



INTERNATIONAL BETTA CONGRESS®

IBC Membership Handbook

Section I

2022-2023 Show Season

The Membership Handbook is updated annually. Those areas that were changed are highlighted in red text so it is easier for members to see the new parts. Please check back each show year for next year's version (usually in August).

If you would like to make suggestions for changes, please submit your proposal to the Constitution Committee prior to the 30 December deadline.

IBC Handbook Section I

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DEDICATION

This update of the IBC Handbook is dedicated to the many members and other contributors who have made this work possible by the IBC Publications Committee:

Bill Hoerner - Parris Jones - Sue Liebetrau - Connie Clark – Steve Saunders
Faith Sizemore - Christine Porter - Liz Day - Joseph Jones - John & Jan Benn

COMMERCIAL CONTRIBUTORS

Sustaining

All Glass Aquarium - Mardel Laboratories Aquarium Pharmaceuticals

Supporting

Penn Plax Plastics, Inc. - Freshwater & Marine Aquarium O'Dell Tanks

Patron Willinger Brothers, Inc.

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Daniel Beimer - Phil Byrum - Peter & Patti McGraw - Joseph Scordino Patrick Miller - Philip Post - Ray Preucil - Bob Richardson - Henry Tusinski

Supporting

Brian & Jane Gravelle - Parris & Daisy Jones - Justin Tucker

Patron

Norman & Florence Fickeisen - John Fisher - Ted Fisher - Henry Oswald Peter Goettner - Frank Lisle - Donald McCooey - Ken & Judy Muller - Gerald Sevonius - Stephen Simkins - Joseph Scelfo - John Webber

To each of you

Thanks

Original Editors: John Benn - Phil Byrum 1987-88

Editor - Phil Byrum

Editor - John Benn

2000-2013: Retypes and Updates - Sally Van Camp

Code of Ethics

The IBC welcomes everyone who is interested in bettas, whether new at owning and/or raising betta or an old pro that has raised thousands. The IBC feels there is room for all betta enthusiasts, young or old, new or experienced, individuals, families, team or commercial breeder.

The IBC is a club of individuals, families, teams, and commercial breeders who support the keeping, breeding, and or the showing of betta bred by members, the research into the genetics of the betta, and support of the preservation of the wild species through the Species Maintenance Program.

All Judges, Officials and Members are representatives of the IBC, and of the betta hobby. As such, all members of the IBC shall agree to act honorably in their pursuit of the betta hobby. In betta related ventures, members shall strive to promote the hobby; they shall embody the virtues of sportsmanship and esteem.

All members shall conduct themselves to reflect credit on the betta hobby in the general and the IBC in particular. This includes respect for the IBC, affiliated chapters, and for fellow betta breeders and enthusiasts.

Conduct shall be directed toward educating the public, improving one's own knowledge and demonstrating integrity. Actions should complement the IBC's goal of promoting betta breeding and showing.

Members should take care to be good representatives at show sites, national/international conventions, on internet forums and lists, and other social media that is in any way related to the betta hobby.

Should a member behave in a manner contrary to the above, bringing discredit to the IBC or affiliated IBC Chapter, or causing strife to other members, a complaint may be lodged with the Executive Board using the IBC Complaint Process.

It is the policy of the IBC that members who sell, trade or give bettas to others must represent the description of the betta in a proper manner so as to assure that the buyers, consumers or recipients are not misled. An intentional misrepresentation would be a violation of the IBC policy and Code of Ethics.

Moreover, it is the policy of the IBC that when bettas are entered in a show, the fish should be raised and bred by the entrant or exhibitor unless clearly stated otherwise. Failure to comply with this policy would be contrary to the IBC Show Standards.

The IBC does not participate in the fighting of fish for any reason and does not condone the fighting of bettas by others; nor does it support any individual or organization that does.

The International Betta Congress expects all members to conduct transactions with all parties in a responsible, fair and ethical manner in all business dealings concerning the purchase and sale of betta stock and supplies. While we hope that all disputes be amicably resolved among the parties, the Congress, however, is not an enforcement agency for the transaction of betta stock and/or supplies– nor can the IBC mediate disputes involving members or any individuals over said transactions.

In the interest of fairness, the IBC does not endorse individual business enterprises and does not allow the promotion of those enterprises in posts on the IBC weblsit, whether they are personal testimonials or commercial advertisements.

The IBC believes that if all members abide by these simple guidelines we will have a happy, fun and stimulating club.

ORGANIZATION

The top authority in IBC is the full membership of The Congress itself. Of course, it is not possible to conduct the simple day to day business of The Congress by involving all members. Thus, The Congress elects the two main BOARDS that handle the details:

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Executive Officers

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Other Members

- Judging Board Chair as Liaison
- General Member-At-Large
- General Member-At-Large
- General Member-At-Large
- Area EB Representatives

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THE JUDGING BOARD

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- One Member at Large serves as Registrar
- Member at Large
- Member at Large
- Member at Large
- A Member from the Executive Board as Liaison
- Area JB Representatives

Each of the Boards has a variety of committees to assist it in the conduct of business. There are two types of committees:

Standing Committees of The Congress

- Finance
- Membership
- Chapters
- Publications
- Flare
- Technical Assistance
- Archives
- Programs
- Convention
- Awards
- Research & Grants
- Nominations Task Force
- Constitution
- Species Maintenance

Committees of the Judging Board

- Committee on Judges' Training
- Committee on Standards
- Committee on Maintenance of Judges Certification
- Species Maintenance Committee
- Virtual Shows Committee
- Kids Show Circuit Committee

CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL BETTA CONGRESS, INC

Article I NAMES AND OBJECTIVES

SECTION 1

This organization shall be known as The International Beta Congress, Inc. and shall, in the following Constitution, By-Laws, and Standards, as amended, be referred to as The Congress.

SECTION 2

The official colors and emblem of The Congress shall be determined by a vote of the general membership. Once determined, the emblem of The Congress shall not be modified without a new referendum of The Congress, such referendum approved by the Executive Board.

SECTION 3

The Congress is a nonprofit organization; Internal Revenue code is Section 501(c) (7).

SECTION 4

The objectives of The Congress shall be:

1. To organize Beta fanciers throughout the world;
2. To establish and conduct training courses for the certification of judges, to define and establish standards for judging Bettas, and to promote Beta shows;
3. To sponsor research and investigation of the Beta genus and to publish the findings in the official publications of The Congress;
4. To provide technical assistance in the breeding, raising, and keeping of Bettas;
5. To assemble and maintain the Technical Assistance Library of information about the Beta; and
6. To publish a journal called FLARE! by and for the members of The Congress, the said journal to be a voice of The Congress, providing members with the opportunity to share information and knowledge.
7. Maintain a website where Beta enthusiasts can exchange news, information and serve as an official means of IBC communication.

Article II MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1

Membership in The Congress shall be granted to anyone not previously a member upon receipt of a properly completed application form accompanied by proper dues. Former members shall be granted membership upon receipt of a properly completed application form accompanied by proper dues if that membership was not previously terminated by The Congress.

SECTION 2

Acceptance of membership in The Congress shall constitute an agreement by the applicant to comply with all provisions of the Constitution, By-Laws and Standards of The Congress.

Article III EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1

The Executive Board shall consist of the Officers, the Chairperson of the Judging Board, three (3) General At-Large Members of The Congress, and up to six (6) Area At-Large Members, one (1) from each of the Areas defined in Chapter one (1) of the Standards. All Officers and At-Large Members shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age. All Officers and General At-Large Members positions may be filled by any elected member in good standing from any Area. A member who is nominated for the Executive Board must be an IBC member for at least one (1) year by January first (1) of the election year.

