

# Blues News

BLUE RIDGE  
DOG TRAINING  
CLUB, INC.



Established 1967

June 2012



## “First Day on the Job”

Pictures by Barbara Zeiger

The caption is “first day on the job”. These three teams made their first Paws for Reading visit to Handley Library on June 13. They are Kathi Hall and Maggie, Barbara with Sugar and Hooch, and Tina Genay and Henry.



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I've seen a look in dogs' eyes, a quickly vanishing look of amazed contempt, and I am convinced that basically dogs think humans are nuts. --  
John Steinbeck





# “Paws Crew at Old Town”

Pictures by Marzenna Gilbert



**We are extremely proud to have Alice and Leo as part of our Paws for Reading group.**

Leo, my 10 year old standard poodle, completed 100 reading visits in June to earn his Tail Waggin’ Tutors (TWT) Award from Therapy Dogs International (TDI). It took us more than 3 years of visiting libraries and schools to accumulate 100 visits and I am very proud of him. I think he is the first dog in the Club to earn this award. He already has his Therapy Dog title from AKC and TDI and TDIAV and TDIOAV certificates from TDI. Counting nursing home visits he has made a total of 250 visits since 2008 when he passed the TDI test.

*Alice Seabright*





# “Blue Ridge Meeting “Home Prepared Pet Diets by Sandy Stokes”

Pictures by Marzenna Gilbert





## “Blue Ridge Meeting “Home Prepared Pet Diets by Sandy Stokes”

When making from scratch you need to be prepared to ask questions about the ingredients you purchase to make your dog food. I avoid any ingredient that comes from China. Be ready to ask questions and to expect answers from your sources. Midas Touch is an excellent source for purchasing ingredients. Jo Bighouse, owner of Midas Touch, is vigilant in carrying only the highest quality pet food, pet treats, and ingredients for making from scratch. We are working together to offer a seminar on making your own dog food and Jo is preparing to make available all of the ingredients used to make Wendy Volhard's dog food from scratch.

The following recipe is based on Wendy Volhard's book "Holistic Guide For A Healthy Dog". I have adjusted the ingredient amounts in order to have a bulk mix on hand for feeding my dog.

### Natural Diet Foundation Bulk Mix

Kelp	½ cup	Bug Off Garlic	¼ cup
Wheat Germ	3 cups	Dried Herbs	2 cups
Vitamin C	9000 mg	Brewer's Yeast	1 cup
Bone Builder	1 cup	Wheat Bran	8 1/2 cups
Willard Water (optional)	1 cup		

This makes 15 cups of dry mix.

Natural Diet (feeds one 75 pound dog for two days, two meals each day)

6 oz dry weight oats (not oat meal) and 2 oz dry weight buck wheat groats  
 1 ½ cup raw vegetables (grated sweet potato, grated carrots, cubed squash, etc.)  
 7 cups of water.

Mix the grains, water, and vegetables in a large pot. Bring them to a boil, stir to mix, remove from heat, cover the pot and let them sit over night.

In the morning add:

1 cup of the Natural Diet Foundation Bulk Mix, 600 mg vitamin C, 1 tablespoon cod liver oil, 2 tablespoons safflower oil, 2 tablespoons black strap molasses, 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar, 1 cup plain yogurt, 2/3 cups liver, and 30 ounces of protein (beef, venison, lamb, chicken, cottage, or mackerel).

Mix well and divide into equal meals.

To each morning meal add: (please note that these amounts are for a 75 pound dog)

300 IU vitamin E  
 50 mg Vitamin B Complex  
 1 egg, hardboiled for 5 minutes\*  
 3 tablespoons fruit\*

\*Four days each week.

If you are interested in learning in detail how to feed your dog by making raw from scratch I highly recommend Wendy's book and I hope you'll consider joining us at Midas Touch for the seminar on making dog food from scratch.

