

Best Practices Series

Compiled by Members of the AKC Delegate Companion Events Committee

Issue: Many Clubs are experiencing an Aging Membership

Many Clubs feel that they are not regularly attracting new, younger members

Response: Certain Activities may appeal to a younger audience of potential Members

Submitted by Dr. Joyce A Dandridge, Capital DogTraining Club of Washington, DC, Inc.

Regular communication with the Club Membership about a variety of dog related activities helps to keep an interest in the Club. A regular Newsletter helps to achieve this goal. Welcoming Parties for new members, at which they are warmly greeted by long term members as well as programs which Demo/Showcase all of the Training opportunities offered by the Club, such as Flyball, Freestyle, Rally, Obedience and Agility.

Additional activities to consider are:

- * Discounts offered to Juniors taking Classes
- * Actively facilitate 4H Groups, and youth organization participation
- * Class offerings for Juniors at Trial Events
- * Allow Junior Members to participate in Classes with Adult Mentors
- * Visit Schools, Libraries with Information and Demos
- * Provide Demos in Public Parks, at Parades, and other such Community Events
- * Visit Hospitals, Schools, and Nursing Homes
- * Use Social Media
- * Include Fun Classes, and Trick Classes
- * Ask New Members what they hope to achieve from the Club
- * Keep in mind that there may be other ways to do things, and younger Members may have some innovative ideas.
- * Offer some Perks, such as reduced fees for Instructors, or free attendance at Seminars
- * Assign jobs to new Members, and then not micro-manage

- * Focus on Member's strengths. Career skills might translate into Club jobs, such as Treasurer, Website maintenance, or Newsletter design
- * Advertise Club activities at Veterinarian Offices, Family Pet Fairs, and Expos
- * Offer Vouchers giving a discount to Club Volunteers
- * Establish a Mentoring Program, whereby a long term Member mentors a newbie for a year
- * Open some slots at Seminars to non-members
- * Broaden the content of meetings and newsletters to involve more people
- * Open the Training Facility on Sunday
- * Conduct an Annual Open House
- * Offer College Scholarships to students in a field pertaining to Animal Care