ETRC Board Meeting, Friday, 4/4/25
254 Babbs Road, Lenoir City, TN

Present from the Board: J. Michael Evans, Alan Bruhin, Mike Smith, Karen Edwards, Jim Pearce, Luke McCoy, Kyle Griffin, Nathan Lamping, Michele Fletcher (on the phone, stuck on the interstate)

Absent, Excused: Bob Smith (sick with flu), Jeff Rader (excused)

Others Members Present: None

A quorum is 50% of the Board. Therefore, a quorum of the Board was met with 9 people present. The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m.

Officer's and AKC Delegate's Reports
President's Report:

Secretary's Report. Karen Edwards.

- **Minutes**: Last meeting was 2/22/25 -- minutes from the Banquet, approved by a majority of Board members and sent to the club website. Luke moved that we dispense with reading the minutes out loud, and vote formal approval. Mike seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

- **Membership:** Membership at the end of December 2024 was 67. Membership today is 45, with 25 prior members who will be dropped from the rolls 6/1/25 if they don't renew before then. One is in the mail, several have notified they won't renew, and Karen will send the others individual email reminders in the next week or so and again in mid-May.

- **Correspondence:** Mostly routine invoices, plus a nice thank you card from the Bruhins. Karen filed the annual report for the club on Tennessee's glitchy new system.

- **Treasurer's Report*:*** Current balance is $38,322.11. Upcoming expenses are for club trials and more hunt tests, tax accountant, any equipment, and replenishing the stock of durable goods for lunches. We are in excellent financial state but made very little money on our last test and need to discuss overall financial situation for the year under another topic.

    - **Insurance:** Our basic liability policy went up to $1000 (was $800 last year). $50 increase is a new thing that if you gross more than $10k a year in your events, it costs extra, and the balance is a basic rate increase.

    - **Taxes:** Karen provided tax information to our new accountant, Jim Longest. Taxes not due until July. He will charge $850 for doing our taxes for 2024. Don't anticipate we will have to pay any actual taxes.

    - New ribbon order received. No change in price from last time, 100 JH and 100 MH ribbons total cost was $1,453.48

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

Old Business

1. ***March Hunt Test:*** Low entries (49), even with an additional $490 in entry fees from price increase, we ended up netting only $487.66. Passed out financial report on this hunt test. There were substantial increases in duck prices because of timing, increase in lunch costs because of grocery increases since last fall, increases in entertainment costs. Not sustainable to lose money or barely break even on tests; they are expected to not only pay for themselves, but to pay for insurance, the banquet, awards, equipment, taxes, etc. Karen figures we need about $10 - $11,000 net from all tests combined to continue our current level of expenditures and break even during 2025. Concerns about economy; don't want to get us back to 2011, when the club ran out of money completely, had to sell one of our trailers, cancel a test, and severely cut costs during the last recession.

   Karen also passed out a summary of last year's HT expenses & income, and noted that our next test coming up at the end of April also does not look like a big moneymaker with only 53 MH slots filled, and only 4 SH dogs and 1 JH dog entered so far. We agreed that we need to keep a close eye on all this to make sure we don't start heavy deficit spending, and may need to adjust some of our expenditures accordingly.

2. ***Issue with Judge***: Jay Floyd was one of the judges for our November 2024 hunt test. Karen paid him with check #967at the end of the test on November 13, $346.46, which represented only his doubled gas receipts as other expenses were paid directly by the club. He called Karen the next day and said he had lost or destroyed the check. She sent him a replacement check, #970, on 11/15. At the end of the month, the bank statement showed he had apparently found check #967 and cashed it on 11/15. Karen emailed him and asked him to tear up the other check when it arrived if he hadn't already but got no response. Karen did not cancel the check because there is a $25 fee for cancellation. However, Mr. Floyd deposited the replacement check on 3/14/25. So, we paid him $692.92 for gas and $250 for his judges' gift for a total of $942.92. J. Michael said he would call him and ask him to refund us the extra $346.46 overpayment. Karen will provide J. Michael with contact information.

3. ***Upcoming Hunt Tests:*** Mike Smith mentioned that we needed some fresh MAP gas cylinders for our thunder boomers before the upcoming April test. Consensus was that he should go get them at Lowe's and bring the receipt to the test for reimbursement.

4. ***Club Trial Rain Date:*** Good response for Sunday, April 6 -- but weather is 100% chance of buckets of rain. We decided unanimously that canceling for this Sunday was the right thing to do, and not wait until Saturday evening, so that people who are fixing food for the cookout can avoid doing any cooking on Saturday. Luke McCoy called Brian Caldwell, and after comparing calendars, we agreed on a makeup date of Sunday, May 18. Karen will send out an email later tonight canceling and notifying people of the new date, and more information and request for RSVPs will be included in the May newsletter.

5. ***Winter Awards Banquet:*** Reservations made for Saturday, Feb 21, 2026 at the Bearden Banquet Hall. Karen has not gotten an invoice from them yet. Alan will call them to remind them to send an invoice for the reservation fee so that we can cement our reservation.

