



DECEMBER 2008

<http://www.fedmedogclubs.org/>

Editor's Note

My name is Tracey Levasseur and I'm the temporary FMDC editor. As many of you have noticed, this newsletter was sent to you via e-mail. With increasing postage rates (yes, there will be another one in May 2009) and rising costs of paper it only makes sense that the FMDC newsletter goes electronic. Most members have e-mail and I'm sure many of you are like me and spend a good amount of time in front of a computer either at work or home, or both.

Now I understand that although many members have e-mail there are some that don't have fast, new computers and others may still have dial-up connections. For that reason I save the newsletter as a .pdf in the smallest file size possible. No one should have problems downloading the newsletter or printing it.

I've agreed to publish the FMDC newsletter for a few months until a member steps forward to do the task. However, I am not a regular FMDC attendee nor am I a legislative liaison for my kennel club. So in order for the FMDC newsletter to be successful in its task to inform its members of all things canine in Maine and the world I need help from all of you. Please send me anything and everything you want published to do with dogs: legislative, clinics, training classes, seminars, etc. My e-mail address is sharpei@sacoriver.net and my physical address is on the back page of this issue. Also feel free to write articles and editorials and don't worry about spelling and grammar. I've got 10 years experience as editor of York County Kennel Club's newsletter *The Scintinel* as well as two other newsletters.

I hope you enjoy this issue. I also hope you have a Happy Holiday season with family and friends, whether they're two-legged or four!



FEDERATION OF MAINE DOG CLUBS, INC. MEETING – NOV.18, 2008

The meeting was called to order by chairman Dale Dutil at 7:36pm. A presentation was given by Erica Harriman, CPA, on the variations of 501 (c) charitable contributions. There are several classifications to this section of the tax code and each covers different types of organizations. The Federation needs to examine these and decide in which category we should apply for 501(c) status.

Secretary's report: the minutes from the last meeting (Sept.15, 2008) were read with the corrections to the June meeting minutes from which some items (point of order raised and ignored, election results were not recorded) had been omitted. There followed a discussion concerning Robert's Rules which stipulate that a point of order must be addressed immediately; recognition of the individual raising the point of order by the meeting chair is not required.

Ann Short then addressed the meeting with a summary outlining her primary concerns for FMDC members (see attached list). She also addressed Jay's letter of resignation as a club representative and chair of the Legislation Committee.

As the situation now stands, the delegates from a number of FMDC member clubs stand ready to recommend to their clubs that they withdraw their memberships from the Federation unless immediate changes are implemented. Dissension and internal differences within the Federation are impeding our progress in the fight against the AR proposed legislative changes that will impact us all. As long as this self-destructive behavior persists, we will be totally ineffective in affecting positive changes that will benefit animal owners in Maine. Member clubs look to the Federation to take a leadership position, to provide direction and guidance and to initiate actions that the clubs can support. If the Federation cannot provide this, a number of members have stated that they will leave the Federation to form another group that will assume a leadership role.

Chair Dale Duhill spoke in agreement that the internal strife must cease if we are to maintain any credibility and preserve our rights as responsible animal owners. She agreed that communication has been a problem as some members do not routinely attend Fed meetings due to distance and that the board meeting prior to the membership meeting had discussed ways to expand the website to try to alleviate the problem. It was also pointed out that the ADOA tracks legislation by state and that if it is made available on the website, members can submit their user ID and password to access the site to keep abreast of actions being taken across the country. Information on pending Maine legislation and the impact it would have on responsible dog owners if passed should also be on the website so it can be readily accessed. Sue Westlake, webmaster of the Federation site, has been waiting for direction from the Federation leadership to add information; she does not believe she has a mandate to add to the site without some direction from the leadership.

Sara Vanderwood pointed out that if the Federation plans to submit any legislation to this session of the legislature, the deadline for submission is January 1, 2009. All bills to be considered for this session must be in by that date. Gary Anderson then spoke to the issue of lack of information/feedback from our representative to the 2010 task force. Without information, the Federation is unable to address the issues being discussed by the task force or determine any appropriate action to be taken.

The next topic of discussion concerned the role of the secretary. It is a time-consuming position as it involves transcription of meeting minutes, compiling and printing the newsletter and the Breeder's Directory. Nola stated that, in the past, the Federation has been involved in legislation but on a much different scale and in a totally different atmosphere than now prevails.

