



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – *Western Edition*

Question: What strategies/ideas would be most helpful to encourage people to start showing dogs?

- Mentoring
- Welcoming clubs/exhibitors
- Co-own
- Help finding a show quality dog
- Breeders
- How to classes
- Junior Handling
- Lower costs
- Club outreach
- Puppy matches/Fun matches
- Owner handled/owner handled title
- Confident builders
- Make the show fun

This list shows the top 13 categories that most survey takers chose. We did find some additional answers that did not fit into these 13 categories. The complete data is listed below.

The answers below are important with many good ideas scattered throughout. It is suggested you read through them all.

What strategies/ideas would be most helpful to encourage people to start showing dogs?

A feeling of inclusion. Maybe even offering money as prizes.

It would be great if clubs could offer mentors to newbies. Both at shows and away from them. Have a group of people available to offer new exhibitors whatever help they need during a club's shows. Offer local newcomers a mentor if they want/need one away from shows. I know there are fewer and fewer active members in clubs today, so it will likely be tough to rally volunteers to do something like this, but whatever we can do to ensure exhibitors feel welcome and have fun at our shows is to our benefit. We want them coming back again and again!

All the fun..

This sport isn't for everyone. I think the target age for people who did not grow up in the sport, to become involved, is often mid-30's or even older. In other words, for many women, after the kids are older. Showing is time consuming and expensive. It is what it is. I think breeders should probably make more effort to sell their best pups to buyers who have the potential to become involved with showing - instead of settling on pet homes (but these show potential homes aren't easy to find).



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I need to be more open with new people - I'm an introvert by nature so that's hard for me but I do make an effort.

This is a great idea!

Encouragement from breeders to puppy buyers. AKC and clubs should try to get publicity (TV, newspapers) to cover events (dog shows, performance events). A publicity chair in each club. Offer mentoring to newcomers. Offer short programs for the general public such as grooming demos, health issues in their breed, how to locate a responsible breeder, what is the AKC, what is a breed standard, introduction to dog showing/ performance events, the benefits gained by showing/training/activities for you and your dog, etc., and advertise these programs (Internet, newspapers, etc.) even if the club has to pay for it. More club interaction with the general public, making dogs a family affair, and push the bonding and rewards of the "sport of dogs." Maybe a designated person to approach bystanders at dog events and welcome them to watch. This may be done sometimes, but it needs to be a regular routine. I did that at a specialty show one day and answered questions, invited people to come and watch, and explained what was going on. Not everyone one is going to become a dog fancier, but we need to be more welcoming. Clubs must keep their websites up to date. When looking at various dog club websites, I have often found that they have very old, outdated information on such things as club meetings, shows, etc. This is very discouraging to someone looking for current info.

perhaps a novice class with a greatly reduced fee. If they check this class, perhaps have a show member there to guild and encourage them

More handling and grooming seminars

Get Jrs away from their darn phones and involved! Meet the breed so they can see different dogs, take them with you to shows, let them help; applies to adults. it's a fun social even too

"Have a ""show"" for beginner owner/handler comparable to best puppy in show.

"

Breed sponsored booths at shows

That it's a fabulous way to form an even stronger bond with your dog(s), make new friends, if you have children get them involved and keep them busy and out of trouble and spend time hopefully away from electronic devices and enjoy being outside/inside with people and other beautiful dogs.

1. People/Settings that are welcoming, encouraging and supportive without being unduly competitive. No one likes the backstabbing pettiness of certain handlers/owners. 2. Handling classes held regularly. Classes on how to groom dogs for showing. 3. Judges who understand that the dog is more important than the handler, so maybe determining a way to encourage judges to be fair and objective (as much as possible). 4. Bring prices down. It has gotten ridiculously expensive. Having multiple shows on one day would help a lot. We have done that at some shows in **** and ****, and it really has bumped up attendance. 5. Breed dogs that meet the breed standards rather than dogs that may look good in group.

Maybe people should try to be nicer.

Encouragement and explaining rules

mentoring and working with their breeder; its hard for new people to get nice dogs

We started showing because the breeder made it a contractual stipulation to own one of her dogs along with herding with them. We followed through and I became our breed's national club president and my husband an AKC herding judge. This is what a mentor can do for you!

Kindness to visitors at a show, willing to talk to them, explain how a show works, perhaps having an educational table where visitors could pick up helpful info.

Seminars for newbies

Having seminars at clubs that don't necessarily have handling classes but focus on performance side.

Don't give up. Join your local club. Find a mentor.

To try and have fun



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I think going to schools with dogs and having a little talk with kids could help. Give them a lesson on how to take care of a dog or things like that that are age appropriate but related.

Study the breed go to show find a mentor buy the best you can afford this is not an inexpensive sport

Positive comments and offers of help

Mentor the newbies

Mentoring my child is over 18 and has been showing dogs as a family with me since she was 7. It starts at home.

That confirmation shows, breed specific events (lure coursing, hunt test, scent work etc), obedience, rally, as well as fun activities (dock diving, barn hunt etc) all maintain the heritage of the breeds they love and live with.

These events are out there and their participation allows others to see that these activities can be done by regular folks, just like them, not just pros. Their pets aren't just pretty home/leash walking decor, they're smart,

workable, capable and useful animals their entire family can achieve great things with! Creating these events give their pups active social lives and they can participate!! Get out there.

Talk to them and have them help you at the shows. Put them on a decent dog, let them keep the ribbons....

reel them in.

Don't give up

More inclusive/less cliquy, more education, access to mentors

Set up a time and place to meet their dog or even provide class schedule for seminars and when giving numbers make sure they are current or even follow up with the person to see if your advice helped

Have them partner with experienced exhibitors.

Somehow make it seem less elitist, maybe have a special event following the Canadian Kennel Club Junior format (juniors "borrow" an entered dog in Canadian shows) so people could borrow a dog and "show" that dog. The target audiences would seem to be kids and younger adults

Make it fun and inviting for new people. Make them feel welcome rather than running them off especially if they get a win first time out.

Continue to offer seminars at dog shows.

Go to shows watch and learn and listen

Be helpful and kind to other exhibitors

I don't know

Having the breeders of their dogs to act as mentors

More exposure to the public

You will have lots of fun..

Help and encouragement from the breeder of their puppy

I mentor people all the time, no matter what breed. I wish more people would help. I also have juniors come to my handling class free of charge.

Be welcoming and friendly, exhibitors are rude for the most part these days

Having events at shows that educate and/or give hands on opportunities.

I think we first have to successfully combat and win over the "adopt, dont shop" mentality. Once is becomes okay to own a purebred dog, and to be proud of that dog, showing will become a fun activity again. I never thought that AKC should have allowed mixed breeds to compete for anything. I understand the reasoning behind the decision, but honestly feel that it harms reputable breeders and the image we have been given by hate groups.

Encouraging mentor ship from both sides.

"I think that all new puppy buyers with show-quality puppies should be encouraged by their breeders to show! I got into showing accidentally because my breeder asked me to give it a try on my dog, and that's how I got hooked. We need to find a way to market dog shows as the FUN social activity that they are; most people think it is boring or unappealing (the dog just trots around the ring... big deal! lol!), and requires no work. It is a skill



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that requires finesse and work, but it is ALSO something that ANYONE can do-- the level of training commitment it takes is more accessible than obedience or agility (for example).

I don't mean to put all of the education/promotion burden on breeders, but breeders are for the most part, the primary point of contact between a purebred dog owner and the purebred dog world. So maybe in breeder "puppy packets" we could have an official club or AKC or individually made "dog showing 101" packet, that includes what it is, why we do it, why it's FUN, and a list of 5-10 local shows in the area during the year with contact information (show chairs, websites, etc).

Prospective buyers often come to dog shows to "meet the dogs." (I can personally say that I did this. I have met tens of people at dog shows who attend to learn about dogs and decide on a breed to get for their household.) We should have a more organized "Here to watch? Dog shows 101" booth/resource guide. This explains what a dog show is, how to find a good breeder, and maybe how to get into dog showing once they have that purebred puppy. Most of the public go out of their way to find a local dog show, but let's do the publicity work FOR them. Maybe advertise our local dog shows in the paper, local news, or facebook events. Let's actively work on bringing the public in, and give them actual physical pamphlets/brochures/packets with information on AKC/purebred dogs/showing, so that they have RESOURCES beyond a blind google search. We need to give them something to leave with (a physical paper/packet/resource list) instead of just *hope* that the public happens to run into a nice, welcoming, informed exhibitor who will take the time to educate.

We also need to let parents know what a great JUNIORS activity it is! Oh how I WISH I would have known about dog shows as a junior! (I'm 32) I participated in 4H and horse shows, but I did not know that dog shows were "a thing" accessible to families. My only exposure as a kid was the National Dog Show on TV-- it never occurred to me or my family that this is a fun, accessible family sport. (And far cheaper than horse showing!) Horse showing is fun, but I think dog shows are so much more "accessible" and appealing to the whole family (many activities, lots of dog sports, cheaper/easier to get to, etc). "

good question

Professional handlers need to not be so stuck up to beginners. It steers them away.

Have an altered class.

I think the 4-6 mth puppy class has opened some opportunity for new people, and hopefully theirs breeders also encourage them.

Exposure to the youth

I would love to see an altered class

Openness and acceptance

Social media can really be beneficial here, but few "older" folks utilize it to its full potential. We all start showing dogs for one reason or another, but the thing that typically makes us stay in it are the people. We come for the dogs, but stay for the people.

Have more Novice events and matches addressing people new to the idea of breeds and conformation

Being open for new people. Help grow the show ring as its starting to die.

education about the link between showing/competing and responsible breeding

Good ? - what motivates millennials? Showing dogs has gotten more and more expensive too - parking has gotten outrageous at some shows. The AR influence on attitudes is changing social views on animal sports in general. It is a multi-faceted issue. Needs a multi-pronged approach

I'm so new and continue to understand how things work. The biggest problem I have is understanding the difference of the showing of champions and non-champions, counting of points and how to get points/majors.

Fun matches. Community in the park matches. More meet the breeds



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Opportunities to learn more about their breed; health concerns about their breed; health tests available at shows; fun activities offered other than O/R and Conformation

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join an all breed club

?

Handling classes

AKC could devote funds to showing their excellent 2 min. video "What Responsible Breeders Really Do" over and over on TV. Clubs could run the video at shows, and sponsor it on local TV. It is so good. Google it, See online. This is a start as it highlights the value of purebred, purpose bred dogs from RESPONSIBLE breeders. i Don't have any ideas

A true beginner/never titled class to show in in addition to nohs

Get a friend or mentor to help you.

You are paying for a judges' opinion and those opinions do vary from judge to judge.

"Mentorship, open-ness

"

Honestly I think new people need a dog show 101, I have spent a lot of time just explaining ring procedure and why their dog has to go back into the ring after winning.

People being nice

Being encouraging. Helping them to understand shows. Finding them good mentors.

Staying powered and the ability to overlook the politics that goes on in the ring between pro handlers and judges from time to time you find the owner breeder handlers judge out there that does recognize a good dog and not the handler I believe the reason why our sport is failing is because of the politics.

Get the public to understand there are sports for All dogs, not just conformation

Not sure

A special dogshow class for first timers and coach judges in how to welcome and encourage them.

