

DELEGATE REPORT
March 2010

The March 2010 delegate meeting was held in Newark, New Jersey. The committee meetings on Monday began with **the Parent Club Committee Meeting** at 9:00 a.m., which was crammed with 2 ¾ hours of information. It was announced that the Dock and Crop committee would meet that day immediately after the caucus. The Parent Club **Code of Ethics sub-committee** reported 92 parent clubs have responded with hard copies of codes, bylaws, and membership applications. Initial review of the documents show many commonalities in them and a final report will be given at the Parent Club Conference this summer. For that reason May 15 is the deadline for submission. The final report will be available to all clubs through AKC and should be most helpful to new clubs and also to those making changes to their current codes. It was announced that the **Parent Club Conference will be held this year in Raleigh August 27-29**. As of the meeting, 111 of 163 clubs and 13 of 41 FSS breeds had responded in the affirmative regarding attendance. If all slots are not filled, clubs will be given the opportunity to add a second attendee at a cost not yet determined.

David Roberts gave a presentation on the PRIME (Puppy Registration and Inventory Management Extranet) program, a point of sale software program for the retail sales of puppies that are AKC-registerable. It was confirmed that it allows retail sellers to register dogs for buyers at the time of sale, but there is no price reduction given by AKC for the registration in this manner. It is simply a tool to encourage dogs to be registered with AKC when sold. The registration papers are then mailed directly to the new owner. The purpose is to help reverse losses in registrations suffered in the past 16 years. It is hoped the project can recapture 70,000 to 100,000 registrations. The retailer receives nothing from AKC for their participation. In 2009 it was implemented in only a few stores and resulted in the registration of 6,000 dogs.

Doug Ljungren addressed issues about the Mixed Breed program and requirements for spay/neuter to participate. Questions being asked concern the fact that participants need only sign stating that a dog is neutered, but do not have to provide proof. Complaints about violations would then be handled on a case-by-case basis. It was suggested that before one could receive a performance title in the program they should be required to provide the proof of spay/neuter. This would allow us to protect our core beliefs without alienating people. There were also inquiries about the change from mixed breeds participating in separate classes at only stand-alone events to allowing them in the same classes as purebreds and allowing this to occur at all shows, not just stand-alones. It was explained that the change was made by the Board in January 2010 as the best way to integrate these dogs into the AKC family and allow it to be done in a cost-effective way for the clubs putting on shows and took into consideration that the dogs are already competing in other agility events outside AKC. AKC is merely trying to be consistent with the rest of the sport. The goal is to encourage these exhibitors to eventually get an AKC registered purebred dog, and many starting out (ie, 4H students) do not own an AKC purebred so would never be exposed to our shows otherwise. The committee

asked AKC to investigate the possibility of requiring certification of spay/neuter prior to the issuance of titles in this program. Mr. Ljungren agreed that they would consider this.

Tom Davies read a statement at the meeting that the **Re-Alignment Committee intended to ask the delegates to refer the question of realignment back to the board for further study before a vote on the matter**, as the restructuring may need refinement in light of the fact that many FSS breeds are now being fast-tracked and will be entering the AKC family in the near future. The committee was supportive of this action.

John Lyons gave a presentation on The Kennel Club's (in England) response to the 2008 and 2009 inquiries into dog breeding in England. The impetus initially was a BBC documentary aired in August 2008 about genetic issues in purebreds and claimed "bad breeding practices" there. The Kennel Club owns the breed standards, unlike in the US where the parent clubs own them. England also has a very active animal rights presence, and The Kennel Club reacted to this pressure and started re-writing the standards of 58 breeds. In November 2009 a government inquiry began by the Associate Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare, which is a non-scientific, political organization in England. AKC disagrees with the direction that The Kennel Club took in this matter and believes they are losing control of purebred dogs in England and giving in to outside pressure. Another difference in England is that The Kennel Club does not do inspections, so they cannot assure the public they are protecting dogs under their registration auspices as is done by AKC. AKC has its own health and welfare advisory panel, has inspections, and the clubs own the standards. All these things distinguish our situation from England's. We need to continually educate the public on all we do to breed good, healthy dogs, test for health problems, work to eradicate them through CHF and other initiatives, give health guarantees, and utilization of CHIC. We need to reassure the public that we are part of the solution, not a source of problems. We also need to continually demonstrate why various breeds look the way they do, move the way they do, etc., by showing the history of the breeds and the purposes of the breeds. Docking and cropping is a prime example, in that breeds that are the subject of this practice have a historical basis for doing so. The standard for various breeds exist because of what the dog was initially bred to do. We must continually remind the public of what we are preserving.