You can visit Midas Touch at [midastouchhealth.com](http://midastouchhealth.com)

Recommended Reading: Books - "The Holistic Guide for a Healthy Dog - Wendy Volhard, The Complete Herbal Handbook for Dogs & Cats - Juliette deBairacli Levy. **More Information on BRDTC website.**



# “OOOPS!”

I am apologizing to  
Ashley Lutz  
For putting  
Travis name on  
Her picture

In last  
**month's**  
Picture of  
the Month



# Picture Of the Month



**“Happy Fathers  
Day”**

*“I Love You  
Dad!”*

**Spitit  
&  
Doug  
Gilbert**

## ***Bacon Pumpkin Kidney Friendly and Gluten Free Dog Treats***

1 Cup of Rice Flour 1/2 Cup of Tapioca Flour 1/3 Cup of Pumpkin 1 Egg White 1/4 Cup of Bacon Grease

Mix all ingredients, add a little water to help combine into a ball. Dough will be a bit sticky, flour with the Tapioca flour and let sit for about 10 minutes. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Roll out dough to about 1/4th inch thick and cut out treats. Bake for about 25 minutes until crunchy. This recipe makes about 32, two inch dog bones. If you cannot find the pumpkin, mashed carrots or sweet potatoes also will work. The flours are available from the Natural food section in Martins. **Sent by Holly Rich**

## **“Doggie Horoscope”**

Gemini  
May 21 to June 21  
Your Gemini dog really tries to be a -good dog-. Just sometimes, his curiosity and keen power let him forget the rules.

Cancer  
June 22 to July 22  
This dog needs to be with you! Left alone at home he feels unsettled, and uncomfortable. Cancer dogs are sensitive, caring home dogs.

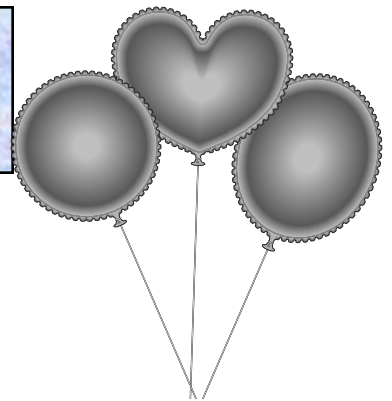
## *Birthdays & Anniversary's July*

*Birthdays*

*Anniversary's*

***Kathy Brunner 7/3  
Annette Talbot 7/6***

***Tim & Becky  
Gregory  
7/24/99***







# Mark Your Calendar



## *“Hilltop Visits”*

Hi All,

This morning at Hilltop, Janet and I had an opportunity to talk with the activities coordinator. The numbers of dogs visiting has dwindled to one or two. So we thought maybe we could try evening visits. She was very agreeable to the idea. We are going to try the second and fourth Friday at 6:00 p.m. and drop the Friday morning visits.

If you are available for any of these visits, just show up beginning on the second Friday of June, and bring a copy of your dog’s shot record. All you have to do is walk around with your dog; the residents will take care of the rest. They just love seeing and petting the dogs.

Thanks everyone,

Theresa



**SEPTEMBER 8-9, 2012**

**UAW HALL, 2625 PAPERMILL ROAD  
WINCHESTER, VIRGINIA 22601**

**9 A.M. – 5 P.M. EACH DAY**

**Sponsored By Shawnee Kennel Club**

For people wanting to compete in Best of Breed, Group, and Best in Show competition. This seminar is held only once a year!

Attendees come from all over the world to learn how to...

***Be part of the Winner’s Circle!!!***

Preparation: George begins with the psychology and philosophy of showing dogs, preparing both the dog and the handler for the BOB, Group, and BIS rings. He also expands on the fine points of training, feeding, and veterinary care for the dog. In addition, George discusses the physical and mental conditioning aspects of showing.

Demonstration: You will learn the process of evaluating a dog. By the end of this clinic, each participant will be able to evaluate any dog and determine what adjustments should be made to present proper breed type.

Prerequisite: You must have attended a previous Alston Handling Seminar as an advanced or beginner handler, or observer. The Super Advanced Clinic starts where the previous seminar ended.

Demonstration Dogs: Twenty dogs will be used for demonstration (Sunday only). Eligible dogs must be Champions that are being shown in the Specials Ring by the handler attending the clinic. A variety of breeds will be chosen one month prior to the clinic. If your dog is selected, confirmation will be sent by e-mail.