For any of the qualifying areas to elect one (1) Area At-Large Member to the Executive Board, three (3) conditions must be met;

1. The Area must have three (3) active IBC chapters within its boundaries on January 1st of the election year;
2. The Area must have twenty (20) IBC members in good standing within its boundaries on January 1st of the election year;
3. The candidate must reside in the respective Area.

If the majority of members on the general board are from a single area, that area will not need an additional elected Area At-Large Member.

SECTION 2

The Executive Board shall implement all resolutions adopted by the membership and shall be responsible for the control and administration of The Congress.

SECTION 3

The Executive Board members shall serve a two (2) year term of office.. President and Treasurer are elected in odd numbered years, Vice President and Secretary in even numbered years. Members-at-Large shall be elected in even numbered years. **General Members-at-Large and Area Members-at-Large are elected as follows: odd numbered area Members-at-Large are elected in odd years and even numbered area Members-at-Large are elected in even years. All Officer positions except treasurer are limited to no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office (they may hold other positions, or run again after a period of two (2) terms of absence). General Members at large are also limited to 2 consecutive terms (4 years).** If no IBC member runs for President in any given election term, the remaining Executive Board will hold a special meeting and determine future steps, which could consist (but are not limited to) of: recalling a previous President, or recruiting a new President from the Membership.

SECTION 4: Officers shall be:

- A. President
- B. Vice-president
- C. The Secretary
- D. Treasurer

SECTION 5

Executive Board Members-at-Large are duly elected IBC members who participate in and have one (1) vote on all business matters of the Executive Board. The President can appoint these members to handle special projects.

Candidates shall be nominated specifically for General Member-at-Large or Area Member-at-Large. Area Member-at-Large candidates must meet the qualifications listed in Constitution Article III Section 1.

Area Members-at-Large shall be elected for a two (2) year term. Areas will be evaluated for eligibility for representation every two (2) years.

All members of the IBC shall be allowed to vote for both General Members-at-Large . **Each Area votes for their own Area Members-at-Large (Representative).**

SECTION 6

There shall be no more than one (1) member of an immediate family serving on the Executive Board at the same time.

SECTION 7

No member is permitted to run for more than one (1) office at the same time. A Member-at-Large on an odd numbered year may run for an officer's position. The Member-at-Large if elected would take the office at election and a President's appointee would fill their remaining year. If the Member-at-Large is not elected, he/she remains as a Member-at-Large through the next year.

The IBC President will appoint a willing IBC member as a replacement until next election for any General Member-at-Large who leaves his/her position during their term of office. The IBC President will request recommendations from the Area affected in the event an Area Member-at-Large leaves his/her position during their term of office. The IBC President will then appoint one of the recommendations to fill the remainder of the term until the next election.

Article IV JUDGING BOARD

SECTION 1

The Judging Board shall have as a guideline of duties, Article I, Section 4, Item B of the Constitution. Further responsibilities and jurisdiction of the Judging Board are outlined in By-Law Article VI.

SECTION 2

The Judging Board shall consist of six (6) certified judges each elected from any Area of the Congress, and one voting representative from the Executive Board, plus any additional certified Judges from qualifying Areas that do not already have a representative on the Judging Board. All Judging Board Members shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age plus additional Representatives from qualifying Areas. All Judging Board Members shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age.

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If an Area meets the following conditions, an additional certified Judge from that Area will be elected to the Judging Board. If an Area does not meet the previous conditions but has an active show schedule, the Judging Board (at their discretion) may appoint an Area Liaison for this Area. This person may or may not be a certified judge and can remain in place until such time as that Area qualifies and elects an official Area Representative.

1. The Area must have three (3) active IBC chapters within its boundaries on January 1st of the election year;
2. The Area must have twenty (20) IBC members in good standing within its boundaries on January 1st of the election year;
3. The candidate must reside in the respective Area.
4. **Each Area votes for their own Area Members-at-Large (Representative).**

If the majority of members on the JB General Board are from a single area, that area will not need an additional elected Area JB representative.

SECTION 3

Members of the Judging Board shall serve a two (2) year term of office on the Judging Board. Three (3) judges from any Area plus any additional qualified Area Judges (see Constitution, Article IV Section 2) shall be selected each year. No more than one (1) member of an immediate family shall serve on the Judging Board at the same time. All members of the Judging Board shall have been certified judges for at least one (1) year prior to beginning their two (2) year term.

All members of the IBC shall be allowed to vote for both General Judging Board Members and Area Judging Board Members.

**Article V
COMMITTEES**

Committees of The Congress shall be established to help develop, plan, and execute the duties of the Executive Board. These Committees, being formed by the Executive Board, shall have a chairperson appointed by the President who is a member of The Congress that is at least eighteen (18) years of age.

**Article VI
CHAPTERS**

SECTION 1

To start and maintain an IBC Chapter you need at least five (5) IBC members. A family membership counts as two (2) towards the five (5). The name and initials of the IBC chapter cannot be in conflict with other IBC Chapters in the same Area. You must name two (2) contact people for the chapter, who must be IBC members. Their names and email address will be in FLARE! and on the IBC Website.

SECTION 2

In accepting Chapter status from The Congress, the Chapter shall consent to comply with the provisions of the Constitution, By-Laws, and Standards of The Congress. Any chapter may prepare and use internally any form of constitution as long as it does not conflict with the Constitution, By-Laws, and/or Standards of The Congress.

**Article VII
AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

SECTION 1

Any member of the Congress may propose amendments to the IBC Constitution by submitting the proposal(s) in writing to the Constitution Committee Chairperson and the IBC President. Proposals received by December 31st will be reviewed by the Constitution Committee for the upcoming ballot in the June election.

The President will notify the other E-Board members of the proposed amendments. The Constitution Committee must advise the E-Board and the author(s) within 30 days as to whether or not the proposed amendments contradict any other Article and/or Section of the IBC Constitution.

If there are no contradictions the E-Board will ensure that the proposed amendments are included in the **Mar/Apr/May** issue of FLARE!, and include them on the ballot.

If the Constitution Committee disapproves any proposed amendments, the author(s) may correct the areas of contradictions and resubmit the proposal(s) to the Constitution Committee. If the Constitution Committee and the author(s) do not agree upon the validity of contradictions, the author(s) may submit the proposal(s) to the E-Board for consideration. The Constitution Committee will be required to present the areas of alleged contradictions to the E-Board. The E-Board will review the proposal(s) and decide if the proposal(s) will be included on the next ballot. The author(s) and Constitution Committee will be notified of the decision made by the E- Board within thirty (30) days after submission of the proposal(s).

SECTION 2

All proposed amendments approved by the Constitution Committee and/or Executive Board must be presented to the IBC membership and must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by all members voting before being adapted to this Constitution.

**Article VIII
INSPECTION OF RECORDS**

SECTION 1

Records and/or minutes of The Congress shall be available for inspection by any member at each Annual Membership Meeting. Any member in good standing may request an inspection of the records and/or minutes of The Congress at any other time by submitting a request in writing to the President of The Congress. The member desiring the inspection shall be responsible for any costs in copying and shipping the records and/or minutes. All records and/or minutes of The Congress shall be sent to the requesting member within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the request.

SECTION 2

Records and/or minutes of The Congress from the current fiscal year, excluding convention records and/or minutes, shall be made available during the Annual Membership Meeting.

