

## RVP COUNSELOR REPORT

For the most part, the concerns of the RVPs are the same as AIS – ageing membership, ways to increase revenue and encourage new membership. One of the new concerns, which has been brought up previously, is the Symposium ballot.

1. Put it back in the Bulletin (Irises).
2. Make it available on the internet like the AIS ballot; have the tally sheet available online for the RVPs.
3. Include a hard copy in convention bags (not possible due to the timing of the Symposium information to be placed on the ballot).
4. Place an article in the Bulletin (Irises), explaining how irises are placed on the ballot and the importance of voting by ALL AIS members, not just judges, so that the public can see what irises grow best, and where.

Another concern is the “Region Raizin’ Baskets, and their value. RVPs concede that the baskets are a donation, and they do make money for AIS, but is the money raised worth the value contained in the basket and the cost of shipping them home? Many regions are not contributing a basket to the 2015 convention. Perhaps baskets with fewer contents could raise just as much money and be easier to transport home. Suggestions are gift certificates and gift cards with a total value of up to \$200 where the bidder could redeem them online or use them in their hometown (Wal-mart, Lowes, Home Depot, restaurants, etc.)

One of the RVPs suggested having sales at botanical gardens. They did and not only did it bring in an increase in revenue, it also increased interest in irises and brought in new members. If there is not a botanical garden in an area, there may be a large garden that would suffice.

The importance of keeping the RVP in the loop cannot be stressed enough, but unfortunately, of the 22 RVPs representing the regions, I only heard from an average of 10 to 12 each time I sent out an email – including the emails where I requested a response that they received the email!!! Communication at times was frustrating, especially when I needed information from everyone.

I have enjoyed my tenure as RVP Counselor.

Yours in iris,

Cheryl Deaton