

Forwarded Message:

Subj: **ShowNumbers**
Date: 7/10/2006 10:17:57 AM Eastern Standard Time
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Sent from the Internet ([Details](#))

ARBA Reply to CBC 2006

Dear Exhibitors:

I would like to take a few minutes of your time to explain to you our attendance numbers at our shows. One must remember the reason that the American Rare Breed Association was started and why we continue to this day. Dr. John L. Slack and Anita Bryant were the two principal founders of the organization. The main reason the American Rare Breed Association was started, was to provide a show venue for the many breeds from around the world that were not recognized by the American Kennel Club. I do not believe the main reason was to get the dog's full recognition by the American Kennel Club.

The American Rare Breed Association become known as "ARBA" over the years and is known and respected throughout the world today as "ARBA." ARBA put in place a show venue which included seven (7) groups. The groups are the Companion Group, Herding Group, Hound Group, Spitz & Primitive Group, Sporting Group, Terrier Group, and the Working Group. It then adopted Rules & Regulations for the show venue, following for the most part the procedures followed by the Federation Cynologique Internationale. ARBA also put in place a new breed acceptance. Many other procedural tasks were completed. This was accomplished in the year 1991.

ARBA, early on made the decision once a breed was accepted by the American Kennel Club the breed would be dropped from our breeds that could be shown at our venues. There are a few that have been in the system forever and can finish their championship should they desire. When I came along and saw that there were breeds recognized by the ARBA and other major organizations around the world that could not participate or be registered with the American Kennel Club, I thought at that moment this is not fair for breeds that have a long lineage and are recognized by other substantial organizations around the world. So I started my goal of quietly pushing the breeds into the American Kennel Club. ARBA played a significant role in changing the attitude and acceptance procedures of the American Kennel Club. I truly believe the attention and the attraction ARBA was getting by the dog fancier, along with the push by ARBA to have the Federation Cynologique Internationale accept ARBA's pedigree, put some pressure on the American Kennel Club to start the "Foundation Stock Service. It is also my belief that putting the breeds out in front of the Judges, Board Members and other dog fanciers with ties to the American Kennel Club was the right way to go and helped our breeds to get a closer look and finally acceptance by the American Kennel Club. The new breeds gave the American Kennel Club a new avenue of revenue also, which was certainly helpful to gain full recognition. Having said that, getting full recognition for our breeds that we recognized by the American Kennel Club became a passion for me. No, I have not sent out letters to the American Kennel Club seeking recognition of the breeds, this was the job for the Parent Breed Clubs and those who were tied to the individual breeds they were seeking recognition. I thought and still think that providing a venue for the breeds for others to see and judge was and is the right way to unlock the door for some of the breeds we recognize to get into the American Kennel Club show ring as well as to have the right to be able to register as an American Kennel Club recognized breed.

In the true sense of the word "Rare" suggests that you would see these breeds once in a blue moon. This name American Rare Breed Association was chosen just because what we were trying to do was give a venue for the "Rare Breed" dog here in the United States. "Rare" can only be used for most of the breeds in the United States. You can go to Europe, Russia, South America, Australia, and other parts of the world and see

these breeds that we call "Rare" in the United States on every street corner, or at least when you ask some one if they have ever seen a Dogue de Bordeaux they look at you strange, especially if you are in France where the Bordeaux is part of the French landscape. The point is what is "Rare" to us is common place elsewhere in the world. To be sure, there are some breeds that are even "Rare" in their native Country of Origin. Some have said I do not wish to have our breed accepted by the American Kennel Club. Not all, but a vast majority usually are the first at the door once it is open to him or her. I have heard this statement so many times it almost now rolls off my back. We are winning the battle to open the doors for our true breeds. Give an American a challenge and usually they will accept it and will strive to do what they are told they cannot do. With the continued help of Parent Breed Clubs, Exhibitors and other interested dog fanciers we will continue the march and seek recognition for the remaining breeds.

