

ETRC Board Meeting, Wednesday, 6/10/26 254 Babbs Road, Lenoir City, TN

Present from the Board: Alan Bruhin, Brent Naveiro, J. Michael Evans, Karen Edwards, Michele Fletcher, Jim Pearce, Luke McCoy, Kyle Griffin

Absent, Excused: Lois Luthenauer is at a field seminar. **Unexcused:** Nathan Lamping, Bob Smith

Others Members Present: None

A quorum is 50% of the Board. Therefore, a quorum of the Board was met with 8 people present. The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m.

Officer's and AKC Delegate's Reports

President's Report:

Secretary's Report. Karen Edwards.

- **Minutes:** Last meeting was our Banquet, 2/22/26. Minutes were approved by a majority of Board members, included in the March Newsletter and posted on the website. Luke moved that we dispense with reading the minutes out loud, and vote formal approval. Brent seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Also there was a set of email minutes dealing only with first reading for new members on 5/13/26. Should these be posted to the website or is it OK for Karen to just keep them locally on her computer? After a brief discussion, all agreed that it was OK to just keep them on the computer.
- **Membership:** Membership at the end of December 2025 was 67. Current membership is 60. 16 people aren't renewed from 2025, although two have told me they intend to renew (Suttles, Troup). Not renewing with reasons: several have moved out of state. Others that didn't renew were a mixture of new people who apparently have lost interest and some long time members who are a surprise. It was agreed that Karen will email one of these along with a copy of the missed June newsletter; the person in question was involved in a serious accident and is recovering. Karen has sent out 2 email reminders plus membership expirations were highlighted in the last 3 or 4 newsletters.
- **Correspondence:** IRS letter to Roberta Williams approving our late filing (delayed until October by our accountant). Karen has made repeated attempts to get Roberta's name removed from this account but has had no luck.
- **Treasurer's Report:**
 - **Calendar Year Finances:** Balance on January 1 was \$40,241.71. Current bank balance is \$35,565.34. We are down almost \$5,000 so far this year due to costs of banquet and losses on our two hunt tests. Note that this includes the Banquet, which is actually in the 2025 Fiscal Year. [Also note: this current amount is less now because Karen had not had the actual amount of the check to Best Western for the motel for May until the meeting.] J. Michael moved we approve the treasurer's report, Luke seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

AKC Delegate's report: Michele, with additional info from Alan:

- The AKC Board has approved a new National Retriever Gun Dog Championship test. This test would be put on by the newly-formed AKC-licensed National Retriever Gun Dog

Championship Club, Inc. and would be an annual national event within the AKC Retriever Hunting Test Program. Although final details are not available yet, an initial qualifying test is scheduled to be held the first week of September 2026 in Kevil, Kentucky, lasting 4 to 6 days, with 6 series. Dogs that qualify at this test will be invited to come back in the spring to a test that will be judged for the championship. For this first year, any dog with a Master Hunter title will be eligible to compete in the qualifying test(s). No information is available yet on entry fees and the test is not yet up on Entry Express. This Championship test will be different from the Master National and Master Amateur in that dogs will be ranked 1, 2, 3, and 4 with the first place winner being declared the National Retriever Gun Dog Champion for the year. If this format holds, of having qualifying tests (presumably in different regions) in the fall, followed by another national test in the spring, this will in effect be yet another two tests that will conflict with putting on weekend and midweek tests, and will undoubtedly force our club further into having tests in summer and late fall / winter as these tests will take up the best weather times and result in low entries in our Master stakes. Also, there will need to be some serious re-training for the judges for this test on how to judge when you are winnowing down from a hundred or more dogs to the dogs to be placed. Alan was invited to judge this year but declined.

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Old Business

1. *Judges' Seminar, July 18, 2026.*

- a. Signups – 18 people plus J. Michael signed up at the meeting. Still four people who owe all or part of the entry fee. Karen provided Alan with a listing of entrants and status of payments.
- b. Food: who is going to get? We discussed getting barbecue, but Alan pointed out that last time that had been quite complicated and suggested that he pick up sandwiches, chips, and sweets from one of the local stores/ sandwich places. We talked about possibly just

turning people loose to find their own food, but the advertisement material that has already gone out says that ETRC will provide food so that's out. Alan will also get doughnuts or some kind of sweetbread / roll for breakfast snacking.

