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With regard to our Breed Standard and the process of Breed Standard Revision, the American Kennel Club assists parent breed clubs with the careful guarding of each breed standard. These documents are maintained in the AKC archives and regulated by requiring parent clubs to wait five years for any further revisions once a change is made. This insures stability in the standard and causes parent clubs to be very thoughtful about any proposal it presents to the membership. So it is with your club. Over the recent years there has been discussion within our club about updating the standard with respect to issues of coat texture and tail docking.

In response to these concerns, the Board asked three respected breed judges: Gay Dunlap, Cindy Vogels and Gary Vlachos to review our breed standard and to provide their recommendation. Based on this recommendation there is a proposal, approved by both SCWTC Board and the AKC, to be presented to the membership. While the language change is relatively modest, it does open the standard to allow for natural (undocked) tails and changes the language on coat faults from curly to kinky/frizzy.

Here is the rationale for the changes as presented to the Board by this three-member review committee:

"Recently we were asked by you to address in some format (possibly a letter to breed approved judges) the continuing controversy over undocked tails.

While we began in earnest with the idea of drafting such a letter, it quickly became apparent to us that a letter would be a "Band-aid" at best, and would not serve the breed, breeders, and judges into the future.

Judges do not take letters with them to the shows... they take their Standards. Breeders don't quote letters or amplifications. They quote the Standard. To open the Standard is not to be taken lightly and, trust us, we have been very serious in our consideration for this proposal.

This proposal allows us to remain faithful to the original blueprint and heritage of the breed by acknowledging the "preferred" docked tail, but also acknowledges the inevitability of undocked tails in the ring.

We have chosen to take the position of allowing "undocked" tails in our Standard one step further by describing the preferred genetic expression of a full tail. We feel strongly that, as breeders, this change is essential. As judges we feel too many parent clubs have changed their standards to allow for the undocked tail, but have failed to describe such tail in its ideal state. By doing this we have taken a proactive approach that if the day arrives in our sport when docking is banned, we need only to drop the "docked tail is preferred" from the Standard.

This proposed action of opening the Standard also allows us the opportunity to correct wording in the description of the coat and drop "curly" for the more accurate terms of "frizzy" and "kinky". Most breeders (including some of the original architects of the American Standard) agree this refinement of wording is long overdue.

We hope this proposal will be considered with the same gravity with which we addressed it, and that the Board will come to the same conclusion we did: that with these changes to our standard the breed can move confidently into the future while respecting its past."

To change the breed standard, two-thirds of those members who vote must approve the proposal. Please watch for your ballot on the proposed breed standard revision with the specific language changes recommended. This is important; this is your breed standard. Vote!

Betty Chapman

At the same time, I am disappointed in the lack of interest the membership displays in using our publication to showcase their dogs. With board member Anna Marzolinno’s assistance, we now have a database with the email addresses of every person approved by the AKC to judge our breed. This includes foreign judges. As soon as Benchmarks is up on our web site, these judges will receive an email with a link taking them directly to this issue. No muss, no fuss. Just a click and they are there, enjoying the publication in full color. The December issue was the first to be sent in this manner and the feedback was very complimentary. I would hope this might spur more of you on to use Benchmarks as the best medium for showing off your lovely Wheatens. Note that I use the word “showcase” rather than “advertise.” Perhaps if we made the distinction between the two words, our collective points of view might change. The definitions for both words follow:

showcase (shoh-kas) verb: to exhibit or display.

advertise (ad-ver-tahyz) verb: to announce or praise (a product, service, etc) in some public medium of communication in order to induce people to buy or use it.

When we buy a page in Benchmarks, it is not our intention to sell anything. Rather we are proudly announcing a special win, a dog that we are particularly pleased with, a picture we want to share with others - fellow breeders, exhibitors and judges. We hope that judges will be suitably impressed and remember our dog, should we show to him or her in the future. When we showcase our stud dog, the intention is to announce his potential availability, not necessarily to sell his services.

And there is another aspect of this that perhaps one may have failed to grasp. Many of you that compete in the southeastern US, in the Pacific Northwest, in the midwest, the northeast, the southwest, seldom, if ever, have the opportunity to see the dogs being shown in other parts of the country. As a result many of us could have a skewed view of the breed in general.

I personally love going through Benchmarks and looking at all the color photos of our dogs from different parts the US. Please consider sharing your dogs and their wins, or pictures of your up-and-coming youngsters, with your fellow breeders and exhibitors.

Wishing you well in the months that follow!
A fter three perfect rounds at the Eukanuba Agility Invitational in Long Beach, California, (December 14 and 15) Lorri Ligato was approached by the Ohio and Pennsylvania contingents. No longer competitors, their encouragement for the final round ran the gamut from... “Just run perfect.” (Yea...right!) to... “Relax.” (Ditto). The dogs attending this national event are the top 5 of their respective breeds in agility. Malley, the number one Wheaten Terrier in the nation, routinely competes against the crème of the crop in this geographical hotbed of agility dogs. Lorri’s customary weekend competitors include the usual breeds that normally place in agility trials, such as Shelties and Border Collies. Wheaten Terriers sometimes have difficulty making time and often jump with a vertical bound. Somehow, Malley has changed that image and was on the verge of becoming the first Wheaten Terrier to make the Invitational finals. But, if Vegas was giving odds on this feat, he would have been categorized as a “long shot.” Not only was accuracy a requirement, but any of the top 12 sixteen-inch dogs to make the finals would also need the importance of this final run. It wasn’t pretty, with two heart-stopping “almost” faults, but Malley had completed four perfect rounds, and did so with the speed to finish seventh in the nation. He had beaten the odds. Unfortunately, the finals, which were filmed by Animal Planet, showed Malley and mommy crashing and burning, which left Malley with a final twelfth place in the nation. Not too bad.

Lorri’s goal is to encourage more Wheaten owners to get involved with agility. She is a loyal defender of the breed and doesn’t accept the fact that Malley may be one of an agility kind. She believes that there are other Wheatens out there with similar drive and abilities. After all, these Irish beauties were hard working farm dogs just like Shelties and Border Collies in years past. But, with a new addition to the Ligato clan, Wheaten puppy, Mac, Lorri feels she has her work cut out for her. She’s hoping he’ll catch the “agility bug” but even if the new Irish guy chooses dock jumping, Lorri can’t think of a better way to spend a day...running with her best friends.
Members of the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of Southern California represented the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America at AKC/Eukanuba Invitational’s Meet the Breed Booth on December 13 and 14 at the Long Beach Convention Center in Long Beach, CA. Our booth position was at the very end of a long row of booths at the end of the exhibits. The AKC positions these booths in alphabetical order and it seems they try to rotate booth positions each year. We did get a moderate amount of traffic considering the location. We handed out “THE SOFT COATED WHEATEN TERRIER” brochure and referred everyone to both the local club and national club websites.

Joan Johnson and Carolyn Filling did the setup and design for the booth, as shown in the photo. “Wheaten World” was our theme and pictures of Wheatens herding, at play and with children demonstrated to our visitors the versatility of the breed. Also included on the wall of photos was a Wheaten before and after grooming. Several hours went into the design and set up of this booth. One club member generously donated handmade holiday scarves for the dogs to wear in the booth, and other members lent various decorative items to give the booth a ‘leprechaun’ look.

Jackie Whitham was responsible for overseeing the event and for scheduling local members who were willing to act as goodwill ambassadors and share their Wheatens with the public. We had fourteen local members volunteer to participate over the two-day event, from 10 to 4 on Saturday and Sunday. There was a $20 fee for entry into the event and a $10 fee for parking. We were given a limited number of passes. Consequently, our members donated both their time and money, which was much appreciated.

Kudos to Joan and Carolyn for their time and energy in providing the decorations. The design was great but kept simple due to funding and the amount of time and energy needed, especially so close to the holidays. We have not been competitive for the ‘best decorated booth’ prize since we are limited monetarily. It is recommended that the National Club help with suggestions and funding.

The AKC is expecting the event to be even larger in 2009 as it will be celebrating the AKC 125th anniversary. Unlike 2008, the entries will not be by invitation only. The show will be open to all, preceded once more by three all-breed clubs on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. The clubs are the Kennel Club of Beverly Hills, Los Encinos Kennel Club and Long Beach Kennel Club.

“Until one has loved an animal a part of one’s soul remains unawakened”

Anatole France
CH WILDFLOWER COLUMBINE  “CRYSTAL”  
September 20 1993  
Ch Legacy Wildwest Wildflower X Ch Wildflower Camellia

Grandma Crystal, the Grand Dam of our home, doesn't know that she is 15 years old. Crystal sometimes looks at things that only she can see and sometimes has a little problem trying to get up quickly...but she's going strong, especially when she runs around the house, chasing the good smells of food in our house.

We love you Grandma Crystal!

Bonney & Chuck Snyder

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CH DERRYHUMMA CALLIOPE  “PIPER”  
Ch Legacy In Shining Armour X Ch Derryhumma Foxy Slattery  
November 14, 1994

Piper is not my first Wheaten but she was my first bitch. I like to think of her as the best hostess you could ever want. She is always glad to have visitors but will bark at you when you get ready to leave. When other Wheatens visit, Piper is more than happy to let them rule the roost and play with all of her toys. She would just prefer not to have to play with them and you'll find her in her crate, thank you very much! Many Wheatens have tried to entice her out of her crate by barking at her but Piper just sits in the back and ignores them until they finally go away. It works every time. I just make sure she is summoned when the cookies are given out!

Piper gives me great joy and will always have a special place in my heart. Even though she is starting to slow down a bit and is not seeing as well as she once did, Piper still loves to go for walks and has not missed a meal yet!

Pat Rutherford  and Robyn Alexander

continued on page7
to our seniors, 14 years or older, continued...