**Article IX
DISSOLUTION OF THE CONGRESS**

SECTION 1

Only the President or a member of the E-Board may submit a proposal to dissolve The Congress. The reason(s) for dissolution will be presented to the E-Board for a "Vote of Dissolution". If ¾ of the E-Board vote in favor of the proposal, the E-Board will submit a ballot to the entire IBC membership within the next sixty (60) days by any of the following methods: (1) publication in the next regularly scheduled issue of both the electronic and mailed paper FLARE!; (2) if the publication is not available, a ballot will be placed on the IBC Website and also mailed to those members who would normally receive their ballot by means of a mailed paper FLARE!; or (3) a ballot mailed to all members in the event that FLARE! and the IBC website are not available. The ballot should contain the reason(s) for the dissolution. Ballots will be returned within sixty (60) days to the IBC Secretary, or the most senior ranking member of the E-Board at the time of the dissolution. Dissolution of The Congress shall require a ¾ majority approval from all members responding.

SECTION 2

In the event of the dissolution of The Congress the distribution of all funds after all debts are paid shall comply with IRS Regulation 501(c)7. Distribution of records and assets of The Congress, **excluding the Gene Lucas Fund**, shall be determined by a simple majority vote of the IBC E-Board. After all bills are paid, the E-Board will send what assets are left to a non-profit organization.

SECTION 3

If the IBC dissolves, any money that is left in the Gene Lucas Fund will be sent to Drake University, in honor of Gene Lucas.

**Article X
RULES OF ORDER**

ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER REVISED, except when the same conflicts with this Constitution or its By-Laws and Standards, shall be used in the proceedings of ALL meetings of The Congress. These meetings shall include, but not be limited to, Executive Board meetings, Membership meetings, and Judging Board meetings.

BY-LAWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BETTA CONGRESS

**By-Law Article I
MEMBERSHIPS**

SECTION 1

The types of membership in The Congress are:

- A. Individual;
- B. Family (all members of one residence with a maximum of two votes per membership);
- C. Corresponding (available only to other fish hobby organizations or commercial entities);
- D. Junior (under the age of 16)
- E. Lifetime

SECTION 2

Corresponding members receive a mailed or online copy of FLARE! only. They receive no other IBC benefits.

SECTION 3

Established dues for membership in The Congress are posted in each issue of FLARE! and on the IBC website. The current membership dues shall be updated as necessary. Notice of any changes shall be published in FLARE! and/or on the IBC website at least sixty (60) days before the change shall be effective.

SECTION 4

Annual membership dues shall be determined by the Executive Board with a majority vote of approval by the members present at an Annual Membership Business Meeting and shall be payable to the Secretary on the anniversary of his/her initial membership.

SECTION 5

A dues increase will not apply to a person with a valid, active membership until that person's membership is up for renewal.

SECTION 6

With the exception of Corresponding Members, all new members shall receive a membership package, either electronically or by regular mail depending on membership class, part of which includes a copy of the IBC Membership Handbook and Exhibition Standards.

SECTION 7

Any member failing to renew membership after sixty days (60) of anniversary of his/her renewal date shall be dropped from the membership of The Congress and immediately forfeit any elected or appointed position.

SECTION 8

The Executive Board, by adoption of a business proposition, may reprimand, suspend, or terminate the membership of any member for actions deemed not in the best interests of The Congress. Such acts will include, but not be limited to:

- A. Misuse of advertising privileges in FLARE!.
- B. Violation of the Constitution, By-Laws, Standards, or Committee Procedures.
- C. Misuse, misappropriation, or misrepresentation in the handling of IBC funds or IBC administrative positions.
- D. Failure to turn over to The Congress all of the IBC property as instructed by the Executive Board.
- E. Violation of the Code of Ethics.

Any member charged will receive a written summary of the charge(s) from the President, which will include the intent of the Executive Board. The member will have thirty (30) days in which to answer or rectify the charge(s). After the thirty (30) day period, the President will submit a business proposition to the Executive Board to act on the disposition of the member's case. A three-quarter (3/4) vote of the Executive Board is necessary to pass any proposition.

A member expelled from The Congress will not be allowed membership in The Congress unless that person is either cleared of the original charge(s), or the person makes restitution for the wrongdoing(s). If an expelled member is cleared of the original charge(s), membership in The Congress will be automatically reinstated provided the individual's membership dues are up-to-date. Reinstatement following restitution will require a three-quarter (3/4) approval by the Executive Board.

**By-Law Article II
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - "CONVENTION"**

SECTION 1

The Annual Membership Meeting shall be held every year during the month of June. Notice of the proposed agenda of the next Annual Membership Meeting shall be published in the **Mar/Apr/May** FLARE!, and on the IBC web site at least sixty (60) days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

SECTION 2

The site and sponsor of a convention shall be determined at least one (1) year in advance. Any chapter of The Congress desiring to sponsor a convention shall submit its invitation in writing to the Secretary at least **one hundred twenty (120)** days prior to the next convention. These invitations shall be published **in the FLARE! preceding the convention**, on the IBC Website and on the ballot. If there is only one (1) site on the ballot, the submitting club will host the next convention.

In the event IBC members attending the Annual Membership Business Meeting cannot determine the next convention site, the Executive Board and Judging Board will have to decide what course of action to take by October 31. Such action could include the possibility of no convention.

SECTION 3

Any tropical fish club or society not a chapter of The Congress may submit an invitation to sponsor a convention using the same procedures as in Section 2 of this Article, but will be considered only if there is no chapter of The Congress wishing to sponsor that convention.

SECTION 4

In conjunction with each Annual Membership Meeting there shall be a betta show conducted under IBC rules, an Executive Board meeting, a Judging Board meeting, meetings of standing committees, and workshops.

**By-Law Article III
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP BUSINESS MEETING**

SECTION 1

IBC members attending this meeting shall have one (1) vote, or two (2) votes for family memberships, on all business matters presented. However votes on amendments to the IBC Constitution and/or By-Laws, and the election of Executive and Judging Board members are not taken at the annual membership meeting, but are voted on by means of mail-in and e-mail voting. The ballots for these excepted items are to be published in the **Mar/April/May** issue of FLARE! and on the IBC website. and on the IBC Website. If FLARE! is late, a separate mailing to the membership will take place no later than April 15th.

SECTION 2

The purpose of this meeting is to conduct business of The Congress according to the Constitution, By-laws, and Standards of The Congress. All proposals, except for amendments to the IBC Constitution and/or by-laws, and election of Executive Board and Judging Board members, shall be accepted or rejected by a simple majority vote, or referred to committee.

SECTION 3

The President shall cause a mail-in ballot to be prepared and sent to all members of The Congress. Ballots shall be handled by any of the following methods: (1) publication in the March/April issue of FLARE!, both the electronic and mailed paper copy; (2) a ballot will be put in electronic format and distributed by membership emailing; or (3) a hard-copy ballot mailed to all members in the event that FLARE! and the electronic format are not available.

SECTION 4

The ballots shall include brief instructions and a description of the amendments to be voted upon, and shall list all nominees for elected positions.

SECTION 5

The completed ballots shall be returned by the members to an individual designated by the Executive Board, and whose name and address shall appear on the ballot. This designated individual cannot be a candidate for office or a member of the household of a candidate, and shall hand carry the ballots, unopened, to the designated Ballot Counting Committee. If the designated individual is unable to deliver the ballots to the Ballot Counting Committee, the unopened ballots shall be delivered to the Ballot Counting Committee at the convention by whatever practical means are available. Members may hand carry their ballots to the convention and present them to the Ballot Counting Committee any time prior to the start of ballot counting.

