**ACPS BOARD MEETING – WEST PALM BEACH, FL --- SATURDAY, JAN. 11, 2020**

**MINUTES**

The meeting of the American Connemara Pony Society Board of Governors was called to order by President, Cathy Blackmon, at 9:20 a.m. in Cypress A Meeting Room of the Hilton West Palm Beach, FL. A quorum was declared with the following in attendance: officers -Linda Haines, vice-president, Fonda Eigel, vice-president, Stephanie Fenton-Hickey, treasurer, Joan Webster, Member Emeritus; and members of the Board, Donna Duckworth (FL), Jill McNicol, DVM (OH), Donna Power (VA), Wayne Quarles (KY), Sarah Thrasher (VT), Suzanne Phelps (VA), Megan Harris (GA), Tracy Garland (WA), Kathy Lucas (CA). Regional Chair attending was Darian Hall. Additional members were Kathy Sparks (IN), Stephanie Keen (FL), Donna Miller (GA), and Kate Dela Vega (VA).

Cathy Blackmon welcomed all to the meeting, with the special greeting to the second generation ACPS members, Stephanie Keen (daughter of Susan McConnell) and Kate Dela Vega (daughter of Deb Norman) with the statement, that “We welcome the next generation and we know these ponies help keep us young!”

The minutes of the October 2019 Board of Governors and Annual Meeting were approved with the following amendments from Sally Oxnard and Tracy Garland. The first amendment should be added to the Awards Report. “The new Fun with Pony Achievement Award will be a pilot for 2020. New policy and form to be voted upon at the January meeting. This meets one of the Strategic Planning goals to recognize more riders who do not compete.”

Also amended in the section on the Nominating Committee Report – “As the meeting of the Board (At Large and Regional Governors) was called to order…” Sally Oxnard requested the included statement with the thought that “confusion remains regarding the status of the Regional Governors. They are just the same as At Large Governors in terms of work and worthiness and responsibilities.”

Also an error in that section – the Chair for 2020 for the Nominating Committee is Deb Norman. Committee members are Bonnie Reid and Joanie Webster.

With the above amendments and corrections, the minutes were approved.

**Report of the Membership Chair** – Kate Denton prepared the report presented by the new Membership Chair, Suzanne Phelps who commented that she had already received three new membership applications! In a nutshell, membership is up from the 2018 totals to 571. Cynthia Holbrook will run the database and has already moved the data to a new software so more reports can be generated more easily. Suzanne said, “Cynthia is doing all the hard work, I am the front person.” A discussion about the printed Directory was concluded with the facts that the Directory will be printed for those who want it ($20), and that the new software will make is possible to print it in a more readable format. The Board unanimously thanked Kate Denton for her three years of hard work and for increasing the numbers of members.

**Report of the Treasurer** – Stephanie Fenton-Hickey, always introduces herself as “Your Reluctant Treasurer” and 2020 was no different. She works closely through Quickbooks on-Line, with Cathy Blackmon, who among her many attributes, is a CPA. The pair presented the Financials for the Society through 2019 with a budget for 2020 that showed the footing is solid, and the expenses and revenues very closely resembled 2018 with a few improvements in revenue. The Vanguard account has done well, and in a few lean months, the money it has made has helped the day-to-day cash flow of the ACPS continue without problems. As an example, Cathy Blackmon explained that over the last three years, the fund has reached $183,000 with $40,000 taken out for various operating expenses. Overall, the financial reporting showed a break-even budget that was approved. As part of the discussion, Tracy Garland asked why the funds for Promotion were shown under the Foundation funds, and that was explained. In short, the fundraising efforts from the World Equestrian Games presentations, were leftover and put into the Foundation, with a $1000 per year to be earmarked for promotions.

In that discussion, the conclusion that one of the Society’s weakest points was promotions and keeping current items on the Web Site. It was also noted that the USEF supplies two grants to the ACPS as an Affiliate – $1.00 per member who uses the USEF web site to pay for a membership comes back to the ACPS, and $500 in monies for educational activities at Annual Meetings.

