



RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERS OF MARYLAND, INC.



Vol 2, Issue 2 – April 2020

As **Responsible Dog Owners** we need to be vigilant and do everything possible to prevent getting and or spreading the novel corona virus. Clean your hands often, avoid close contact, and stay home if you are sick.

Our dogs depend on us, so stay healthy and one thing for sure, we are confident that those of us who love animals can work together to weather this storm and stay safe through this crisis.

Can our Dogs get Covid-19?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Organization for Animal Health have released information saying there is no evidence dogs can spread the disease, and there is therefore no reason to abandon or neglect them. If we happen to contract the virus, it is recommended that we treat our animals the same way we would a family member, in order to adequately protect them: keep our distance and, if possible, make alternate plans for care; wear a mask; and wash our hands before and after we come into contact with them. Do not kiss them. Do not snuggle their little bodies. Get someone else to walk them if possible.



Dr. Jerry Klein, chief veterinary officer of the American Kennel Club, relates the most important thing to remember about animals and COVID-19 is that they cannot transfer it to humans, and they should not be neglected. In the immediate aftermath of the outbreak, misinformation that animals might carry the virus led to abandonment and even killing of some dogs and cats in some places. “Dogs and cats deserve the truth,” Klein said. “We have to take care of these guys.”

Maryland Legislative Update – Perhaps you heard, the 2020 Maryland General Assembly has adjourned early. Beginning Thursday, March 19, 2020 buildings will be closed, and employees are encouraged to remain home and engage in social distancing.



Everyone must work together to help in the fight with COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

Even with the Assembly adjourning early there is GOOD NEWS!

Now for the Good News!

Maryland Legislators and Staff Declare Canines at the Capitol the “Best Day Ever”

2020-03-20 | AKC Government Relations Department



Coming on the heels of a long day of hearings, the Maryland General Assembly and staff were pleased to welcome the American Kennel Club and the Responsible Dog Owners of Maryland (RDO-MD) for the second annual “Maryland Canines at the Capitol”. The March 4 event, attended by some 300 legislators, staff, and visitors, caused a huge buzz and excitement leading up to the day from those who attended last year.

Maryland dog owners, breeders, and sportsmen were on hand to answer questions about purebred dogs and what makes their breed so special. They enthusiastically provided policymakers with facts about the positive impact dog owners, breeders, and clubs have in their communities. They also provided examples of how AKC and Maryland dog clubs promote responsible dog ownership and educational opportunities to advance the wellbeing of dogs throughout the state.



There were plenty of playful puppies on hand for attendees to meet and take pictures with, including two Chesapeake Bay Retriever puppies (the state dog of Maryland), a Pharaoh Hound puppy, and a Chinese Shar-Pei puppy. In addition to the puppies, attendees had the chance to meet two Biewer Terriers, a Samoyed, a Norwich Terrier, a Borzoi, a Labrador Retriever, an Irish Terrier, a 2-year-old Chesapeake Bay Retriever, and an English Foxhound.

“After a successful event last year, the Responsible Dog Owners of Maryland (RDO-MD), were thrilled to return to the State Capitol to meet with legislators and their staff about responsible dog ownership,” said Mary Lou Olszewski, President of RDO-MD. “Being able to talk about our experiences and discuss the importance of purebred dogs and dog clubs in Maryland is a vital part of our Federation’s mission of protecting the dogs and the sports we love so much.”

Numerous legislators thanked the AKC and RDO-MD for coming and noted the calming effect that dogs had on them. Some even asked if AKC and RDO-MD could come back the pet dogs again for more canine “therapy” sessions

With several dog-related bills currently up for consideration in Maryland, the event provided an



excellent opportunity to educate attendees about how well-intended bills can create unintended consequences that harm responsible dog owners and dog sports and even threaten the future of purpose-bred dogs.

RDO-MD and AKC Government Relations staff also provided legislators with information on the economic impact of dog events and how both organizations

can be a resource for dog issues in Maryland.

On the days surrounding the event, AKC GR staff met with 32 Legislative offices and spoke with either members of the General Assembly or their staff. The time was spent sharing information about AKC and AKC dog clubs and discussing the many programs AKC and clubs offer as well as providing information on how RDO-MD and AKC can serve as a resource for dog issues in Maryland.

During the meetings, participants also talked about legislation currently before the General Assembly and were successful in encouraging the sponsor of a tethering bill in extreme conditions to amend it to exempt dogs that are actively engaged in activities associated with agriculture, hunting, sporting, and recreational events as well as training for such activities.



“Throughout the event and meetings, AKC was well-received. Members and staff were eager to share about their own pets and interested to learn about all the resources AKC and our clubs offer,” said Charley Hall, AKC Legislative Analyst/Community Outreach Coordinator for the region. “We look forward to continuing to work together with legislators and clubs on policies and programs that benefit dogs and dog owners in the state.”

Update on Animal Bills that were not passed but will most likely be reintroduced in 2021

Maryland: Session Ends Without Passing Animal Bills

By [AKC Government Relations](#)

Mar 20, 2020 | 3 Minutes

In response to public health concerns associated with COVID-19, the Maryland Legislature has ended the 2020 session and will not reconvene until January 13, 2021.

