

WELSH PONY & COB SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, February 27, 2016

The Annual General Meeting of the Welsh Pony and Cob Society of America, Inc. was called to order by the President, Dr. Ruth Wilburn, at 9:16 a.m. on Saturday, February 27, 2016, at the Embassy Suites Hotel, San Antonio, Texas.

I. President's Report

The President introduced herself and welcomed everyone to the meeting. The President read the purpose of the Society from the By-Laws which is as follows: The purpose of this Society is to maintain a Registry for the recording of pedigrees and transfers of Welsh ponies and cobs, to promote the breeding and use of the breed while striving to maintain its purity and trueness to type and to further its welfare in every way.

She asked each person to introduce themselves.

The President noted that she would like to remember those members who have passed during the year: Phillip Orear, Amy Hitchcock, Rich Petersen, Deirdre Pirie, and Jill Whiting. Two people who were not members but were very connected to the Welsh family had also passed this year, her mother, Joann Wilburn, and Naomi Ward, Robin Nowak's mother. A moment of silence was observed.

The President requested that members continue to give constructive criticism as well as positive feedback as we are working hard to improve our services. She stated that she felt that, thus far, this had been a very positive convention. The auction held the previous evening had great results, the registration bags were beautiful, and many local club members had pitched in to make the convention so successful. We need more volunteers to get involved and take an active role. Those members who do more, feel more rewarded. While the Society does not have the money to expand and do every program that we would like to, members who see a need and fill it can make big things happen. Please make it a point to volunteer at the American National Show or for a project that you think would help promote Welsh ponies and cobs. If you can't do it alone, get a group of people to help you. Together, we could do so much more. Please remember that the Society is for everyone, not just the Board of Directors.

The President commented that the Achievement Award is not always presented each year. However, this year, the Board of Directors had someone that they wanted to acknowledge. She noted that a WPCSA member felt the Welsh that were winning in Dressage needed more recognition. This member requested that the Board allow her to represent the Society and then raised the funds necessary to present the USDF winners with an award from the Society comparable to those that other breed associations offer. Joann Williams was asked to step forward and was bestowed with an Achievement Award.

II. Reading of the Minutes

The President asked for the reading of the minutes of the previous annual meeting. The motion by Sally Ross Davis that the reading of the minutes be dispensed with was unanimously adopted.

III. Secretary's Report

The Secretary's report was printed in the program given to each member and filed herewith. Membership figures continue to drop, but at a slower pace. We need to encourage new members, especially youth members. The President thanked Sally Ross Davis for spearheading the Youth Convention. We need to encourage the youth so that they continue to be involved into adulthood. We need additional volunteers and new ideas for the Youth Working Group.

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IV. Treasurer's Report

The President noted that Lisa Landis is the Treasurer and Jackie Verkuyl is the Finance Committee Chairman. Mrs. Verkuyl reviewed the budget (filed herewith). Registrations have increased. Shows are a major contributor to the budget income. We need to use the website more for farm and classified ads. The website needs to be the go-to place for Welsh. The publications income is in and out, but they do make a small profit. The printed materials did not include a balance sheet but Mrs. Verkuyl noted that we currently had \$110,000 cash on hand in the bank. This is in excess of what six months of operating expenses would be. Rumors continue that we are headed for bankruptcy. This is not now, nor has it ever been, correct. Our remaining loan payable for the building is \$115,000, and there are six years left on the mortgage.

V. Committee Reports

American National – Jackie Verkuyl & Martha Stover

The President noted that the previous evening those present were treated to a wonderful video of this year's American National show by the OKWPS. We have negotiated a one-year contract with OKWPS to see if more of the Society's members can step up to the plate and volunteer. One of the big things we need to do is raise funds and sponsorships for ribbons and awards. If anyone would like to help with this, please let us know. Some of the other volunteer positions include: selling t-shirts, hospitality and decorating. For those who cannot attend or who will be too busy showing, there are projects that you can help with before the show. We hope to have a contract for a longer period of time once we can prove ourselves. While the process was a bit painful, it made everyone realize what a great show Tulsa is and that is where the American National needs to be. We hope to be able to take advance orders for t-shirts through our website this year.

