**General Membership Meeting**

The Annual General Membership Meeting of the Akhal-Teke Association of America, held at Devon Showgrounds, Thursday, September 28.

Called to order at 11:08 am

Roll Call: Trisha Urban, Pat Johnston, Amrita Ibold, Sabine Desper, Katrina Ardiel, Giles Ardiel, Cathy Leddy, Tai-lee Metcalfe, Billy Pope

Reading of unapproved minutes of the previous General Membership Meeting and taking any necessary actions, Secretary, Cathy Leddy:

**MOTION: Amrita motioned to approve last year’s minutes. Pat seconds. Approved**

Presentation of Officer and Committee Reports:

**President’s Report** – Catrina Quantrell, read by Cathy Leddy “It has been a pleasure being your President over the last couple of years, and I thank all the members for the honor and trust that was bestowed on me and the other board members. It has been another great year with new members and seeing more and more people participating in showing and other events with their Tekes and Teke Crosses. I want to thank all the members that have stepped up and volunteered both in time and donations to keep the association thriving. I look forward to the fresh new ideas to come with the new board members that will be elected, at this conference. I personally, will be stepping down from the board but am planning on continuing to run the Incentive Program and working with my young Teke cross and hoping that we will be out competing for the 2018 show season”

**Treasurer’s Report**- Amrita Ibold: Beginning of 2017, $2827 in checking. As of 9/28/2017, $2830 in checking. Savings has $11,126.66 as of 9/28/2017 Complete accounting handed out to attending members.

**MOTION: Amrita motions that we add $1000 to the Incentive Fund for 2018 for a total of $3000 to be handed out. Sabine seconds. Approved.**

**Secretary’s Report** – Cathy Leddy- As of 9/28/2017 we have 79 members, with 13 being new members or members that did not renew in 2016. Last year we ended with 78 members. We have 21 Ranch or Family members now, 20 individuals and 15 friends, along with Lifetime, 3 10-year and International members.

Tai asks what members get for their membership money: Incentive Fund, newsletters, listing on website and ads in newsletter, all mailings, discounts on registration and transfers of ownership.

Amrita suggests that we give something to members for their membership. Discussion of prices and postage. Trisha suggest a $5 or $10 gift certificate to The Painting Pony, as we get a % off each of those. Will ask Jessica Drake how that would work.

**Registrar’s Report** – Amrita Ibold, in 2017, 6 foal registrations, 20 horse registrations. In 2016, 22 foal registrations plus 11 horse registrations. Pat suggests that we make registering foals easier. Amrita talks about people not registered horses and not finishing registration after payment. Katrina would like a 1 step process, discussion on how other registries do this. Trisha said she will send us links that we can look at and get ideas for streamlining our registration.

**MOTION: Amrita motions that Foal registrations are valid for 1 year after date of payment. After that one year is up, if registration is not completed, owner will need to also pay older horse registration fee in addition to fee already paid to finish registration. Katrina seconds. Approved.**

Discussion of older horse’s registrations that haven’t been finished. Deadline for those too? Tabled for now.

**Website Report** – Amrita Ibold- Once again, color is the #1 search with 1800 clicks a week. Our news page has gone up to the #2 spot with 1288 clicks a week since we have been also posting on Facebook when we add something to the website. Breeders is #3 with 800, Horses for Sale #4, Gallery #5, Foals #6. We need to continue to use key words to get on search engines. Amrita asks if we want yearly statistics on the site? Tai suggests we run ads to generate cash and use affiliate marketing. We ask Tai to research what we would need to do and get back to us. Katrina says they got a cost of about $2500-$3000 to update their farm website when we talked about hiring a website developer. Amrita suggests an ad for our website search button in the front-page scroll. Amrita and Cathy have done some updating on the website, it could still use more. Questions: Would developers understand what we are trying to do? Would it be easy to use and update without having to go through third party. Weebly (current website) is easy to use and update and reasonably priced.

**Newsletter Report**- Cathy Leddy- 2 newsletters out so far this year, October’s to come. Discussion of possibly switching January’s newsletter (which usually is pretty skinny) to just having the Annual Report, instead of both. Pat suggests that we have links in newsletter to outside articles. Discussion of how not all members get electronic newsletters.