The discussion then returned to the secretary's report that had not been accepted. To effect the changes necessary, it was moved, seconded and passed that the minutes taken by the vice chair be added to the secretary's minutes to incorporate the changes discussed previously. In response to a question from John Short, it was confirmed that Norma Worley **DOES NOT** receive a copy of the Federation newsletter.

Treasurer's report: Newell has been paid in full for his 2008 services to the Federation. A request was made for an official billing to each club for their share of payment for Newell's service. Each treasurer should have an invoice for the club records. Newell's contract for his services has still not been located...Jay Kitchener supposedly has it. A motion was then made that the Federation treasurer send all member clubs an invoice for any payment that they owe the Federation now

and in the future; seconded and passed unanimously. A motion was then made to accept the treasurer's report; seconded and carried.

Breeder's Directory: the number of directories printed this year will be reduced due to an excess of 50-100 from last year.

Newsletter: 48 printed. Some mailed, some delivered.

Website: see earlier discussion above.

Task Force: in the absence of the Federation representative, Sara, who has attended all the meetings, will write up a synopsis and send it to Nola for inclusion in the newsletter. The first two meetings, little was accomplished. At the third meeting, Norma brought in a facilitator, Wendy Pieh. The group was split into 3 working groups with each group charged with discussing different topics: one to differentiate between hobby and commercial breeders, one to devise minimum state physical standards (for breeding facilities?). The third "group" was given to one person; Sara could not recall his charge. The fourth meeting was to report the results. Laurie Pruett, Sara, Ken Marden and Katie Lisnik comprised the first group (differentiating differing tiers of breeders). The group tended to defer to Ken Marden's definitions. There has been little presented as regards statutes that exist in other states. The next meeting of the task force is tomorrow (Nov. 19). Jay has replaced Laurie as the Federation representative as Laurie is unable to continue due to health concerns.

Membership/Expansion: the committee recommends that the Federation re-define itself with regards to who we are and how we will expand the membership to include individuals and other animal advocates. This will require changes in the by-laws. The way other clubs and federations have done this are available through links on the NAIA website. FMDC also needs to specifically define its 501(c) tax status.

Old Business: the Lobby Day application must be submitted by a specific date in November by the person who requested the date and accompanied by a refundable deposit of \$100.00. As Jay is the person who requested the day, he must submit the application. This led to the question of whether the membership is willing to accept Jay's resignation letter wherein he stated that he is resigning from both the Federation and as chair of the Legislative Committee. After discussion of Federation credibility as a result of Jay and Newell's efforts, a motion was made **NOT** to accept Jay's resignation. The board had already decided to accept Jay's resignation but the membership has the right to overturn that vote which was done. The motion was seconded and passed almost unanimously (two opposed).

New Business: a motion was made that Newell be hired again for the 2009 legislative session. Before we act, however, we need to know what his charges will be and how we will raise the money to pay him. We need to establish a committee to define our 501(c) tax status to dovetail with the membership/expansion committee. We also need to rebut Norma's latest legislative submission. Kathy Wilson volunteered to talk to Newell to define his status and also to Jay if he agrees to withdraw his resignation. Two motions were then placed before the membership by Sue Westlake:

- 1- 1- that Kathy be appointed to confer with Newell to gather information as to what services he will provide and what those services will cost for the next year.
- 2- 2- that the Federation authorize the formation of a committee to consider potential changes to the by-laws and define the Federation's purpose. Those who volunteered to serve on the committee are: Sue Westlake, Ann Short, Sharon St. John, Lynne Wolfe, Kathy Wilson, Nancy Daniels, Tracey Benson, Nancy Jensen-Norris, Sue Robichaud and Patty Richards.

Both motions were seconded and passed.

Nola then announced that she is relinquishing the secretary position, effective immediately. She will continue to organize and supervise the printing and distribution of the Breeder's Directory. Kathy Wilson suggested that, as Nola has been a part of the Federation since its inception, that she compile a history of the Federation and its activities over time. There were no volunteers to fill the secretary's position (note: the secretary position and newsletter editor do not have to be the same person).

At 9:50pm, there was a motion to adjourn, which was readily seconded and passed.

