

## **October 2009 Trustees Meeting Handbook changes approved by Board of Trustees including partial portions of larger paragraphs**

### Mission Statement

#### 1.1 Mission

The American Orchid Society Judging System, as implemented by this Handbook, is designed to provide a process to its members, affiliated societies and orchid growers everywhere by which their orchids can be evaluated and judged for American Orchid Society awards. The AOS judges provide this service at AOS sanctioned shows, the various AOS judging centers regularly scheduled judging sessions and other AOS sanctioned events. This process is designed to recognize quality orchid plants, exceptional cultivation, significant advancements in breeding and artistic design. All orchid growers are encouraged to take advantage of this service.

Approved by Board of Trustees

#### 1.3 Judging Centers (locations and dates established):

Florida-Caribbean Judging Center

Miami, FL – 1955

Puerto Rico – 2010

#### 1.4 Handbook on Judging and Exhibition

The Handbook on Judging and Exhibition, hereinafter referred to as the Handbook, is the official policy statement of the AOS regarding the operation of its judging system and is published on the AOS website and in AQ Plus. Changes to the Handbook, as adopted from time to time by the JC with the approval of the Board of Trustees, are published on the AOS Web site and in AQ Plus. These changes become effective once published. Observance of the rules stated herein is mandatory upon AOS judges as well as show officials and individual exhibitors. Failure to observe the rules may result in disqualification of judges from service, of shows from the privilege of offering AOS judging, or of exhibitors from eligibility to receive AOS awards. All judges are required to own a copy of the current edition of the Handbook as published.

Approved by Board of Trustees

#### 2.1 Organization

The JC is composed of a chair and three to five additional members appointed annually by the Board of Trustees at their first meeting following each election. The term of the chair is limited to four years. One or more of the members may be designated as JC vice-chair. In addition, the chair of each main judging center shall, by virtue of their office, be participatory voting members of the JC. If the judging center's chair is unable to attend, the vice-chair shall serve as the center's voting alternate. If both the chair and vice-chair are unable to attend, an accredited judge of the center, appointed by the chair to represent the wishes of the center, shall serve as the center's voting alternate.

#### 2.3 Duties and Responsibilities

The JC shall:

(8) Be responsible, under the direction of the Board of Trustees, for biannual revision of that part of the Handbook which is devoted to judging. The Handbook Task Force shall have the authority to correct typographical, editorial, spelling or other administrative errors, without

presenting them to the Trustees for approval, provided that this in no way will change the meaning, intent or substance of the Handbook.

## 2.5 Judging Policy Task Force

A subcommittee of the JC known as the judging policy task force (JPTF) shall be appointed by the chair to act as an executive task force between sessions of the JC. The chair shall head this task force. The judging policy task force shall help prepare the agenda for JC meetings, make recommendations to the JC, and make policy decisions which require immediate action. No formal action may be taken on matters pertaining to the status of judges. Decisions shall be made by a majority of the judging policy task force including the chair and shall be reviewed by the JC at its next semiannual meeting

## 3.1 Organization

(1) The judging system encompasses 24 judging centers, and 13 additional sites, located in the United States and Canada.

(2) Each center, including any additional sites, is under the jurisdiction of a center committee comprising its active certified judges. Each center committee is a subcommittee of the JC and each main center chair is a member of the JC. Each center shall have a chair, a first vice-chair, two vice-chairs for each additional site, a secretary, a treasurer, a training coordinator, a clerk, (the secretary may serve as clerk), and one or more photographers. The chair, all vice-chairs and the training coordinator must be accredited judges. The photographers need not be members of the AOS.

(3) Centers in close geographic proximity may, by application to the JC, merge into a single center with multiple monthly judging dates in additional sites by a vote of two-thirds of the judges serving each of the merging centers.

(4) Center chairs and vice-chairs are elected for terms beginning January 1, following the trustees' meeting at which they are confirmed. Chairs and vice chairs completing the term of a chair or vice chair that is being replaced, officially take office when confirmed by the trustees.

### 3.2.1 Chair

(11) Be responsible for AOS slides. Official AOS slides shall be properly stored, used and accounted for at each judging center. When the slides are no longer needed or required by a center, the collection may be destroyed by the center. In order to do so, the center chair must send a notice to the awards registrar, with a copy to the JC chair, explaining why the center wishes to destroy the slides as well as how and when they will be destroyed. Under no circumstances shall a center sell, barter, donate or otherwise disperse any AOS award slide.

