

## THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE AND THE NEW MENTORING PROGRAM

Once the Illustrations of the Elaborated Standard were completed by Alicia Hanna, Barbara Sawyer-Brown, Diane Jacobsen, Barbara Rupert and Myrna Berger, who, together, formed the Elaboration Illustrations Committee (“EIC”), as Vice President, Education, I needed a plan to create an Education Committee.

I asked the EIC to help me plan this evolution. My goal was to bring a significant number of qualified experts into an active identified role in the Education Department. I also needed their help to:

- Answer questions, provide discussions of the Breed Standard
- Put together an official Breed CD explaining and showing the conformation of our breed for judges, members and enthusiasts
- Provide advice in columns for *The Ridgeback*
- Be the Club-endorsed Mentors to **judges** at National/Regional/AKC events
- Dialogue/improve on the Illustrations
- Conduct education events at the National Specialty
- Write/update the history of our breed
- Train breeders for continuity

The EIC and I then identified, discussed and appointed, with the approval of the RRCUS BOD, several candidates which now form our Education Committee. They are geographically dispersed to provide more convenient access and also to cut expenses associated with sending people around the country to do presentations. The current members are: Barbara Sawyer-Brown; Barbara Rupert; Diane Jacobsen; Myrna Berger; Dudley Hackney; Frank Depaulo; Danielle Sand; Susan Ralston; Stacey Davis; Mary Lynne Elliott; Kerry Williams; Heather Queener; and Liz Demery.

The Education Committee has since worked hard on the above functions, most importantly helping to complete the Breed CD. We use this CD to present seminars at which AKC licensed and provisional judges attend and ask specific questions about our breed and then participate in a “hands-on” session as the presenter shows our breed’s correct type, movement and conformation. Many on the Education Committee have given these Club-endorsed presentations and others have attended them as training to be able to give them in the future.

The Education Committee members have prepared specific materials and have been or are being trained in giving detailed presentations on breed conformation as mentors to AKC judges.

We also recognize that we need to mentor the public, the RR enthusiast and prospective puppy owners about the many aspects of our breed. A nationwide general mentoring program for these parties can further involve our qualified and valuable RRCUS member base all across the country for education on general Ridgeback matters. This is, indeed, yet another way of opening up our Club to participation by our many qualified members.

But we need to formalize Mentor qualifications and develop monitoring procedures and to actively manage this program. And the RRCUS BOD needs to approve Mentors since it is they who will represent RRCUS to members and non-members alike and it is they who will be listed on our web site.

So with this background here are the specific aspects of the Club's new mentoring program:

### **Purposes of the Mentoring Program:**

- Mentors are RRCUS members in good standing who are experienced breed enthusiasts who will educate RRCUS members and others interested in our breed. Mentors will supply general information concerning conformation, temperament, training, dog activities in the performance areas, health and nutrition and other general areas concerning the raising of Ridgeback puppies, as well as providing opportunities for on-site visits to see our breed.
- When in-depth formal breed presentations are requested by All Breed Clubs, AKC, Judges Groups, etc. , Mentors will pass those requests onto the Education committee who will provide the complete breed presentation and conduct the Hands-On session. Mentors in that geographical area will be asked to assist in the presentation of any such events.

### **Qualifications to be a Mentor:**

- RRCUS Member, in Good Standing, for 10 or more years
- A Ridgeback breed expert willing and able to share knowledge and provide guidance through an open exchange of information in a positive manner
- Has knowledge of the background, history and function of the breed
- Has raised at least one litter and four AKC champions (conformation or performance equivalent).
- Supports the Breed Standard, the Elaboration and the Illustrations of the Standard as Elaborated
- Has experience in exhibiting and/or eventing Ridgebacks in conformation and/or performance events

- Enjoys interacting with people new to the breed in a clear, patient and positive manner
- Possesses a flexible schedule necessary to accept mentoring requests
- Is accepted by the Mentor Review Committee on an on-going basis
- Members of the Education Committee are listed as Mentors for RRCUS when eligible

**And, there will be a Mentor Review Committee which will manage this program:**

This Committee will be nominated by the 2nd VP, Education, RRCUS and approved by the BOD and will:

- (1) Review the location of Mentors to attempt to get reasonable coverage on a national basis without adding an unmanageable number of mentors;
- (2) Invite qualified people to join as Mentors;
- (3) Review applicants for Mentors and vote to accept, or not, such applicants.
- (4) Review any complaints received against any Mentor with the authority to remove any Mentor if necessary, with BOD approval. It is understood that Mentors act as liaisons of RRCUS with the public and, therefore, need to be supportive of the Club and patient with the public.

The initial Mentor Review Committee consists of: myself at [gohanesian@prodigy.net](mailto:gohanesian@prodigy.net); Dudley Hackney at [rakiaranc@triad.rr.com](mailto:rakiaranc@triad.rr.com) ; Barbara Rupert at [oakhurstrr@aol.com](mailto:oakhurstrr@aol.com) ; Danielle Sand, VMD at [dsandvmd@yahoo.com](mailto:dsandvmd@yahoo.com) ; Barbara Sawyer-Brown at [kwetureq@ameritech.net](mailto:kwetureq@ameritech.net); and Kerry Williams at [jubaleerr@verizon.net](mailto:jubaleerr@verizon.net)

So that's it--- the new RRCUS Mentor Program. This program was announced at the National Specialty in Utah and qualified people were invited to apply. **If you are qualified PLEASE volunteer your services and availability.**

Many enthusiasts and Club members and the Club itself need your participation. So please send a note to me, anyone of the members of the Mentor Review Committee or the RRCUS BOD members if you wish to apply. The members who are listed in the last Newsletter are those who are on the current Education Committee. So please join them, your Club needs your assistance.

Thanks,  
George Ohanesian  
VP, Education