Having said all of the above, you now if you did not know before that our goal is to get the breeds we recognize, recognized by the American Kennel Club. Please do not give me the phrase that there goes our dog now that is recognized by the American Kennel Club. I am not sold on that. What I am sold on is that some Parent Breed Clubs and breeders somehow lose their way once they get to the "Show" and somehow forget what their breeds looked like. The American Kennel Club does not breed dogs, they do not sell dogs, nor do they write the breed standards for the dogs. They may standardize the standard but they do not change the substance. It is still the Parent Clubs responsibility to maintain the breeding practices as well as the breed standard. We do not say you have to compete in the American Kennel Club show ring, but you should sure have the right to.

With regards to large and small shows, let us take a few minutes and reason this out. In the very beginning (1991) the American Rare Breed Association held only up to eight (8) shows annually. Just think about that, eight (8) shows a year. One could say supply and demand? One could ask what does that mean. What that means is very simple you only had eight shows a year to go to in order to gain a championship. This means you had a larger show because folks had to try to attend all of the shows they could to get a championship traveling from all parts of the country and in some cases from all over the world. Remember at this time most did not even think about recognition by the American Kennel Club, they just wanted a venue to show their dog(s). Also, there was no competition as far as venues there was only ARBA mainly for the "Rare Breeds". In 1997 we increased the number of shows around the United States from eight (8) a year to (30) thirty a year. This again is supply and demand, the more shows that you have across the United States means the less travel one has to do to earn a championship. This equates to smaller shows, because you do not have to get to every show in order to get a championship. You must also remember the word "Rare", this means or at least suggests that the breed supply is limited and once an individual has gained a championship on his or her dog and he or she does not desire to be a breeder he or she has no need to enter into a dog show. This in itself takes the toll of "Supply and Demand". Less available dogs, completed championships, etc., etc..

Let us take another moment and look at the size of the shows and add another ingredient along with the number of shows that increased. Our other ingredient is the Breeds that show with the American rare Breed Association. Keep in mind that the American Rare Breed Association has not accepted a new breed into its list of breeds since 1996. However, we have lost breeds to the American Kennel Club. What are the breeds that we have lost and what has the impact of the breeds being accepted by the American Kennel Club meant to the American Rare Breed Association's (other than happy to see they have been recognized as that is why we continue on, so that the American Kennel Club will accept more and more of the breeds) numbers at the shows. This includes breeds that are accepted into the American Kennel Club's Miscellaneous Class as they stop showing as much with ARBA because they have to start putting on their own National and some Regional Specialties as part of the acceptance procedures of the American Kennel Club.

The figures below represent the Breeds and the number of dogs in attendance at our Cherry Blossom Classic before the breed was accepted into the American Kennel Club.

BREED	TOTAL
-	-
BEAUCERON	18
GERMAN PINSCHER	28
ANATOLIAN SHEPHERD	20
NEAPOLITAN MASTIFF	15
TIBETAN MASTIFF	39
GREATER SWISS MOUNTAIN DOG	20
POLISH LOWLAND SHEEPDOG	35
GLEN OF IMAAL TERRIER	21
PLOTT HOUND	4
JACK RUSSELL TERRIER	9

SPINONE ITALIANO	15
NOVA SCOTIA DUCK TOLLING RETRIEVER	23
HAVANESE	15
LOWCHEN	6
CANAAN DOG	3
BLACK RUSSIAN TERRIER	11
TOTAL	270

Of course there are other breeds also that were showing back at that time, which are not really showing these days such as the Azawakh, Redbone Coonhound, Cesky Terrier, Caucasian Ovtcharka and a few others. So as you can see with the loss of 275 to 300 dogs that makes quite a difference in the make-up of the shows. So when one says the shows are smaller I hope that you remember that we have lost close to 20 breeds, and out of those 20 they were our biggest entries. Along with that you must remember we are doing almost 4 times the number of shows. Again, it is Supply and demand both in breeds and the number of shows.

As for the Cherry Blossom this year, our show date changed on us three (3) times this does not help entries, and we had another show going on about 160 miles away. Again supply and demand. Please take a long and hard look at our list of breeds that are eligible to compete at our venue. If you know the breeds at all or do a little homework, you will see that the only breeds left that have any numbers are the Coton De Tulear, Cane Corso, Dogue De Bordeaux, and the Mini Australian Shepherd. You have a small sprinkling of other breeds and for the rest of the listed breeds you may only find a very small handful here in the United States let alone showing. When is the last time you saw a Appenzeller Mountain Dog, Poitevin, Slovakian Hound, Schiller Hound, etc., etc., showing here in the United States.

The American rare Breed Association knows there are other breeds that are out there that have no recognition from any serious registry. Some of those are designer breeds. We at this point are really not interested in accepting these breeds. However, we are interested into looking into new breeds that have a purpose for their breeding. In the very near future we will take a look at some of the breeds that are seeking recognition.

Lastly, as far as the Shiloh Shepherd is concerned it is a shame and surely a huge problem for all concerned. I would think that we would want to advance the breed through a positive attitude. We should be concerned about one another instead of drifting farther and farther apart because we cannot come to terms with the fact that someone does not agree with me entirely. Is this not about the breed? There are ways to go about weeding out the bad dogs, there are ways to train and educate judges, and there are also ways to disagree in a nice way. A way that does not leave an unpleasant thought or taste in ones mouth. Respect is often sought after, but sometimes one forgets that it has to be earned. Every breed has its problems, but every breed does not splinter into oblivion. Who knows what club is right and which one is wrong. Unfortunately this breed has split into so many clubs one does not know why.

The American Rare Breed Association accepted this breed as a breed. A breed with a breed standard. It did not accept this breed as a German Shepherd Dog. It accepted it as a Shiloh Shepherd. This breed was accepted well over ten years ago. This breed should be breeding Shiloh to Shiloh. Yours or no other organization should be asking us to accept Shiloh Shepherd pedigrees mixed with German Shepherd Dogs. What is the sense? Why would we accept your breed and give it full recognition if it is still mixed with the German Shepherd Dog for breeding? You may have your reasons for wanting to do such, but that is not our mission. When an individual calls and asks what is a Shiloh Shepherd what should be ARBA's response?

As far as specific dogs are concerned I will not get into that, but as far as dog shows are concerned, I have repeatedly asked exhibitors of all breeds to become breeder judges. I have asked breed clubs to give seminars, I will ask again for breeders to become breeder judges. We are open and receptive to reasonable dialogue however we will not waste our time on trivial matters within breed clubs or differences between individuals. If an incident happens on the show site we have control as long as it is brought to our attention. We will then handle the situation appropriately according to the rules and regulations of the organization.

As you know we had a lengthy conversation about the Shiloh Shepherd. During that conversation as you well know I did not say I would grant you Parent Breed Club status with the American Rare Breed Association. I did however say that we can work together as long as both organizations benefit from the relationship. I will ask once again, if you have problems with the dogs that are winning bring good dogs to compete against them. Set a date where you want your regional specialty. Give me a list of judges you would like to judge the breed so I may choose from that list. Hold seminars along with our shows all across the United States. I am sure if your

energy is channeled in the proper direction the breed will be enhanced 100 folds.

As you also know the Shiloh Shepherd was one of the largest breeds at our shows. We will not drop our standards to get those numbers back, but we will work with you and all of the rest of the Shiloh Shepherd owners and exhibitors to try to make the breed better and to have the Shiloh Shepherd respected as a "BREED". We look forward to hearing from you with a positive breath of fresh air and together with others we can place the Shiloh Shepherd where it deserves to be.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Slack

Robert Slack
Director
American Rare Breed Association
www.arba.org