

GCA CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE - RECORDING SECRETARY

PATRICIA GAIL BURNHAM

1. I have been a member of the GCA for twenty-three years.
2. I have attended every Western specialty, save one, since 1974. In the last five years I have attended five GCA and ten GCNC specialties
3. If elected, I will attend the GCA Club meetings in person, just as I did for my term as GCA president. Back then, we had an additional meeting each year and I attended all of them
4. For health reasons, I do not support closing the AKC studbook to racing dogs. I will, however, abide by a general membership vote on the issue, which the present Board has not done. In 1997 the general membership voted to not close the studbook. In spite of that vote, the GCA Board, in September 2001, sent a request to the AKC Board asking them to close the AKC studbook to NGA dogs. After a year of consideration, the AKC Board has sent the GCA Board criteria for resubmitting the request. The AKC has requested substantial additional justification for the request. If the AKC accepts the new request, the GCA general membership would have to vote by a 2/3 majority for closure, and then the AKC *still* reserves the right not to close the studbook.
5. Issues and accountability: The current Board has become a one-issue Board. Everything they do revolves around their desire to close the studbook to NGA Greyhounds. They have gone so far as to deny membership this year to ten well-qualified applicants who have a history of using AKC/NGA bred Greyhounds to create dual titled dogs. Many of the rejected applicants have much more experience with Greyhounds than the Board members who voted against them. The incoming Board should stop obsessing over the studbook, and get back to the business of conducting general club business. Applicants for membership should be evaluated on their merits and should be able to attend an open Board meeting at which the vote takes place on their application. Board members should be held accountable when they deny membership to the likes of George and Sally Bell, Gerald Helmke, Anne Standing of Windwood Greyhounds and Laurie Soutar of Lakilanni Greyhounds. GCA membership should be open to any person with years of Greyhounds experience who provides good care to their dogs. In the entire decade of the nineties, only five people were denied membership. One became a member at a subsequent Board meeting. One was an outspoken critic of the GCA. Two of the other rejections were for dog care problems. In the last six months, the current Board has denied membership to twice as many applicants as were rejected in the previous eleven years. The current Board should be held accountable in this election for their inexplicable rejection of these applicants.

They should also be held accountable for ignoring the 1997 general membership vote on the NGA issue. The GCA Board does not have the authority to overturn a general membership vote. It is the general membership's right to overturn bad Board votes. Final authority in the club belongs to the general membership.

6. Goals: I will perform the duties of the Recording Secretary to the best of my ability, without bias and in accordance with the GCA constitution and Robert's Rules of Order as cited in our constitution. I will urge the other Board members to conduct business in a public and accessible format, with controversial topics addressed at Board meetings that are open to all members. I will recommend that the minutes report the Board votes for each Board member. That would enable the membership to hold Board members accountable for their votes. Opening the Board actions to scrutiny by the membership is the best way to guarantee fair representation of the general members' interests.

7. Experience: I have been Secretary of the Greyhound Club of Northern California several times and of the Sacramento Dog Training Club once. With twenty-four meetings to record, the SDTC term provided a lot of secretarial experience. I have six years of experience on the GCA Board of Directors as a Board Member and as President. I am very familiar with the GCA Constitution and Robert's Rules of Order. I write good, detailed, minutes. As a previous chair of the GCA's judges selection committee, I have experience mailing ballots and information sheets to the GCA membership. In various dog clubs, I have held every office (President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer and Board Member) at least once, and most of them several times. I have also served as a show chairman, trophy chairman, obedience chairman, field trial secretary, obedience trial secretary, and tracking test secretary.

I am a registered Engineer and a professional writer. As a project engineer, I conduct and participate in many controversial meetings. As a writer, I take good notes both by hand and by recorder. Speaking of which, I still have the tape recorders that I used when I was last on the GCA Board. They, and I, are ready to serve the club again.