

## Why register your puppy with the American Kennel Club (AKC)?

You have added a purebred dog to your life. You say you don't plan to show the dog in conformation or performance events. So why bother with registering the dog?

The AKC is foremost a registry for purebred dogs. Most of AKC's income is generated through registrations. Only a small percentage of the purebred dogs born in the United States get registered each year and that number is dwindling. You have selected a breeder who cares as much as you do that your puppy will be healthy. A good breeder puts much thought into each mating, to improve the animals they produce. There are many conditions and diseases that a breeder can test for, either through physical exam or genetic DNA testing. Research into disease is an ongoing effort, and this needs continuous funding. The AKC, and its affiliated parent clubs, is the only dog registry in the United States that develops programs and provides funding for health issues.

There are many organizations, like People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) or Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), which solicit donations purporting to stop euthanasia, animal abuse, and expose atrocities at puppy mills, all with very slick flyers, email advertisements, etc... all of which prey on people's emotions. They all sound well and good but that is not how they spend your donation. Both are on record to stop the breeding, ownership, and use of animals for food or companionship. HSUS does not operate one animal shelter in the US. Nor did the money HSUS took in to help the animals made homeless by hurricane Katrina ever goes directly to the welfare of those animals. Instead, it uses the money to further its agenda by using your donation to introduce legislation at the local, state and federal level. PETA has the highest euthanasia rates, when it does shelter animals, in its home state of Virginia. No-kill solutions that have proven effective in many communities are not embraced by PETA.

PETA misleads you as well. PETA gives the money you believe to be used for the purpose of improving animal welfare to other animal rights organizations some of which are on the domestic terrorist list. For instance, the Earth Liberation Front and the Animal Liberation Front, members are involved in bombing corporations and private property and harassment of citizens employed those corporations.

Animal rights does not equal animal welfare. In fact, many of the terms used by animal rights organizations are deliberately intended to confuse. Take for example the term puppy mill. It refers to all breeding kennels, commercial or hobby, good or bad. In their world, there is no good commercial or hobby breeder. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) , not PETA, performs inspections of breeding facilities in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act.

The AKC also inspects commercial and hobby breeding kennels for health and registration violations if they are selling dogs with AKC registrations. It fines and suspends those organizations and individuals not in compliance with their rules. No other U.S. dog registry does this.

The AKC does not derive its income from donations.

The AKC promotes responsible dog ownership by sponsoring Responsible Dog Ownership Days and events throughout the country, offering Canine Good Citizen classes and testing, recognizing individuals and dogs who have served this country and its people in many ways, promoting legislation beneficial to dog ownership and opposing legislation that takes away the rights of owners to make decisions concerning their dog's health and preserve the rights of breeders to breed purebred dogs.

It only costs 20 dollars to register your puppy with the AKC, but that money goes to fund many good causes. I hope that you do register your dog.

Many of the national parent clubs of each breed have their own rescue operations staffed by volunteers, and provide research money with donations provided by club members. Join the American Chesapeake Club. Along with the AKC registration papers I have included an application to the American Chesapeake Club, the AKC parent club. Please join. At the very least you will enjoy the club's official magazine, the Bulletin.

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Del Brave Chesapeakes