It was explained again, that when a member pays dues on the USEF website, on the pull-down menu when asked for “discipline”, the first discipline should be Connemara. That indicator generates the $1 per member payment to the Society.

For many members, this is not generally common knowledge, so it was suggested that the American Connemara Magazine explain the topic and keep the notice in front of the readers.

Cathy Blackmon reported that all the tax reports for the Society have been done. The Regional Treasurer’s reports are due to her by April 15. Each Region needs to send a financial statement to Cathy Blackmon.

The Treasurer’s Report was accepted and the Budget for 2020 was approved.

**Report of the President** – Cathy Blackmon thanked the group for all their work during the past year. She noted that the Society is on a good forward-moving path. We all work well together, she said. With so many varied backgrounds it makes for a dynamic group that has the ability to work together. The officers’ leadership is also forward-thinking and while sadly, the passing of Susan McConnell has required the group to repopulate many committees and positions, all the people who have been asked to do a job have said “yes”. Cathy noted, “Susan’s legacy is well and alive.”

Kathy Lucas thanked Cathy Blackmon for her ability to lead – that it was a difficult time and had been handled very well. All agreed that the character of the breed, Connemara, reflects the people and the breeders. Cathy Blackmon said, “Our character is drawn to their character.”

Deb Norman added, “And it’s all positive energy”.

**Report of the Registrars** – Marynell Eyles, Purebred/Halfbred Registry and Stud Book – had sent a detailed report of the purebred and halfbred foals of 2019. The foal crop is at 45, and there will probably be a few more registered. The Society includes in the registration process the microchip, HWSD status, USEF lifetime recording number, and DNA results. Sending the packet is more expensive as each envelope now costs approx. $3.50 each compared to the two stamps it used to cost.

It was explained that if both sire and dam of a foal are N/N for Hoof Wall, that the foal will be noted N/N by pedigree and not tested. If either sire or dam is a carrier, the foal will be tested. The hoof wall results are recorded on the registration certificate.

Megan Harris, registrar for the Connemara Sport Horse Registry reported that the program is still in its infancy. It is slowly increasing. She said she knows there are other registerable partbreds “out there” and that the crop of 2020 should produce more this year.

A discussion on why farm owners don’t get, or are slow to get, their foals registered found no real answers except to note that the same “players” do the same things over and over. That some breeders may not be interested enough and are breeding to a market or fulfilling a whim instead of thinking of the process responsibly. There were no conclusions.

**ICCPS**  - Linda Haines reported for Scott McGuffin, who was the representative from the ACPS in August. Linda explained the background of the international committee of Connemara Pony Societies and its goals. The ACPS is a “daughter” society to the CPBS of Ireland. Susan McConnell has been the Secretariat of the organization for many years, and the group is now struggling to find a person to fill that role. The ICCPS is also still trying to combine with stud book information from all of the International groups, to form the World Wide Database, but it has been a long and hard struggle with no end in sight.

**ACPS FOUNDATION** – Deb Norman and Stephanie Keen are the Chairs of this program. Deb said she is trying to step into the shoes of a fearless leader (Susan McConnell) and has decided her best role is that of a cheerleader for fundraising for the Foundation. “We do not want to spend all the monies that Susan McConnell worked so hard to amass, and we certainly don’t want to spend the capital. The funds are used for our scholarships and educational clinics, so there is plenty of reason for people to be generous to the Foundation.”

In December, Deb Norman had written a letter to the Membership with a plea for giving contributions to the Foundation. That plea raised more than $2000. In discussing how to raise more money for the good causes funded by the Foundation, Megan Harris suggested that a Stallion Auction be organized with the funds going to the Foundation. The suggestion was put into the form of a motion, and was approved unanimously.

Stephanie Keen, Megan Harris, Jill McNicol, Donna Miller, and Kate DelaVega will organize the fundraiser. The bids and the process will be posted on Facebook. The committee will research having a professional organizer run the auction, but that decision is up to the committee.

