



Upcoming GSKC Meeting:
Wednesday,
March 28 at 7 pm in the Agricenter Boardroom.

March's Program:
Acupuncture and Massage Therapy in Dogs by Dr. Kathy Mitchner, DVM.

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Greater Shelby Kennel Club
Promoting the complete dog

Owner Liability in Tennessee

February 2007.

Senator Doug Jackson proposed to update the current Tennessee dog bite laws. The Commercial Appeal (commercialappeal.com) ran two (2) editorials and one (1) article:

- February 16: *When owners are at fault*
- February 27: *Tennessee dog bite laws must be updated*
- February 28: *Senate passes four dog related bills*

A summary of these articles and the bills follows...

Jackson's proposed amendments focus on making irresponsible owners more liable for actions of their dogs. These four (4) bills passed unanimously in the Senate Judiciary Committee:

- **SB0139: Criminal Offenses** - Increases punishment for the

offense of owning a dog running at large and provides staggered punishments for such offense depending upon the amount of damage or injury to another caused by the dog at large. - Amends TCA Title 44, Chapter 8, Part 4. House Bill: HB0106.

- **SB0140: Criminal Offenses** - Enhances the punishment for the offense of dog running at large if the dog was trained to fight, attack or kill, had a prior history of biting people, or the owner knew of the dangerous nature of the dog. - Amends TCA Title 44, Chapter 8, Part 4. House Bill: HB0106.

- **SB0143: Civil Procedure** - Imposes liability upon owner of a dog that causes injury to another regardless of whether the dog had any past propensity for viciousness or whether the owner had knowledge of the dog's viciousness. - Amends TCA Title 44, Chapter 8, Part 4. House Bill: HB0108.
- **SB0537: Criminal Offenses** - Increases the punishment for the offense of being present as a spectator at a dog fight from a Class C misdemeanor to a Class A misdemeanor. - Amends TCA Title 39, Chapter 14, Part 2. House Bill: HB0548.

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Members who have not paid for 2006 Showcase trophies should contact Kathy Reynolds, Treasurer, at kreynolds@firstcapitalbanktn.com to arrange payment.

May Conformation Classes Registration begins in April. Members will receive an email with registration information and scheduled class dates. Required forms are now available at www.greatershelbykc.org.

Braggs!

March

Franklin, TN

Mary Hewes' Forevr Fire In The Sky, aka Sky, our papillon puppy, won WB and BOS Thursday under Judge Jon Cole, for a three point Major Win.

Mary Hewes' Levon's Uptown Girl, aka Kameo, our Italian Greyhound, won

WB on Saturday under Judge James E. Frederiksen, for a three point Major Win.

Mary Hewes' Levon What's Hot Versace, aka Sachi, our Italian Greyhound puppy, won WD, BOW, and BOS over a Special in the Ring on Sunday under Judge Bette Krause.

David Nutting's Ch. Buckram-Stonehaven C Sunshine, HIT, aka Ceile, was awarded a Group 4 by Michelle Billings at the South Arkansas KC shows in Camden AR.

Vern Harvey presented Sled Dog Events and the Challenge of the Iditarod at the February meeting.



Amendments Passed at February's Member Meeting

February 28, 2007

The following amendments were voted on and accepted by GSKC's general membership: Constitution, Article I, Section 2 – 'Conformation Events' was added to the Club objectives to commit and confirm the Club's hosting of conformation dog shows and matches.

Bylaws – change the existing club fiscal year to match the 990 and 1023 tax form to ensure consistency with these forms and the Club's Charter. The fiscal year for GSKC is now August 31 to September 30.

Bylaws – improve stability of Club leadership by (1) removing the term limits for Directors, (2) extending the terms of Officers and Directors from one to two years, and (3) adopting a staggered election, such that Officers are elected in odd years and Directors are elected in even years. Finally, if an Officer or Director is elected by the Board to fill an unexpired term of more than one year, the name of that individual will be placed on the ballot for a vote by the membership with respect to that unexpired term at the next annual meeting.

Owner Liability in Tennessee, cont.

Continued from page 1.

