



Perspectives

The Delegates' Newsletter

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Thank you to Carl Ashby for your work as coordinator of this issue, and to all the other committee members for performing their share of the task of putting this issue together. Thanks Carl and all. — Janice Gardner, Editor

FROM THE EDITOR

JAN GARDNER

EDITORIAL

Legislation is a continuing fight. We have finally accepted that the target of the Animal Rights philosophy is not the other guy—it is US.

We must not become sanguine about our recent partial success in California and revert to our usual behavior. For all the impact that AKC has in our lives, we are actually a very small player on the state and national scene. Our adversaries (PETA, HSUS, AHA, and etc) have a massive head start on us as far as public perception and fund-raising capability. People have been sold the concept

that Animal Rights equates with Animal Welfare - even though, at its conclusion, the AR agenda would cause drastic reductions in our livestock and domestic pets. The purpose-bred animals would decline sharply in population, other than those imported from third-world countries.

We cannot allow this to happen. We must educate all those we contact (puppy buyers, boarding and grooming clients, neighbors, relatives, town officials) that we are the dog experts. We are the ones who devote our lives to Animal WELFARE. We should

be proud of who we are and what we do.

When people seek a referral from you for puppies, and you have a diminished list of responsible, good breeders to name—grasp this opportunity to explain that if bills like AB1634 were to pass—there would be NO good breeders from whom the public could choose those wonderful pups they want.

We are not winning. We are not even yet in a close race. But - we have begun. Keep up the fight. Eventually, we will prevail, because we must. 🐾

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Perspectives

The Delegates' Newsletter

Perspectives is a publication for, and written by, the Delegates, with an occasional article solicited by committee members ONLY from acknowledged experts in their field. It is a forum for the exchange of ideas, for argument, for news. Through this medium, we hope to become better informed and,

thereby, better equipped to fulfill our responsibilities as Delegates. Your contributions are welcome, and necessary, in making this publication a useful enterprise. Please assist the editorial board by submitting material via e-mail. Opinions expressed in *Perspectives* are not necessarily representative of the views of the Editor, the *Perspectives* Committee, or of the American Kennel Club.

WHERE FUTURES MEET: HOW ONE CLUB IS REACHING OUT TO FUTURE VETS

JIM CORBETT, *Tualatin Kennel Club*

CLUBS

As a part of Tualatin Kennel Club's veterinary outreach, we continue to make contributions to the College of Veterinary Medicine at Oregon State University. For many years we have provided small sums of money for scholarships. In 2006, Tualatin moved to a new level with \$25,000 for scholarships and an additional \$10,000 for a research project related to drug research in the area of congestive heart failure.

In April 2007, we increased our investment to \$35,000 for scholarships, with additional funding available for research, pending the determination of a project that is of high value in the opinions of our club members. This year's scholarships went to students in small animal medicine, and those who plan to practice in the State of Oregon, or who are focusing on canine research. We are very cognizant that nothing in life is for certain, and that change is the foundation of our future. Thus, our criteria cannot be absolute, as young veterinarians may leave the state of Oregon.

One thing that we can do is to provide the veterinary medicine students of Oregon State Univer-

sity a better perspective on the American Kennel Club, Tualatin Kennel Club, and of the role owners and/or breeders of purebred dogs play in our American society. In talking to the students at the annual awards ceremony, and at the awards banquet that follows, we have the opportunity to present a better view of our goals and objectives in purebred dogs. This is an opportunity to address breeding practices, health and welfare of our dogs, and the temperament of our dogs, as well as to talk about events for our dogs—conformation, companion events, and performance events.

Within the award ceremony, I had the opportunity to give a brief speech to the students, faculty and parents, and the following is my perspective of our intersecting futures.

"Where Futures Meet


On behalf of Tualatin Kennel Club, I am pleased to be here this afternoon representing our all-breed dog club, which is centered in Washington County, west of Portland. We are happy to be in the position to be able to provide scholarship support for several of

you today. Working at Oregon State I am well aware of the cost of education, especially in the professional fields, and I am also aware of the depth of debt that is often required to reach graduation and to leap forward into the real world.

Last year we were able to provide \$25,000 for scholarships and this year we are able to increase the total to \$35,000. Our success in our January shows gives us the revenue source to be able to provide funds for scholarships and research projects.

Our members see this as an investment. We will need you in the future as our world of dogs needs a continuing stream of quality veterinarians. You will need us, as we are a part of your customer base that provides you with a financial future.

We are caring dog owners. Our breeding practices and the health of our dogs are of the highest importance. As we look to the future, we want veterinarians who are knowledgeable, skilled and caring.

Thus, this is where our futures meet." 

The Writers' Guidelines for *Perspectives* now appear once a year, in our December issue.

If you would like a copy of the Writers' Guidelines, please send your request to the Perspectives Committee Secretary, Crécia Closson at crannog@earthlink.net.

WANT TO INCREASE YOUR CLUB'S MEMBERSHIP?

DIANNE FRANCK, *Langley Kennel Club*

CLUBS

In the June issue of *Perspectives*, J.N. (Kim) Blutreich of Piedmont Kennel Club described methods used by her club to increase and retain membership. I would like to expand on this by telling you the many things Langley Kennel Club (Hampton, Virginia) is doing to increase and retain its membership.

Langley Kennel Club has always been a good sized club with membership of around 40 to 50 and with 50% or so of these actively participating in club activities. Two years ago the board made the decision to pursue new members and to work on membership appreciation and retention.

Our membership is currently at 83 with 29 new members signed on in the last two years. At our monthly meetings our attendance is normally 45 – 55 people. To facilitate this growth, Langley Kennel Club has developed several programs to recruit and retain members.

Each year after our dog show, which is held on the Memorial Day weekend, one of our members goes through the catalog and highlights every exhibitor who lives in the club's geographical area but is not a member of Langley Kennel Club. These exhibitors are then sent a letter that thanks them for attending our show and invites them to attend our next meeting. This is also done after our January match.

Our meetings are held in a private dining room at a local restaurant, where we meet for dinner first, then hold our meeting. We have found over the years that having dinner available increases attendance at the meetings and makes new people more comfortable walking into a room full of strangers.

At the meetings all guests are asked to sign in. At the start of the

meeting they are introduced and handed a small goodie bag as a thank you. If a club member was instrumental in bringing this guest to the meeting, the club member is given a scratch off lottery ticket as a thank you (cost to club \$1.00).

Membership is discussed at every meeting; we are very open with the membership about recruiting new members and encouraging existing members to stay. Within the last year we have started several new educational programs to keep the meetings interesting to long-term members, these programs are:

1. "*Breed All About It*", each month a selected club member gives a short 10-minute presentation on his or her breed. This presentation is geared to general information on the breed, not show wins or brags. The purpose is to help all of us become more informed about all AKC dog breeds.
2. "*Word of the month*"; using the book *Canine Terminology* by Harold R. Spira, an obscure word of dog anatomy is given and club members must come up with the definition. A prize is given to the member who correctly answers the question.
3. "*Do you know the rules*", each month our AKC delegate reviews one section of the AKC Rules applying to Dog shows or the AKC *Dealing with Misconduct* booklet. The Club has purchased a copy of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows* for each member. This educational discussion only takes about 10 minutes.
4. *Our program chair also arranges for an outside speaker once each quarter to present a ½ hour program relating to dogs. Programs have included topics as varied as a veterinary chiropractor, a presentation on collapsing trachea and a veterinary presentation on canine shot protocol.*

Appreciation of working members is paramount to membership retention. All of us lead busy lives and must decide how to spend our limited free time. Thanking members for giving up their time to assist the club is of utmost importance to membership retention.

As a thank you to members who have worked at the show we hold a June potluck dinner and auction. Langley Kennel Club provides the entrée's and asks each club member to bring a side dish. These potluck dinners are held in a local school cafeteria and are free, fun and full of good times. A small gift is given to each member who has worked at the show (this year that amounted to 48 gifts). This gift is in addition to the hand written thank you note they have received from the Show Chairperson.

We also hold a Christmas potluck awards dinner and auction where Championship plaques are given out to each member who finished a dog to an AKC Championship that year. The money raised at both auctions (of items donated by club members) is used to fund our donations to the AKC Canine Health Foundation and other charitable funding.

By keeping our members educated and the meetings fun we have been able to recruit over 29 new members in the last two years and have had only 4 long-term members not renew their membership (all of whom are now no longer involved in the sport of purebred dogs). We currently have a roster of 83 members.

By putting a little effort into pursuing dog enthusiasts and thanking existing members for their donations of time and money, you too can watch your club grow and become stronger. 🐾

YOU ARE WELCOMED!