**Awards Committee**- Catrina Quantrell/ Betsy Wandler -Incentive Awards will be after end of year. ATAA Awards this year, Horse of the Year and Volunteer of the Year only. Suggestion of doing online survey to see what members really want for awards. Do we want more ATAA awards to recognize horses and riders that aren’t doing recognized events/shows? More like previous years? Or like 2017? Online surveys are easy. Katrina suggests that it is nice to recognize people that are promoting our breed.

**Promotions Report** – Tish Saare: “we advertised in the ALBC Breeder’s Directory and the AERC Endurance News (with thanks to Tim Floyd for that) I don't believe that we received any requests to use our promotions fund for expos and the like, although often folks do expos on their own. We do have some funds available to help out our members, along with banners. Our big event is the one you are at now (Dressage at Devon).  Last year it was the Rare Breeds Show and next year it will be the World Equestrian Games, with a west coast show planned for 2019.  Please let folks know that we are always open to ideas and can help facilitate good promotions ideas that they may have.  We have pamphlets that can be printed and DVDs for sale”

**Nominations and Election Report** – Cathy Leddy- we had 4 people nominated for 2 open positions this year, including Dean Miller, Laura Spear, Gretta Teets and Cindy Sither! Thanks very much to our outgoing BOD members, Catrina Quantrell and Betsy Wandler. Both Catrina and Betsy are going to continue doing the Incentive and ATAA Awards, thank you! We collected ballots at meeting, but did not finish the count until the evening, as the mailed in ballots were back at the hotel. New BOD members were announced at evening banquet: Gretta Teets and Cindy Sither. There will be open positions next year too.

**Old Business:**

 Jumps at venues: Tabled until meeting, need sponsors- too expensive at this time. Tabled.

 ATAA Awards- Incentive Awards doing well, trying new ATAA Awards this year, more volunteer awards? Betsy is happy to continue doing ATAA Awards, but wouldn’t mind help. Discuss different volunteer awards. Online survey to see what members want.

 Breed standard and grading – PowerPoint on YouTube? Trisha talks about brandings, gradings. Several members have asked about a brand for ATs. Trisha says that brands are marketable. Cathy thinks we need someone to push grading. Trisha thinks we need a committee and volunteers.

 Trademark: Our ATAA logo and wordmark is up for renewal this year. Discussion of why we trademarked it to begin with. Members were unanimously in favor of the decision to renew our trademark and wordmark. OK using the AT from our logo as our ‘official’ brand. No one will be required to brand their horse, but may if they want.

**New Business;**

 VNIIK registration – less N. American horses are being VNIIK registered. Need to send measurement forms to Russia – how to do so? Amrita suggests we keep repeating blurb in Newsletter, put on scrolling pix on website. Pat thinks we are getting further from preserving, need suggestions. Motivation to register in our closed studbook – showing, economics, how to facilitate? Danger of horses not being recognized by Russia in the future if we don’t register. Amrita would like to have dual registration at one time. Register both with ATAA and VNIIK at the same time. Will get more information and forward to BOD. We need to get horse measurements for the upcoming 11th studbook. Discuss via email later.

 WEG 2018 – in Tryon, NC, September 10-23, 2018. ATAA booth? VOLUNTEERS needed. Cathy will find 2010 WEG stuff, approximate costs, etc. Committee to work on it?

**MOTION: Amrita motions that the ATAA have a booth at the World Equestrian Games in 2018. Trisha seconds. Approved.**

We will need a committee, budget, etc. Discussion of having some sort of Teke demo at the Games. Possibility of asking the Turkmen trick riders (djigits) that travel come and demo. They were invited in 2010, but couldn’t get stuff done in time. Or, have some of our riders there doing demos. Sabine and Katrina were both ok with this.

**Semen Bank:** Pat talks about the possibility of a semen bank and possibly an embryo bank for future generations, fulfilling part of our association’s purpose of preserving and perpetuating the Akhal-Teke breed, per our Bylaws, Article II, Purpose. She has contacts with the USDA, Smithsonian’s new facility in Ft. Collins, CO, and Swiss Valley Farms (heritage breeds, mostly cattle) Pat discusses partnering with these organizations to spread storage facilities. We could collect semen, get DNA and measurements and photos done, all at same time. Stallion owners would get semen straws for themselves at a fraction of the usual cost and there would be semen preserved in case of catastrophe in the future.

