



# THE AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD CLUB OF AMERICA®

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## ASCA Executive Secretary's Report September 2023

### Announcements

#### New Judges:

- Victoria Lovejoy (WA) – Full Scent Detection Judge
- Roy Fair (OR) – Provisional Scent Detection Judge
- Melody Fair (OR) – Provisional Scent Detection Judge
- Diana Curl (AZ) – Provisional Rally Judge

**2023 Cee Hambo Scholarship Recipients:** Anna Hansen and Stella Marshall.

**2023 Ernest Hartnagle Memorial Icon Award Recipients:** Ann DeChant, Rachel Vest, and Jan Wesen.

The Board unanimously voted to hire Sarah Jackson as ASCA's new Business Office Manager.

The Board agreed to go forward with the **affinity marketing** pilot program as presented by the Sponsorship and Fundraising Committee. Check out our affinity partners here: <https://asca.org/marketingprogram/>

ASCA's Marketing Subcommittee continues to explore options for increasing ASCA's revenue through marketing programs.

The Board voted that lapses in membership between November 1, 2022, and July 31, 2023, will not adversely affect a person's membership status as long as renewals were sent to the Business Office by August 1, 2023.

The Board is seeking input from program committees regarding an emergency replacement judge selection process for the Nationals and Finals.

An updated version of the Scent Detection Program's rule book was approved by the Board and is available on the website here: <https://asca.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/scentdetrules.pdf>

ASCA's Finance Subcommittee continues to discuss a multitude of financial components, including loan repayment, Business Office staff changes, savings, computer fund necessities, future prospects of the Aussie Times magazine, and the AEMD.

The Treasurer's report for August 2023 is available in the member portal.

Aussie Times ad rates have been reduced by 10% for as long as the Aussie Times is available online only.

ASCA's IT Committee continues to explore solutions related to issues with the current system and portal interface.

The Board is working with the Nationals Advisory Committee to initiate several changes to the Nationals hosting policies, procedures, and fees.

The Board considered potential challenges for the ASCA Nationals in 2025 in Winnemucca, Nevada, due to a lithium mine construction near the area.

A recommendation from the Nationals Advisory Committee to change the requirements to serve as the Nationals Chair failed voting by the Board.

A recommendation from the Nationals Advisory Committee to change the timeline for the Nationals Premium List was approved by the Board.

A recommendation from the Agility Committee regarding training collar restrictions was approved by the Board.

A recommendation from the Obedience Committee to change the types of allowable clothing that can be worn in the obedience ring was approved by the Board.

## ASCA Board Meeting Minutes

### September 9, 2023

The meeting was held via Zoom on Wednesday, September 6, 2023, at 7:00 pm Central.

**In attendance:** President Rick Gann, 1st Vice President Susan Byrne, 2nd Vice President Liz Busquets, Secretary Ann McCabe, Treasurer Jan Wesen, Director Denise Creelman, Director Carol Gerken, Director

Dawna Sims, Director Jodie McLellan, Incoming Director David Clayton, Incoming Director Lynda Hardin, Incoming Director Jillian Ward, and Executive Secretary Kalla Jaco.

**Absent:** None.

**President Gann called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.**

## 2023 Altered Conformation Finals Entry

The Board approved an entry into the 2023 Altered Conformation Finals from Angelica DeMont.

BD.23.92 2023 Altered Conformation Finals Entry for Sixx High Definition

**Motion carried** (8-1) - Approved: McCabe, Gerken, Sims, Creelman, Wesen, McLellan, Busquets, Gann. Disapproved: Byrne. Abstained: None. Non-voting: None.

**Motion by Busquets to accept Ms. Angelica DeMont's entries for finals. Second by Gann.**

Comments/Rationale: Despite being late, the circumstances under which the email got allegedly lost in cyberspace may truly or completely ascertained. In a situation where the details are fuzzy, ASCA should judge in favor of the member/competitor in a gesture of good faith. Moreover, other late entries were accepted.

Affected: Ms. DeMont, the Business Office, the 2023 Nationals Committee, other 2023 Altered Conformation Finals competitors.

Effective Date: Immediately upon Board approval.

## Office Manager Position

The Board unanimously voted to hire Sarah Jackson as ASCA's new Business Office Manager.

## Office Manager Salary

The primary focus of this discussion was on offering Sarah Jackson the Office Manager position and related salary considerations. There were detailed conversations about benefits and professional development, with Board members supporting a \$1,000 annual budget for the latter.

## Business Office

The Board's discussion centered around staffing changes and operational adjustments. Updates on new hires were provided and concerns were raised about the current distribution of program responsibilities. The status of the upcoming Finals was reviewed. The Board also recognized Byrne for her immeasurable contributions at the Business Office.

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm.**

## September 18, 2023

The meeting was held via Zoom on Thursday, September 18, 2023, at 7 pm Central.

**In attendance:** President Rick Gann, 1st Vice President Susan Byrne, 2nd Vice President Liz Busquets, Secretary Ann McCabe, Treasurer Jan Wesen, Director Denise Creelman, Director Carol Gerken, Director Dawna Sims, Director Jodie McLellan, Incoming Director Lynda Hardin, Incoming Director Jillian Ward, Laura Gibson, Rachel Vest, Renee Watson, and Executive Secretary Kalla Jaco.

**Absent:** Incoming Director David Clayton.

**President Gann called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.**

The Board sent several questions and potential action items to the Nationals Advisory Committee for them to provide feedback. This meeting was to receive and review their feedback.

**Nationals Timeline & Handbook Inclusion:** The Nationals Advisory Committee is actively consolidating the Handbook items into the Rule Book.

**Contract Disclaimer:** The Board suggested a preliminary Letter of Intent to judges, committee members, and any contracted Nationals workers to serve as a placeholder until a formal contract can be issued, as well as a disclaimer indicating that the agreement remains non-binding until ratified by the Board following budget approval. The Nationals Advisory Committee is open to revising current contracts to reflect this.

**Judges' Airfare Policy:** Existing contracts already address that the travel coordinator will purchase airfare for judges. The Board emphasized the necessity of cancellation insurance for any self-purchased airline tickets.