Cost: \$125.00 per participant (with or without a dog). Fee includes continental breakfast, sandwich lunch, and snacks each day. Clinic fees are not refundable.

For more information, contact Anne Legge, 540-327-4260,  
[annelegge@comcast.net](mailto:annelegge@comcast.net)



## "WAGS & BRAGS"



Yeah kona who got her cd today in pa taking 3 rd place after winning a run off. So 3 tries 3 legs. So proud of her.

**Ann**

I don't often brag on my girls but had to toot Kin-dle's horn today. We are in Richmond at a USDAA trial. Kindle had 5 runs with 5 Qs and 5 1st places. She also earned her Starters Standard Agility, Agility Dog, Starters Relay, and Starters Snooker titles. I am so proud of my baby dog! This is only her 3rd USDAA trial.

Dacey and her partner got a Masters Relay Q and she got a great opening in Masters Snooker (2-7s and 2-6s) but went astray in the closing. She may never get those last 2 Super Qs for her ADCH, but we have fun trying!

**Janice**

Yesterday at the K9 Konnection UKC trials in Beltsville MD, Miss Sonnett put it all together two times and qualified in two sparate trials in UKC open obedience to earn her UKC CDX! So proud of her especially for the second run as it was definitely her nap time and she had to really try hard to stay awake and not lay down on the sit stay :)

**Donna Richardson**

Realized that I had not given credit to Gem from last weekend. She has been on fire lately, and she earned her MXJ last weekend.

Many thanks to Stacey for getting her started and putting some of her titles on her and for Megan for picking up where she left off.

For those of you who remember her mother, Echo; Berne and Donna R. had to be cheerleaders to get her to even move!

**Donna T.**

At the Skyline trial yesterday, dear Sweets earned her RA and a 3rd place. There was a tie between 2nd and 3rd place; and of course, I was slower (not the dog)!

**Donna T.**

I was also at the K9 Konnection UKC trials in Beltsville MD this wkend. My Whippet Holly finished her R02 (rally level 2) title. I moved her up for the other trials, but she didn't qualify at that higher level. I had Tyler in obed. looking for that last allusive CD leg, to no avail. Thanks Donna Richards for remaining Sat. to cheer him on. We came the closest on Sun. morning's 1st trial. He only messed up his sit stay by about 20 seconds. He finally put both stays together on the 2nd trial, but NQ'd on his off-lead heeling ---guess 4 trials in a wkend are too much for his lil' brain. Since his stays have been our biggest block, I was pleased they're finally starting to work. I had 3 sit stays & 2 down stays on him in the 4 trials this wkend --too bad they didn't happen at the same time that he did qualifying heeling.

**Bobbie Lutz**



***It's Dory's 9th  
birthday.  
Happy Birthday  
Dory!***

Today, at the Skyline Kennel Club trials, CJ (Trebecca Cracker Jack) finished his novice rally title. His uncle, Timer (Winmar Jolly Time Dan RA) earned a second leg toward his rally excellent title, with a second place. Timer also came close to finishing his CD, but he lagged just a little too much on his off lead heeling. Everything else was pretty good. He didn't show as much stress as he did at the last trial, so I was pleased with that.

**Kathy**





## “More Brags!”

We were at Skyline KC doing Rally over the wkend. Ashley earned two more legs on her RAE title with a 4th in Ex.B Sat. -- then a 1st in ExB Sun & a 2nd in Adv.B on Sun. Nikki earned 1 RAE leg & would've had a 2nd one, but blew the Ex.B class on Sun. She got a 4th place in the Adv. B class both days. (To get an RAE title, you have to qualify in both Ex.B and Adv.B in the same trial.) Boy the new rules/exercises in Excellent are tough and I haven't really trained them yet. I don't remember the video on new exercises having a modified Utility obedience signal sit/come exercise in it. You should've seen me trying to teach a "distance sit" in 5 minutes! Holly finished her Rally Advanced title. Holly is now officially retired from Rally! And Holly's litter brother Nigel (my cancerboy) earned 1 more leg on his Excellent A title. He needs 1 more to retire from Rally.

