

## **AMERICAN CONNEMARA PONY SOCIETY**

### **JANUARY 20, 2018 --- LEXINGTON, KY – BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING AT USEF ANNUAL MEETING**

Snow covering the grounds around Lexington, Kentucky, did not stop a bevy of American Connemara Pony Society members from heading to the site of the USEF Annual Meeting at the Hyatt Regency Hotel from Jan. 17 to 20, 2018. It was a meeting that celebrated the “JOY” of horses and competition. Mr. Murray Kessler’s year at the reins with Mr. Bill Moroney as the CEO of USEF, the session was one of introspection and inclusion. Boosting membership, encouraging the Affiliates of USEF (of which the ACPS is one), creating a new category for recognized shows, and figuring out technicalities like microchipping, horse recording, drug testing, recognition of breeders, and many other timely topics kept the meeting rooms busy.

At 9 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 20, Cathy Blackmon called the meeting of the American Connemara Pony Society to order for the Board of Governors January meeting. After the roll was called by secretary, Marynell Eyles, each person at the meeting was invited to talk about how they came to admire and support the Connemara breed. Those in attendance were: Cathy Blackmon, Kate Denton, Fonda Eigel, Stephanie Fenton-Hickey, Cynthia Holbrook, Deborah Howell, Susan Jellum, Christina Keim, Gloria LaCroix, Susan McConnell, Jill McNicol, Wayne Quarles, Martha Slamer, Suzanne Phelps, Bonnie Reid, Kathy Lucas. Also attending were Chris Knox, Joanie Webster, Katherine Short, Carol Kozlowski, Stephanie Burk, Donna Miller, Sally Eyles-Goldfarb, and junior members Nora Goldfarb and Meg McNicol. A quorum was declared.

The minutes of the September, 2017, Board of Governors meeting were approved.

Kate Denton, Membership Chair – reminded the group that the deadline for paying dues for 2018 at the old rate is March 1. After that date, the rates all go up except for the Junior fees. At the time of the meeting, 587 members had paid their dues and were receiving the bi-monthly magazine. Kate is paying a computer-person to help her with the software, and if needed, to format the next Membership Directory. In discussion, it was revealed that Sue Jellum could help Kate do that, and Sue volunteered her services. The entire Board and guests in the meeting all agreed the ACPS owned a tribute to the late Anne Moe, for all her work with the Membership jobs.

Treasurer, Stephanie Fenton-Hickey of Georgia, reported that the year had ended on a “break-even” basis, and the best news was having the accounting software, Quickbooks, operating “on line” with access to information available to Cathy Blackmon (president AND accountant!). For the first time, the Inspection program operated at a loss, but Gloria LaCroix explained the many reasons. The Treasurer’s report was approved.

Cathy Blackmon, in her report of the President, said she had just started the job, and thanked all those who serve the Society, saying all of appreciate “all you do.”

Report of the Registrars – Marynell Eyles and Megan Harris. The two registrars for the Society reported on the stud books, and foal numbers. The purebred foal crop for 2017 was only 21 foals registered, but

the feeling in the room was that there were more “out there” that had not been counted. (In fact, upon return to the office, four purebred foal applications were in the mail). Megan Harris reported for the Connemara Sport Horse registry that an Inspection seal is still needed, and a template will be sent to Donna Miller for that purpose. The CSH inspections will be conducted by the ISR Oldenburg organization at their sites.

ICCPS – Susan McConnell reported on the status of the HWSD testing worldwide. Her complete report was emailed to the Board previously.

