

ETRC Board Meeting, Tuesday, 7/2/24 254 Babbs Road, Lenoir City, TN

Present from the Board: J. Michael Evans, Alan Bruhin, Mike Smith, Karen Edwards, Jim Pearce, Michele Fletcher, Jeff Rader, Kyle Griffin, Lois Luthenauer, Luke McCoy

Absent, Excused: Bob Smith

Others Members Present: Chief Marshal Donna Smith

A quorum is 50% of the Board. Therefore, a quorum of the Board was met with 10 people present. The meeting was called to order at 6:43 p.m.

Officer's and AKC Delegate's Reports

President's Report: None.

Secretary's Report. Karen Edwards.

- **Minutes:** Last meeting was 3/10/24; minutes approved by a majority of Board members and sent to the club website. Alan moved that we dispense with reading the minutes out loud, and vote formal approval. Lois seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
- **Membership:** Membership at the end of December 2023 was 58. Membership as of today for 2024 is 60, with 6 not yet renewed (1 says he will renew soon) plus another new member whose forms are in the mail.
- **Correspondence:** Completed annual report for State of Tennessee (\$20 filing charge) and E-postcard tax filing. Both were due by July 1. More on this below.

Treasurer's Report: Current balance is \$47,335.25. See YTD register report.

AKC Delegate's report: Michele had nothing to report.

Old Business

1. **Discuss spring testing season.** Financial information, comments, concerns, things we could do better, how to improve etc. All went well, we managed to pull it off. Concerns and issues are being raised as separate issues below.
2. **Revisit Dates of Fall Events:** Master National is in Paducah, KY 9/21-10/2/24. Who from the board is going (workers), do we need to adjust any dates for our fall events? Alan and Mike Evans are qualified but are not planning to go. Jeff did not indicate that he was planning to go. Our first hunt test is nearly three weeks after the MN ends so we should be full of pros who are already trying to qualify for next year. No change needed.
3. **Club Trial, Sunday 9/15/24.** After some discussion, we decided on the following format for the Fall Club Trial:
 - Contact Andrew Goddard, a prospective member we met at the June 11-12 test, who raises ducks and lives about 60 miles from Sweetwater in Northeast Tennessee. He can provide ducks at ~ \$18 per plus delivery fees; if he is coming to any particular event, he will deliver them for free. Good possibility for getting ducks for our Master

Only tests in the times when we might otherwise have to pen the extras over at Cory's. Talk with Andrew about live flyers for our club trial on September 15. Mike Evans will call him.

- Post a prominent article in the August newsletter and on the Facebook page advertising the Club Trial with live flyers and the details: begin at 9 a.m., last until approximately 4 p.m. to get everything done that needs to get done.
- Members who want live flyers MUST RSVP by the end of August. They will get two free entries and up to two free live flyers (one for each of two dogs entered). Members may request more live flyers at \$10 per duck, plus the \$10 per stake entered for more than the two free stakes.
- Live flyers are available at all stakes levels.
- Members who do not RSVP are still welcome to come, and will get two free entries but will be using dead ducks.
- Members who can serve as gunners are encouraged to bring along their guns and take turns serving as gunners for other members.
- This event will be held at Lucky 7.
- Bird techs? We did not discuss getting bird techs for this event but it would be nice to have some others rather than using club members if possible.
- Non members are welcome to come but will have to pay the standard rates for entries and will only get dead ducks.
- Food for the picnic was not discussed and will have to be decided upon later. In the past, we have sometimes made this potluck, sometimes the club has provided sandwich fixings, and last time we ordered pizzas.
- This event will also include a business meeting.

4. Hunt Test 10/19-20: S-S, 2 JH, 2 SH, one or 2 MH flights.

- Judges Tracy Davis, Steve Davis for one flight Master. Judges for JH / SH: Mike Smith is working to identify judges and has called many but not gotten many positive responses. He has two pinned down but is still looking for another one.
- 2 flights master? We discussed and decided to keep it simple and just have one flight of Master. We discussed possibly having a 100 dog flight and starting on Friday; that would allow more dogs to enter but would require finding workers available for an extra day which is not all that easy.
- Will be at Lucky 7.
- Ducks: Plan to use Buettner for this test.
- Bird Techs: Wildlife Society? Alan will contact them in September once school is back in session. We will be paying them \$100 a person this year.

5. Hunt Test 11/12-13, Midweek Master:

- Judges: Mike Greer. The second judge, Rocky Jones, has withdrawn and Alan is still looking for another judge.
- Location: Brian Caldwell's – Brian has been contacted and is willing for us to use his place.
- Ducks: we will consider contracting with Andrew Goddard if Kiley can't provide them without us having to store them at Cory's.
- Bird Techs – Brian / Bob will arrange?