Handling classes and a mentor

Be friendly, be collegial, make showing a fun time to being with your dog and going out of your way to make friends with new people

Mentor programs, handling seminars

go back to a straightforward competition that makes sense. I personally like some of the very basic classes (baby puppy, Beginner Novice obedience, etc) but hate the huge explosion of class options, owner handler, etc.

When there are so many options, there's little competition in each one and people have to pick and choose more, driving numbers down and stress up. Secondly, better scheduling. It's quite difficult to show a dog in obedience and breed, or rally and juniors, etc because you often have to go from one to the other and even if you get there, your dog is no longer perfectly groomed and loses to the one that just came off the table.

Owner handlers should only have to beat other owner handlers to be successful.

Bring back the fun to the sport/hobby and eliminate the reputation of it being so clickish and political.

Lots of encouragement, introductions to others showing, Fun Day conformation event

Opportunities to learn, less political judging panels, more matches for practice and more encouragement (friendliness) by judges.

Go back to honoring bred by instead of owner handler.

More classes, matches. Make it about the dogs & not all about winning.....

target people who are interested and know the costs involved

Encouraging the newbies and mentoring them.



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Find a place to take classes

BE NICE and encouraging

Attend other shows to get familiar with how things work

More "B" Matches / Newbie classes

Education

more handling seminars and more mentorship; less political shows/judges

Classes without Pros

Information, booklets for breeders to give to their puppy people about events they can show in. Also list of training centers.

Practice shows with one on one mentoring

Breeders willing to sell on co ownership and mentor people through showing and breeding

Wish I had some great ideas. Having fun & good sportsmanship is crucial. In addition to conformation, I think promoting other AKC activities may increase attendance & entry. Performance sports can be very rewarding - obedience, rally, agility etc., and getting other titles/awards such as CGC, trick dog titles and the new ATT etc. can be fun and encouraging for people. Conformation can be somewhat discouraging if your dog continually loses, especially if you do not have support and encouragement from breed knowledgeable friends or competitors. Price of entry may come into play but club's have to pay judges' fees etc. and as entries have declined, entry fees have had to be raised.

Have a free furnished grooming setup area for people that are starting out that don't even know what equipment is needed for their breed. If mentors being available during the show process would also make it less intimidating

encouraging first experiences

Handling classes and matches

Allow for juniors an open type show where they don't have to own the dog. This would create interest and possible future owners. They could learn from a breeder as a youngster and know the grooming and care of different breeds before investing in a certain breed.

Less professional handlers and more open to owner handlers.

more practice shows and fun matches

It's up to the breeders to get their puppy people involved

More promotion of Owner Handler competition

For children pee wee events. More matches with European style evaluations of dog

Create a welcoming and family friendly environment.

Seminars at shows

Offering lessons, public relations-many don't know clubs exist

Having MORE newbies so that they don't feel alone. Having judges that choose dogs not handlers. Providing access to mentors - especially handlers. Educating professional handlers on the importance of welcoming newcomers and helping them.

Fun matches

Not a clue.

seminars

Being open and welcoming

New handler classes

More workshops and classes available.

Interest in purebred dogs, awareness/marketing of it as sport for average person

one-n-one mentorship

Word of mouth. I enjoyed "meet the breed" when I was starting.

having a mentor



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Make it fun! It's always so competitive for new people to enjoy showing.

Encourage them to attend shows to watch and learn. And to meet people that are interested in the same breeds and/or activities.

Make them welcome at ringside. Invite to our setups..invite to our clubs and our clubs need to be more inviting. Patience with not understanding

"Team work, getting out to meet new people and places, spending time with your best friend, your dog.

Another comment I have told young people is that they can brag that they got such and such ribbon/prize at a local show and was in the newspaper. That seems to work well with certain age groups. Also, introduce them to a former Junior Handler who is now working as a Pro handler, making decent money when they want to.

"

???

Better availability of handling classes

More meet the breed AKC events at state and county fairs

Fair & expert judges, reduced cost & a mentor for beginners

I think the interest is either there or it isn't. One thing that doesn't help is the general population's perception that a dog show is a random beauty contest. No idea how to fix that.

just do it

Have a mock dog show with a narrator in places like a MALL SETTING or PARK or somewhere public and free.

it grows the bond between person and dog

First show free or half price entry. Maybe if they enter Novice class.

Show them how to handle and groom their own dogs.

Owner handler classes

Club sponsored mentors and handling classes.

Social networking, encouragement from others showing

Attend a show, check out a handling class or try a private lesson

Better pr advertising

people to know of the PALs registry, all the different things to show in then the training for them, clubs to put on training for the types of CGC trick farm dog etc

Classes that include all, from how to fill an entry to ring procedure.

Positive assistance/encouragement from breeders and educational opportunities from clubs

The bond you create with your dog and friendships you make

When you see someone in your breed who you don't know, take the time to introduce yourself.

Attend a show. Ask a lot of questions.

A mentorship program would be very helpful

On site mentoring of new exhibitors

Money prizes

More match type classes

Support our juniors. We just had our Nationals and only 2 juniors showed.

Having fun, fun matches, owner/handler events/ handling seminars

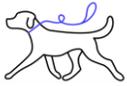
Have matches and instructors to help with criteria

Lower entry fees for newbies. Judges that actually give an individual attention and look over their dogs rather than look at who is holding the leash. Younger judges.

I don't know.

Play or fun days to learn about showing and grooming with no pressure

Discovery day in the park to expose owners to all of the various opportunities available in which to participate with their dogs, podcasts interviewing dog show exhibitors of different disciplines or YouTube video



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coverage/informational videos shared in pet owner groups on social media, posters/flyers for events at veterinary clinics...

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Family oriented activities.

Kennel Clubs having a better presence in their communities.

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Classes, practices, fun matches, public demos, add a best of get (can be altered) or altered class/ division

Better communication with local news (print and tv) showcasing events

Lots of practice

More awareness, advertisement for shows

I'd like to see fun matches brought back and more public club activities

Classes

We need education programs targeting kids in intermediate school

Mentoring seems to be the most successful. Having someone "in your corner" really helps.

Encourage newbies and kindly point out how they could improve & handling classes

Education on the value of purebred dogs, and a sense of welcome from other competitors

positive feedback from other people showing dogs

Have a practice runs

Breeders whonwould be willing to sell nice stock. More handling classes offered by the clubs

Show as you have the best thing since sliced bread at the end of your leash. Have fun and enjoy

Make sure not only you love doing it but so does your dog. Have seen many (in agility) that love the sport but their dogs don't necessarily like it.

More fun and sanctioned matches. That's how I started and wins at that level gave me confidence and got more hooked.

Handling seminars

No idea, wish I knew

Mentor new people with meet the breed and other events they can compete in with rescued dogs.

Enjoy it, have fun don't stress

"Fun days, practice days"

Making it fun again

breeders that work will work with new people to learn to groom and show

Mini social media seminars on showing your dog

being nice and offer help if you can

Know your dog and how it reacts to different situations. Take handling and ring manners classes.

Getting more children involved.

None

This is a tough question. The sport is expensive, and hard to feel inclusion so that would be a first good step to encourage new people to get excited to get involved in the sport. But again, it's a two way effort with both the new person and the seasoned show person.

Recruitment requirements by AKC Clubs. Public outreach.

Have handling practices and teach the new comers how to show their dog and how to enter enter

Puppy matches not in conjunction with shows. I hosted several matches at a local park, we got in lots of foot traffic from locals. Gives them the chance to see cute puppies and meet breeders. It's a great opportunity that clubs don't seem to take much anymore.



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Comraderie, local breed club events and local classes, mentoring by nice individuals interested in growing sport
Involve families. Include other performance activities. Meet the breed. Engage with schools, scouts, elder homes.

Attend dog shows and see what they're all about; talking to owner/handlers is a good place to start.

Friend/ mentor

Fun matches with experienced exhibitors there to help the newbies.

Make it more Owner Handler friendly. Give more points/value to Owner Handler wins.

Mentoring new people and including them. Make them feel welcome

Watch the winners

Community outreach. Clubs should have a booth and demos at community events. Partner with local rescue and shelters to sponsor community pet events/shelter fundraisers. Better advertise matches in the community.

A simple 1-10 step instruction list for what to do & where to be & go at the show-if in conformation they should find others with their breed-not a prof handler-if in obed., rally, agility find an out of the way place to watch for awhile & find a friendly face to ask questions of. Get to the show EARLY!

A booth where people interested in getting started could get information on what to expect at their first dog show. A sign up for people that are looking for someone to talk them through what happens before, during and after you go in the ring. A booth or seminar where people can learn about what to look for in their first show dog and where they could possibly put their hands on some nice dogs.

A welcoming, fun, supportive show environment with opportunities to learn valuable skills and knowledge.

Breeders who support their dogs and encourage their puppy owners in show and/or performance endeavors.

Expanded access to educational opportunities to increase knowledge and boost success. People are busy and have many things competing for their attention and resources. If they leave the dog show discouraged weekend after weekend, most of them won't stick around very long.

Be kind. Many exhibitors don't look like they are having any fun. Who would want to join a group of cranky people who aren't supporting newcomers? Find a way for the public to see how fun it can be and people will want to participate. Also watch the cost-many are priced out of participating

Promoting a family sport for both Children and adults to be invoked in.

I was invited to join the training sessions last winter, but not able to due to weather or work. Would love to try to attend again if they were offered.

Making them feel welcome rather than they can't be bothered with them

Helping people understand the purpose of conformation dog shows. I don't think many people, especially the general public, understand how conformation helps ensure breeders are held to a standard, and how it's a way for people looking for a well-bred, good dog to ensure breeders are ethical and not just "in it for the money". It shows that the breeder took the time to have their dog evaluated by a non-biased 3rd party before deeming the dog good breeding stock. If more people see the value in choosing a dog from an ethical breeder who took the time to show their dog and prove it's genes are worth passing on, less dogs will end up in shelters/euthanized because they were unwanted, had temperament issues, or a breeder didn't take their dog back if the family was unable to care for it.

I don't know

More options available

More workshops and just a friendlier atmosphere to people interested in showing (this is true even when approaching many people after they are done in rings for the day.)

More public information on dog shows in the media

Have a mentor show my dog for me the first time, then help me be a owner handler for future shows.

Actual handling classes

Have a first timer event at larger shows so those participating don't feel like they will be laughed at for not knowing what is going on and what to do.



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Novice opportunity?

Award the dogs not the handlers

Showing how fun it is.

Showing how fun it is.

Education

Maybe the club could sponsor some "introduction" classes.

positive reinforcement for trying

Be welcoming and fight the urge to be defensive.

being willing to help if your breed or a breed you know about, be honest on judging of dog dont say great when poor quality, show where dog falls short, dont work oh great another point makers, this breaks hearts, I KNOW this

Talk to a breeder

A checklist of items needed and possibly a video showing new people how a dog and handler show. Sometimes people need a visual rather than a verbal to understand how you are suppose to look in the ring. My biggest issue was being nervous and not taking long strides with a long legged dog. A professional handler actually helped me after our breed was done and that gave me more insight to how I should have shown my dog. Really helped with the next time.

