

American Connemara Pony Society

September 29, 2018 – Gray Summit, MO – Board of Governors Meeting

American Connemara Pony Society members gathered in Missouri for the annual meeting, splendidly hosted by Region VII. After a fascinating and highly informative tour of the Purina Equine Research Facility and an important presentation by Dr. Donald Walsh of the Animal Health Foundation, on Friday, September 28, the Board of Governors met at the Purina Equine Research Facility Conference Center on September 29.

At 9:15 a.m. on Saturday, September 29, ACPS President Cathy Blackmon called the meeting of the American Connemara Pony Society to order for the Board of Governors meetings. She then conducted a roll call. Those in attendance included Cathy Blackmon, Kate Denton, Stephanie Fenton-Hickey, Joan Webster, Fonda Eigel, Deborah Howell, Gloria LaCroix, Jill McNicol, Suzanne Phelps, Laura Balding, Kathy Lucas, Kay Clements, Annie Balotti-Paleen, Marilyn Chhek, Sally Oxnard, Linda Haines, Sue McLaughlin, Becky Jordan, Fiona Tracy Cheever, and Darian Hall.

In light of the very few members outside of the BOG attending the meeting, Cathy Blackmon called for a motion to open the BOG meeting to all attendees. A motion was made, seconded and approved.

Minutes from the January 20, 2018 BOG meeting at the USEF Annual Meeting in Lexington, Kentucky were approved as written and posted.

Vice President and Membership Chair Kate Denton presented the membership report. She noted that 2018 membership stands at 538 with 10 magazine-only subscribers, down from 587 members with 7 magazine-only subscribers in 2017. The largest drop was in junior members, down to 47 in 2018 from 69 in 2017. The one category increase was in life members, with four new life members in 2018. A total of 95 new members joined in 2018, while 144 members from 2017 did not renew. Kate noted a major thank you to Sue Jellum, who provided the formatting for the printed membership directory at no charge, saving the society hundreds of dollars.

Treasurer Stephanie Fenton-Hickey provided the financial report, including the balance sheet comparison and profit and loss comparison. Total assets as of August 31, 2018 stood at \$170,698.72. For the period Jan.-Aug. 2018, Gross Profits stood at \$40,631.47, while Total Expenses came to \$35,621.81. The Treasurer's report was approved.

Cathy Blackmon presented her President's report. She called several notable accomplishments to the attention of the group, including the Junior National Driving Champion Riley Wiltison and his Connemara. She also highlighted the highly deserved, major recognition given to Susan McConnell, the Michael O'Malley Lifetime Service Award from the ICCPS, the International Community of Connemara Societies of which Susan McConnell has been Secretariat for many years in Ireland. Attendees at that award ceremony noted the extent of Susan's service that garnered the award, and Susan's extremely gracious thank you to others as she accepted it. Cathy noted that Joan Webster has been recognized as an emeritus member of the ACPS.

In the absence of Marynell Eyles, who was justifiably absent from this meeting for the first time anyone could recall (to attend her granddaughter's wedding!), Cathy Blackmon summarized her written registrar's report. The foal crop for 2018 is the largest in a number of years, with the registration applications complete on 22 with 12 more in process.

Linda Haines provided an update on the ICCPS, and again noted the recognition of Susan McConnell's outstanding contributions.

It was noted that the ACPS Foundation has a balance of \$37,939.10. A \$200.00 donation was made to Dr. Walsh in appreciation of the presentation he made to the meeting on September 28. Sally Oxnard noted that the ACPS website contains a form which can be used by the Regions to apply to the Foundation for grants for clinics and other educational opportunities.

Committee Reports

Arbitration

The Arbitration committee is proceeding with development of procedures and documentation to guide hardship registration applications. The one hard and fast requirement will be that parentage must be proven, as preserving the

integrity of the studbook is the inviolable underlying principle. The Hardship Procedures are to be reviewed by Scott McGuffin and then available to the membership, no later than January 2019.

Cathy Blackmon recommended that Fonda Eigel and Marynell Eyles review the registration policies and procedures to ensure consistency throughout, as several documents now contain conflicting prices, etc. It was also suggested that we consider eliminating the need for the Temporary Foal Certificate, going directly to full registration within the first year.

Awards

Marilyn Cheek reported that the Awards Committee is running smoothly. The highlight from the Awards committee was the acknowledgement of Joanie Webster's effort to bring us the new Broodmare Trophy, created to replace the trophy lost in the terrible California wildfire that destroyed Joanie Webster's farm. Joanie worked closely with noted equine artist Jean Clagett to create the wonderful new bronze trophy. Marilyn also recognized the great job done by Karen Laden in her first year of compiling Achievement Award results.

ByLaws

No changes to Bylaws have been required.

Finance

Cathy Blackmon was advised by our insurer that the insurance requirements will be changing and in the future each Region must have a separate insurance policy for events. However, details and timing for this have not been provided by the insurer. Additional information will be sent out as it is available.

Inspections

Gloria LaCroix reported that the Inspections committee is surveying who will be likely to need inspections next year. Getting numbers and sites lined up as early as possible is essential to keeping air travel and lodging expenses down. All regions are encouraged to survey breeders and get numbers as soon as possible.

