

**AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB
Delegates Meeting
December 13, 2024**

Dennis B. Sprung, President in the Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. ET.
(National Anthem played.)

Delegates were reminded to check in at the reception desk for attendance purposes. When Staff prints the blue-colored badge, the Delegate is automatically marked as present.

The Chair introduced the persons seated on the dais: Dr. Thomas Davies, Chairman; Dominic Palleschi Carota, Vice Chairman; Joan Corbisiero, Professional Registered Parliamentarian; Gina DiNardo, Executive Secretary; Lee Ann Reid, Court Reporter.

Condolences were offered in the recent passing of members of the Delegate Body:

Tracy Pancost on November 9, 2024. She was the Delegate for the West Highland White Terrier Club of America since April 2020.

Johnny Shoemaker on October 18, 2024. He was the Delegate for the Toy Dog Breeders Association of Southern California from October 2006 to February 2015 and Redwood Empire Kennel Club since February 2015.

Jerry Yarbrough on October 29, 2024. He was the Delegate for Bexar County Kennel Club since June 1991.

The Executive Secretary read the report on the Nominating Committee and on additional nominations.

Ms. DiNardo: Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 2, of the *Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club*, the NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- Karolynne McAteer, Chair – Irish Setter Club of America
- Joellen Gregory – Otterhound Club of America
- Don Hanson – American Lhasa Apso Club
- Maggi Strouse – National Shiba Club of America
- Mary Lou Olszewski – American Bloodhound Club

Alternate:

- Marjorie Tuff – American Shetland Sheepdog Association

appointed by the Board of Directors at its July 2024 meeting have nominated the following Delegates as candidates for such vacancies on the Board of Directors to be filled at the next Annual Meeting of the Club on March 11, 2025. There are 4 vacancies for the Class of 2029.

CLASS OF 2029

- Dr. Thomas M. Davies – Springfield Kennel Club, Inc.

- Dr. Kenneth H. Levison – Tucson Kennel Club
- Sylvia A. Thomas – Kennel Club of Riverside
- Harvey M. Wooding – San Mateo Kennel Club, Inc.

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 4, of the *Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club*, the following Delegates have been endorsed in writing by the required number of Delegates as a candidate for the vacancies on the Board of Directors for the Class of 2029, to be filled at the next Annual Meeting of the Club on March 11, 2025:

- Carl C. Ashby, III – United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club, Inc.
- Patricia M. Cruz – Heart of the Plains Kennel Club
- Eduardo T. Fugiwara – Two Cities Kennel Club
- Laurie Maulucci – South Windsor Kennel Club
- Robin Stansell – French Bull Dog Club of America

Mr. Sprung: The Bylaws state that nominations may not be made from the floor. Nominations, therefore, closed on November 15, 2024.

In accordance with the Delegate Standing Rule, each candidate is allowed three minutes to address the Delegate Body. Keith Frazier will indicate to the candidates when three minutes have expired. The Chair will introduce the candidates who will speak in alphabetical order and no questions from the floor will be entertained.

The first candidate for the Class of 2029 is Carl C. Ashby, III representing the United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club, Inc.

Mr. Ashby: The new year will bring new faces and new challenges to the American Kennel Club. The positive impact of the pandemic is over and financial challenges are again on the horizon for AKC. At this juncture, AKC Directors must have significant business experience and fresh ideas. Our foundation sport, Conformation, is in decline. An onslaught of anti-breeder legislation confronts us. We struggle to get our name and message in front of the public. Many of our events do not fit today's lifestyles. Let's just consider one. Let's consider Conformation just for a moment. Conformation is the cornerstone of the mission of the American Kennel Club. The decline in Conformation impacts AKC in many ways. Our local clubs don't have the financial resources to carry our message to their communities. Clusters often reduce the availability of purebred dogs in a community and access to the public, especially in the territory of the clubs. The result of that is of course, is it hurts our ability to grow the sport. The role of AKC as 'All Things Dog' is diminished. Our primary revenue source, registrations, is severely hit. Finally, preservation breeding and popularity of purebred dogs is in decline. I will bring fresh ideas and thinking to allow us to address these issues. Why should you consider me with one of your votes? My business experience both as a Founder and President of AT&T Custom Manufacturing Services and as a successful entrepreneur prepare me for the task ahead. My leadership in local and national dog clubs has provided understanding of the challenges all of you face. Jaimie and I have been in the show ring as well as in the whelping box all of our lives and we continue today. I know the challenges that breeders and exhibitors face. My reputation

in my community as a leader, an innovator and a problem solver is another reason. My passion, which I believe I have demonstrated over the years for purebred dogs is unwavering. Finally, my previous experience on the AKC Board of Directors, eight years, and two years as Vice Chair, leave me with great experience. Other candidates have that, but what sets me apart is how I went about working with the Board to accomplish results, not looking for recognition, but by trying to build consensus around ideas to solve problems and then ultimately making AKC better. AKC grew significantly during the pandemic, but there's storm clouds ahead. My experience and skills will be an asset as we weather that storm. Over the weeks ahead I plan to let you know why I deserve the vote of your club. I hope to talk with each of you individually and if you have any questions, I urge you to reach out to me. I ask for your vote. Whether I'm elected or not, I promise to never stop working for the American Kennel Club, our dogs, and your clubs. Thank you.

The second candidate is Patricia M. Cruz. She is representing the Heart of the Plains Kennel Club.

Ms. Cruz: Good morning, everybody. My name is Pat Cruz. I'm the Delegate for the Heart of the Plains Kennel Club for nearly 20 years and I want to thank many of you electing me twice to the AKC Board, where I served as the Board Liaison for the All-Breed Clubs Committee and chaired the Audit and the Judge's Appeals Committee; and, contributed to initiatives including the relocation of the Museum of the Dog at that time.

During my tenure, I've been committed to making motions that have delivered benefits to each of you, your clubs and your stakeholders – unmasking the judges names on breed/additional breed applications, Puppy Bred-by-Exhibitor classes, AEDs at your dog shows, and two-shows-in-a-day. NOHS is now an opt-in and concurrent and open classes at all breed shows is now possible. Advocating financial support for K-9 police dogs has morphed into Patriotic Puppy. And working with AKC's IT Staff, some in this room, took the Delegates e-list from the Yahoo platform to Google making it more secure.

Challenges remain. Registration/litter numbers have declined following the COVID surge. It's time to revisit limited registrations, enhance breeder recognition programs and strengthen the AKC's Marketplace promotion.

I ask you, was the recent 6th failed attempt to abolish term limits not enough for the Board to turn their focus on addressing the needs of your club? Helping one club at the expense of another is reprehensible. My aim is to represent the collective interest of all the clubs, not a select few, address the Delegate turnover, low entry breeds and the declining entries at dog shows.