**Contractual Terms with Centaur:** The Nationals Advisory Committee highlighted the limited options for ribbon suppliers but remains open to exploring other bids. The committee discussed the challenges of switching ribbon vendors, emphasizing Centaur's reliability. Nevertheless, they agreed on the importance of due diligence in ensuring the best deal.

**Review of Entry Fees:** An increase of \$2 per entry was suggested to cover the entry clerk's fees and other costs. The Nationals Advisory Committee emphasized a careful approach due to the membership's current sensitivities.

**Nationals Event Ticket Pricing:** Pricing for the Nationals events is set to cover costs. The Nationals Advisory Committee stressed that these costs are meticulously evaluated every year to ensure they're not arbitrary.

**Financial Reimbursement for Committee Members:** The Board proposed a reimbursement adjustment for Nationals committee members, especially those participating in the event. Discussions revolved around striking a balance between appreciating the committee members' efforts and managing expenses.

The meeting fostered open discussions about the practicalities and budgeting intricacies of the Nationals event. Both the Board and the Nationals Advisory Committee shared their perspectives and concerns. The overarching theme was to ensure the event's success while maintaining ASCA's financial health.

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.**

## September 21, 2023

The meeting was held via Zoom on Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 6:30 pm Central.

**In attendance:** President Rick Gann, 1st Vice President Susan Byrne, 2nd Vice President Liz Busquets (joined at 7 pm), Secretary Ann McCabe, Treasurer Jan Wesen, Director Denise Creelman (joined at 7 pm), Director Carol Gerken (joined at 6:45 pm), Director Dawna Sims, Director Jodie McLellan, Incoming Director David Clayton, Incoming Director Lynda Hardin, Incoming Director Jillian Ward, and Executive Secretary Kalla Jaco.

**Absent:** None.

Open Session topics were recorded and may be listened to on ASCA's [YouTube channel](#).

**President Gann called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.**

## 2023 Cee Hambo Scholarship

This discussion was held in Executive Session from 6:34 pm to 6:37 pm. The ASCA Foundation received applications for the Cee Hambo Scholarship from two outstanding candidates, Anna Hansen and Stella

Marshall. After a thorough review based on the established criteria, the selection committee unanimously chose to honor both applicants with the scholarship this year.

### BD.23.97 2023 Cee Hambo Scholarship Recipients

**Motion carried** (6-0) - Approved: Byrne, Gann, McCabe, McLellan, Sims, Wesen. Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Absent: Busquets, Creelman, Gerken.

**Motioned by McCabe to award the 2023 Cee Hambo Scholarship from the ASCA Foundation to Anna Hansen and Stella Marshall. Seconded by Sims.**

**Moved to Open Session at 6:37 pm.** President Gann welcomed the members listening, introduced those present, and explained the Board's meeting process.

## Nationals Entry Fees

The Board discussed potential fee increases for the 2024 Nationals, focusing on adjustments for the entry clerk's increased compensation and other operational costs.

McCabe recalled earlier discussions about the possibility of raising fees by \$1-2 and noted that stock run costs have not been adjusted for some time. She observed that certain fees, especially conformation, obedience, and rally, were markedly higher than at regular trials while stock fees were comparable to regular trials. Consequently, McCabe proposed the following adjustments: increase fees for ducks to \$50, sheep to \$60, and cattle to \$70. Furthermore, since banquet ticket prices have remained unchanged for a decade, she suggested a minor increase in this fee as well as adjustments to the catalog price (\$40) and emailed results (\$20). Gerken agreed with McCabe, underscoring the necessity of fee adjustments given the inevitable rise in operational costs over time. She thought the proposed increases were reasonable.

Sims also agreed with McCabe's suggestions. She thought that the banquet should not only be self-sustaining but should also generate a surplus. Additionally, she believed stock fees, which are marginally above regular trial charges, could be raised, considering the increased overheads associated with Nationals compared to local trials. Sims also endorsed the idea of a universal fee hike of \$2 to offset increased compensation for the entry clerk.

Wesen backed the proposal to increase stock fees, reiterating the need to factor in buffer amounts for entry clerk fees, be it \$2, \$5, or any other figure. She highlighted the decision last year to increase tracking fees, which were considerably below regular rates, suggesting that these might need further revision due to the high effort required for the event.

McLellan supported the proposed fee increments of \$2-5 and suggested the idea of a variable fee structure for RV spaces, tent spaces, and vendors, taking into account the entire facility cost rather than a standard fee. Byrne suggested reviewing the welcome reception fee, currently at \$15, and considering an increase to \$20 to ensure its sustainability. She also advocated for revising RV fees to accommodate pump out costs and expressed her support for McCabe's recommended increases.

Gann thought that, while there was a general consensus on fee hikes, the Board might benefit from consolidating all data and recommendations before passing a formal motion. It would allow for a comprehensive review and unified decision-making. McCabe agreed to compile the suggestions, after which the Board can evaluate the proposed changes and move forward with a motion.

## August 2023 Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Wesen presented the financial summary for August 2023. She provided insights on the organization's financial status, noting that the beginning balance stood at \$111,449.87 and the month concluded with an ending balance of \$91,680.81. She attributed the significant increase in membership dues to proactive communication—specifically, the announcements and reminders that were sent out regarding lapsed

memberships. She elaborated on the AEMD's detailed breakdown, and observed a noticeable spike in Finals fees, stemming from the queue in June. Offering a holistic view of the organization's financial position, Wesen remarked that the finances for July and August looked promising. She highlighted that the checking account balance was consistently exceeding \$100,000, instilling confidence in the Board's financial decisions. However, she maintained that cautious fiscal management was still paramount. With regards to payables, she affirmed they were being addressed appropriately.

Wesen proposed a motion to commit to a monthly payment of \$5,000 toward the loan to circumvent recurrent monthly decisions on the matter. However, before the motion could be deliberated further, Byrne interjected, requesting it be tabled until after the finance subcommittee's report was reviewed, as they had devised a strategy concerning this matter. Byrne also drew attention to an inconsistency in the P&L statement. A line item labeled "cash discounts" under expenses had been inaccurately recorded. She explained that this entry pertained to a credit card payment due in August. This payment had to be settled directly by Byrne at the bank. She assured the board that corrective measures would be taken in the future to prevent such misinterpretations.