CANADIAN CH HONEYCOMB'S JASMINE JUBILEE  
"JASMINE" OR "JAS"

January 29, 1994

Am Can Ch Legacy Wildflower Wizard
X
Can Ch Pakenham’s Farrah the Fairest

Jasmine was 14 on January 29 and we are looking forward to her 15th birthday. Her recent blood and urine tests are normal and not changed from those taken in her youth. Her appetite is good and she still moves about from upstairs to downstairs. The photo was taken on November 14th after her weekly grooming session. She still loves to greet company and is friends with my two Cairn Terriers. She loves to have her ears washed by the male puppy. She barks when she hears the front door open when I have been away on a trip. Jasmine is a love and has surprised us with her good health in her senior years.

Anita Roy

STARLIGHT ON ZOE'S BRYR ROSE  “ZOE”

March 6, 1993

Ch Bryr Rose Aynsley's Sorcery X Ch Starlight Champagne and Roses

Zoe is our second Wheaten Terrier. She came from Ann Leigh’s Starlight kennel here in Los Angeles. Our first Wheaten was a wonderful male named Ch Bryr Rose Rousseau’s Gypsy from Jeanne Ferris. When Zoe, much smaller than Rousseau, arrived at our home it was clear, even though she was just 2 months old, that she was to be the boss and Rousseau was more than happy to oblige. Zoe is the ultimate happy dog, and her tail wags almost constantly. Even now, at almost 16 years and getting quite frail, her tail still wags when we are around.

Now that Rousseau is gone, Zoe's companion is a 3 year-old Lovebird named Max. Max is completely fascinated by Zoe and spends as much time as she can riding side-saddle on Zoe's back. Zoe has given up being the top dog, handing off that honor to Max who even sits on the edge of Zoe's food dish while she eats! Zoe just ignores Max. It's a great source of amazement and amusement for us to watch them interact.

In the photo, Zoe, in need of a good grooming, stands with Max on her back, wearing her fancy no-slip boots.

Elliot and Nita Midwood

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DIVINE MISS MAGGIE “MAGGIE”
February 24, 1995

Divine’s Dandy Dog X Divine’s Career Girl

“Divine Miss Maggie” or as we fondly call her, Maggily Mae Moo, came into our lives as an eight-month-old, adopted because her family experienced a divorce and could not keep her. She lives with my parents, a retired couple, Jack and Ruth Waldron, who have enjoyed the company of a Wheaten since the 1980’s. All parties involved hit the jackpot when Maggie joined the family. She gives her love freely and with all her Wheaten antics, she makes everyone smile! Dad picked up a clipper and shear, and learned how to give Maggie a sporty look for all her winter and summer activities. Mom lovingly prepares a homemade meal every night, consisting of organic grains and veggies and hormone and antibiotic free meat, we should all eat so well!

As a puppy she had the most powerful Wheaten greeting I have ever seen. On several occasions, she added some temporary eye color to my mother’s face, and always managed to jump and pounce just below the waist on dad. Dad has always referred to Maggie “as a piece of work”. Energy and enthusiasm abounded with Maggie in her youth, and with the help of acupuncture and chiropractic adjustments, she is still able to ‘levitate’ from the ground to greet her loved ones, no matter how long or short the absence. Maggie lives in SLC, Utah most of the year and summers on Guemes Island, WA. Snow tunneling and long walks with Dad are her favorite hobbies in the winter months and she whiles away her summers chasing seagulls on the beach. Occasionally Maggie likes to hang out on her cousin Hannah’s boat; the two love to let the sea air blow through their whiskers! Maggie has a younger sister, Moqui, (another rescued Wheaten) who accompanies her on her adventures. Happy Birthday, Miss Maggily Mae Moo!

CH BRYR ROSE CAPTIVE HEART “MINETTE”
February 16, 1995

Ch Legacy The Buck Starts Here X Ch Bryr Rose Moonstone

Our 4-pound Yorkie, Tessa, often hid her treats under the towel placed in her kennel only to be uncovered by our Wheats, Minnette and her mother, Moonstone.

Pictured here is Minnette taking a nap in Tessa’s crate after a raid. That’s Tessa, of course sitting on top! Showing no signs of slowing down, Minnette enjoys playtime especially with her 9-week-old great granddaughter.

Owners Carolyn Garrett and Jeanne Ferris
to our seniors, 14 years or older, continued...

VANDERBEAR’S GRETA GARBO “MURPHY” and VANDERBEAR’S CHARLIE CHAPLIN “BARON”

October 26, 1994

Reginald Bently Vanderbear X Vanderbear’s Cassiopeia

Murphy and Baron are so much more than litter mates.

The entire litter of 8 pups took a pet tricks class together, at 8 weeks, the beginning of many training sessions for Baron and Murphy.

Despite the early start with training, Murphy never, ever has come when she was called. I had to get another dog, who would come, and she would come to see why he came. Fourteen years later, stubborn as ever, Murphy has slowed down, but she is healthy, aside from some arthritis in the back end.

She loves to go to the park, or anyplace new. She loves new things and new people. She doesn’t want to be groomed anymore, so we keep her hair short. She’s still beautiful.

Baron was the first, last and only dog for Mike, Judy and Stephanie Holser. Steph was 8, she wanted a dog, and the rest is history. Like Murphy, Baron is slowing down, now, after going strong and staying healthy for so many years. Like his father, Bentley, Baron is starting to have issues with his neck and back. Baron still plays with his toys, loves his walks and sleeps with Mike and Judy, but no hardwood floors, please.

Barbara Kinnison and Mike & Judy Holser

CH MANSURA MORNING HAS BROKEN “RANDEE”

March 18, 1995

Ch Paisley Midnight Sun X Ch Mansura Andover Lady Boss

Randee is my special girl and was a gift to me by my breeder. At 9-months of age she finished her championship with three majors!

As the light in my life, and never far behind me, Randee has slowed down considerably but she never misses a meal nor an opportunity to search for purses on the floor for maybe a treat or two.

Happy birthday to my very smart, wise and precious Randee.

Lynn Cone

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CH SHAR-D’S SIMPLY RED O’ERIDANUS “Hunter”

January 10, 1995

Ch Shar-D’s Let The Games Begin X UK Ch Eridanus Lady In Red

First, let ME introduce myself to you: My name is HUNTER and I’ve recently turned 14. I was going to let my huMom take the lead on my writing this but since I am a Wheaten, well...I lived with my breeder ‘Mom’ during my show career and it didn’t take long to get a CH in front of my name. One day, Mom’s dentist came to the house and it was love at first sight, him and me, that is. Mom did not want me to go, but she allowed it on a trial basis. My people Dad took me to the office when we were in Cleveland. I got to play BIG SHOT and knew all the patients and love them all (even the cranky ones.) I think sometimes they came to see me rather than to get their teeth fixed.

In my younger days I had a thing for cats and squirrels…I wanted to kill all of them. I’ve mellowed out somewhat now, either that or I can’t see as well.

I am a well seasoned traveler. My human Dad lives in Cleveland and Ft. Lauderdale so I get to fly back and forth every month. Age has not dampened my enthusiasm for flying (see photo) and those people at Continental are OK!!! They all know my name and give me treats!

I am also a cancer survivor so, all you guys and girls out there who are sick, listen to me. Go to Dr Matt and Dr Randy and you’ll be fine. Hang in there and do what you’re told. I plan to be around here for some time, yet. One more thing…my human always says I’m too smart for my own good! I just try to make everything all right when things get too tough.

Love to you all, HUNTER

(Lives with & loved by Dr Michael and Dr John; bred by Dee Boyd)

CH EMALOT HOKEY COKEY “Lottie”

January 20, 1995

Am/Eng Ch Shar-D’s Stunt Man X Emalot Dancing Queen

This is our Lottie playing with her niece. As our first home-bred champion, but more importantly a very special member of our family and a good friend, Lottie is still fit and healthy, enjoys her walks and playing with her friends. Although she is deaf now, she has a good understanding of sign language!

Owned and loved by Lynn Wassall and the Wassall family, UK.
TIAMO’S HOLWEIT DANCER “DANNY”

September 23, 1993

Am Ch Gleanngay Waggin Wheel X Can Ch Holweit’s Bridget Bardot

Danny is 15 years young, and still going strong, albeit a little hard of hearing (unless you open the cookie jar) and a bit stiff in the rear when he goes up the long flight of stairs to the master bedroom at night. Danny has managed to beat the “medical statistics” which defeated his mother and littermates who died prematurely due to protein losing disease. His long life and health are a testament to the “luck of the genes,” the love and care he receives at home, careful management of his diet, and lots of exercise through daily walks. He has an outgoing, friendly personality and continues to be a great ambassador of the breed. He is the beloved greeter of all the music students who arrive at his front door for their weekly piano lessons with Thea. The tedium of playing “scales” and the challenge of learning new pieces of music is made easier when a furry canine friend sits close by and doesn’t criticize the pianist for hitting the odd wrong note. Danny lives in Ottawa (Canada) with Kyla’s parents, Jolijne’s brother and sister-in-law, Wim Ubbink and Thea Ubbink-Besseling.

Owned by Kyla Ubbink and Jolijne Ubbink

CH AMADE N BENDACHT VALI EN T “SEAN”

May 11, 1994 - January 23, 2009

Ch Amaden’s Leading Man X Bendacht Amaden’s Lady in Red

Acquiring a dog is the only opportunity a person has to choose a relative.

Carol Carlson
He's “our kinda guy”*...

New CH Banner Sweet Talkin' Guy

CH Edgewood Dream Catcher x CH Marymore Banner Gabriel's Choice

Never has a dog been so aptly named.

Bob finished entirely from the Bred By Exhibitor class, following his sister, Rudi, into the championship circle.

He is now enjoying life on the farm with Carol Carlson.

Bred, Owned and Always Handled by:
John & Pam Mandeville
Banner Wheatens, Reg
www.bannerwheatens.com

CoBred by
Mary Peltier, Marymore Wheatens

*“Sweet Talkin' Guy” The Chiffons
New CH Banner Shout

CH Edgewood Dream Catcher x CH Marymore Banner Gabriel’s Choice

Thanks to the judges who found our correct, 17 5/8”, typey girl.
Watch for Rudi, cutting them down to size, in the specials ring.

