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NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM LABRADOR RETRIEVER CLUB

2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **DRAFT** MINUTES

Held by the Officers via Facebook Messenger Video on 29th May 2020

Those Present:

L. Thompson, D. Bratton, S. McDermott, L. Hartis, I Davison and J. Smart.

- 1 Apologies received and accepted from: Mrs A Beckley. Apologies for the original AGM scheduled for 14th April 2020 were received from Ms V. Prichard and Mr and Mrs Coode.
- 2 Minutes of previous AGM for approval and adoption.
Copies of 2019 draft minutes had been available on the website from May 2019 and were available at the meeting. Acceptance proposed: D. Bratton, Seconded: L. Thompson
2019 Minutes were approved and adopted unanimously.
- 3 Matters arising from the Minutes. See Any other business
- 4 Chairperson's Address: Steven McDermott, Chair
"Northumberland and Durham Labrador Retriever Club had another good year in 2019 and I our committee members should be very proud of what is being achieved. This can only happen if you have strong committees; and members who are prepared to put in the required work to make the club advance.

The Officers and committees work hard on behalf of the Members and every year we try to organise events for you which are above and beyond the principal ones. We provide an Educational Bursary of £300 to help these additional events happen.

2019 was the turn of the Working side to provide an event, and a 'J' regs seminar was arranged with Mrs Heather Bradley as presenter. The event was well attended. However 2019 also saw another 2 educational events for members - a Canine First Aid event which was fully subscribed in hours and then working with North East Veterinary Association, a seminar was held for members on Breed Management with Geneticist Erin Chu. All very popular events and we hope these events add to the benefits of being a member of Northumberland and Durham LRC. (If members have any ideas for future Educational events please forward your request to the club).

Irene Davison continues in the role of Honorary Secretary and is always there to support members, committees and sub-secretaries throughout the year and voluntarily carries out many other duties to help others. Irene is also Website Administrator.

Anne our Treasurer and Membership Secretary has presented us with a very high level of accounts in great time and our membership records are in good order.

Linda Thompson is our Vice Chair and valuable committee member and deputises for me at some events. Linda also looks after the Club Puppy Register which has been bristling with enquiries from buyers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Yet again we have too many buyers and not enough member breeders taking advantage of our free register.

In 2019 we welcomed a few new Committee members; and we are grateful to everyone who has stepped up to help the Club. We also had some resignations and our thanks are given to all those who have supported the club in the past as committee members.

In 2019 we held:- an Eye Testing Clinic organised by Denise Bratton in February. Denise was helped by other committee members on the day to provide a seamless event. February also saw our Open Show being held at Bowburn Community Centre – as always a really nice day was provided for members.

Jeff Smart (working test secretary) then organised 5 working tests during April to July. These were as always well attended but help on the day from members and other committee members was lacking. The lack of help on the day and Jeff's work patterns unfortunately meant Jeff tendered his resignation. We thank Jeff for all the work he and his wife Julie put into the tests.

From August to October Lee Hartis (field trial secretary), offered members an additional trial in 2019 which was warmly received. Lee organised 3 novice trials, a 24 dog Open qualifier and a 14 dog All Aged trial - all on superb grounds.

Thanks to our land owners, judges, game carriers, dog stewards and teams of guns for their valuable time and support which enables the trials to succeed. We also give appreciation to our working test and show judges, as without judges the events could not go ahead.

We are very lucky to have very generous hosts for our Tests and Trials and are always indebted to have access to such wonderful grounds; as without their generosity it would be very difficult to run the working events we do.

Sincere thanks go to our Club sponsors Skinner's, Gundog Gear, and CSJ for our Open and Championship shows. They generously support all our events for the benefit of our members and we sincerely appreciate their help in 2019.

The club gives sincere thanks to accountant Paul Glahome for completing the clubs annual accounts.

A huge thank you from the club and members to everyone who arranged the events both show and working, and I am sure those who took part enjoyed them. Details of our events together with photographs, are available on our website. www.ndlabclub.co.uk

I cannot thank enough, the hard-working Committee members and non-committee members who add so much to this Club for the benefit of the whole membership.

There are always matters outside the norm to deal with each year but knowing we have a strong team of 'hands on' committee members working together for the Club membership, their dedication supports Northumberland and Durham in developing further.

