

American Iris Society Board Meeting
San Ramon, CA April 22-23, 2019

Full Minutes are included here.

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Jody Nolin called the meeting to order at 6:05 PDT, April 22, 2019.

Jody welcomed everyone to the AIS Board Meeting and introductions were made by all in the room and by those attending via Zoom. She reminded everyone that only board members are permitted to make motions and vote. Please use the microphone so that your comments and opinions will be heard.

Present:

OFFICERS: Jody Nolin, president; Andi Rivarola, 1st VP; Bonnie Jean Nichols, 2nd VP; Jill Bonino, acting secretary; Gary White, immediate past president.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS: John Jones & Joanne Prass-Jones, registrar/recorder; John & Kay Ludi, storefront; Claire Schneider, recording secretary.

DIRECTORS: Anita Moran, Claire Schneider, Dawn Boyer, Howie Dash, Janis Shackelford, Jill Bonino, John Ludi, Neil Houghton (present via Zoom), Phyllis Wilburn, Susan Grigg, and Wayne Messer.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS: Advertising Editor – Dawn Boyer; Affiliations/Affiliate Liaison – Jody Nolin; Convention Liaison – open (Andi Rivarola temporary); Encyclopedia Manager – Bob Pries (present via Zoom); Exhibitions Schedules – Lois Rose; Exhibition Supplies – Nick Stewart; Exhibition Show Reports -Wayne Messer; Foundation Liaison – Jill Bonino; Gardens – Bob Pries (present via Zoom); Honorary Awards – Gary White; Image Coordinator – Neil Houghton (present via Zoom); Iris Program Resources (digital) – Neil Houghton (present via Zoom); Iris Program Resources (speakers) – Hooker Nichols; Judges – Bonnie Jean Nichols; Library – Dave Silverberg; News & Notes – Wayne Messer; Photo Contest – Amberlee Pick w/ Anita Moran & Cheryl Deaton; Policy – Janis Shackelford; Public Relations & Marketing – Bob Pries (present via Zoom); Public Relations, Social Media – Andi Rivarola; Public Relations, 2020 Centennial – Andi Rivarola; RVP Counselor – Howie Dash; Scientific Advisory – Bob Hollingworth; Section & Cooperating Society Liaison – Phyllis Wilburn; Strategic Planning – Andi Rivarola; Symposium – Riley Probst; Youth – Cheryl Deaton;

GUESTS: Jean Morris (18); Lorene Crone (7); Susan Boyce (12), RVP; Jean Richter (14), RVP; Jim Morris, 2020 Centennial Publication Editor; Mark Werinnar (2); Brenda Wood (14); Lanessa Daniel (14); Glenn Grigg (4); Dan Williams (14); Ginny Russell (7); Sue Brown (15), RVP; Will Plotner (13), SIGNA president; Kathy Chilton (15); and Sandra Saeleus (14).

The agenda presents a planned schedule of reports. However due to attendance or other issue, some reports will be presented out of sequence.

Jody Nolin appointed John Jones as Motions Secretary and Howie Dash as parliamentarian. Because Michelle Snyder is absent, Jill Bonino will be acting secretary.

II. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Motion 1: to approve the March 27, 2019, teleconference minutes as corrected. Motion made by Howie Dash and seconded by Jill Bonino. Motion carried.

III. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

President - Jody Nolin submitted an electronic report.

Progress on the website has been made even if no final delivery date has been given. Text and images have been sent to Thirsty, the developer of the website. A delivery date and testing period will occur in May. A team of editors will be trained to keep the new website up to date. Thanks to John Jones for keeping the existing website up to date. An advertising campaign to promote AIS membership is being planned. More about this will be in the Public Relationships report. The AIS Board in its monthly videoconferences has been able to conduct substantial business. Because the agenda for the Fall 2019 Board meeting, a videoconference, will be devoted primarily to the AIS Budget, the officers and other committee chairs are asked to choose a video conference before or after the Fall Board meeting for presenting their fall reports. A sign-up chart will be passed around for choosing a video conference for presentations of reports. At the 2018 Fall Board meeting, Treasurer Dwayne Booth announced his intended resignation. We thank him for his six years of work on the AIS financial activities.

First Vice President - Andi Rivarola. No report at this time.

Second Vice President - Bonnie Nichols. No report at this time.

Secretary - Michelle Snyder (absent) submitted an electronic report.

Everyone is submitting their bills for payment in a timely manner. Deposits except for the Storefront and Membership are being sent to Michelle. No electronic motions have been submitted. From old business, the boxes of old Bulletins, some of which had arrived in damaged condition, have been sent to the AIS Library. The Postal Service provided a credit for the damage. Regarding changes to the five sections of the AIS by-laws, 375 ballots were cast and all proposed changes have passed. The new by-laws will be available electronically on the wiki. Michelle compiled comments from the by-laws vote and they will be discussed at a future meeting.

Treasurer – Dwayne Booth (absent). Three reports were submitted electronically: Treasurer's Report, AIS Balance Sheet and AIS Profit and Loss Statement. Paper copies of the Income/Expense spreadsheet were distributed. Part of the Treasurer's Report did not show up on the copies. Jill will submit a complete copy later.