SECTION 6

The special Ballot Counting Committee shall consist of four (4) unrelated members in good standing of The Congress, one of whom shall be an Executive Board member, appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board. This committee shall be dissolved at the conclusion of the Annual Membership Business Meeting. Members of the special Ballot Counting Committee may not be candidates for office, or members of the household of a candidate. Three (3) members of this committee shall independently tally the votes from all ballots while not knowing who the members voting are. The fourth committee member without knowing how members vote shall compare the members voting with the most recent IBC membership list and disqualify any ballots whose names are not on the list. All three (3) vote counting members must agree on all vote tallies before the results may be announced at the Annual Membership Business Meeting. No member of the Ballot Counting Committee may divulge any information about how any member voted. Election results are to be documented in writing and signed by all members of the Ballot Counting Committee.

SECTION 7

Each ballot received must be signed or include that member's name, or in the case of a family membership both signatures or the name of the persons voting. This identification shall be used by the Ballot Counting Committee solely to verify that no individual has voted more than once. In the event that an individual or family has submitted excess ballots, the extra ballots shall be randomly removed and disallowed. The IBC Membership Committee shall make the current IBC Membership List available to the Ballot Counting Committee.

SECTION 8

A ballot identical to the one in FLARE! will be put in electronic format and distributed by membership emailing when the printed ballot in FLARE! is mailed. Ballots will also be collected at the General Convention. Members have the choice to vote by hard-copy ballot or electronic ballot, but not both.

A person who is not running for office, nor has anyone in their family running for office, is to be designated by the E-Board to receive the ballots. Their email address shall be publicized to the members. For Electronic ballots, that person shall print out the ballot, write the member's name on the front of an envelope, black out the member's name on the ballot and place the ballot in the envelope and seal it. Ballots received by mail shall be delivered to the Ballot Counting Committee unopened.

A date, at least one week prior to the convention, will be published to the membership as the final date the ballots, both email and postal ground mail, will be received to be counted. The ballots will be presented to the Ballot Counting Committee at convention to be counted with the mail-in ballots.

SECTION 9

The Nominations **Task Force** shall request nominations by a date that will allow an initial list of nominees in the **Dec/Jan/Feb** issue of FLARE! and/or on the IBC website. The Nominations Committee shall set a date for the acceptance of nominations that will allow the mailing of ballots in the **Mar/April/May** issue of FLARE! . In order to expedite this process, those members who are nominating a person for office **MUST** contact that member to verify that the member will accept the nomination. The nominee **MUST** personally notify the nominations chair that he/she accepts the nomination. All nominees to the Judging Board must be a certified judge for at least one year. Nominees will send their platforms directly to the Editor of FLARE!, according to the Editor's guidelines. **Nominees who do not submit a platform will be assumed to have withdrawn from the election.**

SECTION 10

The Executive Board shall insure that proposed amendments to the IBC Constitution, which were submitted in accordance with the IBC Constitution provisions, are to be included in the ballot.

SECTION 11

The Constitution Committee shall insure that proposed amendments to the IBC By-Laws, which were submitted to the committee no later than the published deadline date for the **Dec/Jan/Feb** FLARE!, are published in the **Mar/Apr/May** FLARE! and included in the ballot.

SECTION 12

Terms of office for the newly elected members of the Executive Board and Judging Board shall begin at the close of the Annual Membership Business Meeting.

SECTION 13

Immediately following an E-Board election, the E-Board shall have an E-Board meeting and appoint one E-Board member to be on the J-Board for the two-year term. If that member is a certified judge, he or she shall be a voting member. If not a certified judge, then he or she will be a non-voting member.

**By-Law Article IV
EXECUTIVE BOARD**

SECTION 1

One (1) more than half of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum for the conducting of business at any Executive Board Meeting. For all business of the meeting, the act of the majority of the members present shall constitute an act of the Executive Board. Each board member shall have one (1) vote on all matters of business. Not more than one (1) member of an immediate family may serve on the Executive Board at the same time.

SECTION 2

In the case of an Executive Board meeting that does not receive a quorum attendance, the Board members present may discuss any business that is on the agenda and send a report of discussions to the remaining Board members.

SECTION 3

Any member of the Executive Board (other than the President) who desires to resign shall submit a letter of intent to the President. When the person desiring to resign is the President, a letter of intent is to be submitted to the Executive Board. It is the recommendation of the membership that any Executive Board member who does not feel able to carry out assigned duties should unhesitatingly resign in this manner.

SECTION 4

Any vacancy on the Executive Board other than that of the President shall be filled by a member of The Congress nominated by the President as quickly as possible. If the vacancy is that of the President, the Vice-President shall assume the position of the President for the remainder of the term of the vacant presidency and appoint a Vice-President. If the President and Vice-President positions become simultaneously vacant, further ascendancy to the Office of President shall be by the Secretary, followed by the Treasurer.

Vacancies on the Executive Board.

- A. Unless otherwise provided, a vacancy shall exist on the Executive Board when a member ceases to be a member for any reason save replacement by election.
- B. With the exception of replacing any General Member-at-Large which is covered in Constitution Article III, Section 7, the President shall name one (1) or more nominees to fill any vacancy that may occur within thirty (30) days of the creation of the vacancy. After thirty (30) days the appointment becomes the responsibility of the entire Executive Board. Those named must possess all of the qualifications required of nominees for regular elections to the Executive Board.
- C. Appointment to fill the vacancy shall be contingent upon confirmation by a majority vote of the incumbent members of the Executive Board. The President shall not vote in this matter.
- D. The appointee shall hold office until the next Annual Membership Business Meeting, at which time an election shall be held.
- E. The President shall contact each Executive Board member to discuss or bring forth propositions, as the President deems advisable. Failure to respond to several requests for input in a timely manner without extenuating circumstances is a sign that an Executive Board member is not fulfilling his/her duties. In general, extenuating circumstances will be defined clearly as a medical or personal nature, which affects the member from performing his/her duties. The President shall contact the Executive Board member in question. If the member in question has not made contact within the thirty (30) day period, it shall be grounds of removal of that member unless a majority of the remaining members of the Executive Board finds that extenuating circumstances are present. Any member of the Executive Board may propose removal of a member of the Executive Board, but removal can only be implemented by a four/fifths (4/5) vote of those on the Executive Board not under threat of removal. If the removed member of the Executive Board is the Judging Board Chairperson, the members of the Judging Board must be notified of the vacancy. In this case, the vacancy shall be filled by an election held by the members of the Judging Board. The selection cannot be the member previously removed from the Executive Board.

SECTION 5

The Executive Board shall obtain the services of a CPA to prepare all tax documents required to be filed with the Internal Revenue Service.

SECTION 6

The Executive Board shall approve or disapprove presidential nominations of committee chairpersons and other members by a majority vote. The Executive Board shall be empowered to act in any matter which they deem necessary for the benefit of the Congress.

**By-Law Article V
DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS**

SECTION 1

The PRESIDENT shall be Chairperson of the Executive Board and shall preside as Chairperson of all meetings of The Congress. The President shall review, on a continuing basis, ALL phases of operation of The Congress.

SECTION 2

The VICE PRESIDENT shall assist the President and shall perform all duties assigned by the President. The Vice President, in the absence of the President, shall preside at all meetings of The Congress.

SECTION 3

The SECRETARY shall record the minutes of all Annual Membership and Executive Board meetings and shall submit within thirty (30) days a copy of the minutes to the Editor for publication in the FLARE! and the IBC website.. The Secretary shall keep a current record of all members in The Congress by name and address. This list will be provided by the Membership Chairperson on a monthly basis. All correspondence other than membership inquiries shall be forwarded to the President for disposition and/or reply. The Secretary shall preserve and make proper disposition of all correspondence as directed by the President.

