



**March**

**2012**

**OFFICERS**

President	Kaye Stevenson	334-263-0228
Vice President	Frank Dreyfus	334-567-8009
Secretary	Linda Gamper	334-538-8271
Treasurer	Mike Frakes	334-324-2570

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Corrine Dreyfus 334-567-8009   Christina Flack 334-669-1240   Amie Perez 813-997-6249  
Trigg Grieshop 334-409-2998   Ellen Howard 334-313-0794

**Mark Your Calendars**

When:            Wednesday, March 21, 2012  
Where:          Goodwyn Community Center on Perry Hill Road  
Time:            7:00 p.m.  
Program:        TBA

The "Tailwagger" is the official newsletter of the Montgomery Kennel Club Inc. Its purpose is to share information among Club Members and other interested parties. Articles and/or opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily constitute an endorsement by the Montgomery Kennel Club, Inc. Articles may be quoted if credit is given the article and the "Tailwagger". Deadline is the 30<sup>th</sup> of the month. Annual Ads (1/4 page) = \$20.00. Breeders Directory = \$12.00

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**WEB SITE: [www.montgomerykennelclub.org](http://www.montgomerykennelclub.org)**

## President's Message

Happy Spring!

We are moving along with several events and the participation is greatly appreciated.

Volunteers for any project can contact Corrine Dreyfus.

We are still looking for Chair people for the following committees:

Advertising/ publicity (show and club events)

Breed Match (at show)

Rally/obedience Match (at show)

Hospitality (at the show) (2 days Fri and Sat, this time so we need 2 folks)

Eye Clinic (coordinate with Vet)

Raffle

Wine and Cheese

If you would like to be a chair for one of the above committees, please contact me at [fullmoonlabs@charter.net](mailto:fullmoonlabs@charter.net).

I know the November show seems a long way away, but we need to get things in place now as many things need to be turned in soon.

See you at the meeting on the 21st! **Remember we are all responsible for bringing a snack to share this month!**

Thanks!

Kaye

### Montgomery Kennel Club Minutes – February 15, 2012 meeting

The meeting was held at Goodwyn Community Center and called to order by Kaye Stevenson, President, at 7:15 pm. There were 25 members and 3 guests in attendance.

Kaye welcomed our guests, Diane Lemaster, Julia Markham and Janie Drake.

Note – those guests having attended two or more meetings after receipt of membership application are eligible for membership upon a vote by the board – comments on any prospective member should be addressed to a board member as soon as possible.).

**Secretary's Report:** Frank moved approval of the January minutes. Dave seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mike Frakes offered the Treasurer's Report:

Total Income:	\$2,285.15
Total Expenses:	<u>521.84</u>
Net Income:	\$1,763.31

**New Business:** None.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Conformation Classes:** Christina announced that we can begin conformation classes again on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month, beginning on March 14 if anyone is interested in resuming the classes.

**Rally:** Michelle Howard had a sign-up sheet for anyone interested in having Rally classes. The times and dates will be worked out if there is enough interest to go forward with the classes.

**Old Business:** Trish brought sample tee shirts and polo shirts with the MKC logo for members who might want to place an order. The polo shirts are available in men's and women's sizes. The tee shirts are unisex sizing.

Trish provided information about the American Cancer Society "Bark for Life" on March 10, at Blount Cultural Park. Dog/Handler teams will be walking to raise money for the American Cancer Society. The registration fee is \$20.00 for each dog. The event begins at 8:00, with the walk scheduled to begin at 9:00 or 9:30. Several members expressed an interest in participating as a team for MKC. Trish will get the registration information out to members. MKC team members will be collecting donations from anyone who would like to make a contribution.

It suggested that MKC might want to set up a table with educational information, depending on how much it would cost to set up a table. Trish is going to get that information.

**Hospitality:** Refreshments for our March meeting will be whatever members want to bring.

Door Prizes were won by Amie, Trish, Julia Markham and Teresa.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Program: Jennifer with Pet Supermarket talked about the recently opened Pet Supermarket, and some of the many dental health products now available for dogs.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Gamper  
Secretary

## Volunteers

Please let Corrine at [corrine.dreyfus.ctr@csd.disa.mil](mailto:corrine.dreyfus.ctr@csd.disa.mil) know if you can volunteer for anything. There are numerous things we need volunteers for. For example, meet the breed, education, and dog shows. Signing up for various things does not mean you are obligated. You will just be contacted when needed and if you are not available at the time, you can just say no. Please consider being a volunteer.