Unfortunately our Club events since March have been cancelled in the main this year (2020) due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

We have arranged events only for them to be cancelled closer to the date. Lee Hartis is still hopeful of getting a couple of field trials organised after the ones he arranged from August to September had to be cancelled. As soon as we have more information on this we will let members know. We await the next statement by the Government and Kennel Club in this regard.

Thank you

Steve McDermott – Chairman”

5. Treasurer Report: Anne Beckley, Hon Treasurer and Membership Secretary

Unfortunately Anne was unable to attend the Abridged AGM or provide her report due to illness and the Secretary provided officers with the basics.

The Club insurance was renewed in January and we were pleased to see no increase to last year, for the same cover. Very unusual in this day and age!

As members will have seen from the balance sheet sent to them in March 2020 with the full AGM mailing, we made a very small profit this year but still retain a healthy balance. The Club is not run for profit but for the benefit of its members and the breed. We also held a record number of events this year for members and we give thanks to committee members who made them happen.

Labrador Welfare (who we support) received £173 in 2019 from donations and the secretary received a report from Lab Welfare on their activities which is available on request.

We held three additional Educational events in 2019 instead of our planned one. Canine First Aid seminar, 'J' regs seminar and a seminar on Genetics. We allow a £300 educational bursary to one event per year but this year due to good management, we hosted 3 member events which cost just over £300 for them all.

Many thanks to Paul Glaholm, Certified Chartered Accountant for auditing the accounts.

The Club's Financial Accounts were presented and proposed acceptance by Irene Davison and seconded Jeff Smart as a true reflection. The accounts were then accepted by vote – unanimously.

6 Secretary's Report: Irene Davison, Hon. Secretary

“As Secretary, I look after the Club admin including completing our Annual returns and other necessary paperwork on time and in good order for the Kennel Club. I maintain the Club's central records which I started on becoming Secretary. This allows officers to access our password protected Club paperwork that they need. The records will also be a valuable tool to assist any new person undertaking a role within the Club. We now have a Club laptop (which is also password protected).

We will always continue to post information to those who request it, but the Club email is our default method of contact and by far the most popular with members. The email account takes a lot of monitoring, receiving thousands of emails each year. It's also very popular for applying and paying for membership and working events. I try hard to ensure messages are answered promptly or passed to relevant people for their action.

Annual membership subs are due on the 1st of January each year. If your membership was not up to date by the end of March; you will not receive the benefits afforded fully paid-up members. It's your responsibility to ensure subs are paid at the correct rate and time.

We have policies in place (which are also on our website) to ensure members data is protected and not retained longer than needed. Members can rest assured that we will continue to do our utmost to keep your data secure.

In addition to the Club Secretary role, I voluntarily provide admin support for our working tests and trials, as the paperwork can be daunting with as many events as we hold. I will also provide assistance to anyone who requests my help.

Our Facebook page is visited regularly and is where we also post events/updates as well as our website.

I'd like to thank the committee members who have taken the initiative and organised and helped at events which are all described in secretary reports – there is a lot of work involved and those proactive committee members are invaluable.

Welcome to those members who have come on board and sincere thanks are given to all who have left us.

In 2019 we organised an additional four events for members over and above our two shows, five working tests and five field trials:-

An Eye Testing Clinic in February

A Canine First Aid Event in March

The 'J' regs seminar with presenter Heather Bradley in May.

And finally in June, a collaboration with North East Veterinary Association, Geneticist Erin Chu provided a seminar on Breed Management.

All of the 16 events were well subscribed and well received. Many thanks to those who organised and helped at all our events.

We are very lucky that we rarely struggle to fill committee posts, but are always looking for eager new committee members who can help out at events and bring new ideas. So if you feel you can help, please get in touch. I offer my sincere thanks to members (and non-members) who come along to events just to help out – you are all greatly appreciated as we strive to provide members with comprehensive activities, support and a friendly atmosphere.

Our sponsors have been very generous again in 2019, as have the working event landowners, our show and working judges and of course helpers – who all contribute to the success of our events.

As website administrator; I endeavour to keep our website as up to date as possible. We continue to have a high volume of visitors viewing the website; hopefully due to it being informative and user friendly.

