official ballot or to attend school in order to maintain their status as a judge.

Appointment and Approval Process

The AIS Judges' Chair is to receive the next year's recommendations by September 1 of each year; therefore, the activity reports must have been returned in advance of this date. A year's training is determined from August 1 to July 31 since time is required to complete the work involved in the presentation of recommendations to the AIS Board of Directors in early November. The Board approves or disapproves judges at this meeting and at no other time during the year. Judges appointments are for one year except for Retired and Emeritus Judges who keep their status by maintaining membership in AIS. This appointment commences January 1 of the following year.

The regional Chair and RVP must review the records and recommend the judges for reappointment. Only the RVP may make these recommendations, but this report from the Chair is important in making the final decision. The RVP should be guided solely by the rules of AIS in determining who is and is not eligible for reappointment. A trainee or apprentice who does not complete the requirements in the allowed time must be deleted. Any Garden/Exhibition Judge or Master Judge who does not fulfill the training requirements for their status in any three-year period is dismissed.

The regional Chair has a very responsible job, and it involves great detail. The RVP and the regional Chair are a team of great importance to the quality of the AIS Judges' Training Program. Both should be sure that all regional judges are in compliance with the rules set forth in the AIS Handbook for Judges. Only after the AIS Board of Directors meeting in November are any changes in the judges' roster official.

Notification of Appointments and Changes of Status

The RVP should withhold notification of changes until this official action has been taken. Both the RVP and regional Chair should carefully review the minutes of the AIS Board meeting to be aware of changes which might need to be made in Region rules. When a question arises, the proper AIS official should be contacted for an interpretation before action is taken.

Training School Implementation, Course Approval and Tutoring

The RVP and regional Judges' Training Chair work together to establish procedures for implementing the judges' training program. The RVP and the regional Chair should review the records and plan schools to meet the needs of the Region's judges. All schools in the Region are scheduled through the RVP and regional Chair. Any subject matter that is covered in the Judges' Handbook is acceptable, but certainly no slide programs, hybridizing programs or cultivation programs would be acceptable subjects unless used to support the material in the Judges' Handbook. The schools should be planned and the judges notified well in advance of the actual event.

All schools scheduled within the Region must have RVP approval. For such approval to be given the sponsoring person or organization must provide a list of those attending and receiving credit, the credit received and a copy of tests. This information should be sent to the regional Chair of Judges or the RVP depending on how the Region is organized for receiving of such information. The regional officer forwards the list of attendees, date and location of the training, and a copy of the test to the national AIS Judges' Chair. This is done immediately after the school is held. If some in attendance do not receive the maximum number of hours available, be sure to indicate this.

The Region should supply report forms for tutoring received by apprentices. Only apprentice judges are tutored, and this is on a one on one basis for garden judging and show judging. An apprentice is any person listed as such in the official list of AIS Judges for the current year as posted on the AIS website. Family members may not tutor apprentices at a show or in the garden. It is the duty of the RVP or regional Judge's Training Chair to see that this type of credit is never given. The forms for reporting tutoring should provide space for the names of all judges on the panel when an apprentice works a show. This means only those judges with whom the apprentice worked, not every judge working at the show.

The only way an accredited judge can receive credit for one-on-one training, other than in tutoring an apprentice, is with the advance approval of the RVP and the national Chair of Judges. This would be done only under the most extreme circumstances. The RVP or regional Chair should consult the national Chair of Judges before giving approval.

Training Records

Although the Region is in charge of its judges' training program, it is an AIS function. The AIS Board of Directors appoints judges after recommendation by the RVP. Records are of the utmost importance and the RVP and/or the regional Judges' Training Chair must work together to see that everything is in order before a member is recommended as a judge, whether it be apprentice or accredited. All information pertaining to a judge's training should be the regional Judges' Training Chair records. This Chair must keep all of the records from the time of the individual's admittance to the judges' program. The Judges' Training Chair must make sure that all the files are complete and that forms used for training and for reports are available. The judge's name must be listed exactly as it appears on the AIS membership list.

The regional Judges' Chair and the RVP should stress how important it is that each judge keeps his or her own records of training received. A page for this purpose has been added to the most recent edition of the AIS Judges' Handbook to help the judge maintain these records. Additional pages should be added as necessary. Since the Handbook should be taken to any school, the information can be added at the time of the school and this will eliminate the chance of forgetting a school attended when making reports.

The regional Chair must stress it is the judge's duty to provide the regional Chair with information on tutoring administered and schools attended outside the Region.

No records should be destroyed except in the case of the demise of the judge since many judges return to the program after having resigned or having been dismissed. A copy of any school roster should be sent to

the national Chair immediately after the school so that national records will be up-to-date also. These reports must include subject, instructor, location, date and hours of credit.

If a judge moves to another region, it is the Regional Judges' Training Chair's responsibility to transfer all of his or her training records to the Regional Judges' Training Chair in the new region.

When a judge from another region attends Judges' Training in the region, The Regional Judges' Training Chair also has the responsibility of providing information about the training, including, date, instructor, and topic to Regional Judges' Training Chair(s) in the applicable region(s).

The Official Ballot

Voting the Official Ballot is one of the most important functions a judge performs. While the RVP does not distribute or tally the results of these ballots, he or she should stress the importance of this activity to every judge within the Region. Failure to vote the ballot for two consecutive years is an automatic disqualification of the judge. Along with encouraging the voting of the ballot, the RVP should stress the importance of growing and visiting gardens within the Region where recent introductions and seedlings can be observed over a period of years. Judges need to understand the importance of their responsibility to maintain familiarity with iris that are likely to appear on the ballot.

Annual Judges' Activity Report

The annual activity report is to be sent to all judges by either the RVP or the regional Chair. This report is a national requirement, and failure to return it for two consecutive years is grounds for dismissal. These reports are to be considered confidential to the RVP and the regional Judges' Training Chair. All Apprentice, Garden/Exhibition, and Master judges are required to return the report. Retired and Emeritus judges are not required to do so, but their participation should be encouraged. A legitimate excuse may be acceptable when a report is not returned, but this determination must be approved by the AIS Judges' Chair. Activity reports are from August 1 through July 31.

Annual Training Reminder

In January of each year, all judges should be reminded of their need for training and their need to vote the AIS Ballot for the year by the RVP and/or the regional Judges' Training Chair. Once they have been notified, there should be no excuse for not fulfilling the requirements, and the judge should be dismissed if he or she fails to do so.

Reasons A Judge May Be Suspended

Suspension Due to Failure to Pay Dues. One of the most important things a judge must do to maintain his or her status as a judge is to be sure there is no lapse in AIS membership – even for a day. The AIS Membership Secretary notifies the AIS Judges' Training Chair of any judges whose dues are delinquent and the AIS Chair immediately suspends those judges. If dues are paid before the deadline, the judge is returned to the roster; if not, the judge's name is deleted. Master and Emeritus judges may be returned to the roster upon payment of dues. Other judges cannot be reinstated for three years after they have been deleted from the membership list. Judges do not lose their years of service earned before the deletion, and after their return to the program they will start earning years of credit again. This is important, as after fifteen years of service, a judge is eligible for the status of Master Judge.

Suspension Due to Failure to Vote the Ballot. The AIS Awards Chair notifies the Judges' Chair of those judges who did not vote the Official Ballot. The AIS Chair automatically deletes any judge who has not voted for two consecutive years. The AIS Chair notifies the RVP of this dismissal at the time when recommendations for the next year are due, and the RVP or the regional Judges' Training Chair should immediately notify the judge in question. A judge who is dismissed for failure to vote for two

consecutive years may be recommended for reinstatement by the RVP under the guidelines set forth in the Judges' Handbook. This may be done only after a lapse of one year.