DANIEL J. SMYTH, ESQ., *Chair, Coordinating Committee;
Chair, Delegate Advocacy and Advancement Committee*
BLACKIE NYGOOD, *Secretary, Coordinating Committee;
Chair, Dog Show Rules Committee*

AKC MATTERS

The Delegate Coordinating Committee is made up of the Chairpersons of all the regular Delegate Standing Committees. According to the Delegate Standing Rules on Committees, our charge is as follows:

1. To determine the scope and jurisdiction of Delegate committees.
2. To establish procedural guidelines for committee operations.
3. To coordinate, control, and facilitate committee requests for staff resources and committee expenses.
4. To ensure the timely submission of committee annual reports.
5. To review committee effectiveness and make recommendations.

In our opinion, this sounds like Big Brother at its worst. It might be a good idea some time in the future to rewrite it in a more cooperative tone; for example, the words "help" or "assist" don't even

appear. It sounds Imperial and Intimidating - neither one of which this Committee, or any Delegate Committee, was ever intended to or actually ever should be.

If you, as Delegates, have felt uncomfortable or unwanted at meetings of the Coordinating Committee in the past, please don't feel that way now. If you have a suggestion, idea, or yes, a gripe - send it to one of us and ask that it be discussed. If it is appropriate to just one committee then it should be taken to that Committee first.

It is much more practical to present your idea in writing ahead of the meeting date so that the entire Committee can read and consider it. When you think about your idea in advance you will have the opportunity to research it and devise arguments toward its acceptance. When ideas are presented 'off the cuff' at a meeting, they may not receive suffi-

cient consideration. If your idea is important to you, then it deserves an adequate presentation so that others can also be convinced of its worthiness.

The Coordinating Committee is the last one to meet after all the other committees have met and at the end of a long and tiring day. It might be preferable to be able to get outside, have a drink and chat with friends, or put your feet up and relax. If the Coordinating Committee members can hang in there for a bit longer, hopefully you can also. The only way the Delegate body can grow and improve is for all of us to work together. Your thoughts, ideas and complaints are important to us. Please take the opportunity to share these with the members of the CC.

When we all work together we can get a good deal accomplished.

Come visit us - we won't bite! 🐾

WHEN IT'S NOT BROKE – WHY TRY TO FIX IT WITH A FLAWED AMENDMENT?

JUDITH V. DANIELS, *Mt. Baker Kennel Club*

AKC MATTERS

At the September Delegates' meeting, you will be asked to vote on a Bylaws amendment to extend the time that an AKC Board Member could remain a member of the Board after losing

his/her delegate position, through the expiration of his/her elected term as a Board Member.

Currently, Article VII of our Bylaws provides that, excepting the AKC President (who serves as

a non-voting member of the Board), the AKC shall be governed by a Board of Directors, all of whom must be Delegates. Article VII further provides, "When a

(Continued on page 6)

DANIELS, cont'd.

Delegate who also is a Director of the AKC shall resign his/her position as Delegate or shall be removed therefrom and shall not offer his/her resignation as Director of the AKC, he or she may continue to hold the office of Director until the next annual meeting provided that at the first regular meeting of the Board held subsequent to the date of his or her resignation or removal as a Delegate, the majority of the Board present shall vote to continue him or her on said Board." The proposed amendment has the potential to extend the length of time a non-delegate could serve on the Board from less than one year (to the next annual election), to more

than three years.

So, why would we want a non-delegate Board Member to remain in office for possibly three extra years? If another member club elects the removed Board Member to be their new delegate, he/she can be a candidate for the Board at the next election. The delegate body can then re-elect the Board Member, if we so desire.

Where's the flaw in the change being proposed? A member club could have a valid reason (other than politics) for removing its delegate. For instance, what if the delegate is convicted of a felony? What if the delegate violates

AKC's rules and regulations? Or, what if the delegate violates our new conflict of interest amendment? What if a current Board Member starts charging a fee for judging, or solicits advertisements for a commercial dog publication? Of course, he/she could no longer be a delegate, but then if this amendment passes, the Board Member doesn't need to be a delegate! Should such a person remain a Board Member?

I most certainly don't think so. If you agree with me, please vote NO on this proposed amendment. 🐾

DIRECTORS = DELEGATES = CLUBS

The Beaumont Amendment is a Bad Idea and Undermines our Governance

CARL C. ASHBY, *United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club*

AKC MATTERS

We will be asked to consider a change to the bylaws which will allow a Director to complete his or her term even if they do not represent a member Club and are NOT a Delegate. Essentially this would make the Director a "free agent" accountable to no one for the remainder of his or her term.

The argument goes that since a Director is elected by the delegate body, the vote of a single member club to replace their Delegate is violating the democratic process and rights of the delegate body, consequently denying the balance of the Delegates the services of this director for the term for which he or she was elected.

The presumption in this argument is that a Club would not act in a responsible manner ... unseating their delegate for trivial reasons or for their having taken a position on an issue with which the club was not in agreement - and therefore leaving the Director

open to capricious removal by their Club.

I have more faith in our Member Clubs (and I hope you do as their Delegate.) I believe that all clubs would only replace a delegate as a last resort but, if a Club doesn't act in a responsible manner, there remain options. According to AKC, at any given point in time, there are 20 to 30 clubs without a delegate. These vacancies form a "safety net" should a club act in a capricious manner. A worthy delegate should have *no problem* in being asked to represent one of these Clubs. In fact, I would think such an individual would be very desirable for any Club providing them an experienced, well connected delegate; not to mention the prestige of having a person with Director experience as their own delegate.

The current bylaws allow the Board to continue the ousted delegate until the next election providing, under most circumstances,

ample time for the delegate to find another club and therefore stand for election to continue his or her term as director.

The pitfalls of allowing a non-delegate to fulfill a four-year entire term are clear. First, our governance structure is predicated on the concept that our Directors not only come from our Delegate body but also represent a member club. This provides a check and balance on the actions of directors and keeps them in touch with the concerns and wishes of the member clubs. *The notion that a director could conceivably serve for almost 4 years "without portfolio" is simply not in keeping with our governance structure.*

Secondly, the fact that term limits prohibits a director for serving more than 2 consecutive 4 year terms adds to the reason why this amendment is a bad idea. It is possible a group of directors could "resign" their delegate status at the

(Continued on page 7)

ASHBY, cont'd.

beginning of their second 4-year term, and yet, if this change was approved, they could continue to serve as directors till the conclusion of their elected term.. The result would be a group of directors with no accountability to the delegate body... I shudder to think of the mischief this could cause, or worse, the potential of board gridlock among the various factions.

It is unfortunate that any direc-

tor/delegate would find themselves without a Club and face the prospect of having to give up their seat on the AKC Board of Directors. Serving the AKC as a director is a distinct honor and one of the highest services one can perform for our sport...but Board service is rooted in our governance structure and that principal provides time for a director/delegate to find a new club in order to have the

opportunity to continue as a director. The AKC governance structure was designed to assure that the Directors are accountable to the member clubs. The notion we could have a Board consisting of non-delegate directors is simply a *bad idea* and one that will not serve the AKC well today or in the future. We must send this "bad idea" packing in September! 🐾

CLOSE, BUT NO CIGAR . . .

JUDY HART, *Pembroke Welsh Corgi Club of America*

AKC MATTERS

It's been quite a while since many of us started asking for some 'incentives' that would benefit the responsible breeders, despite our much-touted refusal to breed enough puppies for everyone who wants one (for a few months!). One of our many suggestions at that time was the institution of a discounted registration for litters registered in full in the initial registration, plus packages that offer things like discounted microchips and DNA testing.

Suddenly last summer, the full litter registration was born! Once I finally found the form on the AKC website to review it (you have to be very determined!) and talked to some of the breeders in my club about whether it would meet their needs, I contacted David Roberts, AKC's Assistant Vice President in charge of Registrations, Customer Service and Special Services, with a suggestion. This is my e-mail of Aug. 1, 2006 in its entirety:

"Hi David,

I've been sharing the info about the new full litter registration option with my club members, and the immediate (and only!) concern I've had from numerous people is

whether they will be able to 'limit' the registration when they transfer it to the new owner. We register litters when they're only two or three weeks old so that we have all the appropriate paperwork by the time they're old enough to leave home. At that age, we haven't much idea (unless a puppy is mis-marked) which will be our show prospects, and which will be sold as pets on limited registration. For quite some time now I've asked if we could put a 'limited' option on individual registrations, and in this new program, it becomes even more vital. The people who called me said they would be delighted to use the new full registration option, IF they could identify puppies as limited when they transfer them to their new pet owners. Is that possible?

Thanks!"

David responded immediately, saying he understood the concern and since the puppies would still be under the control of the breeder, perhaps they could be 'limited' on that first transfer and

he would do some checking. Alas, checking revealed that our rules, both the one cited below and the AKC Procedures for Registration Matters Sec. XIII, prevented that option.

Chapter 3, Section 4A of the AKC's Rules Applying to Registration and Discipline states the following: "Limited Registration may be requested for a dog when application for individual registration of the dog is submitted, provided the application, together with a request for such limitation, is filed by the owner(s) of the litter at birth."

