





# Compiled Committee and Program Reports 2021-2022.

The following reports were submitted by respective Chairs of each Program and Committee.

 **Social Media Report.** Craig Aiken– Facebook Group Administrator. Members: Craig Aiken, Lynn Gessling, Liz Best. Steve Smith – FB Main Page Administrator; Brandie Orchard – Instagram Administrator; Steve Smith – Pintrest Administrator.

The APS Facebook page now has over 5800 members and getting requests almost every day. We had great responses from people for the announcement of 'Pastelegance' as the Gold Medal winner for 2022 and it was shared to other peony groups. Since then, we have had an increase in membership requests and postings have increased as well. The past winter we had multiple requests from people in Ukraine which is a great international community awareness.

I would like to ask if Members and Directors would be interested in posting photos of their collection and any other information which they feel would be beneficial to our group. This would be greatly appreciated and it would give our FB members a great opportunity to see the efforts of our Society. My hopes are that our efforts have contributed to new memberships for our society.

 **Website Report.** Nate Bremer- Chair & Manager. Members: David Sorrentino, David Michener, Nick Maycher, Cate Crawford.

The APS website manages many components of the Society and has a tremendous amount of information available to the public and for Members through the Portal. Most memberships are received through the website and are managed by Linette Sorrentino & Kris Jurik. Last year APS ran its first "Virtual Show" (due to the loss of the in-person convention) which was managed by Nick Maycher and Kate Crawford. Publications are sold through the website and are managed by Mike Miller. Seeds are sold through the website and is managed by Scott Parker and Kris Jurik. The largest impact the website provides is that of providing vetted information for public use.

## **January 1 to December 31 2021 Analytics report.**

Devices:

52% desktop  
43% mobile (more commonly used during bloom season)  
5% tablet

Users:

101, 387 Users (unique)  
65% United States; 6 % Canada; 6% Russia; 5% Great Britain; 3% China; remaining various  
85% New and 15% Returning

Page Use (most used at top):

- 1) Peony Registry
- 2) Learn (various with most used: Itoh Peonies, diseases and pests, herbaceous peonies, woody peonies)
- 3) Vendors
- 4) Membership

Website Report continued...

- 5) Convention
- 6) Awards
- 7) Seed Program

Seasonal views are often directed at pages which address particular problems users are experiencing or events (Frost Damage shows up heavily in April).

Active users have a higher usage over time as they become familiar with the website's offerings.

Member Portal has sporadic use. More detailed documents receive less views. Reasons –login (many don't like doing it), location of links, longer viewing and concentration required. May be due to more complex reading content and information cannot be obtained without extra time investment.

Overall use of the website has increased as more links from Social Media platforms direct peony enthusiasts to particular topics.

**Goal: Revise website to make available detailed documents more easily found. While site is organized it may benefit from a navigation restructure within pages.**



**Mentorship Report.** Kent Tretheway, Director – Program Administrator.

The Mentorship Program has received 19 requests to date. Of these, eight active pairings have been made, eight have been closed by committee referrals to other available educational resources, and two are awaiting available mentors, 1 closed by completion.

Eight closed by the committee were most often dealing with home gardens and local growing conditions. Local extension offices and Master Gardener groups are usually better prepared to meet these needs.

One mentorship was closed by members meeting desired goals.

Of the active pairings, three are on large peony planting projects and two are on hybridizing. One is for scientific study of hybridizing and one on large volume cold storage, one on marketing and cut flower production.

The Mentorship Program is in need of additional mentors (volunteers) in the areas of hybridizing, disease and weed management, and ground preparation. Volunteers need not be expert in a field to lead others along their quest for information, merely offer guidance to sources of information.

Active Pairings: 8

Open Requests: 2

Requests closed by Committee referral to other available resources: 8



**Awards.** Steve Smith– Committee Chair. Members: Brandie Orchard, Craig Aiken.

The award committee usually meets once a year to select candidates for three APS Personal Awards and select the APS Gold Medal cultivar.

After reviewing candidates' qualifications and some discussion, the following names were agreed upon and committee felt these individuals were most deserving of an award by the APS. Winners will be contacted and presented the award at the convention or in person at another time, if not attending the convention.

Awards continued...

### **The A.P. Saunders Memorial Award**

Tim Stanek – Iowa (2021 recipient); Hans Maschke – Germany (2022 recipient)

### **Bertrand H. Farr Lifetime Achievement Award**

Carol Adelman – Oregon (2021 recipient); Harvey Buchite – Minnesota (2022 recipient)

### **APS Medal**

Kris Jurik – Iowa (2021 recipient); Geraldine Kildow – Washington (2022 recipient)

Final selections for the Gold Medal were discussed, and we reviewed the APS Guidelines for Gold Medal Cultivars, and the committee decided on the 2023 winner with a unanimous vote. The cultivar name will be announced later.

