

CHAPTER 1

ACCREDITATION OF JUDGES

The judges' training program is one of the most vital parts of The American Iris Society. Members who serve as judges have duties and responsibilities to fulfill, so serving as a judge requires constant study, garden visiting and growing a representative collection of irises.

The accredited judge is the backbone of The AIS judging program and is responsible for the selection of award winners. It is the judges' votes that determine which irises receive awards and thus are recommended to the public. Serving as a judge is a privilege, and duties should be fulfilled with dedication. The judge is a representative of The American Iris Society and should conduct himself/herself in a manner which will bring credit to the organization.

Because the judge is, in many ways, the most important official of The AIS, guidelines have been established for the training and selection of judges. These regulations are a minimum standard, and the conscientious judge will usually exceed the requirements.

APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES

The Regional Vice President of each region annually recommends members from his/her region to be AIS judges for the following year. These recommendations are sent to The AIS Chairman of Judges for presentation to The AIS Board of Directors. The Board has the sole authority to approve the appointment of judges, but the recommendations of the RVP are accepted unless opposing facts are presented which may result in the appointment being nullified.

Those persons recommended as judges must have held continuous membership in The AIS for the past three years and

must have completed all other requirements. Appointments are made for one year, beginning on January 1 after The AIS fall board meeting. Reappointment for each succeeding year is based on satisfactory performance and continuous membership.

REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Since The AIS has stated that each region is responsible for carrying out its judges' training program, it is absolutely necessary that each region maintain records of the work of each judge and prospective judge. Some regions do not have a large membership, availability of instructors, financial resources or a geographical area that affords development of a truly comprehensive training program. Therefore, The AIS requirements for judges' training are minimum requirements that each region can meet. It is expected, however, that most regions will require more than the minimum, and many regions do have far more extensive requirements. All regional schools must be approved in advance, and copies of all school rosters must be sent to The AIS Chairman of Judges shortly after the school.

Each region should establish training guidelines which are in agreement with those of The AIS. In regions where approved requirements for the judges' training program are more demanding than those of The AIS, The AIS will recognize the additional requirements and will support them. Each region is required to send an activity report to each judge annually. Master judges are not required to return these reports, but all other judges must complete the report and return it to the proper regional official. These reports enable the RVP to keep accurate records so he/she will know when an apprentice has completed the requirements for advancement to fully accredited status and will know the training status and performance of accredited judges.

Regions should seek the most qualified members to become judges. Recruitment should be based on finding those with a knowledge of irises and a willingness and ability to serve The

AIS. No person should be appointed as a judge unless he/she is qualified. The RVP has the responsibility to see that guidelines are followed in the training of these judges.

The AIS Chairman of Judges will send each RVP a packet of information by August 1 of each year. This packet is to be used in making the recommendations for judges for the coming year and is to be returned to The AIS Chairman of Judges by **September 1**. It is imperative that the RVP return this information by the stated time in order to avoid any delay in approval of judges for that region. Sending the Activity Report to the judges in a region by July 1 should give the RVP plenty of time to assemble the needed information by the September 1 deadline.

GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL AND REPORTING OF JUDGES' TRAINING

1. Judges' training sessions are to be approved in advance by the RVP, or by the Regional Judges' Training Chairman when so authorized by the RVP.
2. An approved judges' training class is defined as a structured in-classroom or in-garden instruction for two or more participants, presented by a fully accredited AIS judge. A written test of at least 10 questions for each hour of training credit shall be administered, discussed, and filed with the regional JT chair.
3. Only fully accredited judges may judge in an accredited show or present a for-credit judges' training course. A retired judge may not present a for-credit judges' training course nor participate as a judge at an accredited show.
4. A report of the training session is to be forwarded to the approving Regional Officer within two weeks following the session. The approving Regional Officer is then to forward the report to The AIS Chairman of Judges within one week. The report should state the Region, sponsoring group, date, subject,

instructor, hours of credit and include a list of attendees showing name as given on AIS membership records, type of Judge and the Judge's Region.

