



Perspectives

The Delegates' Publication

Meet the Delegate: Maggie Kudirka

Meet AKC Staff: Chris Espiritu

***The Strength and Danger
of the Silent Majority***

***Mid-Continent KC of Tulsa brings
MOWs and POWs together***

***Preparing New Exhibitors for
Obedience and Rally Trials***

NOHS: 14 Years and Still Growing

...and more!





Perspectives

Volume 37, No. 2 • June 2024

The Delegates' Publication



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Buck, Bloodhound
Mary Lou Olszewski
Delegate, American Bloodhound Club

WRITERS' GUIDELINES

Thank you for your interest in contributing to *Perspectives*. Following are guidelines we ask our contributors to follow. They simplify our jobs as editors and yours as writers and help us produce a quality publication while enabling us to get *Perspectives* out on time.

- **Write for your audience.** *Perspectives* is prepared by and for AKC Delegates who represent a wide variety of member clubs through the country. Our readers are very knowledgeable dog people.
- **Be certain that any facts in your article are accurate.** Double-check them. Clearly state when a statement is your own opinion.
- Whenever possible and appropriate, try to **include input/quotes from others who are experts on your topic.** Always attribute any quote to its original source.
- **Articles should be submitted typewritten or electronically, via e-mail.** Solicited articles should be sent to the committee member who requested the article. Unsolicited articles should be submitted to the Issue Coordinator for the upcoming issue OR the Editor.
- **We suggest** articles be approximately **500 to 1500 words** in length.
- Do not rely solely on spelling and grammar check, as they do not proof word usage. **After preparing your article, read it once more before submitting it.** Use a dictionary to check word meaning and spelling.

- **Send in your article electronically, as early as possible.** Submissions will be due by the 15th

of the month following each Delegates Meeting. If your article arrives after the issue deadline, it may not be used in the current issue and may be returned to you or held until the next issue.

- A submission to *Perspectives* may not be reproduced in other publications without the written permission of the author and the *Perspectives* Editor.
- **Any product in the name of a committee** must be approved for release by the committee prior to publication in *Perspectives*.

Again — thank you for your interest. Without you, there would not be a *Perspectives*.

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The deadline for submission is July 15, 2024, with a copy to Sylvia.Thomas@rccd.edu



Perspectives

The Delegates' Publication

is a publication for, and written by, the Delegates, with an occasional article solicited by Editorial Board 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. We reserve the right to reasonably edit all copy submitted. Opinions expressed in *Perspectives* are not necessarily representative of the views of the Editor, the *Perspectives* Editorial Board, or of the American Kennel Club.

FROM WHERE I SIT

SYLVIA THOMAS, Editor/Chair



Can't find your car keys or worse, your cell phone? What was the name of the judge who gave your dog that Group I or your first BIS or National Specialty win? Find yourself upstairs and can't remember what you came to find? You're not alone! I'm right there with you and rather than blame it on the

"O" word (Old), I have decided to think it's just too much to remember and the memory "flash drive" is full. As a remedy that doesn't replace my calendar, but indeed augments my organization, I now make lists. What to buy at the grocery store, what tasks I have to do, who I need to get back to, etc., and I try to prioritize, for example, mail Mother's Day cards, make appointment for progesterone testing, send article to Monica to proof, touch base with Russell on *Perspectives* timeline, and write my column. Every night I take out the crumpled list, cross out the tasks that are done and start a new list for tomorrow. Maybe it's silly, but the list does reduce the daily chaos, provides structure and detail, checking things off gives me a sense of control and feeling of accomplishment. Mostly, I'm reminded of how very lucky I am to be healthy, happy, active, involved, and sometimes over committed and busy. I try to remember that it may not be possible to finish everything in a day. I always keep in mind that I am surrounded by a circle of friends who would help if asked, and dogs that I love. Life really is good especially when I find that cell phone and those darn car keys! Time to go, finish the June *Perspectives* (check!)

This issue began in a familiar way with me in a panic trying to persuade Delegates and Staff to submit an article. As always, several did.

The June issue is brimming with great articles

that are informative, sentimental, funny, and inspiring. We are surrounded by amazing individuals.

Thank you, Charlie Garvin for the progress report on the PPB. The Delegates Companion

Events Committee provides a wonderful blueprint for Clubs to use when planning Rally and Obedience events. Through several interviews, we are introduced to some new Delegates like Maggie Kudirka who shares her inspiring journey. Thanks to Sharyn Hutchens you'll meet Robert (Scott) Dove, DVM who recently joined us as a new Delegate. From our terrific AKC staff, we find out more about Christopher Espiritu, who works with Russell, and Monica introduces us to Anthony Caputo who is with AKCtv.

Kathy Gregory provides wonderful suggestions about finding venues for Scent Work practice. Who knew NOHS is 14 years old? Carl Ashby provides details about the growth and importance of this event. Marc Crews writes about a terrific program his kennel club has started with Meals on Wheels. It's a beneficial initiative other clubs should consider.

Heidi Kilgore reminds us that welcoming newcomers and maintaining our core of exhibitors is essential for our sport and is as easy as just being nice. Jim Corbett takes us all down memory lane as he relates stories about the "Bench Show Days." Oh what stories he tells, he will have you laughing. Finally, Bob Rynkiewicz's article gave me a nudge to try some new things with my dogs. Like Bob, I believe "My Dog Can Do That! (we can at least try!).

Special thanks to the staff and Delegates who sent us articles. You make *Perspectives* what it is. I truly enjoy reading your contributions to the issue. It is amazing to know how much talent, experience, and knowledge there is around us. You all have the WOW Factor!



Have you read an interesting article in a magazine or newspaper that you think might be a great "article" for *Perspectives*? This is where to begin. Call the article or topic to our attention. While we are unable to publish an article that has appeared elsewhere, be it a club, newsletter, or a magazine, we can work with you to "rework, rewrite, reframe" the article for publication in *Perspectives*. Simple! We want to share topics that you are interested in and are here to help make that possible!

AS I SEE IT

MONICA HENDERSON STONER, Assistant Editor

OPINION



Do you remember a cartoonish character of a ragged person carrying a sign proclaiming the end was near? Doomsday predictors have been a part of our culture from the beginning. They certainly proliferate in our society of purebred dogs.

Taking into account some of the recent revelations and problems in our dog world, maybe things are going south at an alarming rate. Certainly some of those posting on social media feel that way. In their view we're watching the end times of purebred dogs. Between health problems and anti breeder sentiments and just plain unpleasant people, they're predicting no more dog shows, no more purebred dogs, heck maybe even no more dogs.

Yet...in March we put out a call for pictures of puppies so young only a breeder could recognize them. Twenty-four Delegates responded, sending forty photos of twenty different breeds. All puppies, from newborn to old enough to romp with children. For the June issue, I added the breed and owner information. Going back over these photos, looking at future stars, seeing the bliss on the faces of children playing with their puppies, how could we ever think our sport is dying out? Just check out pages 38-40 and try to tell me we're fading out.

When I consider my Parent Club has recently welcomed eight...yes, EIGHT new Junior members, how can I begin to predict the end of my breed and those who have always loved and supported the breed? Nor for that matter any breed. Small or large, spotted or

striped, Conformation, Performance, Companion, they are all cherished and loved and protected.

Some people, some of them 'the old guard' who will tell you how things happened in 'their day' when purebred dogs were the real deal, believe today's hedonistic, electronic dependent society would never take the time or make the effort to develop a bloodline or involve themselves in advanced training. And I'm reminded of something I read years ago.

The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. This quote is attributed to Socrates.

Then there's Aristotle: *The young have strong but changeable passions. They are quick tempered and lacking in self-control, and this makes them all the more likely to yield to their passions. They are eager for superiority and easily feel slighted.*

Sound familiar? It seems like frustration with the younger generation is timeless. Given recent disturbing revelations, maybe it's not just the younger generation that has fallen short. These are difficult times. Until you realize how the members of our community have responded in education, in support, in a commitment to making this sport as safe as possible.

Yes, we are cranky and sometimes we just want everyone to get off our lawn. But when the chips are down, when it really is a matter of doing, being the best we can, we step up. Because even the most negative of us believe in the future, every time we hold a newborn puppy, every time we hand the leash to a new Junior exhibitor.

See something you like in *Perspectives* and want to share?



You can receive approval to reprint a *Perspectives* article. All it takes is an email to me, Sylvia.Thomas@rccd.edu, naming the article(s) and indicating where or how it will be used, and I'll take it from there, obtaining the permission of the author(s) and creating a PDF that can be used in a club newsletter or elsewhere. The turnaround is very quick and usually takes no more than a day.

AN UPDATE: AKC PUREBRED PRESERVATION BANK

J. CHARLES GARVIN MD, Delegate, Dalmatian Club of America

Chair, AKC Purebred Preservation Bank

I have been asked to give an update for *Perspectives* on the progress of the AKC Purebred Preservation Bank (AKC PPB). AKC PPB

is now up and running, and its early success is gratifying. We appreciate the efforts of the many individuals and clubs who have not only expressed interest in the program, but made significant contributions, suggestions, and donations.

UPDATES

PPB has a new program manager, Susan Myers susan.myers@akcppb.org who is currently a Senior Breeder Relations Field Representative for AKC. She is a breeder and exhibitor of Sussex Spaniels.

As of this writing we are pleased to share that the frozen semen of 20 sires has been donated. There have been about seven Parent Clubs who have submitted their requested criteria, and many others who are discussing their various options.

The long-awaited recommendations for Parent Clubs to submit their questions for the donor application and their criteria for the recipient application are now available online, along with plenty of other information at www.akcppb.org.

We continue to make improvements in the applications in response to the input we have received from Parent Clubs and breeders. The latest versions of two important documents are now online: the Donor Application and Semen Profile, and the Semen Recipient Application. Also, the tri-fold information pamphlet and the one-page version suitable for reprinting in breed magazines are in the Downloads section of the AKCPPB web site. The documents suggesting language for inclusion in wills and bequests were recently added to the web site.

As a 501 (C) (3), the AKC PPB has recently received a generous donation of \$5,000 to help cover expenses and promote the preservation of



**AKC Purebred
Preservation Bank**

purebred breeds. The expenses, including paying the AKC staff who work for AKC PPB, continue to run far below budget.

At the April meeting, the AKC Board of Directors re-elected the board members for the Class of 2027 for three-year terms: Dominic Carota, Ted Phillips, and Dr. Marty Greer. Continuing on the board are Dr. Charles Garvin (Chair), Tom Powers, Vanessa Skou, Mark Dunn, Dr. Jerold Bell, and Dr. Joellen Gregory.

CURRENT TASKS

The number one challenge for AKC PPB is getting the information about the program out to those who are likely to be interested in participating - clubs, individuals, semen storage facilities, and veterinarians. AKC Delegates have received many presentations, but that does not always translate to the messages being widely distributed. We appreciate all Delegates spreading the word about AKC PPB as much as possible.

We always want to be available to answer questions and address any potential objections or misunderstandings. One effective method we frequently use is to engage club memberships by having them watch the AKC PPB webinar which is on the website, then

have a live Zoom question and answer session with me or other members of the AKC PPB board or staff. We are happy to set that up for any clubs who are interested.

The other continuing challenge is to combat the natural tendency of inertia. People just do not like to think about their own mortality, and what will happen to their established line and any stored frozen semen they have, once they are no longer able to maintain either.

