

February 26, 2015

Mr. Michael L. Van Tassell
President, Collie Club of America
2424 E 6600 S
Salt Lake City, Utah 84121-2654

RE: 2016 Take the Lead Gala

Dear Mike:

The CCA and Collie fanciers have experienced a tremendous amount of turmoil and negative press over the past several years which have adversely impacted our wonderful breed and superb organization. We all know what has transpired is truly not reflective of the heart and soul of our many reputable members and our beloved Collies. We are a club of honor and integrity. We are a faithful breed of courage, devotion, and compassion. And, the majority of our members mirror the characteristics of the breed we treasure and cherish. Our club has a 129 year tradition of exemplary vision and successful leadership superior to the other parent breed clubs within AKC. So, I would like to propose an opportunity for us give back to our brethren in the sport of purebred dogs, support a phenomenal cause, and show the canine world what Collie people are really all about despite these unfortunate circumstances these past few years.

I respectfully request that CCA sponsor the *Take the Lead Gala* to be held in conjunction with the Louisville Cluster Shows contiguous to the 2016 CCA National Specialty. There are four Collie breeder judges on the Louisville Cluster panel in 2016. As Grounds Chair for the Louisville National Specialty, I am diligently working with the Cluster committee to secure permanent grooming space throughout the Cluster weekend into our National Specialty week so folks do not have to move twice. Saturday evening on the weekend of the Cluster is wide open for a *Take the Lead* event. The Louisville Cluster is an ideal location to draw optimal participation for this charitable endeavor. The *Take the Lead* organization supports dog fanciers with life threatening and terminal illnesses. It is a terrific way for us to take care of our own and make a huge difference in people's lives (http://takethelead.org/?page_id=114). CCA can *Take the Lead* as the main sponsor of this event to raise money for this truly worthy cause. Susan Kaelin, the District Director for Kentucky, has agreed to co-chair this event with me. Many other CCA members who are active in *Take the Lead* or philanthropic initiatives have already agreed to work with us on this event as well (John Buddie, Nancy McDonald, Gwen Means, Dr. Cindi Bossart, Leigh Cohen, Lisa Schmidt, June Morris, and Diane Steele to name a few). There are many individuals within the *Take the Lead* organization that routinely assist with these large events, i.e. Susan Sprung (the spouse of the President of AKC) handles the advertising and promotion, Mary Miller (*Take the Lead* Board member who resides in Lexington, Kentucky) handles the large charitable donations from various gift estates, and Mary Beth O'Neal (head of Events at AKC) handles the additional manpower and staffing for the

fundraiser and the *Take the Lead* booth at the Louisville shows. Additionally, Michael Faulkner (AKC judge and *Take the Lead* Board member) has agreed to serve as an advisor for this event since he previously chaired *Take the Lead* the last time it was held in Louisville. Thus, Susan and I will not be without a vast support structure and expertise for this event.

We have planned a silent and live auction, heavy hors d'oeuvres, musical entertainment, bourbon tasting, and several other interactive fundraisers at a unique venue near the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center. With the Cluster shows just before our National Specialty, this will be the perfect opportunity for our club to shine! Susan and I will solicit tiered sponsorships and donations from outside individuals for all auction items as well as discounted rates for the caterer and venue. We estimate that tickets will be sold for no more than \$25 per person. With that being said, *Take the Lead* has advised us to request approximately \$15 per person for a conservative estimate of 250 attendees at this event to total a capped amount of \$3,750 from CCA as the main sponsor of this *Take the Lead Gala*. Although we will have other individual sponsors, this base amount will promote CCA as the host club for this event, i.e. "The Collie Club of America cordially invites you to attend the *Take the Lead Gala* in honor of their National Specialty in Louisville, Kentucky on..." With the large number of exhibitors at the Louisville Cluster, Susan and I hope to set a record attendance for this *Take the Lead* event which will yield a much higher return of total contribution to the *Take the Lead* organization. If every CCA member who attends the Louisville Cluster in advance of our National Specialty purchases a ticket to the *Take the Lead Gala*, then this event will be a tremendous success!

I would like the CCA Board to approve this proposal at their forthcoming Board Meeting at the 2015 CCA National Specialty so that Susan Kaelin and I can hit the ground running in late March. Unfortunately, as you know I will not be in Oklahoma City as I am judging my first All-Breed Best in Show assignment that weekend; however, Susan will be on hand to answer any questions.

Thank you so much for your support of this wonderful cause.

With Warm Regards,

Butch

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cc: Jane Clymer, CCA Secretary
Susan Kaelin, Kentucky District Director

