

Summary of June 2021 Delegate Meeting and Delegate Committee Meetings:

Please Note: due to Covid, these meetings were held on Zoom, and I attended.

Thank you,
Diane Reid
6.9.21

Forum: a presentation on nutrition and new research on canine hygiene was given by Dr. Erin Perry, Associate Professor, Equine Science Internship Director and Canine Science Faculty Mentor, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL. She is also a FEMA Search and Rescue member with her Belgian Malinois.

She stressed the need to base all decisions on scientific research. Plenty of information is out on google, but follow the science. Be aware of social media experts who do not have a scientific background and are not quoting evidence based studies. A recent example of where science was not followed is with all the misinformation about grain free food and allergies. The information is exaggerated and often misdiagnosed (more on this in next paragraph) .

Food is regulated by three groups working together – FDA, AAFCO and NRC. Looking at a bag of food can be overwhelming. The nutritional adequacy is the most misunderstood and yet most important label on dog food. This label will say one of two things: it will either tell you how the food is formulated or how it is tested. If the label says the food is formulated, it has not actually been fed to dogs or tested before it is put on the market. It relies on computer calculations. One wants to buy food that has been tested. Formulation means NOT tested, no live data. Dr. Perry only recommends products that are tested in actual feeding trials. This can be expensive for companies, as there are many required elements that have to be done prior to being able to put tested on a bag of dog food. To return to grain free food and dilated cardiomyopathy – 87% of the products reported being fed to these dogs were formulated foods, not tested. Less than 2% were actually tested in feeding trials.

She suggests staying away from foods that promise too much – if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is not true.

Dogs need water, protein, energy, vitamins and minerals. Their GI tract is 4-5 times as long as the dog itself. The speed at which nutrients travel through this tract and the rate of absorbing nutrients has to do with the diet, frequency of meals, hydration, stress and age of the dog. The most important nutrient is protein, and though there are a lot of protein sources, many have not been tested. If using chicken, keep in mind that it is 70% water; chicken meal is 10% water. Chicken by product is 70% water; chicken by product meal is very little water and much more nutrient dense and much more nutritionally valuable. This is often not understood by consumers. Keep in mind that ingredients are listed in order of weight.

She does not recommend raw.

GI distress can be caused by diet – the dog is eating inappropriate things (garbage gut), has a food allergy or the product could be contaminated. In addition, it can be caused by medical issues (parasite, viral, bacterial) or stress (chronic or acute).

As more dogs are working in less safe environments, more needs to be done to keep them and their handlers safe. Environmental exposure can be harmful. Best to wipe dogs down after these exposures – hospitals, ice melt, blue-green algae, sewage, industrial cleaners, etc.

She ended with a quote from Simon Sinek: “Leadership is not about being in charge, it is about taking care of the people in your charge.” This applies to our dogs.

Meeting:

Dr. Thomas Davies, Chairman said that resilience, flexibility and communication are the three words that characterize the AKC. Things are definitely getting back to where they were; the second quarter is 99% the same as in 2019. All sports are on the rise and litter and dog registrations continue to rise. Some of the practices put in during Covid might remain. A subcommittee was created, tasked with keeping everyone informed in a timely manner – board transparency. A monthly service for new dog owners was formed to list events, tailored by location, for the following month. In April, 400,000 emails were sent out hoping to encourage these new owners to get involved.

Dennis Sprung, President and CEO said that there has been an amazing comeback from a challenging year. We survived a pandemic, social unrest, elections, to name just a few difficulties. This took leadership and harmony. Sports are once again beginning to flourish, and virtual opportunities are welcoming new people.

Ted Phillips, CFO, reported that the first quarter had increased litter and dog registrations. These consist of 48% of the total revenue. Understandably, events and entries during this period were lower, but current projections indicate that the path back has begun. Expenses are lower this quarter than the past year and lower than budget. Travel is 73% lower, rent is lower (no Meet the Breeds) PR is lower and so is staff expenses. The only area that is higher is postage and materials. Grants are consistent with what was budgeted. The investment portfolio has had positive returns – 3.72%, a good performance in a volatile market. The overall condition of the AKC is healthy.

