

Aquatic Gardeners Association Convention Information for Prospective Hosts

Requirements

1. General Information. This document is intended to aid a local organization (Local) that is considering submitting a proposal to host the Aquatic Gardeners Association (AGA) Annual Convention. Most of the information is provided as a guide to help the Local prepare a proposal and host the Convention. Certain items are necessary and are listed under section “2.Requirements for Convention and Items to be addressed in a Proposal.” The Convention will take place beginning on a Friday and ending on Sunday. In the past, the Convention has been held in early November but it need not be held in November. Draft and final proposals can be submitted by email to shieber at yahoo dot com or by mail to Scott Hieber, 2 Mayberry Drive, Tinton Falls, NJ, 07724. Only proposals received no later than 9 months prior to the proposed start date of the Convention will be considered. We recommended that a draft proposal, including at least the names of the committee heads, anticipated location and date, and possible speakers, be submitted not later than 12 months before the proposed Convention start date. The AGA Board of Directors selects the Convention host based on the quality and germaneness of listed speakers and other events, financial impact on the AGA, geographic location, feasibility of the proposal, strength and reputation of the local club, and attendance cost to the AGA members. The selection will be announced by mail, email, or telephone call.
2. Requirements for Convention and Items to be Addressed in a Proposal
 - 2.1. General Information Requirements
 - 2.1.1.1. Hotel--Size of the hotel and other features that demonstrate its appropriateness for the Convention.
 - 2.1.1.2. Access to the hotel from the local airport, distance between airport and hotel, availability of an airport shuttle service, proximity to major highways, etc.
 - 2.1.1.3. Other local attractions or destinations of special interest (public zoos or aquariums, museums, parks, fish/plant stores) to consider for field trips or Convention events.
 - 2.1.1.4. Other Convention Activities:
 - 2.1.1.4.1. Outlines for tours or field trips to be scheduled beyond the Convention activities, including fees, transportation options, meal options, etc.
 - 2.1.1.4.2. Other events, such as Focus Groups or Panel Discussions with the speakers, may be scheduled if time and resources permit.
 - 2.2. Historical Record
 - 2.2.1. Speaker presentations and banquet presentations may be videotaped to provide a historical record.
 - 2.2.1.1. After the Convention, if a video has been recorded, it can be edited and copies produced for sale.
 - 2.2.2. A Convention Treasurer’s report to the AGA Board of Directors must provide a final accounting of costs, revenues, and distribution of funds after the Convention.
 - 2.2.2.1. The report should be submitted within 40 days of the Convention
 - 2.2.3. Recognition and thank-you letters must be sent within 30 days of the Convention to speakers, volunteers, corporate sponsors, and others who donated time, money, or goods to the Convention.

2.3. Finances

- 2.3.1. Any expenditure or group of expenditures in the amount of \$25 or greater must be expressly approved by the AGA or its designee.
- 2.3.2. Registration Fee -- the amount of the proposed Registration Fee
 - 2.3.2.1. Discount offered for early registration, and penalty for late registration.
 - 2.3.2.2. Collection of fees must be coordinated with the AGA website to ensure smooth integration with the AGA's online payments.
- 2.3.3. Hotel
 - 2.3.3.1. Room charges for attendees
 - 2.3.3.2. The contract must be reviewed by the AGA Treasurer prior to execution.
- 2.3.4. Financial Plan -- Estimated Revenues and Costs
 - 2.3.4.1. Costs by Item
 - 2.3.4.1.1. Including hotel presentation room, banquet room and other room charges (such as auction room), catering, speaker subsidies, advertising, expenses, name tags, auction bags, postage, etc.
 - 2.3.4.2. Revenues by Item
 - 2.3.4.2.1. Including fees, auction proceeds, raffles, etc.
- 2.3.5. Financial Sharing -- 50/50 division of costs and revenues between the AGA and the Local.
- 2.3.6. Donated items to be used for the Aquascaping Contest
 - 2.3.6.1. From the items donated to the Convention, seven items with the approximate values indicated below should be set aside to be used by the AGA for prizes in the AGA Aquascaping Contest.
 - 2.3.6.1.1. The six items for 1st Place need not be identical.
 - 2.3.6.2. The items to be set aside for the Contest will be chosen jointly by the Convention Chair and the AGA Board of Directors.
 - 2.3.6.3. These seven items should not be counted as part of the gross revenue of the Convention but as a "pass-through" to the AGA.
 - 2.3.6.4. A representative of the AGA Aquascaping Contest, designated by the AGA Board of Directors, will pick up the prizes at the Convention.
 - 2.3.6.5. Value of Prizes

Prize	Approximate Value of Each Prize	Number of Prizes	
Best of show		\$100	1
1 st place	\$50	6	

2.4. Exhibits

- 2.4.1. Anticipated Manufacturers/Vendors, or at least the anticipated number of them, that will present exhibits
 - 2.4.1.1. Negotiations with the manufacturers/vendors shall be handled by the Local.
- 2.4.2. Competition
 - 2.4.2.1. If competitive exhibits are to be shown, describe the type of competition (for example best plant specimens).
 - 2.4.2.2. Awards for winners

2.5. Food

- 2.5.1. Hotel restaurants
 - 2.5.1.1. Complimentary continental breakfast with room
 - 2.5.1.2. Discounts on food for attendees

- 2.5.2. Nearby restaurants
 - 2.5.2.1. Distance from hotel
 - 2.5.2.2. Typical price range for meals
- 2.5.3. Banquet – Saturday night banquet
 - 2.5.3.1. The Banquet may include announcements, awards, special recognitions, and/or a guest speaker.
 - 2.5.3.2. Consider options for an off-site/ alternate location for the banquet, taking transportation into consideration.

2.6. Speakers

- 2.6.1. A tentative list of speakers that the Local proposes to seek should be submitted. However, no commitments as to dates or subsidies should be made on the AGA's behalf without its express approval.
- 2.6.2. The Convention should have at least four speakers that make individual presentations on Saturday plus two on Friday night and one presentation at the Banquet.
 - 2.6.2.1. At least three fourths of the speakers should speak specifically about aquatic gardening or aquascaping with aquatic plants.