#### BD.23.98 August 2023 Treasurer's Report

**Motion carried** (6-0-1) - Approved: Byrne, Gann, Gerken, McCabe, McLellan, Sims. Disapproved: None. Abstained: Wesen. Absent: Busquets, Creelman.

**Motioned by Sim to approve the Treasurer's report for August 2023 as presented. Seconded by Gerken.**

#### Update from Sponsorship and Fundraising Committee

The Board heard an update from Ward on behalf of the Sponsorship and Fundraising Committee. She opened the discussion by ensuring everyone had reviewed the material provided by the committee. Highlighting the committee's efforts to work with visuals, she emphasized that this could aid in explaining their initiatives more efficiently. Their aim is to incorporate these tools when presenting to the membership. Ward clarified the direction they're targeting with income channels and introduced the topic of an affinity marketing program. Ward then presented the committee's goal of generating revenue for ASCA and shared the ongoing efforts of procuring a brochure to reach out to corporate sponsors. She elaborated on how the affinity marketing program would function, citing an example involving a vendor selling robotic vacuums for dog hair. In essence, partnering vendors would be linked from ASCA's website, and members purchasing through these links would receive discounts. Furthermore, ASCA would earn a commission, either as a flat dollar amount or a percentage of the sale. The primary criteria for selecting partners would be the benefits they offer to members. The committee had shortlisted ten companies for the pilot program. Projections over six months suggest ASCA could earn a significant sum from these partnerships.

McCabe expressed her support for the initiative and offered to motion for the pilot program's approval. Gerken applauded the committee for their innovative idea, seeing the immense potential benefits for ASCA. Ward further clarified that some details with potential partners were yet to be defined and that they needed the Board's consent to move forward.

Denise inquired if the committee had coordinated with Frank Butera and Webmaster Heidi Moblely regarding website integration. Ward confirmed discussions with both and the feasibility of adding an affinity page without requiring any programming. In light of this, Creelman voiced her support.

Sims showed her full support and emphasized the need to clarify the logistics of incoming funds. Wesen expressed gratitude for the hard work, seeking clarity on sponsorship structures, which Ward provided. The remaining Board members echoed support for the program. Gann commended the committee, specifically acknowledging Cynthia Downing's contribution.

Discussing financial logistics, Ward questioned where the incoming funds should be directed. Byrne suggested channeling the funds directly into savings for better tracking, agreeing to share the account details with Ward.

#### BD.23.99 Affinity Marketing Pilot Program

**Motion carried** (9-0) - Approved: Busquets, Byrne, Creelman, Gann, Gerken, McCabe, McLellan, Sims, Wesen. Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Absent: None.

**Motioned by Sims to go forward with the affinity marketing pilot program as presented by the Sponsorship and Fundraising Committee. The funds will go directly into ASCA's savings account. Seconded by Creelman.**

## Subcommittee Reports

As we prepare for the upcoming Nationals next month, the Board has strategically divided into three specialized subcommittees: Marketing, Finance, and IT. Each of these subcommittees is spearheaded by a dedicated champion, and they will each present a comprehensive update on their current progress and status during the annual membership meeting at Nationals.

### *Report from Marketing Subcommittee*

The Board received a report from the Marketing Subcommittee, comprising Ward, Sims, McLellan, Gann, and Cynthia Downing. Ward began by describing how the subcommittee revisited the strategic plan and infused it with actionable items. This re-examination helped identify the marketing targets, which include new members, existing members, the general public, sponsors, the affinity marketing program, and merchandising. A significant revelation was ASCA's lack of diligence in curating and maintaining member benefits. This underscored the need for a more robust benefit base for members. Ward mentioned that a preliminary marketing plan is available for review. This draft will undergo further refinement. The subcommittee also wishes to enhance its role in ensuring consistent messaging from the Board to the members. A forthcoming initiative is the launch of an ASCA merchandise line, which will especially honor the legacy of the stockdog, vintage Aussie, and ASCA.

McCabe commented on the alignment between the Marketing Subcommittee's efforts and the Sponsorship and Fundraising Committee's work. Gerken expressed eagerness to witness the evolution of marketing strategies and merchandise. She also inquired about presenting a finalized version at the membership meeting, which Gann confirmed, stating the aim to provide reports from each subcommittee at that session. Gann also noted that the questions from the membership in advance of the annual meeting would need to be addressed during a separate meeting or over email due to the time constraints of this meeting.

Sims, a member of the subcommittee, expressed her excitement, particularly highlighting Ms. Downing's impressive sponsorship flyer and the promising merchandise ideas in development. McLellan, another subcommittee member, reiterated Sims' enthusiasm and expressed her anticipation to further engage the ASCA membership.

Busquets, Byrne, Clayton, and Hardin extended their gratitude to the subcommittee for their diligence and voiced their support for the initiatives. In response to a question from Byrne about the logistics of merchandise sales, Ward clarified the intention to employ a drop ship mechanism, thereby not overburdening the Business Office. She did allude to potential future investments in manpower, contingent on the program's financial successes, but assured any such decisions would involve the entire Board.

Gann commended the subcommittee's exemplary efforts and gave his approval. Closing the discussion, Ward encapsulated the enthusiasm of the subcommittee, stressing that these initiatives are merely the beginning. Their ambition is vast, and they remain receptive to all ideas. The collective dedication and passion towards the project were palpable, and Ward encouraged everyone to share any ideas they might have.

### *Report from Finance Subcommittee*

The Board received a report from the Finance Subcommittee, comprising Byrne, McLellan, Hardin, Gerken, and Gann. Gann initiated the conversation, highlighting the multitude of financial components under discussion, including loan repayment, Business Office staff changes, savings, computer fund necessities, future prospects of the Aussie Times magazine, and the AEMD.

