

An open letter: To the Members of the Shenango Chapter of NAVHDA from the Executive Board,

The NAVHDA International has reminded us recently that the National's Bylaws require each member of a local chapter to be a member of the International and that the local chapter is bound to these Bylaws as part of their charter. For this reason, the Bylaws of the Shenango Chapter require its members to be an active member of the International. As the Shenango Chapter has grown, however, many of the new members were not aware of the membership requirements of the Bylaws of the National or the Shenango Chapter. Additionally, the Executive Board did not inform the membership of these requirements.

The NAVHDA International has sent the chapter a letter that contains a list of our members with (or without) their NAVHDA membership number as a gentle reminder of our obligations to them as a local chapter. We have not requested nor verified NAVHDA membership numbers in the past, assuming that most, if not all, of our chapter members were also members of the International. At this time, however, we need to begin requesting the NAVHDA member number on each chapter membership application or renewal in order to make sure we are complying with the NAVHDA International Bylaws as well as our own.

If you have already paid your chapter dues for this year, but are not a member of NAVHDA International, we would ask that you join as soon as possible and let us know your membership number when you receive it. This will ensure that the local chapter is not put in an awkward position with NAVHDA International. Note also that the NAVHDA International insurance policy only covers and protects NAVHDA International members. A nonmember participating in chapter activities may not only put themselves at risk but other chapter members as well. Finally, it is also important to state that we recognize the wisdom and necessity of the NAVHDA requirements and are in full accord with them.

It is a reasonable question to ask why it is a requirement to pay dues to both the NAVHDA International and the local chapter. The answer is also reasonable. We all understand that organizations need income to exist. And NAVHDA exists because of member's dues... their sole source of income.

NAVHDA International provides and funds the services that are both the foundation and the support of the local chapters and their membership. These include, testing procedures and judging standards, judge development programs, the breed standards, the breed registry, the test record keeping and publications, the Invitational and handler's clinics, the training materials and resources. All of these and more exist because of the NAVHDA International.

We are proud of the NAVHDA International and their accomplishments over the last 35 years and proud to be a part of it. We recognize that without them our chapter and purpose and programs would not exist. If we and other local chapters do not support the NAVHDA International through dues paying members, we are endangering not only NAVHDA and everything they stand for, but also our own chapter's existence and viability.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and please join with us in doing everything we can for both the NAVHDA International and the Shenango Chapter by complying with the membership requirements.

Respectfully Yours,
The Executive Board of the Shenango Chapter of NAVHDA