

**2005 ASCA General Membership Meeting**  
**ASCA Nationals**  
**Conyers, Georgia**  
October 26, 2005

President, Jerry Aufox called the meeting to order at 7:43 p.m.

Member Attendance was taken at check in. Board Members attending: Peter Hellmeister, Maarten Walter, Allison Bryant, Roger Stevens, Ann DeChant, Jerry Aufox, Chris Davenport, Linda Gray, Michelle Berryessa (Director-elect), and Jo Kimes. Shelly Hollen arrived later.

Jerry Aufox introduced the Directors: Peter Hellmeister, Maarten Walter, Allison Bryant, Roger Stevens, Ann DeChant, Jerry Aufox, Chris Davenport, Linda Gray, Michelle Berryessa (Director-elect), and Jo Kimes.

Jerry Aufox reported that normally we would have a business Agenda which he would like to suspend for the moment so that we can introduce Will Gergits, Therion International.

He turned the Meeting over to Will Gergits, but first he cautioned that if the questions came up about ImmGen, he will disallow questions about ImmGen as he has been told by our Attorney not to discuss ImmGen.

The following is not the exact words of Will Gergits, but a report on his presentation.

Will Gergits state that about a year ago, Therion International had taken over the DNA for ASCA. He stated that he will review what they are doing, what sort of problems they have encountered, what changes they have made to make this a better DNA registry, and what they will do in the future to make this a better DNA program for us.

**DNA Testing for the Australian Shepherd Club of America**

**Goals of DNA Genotyping Program:**

- Enhance the ASCA registry by increasing the accuracy of breeding and lineage information. -- The paper registry is just paper, and it can have incorrect facts. When ASCA began using DNA, ASCA wanted to enhance the accuracy of breeding and lineage information for the paper registry by using DNA for verifying parentage.
- Future benefit of identifying genetic markers linked to heritable defects, diseases and/or desirable traits -- Another goal is the possible future benefit of storing samples for genetic research for defects or disorders or to look for markers for desirable traits. If we have stored DNA, then it can be used for research in the future for Cancer, Epilepsy, or other disorders.

**Therion International, LLC**

- Specializing in DNA-based testing
- Animal Identity Laboratory
- Technological Leader
- Privately Held – fourth “generation” business

Gergits discussed who Therion International is: Will and his partner, Nancy Casna, started off at Life Codes, doing DNA fingerprinting for the Courts. They have been in the DNA business since 1986. Gergits is a behavioral geneticist, and his partner is a Molecular Biologist. Therion is a mom and pop laboratory with Gergits and Casna running their third company together. At Therion, they specialize in pets, domestics, aquaculture and endangered species. They specialize in DNA based testing for animals only, not humans. They have processed samples from over 450 different species/breeds of animals. They are a technologic leader, because they develop novel tests every year. They can do about any DNA testing that we want them to do, and they are willing to develop tests. They don't get a lot of contracts, because they are not the cheapest lab around. They try to give their customers the best service they can get.

**The ASCA Contract with Therion includes:**

1. Determine genotypes for all samples of dogs sent to them, using blood samples, and using a prescribed set of 12 canine microsatellite markers that ImmGen was using.
2. Once they established the genotype of a given dog, they will resolve parentage questions to determine whether this is the Sire or this was the Dam.
3. Report results within 14 working days.
4. Store all genetic data and samples for 20 years per the contract (but Will said forever).
5. Hopefully we will enter into a partnership for the future for research to identify genetic markers linked to disorders.

**Therion inherited from ImmGen:**

- Set of 12 inconsistent canine microsatellites
- Problematic genotype database on 4370 dogs (76% - 9 markers or less)
- Six month backlog of samples
- Only 1232/4370 archived samples
- Sample database without owner/submitter info

The technology they are employing was handed it to them by ImmGen, but it's a technology that is employed by most Registries called a PCR test - DNA amplification of micro satellites. They are looking at specific sites on the genome looking at microsatellites, there is a genetic sequence of base pairs that are repeated over and over and over. The four base pairs are ACTG, these repeat in sequences, like ACACACAC, it might repeat 100 times, 120 times, or 160 times. That depends on the individual. That is the variation we are looking at from dog to dog to dog. Gergits said, "We go in in one site and use primers and hook them up to the DNA of the dog and amplify it and measure how many repeats -- how many base pairs -- that microsatellite has. The reason there are differences in dogs is that one dog may have 120 bases or 122, 124, 126, 128, if it's a four pair repeat, you might expect 116, 120, 124, 128. That is the variation we are looking at the genetic sequencing that differs from dog to dog to dog. When ImmGen and ASCA set this up, the goal was to use 12 different microsatellites, twelve different sites on the genome that will be assayed in the test. If you remember basic DNA from college, DNA molecules are in pairs and so you are looking at 24 different markers per individual. Any test that looks at 24 sites that are all quite variable, it's a robust test. It makes a good test for verifying parentage. The bigger sample you have and the more markers you have the better test you will have." They are looking at 12 inconsistent canine markers, and they had to look at how consistent they were. They have settled on 10 markers that work well of which 9 or 10 worked right all the time. When they got the DNA database from ImmGen, there were 4370 dogs, but some of them had 9 or 8 or 7 markers in their record...not all 12. There were gaps in the data. Therion had to look at which ones worked well over and over and select

the ones that worked the best. Another thing ImmGen was doing that some of us have heard of is rounding. The cattle industry consistently rounds any numbers that don't come out even. Gergits went on to say, "Say you have a dog that has or 122, 124, 126, 128, and then you get 131, then you get 133, 135, 137, 139. One base pair is inserted that is uneven and from then on they are uneven. This normally happens with DNA. In the cattle industry, they rounded the results to keep them even numbers. Since ImmGen worked primarily for the cattle industry, they rounded the canine numbers as well, but at Therion, we think that is unnecessary. We saw anomalies from time to time, but we talked to someone at ImmGen who told Therion that they did rounding when they encountered an uneven number of base pairs. When we have a puppy who comes in, and there is a Sire or Dam in the database with a sample stored, we rerun the sample for the Sire to see if the puppy and the Sire match with the way Therion figures it, just to be sure. By doing that they have been able to eliminate most of the inconsistencies between their results and those of ImmGen, and they are all due to rounding."

Gergits stated that when ASCA decided to end the relationship with ImmGen, another problem was that they had a 557 sample backlog, and they only had 1232 (instead of 4,370) archived samples that Therion received.

#### **Current Status at Therion**

- Using 10 best canine microsatellites
- All backlog samples completed (547 + 543 "new")
- Rerunning archived Sire/Dam when appropriate
- Enhanced sample database with owner info
- All samples stored in locked fireproof container
- Received 1067 samples in 2005 (expect 2000/Y)
- 14 working day turnaround (when volume expectations met)

In response to a question, Gergits answered, "It's not so much a discrepancy as the interpretation of the data when it comes out. If we don't have a sample from the dog, we have to go on the ImmGen results. There are three sources of potential error: one, is the rounding thing, two, their lab or our lab ran the samples improperly, or three, the sample is not good. If the sample is not a good sample, then you won't get good results. A bad sample will not give us all ten pair results. Bad samples create bad results. If it's the rounding thing, we can work with that. If we get we get 121, and they say 122, then it's the rounding thing. It won't make a difference anymore as we are only seeing it in 5 percent of the samples. You are asking us to do two things. One, you are asking us to create a genotype, which we do, ...no problem. Then, two, you are asking us to verify it with the Sire and Dam. The convention is not to exclude the Sire if you have three or fewer markers that don't match...you do not exclude the sire. We do not see that in the samples we have. If anything we see one pair that doesn't match...not as many as three. We don't see it in a whole lot of dogs, which would be a problem. We are only seeing it in 5%, at most. If it doesn't match up, we go back to run the sample of the Sire, if we have it, to see what we get from the other lab which used other equipment. (All PCR machines run things differently in each lab and in other labs run things a little different.) ASCA is paying for us to retest the samples in the stored base. It might be worth it to you to ask us to retest a dog that you may have in the stored samples. We are getting good results by doing this and not finding huge discrepancies." In response to another question that can't be heard on the tape, Gergits said, "We can only make the final decision based on what we find on our laboratory. If there is a pup in our lab, with the Sire and Dam that we are testing, and we say they are excluded, we can only say that it is excluded. Yes, if they were tested at ImmGen, and not

excluded there, then I would suggest that instead of agonizing over this, retest the Sire again and let's figure it out. This is an isolated case, and we must move on."

Gergits went on, "From the moment that we got the technology working -- we got the technology in November -- we got it working right by February or March, we asked Linda Gray to tell Therion who were the problems cases, and they were put at the top of the list. If there is someone out there who have individual problems that haven't been attended to, let the Business Office know, and Therion will be deal with your problems as soon as we can. You have to let us know what you need, and we will try to get it sorted out. We worked with a lot of upset people who were caught between ImmGen and Therion, and we have helped them get their situation figured out."

**Work Completed (Samples):**

- Processed 2530
- Billed 1928
- Reported 1713
- Requested Resubmission 215
- Pending Analysis 39

If you are waiting for results and haven't gotten them yet, it might be that the resamples that we requested have not been received. If your Sire is deceased, let us know. If there are offspring in the database, we can use that to get information about the Sire. We are rerunning Sire and Dams, but if they are not in the stored samples, then we will have to figure something else out. If we have offspring that are in the database, we can go back and look at their markers to see what should have come from the deceased Sire or Dam.

This year we have processed 1713 samples so far. We are completing them in a 14-day turnaround provided that we have enough samples to run. It takes 40 samples per run. We can run the samples faster if we had more samples to run, so start sending samples if you are waiting for the backlog to be cleared.

As you can see, we have sent 215 back for resubmission. The reasons for asking for resample can be due to the below problems:

**What causes problem with processing samples?**

- Not enough biological material:
- Cards/blood not allowed to dry
- Cards get wet
- Samples not stored/preserved properly
- Samples not shipped properly
- Forms not filled out completely

A suggestion was made to have a form developed which would tell the owner why a resample was being request, i.e., not enough sample, card was not allowed to dry, too much blood on card. Gergits showed slides of samples to illustrate good and back examples. He illustrated to what lengths the lab goes to determine whether the sample is useful or not. There was not enough material to run a sample let alone save it for the future. They have run things many times in order to try to get a result before contacting the office with a list of samples that need to be resubmitted. They made sure the technology works right, and then they make sure that the

sample they are sent is or is not useable. The list of resubmittals up to the Nationals is listed here:

**Outstanding (Pending) Resubmittals (Samples):**

IsoCode Cheek	88 (51%)
FTA Cheek	50 (29%)
FTA Blood	35 (20%)
Blood	1 -
Total	174

They have requested resubmittals for the above because the samples they have received do not have enough material to run a sample for the dog. Why not use hair samples? Horses have big follicles, but dogs have small follicles which do not yield enough DNA. ASCA used hair for a while, but there was not enough sample in the follicle, so ImmGen asked ASCA to stop using that years ago.

Therion offers a service and they will work with ASCA with the sample types that ASCA decides to use.

**Sample Types (P = protocol)**

Whole Blood	(P1)
Blood on FTA Cards	(P2)
Cheek Swabs on FTA Cards	(P2)
Blood on IsoCode Cards	(P3)
Cheek Swabs on IsoCode Cards	(P3)
Wire Brushes	(P4)
Tail "Docks"	(P5)

If we ask Therion to process samples from more than just whole blood, this is what they will be required to use. P is protocol for that type of DNA sample. Whole Blood is one process, Blood on FTA cards and Cheek swabs on FTA cards both use a second process. Blood on IsoCode and Cheek Swabs on IsoCode Cards use a third process. Wire Brushes use a fourth process and Tail Docks use yet a fifth process. Each extra process will slow down the receipt or results as they have to wait until they get enough of each protocol to run it.

**Take Home Message**

- Backlog eliminated (except pending resubmittals)
- Laboratory ready to receive regular/expected flow of samples
- Must decide sample type(s) (see the process list above)
- Therion hoping to work with ASCA to enhance efficiency and maximize information flow
- Future considerations – research on genetic disorders?

Therion would like ASCA to decide on the sample methods that will be acceptable so that their service can be timely by narrowing it down to a number of methods that will ensure that we have sufficient samples of each to run them within their turnaround. Blood and blood cards work for that. Adding another method could slow things down.

Questions: Can we get a list of those dogs that are in the DNA data generated by ImmGen for which there are no samples? Jerry Axford said that the Board will get a list from Therion, and we will publish it.

If a dog is no longer stored (Therion didn't receive a sample for that dog from ImmGen) can owner get a new sample and have it stored only? Jerry said that the Board will look into it.

Question: Is there a goal to go to more markers? Can we use enough to verify Sire and Dam? That would be a question if there is inbreeding. If that is necessary, we will use more markers. It can be done if it is necessary. Therion hasn't seen the need for this at this point, but if there is a high level of inbreeding, it may become necessary. There are other markers for canines that could be added. At this point they do not see a need.

In response to a question whether rounding could be the reason for excluding a dog as a sire, Gergits explained the following again: Three markers are needed to exclude a sire. They are never finding three rounding problems but maybe one rounding problem...only one at most. One base pair change is not an issue. Gergits reported having candid conversations with the personnel at ImmGen, and he has learned is that there is not a problem with our database. The decision was at the beginning of the relationship with ASCA and Therion that if there was a problem, they randomly pick a stored sample and retest it. They are not finding big problems with the database. The percentage that was rounded, they know where it will occur, and it can be corrected. They are not finding vast differences between the DNA data generated by ImmGen results and what Therion finds when they rerun the sample.

Are you finding more than one rounding per dog? Will said, No, we have ten markers and match 8 or 9, but where ImmGen has 122, we have 121. Do you want us to exclude that puppy when all of the rest of the markers match up with the sample on file? We know the only difference is that in one or two that are different, they are consistent with the rounding that they told Will they did. He said again, "If there is a Sire on file from before and we have the blood, we rerun the Sire and it verifies the fact that on one of two alleles ImmGen rounded, if they don't match. They rounded and we don't do that. We know they rounded, and we can spot that every time." Gergits said he had many conversations with people at ImmGen during the transition to Therion, and he knows what they did.

This same questions were repeated by Members from the audience. Will kept saying the errors they are seeing can all be explained by rounding. The best way to find out what are errors and what are rounding, is to rerun some of the old stored samples of a Sire or Dam against ImmGen's results to see if ImmGen's results were bad, and they are not bad but are consistent with what Therion gets with the exception of where they rounded, and the roundings are always at the same base pairs and only in 5% of the results in the database. This is, again, why they are sure that the DNA data generated by ImmGen is useable to go forward.

Question: When we send the sample, it is sent directly to Therion, is there a way to reduce the damage to the samples in shipping. Why do blood samples get destroyed? Cards are getting wet. There is not much we can do if the cards are wet in shipping. There was also discussion of blood tubes getting broken. Gergits said that the packaging that ASCA provides for the tubes is adequate and very few glass tubes have been broken.

When the same questions began again Gergits said that he was finished with his talk, but he would be available outside now and at the blood draw tomorrow for further questions from individuals.

Everyone thanked Will Gergits and he departed.

President Jerry Aufox resumed the business Meeting and asked for the Treasurers report.

Allison Bryant, Treasurer reported:

**Statement of Financial Condition as of December 31, 2004**

ASCA's total Liabilities and Net assets -- \$634,384  
Total Revenue for year ending December 31, 2004 \$781,882  
Total Expenses \$697,456  
Change in Net assets \$84,346  
Net assets beginning was \$560,038  
Ending Net Assets:\$634,384

Jerry Aufox pointed out that these were for the first audited financial Statements for ASCA.

**Committee Reports:**

**Agility Committee:** -- Pete Dolan, Chair

I don't have much of a report today other than that of the large issue of the year which has been that the relationship with dual sanctioning with NADAC will be over on May 31, 2006. The Committee is working on rules changes to support that and procedures for the future. (Pete is leaving the Committee as eight years on the Agility Committee is enough.)

Can club sanction early and not have new fees? If you sanction before January 1, you can file with the old fees. Jerry Aufox verified that. The new fees will be \$.50 per dog per ASCA titling run per day for dual sanctioned trials. ASCA Agility Enthusiasts List is available for anyone who is interested. They have been trying to put out the information on that List.

Do we know about how the new rules in January will be transferred into ASCA titles such as Wild Card? We don't know NADAC rules. NADAC hasn't published them yet. We don't have a timeline says Pete. In answer to a question of what to enter, Pete agreed that the safe bet would be to enter the dogs in the more stringent division. He said the Committee is looking at a Q is a Q is a Q. The Committee is looking for a simple way to get us through to May 31 to allow everyone a full titling year. On June 1 it will be by our rules.

What is plan to look into automating the results to the Office instead of paper thing? We are crying poor mouth for a long time getting the office to enter the data. What is being done with the infrastructure for support this? Pete said this is up to the committee, and they are working on 74 item list and getting prepared for our own program came to the top. We have to have the ASCA Agility program in place by June 1. Pete said ASCA already has a viable program...it needs a lot of work. It needs to be promoted and work by the Committee and the Members to make it happen. It needs a lot of marketing as members do not understand that ASCA has a viable program, but in some areas of the country it will take a lot of work.

**BSRC:** -- Report presented by Sunday Miles for Chair Terry Martin who could not attend.

This is a special Nationals for the Breed Standard Review Committee because we have brought the clarified version of the Breed Standard to share with you after working on it for four and a half years. I would like to introduce myself as I am giving this report because our chairperson, Terry Martin, was unable to attend. I am Sunday Miles. A number of members of the committee are also in attendance and ready to discuss the suggested revisions with you this week. Members are: Shelly Hollen, Sunday Miles, Cheri Preciado, Linda Bell, Kristin

McNamara, and Kim Cochran. Current committee members not in attendance are Committee Chair Terry Martin, Sandy Cornwell, and Ernest Hartnagle. We are all actively seeking your comments on this very important project because we will be working on the annotations to the revisions. Your input will be very important for this document. We have copies of the suggested revisions available, and they also will be posted on the ASCA website and in the *Aussie Times*.

We published our first draft of suggested revisions over a year ago in the May/June 2004 Aussie Times. After allowing several months for responses, the committee began working through the Standard for the fourth time. Each letter we received had been forwarded to the entire committee when it was received, and then was broken down into the individual sections. These were sent out as we worked that particular section. We closely examined and reworked the areas where there was significant disagreement. In some areas there were equal pros and cons to a revision so these were debated and discussed. We presented our revisions to the Board of Directors and they gave us their blessing to present the copies to you.

Most of you know that for even one word of the standard to be changed the board must agree unanimously and send it to a membership vote. Per the by-laws no change can be made without a 2/3 majority of the voting membership's approval. We feel that this document is ready to go to the membership to vote on each section individually but recommend a period of time to present the document and to educate the membership, many of whom will be voting but are not familiar with the Breed Standard. We have throughout this work kept in mind that the Standard is not only used to judge conformation shows but is a guide to all who breed and own Australian Shepherds.

We hope that in studying this document that you will closely compare it with the 1977 Breed Standard and Annotations to determine if it is in the best interest of the Breed itself. Voting on each section alone will give the membership the opportunity to approve a revision of a section and to turn down another section if they do not believe it clarifies or reflects the original intent. The approved sections would then be part of the official Standard. Sections not receiving a 2/3 majority vote could be under further discussion and would retain the same wording as the present Standard until such time as another vote was taken.

In the 28 years since the present standard was written there have been both scientific discoveries and changes in the breed itself. The committee unanimously agrees that no breed standard should ever be changed to fit fads or trends but rather should remain a guideline to preserve the breed. We thank everyone who has contributed to this project and it has indeed been a labor of love to work on it.

In answer to a question from the Membership, Sunday stated that they will be providing education as they realize that many of the Members have never even read our current standard. We hope with our education to reach even those who haven't read it so that they can understand the Standard and potential revisions.

We feel that we have a finished product, and we felt that the Breed Standard revision will be voted on section by section. We need to get a feel for your likes and dislikes on this revision before we begin working on the Annotations.

It's been a long but rewarding four years, but we look forward to your input.

**Conformation Committee:** -- Liz Gibson, Chair



This past year was spent correcting typos and grammar errors in the first four Chapters of the Rule Book. We also reworded several rules to clarify them. We started to find some rules that just didn't make sense the way they were written. The Altered program became an Official ASCA Program as of June 1, 2005. The Altered classes must be offered in the full compliment of Classes, there is no more reduced slate. It also counts for HOF. We have been working on the Judges book pages with the judge counting number of dogs, the number of dogs excused, with Judge's initials at the bottom to make sure there are no changes afterwards. You will see them as they are printed. The business office is trying to use up what they have first. We are working on some of the other pages of the Judges' books, and we will be working on them throughout the year. This also includes the Nationals Judge's books which are a mess.

On the approved Judges List that you use to call your Judges, people state that they call the Office over and over to report retired and deceased Judges, but they remain in the book. The Committee drafted a letter that will be sent out to the families of the Judges this year once the new Office Staff is able to send it to correct Judge's List as far as deceased and retired Judges. This next year will be spent on the remaining chapters of the Rulebook, future plans as a template for Premium Lists, a guidelines for Preshows, and a possible guidelines for a Conformation Finals event. We also have a few openings, so respond to the Board. We need you!

Will electronic submissions soon be available? Not yet says Liz. There were no further questions.

**DNA & Genetics Committee:** -- Report presented by Lizette Busquets for Chair Chris Reedy who could not attend this year.

#### ASCA DNA & Genetics Committee Annual Report - October 2005

Committee activity for the past year can be seen on the ASCA website in the Secretary Reports or in the Aussie Times by reading the Committee Reports. Some of the changes to the DNA Program this past year have been switching labs from ImmGen Inc to Therion International. If anyone has older kits sitting around, please make a note to change the mailing address to:

Therion International  
36 Phila Street  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Do not send samples to the ASCA Business Office! This will cause a delay in your results. Please send samples directly to the lab. Any questions regarding obtaining kits or checking on results should be directed to the ASCA Business Office.

The DNA requirement for Sires has changed. If a dog is siring his third or greater litter, a DNA profile must be in the ASCA database before litter registrations will be processed for that particular sire. Please plan ahead!

The Registry Rules have been changed to reflect the current sample methods (at this time only blood cards or whole blood will be accepted) and clarification of DNA terminology.

The Committee realizes that this has been a difficult year for the DNA Program, but we all appreciate the support from the membership. Our goal was, and still is, to maintain registry

integrity through the use of the ASCA Parentage Verification Program. Please continue to utilize the program. A recent project of the Committee has been a series of Frequently Asked Questions. These FAQs can be read on the ASACA website (asca.org). They will also be printed in the *Aussie Times*.

As Chair, I would like to thank the Committee for all of their hard work this past year. We still have many goals for the DNA Program and the Committee members all work very hard, having a deep commitment to ASCA and the breed. We are still 2 members short so if anyone is interested in joining, please send your resume to Jo Kimes. Thank you also to Ann DeChant for continuing as our Liaison for 2006. Ann has a long history with the DNA Program, making her work as Liaison extremely productive. Respectfully, Chris Reedy, Chair.

A question was asked about whether wire brushes would be accepted by the lab. Liz answered that the Committee officially recommends whole blood or blood cards and that the office only has the blood kits or the cards. At this time only those will be accepted by Therion. When asked if the cheek swabs would be accepted in the future, it was explained that when changes are made, the DNA & Genetics Committee will make a recommendation to the Board and the Board will either accept or reject the recommendation. At this time the Office doesn't have wire brush kits, but if the Committee and the Board approve adding that method, the kits would then be available and that would be an option. Jerry Aufox explained the normal Committee process. When asked if the Membership will get to vote on that, the answer was not as it would be handled through the normal Committee/Board process. Liz said that the Committee understands the ease of use of the wire brushes, and they are aware that some Members want them. A suggestion was made by a Member that Affiliates can organize Blood draws and get the kits from ASCA. Some Affiliates do this and make it easy for their members and attendees to get blood drawn using the kits that are available, so that there is no need to pay a vet for the draw. It was also reported that there are two days of draws at this Nationals. The person stated that they didn't have their dogs here, and the person suggesting it said, then they could organize the draws at their local shows and make the program work. Another Member explained that they understood that when you participate in ASCA DNA programs, you use the kits provided by the Office. Why did Will say in his presentation that they are getting brushes and tails? Maybe people bought the kits when they were accepted and available in the past. So many people want cheek swabs that they are not off the table. But the way he described the process, each material submitted would require a different process, and if they are run in lots of forty, he has to hold the test up until he has forty of each process. There may be several choices made available, that use the same process, but neither the Board nor the Committee has sat down with Will to work out the possibilities. This is the first opportunity that we have had to talk to him. Someone asked if there was a possibility of certain options costing more. He said that the highest quality of accuracy was with whole blood, and it would allow you to store blood for future testing. If using other methods means that there will be a retest required, then the person using that will have to pay for additional retests required. It still remains that blood would be a better thing to use.

**Education Committee:** – Liz Gibson reported for Lisa Cameron Bell, Chair, who could not be with us tonight.

The Education Committee this past year has worked on Educational Articles for *Aussie Times* and organization for Educational Programs. They are working currently working on an educational program for Judges and a public out reach program for nonASCA Member to introduce the Aussie. She wishes to introduce Shelly Hollen as Chair and to solicit input from the Members for desired articles.

**Junior Committee: –**

There was no one to report for the Committee but Jerry Aufox announced that the All-Around Junior is Katie Kupfer.

**MVA Committee: --** Andrea Hoffman

We haven't done anything for the past year, but we will have a new Liaison as Shelly Hollen is leaving the Board and it will probably be Allison Bryant.

**Obedience Committee: –** Cindy Franks reported for Mary Burlingame who is not here this week.

List of Committee Members: Obedience Committee -- Liaison: Maarten Walter  
Committee Chair: Mary Burlingame (WA), REGION 2: Lora Cox (CA), Nancy Link (CA), Moria Cornell (CA); REGION 4: Elmer Willems (WI), Kim Waller (MO); REGION 5: Sandra Case (OK), Janet White (TX), Lynn Sidwell (TX), Cindy Franks (TN); REGION 6: Sally Mann (ON), Mary Stoddard; and REGION 7: Jane McNee (QB)  
They are working on addition of Rally program with founder of program working on an ASCA version. Rally when? When next year? The committee is trying to turn it around. A question was asked about Rally as a way to boost interest in Obedience. A Member commented that the Affiliates could use the energy of Rally to boost our Obedience program as regular Obedience entries are dropping. There is no date yet, but the Committee is working on a Rally program with Mr. Kramer for the near future. Bud Kramer is helping to create a Rally program for ASCA, and we will not end up in the same boat as with NADAC. A question was asked about Affiliates offering Rally matches...Affiliates can offer Rally match. Franks said to go for it and have fun teaching about the program. When asked if working with the founder of Rally would get ASCA into the same situation as with NADAC. Jerry Aufox said absolutely not. Cindy said that the Committee is working with Bud Kramer for a program that was for ASCA. A question was asked about how we could work with Bud Kramer and come up with ASCA's program and Franks answered that they would at some point push back from Mr. Kramer, but we can't get him totally out of the picture. It will be a negotiation back and forth because we are coming to him with a different mindset that other venues have. She was asked if we were going to have to buy his book. Jerry Aufox stated that the Obedience Committee has been asked to develop its own Rally program, not to work with anyone outside of ASCA and was to ensure that Rally will be ASCA's program. Kramer has developed his program, and his book is copyrighted. It will not be licensed. It will be ASCA. When asked if there will be a judge's education program for Obedience Judges but not "Rally" Judges? Franks stated that the Committee is discussing that. We are hoping to have something to the Board for Rally soon so that it can be an ASCA Program this next year. If you have any questions ask any Committee Member. You can also join the ASCA Obedience Committee List as well.

**Stock Dog Committee: –** Mike Bryant delivered the report for Linda Mahoney who was unable to attend.

It has been a busy and productive year for both the Stockdog Program and the Committee. Some statistics for trials held and titles awarded from June 1, 2004 - May 31, 2005 (total numbers will be published in the *Aussie Times* after a complete review):  
While the number of trials held was down significantly, entries overall increased by just under 2000 from the previous reporting period.

ASCA-registered Australian Shepherds earned 193 Advanced titles, 235 Open titles, 508 Started titles, 11 Post-Advanced titles. 54 Australian Shepherds were awarded Working Trial Champion titles. Other Breed participants earned 124 Advanced titles, 204 Open titles, 441 Started titles, 12 Post-Advanced titles. 26 Other Breed contestants earned Working Trial Championships. 20 Ranch Trials were held, resulting in 58 titles awarded to Australian Shepherds and 31 awarded to Other Breeds. 12 Ranch Dog Certificates were authorized, 8 to Australian Shepherds and 4 to Other Breeds.

On the Committee side, rule changes were made in several places, including:  
Chapter 3, Section 4, Handlers - This is a new section, with the rest of the chapter being renumbered in the June 2005 Rule book.  
Chapter 3, Section 7.1e, Training Aids (previously Section 6.1e)  
Chapter 5, Section 3.3, Acceptance of Entries  
Chapter 10, Ranch Trial Program, Sections 1-4  
Chapter 13, ASCA Stockdog Committee, Section 1, Membership

The Stockdog Trialing Guidelines have been updated to reflect rule changes made over the years. Many thanks to Cathe Walker for tackling this project. The current Rule Book is available by download from the ASCA website, and by request from the Business Office.

In other business: James Bergert was promoted from Provisional to full ASCA Stockdog Judge. Congratulations, James.

The Working Description Subcommittee completed its task by providing a draft proposal to the Stockdog Committee. The draft has been published in several issues of the *Aussie Times*, generating many constructive comments from the membership. The Committee continues to welcome and encourage your comments as this document is finalized.

A number of concerns, questions, and suggestions for improvements to the Program were submitted to the Committee over the past year. Some of these remain as discussion items, others were resolved quickly.

The SDC remains committed to broadening communication between the members of ASCA and the Committee. To help members keep current, the SDC maintains an email news list containing all non-confidential committee discussions. Any ASCA member can join this list by sending an email to [SDC-NEWS-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:SDC-NEWS-subscribe@yahogroups.com). The SDC continues to explore ways to use available technology to improve timeliness of news delivery and interactivity between the Committee and the Membership.

Mike Bryant has been elected as Chair for the next year, and Chris Davenport will return as Liaison.

On behalf of the Stockdog Committee, I would like to thank the many participants in the Stockdog program throughout the last year as competitors, as hosts, as course directors, as stockhandlers, scribes, and timekeepers. You ARE the program. We would also like to thank all the clubs and individuals who made donations to the Stockdog Finals. This is an expensive event to hold and your contributions are invaluable. Individual recognition will be published in the *Aussie Times*. Our thanks also go out to GAASC for hosting the 2005 National Specialty with the grace that is definitive of "Southern Hospitality"

On a personal note, I would like to thank the members of the Stockdog Committee for donating their time and energy to keeping this program flowing. It isn't always easy, and it isn't always fun but it is never boring (smile). You all made it not only easy for me to follow in some very big footprints as interim Chair, but a pleasure and an honor as well. Special thanks to Chris Davenport, Linda Gray, and Jerry Aufox for providing guidance along the way, and to Mike Bryant for stepping in early since I could not be here in person. Sincerely, Linda Mahoney, Outgoing SDC Chair

A question was asked about what the Committee is doing with the Junior Program? Mike reported that they are waiting for ASCA's Attorney. The new Junior score sheet is in place.

**Tracking Committee:** -- Deb St. Jacques reported for Celeste Kelly, Chair, who could not be here.

Tracking has blossomed recently. The New England Club had a test with 4 TD tests, and all tracks were underwater. The Committee has worked hard to grow tracking. They cleaned up the rules that were hard to understand and suggestion that were made years ago were put into the rules. They changed requirements for certification so that titles earned for other programs if earned within the last three years can be used for Certification, i.e., AKC, CKC, or Shutzhund III. New Judges requirements have been added to become and in house ASCA Tracking judge. They include earning one TD title, to work as a track layer at 5 tests, an apprentice at one test, and to send maps of two tracks you have laid and the recommendations of two tracking judges with whom you have laid tracks so that judges can be certified for ASCA judging. We want to ensure that the Judges that are not AKC judges will have the qualifications to judge our tests. They are also reviewing the qualifications for other judges who will be hired to judge our tests. They are trying to have ASCA Tracking to be respected by the world of Tracking. We have petitioned the Board to allow the Committee to review all Nationals Tracking Judge assignments. We want to assist each Nationals host Club with Tracking. We removed the requirement of the 20 foot marker starting in January. The ASCA Web site has lots of info, and we will include future tracks on the web site. Make sure you take photos of your tests so that we can include them on the Web Site. This year's test was great, and we want to thank the Georgia Club for promoting Tracking at this year's Nationals. The Committee wants your input. Linda Gray will stay as Liaison, and Celeste Kelly will continue as chair. We have spots on the Committee, contact Jo Kimes!

Question: Is ASCA looking at going on to Urban or variable surface. Yes.  
Requirements for Judges...do they have to be ASCA trials where they meet there requirements instead of doing all of it at AKC trials and then coming in to be an ASCA judge. Deb said the Committee will clarify that.

**ARPH:** – ARPH Report presented by Allison Bryant for President Pam Leach who could not attend.

Good Evening

ARPH continues to grow rapidly and therefore the number of dogs rescued by ARPH continues to rise. This year, we have already taken in 571 dogs and placed 504 in new homes. With that number of dogs goes a corresponding increase in expenditures, time and effort by over 800 volunteers.

ARPH continues to be solvent, and because of our financial health we have been able to revise our reimbursement schedule so that all ordinary expenses are covered. We are also able to

cover emergency expenses and most other medical procedures. We are grateful for the ARPH volunteers who work so hard to raise funds so we can continue to help the dogs in need.

Recently, the Board has been busy revising and updating the Rules and Procedures. This is a nebulous task, but one that needs to be accomplished to ensure that we serve the ARPH of today. We want to make our volunteers part of the process, and protect them with appropriate guidelines and procedures.

Once the Rules and Procedures are updated and we have clearer guidelines in place, we will work with each of ARPH's five Regions to strengthen communication and help meet their needs. Each Region has its own challenges and we want to address those. We are in the process of outsourcing ARPH's book-keeping since it has grown too large a task for a volunteer to handle. We began the transition in October and will review its status at the end of the year to determine if it provides the benefits we envision for ARPH and its volunteers.

Sincere thanks go to our many ARPH volunteers, without whose hard work and dedication ARPH wouldn't exist. We are appreciative of all the ASCA members and affiliate clubs. Several clubs regularly hold raffles at their trials and shows, with the proceeds going to ARPH. We are also grateful to ASCA for its continuing relationship with ARPH as its official rescue arm, and in particular for the ARPH column in the AUSSIE TIMES and the link from the new website.

We sincerely thank ARPH's new liaison to the ASCA Board of Directors, Allison Bryant. Allison has been very helpful to members of the Board and has been instrumental in making the agility trial here in Georgia a great success for ARPH. Thank you.

### **New Business**

Ann DeChant reported on a Meeting that was held with Liz Hansen of the University of Missouri Epilepsy study. She announced that they have the samples of 712 Aussie in their database with 92 for affected dogs. For them to be able to establish a test, there are several families that are prime candidates for them to run DNA tests on to be able to identify genes, but they need to fill out these families to be able to have a complete picture. They are working toward that. Their research is being funded by grants from higher up health organizations, some of which are for human research, as dogs may provide the key to epilepsy in humans. They are applying to the Morris Animal Foundation for grant funding. During the seminar, we asked what we could do. She suggested that a letter from ASCA and a petition signed by ASCA Members could make a big impression on whether they receive the grant. Letters from ASCA and its Affiliate Clubs supporting the research could make a difference. We do have petitions circulating this week. The Board of Directors decided to add to the ASCA Foundation to raise money to fund ASCA research along with the efforts already underway to raise funds for the Phenome Project. So now you can earmark donations to the Foundation for epilepsy research and it will be sent to projects such as the University of Missouri study. I'm seeking signatures for the petitions. I believe that if we all support this, there may be a test for us in the not too distant future for this. I urge people to send in samples, because even if you don't know or think that you have this in your immediate family of dogs, you might send in a sample that will be key to the discovery of a test for us. I will, when I get back home, provide more information on the ASCA-L about where you can send your letters of support. I urge Affiliate Clubs to write letters of support as well. Questions: Why won't they tell us what families they are seeking more samples for? Ann: It's confidential. That is a good thing, but it also makes this more difficult for us. One thing that we might be able to help with is that they have a grad student who has immersed herself in Australian Shepherds and our donations might be able to be used to fund more time for her to

work on this project. She might then be able to take time to contact people with dogs needed to complete the families. The good thing about the confidentiality is that you can submit samples to them and have confidence that they won't provide your dog's information to others without your permission. It also makes this situation more difficult. They are looking for both affected and unaffected dogs will complete the picture in that family. If you have unaffected dogs that are not from a family with IE, are they part of the study. DeChant said, they are taking them. When asked for the location of the blood draw, the Hall of Champions was answered.

There was a question about the Dispute rules. The fact that the Board sends them to the Attorney was not disputed, but the question was asked when the Board expected that the Dispute rules would be revised to allow for the time-lag to be in line with the three weeks. Jerry Aufox answered that we are hoping to have dispute rules before the 2006 Nationals.

A suggestion was made encouraging the Board to include in the *Aussie Times* every 6 months a campaign to bug Disney about the "Stubs" Movie.

There was a question about why the Members vote to keep Hardship open and the Board was considering a Motion to close Hardship. Jerry Aufox announced that the Hardship Motion before the Board had been defeated.

Another suggestion was made to correct what happened to the scheduling of this year's Affiliate Meeting so that it doesn't happen again. It was answered that the suggestion will be brought to Rock River Valley ASC for next year's National's schedule.

A question was asked about the awarding of the 2007 Nationals – Jerry Aufox announced the New England Clubs will have 2007. ASCNE and Garden State, Sussex County New Jersey will host with the dates being September 29-October 6, 2007.

A question was asked regarding Members voting on Rule changes. Can Members be allowed to vote on rule changes with the fact that a quorum is never possible? Why can't the people who care to show up vote on rule changes? Jerry Aufox stated that it is a complex subject. ASCA has to run by Washington Law. The law gives ASCA Members the right to change the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws, but it leaves the day to day running of ASCA to the ASCA Board. As much as we'd like to talk about a democracy where a majority of ASCA Members vote on the running of ASCA, it doesn't work that way. We vote for the nine Members of the Board and entrust them with the running of ASCA. The Members vote for the Board Members, but they can also communicate with the Board Members to let them know how we feel about issues. The Members can stay involved by electing and keeping in touch with the Board Members on all issues that are important to us. We have access to them through the e-mail list, ASCA-L and through e-mail and phone. Jerry said that he doesn't answer every e-mail as he gets so many.

Jerry made another announcement that if you are one of the people who tested with ImmGen, but your sample requires a retest, ASCA will pay for it.

Motion to Adjourn: Peter Kontos. Approved.

Meeting adjourned at 10:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann B. DeChant, Secretary