Byrne provided an in-depth update on several of these components. She, in collaboration with McLellan, stressed the organization's commitment to expedite loan repayment. A proposed repayment of \$8,000 per month starting from November/December was suggested. Additionally, she indicated the availability of certain funds originally allocated for clearing computer company debts but went unused. She suggested a lump sum payment using these funds to fast-track the loan settlement.

On staffing changes, Byrne announced Barbara Turcic's imminent retirement and her successor, Jennifer Thomas. Sarah Jackson's promotion to Office Manager has led to Claire Brown assuming the role of agility coordinator. Jamie Pearce's recent hiring fills a vacancy in the conformation/junior/obedience coordinator position, bringing with her significant cyber technology and security expertise. Byrne emphasized the importance of retaining quality staff, suggesting further investments in employee development and benefits. The necessity of additional funds for the computer system overhaul was raised, with Byrne expressing the urgency to address it. On the topic of AEMD, she confirmed the presence of a restructuring plan. Lastly, she spoke of plans to reassess the publication of the Aussie Times during the Spring Meeting in 2024, balancing organizational needs and member expectations.

Sims sought clarity on the strategies in place for computer funds and AEMD payback, to which Byrne confirmed ongoing discussions.

Wesen expressed her satisfaction with the new employee inclusions and emphasized the necessity of adequate budget allocation for staff. However, she voiced her reservations about the \$8,000 monthly repayment, suggesting a more conservative \$5,000 instead. She also echoed the need for more funds dedicated to the computer system.

Busquets praised Byrne for her dedication and efforts to restructure and stabilize the office operations, also expressing her delight with Ms. Jackson's new role. Ward commended Gann's strategic alignment of Board members to various subcommittees, expressing her faith in the Finance Subcommittee's recommendations. Clayton extended his gratitude to Byrne for ensuring operational fluidity in the office during challenging times. Hardin reminded the Board of the reason for the halt in Aussie Times printing, urging swift loan repayment for the magazine's reinstatement due to member demand.

Gann reiterated this sentiment, noting that the funds originally for the magazine were redirected to facilitate loan repayment. He exuded optimism about settling the loan within the next 10-11 months and confirmed intentions to reestablish the Aussie Times, possibly revising its publication frequency. He also mentioned ongoing discussions with the magazine's editor about potential cost reductions, with a comprehensive review planned for Spring 2024.

Concluding the discussion, Byrne expressed her gratitude for the unwavering support, optimistically stating, "We are like a phoenix rising from the ashes," and affirmed the organization's resolve to navigate and overcome the challenges ahead.

### *Report from IT Subcommittee*

The Board received a report from the IT Subcommittee, comprising Wesen, McCabe, Clayton, Busquets, Gann. Wesen reported that after a recent extensive meeting with the IT Committee, the project was currently at a standstill. The challenges faced by the committee mostly involve the portal. A significant concern is the lack of in-house expertise to address potential glitches during releases. A Google document lists over 250 coding errors that require resolution. Wesen commended Heidi Mobley for her invaluable contributions to the team. The focus was on enhancing security features and other functionalities, such as data collection, privacy acknowledgments, and various system improvements for event entries and dog registration. However, due to the magnitude of the existing issues, the IT Committee has recommended tackling problems individually rather than as a complete project. A significant proposal was to seek assistance from Weronica Łabaj, a developer familiar with the current system. Wesen stressed the importance of allocating funds to expedite processes and ensure a smooth transition from staging to production.

McCabe, also a member of the subcommittee, emphasized the critical need to address the 250+ system errors. She noted that the Finance Subcommittee proposed \$8,000 per month to pay off ASCA's loan while Wesen preferred \$5,000 payments and proposed utilizing the \$3,000 difference to go toward the computer system project.

Gerken expressed optimism regarding Ms. Łabaj's potential involvement due to her familiarity with the system. She wondered whether \$3,000 was sufficient for the necessary fixes and was open to reevaluating the loan repayment strategy. Creelman echoed Gerken's sentiments, emphasizing the urgency of continuous progress on the computer program. She highlighted the possibility of adjusting financial strategies based on revenue from increased fees. Sims also endorsed the idea of seeking Ms. Łabaj's expertise and concurred with the strategy of addressing problems incrementally.

McLellan, while not entirely familiar with the technicalities, from a Finance Subcommittee perspective, believed it feasible to allocate both the \$8,000 for loan repayment and \$3,000 for system improvements. She noted potential financial flexibility, especially with funds anticipated from the affinity program. Byrne and Hardin supported McLellan's proposal.

Busquets applauded the IT Committee's efforts in navigating the complex situation and stressed the importance of ongoing system improvements to serve the membership effectively. Ward expressed trust in the Finance Subcommittee's recommendations and acknowledged the IT Committee's commendable progress. Clayton, a subcommittee member, appreciated the advisory role the IT Committee had adopted. He found the strategies proposed by Wesen promising.

Gann emphasized the commitment to the membership regarding the loan and the reintroduction of the Aussie Times. He sought clarification from Wesen regarding contacting Ms. Łabaj, which Wesen confirmed had not happened but was imminent, provided the committee received the green light.

McCabe suggested investigating the possibility of separating Aussie Times subscriptions from memberships, noting the current system's limitations. She mentioned the need to be mindful of intellectual property and recruitment laws when liaising with Ms. Łabaj and suggested consulting ASCA's Counsel on the matter.

Gann concluded by acknowledging the collaborative efforts of the Finance and IT Subcommittees and expressed confidence in the months ahead to address the outlined challenges.

## Aussie Times

This topic was for the Board to deliberate on the future direction of the Aussie Times. However, this matter was addressed in the previous discussion and will be more thoroughly addressed during the 2024 Spring Meeting.

## Alternate Judges for Nationals/Finals

The following discussion was centered on the consideration of selecting an alternate Nationals and Finals judge for each program. The intent is to ensure there is an approved judge on standby, ready to step in if there's a last-minute cancellation.

Creelman emphasized the importance of being prepared for potential last-minute cancellations by judges. She proposed that the Board preapproves a qualified judge who is informed and ready to step in if required. Additionally, she suggested that the designated person be publicly identified as an alternate judge. However, she did not think it wouldn't be fair for alternate judges to adhere to the same restrictions as primary judges, like not judging months in advance, especially if they aren't called upon.