Suspension for Other Reasons. All judges being dismissed for other reasons must also be notified so that they are aware of the deletion before the January *Bulletin* is published.

The AIS Judges' Training Calendar:

January/February

- All judge appointments approved at the fall AIS Board of Directors meeting begin on January 1.
- Notify judges who will need training during the year.
- Mail blank Activity Reports to judges.
- Contact Affiliates regarding their plans to provide judges' training during the year. Secure information and send it to the AIS Judge's Chair for approval.

June/July

- Remind judges to vote their Official Ballot to be postmarked no later than July 1.
- Remind judges to complete and submit their Activity Report to be postmarked no later than August 1.

August/September

- AIS Judges' Chair sends an Annual Training Report for all judges and apprentices, along with copies of blank Advancement Forms, to the RVP or, if designated, to the Regional Judges' Training Chair. The completed forms are to be returned to the AIS Judges' Chair by Sept. 1.

October/November

- Judges are approved by AIS Board of Directors at their fall meeting in November. Term to begin on January 1 of the following year.
- AIS Judges' Training Chair will notify the RVP or regional Judges' Training Chair of those judges who failed to vote the official ballot and who are being dropped as AIS judges. RVP or regional Judges' Training Chair contacts these judges informing them of the situation.
- RVP sends letters of congratulations to those judges who have had a change of status. When notification of approval is received from AIS. Never send such a letter until it is certain that the advancement has been approved officially. A letter goes a long way toward encouraging a newly appointed Apprentice or someone who has just received their Garden/Exhibition Judge status. A letter can also be a positive acknowledgment of the many years of service and contributions made by a Master or Emeritus judge.

Ongoing activities

- Secure and maintain training records on the Region's judges.
- Send judges training session information to the AIS Judges' Training Chair.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY AND THE RVP

The AIS Membership Secretary maintains the official records that inform and support activity in all AIS departments. It is of paramount importance both to the Society and the Regions thereof that these records be kept as current and accurate as possible. The RVP and the AIS Membership Secretary are partners in this crucial endeavor, and each benefits from this partnership.

Reports

To facilitate accurate record keeping within the Region, the AIS Membership Secretary will provide the RVP with a complete *Full Regional Membership Report* four times each year. At the end of December, March, June, and September. This report, generated from the AIS membership files, will include information on every member within the Region. Then, at the end of each calendar month the RVP will receive an *Additions and Corrections Report* which will reflect changes in the AIS records for that Region during the preceding month. These changes will include changes of address, name changes, names of

members who have requested that their memberships be canceled, transfers of members into the Region, and any other alterations which impact the regional record. This report will also include the names of all new or reinstated AIS members. Reinstated members are previous members who have rejoined AIS. If the RVP observes factual errors, omissions, ambiguities, or inconsistencies in the reports received from the AIS Membership Office, these should be reported to the Membership Secretary promptly

Maintaining Regional Records

The information on the monthly *Additions and Corrections Report* should be entered into the *Full Regional Membership Report* immediately so that at all times the RVP has a current record of the status of all AIS members in his or her Region. The edited and annotated *Report* should be retained until superseded by the next *Full Regional Membership Report*, at which point it may be archived or discarded as provided by applicable regional by-laws.

Informing Regional Departments

It is the duty of the RVP to ensure that all relevant persons within the Region receive the updated information provided monthly by the AIS Membership Secretary so that regional activities and the Region's interactions with AIS departments will continue to run smoothly. The Editor of the regional publication must receive the information so new members may be welcomed in print and added to the mailing list. The regional Membership Chair must be informed so that his or her records may be kept current. The regional Judges' Chair must be informed so that changes can be made in the regional Judges' Roster. The regional Youth Chair must be informed so that the young may receive a special welcome. It is therefore imperative that the RVP who receives information from AIS distribute it promptly to officials within the Region.

Reporting Regional Changes to AIS

It is essential that all changes of relevant member information which become known to the RVP be brought immediately to the attention of the AIS Membership Secretary so *Bulletins* will not be mailed to wrong addresses or to the deceased, so the Membership Secretary can inform the *Bulletin* Editor about the death of AIS members, and so AIS membership statistics will at all times accurately reflect AIS membership realities. Therefore, the RVP should encourage regional officials and officers of local Affiliates to report changes in member information to the RVP so that these changes can be forwarded to the AIS Membership Secretary, thereby insuring that the AIS records and all the reports and statistics generated from them for the Region and for AIS will exhibit a high degree of accuracy. Address changes received from returned regional publications are of special interest.

Welcome From AIS

The Membership Secretary sends each new AIS member a "New Member Packet" which contains a welcome letter from the AIS Society, a complimentary copy of the booklet *Basic Iris Culture*, and information about the Sections and Cooperating Societies. *The New Member Packet contains no information specific to the Region.* Youth members who will be receiving the *Bulletin* receive a New Member Packet; other Youth members do not, but do receive a welcome letter from the AIS Youth Chair.

Regional Assignments

When a person joins or rejoins AIS he or she automatically becomes a member of the Region in which their mailing address of record is located. Members in one Region who wish to participate in activities in another Region may make private arrangements to do so within the limits of applicable by-laws, but their AIS regional assignments cannot be changed unless their mailing addresses in the AIS records also change.

Welcome From the Region

Because new and reinstated AIS members are automatically also members of their AIS Region, it is critically important that each be welcomed into that Region. Once a person becomes a part of the regional membership, it is the duty of the RVP to help maintain his or her interest in the Region, and in AIS. Information about new and reinstated AIS members reaches the RVP on a monthly basis in the *Additions and Corrections Report*, and either the RVP or a regional Membership Chair should promptly send a letter of welcome to every new arrival. This letter should contain information about local Affiliates and also upcoming regional activities, in which the new member should be encouraged to participate.

By informing the appropriate officer of the Affiliate closest to the member's home that the Region has a new member, the RVP will facilitate a welcome on the local level, and help ensure that the new member will be invited to meet and interact with other members of the Society, and so be nurtured in his or her enthusiasm for the *Iris*.

Membership Numbers

When a person joins AIS he or she is assigned a Membership Number. This number identifies the membership uniquely. Members of a Dual membership share one number. A reinstated AIS member will be re-enrolled with his or her former Membership Number.

The Membership Number will be found on all reports sent to the RVP by the Membership Secretary and on the mailing label of each member's AIS *Bulletin* where it appears above the member's name along with the expiration date of the membership. The member's name on the label appears in the same form as it appears in AIS records. The appearance of two names on one label denotes a Dual membership.

In communicating with the AIS Membership Secretary, the name of the member should always be styled as it appears in the AIS membership record, and the AIS Membership Number should be included. Use of the Membership Number in correspondence with the AIS Membership Office should be encouraged at every level.

Some Membership Rules

AIS Memberships are never backdated; this is ironclad policy. There are several categories of AIS Membership. Single Memberships are for one individual or an institution or organization, and they may be Annual or Triennial. Dual Memberships are for two individuals at one mailing address, regardless of the nature of their relationship. A Dual Membership may be Annual or Triennial as well. Two members sharing a Dual membership also share one issue of each *Bulletin*. A person who would otherwise qualify for a Youth Membership may be enrolled as one half of a Dual Membership, but this choice should be discouraged since it complicates mailings and statistical analysis involving young persons. There are two categories of Youth Memberships for persons under 19. Those joining under the *Youth With Bulletin* category receive a copy of each issue of the *Bulletin*; those joining as Youth Without Bulletin do not. Both Youth categories are annual memberships, but several years may be purchased simultaneously, not to exceed in duration the time for which the young person is eligible for Youth membership. It is necessary to provide a Date of Birth to the Membership Office when establishing a new Youth Membership. Life Memberships are discussed below.

