

September 11 & 12, 2016
AKC Quarterly Delegate Meeting
Reported by Jane Bjork

First, I want to say that I am honored to be able to be the delegate for the American Brittany Club. My very helpful mentor Brittany fancier Cindy Miller (delegate for Harrisburg Kennel Club) lined me up with a full day.

Another thought, perhaps because I am green and in the PollyAnna stage, is that there is a multipronged effort to keep purebred dog sports alive in the USA. In England, when the rich and powerful were about to be legislated out of foxhunting, they went foxhunting instead of fighting back.

Field Trial and Hunt Test Committee: Doug Lundgren reports that entries for field events are up 5% total, with pointing breed statistics up 2%. I reported that the northeast area entries are down. It was recommended that we keep our stakes open to all pointing breeds.

It was pointed out that Beagle hunt tests are competitive, and there are competitive retriever Master Hunter Excellent tests that are not official and that there is currently no AKC proposal to offer these.

The results of a survey sent to clubs was discussed briefly. The themes of the survey covered grounds, mentoring, judges, birds, public relations and judging. There was discussion regarding survey comments on quality of judging at performance dog events and complaints against judges. Common themes regarding judging complaints were inexperience, inconsistency, favoritism of people and dogs. Judging apprentice opportunity and prevalence differs among the trialers and testers and type of test (pointing breed, flushing breed, retrievers.) One recommendation from the committee was that an apprentice should be invited if the club would like to have this person judge in the future.

Flexible format is being misused and is a source of many exhibitor complaints. Flexible Format only applies up until the drawing and not after. After the drawing, order of the stakes can only be changed with AKC permission. Complaints must be reported. Reps only attend about 10% of performance events.

There is a lack of AKC identification (logos, flags) and a lack of a trial/test headquarters at many events where someone new could ask questions. At your events, include something recognizable and welcoming.

Canine Health Committee:

AKC has funded \$1.2 million in grants to date this year. Diane Brown reported \$130,000 has been donated by clubs and foundations, and this will be matched by the AKC up to \$250,000. Much has been done with a grant regarding the Tickborne Diseases Initiative. There is a collaborative grant between AKC and OFA regarding thyroid disease, which is believed to be rooted in autoimmune thyroiditis. Michigan State will be mining the OFA database for thyroid data, so it is essential that we send our results to OFA. Other grant initiatives include an epilepsy study, early spay and neuter, lymphoma and supporting new residents in theriogenology (canine reproduction). There is a fundraiser on Thursday, December 15th in Orlando, Florida with the National Dog Show hosted by Dr. Bill and Tina Truesdale.

There is a study in disease transmission at dog events that is available at JAVMA.org in full text. A layperson whitepaper is being written at this time and there will be an article in [Dog News](#).

The National Cancer Institute, National Institute of Health and Canine Health Foundation are collaborating on a study on the gene mutation BRAF that causes cancer in Dogs, and is focusing on early identification and treatment. Insurance companies are in favor, because bladder cancer dogs often have delayed treatment due to being confused with a urinary tract infection. There is benefit to people as well, as dog cancer serves as a research model for studying people cancer.

Brucellosis is being found in 10% of shelter-translocated dogs so be careful what you bring into your kennel.

Dr. Carmen Battaglia reports that 60% of all puppies never get registered. 1/3 of all breeds are headed for extinction, and only 10% of all purebred dogs ever get bred. There will be more on this at the December Quarterly meeting.

Parent Club Meeting:

Group Realignment Survey: In 2012, there were 16 votes short of a majority to examine group realignment. Since 2012, there have been 17 new breeds. 70% of delegates and fanciers are in favor and there is a committee to revisit this headed by Dr. Charlie Gavin. The ABC will not be "told" where our breed will be aligned and parent club input will be sought.

Generic Diversity Committee: NPR had a show on what they termed "torture breeding"- the breeding of brachycephalic breeds such as bulldogs. Dr Pederson from UC Davis was featured, and used donated bulldog DNA (for purposes other than intended) on a subset of non-show breeders who knowingly inbreed for rare, non-standard colors to show a lack of genetic diversity. There were no conformation Bulldogs in the study. Purebred dog people used to be the experts, and now we are criminalized and there is a movement to charge breeders with animal cruelty that currently exists in Switzerland.

What can we do? Show healthy vigorous animals on our websites (club and personal). Advertise on AKC Marketplace. Identify good PR people in our club. Have a central PR person as a contact for our club that has press material "on the ready". Have people with strong genetic and scientific background as NPR "won't talk to people without a PHD". Develop local partnerships with vet schools and have health testing days there. AKC has a Scientific Committee. Other contacts include Dr. Jerry Klein, Brandi Hunter, Dr. Michael Hughes, Bob and Cyndi Newcomb from the Bulldog club of America encourage contacts and their emails are rocyn@embarqmail.com and bobnewcomb1@aol.com.

Other News:

NBC Sports will be filming KC of Beverly Hills and airing it Easter Sunday.

New Rally clubs may be formed outside the territory of existing clubs licensed to hold rally.

Dog show rules- one out of every 2 consecutive shows must be held in its territory.

Altered dogs may still only be shown in veteran classes at solo specialties.

Legislative Update:

Lots of new PAWS pending legislation proposed. Increase in spay/neuter legislation, increase in importing of shelter dogs to retail pet stores, amendments are being made to laws regarding rescuing pets in hot cars, many with negative unintended consequences. There is a constant effort to lower the threshold of number of breeding females, and the definition of a breeding female is not defined and hard to define. There is legislation intended to streamline civil forfeiture based on accusation, not fact.

Of note, AKC is pushing for legislation to have pet friendly domestic violence shelters. 70% reconsider leaving a violent situation because they don't want to leave pets behind.

APHIS Regulations: A bit about breeders and regulations: If you sell pets face to face, don't sell/import them for resale, don't use them for commercials, photo shoots etc., don't take compensation or write it off on taxes when transporting rescues (compensation of any sort, including counting hours to maintain certification if you pilot your plane), don't sell more than 50 dogs a year, you should be exempt from APHIS regulations. "Exhibitor" in the regulations does not refer to dog shows and trials but for animals for entertainment outside of a store to attract customers, circuses, zoos. "Handler" refers to someone who transports from one person to another. This is a complaint-driven system with only 120 inspectors for the entire country.

Go to APHIS website and go to lower left hand corner. Sign up for email alerts by choosing "animal care."

There is a NAIA pet legislative conference coming up in Orlando November 5 and 6. Go to NAIAonline.com

Dr. Jerold Bell spoke on genetic health of purebred dogs. With purebred dogs, high homozygosity (genetic similarity) is expected along with deleterious recessive genes. Founder ancestors exhibit strong influence due to founder's effect and contribute more to present day than ancestors close up due to high genetic load. Do all available health screenings- whatever is testable and measurable, but we need more breedable individuals as only 3-5 percent of animals are bred. If you know of/produce a problem, try to breed away from it. We get popular sire syndrome, then his son becomes popular, and so on.

Dennis Sprung then gave a touching tribute to the 9/11 DOGSNY program where sculptures commemorating the rescue dogs of 911 served as a fundraiser and were placed throughout the city. I remember reading about this in the AKC Gazette.

Financial report: In 2015 Registrations are up 7%, litters bred are up 11%. Headcount is 300 and there has been an 8% increase in payroll and benefits expenditures. 4.2 million in the black so far this year.

A mailing went out from AKC PAC and this is important to all clubs.