Bred, Owned and Always Handled by:
John & Pam Mandeville
Banner Wheatens, Reg
www.bannerwheatens.com

CoBred by
Mary Peltier, Marymore Wheatens
*Shout, The Isley Brothers

You know, she makes us wanna SHOUT!!!*
Every year in October at the SCWTCA Annual Meeting, we have the opportunity to meet the incoming board members. This past October we met one new director, Pam Tinnelly.

As in other years, I asked her a series of questions and asked for a photo of herself, preferably with her dogs. You will see that Pam is a very interesting, experienced and well-qualified person. You’ll also see that she has more in her life than SCWTCA. Here is what I asked.

After a brief introduction of yourself, please answer the following “dog related” questions.

- How and when did you first become interested in Wheatens? When did you get your first Wheaten? When did you join SCWTCA?
- What SCWTCA offices and committees have you worked on and how long have you been an active member?
- What all breed, obedience, agility, or breed clubs do you belong to? How are you involved (offices, committees, etc.)? Do you have any other special club or work experience, e.g. P.T.A., that especially qualifies you for the SCWTCA Board?
- How many litters have you bred?
- Who was your first finished champion, performance titleholder, etc.
- What is the funniest thing that happened to you at a dog show when you first started out?
- If you could pick one thing to focus on for the next year, what would it be and why?

And following, in her own words:

I’m Pam Tinnelly, the “Newbie” on the SCWTCA Board. A year ago, I never would have thought I would be in this position! I reside in Garden City, New York, with my husband Bob and our two Wheatens, Biscuit and Paddington. In 2006, I was paroled for good behavior after teaching for almost 35 years. But you can never take the teacher out the person, so I keep active by serving as the educational instructor at Clark Botanic Gardens, teaching nature workshops for elementary school field trips and running afternoon workshops at the library.

How and when did you first become interested in Wheatens? When did you get your first Wheaten? When did you join SCWTCA?

We first became interested in Wheatens back in the late 1980’s. Bob and I were at my niece’s soccer game when I first saw a Wheaten. We loved his looks, size and personality and knew that a Wheaten was going to be our next dog once our Old English Sheepdog passed on. We got our first Wheaten, Farley, from Sue Goldberg. Although we were looking for a pet Wheaten, Sue convinced us to take a show puppy because he would be socialized around other dogs and people and it would give him a “good dog education.” Besides the puppy would ONLY need 15 points to be a Champion and then he can be our pet forever. I guess she hit the educational nerve in me and getting 15 points didn’t sound so bad. So Farley became ours and we soon realized that owning a Wheaten is like eating potato chips: you’re never satisfied by having just one, you always want more. And that’s the way it was with winning ribbons too. The more Farley won, the more we wanted to show him. Who cared about the 15 points! Bob and I have been members of SCWTCA for almost 12 years.

What SCWTCA offices and committees have you worked on?

My first semi-official job after joining SCWTCA was to help Pam Mandeville take dinner reservations for the Montgomery Specialty Dinner. In 2002, after Farley became a Veteran, I volunteered, organized, and chaired the Parade of Veteran Titlists at Montgomery. In 2006, I was Sweeps and Obedience Show Secretary at Montgomery. In 2007, I was asked to be a member of the Independent Specialty Committee. I am currently serving my first term as a Director on the SCWTCA Board.

What all-breed or breed clubs do you belong to? How are you involved?

I belong to several all-breed clubs on Long Island. Unfortunately, we do not have any local or regional Wheaten or Terrier Clubs in our area. I was first invited to become a member of the Westbury Kennel Association where I served as the Chair for Catalogue Ads, Assistant Show Chair, and was elected to the Board of Directors as Recording Secretary. Currently, I am a member of Ladies Kennel Association where I serve as Chief Steward and Show Hospitality Co-Chair. I’m also a member of The Long Island Kennel Club.

Do you have any other work experience that especially qualifies you for the SCWTCA Board?

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In my professional career as a teacher, I served on the Teachers’ Association Union Board of Directors, first as a Building Representative, and later as Union Treasurer. I chaired the Union’s “Crisis Committee” during hard-fought teacher contract negotiations. I also served as the Teacher Representative to the PTA.

Who was your first finished Champion? Tell a little about him.

Our first Wheaten and finished Champion was Ch Shandalee Hot To Trot, (Farley). We think of Farley as a unique Wheaten. He was the most loveable, sweet-tempered, laid-back dog. Comparing him to a college student, he would be the “Nerd” wearing a tie and glasses, a pencil in his pocket, and a load of books under his paw – serious minded. Once Farley got his act together he had a good run. Farley showed at Westminster in 1997 and made the cut from 15 down to 6. He showed beautifully at Great Western and again made the cut at the Beverly Hills Kennel Club. Farley had changed our lives in ways that are hard to explain and he will always hold a special place in our hearts.

We subsequently have owned 3 more Wheatens, all finished Champions: Ch Shandalee Smart Aleck (Alfie), Ch Shandalee Firecracker (Biscuit) and Ch Banner Waggintail Wise Guy (Paddington). Paddington is also a sweet-tempered laid-back loveable dog, but unlike Farley he is known as the "Frat Boy" always looking for the next keg party and having fun! Biscuit is our princess because she was our first owner/handled Champion.

What was the funniest thing that happened to you at a dog show when you first started showing?

Farley was just 6 months old when Sue entered him at Montgomery because she was our first owner/handled Champion. This was our very first show and we didn't know what to expect. We were to get Farley to the show grounds by 7:00 AM so Sue could do the finishing touches. Needless to say we got lost and arrived 15 minutes before ring time. Bob and I found Sue and literally threw Farley out the window and into her arms. We found a parking spot and raced to the ring with no time to spare. Bob and I thought Farley was simply great, perfect, the best in the ring and had the blue ribbon in the bag. Farley placed 6 out of 6. We were crushed and couldn't understand why he didn't win. Pam Mandeville, who was standing next to us, being very blunt, gave us our first lesson on showing dogs. “The dog must walk straight with all four paws hitting the ground!” We've come a long way since that first Montgomery.

If you could pick one thing to focus on for the next year what would that be and why?

I have two things I would like to see accomplished during my tenure on the Board. The first is having a budget in place, setting guidelines and priorities on how the Club’s money should be spent. We have entered into tough economic times and it’s incumbent upon the Board to be both prudent and fiscally responsible to our members.

The second issue may be my own personal philosophy. I would like the Board to be member driven with a grass roots movement to get many more members actively involved in the Club on all levels. We need to cultivate a “farm system” so that, in the future, members will feel comfortable, willing and ready to step up to the plate as committee members and chairpersons, show chairs, and board members, dedicated to insuring the well-being of our beloved Wheatens.

BREEDERS’ CHALLENGE UPDATE

Congratulations to SCWTCA breeders who have contacted their Wheaten owners for donations to the “Breeders’ Challenge”. Several have donated and as a result the contest will extend through September 30, 2009 to provide more opportunities. Interested breeders may encourage Breeder’s Challenge holiday or birthday donations from puppy owners who send presents from their puppy to celebrate special occasions. The breeder who raises the most funds will win a head study painting of their dog created and donated by Darcie Olson. The winner will be announced at the 2009 SCWTCA annual meeting.

This project is a fundraiser sponsored by The SCWTCA Endowment, Inc. Proceeds will be used for ongoing health research for the SCWT. Please access the following web site for additional information: http://scwtca.org/health/breederchallenge.htm

Thank you to the following breeders and owners who have contributed to the Endowment:

Stephanie O’Keefe - $30
Richard & Sonya Urquhart - $1000
Meg Ryan/Molly O’Connell - $1300
Ronnie Copland - $1425
Dennis & Bonnie Wirth - $500
Lynn Cone - $200
Emily Holden/Bonnie Ivler - $225

Projects Supported by the SCWTCA Endowment, Inc.

Canine Phenome Project (2007) – Dr. Gary Johnson, University of Missouri, Columbia
Sibling Pairs Study (2006) – Dr. Gary Johnson, University of Missouri, Columbia
Genes, Dogs and Cancer: 4th Canine Cancer Conference (2006) – Chicago, IL
Genetic Determinants of Malignant Melanoma (2006) – Dr. Michael S. Kent, University of California, Davis
Longitudinal Clinical Study, Mode of Inheritance & Therapeutic Trial of Protein-Losing Enteropathy and Nephropathy (Colony Dog Studies) (1997) – Dr. Shelly Vaden, North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine

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The Board of the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America and the Endowment Board thank the following for their generosity. Donations fund grants selected by the SCWT Endowment Fund Board or provide matching funds for grants approved by the American Kennel Club/Canine Health Foundation.

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Matthew Sullivan
Laila & Mehran Taslimi
Doug & Elisabeth Taylor
Ginger & Bob Teitel in honor of Barcome’s 25th anniversary
Robert & Pam Tinnelly in memory of Bill Kinzer

continued on page 17
Liz Hansen, Canine Phenome Project breed club liaison, reports as follows:

“There are now 991 samples from Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers in our collection for any reason, the majority of these collected for the Canine Phenome Project (CPP), subsidized by SCWTCA Endowment fund. From this we have been identifying PLE/PLN-affected dogs and their siblings (or other close relatives), and believe we have sufficient pairs to justify whole-genome mapping using a new platform of SNP-chips which will be available in March 2009. This new generation chip can be run here at the University of Missouri at a cost of about $250 per sample. We anticipate that this initial mapping stage will cost $20,000, and to cover this cost we will be submitting an Acorn grant proposal for $12,000 to CHF in the next 2 weeks and seek funding from other available sources for the remaining $8000. In addition to securing funding, prior to the arrival of the chips in March, we will consult with Dr Meryl Littman at U-Penn to be certain we choose the best possible pairs of dogs for mapping. If the results of the SNP-mapping suggest a chromosomal region (or regions) for further investigation, additional financial support will probably be needed for gene discovery. This can be addressed via CHF grants or other funding sources, in consultation with the club.