Several board actions were proposed in Dwayne's report.

Motion 2: that we move the \$17,557 balance of the 100th Anniversary Restricted Fund as of 9/30/18 to the AIS General Fund.

Motion by Jill Bonino and seconded by John Ludi. Motion carried.

Dwayne proposed creating a paid position, a business manager to handle AIS financial matters. It was decided to let a finance committee deal with this topic. During the discussion it was asked if the AIS bylaws would permit adding a paid position. The president has broad powers to manage the financials of AIS which would include appointing a business manager.

Motion 3: update the compensation of the registrar and membership secretary from \$1000/month to \$1200/month effective 1 May 2019.

Motion by Jill Bonino and seconded by Bonnie Nichols.

Motion to table by Howie Dash and seconded by Anita Moran. Motion carried.

Discussion: Is the increase in compensation being given to the position or to the persons in those positions? A performance review should be performed before giving a raise to a person. Who conducts performance reviews? Where will the money come from to pay that raise? There is a clear distinction between hiring an expert to fill a position (e.g. Bulletin editor) and using a volunteer to take on an onerous work load. Personnel issues (e.g. hiring of and compensation for registrar and membership secretary) should be handled by the Executive Board or handed to a finance committee.

The AIS already has an Audit Committee that consists of three persons.

Motion 4: that the AIS establish a standing committee, the Finance Committee, to support The American Iris Society's Board of Directors in fulfilling its responsibility to oversee the AIS' financial strategy and performance. This committee shall perform the following:

1. Develop an investment policy for board approval.
2. Develop procedures covering all aspects of the investment process such as asset allocations, to selection of an investment advisor, periodic reviews, and emergency procedures. Said procedures shall be submitted for board approval.
3. Implement the procedures through the treasurer.
4. Assist the treasurer on periodic reviews and reporting, such reporting to be semi-annual at a minimum.
5. Review financial performance against plan and recommend revisions to the board as needed.
6. Identify and develop new revenue sources to be recommended to the board.
7. Provide financial education of the board, RVPs, regional boards and clubs to enable them to fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities efficiently.

Motion by Claire Schneider and seconded by Jill Bonino. Motion carried.

Discussion: Jody Nolin appointed Gary White chair of this standing committee, the Finance Committee.

Dwayne proposed that to increase diversity, the AIS should make a concerted effort to do business with members of minority populations.

Discussion: How many businesses are currently on the AIS payroll and do we know their diversity record? AIS has contracts with few vendors: publishing companies and the company that makes the medals. In some cases, there is only one company that can provide a particular service. Because AIS has limited business dealings, perhaps a focus could be made on increasing diversity in AIS membership.

Dwayne proposed that a committee be created to deal with personnel issues such as resignations and terminations. No motion was made.

Dwayne proposed that, because of the unprecedented donations by Gerald Richardson, the irises hybridized and introduced by Gerald Richardson should be recognized in some way.

Discussion: Perhaps the National Collections would be interested in taking the Gerald Richardson irises. The AIS does not have special property and does not finance the care of hybridizer iris collections. Generally hybridizer collections of iris are handled by someone who has an interest and who does not expect compensation. The Historic Iris Preservation Society (HIPS) could be consulted on ways to create a Richardson collection. In fact in recognition of his generosity, the Gerald Richardson Award will be given for the first time at this convention to a garden on the national tour. Bob Pries will follow up. No motion was made.

According to the Balance Sheet, the total assets are \$1,203,425 which puts the AIS in an improved financial position. According to the Profit & Loss Sheet, total income for the period of October 2018 to March 2019 was \$530,411.64, including the unrestricted donations of \$461,025.08. The total general fund expenses were \$116,619.20. There have been two deposits from the Gerald Richardson estate, the first was received two years ago for \$480,000. The second was received in March of 2019 for \$456,000.

Jill Bonino was nominated for treasurer by Claire Schneider, seconded by Gary White and elected by acclamation.

Editor - Jane Milliman (absent) submitted an electronic report "Bulletin Editor."

The next four deadlines for the Bulletin are June 10, September 10, December 15 and March 10th. Jane is checking price quotes for printing the Bulletin from other publishers besides Sundance.

Advertising Editor - Dawn Boyer distributed a paper copy of her report.

There were 47 shopping ads sold in the Winter and Spring IRISES, 2019, including two non-renewals and two new advertisers for \$3560. There were nine display ads sold for a total of \$2100. Dawn anticipates additional advertising for the Fall, 2019, but not much action in summer & fall.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Membership - Tom Gormley (absent) submitted an electronic report.

Membership is at 3938 which is up by 33 members. Tom included four interesting graphs in his report that show membership status and history.

Discussion: Anita Moran reported that some AIS members in her region (4) are being dropped from the membership rolls and shouldn't be. Region 4's membership chair will be in contact with Tom Gormley. New officers in affiliate clubs need to be an AIS member for the entire year of their office. When renewing an AIS membership, the entire year of the new membership is added to their existing membership. An e-membership is just as valid as a paper membership.

Registrar/Recorder - John Jones will do his report tomorrow.

