

Editorial

Dear Readers,



The turn of the year and the start of a new decade are behind us, and I wish you, your loved ones and your four-legged friends all the best for 2020. First and foremost, I wish you good health, because that is what enables us to enjoy the many beautiful things in life and fulfil our wonderful hobby. Once again, we look back on an eventful year at SV. In my view, the National Assembly in May 2019 was of crucial importance for the future of our association with its regular election of the new SV board. This gives us reason to get excited and hope for the changes needed for the good for our German shepherds and their club. Why am I telling you this? Simply because the consequences of the decisions made often affect public relations. Effective PR work helps to shape a positive public image of us. Important goals include improving

our image and thus making more people interested in purchasing German shepherds – without losing sight of our loyal members, who with their idealism remain an indispensable pillar of the association.

A lot of energy goes into our efforts to increase German shepherds' public presence. The same goes for the improvement of our appearance: how we present ourselves as an association to the outside world (self-promotion). And of course, contact with the media (print, radio, television) and maintaining it. Because: 'If you want to be seen, you have to show yourself.' German shepherds are superstars all over the world, and their fans in Germany should recognise at first glance that they and their dogs are in good hands in our SV community. People have a great affinity for German shepherds. Nevertheless, we are regularly confronted with resentment and prejudice. Laypeople clearly state what they do NOT want: a strongly sloping topline and/or an angled hindquarter. They automatically associate this with illness, and they don't want to own a sick dog. These are clear statements.

If we want to stimulate people's interest in the purchase of a German shepherd and thus gain new members for SV, we have to deal with issues such as this. Good public relations can make a big difference. But there is one thing it cannot do: getting rid of prejudices associated with negative emotions if the cause of them never changes. The analyses of the past few years have clearly shown us where the shoe pinches. What we need now is a resilient SV Board committed to working together to define our direction and consistently implement it. We can only be successful if everyone is pursuing the same goal. The main question that I have to answer first is: 'Who are we and how do we want to develop as an association?' With almost 125 years of tradition, we have a big task ahead of us. With this in mind, I hope that at the end of this year we can look back on initial successes and glimmers of hope. Let's have confidence in that success.

'Courage is the beginning of action, and happiness is the end!'

Sincerely yours,

Roswitha Dannenberg
SV Press Officer