- c. Other logistics – Karen & Jim won't be there because of a family conflict. Karen gave 5 checks to alternate treasurer Michele to use in paying for necessary things during the test, that can't wait till later. Current guess on financials: AKC \$500, hotel \$300 (already paid), food maybe \$300 = \$1100. Income \$420 approximately.

2. Club Trial/picnic/ business meeting 9/6/26

- a. Liase with Osteen / Shuler about this: Alan said he would give Mike Osteen a call and see if he can set something up for a visit and further discussion. He wants to make this as easy and painless on them as possible in the hopes we can use their farm again sometime in the future.
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- b. This test will open up on 8/25/26 for workers/amateurs and 8/26 for everyone else.
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- e. Jim Pearce raised again the idea of having a 'Tip Jar' for the bird techs. Consensus was that this was a great idea; we need to announce it at the judge's initial meeting with handlers, and have it readily available. If we have mixed bird techs, some from the wildlife society and others on their own, we would need to split it proportionally. Jim volunteered to come up with some container(s) and ideas about how this would work and discuss it further with the Board before the September test.

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- a. We are still looking for judges for this test. We have one Master judge and 1 JH/SH pair but need another pair and another Master judge. There was some discussion of possible

judges, and Brent volunteered to work with J. Michael and Alan on the un-fun job of calling judges and trying to get them committed. We are running out of time on this; we have to have the judges named by the end of June in order to avoid a possible AKC fine.

- b. J. Michael passed along thanks from farm manager Brandon Kamp, who said we are so good and clean that he can barely tell we were there after one of our tests is finished.

- 5. **Discussion on Finances:** Karen passed out summary financials on first two hunt tests of the year. We lost small amounts of money on both. Conflicts with other tests were a huge problem. How to fix? We rely on the profits from our hunt tests to support our other activities including the club trials, winter awards banquet, new equipment purchases, maintenance, etc. Alan commented that he was glad to see that on both tests, with really low entries, we still managed to only lose a total of less than \$400. If we had normal entries, we would be fine. This year, with the Master National in Oregon, people don't feel the need to qualify and so entries are down everywhere.

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- e. 'Entertainment meals': currently, anyone who helps work the test is invited to a free dinner with the judges on one or both nights of the test. Not everyone goes, but at times these free meals have amounted to almost \$1,000 for a test (this includes the judges, who we have to pay for). In the past, we used to have a home-prepared judges' dinner in the Hiwassee cabin, which was way cheaper but not logistically feasible in most of the places where we now have hunt tests. We could say that the club only pays for the judges; or that it only pays a fixed fee per person, or we could make sure to only go to cheaper restaurants where they don't serve entrees that run to \$30 per person for the ribeyes and the salmon filets.
- f. Winter Awards Banquet: There was some discussion, but no resolution, on making this event cheaper. Ideas included: (1) not have beef tenderloin on the menu; (2) cutting down

on awards somehow (J. Michael is still carrying a couple of plaques around in his truck that no one has ever claimed); making people pay some for the banquet, either a fixed fee to come or a 'tip jar' type of arrangement.

- g. Ribbons: It was suggested that we go to just one plain ribbon and have tabs for Junior, Senior, and Master, eliminate title ribbons altogether, and give up on duck bands. Karen pointed out that we wouldn't get much in the way of savings (and in fact, it might cost more) to have tabs on a single ribbon – when she orders 100 MH and 100 JH ribbons, for example, we get the price break for ordering 200 and the only charge for the two varieties is \$1 for a line change (that's for the whole order, not per ribbon). It would of course make it easier to have smaller numbers of ribbons ordered in total, but the cost per ribbon would go up by the cost of the tabs (\$.20 each). Eliminating title ribbons would save some money, but we usually only give out from 25-60 a year; cost of ribbon plus tab is \$5.20 so the savings would be from \$130 - \$312 per year. Duck tabs in lots of 500 cost \$135, or \$.27 each. This is the lowest-hanging fruit; many people don't take them and many don't keep them, while we do get nice compliments on our ribbons and especially on our title ribbons.
- h. Having another Quad JH/SH in 2027: every time we have had one of these they have been terrific moneymakers. Logistics are hard, but would be better if we could use Ken's. Getting 8 judges is also hard, but in the past this single weekend has paid for everything else all year.

