

Canine Capers

A publication of the Northeastern Maryland Kennel Club

**Northeastern
Maryland
Kennel Club**

Member Survey Results Are In

Overall, how satisfied are you with your NEMKC membership?

55.6% Very satisfied

44.4% Somewhat satisfied

How likely would you be to recommend membership to a friend or colleague?

88.9% Very likely

11.1% Somewhat likely

In your experience, what benefits does NEMKC best provide?

11.1% Education at meetings

66.7% Community outreach

22.2% Social

How many NEMKC events have you attended in the past 12 months (shows, trials, show-n-gos, RDOD, photos with Santa, Holiday party, Susquehanna in bloom)?

0% 0-1

22.2% 2-4

33.3% 5-7

44.4% more than 5

Overall, how satisfied have you been with NEMKC conformation shows?

55.6% Very satisfied

11.1% Somewhat satisfied

33.3% Neutral

(con't page 2)

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NOTE:

Watch the "My Dog Can Do That" video:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=64KIWLKUzqk&utm_source=akcommwee&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20160212&mkt_tok=3RkM MJWWfF9wsRoiu6TBZ KXonjHpfsX67ewsXKKg38431UFwdcjKpmjr1YoETct0aPyQAgobGp5I5FENQ7jYTaxmt6QLWQ%3D%3D

if you haven't already done so. Keep in mind this can be done for anything (Conformation, rally, obedience, CGC practice, dance, etc) not just agility.

The Harsh Truth About Why Our Sport Is Dying

The Harsh Truth About Why Our Sport Is Dying

By: Drew Deaton

Recently I have read several very well written articles on the

"fall" of Dog Shows as a sport. The reasons targeted in these articles were all correct, they are all problems that do reside in our sport and it certainly would be nice to see

them eliminated. However, are they the true reason our sport is dying? No. Now you are probably wondering by now what my credentials are to be so brilliantly in-

Member Survey (con't)

Overall, how satisfied have you been with NEMKC trials?	25% 2-4 12.5% 5-7 50% Very satisfied 37.5% Somewhat satisfied 12.5% Neutral	Do you use the club website? 83.3% Yes 16.7% No
Overall, how satisfied have you been with NEMKC community events?	Have you felt welcome at events and meetings? 12.5% Somewhat 87.5% A lot	Do you feel the Board is effective in carrying out club policies and events? 100% Yes 0% No
50% Very satisfied 50% Somewhat satisfied	Are any of the following a detriment to your fully participating in events and meetings? 16.7% Lack of support 83.3% Time/day conflict	Do you feel you are well informed about meetings, activities, events and Board meetings? 100% Yes 0% No
How many member meetings have you attended in the past 12 months?		

Dying Sport

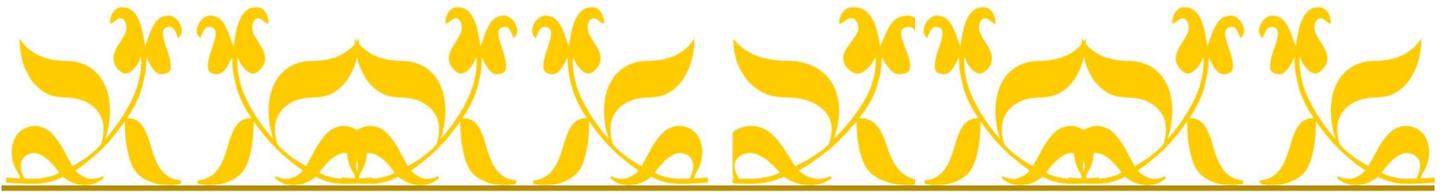
formed that I could diagnose the problem that is killing our favorite past-time, our sport, for some of us- our livelihood. Well as much as I hate to disappoint I am somewhat of a "newbie" to the sport. I am only 20 years old and have been showing for less than two years. I did not participate in Juniors, I hold no degree related to dogs at all, and no one in my family but myself has ever even seen a dog show. I am so new that you could almost call me an outsider...and this makes me the perfect person to tell you why it is so difficult to love this sport as much as I do.