The current approach to the Board Nomination Committee has created instability. This election will bring three, possibly four new members. In the next two elections all three people will term out. The show will go on. Remember, there will be nine or ten people still sitting in the Board room. We're not going to have a 'Bud Light' moment anywhere.

My Board focus has always been on our responsibility to the clubs. I support and agree with others who suggest extending the hiatus period between the terms. In other words, extend the hiatus period more than one year. I would be happy with four because it's been four years since I stepped away in 2020.

I've always considered myself your voice in the boardroom, listening to your ideas and bringing them to the Board to get success for you, your clubs and our volunteers.

With my experience in management, governance, media and collaboration, I will continue to serve you well and honor your trust. My track record speaks for itself. Twice elected from the floor to the Board of Directors and unanimously chosen the first woman Vice Chair in AKC's 140-year history. Thank you for listening. Merry Christmas. Happy holidays to you and yours from me and mine. Thank you.

The third candidate for the Class of 2029 is Dr. Thomas M. Davies representing the Springfield Kennel Club.

Dr. Davies: As a result of nearly 51 years as a seated Delegate, 20 years as a Director, three years as Vice Chairman and four years as Chairman of the Board, I have the longevity and the experience that provides the institutional memory and institutional knowledge to possess the understanding of our culture, our history, and our future. In any organization institutional memory or knowledge is an important factor in the efficiency, innovation, continuity and identity of the organization. Without it, the organization will waste valuable time recreating failures as well as reinventing successes. It can aid in the strategic decision making and operational excellence by using past experiences for a successful future. It is necessary to know and understand what the past has taught us as we grow and prosper. As George Santayana, a 20th Century Spanish philosopher said, "Those who can't remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Over the years I have introduced and supported programs and processes that have assured AKC growth and enhancement. I have opposed certain programs and processes that when implemented have proven to have a negative impact on our generation. I learned at the feet of my mentor, my pick for the greatest AKC person in modern times, Ron Menaker. I owe everything to him. I am a dedicated fan of country music, so I'll leave you with a line from one of my favorite country and western tunes by Alabama: "Give me one more shot. I'll give it all I got." I appreciate your support. Thank you.

The fourth candidate is Eduardo T. Fugiwara representing Two Cities Kennel Club.

Mr. Fugiwara: My name is Eduardo Fugiwara. I'm the Delegate for Two Cities Kennel Club. I am an active breeder who just finished my 25th champion. I have bred two generations of multi Best in Shows and working on the next. I have won four nationals in the past five years and also developed 18 new show homes in the past five years. Three of them are starting breeding next year. That actually is my most proud accomplishment. All my successes would not be possible without the teamwork of my partner, mentors and co-owners.

I am active in the sport. I am the President of my Parent Club. I chair shows in South Florida and I belong to nine clubs around the country in very different regions. I volunteer at my local 4-H.

My corporate experience is in marketing, marketing research, sports marketing and club development, consumer marketing and incentive marketing. My experience includes working for companies like Tootsie Roll, Honda Motors, Mobitel/Portugal Telecom.

My strengths are the capability to access and identify problems and opportunities by assessing risks and opportunities. I strive to find the best solution for the task at hand with aptitude in finding and optimizing external resources, outsourcing for expertise. An inquisitive mind when I am engaged in the task, I investigate in depth, and to seek advice from knowledgeable and experienced people in their fields. Approachableness, flexibility and open mindedness are qualities I rely on to be more effective and to be a better team player.

I believe that strengthening our sport, especially strengthening our clubs and the organization, increasing engagement of empty-nesters and the young generations. Also increasing ethnic diversity participation in our sport. Together, we can continue to ensure AKC maintains its status as premier dog registry in the world promoting breeders and the sport of purebred dogs. If I'm honored to have your vote, I will make sure to make part of my mission to always be part of the Delegate Body and to represent you and your ideas. Thank you.

The fifth candidate for the Class of 2029 is Dr. Kenneth H. Levison representing Tucson Kennel Club.

Mr. Levison: Good morning. I'm Ken Levison, Tucson Kennel Club. We've heard a lot about the past so far this morning, but we need to talk about change for the future. As Vice President for administration and finance for a college, which was dealing almost throughout my career with a scarceness of funds, I have a strong background in the not-for-profit sector and leadership in management and have found creative solutions that increased efficiency, reduced costs, and increased revenues. I have had hands on experience with change management in large organizations and have helped lead strategic planning initiatives. I know that we must be willing to change to accommodate changes in society while never losing focus on the organization's mission. AKC is currently facing a change in the public's attitude towards purebred dogs. We must never forget that AKC's core mission is to be a registry of purebred dogs. In fact, the constitution of AKC in 1887 stated its purpose: To run shows and field trials and to be a registry of dogs. If we are going to be successful into the future, we must have a clear understanding that the future of AKC is in breeders. Sadly, only four percent of breeders registering Dachshunds, as I said before, are members of our Parent Club and the average among all breeds is only seven percent. AKC needs to work with Parent Clubs to help them attract more of these wayward breeders to join them, to help clubs develop compelling reasons that being part of an AKC club is a value added. This, if successful, will help reverse the graying of our sport and revitalize our clubs and AKC. I know that to make positive change there must be a multi-year strategic plan setting out strategic directions for the organization so

that decisions and changes are focused at moving the organization forward. This plan must be developed by all constituencies of AKC: The Board, management, employees, Delegates, and breeders and must be shared openly once developed. I know that effective change can only be achieved through the coordinated effort of employees and AKC members. It is there that the impetus for moving the wheel forward starts. I know that communication, open and honest, is critical in building trust and enthusiasm for the future. AKC must be perceived as listening to the dog fancy. The Board must be at the forefront of this communication, especially with the Delegate Body. The Board must listen and communicate not only the successes but also the challenges. It must oversee the direction and strategic plan and be willing to abandon past practice that may no longer be relevant to our changing times. My background has made me distinctively prepared to rise to these challenges. Thank you.

The sixth candidate is Laurie Maulucci representing South Windsor Kennel Club.

Ms. Maulucci: Good morning. My name is Laurie Maulucci and I am the Delegate for South Windsor Kennel Club.

My involvement with AKC began as an exhibitor and breeder of Great Danes. I have been an AKC Judge since 2007 and was chosen by my peers to judge Best of Breed at our 2014 National.

I am currently a contributing member of nine AKC clubs. Positions I have held include Show Chair, Cluster Coordinator, Treasurer, Secretary, and Top 20 Chair. I was recently elected the East Division Chair for the Great Dane Club of America, presiding over our National Specialty in 2025. While Sponsor Chair for the GDCA, I raised over \$82,000 for the 2017 National Specialty.