ELEPHANTS IN THE ROOM

One objection frequently heard is about the

“The number one challenge for AKC PPB is getting the information about the program out to those who are likely to be interested in participating”

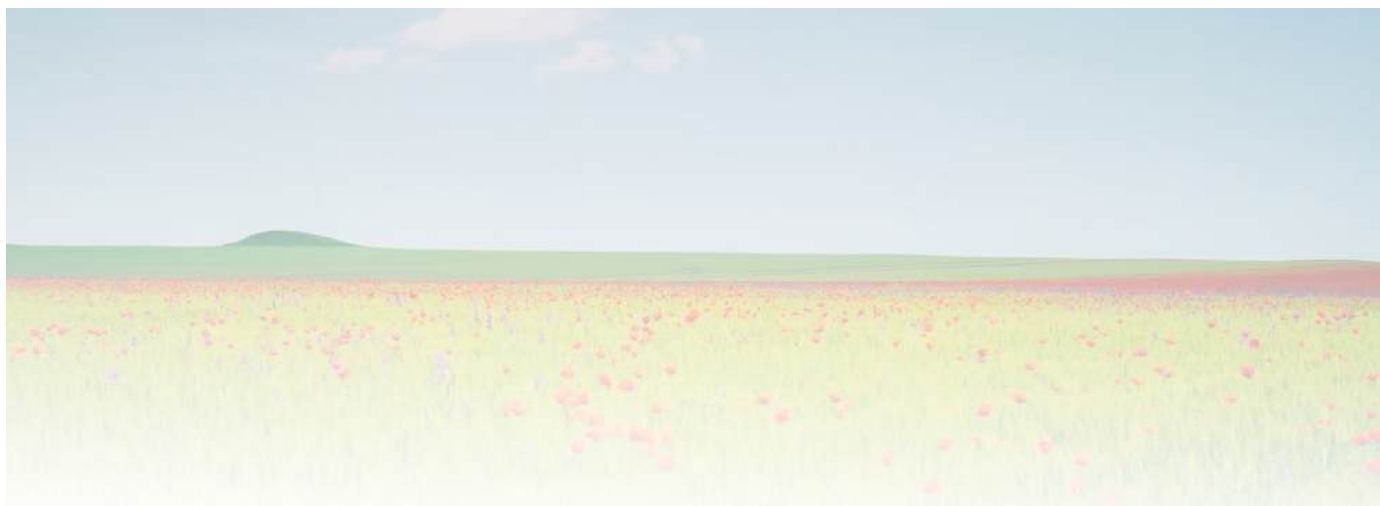
GARVIN, cont'd

breeder who is concerned about loss of control. They are proud of the line they have created and maintained over many years, and are concerned that without their control their line may be diluted, and its reputation degraded. Two questions to clarify and challenge that type of thinking. First, when we breeders are no longer around in 20, 30, or 50 years, who is going to control any semen that may have been stored - and who is going to pay for those 50 years of storage? Second, understanding the natural pride in a well-developed line, if your breed is in trouble in the future, is your line good enough and valuable enough to be useful in reconstructing or preserving your breed?

Similarly, in some breeds there has been a divergence among bench champion type and field champion type, or other schisms. Today's breeder may not want to have their line potentially intermixed with the "other" type. However, if a breed is in trouble, wouldn't you prefer to have your preferred breed type represented in the process of reconstituting or rescuing your breed from extinction?

Encouraging breeders to consider the sometimes-difficult alternatives for what will and could happen in the future is an important task for AKC PPB. Additionally, such discussions are also essential for all of those who are interested in ensuring the long-term survival of our beloved purebred dogs and distinctive breeds.

We at AKC PPB are always interested in your opinions, questions, and suggestions. Thank you for your feedback and your support. You can reach us at contact@akcppb.org 919.816.3329 or charles.garvin@akcppb.org 740.361.0025.



Give Us Your Words...in **WORD!**

We are delighted that the interest in submitting articles to *Perspectives* is increasing. Please send your article as a **Word document** — not a pdf. Text in a PDF may not convert accurately to our layout program's text format and sometimes can require a complete rekeying of the article.
Thanks for your understanding and please keep the articles coming!

CENTENNIAL CLUBS: WONDERFUL REMINISCENCES OF THE BENCHED SHOWS

JIM CORBETT, Tualatin Kennel Club, Inc.

Portland Kennel Club was incorporated in 1893, and was a privately owned kennel club. As with many clubs of that era, PKC was founded by the prominent businessmen and corporate professionals in Portland, Oregon. As was also typical, the focus was on companion events and activities, especially field trials, and thus the Pointer is the centerpiece of our club logo.

When the American Kennel Club promoted an open and public non-profit membership, Portland KC ceased to be a private corporation. In 1993 we held our annual Benched Show, celebrating 100 years of service to the Portland community, with special medallions for each exhibitor and etched glass trophies for almost everything. We built a special 100th Anniversary War Chest with a planned loss of \$50,000. We were shocked—pleasantly—to lose only \$33,000.

We finally reached the point-of-no-return with the Benched Show, when losses were beyond covering from other activities. At the time we said goodbye to our traditional Bench Show, there were only six remaining, including Westminster, Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago International, and Golden Gate (San Francisco).

Bench Shows are unique in that dogs would be “on display” for the full day, except when they are shown in the ring. The goal is to have them available for public viewing and thus be educational, whereby a spectator can look at different breeds and talk to owners or breeders about the merits of their breed.

Nearly every Bench Show had something quirky or unique, each giving us another chapter in our memory bank. While we remember the wins and losses, the famous dogs that passed through, the challenges of setting up and tearing down benching, rings, matting and everything else that builds a dog show, the quirky moments of also every show is what flavors our memories of our Benched Shows.

With that overview, here are a few that linger in our hearts and minds.

Portland Kennel Club, Inc.

(Member of the American Kennel Club)



With the requirement that once dogs were in, and the show had begun, no dogs were to leave, we faced many reasons or excuses. We had simple reasons such as I didn't read the premium list, to interesting and convoluted reasons.

One gentleman showed his dog and said he had to leave because his wife was pregnant. When we said that we assumed that he knew that before he came to the show, he said he did but she was in labor and he had dropped her at the hospital on the way to the show. He wanted to be back at the hospital for the birth. We verified with the hospital that this was true, and sent him on his way—with dog! {We always wondered how this relationship worked out - long term.}

Around noon one Sunday (day two of our two day show), a young woman said she and her dog needed to leave early as her daughter was performing in a local children's concert. We said she was welcome to leave but the dog had to stay until 6:00 pm. We thought no more of it until the show was over and we were tearing down benches, and here was a very nervous Rottweiler still on the bench. One of our club members calmed the dog by feeding it small bites of a baloney sandwich. When that was gone we switched to boxes of Cracker Jacks. Other members were desperately trying to find the owner, as the dog was between two ID #s that were posted. We finally reached a grandmother who told us how to reach the exhibitor at her daughter's concert. Just as we ran out of food, the young woman returned, took her dog, and wasn't worried about our excitement as she calmly walked away with daughter and dog.

We had a time where we were tearing down benching, collapsing exhibitor dog crates for Toy Breeds and other small breeds, when we found a Chihuahua still in the crate. We worked around it as we assumed the exhibitor had planned to get the dog but was handling other errands until unbenching time. Wrong assumption!! Finally we tracked down the exhibitor who had packed multiple dogs in their van but missed one. Since they

CORBETT, *cont'd*

were already 100 miles away, we watched the dog until they returned — mortified and apologetic!!

One year we were having a calm and enjoyable Benched Show when we heard yelling and screaming in the benching area. A quick check with exhibitors showed that a Dalmatian had been stolen off the bench. Interviewing other Dalmatian exhibitors showed it was complicated — a co-ownership dispute, involving how often the dog could be taken to dog shows. We learned that the “dognapper” was in the parking lot, locked in their pickup and refusing to talk or negotiate. As club president, I went with the AKC Executive Field Rep to the Memorial Coliseum ticket booth area, and found dog, and co-owner in the pickup, crowded by people coming to the Portland Trailblazer NBA game against Chicago. We had a lengthy talk with the person and she agreed to a new contract. As the three of us walked back in, a man offered us tickets to see Michael Jordan — free, as his wife was sick. Oh the temptation!!! However, we took the dog back and sat with the people while a new contract was handwritten. A brief objection occurred as one of the parties wanted it notarized, but I was quickly able to grab my briefcase with my notary seal, and end the story...except for missing a great Michael Jordan performance.

At one of our later Benched Shows, an exhibitor came to the club table and said he wanted to leave. He was bored! We explained that it was 3:30 pm

and he had to keep the dog on the Bench until 5:00 pm. He ranted about our violating his dog's rights. We were illegally constraining her. Within 15-20 minutes we had several Portland Police in full armament as they had received a call from a man who said he and his dog were being held against their will. With the Superintendent, Premium List, club management, facility management, and the AKC Executive Field Representative, we explained the bench show requirements, with his signed entry acknowledging that he read and understood. Needless to say the police were not amused. They went to where he was benched and took him and the dog to a private office. (By now it's only 1/2 hour to unbenching.). The police conversation with him lasted almost an hour past time to unbench and go home.

These are only a sample of the challenges of a benched show, and to be honest, many of us miss the quirks and oddities, and stories of amazing real life

I'm not sure how unique or unusual it is, but 10 of the couples who are or have been members of PKC have celebrated 50 years of marriage. (As would be expected, time takes its toll and a significant number are no longer with us.)

In closing, I'm happy to say that my wife and I are a part of the Fiftieth Anniversary Club, as we approach 58 this summer.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Like cookies & snacks? Enjoy fun & interesting people?

PERSPECTIVES WANTS YOU!

Currently the **Perspectives Editorial Board** has vacancies.

Want to know more, and how to join the **cooler-than-cool** group?

Contact Sylvia Thomas:
sylvia.thomas@rccd.edu
 or call/text 951-236-6474



MEET NEW DELEGATE: MAGGIE KUDIRKA

SYLVIA THOMAS, Delegate, KC of Riverside, Perspectives Editor

This issue we all have the pleasure of reading about Maggie Kudirka. Her positive outlook on life and the value of what is important in our lives is refreshing and uplifting. She's someone we will all want to meet and welcome when we have the opportunity. Please join me in welcoming Maggie.

How did you become involved in dogs? Were you “born” into dogs? If not, how did you find your way into the wonderful world of dogs

I was born into an AKC family. I attended my first dog show when I was six weeks old. My mom was the show chair for the Chesapeake Siberian Husky Club independent specialty and brought me along. Growing up I remember attending shows and watching my parents condition their show dogs on the trotter. I learned to appreciate correct movement, structure, and soundness. To this day, I love watching great moving dogs in the show ring.

As their four children grew older, my parents gradually drifted away from AKC activities in favor of ballet and sports activities that we kids participated in. I especially loved ballet and it became my

primary focus. I graduated from Towson University with a degree in Dance Performance and moved to NYC to dance with the Joffrey Concert Group. Unfortunately, my dance career ended a year later when I was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer in 2014. I was 23 years old when my career and life's work vanished in the blink of an eye. It was devastating. I moved back home to Maryland and began intensive cancer treatment. My life now consisted of cancer treatments, advocating for a cure for breast cancer, and teaching ballet.

After living with metastatic breast cancer for five years, I realized all my friends were in the dance world or cancer world. I wanted to meet other kinds of people so in 2019, I bought a Pomeranian puppy and started showing in AKC Conformation. Covid ended this a few months later, but I then found FastCAT. My Pom loved running and I loved earning the spectacular FastCAT rosettes. I also met many new people who had a wide variety of breeds and who participated in many different AKC events. I loved learning about various AKC Performance events, and I joined the Dog Owners' Training Club



Momma Mia and Her Bald Ballerina

A four-pound Pomeranian keeps a young woman with breast cancer on her very talented toes.