Our sport is dying, stop attaching all of these excuses about the fre-

quencies of shows and entry fees are too high for this and too much for that...though you are not incorrect...that is not the reason our sport is dying. Hear me carefully for this is not a metaphor...our sport, meaning its athletes, supporters, and donors are literally dying. I am talking about physical and spiritual death. The great breeders, the famous handlers, those who grew up with their family showing dogs...they are dying! Dog Showing once thrived in generations that were not this one... now that we are in this generation all of the old generations are slowly, literally dying. Our sport is not dying because it is simply a rich man's sport...that is a lie, this is a sport

than can be played in a financially smart way. No, our sport is dying because it's people are dying. Ok- so how do we save it?

Obviously, there is no way for us to stop time from running its course...that is just beyond our control. So in anything, how is one generation replaced once they are gone? With a NEW GENERATION. "Oh but we offer Junior Handling at shows to reel the kids in!"...NO. Everyone reading this knows as well as I do that kids can't just walk in with their dog and say "Hey, I think I want to try this! Sign me up mom!"... not even close. Juniors is a wonderful thing but if you really pay attention it is mostly children of



parents who breed, show, or are even professional handlers themselves. Though they are young, that is not the new blood we need to target. We want to expand, we want to grow!

Now, if no one has ever told you, let me be the first. The veterans of this sport make it INCREDIBLY difficult for us newcomers to love this sport. Myself, I am only still around because I tend to ignore the way people treat me... not everyone is like that, especially not in my generation. If you do not know my generation well, we are extremely over-sensitive and we are offended by EVERYTHING. That is why it takes about 10 minutes for a newcomer of my generation to get ticked off at a dog show. I have tried to bring family members and friends that have never even experienced anything like a dog show along with me and they leave HATING it. Let me tell you why, I don't have all the answers but I guarantee you that with just a little thought, the more experienced folks may be able to figure the solutions out.

When I started showing I was merely helping out a friend of mine in Chinese Cresteds who was generously donating his time to teach me the basics. We were at a show one day, it wasn't my very first show but it was of the first five, I was handling a small and timid Chihuahua client dog of his while he was in another ring. I waited very patiently right by the steward's table with the number "9" wrapped around my left arm. I could not move away from her table because I was so nervous that I would miss my ring-time if I left. So I waited, finally my class came up but I did not really have a full enough understanding of the class system to know that was my class. As it turns out, the steward had called my number and she was an older lady with a gentle tone, I

had mistaken her calling out the number "5" but she was actually calling my number, "9". She called for a second time and I then realized my mistake and rushed in the ring, my nerves had tripled. As I fell in line to stack my little Chihuahua, a VERY well known handler in front of me turned around and remarked "How many times were you going to make her shout your number before you finally came in? Some of us have other dogs to show..." I was appalled that someone would make such a remark to someone so obviously new, just because the steward had to call my number twice. The judge finally directed us to go around the ring. I stood up and looked down but the already timid dog that I was handling had all but curled into a ball and was immobile. He could tell that my nerves was completely shot. I tried my best to pep him up and eventually we made it around the ring. After the class was finished, as I was walking out the Judge grabbed my elbow and stopped me... "Don't you let these old women walk all over you" She said with a very tender smile. That judge is the only reason I ever set foot in the ring again. So this paragraph is for the handlers...what could you do differently to help a newcomer OR what could you be doing that might be turning away newcomers unintentionally?