As the 'full registration' included the application for individual registration within the litter registration, breeders now had no option to include a limited stipulation in that first transfer to new owners.

I immediately offered to propose a rule change...many breeders have lamented not being able to put a dog on limited registration during any transfer of ownership, and a change from "application for individual registration" to some thing like "a transfer of registra-

(Continued on page 8)

HART, *cont'd.*

tion" would take care of all the problems and would encourage continuing registration transfers when dogs are sold later.

However, David reported that he and Jim Crowley had discussed an alternative...allowing the user of a full registration to register some or all of the puppies as limited, and then allowing that breeder a one time removal of that limited designation at no charge (the fee for doing that is currently \$25 per puppy) for those puppies who turned out to be show/breeding prospects. He said he would present that proposal to the Board in October, and I waited to see how this would be handled

before going forward with a rules change proposal.

In May 2007 I e-mailed David again, to inquire whether anything had been decided in addressing this problem as nothing had been announced since our discussions 9 months earlier, and my club members who had been waiting were impatiently asking. He responded that the Board had rejected this plan at the October meeting, and gave no indication that other options were being considered.

We now have a rule in place for a one-time name change if approved by the breeder, but ONLY IF the breeder registered the dog

to themselves before transferring it to a new owner. We have a 'full' registration option, but ONLY IF a breeder is willing to either forego using limited registrations, or will wait until litters are old enough for evaluation before registering, which means they'll have no 'paperwork' available for puppy purchasers. How about if we remove the "only if's" that penalize breeders trying to do the right thing, so that responsible breeders can both act responsibly and still help the AKC achieve its registration goals?

Sounds to me as if a few simple rule changes are in order. 🐾

GETTING TO KNOW YOU: A PROFILE OF YOU, A DELEGATE

CRÉCIA CLOSSON, *Lakes Region Kennel Club*

Interested, intelligent, involved. That describes Jane Ruthford, delegate from the Havanese Club of America. Jane's first delegate meeting was in March, 2007. Although the Havanese Club of America was formed in 1999, they are a recent member club and Jane is their first delegate.

Jane's reading of dog and horse "romance" stories as a youngster developed her hunger for a purebred, AKC registered dog. She walked to school on one path and returned on another just to get acquainted with all the dogs along both routes. Her first dog, when she was in 4th grade, was a small black Labrador Retriever who she coaxed home with treats. Her mother suggested that as long as she was feeding the dog, she might as well have it live with her.

Jane didn't require a second suggestion for that to happen. Rex's name became "Inky"—he was too small for that large appellation.



Jane was fortunate to have a neighbor who had AKC dogs with whom he did obedience training,

and he guided Jane in training methods for "Inky".

After "Inky," who lived just about until Jane left home for college, came a Bichon, Siberian Huskies, and a standard Poodle. But in the last 12 years Havanese have been her breed of choice. Jane was reluctant to tell me the exact number of Havanese she lives with, even though she lives in an unincorporated territory in the state of Washington, and is thus not subject to a numeric limit. Jane is at home full time and so has almost unlimited time to be at the beck and call of her dogs.

Jane is very interested in her breed's health issues, and particularly in cataracts.

Attendance at the first Parent Club Conference brought with it

(Continued on page 9)

AKC MATTERS

CLOSSON, *cont'd.*

the realization that becoming an AKC member club held untold benefits for her club, including having a voice in AKC's affairs and direction. "When a club has unexpected needs," Jane told me, "its delegate knows who to contact in the various departments so that she can garner the information necessary to fill those needs. The visit to the headquarters offices in New York City has proved invaluable," she continued. "For example, when I visited the library I became aware that there are no copies of our newsletter there. And we have a pretty great newsletter! I'm going to see that corrected as soon as I can," she said.

The Havanese parent club secured a grant from AKC/CHF for a preliminary study of cataracts and the search for a genetic connection in that breed. Following that initial study, several members formed a 501c(3) and raised \$200,000 to further the research. It was completed just last year and a presentation of the findings will be made at the national specialty in Denver this year.

Be sure to ask Jane about the connection between short and bowed legs and cataracts in Havanese when you see her in September. Strange correlation!

Attendance at both days of AKC's meetings will continue to

be a priority for Jane. "Attending the committee meetings, where the heart and muscle of activity is, makes attendance on that day as well as at the regular meeting day extremely important," she said.

In answering the question, "Should professional judges, handlers or others who derive a majority of their living from some phase of the dog world sit as delegates?" Jane indicated her feeling that if such were to happen, the complexion of the AKC would change and that change could happen quickly. She also said she'd like to hear a very clear definition of 'conflict of interest,' hoping the term could be better understood. "She wished for more clarity when the term 'ethics' is confused with 'conflict of interest' as they're not at all the same," she said firmly.

Most important to Jane is the need for education of the general population about dogs so good dog ownership can be emphasized more. "For me," Jane continued, "their interaction with my life and my family is a priority, as is an understanding of the dynamics of all healthy relationships ... and dogs play a vital role in this."

Jane's overriding interest is in canine health research, particularly since she believes that much of the research in dogs can cross

over to benefit man. Although she breeds infrequently, she breeds for the best; she understands that whelping is stressful but can manage it. On the other hand, raising those adorable kids is a real pleasure, especially because "Havanese are great moms!" Jane told me. Spending quality time with her dogs is where the most fun comes in. She does like conformation showing. Her assessment of the judges' education programs is that they are worthwhile and good, but she would like to see more breeders' education seminars to better teach breeders how to evaluate their stock and to limit kennel blindness.

"Because of her position, a delegate has a much broader overview of activities in purebred dogs, as well as of the inner workings of the American Kennel Club," said Jane, "but being the delegate also means that I must use my own perspective and analysis when bringing resources back to my club."

It's been my pleasure getting to know this delegate a little better. I hope you will make the opportunity to do so as well. And don't forget to ask her about cataracts and bowed legs! 🐾

UPCOMING DELEGATE MEETING DATES

December: Long Beach, CA – Monday, Tuesday, 3-4

March: New York, NY - Monday, Tuesday, 10-11

June: Location, TBD – Sunday, Monday, 8-9

AN OPEN LETTER

For the Information of Fellow Delegates Concerning a Motion Made from the Floor at the 11 June 2007 Las Vegas AKC Delegate Assembly Meeting

BRYANT FREEMAN, PH.D., *Lawrence-Jayhawk Kennel Club*

AKC MATTERS

James Crowley
AKC Executive Secretary

Dear Mr Crowley:

As requested, I enclose the following motion made from the floor at the official AKC Delegates meeting of 11 June 2007 on behalf of the Lawrence-Jayhawk Kennel Club:

Be it moved that no member or licensed club of the AKC may discriminate in its membership based solely on gender, race, sexual orientation, religion or national origin.

As a long-time university administrator, two-term president of the Clumber Spaniel Club of America, president of an all-breed


kennel club, etc, I, as well as many others, were surprised that the chair did not call for a second to the motion, followed in all likelihood by a tabling for further consideration.

Obviously this motion raises a number of questions, but I remind you the first woman Delegates to the AKC were not seated until as recently [*sic*] as 1974, after more than 20 years of deliberations. I believe the essential question here is to what extent is autonomous a member, or licensed, club of the legally incorporated AKC. May a club also constitute itself a member club of a competing registry (read UKC), with the same officers, Board, joint meetings, and equivalent shows? May a club knowingly admit to membership

an avowed "puppy miller?" May a club auction off dogs?

I present for your delectation a fine can of worms, but we are in the 21st century and similar questions were bound to arise sooner or later. What is right is right.

Sincerely,
Bryant Freeman, PhD
delegate, Lawrence-Jayhawk
Kennel Club

cc: Dennis Sprung, President & CEO
John Lyons, COO
Michael F. Swick, VP and
General Counsel
Heather McManus, Senior Attorney
Cynthia C. Beagles, Attorney 

ARE YOU GOING MY WAY?

BILL NEWMAN, *Mastiff Club of America*
Director, American Kennel Club

AKC MATTERS

When I joined the Delegate Body many years ago, I was so impressed with the quality of that group. By that, I mean the knowledge of pure bred dogs, their overall enthusiasm, dedication and fervor. Since then I have reflected on that impression and for the most part I believe that to be true. But dare not forget that dog people are not only clever, but competitive, egotistical and very opinionated. Perhaps that accounts for my most recent re-

flective attitude about the group and its actions (although maybe I have gotten older and more contrary).

After spending 40 years in Diagnostic and Therapeutic Radiology I still do not feel secure in the field of Physics, but I still have never come across a more negatively charged group than our body. It is as if our neutrons greatly outnumber our protons, but rather it is probably the matter of the visibility and expression of

the neutrons rather than their numbers.

So What Does All That Mean?

