

## Letter from the ASAV-President: Kilian Dill

In early June 2008, ASAV delegates Denis and Irmi Atam, attended the annual ISG Delegate's meeting in Topolcianky, Slovakia. Weeks prior to the meeting, ASAV petitioned the ISG BOD to be considered for membership during this meeting. Denis Atam was to make the presentation on behalf of ASAV. The ASAV board had decided to invest in this application as the ISG BOD, in a formal letter indicated that North America, a continent with multiple countries (USA, Canada, Mexico) is large enough for more than one organization. The past organization had 25 years to move the Shagya horse forward, but the results were far from acceptable, so a new direction was needed.

Our motion for acceptance never made it to the table. The issue of one organization per country was at the forefront. Eventually a motion came forward to let more than one organization exist within North America (an area larger than Europe) and we received a MAJORITY of the vote (actual vote for and against was 673 and 398). However, a large block of votes also abstained. It was these votes that carried the day. According to ISG by-laws, a majority of the ISG votes must be for inclusion. We find this ironic as Germany has had two organizations for many years? How does one accept one set of rules for one group and then uses these rules against another group?

ASAV is not willing to wait any longer for politics to get out of the way of our expansion on the North American scene. We are the most active and dominant organization in North America and we are expanding by leaps and bounds. We are the forward thinking and all inclusive organization on this continent. In the past 5 years, we have set the parameters in the USA/Canada on many fronts:

1. We are the only organization that has had annual membership meetings EVERY year in our short existence. We have had local, national and international participation with external funding sequestered for this event.
2. We were the first to institute DNA testing for all our purebred breeding stock.  
\*\*Note that ISG has only instituted this requirement to be started in 2008.\*\*
3. We have instituted an annual endurance riding competition reaching the east coast and west coast semiannually. Riders throughout the USA can compete.
4. We have stud books for our pure bred stock. The format is that of VZAP and it will become available to all members in 2008 at a nominal fee.
5. We have started several new stud books for new Shagya out crosses. In Europe as well as parts of the USA, the Shagya-Anglo cross has become very popular. ASAV, several years ago, instituted the Anglo-Shagya studbook.

6. ASAV is currently investing heavily into shows, promotions and events throughout The USA and EUROPE. The money required for this has come from donors (organizations), individuals and businesses—all for the good of the breed. Although ASAV promotes/advertises internally through the quarterly Shagya newsletter and

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We will begin to see articles and advertisements (possibly at a monthly pace) at shows and local events. For example, ASAV has taken out a 2/3 page ad in "THE USDF CONNECTION"—promoting the breed, the organization and the stallions. Furthermore, Nancy Skakel has published a great article on Shagyas in the Central Oregon Horse Journal. Look for more promotions and more articles. To date, the majority of the funding has come from donations through organizations supporting our promotional efforts such as the Kentucky group, KEEP.

7. We have opened our tent to all horse people and Shagya folks of any Shagya organization. We do not believe in becoming exclusive. See our latest Newsletter – we allowed anyone to place a ½ page ad — free of charge and not limited just ASAV members. We cannot justify exclusion, if the breed is going to grow in North America.

Because of the uncertainties in Europe, ASAV cannot wait for ISG to determine the direction of the wind. Since ASAV is the lead organization in the USA, we will move forward and set the precedence for all Shagyas in North American. As a result of this we have decided to make Inspections optional.

Why do this? In the current ISG member countries, not all hold Inspections either. Why is this and why has it never been unified? Why do horses have to be “re-inspected” every time one moves them from one ISG organization to another? It seems like a big headache for owners and sellers but also just a way for member organization to fill the coffers. The point is not that we don’t approve the inspection of breeding stock, but that it does not have to be an ISG sanctioned Inspection.

It can be however, an Inspection performed by ISG recognized/certified judges. We leave it to the owner if they alternatively wish to go warm blood or sport horse Inspections. We will generously acknowledge those that have gone through the process.

The ASAV BOD has also decided to make stallion performance testing optional. Currently there are two choices.

1. We participate in a high performance 100 day stallion test at considerable financial investment ---or ---
2. We submit to a weak set of regulations/testing procedures.

We will not go that route and we will not impose this on our members. ASAV favors voluntary performance tests which include all levels in any equestrian discipline. We will document and report any effort in this area which promotes the Shagya and its owner.

If Shagyas are to move forward in the USA, innovative changes are required, as very little progression has happened in 25 years. We will not go along that same path. ASAV is the organization of positive change. Come and join us. Our membership growth has been phenomenal in 2007-2008. Our registrations and transfers are up 50% over the previous years.

In the future, if ISG would like to include ASAV into their network, we will consider their invitation. However, we will not actively seek membership. Our acceptance must be guaranteed.

We keep hearing a tired old adage "It's for the horses". But where would the horses be without their owners? The horse rides on the owner's future. If one does not take care of the owners, the horse has no future. The ISG board sensed the need for change in North America;

*ASAV is the avenue of positive change.*

**JOIN US WITH YOUR ENERGY, ENTHUSIASM, & IDEAS.**

Sincerely,  
ASAV President, Kilian Dill

June, 2008