

## **2009 AWDF Annual Meeting Minutes May 21, 2009**

Meeting commenced at 8:37 am EST

### **Roll Call**

#### **Executive Board present for the meeting**

President: Albert Govednik Vice President: Lyle Roetemeyer

Secretary: Michelle Testa Treasurer Sean O'Kane

Executive Directors: Vera Reeves, Glenn Stephenson

#### **Club Delegates present:**

Mark Chase/ United States Boxer Club

Steve Canuso / United States Rottweiler Club

Johannes Grewe / United Schutzhund Club of America for the GSD

Vera Reeves / Working Riesenschнауzer Federation

Dave Kroyer – U.S. Mondioring Association

Anne Camper / American Working Malinois Assoc.

Paige Shriver / Federation American Bulldog

Annetta Cheek & Ron Marshall / Working Pitbull Terrier Club of America

Jeff Govednik / North American Working Airedale Terrier Assoc.

Dyan Harper / LV/DVG America

#### **Clubs absent:**

United Dobermann Club

North America Working Bouvier

Authentic Hovawarts of North America

Society in America for the Cane Corso Italiano

### **Presidents Report**

President Al Govednik began the meeting by thanking everyone for attending & thanking Jim Honda and the Free Dog! Schutzhund club for hosting our 2009 event.

He reiterated to the attendees that the FCI is very enthusiastic about the AWDF's presence in Europe and directed everyone to read the letter in their handout from the FCI supporting our position within the FCI organization.

He then read his president's report:

Welcome sport friends,

This past year was quite busy and eventful for our organization. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone particularly Lyle Roetemeyer, Sean O'Kane, and Michelle Testa who consistently work hard in making our federation a success.

I would also like to thank Mr. Jim Honda and the Free Dog Schutzhund club for hosting our 2009 championship.

I want to extend a warm welcome to our all of our competitors, as well as our judges: Wilfried Schapermeier, Robert Markschlager, Mike Hamilton, and Nikki Banfield. I wish everyone all the best during our event.

I will just touch a little bit on the highlights of this last year. As you all know we have regular telephone conferences. I believe these calls help keep all of us informed and aware of current events happening

around us and within our federation. Everything contained within my yearly report has been discussed on our conference calls. This information is listed in more detail on our web site. Please note, our secretary Michelle Testa, has been doing a good job of getting our telephone conference meeting minutes posted in a timely fashion. As a reminder past meeting minutes, and other notices are updated regularly on our AWDF website. [www.AWDF.net](http://www.AWDF.net)

Some of the things we accomplished this year include the standardization of score books within our federation. This has been a long project, and we still have to work out some details. I am very confident working with one score book throughout our federation will be a real good addition to our federation members. Unification of our score books just makes everything so much easier for our judges, trial secretaries, record keeping, etc.

While attending the FCI IPO championship in Belgium, FCI working commission president Frans Jansen was able to arrange a meeting with FCI Executive Director Yves DeClercq. Lyle Roetemeyer, and myself had a long discussion with Mr. DeClercq regarding our federation and how the FCI views us. Shortly after that meeting I received a letter that I shared with all of our delegates. The letter basically states that we (AWDF) have been solid supporters of the FCI working commission for some time, and we will continue to be invited to participate in all FCI working dog commission activities.

The RH (Search and Rescue) program is growing in America. Sean O'Kane, and myself have been working with a few of our members to develop a better relationship with the search and rescue community here in the United States. We need to continue to support and embrace this program. The RH opens the door for new people whose dog training roots, are not schutzhund based. So we have a great opportunity to expand our federation membership base. I would like to add, that we have an invitation to attend the RH championship as well.

Last December, the AWDF was again invited to the FCI working commission judges workshop. Johannes Grewe, Sandi Purdy and I attended this meeting located in Nova Gorica, Slovenia. Frans Jansen, Wilfried Schapermeier, Robert Markschlager, Eberhard Uekoetter, and Gunter Diegel all lead discussions relating to judging and rules interpretations. It is very important for us to continue to attend these meetings, as we have been allowed to express our opinions. That's quite an important relationship because in America, our member clubs are the protectors of the breeds that were developed by our European friends.

Our own AWD titles/program became a reality this last year as well. This program was a culmination of work between several clubs and puts us in a very nice position as we can now offer an award that is truly American based and allows our member clubs an opportunity to offer more diverse programs to their respective members.

Mondioring is making great strides internationally, and our people are very involved in this process, and are working hand in hand with the FCI.

