

## Membership Guidelines for Associate Members for The Poodle Club of America

These guidelines are well detailed by the Board of Directors and at the present are outlined below for Associate Members.

Associate Membership is for individuals that have conducted themselves with good sportsmanship and exhibited good character in matters important to the Club and the Breed. Applicants must have been actively competing at the PCA National Show and other Affiliate Club and AKC performance/companion activities for at least 8 years immediately preceding their application. Applicants with extensive work in another area deemed worthy by the Board (rescue, committee work, publications etc.) will also be considered for membership.

The applicant will not be considered for Associate Membership if they would be eligible for consideration for Individual Membership. Applicants cannot be actively breeding or intending to breed poodles in the future. Associate membership is not a step toward Individual Breeder Membership.

- A. Applicants elected to Associate Membership are expected to be active in PCA by meeting one or more of the following criteria on an ongoing basis:
  - a. Owning or competing with a Poodle at PCA National or Regional events
  - b. Attending and working at functions sponsored by PCA or the PCA Foundation
  - c. Serving on a PCA committee, advertising in the PCA catalog, or making donations to the PCA trophy fund or some other function sponsored by PCA. Also, donating to the Poodle Club of America Foundation.
- B. Applicants must have titled at least 3 Poodles in AKC companion dog or AKC performance events and at least 2 of these Poodles must demonstrate a level of excellence by achieving titles in those **AKC** events offered by PCA at the National Specialty (Obedience, Rally, Agility, Hunt Test, Upland Test and/or Conformation). These titles must be at or above the mid level title for the event. Preference is given for those applicants who have achieved the highest title(s) available.
- C. Applicants must have been active members of their local Affiliate Club (if any) or an all breed conformation and/or training club for at least 4 years immediately preceding submission of application.

The applicant must be generally characterized as:

- a. Ethical in training and exhibiting their dogs.
- b. Providing proper care for their dogs and the dogs of others under their care.
- c. Setting a good example as a leader and mentor to those less experienced in those events in which they participate.
- d. Exhibiting good sportsmanship and conduct.

It is possible that an isolated incident may have occurred which brings one of the above four into question. An isolated or sporadic incident should not be weighted too heavily against the applicant.

Individual competitors shall be preferred. Those whose livelihood primarily depends on grooming, training, handling, or judging will also be considered so long as all other requirements are met. The most important objective for Associate Membership is to admit applicants who have acquired the expertise and knowledge of companion dog or performance events related to Poodles. Associate Members are not eligible to vote or hold office.

The question often asked is why so stringent on membership requirements. The first response is there are at least 46 affiliate clubs throughout the United States and the general feeling is that individuals should gain the knowledge about Poodles and various events at the local level before applying to join PCA. It is at the local level that competitors can prove their knowledge and value to the breed. The philosophy of The Poodle Club of America, Inc. is "what can you do for the breed or club, rather than what the club can do for you?"

The Board of Directors wants a knowledgeable, active membership that is interested in the betterment of the breed. Individuals that prove themselves "in the trenches" make better national club members.