2.7. Auctions

- 2.7.1. Plant Auction – Sunday morning auction to be run by the Local.
 - 2.7.1.1. Style of auction/bidding.
 - 2.7.1.1.1. Silent auction, where bidders are allowed to bid as often as they wish within a time period and all bids are written and in public view.
 - 2.7.1.1.2. Live auction, using an auctioneer can be an acceptable alternative or addition.
 - 2.7.1.2. Percentage of proceeds from each sale to the seller.
- 2.7.2. Other Auction(s) – Any other auction, for example, a fish and dry goods auction, that the Local wishes to include.
 - 2.7.2.1. Type of items to be auctioned.
 - 2.7.2.2. Style of auction/bidding (see 2.7.1.1 above).
 - 2.7.2.3. Percentage of proceeds from each sale to the seller.
 - 2.7.2.4. Each buyer must be a registered for the Convention
- 2.7.3. Each seller must be a member of the Local or the AGA unless the seller donates the proceeds in full to the Convention.
- 2.7.4. The Local is responsible for the entire auction, including recruiting auctioneers, setting up an accounting procedure, providing runners, etc.

3. Proposed Staffing

- 3.1. List of persons and distribution of responsibilities.
 - 3.1.1. At a minimum, a Convention Chairperson must be named.
 - 3.1.2. Contacts
 - 3.1.2.1. A person to act as primary liaison between the Local and the AGA regarding the Convention.
 - 3.1.2.2. A person or persons in the Local that can be contacted by the AGA.

4. Local Club Information

- 4.1. Describe your club's history, focus, number of members, and any other salient facts.
 - 4.1.1. You may include any additional information that you believe is relevant to your organization and its abilities to host the Convention

Guidelines for Hosting an AGA Convention

These Guidelines are intended to aid a prospective local organization (Local) that proposes to host an Aquatic Gardeners Association (AGA) Convention. They are provided as a guide but not as requirements – for requirements, see above, “2.Requirements for Convention and Items to be Addressed in a Proposal.”

The Local should decide what number of staff will be useful and available to plan, organize, and conduct the Convention. The Local should also decide on the division of responsibilities. One person cannot do the job alone. It is suggested that the responsibilities cover the following areas; the Chairperson for each of these areas must be a person who can manage multiple tasks and overlapping deadlines:

1. Convention Chairperson
2. Treasurer
3. Hotel
4. Speaker Programs
5. Marketing, Promotions, and Advertising
6. Sponsorship
7. Registration Brochure
8. Convention Program
9. Check-in & Welcome
10. Vendor Room
11. Sales Table
12. Auctions
13. Equipment Manager

Once the responsibilities have been divided, this document should be copied for each committee chair so that each is familiar with the duties of her or his assignment(s) and any relationships to other responsibilities.

CONVENTION CHAIRPERSON

A single person should have responsibility for overall Convention planning, setting up committees, arranging meetings, establishing and enforcing milestones and deadlines. The chair should, as much as possible, allow those willing to work on the Convention to undertake tasks that most interest and suit them. Handing out assignments early helps to avoid task mismatches. Ideally, the chair is also the key liaison person with the AGA Board of Directors, providing the AGA with monthly updates on the progress of the planning and organizing of the Convention, as well as revenues, spending, and budget performance.

TREASURER

The Convention Treasurer need not be your club treasurer. The person must be competent and reliable to handle large sums of money accurately, maintain exact records, and prepare the appropriate budget and reporting materials. The Convention Treasurer should be in close contact with the Convention Chairperson, AGA Treasurer, Registrar, Auction Coordinator(s), other Local staff as appropriate, and the AGA Board of Directors.

Establish a Convention budget early and determine how much you can spend and where money should be channeled, e.g.

Room rentals, Meals, hospitality suite, auctioneer, Publicizing the Convention & Publishing Convention Brochures, Raffles, prizes, etc.

The Convention Treasurer should set up a bank account for the Convention. It should be a business account so that checks made out to AGA, AGA Convention, AGA2K4, can be processed through the account. If the account is set up as a personal account, then it is possible that only checks made out to an individual can be processed through the account under the banking laws that apply in most states.

Some upfront money will be needed, but check into invoicing terms on larger items. You may get a discount if paid within a certain time limit. Also, ensure you have enough money to pay immediate expenses.

Arrange with the hotel's representative shortly after the Convention to review their charges. Review their bill carefully. Mistakes can be costly.

Setting a budget for each area is useful. Work out an estimated profit and loss statement/budget before you make your bid. Also make a worse case scenario budget (e.g. make high estimates of costs and low estimates of revenues) and see if the Convention breaks even. This is a great comfort for club members.

Several suggested accounts for the Convention Treasurer's records are 1) advertising, 2) Convention registration, 3) auction, 4) raffle, and 5) program and 6) hospitality suite.

For out of country entries, allow for reasonable exchange rates.

Accept checks (from persons known to the club) for auction items. Consider arranging for accepting credit card payments for auction items – be sure to factor in the transaction costs in the financial plan. People spend more if they do not have to keep track of the cash they have on hand.

As soon as the details are established, the Treasurer should inform the Registrar and those persons involved in preparation of any printed matter regarding registration, of the payment methods that can be used and how payments should be made.

Arrange with the hotel's representative shortly after the Convention to review their charges. Review their bill very carefully. "Mistakes" can be costly.

HOTEL

Since the contract with the hotel will determine dates, location, and registration and banquet pricing, the contract should be negotiated as far ahead of the expected Convention date as possible. Have one person deal directly with the hotel, keeping all correspondence and **getting everything in writing!** This will help to keep problems to a minimum. Watch for hidden costs – for example, labor fees for hooking into the hotel public address system even if you hook in yourself. Try to anticipate everything. Do not make any financial commitments without express approval from the AGA Board of Directors or its designee.

Begin by making a list of suitable hotels in your area --"Suitable" meaning large enough, convenient by plane, bus, etc., and having a good reputation.

Determine exactly what your requirements are. Read previous Convention reports to get an idea of the number of people attending, and the number of entries for the auction(s). Space would be needed for the following:

- Check-in (Thurs. evening/Fri. morning [if there's a field trip], Fri. afternoon and Sat. morning)
- Breakfast and/or Lunch options at Hotel for convenience (Sat.)
- Vendor displays (Fri. & Sat. – know ahead of time and be sure the vendors understand when the vendors can set up and take down their displays)

- Speaker presentations (Fri & Sat.)
- Focus Groups (Sat.)
- Banquet room (Sat. evening)
- Panel Discussion (if included, Sun. morning)
- Auction(s) (Sun. morning – hall must be available by 7:30a.m. through early or late afternoon, depending on size and number of auctions)
- Hospitality Suite (Thurs. evening thru Sat. night)

Large hotels with convention facilities often feature a permanent “desk” for convention check-in but it is advisable to have the check-in table in the vendor area. The desk may only be available at certain times, so if there is a field trip planned, Thursday evening and Friday morning pre-check-in might have to take place somewhere else, like the Hospitality Suite or the hallway or lobby.

