

RMKC General Membership meeting – Monday, January 9, 2006

Members present: Julie Prentice, Diana Mann, Renee McGovern, Marie Christianson, Nancy Klenke, Chuck Kuhl, Pat Campbell, Carole Sorenson, Lenny Gremminger, Lynn Grovdahl, Caroline Baihly, Linda Cornick, Rick Miller.

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by President Julie Prentice, followed by the president’s report. Visitor Mary Ferreter was introduced.

Recording Secretary: Motion to approve the December meeting minutes was made by Linda C., seconded by Pat C.; motion passed.

Corresponding Secretary: Marie C. passed around event notices that she had received, including an announcement of Rally Run’n’Dones at BOTC on Sunday nights through March 19.

Treasurer’s Report: Caroline B. has deposited the last moneys from the Specialties. She also had a preliminary budget for the budget committee.

Old Business: *Agility Trial* – Judy Hekel will be the trial secretary again in 2006. Committee heads are in place for Vendors, Hospitality, & Grounds; Julie P. & Diana M. volunteered to coordinate the Volunteers/Workers. Judges contracts are in. The Trial will be held Labor Day Weekend (Sat, Sun, & Mon) at the fairgrounds.

Non-Profit Status is still in progress; they are currently working on the paperwork. *Seminars* – Julie P. & Steph M. decided to go with the May dates, given how close we are to February. They are still working on a location, probably either Tails Up or Animal Inn. All key holders are believed to have been located; Diana will print a listing in the newsletter in case anyone would need access to the storage area, etc.

New Business: The February Westminster meeting will be held at the Sorenson’s; address & directions will be printed in the newsletter. Members should bring hors d’oeuvres to pass & their own beverages. Door prizes will be given, also. Julie P. brought up the possibility of having March as a meeting where we actively encouraged prospective members to join us & learn what the kennel club is about. Members could bring scrapbooks or other items that show their involvement with their dogs. A motion was made by Linda C., seconded by Marie C. to have March be a new member meeting; motion passed. Renee M, seconded by Linda C, made the motion to have the PR committee place an ad in the classifieds before the March meeting to notify the public; motion passed. Lenny G. mentioned that she had been approached at the Land O’ Lakes show about the possibility of co-advertising a seminar by Cesar Milan during our Sept. shows; she will get more information from the group to present at a future meeting. We need a nominating committee to come up with the slate of officers for 2006-2007; those interested should contact Julie P.

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Carolyn B., seconded Linda C.; motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Mann



MEMBER BRAGS

★ Diana & Mackenzie Mann - **CH Toshay Elenor Rigby “Berry”**
Land O’ Lakes KC Agility Trials - January 6 - clean run - 1st place
January 7 - clean run - 1st place - NEW TITLE - NJP

★ Caroline & Art Baihly - **Webshire's Tri-Athalon CD SH NAJ Can CD “Cricket”**
Land O’ Lakes KC - January 6 - Novice Agility standard - NEW TITLE - NA
Open Agility JWW - 1st leg
January 7 - Open Agility JWW - 2nd leg
Rally Excellent - 2nd leg
January 8 - Open Agility JWW - 3rd leg - NEW TITLE - OAJ
Rally Excellent - 3rd leg - NEW TITLE - RE

★ Pat Campbell - **Ebony Sands Brimstone “Zeke”**
Land O’ Lakes KC - WD/BW - 4 pt major - NEW CHAMPION

★ **Ropaws Playin It By Heart “Polly”**
Land O’ Lakes KC - WB - 3 pt major

★ Nancy Klenke - **Rabbit Run Jasper**
Land O’ Lakes KC - WD - 4 pt major - NEW CHAMPION



Neighbors don't like debarking for 600-dog kennel

Paul Levy, Star Tribune

A proposed breeding kennel with 600 small dogs has some rural Morrison County neighbors and others speaking out -- in part, because at least some of the animals won't be able to speak for themselves. "It would be deafening to hear that many dogs bark, but the [kennel] owner's idea to have some of them debarked just doesn't seem fair," Vicki Davis, executive director of the Tri-County Humane Society in St. Cloud, said Tuesday. "Dogs bark out of frustration. Some will be in cages. They should be able to bark."

The proposed kennel's size has others upset. "Six hundred! Oh, my God, sounds like a puppy mill," said Joyce Borglund, who says she has bred dogs for 11 years in Prior Lake. Neighbors of the proposed kennel northeast of Little Falls, Minn., also are concerned about dog manure polluting wetlands.

But some of the biggest noise is being made about the proposed debarking, a surgical procedure that reduces a dog's bark to a hoarse, raspy sound that many people find just as annoying. The American Humane Association strongly discourages debarking. The surgery is rarely performed at the University of Minnesota's small-animal clinic, said an official for the university's veterinary college.

But not all of the cocker spaniels, dachshunds, Yorkshire terriers and other toy or miniature breeds at this kennel for small dogs would be debarked, said Gary McDuffee, 52, who is proposing the 40-acre facility in Belle Prairie Township. And, McDuffee added, "The debarking is done in a very humane manner." Only the adult dogs that spend a lot of time outside -- a small percentage -- will be debarked, said McDuffee, a special-education teacher who says he has been in the dog-breeding business for 25 years.

Roger Nelson, who lives fewer than 1,000 feet from the proposed kennel, organized a petition of township residents concerned about dog manure spreading to area wetlands and the Mississippi River. However, the County Board deemed an environmental review unnecessary, voting 4 to 1 against it this month. "We spend thousands of dollars to clean up lakes and rivers, and now we're going to have dog manure that could run off into the Mississippi?" said Nelson, 69. "It's a terrible idea."