Term of Reinstated Memberships

Persons who either canceled their membership or were deleted from the AIS Membership List for non-payment of dues, but who rejoin the Society will have the rejoin date as the date of record for membership.

Renewal Notices

Renewal notices are sent 4 to 6 weeks in advance of the expiration date every month to all whose memberships are expiring that month. They are not sent to those whose memberships are not expiring. To expedite processing renewals in the AIS Membership Office, all members should be encouraged to return their notices with their checks. Renewals may also be paid using PayPal on the AIS website.

Members who tender AIS dues to anyone other than the AIS Membership Secretary must anticipate delay in having their membership monies received in the AIS Membership Office.

Renewal Notices that are returned to the AIS Membership Office with an address correction are re-mailed immediately to the corrected address, and the address of record is changed accordingly.

Official Renewal Date

Dues are processed and memberships updated daily in the AIS Membership Office. Because dues monies must be in hand before a new member can be enrolled or a membership record updated to reflect renewal, the date that a member's dues are received by the AIS Membership Secretary is the date the member is considered enrolled or renewed, not the postmark date, nor the date the monies were tendered at the local or regional level, or to any other parties.

Collecting AIS Dues

All monies collected at the local or regional level for payment of dues for new or renewed AIS memberships must without exception be forwarded to the AIS Membership Secretary promptly upon receipt. If a new member prefers his or her membership to begin at a later date, a note may be included to that effect.

Life Memberships

Life Memberships in AIS are available only to individuals or pairs of individuals. Organizations, institutions, or libraries may not purchase Life Memberships.

A *Life Membership Payment Plan* is available whereby the fee for a Life Membership may be paid over a period of two years. It is necessary that the member maintain a current membership in AIS throughout the period in which payments are being made toward purchase of the AIS Life Membership.

Life Memberships expire immediately upon the death of the member, and are not transferable. Further details on Life Memberships and the *Plan* are available from the AIS Membership Office.

Confirming Life Memberships

In March of each calendar year the RVP will receive a list of all Life Memberships in the Region. In the following months the RVP shall make such inquiries as are necessary to confirm that each Life Member is still alive and the *Bulletins* mailed to the address of record are being received by appropriate parties. The RVP shall convey this confirmation in writing to the AIS Membership Secretary at his or her convenience, but no later than August 1 of that year.

Discounted Memberships

AIS Life Memberships for persons 65 and over are discounted 15% when proof of age is presented. For Dual Life Memberships to be discounted both members must be over 65 and both must show proof of age. No other categories of adult AIS Memberships are discounted for age.

Termination of Memberships at Death

All Single AIS Memberships terminate with the death of the member so that neither heirs, nor survivors, nor the estate have any interest in unexpired time. When one member of a Dual Membership dies, the membership becomes a Single Membership and retains the original expiration date. If two members of a Dual Membership die in the same incident, the membership terminates immediately.

Lost or Misdirected AIS *Bulletins*

To ensure that their AIS *Bulletins* continue to reach them, members should be encouraged to report changes of address promptly. Changes of address mailed to AIS departments other than the AIS Membership Office must be forwarded to the Office and delays will thereby ensue.

Bulletins that are returned to the AIS Membership Office because the address of record is no longer valid are not automatically re-mailed, although if a new address is received with the returned *Bulletin*, corrections are entered into the AIS records. When a *Bulletin* is returned with no forwarding address provided by the Post Office, the member will receive no further mailings unless the AIS Membership Office receives an address change.

Members who did not receive an issue of the *Bulletin* either through change of address or loss in transit may contact the AIS Membership Secretary and request a replacement.

Dues for Sections and Cooperating Societies

AIS members may pay dues for renewal of membership in AIS Sections and Cooperating Societies when paying dues to the AIS Membership Secretary. In such cases, the check or on-line PayPal Payment must be made payable to AIS, and a delay in the Section's receiving the dues may be expected since all such monies are forwarded to the Section Membership Secretaries simultaneously at the beginning of the month following the month of their receipt in the AIS Membership Office. AIS Membership Secretary does not process monetary donations to Sections for special projects.

Affiliates and the Affiliation Process

The Affiliates do not receive renewal notices. Their AIS memberships always run from January 1 to December 31 of each calendar year. It is the responsibility of the RVP to assist local societies through the Affiliation process. The AIS Membership Secretary will assist the RVP as appropriate. All questions concerning the rules of Affiliation or interpretation of the Affiliation Application should be directed to the AIS Affiliates Chair.

Since *Full Membership Reports* have been provided in early January, it should not be necessary to consult the AIS Membership Office records except in those cases where inaccurate information is discovered, or the membership status is believed to have changed after the report was generated.

In all cases except those involving the briefest questions, inquiries from local Affiliates regarding the status of individual members for Affiliation purposes will be referred by the AIS Membership Secretary to the RVP for resolution. If questions remain thereafter, the RVP should contact the AIS Membership Secretary for assistance.

Address of Record for Affiliates

The AIS Membership office does not maintain a record of the local Affiliates to which individual AIS members belong, however the RVP must ensure that the Membership Secretary has been informed of any changes of Affiliate officers since AIS rules specify that the Affiliate's *Bulletin* shall be mailed only to the current Affiliate President, whose address is the address of record for the Affiliate.

AIS Mailing Labels

AIS rules state that each regional Editor may receive at no cost up to four sets of self-adhesive mailing labels for regional members each year. These labels are to be ordered from the AIS Membership Secretary. It should be remembered that the schedule of duties in the AIS Membership Office precludes labels being printed during the periods of the AIS Spring Convention and Fall Annual Board Meeting. Labels can be processed and mailed within 2 to 3 days of request.

Further, the AIS Board also established that RVPs might at no cost receive mailing labels for special mailings to their regional members throughout the year. The same restrictions and conditions of notice above apply, although support may be expected in rare emergency situations. It should be remembered that all regional labels are generated directly from the AIS membership files, and will be only as accurate as the regional information contained therein.

AIS *Invitations to Join*

The AIS Membership Office does not distribute AIS *Invitations to Join*. Requests sent to the Office will be forwarded to the appropriate department. Invitations to Join may be ordered from the AIS Storefront.

Conclusion

Just as the dedicated RVP will develop and encourage programs which attract new members, so must attention be given to engaging the ongoing interest of continuing members. Maintaining membership in AIS is important for the individual, for it is a pre-requisite to participation in many interesting Society activities. Sustaining the interest of AIS members so that they will choose to renew their membership is of critical importance to the continuing health of AIS, and the furtherance of our mission.

Making a commitment to keeping current regional membership records is the first step toward meeting these important goals. Understanding the sequence of events that constitute the AIS Membership Year is necessary in order to meet the commitment. A calendar follows.

THE AIS MEMBERSHIP OFFICE CALENDAR

Early October

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire November 30.
- *Full Regional Membership Report* for September mailed to RVPs

Early November

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire December 31.
- *Additions and Corrections Report* for October mailed to RVPs.

Early December

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire January 31.
- *Additions and Corrections Report* for November mailed to RVPs.