Recording Secretary - Claire Schneider had no report at this time.

Storefront Inventory - John Ludi submitted three electronic reports: Storefront Report, Storefront Inventory and Storefront Sales Report. 175 calendars were sold in March, about half of the inventory. There are many orders for the bookmarks due to the publicity in the Bulletin and News & Notes. John distributed bookmarks to the board and everyone wanted more for affiliate shows. In a short time more bookmarks will need to be ordered.

V. Unfinished Business

Besides the Finance Committee issue, there was no other unfinished business.

VI. New Business

Ethics committee - Anita Moran

There should be someone or a committee that would deal with an ethical issue or complaint regarding a show or exhibition. For example there was an incident when a show chair changed the outcome of the judging. Violations of show procedures should go to the show chair and violations of judging should go to the AIS chair of judges. The RVPs should be able to solve most problems or complaints from affiliates and if they cannot, then refer said problem to the appropriate AIS person. It might be helpful to publicize the chain of command regarding complaints. Perhaps a positive article published in the Bulletin to clarify the steps to take when there is an ethical problem or other complaint. Previously there was an AIS ombudsman, but due to lack of issues, this position was retired. Veronica Johnson has provided advice regarding ethical as well as legal issues.

Judy Keisling has done an ethics presentation, so perhaps she could write an article for the Bulletin, News & Notes and regional newsletters. Does she still have the presentation on ethics?

Bonnie will contact Judy Keisling about this article and ethics presentation.

VII. SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Ad Hoc Library – Jill Bonino.

Everyone is pleased with the new library. Thank you to Dave Silverberg and Will Plotner for making the transition to the new library. The trip by the AIS Board to the library last November was very informative. No actions were requested at this time.

Library – Dave Silverberg submitted an electronic report.

Dave Silverberg reported that the library has received 19 original watercolors in frames from Jerry Oswald. All were painted between 1910 and 1925 by J. Marion Shaw. Dave allowed the board to see first-hand eight of the watercolors. Dave will send the details of the donation to Jody Nolin so she can write a thank you letter.

We need to think about how to use these water color paintings and other unique items that are in the library. What about a traveling exhibit, to regional and national conventions? What about an article in the Bulletin or News & Notes? Does AIS have reproduction rights of any of these watercolors?

Dave asked for guidance regarding what to do with the extra 2800 copies of the Bulletin, which are taking up valuable space. Some copies are in mint condition, others are not. The Board gave Dave discretion to keep or recycle extra copies of the Bulletin. Years ago, some of the extra Bulletins were placed in the Silent Auction. However, there wasn't much interest in them.

Intellectual Property- Bob Hollingworth (absent) submitted no report at this time.

Bylaws- Jody Nolin submitted an electronic report.

Jody thanked the members of that committee for their effort and product. Michelle Snyder is still compiling the statistics of the vote and will present a report at a future meeting.

VIII. REPORTS of STANDING COMMITTEES

Affiliate Chair Report – Jody Nolin submitted an electronic report.

As of today two of the 22 regions have not submitted their affiliation reports. One problem has been affiliate officers who do not renew their AIS membership. Starting this year, the Affiliate Chair will begin filing the 990N forms with the IRS. Jody will submit an updated description of this job with the intent of finding a volunteer to take over this position.

Jim Morris requested that each affiliate send a report of the history. So far only 14 clubs have submitted their history. The search for the oldest affiliate continues.

Awards – Gerry Snyder (absent) submitted an electronic report.

The AIS Awards ballot should be mailed by April 19th. The problem with the Wister Medals continues but might be close to a solution. A few years ago, the Board voted to drop the Board of Directors Award. Gerry would like this award to be reinstated and he will discuss this with the Board at a future meeting.

From Gerry's report:

“This distinctive award is neither a garden award nor an exhibition award. This award is made by The American Iris Society's Board of Directors to honor an iris which has not won a Dykes Medal, but which shows clearly in its progeny that it is among the greats of irisdom. The Board of Directors Award, which is not an annual award, was established in 1972 and first awarded in 1975 (to Snow Flurry).”

Calendars – Janet Smith (absent) has no report.

The 2020 calendar has been printed and is now for sale in the Storefront.

This position is open. A description of this position might help recruit a volunteer. A working knowledge of Publisher software or other layout program would be helpful for the person who takes over this position.

John Jones will phone Janet tonight.

Convention Liaison – Andi Rivarola submitted an electronic report.

We were reminded that Andi is the temporary Convention Liaison and that a permanent chair is needed.

- The 2020 Convention will be at the Newark Liberty International Airport Marriott, Newark, NJ, from May 17 to 24. The co-chairs are Andi Rivarola and Gary White.
 - The 2021 Convention will be in Las Cruces, NM, April 12 to 17. The co-chairs are Howie Dash and Scarlett Ayres.
 - The 2022 Convention will be in Dallas, TX, TBD in April.
 - The 2023 Convention will be in Portland in June and will focus on Japanese iris.
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- The Fall Board Meeting, 2021, will be in Tulsa Oklahoma.

Donation Development – open position.

Perhaps the new Finance Committee will address this position.