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

**ARBITRATION** – Fonda Eigel, Chair, reported on the final wording of the Hardship Registration Policy. The step by step process, and its costs, were explained to the group. The whole procedure will be posted on the ACPS web site. When a pony owner wants to pursue the process, the paperwork to complete will be sent to the applicant. Once the fees are paid and the forms are completed, each case will be decided on its own merit by the Executive Board of the ACPS.

**AWARDS** – Marilyn Cheek and Sally Oxnard, co-chairs. Marilyn Cheek sent the following report: Awards had its usual busy year in 2019. We gave out 57 achievement awards last year (for the previous year) and Karen Laden is laboring over the 2019 compilation that will be presented this spring. An impressive 87 purebred and halfbred Connemaras earned points toward USEF/ACPS Horse of the Year Awards. The USDF/ACPS All Breed Awards honored 31 ponies and their riders.The USEA/ACPS awarded high point status to 3 purebreds and 5 halfbreds (out of 109) Beginner Novice competitors, to 5 purebreds and 4 halfbreds (of 132 competitors) in Novice Level; 4 purebreds and 3 halfbreds (of 67 competitors) at Training Level; 1 purebred and two halfbreds (of 6 competitors) at the new modified level; 2 purebreds and 2 halfbreds (of 19 competitors) at Preliminary level; two halfbreds at Intermediate Level and one halfbred at Advanced Level.

Last October in Richmond, we presented our prestigious Hall of Fame Awards to the winners of the Tooreen Laddie, An Tostal, Tre Awain, and Camlin awards, but had no Broodmare candidate nominated this year. In a break with tradition, we awarded one purebred and two halfbred Connemara of the Year awards to recognize ambassadorial contributions at national and international levels.

The committee also went over some proposed changes that will need to be considered here at the Board of Governors meeting.

I. A proposal to require that the owner or rider of a USEF winner be an ACPS member; THIS PROPOSAL WAS NOT ACCEPTED.

II. A pilot program, to be run by Tracy Garland and Region 9, to explore awards for time spent riding, training, and otherwise enjoying our ponies in an informal, non- competitive way. THIS PROPOSAL WAS ACCEPTED AND A PILOT PROGRAM WILL BE CONDUCTED IN REGIONS 1 AND IX.

Regarding the HOTY awards, there have been a lot of informal discussions about whether and how we might make the HOTY divisions more appropriate and Chris Knox, who is replacing Chris Keim as our USEF/HOTY czarina, is deeply involved in those discussions.

There are some personnel changes: Deb Norman, who has been our Breeding Subcommittee leader, is assuming heavier duties with the ACPS Foundation and may need more help or a replacement on that committee. Donna Miller has proposed two additions for the Performance Award subcommittee: Cynthia Holbrook and Lori Johnson. As noted, Tracy Garland is on deck to oversee the “Time with your Pony “ pilot program. And Raelin Schenck has also joined the awards team. Welcome!

We would like to add a couple of people to the committee —you might call them at-large members—who could help implement recommendations in the Strategic Plan, notably the recommendation that we actively connect with the managers/secretaries of the national championships for all the disciplines to get our ACPS High Point Connemara Awards established at those shows. And we’d like someone who is involved with western disciplines to focus on what new Western categories should be included in the Achievement Awards program and how to compute the points for those new categories. We also are hoping to get a video put together that will show members how to apply for awards, based on Megan Harris’ excellent series on the awards program that ran in *American Connemara Magazine* this year.

In conclusion, let me thank Chris Keim for her service with the committee and especially for her work on the USEF questions and her research on the various “time with your horse” programs run by other breed organizations. She is taking time to work on her masters thesis and we wish her good luck. Kudos also to Katie Donaruma, our outstanding open championship ribbon keeper who gets them off to shows at lightning speed, and to Julie Keahey and Amy Plavin for their hard work getting ACPS policies up to date and onto the website. And, of course, thanks to our committee members who seek out and evaluate candidates for our Hall of Fame awards.