Early January

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire February 28.
- RVPs receive a *Full Regional Membership Report* on which delinquent members may be ascertained by looking at the expiration date column. This *Report* should be used for reference throughout the Affiliation Process beginning now, and retained until the next *Full Regional Membership Report* is received in March. The RVP should scrutinize the *Full Regional Membership Report* immediately to catch errors that could impact the mailing list and report deaths or other changes to the AIS Membership Secretary immediately.
- AIS Membership Secretary sends *Report* of Judges who have not yet paid to the AIS Judges' Chair.

Early February

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire March 31.
- *Additions and Corrections Report* for January is mailed to RVPs. Changes should be transferred to the *Full Regional Membership Report*.

February 15

- The AIS Judges' Chair suspends all AIS Judges who are still delinquent

Early March

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire April 30.
- *Additions and Corrections Report* for February mailed to RVPs.
- List of all regional AIS Life Members mailed to RVPs.

Early April

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire May 31.
- *Full Regional Membership Report* for March mailed to RVPs.

Early May

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire June 30.
- *Additions and Corrections Report* for April mailed to RVPs.

Early June

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire July 31.
- *Additions and Corrections Report* for May mailed to the RVPs.

Early July

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire August 31.
- *Full Regional Membership Report* Mailed to RVPs. Scrutinize for errors and report to the AIS Membership Secretary.

Early August

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire September 30.
- *Additions and Corrections Report* for July mailed to RVPs.
- RVPs confirm regional Life Members in writing to AIS Membership Secretary.

Early September

- *Renewal Notices* are mailed for all memberships that will expire October 31.
- *Additions and Corrections Report* for July mailed to RVPs.

NATIONAL CONVENTION AND FALL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING AND THE RVP

Each year the AIS Board of Directors holds two meetings. One of these meetings is held in connection with the AIS National Convention in the spring and the other is the AIS Board of Directors meeting held in the fall. RVPs are urged to attend these meetings so that they will gain insight into how the AIS is operated. If for some reason they are unable to attend, they are encouraged to send a substitute to represent their region. Anyone attending the Board of Directors meetings soon learns that making decisions for AIS is difficult because everything must be done with the entire country in mind. By attending the Board meetings and learning the process that is followed to operate AIS, the RVP becomes better acquainted with the organization and is better able to serve it. In years past, the meetings of the Board of Directors were closed meetings. Now, for many years they have been open to all members; RVPs and potential RVPs should make every effort to attend as many sessions as possible. Many RVPs who have successful terms later become members of the AIS Board of Directors. If a person selected as RVP is unable to attend the convention, a representative should be appointed by the RVP to represent the Region at the Board of Counselors meeting. A person who represents the RVP should not make or second motions during the Board of Counselors meeting.

AIS National Convention

There are several meetings during the AIS National Convention that are important for the RVP to attend. They are as follows:

- **The AIS Board of Directors Meeting**

The RVP is expected to attend the sessions of the Board of Directors meeting while at the convention as indicated above. During convention week, several sessions of the board meeting will be held. Attendance at these sessions can provide ideas that might make the job of RVP an easier one. RVPs may ask questions, make comments or present suggestions during these meetings although they are not voting members of the board.

- **AIS Judges' Training Chair Meeting**

At this meeting the RVP has an opportunity to ask questions regarding judges' training to insure that his or her Region is in compliance with AIS regulations. He or she has a chance to exchange ideas with other RVPs, to present problems concerning judges for discussion with the Chair of Judges, and become a part of this important team of AIS workers. The RVP should attend this meeting.

- **Board of Counselors Meeting**

The Board of Counselors is composed of all the RVPs and meets during the National Convention. The RVP Counselor who has been appointed by the AIS President is present at this meeting to answer questions and assist the RVPs. However, this is the RVPs' meeting and in addition to providing an opportunity for the RVPs to get together to discuss mutual concerns, there are several extremely important duties that need to be carried out during the meeting. The RVP is expected to attend this meeting.

- **Election of Board of Counselors Officers**

The RVPs select one member to serve as Chair/president of the group for the next year. This person will be in charge of the Board of Counselors (RVP) meeting at the next convention and is responsible for preparing an agenda and conducting the meeting. Another RVP will be selected as secretary of the group. This person records all action taken and provides a set of minutes to the RVP Counselor and all the other RVP's after the meeting. The RVP Counselor is responsible for reporting the proceedings of this meeting during a later AIS Board of Directors session during the convention. Early in the year, the Chair of the Board of Counselors, or the secretary of that group, should contact all RVP's to secure ideas which they have for topics of discussion at the meeting in the spring. An agenda is prepared from this input. This agenda is provided to all RVP's and to the RVP Counselor. This should be done in plenty of time so that persons who are needed to provide information may be contacted before the convention. For example, if the Board of Counselors wants to discuss something associated with affiliates, the AIS Chair of Affiliates should be

invited to participate. The Counselor, Chair and Secretary should work together to set up an agenda which is feasible for the amount of time involved in the meeting. RVPs serving their first year are eligible for these offices.

- **Election of Personnel Committee Representative**

Two other RVPs will be selected to serve on the Personnel Committee. These two will become part of the nominating committee of five (two RVP's, one Section President and two AIS Board Members) who will present annual nominees for vacancies occurring on the AIS Board of Directors. Anyone who serves on this committee should be aware of the qualifications of people from across the country so that a wise choice of nominees can be made. Much of the work of the Personnel Committee is done by telephone or mail, but meetings may be held at the convention or at the Fall Board of Directors meeting. It is important that these two representatives are able to attend the Fall Board of Directors meeting if at all possible. RVPs serving their first or second year are eligible for these offices.

- **Election of the RVP Representative**

Another RVP, in his or her second year as RVP, will be chosen by the RVPs to become a voting member of the AIS Board of Directors for the next year. This person is the representative of all the RVPs. RVPs should feel free to bring to the attention of the RVP Representative items that they wish to be considered at the AIS Board of Directors meetings if they are unable to attend themselves. The RVP Representative should also be in contact with the other RVPs to see if there are any items that need to be addressed by the AIS Board.

Fall AIS Board of Directors Meeting

The fall Board meeting is held the first weekend in November and RVPs are urged to attend this meeting if it is possible. If the RVP is unable to attend, consideration should be given to sending an alternate to represent the region. This fall meeting is on a rotating meeting site, meeting in the eastern, middle, and western areas of the country to save as much as possible on travel expenses for those who are required to attend. Although attendance is not mandatory, an RVP should be present to give the views of the Region and to learn about the operation of AIS.

The RVP in whose Region the fall meeting is held has the following duties:

- Be a good and gracious host.
- Assist the hosting organization should it need assistance. Any AIS group that hosts the fall meeting should be aware of its responsibilities. These are set forth in the Convention Handbook. All that is required is a convenient and not expensive site for the meetings. Hosting clubs may schedule a banquet, but they must be aware of the fact that the Directors cannot participate in any program since they will be involved with meetings.

PUBLICATION SALES DIRECTOR AND THE RVP

The Publications Sales Director is responsible for items sold through the AIS Storefront. The volume of sales handled by this area is astounding and many times people want their order filled "yesterday." The RVP should be considerate of this function and plan ahead when possible to avoid rush orders. Information on the items that are available for sale can be found in the AIS *Bulletin*. Always be sure that the amount enclosed with the order and the shipping name and address are correct. An RVP should make every effort not to burden the Publication Sales Director with additional correspondence and bookkeeping.