In closing I would like to thank everyone for the strong work that has been put into our federation. It has been a pleasure working with each of you whether it has been problem solving or creating some new ideas.

Yours in Sport,  
Al Govednik  
AWDF President

### **Vice President Report:**

Lyle thanked everyone as well and began reading his report:

Vice President's Message:

Since being elected as your AWDF Vice President, I have helped President Al Govednik on any project whenever asked. I attended the FCI Working Commission Meeting in Torino, Italy in the fall of 2007; I chaired the 2008 AWDF Board Meeting in Gadsden, AL and oversaw the championship activities when President Al Govednik could not attend due to his work commitments. I also took the time to travel to Belgium and meet with FCI Secretary General Yves DeClerq and President Al

Govednik to discuss the future of the AWDF and our continued inclusion as participants in the working championships hosted by the FCI.

I feel, without question, that we have been successful in furthering the goals of protecting the working heritage of our beloved working breeds, the breed evaluations and dog sports with which we are all actively involved. The AWDF continues to grow and as we grow we must continue to be true to our working breeds that our individual clubs represent. Continuing to build a strong future for our breed and sport clubs lies in our understanding of loyalty to the goals of the Federation and our ability to work with and support all member clubs of the AWDF. Enabling these goals starts with each one of our individual AWDF member clubs. It is important that those that are selected by their organizations to serve the AWDF in any capacity; whether it is as an officer, delegate, committee member, trial helper, etc.; are given the positive support they need from the club they are representing in addition to the Federation as a whole.

As we continue to work together to build a strong future, we should continue to adhere to the FCI standards for structure and temperament. With that being said, I wish to make reference to my Vice President's report from last year's meeting.

Meaningful success rarely comes from a single action. Success is better defined as a consistent pattern as opposed to an isolated event. Success is ours when we persistently embody the discipline, the integrity, the positive attitude, the respect for fellow members and all of the other attributes that define success. We also have many members of our federation that have given countless hours of work to making this board, our committees and our annual events very positive functioning pieces of our success. The amount of time and effort that have been put forth by President Al Govednik, myself and countless others to promote open and honest discussions amongst our federation as well as members of the world community of working dog enthusiasts have proven successful. As a united federation, I am extremely pleased with our efforts to protect the working heritage of our breeds. Our efforts as member clubs of the American Working Dog Federation will continue to be defined as a success as long as we are all willing to continue this pattern of consistency. I am extremely grateful and appreciative of everyone's efforts.

The future is bright for the American Working Dog Federation because the future continues to be created by positive hard working people within our organization. Those members who wish to be negative make a lot of noise about how bad they think things are for them. Those who are positive, quietly and steadily make real improvements and contributions to our federation. Problems will always crop up and there will always be challenges. It is the same in all walks of life. Yet, we should be mindful that there are those among us that have the vision and the drive to transform challenges into opportunities. Those that have courage, commitment and discipline will continue to build a better federation for all of our members. For every high-profile guru of doom who complains about how unfairly they have been treated and/or attempt to slander fellow members, there are hundreds of others who are working tirelessly to make our organization even better. For every self proclaimed crisis that is rumored and bandied about from chat list to chat list, there are hundreds of real and meaningful successes that go unnoticed, but those successes do have an enormously positive influence on our federation's present and future. While negative thinking members continue to obsess over the past and/or their lack of having their personal agendas promoted, positive members are busy working to build the future for all member clubs of the American Working Dog Federation.

As always, I wish to express my sincere thanks to each and every member for their continued support of their member clubs and their spirit of camaraderie in furthering the goals of our Federation. For twenty years, the efforts of this Federation to protect and preserve our working breeds and breed evaluations have continued to ensure that our future generations will be able to

experience the joy of owning a working dog with true working temperament. I hope and pray that as a federation we will never lose our focus in maintaining the proper temperament of our beloved breeds as working dogs.

I wish each of you happiness and success with your dogs in all walks of your life!

Lyle Roetemeyer  
AWDF Vice President

### **Treasures Report:**

Sean states our Federation is doing well financially compared to 2 years ago. He informed the group that there has been an over all increase in membership numbers (clubs combined). The trophy donations this year reached \$4700.

He handed out the annual budget to everyone and asked that if there were any questions or concerns to please contact him.

### **Secretary's Report:**

Michelle asked if anyone had any questions pertaining to the March TC minutes and that they were already posted on the website. She continued by thanking our webmaster Judy Johnson for her work in meeting the needs of the AWDF by assisting the Secretary in posting all pertinent information on the website. Michelle wants the attendees to know that without Judy's quick responses to her email requests we wouldn't be able to maintain as current a site as we have now.