Our Thanksgiving Classic Cluster in West Springfield, MA hosts an AKC Juniors Clinic every year open to AKC and 4-H Juniors with an average attendance of 92, and I am the co-founder of Jackets for Juniors.

Earlier in 2024 our cluster lost its Obedience and Rally Chair. I recruited enthusiasts to chair and create a unique three-day Obedience and Rally event. That event increased our Obedience entries alone by 150. Two years ago, I worked with two of my All-Breed Clubs to add Fast CAT® to the events we offer.

I am also the President of the CT Federation of Dog Clubs, which in 2024 was awarded the AKC Walter Bebout Memorial Award for Leadership in Canine Legislation. I work closely with AKC Government Relations and the members of the 56 AKC dog clubs in CT to protect our right to breed and own the dog of our choice. That right is being threatened every day by the actions of our detractors.

I am one of the core members of the AKC-Tufts Canine Whelping Program, which is entering its sixth semester at Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine. We provide veterinary

students with an immersive purebred canine whelping breed experience through mentorship by AKC breeders planning a litter.

I am also a member of the AKC Trial Board Committee. As a Delegate, I am the Assistant Chair of the All-Breed Clubs Committee, chaired the Event Analysis Subcommittee, served as a member of the Group Realignment and the Charitable Giving Subcommittees and the AKC Board Nominating Committee.

I am passionate about enhancing the general public's knowledge of who we are and the spectacular things that we do. Our detractors constantly find a way to secure media coverage for their good deeds yet our initiatives like trailers being rolled out to disaster sites never make the six o'clock news. This has to change, and improved communication is where we begin. Serving you on the Board would allow me to contribute at the highest level, and it would be my honor. Thank you for your consideration.

The seventh candidate for the Class of 2019 is Robin Stansell representing the French Bull Dog Club of America.

Mr. Stansell: My name is Robin Stansell and I'm the Delegate for the French Bull Dog Club of America. Many of you know my wife, Cindy. Behind every woman, there is a strong, albeit quieter man. I have seen our sport from many angles: As a Conformation and Obedience Exhibitor, a breeder, a judge, an active club member, a Field Representative, a Vice President of Event Operations and as a Delegate. I know AKC inside and out and can successfully work with all. I was instrumental in the development of such programs as the Grand Championship and the National Owner Handler Series. I also know the global arena. I exhibited my dogs at dog shows throughout Europe while serving in the Army. I have judged all over the world and have made valuable contacts. While serving as Vice President, I developed and managed a financially successful program called AKC Global Services, which used our core strengths of registration and event processing to great advantage. We can do more to develop revenue using these core strengths. Sadly, the French Bull Dog Club is the poster child for attacks by the animal rights movement Torture Breeding propaganda. It has also been a victim of boutique breeding that is affecting an ever-increasing number of breeds producing types that are not historically possible, yet they are getting registered. Our registration system relies on the honesty of our customers. I can help find solutions that protect our historical breeds without disrupting the organization's income stream and alienating our base clientele. I have seen the challenges to purebred dogs on both domestic front and throughout the world. I have actively prevented the spread of breeding bans in countries as far away as New Zealand. I applaud the Parent Club Committee for establishing a task force to address the Torture Breeding Legislation. AKC is a club of clubs. We need to give our clubs more tools to effectively address the serious issues that confound our rights as breeders, that allow clubs to govern more efficiently and encourage financial and membership growth. I know our organization can do more using our core strengths to develop additional markets and additional ways to be the Dog's Champion. We must grow our sport, excite the youth, ensure the survival of the

institution of purebred dogs. I'll work tirelessly and maybe not so quietly to achieve these goals. I would appreciate your vote.

The eighth candidate is Sylvia A. Thomas representing the Kennel Club of Riverside.

Ms. Thomas: Good morning. I'm Sylvia Thomas and I represent the Kennel Club of Riverside which is in California. My professional life has been in education for 40 plus years. In that role I have done everything from meeting with boards to chairing boards to being responsible for curriculum for a three-college system that serves approximately 55,000 students, has 150 faculty, and 150 non-classified people who work to support everything that goes on in the classrooms. I have been responsible for the strategic plan for those colleges when they went from individual sites to full accredited colleges, which is a responsibility that I didn't take lightly. It required a lot of preparation and working with a lot of people. I understand what it's like to be part of a group and I am able to work independently, but I most enjoy being part of a good team. I look forward to being part of the Board as part of a very cohesive, collegial team. If I were honored with that position, I would want to keep in contact with my best friends, all of you, the Delegates, because it's important to know what's going on in the Delegate Body in order to share concerns, share those ideas, and forward those ideas to the Board. Those who know me will let you know I believe that I'm always prepared and preparing doesn't just mean showing up. It means doing a lot of study. If you could see me the night before I have a judging assignment, you would think I'm preparing to defend my dissertation. I study every standard and every illustrated standard. I look at the standards 1,000 times over before I ever walk into that ring. Why? Because I want to do a good job. I promise you that if I'm elected to the Board, I will do that same study, that same preparation, and I will do a good job for you. But mostly, I will listen to you because you will be the voice in my ear when I walk into that boardroom. Again, I thank you for your support. I thank you for being here today. And I thank you for loving our sport the way I do.

The ninth and final candidate for the Class of 2029 is Harvey M. Wooding representing San Mateo Kennel Club.

Mr. Wooding: Good morning again. We have four seats to be contested for the Class of 2029. Three of those seats are currently occupied by Directors that will term out and therefore are not eligible to be on the final ballot. There is an accumulation of experience and an awareness of issues that will be lost. For personal reasons, I wasn't able to complete my last term on the Board, but with the matters that caused me to leave the Board in 2019 far behind me, I can help fill a giant gap. Now think about my next two points. First, AKC is in a difficult period. We've heard about that this morning. The numbers show that once again we're sliding. We're definitely sliding. Will it get worse? How do you stop it? Second and equally alarming, a look at the world around us shows steady progress by animal rights extremists. They have gotten multiple governments on board to ban breeding, showing, even ownership of breeds they have selected for extinction based on inflammatory rhetoric and faulty research. They want to legislate us or regulate us out of business. They are after us. Along with their agenda, they have a plan and it's working. Our fight on the legislative front and our TV exposure has been