(18) Send a copy of the judging center award totals, including shows in the center's jurisdiction, for preceding year in the appropriate format to the chair of the JC at least 60 days prior to the spring meeting of the Board of Trustees

#### 3.2.1.1 Removal of the Center Chair

In the event a center chair does not comply with the requirements of this Handbook and specifically paragraph 3.2.1, the Chair of the Judging Committee shall place an item on the

agenda for the next scheduled Judging Committee meeting to review the performance of the center chair. The chair in question will be invited to present his/her case or mitigating circumstances to the Judging Committee. After review, should the majority of the Judging Committee members, via secret ballot, determine that the center chair in question is in non-compliance then a recommendation to the Trustees shall be made to remove the center chair.

### 3.3 Meetings.

Regular monthly meetings shall be scheduled for the judging of orchid plants and flowers. The dates of these meetings are published on the AOS web-site. Once published, they may not be changed without the approval of the JC. The agenda at these meetings may also include discussion of judging procedures and problems, review of minutes of meetings of the JC, viewing images of recent awards from other centers and such other educational activities as the judging center committee may determine. No formal action may be taken, however, on matters pertaining to the status of judges, recommendations to JC, or other substantive matters, which are reserved for duly called business meetings.

### 3.8 Center Representation

Representation of a center at JC is vital to the administration of the judging system. All centers shall be represented by their chair, (or vice-chair as alternate) at each JC meeting. If both the chair and vice-chair are unable to attend, an accredited judge of the center, appointed by the chair to represent the wishes of the center, shall serve as the center's voting alternate

If a center is not represented by its chair, vice-chair or appointed alternate at two consecutive JC meetings and the absences are not excused, the center shall forfeit its representation until such time as a new chair is elected.

#### 4.2.1 Student Judge

Any person aspiring to become an AOS judge and fulfilling the requirements thereof, regardless of his/her place of residence, may apply to any center for appointment as student judge and upon satisfactory completion of the requirements as provided in this chapter ultimately may become an accredited judge. A student judge is expected to participate in the judging center's training program and upon demonstration of satisfactory completion of this training may be eligible for consideration for appointment as probationary judge. A student judge's training period is a minimum of three years and a maximum of five years following their appointment by the board of trustees and expiring at the end of the tenth regular semiannual trustees meeting following their appointment. If a student judge fails to be advanced at the end of five years of service in this grade, the student shall no longer be permitted to judge and he/she shall be terminated as a student judge. A student who resigns may reapply to any judging center committee for reappointment as a student after a minimum waiting period of one year. Any previous time served shall not be reinstated.

Approved by Board of Trustees

#### 4.2.1.2 Qualifications

Candidates for student judge must:

(9) Maintain membership in the AOS, and subscribe to AQ Plus.

(11) Be able to meet the requirements of the judging system with respect to available time, language skills, ability to travel, physical and mental fitness, and participation in training and judging activities.

~~4.2.1.3 (10) Do you own a copy of the latest edition of the Handbook on Judging and Exhibition? DELETE~~

#### 4.2.2 Probationary Judge (Paragraph one)

Candidates for probationary judge must have served as a student judge for a minimum of three years determined by the sixth regular semiannual trustees meeting following their appointment and must be nominated by one or more accredited judges for consideration by the judging center committee. The judging center committee shall vote on the student judges they propose for advancement, at the center committee business meeting prior to the trustees meeting at which the judges will be eligible for advancement. The requirements for a quorum and voting procedures for business meetings of the judging center's committee are specified in paragraphs 3.3.1.1 and 3.3.1.2). Candidates recommended for appointment as certified judges will be required to sign an appointment acceptance agreement provided by the AOS, in the form approved by the JC.

#### 4.2.3 Accredited Judge

Candidates for accredited judge must have served a minimum of three years as a probationary judge, determined by the sixth regular semiannual trustees meeting following their appointment. Judging center committees shall vote on the judges they propose for advancement, at the center committee business meeting prior to the trustees meeting at which the judges will be eligible for advancement. The procedure for nomination for advancement is the same as for probationary judge. The requirements for a quorum and voting procedures for business meetings of the judging center's committee are specified in paragraphs 3.3.1.1 and 3.3.1.2. Candidates recommended for appointment as certified judges will be required to sign an appointment acceptance agreement provided by the AOS, in the form approved by the JC.

#### 4.5 Knowledge and Abilities

(10) A judge must possess sufficient command of the English language so that he/she can understand the Handbook on Judging and Exhibition and AQ Plus, can understand and write descriptions, make and understand comments being made about any plant, and respond to questions.

4.8 In addition, all AOS judges shall:

(3) Avoid making demeaning comments publicly concerning other judges, judging team support personnel, orchid plants, orchid exhibits, exhibitors or the American Orchid Society.