SECTION 4

The Treasurer is responsible for all accounts of the IBC including any financial budgets the E-Board may adopt. The TREASURER shall promptly record and deposit to the bank of The Congress all monies received in its name, and shall pay all expenditures as provided for in Article X of the By-Laws. The Treasurer shall prepare a financial report on a semi-annual basis for the Executive Board, a preliminary Annual Report to be presented at the Annual Membership Business Meeting, and a final fiscal year financial report in the **Jun/Jul/Aug** issue of FLARE! and the IBC website.. The Treasurer shall be responsible for preparing and filing any tax return required by the Internal Revenue Code. Prior to completing his/her term of office, the Treasurer shall submit all auction proceeds from the convention to involved members, prepare and file any necessary tax return, close the accounting record for the past fiscal year, terminate any locally maintained checking or savings account (except for amounts necessary to cover outstanding checks), and forward to the new Treasurer all financial records and IBC monies.

SECTION 5

The Judging Board, headed by the Chair, will ensure that the following duties are assigned and coordinated for the overall IBC show program, and among specific areas each year, with committees being formed as needed to get these actions done: Judges' Certification and Records, IBC Show Scheduling, IBC Points Registrar, Judges' Training, and the IBC Show Standards ("the Judging Manual"). The Judging Board Chair shall consider complaints and suggestions concerning the IBC show program on a continuing basis. The Judging Board Chair is an ex-officio member of all Judging Board committees and shall appoint and replace as necessary all chairs and/or members for the Judging Board committees.

Section 6: If an IBC Area has enough members, shows, and judges, they are encouraged to form a Representative Sub-Committee to address the specific needs of the Area. This Representative Area Board will be under the direction of the elected Area Representative (and any additional general JB members from that Area), and their duties will be a subset of the Judging Board, specific to that Area. i.e. Judges' Certification and Records, IBC Show Scheduling, IBC Points Registrar, Judges' Training, IBC Show Standards ("the Judging Manual").

**By-Law Article VI
JUDGING BOARD**

SECTION 1

The Judging Board shall have an internally elected Chairperson whose responsibilities shall include filing an annual report of activities of the Judging Board to the Executive Board during the Annual Membership Meeting and a report to the membership at the Annual Membership Business Meeting. Also, a report is to be submitted to the Executive Board and to the Editor for publication in the FLARE! and/or the IBC website within thirty (30) days after all meetings of the Judging Board. The Chairperson shall be elected annually at the first meeting of the Judging Board after the Annual Membership Business Meeting.

SECTION 2

The Judging Board shall have and shall maintain a Standard to the Constitution of The Congress. This Standard shall contain a detail of all responsibilities of the Judging Board including Guidelines, Show Rules, Show Classes, Judging Standards, and Judge Certification, making sure that it does not conflict with or repeat the Constitution, By-Laws or other Standards of The Congress. This Standard shall be available to all members of The Congress as a part of the membership package.

SECTION 3

The Judging Board shall conduct training classes and examination for members of The Congress who wish certification as an official IBC Judge.

SECTION 4

Judging Board members should attend at least one convention during their 2 year term unless the reason for absence is approved by the current board.

The failure of a member of the Judging Board to participate regularly in JB discussions (online or in person) and vote regularly on topics brought up before the JB shall be grounds for automatic removal of that member from the Judging Board, unless the reasons for the absences are unanimously accepted by the remainder of the Judging Board.

SECTION 5

The Judging Board has sole jurisdiction over the standards of Betta judging, including the descriptions of Betta classes, rules to be followed by judges, and the designation of the classes. Procedures for Judge certification, recertification and decertification are also solely within the jurisdiction of the Judging Board. The Judging Board shall serve as the primary agent of The Congress in all matters pertaining to the exhibition of Bettas. That includes the rules and procedures to be followed by the local Show Committees, the awarding of points to winners, and administrative requirements. Changes in show-related matters (excluding judging) shall be forwarded to the Executive Board for their concurrence. Granting IBC sanction for proposed show rests with the Chairperson of the Judging Board.

SECTION 6

The Chairperson of the Judging Board shall conduct business with each of the remaining members of the Judging Board via the approved group meeting site which is normally a closed web group, stating propositions for a vote and discussion of other business as the Chairperson deems advisable. Each member of the Judging Board shall respond within the time frame allocated by the Chairperson. The failure of a member of the Judging Board to respond to a Chairperson's request without prior notice of an absence, within the prescribed time limit for 3 times shall be grounds for removal of that member.

In the event that it is necessary to remove a member of the Judging Board for failure to comply with the requirements of this section, the chairperson shall notify by registered mail, the involved member of the Judging Board of his/her failure to abide by the requirements of this Section. The Chairperson shall provide notice to the involved member and will notify the remaining members of the Judging Board when the letter is sent, that the member is in non compliance. Unless a majority of the remaining members of the Judging Board finds that extenuating circumstances are present, the removal of the involved member shall be automatic.

The Judging Board will maintain an active and ongoing discussion throughout the year by use of the IBC forum or other electronic means. All members of the Judging Board should have access to the forum or other online locations. In the event of temporary access issues, the Judging Board member should notify the Chair or Vice Chair of their temporary absence, and arrangements made. Continual non-participation in JB discussions or voting are grounds for removal - see Section 4. All votes are required to have 'abstain' as an option so members can vote, even if there is a reason the member cannot select one of the options. For online voting purposes, for a vote to be valid, a "quorum" shall consist of a majority of the six (6) generally elected members and half of the Area Representatives. (i.e. if there are 4 Area Representatives, the quorum number will be 6 - 4 general members and 2 Area Reps) (All Area Representatives are still expected to vote on all issues.)

SECTION 7

Any member of the Judging Board (other than the Judging Board Chairperson) who desires to resign shall submit a letter of intent to the Judging Board Chairperson. When a person desiring to resign is the Judging Board Chairperson a letter is submitted to each member of the Judging Board. It is the recommendation of the membership that any Judging Board member who does not feel able to carry out assigned duties should resign in this manner without hesitation. The resignation of the Judging Board Chairperson from the position as Chairperson does not include resignation from the Judging Board unless specifically so stated in the document of resignation.

SECTION 8

Any member of the Judging Board may be removed from office for failure to fulfill the responsibilities designated by the Constitution, By-Laws and Standards of The Congress. Removal of a member of the Judging Board may be proposed by any member of the Judging Board, but removal can only be implemented by a 4/5 vote to remove a judge from the Judging Board. Removal of the Judging Board Chairperson is covered in By-Law Article IV, Section 4E. The vacancy should be advertised on the IBC website and Flare.

**By-Law Article VII
COMMITTEES**

SECTION 1

The President shall appoint a Chairperson that has been approved by the EB for each Committee. A new President can appoint the same Chairpersons to continue, or replace them with other appointees. A President can replace a Chairperson due to a vacancy, resignation, or removal resulting from the failure of the Chairperson to fulfill his/her Committee obligations. Committee Chairpersons

can select as many other IBC members as are deemed necessary to serve as Committee members. The President and Vice-President are ex-officio of all committees. In the event that a Standing Committee exceeds the needs of a specific task, a limited-duration Task Force may be formed instead.

SECTION 2

A Committee Chairperson wishing to resign shall submit a letter of intent to the President for immediate disposition.