ACPS Foundation – Susan McConnell

**ACPS ~ Foundation**

January 14, 2018

Information for the Board of Governors January 2018 Meeting in Lexington, KY

Account Bank Statement Balance as December 31, 2016: \$40,533.10

**Payments in 2017:**

1/30/17	Awards Committee Scholarship		
	Scholarship Winner of \$100 = Emma Joyal (FL)		
	Scholarship Winner of \$100 = Anne Sartore (VA)		
	Scholarship Winner of \$100 = Claryce Eigel (KY)		
	Honorable Mention of \$25 = Summer Fraughnaugh (VA)		
	Honorable Mention of \$25 = Lulu Malinoski (VA)		
9/23/17	Award Committee Scholarships (Linda Haines, Chair)		
	Scholarship Winner of \$100 = Ginger Martin (FL)		
	Scholarship Winner of \$100 = Finley Peterson (VT) (check not cleared)		
	Scholarship Winner of \$100 = Summer Fraughnaugh (VA)		
	Scholarship Winner of \$100 = Stella Marsh (CT)		
	Scholarship Winner of \$100 = Morgan Trotter (TN)		
	Scholarship Winner of \$100 = Lulu Malinoski (VA)		
	Scholarship Winner of \$100 = Adelyn Brierston (OK)		
	Scholarship Total =	-\$1,050.00	
7/22/17	Staples (notebooks and copying for 36 people for JW Clinic at Virginia Horse Center	-117.31	
7/31/17	Virginia Horse Center (room, lunch)	-701.15	
7/31/17	Judy Wardrope (speaker’s fee)	-1,500.00	
9/23/17	ACPS (McGuffin Letter)	- 2,155.00	
12/30/17	Secretary of State of Ohio (Registration)	-5.00(online)	
			-\$5,523.46

**Deposits in 2017:**

Spring 2017	Donations in response to McGuffin letter	+2,155.00	
11/7/17	Proceeds from AGM (Region I) Meeting	+271.00	
2017	Scarves & Ties	+515.00	
			+\$2,941.00

Account Bank Statement Balance as of December 31, 2017: \$38,050.64

Finley Peterson -100.00

WEG Funds from 2010

Original amount for Promotional Use:	\$6,263.30
2014	\$888.26
2015	500.00
2016	420.00
Net WEG Funds remaining	<u>\$4,455.04</u>

AVAILABLE "General Funds" in ACPS Foundation Account \$33,595.60

During the year, please remember to email me to shop for Scarves (\$75.00) and Ties (\$40.00) (free gift wrapping, shipping and handling, too). Your purchases will support the ACPS Foundation. All the money goes directly into the ACPS Foundation account.

### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Arbitration** – Fonda Eigel reported there were no cases. The committee will now formulate a procedure to handle the "lost" and "found" Connemaras, or those with registration issues arising from breeders not adhering to deadlines and rules for registration. The "hardship" cases will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

**Awards:** Marilyn Cheek of Virginia, chair of the Awards Committee, presented a very detailed report, including the important fact that Karen Laden will take over tabulating the Achievement Awards points. Thanks was voiced for Deb Clinch and her work with this awards program. Karen Laden sent word that one of the problems with tabulating the points is that people expect her to verify their points as to whether the shows were recognized or not. That is the responsibility of the pony owner/rider. Important motions for the Awards Committee was **moving the deadline for applying for the ACPS Hall of Fame Awards to August 1. And, in the breeding awards, halfbred offspring will now be included when looking at breeding awards.**

**A new "Working Equitation" Achievement Award will be tabulated, and it was decided to make the Connemara who is exemplary in doing Police work, an "Ambassador" at this time. If there are more Connemaras in the future who participate in that training program, an Achievement Award may be established.**

Chris Keim of New Hampshire was asked to create a format for "time in the saddle/recreational riding" Achievement Award. She agreed to work on that project. The recreational rider award will be a self-reporting format, to catalog time spent in the saddle.

Joanie Webster of Napa, CA, and now a "gypsy" since her home and farm were lost in the recent wildfires, asked for ideas on replacing the ACPS Broodmare Trophy that had been in her home when the fire happened. She and Susan McConnell will pursue a sculpture that is suitable. As a token of rebuilding Joanie's collection of ACPS items, the Foundation presented her with a silk scarf and an enamel membership pin.