To the breeders... Fortunately for my mentor in my own breed, this has not yet happened to me however I have seen it many times. "We all had our first dog" So many veterans have said to me or to friends of mine that are starting out. A friend of mine called a supposedly reputable breeder to obtain a show quality French Bulldog from her. They talked for months and went through the reference process, the interview process and finally this breeder

agreed to sell my friend a puppy. I took my friend to shows and we met a few "Frenchie" folks and observed their handling and their grooming. One very kind handler even showed us a few of his grooming tricks. She finally got her puppy and started showing him. She showed him well! She gaited him beautifully and had taught him to hold a stack very well-but she never won. Months later while at a show we ran into the same handler that had showed us the grooming tricks and we asked him "Why is this puppy not winning anything?" That handler whipped out his phone and pulled up the Frenchie standard and explained in exquisite detail as to why the puppy was essentially a conformation train wreck. My poor friend had no idea, nor did she have a mentor to help her so the breeder sold her a puppy for a show quality price that was deeply pet quality. I can understand if you chose not to sell the absolute best puppy in the litter to a newcomer, but giving them the worst of the litter just because they are new...Does that seem right? That friend has never set foot on a show site again and lives quietly with her PET frenchie, Rosco.

Now to the know-it-all, whether you are a vendor, breeder, handler, or even spectator. I will never forget first time I asked my mother to tag along to the dog show with me. My mother was holding one of my dogs ringside while I was competing in the ring at an outdoor show. The dog my mother was holding had a bowel movement while she was watching me, she had no idea that the dog had used the bathroom behind her. Suddenly, a ferocious vendor comes trampling between the rings and throws a "poop-bag" at my mother and shouts "It is people like you that ruin it for all of us!". IF I am somehow able to convince my mother to come back to a show, she sits ringside and she does not move. She will not hold a dog for me and she will not walk around. She goes straight from the car to the ring and back again while hating every

Dying Sport con't

minute of it. So tell me, if you were a newcomer or a paying spectator who just spent \$20 just to park your car... would you come back?

To the owner-handlers (this is my category)... I am going to be bold with you because I have so much respect for you and love you dearly. STOP TELLING EVERYONE THAT IF THEY ARE NOT PAYING \$1,000 PER SHOW TO HAVE THEIR DOG HANDLED PROFESSIONALLY THEN THEIR DOG WILL NEVER FINISH. If someone asks me "when are you putting her with a handler" again, I might just scream this at them. I have a shocking news update for the show world... some owners have finished their own dogs before. Yes it is true, there are some judges who do play favorites in the ring and put up their friends... don't enter under those judges again and your problems are solved! An owner CAN finish their dog and an owner CAN be a great handler of their own dogs! Professional Handlers do win a large amount of the time, but has anyone stopped to think that it is because they are professionals and this is their lively-hood? The very definition of professional implies that they have the talent or skills to display a dog

more professionally than a non-professional. Do not spread lies to newcomers about not ever being able to beat a handler. Owner-handler friends had me PETRIFIED to step into the ring when there was a major handler of my breed competing. Then a judge put me up with a 10month old puppy over two extremely nice adult dogs handled by two MAJOR handlers of my breed and I realized that is nonsense at just under 5 months of handling experience.

I could sit here and go on for days with examples of situations like these that I have encountered in less than two years of people who made me want to quit. I could never quit because I love my dogs and I love the experience of being in the ring with them. I enjoy it, I have so much fun and they LOVE it too! My point is that we have to allow newcomers the chance to get that feeling, the chance to fall in love with the sport like we all did. You never know who is there for their first show, or second or third. There is too much drama in the world today, I am telling you veterans that my generation has no time or tolerance to welcome in a new activity that is surrounded by drama. If we love our sport and if we

want it to be passed on through future generations and not just die off, then we must change our atmosphere. We must extend kindness and grace to those around us, we have to have fun ourselves. Make friends with the newcomers and please, PLEASE if they ask for help or guidance...help them without cruel or smart remarks. Never forget, you had your first show too. What made you come back? What did you enjoy? What did you appreciate that people did? What did you not enjoy? Did you ever not want to show again-why? What have people done in the past that have angered you or upset you?

Ask yourself these questions and ponder... what can YOU do that might encourage newcomers and keep this sport alive? As a breeder, vendor, owner-handler, professional handler, or even as a spectator... How can you change our sport?