SECTION 3

The duties of the Committees are:

- A. The **FINANCE COMMITTEE** shall consist of at least two (2) Executive Board members other than the Treasurer, who shall serve as Chairperson. The FINANCE COMMITTEE'S duties are to assist the Treasurer in the fulfillment of his/her duties.
- B. The **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE** shall maintain a current record of all members of The Congress and provide this list to members of the Executive Board, the Judging Board, the FLARE! Editor, and requesting IBC Committee Chairpersons. The Membership Chairperson will process all new membership applications, renewals and forward monies collected to the Treasurer. On the anniversary of renewal, members will be sent a reminder notice. New members will be mailed, or provided on-line, a membership package consisting of the IBC Handbook and other IBC related items. Individuals whose memberships have lapsed, but renew within five (5) years of the lapsed date will not be sent a Membership Package unless they specifically request it.
- C. **Sub-Committees of the Membership Committee:**
- D. The **CHAPTERS COMMITTEE** shall consist of the chairperson and one (1) member from each chapter of The Congress. This committee shall concern itself with technical assistance to all chapters and prospective chapters of The Congress. This committee shall hold a meeting in conjunction with the Annual Membership Meeting, with each chapter having one (1) vote in all matters of chapter business, including the Chapter Guidelines.
- E. The **PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE** under the direction of the Executive Board shall be responsible for the **maintenance and** publishing of **all** official publications of The Congress. Any and all business of The Congress which requires notification of the membership shall be published in the FLARE! and on the IBC Web Site. The validity of any published business shall not in any way be affected by the failure of any member to receive or to read the notice.
- F. **Sub Committees of the Publications Committee:**
 - a. The **FLARE COMMITTEE** shall be responsible for the assembly and production of FLARE! which shall be distributed without charge to the membership not less than four (4) issues per year.
 - b. The **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE** shall assemble and maintain a library dealing with all areas of Betta research. It shall render technical assistance to members upon request.
 - c. The **ARCHIVES COMMITTEE** shall maintain the Archives of The Congress for the purposes of storing historical and current material concerning the activities of The Congress. This committee shall provide to any member copies of material from the archives within thirty (30) days of receiving a written request for such material. This committee shall be allowed to charge for the cost of copying and mailing material at a rate to be set by the Executive Committee. Upon appointment of a new chairperson of the Archives Committee, the outgoing chairperson shall within thirty (30) days transmit the originals of all documents to the new chairperson with the cost of the mailing to be borne by The Congress. The Secretary shall transmit copies of all Presidential Committee and Executive Reports and all other written material available to the Secretary of The Congress and its activities to the Chairperson of the Archives Committee.
- G. The **PROGRAMS COMMITTEE** shall be responsible for maintaining all **member benefit programs** of The Congress.
Sub Committees of the Programs Committee:
 - a. The **CONVENTION COMMITTEE** shall consist of members who have experience on helping to put on an IBC Convention. They will be available to answer questions from members who are considering hosting an IBC Convention. They will also be responsible for maintaining a Convention Manual that explains the work needed to put on a successful convention.
 - b. **The AWARDS COMMITTEE** shall be responsible for the purchase and distribution of all Year End Show Awards as delineated in the IBC Standards and verified by the Registrar of the Judging Board. Prior to the start of the Convention the Awards Committee Chairperson shall mail all of these Year End Showing Awards to either to the Convention Show Chair or to the hotel where the Convention is to be held.
- H. The **RESEARCH AND GRANT COMMITTEE** shall have the responsibility of reviewing all requests for research projects involving the Betta. The chairperson of this committee shall submit its recommendations to the Executive Board for ratification. Research grants may be awarded, but are not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1000), and then only if The Congress treasury will not be depleted to less than three thousand dollars (\$3000). Research grants and guidelines shall be prepared, reviewed, and updated as necessary by this Committee. A request for a grant shall have a grant outline detailing pertinent facts regarding the request and shall be forwarded to the chairperson of this committee. This committee shall have at least one (1) member with a scientific background. This committee shall also direct all scientific investigation conducted with funds granted by The Congress and shall administer any Technical Article Award given by The Congress.
- I. The **NOMINATIONS TASK FORCE** shall be required to perform their duties as described in Article III Section 8 of the By-Laws.
- J. The **CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE** shall conduct a continual analysis and review of the current Constitution and By-laws of The Congress for possible changes. The Constitution Committee must follow the procedure for accepting proposals as stated in the Constitution Article VII, Section 1. **This committee is tasked with maintenance and updates to the IBC Handbook on a yearly basis.**

COMMITTEES OF THE JUDGING BOARD

- A. The **JUDGING BOARD COMMITTEE ON JUDGES' TRAINING** shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the Judging Board Chairperson. The chairperson of the committee shall be a member of the Judging Board. The chairperson of this committee is responsible for the development and presentation of the Judges' Training Seminars I, II, and III, the written and visual test. The chairperson is also responsible for furnishing appropriate test results and seminar records to the chairperson of the committee on Judges' Certification. In addition to the chairperson, at least two (2) of the members of this committee must be Certified Judges. The committee is responsible for the development of judge training programs in all interested areas and countries and related duties as prescribed by the Judging Board Chairperson.
- B. The **JUDGING BOARD COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS** shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the Committee Chairperson. Two of the members must be Certified Judges. The committee is charged with the publication and distribution of the Judging Standards to the membership, review of the show classes, preparation of proposals of any class changes, development of Judging Standards in the language of any group showing an interest in the exhibition or study of Bettas, and related duties as prescribed by the Judging Board Chairperson. The committee shall maintain a Standard to the Constitution of The Congress. This Standard shall contain a detail of all responsibilities of the Judging Board, including guidelines, show rules and classes, judging standards, and judge certification, making sure that it does not conflict with or repeat the Constitution, By- laws, and/or other Standards of The Congress. This Standard shall be available to all members of The Congress as part of the membership package.
- C. **JUDGING BOARD COMMITTEE ON MAINTENANCE OF JUDGES' CERTIFICATION** - The chairperson of this committee is charged with the maintenance of all records of certification and apprenticeships. The committee shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the Judging Board Chairperson, including at least two certified judges. The committee is also charged with the development and administration of the Open Book Test, the Advanced Judges' Seminar, and other items available for maintenance of Judges Certification. They are also responsible for any related duties as prescribed by the Judging Board Chairperson.
- D. The **SPECIES MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE** shall be responsible for the continual education, identification and propagation of wild Betta species. The committee shall assemble and maintain literature on wild Bettas and shall maintain a composite listing of available Betta species.
- E. **VIRTUAL SHOWS COMMITTEE – is responsible for the rules and organization of the World wide Virtual Shows.**
- F. **KIDS SHOWS CIRCUIT COMMITTEE – is responsible for the rules and organization of the Kids Show Circuit.**

AREA YEAR END SHOW AWARDS

The Area Year End Show Awards **MAY** include the following: Areas may name these awards for their own historical betta people.

1. **GRAND CHAMPION AWARD** (Trophy or Plaque) – for the exhibitor with the greatest total of international show points within a show year.
2. **TOP 20** – The 2nd through 20th exhibitors ranked by respective international show point totals for a show year. The top 20 awards may be plaques, trophies, ribbons, or certificates.. Note: in some areas 2nd place is called the Reserve Grand Champion.
3. **VARIETY CHAMPIONSHIP** – One (1) award for first place (most accumulated points in the show year) in each division. Awards may be plaques, trophies, ribbons, or certificates.
4. **PRESIDENT'S TROPHY OR PLAQUE** – One (1) award for the exhibitor who wins the most points at the Convention Show. This award is usually presented by the IBC President.
5. **TOP COLLECTOR EXHIBITORS** ranked by respective international show point totals for a show year may be awarded. (at least top one but an area could chose to give more depending on participation). An Area can decide how many places to award. The first place should be a plaque or trophy. The other places may be plaques, trophies, ribbons or certificates by area choice.
6. **MOST BEST OF SHOWS AWARD:** One (1) award for the exhibitor who won the most Best of Show points during the show year.
Note: In Area 1 this award is called the Warren Young Memorial Award.
7. **ARTIST AWARD** – One (1) award for the most popular entry in the Art Variety Classes (Photography, Illustration, and Crafts) as determined at Convention by vote of attendees viewing the show. *Note: In Area 1 this award is called the Walt Maurus Award.*
8. Districts, Countries and Local clubs may also give awards of their own.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

The AWARDS COMMITTEE shall also be responsible for the acceptance of nominations, purchase, and distribution of *Special Recognition Awards*. A request for nominations will be posted on the IBC website list after January 1st, and also published in the **Dec/Jan/Feb** issue of FLARE!. Individuals and chapters to be considered for these awards may be nominated by any member of The Congress in good standing. Nominations will be accepted by the Awards Committee Chairperson, either written or electronically, by midnight March 31st. and shall include at least 3 of the criteria for that award to establish the nominee's qualifications for the specific award.