One benefit of the CPP samples is that SCWT’s can be included in other research in progress here at the U of MO. For the past 2 years, we have had a major project investigating Degenerative Myelopathy (DM), a spinal cord deterioration well-known in Boxers, Pembroke Welsh Corgis, German Shepherds and several other breeds. The mutation that is the major risk factor for DM has been identified and DNA testing is now available. When the mutation was found to be the same in the initial few breeds investigated, we began to screen other breeds where the disease is known and also breeds where the disease has not been reported. We randomly chose 29 SCWT samples from the collection here, and found 0 testing AFFECTED/AT RISK, 5 testing CARRIER, and 24 testing NORMAL. This is a fairly low incidence of the mutant allele (5 of 58 alleles – each of the 29 dogs have 2 alleles – or 8.6% frequency), but perhaps worth noting, as in a breed with a small gene pool a carrier individual widely used for breeding could raise the overall breed-wide risk. Our laboratory has confirmed DM-affected dogs in Kerry Blue Terriers, and we would ask that SCWT fanciers please report dogs with possible DM symptoms to us if they appear in the breed. Disease and research information is available on our web site, www.CanineGeneticDiseases.net, in the DEGENERATIVE MYELOPATHY section. Symptomatic dogs will be tested at no charge (see the RESEARCH section), and general screening testing is available via OFA (www.OFFA.org, go to their new DNA TESTING section). Any breed can be tested, though we list testing as “recommended” for only those breeds where we have confirmed symptoms, histopathologic changes in the spinal cord typical of DM, and test results of AFFECTED for the same dog. Our lab can supply additional information about DM for breed publications if desired.

Thank you to the SCWTCA for your support. We look forward to working with your members toward answers that will help insure healthy dogs in coming generations. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us!”

Liz Hansen for Dr Gary Johnson, Animal Molecular Genetics Laboratory, University of Missouri - College of Veterinary Medicine
## DNA Research Project Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Overview</th>
<th>Canine Phenome Project</th>
<th>SCWT Lifetime Health Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Focus</strong></td>
<td>Establish DNA bank for future genetic research benefiting the SCWT</td>
<td>Lifetime study of diseases prevalent in the SCWT, identifying responsible genes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial Planned Research</strong></td>
<td>Sibling Pairs Study will focus on PLE and PLN in the SCWT</td>
<td>Ten year study, specific research determined as disease patterns emerge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant criteria</strong></td>
<td>All purebred Wheatens. There are no special requirements for age, health, registration or pedigree</td>
<td>Purebred Wheatens under 4 years at the time of enrollment with a known pedigree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Owner requirements for participation</strong></td>
<td>Submit blood sample; complete online health survey and provide pedigree if known, update online survey as needed. Complete breed characteristics survey when available</td>
<td>Submit initial blood sample, initial health survey, three generation pedigree; complete annual surveys. 10 year commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costs to owner</strong></td>
<td>- $20 sample processing fee&lt;br&gt;- Fee to draw blood (no fee at SCWT group clinic)&lt;br&gt;- Ship overnight with cold packs (no shipping cost at group clinics)</td>
<td>- Fee to draw blood (no fee at SCWT group clinics)&lt;br&gt;- ~ $2 to mail sample; no special handling required (no shipping cost at group clinics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrollment Process</strong></td>
<td>Online enrollment of dog and completion of survey at <a href="http://www.caninephenome.org">www.caninephenome.org</a></td>
<td>Send consent form with sample. Sample kit with consent form is available from “Laboratory Contact” or at a SCWT group clinic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privacy policy</strong></td>
<td>Data on individual dogs is confidential unless owner authorizes access</td>
<td>All dog-specific genetic, health and contact information is confidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Partner</strong></td>
<td>University of Missouri, College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Molecular Genetics Laboratory</td>
<td>National Institute of Health, Ostrander Canine Genomics Laboratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Director</strong></td>
<td>Dr Gary Johnson</td>
<td>Dr Heidi Parker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laboratory Contact</strong></td>
<td>Liz Hansen&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:HansenL@missouri.edu">HansenL@missouri.edu</a>&lt;br&gt;573-884-3712</td>
<td>Donna Viglietti&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:vigliettidm@mail.nih.gov">vigliettidm@mail.nih.gov</a>&lt;br&gt;301-451-9390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCWTCA Liaison</strong></td>
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<td>Helen Moreland&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:hjmoreland@msn.com">hjmoreland@msn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizations Supporting Project</strong></td>
<td>SCWTCA, SCWT Endowment, SCWT Genetic Research Fund</td>
<td>SCWTCA, SCWT Endowment, SCWT Genetic Research Fund</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This committee coordinates work related to approved DNA research projects including the Canine Phenome Project (CPP) and the SCWT Lifetime Study at National Institutes of Health (NIH). Committee structure has been more fully defined.

**Board Action Requested:** Approval of the following job descriptions for the Project Leader, Communications Coordinator and Operations Coordinator.

**Project Leader:**
- Coordinates the work of the committee
- Receives reports from DNA research project liaisons (NIH SCWT Lifetime Study and Canine Phenome Project)
- Works with the SCWTCA Health Committee
- Reports to the SCWTCA Board
- Communicates with Boards of other Wheaten groups supporting DNA projects (AKC/CHF Genetic Research Board and SCWTCA Endowment Board) directly or through committee liaisons

**Communications Coordinator:**
- Publicizes and promotes approved DNA projects
- Prepares educational information about approved DNA projects for SCWTCA members and other Wheaten owners
- Prepares materials for SCWTCA web site and SCWTCA publications

**Operations Coordinator:**
- Assists blood collection clinic coordinators by providing information on planning, implementation and financial assistance
- Prepares information and forms for use by blood collection clinic coordinators
- Assists individual owners to participate in DNA projects by providing information on requirements and procedures

Materials for use on the web site, in club publications, by owners and by blood collection clinic coordinators are being updated to include the SCWT Lifetime Study and other changes. These materials include FAQs for the SCWT Lifetime Study at NIH.

**Board Action Requested:** Approval to have FAQs for the SCWT Lifetime Study (NIH) printed and sent to members with Wavelengths.

Materials for Blood Draw Coordinators listed in the August 14, 2008 SCWTCA Board motion are being prepared or updated. These materials will be sent to Board members separately as they are completed. The project information sheets for both projects have been completed. The CPP consent form is available. The NIH general consent form is being revised by Dr Parker to make it specific to the Lifetime Study. The collection and shipment instructions prepared for CPP are being modified to include both projects. While clinic expenses have always been tracked by category, a specific form is being developed for this purpose.

Other activities since the September 28 report include the following. “Basic Information for Owners” sheets on CPP and the Lifetime Study were written and available as handouts at the SCWTCA Annual Meeting, October 1, 2008 and were published in Benchmarks December 2008 and Wheaten Health News Winter 2009 issue. Two additional articles were written for publication in Benchmarks and Wheaten Health News. Five DNA clinic organizers contributed articles reporting on clinics held recently. Four appeared in Health News and one in Benchmarks.

Three successful clinics have been held since the last report. Samples were collected for CPP and for the Lifetime Study at all three. Holly Craig organized the October 2 clinic hosted by SCWTCA during the national specialty weekend at King of Prussia, PA. Beverly Streicher, assisted by Bonney Snyder, organized the clinic held at the SCWTC of Southern California Fun Day on October 26. Sandy Ross organized a clinic in the Boston, MA area on November 16.

Canine Phenome Project and Sibling Pairs Study Progress: See separate report from Liz Hansen, breed club liaison at CPP.

SCWT Lifetime Study Progress: Dr Parker plans to have the new consent form and initial survey ready in January. See separate report.

Respectfully submitted
Elaine Azerolo
The Board of the SCWT Genetic Research Project, and Wheaten owners everywhere, wish to thank the following for their generous donations to the fund.

The SCWT Genetic Research Fund, in cooperation of AKC-CHF, will sponsor genetic research into the canine genome specifically aimed at identifying the genes responsible for the transference of PLE/PLN. This information will make it possible for the development of testing protocols to identify Wheatens with protein wasting diseases.

Pat Bajoras
Erin Baltzer
Ronald Bedford
David Bennett
David & Laura Lee Bennett
Eric & Kristina Berns
Julie Burdick
Diane Byra
Janet Caldarelli
Carol Carlson
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Roxanna & Leo Springer
John & Jette Stevens
Christine Thorpe
George & Darla Jean Veirs
Beth Verner
Cindy Vogels
Jeri & John Voyles
Theresa Williams
Suzanne & Brian Wynne
Barbara Zapf
Barbara Ziegler

To join our effort with a tax deductible donation, make your checks payable to AKC-CHF SCWT Genetic Research Fund and mail to: David Ronsheim, Project Financial Officer, 14837 N 25th Drive #11, Phoenix, AZ 85023-5082.

Or, visit our web site www.scwtgrf.com to make an online donation through PayPal.

LADY IN RED

Ruby looks best in red. If she were human, she would, I am certain, choose to wear a red dress. She can be quite demur when she has a mind for it, sidling up to me, tail swaying like rip-silk in a soft breeze, to lay her paw gently on my knee. Still, there’s something about her that seems to challenge politesse. That same tail can whip a two-pound objet d’art off my coffee table in a heartbeat if she decides to galumph around the living room.

With the look of the devil in her eye she will roll around in gross slimy road kill one day and the next, following a bath of course, parade around as if she thinks she’s Catherine Zeta Jones. I prefer the latter version of Ruby. She, however, seems equally comfortable as slattern or star. I sometimes wonder if she might be afflicted with the condition referred to as split personality. However much we might hold this as a psychological disorder among our own, in dogs I think it is more accepted. Perhaps one day it will be accepted as the norm with us as well.
COLONY DOGS BENEFIT FROM GENEROUS DONATIONS!

The SCWTCA Endowment thanks the following people for their generous donation in 2008 for the Colony Dogs at NC State University. The sale of grooming DVD's by Shari Boyd Carusi raised $4,719.43 and direct donations raised $10,815.00.