The answer to that is how we approach new initiatives, changes in procedure and action plans to assure our survival in an unfriendly world and changing times. There is a method of introducing new concepts that is reasonable and very successful. Granted it appears that we are frequently presented with new

(Continued on page 11)

NEWMAN, cont'd.

situations that are felt to be a fait accompli and they are met with uproarious opposition, and perhaps rightly so.

But there is a proper and more mature approach to change in procedure and policy, that is both constructive and positive. By that I mean one should first look at the problem and decide what are the options for solving it. List first all the reasons requiring change, produce a list of methods of change, and evaluate them all from both the advantage and disadvantage viewpoints. Compile a list of complications and adversities of all solutions, and decide which best suits the situation, the sport and our organization.

That does not mean we will always be right, or successful nor does it mean we cannot change,

modify or negate our actions. What it does mean, is that we are realistic of the problems in the 21st century that confront a collection of what may be interpreted as a group of elite, effete purists by a public not necessarily in tune with our purposes, and more importantly dedicated to our eradication.

So Where Is All This Going?

If we are going to survive, we must accept change, some that maybe unpleasant or not as savory as we would like. But change is inevitable and may not always be the best but must be for the good of the order and our mission.

Please take a new or more prudent approach to strident issues. Do not scream no no no, off with

their heads, but look at the reason for proposed change or concept. Determine its need and eventual effect on our organization. Proceed to analyze its method and make the necessary changes without injecting personal or emotional rhetoric. Make your comments and criticism positive and helpful. Look beyond your personal agendas and look at the big picture.

Are we going to succeed? You can bet your next Best in Show on it, but we cannot do it pulling in different directions and attacking each other. A group divided and fighting within can never effectively mount a defense or good offense against the enemy without.

SO WHO WILL COME WITH ME ON MY WAY ? 🐾



THE SECOND DELEGATE LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS JUDITH DANIELS, NANCY FISK, SUSAN LACROIX HAMIL, MICHAEL HOUCARD, KATHLEEN PARKS, PATTE KLECAN, KERSIN OTTMAR, GEORGE SEXTON, & CAROL WILLIAMSON

LEGISLATION

The second Delegates Legislative Forum/Caucus was held at the June meeting in Las Vegas, and again was scheduled at 7:30 AM on the first meeting day. This time slot, though it is very early, seems to allow delegates to attend the meeting without experiencing conflicts with other scheduled meetings. Perhaps this is the "silver lining" to gathering at this ungodly hour, because over 100 delegates were in attendance. To say that this number of attendees pleased our committee would be a huge understatement!

In order to allow for reports and open discussion on the extremely important bills currently affecting the fancy, the educational portion of the meeting (discussion of methods and tools which could be used to allow us to be more effective when lobbying at the national, state, and local levels) was delayed till the end of the meeting and time allotted for this portion of the meeting was reduced somewhat.

Committee members Susan LaCroix Hamil and Judi Daniels opened the discussion of current legislation with a report on the progress of Assembly Bill 1634, the bill so ridiculously named the "California Healthy Pets Act." They told of their experiences, working together with many others, on the front lines in the battle to defeat AB 1634. Walter Bebout, AKC Legislative Director, spoke about the AKC Legislative Department's ongoing efforts on this front. This outrageous statewide mandatory spay/neuter bill has mobilized the dog and cat fanciers of California, and the nation as a

whole, as no other attack on our sport has ever done. The danger of the animal rights movement has become real and tangible to us all. Like most legislative battles, this fight will continue for many months before it is over.

When asked by non-California-resident delegates what could be done to help those on the front lines, Judi Daniels suggested that each delegate find ten friends, puppy buyers, etc. who live in California and ask them to write letters in opposition to AB 1634. Actions such as this, which only require a small effort on the part of any one individual, magnified by ten friends of each person in attendance, plus those reading this report, can accumulate to make a tangible impression.

Attendees gave reports on the situation in Louisville and on the court fight that the Louisville Kennel Club has undertaken, as well as on the court fight concerning the City of Denver's BSL. Patte Klecan gave an update on the Albuquerque, New Mexico HEART ordinance and the Rio Grande Kennel Club's ongoing efforts to fight it. Nina Schaefer gave an update on the efforts in Pennsylvania and John Ronald spoke about another horrific bill in Washington, DC, which needs to be strongly opposed.

As the reports continued, what became very obvious was that there is an ever-increasing onslaught of terrible bills which, together and singly, have the potential to seriously undermine our rights as dog owners and fanciers.

The educational presentation portion of the next Forum/Caucus


will continue to focus on how to lobby effectively. It seems that those in California have joined forces and are working hard to defeat AB 1634. None of us can afford to wait until a bill of this magnitude comes to our door before we decide to become involved. Let's not wait for a 9/11, or in our case an AB 1634, to wave our AKC flags.

Our first two Forums were scheduled from 7:30 to 8:30 AM, which allowed us only an hour for our meeting. We accomplished much; however, the free exchange of ideas became rushed and the educational portion of the meeting was compromised because of time constraints. I am happy to report that, working with the Coordinating Committee, we have found a way to extend our time by another half hour.

Our next meeting is scheduled from 7:30 to 9:00 AM on the first day of each delegate meetings, starting in September. Though we will still meet early in the morning, we will have a less hurried meeting and will have more time to share ideas and learn from each other. We look forward to seeing you all in September.

Don't forget to find ten friends, puppy buyers, etc. who live in California and ask them to write letters in opposition to AB 1634.

Your homework assignment for the next meeting is to bring your ideas about ways to encourage all members of the fancy to become involved in our battle to save our rights as dog owners/lovers.

As always, WE WILL BE COLLECTING HOMEWORK! 

LANGUAGE MAKES A DIFFERENCE, PART TWO: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN “BREEDERS” AND “RESPONSIBLE BREEDERS”

PATTE KLECAN, *American Bouvier Des Flandres Club*

LEGISLATION

Language has a huge impact on the legislative battles we wage and sometimes the labels we use to describe ourselves are limiting rather than helpful. We are more than breeders. We are the leaders in promoting canine health and welfare and in promoting responsible dog ownership. . . . And we should say so!

The American Kennel Club, in a brochure entitled "Should I Breed My Dog?" sets forth hallmarks for responsible breeders. "Responsible breeders: Embrace the belief that each new litter should represent an improvement over the last; are aware that each breed has an official standard or written description of how the ideal dog [of that breed] looks, moves and behaves and are careful to breed only those dogs that meet this standard; and give careful consideration to health issues, genetic concerns, temperament, soundness and appearance. Responsible breeders know that every dog – however wonderful as a companion – has certain flaws or weaknesses and that it is important to find a mate that can complement strengths and help eliminate the weaknesses. Responsible breeders accept responsibility for the puppies they produce throughout each puppy's lifetime and are always available to answer questions and provide information to the puppy's new owners."

An internet search for "responsible breeder" leads to multiple websites that discuss the difference between a "breeder" and a "responsible breeder." Dog

Owner's Guide, for example, defines "hobby breeder" as "A breed fancier who has a breed or two (or even three); follows a breeding plan to preserve and protect each breed; produces a limited number of litters each year; breeds only when a litter will enhance the breed and the breeding program; raises the puppies with plenty of environmental stimulation and human contact; has a contract that protects breeder, puppy, and buyer; raises [the] dog in the house or runs a small, clean kennel; screens breeding stock to eliminate hereditary defects; works with a breed club or kennel club to promote and protect the breed; and cares that each and every puppy is placed in the best home possible."

This site defines "commercial breeder" as "One who usually has several breeds of dogs with profit as the primary motive for existence. Commercial breeders that are inspected by USDA, state agencies, or the American Kennel Club should have adequate conditions. Commercial breeders that sell directly to the public fall through the regulatory cracks unless they do business in a state that licenses commercial kennels. Dogs in these kennels may be healthy or not and their conditions may be acceptable or not. The dogs are probably not screened for genetic diseases, and the breeding stock may or may not be selected for resemblance to the breed standard or for good temperament."

Dog Owner's Guide defines "A real puppy mill" as "A breeder

who produces puppies with no breeding program, little attention to puppy placement, and poor health and socialization practices. Conditions in puppy mills are generally substandard and may be deplorable, and puppies and adult dogs may be malnourished, sickly, and of poor temperament."

The National Animal Interest Alliance's (NAIA) definitions of breeders fall into two general categories: non-commercial and commercial: "Non-commercial breeders fall into two additional categories: 1) breed enthusiasts, also known as breed fanciers or show breeders, including performance dog breeders who select dogs with the ability and temperament to participate in certain sports or to perform particular jobs; and 2) casual breeders who dabble in breeding."