Marketing/Outside Advertising/Press Releases & Public Relations – Martha Stover & Pat Cochran

Reports from Mrs. Stover and Mrs. Cochran are filed herewith. Mrs. Stover reported that we can always use help getting press releases and co-op ads together. Please contact her if you are interested in volunteering. If there are other areas that you can think of and would like to volunteer to help, you can be the grassroots person to begin something new. We will assist with anything we can. Mrs. Cochran discussed her dreams of us having a video on You Tube. Please help her come up with fundraising ideas. The Frisians have a marvelous video. We could have a great promotional video on You Tube, our website and individual members could link it to their websites. We do have some old raw footage from previous years. It isn't in HD format, so it is outdated. Mrs. Cochran has a script and hopes to have more information by next year. If you have thoughts about the video, she would really like to hear them. She also asked that members please share our Facebook posts as it brings more people to our page. Sharing is very easy, and anyone can do it.

Stud Book – Hetty Abeles & Tiz Benedict

Mrs. Abeles' report is filed herewith. At the last board meeting, we decided that we would use the data base on-line as our electronic studbook and suspend the printed studbooks for a time. David Maurer has graciously donated his time to see that they continue to be printed. Members who wish to sign up for the free on-line studbook should contact the office.

Journal – Megan Burtness

Mrs. Burtness' report is filed herewith. The Journal is on track and will be published soon. The Regional and National shows were very good about writing their articles and getting them in on time.

Review – Margaret Almond

Dr. Almond's report is filed herewith. The Review will now be 32 pages for each issue. We need articles and pictures and ads. We will try to have an archival page and re-print old articles. We also would like our members to please write new articles. We will be having a new three-submission contract for advertisers and news will be sent out in the E-Newsletter.

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Please be sure to read your E-News. Also, please remember if you unsubscribe, you can never use that email address again to receive our mass emails.

Website – Megan Burtness & Sally Steinmetz

Mrs. Burtness' report is filed herewith. With the new website, members can do all business electronically, except transfers and leases. They can send breeding certificates to mare owners, file stallion service reports, renew their membership and register ponies. Forms are grouped together for breeders, owners, show managers, exhibitors, and tds/judges. If you have suggestions of how to better arrange things, please let us know. Mrs. Steinmetz apologized for us still having two sites up and running. When we connected the data to the original site we were very lucky to easily find someone who could access the data and write the code to put it into the site. Years have now gone on and that person is long gone. Mrs. Landis and Mrs. Burtness have done a great job of creating a new site, and as soon as we can, we will merge it into one site.

Youth – Megan Burtness & Pat Cochran

Sally Ross Davis reported that she has had a wonderful group of youth members attend the Youth Convention. She asked that everyone please say hello to the kids and make them feel a part of things. This is a very cohesive group. Roving reporters were reminded to please take photographs.

By-Laws – Marsha Himler & Tiz Benedict

No report needed.

Nominations – Jackie Verkuyl

The President noted that since the bylaws had changed, we were hoping to open the pool of people who would run for the board. While that didn't happen this time, we are always looking for new people who will be on the Board. Since we only received nomination packets from the four incumbents, there was no need for ballots. Being a Director is a volunteer position. It is hard work, but it is also very rewarding. Members are encouraged to please think about running when the time for nominations rolls around again.

Convention & Annual Meeting – Martha Stover & Marsha Himler

The President thanked Mrs. Himler, Mrs. Stover and the Texas Red River Welsh Club for making this convention so successful. We are currently negotiating a contract for the Embassy Suites in San Francisco. Suggestions for the following year are Lexington and Nashville. Suggestions from the floor of the meeting included New Orleans, Las Vegas and Branson.

International Ambassador – Gail Thomson

Mrs. Thomson reported that she attends every international meeting. The other registries are mainly only interested in the EU and we do not follow those requirements. For example, in the past, every county in Germany had their own studbook but they were made to consolidate into one. All countries in the EU have to have passports for all equines.

ADS Liaison – Deborah Branson

Jay Hubert reported that the ADS is alive and well. He gave an overview of their convention in Lodi, California. One of the highlights was the four-in-hand of Section A's owned by Jody Cutler. Driving is one of the best areas for Welsh ponies and cobs to shine as they are naturally good movers. Their purpose was driving, light farm work and light carriages. In the combined driving area of ADS, the most hotly contested class is preliminary single ponies where approximately 90% of the entries are Welsh.

