

July 23, 2013

Dear JRT Friends,

We had a very busy start to the year! Our second annual Thaw Your Paws I & II trials, the Florida State Fair fund-raising racing exhibition, participation in and execution support of the 25th Annual Gold Coast Terrier Network trials and our annual Sunshine Showdown I & II trials were all very successful events. Whew! That's A LOT in just three months! With nearly as many months 'off' now and hoping that everyone is enjoying their summer vacations; I felt it was time to freshen up my Notes. 😊

Your board of directors is already planning for the upcoming Membership Appreciation Day and Russell Mania trials. As has been the custom for some years now, our **Membership Appreciation Day** will be a joint venture with the Gold Coast Terrier Network club. It will take place September 14th and once again will be held at the home of club members Todd & Debbie Smith in Umatilla. The clubs will supply hamburgers, hot dogs and beverages. Members are encouraged to bring a covered dish to share. More details will be forthcoming over the next few weeks and posted to the Events Calendar page of our website: www.ssjrtc.com. The clubs appreciate the Smiths hosting this event.

Russell Mania (Nov 2-3) will be a bit different this year. For years now, we have experienced a sustained decline in participation at this trial especially in the conformation classes. This decline is also being felt elsewhere around the country but is especially troublesome for us because of the time of year. Our November dates are close to the JRTCA's National trial dates. Some of our 'northern' attendees have expressed a preference for our new Thaw Your Paws trial dates in January and cannot do two major trips (three, if they also go to Nationals) in just a couple months' time. Since we have added a *third*, annual trial with the new Thaw Your Paws trial, the board has debated and voted to make Russell Mania a B trial this year. What that means is that there will be no conformation.

Conformation adds a great deal of cost—not to mention work-- to a trial because there are so many (at least 100 *additional*) classes over two days. As with all our sanctioned and non-sanctioned classes, each requires a full set of 1-6 place ribbons, champion and reserve ribbons and champion and reserve prizes. As well, conformation requires two additional judges and associated travel expenses. As you may have heard it said, "Florida feeds Florida" when it comes to our November trial so we do not anticipate a major negative impact by going to a B trial. We'll see how it works out before deciding about this trial for 2014. There are currently no JRTCA affiliated clubs hosting three A trials a year and few that consistently host two A trials per year. Thaw Your Paws and Sunshine Showdown will remain A trials regardless of what we do with Russell Mania.

Beyond our upcoming events, I'd like to spend a moment on our annual **Board of Director elections**, which will be held as they are each year, during our Russell Mania trials. As you know, terms on the board are for two years and half of the board is up for election each year so as to provide continuity of knowledge and experience from year to year. This year, the president and treasurer positions are up among the officers. I will not be re-running. I would like to but after eight years on the board, I am ready for a break from these duties. Jason Jones will not be re-running either. Currently he is our treasurer. He was recently promoted at work and the increased responsibilities there preclude him from committing as much time to the club as he has graciously given in the past. There are also five director positions that need to be filled.

What I want to say about being on the board is this: the very fine folks who have made up the board over the past several years are very hardworking, dedicated Jack Russell Terrier lovers—all for the love of these "little white dogs". Collectively, and especially individually in many instances, they have donated *countless* hours 'running' this club. As you know the board is made up of volunteers. No one receives any payment (other than the appreciation of some and the self-satisfaction of a job well done) for putting together and then executing what has been a minimum of 6-7 events every single year (when you count fund-raising events, "terrier days" and practice days). That equates to an 'event'

almost every other month. There are also a number of club members who are not on the board yet volunteer their assistance with specific duties and it would not happen without those volunteers!

Yet year after year, it's been my experience in ten years with the club (eight of those on the board) that when it comes time for the elections there seems to be a hesitancy, almost knee-jerk negative reaction when members are approached to run for election. I recall my own hesitation—at first. What I'm here to tell you about this is that this apprehension is simply 'fear of the unknown'. There are very few, if any, members in our club who are not qualified to be on the board. The only real requirements (based on our and the JRTCA's bylaws) is that one is a member in good standing of the SSJRTC and the JRTCA for at least one year before joining the board. The more experience you have just participating in club events the better. Any prior managerial experience you may have is beneficial. But here's the deal, none of this is rocket science. Those who have gone before you have written everything down. If you can read and communicate, you can be a productive board member. And there is always someone who can help you when needed. If you can *ask* for help, you will get it.

You need not be retired or as physically fit as Charles Atlas to be on the board. Plenty of board members have full-time jobs as well as other family commitments vying for their time. Board work prior to an event is done at your own pace and at your own convenience in and around everything else going on in your life, similar to Church-related or children's extracurricular activities. Board work done during events is best distributed among many so that all get a chance to enjoy the event with their own dogs as well. There are generally 'enough' physically fit helpers available for the heavy-lifting. What the board needs are *conscientious contributors*.

In our club of around 100 members, a good number of our current members have already been on the board at some point in the past, and in many cases like mine, on the board for *several* years. In some cases, some have taken a couple years off and gotten back on the board. For these reasons, our pool to draw from for future board members is shrinking. Put simply, as a percentage of the core membership, many have already served. That being said, those who have volunteered in the past are entitled to be off the board. They have earned their retirement so to speak. Those who have never been on the board, yet regularly benefit from the efforts of others by participating in club events, need to give serious consideration to taking a turn on the board themselves if they want the club to continue to exist for *their own* enjoyment and function as efficiently as it has over the last several years. If you have not been on the board yet talk to someone who is on the board about what they do. *At the very least*, consider joining one of the Committees *now* that each board member chairs. As my soap box has been: "One person a *committee* does not make!" This will allow you to become 'involved' and learn what really goes on behind the scenes and gain confidence for running in the future. Committee information will be provided at Russell Mania. Current board members are listed on the website on these pages: <http://www.ssjrtc.com/ssjrtc-home/board/>; <http://www.ssjrtc.com/ssjrtc-home/bod-bios/>

Lastly on this subject, I'd like to share what I enjoy about being on the board. I enjoy being part of the leadership of this club. This club, which has *lead* the way among its peers in so many ways regarding club and trial activities. I have enjoyed the sense of accomplishment and self-satisfaction associated with planning--and then executing-- successful event after successful event. I have enjoyed friendships enhanced by working closely on board projects.

So, thanks for listening on that subject. I really hope you'll take the sentiments to heart—for the club's sake.

Finally, I look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming events and hope that you will contact me at any time with questions and suggestions as I am still YOUR president through the end of this year.

Very Best Regards,