Part of updating the website includes the Puppy Register. A free service to members that is still not used as much as we would like. Please contact our Vice Chair, Linda Thompson who does a great job as register co-ordinator, if you want more information.

I hope you feel I have fulfilled my role well on behalf of the Club and its membership; but I did' slack off' a bit in 2019 after I was hospitalised with double pneumonia and sepsis the day after our AGM (which I still tried to attend!?) Luckily all the paperwork had been prepared in advance and my hubby kindly came down to the AGM venue with the buffet.

Before I hand over to Lee Hartis, I'd like to say massive thanks to the rest of our officers who have provided members with some great events despite it taking more of their spare time. We have a great bunch of people that work very well together.

*The final and largest thank you goes to my husband Brian. Firstly for **ignoring** my pleas of 'I'm fine' and getting me to A&E/ICU in April; for taking club phone messages and providing help wherever he can at events. We have both had difficult years; but his tolerance of accepting the amount of time I spend on Club matters is continually supportive. Thank you*

Irene Davison"

7. Field Trial Secretary's Report: Lee Hartis, F.T. Secretary **See Appendix 1**
8. Working Test Secretary's Report: Jeff Smart, W.T. Secretary **See Appendix 2**
9. Show Secretary's Report: Denise Bratton, Show Secretary **See Appendix 3**
10. Club Representative Annual Reports for 2018
 - a) Breed Council/Breed Health – Lynda Heron Delayed.
 - b) Field Trial Liaison Representative's Report: Samantha Whyte **See Appendix 4.**
 - c) Breed Education Co-Ordinator update – **See Show Report**
11. Educational/Programme

The Club bursary of £300 annually to provide an educational event for members and non-members. This is on a rotational basis aiming to satisfy work/show and pet interests. In 2019 all sections were provided with an additional event and as there will not be anything arranged for 2020, this will be discussed at the next general meeting for 2021

12. Honoraria.

Lee Hartis proposed consideration be given to increase the fixed payment to officers attending events being increased.

Whilst all officers present felt that there was possibly a case for an increase due to mileage driven (especially to trials) and the wear and tear on vehicles, it was felt that this would need to be addressed at a full AGM – hopefully in 2021. Denise expressed, whilst she did not need the increase as the two shows were not the distances of the other secretaries and were also on normal highways, she was also in favour of this being looked at for the working secretaries.

All honoraria for 2019 were agreed to be left as the 2018 rate.

13. Election of Officers and positions within the Club

All nominations received had been correctly proposed and seconded. There were no additional nominations for the roles listed or for re-electing committee members or previously co-opted committee members. All votes for positions were unanimously carried.

The Breed Education Representative was deferred to a show meeting in future.

14. Election of Committees, Breed Council, Breed Health, Breed Education and Field Trial Liaison representatives

Irene had provided all admin/paperwork relating to the nominations received. All were agreed with the exception of Breed Education Representative which had no nominations received.

15. Election of Auditors

Irene Davison explained that Paul Glaholm audits the Club's accounts free of charge as Anne uses a compatible accounting software package used in Paul's business. In return the Club display an advert for Paul's business on our website. We also purchase a bottle of spirit as a goodwill gesture annually.

16. Rules and Regulations Review – No changes.

17. Proposals by members

No proposals, questions or queries had been received by members by the required date of 31st March 2020.

18. Any Other Business

a) The Secretary apologised for not noting the £100 charity donation as an agenda item. This was decided at last year's AGM when we could put forward any cause or charity (preferably to do with the Labrador breed) as a recipient.

Linda Thompson proposed that as no causes had been put forward to officers and after discussing the report received from Labrador Welfare, it would be sensible to support Labrador Welfare again.

Linda felt with the explosion of people wanting to purchase Labradors during the Covid pandemic – Labrador Welfare could be very busy towards the end of the year. This was seconded by Lee Hartis and a vote took place which was unanimously in favour of passing £100 to Labrador Welfare to assist with their work with Labradors in our area.

b) Puppy Register – Linda Thompson – report attached Appendix

"In 2019 we had the opportunity to offer another field trial and were pleased to be offer members 5 trials. All had very good support from members with excellent numbers of entries.

We started the season with our 24 dog 2 day qualifier at Bolton Abbey on grouse, by very kind invitation of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire. The trial was exceptional as was the hospitality extended to the club.