Although the Publication Sales Director has many back issues of the AIS *Bulletin* for sale, it is not appropriate to request the director to research information from these *Bulletins*.

RVP COUNSELOR AND THE RVP

Link Between the RVP and AIS

The RVP Counselor is the official link between the AIS Board and the RVP's. He or she serves in an advisory capacity to the AIS Board of Directors, keeping them informed of regional activities and of any administrative problems confronting the Regions. To do the job properly, the RVP Counselor must have some general knowledge of the differences among the Regions and of the problems that are being encountered. It is the duty of the RVP to keep this officer of AIS informed of such events in his or her Region. The line of communication must be kept open at all times.

The RVP Counselor attends all sessions of the Board of Counselors. He or she is there as a representative of the AIS Board of Directors, not to conduct the meeting. This is done by the person who was elected the previous year to serve as Board of Counselors President.

Source of Information and Support

The counselor will supply the RVPs with information on regional matters discussed at Board meetings. Periodic correspondence will be sent to the RVP's reminding them of duties that should be performed. Some of these will include the duty to count the AIS Tall Bearded Symposium Ballots and report the results; the duty to supply the AIS Judges' Training Chair with the required information pertaining to the Region; the duty to remind judges of the importance of voting the Official Ballot of AIS; and to urge the RVP to attend any scheduled functions of the AIS.

The RVP should furnish the counselor with copies of minutes taken at regional meetings and with copies of the Region's newsletters. This information is invaluable in keeping the counselor current in regional matters. One of the last duties of the outgoing RVP is to notify the counselor of the correct name and address of the person who has been nominated for the office of RVP. This name should be listed exactly as it is in the AIS membership list. It should be sent to the counselor in written form in sufficient time for him/her to compose the list of new RVP's for the fall AIS Board meeting that is held the first weekend in November. October 20 is the deadline for receipt of this information.

The RVP counselor is the person to contact with questions and can provide guidance for problems that the RVP may encounter.

IRIS PROGRAM RESOURCES CHAIR (Slides and Digital) CHAIR AND THE RVP

The AIS has an assortment of program titles in both slide and digital format available for AIS affiliated iris clubs/societies providing presentation programs; the purpose is to help these groups supplement their activity programs in an economical way and to provide them with tools to use for garden club and other flower organization programs. The list of available program titles continually evolves and changes. The listing of programs available and information on obtaining them on the AIS See the AIS website. The digital photo presentation programs are digital photos on CDs and some sort of digital projection unit will be required to produce a group presentation.

The rental of one slide set is available free, plus a small charge for shipping, once each year to affiliated clubs and may be rented by groups for a small fee. Requests for slides should be made well in advance, preferably 6-8 weeks. Only one set is provided per request date. Slides are to be returned by Priority Mail the day after viewing. The digital programs on CD are available for purchase only.

The RVP should encourage anyone with photographic talents to help AIS maintain the program of slides and digital photos by offering copies of outstanding slides and digital photos to the AIS Iris Program Resources Chair (Slides and Digital). Hybridizers in the Region should be specifically encouraged to send

slides of their introductions. This is good publicity for the hybridizer, the Region, and provides pictures of the newest iris to those viewing the programs.

If the slides or CDs are not delivered in good shape or if something seems to be lacking in the program, the RVP should notify the Iris Program Resources Chair so that steps may be taken to correct the problem.

YOUTH CHAIR AND THE RVP

Youth members are the future of the AIS and participation by youth in local and regional activities should be encouraged. The AIS Youth Chair has and is happy to share information on building a strong and engaging youth program. The RVP should appoint a Regional Youth Chair (RYC) who is interested in youth and willing to work with the AIS Youth Chair to build a viable regional youth program. Additionally, the RVP should ask the affiliate Presidents to appoint a Youth Advisor (YA) in their local clubs to help and encourage youth members at the local level.

The AIS has a youth awards program. The RVP should work with the AIS Youth Chair, RYC, YA's, and the youth members of the region to see that a qualified youth is nominated for the awards given by the AIS. By reading the minutes and the youth section of the *AIS Bulletins*, the RVP should be able to ascertain when these nominations are to be made.

The RVP AND REGIONAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The RVP should consider him-or-herself a leader of a group of people. The best leader is always in contact with the people he or she is leading. Anyone who becomes too far removed from the people soon loses the leadership qualities that are necessary for success. The RVP should consider all members as important, as indeed they are. The RVP should carefully consider all proposals that are presented. Before making comment, he or she should be sure of the facts and should make sure that there is no violation of AIS policies.

MAINTAIN HARMONY WITH AIS AND AIS POLICY

At any time when there is a question about any subject involving AIS Policy, the RVP should contact the AIS officers to learn about the policy and the reasons it exists. Some ideas that are presented may sound like good policy for adoption by AIS. However, AIS policies must fit all twenty-four Regions and policy that is appropriate for one Region may not be workable in some of the others. Often, the proposals that are presented by regional members seem to have great merit, but they must be evaluated in context with the entire AIS organization. The RVP should tell the person making the suggestion that the plan seems to have merit. Then the AIS officers should be contacted to see if such a proposal has been studied in the past and not adopted or if it is something new that might be submitted for consideration by the directors. Many good ideas have come from the membership and have been incorporated in the AIS policies. Members should be encouraged to present ideas and suggestions.

The RVP should promote AIS at all times. He or she should never criticize the national organization to excess. It is not the duty of the RVP to become the spokesperson for disgruntled groups. Instituting changes is often a slow process in an organization the size of AIS and with the wide range of interests covered by the society. Geographic differences also provide the organization with many different types of people and problems. A suggestion that sounds terrific for one Region might be completely unworkable in another Region. The AIS directors must consider all parts of the country in making decisions. The RVP should constantly be aware of this situation.

GROW AND PROMOTE IRIS

Irises should be promoted at all times. The RVP should set an example by growing as many different types of irises as can be grown in the area. It is the duty of the RVP to study the characteristics and cultural requirements of the different types of irises so that advice can be given to any new members who might request it. This is not to indicate that the RVP must be an expert in every field. He or she should, however, know where the needed information can be acquired so that advice can be given.

PARTICIPATE IN REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

The RVP should participate in shows, tours, programs, meetings and sales of the Region. Visiting gardens within the Region especially gardens of local hybridizers should be a priority of the RVP's spring iris activities.

It is not necessary to enter a show in order to participate. A visit to a local club show and complimentary remarks about its staging is often more important than having the RVP as an exhibitor. Since reports are received from all show committees, the RVP might write a short note to the club congratulating the members for staging a successful exhibition. Anything that can be done to show an interest in these exhibitions is fine. An interest from the RVP encourages the local clubs to continue doing their best.

The RVP should try to attend any regional tour that is scheduled. This is often an impossible goal since many of the tours are scheduled when the RVP has other duties. Whenever an RVP does attend a tour,

enthusiasm should be the byword. Always appear to enjoy every garden. Negative reactions can only lead to problems.

If the RVP can attend at least one meeting of all the clubs in the Region during a three-year term, he or she can be very proud of this accomplishment. Some Regions have many clubs.

Often the clubs will invite the RVP to give a program and will pay expenses. However, some clubs cannot afford such an expense. In this case, the RVP should make every effort to visit that club at his or her own expense.

PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

In many Regions local clubs sponsor regional activities such as tours, meetings and judges training schools. It is the duty of the RVP to provide the guidelines for such activities to any club that is anticipating serving as a host. If the club does not know the proper procedure and something goes wrong, the RVP would be responsible. The RVP should ensure that the club knows the portion of the expenses of the event that will be paid by the Region and the portion for which they will be responsible.