Go to classes, get experience

Get all the dysfunction out of clubs so we wouldn't be embarrassed to bring perspective members, a more welcoming environment, pay teachers to retain them

How about accepting individuals? Stop being so ugly to any new person.

Encourage breeders to mentor puppy buyers who have interest

Handling Seminars

Make it more fun and relaxing.

support

Matches, new owner/handler exhibitions

Find what you love and learn as much as you can

Fun matches - well advertised and open to ALL dog owners, with an emphasis on making it a fun day out with lots of ribbons and prizes, and experienced exhibitors helping the newcomers.

Advertising shows, and not just the conformational side of them. For instance, Fast CAT is awesome and entertaining. People think, hey my dog can do that!

A welcoming environment.

People need to be more willing to welcome and encourage

Make it more accessible, appear less elitist.

Get better judges! SERIOUSLY! The biggest majority have eyes only for their favorite faces - I have been showing for 20+ years and am still dismissed by most if handlers are present - and I do a great job, my dogs are specialty winners, but will lose to a generic entry with most of the judges currently out there.

"1. Give points for reserve on larger entry shows or someway to recognize more dogs that are competitive.

Owner handler win after regular classes is seen as much lesser value. We need more people having chance to succeed with worthy dogs so they get excited and not quickly discouraged.

2. Perhaps coaches designated to help people with their dogs. One for inside dogs. Couple for outside dogs offering individual help and positive support prior to going in the ring. Maybe add 2 rings outside and one inside as coaching rings where people go and get help like an hour or so before ring time. Ongoing from 7am -2pm or something like that. Have the coaches come from the clubs sponsoring the show with the purpose to help newbies and those seeking help to have non-competitive nuturing and fun spot to hang out, make friends and get better at showing. "



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I always encourage people to jump in and just try it. If they are scared I offer to go with them. I know it can be a distraction and sometimes hard to spend 4 days with someone but I think if more people were willing to bring friends and encourage them to go in the ring it would bring more people to shows. I know I had a horrible experience as a 19 year old when I first tried showing. People were so mean! Now 22 years later my first show was so scary. This time around has been a much better experience

Crack down on bait throwing, welcome newcomers.

Smaller clubs need assistance with entries

Classes. Mentors

Be more open and inviting to new comers.

Practice opportunities

Leas cost for juniors

Welcome them into the sport and give them some direction.

for conformation - learning to groom, for other sports - reducing entry fees and finding good trainers in your area

Create a better environment like UKC has.

Be friendly and welcoming to pet owners and encourage them to take their dogs to a good training class so they'll enjoy their dogs more and maybe play the show and trial "games" later on. Most people start with a pet dog. Don't snub those "average pet owners"... they may be our future exhibitors and judges.

Mentor and classes....allow junior handlers to actively participate to show dogs in the rings

Going d explanations of how it works

Judges who know our standard and abide by same; proper etiquette and respect for others; support for the newbies and a better showing of sportsmanship.

Have handlers compete separately. Everyone should be an a level playing field. Let handlers compete against handlers and owners compete against owners.

More updated information that is easily found and accessible from websites, social media platforms, etc. when I moved to Missouri a few months ago, I emailed many clubs in regards to joining. I didn't hear back from most of them or it took a couple to a few months. I sent second and third emails to secretary and presidents with no responses.

Beginner classes that address entries, points system how to dress before you enter your first show

Very simple online videos walking through the most basic steps. Like you have to enter a show ahead of time, not just show up at one (if you happen to hear about one).

AKC needs to figure out how to help smaller existing clubs survive by not placing them in conflict with larger clubs taking over weekends already assigned to smaller clubs. I am a member of a smaller club. We cluster with another small club. We have been having our shows for over 60 years. Our upcoming show entries have now dropped from as high as 1500 dogs to a new low of 350-400 dogs per day! We WILL loose money this year & are now being faced with the tough decision to continue or FOLD! 😞. It is my understanding that we are not the only clubs facing this. The more clubs folding means exhibitors will be faced with more travel & higher cost. We have Rally & obedience, but the entries do not even cover the judge's expenses. We tried barn hunt, dock diving, & Scent Work with the same results.

Maybe set up a grooming demo at a show or have a volunteer mentor booth set up for each breed. Like an information booth for beginners

Not to give up!

Not sure.

Keep coming back, believe in yourself and your 4 legged partner. And train, train, train.

I started a newcomer/mentor Facebook group earlier this summer and am developing a website based on feedback from that group. Please let me know if you would like more information on the content being developed.



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Mentor, encourage and be a friend. Help when/where you can.

Just jump in and go to shows

The owner handler class is a good start. It's very demotivating when you know your dog is finishable but you can't win over a handler to get points.

Having all exhibitors work on being friendly and welcoming - having them remember that it's not life or death (since some treat it that seriously). Having judges go back to actually judging the dogs.

Be nice and welcoming to new people. Offer helpful suggestions. Offer to meet them for coffee. Welcome to practices and be kind when they show up. Don't write people off before taking the time to get to know them.

More Sanctioned Matches as well as informal social gatherings among kennel clubs

Be nice and welcoming to new people. Offer helpful suggestions. Offer to meet them for coffee. Welcome to practices and be kind when they show up. Don't write people off before taking the time to get to know them.

Get people in the doors, obviously post judging schedules for all breeds online and at the show site so people can look up and be there for their favorite breeds. Have incentives for spectators. With more spectators, more interest in showing will come. Also more tours or beginners tutorials during show, not just in the morning.

More online blogs, akin to the drunken spoof but "reality tv". A movie about an incredible life of a show dog from perspective of dog(s). More positive remarks about showing on public forums. Tours at shows for cub scouts, Girl Scouts, school field trips. Student articles in school (newspapers/online journals) student reporters.

More unique angles to show for publicity like the community involvement at mobile show; an mc like in movie Best in Show, reporting on web with live results, more tv specials like the one featuring biggie etc. Making the world fall in love with a "benji" via YouTube videos and public media of specific dogs....Like the back stories of olympians.

letting people know that a lot of dogs like it, that is fun we need to make it fun and learn things

Advertising

Be more supportive

AKC must acknowledge and solve the problem of politics in our sport.

Interest in breeds, judging on akc confirmation standards not current fads, professional handlers could be nicer, they are really shitty to novices

Until AKC does something about the judges don't waste your time

I think judging critique would be a wonderful change. Good to ask judges to be accountable and helpful for the exhibitor. Maybe it's not even a problem w the fog so much as they don't do a straight down and va k so movement can't be seen or the dog is pacing. Critiques would be an easy way to put politics aside

Advertising. And classes.

Not sure

Judge the dogs and stop giving special attention to the handlers. Owner handlers are what keeps dog shows going as most of the entries are from owners.

not sure

Have FUN

Novice adult handler class

no idea. I don't show in conformation all that much anymore

A list of mentors (in any breed that the inexperienced might contact).

Putting on seminars different places

Have tough skin

see above

Having social events at shows.

"Encourage them to show the dog regardless of what others say about the dog, it is after all a learning experience at first, even the best dog will not win with a new person they have to learn to listen to the judge and that it is not about them but the dog



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"

Get honest judges
Club matches geared for inexperienced newbies
Handling classes made all the difference for me. Plus I had a mentor who taught me some grooming & took me to shows.
Club's doing more programs for beginners and talking honestly but not being discouraging or negative.
Mentor in my breed. People willing to help
Get a boy. People are more inclined to sell those and just try. You might just become addicted as I did
Having people at shows to teach newbies how shows work.
Buddy up newbies with mentors. Have someone be their go to person.
Maybe a fun "practice" show for people to try handling dogs. Or beginners workshop at a show.
handling seminars
Help people and advocate for our breeds.
Holding educational seminars, having booths at other events in your community promoting local dog clubs and trainers.
Classes or follow a handler for a day
New exhibitors welcome seminars and at show mentoring to help people get set up and get to rings on time.
Also Q&A booth at shows. So spectators can ask what's going on. Offer "pet" fun matches. To get people involved and looking forward to getting a show dog. UKC offers a companion class
More people willing to educate and encourage people to get in the ring.
In depth education on their breed standard and a more welcoming show environment
Find a good mentor, take handling classes and watch what the people who are winning are doing in the ring, sit ringside every chance you get and just watch how others are doing it.
More willingness of breeders to mentor
Hold handling seminars at a low cost, grooming seminars too. Have a group of experienced breeder/handlers who are willing to mentor a new exhibitor, especially if they got their dog from out of state and don't have a local breeder to help
So many don't understand the purpose of conformation shows. Always asked if we win money. The value of competing and finishing a championship title is foreign. Especially in today's world of "adopt, don't shop" and doodles.
Going to seminars
matches
Help them improve, understand what to do better
Encouraging breeders, matches for practice and price break for newbies
"1. Make it easy for newbies to find a person who will help at shows.
2. Advertisement to wider community and free for visitors
3. More people sitting ring side who can explain what visitors are seeing and how to read the judging program.
4. Use modern English when explaining premium list doesn't translate to people. Fancy? What's that
5. Many of us grandmothers getting involved post retirement bring our grandchildren. Change question about juniors to reflect that
6. Have juniors for seniors. Look at growing at all ages. Women went to work they retire now they have time as do men... cater to that age group"
Exhibitors and breeders need to be nicer to newcomers.
Workshop events
Start young. More workshop, meet & greets, ringside mentoring.
Mentor programs, for handling, sportsmanship, and ring appropriate behavior and attire.



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Understanding what individual judges are looking for and what they see in your dog

Breeder/mentor encouragement

"People think very stereotypical about dog shows and don't really know what it is. So if people knew more about it.. it could be more interesting to them

"

Find a mentor, go to workshops, find classes

I don't know.

Share your quality dogs with the new exhibitor ... mentor them and work with them and welcome them into your club or group. Explain the benefits of owning and showing dogs and how rewarding it can be. The venues are endless and the friendships made along the way are priceless ... which ever avenue or breed you choose you will never regret it!

UKC and open shows are so much more fun as an exhibitor. Low key, low stress, friendly judges who talk to and encourage exhibitors. Not to mention wonderful other exhibitors. And, of course, no pro handlers allowed.

1. Allow altered dogs to compete. Cat shows have been doing this for decades and it didn't hurt them, it helped them. Because AKC only allows intact dogs that can be bred, it supports the incorrect perception that all any of us care about it selling puppies. Allowing altered dogs to compete does not undercut the AKC being a breed registry. 2. Consider giving a discount to people who enter X number of shows a year. When the superintendents turn in their entries, you could have a system flag those that get a discount and adjust the amount that the superintendent needs to send you. You would be surprised at how just a few dollars off in a year can motivate people to enter more shows. 3. You need more handling classes available. If you have areas where there aren't any or only a few offered, then motivate someone (maybe with stipend, or free entries) to hold classes on a weekly basis. We have a local person that does classes but she's the only one so her classes are overflowing. You're lucky if you get two chances to have her look at your dog in that hour.

fun matches, jr showmanship without the need for the junior to own a dog. canadian shows have a fantastic system for juniors!

You have to have fun.

"Encouraging the club breeders to have a lot more involvement in helping their puppy owners and fellow club members with other breeds. learn to groom and show their puppies. The biggest questions on FaceBook seem to focus on how to groom, what to wear, and what kind of leash to use. Sometimes what kind of bait.