Sally Eyles-Goldfarb reported that a high score award ribbon had been presented at the US Pony Club National rallies for highest scoring Connemaras.

In this discussion was the announcement that a new Document Controller has been found. Carrie Hill will format the existing .docs, and will clean up and update those needing it.

There are also templates for the Junior Scholarship awards that are being re-done.

The budget for the Awards committee was higher than usual due to a very high shipping fee on one of the trophies awarded at the Vermont meeting. Much discussion followed, including questions about whether the trophies should be housed somewhere and not taken to each meeting site, whether the Society should pay shipping fees if the winner is present, and can take the trophy home, and other topics about what "keeper" trophies are presented. Consensus of the group was, that if the winner was present, the trophy was to be taken home at that time, or if not possible, would be stored until the next year's meeting for a new winner.

In the comments, Marynell Eyles reminded the group that the Society had “no real home”. She suggested the Strategic Planning Committee might put the goal of a real office on their list of things to consider.

Marilyn Cheek also noted that the USDF All Breeds Awards had cost \$650 for 16 ponies in 2017, and is very expensive for the Society. She asked the Board to decide if the ACPS should continue the program. The consensus of the Board was “yes”, continue the USDF All Breed Awards

**By-Laws Committee – Scott McGuffin** was not in attendance, but had written that he would work on getting a new edition of the By-Laws published with the recent approved changes included.

**Finance Committee** – Cathy Blackmon had included the Finance and Budget into the Treasurer’s Report. She added that the regions should send their finance reports to her asap. The tax returns must be done by May. She also reminded the regions that their activities need to be listed on the year’s calendar so the general insurance policy will cover those events. The policy is through Equisure. Dates should be given to the ACPS in January. The overall insurance rates are calculated on the basis of how many activities must be covered. Each region will pay a fee for additional events insured, and will pay for their shows. Cynthia Holbrook will be the new Insurance representative for the ACPS.

**Inspection Committee** - The Inspection Committee report was given by Gloria LaCroix and Susan McConnell, and they noted that three inspections sites will be offered in 2018. The deadline for nominating a pony for the inspections was Feb. 15, 2018. Jill McNicol volunteered to provide a microchip reader for the inspection sites, so ponies can be officially identified by chip numbers. It was at the point in the meeting that Cathy Blackmon noted, “We always say Connemaras do it all --- I think it’s time to add that WE can do better! It’s we, the humans who might stumble on the path with incomplete paperwork, or oversight. Let’s all agree to do better!”

Sarah Thrasher is the On-Site Secretary for the Inspection program. There are 2 Inspector Candidates at present: Nancy Kilcrease who is being mentored by Gloria LaCroix, and Tracy Garland who will be mentored by Joanie Webster. Susan McConnell noted that the Committee has a focus on educational opportunities and is working on a trip to IRE during the CPBS Inspections tours.

**Youth Program** - In the vein of doing better, Sally Eyles Goldfarb and her daughter, Nora Goldfarb, noted that they want to think of more ways to get youth involved with Connemaras and the Society. There are special ribbons at shows, and there are awards at the Dressage4Kids programs. Nora Goldfarb volunteered to send welcome letters to new Junior members, to let them know about other young people in their regions.

**Internet** – Sue Jellum read Amy Plavin’s report - Cheryl continues to be delightful to work with. If we want anything changed, she is happy to try and oblige. I still need every committee to review their section of the website and their forms and make changes if necessary. We have a new document controller as well and hopefully we can have more fillable PDF’s available. We do need a person to send news of the week or troll the internet and Facebook and send me pictures and text and I can have Cheryl post. I would also like to replace the pictures on the top of the site so we need photos of every discipline and ponies of every color as well.

**Magazine** – Marynell Eyles reported that the year with the new printer has been a good one. The press people are easy to work with, although all of the magazine composition work is done in the home computer, and any changes have to be paid for, so she tries to get it right the first time. A survey about which articles, sections, etc. readers liked, was distributed. The advertisers were thanked, as were all the article contributors for the year’s successes. The new 4-color, and the fact that there is no extra charge for “bleeds”, has opened up the whole process of designing a magazine of which to be proud.