McCabe pointed out that most rule books already have provisions for alternate judges. She suggested a slight modification to the wording for clarity. The objective is to ensure that there are named alternates published for the Finals and Nationals so that both competitors and judges are aware.



Gerken acknowledged that some programs already have this provision and expressed agreement with Creelman's proposal regarding the lifting of certain restrictions for alternate judges. Wesen pointed out that while rules for alternate judges exist, there is a need for an emergency plan that can be utilized in last-minute situations.

Busquets proposed that each program committee should be tasked with drafting the specific language to be included in the rule book to address this emergency plan. Clayton agreed with the need to get the committee's input to establish a more concrete plan. Gann also stressed the importance of involving the committees in this discussion. Creelman clarified her main objective was to make the Board aware of this pressing issue and also mentioned the possible involvement of the Nationals Advisory Committee.

Byrne appreciated Creelman's foresight and recognized the benefits of such a policy, especially given the Board's past experiences with last-minute judge cancellations.

The Board concluded by deciding to seek insights from the program committees on this matter.

## System Liaison's Report

This topic was for System Liaison Wesen to brief the Board on the progress of the computer system upgrade and broader technology projects. However, this was addressed during the IT Subcommittee's earlier report.

## 2025 Nationals in Winnemucca

The Board considered potential challenges for the ASCA Nationals in 2025 in Winnemucca, Nevada, due to a lithium mine construction near the area. With an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 workers expected over the next two years, Gann emphasized the importance of understanding the potential impact on the Nationals event, especially since no contractual agreement with the event facility has been signed.

McCabe, having researched the matter, clarified that the predominant impact on the city pertains to parking for the mine workers. She dismissed any concerns regarding hotel accommodations. Nonetheless, she recommended the Nationals Advisory Committee to contact local authorities to gain more insight and subsequently evaluate the implications for the Nationals.

Gerken agreed with McCabe, suggesting that it would be wise for the Nationals Advisory Committee to liaise with the site in Winnemucca to gauge the implications. Wesen emphasized the importance of thorough research and agreed with going straight to the local contacts for a ground-level perspective. Gann confirmed that the Nationals Advisory Committee would be in charge of this investigation.

Creelman and Sims both voiced concerns, highlighting the importance of understanding the potential impacts on the Nationals event before signing any contract.

Busquets said that the Nationals Advisory Committee was already strategizing on addressing this concern, with particular emphasis on the accommodation challenges posed by the incoming influx of workers. She hoped the committee would provide concrete insights by the next Board meeting.

Byrne shared her past experiences in June where hotel availability in Winnemucca was already a pressing issue. Considering the mining project has been in the works for some time, she voiced her disappointment over the lack of transparency from local contacts in apprising ASCA of this situation.

Ward expressed reservations about the potential shortage of RV rentals. Busquets and Clayton echoed these concerns, noting that many workers might resort to using RV campers, which could result in significant challenges for those intending to rent RVs or stay in RV camping areas during the Nationals.

Gann closed by reaffirming the Board's commitment to keeping the membership informed. He acknowledged the shared apprehensions and reassured that the Board would continue to monitor the situation closely.

## August 2023 Email Business

Due to the requirements of Washington State Law, all legal business of ASCA must be conducted via face-to-face meetings or telephone conference call meetings. To meet this requirement and continue to conduct business via email, each face-to-face meeting or conference call meeting includes a motion to ratify all business conducted via email since the last face-to-face meeting or conference call meeting.

BD.23.100 August 2023 Email Business

**Motion carried** (9-0) - Approved: Busquets, Byrne, Creelman, Gann, Gerken, McCabe, McLellan, Sims, Wesen. Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Absent: None.

**Motioned by Byrne to ratify all business conducted over email in August 2023. Seconded by McCabe.**

**President Gann thanked all the Directors for their work this month and the members listening. The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 pm.**

## ASCA Board Motions

### Director Recommendations

BD.23.91 Adjustment to Aussie Times Ad Rates

**Motion carried** (7-1) - Approved: Busquets, Creelman, Gann, McCabe, McLellan, Sims, Wesen. Disapproved: Gerken. Abstained: None. Non-voting: Bryne.

**Dissent from Director Gerken:** I have not been able to get costs associated with producing AT online. Also, I believe the difference in cost is being applied toward paying off the loan. Achieving pay off faster will allow going back to the printed sooner rather than later.

**Motion by McCabe to reduce the Aussie Times ad rates by 10% for as long as the Aussie Times is online only. Second by Creelman.**

Comments/Rationale: Now that we have transitioned to an online-only Aussie Times publication, we propose reducing advertising rates, reflecting both the market standard for digital publications and the cost savings from eliminating print expenses.

Affected: ASCA members and Aussie Times advertisers.

Effective Date: Immediately upon Board approval.

BD.23.95 Allowance for Membership Lapses

**Motion carried** (7-1) - Approved: Busquets, Creelman, Gerken, McCabe, McLellan, Sims, Wesen. Disapproved: Gann. Abstained: None. Non-voting: Byrne.

**Dissent from Director Gann:** The Board must remain consistent. In the past we had an ASCA member whose membership lapsed, and this individual wanted to run for a Board position and was told NO and had to start over on his membership. We already have a 3-month grace period and I feel this is sufficient. We cannot continue to pick and choose which rules we want to follow.

**Motion by Busquets that lapses in membership between November 1st, 2022, and July 31st, 2023, not adversely affect the membership status as long as renewals were sent to the Business Office by August 1st, 2023. Such lapses will not make the member ineligible for any position, kennel application, etc. Second by Creelman.**

Comments/Rationale: ASCA system problems and lack of automatic renewal reminders greatly affected the ability of members to renew in a timely manner.

Affected: ASCA membership, ASCA Business Office.

Effective Date: Immediately upon Board approval.

#### JA.23.18 September Judge Applicants

**Motion carried** (8-0) - Approved: Busquets, Creelman, Gann, Gerken, McCabe, McLellan, Sims, Wesen. Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Non-voting: Byrne.