By Mara Bovsun

Every three weeks, Maggie Kudirka's Pomeranians—Momma Mia and Miss Vickie—get chicken.

The treat is part of a ritual Maggie has maintained since 2014, when she learned that she had metastatic breast cancer. She was 23 years old.

Chemotherapy infusions every 21 days keep her alive. She has endured more than 90 sessions.

"I've gotten used to it after five years," she says.

After her treatment, she and her mother go to a Panera Bread restaurant near their home in Ellicott City, Maryland. Although she doesn't eat meat, Maggie often orders chicken noodle soup. She picks out the chicken and brings it home to her dogs.

"So they know, 'Oh, she left early in the morning, and she's going to come back with chicken.' And they're all excited to see me."

Chemotherapy is grueling, so after the chicken greeting, Maggie needs a nap. Momma Mia nestles close by her side, doing her most essential job.

"She helps me forget about cancer, sometimes," Maggie says.

Sled Dogs and Toe Shoes

Maggie grew up in a dog-show home. Her parents, Aldona and Robert, bred and showed Siberian Huskies but stopped while

PHOTOS COURTESY MAGGIE KUDIRKA

1/4 MARCH/APRIL 2020 • AKC FAMILYDOG

Opening spread from a feature about Maggie in the March/April 2020 issue of AKC Family Dog magazine

THOMAS, *cont'd*

of Maryland, which I am honored to now represent as their AKC Delegate.

What breeds do you have and how did you choose your first breed?

I grew up with Siberian Huskies. I was in college when our last Siberian passed away in 2009. We went for about a year without a dog, but eventually, we missed having a dog. We thought about getting another Siberian, but my mom wanted to downsize because she was getting older. I suggested Pomeranians, which are descended from sled dogs. We had recently met a rescue Pom belonging to my cousin's widow. He was smart and had a wonderful personality. My mom contacted a local show breeder, and we adopted two of her retired bitches.

Perhaps we've all had that moment or a time in our lives when our dog(s) helped us over the "bumps in the road" and/or the seemingly impossible challenges before us. If this resonates with you, can you share why your relationship with dogs is particularly special or important?

We'd always had Siberians while I was growing up and I loved every one of them. The Pomeranians, however, changed my life when my world turned upside down. At the time I was pursuing a career in ballet in NYC. When I came home for the holidays in 2013, our Pom Miss Vickie started to dig and snuggle into my armpit. I didn't think much of it, thinking that she had missed me. Over the next couple of months, I started having sternum pain and noticed a lump in my breast. Fast forward to June 2014 when I was diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer. I started intense chemo and after the cancer began retreating, Miss Vickie stopped dig-

ging in my armpit. Remarkably, she had detected my cancer months before symptoms showed up.

In 2019, I had a major cancer progression that really affected my mental health. I had been traveling a lot, making speeches and advocating for breast cancer awareness. I got extremely depressed and lonely on the road. I wanted to get a Pomeranian puppy to become my support animal and travel companion. That's when Pomeranian Momma Mia came into my life and improved my mental health.

Because I have metastatic cancer, I will never be cured. I am continuously in treatments, getting biopsies, scans, and surgeries. Each Pom has been a vital part of my treatment. They know when I need a smile or a



Bald Ballerina

BALD BALLERINA - WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 2019

NO ONE CAN SURVIVE ALONE

 A FUNDRAISER CONCERT FOR THE
BALD BALLERINA

JANUARY 5, 2020 2:30 PM

HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SMITH THEATER

SILENT AUCTION, RAFFLE, AND RECEPTION



TICKETS
SUGGESTED DONATION OF \$35
CONTACT
BALDBALLERINA@GMAIL.COM

Photo: Andrew Boltz

Photos Courtesy Maggie Kudirka

As the Bald Ballerina, Maggie uses her website, blog, speeches, advocacy, and her enormous talents as a dancer to raise awareness and funds for cancer patients, especially those fighting metastatic breast cancer. To learn more, visit baldballerina.org or follow her on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



Exhibiting Perfection: In their second show, dancer and dog gave a winning pas de deux, earning the first point toward a championship.

laugh or just to have a dog snuggle with me.

Where does your dog interest lie and why?

I am interested in Conformation, FastCAT, Trick Dog, and I am getting started in Rally and Obedience. Any AKC event that gets my dogs excited to train and compete is what I want to do.

Do you participate in AKC events? Has this changed with time? What do you enjoy most about your chosen area of interest?

I participate in Conformation, FastCat, CABT, Farm Dog, Fit Dog and Trick Dog. I had just started Conformation when Covid struck. I learned that FastCAT events were still happening, so I thought I'd give them a try. My Pomeranians loved to run and we were hooked. That sparked my interest in Performance events. I keep an open mind and will try any events my dogs enjoy so that we can have fun together. I enjoy activities that stimulate my dogs' brains and love learning about new activities and events that AKC develops to encourage the handler/dog connection.

Is there an activity, a trip, or experience that you would like to try with your dog(s)? Why?

I am starting to explore Agility. My youngest Pomeranian loves to run, jump, climb and I think she would be in her element with agility. It will be a

sport we will both learn together.

What club do you represent?

Dog Owners Training Club of Maryland (DOTC)

When did you become a Delegate? What was your interest in becoming a delegate?

My first meeting was in March 2024. Coming in I didn't know what to expect. As soon as I went into the New Delegate Orientation, I felt welcomed and met many Delegates. It was a breath of fresh air to be surrounded by positive and welcoming dog people.

Tell us about the club you represent and how you are currently involved in your club.

DOTC is the 2nd oldest continuously operating obedience club in the United States. We have weekly training classes for various AKC events. We also have an Obedience & Rally Trial in March, FastCAT trials three times a year, Fit Dog Group Walks, Scent Trials, CGC Testing, and Farm Dog Certification. This year we have added the Temperament Test, Fetch Test, and CABT. I like that our Board is open to adding new events whenever possible. I have been a member for three years and train weekly in various classes. I enjoy volunteering at many of our events and trials.

How do you share Delegate information and AKC "happenings" with you club members?

When I take on a new role or job, I try to provide information the way I personally would want to get it. So, when I was at the Delegate meeting, I sent the DOTC board members quick updates about each of the committee meetings I attended. After returning home, I sent more detailed notes to the DOTC board before our meeting so they could bring up questions or concerns. At our general meeting, I gave a brief summary and addressed questions. I also started an AKC Announcements page on our club's website where I post the press releases and/or information that may be of interest to DOTC members.

What has been the most significant change in our sport since you got your first dog? Knowing what you know now, would you do this all over again?

Ego. When I first started showing egos didn't

THOMAS, *cont'd*

seem to be a big part of Conformation. Everyone supported each other and celebrated each other's wins. Now just a few years later, it is more about personal ego and not about the best dog winning. If you aren't in the clique, your achievements and successes are not celebrated. It is especially sad when a person only values a dog that wins. Sadly, I have witnessed owners and pro handlers shove their "loser" dogs into crates while berating the dog for not winning. There is too much emphasis on winning and not enough on improving the breed and appreciating a good dog, even when that dog beats yours.

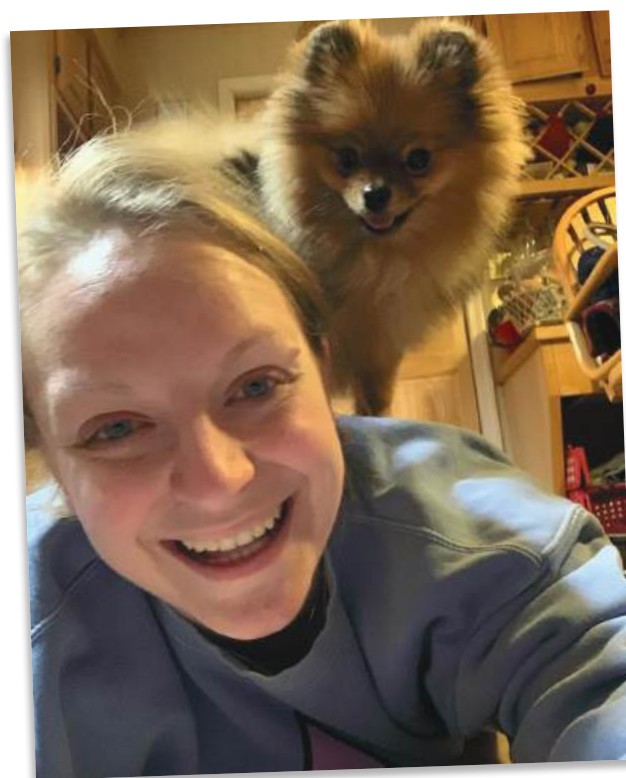
Despite this, I would still participate and compete. I participate to have fun with my dogs. My dog friends who aren't in my breed support me and celebrate my dog's achievements with me.

If it were possible to change something or start something new that would solve something having

to so with AKC, Dog shows or events or anything related to purebred dogs, what would it be?

I would love for people and judges to remember a lot of breeds in the toy group can do many of the same things as bigger dogs; that toys are more than just lap dogs. Of course, some accommodations for size are needed, but many toy dogs love being active and participating in dog sports. I recently watched a Pekingese compete in Master level Rally and it brought smiles to everyone at the trial. This "lap" dog was a rock star, performing better than more traditional high-scoring Rally breeds.

The breeder of my first Pomeranian once remarked that Pomeranians were bred to sit on laps; that movement was not as important as size, silhouette, coat and head. I vehemently disagree. The last line of the Pomeranian standard states in italics: "Even though a Toy dog, the Pomeranian must be subject to the same requirements of soundness and structure prescribed for all breeds, and any deviation from the ideal described in the standard should be penalized to the extent of deviation." To me, this



Angel On Her Shoulder: For the new year, Maggie's resolved to stay positive even in the face of bad news, such as the progression of the cancer that she experienced in 2019. Momma Mia is onboard, her fluffy cheering squad.

THOMAS, cont'd

means Poms should be evaluated just like much larger breeds; that judges and breeders should value soundness as much as a Pom's coat, head, and silhouette.

I believe that Poms can do a lot of the same things that bigger dogs do. Many Poms are superstars in Agility. My Pomeranians are Farm Dog Certified and run in FastCat and CABT. They love all these activities. One of my Poms will be taking the AKC Temperament Test this summer. They are big dogs in little bodies. Just ask them!

How do you spend your non dog time?

Because I have stage 4 breast cancer, my treatments will never end so much of my time is spent getting treatments, blood work, scans, and doctor visits. I also advocate for young women with breast cancer through my social media presence as Bald Ballerina. I teach ballet and conditioning to young dancers.



Any chance I get, I travel to Walt Disney World to enjoy the magic; to nurture the child in me; and to take some time away from breast cancer. My favorite Disney character is Pluto. I love Pluto's curiosity and happy disposition. Pluto reminds me of one of my Poms.

Is anyone else in your family involved in dogs? If so, how?

My mom helps me at shows and is my releaser for FastCAT. She re-introduced me to AKC and has continued to support me in any AKC activity I want to try.

When it comes to dogs and/or your personal life what one thing is still on your bucket list?

I would love to show at Westminster and at Royal Canin and to make it into the group ring. My other bucket list item is to visit all six of the Disney parks in the world. I've been to the parks in Orlando, Anaheim, and Paris. I hope to visit the Disney parks in Tokyo, Shanghai, and Hong Kong one day.