Internet

Policy documents and posted to the web page need updating. Each committee chair is responsible for updating policies and forms relevant to their area.

Magazine

Marynell Eyles submitted a magazine report. Breeders are strongly encouraged to submit ads for the 2019 Stallion issue.

Nominating

Chris Knox is rotating off and will be replaced by Bonnie Reid.

Promotions

A discussion was started on the possibility of having one or more Connemara-themed jumps created that could be used at major competitions such as HITS shows where they would get visibility both at the show and on show videos. Once a jump is created it can be used multiple times. The understanding is that the jumps are managed by the course designers, so the first step would be to contact some course designers for additional information. The concept was well received and the committee will explore what would be necessary in terms of logistics and expenses.

Region Chair Liaison

Gloria LaCroix reported that most Region Governors and Chairs will continue to serve for the next year. She stressed the importance of designating state liaisons to cover each state in a region, as most regions are widespread. Activities and contacts focused at the state level may provide more opportunities than only Region-wide events.

Youth Program

Nora Goldfarb sent a report on the outstanding juniors in the United States Pony Club championships and the American Eventing Championships. She included the ponies and juniors competing at USEF Pony Finals as well.

USEF Connemara Committee

Committee members noted that the current major issue has been the Safe Sport initiative. Beginning next year, all adults with competitive USEF memberships will be required to complete Safe Sport training, which can be completed on the USEF website.

The next USEF annual meeting and concurrent ACPS meeting will take place in West Palm Beach, FL in January. The USEF meeting will begin January 8. The ACPS meeting will be held Saturday, January 12. Registration and hotel information for the USEF meeting is available on the USEF website.

Ad Hoc Committees

Genetics

Joanie Webster summarized a report submitted by Maureen Loughman Abel on the UC Davis effort on melanoma research. Dr. Theon, who is overseeing the research, reported that detailed DNA sequencing has been completed on a total of 28 ponies. He notes: "This allows us to confirm or rule out some of the previously identified genes found only in ponies with melanoma. Now we are looking specifically at genes found only in ponies with early onset versus late onset because early onset is definitely more aggressive and of most concern for owners/breeders. We have identified a few specific genes and we are currently **looking at one which appears very promising.**"

The researchers are now looking for additional blood samples from two cohorts: gray Connemaras <6 years of age with melanoma, and gray Connemaras >15 years of age with no melanoma and no history of melanoma. If you have a pony that fits one of those two categories and would be willing to participate, please contact Maureen Loughman Abel (mlouhgman@embarqmail.com or 863 467-5377) for additional information.

It was also noted that the research continues to be in great need of additional funding. After receiving the update on the Melanoma Research Project, the Board voted to **match funds** donated **by November 15th, 2018**, to this project up to \$2,500.00!! The goal of the research is to identify the genes responsible for equine melanoma using the DNA of the Connemara Pony. Several genes have been identified with one in particular "appears to be very promising".

Please send your donation – however small – to ACPS Treasurer Stephanie Fenton-Hickey, 518 East Mays Rd, Stockbridge, GA 30281. Checks should be made out to ACPS Foundation and noted "for Dr. Theon's Melanoma Study".

It is only with the support of the ACPS and its members, especially the members who gave samples of their ponies, that the research has advanced this far. Let's help bring this research to a great conclusion.

Connemara Sport Horse Inspection Update

It was noted that one halfbred stallion had been inspected and subsequently entered into the Oldenburg Registry.

It was suggested that a seal is needed for the registration papers for Connemara Sport Horses, similar to what is provided for purebreds and halfbreds.

Strategic Planning

Kate Denton reported that results have been received from the survey on strategic planning and will be compiled and presented at the January BOG meeting.

Old Business

Sally Oxnard reported that there is additional ACPS history to be recorded and she would like to eventually see a new book prepared. Several members noted the wealth of history currently contained in past additions of magazines. The possibility of getting old magazines scanned into electronic form and made available online was discussed.

New Business

No additional new business was raised.

The Board of Governors meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

American Connemara Pony Society Annual Meeting – 2:00 p.m., September 29, 2018

Cathy Blackmon called the meeting to order, and the minutes of the January 2018 meeting were approved.

A review of the one motion concerning donations to the UC Davis melanoma research effort was noted.

Region Chair Reports were read from each region. The reports will appear in the American Connemara magazine.

Election of the New Board – New board members are: Kate Denton, Fonda Eigel, Wayne Quarles, Becky Jordan, and Sarah McRae Thrasher.

The annual meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Newly Elected Board of Governors – Meeting – was called to order immediately following the adjournment of the Annual Meeting in order to adopt the slate of officers for 2018.

The nominating committee included Sally Oxnard, Deb Norman, and Bonnie Reid. The ACPS officers for 2019 are Catherine Blackmon, President; Kate Denton, Vice President; Linda Haines, Vice President; and Stephanie Fenton-Hickey, Treasurer.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Suzanne Phelps,
for Marynell Eyles, Secretary

DRAFT