Respectfully Submitted by Nancy Jensen-Norris

FINAL MEETING OF LD 2010 TASK FORCE: NO AGREEMENT ON KENNEL DEFINITIONS

By Jay Kitchener

A packed meeting room of task force members, elected officials and concerned citizens failed to reach agreement at the final meeting of the LD 2010 Task Force on December 18, 2008 in Augusta. Animal Welfare Program Director Norma Worley agreed to submit a minority report to the Agriculture Committee by the January 15, 2009 deadline. The Federation of Maine Dog Clubs will be part of that report and will be on record as supporting kennel definitions based on the purpose of the kennel, not the number of animals kept in it.

Maine State Representative Les Fossel, of Alna, Maine, was in the audience.

Larry Doyon, the commercial kennel representative on the task force, launched a last-minute attack on the exemption from state licensing requirements for kennels used primarily for hunting, show, training, sledding, field trial or exhibition purposes. The exemption resulted from a separate piece of legislation last year. Doyon's effort failed and the exemption stands.

Another last-minute effort from Katie Lisnik of the Humane Society of the United States also failed. Lisnik attempted an eleventh-hour addition to LD 2010 that would have written into Maine law that no person in the state could ever own more than 50 dogs at one time. This language would have negatively impacted sled dog enthusiasts. Opposition to this proposed language was strong and the proposed language was removed.

The minority members of the task force, the Federation of Maine Dog Clubs, the American Kennel Club and the Down East Sled Dog Club, were not successful in having kennels defined by the purpose of the kennel, but the number of dogs that will be used to define kennels was increased and will be based only on the number of intact female dogs in a kennel.

Other provisions of LD 2010 seek to allow the Animal Welfare Department to write rules that must be followed in order for a kennel to become state licensed. The Federation of Maine Dog Clubs asked that such rules be "major substantive" which means the department may draft them, but those rules must come back before the Agriculture Committee for final approval.

FMDC also requested that some type of "interim" or "temporary" license be created to cover those kennel applications that have had to wait over a year from the time the application was submitted and the time the inspection and granting of the license took place.

Worley will draft the final language of LD 2010 and make it available to task force members for final comment in advance of the January 15 deadline.

The task force was the result of a concept draft sponsored by Representative Benjamin Pratt of Eddington from last year's legislative session.



FMDC TO HOST LOBBY DAY IN AUGUSTA FEBRUARY 4, 2009

The Federation of Maine Dog Clubs will host a Lobby Day in the State Capitol's Hall of Flags on Wednesday, February 4th, 2009 from 8:00am to 2:00pm.

FMDC delegates shared great ideas and excitement for Lobby Day at the December 3rd meeting of the Legislative Committee of FMDC. Additional meetings to finalize plans will be held in January 2009.

Pursuant to the policy adopted by the Maine Legislative Council for use of the Hall of Flags, no dogs will be allowed in the State House building.

"Lobby Day is an effective and fun way to deliver our message of responsible dog breeding and ownership directly to our elected officials", said Jay Kitchener, Legislative Chair for FMDC.

Walter Bebout, Director of the American Kennel Club's Government Relations Department said, "The 31 AKC-affiliated clubs in Maine conducted 82 events in 2007 with a combined total of 11,000 dogs in them." Kitchener adds that these events brought hundreds of thousands of dollars into Maine's economy.

"We are experts on responsible dog breeding and ownership, and we're experts at putting on successful events. The level of excitement for Lobby Day is amazing. This is an all-hands-on-deck event, and we're hoping to have everyone involved from all across the state", said Kitchener.

For additional information, contact Jay Kitchener at 207-646-8121 or jkitchener@maine.rr.com

A note from New Mexico, from an article in the *Albuquerque Journal*:

Is the End of Pet Ownership Near?

I could hardly believe my eyes on this article which appeared in the 11/1 issue of the *Albuquerque Journal*. I will write some of the gist below, but will cut straight to the point first about what concerns me, with regard to a pending new ordinance in Torrance County, NM (a rural area). Here it is:

The Torrance County Commission is required to hold one public hearing before adopting the (proposed) ordinance, County Manager Joy Ansley said. That will be 9AM on Dec. 10. Specifics of the new ordinance include:

Number of dogs and cats allowed on property:

- A quarter acre or less - two animals
- A quarter acre to less than 3/4 acre - three animals
- 3/4 acre to less than an acre - four animals
- One acre or more - five animals

That is it! Five dogs and cats maximum, even if a person has a 20 acre property or they will be breaking the law!