**Nominating committee** is looking for candidates for the next election of Board members. Chris Knox is chair of that committee ([chris@knoxfarm.com](mailto:chris@knoxfarm.com)) if you are interested in serving or have suggestions on a person who would like to participate.

**Promotions** – Melanie Trimper and Heather Magnan

Promotions Committee Report 2017 Reported by: Heather Magnan, September 13, 2017 Social Media-Facebook: • American Connemara Pony Society Facebook page likes are up from 1,730 in 2016 to 1,991 in 2017. • Post reach varies, but has hit 9,000 at various times, depending on the number of shares a post gets. The top posts of 2017 were: Halloween Photo submissions, Congratulations to Margo & TwoBits/USEA, Happy St. Patricks day photo/graphic, Paralympic halfbred Dale (this was boosted for \$30 by Jill McNichol), VOTE for Carolina CIC3\* Eventing Nation (this was boosted for \$30 by Jill McNichol), Rolex/Nio post (this was boosted for \$30 by Jill McNichol), Horse & Hound article share on 13.3H Connemara at CIC1\*, Article- Eventing Nation “Does Size Matter?” (this was boosted for \$30 by Jill McNichol), Foals of 2017 photo album with email submissions. • Links and photos of ponies in the news had the highest organic (unpaid) reach and engagement. When posts are “boosted” facebook algorithms actually shows your page posts less unless you pay to boost them. Boosts with original content that directly link back to the ACPS website etc. should be boosted, not articles that are shared. • 160 posts from October 2016 September 2017, up 23 posts from 2015-2016. • 92% of audience is women ages 25-64, with the majority (21%) ages 45-54. • Messages have a 100% response rate, with a response time of 3 hours. • Audience by country of origin (top seven countries): o USA: 1,585 o Ireland: 135 o UK: 73 o Canada: 46 o France: 31 o Germany: 18 Social Media-Instagram: • Account started August 2016: @americanconnemara • Followers are up from 45 in 2016 to 114 in 2017 • 36 photos/videos have been shared • Instagram photos shared directly to Facebook have the highest reach. The hashtags #connemarasdoitall #ACPS and #americanconnemaraponysociety have all increased, as well as members tagging the ACPS Instagram in their photos. Facebook/Instagram Recommendations for 2018: Continue relevant Facebook posts and posts photos to facebook through Instagram if possible. Continue to encourage tagging on instagram and on facebook to share others posts. Viewers are more likely to engage if they think their post will be shared. Short stories/captions submitted with photos including the pictures ponies registered name and breeding is helpful. Don’t just “share” others posts, write a relevant engaging caption if possible. Continue to solicit photos/news from members, the foal photos were very successful and fun for members to participate in. Advertising • Paisley Pony- Stallion Issue • The Equiery • USDF- Full page ad (traded for space in American Connemara), Connemaras were a featured Breed of the Month • US Equestrian - Full page ad and Pony

Finals ad • Multiple sponsored posts on facebook Recommendations for 2018: • Increase Advertising overall • Advertise for Pony Finals • Advertise for AEC's • Advertise with United Stated Pony Club

*Jackie Dinnebeil of the USEF addressed the Board about the new recognized show designation – Competition Lite. She explained that show management does not have to charge for a USEF drug testing fee, or pay an office charge, and she hoped more regional shows would chose to offer their competitors the ability to gain Horse of the Year points.*

A discussion the World Equestrian Games slated for September in Tryon, NC, and participation as a breed society was moderated by Katherine Short of Kentucky. She had attended the talk given by Mr. Bellissimo at the USEF meeting. Katherine has also been valiantly trying to gather information from the WEG organizers at their offices, but it's been a difficult task. Susan McConnell and Katherine were guiding forces at the WEG at the Kentucky Horse Park where the ACPS had weeks of a very organized demonstration of the Connemara breed. Funds for the 2018 edition of the WEG are in the ACPS treasury, but information on fees and demo possibilities are difficult to get. The consensus of the Board was to try to take part in WEG - but, acknowledge that it might not happen.

