

# Lines from Linda

BY LINDA AYERS TURNER KNORR

## Ronald H. Menaker named AKC Chairman Emeritus for Perpetuity



**N**ever before has such an honor been bestowed on anyone by our American Kennel Club Board of Directors. Knowing Ronald H. Menaker will fill the role as AKC Chairman Emeritus for Perpetuity gives us reason to celebrate. His past accomplishments are immeasurable. The March Chairman's report highlights some of the achievements made during his tenure.



"As breeders, exhibitors and club members, we would all likely agree that our dogs have a powerful effect on almost everything we do. For many of us, dogs have changed our lives in incredible ways. I am certainly no exception. Never could I have guessed back in 1965 that a Bedlington Terrier from Gimbel's department store would chart a course for me that would include more than twenty years of leadership at the American Kennel Club and a lifetime of joy with the sport of purebred dogs.

Today's AKC has evolved tremendously since those early days when I chased points for my Bedlingtons, Border Terriers and Giant Schnauzers. We all may be getting older, yet with our knowledge and experience our dogs are getting better. Whether you think there are too many shows or if you are of the mind that there is not enough competition to satisfy your goals, we still have the most wonderful sport to enjoy with our dogs. I am not one to take it for granted.

I have been privileged to participate in a sometimes challenging, always rewarding process of affecting positive changes at AKC over the past two decades as a Board member, Vice Chairman and Chairman. I've seen changes at all levels, but three areas stand out for me as transformative for our organization.

Today's AKC is agile, responsive and accountable. Seventeen years ago, we were anything but. A major technology and management failure created a severe backlog in registrations that caused our systems to effectively melt down. Months of hands-on work in the trenches, insight from consultants and the dedication of staff were needed to right our sinking ship. It wasn't easy, but we did it. We did it right, and we did it as a team. Every member of the fancy has benefitted from the work that was achieved during that pivotal time. In more recent years, when I have witnessed the long-awaited growth in registrations, and the speed at which they are processed, I am grateful for my experience on that exceptional team.



After the Delegates meeting Ron shared the AKC Board Proclamation with his proud wife Lorna Menaker.

“WE HAVE EXPERIENCED SOME MOMENTOUS CHANGES TOGETHER AT AKC OVER THE PAST 23 YEARS, AND I HAVE LEARNED SO MUCH FROM YOU, THE AMERICAN DOG FANCY.”

Today's AKC is an active voice for purebred dogs. Before 2001, we were purely a governing body with a grandfatherly attitude towards events and clubs. Now we share the responsibility to deliver quality competition for the fancy and educational experiences for the public. We built the AKC National Championship to honor our breeders and to introduce the sport of purebred dogs to generations of new fans. Today, the National Championship is our beloved celebration of dogs and the culmination of competition throughout the year. The show has enjoyed record-breaking entries for years and has built a devoted following with its diverse set of entertaining competitions and attractions such as agility, obedience, rally, National Owner-Handled Series Finals, Juniors Classic Obedience and Rally, AKC Meet the Breeds, puppy stakes and dock diving. Thanks to our dedicated staff who execute this superlative event and our breeders, owners and handlers who exhibit the best of the best, the AKC National Championship just keeps getting better.

Today's AKC is a renowned brand with a world-class museum by its side. Headquartered together in New York City, AKC and the AKC Museum of the Dog make a powerful statement to the



media and the public. As a community of purebred dog enthusiasts, we are proud to share our message of responsible breeding and ownership with as broad an audience as we can build. We also know we can preserve our history more effectively by bringing our collection into the light of a public forum. We can now do both by inviting the world to visit us and welcoming them into our gorgeous, inspiring new home at 101 Park Avenue. I am absolutely delighted to have seen this day come during my tenure as Chairman. Little means more to me than the chance to tell the world our story, as in doing so, we can create more allies for the sport we cherish. The throngs of media and the steady stream of visitors to the Museum have proven us right; “if you build it, they will come.” The return of the AKC Museum of the Dog to New York City has long been a dream for many people,

including myself. I am thrilled to have been able to help turn the vision into reality and I will continue to support its growth. I hope you will do the same.

We have experienced some momentous changes together at AKC over the past 23 years, and I have learned so much from you, the American dog fancy. If there is a sense of accomplishment I can draw from my years at AKC, it is purely from playing a part in advancing the sport that has given me so much, working with all of you and from being in a position to help others. It truly has been an honor to serve AKC's constituency. I thank each and every one of you for the support and friendship you have shown me over these many years. My best wishes to you all.” ■

With deepest gratitude,  
Ron