Any judges' training school scheduled in connection with a meeting must have the approval of the regional Chair of Judges' Training or the RVP in addition to prior approval of the AIS Judges' Training Chair. It is the RVP's duty to see that any school scheduled is in compliance with AIS rules. This is especially important in respect to the hours of credit and instructor. Credit should be given only if the school meets every specification in the AIS guidelines and the instructor is an AIS judge who is qualified to instruct in the area being taught. Only AIS judges are qualified to give accredited schools.

COMMUNICATE WITH MEMBERS OF THE REGION

Communication eliminates many problems and lack of it creates many. It is of the utmost importance that the RVP communicate with the members of his or her Region. The content of this communication may be informational, congratulatory, supportive or to request assistance. A variety of channels can be used to facilitate it. When there is no communication, few plans or RVPs have success. The RVP who keeps his or her members informed can avoid problems. As the one who leads a team of informed members, he or she can accomplish much for AIS and the Region.

Regional Newsletter

If the Region has a newsletter, the RVP has a responsibility to contribute to this endeavor. This includes writing articles and gathering information for the publications and assisting the regional newsletter editor. The RVP should write an "RVP Message" for each edition of the newsletter. This is an opportunity for the RVP to communicate with all members throughout the Region keeping them informed of the local, regional and national iris happenings. The RVP should also provide additional articles that are of interest to the Region's members such as cultural advice, summaries of regional events, regional symposium results and awards received by members in the Region. The RVP should take an active role in encouraging members to contribute articles and information to the newsletter.

Letters

Although writing letters does take some time there are times when a letter from the RVP is needed. It is important that the RVP is willing to spend the time to perform this important duty.

When a new member joins AIS and the Region it is important that the RVP welcome that new member to the Region. It is an opportunity to encourage the new member to get involved and to provide information about the nearest local iris club. The AIS Membership Secretary writes a note of welcome to all new AIS

members and sends each one a new member packet. The RVP should at a minimum send the new member a welcome letter and provide information on local iris clubs. Additional items that could be provided in a regional new member packet might include an AIS calendar, a schedule of events within the Region, a copy of the Region's last newsletter, some AIS postcards, and a regional iris pin if the Region has one.

When the printout of delinquent members is sent to the RVP, a letter should be written. Each of the members on the list should receive a letter encouraging renewal and pointing out advantages of membership. This should be done immediately after the list arrives. Delay might mean that renewal would come after AIS has deleted the names from the membership list, thus a lapse in membership has occurred.

Early each year, the judges who need refresher courses should be contacted. It's far easier to remind these judges at a time when they can earn needed credit than it is to have to drop them as a judge later in the year.

A letter of congratulations should be written to any member who wins an award or who does something of distinction. If a judge advances in status a congratulatory note should be sent. Everyone enjoys praise, and when the letter comes from the RVP, it has added significance. A letter to such people will have many dividends for the Region and the RVP.

The folks who make the Region operate smoothly always appreciate thank you notes. A note to a Chair who has completed a project or activity is a way to recognize that person and encourages their continued participation in regional activities. An RVP who fails to recognize the workers may lose these important resources.

Not every letter mentioned needs to be written by the RVP. These duties may be delegated to other regional personnel. They often are more effective, however, if they are written by the RVP.

e-mail

In recent years electronic mail (e-mail) has become a common way to communicate. It has tremendous advantages of being fast and inexpensive. However, not everyone has embraced e-mail and it is crucially important not to exclude these people. An RVP, who is an avid e-mail user, must take the extra step to communicate via mail or phone with members who are not e-mail users. E-mail should only be utilized when you know the recipient is a willing e-mail user. E-mail communications should not entirely take the place of newsletters, letters, phone calls and meetings. E-mail should only supplement other forms of communication resulting in even better communications.

Meetings

A majority of the Regions have at least one regional meeting each year. These gatherings promote unity and give the RVP an opportunity to become better acquainted with the people he or she serves. By scheduling regional meetings in various parts of the Region, an RVP is giving many more people an opportunity to become involved. Some Regions cover large areas, and it is not possible for some members to travel to distant points within the Region for a meeting. If the site of such meetings is moved to a new locale each year, everyone in the Region has the opportunity to participate. Once a member becomes involved in these meetings, his or her interest in all the activities of the Region increases.

The RVP who can attend at least one meeting of each of the local clubs in the Region will do much to bring success to his or her term. At local meetings the RVP gets the opportunity to show his or her interest in the club. These clubs do much to support the Region and AIS, and any encouragement lets the members know that their efforts are appreciated.

Local clubs within the Region should be encouraged to have meetings that will help new members learn about growing irises. It is not enough to have dinner meetings, shows and sales. Some type of training program should be established by a local club to recruit and retain new members. The RVP should encourage clubs to sponsor programs on culture, show grooming, the qualities that are considered good in a garden iris, methods of transporting irises, and any other subject which might be useful to the members. Often, new members are recruited at shows, but these people may know very little about growing irises. They return to the club's summer sale, purchase rhizomes, then promptly lose some of them because of lack of knowledge about planting and care. Every club should have some means of educating new members, nurturing their interests and developing them into members who will stay with the club and become the future leaders.

Area Chairs and Local Club Presidents

Area Chairs can be a tremendous help to an RVP in communicating with members of a large Region. The area Chairs can make sure that every member is informed of activities, welcomed, reminded of delinquent dues and asked to participate. The Chair's job is to be the link between the RVP and the member, just as the RVP is the link between the member and the AIS.

Local club presidents can be of invaluable assistance to the RVP. Their position gives them many opportunities to promote the Region and the plans of the RVP. Regular communication between the RVP and these presidents is vital if the presidents are to feel that they are a part of the regional activities.

ORGANIZE THE REGION

Even though the RVP is the chief executive officer of the Region, he or she cannot operate the Region alone. A variety of other officers, directors and Chairs are needed. They may be either elected by the Region's membership or appointed by the RVP. Most Regions have a set of By-laws that establish officers and directors including the manner in which these positions are to be filled. Since the positions and the way in which they are established varies widely from Region to Region, this section of the handbook will focus on the functional aspects of potential positions that a Region might need to fill. Whether these are elected officers or appointed Chairs is left to the Region to determine according to its own bylaws and procedures.

A Region's Bylaws should always be in agreement with the AIS Bylaws and should be followed by the regional officers. If the Region is incorporated there are usually a minimum number of officers specified by the state of incorporation. A usual contingent of officers might be an Assistant RVP, a Secretary and a Treasurer in addition to the RVP. Appointed Chairs might include a Judges' Training Chair, a Newsletter Editor, an Awards Chair, a Membership Secretary, an Exhibition Chair, a Test Garden Chair, a Publicity Chair and a Regional Youth Chair. However, some of these Chairs may be officers depending on the Region's bylaws. In addition to standing committee Chairs, temporary ad hoc Chairs may be needed for work of temporary nature. For example, a research liaison for a research project or a bylaws Chair if a revision to the bylaws is needed.

Whether officers or Chairs are appointed or elected the RVP will need help in operating the Region. The following are provided as possible suggestions based on information compiled from a variety of regional structures. Each Region needs to determine its specific needs and tailor its officers and Chair positions accordingly.