Yetiva Allen
Elaine Azerolo
Leslie Barnes
Kelly Woods Battaglia
David & Teresa Beagle
David & Colette Beighley
David Bennett
Robert Black
Bradley Boeck
Kimberly Dane Boothe
Leanne Bowker
Dee Boyd
Marc Boyer
Alison Bradley
Carol Brown
Marjory Suber Brusch
Rita Brusco
Nancy Butler
Diane Byra
Carol Carlson
Jana Carraway
Doralee Celotto
Betty Chapman
Ellen Chapman
Michele Connor
Terrill Coon
Neil Cooper
Mary Ellen Correnti
Robert and Karen Costin
Holly Craig
Darlene Cross
Sharon Cuevas
Denise Daniels
James & Camilla Davis
Cheryl DeMallie
Judith Downing
Karen Drogin
Gerhard & Gerta Ernst
Maggie Evans
Julia Farber
Tamara Faurote
Amy Feldman
Richard & Toni Fisher
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Sandra White
June Widdis
Kathy Williamson
Kathryn Wingerd
Bonnie Wirth
Linda Wolter
Rose Zannetti
Barbara Zapf
Elena Zweifach
My name is Melissa Vetter. I am a third-year veterinary student at the University of Pennsylvania. This past summer, a fellow veterinary student and I had the opportunity to do clinical research studying Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers with Dr. Littman. It was a great experience, and I learned a lot about these wonderful breeds. Dr. Littman is specifically examining protein-losing enteropathy (PLE) and protein-losing nephropathy (PLN), two inherited diseases in Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers. I organized and updated the DNA bank, which consists of hundreds of blood and/or tissue samples from dogs with one or both of these diseases, and from normal dogs that lived long, healthy lives. Each sample has a corresponding paper and electronic record, which contains information about the donor dog, including his or her pedigree and health information. We are extracting DNA from these tissue samples so that we can compare the DNA of dogs affected with these diseases to the DNA of normal dogs. This will allow us to better understand the genetic component of these diseases. Hopefully, this important information will someday enable us to make breeding recommendations and to improve treatments for these diseases.

I also learned about the other health challenges in addition to PLE and PLN that some of the Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers face, including food allergies, inflammatory bowel disease, renal dysplasia, and Addison’s disease. Dr. Littman taught us how these diseases can mimic each other clinically, and how to interpret test results to differentiate between these diseases. I will carry this knowledge and experience with me throughout my future veterinary career. I have learned to be especially sensitive to the medical problems that Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers are predisposed to, which will help me to better diagnose and treat my future Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier patients. They are such charismatic dogs, and I am excited to be a part of research that will make the breed stronger and healthier in the future.

My name is Amy Smagala and I am a second-year veterinary student at the University of Pennsylvania. This past summer I was offered the opportunity, along with another veterinary student, Melissa Vetter, to assist Dr. Meryl Littman in her work for Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers and the genetic diseases that affect them. My major duties for the summer included updating the Open Registry and contacting Informative Family members. The Open Registry is a listing of Wheatsens that are affected with one or more of these genetic diseases, such as Protein Losing Enteropathy, Protein Losing Nephropathy, Addison’s, and Renal Dysplasia. The registry is mainly used by breeders to make decisions on breeding, and will hopefully someday allow us to find a genetic factor to these devastating diseases. The Informative Family study follows generations of dogs that are related to an affected Wheaten, monitoring blood and urine results throughout their lives.

With over 400 phone calls made and numerous emails sent, we were able to add over 100 new listings to the Open Registry and update our Informative Family member data. We also received updates on Wheatsens that do not yet meet the criteria or are living into their geriatric years with no signs of these diseases. There are always new cases coming to Dr. Littman’s attention and it is an ongoing process, but every new listing and sample sent to us helps with our research.

In addition to organizing and updating our records, one of the most important lessons that Dr. Littman taught us was how to differentiate between these genetic diseases, which can often appear similar. We also learned what is required for a diagnosis and the most current treatments. I believe this was one of the most important parts of my work, especially because one day I know I will be a small animal veterinarian and now will be fully prepared to recognize these often elusive diseases in our Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers.

My favorite part about this summer, besides working with Dr. Littman and my fellow veterinary student, was being able to get to know the many Wheaten owners and breeders that I spoke with. There are countless Wheaten fans spread over the world, but they are still a tight-knit group of animal lovers that want only the best for their favorite breed. It was an honor to work for and with these people, helping this captivating breed, and I hope to continue to do this rewarding work!
Everyone is talking about bites these days. No, to be accurate there’s a lot of conversation that maybe bites aren’t so important.

Oh, really?

Starting out in Wheatens, I don’t really remember worrying about bites. You might have the occasional undershot puppy in a litter. You’d cross your fingers and hope he didn’t turn out to be the pick...because you already knew you were placing him as a pet. You just didn’t tolerate undershot mouths. You might put up with some dropped incisors or crooked teeth…but you knew they weren’t right either, even if the standard doesn’t expressly address them.

These are terriers after all.

Terriers are supposed to have good mouths. Working terriers need them. Period. Their job is to kill vermin. Not hard to understand, right?

But if you don’t buy that argument, there’s always our standard. You know the description of what’s required. It’s clear: “Teeth large, clean and white; scissors or level bite. Major Fault--Undershot or overshot.”

A show of hands here...who doesn't understand any of these words? How about “major fault”? We all get it? Good.

So why would someone think the most novice or most incapable judge doesn’t get it? Haven’t you ever seen a newer judge in the ring with a little “cheat sheet”? What do you think it is, his grocery list? Nope, it’s a list of disqualifications and major faults.

Over the last year or two, I’ve heard more and more grumbling about mouths. Are people complaining that mouths are getting worse? Some are noticing a higher incidence of bad bites, although many long-timers say that bites have significantly improved.

But, sadly, the quality of bites isn’t the basis of most griping. It’s complaints that undershot dogs...or as some have been characterized, “almost level”...are losing or being withheld from in the ring.

I see...a dog has a major fault and there’s a problem with it not winning?

Let’s get a few things straight. Dog shows are about comparing breeding stock...is this dog closer to the standard than that one? It’s a subjective evaluation. Judges continually have to decide if this dog with the fabulous coat is better than that dog with the brick-like head...and what today’s judge decides is not necessarily what tomorrow’s judge will conclude.

That’s dog shows.

And guess what...a lot of judges are going to decide the major fault of an undershot mouth is worse than the major fault of a poor coat or grey color or too big. If that judge comes from terriers...remember, those dogs who are virtually defined by their mouths...you can take that one to the bank.

A breeder judge commented to me “It’s simple. These are terriers. Undershot is just not acceptable. Period.”

Even if he’s not a terrier man, bad bites are hard for a judge to miss. Presumably every judge knows undershot from scissors, even if they started in Bulldogs. They may not be able to tell if the coat has “occasional” black guard hairs or if it’s grey, or if the dog in the ring is oversized when they all are, or what “overtrimming” is or if that coat is curly or has a “gentle wave”...but they can sure as heck see those teeth and a major fault staring them in the face.

That’s different from breeding. Superficially, I have no problem with the idea that someone keeps and uses a dog with a bad bite in their breeding program and doesn’t show it. If the dog has other traits you like, traits that can help you...go right ahead. Just don’t kid yourself...or any one else...what you’re doing.

But as I said, that’s a superficial reaction. The problem isn’t with that first litter. It’s in the next generation and the next and the next...when people forget to mention that Ol’ Rover on the sire’s side and grand-dam Sweetie Pie on the dam’s side had bad mouths. Lo and behold, here’s a litter of 5 with 3 bad bites. Huh? Where did that come from?

Twice we kept very young puppies with poor dentition. In both instances, they represented something important to us...the last in a line, a really pretty bitch in a litter. We grew them up a few more months and then decided the whole was not good enough to overcome that major fault.
continued from page 23

Still, I can understand why others would choose differently. Every year when the OR comes out, our choices shrink dramatically. As breeders, we need to make compromises today we never had to consider before. Some have swallowed hard, taken a deep breath and done breedings they were less than thrilled about.

What hasn’t changed, however, is knowing they are compromises…by definition, trade-offs between what we want and what we don’t want. First and foremost, breeders need to be sufficiently knowledgeable about breeding and dogs and the standard to realize what’s right and what’s wrong. I am not so sure when it comes to bites everyone gets it…or recognizes it when they see it. Aren’t really sure? At the next show, go look at a couple of other terrier breeds. Nice, big, even teeth, no dropped incisors…yes, that exists.

The second thing is to stop pretending it’s something it’s not. An undershot dog is undershot, whether the teeth are touching backs to fronts or whether there’s a half-inch gap. “Barely” undershot or “almost level” is still a bad bite. If you think a “barely” undershot bite isn’t going to be as big a problem down the road, you’re setting yourself up for getting bitten in the…well, you know…with a litter where all the really good ones look like they should be Bulldogs and not Wheatens.

In a lot of ways, this is about more than bites; it’s defining what breeding dogs is about. Understand what’s correct. Don’t make excuses for what’s not. Recognize you’re always going to have to make compromises. Most important of all, don’t pretend a problem doesn’t exist when it does. Just a little something to chew on.

LITTMAN ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR THE PENN SCWT DNA BANK IN 2009*

STEP 1: TAGGING THE PHENOTYPES

We have several hundred samples now in the Penn SCWT DNA bank. Most of these precious samples are from affected Wheatens, that is, dogs with documented diagnoses of inflammatory bowel disease, protein-losing enteropathy (PLE) and/or protein-losing nephropathy (PLN), Addison’s disease, or renal dysplasia (juvenile renal disease). Some of the samples are from dogs that have not lived long enough yet to know how to tag their phenotype. We also have collected samples from geriatric dogs (14 years old or more) that appear to be unaffected with those diseases. Now that we are doing more tests on older dogs than we used to do, it appears that there is no age limit for being affected with PLE and/or PLN. Some geriatrics have shown abnormal histopathology findings similar to affected dogs, even though they did not succumb to one of those diseases. In view of this we are now “staging” the phenotypes by the degree of their expression and how strongly a dog is considered “normal” or “affected,” based on the severity of the expression of their disease process and how much documentation of the diagnosis is available. For instance, if a geriatric dog had normal lab test results a year ago but did not have histopathology examinations done after death, can it be truly tagged as “normal?”