### **Elections**

Ballots were handed out to the delegates and executive board for the elections by the Secretary Michelle Testa.

Candidates each gave a brief speech before the voting

Votes were tallied by Treasure Sean O'Kane and Secretary Michelle Testa

#### **Results**

Candidates for Vice President Lyle Roetemeyer & Mark Chase  
Elected for the 2009-2011 term – **Lyle Roetemeyer** 14 to 1 votes

Secretary elected - **Michelle Testa** 2009-2011 term

No other candidates for the position

Candidates for Executive Director at Large:

Ronald Harris, Johanness Grewe (withdrew from the slate) & Dyan Harper (nominated from the floor)

Director elected for the 2009-2011 term – **Dyan Harper** 12 to 2 votes

### **Acceptance of a club addition to the AWDF**

The Society in America for the Cane Corso Italiano

The vote was motioned by President Al G. to be tabled 2<sup>nd</sup> by Paige S. all were in favor. The SACCI club is to remain in guest status. Sean O'Kane states that this club has paid their dues this year.

Glenn Stephenson stated that the Constitution and By-laws needs to be reviewed in regards to the term of "Guest status"

### Events committee

Nomination of **John Wiitanen** to the events committee came from the floor by Michelle Testa. She states that John would be an asset as an addition to the committee. He has a lot of past experience in putting together successful nationals.

Al Govednik stated that as president he would like to keep the following people on the events committee: Sean O'kane as committee Chair, Michelle Testa, Lyle Roetemeyer and add John Wiitanen to this committee.

Motion was made by Dyan Harper

Seconded by Jeff G.

All were in favor – none opposed.

Sean spoke to the delegates and board in regards to the committees responsibilities to the future of our events. Moving forward the committee will have more control over the process of the championship including taking over the development of the website. It is very important that the correct information is out there.

Michelle added that everything that is communicated through or about our event should be overseen by the committee prior to posting and should always represent the position of the AWDF.

Anne Camper suggests the events committee develop a process for control. Al stated we will be working diligently on the project

### **Regulations regarding the use of electric and prong collars at AWDF Championships**

Al Govednik had already spoken with the European judges and gave an explanation in regards to the use of these tools. The judges were receptive and supportive of our situation.

Sean spoke in review of the power point presentation and want to let everyone know his appreciation of Vera Reeves representing the WRSF position of the total omission of the prong and e-collars at the AWDF events. Vera's concern about boundaries and the public image is a valid note.

He continues stating that at the USA-GSD board meeting there was an outcry about the regulation to omit these tools and a motion was made that contained some parameters of controlling the use of them. He suggested that we review the USA-GSD policy on the situation.

There was much discussion on the topic. Al Govednik asked that each club delegate take a minute to state their clubs position.

USA Boxer Club – Mark Chase: Collars should be allowed and be used within reason as long as a positive image is maintained

USRC - Steve Canuso: Concerned as well with the public image. Agrees with Vera ( WRSF ) not to have these collars allowed.

Sean O'Kane interjects that USRC President Wayne Simanovich sent an email to him on the subject. In it it states that the USRC is not against the use of these tools and if Steve would like him to read this email to the attendees Steve C. declines.

USA –GSD Lyle Roetemeyer: the USA club already has a policy that they are adhering to. The local clubs must have someone closely monitor competitors

USMRA – Dave Kroyer: This is a hot topic and one should always be careful of what you ask for. We should allow it but monitor it. The idea of hiding the use of the tools creates more issues than we really need,  
Sean O'Kane interjects that Augusta Farley President & Anne Putegnat Secretary USMRA state that they are against the use of prong and e-collars at national events

AWMA - President Anne Camper : For the use of these tools with monitoring

Fed AB – Paige Shriver: For the humane use of these tools. Must be monitored

WPBTCA - Annetta Cheek: For it, monitor it and no allowance for abusive training of any kind

NAWATA – Jeff Govednik: For It and monitor it. Develop something against abusive training

WRSF – Vera Reeves: Fully against it

DVG – Dyan Harper: DVG rules do not allow the use of these tools.

Discussion with the LV/America President Carole Patterson the thought is to allow the humane use of the equipment but with parameters.

Executive Director Glenn Stephenson: The issue is not the devices, let's not identify the tool so much but address the training and use. Parameters should be written in to a policy to have a person or persons monitoring the event areas where these tools are in use.