**Bobbie Lutz**

**Brag from Thriller** - Thriller earned two titles in one day--both of his Open titles with a 1st and 2nd place. **Brag from Gem** -She was on "doggie crack" for the standard run and made a whole lot of people giggle including the judge, but she did calm down a little on the Ex. JWW run and earned additional MACH pts. Special thanks to Megan who had 8 runs in one day!

**Donna T.**

At the Mattaponi KC agility trials this past wkend, the Lutz pups did pretty decently. Nikki earned two Open Jumper Preferred legs with 2nd & 3rd placements. Tyler earned an Open Jumpers & Open Standard leg with 3rd & 4th placements. Travis earned an Open Standard Preferred leg with a 1st place & I don't remember him barking at me once during that run. The day before he made the judge & me laugh though. He'd just gotten his rhythm going in the weaves & was moving faster when he plowed his head right into the next to last pole! Putting him back into them to start it over was a bust--he'd lost his concentration. And Ashley, my other Open dog--well she certainly enjoyed herself, but didn't queue. And the BIG NEWS is that HOLLY FINALLY finished her NOVICE STANDARD title we'd been working on for several year now. Her biggest problem was the time faults. She is now retired from agility @ 9 yrs. old, as well as Rally now that she finished her Rally Advanced a few wks ago. She's now: UAGII, UR02, Highway Run Heart of the Storm, RA, NA, NAJ, NAP, NJP, CGC, TT. We might work on her Beginner Novice obedience title though, maybe.

**Bobbie**

## “The Whelping Box”

Just a quick "brag" to let you all know that Bella delivered a nice litter of five Labrador pups yesterday at North Outlands Animal Hospital. Mother and babies are doing fine. Four females, three black and one chocolate, and one black male.

**Sandy Stokes**

Little Miss Sparks has made my day, my week, my year! Yesterday, she produced four New Additions to Keepsake Kastle!!!! There are two boys and two girls!!!! So far, everyone is doing well. All puppies have gained weight in the last 24 hours and Sparks is being a wonderful mama!

**Margaret Bissell**

Keepsake Kees

Berri delivered 2 puppies on May 30th. We had to do an emergency c-section. There were 4 puppies but 2 did not make it. A sad but happy day. We have 2 beautifully marked boys who are getting bigger every time I look in on them. Berri is doing good. She is sore and a little confused about this new roll in life but she is catching on quickly.

**Jan Burgan**







## VA Federation Report

June 17, 2012 – PLEASE FORWARD TO ALL DOG BREEDERS, PET OWNERS, ANYONE WITH AN INTEREST IN HAVING PUREBRED DOGS

**YOU HAVE UNTIL JULY 16, 2012 TO TELL USDA NO – DO NOT DO THIS**

The USDA-APHIS has proposed new regulations. If they are implemented they will effectively put an end to hobby breeding. There will be no need for a Federation, a calendar or minutes since there will be no dog fancy left. How will this happen? Below is an explanation.

We will be halfway through the public comment period on Docket APHIS-2011-0003 as of tomorrow -- comments will close on July 16th. Making MANY clear and specific comments about the effect of a proposed new rule is the first defense against that rule going into effect. If we don't comment I think we have no hope. But as of now we have only about 1600-1700 comments and about half of them are from the ARs talking about how wonderful the new rule is.

This new rule would require you to keep four or fewer breeding females and sell only their offspring which are raised only on your premises. Co ownerships would count for both, thus if you and Jane Big handler co-own two bitches then she can only have two others and you can only have two others. And this is NOT per species. Two intact female cats on your premises would max you out, even though your dogs are usually out with Jane.

OR

You would have the choice of selling all dogs ONLY from your premises. No meeting halfway, no shipping. EVERY buyer would have to come to where the dogs are maintained. Although it isn't now in the rule and APHIS indicates that meeting buyers in your living room would be enough, the ARs are already screaming that buyers should have the right to demand a complete tour of all parts of your home where you keep dogs because the whole purpose of this is to see that you are inspected by your buyers. It wouldn't surprise me to see them sue to force APHIS to change that -- they've done lawsuits over APHIS rules they didn't like in the past.