The Editorial staff is always on the lookout for an **interesting storyline, a captivating photo, or an idea** for an ongoing feature. If you ever wonder if something would make a good article for *Perspectives*, reach out and ask. The answer is almost certainly "yes!" Contact any of us to get started. We welcome your ideas and enjoy receiving your photos and sharing them.

THE STRENGTH AND DANGER OF THE SILENT MAJORITY

HEIDI C. L. KILGORE, MA Psy., Delegate, Evansville Kennel Club

Humans are social creatures, and we take that socialness about us to new levels in varied ways. We are also competitive creatures, and that competitiveness and feeling of accomplishment can only be felt in these social settings. In every social setting we know there is a small percentage who are never happy. Their personal choices or personalities cause them to be negative, hateful, and destructive to others, especially in competitive venues. Each of these individuals has 'prey'; a person or team that they view with strong emotional negative conflict. They tend to voice these negative and harming thoughts to anyone who will listen, but never at whom is the subject of the thought. We aren't talking about those who make the news next to a mega millionaire having homes searched or assets frozen. We are talking about the one or two individuals who can sour the accomplishments of others with a few hateful or derogatory words. These words create a negative and unsafe environment for everyone involved and can end involvement, slowly killing our social competitive groups.

So how does such a small part of these social populations become a majority in these settings? It is the 'silent' who empower them. Those who say, "I don't want to get involved" or "It wasn't that big of a deal" and my ever favorite, "They were just kidding and didn't really mean it." Dismissal by the Silent immediately makes the small percentage the majority, because the Silent are a majority. As long as this silent majority makes excuses for the smaller group and supports those excuses; the smaller group will control the energy and drive people from these social groups, slowly killing these social competitive groups.

Currently serving on several competitive social organizations, I find we all have that small percentage of the group that is always argumentative, doesn't like change or new things, or has a personality conflict with others in the group. This same group also sits in wait to attack their predator. As the group grows and competition increases, you truly cannot expect everyone to be on the same page. In each of our own social groups we can name them personally, and we tend not to give as much weight to their opinions, words or input because of the way they act toward others. As organizers we also fail them, by not listening to them and acknowledging their thoughts. Is their presentation less than stellar? Yes. Is

their voice several octaves above what is normal and reasonable? Yes. Does that mean we should dismiss them? No. Does it give them permission or the right to attack and undermine another member or competitor? No.

Successful social competitive groups have systems in place to manage, in an appropriate and neutral way, the comments and behaviors of the smaller majority, but it takes the silent majority to move it forward. Restorative Justice is defined as, "a system of criminal justice which focuses on the rehabilitation of offenders through reconciliation with victims and the community at large." (Dictionary.com) Criminal seems like such a harsh word, but it carries a social judgment on behaviors that affect others, mentally and physically. The phrase, "Do No Harm" should be applied to every incident. If there is a perceived harm it should be addressed and those involved should face consequences as defined by the social group they are participating in.

Restorative Justice can be and usually is used in the social competitive clubs. It is a systematic and repeatable process that allows the silent majority to file a complaint and be heard, the smaller majority to defend themselves AND be heard, therefore empowering the prey to have a voice. This system welcomes open and active conversation to start the healing for everyone involved. It creates a foundation of understanding between the parties involved. It allows the silent majority to be supportive and active in all venues. It protects our fragile and usually most enthusiastic members of our groups. Is it called Restorative Justice in our groups? No, it is much less formal, but just as effective. Using these systems will save our groups and promote a healthy competitive energy.

We will never be able to eradicate all of the conflicts within our social competitive organizations, but using the systems in place we can lessen them. The silent taking a stand to be heard, and the offenders being held accountable for their behaviors, will save our groups and forward our mission of kindness in a competitive world.

Nothing dies quickly. A continuation of the silence will slowly and irrevocably not only kill our social clubs, but it will also kill our sport. Use the systems in place to create new foundations within our sport. Protect what we find so dear to our hearts.

We will never be able to eradicate all of the conflicts within our social competitive organizations, but using the systems in place we can lessen them.

PREPARING NEW EXHIBITORS FOR OBEDIENCE/RALLY TRIALS

SUB-COMMITTEE, Companion Events Delegates Standing Committee

Introduction – The Sub-Committee for Preparing New Exhibitors for the Obedience/Rally Ring has put together ideas to help clubs in aiding new exhibitors to be successful in these sports. A continuous flow of new people into the sport is imperative for the long-term health of these sports. Their success results in continuing participation. Preparing new exhibitors is the responsibility of the individual clubs. The AKC may provide direction, however, ultimately, the responsibility for welcoming and encouraging new exhibitors falls to our clubs.

The following are ideas and actions the committee gathered which have merit based on experience:

1 Clubs should consider establishing a “new exhibitor committee” under the supervision of the clubs’ officers and board. The right chairperson is critical. The purpose of the committee would be to greet, encourage, and help new exhibitors. One source of prospective new exhibitors could be those who attended the club’s puppy and beginner classes. Also, this new exhibitor committee could include the club’s Junior Coordinator who would have a special responsibility for junior handlers.

2 Clubs should consider periodically offering a seminar to familiarize new exhibitors with the Obedience/Rally Regulations. Every new exhibitor should have a copy of the AKC Regulation booklet which may be purchased from the AKC or downloaded from the AKC website. The Regulation booklet can also be purchased by clubs in bulk from the AKC at reduced cost. The new exhibitor should know and understand the regulations for the class in which they are entered, as well as performance and judging standards and procedures (ChapterT), and the AKC Code of Sportsmanship. This will give the new exhibitor confidence. In addition, clubs should consider providing all new exhibitors with a copy of John Cox’s “You’re Next In The Ring” article. [See attachment to this report.](#)

“The AKC may provide direction however, ultimately, the responsibility for welcoming and encouraging new exhibitors falls to our clubs.”

The seminar might include the following topics:

- What class to enter? In Obedience, the Beginner Novice Class is an excellent starting point.
- How Obedience and Rally differ in judging criteria and how they are similar.
- How to read a Premium List, complete an entry form, and read a Judging Program.
- What classes serve as transitions between Novice, Open and Utility (Graduate Novice and Graduate Open) and what exhibitors should know to compete successfully.
- What qualifies a performance? What mistakes make a “Not Qualified” performance?
- Understanding what the judge is looking for.
- How to correctly enter and leave the ring, leads and lead handling, and hand/arm position in all exercises. What the judge will say and what the handler should do in all exercises including the Novice group sits/downs.
- The importance of a positive attitude for both dog and handler.

3 Clubs should consider a “Meet and Greet” for new exhibitors trials, prior to the start of the Novice/Beginner Novice Obedience classes or Rally Novice classes. This welcome session should acknowledge and discuss how to cope with stress in both the exhibitor and dog. A mentor could be available to answer questions and be at ring side during the classes. The value of a good first experience cannot be overstated. This “Meet and Greet” could be included in the trials’ Premium List and Judging Program so that new exhibitors make plans to attend.

4 A practice ring at Obedience and Rally trials is allowed under AKC regulations. Certain requirements as stated in the Obedience and Rally Regulations must be met. These requirements are to ensure that a practice ring runs in an orderly manner.

5 Instructors are so important to our sports. It is imperative instructors stay up to date and open

SUB-COMMITTEE, *cont'd*

minded on new training methods. They must be innovative in dealing with training problems and in their interactions with a wide variety of handlers. They also must be current with changes in the Regulations. Seminars and on-line videos are a source for information and clubs should consider how best to provide opportunities for instructors to complete regular professional development activities.

6 For Judges, their Novice A, Beginner Novice and Preferred Novice briefings should be both informative and light-handed. **Putting the new exhibitor at ease should be the judge's goal.**

7 Clubs should consider offering structured practice time ("run-throughs," "pay to play practice," "show and go") that is, times where dogs are tested as if they were at an Obedience or Rally Trial. Someone with experience acts as a judge, clipboard in hand, duplicating the Obedience judge's orders or walking around the ring as if at a Rally trial. This "acting judge" could also point out handler errors should they occur. These sessions might also include time to complete entry forms for upcoming events.

8 Clubs should consider offering "Novice only" Obedience trials (which are considered "special event" trials). In some areas of the country, these trials often have greater entry numbers in the Beginner Novice and Novice classes than in a standard trial with all class levels offered. Of course, judges for such events should be thoughtfully chosen. Clubs offering these events could promote the event locally and even regionally to increase

participation.

Lastly, here are some resources that clubs might use to help their instructors and students:

The Companion Events Committee "Best Practices" - <https://www.akc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/00-Best-Practices-Companion-Events.pdf>

The AKC Obedience and Rally Judges Blog (anyone can sign up for this information) - <https://akc-obedrlyjudges.wordpress.com/about/>

More from John Cox (a well-respected judge and handler) - <https://saintbernardarchive.com/library/>

The January/February 2024 issue of AKC's publication, *AKC Family Dog*®, focused on "beginners": <https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn-origin-etr.akc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/23080608/Digital-Family-Dog-Jan-Feb-2024.pdf>

As always, the committee welcomes new ideas to attract and retain new exhibitors.

Sub-Committee members:

Larry Wilson, Philadelphia DTC, Chairperson
Norine Noonan, Basset Hound Club of America
Patricia Sample, Anderson OTC
Laura Trainor, Susque-Nango KC
Betty Winthers, Pasanita Obedience Club

Thank You

Many thanks to **Sylvia Arrowwood**, Coordinator, of the **June** issue. She and **Monica Henderson Stoner**, Assistant Editor, reached out to Delegates for articles, read every article multiple times and assisted with the proofing and editing of every item in this issue. Their time and input was greatly appreciated. My sincere gratitude to the Delegates and staff members who submitted or contributed articles. We understand your time is valuable and are grateful for your help in answering questions and sharing details about your professional and family lives. We especially extend our thanks for the time involved to select and send photos to us. We rely on you to share your expertise, knowledge, and ideas with us. Without you, there would be no **Perspectives!**



RANDOM LITTLE TIDBITS (#72)

Below is the next in a series of Random Tidbits of information (from me) in regards to the AKC Obedience Regulations. Knowledge of the Regulations provides you the power for...

Saving Withdrawals from Your 200 Account

Today's Random Little Tidbit – You're Next in the Ring! Is Your Game Plan in Order?



Upon arriving at the trial:

- 1) Make sure you have all the needed required equipment for the class(es) entered.
- 2) Check-in early if at all possible. If you have a conflict this should be discussed with the Judge/Steward *before the class is scheduled to start*. This courtesy will help the Judge in determining Group sizes, if applicable, and absentees. Keep attuned to the "white board, if available" for dogs moved out of catalog order as this information will allow your warm-up timing to be more on target.
- 3) Before your turn, watch the heeling pattern and where *each* exercise will take place. In being prepared one can keep their dog better focused while moving from one exercise to the next.
- 4) Know the correct height of the dog's withers if there are jumps in the class entered, and double-check to make sure the Stewards have the jumps set correctly *before* entering the ring.
- 5) If you are entered in **Beginner Novice, Novice A or Preferred Novice**, plan to be ringside for the **walkthrough** at start time of the class. Have accommodations for the dog during the walkthrough.