Working with the obedience clubs to have a handling class along with the obedience classes. It's another method of teaching focus and has the added benefit of other classes and noise going on at the same time.

Fun matches, even just drop in matches every month or two for a few dollars, even with stewards that need to practice too.

Stewarding classes over the winter would be more beneficial than a quickie the morning of a show. I would sign up for a stewarding class over the winter. The judges don't all make a lot of money, and they should not be expected to train the stewards on the fly while trying to judge.

As far as AKC shows are concerned, it would be great if the judges had to provide a written critique against the breed standard with points deducted where the dog does not meet the standard including over grooming. At Sieger / European shows the highest scoring dog usually wins and everyone knows the criteria by which their dog was placed. "

Many new exhibitors are intimidated by pro handlers. Having the NOHS helps, but it would be nice if the AKC had more emphasis on the non-pro handlers. I come from a horse background and most breed venues have open and amateur classes that allow non-pros to show against each other without having to compete with the pro-handlers.

I'm not sure

Make sure your puppy/dog is completely trained so you can compete on a level playing field

More matches and fun shows



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More good, kind knowledgeable mentors, clubs giving classes and seminars, hands on grooming, showing, how to mentor...but most importantly, support for Juniors! This should include the above, but also financial support and active social media outreach. Thank you for this survey- it was excellent. My heart goes out to you for your great loss and willingness to do this survey!

Just getting in the ring to start, you learn a lot from just showing, then watching others and taking in advice from others and applying what works for you.

More welcoming atmosphere, stronger use of AKC's conduct of Sportsmanship, better consistency in judges judging to the breed standard rather than "dialing it in" with picks from professional handlers and known faces. Offering handling classes/seminars at more shows, also clubs reaching out more to newer exhibitors.

More promotion and marketing if events. Every club needs a marketing budget

Promote Jr. Handling

Breeders helping families get started

Give children a chance to learn and do not correct children in the ring, thus embarrassing them. Find them later and compliment their dog and ask them if they would like some pointers on how to present their dog's qualities.

An adult showmanship division where altered dogs can be shown

Find ways to encourage spectators, classes on what to watch for...

Classes that are fun & informative

Breeders being very open and honest about the quantity of dog compared to the standard that the newbie is purchasing - so that they have realistic expectations on how competitive they will be. Encourage to do more than just breed competition. Regular practice events to Foster relationships between long time dog fanciers and newbies.

"I think we need to do more publicity, marketing dog-showing as the hobby the entire family can participate in. The few families I know who attend(ed) dog shows with their children, did so for that very reason, that it wasn't just a kids' thing or a parents' thing but something the whole family could do.

"

Actually talking to people and not being "snooty" about it.

Inclusion- don't pretend like this is an exclusive club

Support

Classes!

Have local events/demonstrations

Not sure ... one of our regional specialty clubs heavily advertised a 'Fun with Your Lhasa' event with a variety of activities, mini seminars and refreshments. NOT ONE person showed up.

More education about purebred dogs

Public outreach, AKC being more "user friendly" to remote shows

Pair a newby with a "big brother" or "big sister" to help navigate the ins and outs of showing. Encourage people with purebreds and mutts who can get a PALS number to show in rally and obedience. That's a great foot in the door and might encourage their next dog to be a purebred who can compete in conformation as well.

Encourage long time show people to be friendly and welcoming to the spectator or exhibitor who might look lost or need an encouraging word. Bringing new people in means higher breed counts, more revenue and more fun.

more classes

Talk to people!

Match up with mentors

Mentoring

Encouraging social media activeness. Most young people find and learn much from it.

Go with a mentor

Less cold attitudes from veterans people need to be more welcoming.



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To always have fun. To remember that this is a time you get to spend with your dog who enjoys making you happy. Along with no matter what someone else says or thinks, you are taking home the best couch buddy ever with you.

I invite everyone to the shows, let them help when I can. Our all breed club has a performance weekend with matches and 4-6 puppy show where we have more time to help new people get knowledge, we also have handling class at this event too.

Canvas the local pet stores, put up flyers advertising dog shows as well as seminars how to find a reputable breeder etc.

Community building

not really sure, trying to get even new members interested is difficult if they don't have a vested interest in showing.

Find a mentor

Kindness .and sincere guidance

"The most helpful would be for clubs to conduct classes but that's not feasible for so many reasons - mostly in great part because once again only a few members support the entire enterprise.

I think a lot of people will try showing. The greater challenge is to support them going forward so they keep showing. "

Event promotion

Make it fun. Keep it light. Then work up to the big stuff.

"Fun matches!!!! People don't show because they don't know how to. Entry fees are expensive so you don't want to just waste money.

Big question would be is How are we going to get the next generation to value purebreds and support breeder?
"

More local club interest in new exhibitors and mentoring them,

Be welcoming, reduce politics

Have a mentor, go to handling class

Honestly without mentoring, they need to hire a handler to get into the sport with the current options. This is not the best method but the most realistic.

Mentors!

Lend a hand, give advice, be nice and courteous and judges who exhibit patience

Willingness of other exhibitors in their breed to assist with grooming and presentation

To be helpful and kind

Find a mentor first.

Providing assistance ring side for newbies. Clubs having classes for just the humans on dogs shows and also handling classes.

Mentoring

Club mentors at shows to help those new to showing.

Be positive. Stay upbeat!

Possibly more classes for handling and breed specific grooming classes

More puppy match's I think would help people learn about shows. Or even a program to go to schools and tell kids

Maybe a tutorial on how to approach people and when to approach people at dog shows regarding getting started. Too many times people come up to exhibitors at the worst possible times. Exhibitors don't mean to be rude but they may be watching what is happening in the ring because they know the minute a judge finishes choosing open dog they will be going back in. Newbies just need guidance.

Encouragement and showing the bond between the owner and dog

Stop putting up handlers instead of dogs. Honest mentors.



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"More inexpensive venues

"

Possibly bringing/encouraging children from FFA/4-H type programs

Be more welcoming of new comers, it is hard with all the AR people out there to trust new people

Dog Show 101 Seminar, teaching the very basics. I have a friend who wants to give this; she needs help getting started. She has 50+ years of dog show experience.

Mock shows in more public settings

Get them involved with an all Breed club and club activities

I think having community fun matches or teaming up with local 4H events. Being part of community events like Highland Games or Bark In The Park events. Have club tables or breed booths. Again there are lots of ways I think social media can be really helpful too as most clubs do not seem to use them to post events or public meeting chances.

Breeder input as to enjoyment of conformation and performance with their dog and the social network it opens to the handler

Encourage puppy owners to consider it or even offer to show their dog, if you've placed one with them, to get them started.

Encourage clubs to offer plenty of beginner puppy classes that lead to Rally. Puppy classes that also introduce different dog sports. Once they GET to a show, then they can begin to understand the fun, the competition, the pride, the relationship with the dogs....

All-breed clubs could have appointed senior members/mentors at an easily noticed station available to novices and spectators - encourage exhibitors to be more accessible. One or two benched shows a year in easily accessed locations to bring the public in, so they can talk to those showing and learn not just about the dogs but about the sport.

As far as conformation - I think people need to feel like they can be successful against the pros. Pros know how to make dogs look good always and beginners make mistakes which might make a good dog not look so good.

Join breed club for help

Breeders push during puppy purchase, available handling classes.

Less political

Making a better list of good local breeders that is available without having to email someone.

Breeders have to mentor newbies

Have mentors at the shows to help beginners

Separate the handlers from the rest of the owner handlers exhibitors and newbies so they don't have to worry about judge's not judging dogs

Breeders should be more involved with the puppies they sell and offer and be willing to help a new owner learn to show. People need people to help them, not books or seminars. The breeder should explain the breed standard and teach a puppy owner how to evaluate their dog against the standard. They should also teach the puppy owner how to groom their breed. As far as clubs, the AKC, etc., handling classes are invaluable, and I love the idea of offering mentorship.

Good classes and great sportsmanship

It's tedious, to be sure, but explaining what the heck is going on would go a long way. It's confusing even for experienced folks!! Also, having an opportunity to "get in the ring" would be fun, so having fun matches and day-of-show opportunities would be nice. I love the pee-wee handling, its adorable and accessible to all.

Lower fees for new handlers, mentor program, grooming seminars,

Friendly banter. Inviting them to specialty events. Inviting them to Fun Days.

More handling seminars, I participate in PHA

Friendship and acceptance

Know the standard of your breed and apply to your dog



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Having more patience and understanding before jumping to conclusions about decisions being made. Juniors should have a GUIDE, every step, until "ready" to take it on themselves. Juniors should not be left "alone" to work through it on their own. Competitive Juniors could be perceived as a bit "bully-ish". Key is to build confidence, as well as skill.

Make shows fun and more social activities plus live/online results. Close shows much closer to show. This is an online world, supers need to get with it and go online only with printable judges program. Stop mailing things. Exposure!

Less expensive

Maybe some dog/people games to get people interested in doing dog events.

I would love to see more Matches offered. Great place for young dogs and a place for new handlers to learn with all the pressure of a "real" show

Inviting friends to attend a show with you to see what happens and how it runs, promote events for juniors and kids who don't know anything about shows.

Fun, family friendly, seminars on grooming/handling

Lower registration fees, clubs to help new people navigate the entry process, encourage kids to participate

The breed clubs have a huge influence I believe and the one I belong to is not doing a good job of encouraging... sadly

Be with them at ring side help to find people to help with grooming requirements go see a dog show and explain what is going on

Offer to mentor, give positive feedback and encouragement

Keep it fun, pressure off, there's enough winning to go around for everybody

That first blue ribbon has a big impact. Encouraging exhibitors to be "nice". There are a lot of "snobs". Club statements to their members to canvas the crowd at their show to seek out newbies and mentor them on the spot. The 4-6 month classes are great, especially promoted by AKC. More actively promoting from AKC would be good.

Perhaps a "novice handler" judged category and/or "mentorship" program with experienced handlers activities/events/education that reach out to younger people to engage in dog sports of all kinds

Club members making an effort to know & help novices.

Club members making an effort to know & help novices.

Workshops, being more inclusive

Find a good mentor and listen, seek their advice

Fewer professionals.

Be kind

Inclusion...seek them out in a friendly inclusive way with genuine offers of help, friendship and mentorship

Education on many aspects of the sport, being open and willing to learn, having fun!

There is a perception of many observers that the dogs are not happy. They see dogs in crates for days on end and on tables on blocks, etc. I think it would be helpful to find a way to alter that perception and to make sure it really IS ALL ABOUT THE DOGS.

Have separate divisions (or entirely separate shows) for amateurs and professionals where each event has all the classes and winners and you can earn points, etc. I know this is something AKC would have to change but it would make it so much better for the average dog owner to participate. We also need better PR to change the public opinion that dog shows are beauty contests. There is a need for less grooming and more health and temperament emphasis for show dogs.

Get word out to the public that we are even having shows.

Continue encouraging junior handling

Some way to prevent negative talk and gossip, some way to level the playing field between middle class and wealthy participants



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Clubs could make the shows more fun...not so dog eat dog..competition is good but can escalate into bad situations

Well, my breed club actually had a weekend of brainstorming about this very subject recently. Folks travelled at their own expense to attend. It was well-attended and some great conversation and ideas for club membership retention and greater participation in specialty events.