STEP 2: COMPARING THE GENOTYPES

Penn geneticists, headed by Dr Paula Henthorn, will compare the genomic material from affected and geriatric non-affected dogs by the newest SNP chip (“snip chip”) technology available, with the hope of finding differences that can be used as markers for “at-risk” genes, that is, genes that are found more frequently in affected dogs than in non-affected ones. We will start by looking at the DLA area of the genome (aka, dog leukocyte antigen system, which is the name of the major histocompatibility complex or MHC in dogs, similar to the HLA of humans, where genes have to do with the function of the immune system). We are also checking for chromosomal abnormalities by examining the karyotype of some affected dogs.

EXPECTATIONS:

Based on the observations gleaned from the Open Registry, we know that affected dogs sometimes have come from seemingly non-affected parents. This pattern would be expected when genes are “recessive” and disease will skip a generation or show up sporadically in a family. However, we learned from Dr. Vaden’s Wheagle colony that the first generation of crossbred (affected x normal) puppies were not all normal, and we would have expected them to be normal if the gene(s) involved were recessive. Thus there appears to be some dominant gene(s) at play or variable expression of one or more genes. There may be multiple genes (a polygenic trait), modifier genes, or environmental triggers involved. In other words, the inheritance of PLE/PLN looks pretty complicated so far. Finding genetic markers for the “at-risk” genes will hopefully bring us closer to understanding this complex puzzle. To be realistic though, we know that if this disease is very complex genetically, we will need more samples to generate statistically significant results. For instance, in human research for diabetes, cancer, and other complex genetic diseases, researchers need hundreds of thousands of samples to find genetic markers. We hope, because of inbreeding in dogs, that we can do with fewer samples than that, but we shall see if we need more than just the few hundred we now have. Thank you, everybody, for participating and helping us with our work for Wheatens!

* Footnote from Carol Carlson, SCWTCA liaison to the U of PA Veterinary School:

In a call to Dr Littman, I asked her where the money was coming from to cover the approximate cost of $60,000 for this first run of the SNP. She responded that the money came from generous clients that she has told about her “Wheaten” work, most of them pet owners of other breeds. A poodle pet owner contributed $10,000; two other generous clients donated significant amounts as well. Dr Littman considers all Wheaten owners of other breeds. A poodle pet owner contributed $10,000; two other generous clients donated significant amounts as well. Dr Littman considers all Wheaten owners of other breeds.

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Get Ready for Something Delicious!

Montgomery 2009

Ah, Montgomery....that mouth-watering week in early October. Just the sound of the word is enough to make terrier lovers everywhere stand up and take notice! If you’ve never attended the National Specialty, this is the year to satisfy your craving. If you’re a frequent patron, you know you just have to be there.

Once again, our specialty headquarters will be the Park Ridge Hotel in King of Prussia. Make reservations by calling 610-337-1880.

Committee Chairs

You’ve all heard the saying, “Too many cooks spoil the broth.” When it comes to Montgomery weekend, that couldn’t be further from the truth. We are very fortunate to have a number of volunteers who are already hard at work to make this upcoming Montgomery special.

Advertising – Susan Ratcliffe
Advertising Obedience, Rally, Sweeps – Carol Carlson
Agility – Betsy Geertson
Bark Patrol – Tom Kahn
Boutique – Emily Holden
Boxed Lunches – Bonnie Ivler
CGC – Suzanne Stone
Dinner Reservations – Jeri Voyles
Dinner Decorations & Flowers – Jan Van Ness
Education – Cheryl Turner Fogarty
Equipment – Tom Neill
Fundraising – Christy Weagant
Judge Liaison – Pam Tinnelly
Mailer – Roxanna Springer & Leo Springer
Marked Catalogs – Lynn Cone
Post Show Hospitality – Genie Kline & Christine Thorpe
Raffle – Abby Kahn
Ring Coordinator – Pat Bajoras
Saturday Breakfast – Bev McDonald
Specialty Banker – Bob Tinnelly
Videography – Willie Rueda
Welcome Bags – Nancy Draper

We’d love to have YOU join our team! Please call one of us and volunteer today!

Kayce Healy kincora321@comcast.net 503 244-1880
Kathy Drobnak kdrobnak@jcfkk.com 303 892-4425

Co-Coordinators Montgomery ‘09

Now We’re Cookin’
Over the years, I have sold puppies to many newcomers to the breed and have enjoyed helping and mentoring them, as they became involved in the wonderful world of Wheatens. Overall, they have been positive and richly rewarding experiences, which I highly recommend to breeders in all breeds. As an example, I'd like to relate one especially gratifying story that occurred many years ago, when I was living in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, just 30 miles from Lock Haven, where I was born and grew up.

It began in 1978 with my second brood bitch, Ch Waterford Lontree Lace that I had acquired from Marjorie Shoemaker. I bred her to Ch Raclee Express West of Andover, owned by Jackie Gottlieb and Cindy Vogels. I had seen him the year before, at the Chicagoland specialty, and had fallen in love with him. I sent Lacy to Cindy, in Colorado, to be bred that winter. And, as sometimes happens, big winter snowstorms began wandering across the country. First the storm would hit Colorado, making it impossible for Cindy to ship her out. Then, by the time the airports there had dug out, the storm had migrated east and we were getting hit in Pennsylvania. Nothing could be shipped in. This happened at least three times. Cindy and I began to joke that they would have to whelp the litter in Colorado!

But alas, we finally got her home and the pregnancy progressed uneventfully. Except that it looked as if it was going to be a large litter. So, on March 17, 1978, St. Patrick’s Day, no less, I wasn't really surprised when Lacy whelped nine beautiful, healthy pups. The shocker was that eight of them were bitches! That's usually a breeder's dream litter.

At that time, I was also getting more and more involved in the show ring, so I traveled to Pittsburgh at the end of March, to a week-end of big dog shows there. After we were done showing one day I was approached by two young men who had seen me in the ring. We had a nice chat about the attributes of the breed and they confided to me that they were interested in buying a Wheaten and getting involved in showing. They further explained that they particularly wanted a male (of course!) They seemed serious, responsible and very enthusiastic. So I told them about my young litter and said that I would be happy to sell them the male and mentor them, if he turned out to be show quality.

So began weeks of conversation back and forth with my new friends from Pittsburgh. Was the male going to be good enough to show? And to make matters more complicated, I owed Marjorie a puppy back, as per Lacy’s sales contract. If the male was nice, would Marjorie take him? We were on pins and needles. As the pups grew, I was really liking the male, but there were several bitches that I liked as well. My hope was that I could convince my friends to take a bitch, instead of a male, if need be. (Years later, I realized what an interesting dilemma it was. How often is anyone so much more intent on buying a male, rather than a female?) But I was learning that they really wanted a male, only. The tension increased.

Finally the day arrived for Marjorie to come to see the pups. And after carefully examining them, she decided not to take the male. Hooray! I quickly called my new friends to tell them that they could have the male. They were very excited and immediately made plans to come to Williamsport to get their puppy. I don't remember if it was that day, or later, that they confided to me, that they had expressed concern, to each other, about whether the male was of good enough quality to be shown since Marjorie hadn't taken him.

But as the puppy grew, he got prettier and prettier. My new friends sought a lot of advice, not just from me, but from other breeders and handlers as well. By the time he was old enough to be shown, my novice friends had acquired the knowledge and know-how to present him beautifully in the show ring. Since one of them was a hairdresser by trade, he had developed an uncanny knack for the grooming and would eventually become a trendsetter in our breed. And the rest is history.

My two young friends, that I met by chance in Pittsburgh, that...
And, of course, Gary and Bill went on to establish their own very successful Brenmoor line. As we all know, Gary is now a highly respected judge. They sure have made me proud!

Then as one more added bonus, this is the beautiful card that they sent me, this past St. Patrick's Day - some 30 years later. It is one of my most cherished rewards, just one of many, that I have been blessed to receive, over the years, for taking chances and simply being willing to let a novice have one of my show prospect puppies.

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**“GRANDMA’S ATTIC” … Priorities and The Glass Half Full**

Jackie Gottlieb

To begin, I will disagree with my good friend, Pam Mandeville, because I try to live with “a glass half full”. I can’t go along with the “sky is falling” approach to life. Yes, times are bad, and probably getting worse, but this has happened before, and we humans are almost as resilient as our dogs. We will have to make some changes in our life styles, and a good reality check will help us focus on necessities. We can learn and grow in the process.

Now is a good time to focus on goals and the priorities involved in achieving them. Our lives in dogs involve multiple areas: exhibiting (in conformation and performance), breeding, support of the breed (particularly through club activities) and generally enlarging our horizons through education and the many friends we make. Most involve some outlay of the funds which may very well be in short supply for a while. Here is where setting priorities comes in. Let’s begin by only showing “our best” dogs, the ones who meet the standard and enjoy the show ring. If we are going to spend money, let’s have fun doing it. Too many judges have commented on the lack of quality in the ring today. Oversize is oversize, toplines should hold on the go around, coarse heads, too short legs, houndy ears, all lack type. While no animal is perfect, show the ones who most closely approximate the standard. With smaller entries, majors will be harder to come by until the AKC adjusts the point schedule. I pointed out last issue that clusters can make for savings, ditto bringing your own lunch, tailgate picnics. Attend the smaller specialty shows, usually held in conjunction with all breed clusters. Those of us who lived through the great depression know that, with planning, you can get more for your buck.

Responsible breeding is expensive, but we cannot lose our gene pool and we cannot compromise our health protocols. That doesn’t mean that every finished bitch must be bred, nor does it negate breeding a bitch who hasn’t finished but carries qualities that are presently scarce in our gene pool. Every breeding should count…

One aspect of your life in dogs costs little or nothing. And that is support of your club and the world of purebred dogs. Yes, there is a lot of fundraising, but often, time and energy are even more valuable. SCWTCA offers many opportunities to participate. Sign up! You will make new best friends, and those economy meals will taste so much better when you share them with friends who also share your enthusiasm for the breed. All-breed clubs offer many opportunities to be “part of the scene,” and perhaps you can become influential in getting the club to hire real terrier judges. Most important in the community service area is the threat to our hobby and, indeed, to the ownership of pet animals. Roni Andrews keeps us well informed, but we must alert others who love companion animals. Battling the animal rights people must be included in your list of priorities. Emails are free and even a few bucks will go far when working within a national movement. Check the AKC web site frequently to stay up to speed in this crucial area.

Every unfortunate episode in our lives can be positive if we get our priorities right and act in a positive fashion. This recession will pass and we can emerge with an even better breed.

Signed:

Grandma Pollyanna!
Dealing with Urinary Incontinence

Y ears ago, I talked to an owner of a Senior Wheaten who wanted to give her dog up to rescue. It took a bit of discussion to figure out that her issue with the dog was urinary incontinence. It still makes me sad that a dog could be given up or ostracized from normal family life due to urinary incontinence in his or her senior years.

We should all be prepared to handle urinary incontinence in our seniors, starting with a senior-wellness visit to the veterinarian. Make sure there is no other underlying health problem such as a bladder or urinary infection, old-age renal failure, diabetes, or bladder stones in males, for example.

Weak sphincter muscle due to old age, “urethral sphincter incontinence” can be treated with PPA (phenylpropanolamine). Hormone therapy is available for both males and females. Also, there are Chinese herbs and Homeopathic treatments available. My own preference is to start with an alternative treatment before going to a prescribed medication – just my preference – but done through a licensed veterinarian. Regardless of your preference, work with your veterinarian on a treatment plan for your Wheaten’s incontinence.

In conjunction with medications, we need to be prepared to manage incontinence in their environment, whether it’s not being able to hold the urine until they get outside or losing control in their sleep. For the dogs that can’t quite get outside before going potty, pee pads at strategic locations make for quick cleanup. For the dogs with urinary incontinence in their sleep, layers that wick away the moisture and protect bedding that is not as easily washed are helpful. For this situation, I use a double-sided doggy blanket that has fleece on one side and microfiber on the other. I place this over a washable underpad that protects a foam doggy bed. The blanket, folded in layers, helps keep the dog dry, while the underpad absorbs and protects the doggy bed. Both layers go in the wash and are replaced with clean bedding. The double-sided blankets we use are from Critterbeds.

Another situation that can require management is home-alone time; either while an owner is working or out for an evening. It may become necessary to confine or restrict a senior’s space at this time of life. Restriction does not have to be to a crate or small space if they are not used to staying in crates. Restriction can be to a room with an appropriate floor, an X-pen with floor protection, or room with space allocated for elimination. We have found that we cannot crate Stella (now 15+ years old), as we do the younger dogs when we’re not home, as she gets too excited, messes her crate, gets it on her paws, etc. Instead, we place plastic on a large swath of floor in the doggy bedroom (carpeted), place a doggy towel on the plastic, and give Stella an entire bedroom to herself including a soft doggy bed. She potties on the towel, stays clean and dry, the towel goes in the wash when we get home.

If your Wheaten is still sleeping on your bed, but is at the incontinence stage, there are large underpads that can be placed on the bed with a doggy blanket over the pad. Large underpads can be found on the internet.

And finally, it may reach a point at which doggy diapers or a male wrap are required. These products are also readily available online. If a Wheaten needs to wear a protective garment, trim the coat to minimize or prevent matting and facilitate easy cleanup of the dog.

Regardless of how incontinence is managed, your senior Wheaten needs to be kept clean and dry. Keeping the coat short at this time of life can help not only with minimizing bathing and brushing time, but also helps with quick drying after any necessary spot cleaning after an accident.

One thing that should not be done to manage incontinence is to withhold water. Never withhold water from your senior, it is too essential to their health and can exacerbate kidney problems.

As long as your senior is doing well in other aspects, urinary incontinence does not have to marginalize his or her participation in your family. Be creative, keep lots of washable blankets and pads, don’t make a big deal about it, clean them up and treat them with the love and respect with which you hope to be treated when you’re that old!

If you would like to submit an article, senior/geriatric care tips, or senior stories to Wheaten Golden Years, please contact Jana Carraway, templarscwt@comcast.net.

Resources:
Key words for searches: underpads, washable, eldercare, pee pads, doggy diapers.
http://www.critterbeds.com, double sided blankets,
There is an alarming trend among performance dog aficionados with owners claiming bragging rights when their dogs achieve high titles at young ages. I recently heard of a dog earning its MACH at two and a half years of age. What were they thinking?

Most of us are aware that puppies have growth plates, zones of cartilage at the ends of the long bones, where the actual growth in length occurs. This tissue is softer than the adjacent bone, and is subject to tearing more easily than the bone itself. At its extreme, this results in an epiphyseal fracture in which the bone completely separates at the level of the growth plate. Much less dramatic are the injuries that can occur with repetitive stress and trauma to the growth plate. If there is uneven damage in this area, it is even possible for one side of the bone to fuse prematurely while the other side continues to grow, resulting in a curvature of the bone that changes the dynamics of weight bearing in the entire limb. In most puppies the last of the growth plates to close are in the forearm bones, at the elbow.

Now, back to our young MACH dog. With each jump, the impact of landing is concentrated in the forelimb, where these growth plates close last. And how many jumps has he done to get to that MACH title? Well, I can't count that high, but you begin to get the point. And in order to be competent in his skills and consistent in his performance, he had to start very early and train heavily. I would question how long this dog's athletic career will be.

How often is life as simple as concern for a single consideration? The puppy's bones are just one facet that need time to develop. It takes most dogs eighteen months or more for maturity of the nervous system. Until then, their lack of coordination increases the risk of injuries of all sorts, and their intellectual capacity is still trying to catch up with their curiosity. (What attention span?) And muscles, ligaments and tendons can't be safely conditioned for peak performance until the bones and nervous system are ready to provide safe support, and coordinated impulses.

So, am I saying not to train your puppy until he is older? Absolutely not! The very young pup is ripe for learning, so teach him to learn. Give him a wide range of mental and physical challenges within his current abilities.

For more information on safe training for dogs of all ages:


So, am I saying not to train your puppy until he is older? Absolutely not! The very young pup is ripe for learning, so teach him to learn. Give him a wide range of mental and physical challenges within his current abilities.
CH Lismore The World Is Not Enough
“Gilbert”

(Ch Vintage Green Beret Ballad (Beret) x Ch Stratford The World Revolves Around Me (Dagny))

First Lismore Litter, First Lismore Champion.

Special thanks to Molly O’Connell for her friendship, mentoring and, of course, Dagny!!
CH Stratford Top Brass

IKE

(Ch Stratford Top Priority (Brody) x Ch Stratford Spice Girl (Sissy))

“We like Ike!”

Owners: Meg Ryan & Molly O’Connell
Breeders: Molly O’Connell & Monica LaMontagne
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Lissadell High Button Shoes CD RE (B)
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Ch. Lonestar Forever In Blue Jeans (B)
Ch. Lontree Prairie Star NAJ NF (D)
Maggie Mae CD RA AX AXJ (B)
Maisy Moylan O'Neil CD RE (B)
Ch. Marland's Kayleigh: Celtic Spirit (B)
Ch. Marland's Punkin' A Smile Maker (B)
Ch. Marquee's Two For The Show (B)
Ch. Marymore Hot Pepper Jack (D)
Ch. Marymore Legacy Renaissance (B)
Ch. McLaren's Zoom Zoom Zoom (D)
Ch. Melandee's Ring Master (D)
Ch. Michaleen's Song O'Morning Star (B)
Ch. Michaleen's Star By Degas (D)
Morgan Frosty Morning AX MXJ NJP (B)
Orion Trebol Hot Off The Press RAE TD NA NAJ NAP (D)
O'Ryan's Georgi Girl CD (B)
Paisley's Scooter Boy OA OAJ AXP MJP (D)
Ch. Pinehome's Seamus Walnut (D)
Piper's Irish Jig CD RN AX MXJ (B)
Ch. Raelyn Lasting Impression (B)
Ch. Ragtime's Life Of The Party (D)
Ch. Reflections My Wild Irish Rose (B)
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Ch. Sanwilly's Collectible Teddy (D)
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Ch. Starlight Honeysuckle Rose (B)
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Ch. Stratford Our Miss Brooks (B)
Ch. Stratford Paddington Station (D)
Ch. Stratford Saddle Up And Ride (B)
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Ch. Stratford Top 'O The Mornin' (B)
Ch. Tiffen's Emerald Isle (D)
Ch. Tiffen's Shaboom Shaboom (D)
Ch. Touchstone Flying Solo (B)
Ch. Tralee Bay's High On You (B)
Trebol Labour Of Love RE MX MXJ NAP NJP OF (B)
Vanbeard's Legally Blonde RN (B)
Ch. Waterwalk Lochlinear Inverloch (B)
Wayland's Bailey CD RA MX AXJ NAP NFP (B)
Wee Miss Jynx RA (B)
Ch. Westridge High Adventure CD RAE (D)
Ch. Westridge High Time (D)
Ch. Westridge Ramble On Rose (B)
Wheaten Volunteer's Jazz Dance NAJ (B)
MACH3 Wheatland Cubby Bear CDX NF (B)
Ch. Whindancer Waiting On The World To Change (D)
Ch. Whindancer Walk It Down To Edgewood (D)
Ch. Whindancer's Heart Like A Wheel (D)
Ch. Whindancer's Sweet Baby James (D)
Wilobet's I'M A Wee Laddie RA (D)
Ch. Winterwheat Just Dew It OA AXJ (D)
Ch. Winterwheat Just In Time (B)
Ch. Winterwheat Just Right (D)
Ch. Winterwheat Steamin & A Rollin (D)
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Oh my gosh, the bank canceled my credit card! When I called about it they said they were sure my card had been compromised...no one could spend that much money in one month at a veterinarian's office!
“We have had more trouble selecting a family dog than selecting the Secretary of Commerce.”