When it is time to enter the ring keep in mind the following:

- 1) A team is being judged from the time they step *into* the ring until the time they *leave* the ring.
- 2) Make sure the leash is attached going into the ring and leaving the ring. **Chapter 2, Section 16**
- 3) Keep the dog under control *at all times* while in the ring. **Chapter 2, Sections 22 & 23**
- 4) No titles may be displayed on your clothing and clothing must not be in poor taste or contain profanity. Also, should not display any information that would be in conflict with a sponsor of the trial. **Chapter 1, Section 10**
- 5) Leashes must be made of fabric or leather and long enough to provide adequate slack during the Heel on Leash exercise. A six foot leash needed in Beginner Novice and the Regular Novice Group exercise. Nothing may be "hanging" from the collar. **Chapter 2, Sections 16 & 17**
- 6) Handling Between Exercises, **Chapter 2, Section 23:**
 - a. **Beginner Novice, Preferred-Novice or Novice A & B**, guided gently by the collar between exercises. NO other physical guidance is permitted and, if used, *must* receive minor or substantial penalties, depending on the circumstances.
 - b. **Graduate Novice, Graduate Open, Preferred-Open, Open, Preferred-Utility, Utility or Versatility** classes, there will be a substantial penalty for any dog that is physically guided at any time or is not readily controllable. Minor penalties will be imposed for a dog that does not respond promptly to its handler's commands or signals before or between exercises in these classes. Items a. & b. also pertain to the Group exercise such as physical positioning the dog for the Sit or Down.
- 7) Before starting each exercise the judge is required to ask, "Are you ready?" Keep in mind this is JUST a question, NOT the start of the exercise. The judging of an exercise will not begin until the judge has given the first order. **Chapter 2, Section 4**
- 8) Praise and petting are allowed between and after exercises, but points will be deducted from the total score for a dog that is not under reasonable control while being praised. **Chapter 2, Section 22**
- 9) After the last class dog and before the awards: If you have been informed you Qed, warm up your dog as you never know if there may be a runoff! Be prepared and ready if called back into the ring!
- 10) Classes at or after 12:00 noon will be listed "to follow" and must be judged in the order and ring listed. No "to follow" class may start before 12:00 noon. **Chapter 1, Section 26**

A minor deduction is ½ point up to 2½ points. A substantial deduction is 3 or more points.

GOOD LUCK.....YOU and your dog can do this and you will ALWAYS be taking the BEST dog home with you!!!

For more information on Judging, examining the exercises and saving other withdrawals from your "200" account, check out

the... ***Dog-Talk articles & Random Little Tidbits:*** www.saintbernardarchive.com

AKC Blog Address: <https://akcobedrlyjudges.wordpress.com/about/> Sign up to receive updates.

John Cox, AKC obedience judge. dog-talk@comcast.net

Guidelines for New Exhibitor

After you acquire your new puppy or adult dog some very basic routine to be established for good house/manner dog.

You should have received from the breeder or who you brought your puppy/dog regarding general care, feeding, house breaking and crate training.

Assumed all that has been done and the next step is do some training for the puppy/dog. The puppy should be at least 4-6 months old before any formal training. The next step is to find a training club or a well respect trainer in your area for training for the AKC Companion Event (Obedience and Rally).

Once your dog is trained and ready to enter an AKC Event the following is what you need to know to get started in the AKC Dog Sport so you will have the right information to participate in our wonderful sport.

- Find a show/trial close to where you live or comfortable do some distant driving.
- Next enter the appropriate class or classes that you dog been trained for
- The day before the show/trial.
 - a. Make a list of all the things you would need for the trial.
 - b. Crate for the dog, water/bowl, dog treats, chair for you
 - c. Upon arrival at the show/trial grounds find where Obedience and Rally being held
 - d. You should have received the judging schedule from the Show Secretary, or the Show Superintendent so you know the time and ring that your class will be judged.
 - e. Now you have the ring and time for your class.
 - f. You should go to the ring and check in with the ring steward. The steward will give you an arm band which identify your dog turn to for judging.
 - g. Now is the time to take the dog out to relief so won't have an accident in the ring, give the dog a drink, then do just a quick warm up before your turn in the ring time – do that about two dogs before your turn.
 - h. Relax, have fun, and enjoy the sport with your dog.

Special note: Equipment for the Novice A/B and Beginner Novice A/B class is a 6 feet leash

Submitted by

Betty M Wintners

Q & A WITH ANTHONY CAPUTO

*Monica Henderson Stoner, Delegate, Saluki Club of America
Perspectives Assistant Editor*

How long have you been with AKC?

I've been with the AKC since October 2021.

What is your current title?

Broadcast Manager for AKCtv & AKC Productions.

What is your scope of responsibility?

I oversee two production units: AKCtv and AKC Productions. At AKCtv, my role involves managing content, ensuring brand-aligned messaging, handling sponsorships, distributing dog show livestreams, and overseeing our weekly show, 'AKC Good Dog TV.' Over the years, we've transformed 'AKC GDTV' into the premier show for heartwarming stories, live sports, trending topics and just simply 'Life with your dog.' Notably, the show airs weekly on our channel 'AKCtv' and is syndicated to 100 markets and 128 stations across the US, reaching 49 million homes—about 40% of the country—every week. As for AKC Productions, we focus on AKC events featured on ESPN. My work includes creating timelines, securing venues, managing sponsorships, organizing competitors, and handling logistics for about eight events annually. These shows premiere on ESPN channels, totaling over 240+ hours of airtime throughout the year. While we do spend considerable time away from home filming these events, the chance to explore different parts of the U.S. and, more importantly, connect with AKC competitors, handlers, and dog lovers—it's a rare opportunity beyond the office.

Have you held previous positions with AKC?

Yes, I did! Before I worked in Broadcast for Ron Furman and Bill Ellis, I worked for Paula Spector and Anita Leveska-Kelley in the Conference and Travel Department.

Please describe your career path to where you are now.

As a young person, I completed three degrees in Music, specializing in Opera Performance. After my time in the opera world, I transitioned to Broadway for several years. Along the way, I held various positions in the business sector. I started as an Operations Manager at a financial firm, spent a decade there, and later became a Casting Director for popular TV shows



here in NYC. And now, here I am at AKC!

Why did you choose to come to AKC?

Well, my position here started as a temporary one, but after spending some time, I realized—I really like it here! One of the most remarkable things about the AKC environment and the broader dog community is the sheer passion everyone has for dogs. Admittedly I don't come from the dog fancy, but I get it—I come from the music world, and passion is what fuels our mission and initiatives. It's a universal force, don't you think?

What are you most proud of at AKC (either in a personal project or in a larger company-wide success)?

Looking back at our journey, I'm proud of the projects we've tackled so far. From getting AKC Good Dog TV out there to the success of AKC on ESPN Dog Sport Series, it's been an exciting few years. AKC's voice and presence have grown immensely, and I'm thrilled to be part of it.

And on a personal note, I've had the incredible privilege of using my talent here at the AKC. When Gina DiNardo, our Executive Secretary, asked if I'd sing at the AKC National Championship, I jumped at the chance! It was a real honor to contribute in a way that was immensely personal and added to the spectacle and grandeur of the National Championship.

What is your personal experience with dogs? Do you own a dog? If so, tell us all about it.

Growing up, we had a Maltese name Max who was registered with the AKC. I loved him – a really good dog. Now, my husband and I, have a small dog named Sophie that we love just as much. Despite our illusions of being in charge, Sophie really runs the show!

How can Delegates best support your department is doing?

The steadfast and continued support our TV and production initiatives have received from the Delegates is something we greatly value. It keeps us on track

with AKC's mission to uphold our Purebred Dog Registry, promote responsible dog ownership, and, as we often mention on AKCtv, celebrate the love of all things dog!



THE NATIONAL OWNER HANDLER SERIES: “14 YEARS AND GOING STRONG”

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

There has been a good deal of discussion regarding the NOHS over the years. I am a breeder-owner-handler, one of the 85% of exhibitors who show their own dogs and experience the challenges owner-handlers encounter. As a past AKC Director, who strongly pushed for NOHS, I have had the opportunity to study the state of Conformation shows in the past and today and, in my opinion, the outlook is not bright. In the following paragraphs I will highlight why and then directly focus on the impact of the National Owner Handler Series.

Although our Conformation event entries (all-breed, specialty, and group) have remained relatively constant over the past 4 years excluding 2020 and 2021, the number of unique dogs in competition continues to decline. In 2011, 128,468 unique dogs competed compared with 100,066 in 2023 a **decline of 22%**. During the same period the number of Conformation events has **increased by 18%**.

During this same period we have seen the number of low entry breeds grow to over 50% of our Stud Book. For example, breeder/exhibitors of 67 breeds have a less than 50% chance of having an entry at an event and 30 breeds less than a 70% chance. This has huge implications for the future as it impacts both entries and participants. To make things worse in 2011, 3.5% of the pups in all registered litters were shown where in 2022 the number was 1.8%.

Bottom line...we are redistributing a shrinking number of Conformation participants across more entry opportunities. Redistribution will NOT sustain the sport.

The reality of these figures validates the importance of keeping as many dogs and people as possible involved in Conformation events. The NOHS was not intended to solve all the challenges of our sport, but to contribute to sustaining it and the core mission of the American Kennel Club.

Attitude surveys have shown that many owner-handlers believe (right or wrong) there is little room for them to be successful at the breed and/

or group level. The result is, people are simply not showing beyond the classes, being highly selective where they showed based on internet research of a judging panel, or simply dropping out.

Keeping an existing exhibitor (owner-handler) is always easier than gaining a new one. Changing cultural norms, restrictive pet ownership ordinances and laws make it increasingly difficult to have multiple dogs and, simply, the 24/7 commitment to their dogs forms barriers for new participants.

When the AKC Board of Directors established the NOHS we considered several factors impacting Conformation:

The NOHS was not intended to solve all the challenges of our sport but contribute to sustaining it and the core mission of the American Kennel Club.

- 1 People have a lot of recreational choices which don't require a 24/7 commitment as do dogs. They need a reason to stay at the show after breed judging rather than “one and done and gone.”
- 2 Success is measured by recognition for the 24/7 commitment to their dogs.
- 3 There is a role for the professional in the sport, but success must be balanced across all participants if the sport is to survive at a reasonable scale. (Interestingly, dogs listed with agents has actually declined over the years from about 19% pre-covid to 15% in 2023, recognizing there are dogs shown by agents not listed with them, but the data is directional.)
- 4 There is a strong need to find ways for a person to participate with a smaller number of dogs. Keeping a dog in the ring for longer than achieving their championship is not only important but necessary.

The National Owner Handled Series (NOHS) was created to provide an opportunity at the Breed/Group/BIS levels to recognize the core of our sport and to provide an opportunity for success that may be difficult to achieve otherwise.

After three years of spotty participation (offered at 13% of the all-breed shows in 2013) the data for those who did offer it showed a correlation to an increase in entries while other competition spe-

cial attractions (Bred by Exhibitor, Best Puppy) had NO impact on entries. Furthermore those who were participating were making entry decisions based on whether a Club offered the NOHS or not, with entries increasing at those shows.

With only 13% of the Clubs offering NOHS competition and the proven benefit to the Club and participants, it became clear that ways had to be found to increase availability of the NOHS competition. *This resulted in Board policy, a policy driven by a deep belief this competition is truly in the long-term best interest of the Conformation sport.* Although that policy no longer exists, *approximately 87% of events now offer NOHS competition, reflecting its importance to exhibitors.*

As with any new competition there have been growing pains. These include exhibitors understanding eligibility guidelines (more later) as well as indicating their eligibility on the entry form, Stewards getting their heads around how to assist the judge in ring management, and judges' understanding just how important this award is to the future of the sport. These challenges have diminished over time.