#### **Motion by President Gann to approve the following list of judge applicants.**

Victoria Lovejoy (Washington) – Full Scent Detection Judge  
Roy Fair (Oregon) – Provisional Scent Detection Judge  
Melody Fair (Oregon) – Provisional Scent Detection Judge  
Diana Curl (Arizona) – Provisional Rally Judge

Comments/Rationale: These judges have met the requirements of the program they are applying to judge for and have the recommendation of the program's committee, when appropriate. When called to a vote Directors may approve the entire list, may approve some and disapprove some, not vote, or abstain by so stating in a vote sent to the Executive Secretary. The "not vote" or "abstain" options can apply to the entire list or specified individuals.

Affected: The judge applicants, the ASCA Business Office, the ASCA Webmaster, ASCA Affiliates, and exhibitors in ASCA programs.

Effective Date: Immediately upon Board approval.

## Committee Recommendations

### Agility Committee

#### AG.23.09 Revisions to 1.1.4 Training Collars

**Motion carried** (6-2) - Approved: Creelman, Gann, Gerken, McCabe, McLellan, Sims. Disapproved: Busquets, Wesen. Abstained: None. Non-voting: Byrne.

**Dissent from Director Busquets:** I see no reason to allow any training collar. Even the lower levels of competition assume a level of control and obedience, as well as teamwork. If a dog needs a halt to go in and out of the ring, or walk around the site, then the dog needs more training. The halt isn't even allowed in CGC tests, yet we're going to allow them in agility dogs?

**Dissent from Director Wesen:** Training aids do not look good to the public.

#### **Motion by Liaison Byrne to approve the following recommendation from the Agility Committee.**

Committee Recommendation: Motion for adding Halt Head and Gentle Leader collars to the rule book.

Motion by Jan Niblock to approve this motion because the rule book is not clear if they are part of the "etc." as stated in the special training collars and if they are permitted or not. Also, it will spell out what "etc." training collars are. Second by Sandra Katzen.

Results of Committee Vote: Approved: 9. Disapproved: 1. Abstained: None. Non-Voting: 2.

#### Current Wording:

##### **1.1.4 Training Collars**

Special training collars (electronic shock, sound, etc.) shall not be used on the grounds or premises. These requirements shall not be interpreted as preventing a handler from moving normally about on the grounds or premises with a dog on a leash. There shall be no intensive or abusive training of dogs on the grounds or premises.

#### Proposed Wording:

##### **1.1.4 Training Collars**

Special training collars (electronic shock, sound, ~~etc.~~ prong/pinch, bark) **shall** will not be used on the grounds or premises. These requirements **shall** are not to be interpreted as preventing a handler from moving normally about on the grounds or premises with a dog on a leash. There **shall** will be no intensive or abusive training of dogs on the grounds or premises.

The use of Halti Head Collars or Gentle Leaders are permitted to be used as training collars. They may be used to enter or exit the ring, but they must be put on and off quickly.

Comments/Rationale: The reason to add Halti and Gentle Leaders to the training collar section is because many people have asked over the years if they could use them at trials. By now the general public is aware of these collars and know that they are not abusive or muzzles so they would not look at them on a dog as being out of the ordinary. Many Clubs already allow for these collars but they are still being asked about it since the rules do not make it clear that they are the exception to the “etc.” in the rules.

Affected: Handlers and Clubs, making it clear that these collars are permitted.

Effective Date: June 1, 2024.

## Ernest Hartnagle Award Selection Committee

EH.23.01 Recipients of the 2023 Ernest Hartnagle Memorial Icon Award

**Motion carried** (7-0-1) - Approved: Busquets, Creelman, Gann, Gerken, McCabe, McLellan, Sims.

Disapproved: None. Abstained: Wesen. Non-voting: Byrne.

**Comment from Director Wesen:** I am one of the recipients.

### **Motion by Liaison Sims to approve the following recommendation from the Ernest Hartnagle Memorial Icon Award Selection Committee.**

Committee Recommendation: Motion to approve 2023 Ernest Hartnagle Memorial Icon Award Nominees. Motion by Tanya Wheeler to approve Jan Wesen, Rachel Vest, and Ann B. DeChant for the 2023 Ernest Hartnagle Memorial Icon Award. Second by Peter Kontos.

Results of Committee Vote: Approved: 7. Disapproved: None. Abstained: 1. Non-Voting: None.

Comments/Rationale: This is an annual function of this Committee. The Committee considered the following for each nominee:

Jan Wesen was nominated by Joann Frey.

Jan Wesen has demonstrated commitment to our single breed club ASCA in her role on many ASCA National's as tracking chair, judged many ASCA Finals competitions, including stockdog and tracking trials. Jan has worked on ASCA finances, Most Versatile Committee, Stockdog Committee, Tracking Committee, DNA Committee, Obedience Committee, and has put her time, finances, energy, and knowledge – as per her letter of recommendation. She has promoted the Australian Shepherd breed in her widespread participation in five different areas of training and competition including herding, obedience, tracking, conformation, and rally. She holds clinics in many of these sports educating and promoting each of them. She continues to travel abroad and educate others in the value of the stockdog program and the preservation of the working Australian Shepherd.

Rachel Vest was nominated by Devona Pierce and by Jim and Carol Ann Hartnagle.

Rachel has dedicated many years to judging, advocating for ASCA all on levels and fostering the stockdog program in the state of Georgia to protect our working lines, which ASCA is founded on. She has been a mentor to many, holding clinics to help handlers learn to read stock and work their dogs to the best of their abilities. As a mentor, Rachel encourages our junior program to get youth involved in carrying our breed

forward to the next generation. Her letters refer a great deal to her commitment to ASCA with many roles as liaison, committee, and Board members throughout the years.

Ann B. DeChant was nominated By Steve and Anne Shope.