Electronic Services – open position.

The chair of Electronic Services will be a manager, not a programmer. The new website won't open until the end of May at which time the plan is to organize and train a committee of people to access and update the website. In addition to the new website, the Electronic Services Committee will work in coordination with the Iris Encyclopedia, images, the image library and the on-line library. The Electronics Services Chair will be a person who recruits, delegates, and maintains clear communications with all those working on the website and other electronic services.

Encyclopedia – Bob Pries (via Zoom) submitted an electronic report.

A new backup system has been installed which copies the entire encyclopedia every night. A separate server that is connected to the internet can make a copy which could be used in case of cyber-vandalism or a crash. Bob recommended all AIS online data bases employ a similar type of backup system. Regarding taxonomy changes, the World Checklist of botanical names is being updated. So far only a few new iris species have been added, but substantial revisions in the Iridaceae could be imminent. With this in mind, Bob asked which format on the encyclopedia would be best:

1. A page similar to all the other webs with one larger image and the rotating gallery of images.
2. Something like this: <http://wiki.irises.org/Ird/WebHome>
3. Or something like this: <http://wiki.irises.org/Main/InfoClassificationFamilyIridaceae>.

Bob noted that the first option is more consistent with the rest of the encyclopedia but does not emphasize the diversity of the Iris family. Please send your thoughts about format to Bob.

One of Bob's projects has been to scan documents and periodicals for inclusion in a mini-library within the Encyclopedia. So far there are approximately 4500 items in the online library. Some regions and affiliates send their newsletters, but not all of them do. Howie Dash will ask the RVPs to submit regional newsletters and ask their affiliate clubs to submit their newsletters to Bob and the Iris Encyclopedia.

Dave Silverberg will contact Bob after the convention about sending copies of his library materials for the Iris Encyclopedia.

Discussion: The iris registry is backed up every night on its own independent server and on John Jones' machine every 15 minutes.

PR Iris Wiki Report – Wayne Messer submitted an electronic report.

An Iris Encyclopedia is different from an Iris Wiki. Additions and corrections can be made to a wiki but not to the encyclopedia. An encyclopedia is assumed to be an authoritative voice providing official definitions. A wiki is a gathering of information from a variety of sources without much oversight. For a wiki to become an encyclopedia it must be more accurate. In the beginning there wasn't much oversight to the photos submitted to the Iris Wiki. But of late, because of the diligent work of Bob, his docents and Neil Houghton, this repository of photos is being upgraded to the status of Iris Encyclopedia. Neil is maintaining a library of high resolution photos.

Discussion: There are step-by-step instructions in the Wiki explaining how to upload a photo to the Wiki. To find these instructions, use the Wiki index.

During iris exhibitions, it is a lot easier and faster for judges to use the Iris Encyclopedia than the R&Is. Of course there are variations in iris color due to soil and weather, but the Encyclopedia is a lot faster and easier to use than the R&Is. Bob Pries explained that it would be possible to designate registration photos in the Iris Encyclopedia as different from backyard photos. A suggestion is designate a particular photo in the Encyclopedia as "closest to registration description."

Exhibition Schedules – Lois Rose submitted an electronic report.

Lois updated her tally of approved shows to 128 for the 2019 season. The final count of approved shows is likely to be fewer than last year. One problem has been that show approval packets have been returned to Lois by the U.S. Postal Service. Lois has double checked those addresses and seeing nothing wrong, has had the U.S.P.S. redeliver those packets. Lois warned that all approval packets have been mailed and if a show chair has not received their show approval packet, they should contact Lois.

Discussion: It was reported previously that the mold for the Youth Medals has been lost. In its place, some clubs are awarding the Adult Medals to youth. The difference between the Youth and Adult Medals is size. The loss of the Youth Medal mold was the company's fault, not AIS' so perhaps AIS should pursue legal action. Wayne Messer and Jean Morris will write up a chronology of events and collect documentation and correspondence with the company that lost the Youth Medal mold and submit it to Veronica Johnson for advice on how to proceed.

Exhibition Show Reports – Wayne Messer submitted an electronic report.

The first shows are in early April, so Wayne doesn't have a final tally yet. Thank you to the affiliate clubs for donating medals back to AIS for reuse. Last year 120 sets of silver and bronze medals were awarded. An order for 150 silver medals and 150 bronze medals has been placed.

Foundation – Jill Bonino submitted an electronic report.

The report contains updates on the grants, scholarships, donations, profit and loss, AIS Library, AIS encyclopedia and that Ackerman Essay Contest. There were no action issues or motions in the report.

Gardens – Bob Pries (via Zoom) submitted an electronic report.

There is a need for a nationwide database of gardens which would help people find gardens in their region that display irises. There is a need for test gardens, too. These would evaluate irises for a particular climate area and attempt to create in depth descriptions of irises.

Bob requested that a volunteer take over this committee because none of these tasks is being performed in an integrated way for AIS.

Legal Advisor – Veronica Johnson (absent) submitted an electronic report.