The National Owner Handler Series is approaching its 15th year as part of our Conformation sport. Over that time, it has become an integral part of the Conformation event. While there may still be some who believe this is a second-class competition, the vast majority find it to be a great addition, evidenced by exhibitors who "check the box." At a time when class entries are dropping (from approximately 74% of total entry in 2010 to 59% in 2023), the NOHS is more important than ever.

There are differences in points of view regarding NOHS, as well as other areas of Conformation. In spite of our differences we must come together. We are the ones who give our dogs a voice. They are counting on us to assure they don't become extinct. While the NOHS, on its own, will not assure the future of our sport, it serves as a bridge to that end. If you are not checking the box, please do. If your club(s) are not offering the competition, please encourage them to do so for the future of our dogs and sport.

A NON-SCENT SEEK & FIND

It's not the Lottery, but the odds are better.
You can be a **WINNER!**

On which page can the word **spectator** be found?
The first Delegate (who is not a previous winner) to contact Monica Henderson Stoner tsent@ix.netcom will win a Starbucks gift card.



MID-CONTINENT KC OF TULSA – AFFILIATION WITH THE TULSA AREA PAWS PROGRAM

Marc Crews, Delegate, Mid-Continent Kennel Club of Tulsa, Past President

Many if not most or even all of us are aware of the National Meals On Wheels (MOW) Program and it's valuable service providing meals to elderly and shut ins and anyone unable to get out and shop for groceries and prepare their own meals. But how many of us are aware of their extended service called PAWS (Pets Aiding Wellness in Seniors) providing food and supplies for those same people enrolled in the Meals on Wheels program?

Mid-Continent Kennel Club of Tulsa (MCKC) became aware of this program about six years ago when a club member learned about the PAWS program and asked if we could invite them



MCKC Club Member Carol Minden with her car loaded for PAWS deliveries.

to make a presentation at one of our monthly club meetings. Then President, I agreed it sounded like a worthy cause and something that would be of interest to our membership. Program Director Jonathan Vanbeber and Program Coordinator Lauren Ors accepted the invitation to make a presentation to our group. Jonathan gave an excellent overview and emphasized the need for such a service. They had arrived at the realization that many of their MOW's clients routinely set aside part of their own meals to feed their pets. Additionally, when these clients had friends or relatives "helping" they would typi-

cally buy the wrong type of food (whatever was on sale) such as cat food for dogs and vice versa and always in large 40 lb. bags to save money, but unmanageable for their MOW's clients. By the end of the presentation most of our members (me included!) were extremely moved, wondering how this situation got overlooked for so many years and thinking we all might have elderly relatives or know someone in this situation. We realized that this could be one of US who might need or benefit from this service at some point.

To develop the program MOW had already gone to a local pet supply chain called Southern Agriculture, very prominent in the Tulsa area with multiple locations and established long before the big box and online suppliers were on the scene. Southern Ag had already struck a deal with their premier supplier, Diamond Pet Foods, to provide maintenance type food at a very low cost and Southern Ag would provide the space and some manpower to break down the large bags into 4 lb./easy to carry bags and parcel them out to meet their clients' needs on a weekly basis. Not wanting to burden their daily delivery drivers, MOW indicated all they really needed were volunteers to help make up the orders and then deliver to their clients on a regular/weekly schedule.

It just so happened MCKC had approached Southern Ag that same year to act as a corporate sponsor for our All-Breed Conformation Shows and they agreed and even asked if they could include Diamond Pet Foods in their sponsorship. As it unfolded, in one evening we had come full circle with the introduction of the PAWS program and our budding relationship with Southern Agriculture and Diamond Pet Foods. All we needed was volunteers. With great enthusiasm, our members gladly signed up in droves to help the PAWS Program!

That same year MCKC also awarded the PAWS Program MCKC's annual "Jay Cronley It's In The Contract" Award designated for an individual or group in the community having gone above and beyond to help further the health and well-being of all dogs. MCKC provides the award winner

CREWS, *cont'd*

with financial support through several charitable fundraising events plus a free 10x10 booth at our annual shows.

The PAWS Program won that same award for an unprecedented two more years and PAWS publicly credits our support as helping them move the program from its infancy in the Tulsa area to a full-fledged and needed service for Meals On Wheels clients. Along the way MCKC made several contributions and donations with the third year in the amount of \$5,000 dollars which was presented right before Best In Show on Saturday of our Conformation weekend. A

Governor's Commendation recognizing our anniversary and charitable support was also awarded in our third year.

Our affiliation over the last several years has continued to form a lasting and meaningful bond and many friendships between our organizations. Beyond all the financial benefits and operational success, I can tell you from personal experience, nothing has been or is more rewarding than the gratitude shown and expressed by an elderly or shut in individual to someone helping them keep their beloved pet healthy and in their homes. As the saying goes: "PRICELESS"!

Special Thanks for the generous donations made by MCKC members and contributions made by others in honor of MCKC's 101st anniversary to Meals On Wheels of Metro Tulsa's PAWS program!

The PAWS Program is a pet food program designed to support companionship animals of MOWs' homebound recipients. In doing so, it also ensures that their recipients maintain healthy diets without sacrificing their meal to protect their pet from hunger. Thank you for providing this much needed service to the Greater Tulsa community!

The club celebrated its anniversary by highlighting its community partnership with Meals On Wheels at their recent dog show.



MCKC President Stephanie Garrett handing over check to PAWS Jonathan Vanbeber and Lauren Ors plus the write up from the PAWS FB page. My hand with the microphone making the presentation LOL.

MEET THE AKC STAFF: CHRIS ESPIRITU, DESIGN PROJECTS MANAGER

SYLVIA THOMAS, Delegate, KC of Riverside, Perspectives Editor

One of the perks of being Perspectives' Editor is the joy of meeting wonderful individuals who are part of the AKC "staff family." Chris Espiritu's introduction came by way of Russell Bianca which gives me another reason to be grateful and yet another favor I "owe" Russell. While I haven't officially met Chris, reading his responses gave me a glimpse into the life and work of this wonderful, multi-talented individual. Thank you Chris (and Russell) for opening the door to a new friend.

How long have you been with AKC? How did you learn about the position at AKC and what prompted you to apply?

This past February marked seventeen years since I began with AKC. My previous job, I was working for a marketing company in New Jersey and I needed a change. I've always known about the AKC since my dog at the time came from a well-known breeder of Chinese Cresteds. I love dogs and NYC so it was just a perfect combination



Chris and Diane

of a place where I wanted to work. To make things even better, my girlfriend at the time (who I eventually married 4 years later) worked a few blocks from the 260 Madison office so she was excited of potentially working near each other. I was ecstatic when I got the job. I always joke that having a Chinese Crested (Powderpuff) might have helped, or that my future boss, Russell Bianca, and I formerly



Chris with his Labrador retriever, Ellie

had rock bands. I thought we hit it off immediately when I first met him.

Describe your position, scope of responsibility and what an "average day" on the job might involve.

I'm a Design Projects Manager. When I was first hired, I was a Production Designer and mainly worked on materials for AKC Gazette, AKC Family Dog, and New Puppy Handbook. Over the years my role has expanded where I assist anyone in the AKC with any graphic design needs. It's pretty exciting because I work on such a wide range of projects. When the requests come in, my day is pretty hectic. On any given day I could be designing a logo, retouching photos, creating ads, visuals for marketing materials, booklets, Powerpoint presentations, posting on our Facebook, updating our web pages, you name it. I will assist with any visual needs people might have.

THOMAS, *cont'd*

Chris with the whole Espiritu family.

What do you like most about what you do? If you could change anything relative to your position, what would it be?

I am fortunate to be one of those people who can honestly say, I'm doing exactly what I've always wanted to do. Since I was a kid, I've always wanted to pursue a visually creative field and I'm actually doing it. There aren't many things I would change but if I could, I've always wanted to mentor a designer who is new to this career. I have been lucky to have a mentor in my boss, Russell Bianca, and my brother, Allan Espiritu, who heads the graphic design program at Rutgers University in Camden, New Jersey. I wouldn't be the designer I am without them and would love to do the same for another designer.

How many publications are you involved with? How are they all managed and how on earth are the deadlines all maintained?

I am involved with AKC Family Dog, AKC Gazette, and a few times a year, I put together the In-Session newsletter for our Government

Relations department. They are all managed well because everyone involved in it has so much experience and expertise in Publications. Sheila Goffe, who heads the Government Relations department, started off in my department when I first worked here. And also because most of us have been in this field when magazines were primarily in print, we are very good with deadlines. These days, with things being digital, it's so easy to make updates or edits after a magazine is published. Back in the day, with print, you had to be solid before publishing. And if you had edits, you'd have to have a section on redactions, edits, or omissions and that would be published in the next issue.

Is there something about your position that is unique and/or something that you particularly enjoy doing? Why?

Being a graphic designer, I always feel you need to adapt to the current trends in tech, visual styles, and mediums (like various social media apps). I love that about my field and even more since I'm tech obsessed. These days, the big thing is A.I.

THOMAS, cont'd

(artificial intelligence) . I've actually integrated that into my workflow since the programs I use are making it available. For example, I love photo editing, but it's a tedious process that can take hours or days. With the assistance of A.I., it helped me become more efficient at it.

If you could change anything, what would it be?

Haha, I would love to make print popular again. While I love the convenience of digital, I think the thing you miss is feel and value when it comes to holding or owning something physical. I see how people are embracing vinyl records again and I totally get it. It just feels great holding something physical. It has value. I don't get that same feeling when I'm streaming music or seeing a magazine spread digitally.

Is there anything the Delegates can to support the work you do?

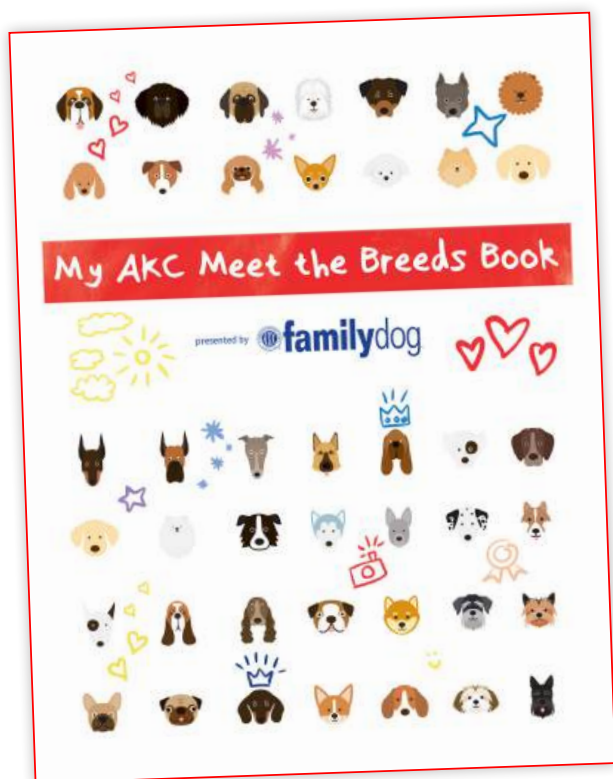
Yes! Read, subscribe, and promote AKC Family

Dog and AKC Gazette magazine. I work with a very talented group. The people writing for it (like Mara Bovsun, Bud Boccone, and Arliss Paddock) are some of the most knowledgeable people writing about dogs. Russell Bianca and Kate McCroary are design gurus and Venus Rodriguez is a publications superstar.

