

President's Report

International Committee of Connemara Pony Societies

2009

“To develop, promote and preserve the Connemara pony as a distinctive breed, internationally”. The mission statement of the International Committee of Connemara Pony Societies defines our goal. During the past ten years we have achieved something but we can't rest on our laurels. There is lot to do and each and every ICCPS Society should do it's share. All the societies work hard in their own countries but often it seems there is very little interest in the international matters.

One of the highlights of the year is the fact that the International Database took a step forward. So far only Irish Connemara ponies can be found in the database but hopefully it soon can be called an International Database. I suppose some countries / societies would still like to know a bit more about the project before forwarding the data from their country. For some reason it seemed impossible to get any facts put on to paper so that everyone could see the same information. Personally, I felt rather embarrassed when the societies turned to me asking more information and I did not have any details and could just advise them to turn to the CPBS. Anyway, lets hope for the best and maybe we will get the facts here later today.

The ICCPS website update was a big task. The website has been there for years but very little has happened to it. The layout is still the same but under the subtitle “Pony Information” there are many new links added, packed with information of the pony, societies etc. In the modern world the web with its vast possibilities is a very good tool to provide information and to promote the pony. We could use it more efficiently if all the ICCPS societies would join community effort and provide information and results from their country. John Tennant has been wonderful help with the website, collecting information, news and bits and pieces from around the world. Without his devoted work we had never been able to add so many new links on the website. I suggest all societies would support the ICCPS by sending any interesting news to him, also photographs are much appreciated. I also want to thank Satu Pitkänen who has done the actual work with the website. I'd like to see her to continue as a webmaster but maybe we should consider some kind of compensation for her work in regularly updating if we want the website continue to promote and provide information.

Performance ponies have been flying the Connemara pony flag high this year. Individual Gold and Silver Medals in show jumping at Scandinavian / Baltic Championships as well as individual Gold and Silver Medals at the European Championships not to mention many more successes throughout the year – not a mean achievement for the breed. We can be proud of these achievements as the breed is not vast in numbers. Good performers are best promoters of Connemara pony and we should be able to use them more in PR-work. So whenever you come across a spectacular performer please send us a photo and the results as well as information of the pony to be added on the website.

Exciting news was the fact that there is also a Connemara Pony Society in South Africa. This is something John Tennant found out, as a good copper should! There has been some change of e-mails and hopefully we will hear more details from the South African society in the near future as they are interested in joining the International Committee.

Review of the Rules for registration was the job the executive board was to do during the winter months. Some of you might remember I send an email to Societies asking comments and ideas. It was just very unfortunate that so few reacted at all – even the comments from Ireland come only few weeks ago. Now we are in a situation where we were not able to produce a clear and simple

proposal for approval at this meeting as originally planned. We probably all agree the old Sport sections should be deleted but the actual wording and many details are still open. This is a situation I wanted to avoid last year as over the years too many hours have been spent debating over the rules at the meetings. This can't be helped now and we just have to face the fact that the rules are going to take a lot of time, again.

One of the Agenda items this year is the General Communication between CPBS, ICCPS and Sister Societies. There clearly are information gaps and they are a serious problem. Lack of communication has caused dissatisfaction and complaints here and there and sometimes it seems that even the simplest of questions remains unanswered. This must change soon if we want to achieve anything. A good dialogue is vitally important, as is feedback and communication. It saves us from a lot of problems and wasted hours and maintains healthy relationship between CPBS and Sister Societies. This also means closer co-operation between CPBS Council and ICCPS executive board is necessary. I wonder if the CPBS Council members understand the role of the ICCPS or if the ICCPS agenda and minutes ever reach them? Do they know why ICCPS exists or what we are trying to do internationally? These questions are asked because the ICCPS has consistently asked for a copy of the CPBS minutes to be sent to the ICCPS Executive so that it can be kept up to date with matters that could affect the work of the ICCPS through its role in the Mission Statement. This request has so far not been adhered to. It would be much easier to work for the Connemara Pony if the right hand knows what the left hand is doing... I hope this agenda item will be thoroughly discussed and we could find a solution how to improve the communication between us.

I've heard several times we should use less time on rules and more on the pony and I totally agree. Just remember why we are spending time here at the meetings. We all share the same interest, the Connemara pony. Should we not see much more interest centered on the ponies, development of the breed and the promotion of the ponies instead of "pony politics"? We are all working for the good of the Connemara pony in our own countries. We should do it also here at the meeting as we all are – or at least we should be - on the same side. As my predecessor wrote in his last report "we should work harmoniously and strongly to achieve the implementation of the Mission Statement as laid down in the ICCPS Constitution".

When you leave this room today you hopefully do not forget the ICCPS for coming year but take an active role in the international affairs.

Tuula Pyöriä
ICCPS, Chair