Nominations for a member or chapter for a Special Recognition Award must include a brief description of the actions and/ or accomplishments that demonstrate the nominee's qualification for the minimum criteria for that particular award. The Awards Committee Chairperson will notify the nominator if it is determined that the nominee is NOT qualified for the award.

A ballot containing the nominations for Fellow of the Congress, Betta Person of the Year, Outstanding Service and Chapter of the Year will be sent to each Fellow of the Congress, **members of the Judging Board and Members of the Executive Board**. no later than April 15th. **Each person voting is entitled to one vote only, regardless of the number of positions that the member may hold.** Electronic means will be used where possible, with the remaining ballots to be sent by regular mail. The deadline for return of the ballots to the Awards Committee Chairperson will be midnight April 30th.

The recipients of these awards shall not be disclosed, except to the Awards Committee, until their presentation during the Annual Convention Banquet. Recipients not in attendance will be shipped their award via insured means.

The cost of these awards shall not exceed 110% of the prior year's award costs, except as applies to new awards.

- Every area may submit nominees. See the IBC Constitution excerpts below for details.
- Nominations for a member or chapter for a Special Recognition Award must include a brief description of the actions and/or accomplishments that demonstrate the nominee's qualification for the minimum criteria for that particular award. The Awards Committee Chairperson will notify the nominator if it is determined that the nominee is NOT qualified for the award.
- **All Nominees must be members of the IBC and all Chapters nominated must be current with the Chapters Committee with a minimum of 5 members.**
- **A ballot containing the nominations for the Special Recognition Awards** will be sent on April 15. Voting will be done by members of the Executive Board, Judging Board, and Fellows of the Congress who are still IBC members. Each person voting is entitled to one vote only, regardless of the number of positions that the member may hold.
- Electronic means will be used where possible, with the remaining ballots to be sent by regular mail. The deadline for return of the Awards ballots to the Awards Committee Chairperson will be midnight April 30th.
- **Nominees for all Special Recognition Awards must be current members of the IBC.**
- **IBC Special Recognition Awards should be for activity at district or area or international levels. Clubs are encouraged to separately recognize members for local activity.**
- Nominations will be accepted by the Awards Committee Chairperson, either written or electronically, by midnight March 31st. and shall include criteria for that award to establish the nominee's qualifications for the specific award.
- **NOTE; ANY NOMINATION WITHOUT SUPPORTING STATEMENT WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED**

The Special Recognition Awards are

1. GENE LUCAS CONGRESSIONAL AWARD OF MERIT –Awarded when warranted. This is the highest award given by the IBC and should only be awarded when warranted. **When warranted" means it is not presented every year but only when a person has risen to exceptional service to the organization** It shall be made on the basis of the following criteria:

Must be a member of The Congress;

Must have made exceptional contributions to the IBC;

Nominations can be made by any member of the Executive Board, Judging Board, or Fellows of The Congress.

Only awarded one time in someone's lifetime.

Must be to someone who has bred and exhibited bettas (can apply to Spendens and Wild Species)

Minimum 10 years membership

Must include being a breeder and exhibitor in IBC shows

In addition to above, the recipient must have at least 5 years active participation at Area or international level in at least 3 of the following categories

1a. serving on Executive and/or Judging boards

1b. building chapters and membership

1c. articles for Flare

1d. judging

1f. developing new lines

1g. maintaining lines or species

1h. hosting shows and/or convention.

1i. Past recipient of receiving Fellow of the Congress.

2. FELLOW OF THE CONGRESS - This award is only awarded one time in someone's lifetime.) . The selection of the Fellow of The Congress, when warranted, applies to those who have been members of The Congress for at least four years with experience in breeding and showing Bettas (can apply to Spendens and Wild Species). In addition to above, it shall be made on the basis of a minimum of three (3) from the following criteria.

- 2a. Performance of outstanding service toward the improvement of The Congress
- 2b. Active participation in the affairs of The Congress
- 2c. Active participation in the district, area and/or international levels;
- 2d. Active participation in the local society functions.
- 2e. Distinction for promotion of the Betta hobby at the district, area and/or international levels.

Note: There can be multiple Fellows awarded in any given year but not more than 2 per area.

3. BETTA PERSON OF THE YEAR – **Only up to ONE PER AREA PER YEAR.** To qualify to award this award an area must have at least 3 shows with a formal area meeting separately or at any of the shows.

The recipient can only earn this award one time every five (5) years. The recipient must have experience in breeding and showing bettas (can apply to Spendens and Wild Species). In addition to above, the selection of Betta Person of the Year shall be made on the basis of a minimum of three (3) from the following criteria at the area and/or international levels:

- 3a. Excellence in the development of a Betta strain;
- 3b. Exhibit participation in shows
- 3c. Results of selective breeding;
- 3d. Contributions to The Congress.

4. OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD - Recipients cannot repeat for the same service. (note could get it for one thing in one year and for another thing in another year). The recipients of this award shall be on the basis of

- 4a. outstanding service performed for the benefit of The Congress at the district, area and/or international levels.
- 4b. Service should be throughout a show year for multiple events including in-person shows, virtual shows, meetings, conventions, celebrations and other public events, serving as committee chair, district rep., etc.

5. OUTSTANDING SPOUSE OR SIGNIFICANT OTHER – - Allow one per Area per year.

The recipient of this award shall be on the basis of

- 5a. Must be a member of the Congress.
- 5b. outstanding service performed in helping a spouse or significant other in performing tasks such as hosting shows, conventions, meetings or any other activity, etc. for the benefit of the Congress.
- 5c. Any other special quality that should be recognized
- 5d. Service should be throughout a show year for multiple events including in-person shows, virtual shows, meetings, conventions, celebrations and other public events
- 5e. recipient would not otherwise be involved except helping spouse (not yet active or involved independently in district, area or international levels and not yet a certified judge).
- 5f. Person can only receive this ONE time in lifetime.

6. ANNUAL FLARE! AWARDS – One (1) or two (2) awards as determined by the FLARE! Editor and Committee. Could include Author of the Year, Article of the Year, or recognition of work within the committee such as translation, compiling Flare, etc.

7. JUDGING BOARD AWARDS: THESE ARE nominated and determined by Judging Board WHEN WARRENTED. These are also referenced under Judging Board in the Constitution.

