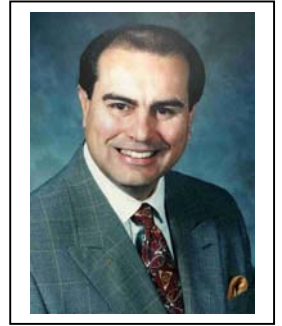


PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE . . .



Although some enjoy the winter months, for various reasons many do not. In fact, some even come up with what's called the "winter blues". While it would be a great name for a musical tune or even for a Basset Hound, it usually describes the downer type mood someone is in during the colder months of the year. With the coming of spring things can change as a new optimism takes hold of people's personal and public attitudes.

In the spring, a lot of persons seem to empower themselves with a new passion as Nature renews herself around them. Like it or not, this world is about power. However, no one has the power to make you happy, sad, or angry unless you give him or her that prerogative. In a free country, you have the power to control your own happiness and in doing so, your own success. For many, success in the world of the Basset Hound is revealed through a breeding program, blue ribbons, points, championships, titles, etc. But for others, success is believing in someone other than themselves and watching them triumph over their perceived limitations. To succeed, they need some well-directed enthusiasm for without such a passion, there is no power and without power over oneself, there can be no channeled passion. When we completely understand the idea of having the power to be in control of our own activities and how we approach them, we will know the difference between success and failure and between winning and losing. Some of the most successful people in the BHCA's history have not been "winners" as defined by blue ribbons yet they have been successful in the fields of mentoring, administration or support. In doing so they have influenced all of us through those they have helped, guided or supported. It is not easy but remember that we are the ones in control of the choices we make. The uncertainties of this world are what most of us respond to either with indifference, concern, stress or optimism. Persons who select to have a positive attitude or optimistic view towards the world around them can determine not only their own happiness; they may even be able to influence those around them as well. Just begin laughing while among a group of friends and watch what happens.

"Generally, wherever you want to go, someone has been or is there already." Why not use them as a mentor to help you grow in your endeavors? Nearly everyone in the BHCA has something to offer others and we should personally be seeking those who will help us get where we want to go by helping us sidestep the potholes since they are truly the ones who have "been there, done that". No one goes up and says . . . Will you be my mentor? They or you begin a relationship and then based on the knowledge that you or they have something that the other wants and that each is willing to share, things begin to happen. Getting the knowledge you need by osmosis and/or the school of hard knocks is something that is fast being replaced by BHCA breed education and its availability to everyone. Experience always helps but without planned educational tools as references and mentors to explain the why and why not, it may not be as useful as you think. What you learn through your unguided experiences may or may not be what is right for the breed, the Club or even your future in the world of the Basset Hound. We all have egos but they need to be tempered with a willingness to learn, as none of us knows all about the Basset Hound or its numerous abilities to please its owners in many different ways.

Within the BHCA, we need to be and grow leaders for the future so we must be optimistic and we must keep our minds open to the possibilities, potential and promise of everyone. Persons passionate about the Basset Hound breed and/or any of its many facets are not just lying around out there for us to find . . . they are probably among us already yet they must be egged on, educated and encouraged in that enthusiasm. Technocrats are needed in any club but we also need creative thinkers in order to keep making progress. Many BHCA members' breed passion is exhibited by encouraging others to new heights of achievement while usually never in the spotlight themselves. Remember please do not confuse anyone's passion for the breed with a zeal for winning . . . it is not the same thing. Watching puppies become the hounds we hoped they would become is a great feeling. It can be that way with people too but much, much harder.

Every member in the BHCA is an opportunity for success in learning or teaching. We might fail along the way but as I define failure, it is merely a decision to stop trying. If through our own power we are in control of our passion for the Basset Hound and the BHCA then we may also possess the creativity to do what needs to be done when called upon to do it and never stop trying to reach the next level. This is not ambition . . . it is self-determination, self-fulfillment and self-enrichment that will be of help to the club and the breed way beyond our years in the sport of dogs. Recently we have lost several friends and members who embodied these very qualities. Let's live up to their examples . . .

Good-bye and God bless them all . . . ***Curt Sheehy, Paul Naros, Susan Camp, James Cook and, John Hackley.***

Randy