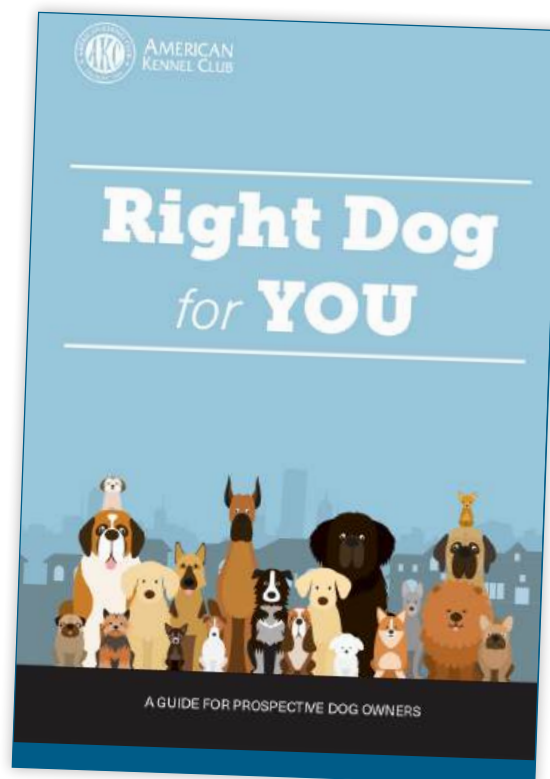
In a perfect world, what is your hope about how publications you are involved with are received by and/or viewed and read by the public?

I would love for our readers to know that some of the people providing this content are some of the best in the industry. Our magazines cover the stories within the fancy to just anyone who owns a dog. There are amazing stories and valuable advice for owners of all levels. I just want more people to experience reading it. We put our heart and soul into all our magazines.

What is your personal experience with dogs? Do you



A sample of one of Chris' projects at the AKC. This sticker book is a hit with kids at AKC events. The booklet contains photos of each AKC-recognized breed and kids check off which one they have seen in person



A sample of another one of Chris' projects at the AKC. This booklet was created to educate people on finding the right dog for you. The booklet opens up like a poster and on the back contains an illustration of every AKC-recognized breed

THOMAS, cont'd

currently own a dog? If so, tell us all about it. Are you able to “bring your dog to work?”

I've had dogs since I was 5 years old (I'm in my late 40's now) and they've been a huge part of my life. I currently don't have a dog at the moment but my wife and I are hoping to get one soon. Last summer, our Labrador, Ellie, of 12 years passed away and there is a part of me that's still recovering. I never had a Lab before but I can tell you, I totally get why they are in the top 3 most popular breeds every year. Ellie was like an animal whisperer. She would find fledglings and stay near them to keep them safe and in her later years, befriended a couple of stray cats. We ended up rescuing one and another cat comes by every day to be petted.

As for bringing a dog to work. Sadly, our building doesn't allow it unless with special permission. Those AKC North Carolina folks have it so good. I'm envious when I see photos of them with their pups at work.

Please share any personal information about you or your family that you would like us to know.

I was born in Jersey City, NJ to immigrant parents from the Philippines and lived in NJ for most of my life. My mom is a retired nurse who worked at St. Vincent's Hospital in NYC. My father is a retired electrical and chemical engineer who proudly served in the US Navy. If you ever go to the Intrepid Air and Space museum in NYC, you can catch him in some photos there. I have two siblings, an older brother who is also a graphic designer who heads the design program at Rutgers University – Camden, and somewhat known in the field for his work. And an older



Chris with his sister, Tracy

sister, who gave up a lucrative aerospace engineering career to become public school teacher and eventually, a nationally recognized educator in STEM programs. And they have awesome spouses and wonderful children. I look up to all of them.

And me, I have this amazing wife who's also a graphic designer. I always say she's the best designer in the family and I'm always in awe of the work she produces. About 14 years ago, I (along with my brother) was diagnosed with a rare neural muscular condition called Kennedy's Disease. I was told it would progress years later and around the beginning of the pandemic, I

started to notice. I started having difficulty walking and suffered quite a few falls. It's gotten so bad that I can't work in the office as much and it was really a tough adjustment. I've gotten better with it now but it took me years to come to terms.

I really couldn't have done it without the support from my wife, my brother (who has been battling the same thing) and my family and friends.

What do you enjoy doing when you are not at work?

Hobbies, activities, vacations, etc.?

There are a lot of physical activities I love that I could no longer do. When I was able to walk normally, there was nothing I loved more than being in NYC and taking a long walk after work. I would leave the office (by Grand Central) and zigzag through all the neighborhoods before I reached my train at the World Trade Center. It was a good 2-3 hour walk and I get to see all the new places that would spring up or try different foods. I miss that the most. I also love swimming and recently got back into that



Ellie with one of the stray cats she befriended. This cat was recently rescued and will be going to a new home

THOMAS, *cont'd*

since it doesn't cause as much stress to my body. I could swim all day if I had access to a pool more often.

Because of my advancing condition, I also focused more on things I could do that Kennedy's Disease doesn't affect. I've always been a fan of tech and video games so I got more into collecting old games and playing new ones. I have a collection of video game consoles and games dating back to the Atari 2600. I just love how much that industry has advanced and reading about the history and current news of it.

I'm one of those people who does what I do after work too. I'm always designing for fun or Photoshopping an image to get a laugh out of friends and family. I guess it's my style of humor and if you see my Facebook or Instagram, there are tons.

I'm also known to be an avid viewer of tv and movies. I watch most things on tv. In August 2020, a new show called Ted Lasso premiered on Apple TV+. I loved it so much that I started a social media account about it (since the show had no social media presence at the time) and it got huge. Actors from the show would message me and praise my posts. I think one of the actors even name dropped me on CBS 60 Minutes. I was so knowledgeable about the show that I was a frequent guest on podcasts to talk about it. It was pretty wild. Since the show ended, I don't post as much but I still get contacted frequently. If you



Chris with Diane at Niagara Falls, NY

are curious about it, I'm CultofLasso on Twitter, Instagram, and Threads.

Also, getting into Ted Lasso was also because I am a fan of sports. When I was younger, I played a ton of sports. I played Hockey, Soccer, and loved to bike. Up until last year, I was a season ticket holder of the New York Red Bulls soccer team. And I am a lifelong New York Giants fan.

As for vacations, I was told I should take more of them since I work a lot. I can't help it, I love what I do. But, this summer, I'm finally going to Portugal. My wife is Portuguese and she was

raised there for half her life. Her family owns real estate there so we have a place to stay whenever we need. I'm really excited to finally go but also scared since I have to plan activities carefully with my condition. The thought of cobblestone sidewalks worries me but overall, I think it's going to be amazing. The trip seems so good that my parents and siblings asked to tag along and now it's a huge family trip across the country. I can't wait.



Chris has been known to photoshop family photos over the years. Here's one of his wife Diane with actor Chris Hemsworth (one of Diane's favorites) with Chris looking cautiously on the side.

Anything on your bucket list you'd like to share?

Believe it or not, I think I did everything I always wanted to try in life. I sang in a band, became an artist/designer, I learned to cook, play guitar, found someone I love... I guess I just need to travel more, which I'm currently doing. Oh wait, there is one and it might happen soon. All my life I always wanted a Mini Cooper and I think I might finally pull the trigger on it.

GOOD JOB!!!!!!!

KATHY GREGORY, Delegate Port Chester Obedience Training Club, Inc.

The very first AKC Scent Work Trial was held in September of 2017 in Ohio, so we are coming up on our 7th anniversary! So many dogs and handlers have achieved their goals of moving up the accomplishment ladder toward greatness. Countless questions have been posed and answered, and the AKC has worked to clarify some ambiguous or seemingly contradictory parts of the rule book with further adjustments to come.

We in the East are experiencing the first warm days of Spring and, as I write this, temperatures for the day are expected to be in the high 70s! So, get out and sniff!

It is so important to avail your dog of a variety of different locations and experiences in order to be able to work through different distractions when participating in a trial. I recently chaired a Scent Work Trial where many of my own students participated for the first time in a competitive dog sport and, no matter how much information I gave them regarding what to expect from a competition, their one resounding comment I got was that no matter how many times you practice, nothing prepares you for a trial. You simply must DO it.

Now that the weather is becoming milder, move your practice outside. Go to your local park and search the picnic tables when not in use. Make friends with the local firemen and ask if you can search a room in their building that is not in use—a bunk room, a large closet, or perhaps a room where they keep unused equipment.

How about your local library? Surely they would not mind you searching the exterior of their building after hours?



It is so important to avail your dog of a variety of different locations and experiences in order to be able to work through different distractions when participating in a trial.

Local car dealerships are also a great location to search!! They usually have bare floors, good for practicing slippery, reflective locations.

How about the salon where you get your hair done? Would they let you search once, after hours? Or your local dog food/supply store? Your dentist may own an office building. How about that? How about the Tractor Supply, Home Depot, Building Liquidator, Lowes, True Value, or Ace Hardware – inside and outside of the buildings. Call them, ask to speak to the person in charge and let them know the day and time you are requesting time. Be sure to take their name. Then, check in with the management when you arrive to let them know you have arrived, where you will be, and that you have permission to be there.

In no case, however, should you search a location without permission. Because I am an Instructor, I carry my own business insurance, and this certainly helps. If you have your own insurance, be sure to let any prospective location know up front. Bring a box

of cookies or donuts with you when you request usage for the first time as a thank you. Tell the prospective location that you are practicing for a dog sport and that you would greatly benefit from access to their property this one time for half an hour (or whatever time you need). Your dog is in training. You do not expect any property damage, but you will clean it up if it occurs. Carry poop bags and a small bottle of enzymatic cleaner. Your presence will not disturb any of their clients and you will stick to a remote part of their property if required.

Make friends! When you are done, see if you can make a small purchase. Smile!

WERE YOU ABLE TO...NAME THAT BREED?

MONICA HENDERSON STONER, Delegate, Saluki Club Of America, Perspectives Assistant Editor

Here are thumbnail versions of the puppy photos that were published in the **March 2024** issue of *Perspectives* ([available here in the AKC Delegates' Portal](#)). Were you able to identify them? The answers are on the following page.