The Parent Club meeting concluded with a reminder to attend the legislative caucus the next morning at 7:30 a.m.

I attended the **Bylaws committee meeting** from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. The main portion of the meeting was devoted to **a report from the joint sub-committee on the future of the delegate body.** They had decided the task was too large to attack all at once, so decided to tackle things piecemeal and report out as each individual task was addressed. One of the first things discussed was **whether to change to three meetings per year, rather than the current four meetings.** This could save money for AKC and also for the individual clubs sending delegates to meetings. The initial suggestion was to have three-day meetings in April and August and a two-day meeting in December or January in conjunction with the Eukanuba. This would be the same total number of days, but

reduce airfares and eliminate one travel day for most delegates. Committee meetings could be more spread out at the three-day meetings to allow attendance at more than the current two committee meetings and allow for other meetings to be scheduled that there is currently no time for. Another thing being discussed is **the fees for clubs**. In 1909 the annual fee was set at \$10 and increased to \$25 in 1930, where it has remained. It is being suggested that this be doubled to \$50. The initiation fee was set in 1912 at \$250, and it has never changed. It is being suggested that it remain \$250 for parent clubs, but be increased to \$500 for all-breed and performance/companion clubs. These fees are actually set by the board of directors, but the delegates then approve them.

The bylaws committee had sent a recommendation to the Board to remove the current term limits, but as of March no response had come back from the board on this motion. It is expected that the board will not address this issue until at least their May meeting.

Delegate caucus consisted of a Q&A for board candidates. The information provided no different information from the December meeting and is not repeated here.

The **Dock and Crop meeting** was held at 5:00 p.m. There are a **number of new bills being proposed around the country at the state and local levels to limit or prohibit docking and/or cropping**. The one that was being monitored in New Hampshire failed on a 17 to 1 vote, and the one in New York failed to receive a bill of particulars filed, so it cannot move forward. It was announced that there would be a detailed meeting at the Parent Club Conference on the issue of docking and cropping on Friday evening. Peter Piusz asked that people forward to him by email (ppiusz@aol.com) photos of undocked dogs of breeds that should traditionally be docked pursuant to the current AKC standards.

The **Coordinating Committee met from 5:00 to 6:30**, so I missed the first portion of it while in the Dock and Crop meeting. It was announced at the meeting that **the Grand Champion points would first be available May 12, 2010**. Also discussed was the **possibility of an invitational for dogs that achieved the Grand Champion title**. The June Forum will be a powerpoint presentation on “What AKC Can Do for Your Clubs.”

I was fortunate to have dinner that evening with board members Patti Strand, Tom Davies, and Carmen Battaglia, and delegate Wyoma Clouss. Most of our dinner conversation was about the **lack of funding for legislative efforts**. HSUS alone spent \$86 million last year on legislative efforts, but AKC’s entire budget for everything they have to do is \$72 million total. Obviously we are being outspent on a major scale. Therefore we have two tasks: a) raise more money for legislation: and b) use the funds we do have more wisely and effectively. The newest program just then being planned and ready to be implemented in April by NAIA is an effort to remedy this problem in part.

The second morning began at 7:30 a.m. with **the Legislative Caucus**. **AKC Government Relations is now monitoring over 950 bills around the country, 700 of which are rollovers from 2009**. Some of the statewide ones are: AZ, to outlaw all

carnivorous animals! (being amended); AL, a statewide MSN bill; FL, an attempt to repeal the current statewide ban on MSN laws; IL, an attempt to define a commercial breeder as anyone owning six or more intact animals; IA, an attempt to define a commercial breeder as anyone owning four or more animals; and MA, ban on voice softening. Also pending now are bills in MO, NJ, NH, OH, OK, PA, SD, and WV.