Practice shows for the public, free event where we explain what is going on and they can try out their dogs in the ring. Handouts to help them find out how to enter a show, where to find show listings, how the point system works, what a handler can do for them.

No idea

Take a conformation class, ask questions but only of those more knowledgeable than you, ask questions of other participants, and enjoy your dog and the experience!

Have pet people more receptive to keeping pets intact longer. This happens through vets not pushing pet owners to do pediatric spay/neuter.

Help with handling and have handling seminars to teach them how to show

More community outreach, grooming seminars

?

Have gatherings where the experienced ones are available to answer any questions. I have so many equations and don't understand the lingo and terms they use at shows. It's all so confusing to me!

"Have fun family events that they don't have to learn a lot about to participate and can do quickly. Probably things that are silly and foolish to seasoned exhibitors, but probably what is needed to get the general public interested and not view dog shows as snobby events.

Maybe take some hints from ""team"" sports and give exhibitors a team to cheer for... not a breed or person... but a rally team or some fast moving team of people and dogs that are exciting. Maybe things like flyball and somehow give each spectator a chance to join a team and cheer for it, hopefully come back again to see how their team is doing and maybe join it?"

be more helpful from older show people

Not sure. Maybe have some good folks greeting visitors to dog shows and assessing their interest and then for those who really seem keen on the idea have volunteers available to provide info or to walk around with them, show them the ropes, or introduce them to fanciers at the show who own their breed of interest. In other words, make them immediately feel part of this dog show community.

More local advertising encouraging people to come check it out. Posts on social media as to how to get started in showing.

Invite them to visit a show, tell them about the training and process, offer to help them learn.

just keep doing it. If you love it jump in all the way

Education and support

Inviting them to training classes and club meetings

Getting support from club members/breeders/friends. Club awards for titles.

Welcoming people of all ages.

Continue person to person mentoring and kindness backed by solving the systemic failures outlined in the above question.

Just be kind and welcoming; offer to help

We need to market dog showing as a family sport in which everyone, from five to 80, can participate if s/he wishes.

Judges need to be friendlier toward all ... they must guard against appearing biased because of past relationships. Judges are gatekeepers in the sport and can really do more to encourage and support persistence in new exhibitors



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Encourage judges to look at and judge dogs, to not judge dogs based on the human's career. To remind judges that the owners of any dog entered are those who have paid entry fees, travel expenses, etc. Remind judges that professional handlers get paid before they take a dog in a ring, and that salary isn't determined after they win or lose. Make it known that owner-handlers are in a show ring for the same reason as professionals - they want to earn a title on their dog.

Figure out how to be more supportive of those in your breed and the show community in general
Informal gatherings of fellow breed exhibitors.

holding the hand of your puppy buying beginners
none

More about the sport and less about making a buck off selling a puppy
Orientation at club meetings on the barriers I listed above.

Owner/handler classes for beginners, intermed, and advanced. The majority of o/h can't compete against the professionally handled dogs and the advertising dollars behind them. Prohibit AKC judges from competing!
encouragement, invitations to shows and lunch afterwards

Make it more fun with things to try (Fast Cat, Barn Hunt, pot luck lunches/dinners) Encourage experienced breeders to reach out and help to mentor and befriend newbies. ALSO newbies need help to learn HOW to shop for their show prospect!

I truly think t if a dog show club could know how many new people are in the ring to have someone ring side asking if they need help understanding the process, it would be a big help, as long as they did not talk down to them. most new people are so intimidated they are afraid to ask and only the very brave go to the handling seminars

That is can be so fun for you and your dog to create a great partnership and to do all kinds of events with their dogs.

Matches and more opportunities to practice and learn.

"1. I think better advertising of the dog shows that are being held.

2. When a person buys a pure bred and registers with the AKC, a list of dog shows/matches available in the area could be sent to the buyer.

3. Have mock shows in grade schools demonstrating the mechanics of a dog show, or send invites to schools to come watch their favorite breed show.

4. Set up occasional booths at health fairs, dog parks, meets or any other gathering.

5. Have a float in local parades."

I really don't know. Young people are not interested in anything other than technical stuff.

Not sure

Manners

I don't know the answer to this.

Appeal to the younger crowds who see showing dogs as a wealthy old person hobby. The focus of shows may need to shift more to athletics and breed working events (lure coursing, terrier trails, nose work) than conformation.

ADVERTISE in local publications or Facebook pages. Newbies don't know about Kennel Clubs usually.

No good answer.

People need to feel welcome and "be known". Make sure when you have folks watching your specialty you talk to them, invite them to a club meeting and make them feel wanted. It's important to engage with people in a positive way but also realize that if you don't give back and mentor others the sport will not continue and it needs to grow to thrive.

Promote purebred dogs since designer mutts are becoming so popular.

"Meet the breeds, holding workshops, handling classes, teaching out to the public and show what we can do.

Volunteer at public schools not just private schools. We need to rise up above the stigma of misinformation



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given out by rescues, shelters, HSUS, ASPCA , PETA along with other AR groups. We need to inform the public on why it is important to protect and preserve purebred breeds, and why it would be a travesty to loose such breeds as a Skye Terrier, a Dandie Didmont Terrier, Otterhound, Or any of the other critically endangered breeds. I fee it is an All Breed clubs duty to provide this and educate the public.

One of the things I feel that would be great for AKC to do with the National and Westminster Junior Showmanship competition is to invite the top handlers (rank 1-3 breed wise) of each breed instead of how many wins they have. It gives the juniors that may be the top in their breed but either does not go to that many shows to have the number of class or BJH wins. It would also give juniors and breeders an incentive to try a rare breed.

There is so much that clubs, breeders, handlers, members can do if they take the time and do it and not say well "we never done that" or any other excuse one may come up with. Also clubs who put on a dog show need to remember that is is BREEDERS and OWNER HANDLERS that are the bread and butter of a dog show, not just Professional Handlers. Clubs and shows need to stop catering to professional handlers, and start treating everyone the same. Also if a young or even a junior member of the club has an idea listen to them don't scoff at their idea just to bring it up a few years later like it was all your idea.

I have show dogs all over the United States and have been in the ring showing for over 35 years and several different breeds. I find it sad that exhibitors at the age of 17 feel that dogs shows maybe something of the pass in 20 years. It is disheartening to hear juniors who love dog shows and love dogs wonder what is going to happen to dog shows when they start having children of their own. We truly need to work with the juniors and children in general to get on board, and fall in love with this sport. "

To start showing? Not sure, to be honest. I think the question should also be "what strategies/ideas would be most helpful to encourage people to KEEP showing dogs after they've started."

It starts with the breeder. Also in our present environment people seem to be more interested in fun things to do with your dog rather than strictly conformation

A short (like one time) How to Get Started Showing Your Dog class giving an overview -- where to show, how to enter, how to get ready, where to learn grooming skills, what to expect at a show, etc. Removing the unknown, scary stuff would help many people take the leap into showing, in my opinion.

Keep the pro's OUT of the bred by and owner handler classes - the judges obviously favor them and it cheapens the efforts of the non-pro's - when the owner handler wins - THEN put them with the pro's - BUT - have a separate "finals" for only owner handlers also. The "future" - if there is one - is with beginners - NOT pro's
Meet the breeds, educational seminars, handling classes

See answer above

Immediately assign a mentor and resources to educate the individual. If not part of a "show family" it is difficult to learn the ropes. Help them get situated in an AKC club either specialty or all breed. Direct to handling classes. It took me months of calling around to find one - partially because I work full time and many meet during daytime hours, and my club didn't offer one. I think breeders are misconstrued by the general public.

Propaganda makes the breeder the "bad guy" who is responsible for overpopulation of homeless dogs because the dogs are not spayed/neutered. The push is to find homes for the many dogs in shelters and there is guilt associated with purchasing a dog when you can rescue one. Somehow the benefits of careful breeding need to be communicated to the general public. Also there is a big time commitment so if you work full time and/or have children it is hard to make the time. I recently moved from **** to ****. To enter my dogs, the nearest show is generally 2-3 hours away. Again, my breed has limited entries so this may not pertain to everyone.

have middle school and high school kids help out at shows, so they can see what's going on

Fun matches dog events other than conformation



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – *Western Edition*

Bringing our sport to the young kids of today through school visits, giving free passes to students to come to the shows, encourage our 4H kids to include our sport as well

Good stewards, thoughtful judges

meetings

having an amateur division

People in the sport to be more friendly & engaging to others

Matches and handling seminars in conjunction with all-breed shows

Find a club that reaches out to help new members

Arrive early enough to find your ring and get your dog settled into the grooming space. If you need to groom before going into the ring, allow yourself more time than you think you will need and take your time! Remember to have fun and make friends with those in the grooming spaces around you. It is a great way to make new friends and learn about other breeds.

Breeder encouragement and training classes.

Have fun, join the local club. Pay a handler for private lessons. Invest in a good dog and study the breed.

Have someone attend the a show with them before they start showing. Explain what it's going on.

Everyone could use a mentor that would help with show grooming advice, little tricks that they have learned, and realistic evaluation of your dog.

Make entries easier to read and fill out. Make instructive videos about shows and show etiquette. Tutorials on what everything means. Handling classes. Being able to team up with someone experienced for 6 months or so until you feel secure enough to go it alone.

Make entries easier to read and fill out. Make instructive videos about shows and show etiquette. Tutorials on what everything means. Handling classes. Being able to team up with someone experienced for 6 months or so until you feel secure enough to go it alone.

I don't know

Somehow making the whole process feel less intimidating seems like it would be helpful, talking to kids in high schools and colleges about dog shows and dog sports could be helpful, a true advertising campaign could be helpful, more dog shows on television with moderators so that people can easily follow along and learn the rules.

Knowing the reason and benefits for it.

Feedback from judges on why a dog lost or won.

Less drama and more fun... make it fun

There are some problems with the structure of the shows. The same dogs go to every show and they win.

Maybe it is because these dogs are better (that is probably true) and after a dog has a grand, grand and has won the speciality or Westminster at what point do they step aside to let other up and coming dogs have a chance. I do not know what the answer is because it is important that the best dogs are shown????

Show them it can be fun, despite the professionals. Perhaps assign someone to a newbie to help. Ask them if this is their first show. Perhaps a box on the entry form

It would probably have to start with judges. To show owners that they can win without a pro handler.

More handling classes with better instruction, more matches.

Provide information about what to expect at a dog show.

more training

Having amateur only shows, having a mentoring program

If breeders put their show homes in touch with each other (if agreed to prior) so that they could discuss showing, etc. Especially if they're in the same area of the country and could meet up for dog shows.

Getting the people who compete in other dog events to come to shows by holding agility, rally etc. at the dog show grounds themselves. Also, reaching out to 4H and offering seminars for these new people.

More positive media on purebred dogs to help defeat shelter propaganda



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A more welcoming and open minded atmosphere

Lots of encouragement and find a good mentor.