Two more affiliates have joined the AIS group tax exemption. Regarding data breach insurance coverage, Veronica has nothing further to report. There was a data theft several years ago of the iris registry and the question is whether or not to purchase data breach insurance. More on data breach insurance will be discussed later. Jody reported that Veronica was very helpful during the negotiations with Thirsty, the website contractor.

Honorary Awards – Gary White submitted no report at this time.

This committee meets in the fall. The honorary awards for this year have already been designated and will be presented at this convention.

Image Coordinator – Neil Houghton (via Zoom) submitted an electronic report.

Responding to the policy requiring images for new registration, Neil has created an instructional video on how to upload photos during the registration process and gave the Board a live demonstration on how to do so. Instructions will be included in an email reply to the hybridizer and can also be found in a link on the Iris Registration page of the AIS website. Neil presented statistics on registrations, photo submissions and cultivar introductions. There can be some confusion in the statistics because of the use of reserved names. Catalogs that describe iris with reserved names are published before registrations of those irises have been submitted which Neil described as very confusing. Another problem has been that some hybridizers have submitted registration applications but without including photos of their cultivars.

In the section of his report subtitled “Deep Bench” Neil suggested that every job in AIS should have a backup, that every chair and officer should be training a successor. AIS should be a cooperative workforce where many people work together. For example the new website should be accessible to many people, not just a few and the oversight of images should be handled by several people, not just one.

Discussion: Hybridizers are being encouraged to submit images of their older cultivars, those irises already registered. There are several silos of AIS data and these should be integrated and shared. We all need to be thinking about training our successors, about increasing the depth of the bench.

Registrar - John Jones submitted an electronic report.

Hybridizers can reserve a name by filling out an application and paying a fee to the registrar. If the registrar finds that the name has not already been used or reserved, then the hybridizer

receives a form marked “name is paid for.” This form guarantees that the name has been accepted and will be reserved for a period of time. When hybridizers are ready to register an iris with a reserved name, they complete the form marked “name is paid for” and send it to the registrar. Hybridizers can register an iris without a reserved name by completing the registration form and filling in the space for name of iris. John sends the list of newly registered iris to Neil Houghton, image coordinator, but does not send the list of reserved names. There is confusion when a hybridizer sends an image to Neil using a reserved name that hasn’t been officially registered.

John is still working on the 2018 R&I and has not yet worked out the annual statistics report. There have been technical issues regarding remote access to shared databases. When this problem is solved, Neil will have access to the database and this should speed up the registration process and John’s work on the R&Is. Work on the website and issues with registration have stalled progress in developing the online registration process.

The software and computer system are seven years old and no longer meet the needs of the registrar. Last spring, John was authorized to spend up to \$1000 on software.

Motion 5: that the registrar be authorized to spend up to \$3000 to upgrade the registrar’s computer system.

Motion by Neil Houghton and seconded by Howie Dash. Motion carried.

Discussion: The operating system and automatic updates for a new system will come from Apple. The software that is needed to access the registrar’s database is FileMaker Pro. Access will be limited to the image coordinator and a few others and will occur through a port in John’s system. Public access to registration information is through a separate server and is one of the benefits of an e-membership. John does not update the iris registry (available to the public) until the R&I has been published. The use of R&Is is declining because people find it faster to use the website. Security is an issue but the cost of securing the registry is prohibitive.

There has been confusion between year of introduction and year of registration. In the garden, the tag should boast the year of introduction. Most hybridizers and catalogs use the year of introduction. The award system uses the year of introduction.

Insurance – Michelle Snyder (absent) has submitted an electronic report.

Michelle has forwarded information regarding a proposal for a new policy for Data Breach coverage to the AIS legal counsel, Veronica Johnson. Veronica will review the AIS website and data base safeguards that are in place, evaluate the nature and extent of AIS’ risk and send recommendations regarding insurance coverage to Michelle. Michelle will report to the board later.

Iris Program Resources (digital) – Neil Houghton (via Zoom) submitted an electronic report which is at the end of Image Coordinator Report.

Digital programs are free to AIS members, affiliate iris clubs and societies. Neil has compiled an assortment of program titles and more are being added. It is necessary to have computer with Microsoft’s PowerPoint software in order to use the PowerPoint programs. For more

information about the available programs or to order any of them contact Neil at images@irises.org

Iris Program Resources (Speakers) – Hooker Nichols presented an oral report.

Because he has not yet received information about the speaker resources from the previous chair, Hooker has begun to compile a new list of speakers. Hooker is using his charm to collect a new list of speakers, topics and contact information. His plan is to have a list by the end of May. Hooker reminded us that July, August and September are difficult months for booking hybridizers for speaking engagements because they are busy with their iris businesses.

Exhibition Supplies – Nick Stewart submitted an electronic report.

Nick updated the statistics in his report. He has filled and shipped 65 orders of exhibition supplies, not just 33, but this is still less than the 85 orders from last year. On January 1, 2019 postal rates increased but the shipping fee attached to the exhibition orders still covers the cost of shipping. If and when the shipping rates are increased again, postage on orders should be increased from \$14 to \$15 and the order form will need to reflect that increase. The AIS Board does not need to approve an increase in postage or a change to the order form. Nick explained that the sale of exhibition supplies does not generate a large profit, but these supplies are an important part of iris exhibitions.