6. ***Proposed Changes to End of Year Awards: (Tabled from January meeting)***

At the January meeting, Karen had moved that we add a new award to our awards lineup for 2025 and onward. This would be a Field Trial Dog of the Year award, since our current top award, the Holcomb Gun Dog of the Year Award, is limited only to dogs who compete in Hunt Tests. Karen, Jim and John Broucek, who is the most knowledgeable club member about Field Trials, had initially looked at the possibility of suggesting changes to the Gun Dog award to allow for points accumulated in Field Trials as well – but because of the different structures of the two sports, trying to find a fair points system seemed like an impossible task. Hence the idea of having two separate awards, one for Field Trial dogs and one for Hunt Test competitors. Karen had drafted up language for three changes to our awards lineup, and sent these out to the Board for review in early January, again in late January, and passed out paper copies at this meeting.

a. The new award, Field Trial Dog of the Year. This award would have a new Perpetual Trophy and the winner would also be awarded an annual plaque to keep, the same as our other two end of the year awards. Draft rules proposed for consideration.
b. Changes to Puppy of Year Award to allow Derby points for JAMS and placements, for dogs who are under 1 year of age, to be considered in determining Puppy of the Year. Draft rules changes proposed for consideration.
c. Changes to Gun Dog of Year award: suggestion that this award be renamed as Hunt Test Dog of the Year rather than "Gun Dog" since field trial dogs are also gun dogs. This would make it more obvious that field trial dogs are not eligible for the Gun Dog Award Draft rules changes proposed for consideration. Draft rules changes proposed for consideration.

GUN DOG OF THE YEAR DISCUSSION, MOTION(S), AND VOTES.

J. Michael asked that we deal with the proposed changes to the Gun Dog of the Year award first. Karen moved that we approve the new language renaming the award as proposed. Jim seconded the motion. After a brief discussion, the vote was taken and the motion did not carry, by a vote of 2 ayes and 6 nays. The Holcomb Gun Dog Award of the Year will retain its title.

FIELD TRIAL DOG OF THE YEAR DISCUSSION, MOTION(S), AND VOTES.

Next Michael brought up the proposed new Field Trial Dog of the Year award. We went over the proposed language, which events would be eligible for points, the point totals to be assigned for placements and JAMS in each category, and other basic structure which is very similar to the rules for the other two awards. The floor was then opened for discussion.

Discussion on Paragraph 6, Calculation of Points for ETRC Field Trial Dog of the Year Award. The major focus of the discussion centered on proposed paragraph 6.a., which would allow some points to be considered from the ETRC Club Trials, namely the Singles Classic event. The proposed paragraph read:

> "ETRC Club Trials: Dogs placing 1st in an ETRC Singles Classic will earn 4 points for 1st place, 3 points for 2nd place, 2 points for 3rd place, and 1 point for 4th place, and half a point for JAMS. NOTE: In order for Club Trial points to count towards this award, a dog must have a least a JAM in one of the other Field Trial categories listed below."

Karen, who drafted the proposed rules, explained that this language was included in order to encourage field trial competitors to attend and participate in ETRC Club Trials, and also to recognize those dogs that performed well in the Singles Classic Stake. However, given the smaller number of dogs competing in Club Trial Singles Classic Stakes as opposed to actual Field Trial stakes, and the easier level of difficulty, it did not seem right that a dog that never earned any points in actual field trials should be able to win this award over a dog that did actually compete successfully.

> ***Motion 1.*** Alan moved, and Mike Seconded, an amendment to this paragraph that would strike the NOTE in its entirety. After a brief discussion explaining the impact this would have on the award and on people competing for the award, the Question was called. Five voted in favor of the proposed amendment to strike the note, and 3 voted against it. The amendment carried, and the NOTE was stricken in its entirety.
>
> ***Motion 2.*** Next, Jim Pearce moved to make a second amendment to that same paragraph, which would add language in a new NOTE, to the effect that in order for Club Trial Singles Classic points to be counted towards this award, a dog must have entered and competed in one of the field trial categories during the award year. The dog would not have to JAM or even complete all series in the Trial, but would have had to enter and come to the line in the first series. Karen seconded the motion, and after more discussion about the ramifications of this amendment, the vote was called and the amendment passed, 5 to 3. A new NOTE was added that would capture the essence of this motion.
>
> ***Motion 3.*** Next, Alan moved that we strike paragraph 6a in its entirety, and not allow any club trial Singles Classic points to count towards this award, under any circumstances. This way, the points would all have to be earned at one of the various field trial categories. After a brief discussion, the vote was called and the amendment passed with 5 votes for and 3 votes against. Paragraph 6a was stricken in its entirety and the subsequent sections will be renumbered.

Discussion on Paragraph 7. This section as proposed read as follows:

> "7. Only dogs fully owned by one or more ETRC members in good standing are eligible to compete for the Field Trial Dog of the Year award. However, points gained while the dog is being handled by someone other than the owner will count towards the award, whether or not the handler is an ETRC member."

J. Michael, as awards coordinator, asked if this might mean we would be expected to provide plaques for each of the co-owners of the dog that won this title.