OR

You would (in theory) have the choice of building an Animal Welfare Act-compliant kennel and keeping all your breeding stock, puppies, and so on, there. This would require you accept no-notice inspections during normal working hours and it's a discrepancy if you aren't on hand when an inspector shows up. Do it again and get fined -- just as you will for other repeated discrepancies.

Figure \$50,000-up for a small kennel IF you can get zoning approval and your neighbors don't mind and you are willing to have your locality and state consider you a business. Don't forget that once you are USDA licensed there must always be someone on hand (during normal working hours) who is qualified to let an inspector in, explain your records, your veterinarian relationship, methods of identifying your dogs and keeping them separate in the various situations where the regulations require that. Hiring a responsible teenager to feed and clean up twice a day won't be enough if you want to be gone during the week.

All of this is explained on the Federation website. These are new regulations, not legislation. They are posted on-line at Regulations.gov. There is a 60-day comment period which ends July 16, 2012. It is IMPERATIVE that everyone make a comment. I know people think they have done enough by signing the AKC petition on this matter. WRONG! WRONG! WRONG! – A petition will count for one comment.

To be official people have to comment on the official site. Here is the link for commenting

<http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=APHIS-2011-0003-0001>

Here is the link for Tips for Submitting Effective Comments

[http://www.regulations.gov/docs/Tips\\_For\\_Submitting\\_Effective\\_Comments.pdf](http://www.regulations.gov/docs/Tips_For_Submitting_Effective_Comments.pdf)

Here is the link for reading what comments have already been submitted – a crummy 1800 (half of which are FOR the regs) when there are over 30,000 signatures to AKC



<http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;dt=FR%252BPR%252BN%252BO%252BSR;rpp=25;po=0;D=APHIS-2011-0003>

or <http://tinyurl.com/7aqm66y>

Click on Public Submission box to see the comments that have been posted.

Link for Federation page that discusses all this-  
<http://virginiafederation.org/introduction>

Facebook pages

Alice Harrington - <https://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/alice.harrington.969?sk=wall>

Federation - <https://www.facebook.com/alice.harrington.969?sk=wall#!/VirginiaFederation>

I am working night and day on this. Have had several phone calls with USDA officials.

Contact me with any questions you might have.

Alice Harrington VFDCB – [aharrington4832@verizon.net](mailto:aharrington4832@verizon.net)

**Thanks, Alice**

## ***“Things We Can Learn from a Dog”***

*Author Unknown*

- 1. Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joy ride.***
- 2. Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.***
- 3. When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.***
- 4. When its in your best interest, always practice obedience.***
- 5. Let others know when they've invaded your territory.***
- 6. Take naps and stretch before rising.***
- 7. Run, romp and play daily.***
- 8. Eat with gusto and enthusiasm.***
- 9. Be loyal.***
- 10. Never pretend to be something you're not.***
- 11. If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.***
- 12. When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle gently.***
- 13. Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.***
- 14. Thrive on attention and let people touch you.***
- 15. Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.***
- 16. On hot days, drink lots of water and lie under a shady tree.***
- 17. When you are happy, dance around and wag your entire body.***
- 18. No matter how often you are criticized, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout. Run right back and make friends.***





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[WWW.BLUERIDGEDOGTRAININGCLUB.COM](http://WWW.BLUERIDGEDOGTRAININGCLUB.COM)



**WHAT'S HAPPENING**

- July 6-8 - Agility Trial
- July 28 - Picnic Meeting
- Aug 4- Obedience Trial
- Sept 5 - Meeting
- Sept 8 - Patriotic paws
- Oct 31- Meeting
- Nov - tba
- Dec - Christmas auction

month a visit to the  
nursing homes  
Envoy 1st & 3rd Monday 11am  
Spring Arbor 2nd & 4th Tuesday  
1 pm  
Hill Top 2nd & 4th Friday 6:00 pm

July 6-8  
Agility Trial  
At  
The Sportsplex



July 28  
Picnic Meeting  
At the  
Sportsplex





Proposed USDA Regulations - APHIS-2011-0003 – Comment period closes July 16, 2012  
 The Breeder's Choice

