



GGLRC 2020 3rd  
 Quarter  
[www.gglrc.org](http://www.gglrc.org)

**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE – Melinda Grosch**

I and my family have owned Labrador Retrievers since 1964 when my dad inherited a fully trained gun dog from a friend who had been a duck hunting guide in Willows, CA. I got my own personal Labrador in 1970, also a field bred dog. I was taken duck hunting with my dad until we moved and no longer had easy access to duck hunting areas. So my early experiences with Labradors are field/pet related but I knew I wanted to show dogs from about 1967 on; but I wanted an Irish Setter for that – Oh No!

As you all know in 2019 the Labrador Retriever was once again the most registered breed as it has been since 1991 (that’s 28 years). So I found myself feeling very miffed by an article in the ACK’s online newsletter, the Nibbler, in which they discussed the breed registration statistics. For some reason they felt it necessary to comment on the fact that the Labrador has never won Best In Show at any of the big televised shows and really didn’t say anything else about them. However, there is more to the Labrador than a pretty face. The article completely failed to point out the unsurpassed working record of the breed. For instance from 1952 to 2019 no other breed of retriever has won the National Retriever Championship (an AKC competition). That is an astounding 67 years straight. In addition between 1957 (the first year in AKC’s records) and 2019 the National Amateur Retriever Championship has been won by Labradors for every year except 1985 when it was won by a Golden. That’s 27 years (1952 – 1984) and then 33 years 1986 – 2019) again quite the achievement. Additionally, the last time I checked there were more Junior, Senior, and Master Hunters in Labradors than in Golden Retrievers – the next most registered retriever breed – by way more than a factor of the number of dogs. (Full disclosure I did not spend time trying to track this down at this time – it used to be easy when the AKC Gazette was still a hard copy publication and I had all the statistics right there in one place.)

So if any of you want to know why I put a lot of my efforts with the Club towards field work (and a bit towards our annual Obedience and Rally Trials at the Specialty) it is because I believe that everything that makes Labradors so, so, so wonderful has come from their working heritage. I feel that the true value of Labradors is seen in their working ability; not just in the field but as detection dogs (bombs, drugs, wildlife, plants, plant diseases, human disease, etc.), search and rescue dogs, service dogs (guide dogs,

assistance dogs, social facilitation dogs, etc.), and all manner of other things. Labradors are a very plain breed so it is no wonder that the flashier dogs usually win Best In Show at conformation shows. In many ways I am actually proud of that – they are a nice utilitarian breed that can do everything but probably won’t wow you when compared with an Irish Setter or one of the Spaniels – and that is as it should be. There are those of us who feel that a well-made Labrador is a thing of beauty (yes I now recognize the beauty of a dog that reflects its function) but I don’t expect to see a Labrador winning Best In Show in a televised dog show any time soon, and not just because of COVID-19.

So come join us at a training day or the Working Certificate test and let your Labrador shine!

Melinda Grosch, President

Don’t forget you need to find a new President!!

Melinda

\*\*\*\*\*

**GGLRC 2020 OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS**

President: Melinda Grosch  
 Vice President: Jennifer Kelly  
 Secretary: Connie Holm  
 Treasurer: Terri Herigstad

Board Members: Allen Garfinkle, Sharon Ventura;  
 Vivian Poole, Catherine Lewis and Kim Sweetnam

\*\*\*\*\*

## MVLR's Specialty Shows During Covid-19 By Jennifer Kelly

Most kennel and specialty clubs are cancelling their shows (including our own GGLRC), but Miami Valley LRC held their June 2020 specialties. What is it like showing during this time of COVID-19? Rhonda Lee of Hylakes Labs flew out to attend the shows, along with her boy JRL Bullet Proof. She said the shows were held at a beautiful outdoor site, but there were some noticeable differences to the norm. Upon entering the showground (in the vehicle), her temperature was taken. Opposite the ring there was a check in table (which is a new), which I believe was to mark the club book for attendance. Armbands were picked up, not ringside, but at a table about 12 ft from the ring. A steward still called in numbers, and the judge still marked her book. Instead of one way to enter and leave the ring, there were two: an entry and an exit. When in the ring as a class, each exhibitor and dog had their own box, a square outlined with spray paint. After the exhibitors did their initial run around, all but the first dog exited the ring. After all the entries were examined in a class, everyone came back in. Once placements were awarded, the number signs were spaced farther apart than is typical. The judge did not shake hands or personally hand the ribbons to the exhibitors; instead, the ribbon was picked up on a table on the way out of the ring.

Masks were supposed to be worn by the judge and exhibitors at all times, both in and out of the ring, even while taking win photos. Rhonda's dog Bullet didn't mind the mask, but she feels it did seem to affect the communication between them. The confusion was caused by the change in body language and voice because of so much of the face being covered, so having your dog get used to you wearing and talking with a mask on might be a good idea. She said breathing was more difficult while on the move and because of the humidity, but wearing the mask was doable. If a person took a mask off outside the ring, that person was told to put their mask back on.

Changes were also obvious in the premium list. With your entry, you had to fill out and sign a

Health Acknowledgement and Liability Waiver. The opening paragraph acknowledged your awareness of the potential for the spread of COVID-19, that the virus could result in severe illness, even death, and that you were voluntarily accepting these risks and would not sue anyone if you contracted the virus from the event. The remainder of the document was divided into two sections, one called Social Distancing and the other Health Reporting. The former was a commitment to abide by the rules related to maintaining individual space, and the latter that you did not have the virus and that you would not attend the show if you were sick, with specific symptoms and actions

listed. COVID-19 Operations Guidelines describing the onsite process and procedures were also provided.

Were the shows successful? There were 158 entries with over 200 total entries on the judge's program for both days. Rhonda said the shows were well organized and ran smoothly. From her experience at these specialties, Rhonda feels there is no doubt shows can be held and be safe. These were outdoor specialties. It will be interesting to see the effect the coronavirus precautions have on the showing of dogs indoors.



Rhonda and Bullet win first place under judge Cindy Skiba. The masks, a sign of the times we live in.