very helpful, but has AKC set out a plan to develop a toolkit and assistance for our clubs to get ahead of this menace? Do we have a plan? Solving a problem involves identifying the core issue; developing options for a fix; taking action sooner rather than later. I help solve problems. I focus on solutions. Here's a third point: Change. It can help us move forward. I like to think maybe while on the Board I played a small part in developing appreciation for productive change within the organization. Prime example: Just look at how we successfully pivoted during the COVID crisis, realizing how important it was for us to embrace change. Those willing to thrive, they embrace change. Those that don't, they fail. Make change a weapon for success. It works. Time to connect the dots. I'm active in the sport and have been for over 50 years. I've had experience on the AKC Board. I've had time off the Board to reflect on where I contributed and where I made mistakes. I've had broad management experience in the dog world. I have 50 plus years in business, both as a Senior Manager and a small business owner. I acknowledge that things are not always as simple as they seem. I'm comfortable knowing that productive change is valuable. I can bring freshness to the Board while still drawing on past experience. I fill a void. Final point, let us make no mistake: Our overriding goal must be to position AKC as the undisputed advocate for the dog and the go-to authority for all things dog. I'm committed to being a driver focused on moving the needle in a positive direction. I am sure every one of you agrees with this objective and hope that you recognize my dedication to it. Come talk with me. I'll be here all weekend. Thank you.

The Executive Secretary read the names of Delegates seated since the last meeting:
Nancy Amburgey, Mason, OH, to represent Akita Club of America
Barbara Steinbacher Dalane, Sussex, NJ, to represent Border Terrier Club of America
Sara Gildersleeve, Lake Katrine, NY, to represent Rockland County Kennel Club
June Johnston, Ashland City, TN, to represent German Shorthaired Pointer Club of America
Dr. Erin Kerfoot, PhD, Marion, VA, to represent Roanoke Kennel Club
Leslie Puppo-Rogers, Salisbury, NC, to represent Curly-Coated Retriever Club of America
Leslie Savoye, Lafayette, CA, to represent Contra Costa County Kennel Club
Allison Schultz, MD, Badger, MN, to represent Bracco Italiano Club of America
Dale Suzanne Tarbox, Columbus, NC, to represent Great Dane Club of America

The following Delegates, who were attending their first meeting in-person since their approval were introduced from the floor:

Nancy Amburgey, to represent Akita Club of America
Rebecca Barber, Ozark Kennel Club
Barbara Steinbacher Dalane, to represent Border Terrier Club of America
Sue Goldberg, to represent Lewiston-Auburn Kennel Club
Dr. Erin Kerfoot, PhD, to represent Roanoke Kennel Club
Leslie Puppo-Rogers, to represent Curly-Coated Retriever Club of America
Leslie Savoye, to represent Contra Costa County Kennel Club
Allison Schultz, to represent Bracco Italiano Club of America

The minutes of the September 10, 2024 Delegate Meeting were published in the October 2024 issue of the online *AKC Gazette* and the complete transcript was posted on the Delegate Portal on AKC's website. There were no corrections and the minutes were adopted as published.

The **American Hairless Terrier Club of America and Greeley Kennel Club** were duly elected as members of The American Kennel Club.

Dr. Thomas Davies delivered the Chairman's Report as follows:

Good morning again. We're here in Florida where almost every day starts with sun. Sometimes not so warm, but with sun. So that's the way I'm going to begin my report.

Welcome to Orlando for the magnificent AKC National Championship presented by Royal Canin. It is thrilling to be here to witness the best of the best in purebred dogs, Agility, Obedience and Rally. This year's entries are as impressive as ever, with well over 8000 entries across Conformation and more than 1200 entries in Companion Events combined. The holidays are of course upon us, and with this stellar assortment of dogs and handlers, we are rightfully in a celebratory mood.

But I want to turn our attention to a matter of significant importance to our community: the current state of AKC dog registrations. I would like to share with you some concerning trends that management and staff have observed and are closely monitoring and addressing.

AKC registrations have seen a notable decline from the peaks we experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, individual dog registrations are down by 14 percent from last year, and litter registrations have decreased by 17 percent. In fact, the number of litter registrations in 2024 has now fallen below the levels we witnessed in 2018. We in America are not facing this quandary alone. COVID peaks and post-pandemic declines have been reported by registering bodies around the world, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Mexico and most European countries.

Last year, we began to hear from many breeders who said they faced a decline in interest in their puppies or future litters. They reported having fewer puppy buyers on their waiting lists. This drop in demand for dogs seemed logical following the unprecedented surge in pet ownership during the pandemic, when many Americans welcomed their first, second, or even third dog into their homes. Maybe the time wasn't right for another dog. Our data, along with shelter adoption counts and pet industry research, indicate that the acquisition of new dogs has significantly decreased over the past 24 months.

The decline in pet ownership has set off a domino effect across the pet industry. This year, some of our sponsors called us for help to explain decreased demand for their products. Makers and sellers of dog food, crates, collars, leashes, and other equipment are reporting lower sales, returning to pre-COVID levels.

AKC's Registration Department is keenly focused on these trends, because their work is the brace that undergirds our fancy. Remember that registration is our profit center that brings in the funds to pay for our most important programs: Events. Government Relations. Public Education. Inspections. We need our registrations to ensure that AKC can continue to serve you, your clubs, your members, our dogs.

Our Registration Department studies dog population trends and estimates that eight million puppies need to be born each year in order to maintain the current population of about 90 million owned dogs in the United States. Most of these dogs are not purebred, but we believe they should be. Given the current situation, we may find ourselves on the brink of a shortage of high quality, purpose bred dogs. This is not in the best interest of dogs or owners – or AKC.

Registration data shows that on average, an AKC breeder typically breeds only one or two litters every year or so. If he or she decides to breed even less frequently, that annual litter becomes “once in a while” or eventually stops altogether. This shift may inadvertently surrender the pet market away from AKC to imported shelter dogs, doodles, designer dogs and other less regulated sources. In the face of a potentially shrinking population of dogs, it is more important than ever that new owners of registrable dogs take that important step of returning their dogs' applications to AKC.

Our Marketing Department has engaged an agency that made a new branding campaign to encourage the public to register their dogs. The campaign will consist of a television commercial and social media advertisements that showcase purebred dogs, responsible dog ownership and breeding. It highlights AKC's authority, and history yet positions our organization as approachable and friendly. When tested among our target audience, 18-to 44-year-olds, 37 percent said they were extremely likely to register their next purebred dog after being exposed to the campaign. You will see the new AKC commercial when you watch the broadcast of the AKC National Championship on December 29, 2024 on ABC television from 2-5 p.m. ET. The campaign will be rolled out in full this coming February. You will be the first to see a preview of the campaign today.

Internally, leadership and Staff are collaborating to facilitate Registration for our customers every step of the way. The Registration and Marketing Departments are improving registration pages on our website and deploying new email campaigns to remind dog owners to register. Many of you are also seeing enhancements in our communications about the AKC Breeder of Merit program.