A vendor area is needed **that is as close as possible to the speaker room** to ensure high traffic through the vendor area. If there is no outrageous additional expense, ask the hotel whether the vendor room can be available to the vendors for setup around noon on Friday. In any case, it is essential that vendors are informed at the time they commit to buying a table what time the room will be available for setup so they can make travel plans. If the vendors set up Friday, the vendor room must be locked Friday night. The person in charge of the AGA Sales Table could be responsible for the key to the room, unlocking it about 30 minutes before the speaker presentations begin Saturday morning.

Determine the size and number of rooms required for the speaker presentations. The room(s) must be large enough to accommodate at least 150 people and have public address equipment and perhaps visual equipment. Can the hotel supply these? At what cost?

If the Local chooses to have focus groups, separate, smaller rooms will isolate the focus groups from each other. The speaker room can sometimes be divided, but this might lessen the sound quality on the video productions.

If the Local chooses to have the banquet at the hotel, a banquet hall will be needed for Saturday night with ample room to set up. The banquet might include a speaker presentation requiring audio/video equipment, awards tables, and a cash bar.

If the Local chooses to hold a speaker panel discussion on Sunday morning rather than a Q & A after each talk, it must be in a separate area from the auction.

The auction room must be large enough to accommodate many large tables and plenty of seating if the format is a sit-down auction with auctioneers. Remember that a public address system will be needed.

It is perfectly acceptable for the speaker room, banquet room, and live auction room to be all the same place, keeping in mind that the hotel staff must turn the room over in a timely way. The hotel will need to know the convention schedule as soon as it is set.

Determine the size of the storage room where auction items will be processed and stored before the auction(s). It must be secure, temperature controlled, have easy access to water supply if fish are among auction items, and have easy access for entries to be brought in.

While not a requirement, the Hospitality Suite has been a popular meeting place for AGA Convention attendees. It helps to break the ice and gives newcomers a place to meet other hobbyists. Consider a small cash

bar. Set out munchies and set a reasonable time limit on the room. Designate a couple of key-holders and make sure they know the schedule. The Hospitality Suite should probably have a sink and refrigerator for convenience, with comfortable seating.

Send a letter to each hotel on your list, stating your requirements and requesting a quote from them. State the date by which these tenders are needed and that you will be making a shorter list based on the responses. Those on the short list will be contacted by phone to arrange an inspection of their facilities. Also state the date of the final decision.

Develop as specific a list of requirements as possible. The AGA can help you with this. Anything you leave out might end up being an extra charge (even an extension cord)! With these requirements in hand, take a few people to each hotel on your short list, noting each hotel's good and bad points, so a decision can be made which is the most suitable. Eliminate immediately any that do not meet your minimum standards.

Let the hotel take care of all room reservations but require that the hotel be able to provide a link to registration from the AGA web site. Check for the extent and availability of (hopefully free) parking. Ask the hotel to provide room-registration forms that can be included in the Convention brochure.

Try to get the hotel to give you as many free rooms (for speakers) as possible, to sponsor an early bird draw, or anything else you can think of.

Obtain a price that will allow as many people to a room as desired so attendees can cut costs by finding a roommate.

Request a banquet menu selection well in advance, so you have an idea what is available. Obtain a menu before making a final decision on the hotel. Menu prices at hotels differ, sometimes substantially. Set a per-person budget for the banquet (including tax & gratuity) but **do not decide upon and confirm the menu until the hotel is prepared to guarantee the price (including all taxes and gratuities) in writing.**

The person in charge of hotel negotiations must consider and provide support for the needs of every aspect of the events and their setup, from table & chair layout to food service (include a contract proposal from the hotel regarding options on room rates, discounts, food service, etc.). This person must be present during the Convention to ensure the arrangements are carried out correctly and on time.

SPEAKER PROGRAM

There should be one keynote speaker, preferably with an international reputation, and four other speakers. Too many speakers means too little time for attendees to meet and chat with each other, visit the vendors, and talk to speakers outside of the presentations. Being able to talk with speakers outside of the presentations helps to keep the presentations from overrunning their allotted time. Seek out speakers who represent the planted aquarium industry as well as other experts (professional and amateur or knowledgeable hobbyists) with diverse topics.

Speaker(s) may include one or two local persons. This helps to keep costs low. Also, seek corporately sponsored speakers (e.g., the Marineland speaker program, or vendors who are willing to give a talk such as Seachem). It might be prudent to have someone who is prepared to give a talk in case one of the planned speakers unexpectedly cancels.

The AGA Board of Directors can assist with selecting and recruiting speakers.

The Convention usually subsidizes each speaker's Convention registration fee, hotel room, banquet, and transportation between the Convention and the airport (gas mileage should be paid before they leave). The Convention Committee also gives a small gift as a token of appreciation, to be presented at the banquet. The keynote speaker's airfare to and from the host city should be paid by the Convention.

Telephone or email contact initially will speed up the speaker selection process. **Send a follow-up letter and request their written confirmation.** Ask that they book early for air reservations (there may be savings here).

After a speaker has confirmed in writing, they should be kept informed of the Convention schedules and sent a Convention brochure. Request a biography, curriculum vitae, photo, and title and summary of their talk for marketing efforts, the Convention program and the introduction at their presentation. Give the speaker a deadline for this information. The material should be obtained well in advance of the Convention to allow adequate time for layout and printing.

While it is generally advisable to minimize the number of contacts dealing with a speaker, the person(s) responsible for producing flyers, ads, registration brochures, and Convention programs should be allowed to contact speakers as necessary to complete the publications on time.

If a speaker has written a book or produced a plant-related product, please let the AGA Board of Directors know. Under most circumstances and with prior arrangements the AGA Sales Table can sell books or other plant-related products offered by the speakers. However, we cannot sell items offered by other registrants.

Make sure the speakers are aware of the terms of their agreement, **in writing**, prior to the Convention. Keep informed of their arrival and departure times and arrange to pick them up, if necessary. Make sure they get settled in and that they know where and when they will give their talk.

Assign a Host to each speaker for the duration of the Convention. The host need not be with the speaker at all times but is a familiar face to whom the speaker can turn to at any time with questions or needs. They do not have to dine with the speaker, but they should make sure that the speaker has someone to dine with, and that the speaker does not feel left out. The host should introduce themselves to their assigned speaker via email in advance and ensure that the speaker's travel, hotel, and audio/visual needs will be met (the host should give this information to the Convention Chair and the Audio/Visual Chair). The speaker hosts should also be responsible for appropriate speaker introductions to be delivered by the Master of Ceremonies or themselves. A host can help her or his respective speaker avoid going over their time limit for their presentation by giving them a 5-minute warning. After the convention, the host should email the speaker thanking them personally.