A couple of amendments (housekeeping) passed.

2021 Lifetime Achievement Awards were given to Peter Green, Conformation; Betty Withers, Companion Events; and to James Basham, Performance Events, posthumously.

Committee Meetings:

All-Breed Clubs: puppy folders are updated with lots of information for breeders to distribute.

The US Police Canine Association, the largest and oldest police dog certification organization in the US, is now associated with the AKC, a terrific new collaboration with a great opportunity for community outreach. The USPCA and the AKC will hold an AKC detection dog competition in the fall. This will demonstrate to the public the training and skill these purpose bred dogs and their handlers bring to the job of keeping our communities safe.

AKC Reunite Adopt a K-9 Cop program will now accept contributions from the public to help cover a club's portion of the grant. AKC Reunite will match donations at a three to one ratio. These dogs cost approximately \$15,000.

Fast Cat and online resources have kept many clubs alive.

The survey regarding how clubs dealt with the pandemic received 300 responses. The results will be discussed in September. They will also coordinate with club development.

Bylaws: much discussion about who can be on a subcommittee. According to Robert's Rules, you must be a member of the committee to be on a subcommittee – or else the entire membership needs to vote.

Canine Health: in the first quarter of the year, \$850,000 was given to eleven new grants; the second quarter started with four new epilepsy studies and the third quarter is looking into tick borne proposals. The CHF is currently monitoring 160 active grants composed of \$11.5 million. There is no question that vet outreach has suffered during these times, as nothing can take the place of face to face, but the number of events (online) has increased with the ease of setting up programs. In addition, attendance has risen. There were 14 vet school visits this spring (all held virtually) with terrific attendance. Dr. Jerry Klein gave all of them, and Mary-Beth O'Neill participated in all too. The vet scholarships for '21-'22 have been awarded – a total of \$36,000 was given to fifteen recipients.

The Canine Health Conference, held every two years, made the difficult decision to go virtual. It will be held from August 13-15th. Early bird pricing of \$60 is through July 1, increasing to \$125 after that. One enormous plus in having it be virtual is that there is no limit on attendance. There are 18 speakers, a few topics being dermatology, cancer, epilepsy and cardiac disease. Continuing education credit will be given. Vet students can still attend. Any club wanting to pay their fee will be appreciated.

Companion Events: agility is 100% the same as it was in 2019; rally 80%, obedience 78% and tracking 87%. Rally and obedience championship titles cannot be earned virtually, though points can come virtually. The obedience fix and go one year pilot has started, and though it

seems to be going well, it is too early to say much more. This past year, 23.5% of people who participated virtually had never participated in person. 16.1% have gone further. Clubs do not seem to be offering obedience trials – 79% of trials are at stand alone venues. This has to do with economics and will be looked at.

Delegate Advocacy & Advancement: their survey found that though zoom was effective, and filled the Covid 'gap,' face to face (in-person) is overwhelmingly the choice of respondents.

Dog Show Rules: discussed an issue brought up by Canine Health Committee (ch. 11, sec. 9) about knowingly and willfully bringing an ill dog to a dog show – doing this with intent. For this, there should be a penalty. It does not make sense to have a time frame, but instead, should be dictated by the disease. Rather than making a rule change, it was voted on by the coordinating committee to bring this to the board for a policy change.

AKC introduced Canine Corner, a free monthly online newsletter full of resources for teachers in grades K-12.

The Puppy bred by exhibitor class has been taken up again with a better proposal: it is now at the option of the club; further, at nationals and independent specialties only, it can be a divided class.

The junior subcommittee continues to work on the best practices living document. Some of the topics discussed was how to establish sportsmanship, how to encourage juniors to become breeders, how to connect them to breeders, and ownership eligibility. Adding a Junior Coordinator role to parent club contacts was approved by the board.

Obedience and tracking tests will now be under companion events. There was discussion about Vet contracts at shows – this contract must be with a licensed vet, be it on site or one on call. A sample vet contract will be put in the show trial manual as a guide.

