

AIS Board meeting, Wednesday, July 26, 2017, by teleconference

Meeting called to order at 5:07 PM PDT

Attendance roll call:

Board: Gary White, president; Jody Nolin, 1<sup>st</sup> VP; Andi Rivarola, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP; Michelle Snyder, secretary; Dwayne Booth, treasurer; Jim Morris, immediate past president; John Jones, registrar/recorder; John Ludi, publication sales director; Claire Schneider, recording secretary; Directors: Susan Boyce, Gerry Snyder, Phyllis Wilburn, Alverton Elliott, Bob Pries, Lois Rose, Howie Dash, David Cupps.

Other visitors: Cheryl Deaton, Jill Bonino, Janet Smith, Paul Gossett, Scarlett Ayres, Wayne Messer.

A quorum is present.

1. Welcome everyone. Please state your name when you say something (Gary White).

2. The AIS Photo Contest

Janet Smith has sent Gary an email with ten points related to her experiences and work with the Photo Contest.

1. Why do we have a Photo Contest? The original purpose of the Photo Contest, established in 2006, was to provide quality photos for brochures & calendars.
2. Very few people participate in the Photo Contest. It's the same people year after year who win.
3. Only a few photos from the Contest are usable in brochures or calendars.
4. Since Janet has worked with the contest, the quality of the photos has declined.
5. There have been no recent requests for using any of the photos in brochures or calendars.
6. The Contest is a lot of hard work for Janet and the other judges. The Contest is expensive. Almost 90% of the entrants wait until the last day, last hour, to submit their photos.
7. This year had shorter time period, so fewer than 200 photos were submitted as compared to the normal 400 photos submitted in previous Contests. Even with fewer submissions, this year the work was harder because 96% of the entrants did not follow the guidelines for naming their photos. It took several exchanges of emails with photographers to figure out which photo matched with which file name.
8. Recommendation that AIS end the Photo Contest.
9. If AIS continues with the Photo Contest, the recommendation is that photos entered from outside of the USA do not receive a rhizome while photos entered from within the USA do receive a rhizome.
10. In summary, Janet is asking the Board to discontinue the Photo Contest.

More of Janet's observations and comments: The quality of the photos is not what it should be. Resolution, size and artistic quality are lacking. Composition is often poor. People don't pay attention to phone lines and other background elements. Pet dogs and cats are nice and are usually in focus, but our Photo Contest is about iris and many times the flowers are not in focus. People wait until the last minute to submit photos which makes a tremendous amount of work to distribute all those photos to the judges. A few different people enter photos, but mostly it is the same people who submit to the Photo Contest and the same people tend to win each year. The

categories of the Photo Contest are posted online, but many of the participants enter their photos into the wrong categories. An exchange of emails with the entrant is required to place the photo into its proper category which is time consuming.

There are six categories in the Photo Contest: (1) iris in a landscaped garden, (2) irises in a field or home garden, (3) events, tours, a person or people (at an iris location), (4) close-up of an iris or irises using the whole flower, (5) iris photos with artistic effects, e.g. macro of bloom segments or photo is altered with Photoshop, (6) photos of pets, wildlife or garden art with irises.

Discussion: We never realized that the Photo Contest purpose was to use the photos. We thought it was to encourage member participation in the AIS. The Photo Contest is very popular in Lincoln, Nebraska (Gary). About 65 individuals enter photos and usually they enter five photos (Janet).

Question: What about making the Photo Contest an online event (Scarlet Ayres)? The photographers' names would be hidden. AIS members could vote online. Maybe having the Contest online would increase participation by AIS members both by voting and by submitting photos.

Discussion: It would be a lot of work to post 250 photos online and to sort the photos into different categories. People would have to vote on 250 or more photos. Would they view all 250 photos? Perhaps to allow each voter one vote per category. "I know people who enter cutest dog photo contests then send a web link to all of their friends asking them to vote for their dog. I think an online photo contest might work for photos of their favorite iris." "As a judge, I remember that when I opened a particular file/category of photos, it was quickly obvious which photos were good and which ones were not. Judging the photos should be easy for the public." One benefit of an online Photo Contest would be that as people peruse the photos, they might learn more about photographic quality and composition.