Your Choices	Then what happens???	Am I a retail pet store under USDA regulations?	Can I sell off premises, i.e. ship puppies or deliver them?	Do I have to allow people into my home/kennel?	Will the USDA inspect my kennel or home?	Can I have more than four breeding bitches?	Do my facilities have to conform to AWA requirements?
You may...							
1. Always require the buyer to come to your home at least once per sale —OR—	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
2. Keep 4 or fewer breeding females —OR—	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
3. Get a USDA dealer's license	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES

NOTES:

The USDA will narrow the definition of retail pet store so that it means a place of business or residence that each buyer physically enters in order to personally observe the animals available for sale prior to purchase and/or to take custody of the animals after purchase. Retail pet stores are not inspected by USDA because it is assumed that the puppy buyers "inspect" them when they come to see the puppies. Pet dealers that are NOT retail pet stores must have USDA-compliant kennels and are inspected by USDA.

If you keep more than four intact bitches and sell even one puppy off your premises, through shipping, meeting the customer in town, delivering the puppy at a dog show, etc., you lose your exemption and must become USDA-compliant and apply for a license.

If you keep fewer than four bitches, you are allowed to sell only animals that were whelped and raised on your premises. This means you cannot sell a "stud fee puppy" or any pups you receive in a "puppies back" arrangement with a buyer. This also means you cannot place rescue dogs, as an "adoption" is considered to be a purchase since you are exchanging a dog for money. Since the rescues are not born and raised on your property, you are not allowed to sell them.

Building a kennel to USDA requirements involves impermeable (waterproof) surfaces, separate areas for puppies, separate food preparation area, and much more. The requirements are here: [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_welfare/downloads/Inspection\\_Requirements\\_Attachments.PDF](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/downloads/Inspection_Requirements_Attachments.PDF)

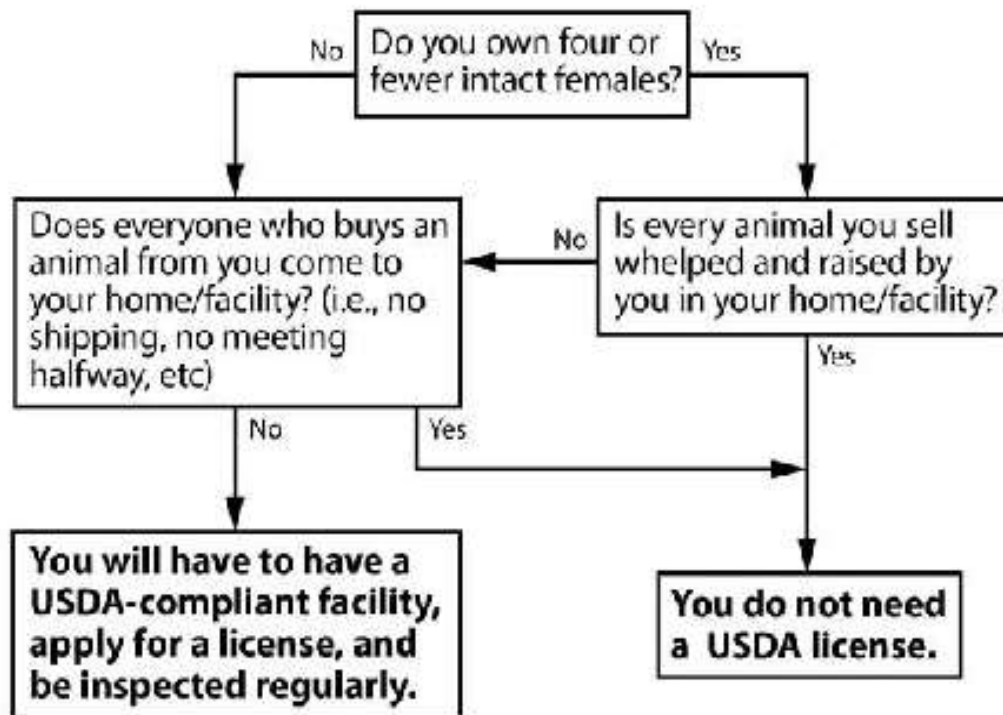


# Virginia Federation OF DOG CLUBS & BREEDERS

[www.VirginiaFederation.org](http://www.VirginiaFederation.org)

[Facebook.com/VirginiaFederation](https://Facebook.com/VirginiaFederation)

## Will the Proposed Regulations Affect You as a Breeder?



# TIPS FOR SUBMITTING EFFECTIVE COMMENTS\*

## Overview

A comment can express simple support or dissent for a regulatory action. However, a constructive, information-rich comment that clearly communicates and supports its claims is more likely to have an impact on regulatory decision making.