Involve more kids, make it cheaper for them to participate

Involve more kids, make it cheaper for them to participate

Selling show prospects and mentoring. Suggesting handling and grooming classes, etc

Frankly looked at my own situation and changed how I was interacting with others. I have a very promising

young special. As a puppy he was always right there but not winning. People were okay. When he did finish he

went grand in 3 weekends taking multiple breed and group wins. We are suddenly no one's friend anymore --

we are a rival for the current "big" dog. Have made a point of hellos and cheering them on if they win. Things

are at least civil at ringside. Some how we have to get back to loving our breeds and supporting them even when

we don't win. Perhaps the shows should consider a best sportsman award and make it a bug deal

Advertising. If you aren't showing or don't have friends who show you don't even know there is a show. I enjoy

going to watch but I usually miss the shows because I don't hear anything until they're over.

Just do it

Really understanding that it's more than a beauty contest.

Not sure.

club could hold more show clinics during the year. Also a membership recruitment drive may help as well.

More public education. Break the stigma surrounding "snobby dog show people"

Maybe reach out through local veterinarians--new owners could be asked if they're interested, and if so, have

their name and contact info sent to the club. Have someone contact them and let them know about classes, etc

coming up.

Need mentors

Have a free event that allows people interested to come and meet everyone at the club and talk over their
worries and fears

Get them involved in a breed community

More mentors

Mentor program

"Cheap beginner things. They don't necessarily have to count towards a title for the participating dog, but rather
a way to gain experience, and be taught what's happening/how to do things. Better advertisement and a more
casual setting are also generally good.

If something seems unattainable at first glance, or extremely difficult/confusing, most people who could achieve
it won't put in the effort, because its too large a gap."

AKC events for new people in show.

There needs to be a more concerted effort made towards grooming a younger generation for the show ring and
breeding. It is understood how much value is placed in breeding standards and maintaining those, but some
breeders are too guarded in even discussing and helping a potential new exhibitor.

I wish I had someone help me after coming out of the ring how I could handle my dog better.

"Akc is now pro active on the legislative side. I hope it will make a difference before more like me are just out of
the race.

Akc, update judge approval process to access breeding stock, not handlers."

How to groom your dog for a shoe I have no one to show me what I need to do to get my dog ready and I have
never seen one in a show other than on tv. Being able to ask some one currently showing my type of dog would
be very helpful. I show her once but there were no other dogs of her breed so I have nothing to come her too. I
would like to be able to show her against another dog of her bred. I have no idea what I should be doing.

To find enjoyment in spending time with your dog.

I don't know.



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A mentor/handling class that would share experiences beginning with how to enter a show, where to be and at what time, the grooming required, what to wear, how to present the dog, ring side manners etc
Make Juniors entries free.

Lower entry fees

Informational or introductory seminars

Be patient, even though it's tough!

Mentors

Make the newbies feel welcome!!! When I started not that long ago I felt like such a waste. I felt belittled and humiliated. Who would want to spend BIG money to be treated this way? It lit a fire under me, and had made me become a better handler. But I feel I'm not the normal. When dog sports participants are warm, friendly and inviting....why would they come back for conformation?

Present it as an activity that isn't all or nothing (no "show homes") like as part of a well rounded dog/potential breeding prospect. So always shows should have multiple performance events so conformation is just one of many fun options to do with your dog

Younger judges who don't have the political ties, fewer points in concentrated areas

begin reaching out to those that do obedience, rally, agility. Have a presence at those other shows, be encouraging, let people know they can get involved. Too frequently our volunteers get stuck in one venue, but we all need to reach across the borders and help at all the venues so people can feel the comrade between all the sports!

Be open to new people. ADVERTISE not only on dog platforms, but also when're non-dog show people can see it. (Public transport/ city events, etc) So people can learn about it and get interested in it. Most people don't know dog shows exist and don't know the reason behind it.

Mentors would be so wonderful. Also the breed clubs having grooming seminars and breed specific seminars. Develop mentor program for new members of club and help establish goals, practices, growth overall in field. I would tell them how much fun it is and encourage them to try it!

Mentorship programs through AKC and breed clubs.

more education at the shows

Go to UKC where professional handlers are not allowed

Encourage all puppy buyers to enter a 4-6 puppy show ,Dog show or match and get have fun winning big !

Go to ego classes first, then arrogant classes second.

More mainstream exposure

Don't know

"encourage people to seek help training their puppies basic obedience, social skills and also learning to control their (owner/handler) anxiousness before ever stepping into a show ring. Huge is also learning to have fun....having a mentor to walk people through the process is a huge help. I thank the many dog fanciers who were willing to step out and help me even without my asking because I did not know what to ask at first.

"

Go to shows without a dog and watch, ask questions and get a feel for what dogshows are all about. Have a mentor help you.

Mentor

I think more people should learn what dog showmanship actually is instead of just what they think it is.

Cooperate and partner with performance sports activities so people learn the value of quality conformation dogs have in performance areas.

Match pros or long time breeders/dog show people with new people. Make them feel welcome instead of isolated.

Everything MUST be positive. Negative sniping comments overheard ringside MUST stop.

Points given to owner handlers



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Dog show buddy system. When people are interested in learning too show or breed, set them up with a person or a group during the day who can walk them through the process or a non-showing mentor who can give ringside and grooming advice without competition pressures.

Co-own and mentor.

Wish I knew!!!

Outreach to rural FFA, 4H clubs to encourage youth participation. More media promotion.

Educate the new people kindly about their breed standard

Help them find classes or workshops where they can be coached and evaluated

Friendly exhibitors who encourage new people To participate

More active promotions geared towards general public

Understanding how fun it is and the bond you create with your dog

Encourage pros and good owner handlers to take someone under their wing

Understanding and pa8

Mentors that are willing to teach

I think convincing people to spend more time with their dogs is a great beginning. It would be wonderful to get more children and teenagers involved.

Breathe deep and play with your dog!

"* More modern social media usage.

* A better AKC website. Pressure AKC to hire like, a legitimate design firm for UI/UX. Make the database easier to search, both the dog database and the event database. As someone who works in software the front-end utility of the site is lacking and it is hurting our clubs and our events.

* More accessible web presence for clubs. Utilize Facebook pages better for the public! Have more events for John Q. Public! Have a decent static webpage!

* Be nicer to pet homes coming from the ""rescue side"" and reach out to them, because they're already addicted to dogs and can be your biggest advocate! I see so many people bash on Canine Partners. Virtually all my friends who did not have the luck or were born into a dog family that encouraged us to do Junior Showmanship, 20's/30's adults with disposable income, started in dogs with rescues, and got into the fancy through performance events with our mixed breed dogs."

Attend handling class, attend puppy. Match with your mentors⁸

Mentors and classes

Join a club, find a mentor, take classes

Mock trials

Our club is tapping into performance to broaden the net.

A show just for new exhibitors. Having show mentors on sight. Being able to chat with judges to understand what was good and what to work on.

Mentors--Great Clubs--Classes

Our local ICCKC club was wonderful in giving us ring time and showing us how to enter, more fun matches both in obedience, agility and conformation, especially rent a ring time for obedience and agility

Advertise, get local TV involved, embrace rescue groups, get involved in the community and make the average dog owner realize that there are local experts to help



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We desperately need more judges. This is the only way that exhibitors will feel like everyone has a chance. I also highly support making as many people feel like winners as possible through offering unofficial and special classes.

Fun for the family

If experienced people can identify newbies and offer help

Be sincerely friendly.

Education!! That they do have a chance against a handler! More strict rules for judges.. judge the dog!! Not who's on the end of the lead ~

Clubs hosting more B matches so new people can see what it's all about. Classes or clinics with handlers and breeders so new people can ask questions and maybe find a mentor.

I believe it has to start when new people register their dogs with AKC. AKC should have a welcome package or a card that makes it easier to find info for participating in AKC activities and listings for local kennel clubs. Then the participants need to reset their thinking and be more accepting. Finally, judges need to give everyone a fair look. After all we all paid for the same and should get the same treatment

I don't know. Make it more prestigious to be an actual serious breeder.

AKC should run media, etc. highlighting WHY purebred dogs are special and important. Why do people rescue dogs instead of purchase from breeders? Many times it's because it makes them feel like they did something important and special. We need to capture this same feeling and motivation with a purebred dog! Go after the ego, so to speak. People can be as prideful to own a beautiful titles purebred dog as they can be to have a rescue... I think education and changing the way people think about dogs is a good start.

"The best way to get people to start showing dogs in my opinion is changing the way people look at them, and unfortunately, that won't be easy to do, simply because in order to change how people from the outside look in, we need to change the way we look on the inside. Exhibitors need to be more friendly, and willing to help each other, handlers need to take a step off their podium, genuinely help the new people, be gracious winners, and on that same note, win fairly, not because they know the judge.

Judges also need to read the standards again, and pick dogs they TRULY think are worthy of best of breed/group placements/best in show, not just put dogs up because of who's on the other end of the leash. They need to start picking dogs that best fit the standard to do the job it was bred to do, be that hunting, coursing, herding, or just plain sitting in someone's lap all day. Dog shows loose so many exhibitors as it is because of the political issues regarding Judges and Pro Handlers, how can we expect to get, and keep, new people when we can't even keep the veterans.

Long story short: Be friendly, be helpful, drop the politics. Then maybe we can expect to actually draw new people in."

UTube handling 'videos'

Matches are what got me started as I had no intention of showing dogs. My first match, I went to in order to please the breeder so she would leave me alone with phone calls. There were about 24 puppies in the ring at the same time. I didn't win but new that my dog was the cleanest dog there. I just thought that "stupid" judge, I'll show them. My bitch finished easily!

I think judges should be mindful of handlers who appear to be nervous or inexperienced. To me nothing is more sad than to see a pet quality dog in the ring with the wrong collar/lead and fumbling handler on the end.

Everyone should have a little education prior to entering the ring. Classes and mentorship really help.

Reduce price for owners , more fun matches (open to all ages of dogs and offer other akc events at the FUN Match take entries day of fun match , besides offer pre entry , offer rally ,beginner obedience, fast cat, lure, trick dog, pee wee juniors ect... and tracking ,costume contest for pet owners like a Gaint dog day carnival hot dog races ect... FUN Cheap dog events (and be able to get a leg towards a title would be a plus and if akc says you



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need to have a catalog to make the event official , than print a catalog the day of event during lunch time for those few class that needed it make the bare minimum needed to make it official)

Involve youth. Get involved in a club (they are aging).

Breeders acting more as mentors.

none

Handling classes and mentoring

Don't know

FUN MATCHES where they can get their feet wet and learn the protocols of showing without the intimidation of pro-handlers and seasoned veterans - and away from the perceptions that it takes a bunch of \$\$\$\$\$\$ to participate in the sport.

having fun

Encouragement

Bring back fun matches as a clubs requirements so new people have a place to possibly win and have fun with their dogs. Require that pro handlers show only in best of breed and groups. No pro handlers assistants in junior handling.

Mentoring

Reduce cost of entries.

Make it more meaningful. Right now you can finish anything so a championship is meaningless

attending shows, watching both conformation and various performance events

first you have to get them to want a purebred instead of a rescue or shelter dog.

The most important in my mind is encouragement from the original breeder for the new owner to learn basic dog care and training principles.

Encouragement

We need more LOCAL small shows. Big clusters have killed our sport. The nearest show when I started was a 20 minute drive (in 1992) now the nearest show is one and a half hours away and that is twice a year. All other shows are two hours drive. New people simply will not drive that far to "check it out".