As with all our grounds, we are exceptionally grateful for the use of such prime trialling terrain for members and cannot thank our landowners enough for their continued support.

Our 12 dog novice trial on grouse followed at the impressive Wemmergill Estate. The trial was excellent with wonderful supplies of game and the usual hospitality from the keeping staff. Unfortunately after a good trial there was no winner but some very good dog work was seen from the finalists.

We then had our first visit for a 12 dog novice, to the Kennel Club Emblehope and Burngrange Estate. The terrain was challenging as fits a Northumberland moor, and the organisation by the keeper allowed us to have a very good trial with a worthy winner.

Our fourth trial was a 12 dog novice, held at Ford and Etal Estate, by very kind permission of The Lord Joicey (Club President). Again we were welcomed by the estate staff and had a good result here too. All our results, write ups and pictures are on our website.

Our final trial of the season was a 14 dog All Aged trial at the ever popular Eggleston Fell Estate by kind permission of Mr Farquhar and Head Keeper Mr Robert Beadle. We had an excellent day with the estate staff lethally shooting as always, which gave us a great day and good result.

The trials had good judges for all trials and we thank them all for their support of our events. My sincere thanks go to the helpers who turned up to game carry, steward and help with admin. We could do with an awful lot more help on trial days otherwise it will be very difficult to put these events together.

Things would be much easier if more people from the membership and committee volunteered to help at events; and I cannot stress enough how much people can learn by seeing the judging and competitors up close.

Whilst the field trials were run at a loss, this was not as much as last year even with adding in the 5th trial. Thankfully the working tests made a good profit and overall the working events made a very small profit.

Our landowners and their agents, are never taken for granted - and all receive a letter of sincere thanks and a gift, as do their game keepers. Their generous support means we are able to offer varied grounds for our events. We are also very grateful to our working event sponsors Skinners and Gundog Gear for their continued support.

Organising the Club events takes a lot of effort AND TIME for the people concerned.

We aren't without our faults, but by taking on these roles when others won't, I hope it shows, that we are committed to giving up a large share of OUR spare time to help our sport flourish and support our Club.

*Thank you
Lee*

PS In 2020 we have been derailed as a club by the COVID-019 pandemic. Tests and trials have been organised but have all so far had to be cancelled in line with KC and Government guidelines. I am still trying to get a couple of trials organised but whether these go ahead is down to the guidance given. As soon as we know what is happening and we feel it is safe for competitors, helpers, judges and club personnel, we will be in touch with members.

“Good evening everyone. I’ve now been in post for 24 month and have completed two full season as Working Test Secretary. In 2019 the Club held 5 working tests using the four-judge system at each test. Venues were Leadhill House, Slaley, Wemmergill Estate, Streatlam Park and Eggleston Fell.

Our thanks to the gracious landowners and ground keeping staff for giving the club and members, the chance to run their dogs on such fantastic grounds.

All tests were very well attended with bulging running cards! We would like to see more young people in the Junior Handler category; but it was great to see the youngsters that did take part. Please try to encourage them to get involved, they are the future of our sport.

We introduced some new additions to last year's test. New judges score sheets new dummy backpacks and the purchasing of extra dummies. These new introductions helped immensely, brand of dummy was changed as we seemed to have a few more than expected firedog dummies come apart.

Our introduction of thanking dummy throwers and placers in 2017 has continued, and gifts are always well received from the great bunch of volunteers we’ve had. As in previous seasons I didn’t have to run around hunting for volunteers. However in 2019 this was the opposite especially noticeable was the lack of help from committee members on the day.

Towards the end of the season this was very problematic and this did interfere slightly with the running of the Eggleston test. In addition to those that helped it does seem to be the same familiar faces offering at each test and I would encourage all members not to expect this assistance, and look to themselves to help with the dummy throwing and other duties. If I didn’t have the support of my partner Julie there would have been major issues and I thank her from the bottom of my heart.

Folk learn so much from watching the dog work and learning about the judging, and new helpers are always welcome. Without these helpers, our tests would not be as comprehensive as they are and in some cases may not take place at all. If the lack of support continues i fear that the tests in the future will be greatly diminished.

We are very grateful to our judges who were thanked with lunch (prepared by committee member Joanne Wilson) and a small gift with our thanks. Without the judges giving up their free time to help our events go ahead, none of the tests would take place. Thank you for giving us and our members, the benefit of your experience.

