

## **A Letter to the Members of Chinook Club of America, Inc. And Other Concerned Chinook Owners**

Chinook Club of America, Inc. (CCA) was founded by Chinook owners who were active with the American Kennel Club and felt that they had the knowledge and ability to promote and effectively pursue AKC recognition for the Chinook breed. Chinook Club of America, Inc. was founded by the Chinook owners who have the longest standing relationship with AKC FSS – active Chinook owners who participate in American Kennel Club events. In the past year, the members of Chinook Club of America, Inc. have participated, promoted and accomplished more in our relationship with the American Kennel Club than any other Chinook club, cumulatively.

The members of Chinook Club of America, Inc. can be proud of what they have achieved in promoting and participating in AKC events. In our first year, we have supported entries at almost a dozen AKC Sanctioned Matches, sponsored trophies, stewarded, earned AKC agility titles, initiated CHIC participation, donated \$600 to AKC Canine Health Foundation, opened a Chinook Donor Advised Fund, initiated the WSU Canine Cryptorchidism study applying for CHF funding, is holding gatherings in different geographical areas of the US, became a member of CERF, sponsored OFA and CERF Health Clinics, and have embraced over 130 club members. And that doesn't even include our internal club accomplishments!

It has been brought to our attention that the Chinooks Worldwide, Inc. board of directors has sent a letter with a ballot to their members this week for a vote on changing the name of their club to "Chinook Dog Club of America." CWW states, "The Chinook Dog Club of America is a name that the AKC suggested and officially approved." This makes it sound like a mandate from AKC. According AKC FSS, the only mandate from AKC was that CWW must change their name. AKC states that the Chinooks Worldwide board submitted a list of names to AKC Club Relations, of which the name Chinook Dog Club of America was included and approved as meeting AKC criteria.

The American Kennel Club does not allow two clubs to share the same name. AKC Club Relations was not aware of the existence of a separate, active Chinook club with the same name because an outside party suggested that Chinook Club of America, Inc. was a splinter group of CWW. Therefore their approval was given without all necessary, accurate facts. In the end, the responsibility for this decision lies solely with the board of directors of CWW.

We believe that, armed with the correct information, the American Kennel Club will correct this situation. The CCA Board of Directors has filed a protest with AKC regarding the proposed name change chosen by the board of Chinooks Worldwide and has requested that the American Kennel Club rescind their approval. Both clubs are incorporated in the state of Connecticut and as the names are the same, we have also lodged an objection with the Connecticut Secretary of State.

Why do we say the names are the same? We own Chinooks, a breed of dog; we do not own Chinook Dogs. Therefore, the word “dog” is implied in name of all Chinook clubs – Chinook Club of America, Inc., Chinook Owners Association, American Chinook Club and even Chinooks Worldwide! Unless CWW is now separating from the rest of the Chinook breed and is claiming a new breed, the Chinook Dog, they would be a competing club with the same name. This will lead to a great deal of confusion not only in the Chinook community, but most certainly at the American Kennel Club. The CWW board knew that their name choice would be a conflict but chose to do so anyway, which will create further division within the Chinook community. One must wonder if the CWW board hopes the confusion in our club names will allow them to piggyback on our hard earned accomplishments, since they have never sponsored or participated in an AKC event and only hold an average of two internal club events per year.

While a regrettable decision on the part of Chinooks Worldwide board of directors, we hope that conscientious CWW members will understand that this proposed name is not a suitable choice and vote against using any version of Chinook Club of America, Inc.'s name - and recommend a more appropriate and less antagonistic choice. There are several other more appropriate names Chinooks Worldwide could select without causing any confusion or problems, for example – The United States Chinook Club or Chinook Club of the United States or Chinook Association of America, or American Chinook Association.

Finally, the CWW board indicates in their letter that the name change is one of the “final steps” to apply for AKC parent club status for the Chinook breed. According to AKC FSS, the Chinook breed is not in the position within FSS to have a parent club chosen, or for a breed club to “petition” for acceptance. Their statement misleads CWW members into believing that CWW is the only club, or the club AKC anticipates to be considered for parent club status. We would like to reassure our members that this is not the case. At this time, Chinook Club of America, Inc., Chinooks Worldwide, Inc and American Chinook Club are the three clubs that have requested parent club status. No decision has been made and AKC FSS will not begin consideration of parent club status until the errors in the database submitted by CWW have been reconciled.

For a chronology of Chinook clubs, please see - A Timeline of Chinook Clubs, Breed Recognition and Registry History.

If you have any questions regarding these issues, please contact Pat Lejman at AKC FSS ([PAL2@AKC.org](mailto:PAL2@AKC.org)) or any CCA board member. For those of you who also belong to CWW, we urge you to vote against the proposed name change and recommend a more appropriate choice. Chinook Club of America, Inc. has earned the right for its name to be autonomous and not obfuscated.

Your Board of Directors