5. A written test containing a minimum of twenty questions on areas to be covered in a two-hour or longer session must be prepared by or under the supervision of the instructor and completed by the attendees at the conclusion of the session. Sessions of under two hours may have fewer questions, with a minimum of ten questions for a one-hour session. A blank copy of the test is to accompany the report sent to The AIS Chairman of Judges.

THE CANDIDATE FOR JUDGESHIP

No person can serve as an AIS judge without being a member of The AIS. At the time of initial appointment as an apprentice judge, the recommended candidate must already have a record of three years of consecutive membership in The AIS. Continuous membership is maintained by paying dues on time. If dues are not received within the grace period, the three-year membership requirement must begin anew. The membership of the candidate must be in that person's name. Credit cannot be given for membership carried in the name of a garden, commercial enterprise or another person's name.

When a person joins the judges' training program, he/she should contact the RVP or the regional judges' training chairman to learn the region's policies. Training sessions consist primarily of lectures, practice judging in the garden and simulated show judging. A slide show is not an acceptable form of training. An instructor may use slides to illustrate, but slides should not be used except as a supplement to the lecture. A candidate for judgeship must complete a written examination on the material covered, which may be of the open book type if the instructor wishes. The candidate must receive a passing grade on the exam to get full credit for the session and should be sure the information relating to his/her attendance at the training session

is forwarded to the RVP or regional judges' training chairman so there is a record of his/her activities and training status.

A minimum of two sessions of structured classroom training for a total of ten hours is required, passing written examinations on each session. The training courses must be conducted by an approved instructor from The AIS in order for the candidate to receive credit. If a session is attended outside the home region of the candidate, he/she should be sure his/her RVP is notified of the training received, subject matter, hours of attendance, location of school and instructor's name. The ten hours of required training must have been completed within the three year period immediately preceding recommendation for appointment as an Apprentice judge.

Anyone interested in becoming an AIS judge must have a copy of the latest edition of the *AIS Handbook for Judges and Show Officials*. Judges and potential judges should study this book to keep themselves informed of their duties and responsibilities. Other publications of The AIS may be beneficial, but the *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials* is to be used as the guideline for judging and should never be out of the working judge's reach.

A candidate for judgeship must get five accredited judges to write a recommendation to the RVP supporting the candidate's advancement to the apprentice status. Forms may be provided by the region for this purpose; if not, a letter of recommendation is satisfactory.

The judges' training year of record is August 1 through July 31 of the following year, e.g., August 1, 2008 - July 31, 2009. When persons are moving to a higher judge level (candidate to Apprentice, Apprentice to Garden/Exhibition, Garden/Exhibition to Senior) who have completed the requirements by July 31, then any judges' training during the remainder of the calendar year will be counted towards the requirements of the level to which they are being moved, pending actual Board approval of their move to the higher level.

THE APPRENTICE JUDGE

After successfully completing all the required training, a candidate will be recommended for appointment as apprentice judge. By this time he/she should have learned the duties and responsibilities of serving as a judge; should have grown and studied enough irises to be familiar with different classifications, varieties/cultivars and their characteristics; and should know the qualities of a good iris well enough to make a conscientious evaluation. The status of apprentice judgeship is a learning phase. After being appointed an apprentice judge, one has three years in which to complete the requirements for becoming a garden/exhibition judge.

Each apprentice judge is required to judge seedlings or named varieties in bloom in the garden on two separate occasions under the tutorship of two different fully accredited AIS judges. Each tutoring session must be for a minimum of two hours. This tutoring must be more than just a stroll through the garden. The time should be spent in truly evaluating iris plants -- plant vigor, the stalk, branching, substance, durability, bud count, form, etc.

The AIS Chairman of Awards will send each apprentice judge a copy of the Official Ballot of AIS which will be marked "Void." The apprentice should use it as a study guide as he/she visits gardens for garden training. The ballot is not to be returned.