**MOTION: Cathy motions that Pat looks into this and gets back to us with a proposal. Trisha seconds. Approved.**

**Motion: Cathy motions to adjourn at 1:08. Giles seconds. Approved.**

**Addendum: Cathy, Amrita and Pat talked after the meeting and came up with some possible goals for the ATAA based on member input at the GMM. These are:**

1.  **Goal: ATAA to hold its 2018 annual conference in conjunction with the FEI World Equestrian Games (WEG) in Tryon, North Carolina September 11-23, 2018**[**https://tryon2018.com**](https://tryon2018.com)

 a.  Amrita will be checking on inviting and securing the Turkmenistan Circus to demonstrate at these games

 b.  Cathy Leddy agreed to chair the committee to put together a booth for the event.  Cathy is looking for a co-chair.

 c.  Cathy will prepare an initial budget for the event, then this budget needs to be approved by the ATAA Board

 d.  Proposal - build into to the budget the Cathy’s travel costs, as well as the travel costs of the co-chair.  In return the Chair and the Co-Chair will split the time that they will be responsible for the booth. So that one of them will set up and run the booth Sept. 10-17 and the other will run the booth Sept 18-23 and tear down the booth. As Co-Chairs they will also be responsible for organizing the volunteers to help run the booth during the event.

 e.  Cathy will look for the task list that she developed the last time the ATAA participated in the WEG to help build the budget, tasks and organization for the WEG

2.  **Goal: Develop a plan/ proposal to develop a germplasm preservation program, including a sperm bank for stallions and exploring cryopreserved material for breed reconstruction (long-term 100 years+)**

Pat Johnston agreed to explore and develop this proposal and report on progress during the year

 a.  [National Animal Germplasm Preservation (NAGP) - USDA](https://nrrc.ars.usda.gov/A-GRIN/main_webpage/ars?record_source=US)

 b.  Private long-term preservation (Swiss Valley Farm Foundation/Smithsonian partnership) [SVF Foundation](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwjJitfZpNLWAhUC2GMKHeP4BakQFggnMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fsvffoundation.org%2F&usg=AFQjCNHHdm2A5KutOIKxT1OqPvfgYvp7PQ)

 c.  Sperm bank for immediate use by ATAA members

3. **Goal:  Initiate and develop a plan to move forward with Akhal Teke grading**

 Cathy agreed to review Grading notes from 2016 ATAA Conference and the discussion with Molly Nicodemus.

 a.  Cathy approach Molly about developing a road map (including a time line) and plan on how to move forward with a robust grading of the Akhal Teke horses in North America.  The idea being that we would like a committee that is or guided by an outside advisory council headed up by possibly Molly.  We need to think about our approach to Molly, so that this is not an overwhelming task and has a long enough implementation time frame to work with her schedule.  Cathy agreed to talk to Molly and also explore what it might cost to have her do this kind of work for the ATAA.  We would then have a budget for this project that would need to be approved by the ATAA Board.

4.  **Goal: ATAA- VIINK; follow up with VIINK about “combining” our efforts to register AT horses in North America**.

 a.  Idea being that it would be one stop shopping for registering AT horses. registering with both ATAA and VIINK at the same time, through the ATAA.

 b.  Amrita to follow up on current proposal from VIINK.  The Russian registry would like $100 per registration per horse.  We currently charge $40 to register with the ATAA, which includes DNA testing.  Total registration would be $140.  Why don’t we separate the DNA testing cost from the registration cost, so that the members see that total foal registration is $100 and DNA testing is $40?  Need to think about how to organize that so that it makes sense and flows well. Amrita could you think about this and possible prepare a proposal for the Board to approve?

5. **Goal: Register Brand**

a.  Discussed the idea that Gretta and Trisha are both interested in a brand to be used on ATAA graded horses.

 b.  Branding would NOT be a requirement

 c.  Brand to be used, is part of the ATAA current trademark which will continue.  This will continue to reinforce the trademark and be consistent with our years of investment in our imagery. See below

 

 d.  Ask Gretta (possible work with Trisha) to find out how to register a brand in the US to protect its use for the ATAA.

Other things discussed that weren’t necessarily formed into goals:

1.  Pat to explore the data base that Milena had originally worked with developing.  The idea being that Pat would seek out the owner of this database/website to see if they would donate it to the ATAA, as well as the ability for out to edit it.  We would like full control of this web site, and then we would update it if it made sense for us to do so.

2.  Pat agreed to mentor Laura Spear on her idea of developing a data base that would be searchable for AT horses and their athletic accomplishments.  These MUST be recognized events with links to results.  These are not schooling shows.

3.  Think about how to expand participation in Horse of the Year award for 2018