If Aquascaping Contest Awards are to be announced at the convention and the judges will be asked to comment on the winning entries, make sure the judges are aware of this ahead of time so that they can be prepared to comment. It might help to remind the judges that people tend to hear negative comments more strongly than positive comments.

Make a list of all equipment required (public address, visual aid, automotive, etc.). Arrange for the equipment well in advance so that it will be available and set up when needed. Remember to check all equipment for malfunctions before the convention begins and check the equipment to be used in a presentation before the presentation begins.

The Convention Committee should also write a letter after the convention, thanking each speaker for their presentation.

MARKETING, PROMOTIONS, AND ADVERTISING

The Marketing, Promotions, and Advertising Committee chairperson need not be your best graphic designer, although that person certainly should be on the committee for creating print and internet ads.

This task should begin as soon as the date is set, with a general announcement to the hobby-related web mailing lists and plant-related forums. The AGA has a list of such mailing lists and forums.

Cable TV sometimes allows interviews to be taped and run several times.

Contact aquarium magazines and periodicals with an ad promoting the Convention. Remember that magazines work many months in advance of the publication dates. *The Aquatic Gardener* will print your full-page ad in the summer and fall issues.

Prepare a cover letter and press release for local newspapers and radio stations a few months before the Convention and follow up by telephone or in person a week before. Please note that a press release and an advertisement are not the same. Putting too much “enthusiasm” in a press release will turn off the recipient more than intrigue them.

Print flyers for pet shops, schools/colleges, factories, laundromats, libraries, etc.

Visit local aquarium and fish clubs and send as much information as possible to out-lying clubs to generate more enthusiasm. Consider preparing a slide presentation to share with other clubs to encourage attendance. Ask club editors to include your flyers or ad in their bulletins.

Make sure printed flyers, brochures, and/or advertisements go to the AGA Membership Chair and the AGA Bookstore Lady in pdf format. They will insert the advertisements in their mailings, which often go to new members and non-members.

Sample flyers, ads, brochures are available from the AGA, as well as many graphics. Ask the AGA for enough general AGA brochures to accompany your advertising efforts.

The majority of AGA members are online; indeed they found out about the AGA on the internet. Therefore, web site advertising, mailing lists, and forum posts are a valid and vital way to advertise the convention. It is also an inexpensive way to keep in touch with convention-goers and feed them as much information as possible before they arrive. The AGA Membership Chair is happy to send email announcements to all members, and provide a mailing list for mailed publications.

In addition to being a fun meeting place for attendees, the Hospitality Suite has been an advertising medium, with the Platinum Sponsor enjoying “name rights.” Create a nice poster to attach to the door of the Hospitality Suite, using the Platinum Sponsor’s logo.

Give your raffle(s) general appeal. Not everyone is interested in the same thing. Have tickets available as soon as check-in begins and promote them heavily. The AGA Sales Table is happy to sell them. Promote the sale by offering a free ticket for each book sold or a prize for the most tickets sold. Some organizations have small raffles throughout their conventions, but beware not to flood the market. You may need a license, so check out local and provincial/state regulations.

Consider a tour of local aquatic aquarium related sites or a shopping expedition. Make sure it has a general appeal. Not everyone likes the same thing.

At the Convention, make appropriate use of signs to help attendees to understand where things are located, when events will occur, and any important changes in schedule.

The AGA Convention Banner should be hung in a prominent location; prior arrangements must be made with the hotel. One of the AGA Board members will make the banner available to the Convention staff.

SPONSORSHIP

The job of vendor and sponsor solicitation is too big for one person to do effectively. At least two or three people should be assigned this task as their major Convention responsibility. An extensive number of telephone calls, visits to potential sponsors, and repeated contacts are necessary to achieve a good level of sponsorship and donations.

Compile a list of prospective donors. The AGA Board of Directors has the list that was used last year. Contact pet stores, order houses, aquarium set-up and maintenance companies, and manufacturers of aquatic supplies for donations. Don't forget online-only stores and aquatic plant web sites. Also, check with the Chamber of Commerce in your area, banks and any Tourist Information/Convention Bureaus for a list of prospective companies. Visit local manufacturers, retail stores, restaurants, etc. for sponsorship, discounts, or even coupons.

Divide the list into groups for specific types of sponsorship e.g. a) large companies for under-writing, advertising, b) smaller companies for trophy sponsorship, c) smaller companies for product donations. Earmark certain companies for product samples for the goodie bags. A different solicitation letter is then sent to members in each group.

An alternative is to produce one standard letter including all types of sponsorship and letting the addressee choose the desired type. Remember they will not appreciate receiving more than one letter requesting support. An all-inclusive letter also is sometimes useful where a sponsor is amenable to supporting more than one area.

The areas needing donations are:

- a) money to cover speakers, publication and awards/trophies
- b) raffle—A few really nice items that people will buy tickets for
- c) auction—plants, driftwood, dry goods, magazine subscriptions, gift certificates
- d) check-in packets [coupons or specials that can only be used during the weekend]
- e) goodie bag [coupons or specials that can be used after they go home, as well as samples of fish food, aquarium chemicals, plant supplements, etc.]

The solicitation letter should hit on the high points of the Convention: its speakers, hobbyists, etc. Make them aware that their company's name will be mentioned several times throughout the Convention and the number of people your advertising is expected to reach. The AGA has sample letters, which outline various benefits of sponsorship, for your consideration.

Make prospective donors aware that you will accept anything and give them an address and telephone number of someone to contact (someone who is home a lot). Effective negotiating skills, diligence, and persistence can make a big difference in the level of sponsorship and amount of donations.

It is best to start soliciting soon after the Convention date has been set and preliminary advertising has begun. Waiting too long will limit incoming working revenue, increase the chance of vendor travel conflicts, and make other Convention tasks more difficult. Don't be put off if the company says that it's too soon to think about it—just call them back in a couple of weeks and ask again.

Be sure to catalog donated items as they are promised and as they arrive or are picked up. This helps to follow up on promised items not received. It also helps to gauge the size of the events in which the donated items will be used (auction, raffle, etc.) and ensures that all donors will be formally thanked after the Convention, which is critical.

Acknowledge sponsors whenever possible (Convention flyers, auction, show bulletins, club bulletins, web sites, etc.) Invite them to send company/product literature for inclusion in the check-in packets. (Give them a firm date that they must send it by.)

