

ETRC Board Meeting, Sunday, 12/13/2020
Cory Smith's Farm, Niota, TN

Present from the Board: Alan Bruhin, Karen Edwards, Luke McCoy, Jim Pearce, Tom Gibson, Cory Smith, Jeff McNutt

Absent, excused: Peter Torok, J. Michael Evans, Michele Fletcher, Mike Smith

Absent, unexcused: Lois Luthenauer

A quorum is 50% of the Board. Therefore, a quorum of the Board was present. The meeting was called to order at 4:18 p.m.

Officer's and AKC Delegate's Reports

President's Report: Nothing to report.

Secretary's Report. Karen Edwards.

- **Minutes:** Last meeting was 9/15/20; minutes approved by a majority of Board members and sent to the club website shortly after the meeting. Luke moved that we dispense with reading the minutes out loud, and vote formal approval. Jim seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
- **Correspondence:** Dues notice from AKC, referred to Lois for payment.
- **Membership:** Current 2020 membership is 59, including 5 waiting first reading and assignment of sponsors later today. One person, Doug Zelonis, says he is quitting, wants to just do upland hunting instead.

Treasurer's Report: Lois Luthenauer was not present. Karen reported that the approximate balance in ORNL FCU as of today is \$23,000. However, there are three checks from the hunt test that have not yet cleared for unknown amounts, and several bills with payment outstanding, which will bring the total down some.

AKC Representative's Report: Michele Fletcher: Not present.

Old Business

1. Fall 2020 Hunt Test Recap

- a. **What worked, what didn't?** There was general consensus that the test went amazingly well, considering the pandemic and changes that had to be made to accommodate that (closed cabin, ribbon ceremonies at the sites, protecting the marshals, etc.). Special kudos went to the Bird Technicians from the community college wildlife society, who needed very little training and were diligent workers. We will be using them again.

- b. **Financial info:** Not enough data yet to tell whether we made a little money, or lost a little. Best guess is that we made a small profit. More info on this when more financial data is available.
- c. **Final thoughts:** Not bad!

2. **Winter Training sessions:**

- a. Today's – General consensus was that the day went very well and was a success. We had a decent turnout of about 18 people. Luke did an excellent job of presenting, from a judge's AND competitor's perspective, the ins and outs of a Junior hunt test, and answered all questions. The technical session – demonstrating the beginnings of force fetch – was also well received. There was still time to do a Junior test land setup, which was used by most of the dogs there, while still allowing some doubles for the more senior dogs. Big thanks to Luke for doing this for us, to the Smith's for allowing us to use their farm, and to Elena Smith for providing yummy cookies and bottled water.
- b. Jan 10, Sunday afternoon, 1 p.m. at Cory's: Alan Bruhin, Master setups and rules, demos, and running setups with advice to handlers. We discussed that it might be a good idea to add some early casting drills to this session. Cory and Elena Smith confirmed that they are willing to donate use of their farm again. With the Smith's big barn/indoor tennis court, even if it rains or is horrible weather we can do the seminar part and demonstrate/try some early casting drills inside. By this time, the heater in the barn will be working.
- c. Feb 14, Sunday Afternoon, 1 p.m. at Cory's: J. Michael Evans, Senior rules and setups. Michele Fletcher, how to enter your dog on EE. Setups and advice to handlers at all levels. This is Cory's birthday, so we need to be nice to him that day, and Karen will bring a cake and ice cream!

3. **Spring Hunt Test**

- a. Dates with AKC and TWRA: Memorial Day weekend is as late as it can be this coming year – Memorial Day itself is May 31. We need to check with both AKC and TWRA to make sure that they are counting the weekends the same way this year, or if we are going to face issues like we do every few years with their different methods of counting weekends. Karen and/or Michele will check with AKC, and we will ask Mike Smith to check with TWRA about the dates. Also, if possible, we need to see if we can move earlier in the year for our spring test – as early as March would work – to avoid the heat. We have tried before and failed, but are hoping that we can pull it off one of these years. There are always problems with hunt season and share cropping planting at TWRA, and too-close other tests with AKC. Now we have the added complication of the Master Amateur this year, which is scheduled for May 16-23 in Emporia, VA. There is also the rescheduled 2020 Master Amateur which will be in California April 18-25, 2021, although being so far away it probably won't impact us too much.
- b. Format: two master flights at Hiwassee are getting harder to do with all the sharecropping going on, and the lack of good Master water. Alan, Luke, and J. Michael

have all had preliminary discussions with Brian Caldwell to see if we can have one Master flight over there – it's only about a 15 minute drive from Hiwassee. This will not be easy logistically but it may be worth a try. Brian is willing, with one caveat – he would prefer not having any live rounds on his property, which means we would have to get an exception from AKC to have a Master test without live flyers for at least one series. We will probably try to get an exception for both series, if it can be done, for equity reasons. J. Michael will work with Brian and AKC to try to get his property qualified as quickly as possible.