I’d like to thank our Inter club Team, who were selected based on consistency of performance during the earlier tests. Five teams took place and our team came first with Lee Hartis having top scoring dog on the day. Also massive thanks to our judge Carole Clark.

Thank you to everyone who supported the club’s events, (members and non-members) including our committee and of course our valued sponsors Skinner’s and Gundog Gear. Their support is exceptional, which we never take for granted and make sure their sponsorship appears on our website, test reports, running cards, prize certificates and Facebook Page. Two great companies who do so much to help grass roots Clubs.

We did have a few issues during the year which were ultimately out of Club control, but overall it was a good year with exceptionally full running cards – so we must be doing something right!

The tests made a healthy profit which helped purchase new test equipment and offered support towards the field trials.

I did have massive reservations taking on the Test Secretary role, with shift work and family life - I didn't want to let the club down by doing a mediocre performance. I found out very early on that the position can be quite stressful and demanding. Organising grounds, judges, equipment, answering calls and replying to letters can take its toll. Balancing the needs of certain individuals was also a task, finding a compromise that suited all was required in some cases. As a result of work issues the lack of support this year I decided to resign from the role as working test secretary.

On a personal note I would like to thank Irene Davison. Without Irene's support I would not have been able to fulfil the role. Irene has helped me in every aspect of the job and has always been there to offer help and guidance. We don't always see eye to eye on everything however we always come to an amicable conclusion.

The work Irene does for the club is unbelievable as I'm sure you will hear from the others on how much she contributes. Irene was unable to attend many of the test due to illness, however as she started to recover she still made the effort to help out, some of this from her hospital bed.

Another special lady who I also want to thank is my wife Julie. Julie has helped at every test, she has thrown dummies, done the raffle, parked cars, assisted with the admin side and has had to take the brunt of my temper tantrums. Again without Julie's help and support I would have struggled.

I would like to thank all the good folk who came forward and offered their help.

Finally I'd like to thank the "main man" again - I ordered lovely weather for all the tests - I asked for no midges at Wemmergill - and I even rode my luck by asking to be in the awards with Drake, unfortunately he was rubbish and this didn't happen lol.

The man came through and nearly fulfilled all my requests! Not sure why - as I'm not even religious, and I just hope I haven't put the mockers on things for this year, I wish the new WTS all the best when the season commences following Covid 19 restrictions being lifted

*Thank you
Jeff Smart*

"It's not until you begin to write your annual report that you realise how many events are managed throughout the year, and 2019 was no exception.

We started in February as always with the clubs annual eye testing event and we are grateful to Stuart Ellis for his hard work carrying out the BVA Eye testing for us on over 60 dogs. This is a long day for Stuart and he in turn passed on his thanks for our hospitality and admin support throughout the day. Thanks to Jo, Kira, Suzanne, Kay, and Wendy for all their help at registration and Anne who supports and cashes up during and at the end of the day.

The following week was our Feb Open Show. It was a pleasure to welcome Diana Stevens (Wylanbriar) to judge, Diana is a lovely friendly person as well as an accomplished judge both in the show ring and the field. She had a good entry of 59 dogs making 78 entries. Fiona MacLean's dog Ch Afinmore Azufra was her Best in Show on the day.

Diana commented on how warm and friendly the show was with lots of lovely prizes and good selection of classes. New for 2019 was the puppy walk during the lunch break alongside the junior handling which is always offered.

The committee worked super hard as ever to make the day a success - my huge thanks to them for this.

Not long after this we held a Canine First Aid event in March. This was hosted by K999 First aid (Jacqui Molyneux (vet) and Mechelle Jaques (canine behaviourist and dog trainer)). The event was a great success which could easily have been fully subscribed twice over. Both Jacqui and Mechelle were pleased with our hospitality, and I have to thank Irene and Anne for their support that day to help provide refreshments including pie and peas for everyone.

The last event in the calendar was our Oct Champ Show. The club invested in new show mats and agreed all places would be offered rosettes making things a little more special. We also added special working classes and these were supported by some club members who are better known for taking part in working tests. We really value their support.