Do not forget to send thank-you letters to each donor and vendor as soon as possible after the Convention. Failure to do this follow-up, post-Convention task is considered by many vendors to be a breach of unwritten protocol and can seriously affect future vendor support.

Vendors have often donated all the goods that they have remaining when they are ready to leave the Convention on Saturday afternoon. When a vendor first arrives, arrange a time collect these items from the vendor, whether for use in an auction, raffle or goodie bags. Even with prearrangements, vendors sometimes just hand the goods out on a first-come, first-served basis or just leave them behind on the tables when they go, which can lead to most of the goods going into the hands of just a few.

REGISTRATION BROCHURE

Successful AGA conventions have been advertised using a combination of ads in TAG and other hobby-related magazines, information on AGA and Local web sites and messages posted on hobby-related internet mail lists and forums. However, a printed color brochure gives a professional presentation that magazine and internet marketing alone cannot achieve. An 8 ½ x 11" trifold format on stiff paper stock can be produced on any high quality color printer that accepts standard size paper. But consider having the brochures professionally printed.

The goal of the registration brochure is to entice people to register for the convention. It does not provide every Convention detail—only enough to excite the reader. Consider producing a brochure early, when the basic details are known and then professionally producing one later when more details, such as speaker schedule or Field Trip sites, etc. have been arranged.

Convention staff can hand out brochures at any hobby-related meetings or conventions then attend before the convention. They can be sent to other clubs. Also, they can be mailed to all AGA members, sponsors, and potential sponsors but most of the distribution should occur at least three to four months before the convention.

Included in the brochure might be the following points of interest:

- front panel: who, what, when, where, why
- tentative schedule of events
- list of speakers and titles of presentations
- autographed books etc. available
- field trip destinations
- focus group topics

- auction information
- hotel information: location and contact info, rates and reservations
- local contact info for questions
- registration form with prices, an address where to send it, and forms of payment accepted
- if mailing, then include space for “To” and “From” addresses. If using a professional mailing agent, find out from the mailer where to put this—they’re picky.
- graphics: AGA logo, Local logo, convention logo, sponsor logos
- directions to the AGA and Local websites for more information and registration

Sample brochures are available from the AGA, as well as many graphics.

Costs of production, printing, and mailing must be included in the budget. Do not underestimate the time it will take to produce a registration brochure. Giving firm deadlines to those people who must provide information and graphics is essential. (Sponsor logos can often be copied off their web sites. If they are printed very small, low resolution probably won’t matter.)

CONVENTION PROGRAM

A Convention program should be prepared and provided to each attendee when he or she checks in at the check-in desk. The purpose of the Convention program is to relay as much information as possible about each portion of the Convention. A good program anticipates the attendees’ questions, and will inevitably save Convention organizers repeated explanations and even misunderstandings during the Convention. In addition, it may also be saved as a souvenir by attendees! A portion of the program should be used to inform attendees where they can go to get help or information.

Consider having the program professionally printed in color; the production may be too time-consuming for a volunteer and the cost of materials, including ink cartridges and a special stapler may prove to be nearly as costly as professional printing. In any event, the program should look professionally and artfully prepared. Do not underestimate how long it will take to prepare the program. It takes time to assemble information from so many different sources, and some people will need prodding more than once. It is best to give speakers, sponsors, and Convention organizers firm deadlines.

Suggested inclusions in the Convention program:

- Welcome letter from the Local inviting everyone to have a good time and explaining whom to seek for questions.
- Detailed schedule of events outlining where and when each event is to occur.
- Detailed explanation of the field trip, if any.
- Where to go for breakfast and lunch.
- Biographies of speakers and focus group leaders, along with a title and short summary of their talk.
- Schedule and locations of focus groups (if any).
- List of local aquatic plant retailers (rather than just local fish stores!) and any discounts they offer.
- List of sponsors/vendors and their web sites, and an invitation to visit the vendor room.
- Include the vendor room designation.
- Auction rules and information.
- Consider offering advertising space in the program to sponsors for a reasonable fee in addition to or as an alternative to basic sponsorship. Be sure to give firm deadlines to the sponsorship committee so they can pass those deadlines along to potential sponsors.
- Any advertisements you have promised in return for sponsorship (see note above)

Keep in mind that a certain percentage of attendees have never been to a convention or an auction—don't be afraid to state the obvious.

Have as many people as possible proofread the program. The last thing we want is to misspell a speaker's name or a sponsor's web site address! The AGA Board of Directors will be happy to help—most of us proofread each issue of *TAG* multiple times.

A sample Convention program is available at your request.

CHECK-IN & WELCOME

Check-in and Welcome are closely related because they rely on the same information and operate at the same time. Registration is responsible for taking and recording convention registrations, and checking-in everyone in at the convention. Members of the Welcome Committee introduce themselves, make the attendees feel welcome, and answer any general questions about the AGA or the conference. These are the “front line” people who will be available and be representative of the AGA and the Local to handle anything that needs to be taken care of. Smile, call people by name, be helpful, breathe deeply as necessary. These two committees can also work together to create and fill check-in packets and goodie bags.

Before the convention:

The Registrar must be readily available by phone, mail, email, and hopefully fax, six months prior to the Convention to answer questions and receive registrations. This person must keep copies of each registration and payments received by mail before forwarding them to the Convention Treasurer. Send a confirmation email or postcard when people register, telling them when and where more information will be available.

To help keep your records straight, fill out a registration form for each person registered. If information is taken at a meeting or over the phone, still fill it out or write all the information down, this will cut down on errors. This information is very important. For mail, phone, and fax registrations, receipts can be mailed. People who register online get an email receipt.

Convention attendees must be AGA members to attend the speaker presentations (one membership per household); however, the Local should decide upon the membership rules for their own members. You could decide that all convention-goers must be AGA members, or waive the membership requirement for Local volunteers only, or for all Local members who were enrolled by a certain date, or all Local members. ***The AGA asks that you advertise your membership requirements clearly and strongly within your organization to avoid misunderstandings.*** Be sure to tell the AGA Membership Chair, Convention Treasurer, and Registrar as soon as the decision is made.

The AGA Membership Chair will look up all paid registrants in the AGA database to check membership status. If provided a list of Local members, she will cross-reference registrants in that list, too. If any registrations are submitted by phone, fax, or mail, please notify the Membership Chair as soon as possible. She will contact non-members and explain the membership requirement. Conflicts can be decided jointly by the AGA Membership Chair and the Convention Chair.

A Master list of all Convention attendees, including speakers, paid registrants, vendors and compensated volunteers must be compiled to submit an accurate count of the numbers of participants to the hotel **for each event**: general registration, field trip, banquet, and spouse/guest banquet.