More questions: Who would get to vote online? AIS members only? The general public? Would voters be restricted to voting once in each category or be permitted to vote multiple times? How/who will be in charge of uploading photos? (John Jones)

David Cupps: I envision a website where people would submit their own photos and decide the appropriate category. Regarding voting, there are programs we could use that would be easy to set up. The Board can set up guidelines about photo categories, who could vote and how many times.

Question: Before we begin making official changes to any part of the Photo Contest, shouldn't we decide if we want to continue offering the contest (Jody Nolin)?

Discussion: The future of the Photo Contest would be a good project for the Strategic Planning Committee (Andi Rivarola). They can write an action plan which would be presented to the AIS Board for approval. The AIS lawyer should be included in discussions of changes to the Photo Contest especially in regards to royalty rights for use of the photos and the wording of the release statement and signature card when photos are submitted. Gary White, president, officially

assigned the Photo Contest project to the Strategic Planning Committee. The next Photo Contest is scheduled to begin May 1, 2018. Perhaps an online popularity poll could be introduced as a pilot program alongside the established Photo Contest.

Janet Smith, "After many years on this project, I will resign from the Photo Contest after the 2017 contest has concluded." The AIS Board is most grateful to Janet Smith for all her hard work and dedication to the AIS Photo Contest.

### 3. Annual Fall Board meetings (Dwayne Booth).

What should be the format of Fall Board meetings? Continue with live meetings such as the upcoming meeting in Dallas or gradually change over to teleconference meetings?

The cost of flights and hotels for these Fall meetings can run as high as \$900 and is mostly paid for out of pocket. Maybe more of the RVPs and other members would attend the Board meetings if they were held as teleconferences. There's six months in between the Spring and Fall meetings. If teleconferences were scheduled for once a month, issues could be dealt with in a more timely manner, as they come up instead of waiting six months. Therefore, I propose that we continue with the schedule for Fall meetings in 2018 and 2019, but by 2020 that the AIS Fall meetings would be eliminated and replaced by teleconferences.

Discussion: The contract for the hotel for 2019 has not been signed. So that Fall meeting could be eliminated (Paul Gossett). The Fall meeting 2017 will be in Dallas. The Fall meeting 2018 will be in Portland with the important agenda item of change of officers. To accommodate the change of officers, perhaps we only need to have a Fall Board meeting every three years. This would require a change to the AIS bylaws. The Strategic Planning committee will work on this issue and include input from the Executive Board.

### 4. Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL) would like to add the Bulletin of the American Iris Society to their list of resources. (Bob Pries)

The BHL is a consortium of major natural history museum libraries which stores digital information about the biodiversity of plants and animals. They have over two million pieces of biodiversity literature that spans more than 200 years. They upload 1000-2000 articles from various natural history and botanical journals each week. They are currently uploading iris catalogs of 1920s. The BHL is not part of the Library of Congress. But it is an online resource that covers ten of the major botanical libraries in the world. This is quite an honor that the BHL has invited the AIS to contribute the Bulletin. If the Board gives permission, the BHL will digitize and store our Bulletin at no charge to the AIS. The Foundation already has paid to have editions of the Bulletin digitized. This issue will be referred to the Intellectual Property Committee.

### 5. Miscellaneous Announcements

Gerry Snyder: The balloting is going well. But more than 100 people are still eligible to vote. Gary will be able to announce the winners around the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Michelle Snyder plans to spend \$30 for digital recorder to replace her tape recorder which will come out of her budget. She's the back up for Claire's recordings. Also, Michelle and Gerry will be "out of town" from August 24 to October 7.

The deadline for submission of articles for the next issue of the Bulletin is August 15.

The next teleconference will be August 30, 2017.

Adjourned at 6:06 PM PDT.

Respectfully submitted,  
Claire Schneider