

Notes from Committee on Awards

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Because of the rapid growth of the AOS judging system and the increasing need for additional judging centers, the concept of regions as homogenous geographical areas was questioned at various levels. In addition it was recognized that most supplemental centers were virtually autonomous in most of their judging activities and administration. The COA was directed to investigate these questions and make recommendations. During the past 18 months, the overall structure of the regional system of judging centers as well as the alignment of judges and societies has been thoroughly studied. The final proposal was presented to the regional committees subsequent to the Fall 1995 meetings in Cleveland and gained acceptance by a large majority. At the April, 1996 COA meeting in Vancouver, B.C., those items of greatest concern voiced by the regions were discussed: continuity for the affiliated societies if boundaries were dissolved and adequate representation on COA. Modifications were made and agreed to by the committee. By unanimous vote, the COA recommended and received the Trustees' approval of the modified proposal.

The main points addressed by the restructure action are summarized here and will become effective January 1, 1997.

Geographic boundaries for each center will be dissolved. However, each affiliated society will continue to support and be served by its current center until such time as a transfer is proposed to and approved by the chairmen of the centers involved.

The designations "regional" and "supplemental" will be dropped, and all centers will be independent of their current regional centers, unless they have opted otherwise. Those centers currently operating under probationary status will remain so until made permanent by the COA. New centers will be established according to provisions outlined in the *Handbook on Judging and Exhibition*.

Judges and prospective students may select the center they wish to serve. However, once their selection is made, any change will require approval of the chairmen of both centers involved, as provided in the *Handbook on Judging and Exhibition*.

The Committee on Awards shall be composed of a chairman appointed by the President of AOS and a maximum of nine other appointees. The chairman of each judging location will also serve as a voting member.

To assure that the Tenth Edition of the *Handbook on Judging and Exhibition* is as current as possible, the Handbook Rewrite Committee will proceed with the necessary changes relating to the restructure proposal as approved by the Trustees. This will necessarily delay publication by a few weeks, but we expect the new handbooks to be available in fall 1996.