"Breed enthusiasts follow breed club guidelines and codes of ethics. Breed enthusiasts are motivated by several factors: love of a breed; a desire to contribute to the improvement of breed health and performance skills; enjoyment of breed competitions and sports; and pleasure in the company of other breed and dog admirers. Breed enthusiasts . . . breed for health, temperament and breed type; screen their breeding stock for genetic abnormalities; become knowledgeable about breed history and bloodlines; provide appropriate health care and housing for adult dogs and puppies; raise, train and socialize puppies in their homes; participate in dog shows so their dogs can be evaluated for

(Continued on page 14)

adherence to specific breed standards of excellence and for performance ability; and help with public education efforts promoted by national and local dog organizations. Breed enthusiasts are sometimes called 'responsible dog breeders' ."

"Performance dog breeders are hobbyists, sportsmen or service dog organizations that breed dogs primarily to do a job or participate in a sport. They breed dogs for the temperament and ability to serve as working companions for handicapped owners, or produce hunting dogs, herding dogs, guarding dogs, racing dogs, sled dogs, dogs used in law enforcement and dogs with temperament and stamina to participate in schutzhund and other sports. These breeders concentrate on health and ability in producing high-energy, high-drive dogs that are good at their jobs, but which may not always be satisfactory as family pets because of their Type A workaholic personalities. Therefore, responsible performance dog breeders take extra care in placing their puppies as pets."

"Casual breeders raise dogs in their homes and sell directly to the public. Known pejoratively as 'backyard breeders,' they breed litters so children or other family members can witness a birth; because they mistakenly believe that a female dog needs a litter to be 'fulfilled', because they hope to earn a little extra money and haven't yet learned that litters cost more than they bring in; and because they did not neuter their pets or keep them properly confined. These breeders produce both purebred and mixed-breed dogs. . . . They are extremely unlikely to attend seminars, help with public education efforts, and contribute to breed rescue efforts, or take back dogs if placements don't work out. For these reasons they usually cannot offer sound

advice to their puppy buyers. . . . These amateur breeders are often disparaged by both anti-breeding activists and show breeders because they can unwittingly contribute to irresponsible dog ownership."


"Commercial breeders sell dogs as a business through large kennels, pet stores, national magazine ads, newspaper ads, and over the internet. Commercial breeders may be regulated or non-regulated. They may produce a single breed or multiple breeds, including crossbreeds. They may keep as few as three breeding females or as many as several hundred. Commercial kennels that sell dogs for resale in pet stores are regulated by the US Dept. of Agriculture under the federal Animal Welfare Act. Commercial kennels that sell directly to consumers from their facilities or through magazine ads or the Internet are not always required to be federally regulated and may avoid oversight altogether."

"Puppy mills are substandard breeding operations run by people with little concern for the welfare of their puppies or their breeding stock. Medical care is scarce; socialization and good nutrition are non-existent. Puppy mill dogs are typically in poor condition and live in kennels that are rundown and filthy. Dogs may be confined to small cages like rabbit hutches; puppies may be raised or displayed in shopping carts. When AKC inspectors find such kennels, they suspend the registration privileges of the owners and report the conditions to area authorities. When USDA inspectors come across such kennels that sell puppies to pet stores or to other commercial kennels, they use the federal Animal Welfare Act to suspend or revoke licenses and assess fines."

NAIA continues, "The entire commercial dog breeding industry

and even hobbyists are tainted by the existence of puppy mills. Anti-breeding zealots find kennels with squalid conditions, get the media interested, and paint all commercial breeders and pet stores that buy from commercial kennels with the same brush in press releases, articles, and fund-raising campaigns. Anti puppy-mill campaigns target all commercial breeders regardless of their standards. They use the existence of such kennels to promote mandatory spay/neuter bills and other anti-breeder legislation. They also use these campaigns to promote shelter dogs instead of well-bred and well-socialized puppies from breed enthusiasts."

"Breeder" or "responsible breeder"? When you walk into the office of a legislator or stand up at a city council meeting and announce that you're a "breeder," which image do you think comes to their minds? Because so many politicians have been indoctrinated by the animal rights groups into the mindset that "breeders" only fall into one category, the image that's conjured up is – "puppy mill." They think breeding is a business and we're only in it for the money! I've heard more than once that outrageous fees for intact animals and litter permits are just the 'price of doing business' ."

Until we succeed in winning the war for the public image regarding "breeders" we should always refer to ourselves as "responsible breeders" and educate the politicians that there is indeed a difference. We need to re-establish ourselves as the experts on the welfare of dogs. We need to re-claim the time honored integrity of the purebred breeder dedicated to the preservation of the uniqueness of our dogs. We need to change the public's image of who we are. We are RESPONSIBLE BREEDERS! 

IT'S US AGAINST THEM

JOAN TABOR, *Eastern German Shorthaired Pointer Club*

LEGISLATION

Fighting anti-dog legislation is a battle. Unfortunately the fancy are generally undermanned and under-funded. The sense of urgency is often lacking in hobby breeders, who, by their own definition, have a 9-5 job in addition to their dog hobby.

The New Jersey Federation of Dog Clubs (NJFDC) has had recent success in fighting breed specific legislation (BSL). In this battle they worked side by side with a non -AKC Club, The Delaware Valley American Pit Bull Terrier Club (DVAPBTC). The DVAPBTC had one full time worker and a sizable budget. Both groups circulated petitions and had the services of a pro-bono attorney. Representatives of the NJFDC and their attorney had a sit down meeting with the bill sponsor, during which time he was given a chance to review the signed petitions.

With the assistance of the DVAPBTC, the NJFDC sent a mailing to all New Jersey legislators. The mailing was quite comprehensive, containing a five page and fully researched statement on

why this legislation was wrong for New Jersey. We also presented position statements from the AKC, the New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association (NJVMA) and other reputable dog organizations, plus a reprint of an article in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA) entitled, "A Community Approach to Dog Bite Prevention." In this instance, all of the animal welfare organizations and most reputable dog organizations in the State of New Jersey were on our side.

Currently we (NJFDC) are fighting anti-breeding laws. So far our approach has consisted of sit-down meetings with some of the bill sponsors and attendance at legislative committee hearings, where our representatives have addressed the committee members. Unfortunately, the dog fancy at large takes no initiative on their own to attend those hearings which are conducted during weekday business hours. It is generally assumed that someone from the NJFDC Board of Directors will attend.

In addition to the aforementioned, the NJFDC publishes a quarterly newsletter, has a public education table at local dog shows, and maintains information on its website. We also encourage the member clubs to contact their legislators and bill sponsors by mail, e-mail, phone and fax. What we need to fight anti-breeding legislation in New Jersey is a cohesive front from all NJ AKC Clubs, their membership and the fancy as a whole. We do not need internal bickering about the way in which we are doing our job.

Dog hobbyists hurt themselves when there is divisiveness amongst us. The Animal Rights (AR) movement is cohesive, motivated and well funded. Internal bickering from within our own ranks can only bring joy to the AR groups who are often behind much of the legislation that we fight.

It takes a village of like-minded dog hobbyists and dog owners to combat the spread of AR legislation. 🐾

The coordinator for the December 2007 issue will be Carol Williamson.

The deadline for submissions for this issue will be October 5, 2007.

Please submit your articles to Carol at carol.williamson@kirbycorp.com

WHY THE MIXED BREED INITIATIVE IS IMPORTANT TO AKC'S FUTURE

THOMAS M. DAVIES, *Springfield Kennel Club*
Director, *American Kennel Club*

MIXED BREEDS

Dog trainer Karen Peake says she faces the day a student is ready for competition with a mix of emotions. If the dog is a purebred, there are numerous opportunities for the owners to show off their dogs' new skills.

But for the numerous owners of mixed breeds in her classes, finding trials is a disappointing experience. Peake, who teaches in northern Virginia, wrote the following in a letter to AKC: "So many of them would love the opportunity to compete in companion animal events, but currently are unable to. I would love to be able, in the near future, to give competition information to my clients with mixed breed dogs."

Peake can't remember a time when she wasn't involved with purebred dogs. She was introduced to the fancy by her mother, who got involved in the sport through a little mixed breed dog. She went on to say "You are the nation's largest registry and the best venue for owners of mixed breed dogs to 'strut their stuff' and open a completely new experience that could lead to more people becoming involved in the purebred dog fancy."

Peake is not alone in recognizing the disappointment of dog owners who cannot compete in AKC events. The majority of people who responded to the recent AKC survey on mixed breed participation said their clubs offer training classes for mixed breeds. The survey's purpose was to

gather input as the Board considers allowing spayed and neutered mixed breed dogs to be listed, similarly to ILP dogs, and to compete in Companion Events (agility, obedience, rally, and tracking). What is the message that we send when we tell these same owners that they can't enter our club's next AKC obedience or rally trials?

Actually, the majority of survey respondents agreed mixed breeds should be allowed more access to AKC events. More than 50 percent said clubs should have the OPTION of offering classes for mixed breed dogs. Sixty-five percent of AKC constituents who responded were in favor.

At the June Delegates meeting, some speakers stated opposition to this concept because it is a break from tradition. They contended AKC was established for purebred dogs only, and that's the way it should be always.

