

To Board members of AIS and Paul Black

Dear Friends:

First, I would like to Thank Paul for raising questions and making suggestions. It is this kind of action that will keep our Society active and vibrant. Secondly, I will give my opinion and suggestions concerning the issues that Paul has presented.

As a general statement let me say that in my experience of belonging to 15 plant societies, from gooseberries to nut trees, and belonging to the Rotary Club and my Church, I have found that the more you can split things up and therefore, get more participation, the more members you have and the more activity you have. Of course, if you can't get people to serve in leadership positions, you have to combine or go out of business. Now, to respond to Paul's comments:

1. I have no preference to the reservation of names. I'm always running late in coming up with names. I keep several lists that people have given me but usually don't reserve names. I would think it would be good to get a recommendation from the registrar since I don't know what's involved in reserving names. Three years is fine or even five if that doesn't become a burden for someone.
2. As for as charging overseas hybridizers a fee for their registrations, it seems to me that somewhere long ago, I had the impression that when AIS was asked to be the International Registration Agency for Bearded and Beardless irises (not bulbous irises), AIS agreed not to charge for this service to overseas registrants. I know that I don't pay anything to register a Daffodil with the Royal Horticultural Society. When I did the survey about organizing a World Iris Society, some responders suggested that we already had a World Iris Society in AIS. It may be that Bob Pries could check this out with the International blah blah (Can't think of their full name). As a non-profit organization, one of our justifications is the promotion and education of persons about irises and we want to know what is available worldwide; therefore, we want as many new things registered as possible.
3. In regards to AIS awards, I can agree with Paul to a certain extent. First, as you know, overseas creations are not eligible for awards unless first introduced by an American. And, it maybe that some lone hybridizer in some far off country may come up with something extraordinary and wouldn't have the means, motivation, or know how to introduce it to the world. It could be lost forever. With the 300 plus species of irises we have, some are located in hard to reach places or war is going on there (like Iran, Nogoro-Karabach, China, etc.) Very often the locals don't think much of them since they are so common and its difficult to get plants or seeds from these areas. So, they need all the encouragement they can get. Its my feeling that this is one of the goals of AIS to find these rare (to us and the

world) irises and make them available to all. Awards may encourage making these available to the world. But, I agree with Paul that judges need to encourage hybridizers in their area with the voting of awards, if the irises are worthy.

4. In regards to awards for species, as indicated above, an effort was made to encourage the introduction of selected species and hybrids. Its true that some could be registered as Siberians or Spurias etc. but a distinction was implied that these might be used for further hybridization and let the hybridizers' imagination run wild. So, it was left up to the hybridizer as to whether he wanted to register his selection as a species of hybrid which I think is a good idea.
5. The dwarf iris section should remain as is unless there is a problem with getting officers, committees, etc. I would leave it up to the people involved. Referring to my opening statement, when you combine the two, you will end up with less members.
6. In regards to AIS sections, again, I refer to my opening statement. Most other societies are not blessed with over 300 species that vary considerably and require different culture. I can only think of one Society that has more species which is the Orchid Society of which I was a member. There are probably more but I don't know if they have as much variation in their cultural and climate requirements as irises. So, I say, the more sections, the better. One publication can not do justice to all the information available that is now provided in all the section newsletters and publications. If you tried to put all the information into one, it would either be too large or would not have all the information available. It is costly to belong to several sections but you do have a choice and to attempt to combine all intone publication would require an increase in dues in which case would cause the loss of some members.

Again, I want to thank Paul for his concern and suggestions. Perhaps other Board members or Officers may have opinions and suggestions concerning these matters. We all want the AIS to move forward.

Dave Niswonger