The Registrar's list(s) should be reconciled with the Treasurer's list of transactions and the AGA Membership Chair's list(s) of members on an ongoing basis before the convention to avoid errors and ensure consistency. Sometimes people's Paypal names are not the names they go by, or someone else pays for their registration; the AGA Membership Chair is in the best position to spot and correct these errors.

Mention the registration cut-off date frequently in advertisements and email reminders if there is a discount or special prize for early registration.

Name badges should be made two or three days prior to the Convention. The name badges for key convention personnel should have clear markings so that attendees will know that they can go to these people if they have questions during the convention. Colored ribbons on the name badges add a nice touch and help the attendees to identify Speakers, Convention Committee Members, Sponsors, and AGA Board Members. (You'd be amazed what www.ribbons.com has.) Karen Randall has offered to "decorate" speaker badges with personalized drawings of aquatic plants. If possible, print a condensed version of the Convention schedule on the back of the name badges.

Check-in packets should be assembled just prior to the Convention and made available to those working the check-in desk. (Assemble extra packets to accommodate walk-ups.) This will require coordination between the Sponsorship Committee, Welcome Committee, and the Registrar.

Potential inclusions in the check-in packets:

- name tags
- convention program
- sponsors' promotional flyers or product info
- hospitality items
- information about and map of the hotel
- tourist information, map, and coupons for the city
- any local coupons to be used during the weekend
- flyers regarding field trip destinations
- handouts prepared by speakers or focus group leaders
- Auction Guidelines and Auction Registration Form
- local club business card or brochure

The hotel may have enough information brochures to give everyone. Ask; you never know. City Tourism offices or Chambers of Commerce often give city maps, brochures, event flyers, coupon booklets, etc. free for the asking. Sometimes they will give you enough to include in each check-in packet. If not, they can be stacked at the check-in desk and/or on the AGA Sales Table.

If asked, nearby restaurants may offer discounts for convention-goers for the weekend or coupons to put in the check-in packets or goodie bags. Canvas Local membership for people who work in service industries and can offer discounts or coupons to their businesses.

The AGA Membership Chair will send or bring PAM back issues to give away at the convention, either in the check-in packets or in the goodie bags.

Expect many last minute sales. The last week you will need to stay by the phone.

Make a list of people willing to work the check-in desk and have them sign up for a specific time Thursday, Friday, and Saturday morning. Someone will have to miss part of the events Thursday and Friday. Schedule at

least two people at a time at the check-in desk: someone to help during the peak times, chat with during the lulls, and allow bathroom breaks.

During the convention:

Have a sign stating when and where check-in takes place in a prominent location (near the hotel front desk). When people arrive and have secured their room, the first thing they want to know is, “Where do I register or sign in?” Registrants should know **before** they arrive at least when check-in will begin, if not where.

It is very important that registration and welcome staff be present and check-in occur at the appointed times, which may vary according to the events offered. The field trip has been very popular in the years it has been offered, with more than 60% of registrants also attending the field trip. If the Local chooses to offer a field trip, Thursday evening and Friday morning check-in will be as important as Friday afternoon check-in. Unfortunately, the hotel’s check-in desk may not be available without an additional whopping fee, so you may have to set up check-in elsewhere.

Many attendees will not want to carry their check-in packet with them on the field trip; be prepared to hold their packets until later on Friday. Some attendees will not arrive until Saturday morning.

Two copies of the Master list should be available at the check-in desk to assist attendance documentation and confirm attendee information. Another list should be posted near the check-in table to aid attendees in meeting each other. That list should contain names, email addresses, and city/state/country, but not phone numbers or street addresses. The check-in desk is also a good place to post a list of tables before the banquet so that each attendee can sign up for their preferred table.

Also at the check-in desk, have name badges ready for all preregistered attendees and blank badges for walk-up Convention registrants. If you are using the pin-on badges, either include them in the check-in packets or don’t assemble them until the person registers, because assembled name badges are very slippery and messy. Unless you have room to spread them all out, it gets out of control quickly.

Have information about the hotel layout (“Where’s the restroom?”), Convention events and the local area close at hand. You may need pens, scrap paper, markers, parking passes, sticky notes, etc. A small card file at the check-in desk to place information as attendees sign in (room number, who’s with them, etc.) is very handy. Consider having a Hospitality Opener.

Ask registrants whether they are first time AGA or fish convention attendees and record this information. Have some Welcoming Committee staff assigned the responsibility of informally checking on these people periodically to ensure that they feel “at home,” asking them whether they need anything or have any questions and do they have plans for lunch.

It is advisable to have a PC at the check-in desk. This will allow a quick look-up and updating of registration status, AGA membership status, etc. without undue delay or paper-shuffling. Ask the AGA Membership Chair for the latest AGA membership spreadsheet file.

Since walk-ups are likely, a cash drawer with change and a reliable means of recording purchases (such as a supply of 2-part carbon receipts books) should be set up at the check-in desk.

Inevitably, there will be a few people who have registered for the convention, have been notified of the AGA membership requirement, but who have not paid their dues by convention time. The Registrar should mark their

names on the list and/or flag their name badges to catch these people when they register and ask for membership dues.

Please keep a thorough record of any AGA membership dues collected, because this is not Convention Income and must be kept separate. Please give the collected names, email addresses, and physical addresses to the Membership Chair **on Sunday** so new members can be entered into the database and the current issue of *TAG* mailed immediately after the convention. Better yet, if the current issue of *TAG* is available, the Membership Chair will bring some with her and they can be handed directly to new members when they register and pay their dues. Note that this would apply only to walk-ups and “membership deadbeats”; other new members have already received this issue by mail.

Please also give the collected names, email addresses, and physical addresses of all last-minute registrants to the Auction Coordinator Saturday evening to facilitate recording auction purchases.

VENDOR ROOM

A key element of the Convention is the area where vendors can display goods and information and vendor representatives can meet and speak with attendees. Ensuring high traffic in the vendor area is crucial to the success of the vendor area for the attendees and the vendors. The vendor area should be as close to the speaker/presentation rooms as possible. Try to include as many activities as practical in the vendor area to promote traffic and contact between the attendees and the vendor representatives; the check-in desk, hospitality area, sales table, or other event functions such as raffles or silent auctions could be incorporated into the vendor area.

SALES TABLE

The AGA requires a Sales Table to vend various items such as t-shirts. Board of Directors designees staff this table. The sales table can be done jointly with Convention staff if Convention items are to be offered or separately by AGA staff. If the table is to offer Convention items or Local club items for sale, please inform the Board of Directors of the exact items and their prices two weeks before the convention so that signs can be printed for the Sales Table. This table is probably best located in the vendor room.