AKC was founded in 1884 for the purpose of recording the pedigrees of purebred dogs, registering them, and sponsoring quality events for purebreds – and that focus will never change. But AKC in 1884 is not AKC in 2007, as one delegate put it at the June meeting. Lifestyles and dog owners have changed – and the AKC must adapt in order to survive.

Today, AKC is faced with numerous challenges. These include a steadily declining registration rate for both litters and individual dogs. Registration fees subsidize

dog shows and events so this is a true concern for exhibitors.

In addition, the animal rights movement has become a powerful force in our country. Anti-dog and anti-breeding legislation crops up on almost a daily basis in local and state governments. Currently, AKC is fighting six state and 26 local government initiatives; this is not counting the ones that have already passed, including the Louisville, Kentucky spay-neuter ordinance.

AKC's adoption of a mixed breed dog listing service would provide a significantly broader base of dog/pet support to increase our ability to influence legislative activity.

As another delegate said at the June meeting, the animal rights movement plays the "E-card" against us, meaning the Elitist Card. They can point to AKC and jeer that we don't represent all dogs – they do!

Longtime Golden Retriever breeder and Golden Retriever Club of America President Chris Miele recently wrote AKC to express her personal views on this topic. She said she understood the reluctance of some fanciers to include spayed/neutered mixed breeds, but that they shouldn't fear the loss of their elite status. "It is generally agreed that AKC represents the elite of dog owners, breeders, and competitors. Admitting mixed breeds to companion events doesn't jeopardize that

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status. The delegates, judges, and member clubs still represent the pinnacle of knowledge and dedication to health, breeding, training, and responsibility."

It is important to advance the positive aspects of AKC to a new and very large segment of the dog owning public. Nearly half the dogs in the country are mixed breeds, comprising about 31 million dogs, according to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association. Even if AKC captured a small percentage of those owners, it would translate into a significant gain.

The Kennel Club of Great Britain—one of the world's most prestigious registries—has registered non-purebred dogs for more than 50 years. Crossbreeds, as they are known in England, compete in obedience, agility and other companion events.

Rosemary Smart, President of The Kennel Club, says the move has helped their country's purebred dog fancy with influencing government actions. "We try to represent dogs and dog owners in a practical and measured way, putting forward the voice of reason against some rather more extreme organizations. If we are seen to be only representing a sector of the dog owning community, it would be very difficult for us to influence government and be part of the consultative process."

The Kennel Club has two branches for its mixed breed program. The Companion Dog Club registers about 1,000 dogs a year, and the Activity Register (for competition) registers about 3,500 a year. These figures may seem small, but not when you put them in perspective. England is much smaller than America. The Kennel

Club registers about 57,000 litters a year, compared to 413,000 for the AKC. For individual dogs, the comparison is about 270,000 individual dogs a year in the UK, compared to more than 800,000 for AKC. If the AKC captured the same percent of crossbreeds as The Kennel Club, the results could be significant.

The fear of promoting the breeding of "designer" dogs is another reason fanciers cite for not wanting mixed breeds. They do not want to contribute to the popularity of labradoodles, goldendoodles, and puggles.

It's not the breeders of these pricey mixes that AKC wants to reach – and the spay-neuter requirement would prevent these breeders from involvement. AKC needs to connect with the pet owners who bought into the hype that designer dogs are the new super canines. By not encompassing the owners of these dogs, we actually increase the likelihood that their next dog will be another designer dog. If the AKC develops a bond with the owners of these hybrids, then we gain the ability to enlighten them to the benefits of a well-bred purebred.

A mixed breed program also would allow AKC to embrace people who own both mixed breeds and purebreds and provide them with a venue for participation in our events. More than 21,000 people took the mixed breed survey, and nearly 30 percent of respondents said they own a mixed breed. Exhibitors who compete with both purebreds and mixed breeds likely choose an alternate registry that allows all their dogs to play. Most, if not all, competing registries that sanction companion events provide for mixed breed

participation.

Mixed breed owners who compete in companion events – whether they are in separate or same classes – will be exposed to the performances of well-bred and structurally sound purebred dogs, providing some stimulus toward the possibility for their next dog to be purebred.

Many have stated they didn't mind mixed breed involvement, but they did not want a mixed breed to take their dog's slot in limited entry trials. This program would be OPTIONAL for clubs. If your club events' entries are booming, then you do not have to offer classes for mixed breeds. But many clubs need more entries to break even. In 2006, there were more than 180,000 slots in agility trials that went unfilled. Obedience trial entries have declined since 1999 so some clubs would welcome the extra entries.

Most importantly, the AKC would truly demonstrate its commitment to responsible dog ownership. It's difficult to contend that we are concerned about the best interest of all dogs when we exclude nearly half the dogs in the country. There is no better way to combat the spread of anti-dog legislation than by educating all dog owners and showing them that AKC cares about all dogs.

Miele summed it up well in her letter. "Perhaps the delegate body would be more favorable towards this if they realized that this will help AKC's image considerably with all the horrid legislation that is cropping up all over the place. This is an opportunity to promote responsible dog ownership for ALL dogs." 🐾

AKC MIXED BREEDS????????

DAVID MERRIAM, *Duluth Kennel Club*
Vice-Chair, AKC Board of Directors

MIXED BREEDS

For 123 years the American Kennel Club has been committed to the sport and the encouragement of purebred dogs. The Board of Directors and the Staff are now engaged in a procedure which, if it came to fulfillment, would disastrously undermine our historical basis.

Can there be any doubt of our allegiance to the purebred dog? It is explicit in the stated Objects of the Club [emphasis mine]:

"The objects of the Club shall be to maintain and publish an official stud book, to adopt and enforce uniform rules regulating and governing **purebred** dog events, to regulate the conduct of persons interested in breeding, registering, selling, purchasing, exhibiting and running **purebred** dogs, to prevent, detect, and punish frauds in connection therewith, to protect the interests of its members, to publish an official kennel gazette, and generally to do everything to advance the study, breeding, exhibiting, running and maintenance of **purebred** dogs." (AKC Bylaws, Article III.)

The last major overhaul of the bylaws initiated by the Menaker Committee included the addition of "purebred dog" to numerous sections similar to the example above. This attempt to bring mixed breed dogs into the structure and governance of AKC is not only misguided but absolutely sends the wrong message. The proposals say the mixed breeds will not be registered, only listed. Do you really believe that the public will distinguish between

AKC registered, AKC listed or AKC enrolled? Be serious. If mixed breeds are "admitted" in some form, be prepared to find advertisements of AKC Labradoodles, AKC Cockapoos and AKC You Name It.

This result will be a withering rebuttal to our messages of so many decades: Make your next dog an AKC purebred bought from a breeder. Know what you are getting, buy an AKC purebred dog.

One must question why AKC is even considering such an ill-advised move. The best I can discover is that it stems from two sources: 1) some companion event people want to be able to enter their purebreds AND their mixed breeds at AKC events and 2) Some think that the program will be a money maker for AKC.

I believe that the only national kennel club AKC recognizes that "registers" mixed breeds is The Kennel Club in the UK. They separate their mixed breed registry into two parts, Activity and Companion Dog Club. Obviously, the Activity dogs are those who compete in their companion events and number about 3500 per year. The Companion Dog Club garners a mere 500 mixed breed dogs every year.

The proposals I have seen include the provision that all mixed breeds must be spayed or neutered before they can be listed. Is AKC committed to breeding purebred dogs or just exhibiting any kind of dog? Deliberate and thoughtful breeding is at the very core of our sport.

If, under the proposal, the mixed breed companion events

must be held separately from AKC companion events, the desire of the dual owner will be denied. If held at the same time and place, it will only be a matter of time before they are combined.

It is argued that if AKC includes mixed breeds, we will have greater political influence. Balderdash! Politicians are not that naive. A handful of mixed breeds attached to hundreds of thousands of purebreds does not change the leopard's spots. If England is our only example, their kennel club has been less than successful politically, e.g. the docking ban and the fox hunting ban.

I do believe that AKC has interests which overlap with the owners of mixed breeds. They include humane treatment, recovering lost dogs (CAR), legislation, good citizenship (CGC), responsible dog ownership and protecting the right to own dogs. AKC's interests DO NOT extend to registering/enrolling/listing mixed breeds and providing mixed breed competition.

Because our Bylaws are so explicit about the Club's commitment to purebred dogs, I believe that any action which would move AKC into the mixed breed proposal surely must have the approval of 2/3 of the Delegate body by amending Article III. To allow such a monumental change on the vote of only seven board directors would be unthinkable.

The methodology of approaching the mixed breed proposal as a "blank slate" is deceiving. It assumes that the slate is to be filled in. I say toss the slate now. A BIG NO TO **AKC MIXED BREEDS**. 🐾

AKC MIXED BREEDS PROGRAM — “DON’T OPEN A CAN OF WORMS”

JOAN CONFORT, *Twin Brooks Kennel Club*

MIXED BREEDS

Wow! What a can of worms the American Kennel Club is opening! AKC has always been known for standing behind its registry of pure-bred dogs. This proposed program marks a big change from what AKC has historically stood for.

