

2016 December AKC Delegate Meeting at the AKC National Dog Show in Orlando, Florida

Submitted by Jane Bjork, American Brittany Club Delegate

If you are ever in a position to go to the AKC National Dog Show in Orlando, Florida, go, but wear comfortable shoes! It is a vast dog extravaganza. Conformation, dock diving, obedience, rally, agility- there was too much to take in.

The Mid-Florida Brittany Club hosted the Brittany Meet-the-Breeds booth at this event. Thank you to Sherry Foster, Anne Conklin, Janice Hightower, Eva Bailey and Dimi Morse for providing the public with a chance to learn about and interact with our Brittany breed.

Interesting to note, I met James Corbett (Delegate for Tualatin Kennel Club.) He and his wife Kathleen are from Oregon. They knew our ABC Hall-of-Famer, national officer and Brittany author Nicky Bissell very well. They revealed she was quite the night owl, staying up late to work on breed projects. Nicky bred under the Juchoir prefix.

General Information: Check out the new AKC Canine College at www.AKC.org/canine-college offering online courses and exams for breeders, judges, breeders, groomers and the general public. Some courses are free, and others are available for a fee. This was launched in 2016.

AKC Registration is up 8%, and the AKC website has 6-7.5 million visitors a month which is up 42%.

The new Link smartcollar is now available. It is essentially a water-resistant fitbit for dogs, that also allows you to track your dog via your cellphone and map your dog's path. It has an accelerometer to measure g-force, and an ambient temperature monitor, and a remotely activated LED light. If you name your club and use code CLUBMEMBER, your club will get \$10.00. Note that this phone requires you are in an area covered by your cell phone.

AKC has a new department called Club Development, designed to champion best practices and set up clubs for success. Imagine a worst case scenario; everyone resigns right before an event, or the show site or grounds are suddenly unavailable. Or, your club just needs educational material or wants help adding a special attraction, contact Glenn Lycan at GEL@akc.org.

There is an AKC CH Parent Club conference in Saint Louis on August 11-13, 2017. Information will be made available in early 2017. Topics such as refractory epilepsy will be included.

Dog Show Rules Committee: An amendment to Chapter 6 Section 9 to allow show entries to close at 11:59 PM did not meet the required 2/3 majority and did not pass.

Field Trial Committee: Doug Lundgren reported that, as of November 2016, annual field trial entries are down 4% and hunting test entries are up 13%. The long term trend reveals *competitive* events are down 0.9%, whereas *testing* events are up 4.7%.

The English Setter Club of America has not designated any event as a national championship in 4 years. The AKC Performance Events department may embed the AKC National Pointing Breed championship as their national championship as long as the best English Setter has qualified and met performance requirements for that breed's national championship.

A proposal to amend the AKC Rules for Retriever Field Trials to offer an AKC National Derby Retriever Championship was read. This may encourage newer people with a young dog to receive a title at the national level. There is differing opinions regarding adding a *prefix* NDC title to a derby-level performance. Prefix titles have never been awarded at pre-adult level performance wins. This will be voted on at the March meeting.

Event Secretaries- ask for an AKC flag in your field trial packets to fly during your events. Details are being worked out. Also post the AKC Sportsmanship poster in a visible location.

Canine Health Committee: The CHIC DNA banking is now 15 years old, and has 23,000 samples. Forms can be downloaded from the OFA.org website, and a kit will be sent to you for a small fee. Blood samples are preferred for research purposes, but cheek swabs are also an option. On the form is a selection of disorders that you, the owner, select and this can be updated if a new health issue comes up for your dog. The database is mined by researchers for potential “high value candidates” for full genome processing to look for potential disease markers, and the cost of this has dropped from \$25K to \$2-3K per dog. Researchers are more interested in starting a breed-specific project if samples are available. To view completed grants or look at the current portfolio, go to <http://www.akcchf.org/research/>

It is important that the best interests of the sport of purebred dogs are represented in veterinary medicine, and this starts with educating veterinary students. Animal rights interests are well represented (example, anti-crop and dock stances) and thus, we need to counter this information. If you live near a veterinary college and want to be a breed ambassador, AKC’s Mari-beth O’Neill has a presentation that can be used for outreach. Contact her at mbo@akc.org.

Do you wish to honor a cherished pet or person? The Canine Health Foundation offers an engraved brick paver for the Path of Honor at the Purina Event Center near St. Louis, Missouri for \$100, of which \$70 is tax-deductible. Visit Support.CanineHealthFoundation.org/Bricks to order online, or email chf@akcchf.org.

News on Breeders of Merit. Breeders of Merit are automatically listed at the top on the AKC Marketplace webpage. There is an opt-in pet health insurance option available for new litters. Puppies can be registered at time of sale, and will then get 30 days of coverage from the point that they leave your premises.

There are many laboratories that offer “multiplex DNA testing” for a variety of canine disorders with varied quality control measures. There will be an International Conference for Harmonization this spring in Paris to establish quality guidelines for labs offering testing to the public.