Bottom line on all of this: sometime in the fall we need to have another meeting with a heavy emphasis on finances to see if we need to make some changes on our current policies.

6. Winter Awards Banquet:

- a. Need to make reservations at Bearden Banquet Hall for Saturday: Feb 20, 2027. We considered Feb 27, 2027 to eliminate the gap between the election and the start of the new fiscal year, but Michele has a judging conflict on that date. Alan said he would call them and try to reserve this date.
- b. Speaker: Any suggestions for a person to come talk to us and one what topic? We have had two vets, and that was very well received. It wouldn't have to be a vet, however, it could be an AKC rep, a pro trainer, etc. No one had any suggestions, but agreed to think about it over the next several months.

New Business:

- 1. **New Members:** one for first reading and assignment of sponsors:
 - a. Laura Hamilton, retired, PO Box 55, Loudon, TN 37774 (Preferred address through 9/1/26: PO Box 353, Barnesville, MD 20838). Email: lkoAloha@gmail.com. Phone 360-790-9748. Willing to volunteer as assistant hunt test secretary, hunt test set-up, marshalling, food prep / Supplies. Has three Tollers, two of them are SH WCX. Belongs to HSDTRC-USA and the Buckeye Retriever Club. Requests Mike Osteen as a sponsor. Alan agreed to be the other sponsor. Luke moved we accept her as a provisional member, Jim seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Any other new business? None.

Adjourn: There being no other new business, Luke moved that we adjourn. J. Michael seconded the motion which then passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Addendum. After the meeting ended, we remembered that we had forgotten that we needed to nominate Alan Bruhin for another term as Region II Director for the Master National Retriever Club. Via email on 6/11/26, J. Michael Evans moved that we nominate him for this position; Karen Edwards Seconded, and aye votes were received from J. Michael, Karen, Jim, Luke, Michele, Kyle, & Brent. This is a majority so is considered to PASS without waiting for responses from the rest of the board.

Karen Edwards then moved via email that we incorporate this motion and its passage into the draft minutes from the June 10 meeting, which had not yet been finalized. Jim seconded, aye votes were received from Karen, Jim, Luke, J. Michael, Michele, Kyle, & Brent. This is a majority so is considered to PASS without waiting for responses from the rest of the board.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen Edwards
ETRC Secretary/Treasurer

Changes:

1. Karen Edwards: Add to minutes the email motions and vote taken on 6/11-12/26 to nominate Alan Bruhin for a second term as MNRC Region II director and add this to the minutes as they had not yet been finalized.
2. J. Michael Evans, 2/23/26: added call name for Michele's Amber; corrected to show that Miss Ivy is not in the Master Amateur HOF yet; and changed the title award from AKC Sportsman to AKC Sportsmanship Award.

Approvals:

1. Michele Fletcher, 6/11/26
2. Luke McCoy 6/11/26
3. Kyle Griffin, 6/11/26
4. Brent Naveiro 6/12/26
5. Michele Fletcher 6/12/26
6. Karen Edwards, 6/12/26
7. Jim Pearce, 6/12/26

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- f. Winter Awards Banquet: There was some discussion, but no resolution, on making this event cheaper. Ideas included: (1) not have beef tenderloin on the menu; (2) cutting down

on awards somehow (J. Michael is still carrying a couple of plaques around in his truck that no one has ever claimed); making people pay some for the banquet, either a fixed fee to come or a 'tip jar' type of arrangement.