The full ordinance can be found on the county website at <http://www.torrancecountynm.org>

Other things included in this ordinance are fines for roaming at large:

- first offense - \$25
- second offense - \$60
- third offense - \$100 or 40 hours community service

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Also - a Dangerous Dog Act will be created. "Dangerous dog means a dog that has caused serious injury to a person or domestic animal. Once an animal exhibits dangerous behavior, if you choose to keep the animal, then it needs a special license."

Another point in the ordinance is stallion containment rules. "Stallions are incredibly strong animals. They destroy property and sometimes hurt mares," Foust (Planning and Zoning Director) said.

Well, I thought it was bad when unrealistic numbers limits were imposed on breeders. But to impose such numbers on pet owners (let alone that this would make it impossible to breed) - I can hardly believe my eyes.



WIDOW LEAVES £7M TO DOG RESCUERS

From *The Scotsman*, December 20, 2008

By Frank Urquhart

SO MUCH for a dog's life. Animal welfare groups are in the money after a rich widow left them a staggering £7 million in her will.

Grace Smith's two pampered former rescue dogs, Winnie the lurcher and Harry the collie, enjoyed the finest cuts of steak and are now set for life after Mrs Smith also left them a fortune.

The widow of a retired consultant surgeon, she astutely played the stock market from her 18th-century home on the outskirts of the village of Alves in Moray.

For years she bred bull terriers in the extensive grounds of her home, a former Free Church manse. Villagers knew dogs were her abiding passion.

But no one had suspected she was a millionaire – until yesterday, when details of the huge bequests became known.

Mrs Smith, 84, left almost her entire estate of £7,052,477 (\$10,573,032 US) to animal welfare organisations, with almost half going to the Dogs Trust. And she left Winnie and Harry and a cat called Puss Puss £50,000 (\$74,960 US) to ensure all three animals "live out a happy and healthy natural lifespan".

Friends and neighbours yesterday admitted they had been astounded by the news.

Local councillor John Hogg, a close family friend, said: "I had no idea that she was so wealthy. But Mrs Smith lived far from frugally. She lived comfortably and well, and enjoyed life. She and her husband didn't go away on foreign holidays, for example, but that was because of their ties to the dogs. Wherever they went they took the dogs with them."

Mrs Smith's lawyer, Derek Robertson, said she had been a patron of the Bull Terrier Trust for many years. "She bred bull terriers and she had kennels in her garden," he added.

"Towards the end she stopped breeding bull terriers and took in Harry and Winnie, two rescue dogs. The cat just turned up one day and didn't leave."

Mr Robertson said that a close friend of Mrs Smith had agreed to care for the three pets. He added: “The animals were fed the finest meat. They were getting steaks and everything – you name it, they were getting it.

“The two dogs were grossly overweight. They could hardly move because they were so well fed. And when the dogs went to her friend’s home after she died they had to be put on a diet.”

Mr Robertson, who stressed that Mrs Smith had supported charities such as Save the Children and the Salvation Army, said that both she and her husband, who left his £2,784,066 (\$4,173,856 US) estate to his wife after his death three years ago, had astutely played the stock market.

Clarissa Baldwin, the chief executive of the Dogs Trust, welcomed the massive bequest. She said: “Her donation will be used in a number of areas within the charity to help care for the 16,000 rescue dogs which pass through our centers each year.”

It’s a dog’s life with £90 million

THE wealthiest pet in the world is said to be a German shepherd dog called Gunther IV, which inherited a reputed £90 million (\$134,927,476 US) fortune in July 2000.

Gunther IV inherited his fortune from his father, Gunther III, who had been named as the sole heir of the estate of his owner, a German countess by the name of Karlotta Liebenstein, who left her estate of £43 million (\$64,465,350 US) to her pet dog when she died in 1992.

The dog is said to have a property portfolio that includes estates in the Bahamas, Italy and Germany.

Last year a small white Maltese terrier called Trouble, the pet of Leona Helmlsey, a New York hotelier and multi-billionaire, was left £6 million (\$8,995,165 US) after she died at the age of 87.