Nate Bremer brought up an idea about possibly making another award for intersectional and woody peonies as these would most might not be selected for the Gold Medal due to a number of limiting variables.

 **Nomenclature & ICRA.** Reiner Jakubowski, Chair & Registrar. Members: Nate Bremer – support & website.


Nomenclature - ICRA Report 2021. Reiner Jakubowski – Registrar; Nate Bremer – Support and website.

115 Peonies were registered and recorded in 2021. Cultivars continue to be previewed in the Bulletin and detailed in annual [Directory of New Cultivars](#). The Registrar has processed over 100 new cultivars for a number of years now and more automation to assist with processing is planned for the future.

This is Reiner's last year as ICRA registrar. APS and the peony world owe him a debt of gratitude for the detailed and thoughtful work in assisting originators with new cultivar registrations. Reiner has served as registrar since 2004 (18 years!) and has processed more than 800 cultivars. During his tenure, Reiner was instrumental in changes in registration requirements which created more complete and detailed entries – useful for anyone wanting to know more about registered peonies. His assistance in the design of the past and current online Peony Registry has provided an outstanding resource for all interested in peonies. He was also instrumental in the production of the annual Directory of New Peonies publication which is distributed to APS Members.

Reiner will remain as Nomenclature Chair and will continue to assist APS' new registrar, Jordan Kabat.

**Thanks go to Reiner for many years of outstanding service in support of the Peony and the American Peony Society!**

 **Editorial Group.** Kim Bremer - Chair. Members: Sharon Schmitz – Commercial Advertising; Lois Girton – proofing/contributor; Jill Stevens - proofing; Jim Sampson Science Segues/contributor; Jerri O'Connor – regional society news; Nate Bremer – contributor.

This year, the APS Bulletin odometer turned over issue #400, a historic milestone. The Bulletin remains a popular member perk, and the online option is well-received, especially by our overseas members. The Bulletin is powered by an all-volunteer team of writers and field editors who cultivate articles and photos; edit and proof. The core team includes Lois Girton; Jill Stephens; Science Segue/content writer Jim Sampson; Nate Bremer, content contributor; and Regional Report manager, Jerri O'Connor. We are pleased to report that advertising is at an all-time high, supported by advertising manager Sharon Schmitz. Thanks go out to our advertisers for their support, which is an important contribution to defray the costs of printing and mailing as our membership increases. We are excited about growing editorial involvement by members, who offer suggestions and ideas, and volunteer to submit articles. One last note: long-time Bulletin publisher Covington Press has closed its doors this May. The APS will be served by our representative Steve Conklin, who has formed a print brokering company Midwest Printers to offer continued service.

## **Corresponding Secretary.** Hazel Cook – Secretary.

The 'contact the American Peony Society' section of the webpage provides a significant connection with the general public resulting in sharing of information, promoting the society and peonies. At present there are about 40 new enquiries per month. Memberships, convention, disease and growing concerns as well as plant identification remain the most frequent inquiries.

Providing correct information in a timely manner is only possible with the assistance of other officers, directors and many resource persons. This position is a great opportunity to learn and share knowledge.

## **Speakers Bureau.** Lois Girton – Chair.

In lieu of an APS convention in 2021, several presentations were made available to members via Zoom. Speakers included Donald R. Smith, Harvey Buchite, Michelle Ovans, Becky Swenson, and Margery Daughtrey. Margery's program on peony diseases was recorded and is available through the member portal of the APS website: MEMBER PORTAL>>PEONY LIBRARY>>VIDEO or <https://americanpeonysociety.org/member-portal/pages/video/>. A decision was made not to schedule virtual presentations during spring 2022 although several members made or joined those of the Canadian Peony Society.

Another responsibility of this position is to work with convention chairs to arrange speakers at the national meetings. If you have a topic you would like to have covered or would like to present at a convention or virtually, please get in touch with me. We would like to resume some virtual offerings over Fall 2022 and Spring 2023.

## **International Outreach.** Cory Tischman – U.S. Chair and Leena Liljestrand – European Chair.

### **1) The purpose and goals of the International Outreach Group**

Make connections with international entities, such as growers, organizations, individuals and provide a sounding board for new ideas and channel this information to appropriate individuals and committees within APS.