In addition to the above report – at the meeting, Deb Norman asked for nominees for each of the ACPS Hall of Fame Awards.

The new Pilot Program, emphasizing having Fun With Your Pony, and an achievement award to honor that, was discussed at length, including how to introduce the program and how to inform the regions about the new pilot program. After much deliberation, it was decided to keep the pilot program in just two regions that have already determined there is an interest, instead of opening it to all. The year will run from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 of 2020 in those two regions. A watermark will be printed on the application pages, adding the word “PILOT” so Karen Laden will be sure to notice. The program will be treated as an Ad Hoc issue for 2020, and it will be decided at the 2021 Board meeting whether to continue the program.

Wayne Quarles made a motion to accept the proposal with two regional designees to keep track of points. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

**BY LAWS – SCOTT MCGUFFIN**, Chair. No changes to the ByLaws are pending or have been suggested.

**FINANCE** – Cathy Blackmon had included her Finance Report in the time allotted for the Treasurer.

**INSPECTIONS** – Kathy Sparks, Chair, sent the following report - Good morning everyone,

Friday the Inspection Committee met, with inspectors present as well as a few other interested ACPS members in attendance. Here is a summary of topics that were discussed and what I reported Saturday to the board:  
1)  two inspection sites are scheduled for 2020.  Those are Region 3, July 26, Lexington VA, Region 3 show Region 4, Oct 10-11, Big Bear Farm, GA , Region 4 show

The due date for paperwork and fees is Feb 1.  This date allows for inspectors to plan travel. The nominations are coming in and the details will be worked out.  Tentative teams have been set and more details will come in a separate email.  We are seeing the effects of the slump in breeding a couple of years ago, impacting the number of ponies eligible for inspection.  One other item that impacts the numbers of ponies who could be nominated is, yes over the years, thanks to the support, effort and hard work of everyone, owners, ACPS members and inspectors, we have inspected a majority of the ponies !   Well done !

That being said, inspections will look at a schedule of rotating around the regions.  This means, yes you might have one or two ponies in 2020, but perhaps by 2022 your region may have 10 ponies.   I will be working with region chairs/governors/ members to project a schedule for regional inspections.  For example, Region I is thinking in 2021 they will have the numbers.  Remember there is no big push to have a young pony inspected.  Often they are better served waiting until they mature a few more years.

Another part of the eligible ponies for inspection are those who had been nominated in the past, but for various reasons, were unable to attend their originally scheduled inspection.  Their nominations are on file and with Marynell’s assistance, we will be generating a list and I will be following up to determine the status of these ponies.  
2) Top priority is a much needed review and update of the committees policies and procedures.  I asked the inspectors present to start with the Certification subcommittee policy and I will be sending out a copy to everyone via email so all can provide input.  The goal is to have revisions of all the Inspection P&P ready to present to the board for approval in September.  Updates to the ACPS website are also being done

3)  the Inspection Committee serves in an educational capacity for the society.  It has been proposed, and partial funding has been requested from the Foundation, for informative clinics in regions 8 and 9. Yes we have had clinics before, many times at the annual meeting, but the majority of our members do not attend the annual meeting.  We need to serve our members and work within the regions. There are some additional details  to be worked out and again, this will be addressed in a separate email.  Inspectors would serve as presenters and teaching aids and tools will be developed.

4)  Pony owners and other interested parties are asking “why should I want to have my pony inspected ?”  Please step out of your inspector’s role and put pen to paper and send in a couple of catch phrases you have shared with individuals who have asked you about inspections.

5) The Inspectors received a copy of the Linear Profiling currently used by the CPBS  for our review and study.