The remainder of the meeting was a **dynamic presentation by Patti Strand entitled “Preserve Purebreds: Preserve Dog Ownership Rights.”** The public needs to have all the facts in front of them, not the mis-information touted by AR groups such as HSUS and PETA. Most people truly value the animal-human relationship and would be horrified to know that the true goals of these groups is to destroy this relationship and end up with a world where there are no more pets. Recent US pet censuses reveal that future trends may lead us down that very path. Marketing, legislative, and fundraising campaigns of our opponents focus public attention on the problems and the media then caters to ratings rather than to balanced reporting. The coverage of the Michael Vick case and every “puppy mill raid” are prime examples. On the legislative front, even when we eventually defeat bad bills, the public perceptions have been slanted and influenced adversely, closer and closer to the AR agenda with each campaign they hear about. So let’s take a look at the real facts about pets and where they are going to come from in the future. If current trends continue, by 2018 only 220,000 AKC dogs will be registered. Purebred dogs from hobby, backyard, and commercial breeders are ALL down. International sources, both legal and illegal, are rising. Petfinders is the biggest source of dogs for the public today. In 2008 between 78% and 87% of all dogs were neutered, as shelters only adopt after neutering and many breeders sell only neutered pets. To replace the dogs currently in US households today, 7.9% of those dogs will need to be replaced annually. Today there are 72 million dogs in US homes, so that means 5.7 million new dogs are needed annually. By 2018, with current trends, there will be a shortage of 1.86 million dogs! In only two to four years we will be unable to replace dogs as needed. We have the highest rate of dog ownership in the world at 39%, with France next at 25%, UK at 18%, and Germany at 13%. If current trends in breeding continue, pet ownership has only one way to go: DOWN. We need to point this out to the public so they see where trends are leading. We must promote AKC at every opportunity. To do this we must tell the positive story of responsible dog ownership, good breeding practices, health testing, health research and improvements, CHIC, and CAR. A negative focus led by the AR movement and fueled by the media is leading us to a world with no more pets. Only those armed with knowledge can stop this trend.

The **official meeting** began shortly after 9:00 a.m., as there was **no Forum** at this meeting. Ballots were distributed and the **first vote was cast**. While they were being tabulated, the meeting continued. **Chairman Menaker’s report was on the Outstanding Sportsman Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award, with nominations due by May 7, 2010, and June 1, 2010 for the ACE awards. President Sprung reported on two new awards being rolled out: the James S Holt Memorial Award to one legislator in every state annually for supporting dog-friendly bills and opposing those that put unreasonable restrictions on breeders and ownership of pets; and the Walter Bebout legislative award. Jim Stevens, CFO, gave a somewhat**

gloomy, but mixed, financial report. The full report is available online at akc.org, and I encourage everyone to review it in detail. It reveals that, as registrations fall, revenues from all sources associated with registrations (including pedigrees, royalties, entries, sponsorships, DNA, videos, subscriptions, etc) fall as well. The good news from 2009 was that payroll, benefits, and general operating expenses were also decreased, so that the operating surplus was held at the same level as 2008; and also on the positive side was a recovery on investments from the losses suffered in 2008.

The votes on rules were as follows:

1. Group realignment amendment---a motion was made by Tom Davies to recommit the matter to the Board. Motion passed.
2. Chapter 11, Section 6 of Dog Show Rules---elimination of the use of telegrams to change or cancel entries. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Chapter 10, Sections 1 to 6 and Chapter 15, section 1 of Dog Show Rules---- changes on duties of show veterinarians. Motion to refer back to DSR for clarification and changes made and passed, so no vote on the original motion.

The only motion read to be voted on in June was concerning Field Trial Rules.

The results of the election were announced. All candidates nominated by the committee were elected. The vote was: Garvin, 238; Scully, 218; Newman, 217; Battaglia, 175; and Gladstone, 172.

Meeting was adjourned.