Adopted guideline criteria for hiring judges for the Great Smoky Mountain Cluster

First it should be noted that these are just guidelines, and should be used as a tool to put together a good, efficient and fiscally responsible panel of judges for our cluster.

The main objective is to assemble a panel of judges that are competent, in good physical condition, and fit together to complete the panel with everyone in agreement.

Because we are a 4 day cluster that also has independent specialties being held in conjunction with our shows we must not forget that under AKC rules no judge can do a breed/group/BIS combo on the same day.

We should use the entry numbers from the previous show to assist in calculating judges daily assignments.

Take into account Specialty Club requests when possible and practical.

When hiring be sure to find out if the judge has any breed specific restrictions for National Specialties, Westminster, Eukanuba, Etc.

Ask club members for suggestions and ask them to make them breed specific so a requested judge can be assigned to those breeds. Remind members that suggestions should be "objective" and not just judges they "win under".

Because of the rising cost in "expenses" try to assign judges to a workload of about 150 dogs per day (excluding groups).

Establish a cluster approved fee schedule for judges and hire those that fit into the parameter.

With the above notes in mind we should use the following criteria as a policy guideline:

- Does the judge have a reputation as being kind, and considerate to ALL the exhibitors? Does he/she give every exhibit the same consideration regardless of quality?
- If possible use a few "NEW FIRST TIME PROVISIONAL JUDGES".
- Use an occasional provisional judge with one group or less
- Try to avoid using judges that live within a 100-150 mile radius of Knoxville, unless assigning "new provisional breeds" or using to fill out a panel to keep costs under control
- Request that hired judges NOT ACCEPT ANY OTHER ASSIGNMENTS WITHIN A 300 MILE RADIUS OF KNOXVILLE FOR 90 DAYS TO PRIOR TO THE CLUSTER.
- When possible review "past assignments" and try not to use judges that have been "overexposed in our general geographic area."
- If possible use judges that can serve from 2 to 4 days as the expenses are reduced accordingly.
- Use judges that we had good feedback on in previous years, especially when they may have recently been approved for additional breeds.

- Avoid using judges more than once every few years except in the case of new provisional breeds or when they can do breeds which they have not done recently at our shows.
- Whenever possible allow approved judges that are members of the TVKC or the ORKC as well as the East TN judges group an opportunity to judge any "new recently approved provisional breeds" at a fee of $3.00 per dog inclusive.
- Although we try to avoid using too many local judges it is OK from time to time to use judges from our area as long as they have not been "overexposed" in our area. We should pay their normal fees within our guidelines. This is also done on occasion to establish good relationships so that in the event of "overloads" at future shows they may help us out on short notice without the feeling they are only called because they live close and we need their help.
- Work closely with the specialty clubs to provide them a list of judges that may be assigned to their breed.
- Avoid judges that are known for excessive fees and expenses. (keeping in mind judges have no control over air fares, except when they wait until the very the last minute to book)
- Married couples and partners should also be considered as they normally will share a room, drive together, etc. resulting in some cost savings to the club on expenses.
- Using Obedience judges that also do conformation can often be helpful as they may also judge a group or BIS after obedience as well as cover overloads if available.
- In breeds where we have a history of large entries or supported entries, specialties etc. Hire "Breed Specific Judges" (often breeders doing their initial provisional assignments in their own breed) at a flat fee of $3.00 per dog.
- Avoid foreign judges as their expenses can be very high, also many foreign countries have an easy approval system and many of them are not qualified for all of the breeds for which they are approved. However in the case of good foreigners with highly respected reputations who agree to compensation within reason can be used on occasion.

Recommended fee schedule for 2010

Less than one full group $ 3.00 per dog inclusive
One Group Max: $200 per day plus expenses or a flat rate of $3.00 per dog + one night's lodging for each day of judging.
Two or Three Groups Max: $350 per day plus expenses or a flat rate of $3.00 per dog + one night's lodging for each day of judging.
Four to Five Groups Max: $400 per day plus expenses
Six or Seven Group Recommend $450 per day + expenses but some "all arounders will be $500 per day +expenses