6. **Facebook:** We Have definitely gotten some new members from this route. Alan said there is nothing much to report, he's posting things from time to time.

7. Winter Awards Banquet: Reservations made for Saturday, Feb 22, 2025 at Bearden Banquet Hall. Paid \$250 deposit in April. Nothing to do until December with the awards calls.

New Business:

1. New Members:

- Matt & Katie Neil. He works for Cigna Group. Address 8234 Trout Lily Drive, Ooltewah, TN 37363. matthewJNeil10@gmail.com, (423)618-9081. Has a 2-year old Labrador, interested in hunt tests, dog training, club trials. Will volunteer for 'whatever is needed.' Sponsors: Kile Griffin, Donna Smith.
- James "Ryan" and Briana Troup: self employed. 304 Royal Oaks Dirive NE, Cleveland, TN 37323. TheTroupFam@gmail.com(423)943-8977. Volunteers for training committee, test/training grounds search, Raffle/fundraising, duck wrangler/assistant, Board of Directors, Club Officer, Gunner, Marshalling, Awards Committee, Judging at club trials, Hunt Test Chariman, Training Supplies, Ribbons Handler. Interested in Hunt tests, field trials, dog training, club trials, judging/judging clinics, breeding, and is a member of NRA and Ducks Unlimited. Has 2 young black labs, was at our Quad test and earned a number of JH ribbons. Sponsors: J. Michael Evans, Alan Bruhin
- Zachary & Tyra Pry: he's a truck driver. 447 Mountain Gap Road, Thorn Hill, TN 37881. Waylonharley3@gmail.com. 865-469-4215. Volunteers for hunt test set-up, bird tech / coordinator. Interested in AKC hunt tests, field trials, hunter's safety course for his wife, dog training, club trials. Has an SHR 2-year old black lab. Sponsors: Donna Smith, Lois Luthenauer
- Dennis & Nora Wilcox, Facilities Manager, 107 Sioux Ct., Hendersonville, TN 37075, dennisRWilcox@gmail.com, cell 615-414-8273. Requests Mike and Donna Smith as sponsors, has 4 labs of various ages, is a judge of HT and FT, interested in hunt tests, field trials, dog training, club trials. Sponsors: Mike and Donna Smith.

Lois moved we accept these people into membership on first reading; Alan seconded; the vote was unanimous. There was some discussion about sponsor responsibilities which include contacting the member, inviting them to contact you back for any questions, and then also calling and inviting them to events.

2. Fees for Fall Tests and onward: Do we want to raise our fees for hunt tests? Many other clubs ask for more than we are currently charging -- \$80/ \$90 / \$100. Alan moved that we raise our rates by \$10 per stake starting in January 2025, to \$90/ \$100 / \$110. This motion was seconded by Mike Smith. Discussion ensued:

- Hunt Test income / expenses show that we are doing fine with our JH/SH tests, but it is the MH only single-flight tests that are running close to the margin for breaking even. However, the general consensus is that we don't want to do another Quad JH/SH test next year which is exhausting even though it brings in a ton of money and participants. This would mean that we have to drop one or two MH only tests, but the general consensus was that that's OK too.

- Some concern was expressed about the chilling effect this might have on JH/SH entries and getting new people involved in the sport.
- It was also mentioned that raising the rates by \$10 for each stake meant that JH and SH participants were paying \$20 more per weekend.

The vote was taken and passed, so that we will raise each stake by \$10 next year.