Ann has been participating in ASCA events and joined the ASC of MI since 1976. She has participated in many of the programs ASCA offers to maintain the unique type of the Australian Shepherd. She has written articles and pieces for the education of the general public, on the history and possible origins of the Australian Shepherd. Her commitment to the ASCA programs while she served as president and many other roles within ASCA including the formation and administration of the Epigene list for non-judgmental sharing of pedigrees and information and support for owners or breeders of Aussies with epilepsy. She has been a lifelong contributor to the preservation of our breed and the betterment of health management. She served as ASCA President and served on the Board and on many committees. She was the first chair of the ASCA DNA Committee which developed the groundbreaking DNA Parentage Verification program. She is a Senior Breeder Judge and is a recipient of ASCA's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Affected: ASCA members, the ASCA Nationals Banquet Chair (will receive the presentation for inclusion in the banquet program), and the Office Manager to bring three Award pins to the banquet.

Effective Date: Immediately upon Board approval.

## Nationals Advisory Committee

NA.23.05 Revise Eligibility to Serve as Nationals Chairperson

**Motion failed** (4-4) - Approved: Creelman, Gerken, Sims, Wesen. Disapproved: Busquets, Gann, McCabe, McLellan. Abstained: None. Non-voting: Byrne.

**Comment from Director Busquets:** This motion starts with the faulty premise that only the President and the Treasurer have a supervisory role over the specialty. While people in these positions may interact more with that year's committee, any action/decision is ultimately made by the whole Board. It's a conflict of interest to have one person be a director and also be chairperson. Decisions about the budget and finances are made by the Board. Complaints and conflicts at the specialty are reviewed and resolved by the Board. A director who is also a chairperson may have undue influence over and undue access to Board discussions. ASCA needs to steer away from having the same people have such power and control. Instead, ASCA should be encouraging the membership to become more involved in the planning and management of the specialty.

**Comment from Director McLellan:** Conflict of interest.

**Dissent from Director Creelman:** A board member may have to vote on something that would affect the Chair. This would be a conflict of interest. I would only utilize this, as a last resort, if no other qualified person applied for the position of Chair.

**Dissent from Director Gerken:** I support the wisdom of the NAC, and believe this may allow for the best leadership, especially if there are limited applicants.

**Dissent from Director Sims:** I believe employees and board members should be a last resort. We don't have many qualified people who are willing to take on such a huge job so we shouldn't limit our options.

**Motion by Liaison Busquets to approve the following recommendation from the Nationals Advisory Committee.**

Committee Recommendation: Motion to Revise 1.7.2 of the National Specialty Rule Book.

Motion by Laura Gibson to revise section 1.7.2 of the National Specialty Rule Book, according to the proposed wording below. Seconded by Rachel Vest.

Results of Committee Vote: Approved: 5. Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Non-Voting: None.

**Comment from Creelman:** I believe the Board and employees should only be considered as a last resort.

Current Wording:

**1.7.2 INELIGIBLE TO SERVE AS NATIONALS CHAIR**

ASCA employees (regular, part-time, contract, or temp) and Board members cannot serve as the Nationals Chair unless they have committed to that position prior to their employment or election.

Proposed Wording:

### **1.7.2 INELIGIBLE TO SERVE AS NATIONALS CHAIR**

~~ASCA employees (regular, part-time, contract, or temp) and Board members~~ The ASCA President and the ASCA Treasurer cannot serve as the Nationals Chair unless they have committed to that position prior to their employment or election as they have a supervisory role over the Nationals Chair.

Comments/Rationale: There is no reason that employees or Board members who feel they have time to devote to chairing a Nationals should not be able to serve in this capacity. Our pool of persons willing to do this complicated and time-consuming task is not so large that we should limit it. We have left the stipulation that the President and the Treasurer should not be able to serve as the Nationals Chairperson because they do have oversight duties with regards to the Nationals Chairperson and the financial and contractual aspects of Nationals.

Affected: Employees and ASCA Directors who might want to serve as the Nationals Chairperson.

Effective Date: Immediately upon Board approval.

### NA.23.06 Revise Nationals Premium Due Dates

**Motion carried** (8-0) - Approved: Busquets, Creelman, Gann, Gerken, McCabe, McLellan, Sims, Wesen. Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Non-voting: Byrne.

**Comment from Director Gerken:** Having later due dates will allow for more accurate budget projections.

### **Motion by Liaison Busquets to approve the following recommendation from the Nationals Advisory Committee.**

Committee Recommendation: Motion to Revise Section 7.3 and 7.4 of the National Specialty Rule Book: Premium List Due Dates and First Draft of Premium List.

Motion by Laura Gibson to revise the National Specialty Rule Book, Section 7.3 and 7.4, as worded below. Seconded by Rachel Vest.

Results of Committee Vote: Approved: 5. Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Non-Voting: None.

Current Wording:

### **7.3 Premium List Due Dates**

A. September 1 (of the year prior to the event) - Judge slate and the first draft of the Premium List due to the Executive Secretary.

B. October 1 (of the year prior to the event) or thirty days after the draft was received by the Executive Secretary - Board comments and approval of the Judge slate due to the Nationals Committee.

C. November 15 (of the year prior to the event) - Final draft of the Premium List due to the Executive Secretary.

D. December 15 (of the year prior to the event) or thirty days after the final draft was received by the Executive Secretary - Final approval due to the Nationals Committee.

E. January 1 (of the year of the event) for September/October Nationals – Camera-ready copy due to the Executive Secretary.

F. January 15 (of the year of the event) for September/October Nationals - Deadline for Executive Secretary to have a camera-ready copy to the Aussie Times Editor for March/April issue.

G. March 1 (of the year of the event) for November Nationals - Camera-ready copy due to the Executive Secretary.

H. March 15 (of the year of the event) for November Nationals - Deadline for Executive Secretary to have a camera-ready copy to the Aussie Times Editor for May/June issue.

Without exception these deadlines must be met by the Nationals Committee.

#### 7.4 First Draft of Premium List

The first draft of the Premium List must be received by the Executive Secretary on or before September 1 of the year prior to the event. This information will be forwarded to the Board for review. Board approval of the Judge slate along with comments and recommendations are due to the Nationals Committee no later than thirty days after receipt by the Executive Secretary. The Nationals Committee will contact Judges regarding their availability to judge only. The Board heavily considers prior judging experience of large entries. Please be certain that selected Judges are qualified in this respect. Official confirmation of judging assignments must not be given until the Board's approval is granted.