### **2) Barriers to goals, problems**

In Europe: in some countries language barriers, possibly even cultural. Not feeling any "brotherhood" with APS? APS too US-focused? Membership fee vs benefits in Europe.

### **3) The responsibilities of the members of this committee?**

Cory is the head of the group, Leena reports to him. All ideas and suggestions as well as all development will be discussed in meetings, and if deemed to be of value, forwarded to APS, either directly to the President, or to a suitable group (Bulletin/Editorial, Website, Social Media etc)

### **4) What other committees or officers would be most likely communicating with often?** Mainly Bulletin/Editorial, Website, Social Media, the President

### **5) Do we want/need to recruit more people?**

Not at this stage. Maybe later, and the emphasis would be on languages (French, German, Russian, Chinese)

### **Future Plans:**

- Cory takes contact first via Facebook with the **NZ Peony Society**, then email. Regarding contacts with for example **Russia and Ukraine**, we could ask Dick Westland for help, and in **South America (Chile) and in South Africa** we know that Ruud Warmerdam has good contacts. Cory will contact Dick and Ruud.

International Outreach continued...

- Leena has already spoken with **Norwegian** peony enthusiasts and **The Danish Peony Society**; next step to contact growers in EU and UK.
- As we are to actively seek international sources of articles, images etc, Leena will contact Martin Page regarding the **RHS Peony Trials** (ended 2020) for more information and possibly an article. Two articles already on the way, one on a Finnish “Village Peony Park” and the other personal history of the man behind P. ‘Karl Rosenfield’.
- Make APS members aware of the relatively new European peony site **The Peony Society**. A very good source of peony information and news: <https://www.peonysociety.eu/>
- Discuss with the concerned people/groups how the **2021 convention** (mainly garden visits and lectures) are to be arranged. Possibility for everyone to attend for a fee (5\$ ?) via web? Practical questions around this. Maybe not only during the convention? Winter lectures?
- Suggested to discuss benefits for the non-US members. Better benefits, such as an **EU peony Auction**. Leena has discussed this tentatively with a couple of growers, and they are willing to participate (i.e. donate and send the roots to the winners, but only within EU). Information would be available on APS homepage, and all the income would, of course, go to APS.
- As the President of SPS, Leena suggested something that works very well for SPS: the US peony growers could give the APS members in the US **a discount**. This is a win-win, as it will be a lucrative addition to the APS benefits in the US and create more business for the growers. There are other possibilities: companies/firms producing/selling signs, bulbs, perennials, seeds, garden utilities etc could also be included. All would get a sponsor ad for free on the website (not in the bulletin). This works very well in the Nordics.
- A suggestion from Leena: **a magazine collector** for the Bulletins, to keep them fresh and available in a nice way. See below.



 **Award of Landscape Merit.** Cory Tischman and Jill Stevens – Co-chairs.

The committee did not have any formal meetings over 2021-2022, but primarily communicated and coordinated over email. In 2021, the current committee members were tasked to revive the ALM as the previous head of the committee was unable to continue with the duties involved. For continuity's sake, the committee used the last available list of judges and asked them to use the scorecard that had been used in the past and to evaluate the list of cultivars on the last list created in 2019. Three judges had turned in scorecards for 2021. Feedback from other judges was that the scorecard, while thorough, was tedious to use, and the list of cultivars overwhelming to score.

In early 2022, the committee discussed overhauling the scorecard and process for evaluating cultivars. Early drafts were sent to judges for feedback until a finalized scorecard was created. The new scorecard was sent to the judges and they were tasked to evaluate five cultivars from the previous list with the hopes of having enough data to use this fall to award any of the cultivars with the ALM.

**Current total memberships: 939** (includes Individual, Life, Commercial & Institution) (**1093** with dual household memberships)

Australia	8	China	6	Germany	11	New Zealand	5	Sweden	7
Austria	1	Denmark	3	Italy	6	Poland	1	Switzerland	3
Belgium	5	Estonia	1	Japan	1	Russian Federation	2	Ukraine	4
Canada	59	Finland	3	Latvia	3	South Africa	1	United Kingdom	7
Chile	1	France	2	Netherlands	14	Spain	2	United States	783

**Current Commercial memberships: 82** (60 in the USA and 22 in other countries)

Australia	1	China	0	Germany	0	New Zealand	1	Sweden	0
Austria	0	Denmark	0	Italy	1	Poland	0	Switzerland	0
Belgium	1	Estonia	1	Japan	0	Russian Federation	0	Ukraine	0
Canada	9	Finland	0	Latvia	1	South Africa	0	United Kingdom	2
Chile	0	France	0	Netherlands	5	Spain	0	United States	60