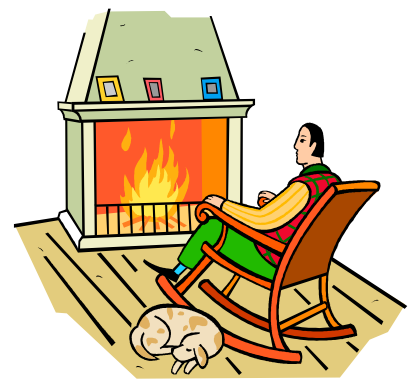
Mrs Helmlsey, who excluded two of her four grandchildren from her will, instructed the executors of her estate, valued at between £2.5 billion and £4 billion, to spend her entire charitable trust on the care and welfare of canines.

Trouble was forced to go into hiding in Florida after receiving death threats.

Eight years ago Patricia O’Neill, the daughter of the Countess of Kenmore, left her £40 million (\$59,967,767 US) fortune to her pet chimpanzee, Kalu.

Mrs O’Neill, who was married to the former Australian Olympic swimming star Frank O’Neill, had rescued the chimp from captivity in Zaire and took it to live with her at her home in South Africa.

“You do not examine legislation in light of the benefit it will convey if properly administered, but in light of the wrongs it would do and the harms it would cause if improperly administered.” — Lyndon Baines Johnson



potentially dangerous animal owners

Copied with permission By Linda D. Witouski – November 2008

At a recent show, I couldn't help but notice the availability of space. Not only was the parking prime, but the space around the rings inside the building was incredible. There were dozens of empty chairs ringside - a commodity generally not so available. It was at that moment that I looked around the building and a queasy feeling crept over me. Not only was this building bare, but the people in attendance were mostly my age. That age where you hope you can begin your downward decent into living in peace and quiet after having been involved in this sport since the crib, and looking forward to those "twilight" years or a dirt nap, whichever. I reached for the judging schedule to see how many Juniors were entered. Nine. Only nine. I realize that the economy could very well have a definite impact on our sport, however, there are other factions that have a hand in it. It hit me like a brick ! When Wayne Pacelle of the Humane Society of the United States said, (1993), "One generation and out. We have no problems with the extinction of domestic animals. They are creations of human selective breeding," it dawned on me that he wasn't only referring to the animals - he was talking about US.

ONE GENERATION AND OUT IS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

The animal rights movement pressed into school systems and devised an educational program for every animal venue. Farming, exhibits, zoos, wildlife, environment, veterinarians, companion animals - no stone was left unturned. It doesn't matter what we do, it's surely not in accordance with the animal rights activist groups. Looking around at the very few young people at dog shows, and the lack of newcomers of any age, it's become quite clear that the meaning of "one generation and out" wasn't only meant for the dogs. The animal rights activist movement has taken over the media, veterinarian, public & private schools, animal control & training of those animal control officers as well as lobbyists and legislators. They've infiltrated every thread of what we hold dear. Working together, they have managed to convince everybody and anybody that they are "THE" experts and anything that we do is wrong and a disservice to animals. Young people that we should have taken under our wings have turned to assisting the movement and most unfortunately, will never know the joy of our sport. They will never learn what animal husbandry truly is nor will they ever understand the pride of having bred, loved, cared for and promoted something that upholds the standards that reputable breeders honor. They'll never know that special bond that develops nor will they learn to distinguish between the joy of victory and the agony of defeat. Worse, they may never learn that people are supposed to be able to make choices that best suit them - before it's too late. It's up to all of us to take back what has been stolen from us and to learn, quickly, to work together as one. If we don't take the time to reach out and touch someone now, our sport, our animals and our rights are doomed. If we don't make every effort to bring new people into our fold, who will take over for you when you hang up your leads? Who will preserve and continue to improve your breed and your standards? What difference will all of the health research mean when the results are returned - too late - because you are no longer permitted to have animals or the ones you do have must be spayed & neutered? How will all of that research help when breeding is no longer permitted or the monetary expense to breed far outweighs logic? Are you content to see it all fall by the wayside knowing the only animals the future will see will be in museums or books? The animal rights movement is taking away our future, and we, the majority of the showing populace, are dangerously & extremely close to being - One generation and out.

ENTICING NEWCOMERS or SHOOING THEM AWAY?