Proposed Wording:

#### 7.3 Premium List Due Dates

- A. ~~September~~ November 1 (of the year prior to the event) - Judge slate and the first draft of the Premium List due to the Executive Secretary.
- B. ~~October~~ December 1 (of the year prior to the event) or thirty days after the draft was received by the Executive Secretary - Board comments and approval of the Judge slate due to the Nationals Committee.
- C. ~~November~~ January 15 (of the Nationals year ~~prior to the event~~) - Final draft of the Premium List due to the Executive Secretary.
- D. ~~December~~ February 15 (of the Nationals year ~~prior to the event~~) or thirty days after the final draft was received by the Executive Secretary - Final approval due to the Nationals Committee.
- E. ~~January~~ March 1 (of the year of the event) for September/October Nationals – Camera-ready copy due to the Executive Secretary for publication on all ASCA media outlets.
- ~~F. January 15 (of the year of the event) for September/October Nationals – Deadline for Executive Secretary to have a camera-ready copy to the Aussie Times Editor for March/April issue.~~
- ~~G. March 1 (of the year of the event) for November Nationals – Camera-ready copy due to the Executive Secretary.~~
- ~~H. March 15 (of the year of the event) for November Nationals – Deadline for Executive Secretary to have a camera-ready copy to the Aussie Times Editor for May/June issue.~~

Without exception these deadlines must be met by the Nationals Committee.

#### 7.4 First Draft of Premium List

The first draft of the Premium List must be received by the Executive Secretary on or before ~~September~~ ~~November~~ 1 of the year prior to the event. This information will be forwarded to the Board for review. Board approval of the Judge slate along with comments and recommendations are due to the Nationals Committee no later than thirty days after receipt by the Executive Secretary. The Nationals Committee will contact Judges regarding their availability to judge only. The Board heavily considers prior judging experience of large entries. Please be certain that selected Judges are qualified in this respect. Official confirmation of judging assignments must not be given until the Board's approval is granted.

Comments/Rationale: In March when the NAC sent the motion changing the publishing of the premium to the Board, we neglected to revise the correlating sections 7.3 and 7.4. This was an oversight which this motion corrects.

Affected: This affects the Nationals Chairperson, all members of the Nationals Committee and the Board by changing the deadlines and the requirements for the Nationals premium.

Effective Date: Immediately upon Board approval.

## Obedience Committee

### OB.23.04 Allowable Clothing in the Ring

**Motion carried** (8-0) - Approved: Busquets, Creelman, Gann, Gerken, McCabe, McLellan, Sims, Wesen.  
Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Non-voting: Byrne.

**Motion by Liaison Busquets to approve the following recommendation from the Obedience Committee.**

Committee Recommendation: Motion by Hilary Hines to change the types of allowable clothing that can be worn in the obedience ring. Seconded by Juliet Gentile.

Results of Committee Vote: Approved: 10. Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Non-Voting: None.

Current Wording:

### **1.5 Identification**

No badges, coats with kennel names, dogs' names or any dog related advertisements, shall be worn or displayed, nor any other visible means of identification used, by an individual when exhibiting a dog in the ring, except in the case of the Obedience Team Class, where exhibitors may wear coordinated clothing, with art as desired, and giving the name of their team if desired. However, kennel names and names of dog related businesses will still not be allowed.

Proposed Wording:

### **1.5 Identification**

~~No badges, coats with kennel names, dogs' names or any dog related advertisements, shall be worn or displayed, nor any other visible means of identification used, by an individual when exhibiting a dog in the ring, except in the case of the~~ Club clothing, event clothing, or breed clothing may be worn by anyone exhibiting a dog. Clothing may display the dog's call name and/or the dog's picture but cannot include any titles earned. Kennel names and handler names are not permitted. Wording and/or graphics on the clothing of anyone in the ring must not contain profanity. In the Obedience Team Class, ~~where~~ exhibitors may wear coordinated clothing, with art and the name of the team as desired, ~~and giving the name of their team if desired~~. However, kennel names and handler names ~~of dog related businesses will still~~ are not ~~be~~ allowed.

Comments/Rationale: The current rules for allowable clothing in the obedience ring are very restrictive. Having the dog's call name, club name or any breed specific graphics or wording on clothing is not revealing any information the judge would not already know.

Affected: Exhibitors will be allowed to wear a broader range of clothing in the obedience ring. Judges, stewards, and the trial committee will still need to remind exhibitors of the appropriate clothing in the obedience ring if issues arise.

Affiliate Clubs, the Webmaster, and the Business Office are not affected.

Effective Date: June 1, 2024.

## Scent Detection Committee

SC.23.03 New Scent Detection Rule Book

**Motion carried** (8-0) - Approved: Busquets, Creelman, Gann, Gerken, McCabe, McLellan, Sims, Wesen. Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Non-voting: Byrne.

**Motion by Liaison McCabe to approve the following recommendation from the Scent Detection Committee.**

Committee Recommendation: Revision of Scent Detection Rulebook.

Motion by Deborah Divich that the old Scent Search now Scent Detection rule book be replaced with the current newly revised ASCA Scent Detection program rulebook dated 7/9/23 and is currently available on the ASCA website. Seconded by Sandy Thompson.

Results of Committee Vote: Approved: 9. Disapproved: None. Abstained: None. Non-Voting: 1.

Current Rule Book:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wbsW9eZldB8WOqe4PfWGAU47A67UmyiW/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wbsW9eZldB8WOqe4PfWGAU47A67UmyiW/view?usp=drive_link)

Proposed Rule Book:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/102kMau6qFaL9h73wp3VSAqGfwuZVVJhe/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/102kMau6qFaL9h73wp3VSAqGfwuZVVJhe/view?usp=drive_link)



Comments/Rationale: Due to the Scent Detection Committee's new direction, the rules were revised to provide more clarity, remove redundancy, and provide a better understanding of the program for competitors and judges.

Affected: This motion will affect all potential interested parties moving forward as the information within the program has been updated. No further changes may be made until the next change cycle in 2024.

Effective Date: Immediately upon Board approval.