Herding, Earthdog & Coursing Events: it has now been approved that test level herding judges can compete in trial levels on the day that they are judging, as long as they do not enter any event that they are judging, and vice versa. It has also been approved that stock dogs can participate in any class for which they are not setting stock.

Lure coursing regulations are being separated from cat and fast cat. Some of the fast cat rules are being redone. A motion was made to require official timers. These cost about \$1200, and one to two days of shows will cover the club's cost. Lure operators cannot operate machines for his own dog or immediate family's dogs or his breed (or if all American, can't operate the lure for the height his dog is in). Apparently, there is quite a bit of cheating going on - results are being altered. Many of these complaints are when a club uses a service provider. For the integrity of the sport, this needs to be looked at. A motion was made and passed not to allow hot starts at any fast cat events. It is dangerous for the handler and the dog. A hot start is where the lure starts behind the entrant and is already on the move and continues down the

course. This is what happens in coursing, but in fast cat, the lure should be in front of the dog to start. Fast Cat is up 100% compared to 2019.

Parent Clubs: there has been no legislative action/changes for dock and crop; AKC GR is tracking 2100 bills – positive as well as negative. PAC is still asking that the money for the cost of one parking space at a national be donated to them.

Pet Disaster Trailers – 94 trailers have now been delivered, six are in the pipeline and twelve others being worked on.

Junior scholarships were awarded. This year, they were asked to write an essay about how they maintained their involvement with their dogs and the AKC during Covid. \$25,000 was awarded to eleven recipients. \$10,000 was awarded to eight juniors in companion events and \$10,000 to juniors in performance events. There were a couple of juniors running at the AKC Agility Premier Cup, including a father and his daughter.

The registration material sent out to new puppy owners has been changed. It suggests you get involved with your parent club and includes a link to this. Breed specific material is included. 19 parent clubs have signed up.

The best practices document, how to help parent clubs be successful, is moving along. Some areas being worked on are staging national specialties, juniors, membership, governance and club elections, breeder education, health, publications and social media, legislation and planning for the future.

Interviewing breeders and people who are important to the sport is ongoing. They are now working with the AKC.

Preserving club's material is important. The AKC archives can help with ways to accomplish this.

A survey will be coming soon dealing with what parent clubs think is important and how best to attract and retain members. There will be approximately 35 questions.

No further marketplace complaints. Don't forget to monitor it, as the AKC does not.

The Preservation Bank sent out a survey and received responses from 80% of parent clubs. Once analyzed, it will be shared. The majority thought having an AKC sponsored semen bank was a great idea. Again, it was stressed that the parent club will have full authority and say and would develop their own individual criteria and decisions. They are aware that not all breeders belong to parent clubs. Their long term goal is to be able to breed better dogs by preserving the genetic material of today and tomorrow, and to provide storage, collection and distribution according to the needs of parent clubs. A tool to prevent breeds from going extinct. This will not be a profit center for the AKC.

The AKC marketing initiated forming breed specific facebook groups. They are not acting as the experts, just facilitating the conversation and wanting parent clubs to join the breed groups as the experts. They chose breeds based on active breed specific conversations already happening on facebook with the intent of hoping to involve them. Though this might be a good idea, they should have discussed this with the parent club committee first. They are being asked to reconsider the program and discuss it with the committee before moving on.

The board has a new policy: AKC club relations has to notify in writing a parent club of any new specialty clubs being formed.

Coordinating Committee: event cancellations are dropping, now they are in the single digit and so far, nothing has been cancelled for December. Fast Cat is up 215% over 2019, all other events up between 85-120%. There were 135 all breed shows in May with a 38% greater entry than in 2019. Canine college has 600 courses and 40,000 people have participated since 2020. NY State Not For Profit law states that membership voting has to be done in person. The AKC is permitted to vote electronically (as a result of Executive Order 202) until December 31, 2021. As the AKC is incorporated in NY State, delegate meetings will be required to be in person.