The AKC Registration and Information Technology teams are also working to improve online registration application processes. We have a new, simplified Online Litter Registration system. Now, litters conceived by artificial insemination can be registered online. The Online Litter system is now fully integrated with the Breeder Toolkit, which makes it easier for breeders to select dogs and track progeny. The new system is also linked with Prepaid Dog Registration, which helps Breeders of Merit comply with their commitment to register all dogs in a litter. Look out for planned improvements to the Online Dog Registration system in

the first quarter of 2025 as well. Be assured that your Board and Staff are firmly committed to addressing and responding to trends that threaten our fancy and our sports. But we cannot do it alone. Upholding and advancing our registry are our mission and our shared responsibility. Your support, dedication, and action are crucial. We must all encourage our own puppy buyers to register their dogs. Whether a puppy is eligible for full or limited registration application, please make sure new owners know why registering is important.

Our services, education and opportunities for dog owners are unparalleled. The AKC community wants to be here for them – for all dogs and owners – no matter if that dog is destined for the show ring or a soft place on the couch. Seek out new faces that you might see at dog shows. Facilitate their quest for a purebred dog with your contacts. Encourage your club members to breed when the time is right and offer to mentor them. We owe it to ourselves to act on behalf of this hobby that brings us all so much joy. Wishing you a wonderful weekend, and very happy holidays. Thank you.

For the President's Report the Chair called on Kirsten Bahlke, Vice President of Marketing, to present AKC's new Brand and Registration campaigns. The goal of this initiative is to stem the tide of double-digit registration declines in litters and individual dogs which has substantial consequences on AKC profitability and programs.

Ms. Bahlke: Thank you, Dennis. Hi, everyone. As Dennis said, my name is Kirsten Bahlke and I have the pleasure of leading the AKC Marketing group. I am here today to walk you through some really exciting new programs to address everything that everyone's been talking about in terms of the challenges that we're facing. I'm going to talk about two things today. The first is a Brand campaign. You're probably thinking what is a brand campaign. Well, other than marketing speak, it is made up of two pieces. The brand which we all know and love is AKC. The campaign is really a series of activities where we're talking to consumers and where you'll see it. You'll see it on TV, as we just talked about, during the national broadcast of our show. You'll see it on social media. You'll see it online when you're doing a Google search and you'll even in certain cities see it in real life, IRL for the target audience, by the way.

Who is that target audience? Unfortunately, or fortunately, the target is not us. The target is the next generation of purebred dog lovers. That's who we've been trying to understand and trying to see how we can get them to be purebred dog owners. A critical piece of that is first we have to make them aware. We have some of the lowest levels of awareness as AKC among those under 35, so we really need to get in front of them. Then when we're in front of them, they have to not only understand us, but then they really need to love and connect with us. Because if they don't, we'll never get them to go from awareness to action. What have we been doing? Dr. Davies mentioned our new advertising agency, the Leap Group. We've been working very closely with them and first we started with research. As I said, how do we understand this target group and what can we say and how can we interact with them? Then we did work with the Board, with a lot of people in the organization to align, does this make sense, are we aligned on this target on how we are talking and what we need to change. Then we went into what's called creative development. That just means we went in to develop the assets, what is

it going to look like, what are we actually going to say, what images are we going to use. Then we took a piece of that and put it back in front of that target audience and said what do you think? We actually surveyed almost 1,000 people in that younger group of consumers and showed them a rough version of our commercial and then asked them a series of questions. I'm going to share some of the data with you now. In that survey after they saw what we call an animatic, which is basically they saw a little short video that encapsulated our concept and the script. We said, please rank your agreement with the following statements. This is my setup slide, so I'll just share with you a that a score of 1 is I don't agree at all and a 5 is I agree completely. For the positive statements, you want to be closer to that 5. The numbers I show on the bottom of the slide are the weighted average responses, again the closer to 5 the better. Consumers, this important younger demographic, told us after viewing that commercial, I feel the AKC understands the experiences of dog ownership. They felt connected. They said the script made me feel excited to spend time with my dog. So here we are. We understand you, younger dog owner. We get you. The script feels relevant to people in my age group and my lifestyle. That is a huge barrier for AKC, as you might imagine. It's not something that comes to us naturally right now. Then this script makes me more curious to learn about AKC. They're aware and now they're starting to want to learn more and step into that action. Another thing we asked them after they had viewed our commercial was, please choose the clearest messages you got from this script. Here are the top four that they chose. AKC advocates for dogs. AKC cares about the well-being of dogs. We provide information and resources, and we are knowledgeable of breeds. That's a pretty good set of things for them to take away. I hope you agree. Then finally we said, how does this script make you feel, what words come to mind? By the way, we did have words that weren't so positive, but I am showing you the top four here. This is what that younger generation told us: They thought the script came across as friendly, trustworthy, knowledgeable, and joyful. We are really happy that those are the words that they're associating with AKC.

To top it all off, we have two more things. One, 60 percent of the respondents in this younger demographic said I feel more positive about AKC having seen this commercial. Two, as Dr. Davies indicated, 37 percent after viewing the commercial said they would be extremely likely to register their purebred dog. That's a statistically significant increase versus what they said before seeing the commercial. Have I tantalized you enough? Would you like to see the commercial? All right. Fantastic. This is our finished 60-second spot. You will be seeing it here. There are also flyers outside with a QR code, so you can view it as many times as you like on your mobile. Without further adieu.

(Video played.)

Ms. Bahlke: All right. Thank you very much. As I said, I encourage you to get the QR code, look at it on your mobile, make sure you can hear all the words. In my obviously biased opinion, it does a wonderful job of talking about the many facets of AKC. As you can see, we spotlight breeders, we spotlight care, responsibility, information, and it really does resonate with consumers.