The original judge line up had to be changed late in the day. Denise Tim's pulled out due to ill health and I was very grateful to Karen Powell (Seatallan) for stepping in to judge dogs for us. Anne Taylor (Fabracken) also agreed to referee in place of Angela Williams to avoid any conflict of interest as David Craig (Angela's Foulby affix partner) was judging bitches.

Thankfully all KC admin was amended in time and the show went well as ever receiving a good entry of 149 dogs making 190 entries (71 dogs and 119 bitches). Both judges enjoyed their appointments and agreed their Best in Show to be Maxine Woodley's bitch, Sh Ch A Sense of Pleasures Ylvi at Alkhamhurst. Judges critiques were received immediately after the show which was great for our exhibitors and I thanked both judges for this.

I am particularly grateful to the show committee for supporting me at the 2019 Champ Show as due to my own health problems at that time I was unable to help set up the night before and could not do heavy lifting on show day.

I'd also like to thank our vice chairperson Linda Thompson for providing beautiful flower arrangements for both our shows, this is much appreciated along with help hosting judges and opening events.

In addition to our 2 annual shows the club also supported 2 local open shows in 2019 (Durham County Canine Premier Open and Wolsingham Show). This involved providing special rosettes, £10 prize money split £5 best of breed and £5 best puppy in breed. This is something the KC encourages breed clubs to do as it gives us the chance to help local show societies when choosing Labrador breed judges, and class allocation. Our support was acknowledged in both their schedules and show catalogues.

The judge's competency framework has undergone a KC review during 2019, and although the Club Breed Education Representative role is vacant again, Irene and I continue to monitor KC announcements on JCF and share those with club members and committee, also checking with the Breed Education Coordinator Karl Gawthorpe for his updates too. I suspect this area will continue to be quiet given the widespread cancellation of show events we've seen this year.

The committee have been a brilliant help to me all last year and I cannot thank them all enough, along with officers of the club who are always on hand to guide and support with advice.

Thanks

Denise

“As a breed club I feel it's very important that we try to help people asking for our advice on where they can find a good healthy puppy. This must be better than buyers resorting to buying pups from non-health tested parents.

For this to work, we need members to let us know where such litters are. This is a free service to all our members but unfortunately the last time someone used this service was May 2019.

We normally get about four requests a month by phone email / website. The last few months I have had at least that amount per day. Hopefully things will soon return to normal.

I must thank a few breeders that I know who help me greatly by giving me pointers to litters and for giving me permission to pass on their details.”

Linda Thompson

Unfortunately there is no report for this at present.

“Dear N&D Committee & Members,

In 2019 the Northumberland & Durham Labrador Retriever Club (N&D) submitted two items to the Field Trial Liaison Council (FTLC) agenda.

1. Increase the number of Council meetings from 1 to 2 meetings per year to truly represent the trialling community and be more effective at grassroots level. The Council did not support the idea for practical reasons but agreed that guidance about the Council’s remit and criteria for submissions to the agenda should be published in the Field Trial Newsletter. See Spring 2019 FT Newsletter, page 10.

2. The N&D asked the Council to consider changing the name of the Incident Book. In the shooting field the word ‘incident’ might suggest something major rather than just an etiquette issue, for example. The Council did not support a change of name but agreed information about the incident book should be published in the FT Newsletter. See the Spring 2019 edition, page 9 and J regulation J5.h

The main topic of conversation at the 2019 FTLC meeting was the change of criteria for existing A&B panel judges. The new criteria stated they must all attend a KC judges training programme seminar on KC J regulations for the appropriate sub-group and pass the examination, to be able to continue judging after 1st January 2022.

The Council decided to ask that the Field Trial Committee (FTC) reconsider this criteria change. The FTC have looked again at the criteria change and decided to give ‘Grandfather Rights’ to A panels judges. See regulation J6.c.(6)

Also in 2019 the N&D and I sort clarification from the Kennel Club as they had informed clubs that “once you state someone is a full member they must have all the rights associated with full membership.”

This meant that it is not permissible to state that someone is a full member but not entitled to preference in the draw for field trials. ++

Due to Covid-19 the 2020 FTLC meeting has been postponed. Hopefully in the not too distant future the meeting will be able go ahead.

*Yours sincerely
Samantha Whyte”*

++[Club rules require members to be ratified by general committee before becoming fully ratified members.]