6) Recognition of inspected and approved ponies came up and how can we increase awareness and Bring attention to these ponies who have been inspected.   A suggestion was proposed at the board meeting - to have a class at our shows only for inspected and approved ponies.  In some cases it might be the same group of ponies which would compete in another class, but maybe not.  The pony’s status is easy to determine via the Studbook. We encourage show managers and show committees to consider adding such a class to their prize lists.  
7)  Once again the topic of recognizing ponies on the day of inspection was raised.  Keep in mind the goal of the inspection process is to inspect breeding stock per the breed standard.  The approved ponies are added to the international studbook and the seal that is applied to their registration papers is the incentive and reward.  Not all programs require “special” prizes - the goal here is approved status.   We do however inspect for premium status and upon attaining premium status, the nominated pony is singled out and the owner congratulated.   Premium status is something to be extremely proud of achieving, one breeders and owners should celebrate.  
The Inspection Committee and Inspectors have perhaps the most important role in the society, one of seeing that we maintain and preserve our breed standard.   And the job is taken very seriously.  It is an honor and privilege to serve as an ACPS Inspector.

The inspection program has worked hard to achieve a level of success and improve the perception of the process, thereby encouraging pony owners to study their breeding stock and really take a good look at both the stallion and mare Being bred. Every decision and part of this program has been given mindful consideration, sought out counsel and advice from countless individuals and it is the ponies and our members who are best served by our efforts.  Therefore, the concept of recognition of significant ponies on the day of inspection requires more discussion and thought. The discussion will continue

8) The proposed Strategic plan section regarding Inspections was distributed and those present were asked to comment by February 15, as the Strategic Planning Committee will be discussing the Inspection component during their February 24 conference call.

9) Our Society should be proud of its achievements as a breed Society.  We have received international recognition for our effort by our membership in the ICCPS, encouraging the international world to come to realize the importance of DNA testing and recording of foal birth color, we’ve been on the cutting edge in breeding practices involving artificial  insemination and embryo transfer, we’ve supported not only financially but provided a breed test population in research programs regarding melanomas and hoof wall syndrome, and we are educating our members and pony owners through the Inspection program to take a closer look at their much loved ponies and to understand the importance of maintaining a breed standard and by doing so, we ensure the future of  the Connemara pony.  
  
I am pleased to share that the Inspection Committee members are: Tracy Garland, Wayne Quarles, Sarah McRae Thrasher and myself as Chair.   Please feel free to contact any of us should a question or need arise.

Thank you for your support of the Inspection process and dedication to the Connemara pony

**Internet** – Amy Plavin, chair, sent a brief report that the web site needs information from all the committees. A project to read and update all the policies and procedures will be undertaken and the new document controller is Julie Keahey, who is doing a great job putting the documents into similar formats to keep track of updates.

**Magazine** – Marynell Eyles thanked the assembled group for their contributions to the magazine over the last year – whether in the form of an ad, or an editorial piece of writing. Each is important. The ads are very important, not only for revenue, but also for determining the price of postage since the magazine is mailed under Media mail. The cost is somewhat dependent on the percentage of ads on the pages. Even if a farm doesn’t have a specific pony or stallion to advertise, it helps the survival of the magazine to put a business card, or any size ad on the pages. The articles and the stories, and the photos are the best parts of each issue, and thanks was expressed for contributing.

The next issue is the Awards Issue, and while it’s always a more difficult issue to construct thanks to all the many little pieces, it involves so many members to make it happen.

**Nominating** – Deb Norman, Chair, asked each Board member to think of a good candidate for the slots that will be open in 2020. Each year, there is a “class” of 5 or 6 candidates who must be nominated. The membership has many on the list who could contribute their talents to the Society. The Board members whose terms are complete in 2020 are Cathy Blackmon, Stephanie Fenton-Hickey, Cynthia Holbrook, Deborah Howell, Jill McNicol, and Lisa Rease.