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USEF Liaison – Sally Steinmetz

Mrs. Steinmetz's report is filed herewith. Our USEF Representative, Natalie Norwood, had attended the Open Forum the previous day and spoke about the benefits of the USEF, including insurance. When you join, please put Welsh as your primary discipline as we receive a membership incentive grant based on the number of Welsh members. The USEF rules still prohibit piebald and skewbald so this will be put forward as a rule change.

USDF Liaison – Joann Williams

Joann Williams' report is filed herewith. Each year the USDF publishes a yearbook that has pictures of all winners, including the All Breed Awards. This is really good publicity for the Welsh breed. The WPCSA pays a fee for the USDF to give a medallion and the other organizations were giving their winners a nice additional award. Mrs. Williams volunteered to spearhead a fundraising campaign this year so that the Welsh winners would have a nice extra award too. Mary Alice Williams donated saddle pads and other winners were given nice tote bags.

US Pony Club Liaison – Louise Gill

Louise Gill's report is filed herewith. Like many other organizations, the USPC has been feeling the economic pinch and are now offering awards in 14 different disciplines in order to attract as many participants as possible. We would like a group of people to offer an award, but someone would need to tabulate the points. At the convention, Mrs. Gill met the person in charge of the demonstrations at the Rolex Three-Day Event in Kentucky. She can offer a stall and tickets to the event. We would like to help support someone if they are interested. We can offer advertisements and a banner.

Licensed Officials – Tiz Benedict & Marsha Himler

Dr. Benedict's report is filed herewith. If you are sponsoring a judge applicant, please help them get through the licensing process. All new judges need a mentor, and we are willing to help as well. Quite a few people start the process, but they cannot get their card without a clinic. We encourage clubs and shows to hold clinics. We are in the process of redesigning the open book test.

Show Compliance – Sabra Schiller

Mrs. Schiller's report is filed herewith. She has received seventeen prize lists for proofreading and five new shows have applied so far this year.

Mollie Butler/J.D. Orear Memorial Scholarship – Sabra Schiller

Mrs. Schiller's report is filed herewith. She introduced Kristy Wilkinson, one of our two 2015 scholarship recipients. Please encourage members and students familiar with Welsh to apply.

Show Rules – Sally Steinmetz

Mrs. Steinmetz's report is filed herewith. She noted that all changes had been reviewed in the committee meeting held the previous day. Any questions should be directed to her, and she thanked everyone for their feedback.

Welsh of the Year and Hall of Fame – Jackie Verkuyl & Gail Thomson

Mrs. Verkuyl reported that we are a little behind on both programs this year. We have received four nominees to the Hall of Fame and would like a few more for the initial class of inductees. The Welsh Hall of Fame is for retired animals who had outstanding accomplishments before the current lifetime awards system was in the place. Western Glow is an example of a pony that could be nominated for the Hall of Fame. Please use the website page to submit nominations for both programs. We received four outstanding nominees for the Welsh of the Year, but the committee is looking for a few additional Welsh to consider. The Committee will review the nominees and voting will open within the next few weeks.

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Regional Representative Liaison – Margaret Almond

Dr. Almond's report is filed herewith. Please give your Regional Representatives news and feedback. Joann Williams has resigned from the North Central region. Carol Maurer has volunteered for the North West region. The North Central area needs an additional representative, and Reita Geilander will be asked to fill the vacancy.

VI. New Business

Mrs. Burtness thanked Kristy Winkinson for her help with the PowerPoint presentations. She also thanked all of the owners who submitted their photographs. Only four more were needed for the presentation to be complete.

A few people did not pick up their auction items and need to see Mrs. Landis for those. We raised over \$8,200 and would like to thank everyone who participated, especially an anonymous donor who gave a very generous \$1,300 donation.

There was no inspectors report as there were no election or bylaw changes.

Connie Moore shared the program from the American National Show. The Society made almost \$4,000 from the show's fundraising efforts.

There being no further business, Jay Hubert's motion to adjourn was unanimously adopted. The President adjourned the meeting at 11:01 a.m.

Lisa L. Landis
Executive Secretary-Treasurer

PLEASE SEE THE CONVENTION PROGRAM AS WELL AS THE BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES FOR COMMITTEE REPORTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION.