

BENCHMARKS

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FROM THE EDITOR

Special thanks to all the Wheaten lovers who have shared their rescue experiences. If anyone else has stories to share, don't hesitate to send them to me. And thanks to all the people who help with the funding for rescue as well as the work that goes with it.

Another thank you to the people who shared their pictures of the Roving and the Southern California Specialties at Great Western. Without Emily Holden, John Mandeville, Roxanna Springer and Ann Warren, there would not have been any candid photos from the weekend's events. Their pictures make the judges' commentaries come alive. I hope you enjoy them as much as I have. I missed going to California but feel a little like I was there as I enjoy the pictures.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

SHADES OF GRAY

The June issue of Benchmarks contained an article which discussed coat and its importance in making breeding decisions. The survey conducted for the article covered many topics and shed some light on what we are all thinking at the current time.

It is not surprising many of us have diverse opinions. However, I was surprised by the comments of some breeders who chose to single out dogs of Irish type, including those who have been imported, and categorize them as inferior. The article recited comments which included: "imports were not up to our (American) level in type, structure, etc., did not meet the American standard."

If the characteristics of breed type were black and white, we would all have perfect dogs. However, as in all aspects of life, there are often shades of gray. Wheatens with Irish coats and those with North American coats are not perfect. Some have square heads, large ears, short necks, improper shoulder angulation, short legs, long backs, improper tail sets, exaggerated rear angulation, large hocks, et cetera.

We do not live in a perfect world, and I believe we should refrain from trying to define one type of wheaten as superior or inferior. There will always be those who have preferences. We can either live with each other or watch the river of diversity widen and eventually separate into two breed varieties.

Nancy Draper

AKC/CHF GENETIC RESEARCH FUND UPDATE

David Ronsheim has accepted the position of Financial Officer of the AKC/CHF SCWT Genetic Research Fund. David has impeccable credentials for the job...many years of varied business experience and a love of orderly record keeping. From now on, donations will go directly to David, 1487 North 25th Dr. #11, Phoenix, AZ, 85023, who will send them on to AKC/CHF. Make checks payable to AKC/CHF so that you get the tax deduction.

This way we will have a running knowledge of the Fund's status. Thus far the fund has benefited from merchandise sold at Great Western, donations made to honor friends and pets, and \$100 per puppy whelped by several breeders. Just as soon as we have adequate seed money, we will contact AKC/CHF who will guide us to the researcher and institution best qualified to undertake the search for a genetic test for protein losing disease in the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier. We are fortunate to have AKC/CHF initiate and supervise the grants. If SCWTCA at any time initiates an appropriate project, the money will be available to the Club.

The recent completion of the canine genome makes our goal possible. We do have a way to eliminate this disease that threatens the very existence of the breed. Finding a genetic test will make it possible to substitute science for our present best intentioned, but in reality, "toss of the dice," system that is our only resource now. We welcome your support and suggestions. Our web site will be up soon, and we have splendid and exclusive merchandise for you. Let's put an end to the dreaded phone calls, the wonderful dogs that die before their time, the heartbroken owners. Pool our resources and find the way.

Jackie Gottlieb
Roni Andrews
Neil O'Sullivan

Kathy Clarke
Barb Smith
David Ronsheim

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

"To escape criticism—do nothing, say nothing, be nothing."

...Elbert Hubbard

After our Nominating Committee finished its process this past year, I promised our Chair of the Nominating Committee, Nancy Butler, I would write something about serving on the SCWTCA Board of Directors.

I have served on the Board a total of seven years in two different time periods and my experience has been that every Nominating Committee has taken their job very seriously. That was certainly the case this year. It was a difficult job for this Nominating Committee and I want to personally thank them for their efforts. I also want to live up to my promise to Nancy, in my own way.

First I want to point out something many of our membership have probably not considered, the personal cost in time and money it means to serve on the SCWTCA Board. There are three Board Meetings a year, including the one the Monday after Montgomery. Accepting a Board position is a commitment to attend those meetings. Assuming you are already coming to Montgomery, the cost for that meeting is minimal. The other two meetings can be any where across the US and probably average costing the Board member \$1,000-1,500 per meeting. So serving on the Board costs, on average, \$2,000-3,000 per year.

In the past, there were basically the three meetings. Now, the meetings never really stop, thanks to the internet. There seems to always be items needing work and the communication via the internet is at least weekly, if not daily. The commitment in time is tremendous and everyone on the Board is involved.

It is a commitment and my experience has always been the Board members take this commitment to heart. They gladly spend the time and money, because they are each motivated to do their best for the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier.

Now for some fun, I would like to try to dispel some of the myths about the SCWTCA Board. I doubt this works, since these myths have been around as long as I have been in the club and likely predate me by a very long time.

Please do not think these comments apply to this Board. I have heard these myths about every Board. I just hope you will think about my comments when you hear them about the Board 5-10 years from now.

It is important to remember, the SCWTCA Board is geographically diverse. This is not an accident. It is in the Policy Manual and is a strong recommendation to the Nominating Committee to try to bring geographic diversity to the Board. This way, every part of the US can be represented and no one area becomes dominant.

This also means that everyone in the club probably knows at least one Board member. Ask yourself if the Board member you know falls in the category of any of these myths.

Myth One: The Board has a hidden agenda.

If there is a hidden agenda, I have never seen it and I do not see how it could come to pass.

Perhaps the nine people on any given Board, from different parts of the US, who rarely see each other, got together, before they were asked to serve, and created a "hidden agenda". They then found a way to get elected to the Board and have started the implementation of their "hidden agenda."

On the other hand, perhaps the only agenda the Board has is the one at the beginning of each meeting that lists what items have to be addressed.

What is more the case is that the various different Board members each have a strong motivation. Some have had sick dogs and want to do whatever they can to avoid having more sick dogs. Some have produced problems in their own litters and want to eliminate these problems in the future. Some have experience or education that they feel will be something to offer to the health of the breed.

Myth Two: The Board knows something the rest of the Club does not know.

May be this isn't a myth. I mean, I certainly hope they do, whoever they are. Who in this Club wants a stupid, uninformed Board?

Not that the Board is necessarily smarter than the average member, but they need to be informed and reasonably intelligent to do their job. Mostly, the Board will contact the people on the various committees that really know what is going on in their areas and get the needed information from them. After a while, the Board members probably do get more informed, in general, than most of the membership.

I think the myth is that the Board uses this information for some self-indulgent objective. Really, you think so?

Myth Three: The structure of the SCWTCA nominating process allows the Board to perpetuate itself.

I guess, since the Board appoints the Nominating Committee which then nominates the Board, you could theorize the possibility of this myth.

I have never seen this happen. It would require at least five members to agree to “stack” the Nominating Committee. This is just not going to happen. It goes back to the “hidden agenda” myth and it is simply not why they are on the Board. As I mentioned earlier, everyone in the Club should know at least one Board member. Would the Board member you know participate in this type of activity?

Some final thoughts.

You may believe the situation we currently face is pivotal for the club and the breed. It is. The fact is, every Board faces important, pivotal problems.

However, the problems faced by this Board, and the last, and the next, are not problems of their own creation. They are inherited. In particular, the health issues we face have developed over the past thirty years or more. They did not start last October and the solutions will take serious open minded people that do not have an agenda other than finding a solution, where ever it is. If there are agenda's different from this one, they are not on this Board or any other Board on which I have served.

Regards,

John Giles, President, SCWTCA

THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: The Show Must Go On...

Pam Mandeville

As usual, Great Western was terrific. With SCWTCA's Roving there, we were treated to an impressive entry, capped off with Elena Landa's "Charlie" placing in Saturday's Group.

But again this year, GWT's great moment for me was at another ring. On Saturday during the Wheaten break, we strolled over to watch Kerries. As John chatted with others, I looked at the catalog...and my eyes widened. There he was, entered as a Veteran – the incomparable Mick. I nudged and pointed and within minutes, John had it confirmed: CH Torum's Scarf Michael was back where he started his U.S. career.

By the time Mick entered the ring, it was 3 and 4 deep with spectators who'd heard..."he's here!"...and **good** for those Wheaten people who watched. Mick was clearly pleased to be back...as he told us with some "woofs"...and handler Bill McFadden's grin spread ear to ear. Of course, they won the breed and went on to take the whole show...with many of the other handlers in the Group ring joining the packed ringside in rousing applause on his down and back.

Walking back to the Wheaten ring after Kerry judging, a long time, highly successful Wheaten person commented, "Every dog person should get to see a moment like that." You bet.

That started me thinking of the Wheaten show moments I've experienced. I don't mean the ones we've all had...first point, championship, group placement, specialty win. I'm talking about the ones you stand at ringside and watch and think how very lucky you were to be there.

On a cold February 1989 night, I sat on the floor of Madison Square Garden. It was *really* the floor...no ringside seat, just butt on carpet, behind the ropes at the end of the arena, crowded together at the end of another long day at Westminster.

That night, lightning struck. The breed's great winner Harry, CH Andover's Song N Dance Man, ROM, CGC, won the Terrier group. No Wheaten had ever even placed in the group at Westminster...and hasn't since. It felt like validation...even though I had nothing to do with it other than cheering. And it seemed so appropriate the first winner came from Andover and Jackie and Cindy who had put so much into the breed for so many years...and who still do.

Four years later history happened again, this time on a cold October evening. CH Shar-D's Let the Games Begin, ROM...Brett, who with all due respect to the rest of you, remains my all-time favorite Wheaten...went Group 2 at MCKC. Yeah, sure, Westminster has the "if you can make it there..." aura. But, Montgomery. That's the Holy Grail and Brett and Shari did it first and best. I look at that photo on the SCWTCA website...and I remain as awed as I was that frigid day.

In case you've forgotten...Harry and Brett share two other accomplishments. Like last year's winner, they repeated their National Specialty wins from the Veterans' class. And they are the only Wheatens to have retired the BOB trophy at the National Specialty. There's something telling about those facts...for another column.

Other than proving I'm getting old, why do I care about exciting dog show moments?

I believe in the importance of dog shows. They provide us with a way to measure our best against others' bests. They keep us honest; keep us from becoming too enthralled with that puppy whose finest virtue is his charm. They remind us of all those other breeds who inhabit our dog world and what they contribute to our knowledge. Those exciting moments, centered as they are around good dogs and hard won victories, remind us we're shooting for quality.

Most of all, dog show moments keep us coming back. How can you not, when at the very next show, you may see CoCo stand up on her hind legs in the BIS ring and bark at a too-low-flying jet? When you may see Rufus go around and realize, perhaps for the first time, you think a Colored Bull Terrier is great? When you may see a young Wheaten at her first show pull herself up looking in astonishment at a judge who had the audacity to not drop everything when he saw her? When you may see a coat or a head or a tailset that sends you scrambling for your catalog to find out who produced it?

When you do and you turn to someone at ringside and say, “did you **see** that?”...that’s the other part of dog shows. Those shared experiences bind us together in the dog world.... like a bungee cord...strong, unbreaking, always pulling us back in.

I’ve saved telling my first memorable Wheaten show moment for last. It was a warm day at the Colorado Roving in June 1988. I’d ventured there with my first show dog. It was **quite** an entry. In the Veteran’s Dog class – “Ryan”, CH Raclee Express West O’Andover, ROM, and “Doc”, CH Gleanngay Holiday, ROM. In the Veteran’s Bitch class – “Aria” CH Glenworth Andover Aria, ROM. Specials included CH Andover Song ‘N’ Dance Man, ROM, CH Bantry Bay Kashmir, ROM...and a dog then starting to make his name, CH Brenmoor’s Spark Plug, ROM. I was sure this would be a memory even before the judge gave the specialty to Sparky. When he went on to Group 1, that pretty much iced it.

When Sparky went Best In Show, I knew then I was hooked on dog shows forever.

Something else happened to me at that Roving that illustrates why dog shows have such importance to us.

I met Beth Heckermann.

I still have an image of standing ringside and hearing this Texas accent behind me briskly commenting on the action, including a story about a handler (showing a class dog at that very moment) who hadn’t been able to get the dye job right and turned the dog pink. Her poke, of course, wasn’t that he’d done the deed...or that he’d done it badly...but that he’d been so dumb as to go in the ring with the dog.

Right then, I knew we’d like each other.

We became buddies, the way people living at an 1800-mile distance with a shared interest but rarely running into each other would. Wit, brains and honesty always do it for me. She had ‘em...in spades.

Our conversations weren’t frequent enough...too much time would pass in between but then she’d pop out of nowhere about something. I relished our banter about dogs, about people and about dog issues to no end. Beth knew where the bodies were buried. As much as I would joke my favorite thing about her was that there was no filter between the brain and the mouth...she knew who she could trust and who she couldn’t.

Beth and I were in frequent contact the last few months of her life. While I wouldn’t wish on others the reasons why we were, I am grateful, especially since our communication wasn’t brought on by her illness, a form of sympathy she would have deplored. Our last few emails were about Great Western and dogs and Wheatens...and while I was scolded for not bringing back any good gossip, she liked hearing about Mick.

So I think Beth would have liked a column about dog show moments, even as she would chide me for being sappy. She knew dog shows were important to dog breeders...and good dogs and moments were elusive. When you acquire a buddy at a dog show who knows that, it’s always worth going back.

Take care, sport.

REMEMBERING BETH HECKERMAN

Beth and her husband, Bill, joined SCWTCA in 1976 the year they acquired their first Wheaten Am, Mex, Int, World CH Andover Catch That Catch Can bred by Jackie Gottlieb and Cindy Vogels. Beth usually showed their dogs. The last litter she bred was in 2002.

Beth served as recording secretary from 1984 through 1989 under the leadership of 3 presidents, John King, Cindy Vogels and me. She was a stickler for details and insisted that we always follow Roberts Rules. Beth and I always met before a meeting to review the agenda and plan the meeting. She never let me wander from the agenda. Meeting started and ended on time. We always had time left for dinner and fun. Between Bryan McNamara who was treasurer and Beth, we were kept in financially good shape. Beth edited Wavelengths from 1984 through 1997. It’s the longest time that anyone served in that position.

Beth worked closely with me on the Open Registry. We were in constant touch by email whenever we received additions from Dr. Littman. Her knowledge of pedigrees and dog’s names filled in the blanks in my knowledge. We shared the work of looking on the AKC website for dog’s names, registration numbers and birthdates. Many times we ordered pedigrees from the AKC to verify sires and dams.

Beth never minced words. You always knew exactly where she stood. There were no innuendos; just honest straight forward words.

Beth was an amazing resource for Wheaten and Club history. Over the years when I had a question of who, where or when, I would call Beth. She was so organized that she could usually find the answer within minutes; if not, she would email me the answer by the next day. It worked well. I am a "very" morning person and Beth was a night person. I'd go to bed and when I checked email in the morning, there was the answer.

In the six weeks between being diagnosed with cancer and her death, we were in touch by phone several times a week and email daily. She always kept an upbeat attitude. We never talked about her being sick, only about what was going on in the Club and with the dogs. I miss these conversations and will miss Beth even more in the days ahead when I have a question and no one to ask for the answer. Thank you Beth for all that you did for me, the Club and the dogs.

Carol Carlson

As I prepare to submit additions this summer to update the Open Registry, I really am missing my good email buddy, Beth Heckermann. Beth would have checked everything twice. With her experience, wisdom, and attention to detail, Beth would have recognized the names that need the prefix "Ch." or the suffix "ROM". Beth would fix the spelling errors (is it 's, 'n, n' or 'n'?) and fill in any gaps for birthdates or sire/dam information.

Beth would identify relationships with other dogs on the OR and add those details to the new last column of the OR. Beth would know when to change a dog's entry to all capital letters (if affected as well as sire or dam to an affected). Beth was a friend who gave me moral support when it seemed someone was ready to kill the messenger.

Beth would help give me strength as I dealt with the daily sadness of morbidity/mortality and sometimes the compassion fatigue that goes along with learning about yet another sick dog. And when the morbidity and mortality affected Beth herself, she also shared her strength of character, the no-nonsense attitude, the uplifting honesty and ethics, the life-wisdom and even the humor which her special nature could teach me. I will really miss Beth.

I am so grateful that her spirit is looking down, smiling, and even still supporting our work. Thank you, Beth, for everything you've done for so many years for the Wheaten community and for helping me personally in my life.

Meryl Littman

Friends of Wheatens can honor Beth with a donation to the maintenance of the SCWT Open Registry at Penn. Donations in any amount (deductible for Federal income tax purposes) should be made to Trustees of the U of PA with the notation for SCWT Open Registry and mailed to

*Donna Carlson
Development Office, School of Veterinary Medicine
3900 Delancey Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6010*

If you want to pay by credit card, include account number, expiration date and your name as it appears on card. Be sure to sign.

RIVETING QUESTIONS

Gay Dunlap

Breeders have been besieging me with questions. Some are riveting. Here's one: "Looking back, what do you feel you (as a breeder) and the club (as a whole) should have done differently if anything, considering the present status of the breed." Another, "What if our only hope is genetic diversity?" And another, "Why, when I inquire about the use of a stud dog, do I feel that someone is passing or failing me?"

Obviously, the first two queries deal with our situation regarding genetic disease. Responding to question #1, I would have been more concerned about the over-use of a stud dog, not just mine, but all of them. I would have encouraged SCWTCA to support the use of dogs other than champions in our breeding programs. Back then we were naïve, prideful and, in retrospect, perhaps even arrogant, that every dog in our pedigrees was a champion. In 1977, the litter that produced "Doc" (Ch Gleanngay Holliday) produced a handsome brother with a dudley nose. He was a carbon copy of Doc save for his pigment and coat. His coat was gorgeous whereas Doc's was curly and stand-away. We wrote "Dudley" off, neutered him and placed him as a pet.

Sometime in the 1980s, SCWTCA member, Dr David Lincicome, suggested that we stop throwing out dogs that were not champions. We politely ignored him and tittered about the idea. Dr Lincicome is a PhD, Professional Animal Scientist, Diplomat of both the American Board of Animal Physiology and the American Board of Microbiology. He received an award from the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy in 2002 for his work in genetic conservation. Should we have listened to him? You bet! How many times were dogs written off that could have contributed not only to the quality of our breed but also to our genetic diversity?

"What if our only hope is genetic diversity?" There is much we do not know. Consequently, we are pretty much faced with "breeding from the hip". There are so many theories. This question relates to one. It says, "Genetic diversity is the only way to go", giving permission to breed to import dogs. There is the "don't throw the baby out with the bath water" theory, divina permission to breed down from affected. There is the "better the devil we know than the one we don't know" theory

that is the rationale behind not breeding to import dogs. In point of fact, until the canine genome is mapped and until we can identify mode of inheritance, we are faced with breeding from the hip or not breeding at all.

The third question may or may not deal with our health situation. "Why do I feel as though someone is passing or failing me when I inquire into the use of a stud dog"? Judgment is inherent whether one is accepted or refused. Doubtless, it is the stud dog owner's prerogative to turn down a bitch. The reason provided, however, is often the fly in the ointment. When it is insulting or perverse, or when it becomes obvious the reason has nothing to do with dogs or the good of the breed, what then? What effect might this pervasive practice have on our breed down the road? Is it in the best interest of our breed? Or, could it simply prove the validity of Gore Vidal's theory that our culture is obsessed by the need for power over another person? In truth, we must be ever vigilant and cautious not to recreate the popular sire syndrome. However, the potential damage to our breed by refusing bitches for breeding is fundamental. It flies in the face of the very thing we should be striving to do, increase a limited gene pool. Do we as breeders choose to pull each other down or lift each other up? The answer to this may well determine the future of our breed.

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GRANDMA'S ATTIC

This could be a great thing for our couch potato dogs and their owners. Jim Tebbetts is from California. He owns Ch. Calawyn's Gala Serrana, SE, ME, CGC. Sera was the first Terrier to ever earn a leg in the AKC Senior Earth Dog Test and first Welsh to earn a Master Earth Dog Title. Sera also has a Certificate of Gameness from the American Working Terrier Association. Jim is also an Earth Dog Test Judge, being able to judge all classes in the Earth Dog Test Program. Jim was also on the committee that prepared the Earth dog Test Program for the AKC.

His sister and brother-in-law now own my Welsh Terrier, CH Andover Walk This Way. He will shortly begin his earth dog career.

Jackie

STRONG-DOG PROGRAM PROPOSED FOR BIG TERRIERS

Jim Tebbetts

Historically, Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers protected people and property, worked cattle, kept down vermin, hunted badgers and foxes, and were even used as gun dogs. As it relates to the hunting of badgers, Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers, along with other large terriers were used in Ireland as 'Strong dogs' that had to locate and engage or extract their quarry. One of their main functions might have been as a 'draw' dog, to pull the quarry from the earth. In the past, strong dogs in Ireland competed in working trials for gameness, which involved contact with a badger, and possibly drawing it from a tunnel.

These terriers had to gain a Major Trial certificate before becoming an Irish Champion. A dog was to travel 50 feet in an eleven-inch by eleven-inch tunnel in soil and with corners in it, in the time of sixty seconds; engage the quarry and 6 minutes to work him, that is bring the badger to the surface. He must hit his badger dead silent. If he yields at all, or shows bad temper, he is lifted (hatch door) and broken of his Game and disqualified. If he works well, he stays for trial time and is certified. The idea of trials is just to test gameness. Those passing would be awarded "An Teastas Mor" (or Gaelic for the big test). These tests ceased in the mid 1960's due to public outcry and reduction in the number of badgers available to hunt.

In the book "Terriers of the World, Their History and Characteristics, by Tom Horner, Mr. Horner suggests " ...in the early years of the Wheaten, breeding was done with 'fighting and badger digging in mind.' " There are a number of letters found in the magazine, The Irish Field, that reference the Wheaten's abilities as a badger-working specialist.

When the American Working Terrier Association (AWTA) devised its earth dog program and the American Kennel Club (AKC) followed suit and devised its own earth dog program, many owners, breeders and fanciers that owned 'big terriers' wanted to participate in a similar earth dog program. Well such a program is being developed for these big terriers (Irish, Glens, Kerries, Staffs, Wheatens, etc.). This event is based on the trials held in Ireland, many years ago; however, owing to modern sensibilities there have been some changes. The proposed standards are:

Tunnel diameter - 11x11 inches

Tunnel length - Up to 30 feet

Number of turns, angle of turns – Up to 3 turns, either 90 or 45 degrees or a mixture.

Quarry - Weighted raccoon or badger hide (up to 40 lbs), rather than a live badger!!!

Release point - At tunnel entrance

Maximum time allowed to reach quarry - 1 minute

Time required to draw quarry from the tunnel – Maximum of 6 minutes, for qualification

Extraction of quarry from tunnel - Required for qualification. Owner to retrieve quarry from dog.

Vocalization - Dogs are required to be silent when drawing quarry from tunnel

Like in the past, times there is no official sponsoring body for this type of program. If all goes well and we can put together a program, along with rules and procedures, perhaps the AWTA and/or AKC might be interested in adding it to their performance program. But until they do, we (terrier fanciers) must put together fun days, tests, and so forth to work out the program. This to meet the overall goals of the sponsoring organization and to ensure no harm comes to the dogs that participate.

The Southern California Den Dog Club (SCDDC) has sponsored a number of above and below ground practices for the proposed 'go-to-ground' strong dog test for the bigger terriers. At a fun day held with the GWTA Match in early April, there were about 20 dogs that tried a ten-foot above ground liner. Ten animals, which included 2 Airedales, 2 Wheatens, 1 Staff bull, 1 big Staff/small Am Staff (it was a rescue and owner did not know exactly the breed), 2 Parson's Terriers, 1 Welsh Terrier, and a Ferret went through the tunnel with no problems. Most of the remaining dogs got their heads in the tunnel, but were just unsure as to going in. At a Fun Match held in New Jersey the next weekend, numerous dogs entered the liner, to include Glen of Imaals and Kerries and drew the quarry, a weighted badger pelt from the liner.

The initial Practice Match in California was held on Monday, June 21, 2004 after the Great Western Terrier Association (GWTA) Earth Dog Test. The match was held at Canyon RV Park in Anaheim. Breeds participating included three Airedales, two Kerries, one Wheaten, and one Staff bull. Total of 7, of varying sizes (Height, weight). NONE had participated in this type of event before.

For the test I prepared a 1/2 Tunnel, of fifteen feet, with two 45-degree turns (One left, one right). The quarry, about 20-25 pounds was placed at the end of the tunnel. I had tied a rope to it, to permit the drawing of the quarry from the front to the rear.

The store sent the wrong scent, so I used coon. Will get the right kind next time. The scent was placed along the sides of the tunnel and liberally on the quarry.

End Result - The Staff Bull did EXCELLENT - it went into the tunnel with no problems. It did take two tries, along with its owner's encouragement to drag the quarry out. No major damage to quarry. We used the Staffie as a 'quarry puller' to bring the quarry to the entrance for the other dogs. This dog also participates in schuntzhound so knew how to grab onto something. After the Staffie brought the quarry to the entrance, the Airedales and Kerries were brought in, and I pulled the quarry into the tunnel, with the two Airedales and two Kerries following.

At the beginning, the three Airedales and two Kerries had no concept of what was going on. They got a portion of their bodies into the tunnel, but always withdrew. After they saw what the Staffie did, two of the Airedales had no problem with going into the tunnel. They however did not 'remove the quarry.' They laid in front of the quarry, but did not 'know' they were to grab on and remove - training will cure this. The third Airedale wanted to do 'something' but just did not know what to do.

The two Kerries had the initial confusion as the airdates. But after watching the Staffie, they knew what to do. They went to the quarry, but did not latch on and return it to the owner. Again training should cure this. The wheaten showed interest in the tunnel and the activities going on but just did not pick up the concept. Training should take care of this.

Also observing the Match was David Merriam, Vice Chairman of the AKC. He being a terrier man (White Bulls) was very interested in the program.

The SCDDC invites all owners of big terriers and their dogs, to participate in this initial program development. Should you have any questions, comments or just want more information on the program, contact Carol Hamilton at katiedid.dandies@adelphia.net or Jim Tebbetts at tigerreb@earthlink.net. We are available to have some 'fun match' play dates.

WHEATEN TEAM MAKES HISTORY TRACKING

CT Skibbreen Autumn Leaves VCD1 CDX

Susan McGee

Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier history was made on May 16th, 2004 when Judy Shortino and her bitch, Kailynn of Lindenhurst, IL, completed their **Versatile Surface Tracking** title, the first Wheaten team to receive this prestigious AKC title! Congratulations to Judy and Kailynn! Kailynn can now have the initials, "C.T." before her name which stands for Champion Tracker, indicating she has earned all three tracking titles: TD, TDX and VST. So what is this tracking all about? Researching the AKC website, I learned the following:

AKC tracking events are the competitive form of canine search and rescue. The purpose of a tracking test is to demonstrate the dog's ability to recognize and follow human scent. This vigorous, noncompetitive outdoor sport is great for canine athletes and their owners. Unlike Agility and Obedience, events that require a dog to qualify three times, a dog

only needs to complete one track successfully to earn each title: TD (Tracking Dog), TDX (Tracking Dog Excellent) and VST (Versatile Surface Tracking). Sounds simple? Wrong!

Tracking is a team sport where the handler working as a team with her dog has a real understanding of the dog's motivation and commitment to the task at hand. The handler learns to read the dog and communicate with the dog to accomplish their goal. Before a dog can enter a tracking test, it must be certified as a "tracking dog" by an AKC tracking judge. The certification indicates the dog is good enough to enter into an AKC tracking test. How does this happen?

Training! The handler works to develop the inner drive, motivation and determination necessary for the dog to work with intensity and perseverance. Hours of training, tromping through fields, laying track at early morning hours in the dark and returning later to track your dog ... lots of dedication, energy, training and conditioning of the dog and effort go into this challenging but rewarding sport.

Adding to the difficulty of obtaining a tracking title is that tracking tests are difficult to get into due to small entry limits (1-24 dogs) since so much field space is required to run a track. Once the entry closes, there is a drawing to see who gets to enter and who is on the alternate list.

The first title, **Tracking Dog (TD)** requires a dog to follow a track 440-500 yards long with three to five changes of direction. The track is laid by a human tracklayer and is "aged" for 30 minutes to two hours before the dog begins scenting. The owner follows the dog on a long leash and can encourage the dog during the tracking test. It gets harder to obtain the next title, TDX.

The **Tracking Dog Excellent test (TDX)** shows undeniably that the dog has the ability to discriminate scent and possesses the stamina, perseverance and courage to do so under a wide variety of conditions. The dog must have earned the TD title to take the TDX test.

A TDX test presents difficult challenges. Tracks are plotted to be challenging and realistic. The track is at least 800 yards and not more than 1,000 yards in length with the legs of the track at least 50 yards. The scent on the track is aged between three (3) hours or more than five (5) hours old. There are a total of five (5) to seven (7) turns including both left and right turns. There are at least two (2) obstacles to challenge the dog and handler. The purpose of an obstacle is to test: 1) The dog's ability to adapt to changing scent conditions; 2) The dog's ability to continue scenting while overcoming physical obstacles; and; 3) The dog's ability to continue scenting under difficult and varied handling conditions. The test articles consist of four (4) personal, dissimilar articles, about the same size as a glove or wallet, that are to be dropped on the track by the tracklayer at the points indicated on the judges' charts. Only the last article may be a glove or a wallet. Are you impressed so far?

The **Variable Surface Tracking** title is even more difficult! The track is between 600 and 800 yards with a minimum of 3 different surfaces (vegetation, concrete, sand, gravel) and is plotted using the different surfaces and scenting conditions. The track scent is between three and five hours old and consists of 4-8 turns (left and right) on various surfaces. The track is usually close to buildings, parking garages, courtyards etc. as the expectation of Variable Surface Tracking is for dogs to handle the diffusion of scent created by these structures. There are VST test articles to be found along the track. They consist of four (4) dissimilar, common, everyday items which can be easily carried by the tracklayer and safely picked up by the dog including a leather, plastic, metal and fabric article.

As you can see, these titles are very difficult to complete and require tremendous training and teamwork to accomplish. Congratulations to Judy and Kailynn on receiving this prestigious title. We are proud of you!

For more information on tracking access the AKC website:
www.akc.org/dic/events/tracking/getting_started.cfm

Editor's note: Kailyn is the first Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier to receive this award and only the second Terrier to receive it. She is the 85th dog in the U.S to earn the CT title. In addition to her 18 titles, Kailyn is an International Therapy Dog. She still has a few more titles to earn. Judy says the CT is the most gratifying one. In addition to her performance in trials, Kailyn is a stage star. She played "Sandy" in Annie for six performances.

Obedience: AKC - CD, CDX. UKC - CD, CDX, **Canada** - CD

Agility: AKC - NA, OA, NAJ; UKC - **U-AGI, U-AGII, U-ACH, U-ACHX NADAC**- NAC, NJC

Tracking: TD, TDX, VST, and CT (Champion Tracker)

WHEATEN RESCUE?

Genie Kline

Three years ago that would have been a joke in Alabama. Fostering or dashing to a shelter to rescue a Wheaten would have been unheard of. This last year we have had 9 in our state alone. Have I developed a passion for this? You bet I have. And I while I have fostered two dogs, I have not done this alone in our state: Amy Havelly and her friend Vicky have

fostered 6, and Ann DeFoore one. We have had a large number of rescues in Georgia, and some in Mississippi and Tennessee. This article would never stop if I listed all the rescue volunteers in these states. My thanks to all of you.

The reward for these homeless kids is that loving home that Nancy Butler finds for them. Our conversations are now peppered with wonderful tales about how well the rescue is doing in its new home. Certainly, not all of these have a happy ending. I need not go into that.

I do feel all of us have a responsibly to help rescue. But helping with rescue can wear a number of different hats:

- Yes, you might be called on to foster. Not everyone can, so don't feel bad if you cannot.
- A trip to the shelter to look at a dog to determine if it is a wheaten, If it is getting it into a boarding kennel until Nancy can make arrangements for its care is a big assistance.
- Some of our rescue friends will send a check for the care of the dog until he/she can be adopted. This is a great help for the foster family or for paying veterinary bills.
- All of the dogs come matted and most are very dirty. Some of you might help with a "down to the skin hair cut" and a bath.

We do need help and our families with rescue Wheatens are eager to help. But we what we need are **members** that know Wheatens and the wheaten temperament to help us. We have had some expert help from non-members that know the Wheaten, but we need more, as we ask so much of our rescue volunteers

The Wheaten friends that have helped with rescue are rewarded by knowing that somewhere, someone has a wonderful loving Wheaten grateful for the kindness they now know.

The wheaten friends that have helped with these 9 are rewarded by knowing that somewhere, someone has a wonderful loving Wheaten grateful for the kindness they now know.

THE WIN PUPPIES' STORY

Susan Getter, Raleigh, NC

Early last December, a woman who works for a shelter in Abilene, Texas rescued a female Wheaten from an auction, not knowing at the time that the female was pregnant. After she was checked by the vet, the woman contacted Gwen Arthur, founder of Wheatens In Need (WIN) and asked for her assistance in placing the soon-to-be-born puppies, wanting to make sure they all had great homes. About a week later, 8 puppies were born - 4 males and 4 females.

Gwen quickly found homes for all of the babies, most of them in Texas. The puppies stayed with their Mom for the first 9 weeks, and then left for a big adventure to meet Gwen and their new owners in a Wal-Mart parking lot somewhere in the middle of Texas. Gwen noted that they drew lots of attention, and she assured the people that gathered, including the local sheriff, that she was not peddling puppies out of her motor home, that they were rescues and all were spoken for!

But for three of these little pups, Molly Lee, Murphy, and Abbie, the journey did not end that day. They were going to the homes of 3 different WIN volunteers, all of whom lived on the east coast, far away from Texas!

In what has to be the longest single-person WURL in WIN history (4200 miles round trip), Molly's dad, Guy Hagner, planned to drive out and pick up his Molly, and then volunteered to drive Abbie, who was going to NC, and Murphy, who was going to live in Baltimore, along with him. Guy left his home in Pennsylvania to meet Gwen in Texas. After the other pups were picked up, they made their way back to Gwen's home in Houston for the night. The three were lucky to be able to get some extra attention from their Auntie Gwen before started their long journey the next day. Baths, nail trims, and haircuts were all part of their "spa" treatment the next morning as was a visit to Gwen's vet!

Guy and the pups then got in the car and started their first big "leg" of the journey from Houston to Mandeville, LA. As Guy described, the pups were not sure what was going on and did quite a bit of "singing" in the car - among other things, which made for several clean-up stops for Guy. The night went well at the home of his friends, and then it was off for the longest "leg" of the trip to Atlanta.

After a night in Wheaten home in Atlanta, they started off for their next "leg" of the trip - after a stop at a vet for the itches, they arrived in Raleigh, NC, and Abbie's forever home! The pups played quite a bit, and Abbie's new older brother was a bit grumpy with 3 ten week old puppies in the house. Guy, Molly and Murphy got an early start the next morning, only to arrive back at our house 5 minutes later for a crate and paw clean up - Murphy hadn't quite finished all of his business before he got in the car!

Guy was in the home stretch, with a stop at his parents' house in Baltimore to meet Jenn, Murphy's new mom. After dropping Murphy off, he headed back, finally, to PA the next day to bring his little sweet pea, Molly Lee, home to his wife and sons.

It was an exhausting 5 day trip home for Guy and Molly (and Abbie and Murphy!), and the grandest WURL of all times. We will never be able to thank Guy enough for not only making the trip, but for taking such wonderful care of the puppies on the journey. Guy is simply amazing!

Molly, Murphy, and Abbie are all settled happily in their new homes, thanks to the efforts of Gwen and Guy!

Editor's note: The Mother was adopted by a lady in Abilene who Gwen met at a show in Abilene in June 1989. She lost her Wheaten a couple of years ago and was ready to adopt an older dog.

KATIEMAE, THE FOSTER PUP WHO STAYED

Jan Griffith

KatieMae came into our lives in November, 2002 as a foster through Wheatens In Need (WIN). We drove an older fellow to Toledo, Ohio, to go on to his "forever" home. We stayed overnight to pick up a 3 _ month old Wheaten puppy with possible ectopic ureters who was surrendered to WIN in Chicago. Her older owner didn't know how to cope with an incontinent puppy.

She was a tiny munchkin that we fell in love with immediately. And we weren't the only ones. My 3 year old Liffey and 5 year old Finbar loved her as well. Liffey treated her as if Katie was her puppy, reprimanding her, playing with her and that friendship lasts to this day.

The first thing we did was to make a vet appointment. Our vet, Dr. Gardner, is very familiar with ectopic ureters and the surgery. She referred us to a specialist and Katie had blood work and an IVP. That is when we found out that Katie had not only ectopic ureters but a pelvic bladder as well. Her bladder is very small and located very far back and low in her pelvis. We were given 2 choices, put her down or put her in diapers. The first one wasn't even a consideration. KatieMae was the sweetest, most loving dog I had ever known and we were sure she would make some family a great pet, in spite of her problem.

We read every application that was forwarded to us but no one wanted to take on a puppy in diapers. I called several prospective homes in the area but no one was interested. Meanwhile, KatieMae was growing in size and in our hearts. She was bright, funny and her favorite thing was to throw herself down in someone's lap and gaze up at them. She adjusted well to a life in diapers, only pulling them off occasionally.

Terry broke his leg in February when KatieMae was 5 months old. He was confined to the sofa for several weeks following his surgery. His constant companion was KatieMae, usually snuggled in his arms. It started to become very clear to us that, perhaps, KatieMae was already in her "forever" home. Unbeknownst to us, several of our Wheaten friends throughout the country were quietly sending checks into Gwen for her adoption fee. They knew she was where she should be.

She has marched in the Pittsburgh St. Patrick's Day Parade and made appearances at local Irish Festivals with her own brochure telling the story of why she wears a diaper, cautioning people about puppy mill purchases and telling them about WIN.

It can sometimes be a bit of a challenge caring for her. She is very prone to skin irritations and infections but our vet makes sure we have enough topical medication to take care of these without a trip in to see her. She also has to be watched for bladder infections, but, fortunately, there have been none. We have put her in cloth diapers instead of the disposables because she would go through six or seven a day. She has a daily bath in the morning when she wakes up and maybe one during the day if she is in her x-pen without her diaper when we are out. Her coat has to be cut short to avoid matting since she goes right into the bathtub before any combing.

But, when she climbs up into our lap if we are having a bad day, or just runs for the pure joy of it through the house with Liffey and Finbar on her tail, we know all is right with the world and she is just where she should be, at home with us!

MAX

Eileen Sheppard

This is my first experience with a Rescue dog and I'm truly impressed with the entire operation. Connie and Charles Kirchner contacted me after I filled out an application. I had a poodle for 17 years and wanted another dog to love. They had a five year old male Wheaten who had allergy problems. His former owner could not deal with the allergies and the new baby she was expecting. Connie and Charles took him to Penn for diagnosis. After being treated and living with them for 5 months he was ready for a new home. He requires an injection every three weeks.

My cousin Jack and his wife live in San Francisco and had a Wheaten for 15 years. They just loved him (Buck) and said that if they get another dog it would have to be a Wheaten. That was the first time I heard the name mentioned.

I have grandchildren, so I wanted a dog that was gentle and loving. I really had a feeling that when the right dog came along I would know. So along came Max. He is such a good boy. It didn't take him long to make himself right at home. He has a variety of places to sleep, including my bed on occasion. I have a nice size yard; Max checks the perimeters out every day, chasing the squirrels away and anything else that is brave enough to get close. My granddaughter, Christina, comes over every day to let Max out and play with him while I'm at work. He and I go for a walk in the AM and after work (just what the doctor ordered). Max has some allergies that need medication, but he seems to be responding to all the good care he got from the University of Pennsylvania and Connie and Charles. He takes more vitamins than I do. He is just a beautiful dog and everyone in my family is enjoying him.

I live near the shore. Perhaps the salt air has helped Max with his allergies. He is doing very well.

Thanks again to the Rescue for all their fine work.

SAVANNAH SAVES THE DAY!

Cheri Steinbronn, Fayetteville, GA

On June 12, this year, we adopted a wonderful Wheaten Savannah. She was 2 years old when we got her from SCWTCA Rescue. She quickly became our very dear family pet. She is particularly devoted to our son, Grant.

On July 13, just one month after she came to live with us Savannah became our family heroine. After everyone had gone to bed, Savannah started barking incessantly. She would not stop. She woke Grant. He got up to see what was wrong. Our water heater shorted out and foot high flames were shooting from it.

Grant woke my husband up. He was able to react quickly and keep the fire from spreading. Thanks to Savannah's, our emergency alert system we are all safe.

Savannah saved the day, the family and possibly our house!

WELCOME DORY!

Paula Link

It was only a few days after we had arrived home with our Dory. She is considerably larger and younger than our other dog, and of course has her own personality, too. We were all still adjusting (in fact, we still are). Tom had decided to take his first stab at planting potatoes in our back yard. He purchased a few "new," or red, potatoes from a produce stand for that purpose, and even cut up a few from the store that had begun to sprout.

He carefully dug a space about 10 feet long and 6 feet wide in our hilly backyard, and planted his potatoes. By the time he finished it was late afternoon and he came in for dinner. Dory was in the back watching from a distance, and Tom forgot all about her.

About dark he took she and our other dog on their nightly walk and then crated both dogs in our sunroom.

The next morning he fed the dogs and let them outside. About midmorning he went to water his new potato bed, and found little white or reddish lumps lying all over the backyard! The newly turned earth was just that - newly turned, and Dory had incriminating damp earth clinging to her. She had studiously "unplanted" every potato!

Tom replanted and placed wire mesh over them, and I am happy to say since that time he managed to harvest his crop and we are enjoying the bounty of the harvest. I may even share some with Dory.

My latest Dory story, however, didn't turn out quite so happily. She ate all but two slices of a deep dish apple pie that was left on the kitchen table. We are still learning to keep a weather eye on her, or keep ALL food out of her reach, which is much taller than we are accustomed to with our shorter dog. Luckily she was not sick, and we just celebrated my birthday with no culinary mishaps!

We love Dory, and are so happy that we were able to benefit from the wonderful work that the Wheaten Terrier rescue group does. She has stolen our hearts - from her mile-a-minute tail wagging, to her incredibly intelligent eyes, to her habit of jumping up onto the grooming table to let me know she wants attention. What a treasure! Thank you.

Editor's note: Dory is one of four dogs rescued from a North Alabama Shelter. The owners dumped the four dogs, one of them a Wheaten. They were foster-cared by Amy Havelly. All had multiple health problems. Generous Wheaten friends paid the vet bills. All were placed.

Ch Carlinayer A Little Wiser, ROM "Hemingway" 1989 - 2004

IT TOOK A VILLAGE

Anna Marzolino

What can be said about a dog that had nine lives? Hemingway came to live with us in the twilight years of his life and gave our family great joy from the moment he set foot in our home. He was my son Patrick's favorite dog. He lived in his closet among the shoes and stuffed animals. He emptied every trash can he could find and he ate absolutely anything that was even remotely edible. He had a beautiful head and that head fit perfectly inside an In-N-Out French fry bag, a Breyers ice cream half gallon container, Cocoa Puff cereal box or any box or chip bag he could rustle out of the garbage or pantry. He also loved to go on walks, alone. As good as it had it here he never forgot the desire to roam. If a side gate was open, he was gone. Not that he was that fast, but he could not hear. It made looking for him hard. Apparently he was

allowed to roam the streets of his home town whenever he got the urge only to be picked up by animal control and brought to his vet's office for boarding until his owner would come and pick him up.

He taught us many things that old dogs have great worth and no matter how old they are. That old dogs can be rehomed and be happy. That maybe having unneutered dogs in pet homes isn't such a great idea. That really curly coats are like Velcro and that there is more to a dog than a coat. That no dog is truly deaf when it comes to dinner time. That if they sleep really hard and bury themselves in a closet of stuffed animals they can become camouflaged and you can needlessly look for hours for them outside. But most of all that there are Wheaten owners and breeders that are willing to drop everything to help out a dog in need. Thank you to everyone who aided in his rescue, Doug Mylcraine, Robyn Alexander, Elaine Nerrie, Janet Petros, Gabriel Rangel, Wendy Beers, DVM, Nancy Hahn and Dr. Hahn. Thank you to those who offered to send money for his care, there were too many to mention. Thank you to those of you who offered to take him in if we could not. Thank you to Dr Littman who included Hemingway in the DNA family and to our vet who cared for him late in life. A very special thank you to his prior vet who always cared for him when his owner would not. Thank you to those who were instrumental in getting his ROM so late in life. A very special thanks to those who supported us when it was his time to go: Gay, Caroline, Kathy, Janet and Elaine.

It took a village to rescue Hemingway. We thank all of you who have supported him.

MAKING BREEDING DECISIONS & THE OPEN REGISTRY

Meryl Littman

A breeder asked how the Open Registry could help with breeding decisions. Here is my answer.

Sorry for the delay, but I wanted to show Dr. Urs Giger (geneticist) your email and make sure I included his input before responding. Here's our consensus:

#1. The OR is currently of limited use to make breeding decisions because:

- a. in so many SCWT families, affecteds have been found
- b. there is not yet an age or a definitive way to declare a dog free of the disease trait (therefore, we cannot list "normals")
- c. the mode of inheritance of these clinical conditions has not yet been determined
- d. besides the genetic predisposition to develop PLE/PLN, there are probably environmental factors that are influencing the clinical expression of the disease with respect to onset, organ involved, and progression.

#2. Even though the OR is not yet as useful a tool for making breeding decisions as we would like, there are positive things the OR does for the SCWT community, including:

- a. The OR helps to stop rumors concerning which dog had which disease.
- b. The OR helps to show the extent of disease in the breed and helps researchers and funding agencies become aware of the need for further investigations.
- c. The OR helps to show researchers family patterns of disease which helps us find and study informative families.
- d. The OR increases the likelihood that owners, breeders, and their veterinarians will become better educated about these diseases.
- e. The SCWT Open Registry has received an award for this important effort.

Making decisions also will depend on the philosophy of the breeder as far as how far away from affecteds they feel should not be used in their breeding program. Some breeders may feel that they don't want to use any close relative (littermate, sire, dam, progeny) of an affected. Others might include aunts/uncles. Some people may feel that we don't know enough yet to make those decisions, and that we may throw out too many good dogs and lose genetic diversity if we cull so many dogs this way.

Your questions are important and what everyone (me too) would like to know. We're all frustrated that the situation is complicated and that morbidity/mortality continues. Sorry that our knowledge at this time can't completely help answer you absolutely.

Take care. -
Meryl

Editors Note: The award that Dr. Littman referred to above was given to SCWTCA in 1999. Reprinted from December 1999 Benchmarks.

SCWTCA RECEIVES AWARD

The Dog's Best Friend, a California based educational organization committed to improving the lives of purebred dogs through responsible dog ownership, ethical breeding practices and education on issues relating to dogs awarded The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America, Inc. its first "Award of Recognition." This award was given for our "extraordinary fund raising efforts in support of research into protein wasting syndrome and a planned open registry." The \$500 award

will be used for public education.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - DR. VADEN

Shelly Vaden

What is the makeup of the colony of dogs now? **Currently we have 13 dogs remaining in the colony. Our oldest wheaten will be 10 in February; she has PLN. We have 5 other Wheatens: two 7-year olds and three 4-year olds. One of these dogs has PLE and one has PLN. Our 7 wheagles will be 8 in October. One has PLN and one has PLE.**

How does the information you get from your research fit with Littman's work? **Dr. Littman and I continue to share information. She is collecting DNA from our colony dogs for her study. It is expected that the colony dogs will be one of the informative families in Dr. Littman's study. Results from all studies will eventually enhance our understanding of both the genetic findings and the clinical findings.**

Both you and Dr. Littman have stressed to watch for trends in results.

- Which are the important values to be tracked? **We are dealing with a disease that is often insidious in onset and slowly progressive. Because of this, I believe the more information the better. However, this does not always fit well with the budget. For SCWT that are apparently healthy, a test for urine and fecal protein loss is the minimum indicated. The test for fecal protein loss is the fecal alpha1-proteinase inhibitor concentration. Either the ERD test for microalbuminuria or the urine protein: creatinine ratio can be used for detecting excessive urine protein. The ERD test is more sensitive and will often become abnormal prior to the urine protein: creatinine ratio. A complete urinalysis is needed at the same time the ERD or urine protein: creatinine ratio is evaluated so that a positive result can be adequately interpreted. Dogs that manifest signs of gastrointestinal, renal or allergic skin disease should be monitored more closely. This may include a complete blood count, a serum biochemical profile or additional tests.**
- Over what period of time? **As this disease rears its ugly head late in life, the dogs need to be monitored throughout their lifetime, starting during the first year of life.**
- Can there be some indication of how to look at the trending? At what point do you say "this is a trend" vs. "this is an aberration"? What do small ups and downs mean in the long run. I.e. if an occasional value is up one time and down the next, should there be cause for concern? How much concern? **There is normal biologic variation within all of these tests. However, normal dogs should not have persistently abnormal results. Your veterinarians can help you with assessing the clinical relevance of specific trends.**

In the colony dogs does the dog start spilling protein before the Heska test shows abnormal. The Heska test will either become abnormal before or at the same time as the UPC, depending upon the testing interval and the rapidity of onset of disease in any given dog. The UPC will not be abnormal before the ERD test because of the methodologies used. **What is the average UPC reading when the Heska test shows abnormal?** There is no real answer to this question. Once the ERD test is abnormal, the UPC can be over a wide range of results. **With the information that you have acquired on the UPC from the colony dogs will that information be published?** Yes

When you refer to a dog as "at risk", what do you mean? How does a vet use that information with an owner's pet? With a breeder's stock? When I use the term "at risk" I am generally referring to genetic risk – meaning that the dog has PLE/PLN in the family. I could also apply the term to dogs that have allergic skin disease because I believe there may be a close association with allergic skin disease and PLE/PLN. If I were evaluating someone's pet that I believed was 'at risk,' I would tuck this information into my back pocket and pull it out if the dog started showing clinical signs consistent with the disease or if my screening tests became abnormal. I cannot make breeding recommendations.

Other breeds that have a risk of protein losing diseases refrain from breeding dogs with UPC's over 0.5. If you were a breeder, what would your cutoff UPC be? A persistent UPC above 0.5 is abnormal. I would use this as my cutoff.

The lab that my vet uses for testing has <1.0 as the standard for UPC. I heard you say that at >0.4, the dog should be watched. Can you elaborate in terms of:

- **What does "watched" mean?**
- **Are there some dogs, more than others, that set off alarms...meaning when read in conjunction with tests or other factors, the value may be meaningless, may require retesting or may require intervention?**
- **While this range may mean one thing to an owner...early intervention, etc...what message does it send to a breeder about breeding stock?**

I was fortunate to recently be involved with writing a consensus statement for the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine regarding proteinuria. My esteemed colleagues were Drs. Scott Brown, Jonathan Elliot, Greg

Grauer, and George Lees. This working group agreed that, in dogs, persistent renal proteinuria as manifested by UPC values ≥ 2.0 usually is due to glomerular renal disease. In dogs with renal failure, having a UPC value ≥ 1.0 at initial evaluation is associated with increased risk of uremic morbidity and mortality. Additionally, risk of adverse outcomes increases as the magnitude of proteinuria increases. In dogs, UPC values ≥ 0.5 are evidence of persistent renal proteinuria when they are found repeatedly in ≥ 3 specimens obtained ≥ 2 weeks apart and cannot be attributed to a prerenal or postrenal cause. The group also agreed that persistent renal proteinuria should always prompt action and that appropriate actions depend on the prevailing magnitude of proteinuria and the clinical status of the patient. Possible actions include prospective monitoring to promptly detect worsening trends in animals that appear to have stable, kidney disease, diagnostic investigation to detect any diagnosable, treatable infectious, inflammatory or neoplastic disease that might be the underlying cause of the animal's renal disease, and finally, therapeutic intervention that is meant to slow the rate of renal disease progression, using reduction of the magnitude of proteinuria as one index of therapeutic response. The treatment strategies to be considered are to feed an appropriate diet (one with reduced quantity/high quality protein with n-3 fatty acid supplementation) and/or to administer an ACEI drug. Prospective monitoring was recommended for dogs that are not azotemic but have persistent microalbuminuria or persistent UPC of ≥ 0.5 .

Therapeutic intervention accompanied by adequate monitoring was recommended after appropriate investigation and specific treatment of any underlying disease that is identified for dogs with renal failure and UPC values ≥ 0.5 and dogs without renal failure that have persistent renal proteinuria with UPC values ≥ 2.0 .

How does seeing if and/or when dogs get sick help with the Mode of Inheritance? If the dogs do not overtly manifest the disease, we cannot be confident that the more subtle findings in our dogs are due to PLE/PLN of SCWT rather than another disease. The dogs must have phenotypic expression of disease to verify the genotype.

What do you expect to learn about diagnosis and treatment from the colony dogs that can be useful to vets? To owners? We sincerely hope that the information that we gain about early manifestations of this disease will assist with early detection of disease and that the treatment modalities that we are using in our colony dogs will be directly transferable to affected SCWT.

When should an owner have ERD test done rather than sending sample to you for MA test? The ERD test is a screening test for PLN. If the ERD is positive, a sample can then be sent to us for quantification.

If an owner sends you a kit for the FAPI and MA so that it arrives on a Tuesday, how long does it take owner to get results of FAPI and MA test back? FAPI tests are sent to Texas the week they are received by NCSU. Texas runs FAPI assays starting Monday and ending on Wednesday. Results are faxed to NCSU on Wednesday evening and owners get results no later than Thursday evening. In general, FAPI results should be reported to owner on Thursday evening, the week after samples are shipped to NCSU. MA results usually take 4-6 weeks. Once our lab has received around ten samples, which usually takes about 4 weeks, the samples will be shipped to Heska. Heska usually reports results within 1-2 weeks.

How many MA tests have been completed on Wheatens? 195 submissions of MA tests on Wheatens in the population

How many Fecal API tests have been completed on Wheatens? More than 280 submissions of FAPI tests on Wheatens in the population

If owners are having ERDs done by their vets or FAPI directly from TAMU, are you still interested in their results? Yes If so, how can this information be supplied to you and what would you like? Results can be faxed to NCSU at (919) 513-6336 or mailed to NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine, 4700 Hillsborough St, Raleigh, NC 27606. Both should be sent to the attention of Tonya Harris. **How about the "big red-topped tube of poop"?** Those samples are being stored for future studies but we have filled our freezers to capacity and are not requesting more samples at this time.

Do you intend to publish additional papers on your research with the colony dogs? Yes

Editor's note: I would like to thank both Dr. Vaden for answering the questions and to the people who sent me questions to ask her over the last year.

HEEL! SIT! DOWN! STAY! COME!

Peggy Warren, Ontario, Canada

Does your dog recognize these commands? If she does, she just might be an Obedience Dog.

If you've ever found yourself at a dog show, you may wonder what's going on. A confirmation show is like those you saw in the movie *Best in Show*, or the highly prestigious Westminster Dog Show, which you might have surfed past on TV one evening. You could think of confirmation as the beauty pageant element of the Dog Fancy. But there are other elements that the American Kennel Club (AKC) and the Canadian Kennel Club (CKC) also recognize with titles, such as Agility, Field Tracking, and Obedience, to name a few. This is the first of two articles which will give you a brief insight into the world of competitive obedience trials.

It takes a lot of work to get past the basics we all started to learn in Puppy Class. We signed up for those classes because we wanted that cute little puppy to do as we asked – to come when called, to stay reasonably close to us when we went for a walk, and to sit, lie down and stay, on command (we hoped). Signing up for an obedience class might also have been a condition of our purchase agreement when that furry creature came into our lives. So, we went. But some of us ... kept on going. And so began our life at obedience trials, competing for obedience titles.

The basic AKC and CKC obedience titles are Companion Dog (CD), at the Novice level; Companion Dog Excellent (CDX), at the Open level, and Utility Dog (UD), at ... the Utility level. In Canada, when dogs receive the UD title, they are also known as Obedience Trial Champions (OTCh). There are also new transition classes, and more advanced trial classes for people who just like to keep on trialling, such as Obedience Trial Champion Excellent (OTChX), Master Obedience Trial Champion (MOTCh) and Grand Master Obedience Trial Champion (GMOTCh).

With any of the basic titles, dogs are scored out of 200 points. A passing score is 170, and the dog has to have passed the principal parts of each exercise in order to receive a qualifying score, or “leg”. Once a dog obtains three legs, they receive the title. This is virtually the same for obedience trials in the U.S. Obedience trials in Canada can be held concurrently, with two trials taking place on the same day – a little like a three-ring circus. So, on a given weekend, with two trials a day, a dog can earn its Canadian obedience title with one to spare.

Novice dogs have fairly basic routines to run through with their handlers. The individual exercises are:

- Heel On Leash (with a fast and a slow change of pace, at the judge’s direction, and at least one halt, where the dog sits in heel position beside the handler without being commanded to do so). The Heel On Leash also includes a Figure 8 (two ring stewards stand eight feet apart, and the dog and handler circle them in a figure 8 – the dog has to speed up on the outside circle, and slow down on the inside);
- Stand for Examination, where the dog is asked to move from a sit to a stand, in heel position at the handler’s left side. When the handler is ready, he or she moves to the end of the six-foot leash and waits while the judge goes to the dog and examines it by touching it lightly on its head, on its back, and at almost-the-tail. The handler then returns to heel position by walking around the dog. The dog is not to move from its stand throughout this process [NOTE: this exercise is done off leash in the US];
- Heel Free (the same pattern as the Heel On Leash, but without a leash); and
- Recall (where the handler tells the dog to sit and stay, leaves the dog and crosses to the other side of the ring, and calls the dog to come). When the dog comes in, it’s to sit immediately in front of the handler, and, when the judge asks, at the handler’s command, the dog moves into heel position, on the left side of the handler, called a “finish”. Often, dogs are trained to circle behind the handler to move into heel position, or to jump up and swing into heel position.

Two group exercises follow the individual exercises: a Long Sit, where the dogs are lined up with their handlers across one end of the ring, placed in a sit, told to stay while the handlers walk across the ring. The dogs are to stay in “sit” position without bothering their canine neighbours. That’s done for a minute (the longest minute most of us have ever endured), and then, at the judge’s command, all handlers return to their dogs for ... the Long Down. It’s a very similar exercise, except the dogs are in “down” position for three minutes.

It seems fairly straight forward, but it seems to take about a year of working hard with your dog before you both feel confident enough to enter your first Novice trial. Once you have your title, you start to train for Open, which is considerably more complicated. Open exercises, and those in Utility, will be highlighted in the Fall issue of *Wheaten Whispers*.

In Eastern Ontario, our Wheatens have done extremely well in Obedience. Most of us seem to train with the Ottawa Dog Obedience Group, run by Joan and Jack McKissock. Margaret Tims’ Belle has twice won the High in Trial (HIT) – the highest qualifying score of all classes in a trial – at the American SCWT Obedience Trial held during the American Terrier Specialty weekend in Montgomery, Pennsylvania. Belle now has both her Canadian and American Companion Dog titles.

For several years, our EOSCWTC Wheatens have been listed in the August issue of *Dogs in Canada*, which focuses on the sport of Obedience each year. The magazine, in conjunction with the CKC, compiles a list of those dogs which have accumulated the highest scores in Open and Utility classes over the year, and ranks them. In 2001, Peggy Warren’s Bailey was ranked as the 5th top Wheaten in Obedience, with only two qualifying scores! In 2002, Dan Ryan’s Winnie was Number 2 Obedience Wheaten, with only four qualifying scores. And the August issue this year will list Les Holt’s Bonnie as the 4th highest ranked Wheaten in Obedience for 2003, with only one qualifying score. You can see that Bonnie should do even better for the 2004 results! Now, a Golden Retriever handler might sniff at these rankings, because there are so many Golden in Obedience, and only a relatively few Wheatens, so our rankings with so few trials has a tendency to bother those Golden handlers. Ah, but our success has not been for lack of talent or hard work!

Article first appeared in the June 2004 **Wheaten Whispers**, the quarterly publication of The Eastern Ontario Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier Club.

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'...

California has always been a place for dreams. This past June in Long Beach, California dreams really did come true!

One hundred and seventeen Wheatens entered the show grounds for four days of stiff competition. The weather was dog show perfect – overcast skies, not too cold and not too hot. The grounds were a sea of green with the rustle of the enormous white tents in the breeze.

On Thursday was the Great Western Terrier All Terrier Futurity, the first of its kind, Bonney Snyder and Molly O'Connell were the lucky ones chosen to move on to the Futurity Group Ring. Congratulations!

Friday was the SCWTCA National Roving Specialty. Mrs. Beverly McDonald judged sweepstakes and Mrs. Sue Goldberg judged the breed. Michael La Motte and Marc Boyer hosted our SCWTCSC hospitality and it was spectacular. Throughout the day they changed the feast. It was a delicious treat! Later that evening Cecily Skinner chaired the National Roving Specialty Dinner. Beverly Streicher and committee outdid themselves with table decorations. Each table sported a Wheaten statue pursuing a "California" occupation, sport or hobby. Our annual auctioneer, Richard Urqhart, worked his magic and raised a tremendous amount for our Wheaten colony dog. Gary Vlachos was our speaker for the evening.

Saturday was the SCWTCSC Specialty. Mrs. Marcia Stanger judged sweepstakes and Ms. Christine Erickson judged the breed. Miriam Kahan organized the boutique tables and the assortment of Wheaten wares was extraordinary – everything from dog massages to Wheaten pottery and jewelry. Carol Martin enchanted us with her scones again this year. Even the judges were coming over and asking for the recipe! She had a huge assortment of savories on the table but her scones are legendary. After the show SCWTCSC held a wine and cheese reception and our annual raffle. Myrna and Jeanne Flavell chaired the raffle and continue to amaze everyone with their ability to gather such wonderful and whimsical raffle donations.

Sunday was the supported entry for Long Beach Kennel Club. Sandra Goose Allen judged breed. M.J. Carr served a farewell table that made leaving the grounds difficult.

Our weekend was dreamy...friends, dogs, competition, great food, having fun and making memories. We thank those that came and participated; we thank those club members and family members that worked so hard all year to make our dreams come true. It was a weekend warmed by love, friendship and the California sunshine. We hope your dreams came true, too!

The SCWTCSC membership

SCWTCA ROVING SPECIALTY SWEEPSTAKES JUDGE'S COMMENTARY

Bev McDonald

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for showing under me. It was a wonderful entry with so many beautiful dogs. The hospitality shown by the club was wonderful. I truly enjoyed this judging assignment. I wish I could have had more ribbons to pass out.

Overall, I was impressed by heads, mouths, and size. There were quite a few light eyes, and some questionable coats. We still need to concentrate on improving shoulders, which will enhance and improve proper movement.

6-9 Month Puppy Dogs

My first place winner, Islander Amaden Boy Toy was a very nicely balanced puppy who moved very well. Second place went to Andover Saltnease who had a very pretty head and again was a very nice moving dog. Both 3rd and 4th place dogs, Bonney Bellissimo and Lochlinear If It Ain't Brogan are very nice dogs who just need a little more ring experience.

9-12 Month Puppy Dogs

My eventual BISS came from this class. Orion's Ya Talkin To Me is a very sound and balanced dog. He made a very pretty picture both stacking and moving. His side gait was wonderful. He has very up and showy this day. Second place went to Springmoor Cyrus a very nice puppy with a beautiful head Third place went to Lontree Brogan's Irish Folly and Fourth Place to Andover Dare Me. I am sure both of these boys will have no trouble finishing.

12-18 Month Dogs

First place in this class went to Starlight Treasure Chest, a nicely balanced dog with a pretty head piece. Harbor Hill Ninety MPH was the second place winner in this class. Harbor Hill FWY Off Ramp was the third place winner in this class. Both are nice very dogs.

6-9 month Puppy Bitches

This was my favorite class. There were so many pretty puppies in this class and they all seemed to be having a very good time in the ring. First place went to Andover Big Story. She is a very balanced and showy bitch, with a beautiful head and made a very pretty picture while moving. Second place went to Bendachct Bonney Bedazzled, again a very pretty bitch with excellent movement, especially her side gate.

Third place winner was Eureka Singin in the Rain, a very nicely balanced bitch. Fourth went to Andover Wild Rose High On Life who really gave her Mom a workout in the ring.

9-12 month Puppy Bitches

My Best of Opposite Sex came from this class. Caraway Circle of Life was the winner here. She is a beautiful bitch. I was very impressed with her size, balance, and movement. She has a wonderful head piece, beautiful ears and a perfect bite. She was very up and showy this day. Second place winner was Lechaun's Just A Whisper, again a very nicely balanced showy bitch Third place went to Westridge Lady Day, a very nice moving bitch. O'Ryan N Marquee Talkin Trade was the fourth place winner. She is a very pretty bitch.

12-18 Month Bitches

First place in this class went to Bonney Marchael Sorceress a very pretty bitch. I was very impressed with her coat and color and overall balance. Second place went to Eringlo Cuddlebug again a very pretty bitch. Third and Fourth places went to Claddaghs Star Studded Ceili and Islander's Jamakin Jewel. It was difficult to pick between them, both were very cute and showy.

When the final six dogs came back into the ring I found myself feeling very proud to have had the opportunity to judge all of them. I would have been proud to have bred all of them and would have gladly taken any or all of them home with me. You should all be very proud of your accomplishments.

I again thank you for showing your wonderful dogs to me and I really did enjoy myself.

Thanks You
Bev McDonald

SCWTCA ROVING NATIONAL SPECIALTY JUDGE'S CRITIQUE

Sue Goldberg

When Horace Greeley said, "Go west, young man," he must have known that that's where the quality in Wheatens was to be found. What a beautiful entry! When I first looked over the lineup in the Puppy Dog 6-9 Months class, I couldn't believe my eyes! Like flowers in a field on a warm spring day, up had popped these lovely little puppies. Having bemoaned for the last few years the decline in quality of our wonderful breed, it was so exciting and uplifting to have so many quality exhibits from which to choose. This class set the tone for what was to be a most enjoyable assignment and a true highlight of my judging career. This was going to be so much fun!

Puppy Dogs 6-9:

1st – Bonney Bellissimo Lovely breed type, beautifully conditioned, a balanced, moderate youngster with proper flowing coat and wonderful color, square outline and a level topline. Could use a little more angulation in the rear but overall a pretty package who used himself to great advantage.

2nd – Moondance Wild Night Beautiful color, lovely length of coat, beautiful breed type. Could use a little more length of neck. An 'easy goer' who moved effortlessly around the ring.

3rd – Stratford in the Spotlight Square outline, level topline that held on the go-round, and angles at both ends. Could use a little more length of head and a better quality coat. Just 6 months old, hopefully he'll gain some more substance as he matures.

4th – Hilltop's Break a Leg Lovely coat and color. An elegant, typey youngster with a nice length of neck and a level topline. Lack of reach in front cost him a higher placement.

Puppy Dogs 9-12:

1st – Orion's Ya Talkin to Me Almost square in outline. An 'easy goer' with lovely flowing coat and a pleasing blend of neck into shoulder.

2nd – Springmoor Cyrus Moderate size with correct eye color and good pigment. Coat could be silkier. A little longer cast than the 1st place puppy. Was somewhat over trimmed which cost him.

3rd – Lontree Brogan's Irish Folly Pleasing coat and color. Could use a little more neck and better tailset.

PUPPY DOGS 12-18

1st – Starlight Treasure Chest Elegant breed type, a moderate dog with proper flowing coat, angles at both ends and a level topline. Fluid sidegait. He could use a better blend of neck into shoulder. Correct head planes, and overall a balanced, pleasing package.

2nd – Harbour Hill Ninety MPH Pretty outline, not quite the coat quality of #1. Nice topline. Could use a better rear. Correct head planes. Plenty of substance; hopefully he won't coarsen as he matures.

3rd – Claddaghs Rainbow 'Rnd My Shoulder Pretty coat and color, somewhat overtrimmed. Could use better blend of neck and higher tailset. Nice eye color.

4th – Lissadell The Powers That Be Better fill under the eyes than most. Short-backed. Could use more length in head and neck. Grey in the body coat cost him a higher placement.

Bred By Exhibitor Dogs

1st – Pitterpat's Waitin on a Sunny Day Pretty color and pleasing breed type. Better angles front and rear would make for better reach and drive. Good length of muzzle, small ears nicely set, and correct eye color.

American Bred Dogs

1st – Harbour Hill Extra Topping Needs a little training. A lovely-headed dog with flowing coat but lacks moderation. Dark eye and nice angles at both ends.

Open Dogs

1st—Caraway Spirit of Life Oozes breed type. Moderate, balanced, square in outline. Could use slightly better rear angulation. Silky, flowing coat of rich, warm color. Lovely length of head with correct planes, clean cheeks and proper backskull so rarely found in our breed. Used his ears even when moving; wonderful attitude. Held his topline on the go-round. Beautiful reach. A most appealing, eye-catching youngster.

2nd – Harbour Hill Fwy Off Ramp Nice outline but oversized. Better in front than in the rear. Pretty, flowing coat.

3rd – Eureka Keepsake Tanner Trail Moderate but longer cast. Coat could be silkier. Nice topline.

4th – Bryr Rose Willy B. Wild Appealing outline but oversized. Coat could benefit from some judicious thinning. Correct level topline. A longer, cleaner top skull would add elegance.

Winners Dog:

A most pleasing lineup that bodes well for the future of our breed. I could have pointed any one of four ways but on this day, my **Open Dog, Caraway Spirit of Life**, was not to be denied. Balanced, moderate, of correct substance in peak condition, his lovely head, effortless sidegait, silky flowing coat, and elegant outline were a pleasure to behold and to reward. He has a wonderful attitude and fits the Standard in so many ways. I look forward to watching him as he matures.

Reserve Winners Dog:

Similar in type to the Winners Dog, my **6-9 Month Puppy, Bonney Bellissimo**, has much to offer. He moved smoothly around the ring and showed himself happily and with confidence. Beautifully presented, he, too, has a most promising future ahead of him.

Puppy Bitches 6-9

1st – Bendacht Bonney Bedazzled Very typey puppy with beautiful coat and color. Balanced and held her topline on the go-round. Very smooth sidegait, and nice foot timing

2nd -- Gallagher's Sweet Dreams Efficient, effortless movement. Caught my eye as she moved around the ring. A little broad in top skull which is a common problem in our breed, but a moderate bitch with lovely coat and color.

3rd – Marymore Issey Miyake Pretty outline. Coat quality not quite as silky as the first two. Elegant, moderate. Nice blend of neck into shoulder and level topline.

4th – Eureka Singin in the Rain A moderate bitch with nice rear angulation. A bit longer cast and coat color not as clear as it should be. Tail is "bang up" where it belongs. Lovely sidegait.

Puppy Bitches 9-12

1st -- Doubloon's Solas Sorceress Elegant, typey bitch who never let down. Nicely balanced. Lovely coat and color. Could use smaller ears but overall an 'easy go-er' in a pretty package.

2nd – Doubloon's Tradition Littermate to #1. A little unsure of herself and not quite the front movement of her sister which cost her. Overall, a pretty, moderate bitch.

3rd – Acacia's Ferrari Testarossa Somewhat bigger and longer cast. Not quite as elegant. Lovely coat and color. Level topline and another 'easy-goer'.

4th – Westridge Sassy Sarah Nice topline. Could use smaller ears. Decent bone and substance. Pretty coat and color.

Puppy Bitches 12-18

1st – Waverleyglen's Dancing Queen Real 'easy goer' with a wonderful attitude. Coat could be silkier. Pretty little package who used herself beautifully and just thinks she's hot stuff.

2nd – Bonney Whiskey for Derryhumma Lovely, flowing coat, but not quite the breed type of #1. Very nice sidegait.

3rd – Bonney Prize Irish Vintage Littermate to #2. Larger bitch, longer cast than her sister. Could use a better tailset. Nice angles at both ends.

4th – Brelan's Forever Magic Square in outline, nice blend of neck and level topline. Not quite the movement of the others. Nice bone and substance.

Bred By Exhibitor Bitches

1st – Caraway Circle of Life Feminine and eye catching in a beautiful class of Bred By bitches. Moderate, balanced, with fluid, easy sidegait, a lovely flowing coat and a gorgeous head – beautiful planes and a clean, not blocky, topkull so rarely seen in our breed and a true treasure when we find it. Square in outline, wonderful attitude, a most pleasing bitch who filled my eye.

2nd – Lechaun's Just a Whisper Half-sister and very similar to #1 and pressed her hard. Not quite the bone or the head of #1 but a lovely square outline, nice sidegait. Moderate, feminine, pretty coat and color.

3rd – Pitterpat's Counting on a Miracle Gorgeous flowing coat. Longer cast than the two above. Another 'easy goer' who held her topline on the go round.

4th – Bonney Marchael Sorceress Half-sister to #3. Lovely coat and color. Also longer cast than #1 and #2. Beautiful reach going round the ring.

American Bred Bitches

1st – Stratford Spice Girl Another half-sister to my 1st and 2nd Bred By Bitches. Moderate, feminine. Could use better layback of shoulder. Pleasing coat and color.

2nd – Hullabaloo Satin Sheets Could use more length of leg. Pretty coat.

3rd – Westridge Twice as Nice My apologies. The recording is all static and comments are not discernable.

Open Bitches

1st – Starlight Jazz at the Pitapat Lovely coat and color. Somewhat low on leg and could use better rear angulation. Beautiful sidegait.

2nd – Morgan's Roxie Heart Lovely breed type, square outline. Not quite the layback or reach of #1. Beautiful flowing coat.

3rd – O'Ryan N Marquee Talking Trade Beautiful, clear coat color. Could use a little more neck and better head. Lovely eye color and pigment.

4th – Deryni Star Spangled Beautiful Irish coat with a lovely sheen. Decent mover. Correct proportions of muzzle and topkull. Nice topline.

Winners Bitch

As with the Dog classes, reviewing this lineup renewed my faith in the future of our breed. The breed type I was sure had been lost was still present! Just admiring all these youngsters made me so happy. From Bred By, a class dear to my heart, that gorgeous, typey bitch, **Caraway Circle of Life**, was just my style! From her correct, feminine brick-like head to her lovely blend of neck, level topline that held up all around the ring, her beautiful balance, effortless gait and her great attitude, all wrapped up in a silky coat that gave me goose bumps as it flowed when she moved. And what a kick to learn that she and my Winners Dog are littermates!

Reserve Winners Bitch

Also from the very strong Bred By Class, **Lechaun's Just a Whisper**. Very similar in type to my Winners Bitch. Didn't quite have the head of the Winner. A feminine, 'easy goer' with a wonderful coat. A very deserving bitch of great promise.

Veteran Bitches

1st – Ch. Doubloon's Hot N Steamy What a mover she was! Gorgeous reach and drive. She just ate the ground up as she went around the ring and loved every minute.

2nd – Ch. Gallagher's Uptown Girl Square outline. Coat quality could be better. Nice earset, good bone, size and substance.

Best of Breed

Ch. Doubloon's Playing the Field – A beautiful bitch. Moderate, typey, great liberty of movement topped with a flowing coat in wonderful condition. Nice angles at both ends with plenty of butt behind the tail. Happy, confident, a great ambassador for our breed. It was a pleasure to reward her.

Best of Winners

Caraway Spirit of Life – A happy, showy, beautifully balanced young male with much to offer the breed. He and his littermate are very similar and she pressed him hard for this win. His slightly better bone, substance and spring of rib carried him this day.

Best of Opposite

Ch. Bonney Walkin Happy – A moderate, typey dog, square in outline, nice dark eye, fluid movement, gorgeous coat and color.

Awards of Merit

Ch. Desert Rose Raz N Kane – Moderate dog, pretty color, not quite the flowing coat of the others. Square in outline, nice bone and substance.

Harbour Hill Peppermint Patty – Heavenly coat, wonderful color that flowed so beautifully as she moved. Would like a narrower backskull to balance with muzzle. Nice angles, plenty of butt behind the tail, smooth blend of neck into the shoulder. A very pretty picture.

Ch. Lakkas Ustilago – Correct Irish coat, nice head planes, lovely topline. Better layback of shoulder would give him better reach in front. Butt behind the tail. Beautiful condition.

Ch. Elora Bastion – Square outline. Good bone and substance. Pretty coat. Nice blend of neck and very smooth through the shoulder.

This Roving Specialty attracted a lovely entry with more quality throughout than at many a Montgomery, making it easy to find the moderate, elegant, silky-coated, typey Wheatens I was seeking. My spirits soared as I sorted through the classes and found so many sound exhibits who had the breed type many of us thought we had lost and the fluid, efficient, unrestricted movement we've been trying to achieve for so long.

General observations: Heads still need attention. We must breed away from the cheeky, blocky backskulls that combine with muzzles lacking in fill below the eyes and strive for clean, brick-like heads of parallel planes with well-filled muzzles of equal length to top skulls. Happily, there were only two mouths that were questionable, and almost all eyes were correct dark hazel or brown. Ears seem to be getting back to proper size. Front assemblies are improving somewhat but upright, loaded shoulders and faulty front movement still plague the breed. Toplines have greatly improved, but tailsets could be better in many cases. Rear movement is still close and often sickle hocked, lacking the drive called for in our Standard. Better rear angulation remains a goal. Side movement has greatly improved in many cases, with dogs covering ground more efficiently. Proper size and square outlines are more prevalent. Coat quality is vastly better and presentation much more consistent with our Standard than in past years.

On a personal note, up until I walked into the ring that day, I was fairly convinced that the health issues we face had so overtaken our breeding goals as to blind us to the type of Wheaten our Standard describes. Overall, I was delighted and encouraged to have such lovely examples of our breed to judge. It inspired me to deliver this important message to my fellow breeders and especially to those Wheaten fanciers who missed this Specialty: We must be vigilant in retaining our breed type. We must not sacrifice the look of this beautiful breed in our quest to expand our gene pool. Good health and correct breed type are not mutually exclusive! The quality of the entry at this Roving National Specialty proved that.

