

REPORT TO THE MEMBERSHIP January 2010

In October the MALC submitted an extensive and thorough application for AKC accreditation as a specialty breed club. We recently received word from the AKC that our Club covers too large a geographic region for AKC recognition. Though that decision did not come as a surprise, it is nonetheless disappointing. We and the other LCA regional clubs had hoped that the AKC would take the regional clubs with their current territories. We were the test case, and the AKC's denial of our application does not bode well for the other regional clubs.

That said, the AKC did not flatly deny the application. They consider us to be a well organized club with a solid history and offered us the possibility of recognition for the central Virginia area in the interstate 64 corridor from Virginia Beach to Charlottesville. Were the club interested in pursuing this, we would have to: (1) add about four additional household memberships in the central Virginia region; (2) amend our bylaws to require six Board meetings per year and six general membership meetings per year with a quorum of 20% of the members; (3) eliminate the electronic voting that our bylaws now permit; and (4) add "Virginia" to the name our Club. Were we to do all of this, it is likely that we would become the first regional Leonberger specialty club in the Country. We would, after having the required matches, be able to hold AKC shows at which dogs could be awarded AKC championship points. The downside is that members outside the central Virginia area would become associate members who could not hold office. Much of our membership would thus be disenfranchised.

At this point the Club has two options. We can do nothing and remain exactly as we are. We would not be able to hold our own shows for championship points, but we could sponsor specialties under the auspices of AKC recognized clubs. Or we can change the MALC as indicated above to accommodate the AKC.

The MALC Board recently held a meeting in which both options were discussed. The consensus among the Board is that the Club stay exactly as it is now. The Board recommends that we simply forego any possibility of AKC recognition in a more limited area. The decision, however, is one to be made by the membership, not the Board. We will therefore hold a special meeting of the membership on Saturday, March 13, following our LCA regional show being held on that day. I will then present to the membership the pros and cons of both approaches and we thereafter open the floor to commentary from members. Should any member make a seconded motion to alter the club to conform to the AKC requirements, that motion will be voted on after further discussion by the members at the regular annual membership meeting in October. If there is no such motion on March 13, one may still be made and seconded in writing to the Club's secretary, Sandy Beggs, on or before April 13. Should this occur, the written motion will be voted on by the membership at the annual meeting in October. If no one moves to alter the Club to seek recognition, that will be the end of it. Our club will continue to exist exactly as it does now.

If any of you have any questions about any of the foregoing, please do not hesitate to give me a call. I will be happy to provide what additional information I can.

Harry Austin, Board Member (434) 985-4631