My problem for this AKC proposal is there are people in the world who have been using Pit Bull mixes for dog fighting. They are now mixing them with Boxers and Rottweilers, and other large breeds. The powers-that-be keep trying to clean up this problem of illegal dogfights, but the fights somehow continue to proliferate. With the AKC’s acceptance of the mixed breeds, aren’t they openly supporting this avenue for continued abuse?

The other problem I see is with the “designer breeds” which are bred through puppy mills. The AKC is openly endorsing mixed breeding with no knowledge of outcome and breed specific genetic and temperament problems. I have personally met people who

own a “Yorkon” — very cute but not problem free. This is a blend of a Yorkshire Terrier and Bichon Frise. The “designer breeds” are the new vogue in canines of today. The puppy mills should be pleased at the prospect of this mixed breeding being accepted as part of the AKC registry.

Another negative example of possible breed dilution in the proposed mixed breed program would be that of having a superior dog with high attributes which has been neutered to meet our AKC mixed breed program criteria, and which therefore cannot be used for breeding. However, the breeders of this dog will still have the option of using a litter mate to try and achieve the same results. Would the offspring of this repeat cross breeding then be eligible for our listing service and our competitive events?

There could also be a positive aspect to this proposed new registry; I have been at dog shows where mixed breeds performed in obedience and agility almost as

well as the pure-bred dogs. This accomplishment can be attributed to the dog’s training, not to a planned breeding.

The Canine Companion for Independence group has bred Golden Retrievers and Labrador Retrievers together for the handicapped and have arrived at a perfect guide and service dog combination. I suppose these dogs would then be eligible for our registry?

Whether one leans toward the positive or negative aspects of this planned service, I hope that the American Kennel Club will be careful and straightforward as I and others wish to have full faith and confidence in the integrity of the AKC’s registry. Opening our services to mixed breed dogs has the potential of lessening the public’s perception of AKC dogs as specially bred dogs to meet high standards.

So, please . . . “Don’t open a can of worms.” 🐾



ENHANCING THE AKC INVITATIONAL SHOW

LIZ SULLIVAN, *New England Dog Training Club, Inc.*

COMPETITION

The Invitational is the AKC's premier event. It is the only show actually put on by the AKC itself. While attending various Invitational shows in recent years, I have been struck by the quality and quantity of the entry. Sadly in many cases, it is *not* a collection of the most elite dogs in the various breeds. While it may be a representative selection in some breeds, in other breeds not only are the numbers limited, but frankly there are notable absences of many of the truly top dogs of that breed.

Last year's Invitational in Long Beach is a good example of this. I've felt for many years that this show is simply not an important one for my breed (Boxers) as there have never been particularly large numbers entered and seldom have there been more than two or three of the truly top Boxers. As in most years, the Boxers entered last year were less than half of those eligible to compete and in perusing the catalog, I recognized the names of just a few of the well-known Boxers. It is true that the number one Boxer in the country was there, but this bitch is a California dog and, with the Invitational being held in Long Beach, it amounted to a local show for her. The majority of names listed in the catalog were of dogs I didn't recognize—and they certainly were not, with few exceptions, among the Top 25 Boxers in the country.

At first I thought this was something peculiar to my breed—for whatever reason Boxer people simply don't care about the Invitational. But in talking to other delegates with other breeds, it appears many of them feel the same way—

the Invitational is not a show where they expect to see a significant number of the top dogs of their breed competing, unlike their Parent Club National Specialty. Last year I made a point of watching this aspect in particular and noted that many breeds had relatively small entries. I am not personally familiar with the top dogs in other breeds, but when—for example—there are only 4 Great Danes entered in the show, you can safely assume it has not drawn a large entry of top winning Danes. And this was not isolated to Great Danes and Boxers, there were many breeds that I watched with small entries, well below the number of dogs eligible to participate.

If last year's entries had been an anomaly, the problem might be laid at the feet of the judging panel chosen. But typically the judging panels are stellar and this was not a one-time occurrence. It was, at least in my personal experience in attending this show, fairly typical. So the question must be asked, "Why doesn't the AKC Invitational draw a better entry?" But a more important question might be, "How can the Invitational be enhanced so that it becomes the real jewel of a show it is intended to be?" Clearly, a show like Westminster can and does draw outstanding entries—although it may be a bit unfair to compare a show with a long history and an outstanding tradition like Westminster's to a relatively new show like the Invitational. One possible reason top dogs avoid this show may be the location. Perhaps the sites in Tampa,

Florida and Long Beach, California are not optimum venues. Certainly the ongoing struggle in California regarding oppressive anti-dog legislation, and the fact that both representatives from the Long Beach area in particular betrayed the trust of the dog-friendly lobby, may impact entries this coming year. Many, many people in the dog fancy are speaking of avoiding the Invitational if it is not removed from California.

But regardless of issues like this political one, if the show itself was a significant event for the dog fancy, I believe it would draw better entries—and by better entries I mean larger numbers of the top dogs in each breed, not simply larger numbers of relatively obscure dogs. I would like to suggest a few possible enhancements that could make the Invitational the "crown jewel" of dog shows it was intended to be. And my use of the word "crown" in the previous sentence was intentional, because the first enhancement I would suggest for the Invitational is the promotion of the idea of a **"Triple Crown of Dog Shows"**.

If this sounds slightly familiar it may be because several years ago this idea was floated by the Chairman at the Invitational in Florida. But like the proverbial "15 minutes of fame" everyone is supposed to be entitled to, the excitement over this idea lasted about 15 minutes. The reason it quickly died (as it should have in this instance) was the serious miscalculation of including Crufts as one of the "triple crowns". Crufts is not an accessible show for many

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North American dog fanciers and it should never have been linked to two premier American shows. Firstly, if you own one of the many docked or cropped breeds, you can't even enter your dog in Crufts. Furthermore, although the restrictions on travel from countries where rabies exists have been somewhat eased, it still requires such a commitment to import a dog into England, show it, and return to America that many who are specializing top dogs are unwilling to do so. The competition for national rankings in this country is intense enough that many people would be unwilling to give up several weeks of competition to simply attend one dog show in England.

Instead of creating a triple crown from Westminster, Crufts and the Invitational; the Triple Crown should have been made up of the Westminster in February, each breed's Parent Club National Specialty (most of which are held between Westminster and the Invitational) with the final "jewel" being the Invitational itself. All three of these shows are accessible to the dog fancy here in America and are likely to draw good entries—especially if bragging rights to having a triple crown winning dog are available. In order to make this the elite competition it should be, it would be necessary to restrict the title of "**Triple Crown Winner**" to a dog who accomplished these three wins in the *same calendar year*. While going Best in Show at Westminster, your own National Specialty and the Invitational would truly be an ac-

complishment on par with winning the Thoroughbred Triple Crown races, there can only one Best In Show winner, and that in itself would not do enough to increase entries significantly at the Invitational.

My second suggestion is that in addition to proclaiming a dog, who went BIS at all three shows to be the national triple crown winner, we should also consider a title of "**Breed Triple Crown Winner**" for any dog that went BOB at all three shows. Obviously going BOB at your national is the same as going BIS, but by having a Triple Crown award for every breed, you would increase the interest by the number of available breeds—which is a lot more than the one dog who might achieve national Triple Crown success. To go BOB at these three elite shows would still be an accomplishment significant enough that I believe many people would aspire to it. There should be some special trophy or medallion for any dog who accomplished this notable achievement.

Finally, taking a page from the most popular sport in North America, Football, with its "super bowl", we need to increase local "rooting" interest in show dogs if we want the general public to become interested in these (and all) dog shows. My final suggestion for enhancing the Invitational would be to designate one cluster of shows in each state as the "state Invitational championship cluster". How many more members of the general public might be inclined to watch the Invitational on

television if their local paper mentioned that the New York or Iowa state champion was competing there? In order to get the best dogs to the Invitational we need to make it possible for dogs to earn standings that make them eligible—and at the same time, give people in that area someone to "root for" at the Invitational. So the AKC should designate one good sized cluster of shows as the "Invitational challenge" cluster and for *these shows only* the judges should be instructed to choose not just a Best of Breed or Best in Show but also a Reserve BOB and Reserve BIS. What ever ranking system the AKC ultimately decides upon, the dogs going BOB and RBOB at these shows should be awarded 10 points and 5 points respectively and those going BIS and RBIS should be awarded 50 points and 25 points toward their standings. So a dog that does well under several different judges at these clusters would rise in the rankings because of these special wins. It would be nice if Westminster and each national specialty club would agree to award RBOB and RBIS as well, but even without their buying into this plan, it would still make competition more exciting and for the Invitational—it would build suspense all year as dogs compete for the opportunity to win a triple crown for their breed. I suspect we could see a steady increase in entries of top dogs if this idea caught on among the dog fancy. 🐾

PARETO'S PRINCIPLE: IS THE 80/20 RULE ALIVE AND WELL AT DOG SHOWS?