> ***Motion 1.*** Luke moved that we amend this section to add that "Only one plaque will be awarded for a co-owned dog." Alan seconded this motion, and the vote was unanimously in favor. This language will be added to section 7.

Bringing the Amended Award Proposal To A Vote:

Now it was time to vote on accepting or rejecting the proposed new award for Field Trial Dog of the Year. Jim moved that we approve the award with the language as proposed and amended. Karen seconded the motion, and the vote was 5 in favor and 3 opposed.

Motion carried. We now have a new award. Karen will look at perpetual trophies and make a recommendation for purchase to the Board at a later date.

PUPPY OF THE YEAR DISCUSSION, MOTION(S), AND VOTES.

The proposed language changes for this award included changes to allow points earned in Field Trial that a puppy would receive 3 points towards the ETRC Award for any puppy JAM or placement in a derby. Derby Stakes, by an ETRC-owned dog that is less than one year of age, to apply towards the Puppy of the Year Award.

Discussion on Paragraph 5. No changes had been proposed to this section to include consideration of Derby placements or JAMS for the Puppy of the Year Award. The current language in the award rules reads as follows:

> "Only puppies owned by ETRC members in good standing are eligible to compete for the Puppy of the Year award. However, points gained while the puppy is handled by someone other than the owner will count towards the award."

Several people noted that this could mean a person could join the Club in late November and still end up walking away with the award. It was noted that similar language is included in the Gun Dog and the new Field Trial awards as well, but we decided that we were now considering only the Puppy award and any motion suggesting further amendments to the language for the Gun Dog and Field Trial awards would need to be handled separately.

Alan Moved, and Luke seconded, that for the Puppy of the Year Awards, only points earned AFTER the owner was a club member would count towards determining the winner of the award for any particular year. The vote was unanimously in favor of this change.

FURTHER AWARDS AMENDMENTS PROPOSALS, DISCUSSION, MOTION(S), AND VOTES.

Alan then moved that we amend the Gun Dog and Field Trial Dog of the Year awards to include the same language, that points only start accumulating towards these awards AFTER the owner of the dog has joined the club. Luke seconded this as well and this vote also carried unanimously.

Karen will provide clean final draft copies of these three awards to the Board along with the minutes, and will request final approval of the new language. Final approved language will be included in the May newsletter and posted on the club website.

New Business:

1. ***New Members:*** two for first reading and assignment of sponsors:
    - Rickey Peebles, Project Controls, 905 Belltown Road, Tellico Plains, TN 37385. RLPPeebles@gmail.colm, cell 803-602-2378. Volunteers for 'whatever is needed,', hunt test set-up, and photography. Has two flatcoats, one 8 years one 3 years; older one is a MH, younger one is SH. Interested in hunt tests and dog training. Mike Smith and Nate Lamping agreed to sponsor Mr. Peebles.

- Ronnie & Paige Cowan, Wildlife Biologist, UT. 317 Ashley Drive, Seymour, TN 37865. RC@UTK.edu, 865-214-2167. Volunteers for duck wrangler/assistant, hunt test set-up, Board of Directors, bird tech and/or coordinator, gunner, and interested in judging at club trials and being a hunt test chairman. Has a 1 year old chocolate Lab. Interested in hunt tests, field trials, hunter's safety course, dog training, club trials, judging/judging clinics. He is a DU member and a certified Hunters Safety Instructor. Requests Alan Bruhin as one sponsor. Alan agrees to serve as sponsor, and J. Michael will be the second sponsor.

  Karen moved that we accept these people as new provisional members of the club, with their final vote to be taken at the Summer/Fall Club Trial/Picnic/ General business meeting. Jim seconded and the vote was unanimous.

Any other new business?

J. Michael suggested that the club consider buying some more dummy launchers to make our club trials and potential training sessions work more smoothly. If we bought two more 5-bumper launchers, no one would have to spend any time in the field except for possibly blind planting and of course rebirding.

We looked up some costs for launchers online from Thunder Equipment. Five shooters cost around $1,300 each without electronics. Luke moved that we order two of these, and Michele seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

We currently have Garmin electronics on our two club launchers, and there was agreement that we needed to have compatibility. However, the Garmin electronics are no longer being regarded as top of the line, and everyone seemed to prefer Dogtra. If we replaced our two current launchers' electronics with Dogtra, and got three receivers and one transmitter / receiver pair, that would increase the costs by about $800. We could then sell our current Garmin electronics to recoup some of this expense. Luke moved that we purchase 1 Dogtra transmitter and 4 receivers from Thunder Equipment. Mike seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Jim Pearce agreed to make the purchase. The total cost before shipping will be around $3,400.

Adjourn: There being no other new business Luke moved that we adjourn. Jim seconded the motion which then passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Karen Edwards

Karen Edwards, Secretary/Treasurer

Changes:

Approvals:

1. Nate Lamping 4/5/25
2. Alan Bruhin 4/5/25
3. Luke McCoy 4/6/25
4. Kyle Griffin 4/6/25
5. Bob Smith 4/7/25
6. Mike Smith 4/7/25
7. Jim Pearce 4//8/25
8. Karen Edwards 4/8/25