## Conformation Classes

Let's start back conformation classes. I need volunteers for the following dates and times:

March 28 at 7 pm

April 11 at 7 pm

April 25 at 7 pm

May 9 at 7 pm

May 23 at 7 pm

Please email me at [cflack12@yahoo.com](mailto:cflack12@yahoo.com) if you can volunteer for any of these nights. Thanks, Christina

## Braggs

My smooth collie boy, Eric (GCH CH Caublestone's Crowd Pleaser) took BOS two days and was awarded Select Dog two days at the Atlanta, GA shows on 2/2 - 2/5, completing his Grand Champion title. At the same shows, his half-sister Breezy (CH Caublestone's Dixie Windjammer CD BN) qualified all four days in Novice Obedience - earning her Companion Dog title. At the Greenville, SC shows 2/17 - 2/19, Eric went BOV all three days adding 3 more major wins to his GCH record! **Amie Perez**

Murphy says she has had a very busy time. First, she went to the Southeastern NADAC trial. There she showed mom that she could do her down contacts plus she could go between two tunnels without any spins. Clipper showed mom that he could do weaves in the ring plus he "Q"ed in Novice Tunnelers. Cisco said she was listening and "Q"ing. She came in with first in Open Regular and Elite Tunnelers; Second in Elite Tunnelers and Open Regular. Then she ended the trial with a "Q" in Elite Jumpers. But her "Q"ing resulted in her earning her Outstanding Regular Certificate. Then after she came back from the NADAC trial, mom and her headed to Florida to pick up Piper [Himark's Just Imagine]. He is the newest addition to the Sheltie Krewe and Collie Boys. **Susan Barmby & Rosemary Coyle**

**Please email me your braggs at [cflack12@yahoo.com](mailto:cflack12@yahoo.com)! When you do send me your brag, please include the dogs registered name and the breed. Also put brag in the subject line.**

# Article

## On Crufts Vet Checks & Purebred Health

This discussion was spawned by the emerging decision of Crufts officials to hold winning dogs to an additional level of scrutiny beyond the official dog show judges selections. This second level of judging is unprecedented in the world of dogs. To the dog show spectator or consumer/owner of dogs, this may seem like an idea whose time has come to help protect the dogs and the prospective dog owners. But to those who participate in this type of event, this second level of judging fails to serve the purpose of protecting the dogs, the breeders, the consumer, or the sport.

There are several reasons this approach is destined to fail.

First, the breeds and breed traits selected by Crufts were merely based on extremes of appearance. Appearance is what makes the breeds what they are in the first place. Whether we approve or not, extreme body characteristics are how these dogs were selected for breeding and competition. If we decide the extremes are too extreme, we should go back to the source and limit ourselves to more moderate body types. We should not allow this to be rewarded, and then snatch away the reward based on a veterinarian's opinion after the fact. There are better ways than this to move breed standards to where Crufts officials think they should be.

Second, they are asking specially selected veterinarians to overrule the judge's decision after the judge has awarded the dog a winning place. If it is determined that this type of health screening is appropriate, it should be done before, not after, the dogs have been selected as winners. It would be far more fair to all exhibitors to screen the pool of participants prior to judging so the final decision is made by the judge. The point in all animal judging is to pick the winner based on its appearance or performance.

Third, a veterinarian's opinion is merely one more opinion. It is just as subjective as a dog show judge's opinion when appearance is the standard. As a veterinarian, I would not want to have to make a heavily scrutinized decision to take away a win without objective criteria. There is not a way to develop objective criteria – measurable characteristics – for the traits the Crufts officials seem to be targeting. In other words, there is no test that can be held up to be repeatable, for these traits. There is no equivalent to a blood sugar test to say what is normal and what is abnormal in this setting.

Fourth, they have decided to start with 15 breeds with the most "troublesome" characteristics. This group of dogs seems to be somewhat arbitrarily selected as we all have an opinion of which breeds have the most worrisome traits.

Fifth, the selected breeds seem to have been discriminated against based only on appearance. Appearance is an obvious health concern, but in no way does it reflect the real potential health concerns we experience in the world of dogs. Many of the biggest health threats we see in dogs cannot be seen with the naked eye, only with advanced diagnostics. We should be putting our efforts into eliminating disorders such as epilepsy and cruciate ruptures from the gene pool, not into telling judges how to do their jobs.

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The purebred versus hybrid dog argument clearly has no easy answers. I will use "hybrid dog" as the term for any dog with more than one breed of dog in its background. There are many small studies, but no comprehensive studies on either side. It is unlikely there ever will be one of the scope that would help in this debate as there is no financial gain for either side that would make the expense of the study worthwhile. Patching together bits and pieces of retrospective studies

does little to answer the big question of which is "healthier." As dog people, I am not certain we could even agree on what "healthier" means.