Not long ago, an exhibitor who had brought her five closely related Wheatens to a show where I was judging nearly bowled me over when she said of her dogs, "I know they're ugly, but they have the *cutest kidneys*."(!)

Indulge me, please, as I mount my soapbox. Before we change our name to the 'Kidney Terrier' or the 'Gut and Kidney Terrier', here is my official proclamation from one who's been following this breed around since 1968:

A Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier is more than just a gut and two kidneys!

Of course health is important. So is temperament. So is construction. So is efficient movement. So is a soft, silky flowing coat of clear, warm wheaten color. And so is BREED TYPE.

Remember what Dr. Padgett said at Montgomery a few years back? "Everyone is a carrier for something." Let's breed intelligently, study the pedigrees and assign risk. But let's also remember to unbury our noses from those pedigree papers and the lab reports and look up and see the whole dog.

The many fine examples of Wheatens at the Roving are evidence that we are regaining the breed type we had lost. We must make sure it doesn't escape our grasp again. I'll dismount the soapbox now.

My deepest thanks to the SCWTCA, the SCWTC of Southern California, and the show committee of Great Western for their warm hospitality and a wonderful weekend. Thanks also to my capable stewards for keeping things moving apace. The dinner was a great opportunity to meet and greet old friends and new, the presentation on breed history was well done and brought back many memories, and the auction was such fun. After a lively bidding war, I can safely report that the swimming pool Wheaten is happily ensconced in the warm Florida weather where he belongs, instead of freezing his buns off in Minnesota. My thanks to my friends who came just to watch and show their support, and to my wonderful husband, Harvey, who really wanted to attend but stayed home puppy sitting, instead.

A special thank you to the entire membership of SCWTCA. I was honored to be selected for this assignment, flattered by the size of the entry, and thrilled by the depth of quality. Thank you all -- you made my heart sing!

Sue Goldberg



GREATER ST. LOUIS SPECIALTY SHOW

Friday, May 28, 2004

Renee Kotaki, Show Chairman

This year, the St. Louis Wheaten Club's Specialty was held in conjunction with the Rolla Kennel Club all-breed show at the beautiful grounds at Purina Farms in Gray Summit, Missouri. The weather cooperated throughout the 4-day show weekend. All enjoyed the coffee and sweets each morning before showing and the hospitality offered by the Club members throughout the weekend. Thanks to all donors to the Specialty raffle which raised over \$500 for Wheaten health. It was a very special weekend.

SCWTC of Greater. St. Louis SWEEPSTAKES - May 28, 2004

JUDGE: Elizabeth Verner

Best in Sweepstakes: **Soho Stratford Cayenne Pepper** (CH Bonney Midnight Spice Dreams x Caillan Stratford Sioux Spence Thriller). Bred by Sandra Scott & Mark Hogan & M O'Connell & L Sarff. Owned by Meg Ryan & Sandra Scott.

Best of Opposite Sex: **Stratford Spice Girl** (Ch Bonney Midnight Spice Dream-Caillan Stratford Sioux Spence Thriller). Bred by Sandra Scott & Mark Hogan & M O'Connell & L Sarff. Owned by Molly O'Connell & Monica Lamontagne.

REGULAR CLASSES

SOFT COATED WHEATEN TERRIERS

JUDGE: Ms Peggy Beisel-McIlwaine

Winning from the Bred-By Class - Winners Bitch, Best of Winners, Best of Breed - Eringlo Cuddlebug (CH Heartstring's Toast to Tara x CH Saddlebrook Eringlo I'm Fancy). Bred and owned by Dennis & Cindy Shea.

Winners Dog - Whindancer's Fascinating Rhythm (Soldiersong' Fianna Boy x CH Whindancer's Emerald Shoes). Bred by Susan Rathiffe. Owned by Susan Rathiffe & Karen Rechberger.

From the Veteran Dog Class - Best of Opposite Sex - CH Babalu Gas House Gang (CH Shar-D's Let the Games Begin x CH Lontree Lacy Valentine). Bred and owned by **Kerry Kuehner**.

St. Louis Specialty Companion Shows Results

Rolla Missouri Kennel Club (2)

Saturday, May 29, 2004

Judge: Mrs. Robert D. Smith

BOB, BOW, WD: **Michaleen's Killarney Spirit**, Owned by Patricia Weir and Mike and Elaine Smith

BOS, WB: **Stratford Spice Girl**, Owned by Molly O'Connell and Monica Lamontagne

RWD: **Caillan Great Expectations**, Owned by Dorothy Hargrove

RWB: **Caraway Circle of Life**, Owned by Beth Verner and Betty Chapman

Mississippi Valley Kennel Club (1)

Sunday, May 30, 2004

Judge: Mrs. Sandra Goose Allen

BOB, BOW, WD: **Heirloom Ever Ablaze**, Owned by Patrice Chevalier, Robert Bergman and Dianna Thruston

BOS, WB: **Caraway Circle of Life**, Owned by Beth Verner and Betty Chapman

RWD: **Caraway Celebrate Life**, Owned by Beth Verner and Betty Chapman
RWB: **Saddlebrook's The Great Gazoo**, Owned by Stan and Jinx Moore

Mississippi Valley Kennel Club (2)
Monday, May 31, 2004
Judge Dr. Bernard L. Esprite

BOB, BOW, WD, Group 4: **Caraway Celebrate Life**, Owned by Beth Verner and Betty Chapman
BOS: **CH Eringlo Alwaz An Angel**, Owned by Dennis and Cindy Shea
WB: **Michaleen's Song of Kerry**, Owned by Patricia Weir and Pegi Shaner
RWD: **Michaleen's Killarney Spirit**, Owned by Patricia Weir and Mike and Elaine Smith
RWB: **Eringlo Cuddlebug**, Owned by Dennis and Cindy Shea

A MIRACULOUS RECOVERY

Dee Robbins, Prospect Heights, Ill.

It started with a small very mild seizure of very short duration. I didn't even see it but was told about it by my husband, Art. Two weeks later, my almost 10-year-old Fiona suffered another such seizure. Her rear leg stiffened, her head pulled back slightly and when it was over she had a little froth at the mouth. She had her third one the next morning but by that time I had an appointment with my vet. My first thought was epilepsy - at that time I didn't know dogs that age didn't usually get epilepsy. Her bloodwork all came back normal and I was given some Phenobarbital but my vet, Dr. Judy Cole, (Bless her heart) told me if it wasn't epilepsy the meds wouldn't work. Her fourth seizure occurred that same afternoon but again by that time I had already made an appointment for an MRI at one of the specialty clinics in our area. We got her in that night as an emergency to the Veterinary Specialty Center which is about a 30 minute drive from our home. I don't believe in a "wait and see" attitude. The next day we were told the results of the MRI - it was a brain tumor on her left side about 1/3 the size of her brain. It was benign, so it wouldn't have spread to other organs, but would have continued to grow if not removed. We opted for immediate surgery which was set up for the following week but then delayed as they wanted to run more tests - an ultrasound and some fluid and lymph node tests to be sure nothing else was going on.

Once everything showed clear, surgery was once again scheduled. The surgeon, a neuro specialist, had done about 10 such tumor removals but mostly on cats. Dr. Benoit Charette assured us the surgery was possible, although difficult. It would involve removing a part of her skull and replacing it with a very thick muscle that would eventually harden. Fiona was under for about 2 hours and in recovery for another hour or more. It was the longest stretch of time I think I have ever gone through. When we were finally called into the waiting room to speak with the doctor we learned she had come thru the surgery well BUT had lost the sight in her right eye and was unable to move her right rear and front legs.. They didn't know how permanent any of her disabilities would be. We were grateful she was still alive and were more than ready to deal with whatever was ahead. We were shown the "tumor" which looked like small pieces of ground beef. I guess I looked surprised, especially after having been told how big the tumor was, but the doctor said a dog's brain is very small. Not too small to run a household and their humans was my thought!

Fiona was given intensive physical therapy, also at the Specialty Clinic, following her surgery. She came down with a bout of pneumonia so needed additional meds for that. She was put in a sling several times a day to encourage her to move her legs and she was given water therapy. We were allowed to be present for this and found it very interesting. It's a little treadmill in a tank. The dog is taken into the tank with a sling under it and the tank fills with warm water. The therapist then holds the dog on the moving treadmill forcing them to move. Fiona's first round went three minutes but it took about 20 minutes just for setup!

They were very nervous as Fiona still had pneumonia and they weren't sure what her reaction to the water therapy might be. She did better than they expected. I was all for having another session the following day but learned it was only given a couple times a week at most.

By the time she was released she still couldn't walk on her own but needed a harness up front and a sling around her rear. She had been in the hospital 19 days by that time. We had visited her every day, sometimes twice a day, evidenced by the fact we knew the entire staff on a first name basis and Fiona was the darling of the clinic. We also began to get a clearer picture of the fact that both the doctors and staff really didn't think she was going to make it. We never thought she wouldn't.

On the day she left she had us bring a large decorated cake in for the staff as a THANK YOU! The doctors and staff couldn't have been nicer or more caring--both to Fiona and us. Once home she seemed to perk up but after the second day decided to stop eating. She was still drinking water but nothing we tried to tempt her with seemed to work. Dr. Sammut, the doctor assigned to her at the Specialty clinic, prescribed two different Medications to spur her appetite and by day five she was back on track.

Her medications were to be given four times a day so we decided to exercise her at those times as well, just to get into a routine. Our day started at 6 a.m. and there we both were in our driveway, Art holding a leash to her harness and me

walking behind with her sling. At first we only went a short distance but extended the distance as time went on. In the beginning we went around our circular driveway once but by the third day we were rounding our driveway about 3 times. As she got stronger, we tried to eliminate the rear sling but without it Fiona kept collapsing. I could hold it very loosely and she would walk, so I got an idea from a "TTouch seminar" I had once attended and wrapped an ace bandage around her rear where the sling usually was. It worked and eventually I withdrew the sling and just left the ace bandage on. When she went back to see the doctor for a re-check about 2 weeks later they were amazed at how well she was doing and even asked if we had been bringing her in for therapy. We assured her we had done it all on our own at home. Within a few weeks of leaving the hospital Fiona was declared healed enough to start her radiation treatments. This was to prevent any cells left from the surgery (they had gotten better than 95% but not all) from growing back. It was decided that she would be coming in five days a week for three weeks.

By this time she was able to walk on her own, get up and down on her own, and was doing well up and down stairs with just a little help. She had also started barking once or twice. She still had some residual effects from the surgery--primarily the loss of sight in her right eye and a loss of feeling on the right side of her face.

She finished her three weeks of radiation with very little side effects. She did have some slight burning in the back of her throat and tongue but was given a mild pain medication for it. She has had her two week post follow-up with Dr Sammut and all is going well. She is still blind in her right eye but is gaining sensation back on the right side of her face. She walks and runs normally and can do stairs with the best of them. Unfortunately she has also become somewhat "reversed" on her ideas of where to go potty. She now does nothing outside and our family room looks like an explosion in a towel factory BUT we have her and hope to have her with us for many more years. She truly is our little "MIRACLE DOG".

Some of you may be wondering about the cost of all of this and I will say it has been very substantial (\$20,000.00) by the time the radiation will be finished but what price can you put on life? We are so very grateful to have her with us and are hopeful for many more quality years to come.