Each apprentice judge is required to receive exhibition training at two different accredited shows under the tutorship of different fully accredited AIS judges on each occasion. The Apprentice is only a student and cannot participate in the selection of "Best Specimen of Show" or help to break ties when the other judges disagree on the ribbon to be awarded. The apprentice judge is to listen to the evaluations being made by the judges of the show and learn from their deliberations. Apprentices should be given the opportunity to evaluate one or more specimens. Apprentices have no vote, and the ribbons are awarded by the accredited judges. Only one Apprentice is to be assigned to

each panel of judges. Under no circumstances is the Apprentice to serve as a clerk while receiving this training. Should more than one Apprentice need training, the panel of judges may be divided so there is still only one Apprentice per panel. Apprentices may also receive this training under simulated show conditions if the training cannot be received at a regular exhibition. (This training may only be given if the Apprentice has no other means of obtaining proper training, and it must be approved in advance by the RVP and regional Judges' Training Chairman.)

The tutor (garden training or exhibition) must never be a family member. The apprentice judge should ask the tutor to make a report to the RVP concerning his/her performance. Forms for this purpose are usually provided by the Region. The apprentice judge should provide the supervising judge with a stamped envelope, properly addressed to the regional authority, to ensure the report is sent to the correct person.

All apprentice judges must also attend a training school on AIS awards and balloting and pass a written examination on the session. This session is to be at least two hours in length and shall be taught by an approved instructor. A training session on Awards and Balloting may be counted towards apprenticeship credit if taken within the three years immediately prior to appointment as an apprentice judge and provided the ten hours of training requirements have been completed.

After completing twenty hours of training (ten hours are required prior to application for apprenticeship and ten hours are required for accreditation), the apprentice judge is eligible for appointment as an accredited judge. Apprentices who do not complete requirements within the three-year period must wait a full year before again being eligible to seek appointment as an apprentice. No credit is given for hours completed in the three years. (See summary of requirements to be completed as an apprentice judge on page 12.)

FULLY ACCREDITED JUDGES

A fully accredited AIS judge is any currently approved judge in the following categories: Garden/Exhibition (G/E), Senior (S), Master (M), and Overseas (OS).

Eligibility for this important position is based not only on the completion of the apprentice requirements, but continuous AIS membership as well. To maintain accreditation, the judge must maintain his/her AIS membership, vote the official ballot, attend training sessions, serve as a tutor for apprentices and complete the annual regional activity report. Additional requirements established by the region must also be met.

Garden/Exhibition Judges: Garden/Exhibition judges must complete courses and tutoring sessions that total five hours [two hours must be in-garden training] during each three-year period, and each judge must attend at least one judges' training school during the three-year period. To receive credit, Garden/Exhibition judges must take and pass a written examination on each judges' training school.

Failure to vote the official ballot in a timely manner for two consecutive years results in automatic disqualification as a judge. Failure to submit a timely Activity Report for two consecutive years results in automatic disqualification as a judge. It is the responsibility of the RVP to report any other unsatisfactory performance which could result in the disqualification of the judge.

Senior Judges: A person who has served the Society as a judge for fifteen years is elevated to the status of **Senior Judge**. These fifteen years are counted from the time the judge is first approved by the AIS Board of Directors as an Apprentice. If there is an interruption in service, the judge does not lose the years served before the interruption. Senior judges are required to earn credit totaling three hours [one hour must be in-garden training] during each three-year period. This credit **must** be earned by attending or teaching an approved judging school.

When a Senior Judge tutors an apprentice judge, the Apprentice receives training credit, the Senior judge does not.

Senior judges are required to submit an Activity Report each year to the region. Failure to return a timely Activity Report for two consecutive years will result in the judge being dropped from the official roster of accredited judges. Senior judges will receive an Official Ballot. Failure to vote the timely ballot for two consecutive years will result in the judge being dropped from the official roster of accredited judges.

Requests for changes from Retired (R) judge to active Senior judge are to be made through the RVP and/or regional Judges' Training Chairman. The change in status will be approved if the applicant has met the requirements of three hours of training [one hour of which is in-garden training] and has submitted a timely Activity Report.

Master Judges are appointed by the Board of Directors upon recommendation of The AIS Chairman of Judges. Three-fourths (75%) approval of the Directors present and voting is required. Master judges are fully accredited AIS judges but are not required to visit gardens, vote the ballot or complete an Activity Report. This honor is given to judges who have rendered outstanding service to the Society. Nominations for master judge may be made by the RVP or other AIS members. The nominating letter is sent to the Chairman of Judges and must contain a full statement of the nominee's record of service to The AIS. The nomination must be supported by written statements of endorsement from four fully accredited judges, at least two of whom must be from outside the nominee's region.

