

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL EUPHORBIA SOCIETY HELD 7<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2013**

On 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2013 the ninth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the International Euphorbia Society was held on occasion of the Europese Landen Konferentie (ELK) at Blankenberge, Belgium. Present were fourteen I. E. S. members, two National Representatives (Giuseppe Orlando, Spain; Emmanuel Porte, France) and six Committee Officers (Volker Buddensiek, Editor, Thomas Cammaerts, Publicity Officer, Jaap Keijzer, Curator of the Reference Collection, Pjotr Lawant, Secretary & Asst. Editor, Bob Potter, Treasurer and Membership Administrator and Rikus van Veldhuisen, Chairman). A notice of absence was received from Walter Minuth.

**1. Opening.** The Chairman of the I. E. S., Rikus van Veldhuisen, opens the Annual General Meeting and welcomes the I. E. S. members and officers as present. He has regrettably to announce Walter Minuth's own resignation as Vice-Chairman & Web Officer because of serious health conditions. The Chairman thanks him gratefully for his contributions to the I. E. S. in the past years, also his wife Anke is thanked for her efforts in renewing and updating the I. E. S. website.

**2. Minutes and Constitution.** The Chairman asks the members as present for approval of the Minutes of the former AGM of 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2012, as published on the website; put to the vote these Minutes are unanimously agreed by the meeting. Not any comments are received regarding the in September 2011 newly written Constitution, as published on the website.

**3. Reports of Committee Officers.**

(1) The **Chairman**, Rikus van Veldhuisen, notes that about this actual AGM all I. E. S. members have been informed in time by way of the website, the more, all European members are personally invited by email or letter. He recalls to mind that to the end of March the amount of subscriptions still proved to be alarming low, but an immediately raised reminder campaign by the Secretary, repeated in July, resulted in a moderate increase of membership subscriptions.

(2) The **Secretary**, Pjotr Lawant, reports that at the end of December 2012 we could account for a solid amount of 221 paying subscribers; at the end of March all members who had not yet renewed were sent a reminder by email or post. But at the end of June 30 % of the "2012" members had not renewed their subscription for 2013, so a second reminder campaign was initiated. All National Representatives were informed; if not represented by a National Representative, members were

personally approached by email or post. In the course of time most National Representatives reported to the Secretary about their efforts to regain subscribers, and a lot of people who had been personally approached reacted positively. The definitive figures now are: from the 221 members who paid for 2012, 44 did not renew for 2013, resulting in an actual amount of 177 paying subscribers at the moment of this AGM, being a serious loss of 20 %. By the way, we now exchange EW against 8 journals of societies in the related field, topics considered of interest for the I. E. S. members are regularly reviewed in EW; in 8 cases the journal is sent as a complimentary copy.

(3) The **Treasurer**, Bob Potter, considers the actual financial status of the I.E.S. just in equilibrium; but he warns that in near future serious attention must be paid to the increasing costs of printing and sending the journal. Although paying by PayPal is a very convenient way, a lot of members prefer on their own one or another way, which is much confusing for recording financial data correctly. The Treasurer warns: maybe the actual subscription fee has to be increased in future, but all depends whether we can keep the renewals for 2014 sufficiently coming in.

(4) The **Editor**, Volker Buddensiek, reports that thanks to our Membership Administrator, Bob Potter, all issues of EW were distributed punctual on time to the members of the I. E. S. Especially the August 2013 issue about *E. polygona* attracted much attention of scientists in the field. He stresses anew that members must not hesitate to submit their *Euphorbia* experiences to the Editor, e. g. about “tricky” ways of cultivation; if needed, help can be given about text structure, correctness of names and citations, formal aspects and a final correction of a “raw” version in English by our President, Susan Carter, to provide the author with a good English text quality. Travel reports will also stimulate people to “experiment” with particular *Euphorbia* plants, comments the Chairman.

(5) The **Publicity Officer**, Thomas Cammaerts, invites everyone to visit the Facebook page about the I. E. S. Initiated in May 2013, it attracts more and more visitors; in the meantime the picture gallery and grafting video got much interest. People who meet each other on Facebook can discuss specifics about cultivation problems and even exchange plants (within Cites rules). Nobody knows from one another what he or she is cultivating, so perhaps Facebook can be of help, it is said. Facebook may also become an interactive medium to exchange pictures for identification of plants and tips. Another topic regards the celebration of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the I. E. S. in 2015. Thomas Cammaerts reports that the Direction of the Botanical Garden in Meise, Belgium, is willing to participate in organizing a symposium in its premises provided a sufficient amount of members (80?) register to come. Concerning this aim, maybe the I. E. S. must cooperate with other societies in

the related field, it is said by members present. In conclusion an important subject to pay attention to in near future.

(6) Worded by the Chairman, although our **Web Officer**, Walter Minuth, now has resigned, nevertheless he and his wife Anke have thoroughly updated the I. E. S. website in the past year. Until a new web officer is appointed, for the time being the maintenance of the website will be done by the Editor, Volker Buddensiek, if needed with help offered by Giuseppe Orlando, our National Representative for Spain.

(7) Finally, the **Curator of the Reference Collection**, Jaap Keijzer, welcomes everyone who wants to know how successful propagation or grafting has to be done.

**4. Composition of Officers.** The proposal to appoint the Candidate Committee member as nominated by the Committee, namely Christian Blenn (Switzerland), as new Committee Officer of the International Euphorbia Society (cf. Constitution Art. 12.5/6), provisionally without specific terms of reference, is unanimously agreed by the meeting. Before, Christian Blenn has extensively elucidated his commitment with succulent plants, particularly *Euphorbia* species.

**5. Term.** Because Constitution Art. 11.1 stipulates that Committee members sit for a term of 3 years, just on the next AGM of September 2014 the greater part of the Committee members will be asked if they stand for re-election or not. Now very recently the position of Vice Chairman & Web Officer has become vacant, on a subsequent request of the Chairman it proves to be that nobody from the public as present is instantly willing to execute the job, therefore all members are urgently invited to join the Committee for this important position; anyone who is interested is much cordially invited to contact the Chairman, Rikus van Veldhuisen, as soon as possible. Furthermore, not any other Committee member has notified to resign from his actual executive position and according duties.

**6. Discussion.** (1) Because the actual state (7<sup>th</sup> September) stagnates by 177 paying subscribers (a loss of 20 % compared to 2012), the question how to increase the number of subscribers is indeed considered a very important one. Some members as present stipulate the importance of a regularly updated website; others primarily vote for the “energetic” work already actually done by the National Representatives. Reminding “non-payers” in time is also considered an important issue. Perhaps a leaflet inserted in the Spring issue? But to give an ultimately effective answer to this question is very difficult, it is said. (2) In summary, members as present advise the Committee “keep going” and say “go ahead” with the planning of the symposium in 2015.

**7. Any other business; questions.** No further comments or questions are raised.

**8. Conclusion and closure of the meeting.** The Chairman of the I.E.S., Rikus van Veldhuisen, summarizes the contents of the meeting. At the next AGM in 2014 the Minutes, as posted on the I. E. S. website, will be presented for approval. He thanks all present for their contributions and closes the ninth AGM of the I. E. S.

After closure of the official AGM as notified above a contest was presented, namely the First I. E. S. Contest of the most beautiful *Euphorbia* plant grown by any member. Everyone present could judge everybody's plant brought with her or him. A small number of plants were exhibited for assessment. Finally it proved to be that the plant contributed by our member Tony Harcourt was considered the most beautifully grown *Euphorbia*.