



20th Century Fund

An Open Letter to all Field Trialers

At the annual meeting of the Amateur Field Trial Clubs of America held in Pensacola, Fla., in March 1986, there was serious discussion concerning the status, goals, and future direction of our organization.

Unfortunately, the problems which afflict most amateur sporting organizations also afflict ours. The needs are enormous, but the resources are limited. In order to set the stage for discussion of the subject of this letter, I would like to share some information concerning the AFTCA. Much of this may not be new to you.

Historically, since the inception of the AFTCA, our organization and its member clubs have operated on shoestring budgets. The perpetuation of our organization and the sport of field trialing has come primarily from the unselfish generosity of thousands of its members who have contributed money, time, and effort. In addition, hundreds of landowners, some of whom are involved in field trialing and most of whom are not, have allowed us to conduct our events on their property. In many and most instances, there was little to be gained by allowing us to conduct these events on their property. Conversely, their livelihood, at times, has been put at risk, whether it be from fire, inadvertent injury to crops, fences, livestock, etc. To these individuals, we owe a debt that can never be repaid.

Our past history is very respectable. The AFTCA, which was founded in 1916, is an incorporated organization with member clubs and is governed by a set of bylaws, rules and regulations. Representation is by a trustee from each region, of which there are currently eighteen with the recent addition of Hawaii. The officers are elected from the Board of Trustees. The members of the Board

time, horses and keen attention to the task.

As we reflect upon our past, we can make objective, as well as subjective, evaluations of our successes or failures. Each year at the annual meeting of the AFTCA, the Board of Trustees is presented with a financial report.

Our current status consists of a limited amount of working capital held in a checking account and, additionally approximately \$40,000 invested in certificates of deposit. Although the \$40,000 is respectable, it should be pointed out that it was saved over a fifty-year period with no wild excesses of spending, and it is the interest gained on this money which allows us to remain in the black. Were it not for the fact that the AFTCA operates on a very thin budget, it would be unable to sustain itself. There is no latitude for the AFTCA to accomplish many of the tasks which lie before it.

Thus, at the March, 1986 annual meeting there arose a discussion concerning our problem status. From this discussion was born the concepts of the AFTCA TWENTIETH CENTURY FUND. The concept was conceived and promoted by John O'Neill, Jr., and after thorough discussion, received approval by the Board of Trustees.

Basically, the AFTCA TWENTIETH CENTURY FUND can be explained as follows:



Dr. A.G. Lurus

The purpose of the fund is to help the AFTCA strengthen itself financially. Once this has been accomplished, we will be

The Board of Trustees named Mr. Dwight Smith of Norwood, N.C., as chairman of the TWENTIETH CENTURY FUND. Mr. Smith's role will be to oversee the fund-raising campaign, create a prospective donors list, acknowledge donations and pledges, make appearances before groups and transfer money for investments. Assisting Dwight will be Mr. Jack Fiveash of Pensacola, Fla., who will chair the Twentieth Century Circle Committee. The primary role of this committee will be to contact individuals and companies on a one-on-one basis. Assisting Jack in this effort will be Mr. Harry Townshend of New Haven, Conn., and Mr. Pete Frierson of Jackson, Miss. All trustees will have a role in canvassing their regions for donations.

In order to benefit donors, I have enlisted the help of Mr. John McNamera, an attorney, of Santa Rosa, Cal. to file for tax exemption under 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue code. The success of this effort will be announced as soon as it becomes known. The expectation is to have this completed during the 1986 year.

Once the fund is created, it must be safely protected. This fund represents a solid investment in our future. To this end, the Board of Trustees voted that the principal would not be spent. The monies made available would be only the interest earned on the investments and the priorities for expenditure of the interest would be determined by the Board of Trustees. An investment committee consisting of John O'Neill, Jack Fiveash, Harry Townshend, Stephen Walker and Pete Frierson will assist Dwight Smith in the investment of the funds. The current thought on investments is a safe conservative approach such as U.S. Treasury

of Trustees are expected to be present at the annual meeting held in conjunction with the National Amateur Quail Championship. The Board of Trustees contributes many hours in the resolution of problems as they occur during the year. Many trustees are asked to travel long distances to other trials, meetings, or hearings. All of this is an effort to insure cleaner, better, fairer and a more well-run sport. These activities help insure an essential, strong, and fair governing body. Participation as a trustee or an officer is done without compensation. A debt of gratitude is owed to all the trustees who have served our organization so well over these many years.