Note: The bills do not contain breed-specific legislation, which was ruled unconstitutional by Tennessee courts.

Tennessee's current law does state that allowing a dog to roam at large is a crime, but requires prosecution to prove that the owner allowed the dog to roam, which would be difficult to prove.

And, civil liability under the current law?

Simple, an irresponsible owner can avoid that liability by simply claiming he was unaware the dog was on the prowl.

As for local support, several organizations support the bills for forcing the owner to take responsibility and for not including breed-specific language. One such supporter, Donna Malone, a recent guest speaker at the GSKC January Membership Meeting, Vice President for Responsible Animal Owners of Tennessee (raot.org), was quoted as saying, "Owners have a responsibility to ensure that their dogs are not a menace to society." Malone also stated that she agreed with another bill [SBO537] that would increase the penalty for spectators at dog fights. Instead of the current \$50 fine, a person could be fined up to \$2,500 and 11 months and 29 days in jail (Class A misdemeanor).

The next step requires all the bills have a House version and then referred to the civil practice and procedure subcommittee.

To read the bills in full, visit:

www.legislature.state.tn.us/bills/currentga/asp/WebBillInfo/BillCompanionInfo.aspx?billnumber=SB0139

www.legislature.state.tn.us/bills/currentga/asp/WebBillInfo/BillCompanionInfo.aspx?billnumber=SB0140

www.legislature.state.tn.us/bills/currentga/asp/WebBillInfo/BillCompanionInfo.aspx?billnumber=SB0143

www.legislature.state.tn.us/bills/currentga/asp/WebBillInfo/BillCompanionInfo.aspx?billnumber=SB0537

Herding License to Lapse

GSKC's license to host herding trials will end July 2007. To keep this from happening, GSKC must host a herding trial before the license expires. At this time, there is no plan for a herding trial. If you are interested in keeping GSKC's herding license current, contact Betsy Tolley.

When the Man waked up he said, "What is Wild Dog doing here?" And the Woman said, "His name is not Wild Dog any more, but the First Friend, because he will be our friend for always and always and always." ---Rudyard Kipling, *Just So Stories*, 1902

President's Message

Spring is almost here and springtime means that it is time for AGILITY! For those who do not follow agility, our April trials will be held at the Multipurpose Arena located directly behind the Shelby ShowPlace Arena at the Agricenter International on Germantown Parkway at Walnut Grove.

This year our trial dates occur over the Easter weekend—April 6, 7, and 8. But that happenstance has not deterred our entries. On Friday we have 181 runs and 63 handlers for our Excellent Only trial. On Saturday there are 328 runs and 105 handlers. Despite its being Easter, Sunday has 284 runs and 92 handlers. The Club has retained the services of Best in Stewards to provide agility stewarding. However, there is still a need for volunteers. Anyone interested in helping during the trial weekend should contact Betsy Tolley at 476-9199.

The Club is purchasing and outfitting a 16-foot bumper-pull utility trailer for storing and transporting our agility equipment. This trailer will make loading and unloading equipment much easier than it has been in the past. The trailer and equipment are also being insured.

During trial hours, Dr. Lisa Miller, DVM, of MedVET Veterinary Specialists, will have a booth at which participants and club members may schedule physiotherapy sessions for their dogs or consult with Dr. Miller regarding previous injuries to their dogs. She will also be on site for veterinary medical services or referral in the event of any emergent illness or injury occurring during the trial. If you have a dog with a previous injury this may be a wonderful opportunity to consult with Dr. Miller.

Springtime also means that the Tupelo Kennel Club will be holding their show in Tupelo with the Golden Triangle KC. This year the event will feature the usual three conformation shows and obedience and rally obedience trials at the Civic Center. In addition, the Olive Branch KC will be having their two-day show at the Flea Market in Tupelo on Wednesday and Thursday. For those interested in conformation and/or obedience, this provides an opportunity for five days of dog events in two separate venues in Tupelo.

Finally, don't forget to mark your calendars for the membership meeting on March 28. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Kathy Mitchner, who will be talking about acupuncture and demonstrating its application on members' dogs.

I look forward to seeing you in March.

Betsy Tolley
President, GSKC