Assistant RVP

In many cases, this person will become the next RVP. By serving as assistant RVP, he or she can gain valuable insight into what the job involves. The assistant RVP should act as RVP whenever the chief officer is absent or unable to function. The assistant would serve as interim RVP should the RVP become

unable to perform for any reason. At the next meeting of the AIS Board, a new RVP would be appointed, based on the Region's recommendations.

In some Regions, the assistant RVP is not scheduled to assume the duty as RVP. He or she is selected to help the person in office and to lend advice. Often this assistant is a person of stature in the Region and many times is a former RVP whose familiarity with the job is very helpful. The choosing of this person should be done after careful consideration of the qualifications. An RVP who was popular during his or her term could be a tremendous plus to the term of an RVP who is not so well known.

Regardless of whether the assistant RVP is destined to take over the top position or not, the duties of the office should be performed with the best interests of the Region and AIS in mind. This person should be more than a titleholder. He or she might be in charge of helping those clubs who host regional meetings in the planning of those events.

Secretary

A capable secretary is a must in a Region. The secretary should be able to take accurate minutes. A file of regional records should be maintained, including copies of the Bylaws. The secretary should prepare copies of the minutes for printing in the Region's publication. This should be a job assigned to someone who regularly attends the meetings of the Region. The secretary can also assist the RVP with meeting agendas and contacting other officers/chairs to secure reports specific to their area of responsibility. The secretary can also help with routine correspondence. The Region may decide to split this position into a recording secretary and a corresponding secretary. A dedicated secretary can be a tremendous help to an RVP.

Treasurer

The operation of a Region is an expensive endeavor. The treasurer should be a person of absolute integrity due to the need for accurate records and the amount of money involved. Some feel that the treasurer should be bonded through an insurance policy. It is the duty of the treasurer to prepare financial statements, pay the Region's bills, and to be in charge of fund raising if no other committee has been assigned that task.

The Region should have a policy established that tells the treasurer what payments may be made without further authorization. Receipts should be required for all reimbursement. Expenditures that are out of the ordinary should never be paid without approval of the RVP. An RVP should be sure that the treasurer has a list of authorized expenditures, and he or she should be sure that any others are necessities of the Region before approving their payment. If there are substantial items that have never been a part of Region's expenses in the past, the Region may want to require approval from the executive committee of the Region before payment is made.

An annual budget that is approved by the regional representatives is an excellent financial management tool and would be the responsibility of the treasurer to prepare. Financial reports should be published at regular intervals, and the treasurer should be prepared to give additional reports upon request. It is a good idea to have an audit committee audit the treasurer's records at the end of each year or each term in office.

Judges' Training Chair

The Judges' Training Chair should be a member who is a judge and is thoroughly familiar with AIS Judges' training rules. This job requires accurate record keeping regarding the activities of the Region's judges; the schools attended, tutoring done or received, voting records, addresses and years of service. The Judges' Training Chair should supply report forms to apprentice judges and mail activity reports to all judges in the Region. When information from all these activities has been recorded, the information

should be sent to the RVP in time for the annual report to reach the AIS Chair of Judges and Judges' Training by September 1st prior to the fall board meeting.

Membership Chair

It is this Chair's responsibility to keep accurate records of addresses and membership status of the members in the Region. This is made easier by using the printout of Region membership that is sent to the RVP every month. This is provided by AIS automatically and without charge to the Region.

Newsletter Editor

This is one of the most difficult positions to fill. The RVP who has a capable editor is fortunate. The RVP should help the editor by writing articles, getting the RVP message in on time, securing articles from other sources and sharing publications which are usually sent to the RVP from other Regions. It is the duty of the RVP to be sure that the regional publication is used not only to advance the causes of the Region, but also to promote The American Iris Society. The Regions exist only as a part of that organization, and the publications should not be used as a deterrent to the advancement of AIS. The RVP should make sure that the Region editor is sent the names of all new members so that the mailing list can be kept up to date. He or she should also supply the editor with information on any judges' training sessions which are scheduled in the Region or in nearby Regions.

The Editor is responsible for compiling, editing, publishing and distributing the newsletter in a timely manner. The editor may have assistants or a committee to help with these tasks. The editor is not responsible for writing all the content that is in the newsletter. It is appropriate for the editor to solicit contributions to the newsletter. The RVP should also take an active role in this solicitation.

Although this is an expensive endeavor, it is often the thing that keeps Region members involved. A member who lives in an area with no local club has little contact with the Region other than through the newsletter. A newsletter should contain items of particular interest to the local members. Articles should deal with iris culture and performance, local club news, show information, profiles and news about meetings and judging schools.

Some Regions send publications only to those who pay a subscription or pay a regional membership fee. This is done to offset the cost of printing and postage. There are problems with this practice. Those who do not or cannot pay the fee are omitted from real participation in the Region. A lack of communication often results in a loss of interest, and the Region loses a person who could have been an active participant at some time in the future. New AIS members sometimes have joined just to see if it's worth the money to be a member. They are not likely to pay an additional amount to a Region for another publication. On the other hand, the receipt of that regional publication may be the added bonus that will insure their continued membership in AIS. Every available means should be used to pay for the regional publications without resorting to a charge for the members. Subscription fees are appropriate for non-AIS members of local affiliates. Sometimes these are paid by the local affiliate for these persons.

It is customary to send copies of the Region Newsletter to other Regions and to the officers and directors of The American Iris Society and the AIS Librarian. A Region may also decide to send the local publication to RVP's and editors of those Regions that are willing to reciprocate. This exchange of information is often helpful in providing content that can be used from one Region to the next.

Robins Chair

Some Regions do not have regional robin programs, but they are most beneficial. When a new member joins the Region, this Chair makes contact to see if the member wants to belong to a regional robin. Membership in these robins is limited to those people who reside within the Region. They are beneficial to new members because cultural practices discussed will be good for that particular area. Members of the

robins develop friendships with other Region members. In recent years, some traditional mail robins have been replaced or supplemented with e-mail robins. All this leads to a stronger Region.

The Robins Chair must assign new members to the robins upon request, enforce robin guidelines, and keep records on the robins. A good letter writer usually makes a good Robin Chair. The RVP should notify the Robins' Chair when new members join the Region. Without this information, he or she cannot contact these people to determine if they want to be a member of a robin.

The regional Chair of Robins should maintain contact with the AIS Chair of Robins, keeping that person informed of the number of members, number of robins and the type of robins in flight within the Region.

Area Chairs

Many Regions are so large that they are divided into areas. This may be along state lines, county lines or city or club locales. An area Chair should be the RVP's liaison with the members of an area. The duties would include efforts to build and maintain membership, keeping a line of communication open, providing news of events in the area and helping members of the area when the RVP is not available.

Usually, the selection of the area Chair is based on several qualifications. Anyone taking the job should have been in AIS long enough to be familiar with and active in the promotion of AIS and its objectives and practices. The appointee should have lived in the area long enough to know the irisarians who live there. He or she should be a basically friendly person and should be interested enough in irises to promote them and The American Iris Society.

Awards Chair

This Chair's functions vary from Region to Region. Many Regions have awards that are presented after spring tours; some have service awards and some present no awards at all. The Awards Chair would be responsible for securing awards, having them ready for presentation and engraving awards that require such action. Whatever the Region does regarding awards should be under the supervision of this Chair.

Exhibitions Chair

Although the AIS Chair of Exhibitions provides the basic guidelines for presenting a show, many Regions have a local expert in the field who is available to answer the many questions that arise. This job should be assigned to someone who thoroughly understands the methods of presenting a show and is willing to help clubs that are staging one for the first time.