**Promotions** – Melanie Trimper and Heather Magnan, chairs, Linda Haines read the report. Ads have been placed in several national publications in 2019. Melanie Trimper has asked to step down from her duties and the Board unanimously voiced thanks for her work, and sent their best regards for improved health. It was noted that she has done wonderful work for the Society. The committee was re-populated with the following people after discussion on the possible ways to promote the Connemara. The committee members are Raelin Schenck, Donna Power, and Kate DelaVega who will work with chair, Heather Magnan. Megan Harris noted that many of the “big names” in the competitive world are sponsored by corporations and/or groups. She suggested the Society come up with a plan. Jill McNicol noted that her daughter had been an Ambassador for the Plaid Pony magazine, and perhaps that was the way to proceed. The committee will write a proposal for Ambassadors for the Connemara. Several names were mentioned and the idea will be pursued.

Additionally, the new benefit from the USEF in the form of medical insurance, including dental and eyesight, should be a very good reason for more ACPS members to choose to be USEF members also. Even the USEF $25 membership will include the insurance option. For many farm owners and trainers, health insurance is a difficult and expensive part of a budget.

The idea of a new jump, decorated with a Connemara theme (logo, shamrock, ACPS) was also discussed, and several Board members suggested people who might build the jump. The demonstrations at Land Rover 3-Day would be an excellent site to use the jumps, as well as other venues,. The jump would be portable enough to move from site to site in a trailer .Bids and prices for the jump will be submitted.

**Region Chair Liaison** – Sally Oxnard sent the following: We have three new Region Chairs: Tracy Roettiger in Region 1, Katherine Short in Region 5, and Susan Dudasik in Region 8. There are inspections scheduled in Region 3 and 4 and may be more. Regions 8 and 9 are supporting the Strategic plan recommendations by scheduling a pre-inspection clinic and asking for funding from the Foundation. Regions 1,3, 4, 6 and 10 have been having shows. Region 5 has big plans for the Connemara demo at Rolex and the annual meeting and more. Many regions have newsletters of Facebook pages as communication tools. All regions are working on updating their info on the ACPS web site. All the regions are working with Becky Jordan on our new insurance plan and new consent form. We hope to have another Region Chairs meeting in September in Lexington, KY.

**Youth Program** – The Goldfarb family in Tennessee has been conducting the youth program through high point ribbons in competitions like the United States Pony Club championships, in communicating with the young people who are finding success with their Connemaras, and keeping a Facebook presence with them. The girls are looking for a replacement since they are all away at school. Sarah McRae Thrasher said her working student, Sophie Tuller, has agreed to take on the project. Since Northern Connemaras is hosting junior camps, using their Connemaras, it seems the perfect fit for reaching many young people. She will share the information about the scholarship programs, and a page in the magazine is dedicated to the youth each issue.

**USEF Connemara Committee** – the committee is now chaired by Chris Knox. In the past, the committee met at the USEF annual meeting, but most of the group’s work is now done via conference call. Approving rules changes, considering officials, and other pertinent to the Connemara division topics are discussed. The Committee is repopulated annually at the pleasure of the USEF president, Bill Moroney. Jackie Barr is the ACPS/USEF contact person for 2020.

**Ad Hoc Committees**

**Genetics** – Maureen Loughman Abel sent her report and Joanie Webster read it to the group. The time is near! UCDavis hopes to create a test to determine the odds of developing melanoma in horses within the next year. This research is based on samples taken from Connemara Pony purebreds, however, the test will be used on all breeds of horses.

The first Connemara Ponies were sampled in 2013, and since then approximately 90 ponies were put forward for sampling by their owners, The ACPS has also been generous with financial support. Dr. Alain Theon credits the ACPS with keeping this research going, despite some difficult times.

For those who are scientifically inclined, here are comments from Dr. Carrie Finno. Dr. Finno led the HWSD research and she came onto the Melanoma Research about a year ago. “WE have completed testing the genetic markers in our candidate tumor-suppressor gene for an association in 12 early onset Connemara ponies and 12 unaffected (less than 15 years of age). The exciting thing is that the association holds up…i.e. these genetic markers are associated with a 4 to 5 times odds of developing early onset melanoma. We have a few more ponies that I need Becca\* to finish genotyping but the data is pretty solid. Next steps are to look at gene expression in tumor tissue and see if there is a difference at RNA and protein level between early onset and unaffected ponies.” \*She is referring to the genetic lab at UC Davis.