Another part of this campaign, which if you have been over on the show floor you may have noticed – we have a print side, if you will. Instead of just videos, we also have still images and you probably have seen these with our tagline of "Everything that we do we do for dogs." Also, this is something that very much resonated with this younger audience. We're sharing it with you, our very important core audience as a teaser before this goes anywhere else in the world. It will be on the ABC broadcast and then the official launch, as Dr. Davies said, is February 17, 2025 where it will go across the channels that I mentioned earlier. But we're not done. We need to take people from awareness to action. We're in the process of developing a campaign specifically targeted to registering your dog and why register. We've heard a lot today about what's happening, and we think this is a really great way to connect with that younger dog owner and get them to register. I'll tell you why we believe that. Again, we talked to the consumer, and we put the script in front of them and said take a look at this, read it, hear it and tell us what you think. Again, we asked some questions. Rank your agreement. Same thing as earlier, 5 is better. The script makes clear the benefits of registering my dog with AKC. Very close – that's an extremely high number, so this is excellent for us in terms of really communicating and understanding. Makes me curious again. Now you want to make sure you're not just getting somebody to go, oh, yeah, that's nice. We want them to start taking action. If they're curious, they're going to be more likely to take action. Speaking of action, this script motivates me to register my dog with AKC. When was the last time we heard that? That is really exciting news. 61 percent of the consumers who were surveyed said they feel more positive about AKC. I do want to point out that these two pieces of research were done separately, even though the number happens to be very similar. The people who saw this registration script had not seen the awareness script and vice versa. Imagine when the two were together. Very powerful. We did ask both before they saw the commercial and after if they were more likely to register their dog. What you can see is post exposure, so after they saw our commercial, we had a statistically significant higher number in the top two boxes with responses of extremely likely and very likely to register. We're very excited about the possibilities that this brings. I'm going to walk you through it. This is in a much earlier stage than where we are with the awareness campaign. The awareness campaign launches first. What I have to share with you today is going to take your imagination and a little bit of listening skills. This is just a concept. Think of how our target market talks about taking their relationship to the next level. That's sort of what we're doing a spoof on. I'm going to read through the script and walk you through the ideas of the visuals that will go with it. Then I'll repeat with just the voiceover and just what would be heard. Imagine this commercial starts with a woman who's at her closet or maybe she's actually at a coat rack and she's moving some coats and you're thinking she's making space for somebody new in her life. Then you see her hang up a dog leash, maybe a dog sweater. Then the voiceover says – sort of your announcer – "Finding the right one can take time, but when you know, you know." Then we see the dog. We did this spot with a Golden Retriever. We're currently casting. *Anyone who's going to have puppies in the Cleveland area, please let us know.* Then you see the dog walking next to the woman. A pull back shot, and she says, "So I made it official; registering her with AKC." Someone off camera says, "Cute couple." Now they're outdoors and the owner is looking down playfully and joyfully. We see the dog playing and then a voiceover comes and says, "AKC is a not-for-profit that connected me with other dog lovers." Now in the backyard and she's teaching her dog some

tricks. She says, "And taught me what she needs with breed specific tips and tricks." Then we come into a room and they're on the couch snuggling and then she says, "I even got to peek into her ancestry." Another pull back shot and we can see she is looking at a scrapbook including photos from her breeder when she picked up her puppy because AKC has her whole family history. The owner points to a photo talking to her dog, and it's the breeder's farm, "That's where your folks are from." Now we see the woman outside again tossing a ball and the dog playing and the voiceover says, "Declare your love. Register your dog at AKC.org/register." The dog comes back with the ball and gives it to the owner in a beautiful scene. She says, "Such a good fetch." "American Kennel Club, everything we do we do for dogs." So now imagine those scenes, and I'm just going to do the copy. *Finding the right one can take time, but when you know, you know. I made it official, registering her with AKC. AKC is a not-for-profit that connected me with other dog lovers and taught me what she needs with breed specific tips and tricks. I even got to peek into her ancestry because AKC has her whole family history. That's where your folks are from. Declare your love. Register your dog at AKC.org/register. Such a good fetch. American Kennel Club. Everything we do we do for dogs.*

Now this will make a little more sense. There are buttons outside on the table that say, "Declare your love." I would love for people to be wearing this wherever and whenever. Yay, I see someone is already wearing it. What does that mean, declare your love? Registering your dog is a way to declare your love for that breed and that dog. Join us in that. In January 2025 we will be in Cleveland and I am very serious about looking for litters of puppies that will be around three months old to be in this commercial. We will then go into all the work behind the scenes to actually produce it and get it ready to launch in probably late March 2025. We will have both the awareness campaign and the registration campaign on air at the same time to have that double effect. Everything we do we do for dogs. Thank you very much.

Ted Phillips, CFO, delivered the Financial Report as follows:

Good morning. Thanks for attending and it's always good to see you. I agree with Dr. Davies, it does start out sunny here in Orlando and we've got a great show ahead of us.

Today I'm presenting key performance indicators and financial results for the nine months ended September 30, 2024. These data points are essential to telling the story of AKC's operating results. This chart provides a comparison of litter and dog registrations for the nine months ended September 30, 2024 and 2023. As of September 30, 2024, litter registrations totaled 188,643, which is 17 percent lower than the same period in the prior year. Dog registrations totaled 410,901, which is 14 percent lower than the same period in 2023. These non-financial statistics support the financial results that we will review shortly. Looking at sports and events information, we continue to see an increase in the total number of events and entries as shown on this slide. As of September 30, 2024, we see 11 percent growth in events totaling 22,192 over the same period of the prior year. The line across the top of the two columns shows that entries climbed by 2 percent to 2.84 million.

As with every good not-for-profit organization like AKC, we have major program areas. Let's look at the major program revenues as of the end of September. Please note that net operating

income for this period is \$2.2 million, which is principally driven by interest and dividends for the nine-month period ended September 30, 2024. Revenues from operations total \$69.7 million, and are principally driven by registrations, event fees, sponsorship, and advertising. As of September 30, 2024 revenues from operations are 9 percent lower than the same period in 2023. Registration and events fees total \$47.6 million, which is 68 percent of total revenue, and \$5.5 million or 10 percent lower than the same period in 2023. Registration and related revenue constitute one of the two major programs that we'll look at which is led by litter and dog registrations, that total \$34 million or 48 percent of operating revenues. This is trailing in the same period in 2023 by \$6 million or 15 percent. Litter and dog registration represent 36 percent of total revenue. Sports and events is the other major program that drives the majority of our revenue. Recording and service fees represent 20 percent of operating revenues or \$13.7 million and is 5 percent higher than the same period in the prior year. Please note that given the current revenue levels and expense levels, this major program is projected to return a net operating loss from operations at year end. The final significant area of revenue is advertisement, sponsorship, and royalties, which constitute 20 percent of operating revenues totaling \$14.3 million which is comparable for the same period in 2023.

Total operating expenses are \$69.7 million, which is 2.7 percent higher than the same period in 2023. Staff and travel costs comprise the largest component operating expenses at \$35.8 million, which is 6.5 percent higher than the same period prior year. The other significant expense area are professional and other service fees, which include IT and specialists that we need to hire. That expense line totals \$13 million and is 19 percent of total operating expenses. Annual donations from AKC to charitable organizations total \$4.2 million or 6 percent of operating expenses. All other operating expenses recorded on this slide are consistent or lower than the prior year. As we look forward to the end of this calendar year, which is the end of our financial operating year, we expect to end the year with a net operating income at break even.

