

General Session, March 5, 2011

The March 5, 2011 Convention AERC Board of Directors General Session meeting was called to order by President Connie Caudill at 10:48am Pacific Time.

Present at the meeting are current AERC Board Members: Connie Caudill, Laura Hayes, Jan Stevens, Michael Campbell, Monica Chapman, Sue Keith, Sandy Terp, Tom Noll, Gail Williams, Lisa Schneider, Susan Kasemeyer, Joe Schoech, Roger Taylor, Michael Maul, Forrest Tancer, Kevin Meyers, John Parke, Susan Keil, Terry Woolley-Howe, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Leslie Anderson, and Olin Balch.

Members not present: Maryben Stover, Susan Schomburg, and Patti Pizzo.

Robert Ribley, chairman of the Elections Committee, provided the service of swearing in the new members of the AERC Board of Directors. These members included: Terry Woolley-Howe, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Olin Balch, and Leslie Anderson.

President Connie Caudill then called for the election of Officers to begin.

The motion to nominate Connie Caudill as President of AERC for her third term was made by John Parke with Terry Woolley-Howe seconding the motion. Roger Taylor made the motion to close nominations with Susan Kasemeyer seconding the motion. All members of the BOD voted in favor of Connie Caudill for President.

The motion to nominate Jan Stevens as Vice President of AERC for her first term was made by John Parke with Terry Woolley-Howe seconding the motion. Roger Taylor made the motion to close nominations with Gail Williams seconding the motion. All members of the BOD voted in favor of Jan Stevens for Vice President.

The motion to nominate Susan Kasemeyer as Secretary of AERC for her first term was made by Gail Williams with Terry Woolley-Howe seconding the motion. Roger Taylor made the motion to close nominations with Gail Williams seconding the motion. All members of the BOD voted in favor of Susan Kasemeyer for Secretary..

The motion to nominate Mollie Krumlaw-Smith as Treasurer of AERC for her first term was made by Susan Keil with Laura Hayes seconding the motion. John Parke made the motion to nominate Roger Taylor as Treasurer of AERC for his third term with Terry Woolley-Howe seconding the motion. After the ballots were counted Robert Ribley, Chairman of the Elections Committee announced that Mollie Krumlaw-Smith was elected as the AERC Treasurer.

President Connie Caudill then opened the microphone to the membership of AERC to address the Board of Directors. Several members provided comments including:

A request that the BOD consider full sanctioning with full points/miles for the North American Endurance Team Challenge that is being held in Greenville, CA on September 24, 2011

Concern that many of the AERC Committees are not holding committee meetings at our convention due to the chairperson of the committee not being in attendance. It is suggested that if the chairperson is going to be absent from the convention then someone from the committee who is going should be assigned to chair the meeting.

Keep ‘fun’ in the sport – the BOD should keep in mind that when we change the rules/regulations that pertain to endurance riding that we should keep in mind that we do this sport for ‘fun’.

A member expressed appreciation to the BOD for dedicating their time and effort to do their job.

With the influx of GPS usage by riders it was felt that there seem to be a lot of discrepancies in the actual distance of rides that are being sanctioned – the concern was not over the small differences, rather it was in the large differences of 5+ miles.

There was a request from a member that AERC should try harder to reach out to the gaited horse owner community. It was emphasized that these people who are trail riding don’t have the vision to compete in endurance riding. They commented that there seemed to be a lot more ‘pulls’ with gaited horses than with the non-gaited horses. They questioned whether that was due to the ‘inexperienced’ riders overriding these horses or whether it was caused by ‘inexperience’ in judging soundness in gaited horses. They recommended that the owners/riders of these types of horses needed to educate themselves on their horse’s gait and relay that information to the control judges at the rides. They also suggested that owners/riders make an effort to train their horses and themselves to trot/gait correctly so that they can show them to the control judges in the best light available.

A comment was received that a member felt that growth was important for any organization, replacing the membership that is leaving the sport was the least that should be done. It was noted that in a survey by the AERC Office staff of 1000 non-renewing AERC members that the economy was the main reason for non-renewal. They basically couldn’t afford to do it at this point. Other reasons for non-renewal included injury to rider or horse and not having a horse to compete on at the present moment.

A member commented that all of the AERC membership needed to work harder at education and inclusion of new members. They felt that most horses could do this sport, but emphasized that the rider needed to ride that horse for that day.

The AERC BOD and AERC Committees were encouraged to support the AERC Research Committee. AERC is in a position to help (support) financially and philosophically.

Comments about membership and new members were then received. The AERC Office often receives what they term as ‘cold calls’ – calls from people who have heard about endurance riding and want information. The office generally refers them to BOD members in their region and encourages them to attend rides to watch and learn. It was noted that many rides now offer 10-15 mile ‘fun’ rides so that people can give it a try. The Education Committee chair, Susan Keil, also mentioned that there was funding available for each region for endurance clinics.

A thank you was expressed to the AERC Office Staff for their hard work for AERC and it’s membership. A big thank you went out to Troy Smith, editor of *Endurance News*, for her work in publishing such a fine magazine.

The BOD and Kathleen Henkel were also thanked for offering the Jim Steer symposium to all the members, not just the control judges. They hoped that things like this would be done more in the future.

It was asked of the BOD, “what they (the BOD) could do for the membership of AERC with their trail issues?” Several comments were received and they included:

We, the membership, need to work with our local organizations (PNER, MRER, SERA, etc) – the BOD represents the national organization.

It was suggested that we form a group to lobby for us on trail issues. It was noted by the BOD that we are members of the American Horse Council (AHC) and have seats on the Horse Welfare and the Trails/Recreation Committee. AHC does provide lobbying in Washington DC for equine trail issues.

We as riders need to quit ‘putting our heads in the sand’.

The AERC Trails and Land Management Committee was asked to get the word out to the membership on what they can do to help with trail issues.

It was noted that writing letters, making phone calls and sending emails to local and US government officials is one way of getting the word out about our difficulties in dealing with trail closures and/or difficulties with trails.

A member recommended everyone should make an effort to join their state Horse Council and become more involved with informing them about endurance riding.

It was highly recommended that when contacting our representatives in Washington DC that it be done with a ‘hard copy letter’ rather than a phone call and/or email. While these other forms are good, a mailed, written letter is the best way to express our concerns.

The conversation was summed up in one statement: “The membership who is ‘in the know’ needs to inform the membership who ‘doesn’t know’”.

With there being no further comments and/or business before the AERC BOD, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50am Pacific Time.