



Shawnee Kennel Club

Smoke Signals

March 2009

www.shawneekennelclub.com

Officers May 2008 – May 2009

President: Sharon Howse Cairnhowse@starband.net

Vice-President: Jane West jwestkees@aol.com

Treasurer: Scotti Slonaker scotti2467@yahoo.com

Corresponding Secretary: Ellen Rivers eleri@shentel.net

Secretary: Donna Germelman 540-995-3418 email elkies@verizon.net

Board Members: Jeanne Jackson; Regina Swygert-Smith; Anne Legge; Joyce Ragland

Webmistress: Marylou Crouch mlvc@earthlink.net Newsletter: Noreen Dunlap Noreen.dunlap@wildblue.net

General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, May 19, 2009 at the Frederick County Public Safety Building

Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

General Membership Meeting at 6:30 p.m. Hope to have a program.

Tuesday, June 16, 2009 at the Frederick County Public Safety Building

Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

General Membership Meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Frederick County Public Safety Building Last Meeting before our July Shows

Disclaimer

The Shawnee Kennel Club is not responsible for, nor does it necessarily agree with, the opinions in this newsletter.

Inside this issue.....

President's Message

Announcements

Of Interest to All

Braggs

PLEASE READ

The Cocker world was rocked hard recently when one of our well-known, well-respected breeders in the NW had all 26 of her dogs confiscated by local animal control. Due to a number of cascading blows – husband lost his job; debilitating neurological disease; aged mother moving in; severe cold weather and couldn't afford to heat the kennel – she brought all of her dogs into the house and crated them. Someone complained, inspectors showed up and decided she was guilty of animal cruelty for having them all crated in

one room and not groomed. She was given less than 24 hours to reduce the number of dogs to 4 or less. Since she was unable to do that, the dogs were seized.

My point in mentioning this: **it could happen to any of us.** If animal control shows up at your door for whatever reason, and gives you the same ultimatum, do you have a support system in place? Do you have a plan for saving your dogs? Is there someone you could call and say "help" – and know they would take and care for your dogs?

I would like to offer my home and help to any club member who finds themselves in this untenable situation.

Noreen

President's Message

Spring Has Come to the Shenandoah Valley

Yippee!!! Spring has finally come to the Shenandoah Valley. It's such a wonderful feeling to know that winter is on its way out, and the days are getting longer and warmer. I drove around in Winchester today, and the Yoshino Cherry Trees are just beautiful this spring, and every flowering cherry tree I saw was full of blooms.

We had a good meeting last week, and had 17 people attend the meeting. It was so nice to see Anne at the meeting. Welcome back, Anne!! ☺ During the meeting, we passed around a set of the pet oxygen masks for everyone to see so the ones attending could see what they voted on at the November meeting. The 15 pet oxygen masks were presented to Winchester/Frederick County Fire and Rescue last month. Channel 25 came out and filmed the presentation. It was nice for our club to get news coverage for presenting the masks to fire and rescue. There is no telling how many animals the pet oxygen masks will save, and it might end up being one of our pets. The pet oxygen masks are in for Clarke County so we hope to do that presentation soon. Members are checking with counties in VA and WV about the pet oxygen masks to find out what their needs are. Several members need to be thanked concerning the pet oxygen masks and the recent presentation to Winchester/Frederick County. First of all, thank you to Mary Lamphier for doing the initial research on the pet oxygen masks and the figures for the area counties. Thank you to Linda Noll for contacting the Winchester/Frederick County Fire and Rescue to find out how many masks they needed. Thank you, Scotti for ordering the pet oxygen masks, and having them shipped to your home. Thank you to Mary and Jamie Lamphier for coming to the presentation and bringing Trixie to be a demo dog, and thank you, Scotti for calling your son to bring his dog to be the other demo dog. Both dogs helped to make the Channel 25 coverage educational and interesting.

We want to wish Donna Germelman's husband a speedy recovery from his recent heart surgery. Also, the club membership extends our condolences to MaryLou Crouch in the recent death of her father. It's never easy to lose a parent. Kathy, it was nice to see you at the meeting, and welcome back from Florida. I think you brought this good weather with you.

Mark these dates on your calendars. The May general membership meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19 at 6:30 p.m. at the Frederick County Public Safety Building. There will be a short board meeting at 6:00 p.m. Margaret Hilliard will present the program on her trip to the World Dog Show last summer. The June meeting will be on Tuesday, June 16 at 6:30 p.m. at the Public Safety Building, and there will be a short board meeting at 6:00 p.m. This meeting will be the last meeting before our July shows so we'll be passing around sign-up sheets and recruiting workers for various jobs.

Our miniature and full size daffodils have put on quite a show the past few weeks, and now, the Quince and tulips are blooming. The shows are starting up in our area so it is always fun to go to the spring shows and see all the new puppies. Hope to see everyone at the May meeting.

Sharon Howse

Announcements

The George Alston Seminar is booked for September 12 & 13, 2009. There will be room for Beginners, Advanced, and Observers. For more information, contact Anne Legge, (540) 667-2937, annelegge@comcast.net.