4.9.4 Suspension, termination and other disciplinary actions.

A certified judge may be suspended terminated or disciplined either for cause, as set forth in Paragraph 4.9.4.1, or automatically, as set forth in Paragraph 4.9.4.2.

4.9.4.2 Automatic Suspension or Termination

(1)(e) failure of a probationary judge or student judge to be advanced at the end of five years of service in their respective grade.

(2) In each instance outlined in (1) (a) through (d) above, an initial notice or invoice (as appropriate) shall be sent to the judge. If the judge has not executed the required waiver or paid the required fees within 30 days from the due date of the notice or invoice, a second notice or invoice shall be sent via certified mail with return receipt requested. A copy of this notice shall be sent to the center chair, who shall acknowledge receipt of the notice and shall insert a copy of it in the judge's personnel file. A copy of this notice shall also be sent to the JC chair. The second notice shall state that if full payment or the signed waiver is not received within 60 days from the date of the notice the judge shall be placed automatically on suspension for a period of 60 days. The second notice shall also inform the judge that if he/she is ultimately placed on suspension, he/she may not judge, present plants and/or cut flowers for AOS judging, and at the end of the 60 day suspension if the payment or waiver has not been received, he/she will be permanently terminated as an AOS judge.

~~(5) In the event that any of the failures discussed above in paragraphs 4.9.4.2 (1), (2), (3) or (4) involve the judging center chair, the chair shall be disqualified from performing the functions cited in those sections. Those functions then shall be performed by the first vice chair of the judging center. If both the chair and the first vice chair are involved, the chair of the JC shall perform those functions or shall appoint another accredited judge from that judging center committee to do so. DELETE~~

5.5.2.1 Judging - Procedure

(5) Taxonomic verification of all previously unawarded species is required, no matter what award is granted. Although taxonomic verification need not be presented prior to an award's being granted, if it was previously obtained, it should be accepted when the plant is judged. Awards will be held in a provisional status until identification is complete. Once an award has been cleared it will be allowed to stand, regardless of subsequent name changes resulting from taxonomic changes or award challenges.

(10) No quality award, excluding a cultural award which goes to the grower, shall be granted to a previously awarded cultivar unless the new flowering is notably superior to that under any previous award.

5.5.3 Recording the Results of Judging

(1) For each award made, the following steps are necessary:

(a) An entry form in triplicate shall be prepared in proper English, providing a description of the flower with exact measurements and other data as required, including the cultivar name, and the owner's name, address, phone number and e-mail address.

(5) The required images, film and/or digital, as specified by the Awards Registrar, properly labeled with the judging entry number of each awarded plant, shall be made and submitted to the appropriate center chair or designee no later than 14 days from the date of judging. Each photographer who agrees to take the official images of awarded orchid flowers and plants, by so doing, gives permission to the AOS to use the submitted images for the Society's purposes and programs. In the event that images are lost or inadvertently destroyed and are not received by AOS, the chair of the JC may waive the image requirement to avoid nullifying the award. In such an instance, a comment shall be added to the award description concerning the absence of the images. Images of poor quality or incorrect images shall not be published and shall not affect the status of the award.

#### 5.5.3.1 Provisional Awards

When an exhibitor has fully met the conditions of a pending provisional award, the chair of the center holding the records of the provisional award shall prepare an electronic submission as described in paragraph 5.5.3(2) and send it to the AOS for processing and billing for the required award fee(s). The cost of awards photography at a show is a show expense payable by the sponsoring society

#### 5.6.1 American Orchid Society Sanction of a Show

An Affiliated Society wishing AOS judging at a show must do the following:

(7) The required fees, for the judging supplies and the show trophy, if desired,....completion.

#### 5.6.2 Judging Supplies

The judging supplies for AOS authorized orchid shows include the following:

- (1) Entry forms.
- (2) Ballots for the AOS show trophy.
- (3) Judging summary sheets.
- (4) Score sheets for all point scales.
- (5) Award seals for all types of awards.
- (6) Awards photography guidelines, SITF measurement forms and information sheets and other ancillary material.

#### 6.2.9 Certificate of Horticultural Merit (CHM)

Awarded to a cultivar of a species or natural hybrid .....Although taxonomic verification need not be presented prior to an award being granted, if it was previously obtained, it should be accepted when the plant is judged. Once an award has been cleared it will be allowed to stand, regardless of subsequent name changes resulting from taxonomic changes or award challenges.