3. **Ribbon Mailing Fees:** We have been charging \$5 to mail ribbons. To send one ribbon now costs around \$6 in postage first class (going up again as of July 14) and the padded envelopes cost around \$.75 each. Karen moved that we go up to \$10 and that includes up to 3 ribbons; an additional \$5 for up to two more, and we won't mail more than that. Jim seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
4. **Club Tee Shirts:** we need a new place to store them, they are too unavailable at Cory's and take up too much room in the trailer. We do eventually make money on them; notice that on the expense records provided, we made the most in the years when we had two tests at Hiwassee, and when we bring them to the club trials they also do well. Still, over the last four years, we netted \$1157.14. Not a huge moneymaker, but they more than pay their own way. We sell them at a pretty low margin and the point is that they are for us and others to advertise the club, not that we make a large profit on them. Discussion of what to do about Tees/hats did not result in any resolution. No one is willing to take them on. Lois agreed that she or her son will pick up the shirts at Cory's from the trailers and will go through and do an inventory and throw out all the ones that are faded, have melted logos, etc. We will discuss this further at a later meeting.
5. **Update on Shuler / Osteen dog venture:** Mike Osteen is moving down to work at the new facility. The farm is 125 acres in Loudon County, don't know where; they are planning to put in four ponds and are in contract discussions for getting this done. Heath has paid his membership for the next 4 years; Jon and Mike each took a membership form and said they intend to join but haven't yet. They are thinking that their place would be good for running hunt tests and this is part of their proposed business model. Also, they are planning to offer training classes for people and dogs there.
6. **Taxes.** In order to use the postcard tax filing, we are supposed to have 'revenue' of less than \$50k a year over the past three years. We were OK until this year. For next year, we definitely won't meeting the criteria for using the simple form. Karen stated that she is not capable or willing to do real taxes for the club, which means we will either need to reduce our revenue by putting on fewer tests, or we will need to hire an accountant to do taxes for us. We would need to do some price shopping and see what we can find. Taxes are due before July 15 each year for us so we have some time but need to make sure not to let this fall in the cracks. The general consensus was agreement that we need to hire an accountant to do our taxes for next year. Karen agreed to ask her accountant if he would take us on, and will report back at a later meeting. This will probably cost around \$1000.
7. **Jason Jackson information:** Jason is the TWRA manager for Hiwassee. He no longer lives on the WMA and most of the work there is done by the fisheries people; he usually only comes once a month to check up on things. However, he came every day of our test, mowed for us where we needed him to, and was generally super helpful in putting on the Quad. M. Michael suggested that we talk about giving him some kind of thank you gift. Alan moved that we give him two gift cards of \$50 each for restaurants in the Cleveland area. Mike Smith seconded the motion, which passed. Mike Smith

volunteered to get the cards, he and J. Michael will decide how and when to present these to him.

8. **Canine Field Triage:** J. Michael talked with Dr. Monica Webb, who is a DVM who specializes in working dogs. She has a presentation with slides and a dummy dog, which might be a good thing to have as a program at one of our events. Lois suggested we do this at our banquet next February, maybe instead of the door prizes – having this at an indoors event is much easier to control (weather, audio-visual equipment etc.) than at most of our events, and we can give her a great meal as well. This was agreed on and J. Michael will contact her to make the arrangements.
9. **Bird Tech Coordinator:** We have had some issues this year, particularly at our Quad test, with having sufficient numbers of bird techs for us not to have our elderly club members out in the blinds for hours on end. The Wildlife society has been pretty good and reliable, but not so much this spring. We discussed that we need to have our big tests when school is in session – i.e., have our big spring test at Lucky 7 instead of Hiwassee in early May, and have a Master-only at Hiwassee in the June time slot. Alan will get back in touch with the wildlife coordinator Robert Brewer in September after school is in session to try to line up more help for our October test.
10. **Ribbon Order:** We had so many entries in our Quad that we are running short of both JH and SH ribbons. Only have 38 Junior and 62 Senior ribbons. Definitely won't have enough JH ribbons for the fall test, and we MIGHT have enough SH but it's too close to count on. Karen ordered 100 of each on 7/1/24 for delivery on 9/7/24. Cost will be \$1,453.48; it's on her personal credit card and will pay back with a check when the charge shows up. Good news is, this is actually \$.08 less per ribbon than the last time we ordered ribbons in February. Alan moved that the board authorize Karen to order ribbons whenever needed without prior approval. Lois seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Any other new business?

1. **Ribbon Order:** Alan moved that we buy a banner and some stakes that can be set up at our tests – with logo and the name of the club – that people can use to take pictures in front of. Some clubs bring along hay bales, pumpkins etc. – but just a banner would make a nice backdrop and not cost too much. Michele seconded the motion, and agreed to look into getting such a banner in about a 3' x 6' size or thereabouts. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn: There being no other new business, Jim moved that we adjourn. Mike Smith seconded the motion which then passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted



Karen Edwards, Secretary

Changes:

1. J. Michael Evans: Add names of sponsors for new members.
2. Michele Fletcher: add missing word at end of last bullet on Club Trial.

Approvals:

1. Michele Fletcher, 7/3/24
2. Alan Bruhin, 7/4/24
3. Jeff Rader, 7/4/24
4. Luke McCoy, 7/4/24
5. Kyle Griffin, 7/4/24
6. Mike Smith, 7/4/24
7. Lois Luthenauer, 7/4/24
8. Karen Edwards, 7/4/24
9. Jim Pearce, 7/4/24