A great majority of the showing populace has always had an attitude, particularly when a new person would approach them at a show inquiring about their breed or the dogs being shown. This anomaly existed way back when and it still exists today. Looking back, it's clear that this attitude that some still carry with them, is a great part of the problems today. We actually shooed people away, thinking that our world would never come to an

end and there would be plenty more opportunities to advance our 'lines.' The showing fancy wasn't thinking about the future and judging by some still existing attitudes, still aren't realizing the bleak future of our sport confronting us. We live in America and we can do what we want, can't we? Dog shows will always exist... won't they? Worse yet, there are still those individuals that just cannot seem to get along with their own club members and those within their own breeds, insisting on making life difficult for others by continuing to add fuel to whatever fire some disgruntled person started for no apparent reason other than their own agenda. Some would suggest that those reasons include selfishness, jealousy and just plain hatred for anybody that might be doing better in the sport than others or those really dangerous persons that think that "they know it all" without having the experience of those before them whom they should be learning from. All of these factors are nothing more than additions to the animal rights movement. If you are one of these, you might as well join forces with the opposition and stop hiding behind your animals. If you believe that your actions against others will keep you safe, be forewarned that you are not exempt from that knock on the door. Every person within your club or breed that you destroy, demean or otherwise terrorize, adds another nail to the coffin we are all facing. What kind of message are you sending to younger people or any other persons that might have an interest in our sport when they discover that those who have been in the sport 'forever' seem to be hell bent on destroying each other and that they are incapable of working together or helping each other? How in the world can you educate or assist a NEW person interested in the sport or your breed when you can't seem to find the time to stop fighting amongst your peers and become that helpful educator?

IT DOESN'T AFFECT ME - WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT

I actually have grown fond of this ridiculous comment because it gives me the opportunity to explain what it actually means and why those who use this lame excuse are definitely closer to being one generation and out than those who understand the circumstances. Let me set the record straight using a few of the popular "reasons" I have been given over the years. Everything that goes on in the animal world, especially legislatively, affects everybody. Cropping and docking. You don't crop or dock, either by choice (while still available) or because you don't have a breed that requires or prefers it. That doesn't mean that you should sit back ignoring that ban, law or ordinance and not assist those breeds that DO, for rest assured, along with that cropping/docking issue, another issue will follow that WILL affect you and your breed. By not assisting, you are allowing for your own loss of freedom of choice. Mandatory spay/neuter laws. You don't live there so it doesn't affect you, but if you don't assist that area, it surely WILL affect you in short order for it will continue to spread like a California wildfire if everybody continues to believe that 'it doesn't affect me'. Maybe not today, but what will tomorrow bring to your neighborhood, state, city, town or county? BSL, breed specific legislation. You don't have "one of those breeds". Are you sure? It wouldn't take more than an animal hating neighbor, mailperson, meter reader, delivery person or some unruly kid from up the street to report your five pound, barking, snarling, fence running 'potentially dangerous dog' even if the dog wasn't lucky enough to get a bite in! The next thing you know, officials are at your house and you are subjected to defending yourself and trying to get your dog out of protective custody all at great expense. It IS important for everybody to work together for make no mistake, it will come to you just like it came to the other guy. You remember him - the one that kept saying that it didn't affect him? So, those of you that use the old 'it doesn't affect me' excuse, think about it before you say it or come up with something better.

Of all the emails I receive, the most common is "What can I do about it? It's just the way it is." This is not true and you are only deceiving yourself if you believe that. You, we, are the only ones that CAN do something about it. We are the ones that are losing our integrity, pride and reputations and the irony is that it's being taken from us by those who don't have near the 'expertise' that we have. What they do have is talent in "marketing, promoting and fund raising". It's up to all of us to become astute in these same areas, reverse the current trend and take back what is ours. Need a few common suggestions? Here, let me help you out ...Advertise for new