These tips are meant to help the public submit comments that have an impact and help agency policy makers improve federal regulations.

## Summary

..Read and understand the regulatory document you are commenting on

..Feel free to reach out to the agency with questions

..Be concise but support your claims

..Base your justification on sound reasoning, scientific evidence, and/or how you will be impacted

..Address trade-offs and opposing views in your comment

..There is no minimum or maximum length for an effective comment

..The comment process is not a vote – one well supported comment is often more influential than a thousand form letters

## Detailed Recommendations

1. Comment periods close at 11:59 ET on the date comments are due - begin work well before the deadline.

2. Attempt to fully understand each issue; if you have questions or do not understand a part of the regulatory document, you may ask for help from the agency contact listed in the document.

Note: Although the agency contact can answer your questions about the document's meaning, official comments must be submitted through the comment form.

3. Clearly identify the issues within the regulatory action on which you are commenting. If you are commenting on a particular word, phrase or sentence, provide the page number, column, and paragraph citation from the federal register document.



- a. If you chose to comment on the comments of others, identify such comments using their comment ID's before you respond to them.
4. If a rule raises many issues, do not feel obligated to comment on every one – select those issues that concern you the most, affect you the most, and/or you understand the best.
5. Agencies often ask specific questions or raise issues in rulemaking proposals on subjects where they are actively looking for more information. While they will still accept comments on any part of the proposed regulation, please keep these questions and issues in mind while formulating your comment.
6. Although agencies receive and appreciate all comments, constructive comments (either positive or negative) are the most likely to have an influence.
7. If you disagree with a proposed action, suggest an alternative (including not regulating at all) and include an explanation and/or analysis of how the alternative might meet the same objective or be more effective.
8. The comment process is not a vote. The government is attempting to formulate the best policy, so when crafting a comment it is important that you adequately explain the reasoning behind your position.
9. Identify credentials and experience that may distinguish your comments from others. If you are commenting in an area in which you have relevant personal or professional experience (i.e., scientist, attorney, fisherman, businessman, etc.) say so.
10. Agency reviewers look for sound science and reasoning in the comments they receive. When possible, support your comment with substantive data, facts, and/or expert opinions. You may also provide personal experience in your comment, as may be appropriate. By supporting your arguments well you are more likely to influence the agency decision making.
11. Consider including examples of how the proposed rule would impact you negatively or positively.
12. Comments on the economic effects of rules that include quantitative and qualitative data are especially helpful.
13. Include the pros and cons and trade-offs of your position and explain them. Consider other points of view, and respond to them with facts and sound reasoning.
14. Keep a copy of your comment in a separate file – this practice helps ensure that you will not lose your comment if you have a problem submitting it using the Regulations.gov web form.

## Form Letters

Organizations often encourage their members to submit form letters designed to address issues common to their membership. Organizations including industry associations, labor unions, and conservation groups sometimes use form letters to voice their opposition or support of a proposed rule. Many in the public mistakenly believe that their submitted form letter constitutes a “vote” regarding the issues concerning them. Although public support or opposition may help guide important public policies, agencies make determinations for a proposed action based on sound reasoning and scientific evidence, not a majority of votes. A single, well-supported comment may carry more weight than a thousand form letters.

\* Throughout this document, the term “Comment” is used in place of the more technically accurate term “Public Submission” in order to make the recommendations easier to read and understand.

Disclaimer: This document is intended to serve as a guide; it is not intended and should not be considered as legal advice. Please seek counsel from a lawyer if you have legal questions or concerns.