The AFTCA has one salaried employee, namely the secretary-treasurer, Miss Leslie Anderson, who has faithfully served our organization since 1956. Many of our noteworthy accomplishments can be attributed to her excellent performance as secretary-treasurer. Were it not for Miss Anderson, our organization would hardly be where it is today. When gratitude is expressed, Miss Anderson deserves the highest. Not only has she served for so many years at a salary far below that commensurate with her duties, she has contributed her home, at minimal compensation, to serve as the office of the Amateur Field Trial Clubs of America. Miss Anderson, we cannot thank you enough.

The AFTCA has numerous functions besides serving as the governing body. Of these functions, record keeping is one of the more important. A complete set of records is kept on the recognized amateur wins, as well as the sending of certificate of wins to respective owners.

The enormity of this task is exemplified by the fact that approximately 600 trials are conducted annually. Add to this task the answering of numerous telephone calls received by our Secretary each day.

The AFTCA conducts nine National Championships on five different game birds including the recently added National Amateur Chukar Championship. Representation at these events is provided by our Secretary and also Trustees when possible. These trials

able to do many of the things to embetter our organization. We must do more than just survive. First off, we must computerize the record-keeping of the AFTCA. This will not only facilitate an streamline the operation but will allow a hook-up with The American Field computer.

Computerization of our records will allow us to keep a second set of records which could be stored safely in a vault. It is unsafe to operate with a single record stored in the Secretary's home. The research on this project is currently under way.

Secondly, it is obvious to everyone that the availability of field trial grounds is rapidly diminishing. The death of a few important people could devastate our ability to run trials on first-class venues. In the future, the AFTCA must be in a position to take advantage of the opportunity, should it arise, to secure and/or manage field trial grounds. This could be through privately owned land or by assisting States in the setting aside of grounds for this purpose. this would be a gigantic undertaking, but there does not seem to be any other way.

Thirdly, the AFTCA must become active in stimulating interest in bird dogs and field trials. Programs should be created to develop interest in field trial s of American Field Standards. Although we are not supportive of shoot-to-kill trials, we must be more active in promoting walking shooting dog stakes; otherwise, we will see a continued growth of other organizations at our expense. From the walking shooting dog owners will come a few horseback field trialers. In any event, we must represent and support both.

Fourthly, we must be financially in a position to act when an unusual opportunity presents itself, so long as our actions are in the best interest of the AFTCA and field trials.

This brings us to the method of securing the monies for the TWENTIETH CENTURY FUND. It was decided by the Board of Trustees that it should be from individual donations, and to this end the trustees themselves pledged \$30,000 of a goal of \$60,000 to be collected over five years. In retrospect, after this response from the trustees, it appears we set our sights

Bonds, but latitude will be granted to the committee.

A detailed business plan has been written and the Amateur Field Trial Clubs of America can be assured that this fund will be safeguarded prudently. The transfer of any money will require the dual signatures of the President and the Chairman of the fund. The decision to spend money by the Board of Trustees will be measured deliberately and carefully calculated for the most permanent impact. A financial report will be made available twice a year to the full Board of Trustees.

Needless to say, times are changing, and if our organization is to survive, it must move with the times.

As I was driving home from the hospital last week, I witnessed most heart warming sight. There, beside a bus stop sat the most elegant, beautiful, well-groomed, yellow Labrador I have ever seen.

Beside the dog stood a gentleman his hand stroking the dog's head. At a distance, I could sense a deep bond between the man and the dog, and as I drew closer, the

circumstances became apparent. The dog was wearing a seeing-eye-dog harness. The thought which crossed my mind was if only this man could see how beautiful his Labrador is, and if only his dog could understand how important his eyes are to his master in the role he is serving. It has often been said that the most beautiful things in life are usually taken for granted. The blind man lost one of the most beautiful things in life and will never see again. Over the years, little by little, bit by bit, the field trial fraternity has lost beautiful field trial grounds on which to conduct their sport. Like the blind man's eyesight, the grounds can never be totally replaced, only substituted. It is not too late, however. The blind man hasn't stopped and neither should we.

What does the next century hold for the AFTCA? Greatness, I hope. The AFTCA must act now to protect its future and the future of those who follow us.

Who is the AFTCA? You are. Who can help? Only you can!

Ladies and Gentlemen, please join with me and the Board of Trustees in

<p>are conducted in conjunction with member clubs throughout the country. Attempts are made to change the venues to different regions to allow for the broadest participation of our members. Our deepest appreciation goes to the clubs and its members who host such events.</p> <p>Not to be forgotten are the many judges selected for such events who contribute their</p>	<p>too low. This does not mean that we need to stop once we have reached our goal. We must, if possible, far exceed our goal. The needs are too great to do otherwise.</p>	<p>this investment in our future and rededication to our sport. No donation is too small and each will be gratefully appreciated. Thank you so much, Merry Christmas to all.</p> <p>Angelo G. Lurus, M.D. President, AFTCA</p>
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