



January 1, 2018

Dear Members and Friends of DOTC of Maryland,

I am writing to wish you all a very Happy New Year, and to bring you up-to-date on the "State of the Club" for DOTC. As many of you are aware, we have been concerned about finances since we moved to Carroll County. We moved because after two years of intense work by several Board members, nothing could be found in the Baltimore County/Baltimore City area. After 18 years at the National Guard Armory, where we were charged way below market price, we had to move.

We recently had a meeting of the Board of Governors at which our Treasurer, Kim Manuelides, filled us in on our financial situation, now that we are about half way through the program year. In a nutshell, it's dire. We have a little over \$8,000 in our account. We need \$2,000/month to rent the buildings at the Carroll County Agriculture Center. We also have expenses that we'll need to pay, up front, for our upcoming March Obedience & Rally Trial, as well as our upcoming April FAST CAT trial. We are hopeful that these two events will earn us money, but we have to put out some money, up front. There is also no guarantee that these events will, in fact, turn a profit (although there is every expectation that they will). As you can see, we do not have enough money in our account to pay the anticipated expenses for the 5 (five) months left of our "school" year.

A large amount of time at our recent Board meeting was spent on brainstorming ways to increase our income. The most obvious way would be to raise dues. Those who've remained active have noticed that dues were doubled for this program year. As any of you who train anywhere else know, the \$150/year for a training member, \$100/year for a voting member, that we charged this year, is still absurdly low. Many of us pay that much for a 6 or 8 week class, elsewhere! Your DOTC dues entitle you to all the classes you want to attend, all "school" year! That could be as many as 3/week, for all 4 eight-week sessions!

One suggestion was to ask for a 2<sup>nd</sup> semester set of dues from all active members. Another suggestion was to charge per class, as most other training groups do. Another suggestion was to ask for anyone who is willing, to make a contribution to the Club. We are a 501-3c organization, so your gift would be tax deductible. It's probable that the solution is a combination of these ideas, or one that one of you will bring to us.

The Board hopes that you will, if it is at all possible, attend the upcoming General Meeting on Wednesday, January 17, at 7:30 PM, at the Carroll County Agriculture Center. If you are able to attend, we hope that you will come with positive suggestions on how we can keep DOTC of Maryland, Inc. alive and well. It is our hope that all of us, together, can figure out a way for DOTC to, not only survive, but to flourish! After all, we are the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest dog training club in the nation!

I look forward to seeing many of you at the meeting on January 17, with your helpful suggestions. If, for weather reasons, we cannot meet that night, the meeting will happen the next available Wednesday. Remember, if Carroll County, Baltimore County, or Baltimore City schools cancel school that day, or cancel activities for the evening, due to weather conditions, we do not meet.

Thank you for your consideration of our situation.

Gail M. Phillips

President, Dog Owners' Training Club of Maryland, Inc.