But the county has had no complaints about another large breeding kennel that McDuffee helped start in 2001 and foresees no problems with the proposed kennel, said Tim Houle, Morrison County's administrator. "There was no controversy at all," McDuffee said of the existing kennel, which is 10 to 12 miles from the site of the proposed facility. Debarking is conducted there. As for why he's facing opposition now, McDuffee said, "We have people in the area who don't want a kennel. ... It's something new to them." The Tri-County Humane Society's Davis, who has lived in St. Cloud all of her life, said the other kennel was not brought to her attention when it opened. "If I would've heard about it," she said, "I would've done the same thing I'm doing now" regarding the Belle Prairie Township site.

The waste produced by 600 adult dogs weighing from 10 to 14 pounds apiece is equal to the manure of eight steers, Houle said. "Around here, nobody would be worked up over eight steers," he said. "In Morrison County, that's hardly a hobby farm."

As for debarking, Houle said, "These are only the dogs that will be kept outside. How many 10- to 14-pound dogs are kept outside during the winter in northern Minnesota? I don't think we're talking about many dogs." The kennel's number of adult dogs -- 600 -- would likely make it one of the larger dog-breeding kennels in the state, McDuffee said.

The Minnesota Dog Breeders website lists about 50 kennels. Some, such as Dean Krotzer's poodle kennel in Akeley, are relatively small, with only five adult female poodles. Borglund has 23 adult females -- mostly West Highland white terriers -- and said that in her 11 years of running kennels, she's never had more than 25 adult dogs.

"I want to make sure that I know that each of my dogs is cared for on an individual basis," she said. "That's hard enough with 23. But 600? That scares the heck out of me." McDuffee said he has taken every precaution with neighbors' concerns about odor, manure and noise. He said that he buys dogs from reputable breeders and that the puppies are later sold across the country. "These kennels are licensed and well-inspected," said Houle. "I'm not sure what all the noise is about."

Opponents ask investigation of kennel permit

BELLE PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP, MINN. -- At night, as Debbie and Roger Nelson drive along the gravel road leading to their farm, they pass a new "No Trespassing" sign on neighboring property and hear dogs barking. "Lots of them," Debbie Nelson said Saturday. But the Nelsons and other opponents to a proposed breeding kennel with 600 adult dogs are howling, too. They have asked the FBI to investigate the Morrison County Board for allegedly misrepresenting itself in granting a permit for the kennel. And a "Stop the Puppy Mill in Morrison County" petition is circulating via the Internet, prompting animal advocates across North America to howl, as well.

The Morrison County Board has been inundated with complaints from across the nation, "unlike anything we've ever seen here," said Tim Houle, county administrator. "I know the [kennel] industry is controversial, but I don't understand this e-mail attack against me," said Gary McDuffee, the prospective kennel owner. McDuffee, a 25-year veteran of the kennel business, said: "People who know me know what kind of business I run." When McDuffee, 52, a Little Falls special education teacher, sought county approval to open a dog-breeding kennel in Belle Prairie Township, 4 miles northeast of Little Falls, opponents complained about his plans to debark some of the dogs (a surgical procedure that quiets barking) and about the sheer size of the proposed kennel. They also grumbled that the county board deemed unnecessary an environmental assessment of the kennel's effect on bordering wetlands.

McDuffee says that no formal complaints have ever been lodged against his operation of two other kennels in Morrison County. But opponents note that his former business partner and ex-wife, Wanda McDuffee, has been suspended until 2008 by the American Kennel Club for misrepresenting breeds, according to Daisy Okas, a Kennel Club spokesperson. Gary McDuffee, who plans to retire as a teacher at the end of the school year, said he is no longer in partnership with his ex-wife and declined to comment further. McDuffee also declined to say when he planned to open his kennel. Asked when dogs were to be brought onto the property, he would not comment. "I can promise you that these dogs will be raised to be pets," he said. "Every one of them will be kept clean, socialized and be named."

But among the fears listed in the Internet petition is "that this kennel will be nothing more than a puppy mill where the dogs will live in filth and misery for all their days." On Saturday, eight animal advocates from the Twin Cities and Morrison County met at the Nelsons' rural home. On Friday, they obtained a Minneapolis attorney. The group called an area utility worker, who told the Nelsons on Saturday that he did not see any dogs in a shed on the property last week. "Oh, there are dogs there," said neighbor Jeremy Dickmann, who lives across the road from the kennel property. "I hear them at night."

The property, which McDuffee said he recently bought from Harvey Block, has a controversy of its own. Block had obtained a conditional land-use permit from the county board, which was then passed along to McDuffee. Among the county board members who agreed to the conditional-use permit by a 4 to 1 vote was Bill Block, who describes Harvey Block as "a distant cousin who I do not really know personally."

When asked whether there were plans to reconsider the board's decision to approve the permit, Bill Block said no.

"If the county were to reconsider our decision, we could be liable for any and all costs incurred by the developer in reliance of our decision," he said. Block added that he was "disappointed with the tone" of the complaints he has received, particularly those from afar.

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Rochester Minnesota Kennel Club 2004-2005

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Monthly Meeting - See pg 1 this month for special meeting location information

Date: 2nd Monday

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church ~ 559 20th St SW

Directions from downtown Rochester: South on Broadway to 20th St SW (Kwik Trip) - turn right (W) - go approx 5 blocks to top of hill - Church is on the right, set back from the street