- g. Ribbons: It was suggested that we go to just one plain ribbon and have tabs for Junior, Senior, and Master, eliminate title ribbons altogether, and give up on duck bands. Karen pointed out that we wouldn't get much in the way of savings (and in fact, it might cost more) to have tabs on a single ribbon – when she orders 100 MH and 100 JH ribbons, for example, we get the price break for ordering 200 and the only charge for the two varieties is \$1 for a line change (that's for the whole order, not per ribbon). It would of course make it easier to have smaller numbers of ribbons ordered in total, but the cost per ribbon would go up by the cost of the tabs (\$.20 each). Eliminating title ribbons would save some money, but we usually only give out from 25-60 a year; cost of ribbon plus tab is \$5.20 so the savings would be from \$130 - \$312 per year. Duck tabs in lots of 500 cost \$135, or \$.27 each. This is the lowest-hanging fruit; many people don't take them and many don't keep them, while we do get nice compliments on our ribbons and especially on our title ribbons.
- h. Having another Quad JH/SH in 2027: every time we have had one of these they have been terrific moneymakers. Logistics are hard, but would be better if we could use Ken's. Getting 8 judges is also hard, but in the past this single weekend has paid for everything else all year.

Bottom line on all of this: sometime in the fall we need to have another meeting with a heavy emphasis on finances to see if we need to make some changes on our current policies.

6. Winter Awards Banquet:

- a. Need to make reservations at Bearden Banquet Hall for Saturday: Feb 20, 2027. We considered Feb 27, 2027 to eliminate the gap between the election and the start of the new fiscal year, but Michele has a judging conflict on that date. Alan said he would call them and try to reserve this date.
- b. Speaker: Any suggestions for a person to come talk to us and one what topic? We have had two vets, and that was very well received. It wouldn't have to be a vet, however, it could be an AKC rep, a pro trainer, etc. No one had any suggestions, but agreed to think about it over the next several months.

New Business:

- 1. **New Members:** one for first reading and assignment of sponsors:
 - a. Laura Hamilton, retired, PO Box 55, Loudon, TN 37774 (Preferred address through 9/1/26: PO Box 353, Barnesville, MD 20838). Email: lkoAloha@gmail.com. Phone 360-790-9748. Willing to volunteer as assistant hunt test secretary, hunt test set-up, marshalling, food prep / Supplies. Has three Tollers, two of them are SH WCX. Belongs to HSDTRC-USA and the Buckeye Retriever Club. Requests Mike Osteen as a sponsor. Alan agreed to be the other sponsor. Luke moved we accept her as a provisional member, Jim seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Any other new business? None.

Adjourn: There being no other new business, Luke moved that we adjourn. J. Michael seconded the motion which then passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Addendum. After the meeting ended, we remembered that we had forgotten that we needed to nominate Alan Bruhin for another term as Region II Director for the Master National Retriever Club. Via email on 6/11/26, J. Michael Evans moved that we nominate him for this position; Karen Edwards Seconded, and aye votes were received from J. Michael, Karen, Jim, Luke, Michele, Kyle, & Brent. This is a majority so is considered to PASS without waiting for responses from the rest of the board.

Karen Edwards then moved via email that we incorporate this motion and its passage into the draft minutes from the June 10 meeting, which had not yet been finalized. Jim seconded, aye votes were received from Karen, Jim, Luke, J. Michael, Michele, Kyle, & Brent. This is a majority so is considered to PASS without waiting for responses from the rest of the board.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen Edwards
ETRC Secretary/Treasurer

Changes:

1. Karen Edwards: Add to minutes the email motions and vote taken on 6/11-12/26 to nominate Alan Bruhin for a second term as MNRC Region II director and add this to the minutes as they had not yet been finalized.
2. J. Michael Evans, 2/23/26: added call name for Michele's Amber; corrected to show that Miss Ivy is not in the Master Amateur HOF yet; and changed the title award from AKC Sportsman to AKC Sportsmanship Award.

Approvals:

1. Michele Fletcher, 6/11/26
2. Luke McCoy 6/11/26
3. Kyle Griffin, 6/11/26
4. Brent Naveiro 6/12/26
5. Michele Fletcher 6/12/26
6. Karen Edwards, 6/12/26
7. Jim Pearce, 6/12/26