AUCTIONS

Due to the many particular requirements for conducting well-organized, successful auctions, an Auction Coordinator should be named for each auction. For example, if separate silent and live auctions are to be held, then a different Auction Coordinator might be appropriate for each event. Suggested Auction Coordinator responsibilities are listed at the end of this section.

Make sure the auction room is large enough, with a good supply of display tables.

The auction room is a good place to display posters thanking donors and sponsors. The more you recognize a vendor, the easier it will be to gain vendor support at future Conventions. However, most vendors leave Saturday evening. If these are special posters for the auction room, be sure to show them to the vendors before they leave. They cannot be appreciative for something they do not know about.

Allow ample time for the auctions. This is very important. Provide a refreshments table in the auction room if at all possible and reasonably affordable; this is a good way to keep people from wandering off.

The Local must decide how large an auction it wants and can accommodate given basic facilities and time restraints and what it can reasonably expect. Varying the split (i.e. club/seller) may increase or decrease the

number of items received. To increase the number of buyers, make good use of frequent advertising and get other local aquarium clubs.

Consider having any silent auctions take place in the vendor room. A sales table (where consignors specify a price for each item) is another way to reduce pressure on the main auction.

More than one auction might be conducted, with fish and new equipment and supplies in separate or combined auctions, and a plant auction. The Local will need one or more cashiers and a data entry person to keep track of sales transactions for each auction. The Convention Treasurer should understand and be satisfied ahead of time with the cash management processes the Auction Coordinator(s) intend to use.

The auction format may use auctioneers (“Live Auction”) or written bids (“Silent Auction”). For a silent auction, adequate time must be allowed for bidders to run up the prices. For a live auction, at least two auctioneers are necessary to allow reasonable rest periods for each auctioneer. Experienced, fast auctioneers can greatly affect how quickly a live auction proceeds and how high the average price per item will be.

If a computer program is used for any auction, a dry run/dress rehearsal prior to the actual auction is highly encouraged to avoid problems during the auction(s). A computer or software breakdown could be catastrophic to the auction.

Have all items to be auctioned tagged or indelibly marked with a unique Auction Item Number so the auction workers can be easily handle them and complete and record transactions quickly. It is helpful, especially for future planning, if a brief description of the item is included.

For silent auction items, each item should have a bid sheet that is marked with the Auction Item Number, the seller, and a description of the item. Without this information, you cannot track sales later, which can be valuable in assessing the auction. The bid sheets should be made up well ahead of the auction. And unless the bid sheet and item have matching unique Auction Item Numbers, you cannot tell if a buyer is paying the right amount for the item in hand.

For live auctions, a recorder must be used to record the Auction Item Number, Buyer/Bidder Number, and sales price of each item as it is sold. Alternatively, runners may fill out a card with that information, handle the sales transaction with the buyer and then immediately turn the card in to the data entry person to record the information.

Allow sellers the option to move an item forward in the auction for a small fee, e.g., \$2. Someone should be in charge of collecting this money and getting the respective lot to the auctioneer immediately. The additional revenue earned this way is not insignificant!

Make sure that regardless of the order in which they are submitted, all live consignments are sold. Because some bidders will want to bid on many items and not stop to pay for each item right after it is won, consider running tabs for those who ask for one. However, keep in mind that the greatest workload is at the close of the auction when many bidders will be paying for their purchases. Here are two ways in which the check-out task can be made easier:

- a) Cash & carry system, where several runners equipped with aprons and a small cash float deliver the purchase and receive payment.
- b) Lot system, where each bidder's number corresponds to a box or bag in which are placed the bidder's purchases.

The lot system has several advantages: it makes the tabulation easier, which in turn makes payment easier and then enables the Local to pay sellers their split at the auction, thus decreasing mailing costs. If using the lot system, approach a supplier who will donate boxes or bags as a form of advertising.

Whatever auction system is used, it should be discussed with the AGA Board of Directors well in advance of the Convention so that as much experience as possible can be brought to bear on this event.

Decide if you will have one or more cashiers/cash drawers for each auction, whether silent or live. A single cashier/drawer for all auctions simplifies end-of-auction reconciliation and minimizes staffing requirements, but makes it much almost impossible to determine afterward which auction produced what revenues and, if there is any error, to determine where the error occurred. Using unique Auction Item Numbers across all auctions, and recording these numbers with each sale allows the capture of all the information while using a single cashier.

Have an initial cash supply at the start of sales so that cashier(s) can make change. Be sure every check is made out correctly.

Don't forget that you will need things like a personal computer, printed receipts, calculators, staplers, pens, a sales form to document buyer information, a sign for credit card purchases (if arrangements have been made with a credit card processor bank to handle credit card payments), a sign instructing sellers how to make out checks, shopping bags or boxes, bidding sheets (for last minute entries/donations to the silent auction). One or more of these items is very likely to be forgotten!

AGA Auction Coordinator Responsibilities:

Before the Convention:

1. Assist the Convention chairperson as needed in coordinating acquisition of donations for the auction.
2. Contact and coordinate potential auctioneers and announcers, cashiers, runners, data entry personnel, and extra volunteers for hauling stuff around.
3. Collect all items needed for auction/check out process;
 - moving carts to transport items to/from rooms
 - documents to copy/distribute:
 - auction guidelines/auction seller forms (can be included in check-in packets)
 - Auction Bid Sheets
 - Sales Receipt Forms
 - 3 calculators
 - 3 staplers and extra staples
 - many pens to distribute for auction use
 - permanent markers
 - stickers for labeling items and boxes/bags
4. Print enough Sales Receipt Forms to document buyer/seller info, obtain signatures for credit card purchases, document reimbursement status, etc.
5. Label stickers to label each shopping bag or box with attendee's name and bidder number.
6. Just before the Convention, obtain a copy of the attendee list to make the check out process faster.

During the Convention:

1. FRIDAY 12:00pm – 6:00pm. Assist volunteers at the check-in desk to accommodate attendees who bring auction items at that time. Distribute the Auction Guidelines to attendees and answer questions. Help sellers complete Auction Registration Forms and secure these forms for auction records. Make sure all plant donations are labeled with SCIENTIFIC NAME, COMMON NAME (if known), VARIETY and SELLER'S NAME. If the auction items cannot be received at this time, arrange another time BEFORE SUNDAY

MORNING to receive them. Storage/security of all auction items is the responsibility of the Auction Coordinator.