Appointment as Master judge is based on service at the national level that goes far beyond the expected conscientious performance as an AIS judge. To be considered for appointment, one should be a judge whose leadership and dedication to the ideals of the Society are of genuine and obvious distinction. The honor is accorded only to persons who have

served as fully accredited judges for a minimum of ten years except in the most unusual circumstances.

The AIS requires that an annual Activity Report be sent to every judge by each region. Master judges are not required to return these reports. Apprentice judges, Garden/Exhibition judges, and Senior judges must complete their Activity Report and return it to the proper regional official by the specified deadline.

APPOINTMENT OF OVERSEAS JUDGES

A candidate for overseas judgeship must have expressed an interest and willingness to be appointed an AIS judge. A letter of nomination must be submitted to the AIS Chairman of Judges by an AIS judge outlining the qualifications of the proposed overseas judge. The letter of nomination must be endorsed by a minimum of three additional accredited AIS judges when it is submitted to the Chairman of Judges. There must also be a letter of concurrence from the proposed judge's national society if that society has a formal judges' program. Those nominees properly recommended and endorsed will be included in the annual report of the Chairman of Judges when it is presented to the Board of Directors for approval at the Fall Meeting.

REINSTATEMENT OF JUDGES

If circumstances cause a judge to resign his/her appointment, the resignation must be in writing.

If an apprentice judge is dropped from the judges' roster or resigns, he/she can be reinstated only under the guidelines for new candidates for judgeship. He/she must receive the recommendation for reinstatement from the RVP and five other judges in his/her region and must meet all other requirements of a newly appointed judge.

If a fully accredited judge is dropped from the judges' roster for cause: Failure to complete the required training hours in a timely manner; failure to submit a timely Activity Report for two consecutive years; failure to vote the timely Ballot for two consecutive years, or resignation, he/she can be reinstated upon the completion of the required hours of training in an approved school and upon the written recommendation of the RVP and five other judges in his/her region, who are familiar with the activities of the accredited judge seeking reinstatement.

If Senior and/or Master judges are dropped for failure to pay dues on time, they may be reinstated upon payment of dues if reinstatement is requested. An apprentice judge or garden/exhibition judge who is dropped for allowing AIS membership to lapse must wait three full years before applying for readmission to the program. The Apprentice must begin anew on requirements; the garden/exhibition judge must have earned the required hours of approved training since being dropped.

For reinstatement to be granted, the judge must receive the recommendation of the RVP and full approval of The AIS Board of Directors.

SUMMARY

Requirements to be completed as a Candidate for Judgeship:

1. Maintain three years of continuous AIS membership.
2. Make application for entry into the judges' training program.
3. Successfully complete a minimum of two training sessions for a total of ten hours, passing written examinations on each session.
4. Obtain the recommendation of five fully accredited judges.

Requirements to be completed as an Apprentice Judge:

1. Maintain continuous AIS membership.
2. Complete two two-hour sessions of garden training under different AIS fully accredited judge-instructors.
3. Complete two two-hour sessions of show judging under different AIS fully accredited judge-instructors.
4. Successfully complete a two-hour course on awards and balloting. (A training session on awards and balloting taken within the three years immediately prior to appointment as an apprentice judge can be counted to satisfy this requirement.)
5. Complete all requirements within three years after being appointed an apprentice judge.
6. Complete the annual Activity Report.

Requirements for maintaining status as a Garden/Exhibition or Senior Judge:

1. Maintain continuous AIS membership.
2. Vote the Official Ballot each year before deadline. Failure to do so for two consecutive years results in automatic disqualification.
3. Attend and successfully complete refresher courses during each three-year period. Five hours credit [two of which must be in-garden training] is required of Garden/Exhibition judges, and three hours credit [one of which must be in-garden training] is required of Senior judges.
4. Complete the annual Activity Report. Failure to do so for two consecutive years results in automatic disqualification.
5. Complete any additional regional requirements.

Master judges maintain their status as judges by maintaining continuous membership in The American Iris Society.