The new Members Only section of the website is now functioning--very barebones--but at least it is now available. If someone can forward the minutes from past meetings, I will post those.

Our domain name of shawneekennelclub.com is still not fixed but the alternate works fine--so set your bookmarks at <http://shawneekennelclub.net>

When you open the front page, go to the Links and scroll down to Members Only. After you click on the link, you will be asked for a login and password.

Login username: Shawnee
Password: 2008puppy

If you need to contact me about the website, use this address:
mlvc@earthlink.net
Mary Lou Crouch

Of Interest to All

This is my roughly semi-annual plea to experienced breeders to be gentle with novices and nice to the public. In the past few months I have talked to several wonderful people who might have been interested in showing but were turned off by the roughness of the dog fancy.

And please, don't anyone give me that crap about "If you can't stand the heat..." There is no need for rudeness in any walk of life. "Don't ask for my opinion if you can't take it" is just an excuse. If you want to talk that way to other very experienced people or to close friends, have at it. But the person who has just begun showing does not need to have her dog torn apart, even if you think "she needs to know the truth." There are ways of helping people without being cruel and totally destroying their interest in the fancy.

Someone with a pet who casually asks you what you think of her dog does not want a litany of faults and reasons the dog should never be shown or bred. An obvious novice at a show, likewise, does not need to have her dog taken apart from the ears to the toenails. She needs encouragement and kindness, regardless of what you think of her dog. If she sticks with showing, there will be time to mentor her later and gently suggest that she would do better with a dog of better quality.

Whenever someone asks me to evaluate a dog, and I know that person is only marginally (if at all) interested in showing, I always flash back to the judge who nearly killed all interest I ever had in breeding and showing collies. He informed me I should "trash that bitch and start over." I was 23, "That bitch" was a dog I had saved up for and dreamed of all my life. She was my first collie and I adored her. No, she was not the greatest collie in the world, but there was no reason I shouldn't have shown her and learned the ropes with her. That judge left me in tears, feeling stupid and worse, that my beloved Faith was just show-ring "trash."

Know why I didn't give up? Because a few weeks later I met the woman who would become my mentor, Anne Cross of Shadowmont Collies, also a judge and more important, a kind person who saw right away how much I had emotionally invested in this collie. When I asked for her opinion, I actually phrased it, "How bad do you think she is?" I'll never forget her first words. "Faith is a delightful pet with a lot of good qualities." She told me what those were and I think she ended with, "She could use a little more substance, but she's a beautifully feminine bitch." Later, when I got to know Anne better and she could see I was really interested in learning, she encouraged me to show Faith for a while and then gently suggested that I might be more successful with a different collie.

Evaluating kindly also applies to dogs you have bred, those in your own line, those sired by your dog, and any others you might feel some "ownership" of. Every year at our reunion, I see a few whippets about which I think, "Well, gee, that's one breeding I'm glad I didn't repeat!" But I would never, ever tell one of my pet owners that her dog is not absolutely the cutest, smartest whippet I ever bred! Okay, I don't go that far, but when it comes to critiquing my breeding program, which is not the place to do it or the people who want to hear it.

If the owner was considering showing and the puppy has not turned out the way we hoped, I might still encourage him to show if there are no disqualifying faults. Few of us started out with an easy champion and we all had to learn somewhere. In this case, I might gently suggest a couple of places the whippet "could use improvement" so the owner won't expect to knock 'em dead, but I'm not going to tear that dog apart, even if I did breed her and consider her still mine in some way.

With the anti-breeding legislation that is flooding the country, we need all the friends we can get. We do not need to come across to the public as know-it-alls or rude or snappy. Because when it comes time to contact legislators, you don't want that pet owner to think, "I don't give a rip whether those snotty people at the dog show ever breed another litter!"

For those of you who would say, "I tell it like it is," "You have to have a thick skin to show dogs," "If you don't want my opinion, don't ask for it," "If you can't take the heat, stay away from the dog show," I have a suggestion: Don't talk to novices or pet owners. Just smile and say, "She's just as cute as she can be."

I do think we are getting better with the public. But please think hard before you tear apart that novice's dog, even if she asks your opinion. It takes many, many years in the dog show world before you can really be objective about the dogs you love...and even then, it's not fun to hear someone trash your dog. As my mother used to say, "Be kind to one another. The world is hard enough."

Sharyn Hutchens
Spring, 2009

Brag

Sunday April 5, in Salina KS, my Pembroke bitch Hum'nbird Night Lily 'Nadia' finished her Ch. title, her first weekend out with handler Linda Williams. She only needed one major with all other points from BBE. Nadia was previously Best Puppy and RWB at a large stand-alone specialty. Yeah, now onward toward finding her a boyfriend.

Carrie Chase
Hum'nbird Pembroke Welsh Corgis

In March we went to a Dachshund Field Trial in Georgia. We got a placement in the open dog class. You get points for a placing. Our old girl Littlest at age 11 took 1st. in Field Champion Bitch Class. There was any entry of 27. She even went up over the much younger # 1 Field Dachshund in the country for 2008. She is an amazing dog.
Dave and Lorraine Simmons