There was a suggestion that the BOI could put this policy together. Sean reviewed the BOI responsibilities and that is not their job.

Lyle suggests to AL to add this to the events committee to work on as an inclusive with the code of conduct.

Glenn S. suggests the use of video monitoring as a deterrent to have the capability to make decisions at the moment of infraction of the policies.

He continues stating that to appoint a person with experience to have authority to make decisions in questionable situations.

Al G. states the Judges and the Trial Secretary both have this authority and are protected against any retaliation.

A determination of the topic was made. The events committee will work on the policy. Sean O'Kane asked that in order to keep things balanced that Vera join the committee to assist in developing the criteria. Vera agreed.

### **Statistic forms for the FCI**

President Al Govednik reviewed the importance of this document for the FCI meeting. He asks that all clubs have their submissions to the AWDF Secretary by July.

### **AWDF Score books**

Anne Camper (AWMA) began by saying that it is important to allow the smaller clubs under AWDF to develop and grow. AWDF scorebooks should all be assigned by the breed clubs only, with the exception of the Mondio and LV/DVG clubs. The Issue is the identification of the breed of dog by the other clubs. What constitutes the official identification of a dogs breed? How can another club verify breed classification without knowing what is the accepted registration for that AWDF breed club?

Paige Shriver of Fed AB states that she agrees with Anne Camper. AB owners are getting their books from USA with their bred listed. How does USA-GSD verify that the specific dog's pedigree is what is accepted by Fed AB? The USA-GSD should list the breed as mix specifically for that reason. She continues that with the present process as it stands it is not allowing the other breed clubs to have a financial addition and actually prevents the clubs from retaining members thus inhibits growth. She clearly wanted the USA-GSD club to know that they still have means to make their money on stamping the books as they have always done even allowing other breeds to purchase from them but would prefer that the score book be filled out in the breed ID as a MIX BREED unless the AWDF Score book is acquired from the specific breed club. The members can acquire their AWDF books from the appropriate club then send them in to be stamped by USA-GSD

Glenn Stephenson asks why USA-GSD even assigns books to other breeds.

Lyle states it has been USA-GSD procedure for quite some time and they will not relinquish the allowance of anyone obtaining a score book from their club.

*Paige Shriver of Fed AB made this motion:*

*All AWDF score books must be acquired from their specific AWDF member sport/breed club with the exception of the sporting clubs (Mondioring, LV/DVG, etc) in order to retain the breed identification in the AWDF score book, otherwise the breed ID will be listed in the AWDF score book as MIX BREED.*

*The motion was seconded by Johanness Grewe & Anne Camper  
All were in favor – none opposed.*

***Motion passed.***

## **New Clubs to become members of the AWDF**

### *Working Black Russian Terrier Club of America*

Helene Haldi of the Working Black Russian Terrier Club of America was present to speak on behalf of the club. She brought along a young male dog as example of the breed.

Her presentation included a brief description of the history, type and temperament of BRT.

The inception of the club was March 9, 2009 and at present there are 26 members. The breed is registered with the AKC and there is presently a small number of dogs already titled to IPO1

There were many questions asked in regards to programs, regulations and what the club is now doing to promote their breed as a whole.

Michelle reminded the delegates present that there is information on this club in their hand out and if they would like to review the WBRTCA's C&B/L she has it with her available to them to read.

Annetta Cheek spoke in regards to assisting this new club to grow and made the suggestion to accept the WBRTCA in to the AWDF under a guest status  
Al Govednik reviewed the guest status with Helene.

Annetta Cheek made the motion to accept the WBRTCA in to Guest status

Glenn Stephenson seconded the motion

All were in favor – none opposed

### **Motion passed**

### *North American Ring Association*

Submitted a request for membership to the Federation, they did not have any one present to represent them. Al Govednik reviewed the NARA's proposal stating the club has approx. 162 members.

The proposal was held until someone from NARA can be contacted.

### *Working Dutch Shepherd Assoc*

There was no representation

## **2010 AWDF Championship bids**

Sean O'Kane states that Mike Diehl and the OG Indianapolis Club has stated an interest in hosting the 2010 event with a tentative time frame

of the last weekend in April. The club is presently working on a proposal.

Sean states this club has a super facility and very capable of handling an event of this size. They are currently waiting on approval for additional property for the venue. Sean also continued that John Wiitenan has also expressed an interest for the 2011 event in Michigan but would be able to host 2010 if needed as back up.

Lyle Roetemeyer motioned to adjourn Michelle Testa seconded the motion

All were in favor Meeting adjourned 10:40 AM EST