2. SATURDAY 8:00am – 4:00pm. Continue to be available to receive auction items, process forms and secure items in storage.
3. SUNDAY 7:30am – 10:00am. Coordinate all aspects of the Auction set-up. Hopefully you will have at least four volunteers to assist with bagging and labeling donated plants, completing bid sheets, distributing items and labeling bidder boxes or bags.
4. SUNDAY 10:00am – The Auction should promptly begin at 10:00am and an assigned announcer will coordinate the auction process. The AGA has created handouts for Auction Guidelines.
5. After all buyers are checked out, unsold items must be packed up for the AGA to remove.

After the Convention:

1. Organize bid sheets and tally auction income and reimbursement to sellers.
2. Cross-reference income with Sales Receipt Forms. Save bid sheets and Auction Registration Forms.
3. Make a copy of the Sales Receipt Forms and submit results to both the Convention Treasurer and the AGA Treasurer.
4. Send all checks and a cashier's check of the total cash income to the AGA Treasurer as quickly as possible to expedite payment to sellers.

EQUIPMENT MANAGER

The Equipment Manager should be someone local to provide, for example, a working laserjet or good inkjet printer and computer system to handle on-site requests for name badges, signs, auction related items, etc. This person could also acquire name badges, cardstock/posterboard for signs, receipts for use at the check-in desk and in the auction(s), markers, pens, tape, thumbtacks, and other office-supply needs.

The Equipment Manager should be available during the weekend to run errands.

AGA VOLUNTEERS

The following people have offered their services:

Erik Olson	Producing and Directing Video Taping and providing some Public Address equipment (including microphones, mixers, and other audio gear) for events. Editing and production of recorded materials; assistance with any integration between the convention and the AGA Aquascaping Contest, including printing of photos. Scanning speakers' slides so they can use the computer instead of a slide projector.
Scott Hieber	Gaffer, assistant cameraman Convention Treasurer, including assistance in preparing Budget Planning and reporting, tracking revenues and expenses and preparing any financial analyses that might be useful.
Cheryl Rogers	Registration management. AGA Membership. AGA Sales Table. Assistance with vendor solicitation.

Phil Edwards Vendor solicitation.
The AGA will establish a private web mailing list including the AGA Board and the Local convention staff to help maintain communications and provide for discussion of any issues as they arise.

AGA Silent Auction Sales Receipt Form Date: _____

Name: _____ Amt. \$ _____

_____ Payment by: Cash ☐ Check ☐ CC ☐

CC #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

CC SIGNATURE : _____

Item Auction ID # _____ Item Auction ID # _____

Item Auction ID # _____ Item Auction ID # _____

Item Auction ID # _____ Item Auction ID # _____

Item Auction ID # _____ Item Auction ID # _____

Item Auction ID # _____ Item Auction ID # _____

Item Auction ID # _____ Item Auction ID # _____

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Item Auction ID # _____ Item Auction ID # _____

Item Auction ID # _____ Item Auction ID # _____

Item Auction ID # _____ Item Auction ID # _____

Item Auction ID # _____

Item Auction ID # _____

These Silent Auction Guidelines, Auction Registration Form and Auction Bid Sheet documents are samples provided for information purposes for the benefit of prospective Convention sponsors –

Aquatic Gardener Association -- Silent Auction Guidelines

When Convention attendees pick up check-in packets, an Auction Coordinator will be at the Convention check-in table to assist auction donors in processing items, completing the auction forms and confirming whether the proceeds are full donations (i.e., that the AGA will receive 100% of the proceeds) OR that the donor confirms a partial (50%) profit, with the other 50% as proceeds to the AGA. Plant material as well as related items will be accepted. Each donor (vendor) may submit a maximum of 10 (lots) with no more than 4 lots of any one species or variety. We encourage you to bring unusual or hard-to-find plants to ensure a great selection. PLEASE pre-label all plant bags with a scientific name, a common name (if known) and the donor's name. If the Auction Coordinator cannot process all auction items at the time of auction registration, another time BEFORE SUNDAY MORNING should be determined by the Convention Chair and the Auction Coordinator. Storage of the auction items will be the responsibility of the Auction Coordinator.

On Sunday, Auction volunteers place the items on several designated tables with a corresponding bid sheet to the right of the item. **Access during auction set up is restricted to the auction coordinator and authorized auction volunteers.** The silent auction will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m.

Silent Auction Rules:

1. Auction attendees will be given the opportunity to inspect all auction items for a fixed amount of time set by the Auction Coordinator. A bidder does not need to register for the Convention or the auction to bid. Each bid must be a multiple of ONE DOLLAR. A bidder submits a bid by writing her or his name and the bid amount on the corresponding items' bid sheet. **ONLY LEGIBLE BIDS WILL BE DEEMED VALID.** There is no limit on the number of bids that may be placed on any item within the allotted time for placing bids.
2. To finalize bids, the Auction Coordinator or an Auction Volunteer will announce to bidders when a table will be closed to bidding. An announcement of the bid opening period for each table will be made by the Auction Coordinator. An announcement of the bid closing time for a table will be made at the start of the bidding period, at 5 minutes before the close of the bidding period, and at the close of the bidding period. After the closing of the bidding period for a given table, no further bids may be made on items on that table nor will any further bids be accepted on those items. Auction Volunteers will remove and sort items for winning bidders. **PLEASE DO NOT INTERFERE WITH THIS PROCESS OR GO BACK TO THE CLOSED TABLES.** Bidding continues on remaining tables until each is closed to bidding.
3. Payment for AGA auction items can be made by cash, check and possibly by Master Card or Visa if arrangements with a credit card processor have been established. All bidders must check out and pay during or immediately after the auction concludes. Cashiers will be available to retrieve your bag(s) of items and check you out. The AGA Treasurer will be responsible for mailing checks for sellers' portions of auction revenues within 2 weeks following the auction.
4. Any unsold items must be retrieved by the seller immediately after the auction or they will be considered a donation to the AGA.

PLEASE SEE AUCTION REGISTRATION FORM ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS SHEET

Aquatic Gardeners Association Auction Registration Form

Seller Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Country: _____

Zip or Postal Code: _____ E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Seller is a member of AGA____ Local____ (must be a member to sell)

List of Auction Items:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

AGA SILENT AUCTION BID SHEET

ITEM #: _____ SELLER: _____

Genus species (var.): _____

Common Name: _____

BIDS MUST BE IN MULTIPLES OF \$1.00. **PRINT** CLEARLY USING INK.

Name

Bid Amount

1. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

4. _____

4. _____

5. _____

5. _____

6. _____

6. _____

7. _____

7. _____

8. _____

8. _____

9. _____

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13. _____