Discussion: A club must provide a show number and show date in order to receive exhibition supplies. Clubs that have not renewed their affiliation with AIS should not be able to receive show supplies from Nick or insurance papers from Michelle Snyder. However, some do. Affiliations run from April 15 to April 14 of the following year. Show schedules can be submitted as early as October which means it is possible for an affiliate to schedule an AIS sanctioned show without having paid their annual affiliation fee. However when clubs submit their show schedule for approval, there is no check of their affiliation status. This issue of affiliation status and insurance for exhibitions should be sent to Michelle Snyder for clarification.

The bookmarks are very popular. Nick has sent out the last of the invitation to join brochures and is including packets of bookmarks in each order.

Motion 6: that we spend up to \$550 to print additional bookmarks.

Motion by Anita Moran and seconded by Dawn Boyer. Motion carried.

Judges – Bonnie Nichols submitted an electronic report.

Judy Keisling spent the weekend training Bonnie and is a fountain of knowledge. RVPs and judges have given some great suggestions. The data base of judges is shared with Judy Keisling and is being kept current. Since last year, there has been a reduction by twelve in the number of judges. In region 17 five people have entered the judges training program.

Discussion: A suggestion is that show chairs appoint clerks who are not judges so that they could see what judging is all about and perhaps become interested enough to become a judge. Perhaps a business size card or name tag could be produced that identifies a person as a master judge or apprentice judge or whatever. Bonnie will discuss name tags and cards with Judy. Region 17 uses an AIS Judges badge.

Judges Handbook – Betty Roberts (absent) has submitted an electronic report.

Bonnie Nichols has received updates from Betty on SDBs, JIs, Novelty, TBs, A, AB, awards, LA, and information. Bonnie plans to give a monthly report on the progress of the handbook and to present the handbook revisions section by section.

Discussion: Why is point judging based on 100 points; why not allow more? Maybe because it's a percent? Information about this question will be sent to Bonnie. John Ludi sold 26 judges handbooks last year and has enough of the 7th edition for two more years. The handbook revision needs to be completed before John runs out of handbooks. Handbook revision has been ongoing for four years. Would it be possible for the board to approve sections of the handbook and make those available instead of waiting for the entire handbook to be finished and approved?

There are many aspects of garden judging that are similar (e.g. distance the judge should stand from clump). Perhaps there could be a general section on garden judging in the handbook.

Having this section would make the handbook less repetitious. Bonnie will expect to receive an email about this suggestion from Phyllis Wilburn.

Other suggestions regarding the handbook revision were to

- include a footer on every page of the handbook with its page number, section name, and revision date;
- have judges be responsible for keeping their copy of the handbook up-to-date,
- make the entire handbook available online, and
- follow the Board's instructions from 1999 which said the handbook should be revised every five years.

It is possible that some clubs hold their spring shows without obtaining their AIS sanction because that's what they did before their club became an affiliate of the AIS. A club that became an affiliate of AIS in the 1960s but has been holding iris shows since the 1920s might not have as a priority keeping their AIS affiliate dues up to date.

Membership Development – Andi Rivarola submitted an electronic report.

The committee decided that communication is a key to increasing membership, so training sessions on communication will be held at future conventions and online. The first session will be Friday, April 26th, 5 to 6 PM. During the summer the committee plans to hold webinars and Zoom sessions to continue communication development with RVPs and club presidents. Ideas for publicity will be presented and successful strategies for increasing membership will be shared. The bookmarks are a great promotional item. The old bi-fold Invitation-To-Join (ITJ) brochure is no longer being printed but can be downloaded from the AIS website. Other suggestions were to

- make available the program which describes the benefits of being an AIS member;
- produce videos on how to promote your club, how to delegate, sales idea, etc;
- explore regional sponsorships;
- support visits to all affiliate clubs where someone will promote AIS and answer questions;
- keep in mind that some clubs function at a low-tech level (i.e. paper communication).

Policy – Janis Shackelford presented an oral report because a printed version would have been fifteen pages long.

Janis demonstrated her Motions Index which is an excel spreadsheet of motions. She has created three versions: the motions organized alphabetically by topic, motions grouped by year, and topic plus motion. She has indexed the motions from 2018 back to 2004. There has been an issue of linking the motions to the reports in AIS documents. Until this is resolved, if one wants to understand an ambiguous motion, (e.g. Motion to approve the committee's report, passed unanimously), one will have to open the appropriate minutes and scroll down to find that motion. Currently Janis is writing a synopsis of each year in AIS, for the last 25 years, based on the Bulletins and board minutes. We don't hear this very often: there was a round of applause for Janis' project, Motions Index. Well done, Janis!

Discussion: One suggestion for linking the Motions Index to the actual motions was to insert a pdf file into the EXCEL spreadsheet. Another suggestion was to investigate using other data management software such as Filemaker or Google drive. Another suggestion was for Bob Pries to post the spreadsheets of motions on the wiki and include files of all the reports from which the motions were extracted. John Jones, Bob Pries and Janis will discuss a long-term solution for posting and accessing the Motions Index.