If such verification is not received within one year, the judging center chair must disallow the award unless there is satisfactory evidence that the question of verification is being actively pursued by a taxonomist. A species or natural hybrid shall not receive a CBR and a CHM at the same judging.

#### 6.2.10 Certificate of Botanical Recognition (CBR)

Awarded to a cultivar of a species, subspecies, variety or natural hybrid deemed especially worthy of recognition for rarity, novelty or educational value previously unrecorded by AOS..... No award of any kind may have previously been made to the taxon. A taxon may be granted a second CBR only to correct a clear taxonomic error in the record and the description of such an award should clearly state the reason for the second award. Once an award has been cleared it will be allowed to stand, regardless of subsequent name changes resulting from taxonomic changes or award challenges. No point scale is used, but the award shall be granted only by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the judging team assigned. .... A species or natural hybrid shall not receive a CBR and a CHM at the same judging.

#### 6.3.7 Silver Certificate

The Silver Certificate shall be awarded to the exhibit that wins the AOS Show Trophy if the average of all scores is between 85 and 89 points. Any accredited judge may nominate another exhibit(s) for a Silver Certificate to be scored according to the Point Scale used for the AOS Show Trophy, paragraph 7.3.3, and all eligible judges or, in a large show, where there are many judges, an appointed team of at least five accredited judges may score it. Any exhibit that is scored an average of at between 85 and 89 points on this Point Scale shall be awarded a Silver Certificate.

An exhibit or group of orchid plants or cut-flower exhibit may also be nominated by an accredited judge for a Silver Certificate on the basis that it is exceptional, unique or worthy of high recognition but that it does not meet the usual requirements of the Show Trophy. Educational value and creativity may be part of the consideration. It is preferable that all eligible judges vote; however, in a large show the chairman may appoint a team of at least five judges to vote on the nomination. A Silver Certificate shall be awarded by a positive vote by at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of those voting. An award description shall be written that describes the reasons for this prestigious award.

## Part II, Exhibition

### VI. AOS Judging Centers and Affiliated Societies

After a judging center, supplemental judging center or additional judging site has existed for a number of years, this obligation may be forgotten. More importantly, newly affiliated societies may not even be aware of this responsibility. The AOS does not fund the operating costs of judging centers; these costs are borne entirely by the centers. If renting a location for judging is necessary, the expenses may be considerable. Other regular expenditures include the purchase of library reference materials, projection equipment for reviewing images of awards granted in the other judging centers, training and educational seminars, and supplies and postage for judging center correspondence and record keeping.

In addition to providing AOS judging for society shows and the contributions of the individual judges to Affiliated Society activities and meetings, the presence of an AOS judging center, supplemental judging center or additional judging site is a vital stimulus for orchid growing in any area. Affiliated Societies are encouraged to check periodically with the chair of their area judging center to ascertain the needs of the center and how the society may be of assistance.

## **Fall 2009 Trustees Meeting Additional Handbook changes approved by Board of Trustees**

### **1.) 1.3 Judging Centers (locations and dates established):**

**Rationale:** This change was generated by the approval of a new judging site in Puerto Rico..

**Proposed 1.3 Judging Centers (locations and dates established)** Insert as noted.

Florida-Caribbean Judging Center

Miami, FL – 1955

**Puerto Rico – 2010**

### **2) Paragraph 4.8 (3) Demeaning comments**

**Rationale:** This proposed change had been requested by a number of trustees a few months before the meeting and was included in the JCETF report which was withdrawn from the JC agenda and was deferred until next spring. Many trustees requested that this be presented directly to the board for possible implementation at the fall meeting.

There is a basic principle to foster fairness to all and prevent destructive behavior from overturning the common good. This is also the intent of the Handbook on Judging. Those who complain about trampled freedom of speech often neglect the right of members of a club to maintain order and decency to allow them to accomplish securely the organization's goals, work to create dignity and decorum and to protect members from attack. Constructive criticism is often beneficial. AOS judges are valuable ambassadors of AOS. Public vilification of AOS by a judge is confusing and damaging and should not be condoned. If avoiding demeaning comments about judges, support staff, plants, exhibits or exhibitors is acceptable, then avoiding demeaning comments about AOS per se also should be acceptable and appropriate.

**Proposed: 4.8 (3)** Insert “American Orchid Society” as noted

Avoid making demeaning comments publicly concerning other judges, judging team support personnel, orchid plants, orchid exhibits, or exhibitors **or the American Orchid Society.**

**4.8 (3)** Avoid making demeaning comments publicly concerning other judges, judging team support personnel, orchid plants, orchid exhibits, exhibitors or the American Orchid Society.