It is probable that many disorders we see today will be known in the future as having a genetic basis. There is probably a genetic basis that explains a tendency to develop or be resistant to bacterial, viral, and parasitic diseases. We know there are genetic tendencies to the development of certain types of cancer. Certain behavioral traits also play a role in the development of disorders, and these probably have a genetic basis as well. For example, there are risk-taking dogs – the ones who like to run, who are more likely to suffer trauma than the dog who won't leave the owner's side long enough for the owner to visit the bathroom.

Most disorders we see in purebred dogs were not created by the breeder or the breeding program. They are the result of a mutation or a magnification of a trait by combining genes. All dogs have at least one genetic disorder and usually have many, purebred or hybrid. No dog is perfect. If there is a genetic disorder in a breed, it is one that was in the foundation stock as a mutation or magnification, most that occurred hundreds to thousands of years ago. But that disorder happens to have traveled along generation to generation by being linked to another trait that was desirable and was perpetuated, intentionally or unintentionally.

Many purebred dog breeders have not only put themselves under the microscope in an effort to breed dogs with fewer defects, they have bought and paid for the microscope. By this, I don't mean they are paying for biased research. I mean they are the people who are trying to understand their breed's disorders and deal with them responsibly. The breed clubs are funding excellent, independent research to understand the disorders that may plague their breed. They are supporting the development of DNA and other tests to aid in their ability to screen for disorders, to work their way out of disorders that have occurred in their breed. So this is a double-edged sword for this group – the same tool that they have helped to develop to "improve" their breed is now being used against them to take them down. Does this seem unjust to anyone besides me? Not all purebred dog breeders are created equal. Not all breed for conformation – some breed for performance, such as field work or herding – functions that still serve society today. Some purebred breeders screen and appropriately use the data they collect by screening. Some don't screen. Some don't use the data. Some don't use the data correctly and haphazardly slash dogs with valuable genetics from their lines because they may carry a trait or have a trait of relatively minor health consequences, further narrowing the gene pool in a breed of dog with too little genetic diversity to begin with.

Not all hybrid breed dog breeders are created equal either. Some (but not all) are every bit as careful with their genetic screening and selection as those who apply it to purebred breeding programs.

We should not paint all breeders with the same broad brush. Nor should we paint the expectations of dog buyers and owners with the same broad brush. Each has their own set of needs and goals. If a dog buyer wants to purchase a dog with a predictable appearance, size, temperament, and skill set, they should have that opportunity to do so. If they prefer to purchase a dog with such a varied genetic background that they cannot predict what they are likely to look like or act like, that too should be their option.

Every day in our veterinary clinic, we see purebred dogs and cats as well as hybrid dogs and cats. If only purebred dogs and cats became ill, what would veterinarians and their staff do all day?

Hybrid dogs and cats fill the exam and surgery rooms of veterinary clinics all over the country as they too suffer from illnesses and injuries.

Farmers must have figured out along the way that there is something to purebred animals. Most production animals are purebred – such as Holsteins or Angus cattle. They are used for production because of predictable genetic performance, not to impress the neighboring farmer or

for their own ego. Farmers do outcross animals when there is a trait they are specifically looking to perpetuate. But if they had severe health problems in purebreds, they could not be financially successful and would no longer use purebred stock as the backbone of their production program. The human species is the most outcrossed species on the planet, due to our freedom to travel and mate with minimal restrictions. If simply outcrossing genetics made all the bad genes "fall out" of the gene pool, humans would be free of genetic disorders. Unfortunately, as we all know, this is not the case. So the same is true in dogs and cats – a mere random outcrossed breeding does not lead to freedom from genetic diseases.

In short, this approach to judging is too little too late. It may make Crufts officials and the general public feel warm and fuzzy – that somehow they are trying to move the agenda of protecting the dogs and consumers forward, but as you can see, it is merely window-dressing and does not truly address the problems of dog genetics.

-Dr Marty Greer, DVM, JD, NAIA Board Member

*Dr Greer has run the Brownsville/Lomira Small Animal Clinic in Wisconsin since 1982. In 2002, she opened the International Canine Semen Bank-Wisconsin, which allows breeders to preserve their dog's semen for use at another time or a remote location. A specialist in her field, she has contributed to pharmaceutical and nutritional research as an investigator and was appointed to the Wisconsin Veterinary Examining Board. Dr. Greer also trains service dogs for [CCI](#), and recently earned her law degree from Marquette University.*



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