**Region Chair Liaison** – Gloria LaCroix reported that she had talked with each Region Chair through the year, and the group in attendance had already met. Each region gave an annual report and will be published in the magazine. Each region has been asked to help “round up” and host sites for Inspections, and to consider how to have a show, or become part of a show, if there are not enough ponies to support a stand-alone event. There seemed to be much enthusiasm across the country, she said.

**USEF Connemara Committee** – Chris Knox reported that she and Cathy Blackmon are the ACPS Affiliate liaisons. Cathy reported that the USEF has awarded the ACPS a \$2000 grant for use in fostering membership and education, and they also refund \$1 for each member. Chris Knox said the USEF is offering a free Fan Membership to all junior ACPS members. The question as to whether the ACPS allows the USEF to use the membership statistics or whether the ACPS will manage the names contacted will be investigated. The Board felt the names should not be released to the USEF. A new Learning Center will be posted on the USEF web site, and there will be videos for each Affiliate. Chris asked the Board how should the ACPS be represented. The whole process is free for the Society. The discussion will continue.

### **Ad Hoc Committee Reports**

Joan Webster gave the report on the **Melanoma project** sent by Maureen Loughman-Abel, and it included the discouraging news that Dr. Theon did not get a grant he had hoped for from The Morris Foundation. He is not giving up though, and progress is still being made.

Donna Miller reported that the ISR Inspectors will host the **ACPS Sport Horse Inspection**.

**Strategic Planning** – Chris Keim said her committee members are Kate Denton, Jill McNicol, Scott MdGuffin, and Donna Miller. She said their motto at the moment is also, Do Better. She said, “Using the model of the ICCPS, to address the issues of the group” is a good place to start. They hope to move

forward and grow the Society. Three important issues they will keep in mind are supporting breeders, encouraging volunteer support, and education for all.

Joanie Webster also presented a five-point bullet list of what an **Emeritus member of the ACPS Board** should do. That list was approved, and in talking about that status, a note of celebration was applauded for Winston Sheppard of Philadelphia, who served many years on the Board, and as Treasurer, and was one of the early owner/breeders of Connemaras. Winston always brought a “funny” to the Board meetings, and often, was so amused by his humorous story, that he could hardly deliver it! Winston Sheppard just celebrated his 101<sup>st</sup> birthday.

### **Old Business**

**Hardship Cases** - Kimberly Gates requested that the ACPS form a committee to review the policy for “hardship” cases. The Board has structured the process to have the Arbitration Committee be the “entrance” point for the steps. If that committee agrees there is a worthy case, information will be gathered, and that will be send to the Executive Committee to review and decide. **The motion was to review the policy and procedure of the Arbitration Committee to include future hardship cases that may come to be considered. After information is gathered, that information will be coordinated and reviewed and decided upon by the Executive Board of the Society (President, 2 Vice Presidents, Treasurer). The motion passed.**

**USEF Foal Registration** – Following up on suggestions from Chris Knox and Jill McNicol at past meetings, and again in this meeting, the process of recording every registered foal with the USEF was discussed. A motion to add \$25 to each foal registration fee was approved. The foal must be registered in the first calendar year of its life to qualify. That fee will provide a USEF Lifetime Recording number for each animal. **The motion: Increase fees for all ACPS registered foals to include the fee for a permanent lifetime USEF recording. The paperwork must be completed by December 1 of each year. The motion passed.**

**And in closing:** The Board passed a motion **that the ACPS office would officially close each year on Dec. 15, and reopen on Jan. 1 of the next year. The motion passed.**

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted**

**Marynell Eyles**