"We love our specialties because they are fun. We go to the shows to enjoy ourselves not just to get points or a purple and gold ribbon. There needs to be an easiness about the show. I have been to shows , even specialties where I won everything and left knowing I would not return to that show unless there were changes because it just was not enjoyable. Two of my favorite shows to attend are the Woodstock circuit in Vallejo,CA and LRC of Potomac because they are so enjoyable. So give the newbies something to enjoy even when they don't win. I have been the president of three different clubs in my breed as I have moved to different areas so I have helped put on a lot of specialties, including a National and I understand the hardships we all face putting on a show these days. Just getting a good venue is almost impossible in some areas.

I think we also as breeders are so careful about who feet our show dogs and breeding dogs these days that we have discouraged new people. It's really a double edged sword. We want to protect our breed and the individual dogs so they don't get in the hands of puppy mills or just bad homes. Being a breeder is really a huge responsibility and sometime it is hard to encourage others to take on this take when you know they have no idea what being a breeder truly entails. Now we have the added problem of the dog laws almost everywhere. I would love to find a county where I could go into one of the meetings and just say, let me tell you how you could make a ton of ones for your county and help prevent puppy mills at the same time. Just become the county that welcomes reputable dog breeders. Let the dog breeders help you make the laws and restrictions that will be good for reputable breeders, not the ones we all want to stop. The county could establish a kennel fee. Routine inspections could be required. Sensible restrictions could be applied. Puppy buyers could know they were purchasing a puppy from an accredited kennel. AKC could be involved with the whole setup. Kennels could be required among other things to show proof of breeding for and participating in some type of legitimate dog activity other than just selling puppies. Well that's just touching on the subject but it's time to think out of the



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box. Perhaps 'breeders' should be required to have some sort of certification-nothing too crazy, but show knowledge of dog breeding, whelping, care of puppies and dam, responsible ownership and sales, etc. before they actually breed a litter. I do not want us to be like the German kennel club where they send people around to tell you what dogs you can breed. That is ridiculous. Just a fairly simple test showing you have done your homework on learning about the actual breeding whelping, selling process. This is just off the cuff stuff, but it sure would be nice to be able to stop hiding our dogs from the county and city officials. "

Make it fun again

I'm not sure

The camaraderie within the group and how it's about community vs. competition.

New handler classes, lower entry fees, ring side mentorship

matches available for all

Matches where there is time to help people learn to show. Classes

Not sure.

"Fun, it has to be fun, no drama or politics.

"

Need to get more young people involved as they will determine if the sport is to continue into the future.

Breeders and people who are showing need to try to encourage and excite younger people how much fun it can be. This means stopping all of the cliqueish behavior at the showgrounds. Talk to people other than those you know and reach out to new people. People used to root for each other in the old days and talk with each other around the ring. Now everyone is for themselves or their 'group'. We also fight the people who think breeders are horrible people. Some are but most aren't and breeders need to show by example that they love and respect their dogs.

Getting young people interested and preserving pure bred/rare breeds

A local club that offers not only handling classes, but the other parts, such as entering, what class to enter, evaluation of their dog, what to wear, bring, general grooming, what happens if they win 2nd place in their class... again, I could go on and on !

Have dog show mentors walking around asking if anyone needs help. Advertise it, so people are aware help is available. Have a helper for each group.

Encourage people to be more welcoming

I'm honestly not sure.

Don't know

Closer shows. Cheaper fees

The beginner classes in obedience help.

Hold licensed AKC shows for newcomers only, no professional handlers

"quit allowing judges, previous and current handlers to show in the owner-handler classes. Politics need to be taken out of the owner handler series at the very least.

provide and enforce grooming areas for day show, so someone can have shade and be in and out of the show without the space being taken and held when not in use. Large dog cages/crates should not be left overnight to hold spaces and prevent others from using it when it isn't in use.

It's not a problem when there are people actually using the space all day, as long as it's in use.

measure and weigh more dogs (including specials) that continue winning despite being oversize.

enforce the conflict of interest rules when hiring judges."

Demonstrably fair judging. Far too skewed to 'the good old boy's network.

Handling demonstrations, puppy matches

Mentor and be there for help and encouragement

exhibitors to be more inclusive and friendly



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mentors are definitely the way to keep people involved. When I sell my puppies I encourage my puppy buyers to meet us at shows. Even if the puppies that they are buying aren't show quality they can still do rally, obedience, or many of the fun events. Pet people who start participating with their pets end up with a better bond with their animal and a better trained animal which helps insure my puppies stay in their forever homes
Start with companion events. Join local all breed AKC clubs.

Set up an open class for non handlers

Workshops/classes

I really do not know. I do think that the Designer Breeds have NOT been a positive for dog shows. People need to be supported in their decision to not alter as a puppy rather than as is now, they are told that it is NOT responsible to NOT alter EARLY. Even my own vet makes me feel a little down when he tells his staff, "no, she's a breeder", when techs bring up the spay/neuter subject. Truth be known, I show more than I breed. My 1st AKC dog show was in 1957. Currently have a male near his Championship.

Learn about your breed, find a good person to train with. Make friends outside of your breed. And be realistic in your expectations

Have fun with your dog

get them to attend a dog show as a spectator

Stronger education about how purebred dogs came to be and importance of responsible breeders as caretakers of their breeds.

Education that showing dogs is more than a beauty contest it is the foundation of all breeding programs

Show how much fun it is for a family.

C matches

Costs have become exorbitant. Need more done to contain.

encourage responsible ownership and training

Friendly contacts & encouragements

Introducing them to a wide variety of dog sports and giving them a chance to try out as many as they can.

Certainly conformation would be among those, but it does not have to be the primary vehicle. Events like Fast CAT lure coursing, up dog (AKC's version of frisbee dog) and even barn hunt take advantage of a dog's natural instincts and don't require all that much training to get involved. Schedule some introductory events or even a trial in some of these sports to occur during the staging of the club's conformation event. The main thing is they are fun for both the dogs and their owners and that brings people into our world.

Just do it

1) Attend shows to watch how professional & top amateur handlers show their dogs; 2) Get involved in training classes; 3) Participate in matches to improve handling skills.

Making the environment open and welcoming.

Breeders. Puppy apps at shows, better marketing to counteract the negative spins of the AR movement. Etc

Fun matches, handling classes, video taping of handling progression, evaluation of their "show" prospect and encouragement to participate in other activities performance events with their dog(s) as they finish that animal so they remain dog active.

More Puppy Matches to get newbies comfortable with the ring experience.

For AKC to clean up the judges

"Shorter days at shows 8am -6pm is way too long. People loose interest, adding fluff like best puppy (groups) owner handler (groups again) bred by (groups again) all are participation awards that mean nothing when showing for points.

"

Handling classes

Not sure if I would encourage it.

Make it seem less elitist.



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I am not sure but something needs to change. Perhaps needs to be more family friendly. I traveled to other countries and whole families come to the show
don't know

Have mentors available

More opportunities to show.

Not sure yet...just getting started.

First having a dog, then concern about dog obedience, and finally dog show atmosphere.

None

more impartial judging

Idk

exhibitors need to help each other

Welcoming! Educate and help to get a quality animal to standard.

I don't know.

Talk to a professional handler that is willing to take time to talk to you.

It's a fun activity and people don't know that.

Have to make the culture much more inviting and welcoming to new people. A simple "hello, how are you" goes a long way to breaking the ice for new people.

this encouragement needs to come from the breeders

More attention to jrs also dog sport involvement for all and 4h encouragement

Ask others in your breed for help

YouTube videos

That there can be friendships and fulfillment in showing your own dog. Maybe there could be a system that would alert club boards/members that there is a new show person coming to their first 5 shows.

n/a

For people who have been in it to help rather than look down on other people. I know a lot of people who would show again including myself if it wasn't for snotty owners and snotty professional handlers. Also judging needs to be fair quit picking dogs because of who is on the end of the lead rather than the quality of the dog.

More time to show. Everything is so rushed now.

Stop breeding designer dogs.

Friendlier peers willing to help.

having handling seminars at the dog shows

Information on upcoming shows to public AHEAD of weekend of show. More judges that are truly interested in exhibitors and the standard instead of handlers regardless of quality of dog.

Explain there is also a social aspect.

Attending dog shows, watching what is going on, after judging to pick out a handler or owner who is willing to talk with you

Offering more handling practice and instruction at shows. Somehow cutting costs? Having to pay for grooming space has greatly increased costs for the average 1 to 2 dog owner/handler.

Be gracious winners and gracious losers

Being kind and being the type of person that newbies can approach. Let go of the egos. And just because one or ten newbies didn't take our advice the next newbie may.

"handling seminars at shows

"

Reach out to 4-H clubs to offer to mentor kids

Encourage bystanders at shows who might have their dogs; social media, breeder directories. You don't have a space for comments, but as. Retired judge, I love working with juniors.

I wish I knew!



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TALKING TO THEM ABOUT THEIR GOALS, HONESTLY ASSESSING THEIR FIRST DOG AND THEN LEARNING WHAT THEY WANT TO DO WITH THEIR DOG.

Fair judges

Fun matches

"Teachers are always interested in inviting guest speakers to present topics of interest to their students. Clubs should partner with AKC to produce videos geared to elementary and Jr High students. Clubs should find members interested in establishing relationships with school principals and individual teachers to do ongoing presentations using the video as an attention getter followed with a Q and A session.

Teachers love guest speakers because it gives them a break and kids love it even more.

Clubs

could ask schools to consider making them part of ongoing parent workshops by having them present a workshop session on how dog showing offers students the opportunity to compete in a non-contact sport and how competing, winning and losing serve to mold and strengthen the inner character of children and youth.

Students can write essays about their experiences, which teachers can use to grade students' writing skills, etc."

Getting young kids involved with 4H and learning how to truly have a dog, not just an ignored family pet

More coverage of dog shows by mainstream media. A mini introduction to the sport at all shows.

not sure. maybe reduced entries for Novice and Amateur Owner

?

Encourage new people maybe off a handling seminar

Remind them we all started knowing next to nothing and not be afraid to ask. If someone is snarky, then ask someone else! No all of us are that way. Do your homework on your dog and breed and find someone in your breed to help you.

Fellow exhibitors of same breed, taking newbies under their wing.

?

Get the best dog you can afford and get involved right away.

Emphasize the fun and camaraderie.

Listen and watch without judgment.

It has to be a learning experience done in a positive manner

The politics are awful, judges/handlers relationships, some judges always put up handlers, even when they go across country for the almighty win. And it may not even be the best dog they are putting up over & over.

Not sure

Fun matches with positive reinforcement.

Have what we used to have locally - Breeder's Showcase where people could just come and meet the dogs/breeders without going to a show - sponsored by the local club

Hold people accountable for their behavior.

Not sure

Fewer shows, better qualified judges (even for low entry breeds), enforcing rules about dogs altered by artificial means. Why become involved in a sport that is really just a political game?

Day of entries

Mentor

Start very very young and have a mentor. It is too hard to try to "break into" the game at my age.

Attend classes; seminars; sit with those who can impart positive information; ask questions.