DONNA BECKMAN, *Siberian Husky Club of America, Inc.*

COMPETITION

In the 1940s, Pareto postulated an idea illustrating the inequality of wealth in our country: that 80% of the wealth was controlled by 20% of the population—the 80/20 Rule. Since then, this principle is often found to be true elsewhere—even in dog shows.

Exhibitors will tell you that the same judges appear on most judging panels. Aspiring judges will tell you the same thing. So, without a scientific statistical analysis because we don't need to know the exact percentages, I suspect we can at least agree that there is a number of judges who seem to get a large proportion of assignments.

There are a several reasons for this trend, with the economics of dog shows leading the list. Costs are rising everywhere: show grounds, transportation, services, to name just some of the areas with escalating costs. Anyone who has ever put together a judging slate knows that finding fewer judges who are able to judge multiple full-day assignments reduces expenses (and this is all the better

if the judges are husbands and wives). But, it is not merely an economic issue, often those more experienced judges are some of our best judges, and any club wants to offer a great panel of respected and well-qualified judges. In some ways inertia takes over and the panels become self-fulfilling prophecies: club members suggest judges with whom they are familiar, these are the judges who judge frequently, and as a result, they get more assignments.

But, is this dog show version of the 80/20 Rule detrimental? I suppose it depends on your *perspective*. Some exhibitors may become tired of showing to the same people, and entries may drop. Winning exhibitors, however, want to see the judges they like on panel after panel. Aspiring judges trying to get a group or two in order to be more attractive to selection committees may find it difficult to get the assignments they need to progress. And, although the Sport wins by providing experienced judges, it might also lose by not

providing those good aspiring judges with enough opportunities to gain experience.

Perhaps there is a way to change the 80/20 Rule that would give us the best of both worlds: utilizing our best experienced judges while providing an opportunity for aspiring judges. Here are some ideas:

1. Partner with the specialty clubs in your area. A supported entry can often make hiring a "specialist" judge more cost effective.
2. Try to add more provisional judges to your slate—both those provisional for their initial breed and those working on their 8th breed or filling out their first group.
3. Expand you club's judging time and distance restrictions.
4. Most importantly, remember that expanding the judging pool begins with your Club making this a goal when selecting your next slate. 🐾



SLIDING APPLICATION FEE SCALE: SHALL WE REJIG?

SYLVIA ARROWOOD, *Charleston Kennel Club*

COMPETITION

The new application fee schedule for obedience, rally and other events seems to be already set in stone for all clubs desiring to hold such events. This may throw a chicane in the road for clubs with small entries. It will now be more difficult for them to continue to sponsor certain performance events. Clubs which were lucky to break even in the past could be placed in jeopardy if required to pay higher fees in order to host their events.

Is that what any of us involved in AKC performance events wishes to have happen? Is this good for the sport as a whole? Most of us would venture to say NO, NO, NO to those questions.

One of the all breed kennel clubs to which I belong has voted to retain obedience and rally at their shows next year even though they are aware it will not be profitable to do so. The hope is that local obedience clubs will "rally" to help bolster their entries. Without this support from the training clubs to enable their inclusion in future shows, it may be impossible for my club to continue to host

these performance events. All clubs in the area will be notified of the situation and asked for their support in the endeavor to retain obedience and rally at this particular show.


Clubs with large event entries will not be hampered by the fee increases, but higher application fees could be an important factor in determining which events a club with smaller entries must cut in order to survive. Currently some smaller clubs are teetering financially; whether they continue to sponsor less profitable or non-profitable events is a major issue. Some clubs could be forced to discontinue events which are not cost-effective. This is not the desired outcome we as a group should be seeking. Every effort should be put forth to induce clubs with smaller entries to continue sponsoring performance events.

A sliding fee schedule for all events would certainly be an incentive to clubs with smaller entries to continue holding obedience and rally events. Those clubs with larger entries will probably

not be impacted by the fee increases as their income will help absorb them.

Perhaps it might be best to do everything imaginable to encourage participation in all aspects of our sport and initiate a sliding scale for application fees. This would prove a welcome boon to those clubs adversely affected by the new, higher application fees.

Could the AKC make a sliding application fee schedule arrangement available to clubs in need or clubs with smaller entries? Would it be wise to rejig and institute one now? Is there anything wrong with trying something new? Perhaps it is time to rejig the application fee schedule for smaller entry clubs and cut them a break.

In the words of the King of Malapropisms, New York Yankee slugger Yogi Berra, quoting a famous American President: "Franklin Eleanor Roosevelt" "There is nothing to fear but beer itself." Let's try implementing a sliding fee schedule and see what happens. Never fear - certainly no harm will come from instituting such an action. 

PLAN NOW FOR FUTURE AGILITY – AND OTHER – EVENTS

MAUREEN SETTER, *Cleveland All-Breed Training Club*

COMPETITION

You and your club members have been involved with agility for quite awhile and decide it's time for your club to put on its own agility trials. You bring the idea to your club's board mem-

bers, and they give you the OK to apply for a Plan "A" Sanctioned agility match.

Everyone is excited about holding this new event. You contact the AKC Companion Events

Department, and the staff sends you a check list of items that must be submitted along with your match application.

You go through the check list,

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SETTER, cont'd.


noting that you have each item well in hand, until you come to:

"Constitution & Bylaws – If these do not include agility, please make plans to amend them to show the addition of agility and submit a letter of intent stating that you will amend your constitution and bylaws to include agility by a specific date along with your application. If the club chooses to add an all-purpose phrase to the constitution to encompass all AKC events, you may

do so.

'Letter of Intent – The letter of intent needs to be signed by a club officer and be written on club letterhead. The letter of intent will suffice for the club to hold a Sanctioned A Agility Match. However, the club will need to amend the constitution and bylaws to include Agility (or have an all-purpose phrase to cover all events that the club is eligible for) prior to AKC granting licensed status for agility. We all know how long it takes

to update your club's constitution and bylaws. Even if your club (Specialty, All-Breed, or Group) is not planning to hold an agility trial, take a look at your club's constitution and bylaws and consider including the statement "and any other event for which the club is eligible under the Rules and Regulations of The American Kennel Club."

By doing so, you can plan for your club's future, even if you don't know what that future is! 

THE DENTAL VACCINE: A NEW BREAKTHROUGH IN THE FIGHT AGAINST PERIODONTAL DISEASE

DR. SCOTT LINICK, DVM, FAVD

MEDICAL ISSUES

Many greyhounds are afflicted with severe dental disease. Signs of this disease include halitosis, gingival inflammation, gingival recession, bone loss and tooth mobility. These are the signs of periodontitis.

Canine periodontal disease is caused by bacteria naturally present in the dog's mouth. The bacteria grow into plaque on the teeth, which if not removed, hardens into tartar. The bacteria multiply and infect tissue below the gum line. They release harmful toxins that damage the gums, the periodontal ligament (which holds the tooth in its socket), and the bony socket itself. This deep infection is called periodontitis and may be painful to the dog. Furthermore, the bacteria from the mouth enters the bloodstream and can cause broader health problems including heart, liver, or kidney disease.

Now there is a new weapon in the battle against periodontal disease! Pfizer has developed a new vaccine against the bacteria that

are most often isolated in dogs with periodontal disease, the Porphyromonas species. Dogs receiving the Porphyromonas vaccine should develop an immune response to these bacteria, which are responsible for much of the bone loss associated with periodontal disease. The vaccine was tested to be safe in dogs as young as 7 weeks of age and as old as 15 years. The USDA conditionally released the vaccine in November, 2006, realizing the need for the vaccine, its safety and efficacy. Currently studies and field trials are being conducted to prove long-term efficacy in order to gain full approval for the vaccine.

It is important to realize that the vaccine is a preventative measure and not a treatment for periodontal disease. Also, it is to be used as part of a total preventative dental health program including professional cleanings and home care.

For Greyhounds, with their predisposition to severe periodontal disease, I feel this vaccine is a

very valuable tool. At our practice, we administer the vaccine to Greyhound puppies and young dogs before periodontal disease occurs. For adult dogs with existing dental disease, we recommend a thorough dental cleaning and administering the vaccine at that time. The vaccine is administered in 2 doses, 3 weeks apart with boosters every 6 to 12 months depending on the severity of the case. *Remember, home care in the form of brushing, rinses, dental foods or chew toys is a must.*

In the past, the only way of treating periodontal disease was through the mechanical removal of plaque and tartar. Now we can get to the root of the problem by neutralizing the harmful bacteria before they do their damage.

Dr. Scott Linick practices at Plainfield Animal Hospital in South Plainfield, NJ. He has been a Fellow of the Academy of Veterinary Dentistry since 1997. 