Once again, I am asking members to notify me of any Connemaras who developed melanoma prior to age 6. They may not be tested right now, but I will keep track of them for future reference. So, stay tuned! A test is on the way in the next year or so which will assist breeders in decreasing the incidents of melanoma in all equines.

**Strategic Planning** – Liz Platais sent her report which was read by Kathy Sparks – The committee wants to thank Chris Keim, chairman, Kate Denton and Donna Miller for their work on the Strategic Plan over the past year. Due to other obligations, Chris has asked to resign and Liz Platais, former ACPS president was appointed to take her place. IN order to assure that the SPC continue to go forward a new committee was formed for the year 2020. They are Kathy Sparks, past ACPS president, Kate Denton, ACPS vice president, Tracy Garland, and Donna Miller. At the January 2019 BOG meeting, responsibility for each of the 9 areas was assumed by members. As the new committee formed, an update was requested from each of those areas. Great appreciation is expressed to Sally Oxnard and Marilyn Cheek of Awards, Linda Haines of Promotion also working with Deb Norman of Breeders Concerns. Kate Denton of membership and Cathy Blackmon in the area of the Annual Meeting. Unfortunately no update was received from BOG members who had assumed responsibility for Inclusivity, Volunteer Support and Miscellaneous.

The committee met via conference call on December 2, and will continue to meet monthly in order to assure that the ACPS continues to move forward.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**HISTORY BOOK** – Sally Oxnard sent the following: The history committee is kicking off the new decade with a meeting with Caroline Nesbitt, Liz Platais, Cynthia Richards, and Sally Oxnard to get the ball rolling and share a lunch, Planning includes addressing format, questions to be asked, senior Connemara breeders to interview, etc. Interested participants please contact Sally Oxnard.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Embryo Transfer Rule for Registration – Donna Duckworth brought a topic of discussion and decision to the Board. She noted that some breeders had asked why only one Embryo transfer foal (except in the case of twins) was allowed to be registered in one year. Discussion on the topic concluded that the rule was written when the embryo transfer procedure was very new, and very rare. Now, the process is undertaken by many sport horse breeders, and some Connemara breeders. A motion was put forth – Multiple embryos can be flushed from one mare and all resulting foals are eligible for registration pending parentage testing for each. The motion passed unanimously,

**Policies and Procedures for committees** – Cathy Blackmon read changes to be made in the P&P statement for the Annual Meeting Committee. Those changes were approved. Fonda Eigel said all the committee chairs should read the Policy and Procedure statements for their committee and make changes as needed. The updates will be reviewed, approved, and then should be sent to Julie Keahey, the Document Controller. Tracy Garland suggested a “Consent Agenda” should be used for these detail-type changes to enable the group to make small changes without the whole Board taking time in a meeting. The idea was well received.

**Fonda Eigel noted that applications are being sought for the Connemara Demonstrations at Land Rover 3Day** in April in Lexington, KY at the Horse Park. She also noted that the Breyerfest this year has a Celtic theme, and the Connemaras have been invited to participate. That date is July 10 to 12.

The trade fair, Equitana, is Sept. 23 to 27, and there was discussion about having a booth there, but that time is the same as the ACPS Annual Meeting, so the discussion ended with a decision not to try to man a booth there. If attendees at the AGM want to attend Equitana, there will be time for them to do so,.

**Fonda Eigel, on behalf of her Region V, invited the ACPS members and Board to the Annual Meeting at the Hilton Downtown Lexington, Kentucky.** The organizers are planning sessions on breeding and feeding Connemaras, nutrition based on the pony’s needs, and more information from the vets and professionals in the area.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Marynell Eyles, Secretary