Public Relations & Marketing – Bob Pries & Susan Grigg submitted an electronic report. In spite of creating a membership contest, voucher program, and advertising on Facebook, membership is not growing. New ideas are needed to promote membership as well as enthusiasm for some of the old ideas. The cost of advertizing in horticultural media to promote AIS membership will be expensive.

Motion 7: to authorize the PR and Marketing Committee to add \$10,000 to their annual budget for advertising of AIS membership in flower and garden related publications.
Motion by Susan Grigg and seconded by Wayne Messer. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion: Jody Nolin is currently in negotiations with State by State Gardening, which publishes regional garden magazines for 21 states, from the Midwest to the east coast. A quarter page ad for three issues would cost \$6000. (For comparison a one third page ad in one issue of Better Homes & Gardens costs \$320,000.) Neil Houghton has drafted a press release for possible use in the State by State Gardening publications. A targeted email campaign would cost approximately \$2000.

There is no information about return on the investment but a statistical hook could be placed on the response link for membership which would ask how the person found out about AIS. Advertising with the daylily folks is profitable because irises bloom before the daylilies. We will need a wow factor every year in the advertising campaign. This year that factor will be a promotion of the Centennial. Advertisements in 2021 should have a different wow factor. Perhaps an iris that a hybridizer didn't want to introduce could be the bonus for joining. Because membership development is so critical and because advertising is so expensive, a well-developed marketing campaign should be developed that includes more than magazine ads. Stories and press releases should be sent to local newspapers. There is a difference between recruiting new members to the world of iris and enticing affiliate members to join AIS. Both of these groups should be targeted.

The P.R. Committee is asking for a volunteer to write press releases.

News and notes has been a tremendous success. Maybe sending News & Notes to non-AIS members a few times a year to affiliate members would show the non-AIS members one of the fine benefits of joining AIS.

Motion 8: that we make News & Notes available to all members of AIS affiliates for free four times each calendar year.

Motion by Susan Grigg and seconded by Claire Schneider. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion: Originally News & Notes was intended for AIS members and e-members. Many club presidents forward News & Notes to all their members. Should we send the News & Notes to everyone with an unsubscribe option? Or should we send News & Notes only to AIS members? Some people might be put off receiving monthly issues of News & Notes, extra emails in their In Box. Perhaps to send out the News & Notes Awards issue (once a year) as a teaser for joining AIS. Jody Nolin has the contact information for all of the affiliate clubs.

Photo contest – Amberlee Pick made an oral report.

Amberlee has volunteered to be in charge of the Photo Contest. The plan was to begin the contest on May 1st with a post of information on the new website. However with the opening of the new website delayed, John Jones will work with Amberlee to post something about the Photo Contest on the old website. Cheryl Deaton and Anita Moran will assist Amberlee with the Photo Contest.

Public Relations (Social media) – Andi Rivarola submitted an electronic report “Social Media Report.”

The AIS social media is doing great! The AIS Facebook page has over fourteen thousand followers. Twitter and Instagram have 1600 and 123 followers respectfully. The AIS Blog, World of Irises, has had over one million views since its inception in 2011.

Anyone interested in writing for the blog or submitting photos, please contact Andi.

2020 Centennial Convention Report – Andi Rivarola submitted an electronic report.

The website for the 2020 convention is up and running <https://2020irisconvention.org>
The schedule and other information are posted.

2020 Centennial Gardens & Judging – Jill Bonino gave an oral report.

Jill and Kathy Chilton will visit the Presby garden four days in May to check the iris, take photos and maybe a few short videos. A total of 123 varieties were planted from America and overseas.

2020 Centennial Publication – Jim Morris has submitted an electronic report.

Jim is still waiting for responses from the affiliates. So far he has received only 16 reports from the 158 affiliates. A volunteer is needed to write an overview including a little history of the AIS sections, cooperating societies and affiliates. The prologue to 1920 has been completed by Bob Pries. Cheryl & Riley will write the history and organization of the AIS regions. The ages of the affiliates will be written by Jody Nolin. The history of the affiliates has been difficult to research because little information about that is in the Bulletins. Jim needs an assistant editor and proposes that AIS fund this position. Four supplements, each at 72 pages, will present 288 pages of interesting AIS history and information. It is time consuming to do the research. For example

twenty to twenty-five hours have been spent so far researching the AIS logo. Researching the 70 years of work by the Sass family and condensing that information into an article has been extremely time consuming.

Motion 9: that we hire an assistant editor for three supplements of the 2020 Centennial publication at a cost of \$3000.

Motion by Howie Dash and seconded by Bonnie Nichols. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion: The cost of the assistant editor would come from the 2020 Centennial Budget. The editor position was contracted for \$2000 per issue. Jim Morris is the fourth editor and is the first one who has produced anything. The budget for lay-out is \$1500 per issue.

Audit – Howie Dash gave an oral report based on a printed report submitted by Cheryl Deaton. Janis Shackelford, Cheryl Deaton and Howie met during the Fall Board meeting 2018 to audit the 2018 convention report. The audit showed that AIS took in more money than was reported by the treasurer. This extra income should be split between Society of Louisiana Iris (SLI) and AIS. Jill Bonino will go through the records to resolve this issue.