That's a hard one. The vibes and atmospheres of the shows need to be more "fun" and appealing to younger people to get new blood in the show world. Not exactly sure how that would work.



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Classes in what the breed standard is and how it is judges. This would help in really separating real champions from champion pets.

Kindness and guidance

Well you will have to decrease the price of entire or parking because it kills us as a owner handler to participate in a show event specially if it's a four day show week entries parking hotels food all is costly now so you have to look at it as picking and choosing which shows you will go to. I think if you enter a dog you should get free parking for that day and if you can't give free parking then you need to bring down the entires because a new person would not be able to do that Experience show handlers get compensated through their clients normal people who aren't handler's with clients have to pay for everything so that is why there is a decline in shows because we cannot afford it and we have to be picky at what we enter that's my idea, there really isn't any encouraging people to be come show people it's the price! The experience going to a show to without having any idea of the cost, that is why they don't stay

Having a good mentor

More peer support

That it isn't all rigged in favor of professional handlers

I think dog people need to be more welcoming and friendly with newbies and the people that even come to dog shows.

Positive outreach material

Encouraging exhibitors to help new people. Judges that are patient, some judges expect perfection from dog and handler. I am hard of hearing and a lot of judges mumble or expect my experienced dog to be a statue. She is a dog. My dogs are dogs first. She stands for exam and free stacks but fidgets sometimes and I've had judges who got annoyed on the table when their rough and she moves.

Find good friends you can trust and make it about the journey!

Continue to provide training classes that get owners of pets interested in performance. I believe that performance events lead some to consider getting conformation worthy dogs. Also, people at conformation shows need to be very friendly and helpful to non show folks who attend.

I see lots of new people at 4-6 month classes. If the club would provide a helper for each inexperience entrant to help them before hand and cheer them on I think it would be helpful. It seems the newbies get ignored.

"Have a meet the breed at the county fair. Fun matches where anyone can participate.

Rule for the AKC that Juniors can only use dogs that are owned by family needs to be changed. A junior should be able to enter a show with a friends dogs as a novice to see if they even would like to show. "

Have a mentor

Mentors, kind people at shows,
matches, matches and more matches

Being kind and helpful to other exhibitors especially the new ones

Mentoring!! Inviting new people to clubs and getting them involved.

akc classes

I think more matches would help - it's a more relaxed atmosphere, less pressure, hopefully more fun. We need to create a sense of community and belonging.

less expensive

Encourage new exhibitors at ring side and offering positive comments about their dog and other competitors dogs. There is a lot of negativity in the breed ring. We need to be supportive of all exhibitors and congratulate the winners even if you lost to them

Sit and watch experience handlers showing your breed. Watch and learn.



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This is a tough one. Breeders and exhibitors are a fraction of what they use to be - I started showing in the 1970's. So you do not even have the numbers to start with. Our breed club addresses this issue every year. Entries too, are a fraction of what they use to be.

Introductory Classes at large AKC sponsored dog shows.

A special spayed neutered class.

The sport brings knowledge of the breeds and the history of the breed he or she owns.

Handling help

a lot of mentoring and help from their breeder. Maybe a small club of new exhibitors or dinner meetings etc.

Judges having a scheduled time to talk to groups of new exhibitors

It was for me the friendship with most of my competitors, like any sport there are those that try to intimidate you and your dog and that is the most unfortunate thing about showing.

Find ways to make the competition fair and more consistent from venue to venue.

Opportunities to learn without rude people

Reaching out by the community, breeders and professional handlers. Show the bond that develops between dogs and handlers/owners and the positive effects it has on dogs and socializing.

Special classes for first time owners

More handling classes; mentoring programs; more matches on non-show weekends.

Join a local KC, attend shows, talk with breeders

Newbie only fun matches prior to actual shows.

More advertised handling classes, breeders introducing people to shows.

Have more handling classes which are very hard to find.

Clubs showing opportunities for their breed-how to groom, show, hunt, etc. Breeders to pay for a club membership for purchasers.

Free clinics Free matches Free seminars

Offer novice classes

Mentoring would be very helpful. I have heard professional handlers giving tips and tricks to owners of dogs they have shown. It would be lovely to attend a seminar where these tips are shared with the newbies.

Supporting 4-H dog clubs is another way to help young people get started who did not grow up in families who breed dogs. That is how we got our start.

Having other family friendly events alongside the dog show. Or hosting an agility trial at the same time could help draw more dog people in. Also having meet the breeds and just having an overall happy attitude towards new people looking to learn is helpful.

More local shows. Less expensive

Lower entry fees

Is there a way to identify new people showing and connect them with an experienced person to help them out?

Make sure you get judges who look at dogs and not handlers.

At dog shows have someone available to introduce the sport to interested people

make it less subjective and skewed towards professional handlers

constructive criticisms, positive encouragement to keep trying

More events including the public, matches, free short classes/seminars explaining dog shows to the public at shows, handling seminars for newbies, and so on. Better publicity by individual clubs targeting the public to come and enjoy these events. More social media presence for clubs and their events.

Classes, exhibitions, breed club fun days

Mentor programs

The AKC has started off in the right direction by allowing mixed breed dogs to participate in performance

Having more shows that don't require long travel to participate in

Working together not against each other



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I think the AKC has done a pretty good job with keeping people in the show ring with the OH competition, the Puppy competition, BBE competition and allowing mix breeds to compete in performance competitions.
Radio advertising of shows to get people to the right place
Classes for those interested, group mentor ship.
Keep it all positive and be willing to help those who need it!
Combine a training for/trying a performance event with a conformation match.
Change in attitude in everyone
Offer breed seminars to the general public perhaps with 4h or community center classes.
Introduction to showing at dog shows, pee wees
More resources available about "what it is all about" from breeders, shows, articles in on line resources. Not that many read actual magazines, newspapers anymore.
Having someone to give helpful advice
Expenses
Being friendly
separate classes that offer points for breeders and non pro owners.
Reach out to 4H and FFA groups. They already have a love for animals
Breeder support
Local radio ads and public interest events at shows
Encouragement
Patience and a thick skin
Having designated mentors for a particular area; especially group specific and give judges enough time between classes to evaluated/teach people the nuances of showing.
All of us who have the resiliency to stay with this must find at least 2 people to replace us when we are no longer active in the sport in order for it to survive. This is especially important in rare breeds. We must teach resiliency because this is unfortunately a dishonest sport with dishonest people and newbies have to learn to withstand it and to project the values of honesty and integrity so that dishonesty can be snuffed out. If we model the way back to making this a sport of gentlemen and gentleladies then more people of all ages will want to get involved and STAY involved; they will want to compete and they will want to continue the lines we have developed.
Participation in local events. Show giving clubs should reach out to people in their area; advertise their events (matches) Be creative and entice people to give it a try. Hold special events and advertise within their communities; let people know who they are and where they meet. Give free seminars to beginners.
Be inclusive of all
Teach people responsible breeders are not contributing to rescue
Less politics, more mentorship from current competitors.
pick your breed carefully
More fairness, less politics, less picking a dog due to who he belongs to, is being handled by
"easy to find information regarding dog shows, friendly people and helpful suggestions
"
Videos for "Your first show dog and dog show", finding shows, entry forms-where to find, how to fill out, training options, what to wear, when to arrive and then what.
More encouragement from experienced owner/handlers. We can all be competitive without being dismissive or downright rude. More advertising about upcoming shows.
Mentors - raise overall regard for purebred dogs.
First 3 shows for puppy half off
Winning private lessons from a handler and/or groomer



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More matches and handling seminars. Especially held in conjunction with existing shows so additional travel isn't required. Tour guides and information pamphlets/spectator programs at shows to explain what is happening.

Breeders need to encourage puppy buyers to participate in at least one dog sport.

Mentors/ Great Breeders

Good PR. Encouraging people to do more with their dogs. Having fun days with demos, try-its, representatives for local resources. So that people will know where to go to get started.

It shouldn't be all about the wins. It's the journey and interaction. Trying to encourage people to become students of the breed

A more inclusive atmosphere

Start with performance sports, then introduce confirmation, highlight breed histories

Peer mentors. Mentors with experience that are more in the same age group as the newer exhibitors

Partner a new person with a club that is established and helps to introduce hem to the routine, people and where and who to ask questions. Being warmer and more welcoming.

Lots of encouragement to Juniors, education about how to enter into a show and what to expect at a show.

Education about the various classes and groups and wins etc. Points calculation mystery.

Have more FUN matches and invite the public. Let them see the fun in a relaxed environment and have handlers offer a short free handling seminar at the beginning of each Fun match to brush up on skills.

Promotions

Give points to owner handler ring

Unsure on this one

I think we are on the right track offering fun performance events at our shows.

Take them to shows

More handling seminars at shows

Ask questions of someone you admire. It's a huge compliment and more likely to help

the dog show scene is no longer the family friendly sport it used to be, (1960) the amateur/newbie needs matches to become abundant for starters. The disposable \$\$ available are far and few between these days, so many clubs and events are no longer viable and diminishing. Get rid of the Group and BIS emphasis numbers game and place the importance of excellence in performance and purpose of each breed back into judge's priority and start judging breeding potential and the breeder's role back into a judge's mind set, not whether that handler and dog who is well-advertised is who the Group Judge is expecting. Sit in on Judge's luncheons and dinners and listen to what they are talking about and WHO they are talking about with the other judges.....it is an eye opener. I realize the above is pretty negative, but the importance of the numbers game, who has the biggest advertising budget for the magazine ads online and hard copy has changed the mindset of judges, exhibitors, handlers and breeders to an elitist sport these days, the pendulum has swung too far for the salvation of this being a family sport, fair and KNOWLEDGABLE judging and emphasis on breeding/performance excellence and the breeder has slipped through the cracks.

Mentors mentors mentors

Have clubs offer demonstrations to young groups, like 4H clubs, etc.

"Possible entry discounts for puppy classes or free ringside mentorship. Also perhaps if its a groomed breed, seasoned exhibitors could have a sign on a chair at their grooming spot that says ""come on in!""

Pamphlets included in a puppy buyers take home folder on how to be paired up with a mentor or exhibitor that is local. "

More publicity, radio announcements, mentoring

Not sure

handling clinics, free fun matches



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Clubs that actively promote fun events with no pressure match shows for newbies to try out.... and advertise the even on local dog groups in social media to reach a larger audience

Meet and greet at a show. Someone from their breed mentoring them.

Make the prizes worth showing for, Not Stuffed Toys

That anyone can get into it, just requires an open mind and a willingness to try (and a wallet full of cash is probably helpful, too).

Think handling classes and support by other people

instant success on some level, i.e. o/h

Educate the public on the importance of preservation breeders and that the "adopt don't shop" rhetoric is not gospel. Help teach people that owning a well-bred, purebred dog is something to be PROUD of and not ashamed of! Rescue is great, but it's rare that a well-bred dog from a preservation or heritage breeder ever ends up there - Good breeders are not evil... and more people should be taking up the mantle from the older breeders so we do not lose any of our amazing dog breeds! I think showing and breeding can be a package deal and something to take pride in!

A "to do" list

"Reduce entry fees making it easier/more affordable to enter & to be able to enter more than 1 dog.

Stop focusing so much on pleasing professional handlers & start helping the owner-handlers."

Xx

Woof!!