Publicity Chair

This person is responsible for getting news of the Region before the public. If news of national importance occurs, the regional Publicity Chair should inform the AIS *Bulletin* editor. Should the Region host an AIS Convention, this person could handle the publicity or he or she could do the preliminary work until a convention Publicity Chair is appointed.

Test Gardens Chair

If the Region has a test garden or wants to establish one, someone should be in charge of finding a site and helping to enforce regulations. It might be best if this person were also the host of the test garden.

Youth Chair

The Regional Youth Chair (RYC) should be someone who is enthusiastic about regional members under the age of 19 and see that they are signed up as AIS members at one of the special youth rates. Duties of the RYC include sending dues reminders, providing youth news to the regional bulletin Editor and writing youth nominations for awards. Other duties might include setting up special youth meetings,

social gatherings, correspondence groups or anything that might assure the continued interest of those in this age group. With the help of the RVP, the RYC should secure a Youth Advisor (YA) to lead the youth members in each affiliate club. The RYC and the YA's make up the Regional Youth Committee.

Other Chairs and Committees

Other committees may be needed on a temporary or on an ongoing basis. Some examples are archives, audit, budget, by-laws, conventions, fund raising, historian, hospitality, legal, library, parliamentarian, photography, plant sale, sunshine and silent auction. This is not an exhaustive list and there may be others depending on the specific needs of the Region.

Appointment of Committee Chairs and Members

The RVP is an Ex-Officio member of all committees. The RVP may appoint the Chairs and the committee members. It is also possible that the Chair selects the members of the committee he or she chairs. Many times it is a matter of who is willing to volunteer to serve as a Chair or as a member of a committee.

All Chairs should be aware that they are responsible for keeping the Region's members informed of activities that are planned and the progress of these in their area. The RVP should be kept informed of all committee activities to ensure that such activities are in compliance with regional bylaws, objectives and policies.

Supervising the Work of the Region

Once committee assignments have been made and officers have been elected or appointed the RVP is ready to begin the task of supervising the work of the Region. He or she should approach the task with an open mind and a good deal of enthusiasm. The RVP can rely on members of the AIS Board of Directors for advice. If a situation arises which seems too difficult for a regional solution, the AIS directors should be called upon to make a decision on what course to follow.

SAMPLE FORMS

The following pages will provide samples of some of the forms mentioned earlier in this booklet. These are merely guides and may need revision for use in any particular Region.

The Activity Report

An activity report should also be sent to Emeritus judges just to show them they have not been forgotten. This need not contain all the questions listed in the sample form provided. It should ask if they want to be re-appointed, the schools they have attended or taught, if they have done tutoring, and if they voted the most recent AIS Ballot. No action is necessary if these judges do not return the report. However, Apprentice, Accredited and Active Master Judges should be sent one reminder and then DELETED from the recommendations if they fail to respond. In the case of an Active Master Judge, this results in automatic change to Retired Master Judge.

Show Tutoring Form

A sample show tutoring form is provided. This form should be used in the tutoring of apprentice judges at shows.

Garden Tutoring Form

A sample garden tutoring form is provided. This form should be used in the tutoring of apprentice judges in the garden.

**ACTIVITY REPORT
FOR
APPRENTICE, GARDEN/EXHIBITION AND MASTER JUDGES**

This report MUST be completed and returned no later than August 1. Failure to do so for 2 consecutive years results in disqualification as a judge in the AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY. Report includes activities between August 1 and July 31. It is your duty to maintain records of this information to complete this report.

Name _____ Current Judge Type _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Did you vote the AIS Ballot? ___ Yes ___ NO Do you want to be reappointed next year? _____

How many iris gardens within the Region did you visit? _____ How many outside the Region? _____

How many total garden visits did you make? _____ How many iris shows did you attend? _____

How many iris shows did you judge? _____ How many shows did you enter? _____

List the judging schools attended since last July 31. Provide Date, Location, Instructor, Topic & Hours

List the judging schools at which you served as an instructor since last July 31.

Provide Date, Location, Instructor, Topic & Hours

List apprentice tutoring you did since last July 31. Note: Only those persons listed in the AIS *Bulletin* for this year may be counted.

Date Location Show/Garden Name of Apprentice Hours

In order to judge irises, one must know them. In order to know them, one must grow them.

How many different varieties of iris do you grow? _____

What types of irises are in your garden? TB _____ BB _____ MTB _____ IB _____ SDB _____ MDB _____

AR _____ AB _____ LA _____ SIB _____ SPU _____ JAP _____ Species _____ Others _____

A collection of newer irises is important for an AIS judge since these irises appear on the Official Ballot.

How many irises grow in your garden which were introduced during the past five years? _____

List a few of the latest iris growing in your garden.

List the activities in which you have participated which helped to promote irises and AIS, for example secured new members, gave programs, wrote articles, helped at local or regional activities, or served as an officer.

Signature as listed on AIS records

Date

SHOW TUTORING FORM

To the judge: It is your duty to tutor and evaluate the apprentice. All final decisions on ribbons should be made by the accredited judges. The apprentice has NO VOTE. It is permissible to question the apprentice after the session is completed. PLEASE DO ALLOW THE APPRENTICE TO EVALUATE SOME SPECIMENS, but give ribbons only on the evaluation of the accredited judges.

You need not show this evaluation to the apprentice. However, discuss the ratings with that apprentice. This report should be mailed by the judge to the regional Chair of Judges. See AIS Handbook for Judges for suggestions to make to the apprentice.

EVALUATE HONESTLY!

Apprentice

Judge _____ **Location** _____ **Date** _____

Overall Rating: Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____ Not Observed _____

Specific Rating Areas Considered Rating knowledge of the basic principle for evaluation of irises on exhibition. Ability to apply these basic principles. Ability in judging tall bearded specimens. Ability to judge beardless irises. Ability in judging collections and English boxes. Ability to judge bearded irises other than tall bearded. Ability in judging seedlings. Knowledge of AIS show rules. General knowledge of iris varieties and their individual characteristics. Ethics involved in judging. Understanding the duties and responsibilities of the show judge. Understanding of what an apprentice can and cannot do while receiving show tutoring.

Do you feel that this apprentice would, if accredited as an AIS judge, be an asset to the program and a worthy representative of AIS? _____

Would you recommend that this person be accredited upon completion of the requirements? _____

Remarks:

Names of other judges on the panel accompanying this apprentice:

Signature of Evaluating Judge

Date

GARDEN TUTORING FORM

To the judge: It is your duty to tutor and evaluate the apprentice. This evaluation must be based on a **two-hour session** in a garden. The tutor should be sure that instruction in judging is given and that the session was not just a garden visit to look at new things. Test the ability of the apprentice to judge! Mail the report immediately to the Chair of Judges in this Region. It is a confidential report to the regional Chair of Judges and the RVP.

EVALUATE HONESTLY!

Apprentice Judge _____ **Garden** _____

Date _____

Overall Rating: Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____ Not Observed _____

Specific Rating Areas Considered Rating understanding of the basic principles of garden evaluation of irises. Ability to apply these basic principles. Ability in judging Tall Bearded irises. Ability in judging other bearded types. Ability in judging beardless irises. Ability in judging new introductions. Ability in judging seedlings. General knowledge of introduced irises and their characteristics. Ethics involved in judging. Understanding of the duties and responsibilities of a judge.

Do you feel that this apprentice, if accredited as an AIS Judge, would be an asset to the judging program of the American Iris Society? _____

Remarks:

Signature of Evaluating Judge

Date