As a result of the House and Senate working hurriedly to move numerous bills and pass a budget, many bills did not make it to final passage. Three of those unsuccessful bills were ones that were greatly improved as a result of positive amendments, as mentioned in a previous [alert](#):

Senate Bill 625 – Originally, this bill sought to regulate the Internet sales of animals by pet stores. The original language concerned many who use Facebook or other internet “brag” pages to showcase their dogs and puppies for sale. As amended, all references to Internet sales were removed. It further clarified that a pet store does not include situations where the animals are sold at establishments where they were bred, and the buyer and seller are both present during the sale or transfer. The new language would have clarified for the first time in Maryland law that home-based breeders are not considered retail pet stores.

Given the interest the sponsor has expressed in getting this bill passed, AKC GR believes this bill will likely be reintroduced next session. If this is the case, AKC will be requesting that it include the amendments mentioned above.

House Bill 406 – Originally, this bill and its companion, Senate Bill 627 which never left committee, sought to address the issue of unattended dogs extreme weather conditions. It further defined those conditions and required that no dog could be tethered in those conditions for more than 30 minutes if the dog is left unattended and without access to suitable shelter as defined in the bill. Given the language in the bill, questions about the meaning of unattended as used in the bill and the requirement for access to “suitable shelter,” AKC was concerned that the legislation could impact dog shows, field trials, rally, agility, hunting, and other activities. As such, the sponsor agreed to amend the bill allow for an exemption “if the dog is lawfully and activity engaged in hunting; livestock herding; sledding; sporting; or training.”

The sponsor will be reintroducing this bill next session, and AKC believes it will include the exemption language. The sponsor has expressed a willingness to work with the AKC, and we look forward to talking with her further in the interim about this legislation.

House Bill 863 – As introduced, this bill sought to ban organized “hunting or killing contests”, with the intent to stop certain activities such as coyote hunting contest. AKC and sportsmen groups expressed concerns that the broad wording could impact humane, legitimate hunting, field trial, and similar events. The bill was amended to remove the word “hunting”, and to further clarify that the bill does not include “lawful dog training or dog performance competitions.” The bill passed the House but was ultimately held in the Senate.

AKC was informed by the sponsor that given the overwhelming support of the final amended version of the bill, it will be the introduced version next session.

With the session coming to a close, AKC Government Relations would like to thank all the Responsible Dog Owners of Maryland (RDO-MD) and all those who took the time to reach out to their local senator or delegate to advocate for sensible legislation that protects the health, safety and welfare of dogs and their responsible owners. Over the next several months, AKC GR looks forward to continuing its outreach to Maryland lawmakers, and connecting with clubs and breeders in the state to discuss how we can work together on behalf of dogs in Maryland.

Charley Hall is the AKC GR Legislative Analyst/Community Outreach Coordinator for Maryland, Charles.Hall@akc.org. We are grateful to Charley for all his help with Maryland legislation and look forward to our continuing our work together.

Know a MD Legislator that is supporting our mission?

RDO-MD wants to know about them. Please submit their name and a short paragraph of why you would like to see this legislator(s) recognized by the RDO-MD. Ultimately the “Legislator of the Year” will be chosen from these candidates.

Send to Bekki Pina, kaije1127@yahoo.com



2020

This event will be bigger and better!
Everyone is invited to participate
Club & Individual Breed tables will be
available at no cost.

Tuesday, August 25, 2020, 6-9 p.m.
Information? Contact - Alisa Matricciani
aussiedogX3@gmail.com

Time sure does fly! It has now been two-years since RDO-MD has been incorporated.



RDO-MD appreciates all the AKC Clubs and individuals in Maryland.....that continue to support our mission of responsible dog ownership in our great State of Maryland.

You are invited to join our RDO-MD management team..... All candidates need to be nominated. Please let us know if you are interested. Contact Hal Happersett, halhappersett@yahoo.com

<u>BOARD POSITION</u>	<u>TERM LIMIT</u>
President	2 years
Vice President	1 year
Recording Secretary	1 year
Corresponding Secretary	1 year
Treasurer	1 year
Director 1	1 year
Director 2	2 years

The road to OUR heart is paved with paw prints.”

2019-2020 RDO-MD Officers & Directors

President	Mary Lou Olszewski
Vice President	Hal Happersett
Treasurer	Martin Del Prince
Recording Secretary	Kelly Edwards
Corresponding Secretary	Bekki Pina
Director	Corissa Fanning
Director	Alisa Matricciani

Your support is invaluable - Thank you!

CLUB TIMELINES

CLUB YEAR JUL 1-JUN 30

NOMINATION COMMITTEE SELECTED NLT FEB 15TH

NOMINATION COMMITTEE MEETING: MARCH

NOMINATION COMMITTEE SLATE SUBMISSION NLT APRIL 1ST

RENEWAL NOTICES BEGIN TO GO TO MEMBERS: APRIL

NOMINATION COMMITTEE SLATE NOTIFICATIONS NLT APRIL 15TH

WRITE-IN NOMINATIONS DUE NLT MAY 15TH

ANNUAL MEETING NOTIFICATION NLT JUN 1ST

MEMBER NOTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL NOMINATIONS NLT JUN 1ST

BALLOT VOTING (IF APPLICABLE) BETWEEN JUN 1ST - JUN 15TH

NON-COMPETE NOMINATION SLATE CONSIDERED ELECTED NLT JUL 15TH

APPOINTED FINANCE COMMITTEE TREASURER AUDIT JUN 1ST -Jun 30th

ANNUAL MEETING: JULY



“When I needed a hand, I found your paw.”

RDOOFMD@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RDOofMD/>

www.responsibledogownersofmaryland.org