Drew Deaton

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What Dogs Are Teaching Us About Cancer

By R. Scott Rappold WebMD Health News

Reviewed by Arefa Cassoobhoy MD, MPH

Oct. 29, 2015 -- When Marisa Rockwell took her dog Valo to the veterinarian for trouble peeing, she suspected some sort of urinary tract infection.

The diagnosis was much worse: bladder cancer, two different types. The pit bull mix was given 9 months to live -- a devastating prognosis for Rockwell, his owner for a decade. So when she heard about an experimental study on canine cancer at a nearby

clinic, she signed up.

"I said, 'If there's no cure for either of these cancers already, we might as well try something that's not been tried before,'" says Rockwell, of Guilford, CT. Valo received two shots and follow-up testing, but that was it. He continued to live at home. More importantly, Valo continued to live. Ten months after the diagnosis, Rockwell says he is showing no signs of illness.

This clinical trial is one of many going on around the country on cancer in dogs, aimed not just at curing man's best friend, but at finding answers in medical science's war on human cancer. Humans and dogshave similarities in how both develop cancer. They also share other physical traits and the same living space. Canine research isn't confined to cancer, with studies around the U.S. focusing on

From the American Kennel Club

Dear Club Officers and Delegates,

I am delighted to provide you with an update of work performed under the leadership of Brandi Hunter and Davis Alexis in the area of Public Education and request your assistance. The newly improved and enhanced Canine Ambassador Program, created by Davis, provides clubs multiple opportunities to promote purebred dogs, responsible dog ownership and safety around dogs in your communities. In addition, it allows clubs to impact local policies by addressing issues relevant to purebred dog owners. With numerous updated lesson plans, new resources, and collaboration amongst Ambassadors, the program provides the connection between clubs and purebred dog fanciers of tomorrow. Public Education is an integral piece of the American Kennel Club's mission as outreach programs explain how to ever-strengthen the invaluable human-canine bond we all cherish. In order to expand our reach, we respectfully encourage every club to nominate at least one Canine Ambassador to represent their club and volunteer in their community. Please join us in this effort by completing the online [sign-up form](#) found on our website. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to hearing from you.

For more information about the Canine Ambassador Program, please visit our website at www.akc.org/public-education/canine-ambassador-program/.

Sincerely,

Dennis B. Sprung
President and CEO

What Dogs are Teaching Us About Cancer con't

everything from spinal cord injuries to aging to whether having a pet dog makes us healthier. But unlocking the mysteries of cancer, from testing new drugs to trying to understand why benign lumps turn into malignant tumors, may pose the greatest potential benefits for man and man's best friend, experts say.

The American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation has funded some 30 such trials in the past 15 years. Meanwhile, veterinarians and researchers at 20 universities around the nation have formed the Comparative Oncology Trials Consortium to share information and cooperate in clinical trials on cancer in dogs, with the goal of better understanding and treating cancer in people. "There are a handful of products that have been added to the market that were initially tested in pet dogs with cancer. There are many more in the pipeline," says Arlene Weintraub, author of the new book *Heal*, about comparative oncology between dogs

and humans. "Over the last year or so there have been many developments in this area, in all sorts of cancer research."

For Valo's owner, it's about not only prolonging his life, but maybe playing a part in the greater battle against cancer.

"In a way, he is making his little mark on history," Rockwell says.

Fighting Cancer

All 20 dogs enrolled in the cancer study are still alive, says Gerald Post, DVM, oncologist at The Veterinary Cancer Center in Norwalk, CT.

While it's too soon to say what role the clinical trial played in their survival, researchers are optimistic. The study is based on a vaccine developed at the Yale School of Medicine. First tested in mice, the vaccine's purpose is to encourage the animals to make disease-fighting antibodies to attack a tumor.

Post says the study is a new take on monoclonal antibody drugs that have been used in humans. In these drugs, the medication itself provides antibodies to fight tumors. "Instead of making the antibodies externally, we have hopefully figured out a way to make the body make them itself," Post says.