8. CHAPTER OF THE YEAR - **Limited to ONE Chapter of the Year per Area in any given year. Nominees must be current chapter meeting the requirement of 5 IBC members and filed with the Chapters Chair. To qualify to award Chapter of the Year an area must have at least 3 shows and a formal meeting separately or at one of the shows. A given chapter cannot repeat more than one time every 3 years.**

The selection of the Chapter of the Year shall be made on the basis of a minimum of three (3) from the following criteria:

- 9a. Local growth in IBC membership;
- 9b. Maintenance and development of the Betta genus by a group;
- 9c. Participation in international and district activities, such as the hosting of shows, district meetings, seminars and conventions;
- 9d. Unusual services to the hobby, such as publication of the "Species Maintenance Report" or a district-wide newsletter;
- 9e. Support of other IBC chapters and their activities

**By-Law Article VIII
OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS OF THE CONGRESS**

SECTION 1

FLARE!, the IBC website, and a membership-specific email list shall be the official publications of The Congress. FLARE! shall be the print publication either on paper and/or electronically. The IBC website shall be the official IBC presence with a section open to the public. There shall also be a section of the website for members-only where members can download official publications. The membership email list shall be the official members-only email communications for items outside Flare!. All official rules, standards, Constitution and/or By-Law changes shall be published in FLARE! and announced by the membership email list. Any changes become effective when announced on either of the publications. Other communication tools (online or otherwise) can be used as the IBC sees fit. **Other social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram shall not be considered an official publication but shall be used for informal communications among members of the IBC and the general public.**

SECTION 2

The format and content of FLARE! shall be the responsibility of the Editor under the direction of the Executive Board.

SECTION 3

The minutes, annual and interim reports of all meetings of The Congress shall be published in the **Jun/Jul/Aug** FLARE! within ninety (90) days of receipt by the Editor and on the IBC website.

SECTION 4

Current and/or past printed issues of FLARE! may be requested by members and if available, will be sent to those providing mailing costs.

**By-Law Article IX
AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS**

SECTION 1

Any member of The Congress may propose amendments to these by-laws by submitting the same in writing to the Constitution Committee Chairperson.

SECTION 2

The by-laws may be amended in one of the following ways:

- By a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of all members through mail-in ballots submitted not in conjunction with an Annual Membership Business Meeting (between Annual Membership Business Meetings). This way can be used when time is important and the Executive Board seeks membership acceptance of an amendment. By-Laws established by the Executive Board may be overridden in this way.
- By a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of all members through mail-in ballots submitted in conjunction with an Annual Membership Business Meeting, plus the vote of IBC members at the applicable Annual Membership Business Meeting who did not submit mail-in ballots. By-laws established by the Executive Board may be overridden in this way.
- By a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by the Executive Board.

SECTION 3

In the event that time is an important factor, mail-in ballots may be sent to all members. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of approval by the responding members shall constitute acceptance of an amendment.

**By-Law Article X
FINANCIAL MATTERS RELATING TO THE CONGRESS**

SECTION 1

The Congress will adopt as a tax accounting period the fiscal year beginning July 1 and terminating June 30. It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer to prepare and file any tax return required by the Internal Revenue Code.

SECTION 2

The Executive Board, previous IBC Treasurer (if not reelected or continuing in office), and the chairpersons of the IBC committees shall adopt a financial budget at each year's convention for the next fiscal year. It shall be the responsibility of all committee chairpersons and officers to follow the guidelines of this budget. No expense item that exceeds the amount set in the budget by more than fifty dollars (\$50) shall be reimbursed by the Treasury without the prior approval of the Executive Board. In order to obtain approval for reimbursement of these amounts, the following steps must be taken:

The person requesting the reimbursement must send a written request to the Treasurer. This request must contain (

- (1) the reason the budget was exceeded,
- (2) the amount of reimbursement sought,
- (3) the time frame in which the monies will be needed, and
- (4) the purpose for which the funds will be utilized.

Upon receipt of a supplementary budget request, the Treasurer shall within seven (7) days forward a copy of the request to each member of the Executive Board along with a ballot requesting approval/disapproval of the supplementary budget request. A majority of ballots received by the Treasurer postmarked no more than fourteen (14) days after the date the ballots were mailed shall determine the issue. The Treasurer shall inform the involved member and the Executive Board within seven (7) days of receiving the last returned ballot of the result of the voting.

SECTION 3

All chairpersons and officers shall submit an itemized accounting of all expenses and income on a monthly basis. The IBC Treasurer shall be provided a sufficient receipt of any expense exceeding ten dollars (\$10). In order to comply with provisions of the Internal Revenue Code, all income items shall be reported by distinguishing between member versus nonmember sources. The Treasurer shall upon receipt of a monthly accounting report:

1. Send expense drafts to members within seven (7) days.
2. Update all financial records within fourteen (14) days.
3. Segregate income records so as to identify any possible sources of unrelated business income.
4. Provide a regular Financial Report for each issue of FLARE! **and/or on the IBC website.**

**By-Law Article XI
PARLIAMENTARY AND PARLIAMENTARIAN AUTHORITY**

SECTION 1

The President shall appoint a Parliamentarian for The Congress and such appointment shall not be subject to approval by the Executive Board.

SECTION 2

It shall be the duty of the Parliamentarian to offer advice on matters of Parliamentary Law and procedure to the President, the Executive Board, and to the membership.

How to Form an IBC Chapter

(Updated July 2017)

Thank you for deciding to become an IBC Chapter. Your chapter may consist of both members and non-members of the IBC. However to qualify for an IBC Chapter at least 3 people must belong to the IBC (*a family membership counts as 2 people toward the 3*). They must be a member in good standing and not a founding member of an active chapter. Once you have 3 IBC members you can send your completed application to the Chapters Committee. You will be emailed confirmation of your chapter's acceptance after your application form is reviewed and IBC E-Board accepts your petition. Please allow approximately 7 days for this process.

- Include the names of at least 3 IBC Members. These names will be verified with IBC Membership.
- Include the name of your club on the application form. The name and initials cannot be in conflict with any other IBC chapter within your specific IBC Area.
- The application must contain the name and email address of the contact person for the chapter. The contact person must be an IBC member and his/her name and email address will appear in FLARE! and on our official website. The contact person does not need to be an expert on the IBC or on Bettas, but they will respond to any questions dealing with their chapter.

Chapters are run independently from the IBC and they may prepare their own constitution that will fit their needs as long as it does not conflict with the IBC Constitution, By-Laws, or Exhibition Standards. However in accepting Chapter status, the Chapter agrees to comply with the provisions of the IBC Constitution, By-Laws, and Exhibition Standards. In order to maintain Chapter status you will be asked to confirm and/or update the information provided on your application each year.

If you are an IBC member you will receive the benefits listed below:

- You may apply to become a certified IBC Judge.
- You can attend the IBC Annual Membership Business Meeting.
- You can run for a position on the E-Board or J-Board (if a certified Judge for at least one year).
- You can be part of a committee.
- You will receive your own copy of FLARE!, either electronically or by regular mail.

If you have any questions feel free to contact the Chapters Chairperson, or members of the Executive Board or Judging Board. The email addresses for these people can be found in FLARE! and also on our website.

If you would like further information on how to run a chapter, a good source would be to get in touch with the contact person from one of our other chapters.

IBC Chapter Application/Renewal

(please fill out and send to chaptersIBC@yahoo.com or send the information in an email)

Chapter: _____
Name and initials cannot be in conflict with any other chapter within your specific IBC Area.

Location (State, Country, etc) : _____

Name of President: _____ Phone: _____

Email _____

Name of Contact Person (must be an IBC member): _____

Email of Contact Person: _____

Please provide the name and email of an alternate person in case we cannot reach the contact person listed above. Name of Alternate: _____

Email of Alternate: _____

The people listed below are currently IBC Members (**must have a minimum of 3**). It is not necessary to provide the names of non-IBC members. **They cannot be a founding member of an active chapter.**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Website: _____

Facebook: _____

Is your chapter planning to host a show in the upcoming year? () Yes () No

If yes, when: _____ What type: _____