HENDERSON STONER, *cont'd***1 Leonberger**

Matthew Townsend

*Delegate, Carolina Working Group Association***2 Otterhound**

Joellen Gregory

*Delegate, Otterhound Club of America***3 Miniature Poodle**

Larry Wilson

*Delegate, Philadelphia DTC***4 Airedale Terrier**

Nancy Bougher

*Delegate,, California Airedale Terrier Club***5 Akita**

Sylvia Thomas

*Delegate, Kennel Club of Riverside***6 Basenji**

Katie Campbell

*Delegate, Basenji Club of America***7 Dalmatian**

Diane Skibinski

*Delegate, Lake Shore KC***8 Bichon Frise**

Mayno Blanding

*Delegate, Bichon Frise Club of America***9 Bichon Frise**

Mayno Blanding

*Delegate, Bichon Frise Club of America***10 Akita**

Sylvia Thomas

*Delegate, Kennel Club of Riverside***11 Dalmatian**

Becky Richardson

*Delegate, Santa Clara Dog Training Club***12 Flat Coat Retriever**

Wendy Jones

*Delegate, Lake Champlain Retriever Club***13 Dalmatian**

Diane Skibinski

*Delegate, Lake Shore KC***14 German Shorthair Pointer**

Bob Rynkiewicz

*Delegate, Eastern German Shorthaired Pointer Club***15 Toy Manchester Terrier**

Elizabeth Trail

*Delegate, Green Mountain Dog Club***16 Keeshond**

Rick Su

*Delegate, The Keeshond Club of America***17 Otterhound**

Joellen Gregory

*Delegate, Otterhound Club of America***18 Lhasa Apso**

Arna Margolies

*Delegate, Ladies' Dog Club***19 Keeshond**

Rick Su

*Delegate, The Keeshond Club of America***20 Toy Manchester Terrier**

Elizabeth Trail

*Delegate, Green Mountain Dog Club***21 German Shorthair Pointer**

Cathy Iacopelli

*Delegate, Augusta Kennel Club, Inc.***22 American Water Spaniel**

Sally Green

*Delegate, Terre Haute KC***23 Saluki**

Warren Cook

*Delegate, Southern Oregon Kennel Club***24 German Shorthair Pointer**

Bob Rynkiewicz

*Delegate, Eastern German Shorthaired Pointer Club***25 Otterhound**

Joellen Gregory

*Delegate, Otterhound Club of America***26 German Shorthair Pointer**

Bob Rynkiewicz

Delegate, Eastern German Shorthaired Pointer Club

*HENDERSON STONER, cont'd***27 Whippet**

Sharyn Hutchens
Delegate, Shenandoah Valley KC

28 Standard Wire-Haired Dachshund

Laura Myles
Delegate, Whidbey Island KC

29 Toy Manchester Terrier

Elizabeth Trail
Delegate, Green Mountain Dog Club

30 Leonberger

Matthew Townsend
Delegate, Carolina Working Group Association

31 Sussex Spaniel

Karen Cottingham
Delegate, Salisbury MD Kennel Club

32 Sealyham Terrier

Leslie Jaseph
Delegate, Columbia Terrier Assoc. Of MD

33 Saluki

Warren Cook
Delegate, Southern Oregon Kennel Club

34 Sealyham Terrier

Leslie Jaseph
Delegate, Columbia Terrier Assoc. Of MD

35 Toy Manchester Terrier

Elizabeth Trail
Delegate, Green Mountain Dog Club

36 Vizsla

Florence Duggan
Delegate, Sussex Hills KC

37 Sussex Spaniel

Karen Cottingham
Delegate, Salisbury MD Kennel Club

38 Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever

Marile Waterstraat
Delegate, Huntington KC

39 Whippet

Sharyn Hutchens
Delegate, Shenandoah Valley KC

40 Toy Manchester Terrier

Elizabeth Trail
Delegate, Green Mountain Dog Club



THE DOCTOR IS IN THE HOUSE! MEET DR. ROBERT (SCOTT) DOVE

SHARYN HUTCHENS, Delegate, Shenandoah Valley KC, Inc., Perspectives Editorial Board

Dr. Robert (Scott) Dove joined the Delegate body last fall representing the Scottish Deerhound Club of America (SDCA). He is a Theriogenologist, the owner of a successful veterinary hospital in Gainesville, VA, and a board member of the SDCA. Along with his wife Cecelia, he's a longtime successful breeder, whose Deerhounds have won Best in Show at Westminster and the National Dog Show.

Scott graduated from Texas A&M at the age of 23 with a Bachelor of Science in addition to a DVM. He followed that up with a three-year course in small animal Theriogenology from the European School of Advanced Veterinary Studies. The first year was in France, the second in Germany, and the third in Italy. In Sweden he learned to do trans-cervical inseminations (TCIs). One of his early mentors was S.W.J. Seeger, who in 1969 was the first person to successfully obtain puppies from thawed frozen semen.

Perspectives caught up with Scott recently to talk about Deerhounds, Theriogenology, and winning big!

What made you choose Deerhounds?

My future wife (though I didn't know that at the time) had a Deerhound and brought her to my practice. That's how we met.

Have you owned other breeds?

Yes, we've owned a Whippet. We went out west and after watching Whippets hunt, I decided I had to have one. We've also had a couple of Border Terriers because they went along with us fox hunting. We were a fox hunting family, mounted fox hunting. I was the master of our local hunt for a while.

So who whelps the puppies at your house?

Deerhounds normally have litters with no trou-



Ch Foxcliffe Thistleglen Unique
(call name Neekie)

ble. My wife, Cecilia, sits in the whelping box and is that person. I am usually in the other room wondering if I'm going to get a phone call for a C-section. If anything starts to go awry, we pick everything up and go to the office.

What's your kennel set up like?

We live in a barn. We took an old barn and we built a house in it. It has a silo, and we live in one half, and the hounds and the horses live in the other half. So we're all under one roof.

The puppies and the adolescents live in the barn, where

they've got indoor/outdoor runs and paddocks to run in. We like to keep puppies together in the litter because then they learn dog rules. When you separate and you send them off on their own as little puppies, they don't learn dog rules.

When they get to be retired girls, they come inside, and they live in the house. Because they're Deerhounds, you can have six in the living room and never know it. They walk over and they put a nose on you and they say, "Hi," and you reply, "Hi." Then they go lie down. They're very easy to live with. That is the nice thing about them.

"We're good guys and we are in need of superior veterinary services and we support good veterinarians. So we're a clientele you want."

Tell us about some of your most memorable wins with the Deerhounds.

Hickory (GCh Foxcliffe Hickory Wind) winning Westminster in 2012 was like nothing else. Then her granddaughter Claire (GCh Foxcliffe Claire Randall Fraser) won the

National Dog Show twice, back to back. We sent a puppy bitch to a breeder we've known for 40 years who lives outside London. That puppy won the British breed show there (equivalent to our national specialties). That was the first and only time an American-bred Deerhound has ever won that show. Then that same bitch went on to win the dog

HUTCHENS *cont'd*

show in Bath with over 8,000 entries.

On a more general note, why is there such a shortage of repro vets today?

I presume it's the hours. That's probably the number one thing. If you're going to offer reproduction services for breeders, that's a 24/7 job, and most people don't want to work 24/7. There have been times when I went for two or three years without a day off, because that's what it took. Now that I've worked for 48 years, I do have two other veterinarians who are also breeders. But unless you have a group of veterinarians who are willing to rotate on duty, you really can't be a repro vet. Offering reproduction services Monday through Friday, 9:00 to 5:00, is not really helpful. Things happen outside of that timeframe, from sun up to way past sundown. That's just what this type of practice requires and there are not too many veterinarians who want to do that.

Don't they teach repro at vet schools?

Vet students don't get anything repro. There's just not enough time. There's way too much to teach them, and there's just not enough time. They might get a touch of it for horses and cattle, but they probably aren't going to get anything for small animal. The only way you can learn that is through a repro practice that does a lot of that kind of work. That's where you get good at all the nuances. There are a lot of nuances in doing a good C-section so that things turn out as well as possible. There are a lot of things that they do not teach you in vet school.

I wonder does animal rights have anything to do with the shortage of repro vets.

Yes, the number two thing is the sort of general anti-breeder sentiment in the veterinary circles. You see a lot of that in the emergency



*Grey Haven Foxcliffe Purple Reign JC BCAT
(call name Reign)*

clinics where they will not do a C-section unless you agree to a spay. That's taking politics to a way ridiculous point and to turn a breeder and the bitch and those unborn puppies away because of your political viewpoints, in my mind, that's malpractice. It's unethical. As a veterinarian standing there, looking at a bitch that needs a C-section, that needs help, and the puppies that are depending upon that, to turn them away, I think, "Don't you remember the oath that you took when you got your license?"

What are your goals as a Delegate?

As a Delegate and a veterinarian, I want to try to help solve that problem. It's a huge problem, and the AKC Delegate body has already done a lot of pretty good things to help. I think we need to really aim toward the associations of emergency veterinarians and say, "If you look at me as a breeder, look at me as a preservationist." I am breeding a very rare breed. The Scottish Deerhound is very rare. I mean, not quite as rare as a Dandie Dinmont, but we're going that direction, and lots of other breeds are too. So breeders really are preservationists, and if they get to know us, they would understand how well our dogs are taken care of and what we do.

I like the meetings and I like the people associated with AKC, and my opinion is that that group is trying to do a really good job. I truly admire the things that they're trying to get done. I'm very happy to be there. I want to be able to participate and help along with those good things. And one of the things I really want to do, like I said, is to try to convince emergency clinics and emergency veterinarians, the AVMA in general, that "We're good guys and we are in need of superior veterinary services and we support good veterinarians. So we're a clientele you want."

CAN MY DOG DO THIS? THEN — MY DOG CAN DO THIS!

BOB RYNKIEWICZ, *Delegate, Eastern German Shorthaired Pointer Club*

With all of the Events we have available to us, the first question many of us ask of ourselves is, “Can My Dog Do This?” When we ask this, we may be looking to expand our experience, but we may have some concerns. The only way we can answer these concerns is to go out and try the new experiences. We should all take a step back, take a look at the variety of different activities available, and have confidence in our dogs.

Recently I had the opportunity to be exposed to a large number of new events for myself and my dogs. Currently I have a new German Shorthair Pointer. He is a Sporting breed dog, typically used for hunting upland game birds. Thankfully I have a breeder and friend who exposed me to the variety of the different sports. With my new GSP, I have tried a variety of new sports, including Rally, Fast Cat, Dock Diving, and Coursing. In the past I may have said, Can my Dog do this? I now say, “MY Dog Can Do This.”

As the AKC continues to add different events and sports, we all need to take a moment to expand our thinking, and give our dogs the chance of experiencing the opportunities we have been presented with.

Let’s consider the newest event called Fetch. I had the opportunity to view this event a few times. Many folks, when they first heard of Fetch, said it would be only for Sporting dogs as they easily retrieve. At the events I observed, each and every dog group represented. One group was the Toy Group. These little dogs were little speed racers. What surprised me the most was the enthusiasm of all the owners, in seeing how well the dogs performed. The common theme that I heard over and over was, “Boy This is Fun! I can’t wait to compete in the next level.”

Are we limiting our dogs to what we think they can or should do? Maybe we all need to take a moment to go out and observe, or better yet experience a variety of different sports. A good starting point is to watch the different AKC presentations on the AKCtv Channel. Benefits of expanding our horizons include making new friends, seeing our dogs for what they truly can do and maybe change our thinking from “Can my Dog Do This?”, to “MY Dog CAN do this.”

LET’S ALL GO OUT and make “My Dog Can Do This” our MOTTO. Enjoy your dogs, I’m hoping to see you all at the different events this year.

ANDY REID & DAN SMYTH — SEPARATED AT BIRTH?





BOARD & DELEGATE MEETINGS 2024

As of November 13, 2023

All meetings, except December, are in the NYC/NJ area. The December meeting is in Orlando, FL.

JANUARY 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January

- 8 Board Meeting
- 9 Board Meeting

July

- 8 Board Meeting
- 9 Board Meeting

JULY 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
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FEBRUARY 2024						
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

February

- 12 Board Meeting
- 13 Board Meeting

August

- 12 Board Meeting
- 13 Board Meeting

AUGUST 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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MARCH 2024						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

March

- 11 Delegate Committee Meeting
- 12 Delegate Meeting

September

- 9 Delegate Committee Meeting
- 10 Delegate Meeting

SEPTEMBER 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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APRIL 2024						
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April

- 8 Board Meeting
- 9 Board Meeting

October

- 7 Board Meeting
- 8 Board Meeting

OCTOBER 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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MAY 2024						
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May

- 9 Board Meeting
- 10 Board Meeting

November

- 11 Board Meeting
- 12 Board Meeting

NOVEMBER 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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JUNE 2024						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

June

- 10 Delegate Committee Meeting
- 11 Delegate Meeting

December

- 12 Delegate Committee Meeting
- 13 Delegate Meeting

DECEMBER 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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