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club members, start a kennel club/breed club blog, hold fun events for the public, stop by that place that you are 'sure' is a puppy mill, visit that commercial kennel - get to know them before you make any comments, offer tips and suggestions, help them, listen to them, befriend them, educate them and be educated in return – go over to Farmer Bob's, step over those cow paddies and talk to him, ask him if he knows his right to farm or raise livestock is endangered, go to schools and ask to speak to the children, make arrangements to take dogs with you, get media attention by working with children - sponsoring adoption days (purebred or otherwise) or turning your club classes into a class to teach responsible animal ownership and safety around dogs and invite parents as well as senior citizens, get them to help with fundraising, stop by your town hall and ask for the meeting agenda, check for any agenda subject animal related and attend the meeting, talk to churches, hunters, any sportsmen, call a special kennel club or breed club meeting of those members that are still active (before they hang up their leads or take that dirt nap) and discuss ideas, research your towns and participate in events offered, check with girl scouts, boy scouts, invite them to your shows or public events, attend council meetings, introduce yourself, (invite them to your events & shows,too), and get involved with rescue work in your breed. Pure breed rescue is one of the biggest problems that we have - every time one shows up in some shelter, every breeder is accused of putting it there - the fingers don't only point to the irresponsible breeders. We are all affected and the time has now come to be effective rather than affected.

USE THAT TOOL THAT'S ON YOUR SHOULDERS

The AKC has many informative brochures, flyers and pamphlets that can be placed in assorted locations and they have educational programs that can be used in school systems. They can provide you with CD's, DVD's, classroom workbooks for teachers and a large assortment of other publications that can be used for just about any venue, including legislators. Take advantage of them. Utilize the tools that are available to you, especially that one that sits on your shoulders... and get creative. We are losing everything that we've worked so hard to achieve. We're losing our 'expert' title, our rights, our freedom of choice, our animals - and it just keeps coming with no end in sight, except our demise. There are many other organizations, pet law lists, and breed legislation lists that are jam packed with good information that you can use. All you need to do is ... DO IT - before it's too late to do, and my friends, that time is quick approaching. The plane is circling the airport for a landing and we need more people standing on the runway....!

THE CHALLENGE

The dog fancy is generally not very laid back and those that I know will fight to the bitter end about any subject We've always had the spit 'n' fire to strike back. Where is that aggressiveness now? For those that have told me that they fear some sort of retaliation, know that the more visible you are, the less likely you are to be targeted. With that said, how many of you will step up and start working toward reversing the travesty befalling us? How many of you will make an effort to stop using derogatory terms or take the time to educate? How many will prove that they are part of the dedicated fancy and work together to make a difference?

And, last, but not least, I don't want to forget about those in the sport that I mentioned earlier who are still intent on being vicious towards their comrades. Those who can't seem to get past making their own breed and club members miserable and those who can't stop complaining about or accusing their peers of some heinous crime, high volume breeders or commercial facilities. You have a "special gift" and it's time for you to put it to better use against those who would see you dog-less, or just let us all know when you fall off the fence into the AR pit so we can start working on a "potentially dangerous animal owner" law.

Linda D. Witouski
AKC Judge & Delegate
AKC SC Legislation Representative



AKC ANNOUNCES NEW AKC S.T.A.R. PUPPY PROGRAM

New York, NY- The American Kennel Club® announced today that it is rolling out a new training program geared towards puppies and their owners. The AKC S.T.A.R.sm Puppy Program will reward responsible owners who take the time to train and socialize their new puppies. The program is a natural pre-cursor to the AKC Canine Good Citizen® Test. “S.T.A.R.” stands for Socialization, Training, Activity and a Responsible owner, all of the things a puppy needs to have a good life.

Start life on the “right paw.” “The AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy Program will provide dog owners with the tools to raise and train their dog responsibly and prepare the puppy to become an AKC Canine Good Citizen,” said Dr. Mary Burch, AKC CGC Director.

To get started, owners enroll in any puppy or basic training class that is at least six weeks long and instructed by an AKC Approved CGC Evaluator. Classes will include valuable training tips for puppy owners - such as how to house-train - and lessons on practical skills for puppies -such as coming when called. The program is open to all dogs. Puppies can begin training as soon as they have the necessary vaccines and they can enroll in AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy at any point up until their first birthday.

“We want to do our part to make sure all puppies have a good life,” added Dr. Burch. “Early training and socialization along with teaching the owner the necessary skills is the key to having a well-behaved, well-adjusted dog and ensuring that dogs don’t end up in shelters because of behavior problems.”

“It is not the function of our government to keep the citizen from falling into error: it is the function of the citizen to keep the government from falling into error.” United States Supreme Court, American Communication Association vs. Douds, 339 US 382 (1950)

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