If the study shows most dogs have developed the antibodies, researchers will do a second that looks at dosing and a third focusing on the long-term effects on tumors. "We're really excited about it, because it could truly revolutionize how cancer is treated in dogs and people," Post says. It's one of many projects that are part of the One Health Initiative, a global movement to look at all aspects of human, animal, and environmental health in a comprehensive manner. Canine research has allowed researchers to identify genes linked to different types of lymphoma in dogs that are also linked with lymphoma in humans.

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Researchers at Mississippi State University see promise in studying blood platelets in dogs with cancer to better understand how cancer spreads and how to stop it. Dog research has already led to some drugs and therapies showing promise in human health. Weintraub cites Sutent, which is prescribed to battle advanced kidney and other cancers, as one such drug. Researchers have also begun human trials on PAC-1, which causes cancer cells to self-destruct, after successful results from canine studies. Some of this research is funded by the American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation. Diane Brown, DVM, PhD, chief scientific officer for the foundation, is quick to differentiate this work from animal testing.

Fighting Cancer continued...

"Sometimes people think, 'Oh, this is about owners who are dropping their dogs off for research purposes,' and that's not the case at all. These are dogs that belong to people that continue to be cared for and live in their homes," Brown says. "You'll have these veterinary specialists who are running trials that have access to all the latest tests and MRIs and equipment, so the dogs are still treated for their medical condition. They just happen to be having samples taken or having drug therapy that is still experimental." Such treatments could cost pet owners thousands of dollars, she says, while these clinical trials are offered at reduced cost or sometimes for free. And the potential benefits go far beyond cancer research.

Treating Spinal Injuries

At first glance, a dog's spine seems to have little in common with a human's. But Jonathan Levine, DVM, says spinal injuries in dogs can be very similar. An associate professor at the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, Levine has been working for years on a treatment in dogs that could be used in humans. He is compiling the results from a study of 90 injured dogs that received the treatment shortly after injury. It's designed to block enzymes released after an injury that can cause more permanent damage and stunt the healing process. The hope is that, combined with surgery, rehabilitation, and other treatments, the drug will show enough promise to eventually be used in human trials. "I think the reality is it's hard to find treatments for human spinal cord injuries. There are so many examples of failed trials and the hope for those of us working with dogs that are injured is we can speed discovery, that we can help the dogs, and we can help people. And we really believe in the potential of these dogs to do that," Levine says. **Do Dogs Make Us Healthier?** At the University of Arizona, scientists are looking to the bacteria in our guts to try to prove the adage that having a dog makes us healthier. Could the relationship between man and man's best friend be more than a social one? **Do Dogs Make Us Healthier? continued...** "Dogs have evolved with humans over thousands of years, from the point in which we were trying to domesticate them," says

research specialist Kimberly Kelly.

"We really wanted to see if there's something deeper that's going on and if that mechanism might actually be bacterial because of that evolution, the sort of 'old friends' idea," Kelly says. Researchers paired shelter dogs with people who didn't own one and collected fecal, saliva, and skin samples from both. They wanted to see if the dog's presence changed the bacteria in the gut and eased digestion. They are also studying whether the bacteria dogs have could affect humans' allergies and their immune systems. Kelly expects to have preliminary results by early in 2016. "Anecdotally, people would tell me their digestion was better. Who knows, that could be stress. The dog is bringing the stress down," Kelly says. They plan a larger study if results bear out. It's already been a win for the dogs. Of the 16 in the study, study participants permanently adopted 14. Sandie Kirchner and her husband hadn't had a dog in 20 years. But when the retired couple heard about the study, they volunteered. Kirchner, of Tucson, AZ, doesn't know what biological effects came from having April, the 3-year-old Chihuahua mix, in the home. But their new best friend has made life better. "I don't know if it actually changed the probiotics in my body -- probably it did. I know my husband's blood pressure dropped, so his cardiologist changed his medication," she says. "Having a dog in the house just makes us smile, so that makes us happier. I walk her a couple times a day, so I've met all kinds of new neighbors, so I guess that's improved my mental health."

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