**Current Individual paying memberships: 751**

Australia	4	China	3	Germany	3	New Zealand	3	Sweden	6
Austria	1	Denmark	3	Italy	5	Poland	1	Switzerland	1
Belgium	2	Estonia	0	Japan	0	Russian Federation	2	Ukraine	4
Canada	43	Finland	3	Latvia	2	South Africa	1	United Kingdom	5
Chile	1	France	0	Netherlands	8	Spain	1	United States	649

**Current Institution memberships: 12**

Australia	0	China	1	Germany	1	New Zealand	0	Sweden	0
Austria	0	Denmark	0	Italy	0	Poland	0	Switzerland	0
Belgium	0	Estonia	0	Japan	0	Russian Federation	0	Ukraine	0
Canada	1	Finland	0	Latvia	0	South Africa	0	United Kingdom	0
Chile	0	France	2	Netherlands	0	Spain	0	United States	7

**Current Life memberships: 94**

Australia	3	China	2	Germany	7	New Zealand	1	Sweden	1
Austria	0	Denmark	0	Italy	0	Poland	0	Switzerland	2
Belgium	2	Estonia	0	Japan	1	Russian Federation	0	Ukraine	0
Canada	6	Finland	0	Latvia	0	South Africa	0	United Kingdom	0
Chile	0	France	0	Netherlands	1	Spain	1	United States	67

- Current **total** memberships: **939** (**1093** including dual memberships)

- includes Individual, Life, Commercial & Institution

- Current **Individual Paying** memberships: **791**

- **145** new Individual memberships since 1/1/2022
- **320** renewal memberships since 1/1/2022
- **171** memberships more than same time last year

- Current **Commercial** memberships: **82**

- there are **13** new commercial memberships since 1/1/2022

- Current **Institution** memberships: **12**

- Current **Life** memberships: **94**

- Current **Online Only** memberships: **134**

- **Lapsed** memberships by year:

- Members in **24** countries other than the USA

- Most members in other countries is Canada with **59** members

- USA members in **46** states (states with more than 20 members)

- most members in a state is Minnesota with 60 members followed by New York with 49 members

Year	Lapsed Members
2021	217
2020	124
2019	120
2018	100
2017	112
2016	149
2015	103

## Membership continued...

State	Members	State	Members	State	Members
Minnesota	60	California	32	Oregon	26
New York	49	Pennsylvania	31	Illinois	25
Washington	47	North Carolina	29	Maryland	23
Michigan	45	Virginia	29	New Jersey	21
Wisconsin	43	Iowa	28		

- “How did you hear about us?” was added to the website membership page around May 3, 2020

How did you hear about us?	Number
Online Search	503
Other	211
Social Media	162
Through a friend	111
Use of Peony Registry	68
Through an Event	32

## **Auctions.** Mary Muellner – Chair. Lois Girton & Jill Stevens.

### 2021 Auction

- Auction Dates: August 19 - 22, 2021
- Auction Type: Online
- Number of Items Sold: 110
- Number of Donors: 36
- Number of Winning Bidders: 48
- Estimated value of items: \$8,528
- Items sold for: \$10,110
- Additional Donations: \$167
- Total Funds Raised: \$10,277
- Expenses: \$300 for one year of Auctria software, plus credit card processing fees
- The top selling auction item ‘Patricia Jean’ sold for \$800, donated by Tim Stanek /Iowa Peony Farm

### 2022 Convention Auction

- Auction Date: June 4, 2022
- Auction Type: A mix of Silent and Live auction items
- All peony plants will be shipped in the fall.

### 2022 Fall Auction


- The 2022 fall auction will occur in late summer / early autumn. Final dates have not been determined.
- Shipping plant material internationally requires a phytosanitary certificate. For this year’s fall auction, we hope to have donated items, which may ship to countries other than the United States. This is dependent upon what is received for donated items. Watch the APS website for more information about the upcoming fall auction.

## **Publications.** Mike Miller – Chair.

International sales still a bit of concern as the selling price does not always cover the cost of postage alone.

### 2021-2022 Book Sales

The American Tree Peony	4
Best of 75 Years	2
History of Peonies	1
1986-1996	2
Directory of New Cultivars	2
American Hybrid	1
The Peonies	1
1997-2007 Peonies	1

 **None Reporting Committees and Programs:** Seed Program, Commercial Members, and other initiatives may not be active at this time or have no activity to report.

Submitted by Nate Bremer – APS President, May 16, 2022.