

# PaSRBA General Membership Meeting

February 8, 2009

**Present:** Lori Jo Whitehaus, Art Sweinhart, Sue Werner, Russ Wolfe, Denise Ancharski Stutler, Steve Allaman, Bryan Rager, Bruce Himmelberger, Alex Stepnoski, Richard Vaerewyck, Morgan Turner, John Graybeal, Lia Schmittel, Karen Callahan, Judie Welch, Frank Welch, Hailey Wolfe, Robin Wolfe, George Long, Barbara Smith, Ricky Cope, Joyce Holton, Larry Wagner, Ellen Anderson, Monica Dyer, Cathy Forney, Kathy Kummer, Gerry Vaerewyck, Sheila McConn, Fred McConn, Lisa Gephart, Matt Laley, Lauren Meckler, Linda Rentschler, Rehanna Stepnoski, Hannah Wisniewski, Bonnie Callahan, Dan Ancharski, Mary Ann Ancharski, Robert Vaerewyck, Piper Smith, Chris Fauser, Brian Bell, Sarah Gregory, Debbie Gregory, Aaron Dillon, Patti Dillon, Dana Lape, Erin McGrath, and Danette Moore

The Pennsylvania State Rabbit Breeders Association's (PaSRBA) general membership meeting was called to order by President Lori Jo Whitehaus at 7:34 a.m. on February 8, 2009. On a motion by Denise Ancharski and a second by Art Sweinhart, the group approved to dispense with the reading of the November 2009 minutes. On a motion by Denise Ancharski and a second by Art Sweinhart, the minutes were approved. Treasurer Russ Wolfe gave a verbal report as he is in the process of converting all records to Quick Books. The checking account's current balance is \$8,325. No monetary report was available yet from the first day of the Convention. The PaSRBA's credit card limit was increased by the bank to \$7000.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit: The audit has not been completed.

Insurance: No report.

Ways & Means: Lisa Gephart will be the new Chairperson of this currently non-functioning Committee. She already has some fund raising activities in mind.

Membership: Bob Kolb will be the new Chairperson of this Committee as Nancy Groff will be moving out of State. A reminder was given that membership fees have increased for 2009.

Newsletter: Kristina Kolb will be the new newsletter editor as Steve is retiring from this job. The deadline for articles is February 15<sup>th</sup>.

Sweepstakes: Peg Hailey announced the Exhibitors of the Year. She stressed the importance of Shows/Specialty Clubs needing to file reports. **SOME CLUBS ARE FAILING TO FILE THEIR SHOW**

**REPORTS IN A TIMELY MANNER OR NOT AT ALL.** This is not fair to exhibitors who paid entry fees to enter a sanctioned show. Exhibitor sweepstake winner pins need to be picked up from Peg. Her sweepstakes report was distributed to all PaSRBA members who were present. (For specifics – please see the attached report filed with the Secretary’s minutes.)

Farm Show: Lori Jo Whitehaus reported there were a record breaking number of entries – rabbits to posters. The Meat Pen auction was a monetary success due to the efforts of George Long and Fred McConn in establishing an Auction Fund to keep bids quite worthy. George Long served as the packer and would like to see guidelines established as to the destination of rabbits that are bought with PaSRBA funds. Clubs and individuals are urged to continue their much appreciated support of the Auction Fund. Moving the meat pens to the Small Arena prior to the Sale generated more traffic and lots more questions about the commercial aspect of raising rabbits. The Commercial Committee will check into creating a flyer about the value of rabbit meat, and will consider selling cookbooks featuring rabbit meat. The Farm Show judging boxes have been deemed unsafe. Due to a judging box incident necessitating the euthanizing of a rabbit, a request will be made to the Farm Show for eight new judging boxes. Any other suggestions for improvement should be directed to Sue Toth or Lori Jo Whitehaus. Premiums will try to be evened out between open and youth for 2010.

Commercial: Art Sweinhart reported that Purina Feeds cut back on its meat pen contest monetary donation, but Gingrich Animal Supply picked up the slack. The rabbit meat sticks and jerky continue to be a hit at both the Farm Show and the Convention. The Committee will work on a ruling on whether there should be a limit on the number of meat pens one person can enter at the Convention.

