

1993

## Thomas W. Merritt

Tom's interest in field trials was all encompassing. He judged in excess of 50 trials plus having judged the first National Amateur Stake in 1957, and was a National Open Judge four times. He was a National gunner. He had starting dogs in eight Nationals, and was an interested breeder. His great dog, Dual Ch. Grangemead Precocious, appears on the pedigrees of many of today's top dogs.

Retriever trials, as we know them today, are indebted to men of Tom's insight and devotion. One of the original incorporators in 1941 of the National Club, he served as its President three terms. He was also a past President of the Labrador Club. The "blue" book changed its color to red and then orange, but through the years Tom guided the Retriever Advisory Committee, developing the principles and language by which trials should be conducted. During his many years as a director of the American Kennel Club, retrievers enjoyed a strong and respected voice in Kennel Club affairs. Because of his vast experience and knowledge, he was a frequent panelist at retriever conferences.

In 1954 Tom was recipient of the Martin Hogan award honoring the person in the midwest who, in the opinion of the awards committee, made the greatest contribution to the advancement of any or all Retriever breeds and Retriever trials.

When asked in 1965 to assume the positions of President and Editor-in-Chief of Retriever Field Trial News, he provided a firm and steady influence to the News in its transitional period. His constant attention and quiet guidance reflected his dedication to the best interests of the News and the retriever fraternity.

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