



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB

James P. Crowley
Executive Secretary

February 8, 2011

Meg. I. Hennessey, President
Dalmatian Club of America
PO Box 257
Marengo, IL 60152

Dear Ms. Hennessey,

This concerns your response to my request for the name of the author of the article, "*Questions and Concerns Raised About the Health and Welfare Committee Report*," which appears to represent an official Dalmatian Club of America (DCA) position and purports to analyze available data and to evaluate prior studies to reach conclusions regarding the findings of the AKC Health and Welfare Committee report.

When the issue of registering LUA Dalmatians was last raised with AKC, I authored, and signed a memorandum to the AKC Board on the matter. In it, I strongly recommended that AKC defer to the DCA. This was in part due to the open manner in which the DCA had addressed the issue. I had taken the same position in the past when it has arisen over the years.

After the AKC Board sought input from its Health and Welfare Advisory Committee, and subsequently reached the agreement with DCA, I was appointed to an AKC staff committee to "help coordinate the communications and sharing of information between the DCA and the LUA Dalmatian supporters." Even though I had previously taken a position, the feeling was obviously that I was still capable of being fair and objective.

My delayed response is due to the fact that I was at a loss as to how to respond to the rationale for keeping the author(s) of the article anonymous as well as for the DCA Board's belief that this would not be perceived as the club's official position.

You indicate that the anonymity was intended to avoid having your members dismiss or embrace what is said or written because of who said it, rather than what is said. I would hope that any rational person would consider the source of information, particularly on something like scientific analysis and conclusions, before making a decision based on it.

You also state that, while authorized by the DCA Board for publication in the club's official magazine, and while carrying no disclaimer, it was not meant to be a position statement. However, anyone reading the article, as presented in the club's official publication, could only assume that it represented the official position of the DCA Board.

I am disappointed at the lack of transparency that has been introduced into the procedure. It is commendable that DCA has published publicly authored articles and studies from other journals in its official publication. However, I do not believe that any of these other journals would publish a report prepared by and publicly credited to several individuals highly respected in their respective fields, and then follow it up with an anonymous article, differing with the conclusions in the reports as well as the underlying research beyond those conclusions. I am disappointed that a credible publication like *The Spotter* would do so.

Certainly, there is still the opportunity for the DCA to reveal the author(s) of the article and restore the necessary sense of transparency and fair play. I only hope that the continued refusal to reveal the author(s) has not tainted the process and damaged any chance of achieving a spirit of cooperation and open discussion. My issue is with procedure followed and the perception created, and has nothing to do with the underlying question if whether or not these dogs should be registered.

While it certainly does not report to me, I have recommended that the AKC Health and Advisory Committee only respond to written material prepared by credible sources where the author is willing to publicly stand behind the information published. Such transparency is crucial to any open intellectual discussion.

Sincerely,

James P. Crowley
JPC/ns