- c. **New Amateurs First rule:** AKC has passed a new rule that will be in effect as of January 1. Workers will get first crack at signing up for tests, on Tuesday before the test opens on Wednesday, using a code. This is not a change. However, this year, 25 to 35% of all Master slots will be allocated to Amateurs, and they will also be able to sign up starting Tuesday evening at the same time as the test opens for workers. If someone signs their dog up as an Amateur, they will HAVE to handle the dog in that stake and cannot turn it over to a pro. As of Wednesday evening at the regular opening time, all slots not filled will now be available for anyone to sign up. We did not make a decision, but the discussion seemed to be favoring us allocating 25% for Amateurs since we don't have that many amateur master handlers in this local area. Alan mentioned that pros are not happy with this new rule, and tests which allocate 35% to amateurs may end up with tests not filling if a pro can't get all 20 of his dogs in. However, since all tests will be subject to this rule, it seems like that shouldn't perhaps make much difference? One club has decided to award all their worker slots to pros to encourage them to come; however, these codes only work for one dog so it may not make much difference. Considering that the pros use of bots to enter a dozen dogs at a time is the reason why amateurs were being squeezed out, there wasn't much sympathy on the board for this predicament that the pros may be facing. Clubs may end up putting on more 'master only' test if the demand is there and the workers are willing.
 - d. **Judges:** Alan says he has pretty good ideas for Master judges but please let him know any recommendations you may have for Junior /Senior judges. He will start calling after the first of the year – but we need to get some idea of the date first, if at all possible.
- 4. ***Club Trial:*** We had to cancel the Fall club trial because the Smiths both were down with Covid. We discussed rescheduling, and decided tentatively to try to have one in March or maybe early April – but wait until the new year to see how the schedule for testing is shaking out.
 - 5. ***Nominating Committee for Officers/Board.*** Alan Bruhin: Nominating committee finished and reported their slate to Secretary before time. The results were published in the December Newsletter along with the required call to the membership for nominations from the floor, to be sent to Karen as Secretary. The deadline for nominations is December 31; none have been received to date.
 - 6. ***Awards Calls:*** The call for awards in the December Newsletter assumed that everything was going to be normal, and that J. Michael was going to deal with the awards again. Michael has

agreed to do this, so we're good. Karen will send out at least one and possibly two reminders about getting nominations in.

New Business:

1. ***New Member:*** five new members for first reading
 - a. Wayne / Tina Rich: Dandridge, TN, waynerich4214@hotmail.com, 865-712-4214. Retired; part time court security. Has a 2.5 year old black Lab, interested in hunt tests, hunter safety course, dog training, NRA member. Volunteers to be a gunner. Alan Bruhin and Jeff McNutt agreed to sponsor Mr. Rich, who was here at the training today and several of us got to meet him.
 - b. Brian / Lara Fretwell: Cleveland, TN, no1fret@gmail.com, 423-650-2987. Physicians's assistant / Dentist. Has a 1.6 year old Black Lab. Interested in hunt tests, field trials, dog training, club trials, judging / judging clinics, NRA & DU member. Volunteers for Hunt test assistant, hut test set up, club officer, marshalling. Cory Smith and Luke McCoy volunteered to sponsor the Fretwells.
 - c. Cameron Pemberton, Chattanooga, cameron13@gmail.com, 423-304-7988. Freight broker. Young guy with black lab puppy (was in puppy stakes at test), interested in hunt tests, field trials, dog training, club trials, and breeding. Volunteers for whatever is needed. Since the McNutts met them while judging the Puppy Stakes, they agreed to serve as sponsors for both Cameron Pemberton and Sydney Parks below.
 - d. Sydney Parks, Chattanooga, TN, kaylon2426@gmail.com. 423-693-3423. Has a young Black lab puppy, was with the guy above at the hunt test puppy stakes in fall. Interested in hunt tests, field trials, dog training, and club trials. Volunteers for whatever needed & photography (has a drone and editing software).
 - e. Kelli & Joseph Riggs, Odessa, FL. Flatcoat89@yahoo.com, 813-340-5727. Has a bunch of flatcoats. Is a puppy/junior/senior judge. Comes to TN to train several times a year and wants to get involved. Interested in hunt tests, hunter safety course, dog training, club trials. Belongs to 5 retriever clubs, two flatcoat clubs. Volunteers for marshalling, judging at club trials. Jim Pearce agreed to sponsor the Riggs, who requested that Lois be the other sponsor. Karen agreed to fill in as secondary sponsor if Lois is unavailable.

Jeff moved we accept these people as provisional members. Cory seconded, and the vote was unanimous. Karen will contact each of the new members telling them names and contact info of their sponsors; sponsors will have access to the new members' contact info through these minutes.

2. ***Spring Banquet:*** What on earth are we going to do this year? Challenging, given the current Covid situation. Clearly, jamming the 25-35 people who typically come into the banquet room at the Calhouns is a nonstarter for safety reasons, even if Knoxville's event regulations have been relaxed by then! After some discussion, we agreed to the following: tentative date Saturday, February 27, 2021. Tentative Location: the big indoor tennis court at Cory and Elena's place, which will be heated by then. Food: we will contact the barbecue place that catered our fall 2019 hunt test at Ken Campbell's place to see if they are willing to provide the

food. Left unresolved so far: we will need to contact a party planner to rent tables, chairs, and potentially tablecloths (the caterers provide plates, silverware, napkins and glasses) in enough quantity to allow for adequate social distancing. Someone needs to volunteer to take on the coordination for this event. We also need to discuss providing some rental to the Smiths' to cover the cost of the electricity for heating and lighting, and general commotion/wear and tear, etc. as this is a big ask.

Any other new business?

1. New Holding Blinds: this had been brought up before, and tabled until we knew how much money we have in the bank, since we did not have a spring hunt test this year (our big moneymaker) and usually don't make a lot of money on the Fall test. Since we still don't have that information, we decided to ask Cory and others to inventory the current blinds to see how many need to be replaced, while we wait for the final financial information to come in. The old blinds will be offered for sale to club members.

Adjourn: There being no other new business, Jim moved that we adjourn. Jeff seconded the motion which then passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted



Karen Edwards, Secretary

Changes: None requested

Approvals:

1. Peter Torok 12/14/20
2. Mike Smith 12/14/20
3. Cory Smith 12/14/20
4. Michele Fletcher 12/14/20
5. J. Michael Evans 12/14/20
6. Jeff McNutt 12/14/20
7. Jim Pearce 12/14/20
8. Karen Edwards 12/14/20