Finally, our balance sheet. This represents our financial position as of September 30, 2024. Total assets are \$270 million which are \$10 million higher than December 31, 2023, which represents investment earnings over the nine-month period ended September 30, 2024. The largest asset class on the balance sheet are investments and cash. The investment portfolio for these nine months returned a gain of 10.7 percent, and early indications from November result in a 13 percent gain. The overall financial condition of AKC is experiencing challenges but is still solid. We obviously feel the general economic impact of inflation. Thank you for your time today. We appreciate your dedication. We look forward to serving you. As always, my information is available, so feel free to reach out.

There was a vote on the proposed amendment to **Chapter 16, Section 2** of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows – Championships*, which inserts verbiage to award championship points to a class dog awarded Reserve Best in Show. Points earned would be based on the highest number of points awarded in any breed from all groups excluding that from which Best in Show advanced.

The amendment was proposed by the Delegate Dog Show Rules Committee and brought forward with approval from the AKC Board of Directors.

There were no questions or discussion.

There was a two-thirds vote in the affirmative and the amendments were adopted.

The Chair called on the Executive Secretary to read the proposed amendment to **Chapter 11, Section 8-A** of the Rules Applying to Dog Shows – Dog Show Entries, Conditions of Dogs Affecting Eligibility.

Ms. DiNardo: This amendment to **Chapter 11, Section 8-A** of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows – Dog Show Entries, Conditions of Dogs Affecting Eligibility*, inserts text to establish the administrative disqualification of a dog that if on three occasions an Event Committee report determined the dog attacked a person or dog at an AKC event, presents a hazard to persons or other dogs, but no injury resulted. It also inserts text for greater clarity concerning the impact of any awards received at a show where a dog was disqualified under this section, and the ineligibility of a dog disqualified by a judge, the Event Committee, or administratively by the AKC for aggression to compete at AKC events or be on the grounds until its eligibility has been reinstated by the AKC.

Upon approval corresponding revisions will be made to the following Performance Events rulebooks:

- *Basset Hound Field Trial Rules – Chapter 7, Section 14*
- *Beagle Field Trial Rules for Brace, Small Pack and Small Pack Option – Chapter 7, Section 14*
- *Beagle Field Trial Rules for Large Pack Field Trials – Chapter 7, Section 14*
- *Dachshund Field Trial Rules – Chapter 7, Section 14*
- *Pointing Breed Field Trial Rules – Chapter 8, Section 13*
- *Retriever Field Trial Rules – Chapter 6, Section 5*
- *Spaniel Field Trial Rules – Chapter 10*

This amendment was proposed by the Delegate Dog Show Rules Committee, supported by the Companion Events, Field Trial and Hunting Test Events, and Herding, Earthdog, Coursing and Scent Work Events Committees, and brought forward with approval from the AKC Board of Directors.

It will be published in two issues of the *AKC Gazette* and you will be asked to vote on it at the March 2025 Meeting. The full text is on the worksheet previously emailed.

There were no questions or discussion.

The Chair advised the Delegate Body that the proposed rule changes to **Chapter 11, Section 8** and **Chapter 6, Section 2** of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows* will be read/voted as one amendment.

The Chair called on the Executive Secretary to read the proposed amendment to **Chapter 11, Section 8** of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows – Dog Show Entries, Conditions of Dogs Affecting Eligibility*.

Ms. DiNardo: This amendment to **Chapter 11, Section 8** of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows – Dog Show Entries, Conditions of Dogs Affecting Eligibility*, allows dogs that have been neutered or spayed to compete in Brace and/or Teams classes at independent specialties or all-breed dog shows that do not offer competition beyond Best of Breed.

This amendment was proposed by the Delegate Dog Show Rules Committee and brought forward with approval from the AKC Board of Directors.

It will be published in two issues of the *AKC Gazette* and you will be asked to vote on it at the March 2025 Meeting. The full text is on the worksheet previously emailed.

There were no questions or discussion.

The Chair called on the Executive Secretary to read the proposed amendment to **Chapter 6, Section 2** of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows – Premium Lists and Closing of Entries*.

Ms. DiNardo: This amendment to **Chapter 6, Section 2** of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows – Premium Lists and Closing of Entries*, inserts verbiage specifying that it must be stated in the premium list if neutered or spayed entrants are permitted to compete in the Brace and/or Team classes.

This amendment was proposed by the Delegate Dog Show Rules Committee and brought forward with approval from the AKC Board of Directors.

It will be published in two issues of the *AKC Gazette* and you will be asked to vote on it at the March 2025 Meeting. The full text is on the worksheet previously emailed.

There were no questions or discussion.

Ashley Jacot, Director of Education, presented the Eddy Awards:
We know that quality dogs come from good breeders. Education is the cornerstone of progress. In that knowledge and expertise are indispensable. This year's recipients of the AKC Eddy Award exemplified the very best in breeder education by offering unique educational events, courses, documents, and mentoring opportunities that inspire and elevate the breeding community. Before announcing the honorees, I would like to take a moment to recognize and

thank my fellow committee members, Mari-Beth O'Neill and Anne Bowes who diligently reviewed the nominations and selected the recipients.

It is my great pleasure to announce the 2024 AKC Eddy Award recipients. When called, please come up to receive your award.

- Otterhound Club of America – Delegate, Joellen Gregory, DVM
- Welsh Terrier Club of America – Delegate, Bruce Schwartz
- Staffordshire Bull Terrier Club of America – Delegate, Amy Schwoeble
- American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club, Inc. – Delegate, Claire Parker
- Siberian Husky Club of America – Delegate, Ann Mariah Cook
- English Cocker Spaniel Club of America – Delegate, Beth Hendrick
- Leonberger Club of America – Delegate, Don James
- Golden Retriever Club of America – Delegate, Ellen Hardin

Congratulations to these outstanding clubs for their remarkable contributions to breeder education. Your works inspires us all to strive for excellence in every aspect of our shared passion. Thank you.

Doug Ljungren, EVP of Sports & Events, made a presentation on behalf of AKC and the Junior Task Force Committee, in support of 4-H Canine Clubs:

Juniors are important to the future of AKC, our clubs, and our sports. AKC would like to acknowledge those clubs that have engaged with their local 4-H groups in a sustained and meaningful way. Normally Mari-Beth O'Neill would be giving these awards. She's across the street being a Show Chair for the Juniors and Puppy Stakes. She has her hands full with 1,750 entries. I'm proud to stand in for her.

We're going to recognize two clubs and if those Delegates could come forward while I'm reading what their clubs have done. That's the Catoctin Kennel Club and the Greenville Kennel Club.