One bank statement was missing but the values were obtained elsewhere. The convention expenses were 100% in line with records. One problem was that some of the income and expenses for the 2020 Convention were included and should not have been mixed with the 2018 convention account. A second check was sent to GNOIS and the issue of the missing check was resolved.

Recommendation: There should be a separate bank account for each convention.

According to the revised by-laws, whenever there is a new treasurer an outside person should be hired to audit the books. Jill Bonino will coordinate this transitional audit with the Audit Committee.

News & Notes – Wayne Messer submitted an electronic report.

The top four topics in News & Notes, in order of popularity, are Recognizing New Hybridizers, New Iris Species from World of Irises, AIS Bookmarks photos, and SIGNA Seed Exchange List. In a postscript, Wayne asked what is missing in the News & Notes? Please send suggestions and feedback to Wayne.

Discussion: One suggestion was to publish a version of News & Notes for the novice iris person. About 45% of recipients open News & Notes. To increase the open rate, a suggestion was to put a provocative headline in the subject box of the email instead of “News & Notes.”

RVP Counselor – Howie Dash submitted an electronic report.

There has been excellent communication with the RVPs via RVP-discuss. Today the RVP meeting was attended by not only RVPs but also the assistant RVPs and other AIS dignitaries. There were presentations by Riley Probst about the Symposium, Cheryl Deaton regarding Youth programs and Hooker Nichols to recruit speakers. Much of the discussion at the meeting was centered on membership development.

The new RVP representative to the AIS Board will be Susan Boyce (12), the RVP secretary will be Kathryn Moore (2) and the two representatives to the Nominating Committee are Belinda Carroll (7) and Jean Richter (14).

Scientific Advisory – Bob Hollingworth (absent) submitted an electronic report.

This committee gave an endorsement to the AIS Foundation in support of a joint Russian-Mongolian expedition to explore further the iris flora in the far eastern area of Russia. With suggestions from the Scientific Advisory Committee, the expedition revised their goals and budget and subsequently the AIS Foundation Board approved funding for \$14,000. The composition of the committee is unchanged and continues to operate effectively.

Section and Cooperating Societies Liaison – Phyllis Wilburn submitted a printed report.

There was some confusion at the convention about when and where this committee was supposed to convene so only four people attended the meeting. It has been a problem collecting stories, events and history from the presidents of these organizations for the Bulletin and for the editor of the 2020 Centennial supplements. Mike Reed from Texas will represent the Section and Cooperating Societies on the Nominating Committee.

Silent Auction – open position

Symposium – Riley Probst submitted a printed report.

The results from Symposium 2018 were published in the Winter Bulletin 2019 and are posted on the AIS website. The return of ballots for 2018 was 375 ballots, about fifty more ballots than last year. The cutoff date for return of the Symposium 2019 ballot is August 1. Riley reminded that each affiliate is entitled to submit one Symposium ballot.

Discussion: A suggestion was that RVPs attend affiliate meetings to distribute and collect Symposium ballots.

Youth – Cheryl Deaton submitted an electronic report.

Currently there are 396 youth members registered in AIS. Michael Kowalchuk (22) is the winner of the Cosgrove Memorial Award. First runner-up is Katharina Brase (21) and second runner-up is Glory Winzer (18). Debbie Straus will announce the winners of the Ackerman Essay Contest at the Awards banquet on Saturday. Cheryl thanked all those who have donated irises for distribution to the youth members.

IX. REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Because Dwayne Booth, chair of the Nominating Committee, was absent Jill Bonino presented the report. The directors whose terms will expire in 2019 are Claire Schneider, Howie Dash and Dawn Boyer. David Cupps, whose term expires in 2019, resigned as a director and Susan Grigg has been appointed to fill his remaining term. The Nominating Committee has submitted the names of nine candidates for director: John Jones (14), Steve Speights (20), Susan Driver (7), Steve Poole (9), Riley Probst (14), Lorene Crone (7), Claire Schneider (15), Howie Dash (23), and Doug Chyz (4).

An additional nomination from the floor was for Cheryl Deaton (15) by Jill Bonino.

There are ten candidates for four director positions.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

After the ballots were counted, the AIS executive board nominated four candidates to the AIS Board of Directors whose terms will expire in 2022. Assuming no further nominations, these candidates will be elected at the Fall Meeting 2019: Doug Chyz (4), Lorene Crone (7), Howie Dash (23) and Claire Schneider (15). Susan Driver (7) was appointed to finish the director's term of Jill Bonino who is now AIS treasurer.

XII. NOMINATING COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The nominating committee for next year that will present a slate of candidates to replace those directors whose terms will expire in 2020 are:

1. AIS Board member, Anita Moran
2. AIS Board member, Wayne Messer, chair of this committee
3. RVP, Jean Richter
4. RVP, Belinda Carroll
5. Section & Cooperating Society representative, Mike Reed

XIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next teleconference will be ~~June 27~~ June 26 (Wednesday), 5 PM PDT, 8 PM EDT.

XIV. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:52 PM, April 23, 2019

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Schneider