Equipment: Bryan Rager reported touch up work needs to continue on the storage trailers.

Convention: Brian Bell reported that the Convention’s 2009 entries have set a new record. Chairperson Mike Toth was sadly unable to attend the Convention due to unforeseen work commitments, but had everything so well organized that past Chairperson Brian Bell was able to step in with a few days notice and run the Convention with ease. Even though PaSRBA employed a record number of judges and the judges finished in good time, they still had to examine an average of 290 rabbits per judge. As this work is over the typical limit a judge should expect to handle per day, this topic requires further discussion. The Lebanon Valley Expo Center, current home to the Convention, would have a new building available for rental next year. However, the dirt floor is a concern. Larry Wagner suggested an alternative site located in Reading. The price of \$5000/day is twice that which is currently paid to the Lebanon Expo facility per day, but the location could provide more floor space (275,000 compared to 40,000 square feet) that would all be under one roof. Wagner also asked PaSRBA to consider running a double show on Saturday, and keeping specialty shows limited to Sunday. The

Convention team always considers new site options, and will explore this site too. Vendors that are currently in the Open Showroom need to move to a different area to allow more space for exhibitors. While vendors must be kept happy, exhibitor comfort is of primary importance. An effort will be made to move judges not rabbits. **Goals will be mapped out for the Convention. Please send written comments to Brian especially and also the PaSRBA Board and Convention Committee. The Board would like to know YOUR ideas of 3 goals for the Convention and also your constructive criticism or notice of things that are done well.** Brian stressed the fact that the Committee will be setting Convention budgets and goals at the May 17<sup>th</sup> PaSRBA meeting. Set-up was 95 percent completed by lunch on Friday thanks to the efforts of a local FFA chapter. Attitudes at the 2009 Convention have been wonderful.

Elections: please see the attached sheet filed with the minutes for details. Elections winners were Russ Wolfe (treasurer), Art Sweinhart (vice president), and Bryan Rager (Director). Distinguished Service awards were presented to Peg Hailey and Richard Vaerewyck.

Merchandise: Kathy Kummer reported sales are going well. Next year plans are underway for larger adult and children's sizes.

Youth: Gerry Vaerewyck compiled a youth budget by comparing the past several years (see attachment filed with Secretary's report). Youth contests were well organized and ran on time. Gerry will continue working on youth E-mail newsletters to keep everyone informed. For 2010, the Committee wants to have all forms be sent to one address to eliminate confusion. He is working to coordinate an airline package deal for youth wishing to attend the 2009 ARBA convention in California. PA 4-H State Days could use more help for their rabbit contests. Under discussion is the possibility of a Pennsylvania sponsored regional United States rabbit bowl contest which could even progress into a future national contest. Farm Show poster and PaSRBA Educational Contests will add a disclaimer that entries must be made within a year of the contest. Currently there is no limit on the number of times a youth can win Royalty titles or Exhibitor of the Year – but the Committee is considering limiting the title of Commodity Representative to a one year term. A final decision will be made at the May meeting. Royalty court members who were present were asked to stand and be recognized.

Website: Joyce Holton requested members send her information and pictures to be placed on the website.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

none

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Committee Chairpersons for 2009 were announced by President Whitehaus. (see attached list filed with the Secretary's report). On a motion by Julia Krout and a second by Fred McConn, these names were approved.

By-Law changes were presented as published in the *Discovery* Newsletter. They have already been approved by the Board and now require acceptance by the General Membership. On a motion by Art Sweinhart and a second by Karen Callahan, the changes were approved.

Congratulations were offered to new President Travis Finkle and the recently formed Maryland State Rabbit Club. President Whitehaus stated the PaSRBA would be willing to help them with any problems or questions.

Eric Stewart will not be running for re-election at the end of his Director's term. Four candidates are vying to be the new District 9 Director. All candidates were offered a few minutes of time to state personal backgrounds and qualifications as well as their goals for District 9 and the ARBA. Due to travel constraints, only two candidates were at the meeting to speak. The PaSRBA provided a forum to speak, but is not endorsing any candidate.

The meeting adjourned on a motion by Russ Wolfe and a second by Ellen Anderson.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Werner

PaSRBA Secretary