Since its inception in the early 1980s Catoctin Kennel Club has maintained a close relationship with its community 4-H club called the Tailwaggers. This has included conducting Obedience, Rally and Conformation classes for 4-H members, permitting 4-H club members to train at their facilities, sponsoring and judging the annual 4-H Junior's Conformation and Obedience show at the county fair, and immersing Tailwagger 4-H members in their club activities including stewarding and assisting at onsite shows, presentations at club meetings, and sponsorship of fundraising activities. Through the years the instruction and training facilities provided by CKC have helped prepare 4-H members to compete in both the county and state levels in Conformation, Obedience, and Rally and in addition to exhibit at AKC shows. In 2019, alone, CKC volunteers provided over 160 service hours of free training and facility use to the Tailwaggers 4-H club, and that level of support has continued to the present day.

One longtime 4-H member has become a Conformation Dog Show Steward, a member of the Mid-Atlantic Stewards Association, a licensed AKC Juniors Judge, and a certified AKC Show

Secretary. His development was supported over the years by CKC, where he stewarded specialty shows, trained on CKC rings, and was educated by CKC instructors. His success at the AKC level was celebrated at the October 2024 CKC general membership meeting as its main presentation topic, with him present to share his experience.

Our congratulations and appreciation to Catoctin Kennel Club for their ongoing mentorship and support provided to the 4-H Tailwaggers and introducing young fanciers into AKC events.

The Greenville Kennel Club has been supporting the 4-H community throughout South Carolina providing training and Junior Showmanship, Agility, Obedience and Rally. In 2023 Greenville established an annual budget for the Juniors/4-H Committee to fund rental of training spaces for their classes, purchase equipment and supplies. With the elimination of the dog ownership requirement for Junior Showmanship, Greenville members have provided dogs to interested 4-H members to compete in local AKC Junior Showmanship events. Training classes continue to be offered which include CGC training. Our congratulations and appreciation to the Greenville Kennel Club for your ongoing support of the local 4-H youth.

Gail LaBerge, Delegate from the Atlanta Obedience Club, presented an update on the AKC PAC:

Good morning. I'm always amazed that when I see you guys in the hall that none of you run away from me screaming, "The woman wants money." Because I do. Each Delegate meeting one of the members of the AKC PAC Board does approach you and does speak about our need for funds in order to help elect officials who think along the lines of AKC on legislation. Before I do ask for those donations, I want to give you a little bit of preliminary figures on what our donations did in the last election cycle that ended in November. On the federal level and state level combined we had a little more than 90 percent success rate of who we supported that was elected. 90 percent is a very high percentage for any PAC, whether it's a very large one or a small one like we are. Remember we are one issue PAC. We can only look at their position on canine issues. The state level we were higher than that. We probably were around 94 percent. I wanted you to know that your money is going to good use in how we have used it to support these candidates. Now, at this time there's two special ways that you can support the PAC. All of you have heard us talk about the seven day, six nights in Costa Rica sweepstakes that also has \$1,000 gift card for your travel and transportation from the airport to the private house that's literally right on the beach. That drawing is Sunday. I have a few tickets. Sheila Goffe, our wonderful Vice President from Government Relations at the booth has a few. What's left will go across to be sold this weekend. If you haven't gotten yours, you can get them from me at lunch or you can get them from Sheila. If you are here all weekend, you want to hit the booth early because when they're gone, they're gone. The other thing that we have is the wonderful caricature artist back. Raphael is over there starting today to do the pictures for you with just you, you and the dogs, or just the dogs. This year the suggested donation is \$40 for two images per ornament maximum, or you can get three ornaments for \$100 with two images per ornament. As always, we appreciate every one of you that donates to the AKC PAC and understands what we're trying to do. I do want to give a big shout out to those who have signed up to do the recurring donation monthly. That also helps us – and I

think Ted will agree with me on this – to figure out how much we have coming in that's going to immediately go back out. One final reminder, none of your donation goes to administrative costs. Those are all handled internally at Government Relations. Every dime you give goes back out. I wish all of you happy holidays and safe travels. If you're entered across the street, I wish you good luck.

The Chair informed the Delegates that the Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at the Doubletree Newark Airport Hotel in Newark, NJ. The March meeting is the election of the Class of 2029. More detailed meeting information will be emailed to the Delegates as soon as it becomes available.

Lunch was served in Grand Ballroom C.

Delegates were not required to turn in badges. New badges will be printed in March. Delegates were given an option to recycle the badge holders and lanyards.

The following Delegates spoke during New Business:

Don James, Delegate from the Leonberger Club of America, who spoke as a member of the Parent Club Committee, announced the four recipients of the Pat Laurans Difference Maker Award for the quarter. The honorees were Dr. Joellen Gregory, Karen Burgess, Duane Butherus and Dr. Charles Garvin.

Harvey Goldberg, Delegate from the Somerset Kennel Club gave his support for the new marketing campaigns but addressed concerns about not having included language to specifically feature purebred dogs in the ads, as well as an incorrect breeder reference. *The Chair ensured that the breeder reference error would be rectified immediately.*

Mr. Goldberg requested clarification on the value of the investment portfolio from the Financial Report. *Ted Phillips, CFO, explained the AKC balance sheet from the presentation including total asset breakdown and investment numbers.*

Mr. Goldberg recommended that the AKC Board reduce entry fees to assist the clubs nationwide that are struggling.

Monica Stoner, Delegate from the Saluki Club of America, and Coordinator for *Perspectives*, asked Delegates to read the current issue of the newsletter, and to submit articles sharing personal thoughts, history of breed involvement and pictures for the next issue. She expressed appreciation for the guidance of designer Russell Bianca, Director, AKC Publications who will retire after 27 years.

Helen Prince, Delegate from the Scottish Terrier Club of America referred to a flyer that was handed out at the Parent Clubs Committee meeting requesting information from Parent Clubs for an online Educational Conference being planned by the Parent Clubs Committee. Presidents, Secretaries and Delegates will receive an email on January 1, 2025 from Peter

Piusz requesting five recommendations of what your club needs help with to be included as components at the conference. The deadline for responses will be around February 1, 2025. She urged Delegates to follow through for their Parent Clubs to make the conference as comprehensive as possible.

Margaret Pough, Delegate from the Finger Lakes Kennel Club suggested that AKC remove the late fee from dog registrations.

On behalf of the AKC Board and Staff, the Chair wished the Delegate Body a healthy and happy holiday.

Hearing no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

(One sharp rap of the gavel.)

(Proceedings concluded at 12:33 p.m. ET.)

The opinions expressed by the speakers may not necessarily reflect those of The American Kennel Club.