So spoke our new president last week, and this after the first person selected to take over the Commerce Department had to step aside and a second choice made.

The selection of the promised puppy for the Obama children has received countless words on television and in print media. Seemingly, everyone has an opinion of what choice the First Family should make, and that they have a perfect right to influence the Obama family’s selection.

One of the primary determinants of whether a family pet enjoys a long and happy life in their first home is whether the new owner has made a careful and thoughtful choice of breed that best fits their particular lifestyle. Any dog placed in the fishbowl of the White House is bound to experience unusual stresses. Selecting the “best” dog for that situation is crucial.

Recently some have promoted a crossbred dog, a “labradoodle,” as the best choice for the Obama family. One of the reasons is that these dogs exhibit something called hybrid vigor. The argument goes that pure-bred animals are predominantly “inbred” and therefore they are genetically unsound and apt to exhibit abnormalities and disease.

Ah, if life were so simple! Yes, hybrid vigor can be useful, but only if both parents are highly inbred! Otherwise, all you are doing is producing offspring that likely will have no similarities to each other, and given that each parent has a very different genetic package, and that genes can remain unexpressed for many generations, one has no idea what each of the pups, even those with similar phenotype (appearance) as pups will look or act like as adults, or what genetically-based problems will show themselves during the animal’s life. If you have any need of predictability regarding size, health or behavior better select a well-bred animal of a specific breed.

Veterinarian Libbye Miller recently said “adorable mixed breeds’ get cancer, epilepsy, allergies, heart disease, and orthopedic problems just like purebreds. I see it every day in my veterinary practice, but mixed breeds aren’t tracked like purebreds, so they have a reputation as ‘healthier’ that is actually undeserved. I am so tired of PETA and their bogus war on the dedicated breeders who strive to breed healthy dogs, place puppies in appropriate homes, and feel responsible for their puppies for life.” Miller owns a small animal veterinary hospital in the Midwest, lives with a Belgian Tervuren, and graduated from the University of Tennessee Veterinary School.

All animals have a certain amount of genetic load, which is to say there is absolutely no animal without some genetic problem of one sort or another. Do you know anyone who wears glasses? Has allergies? Thyroid problems? Weak knees? Flat feet? A skin condition? Arthritis? These are all genetic imperfections that show up in humans who generally are all crossbreds. No human is genetically ‘clean.’ Actually, no known creature on earth could fit this description, except possibly the creatures in which females reproduce without a male being involved and that is still under study.

The fanciers of various breeds and species work very hard to eliminate serious genetic problems. They screen their animals with every available test at considerable cost of time and money. They demand that any animal bred with theirs will have similar health standards. They contribute money to research, such as the Morris Animal Foundation and the AKC Canine Health Foundation, to further the work of identifying and finding solutions for genetic issues. Interestingly, the current success of research in human health grew from the discovery of the canine genome a few years ago. We really are all more closely related than some might wish.

Are there unethical animal breeders? Sure. Good people and bad appear in every grouping. Sadly, these breeders are often readily available because of their high volume and visibility. You can find any number of these people on the Internet and in advertisements.

If you want to find a healthy and sound animal with a breeder who will work with you and be available whenever needed for support or help during the life of your pet, you may have to spend a little time searching them out. Those who do this have learned that they are worth their weight in gold.

The average dog can easily live 12-16 years. Indoor cats have a life expectancy of about 15 years. Horses often live well into their 20s, some older. Isn’t it worth a few weeks of searching and study to ensure that the animal you take into your heart will not cause family dissension, huge medical bills and possibly a lawsuit if he injures someone?

I hope the Obama family will invest this time into selecting a puppy for Sasha and Malia, if for no other reason than to prevent the heartbreak that will occur from the wrong choice.

author unknown
Yesterday, I experienced a very unusual thing indeed. It might restore someone's faith in humanity! I know it did mine.

As with all forms of competition, there comes a certain amount of ambition, goal grabbing, disappointment, anger and even revenge in extreme cases. Some of it is just the nature of competition; the majority of it is just malice. Dog showing is no exception. Unfortunately, all too often I have stood at ringside and heard malicious comments, bitching and bickering. Dog show people can be very cruel to each other sometimes. I have on occasion been the brunt of these comments, but that's another story.

Well, yesterday I had a breath of fresh air, as it were. I was stewarding at the Rough Collie Club of Ireland’s Championship show. It’s a relatively popular breed here in Ireland. Always a big entry. They had a wonderful judge from the U.K. This lady has been in the breed since 1949. So it goes without saying that I was pretty privileged to steward for her. Anyway, just before the Novice class, one of the club officials came into the ring and, I overheard her tell the judge about the one entry in the class. I thought it was unusual that there was one entry in the class, but later found out the reason why!

I called the class, and in walked an old man and his Rough Collie. I’ve only ever seen this man at our St. Patrick’s Day show. He’s an old man, rough around the edges and, well, his dog is really unkempt by show standards. He marched proudly into the ring with the dog on a great big, thick rope lead! While the judge was going over the dog, I was filled in on his story. I was told that he lives in an old folks home in Galway (the other side of Ireland). He has no family left living and no visitors at the old folks home. He’s been showing this dog for eight years only ever on St. Patrick’s Day or the Club show. He’d traveled fifty miles on a bus yesterday morning, which takes about five hours in Ireland. The nurses at his home usually phone the club to tell of his departure, and the club usually phones back when they spot this old man at the show.

He has only ever shown the dog in Novice, and people over the years never compete against him. The nurses told the club officials that, when he wins a rosette at a show, he wears it for weeks at home in the old folks home. The dog lives with him at the home and is quite the celebrity “show dog” with all the residents, the pride and joy of this man’s life. He spends half the year telling people about the last dog show and the other half of the year looking forward to the next one.

Anyway, the judge was so considerate to this man. And, boy, was he proud to show his dog off. When the judge asked could he look at the dog’s teeth, “Oh yes,” the man replied and instructed the dog to “Smile.” With that, the dog showed off a perfect set of choppers! The judge replied, “Aren’t you a clever dog? ” With that, the man said “Oh, he is very clever, he’ll shake your hand, too, if you like.” I couldn’t help smiling when I heard this and, full credit to the judge, she shook hands with the dog. The dog won first in the class and every exhibitor at the show, gave this old man and his dog a standing ovation. He was cheered and clapped as he did his own lap around the ring.

People came over to the ringside to congratulate him and pat the man on the back as he left the ring. Talk about Elvis leaving the building, this man was certainly the king when he won his class. He was just so proud of his accomplishment. He lapped up every minute of it. It was the first time, I’m sad to say, that I’ve seen people being genuinely nice at a dog show. They really made this old man’s day. Possibly year! Heaven help the residents at the old folks home when he returned home last night. Not only did he win a rosette but also won a great big trophy. I’m sure it will take pride of place on the mantle piece.

Isn’t this what dog showing should be about!! Giving people like this old man a day out to enjoy the only family he has, his best pal, his dog. A memory for an old man to hold on to, to brighten his day, something to share with his friends at the old folks home? Something to be proud of, however small the achievement?

Anyway, that’s the story, just a thought, an observation and possibly an inspiration to us all! I know it’s one of the happiest memories I have of a dog show.

Nancy Conner
Tainaron Irish Setters, Reg’d., since 1969
one Cardigan Welsh Corgi, since 2001
and a smattering of English Cockers, too
What every Montgomery attendee fears is that dreaded phone call from the dog sitter. My call was…“Your dog just had a seizure. It lasted about 1-1/2 minutes. She's okay now.” But I am NOT. This seizure is the fourth documented since March 2008 for Carly, my 8-½ year old heart-dog, and my first owner-handled champion, my best agility dog, my first CD dog, and my first tracking dog. She's my favorite and she knows it.

At 8 weeks she picked me and I picked her and we both waited anxiously until Elena decided which puppy she wanted…she picked another, thankfully. I have known something was “not quite right with her” for over a year…intuition and that special bond.

Blood work including thyroid panel and urinalysis revealed no answers…all looked really good. My vet did not have an answer. So far the seizures occurred at night with no warning. Is it a brain tumor? She doesn't “act” like a dog that has a brain tumor and she is too old to develop epilepsy. I am now on “heightened alert” because when Carly seizes, Sabrina attacks her…she becomes confused by Carly's behavior and acts aggressively towards her. Survival of the fittest kicks in.

Carly had another seizure on a beautiful fall Saturday morning two weeks after Montgomery. I was raking leaves and the dogs were enjoying the cool weather. I looked up to see Carly stumbling towards me. Had she pulled a muscle in her leg or hurt a foot? No, she was having a seizure. I caught her as she sank in front of me and began to take her inside to protect her from the other dogs. Sabrina caught on quickly that something was amiss and her newfound job was to kill that dog moving erratically in my arms. Visualize this: woman holding seizing dog above her head while kicking at other dog in order to get it to stop leaping to bite the seizing dog…in her yard for all to see. When I ended up getting bit (only a bruise due to a thick layer of polar fleece), I quickly laid Carly down on the driveway and grabbed Sabrina, took her in the house and crated her. I returned to Carly to hold her to prevent her from hurting herself and to make certain Clancy didn't go after her. It was time to take action.

I called my vet immediately, confirmed that there was no reason to bring her in as there really was nothing they could do for her, and scheduled an appointment for Monday. By Monday morning I decided a stronger course of action was needed and I called to ask for a referral to the neurologist at the local specialty clinic. On Tuesday, October 21, I took my energetic, beautiful girl in to be examined by the neurologist, armed with recent blood work results and historical information on the documented seizures. Dr. Brian Cellio examined Carly and said she did not exhibit any typical physical signs of a dog with a brain tumor. He gave me a small ray of hope…it could be encephalitis, not a brain tumor, and it is treatable. I think he was puzzled but pleased that I was willing to spend $1400 for a CT scan when clinically it didn't appear that Carly had a brain tumor. We agreed that I would call him at 3:30 between his surgeries and my meetings to discuss the results of the CT scan.

When it was time to call, I just couldn't do it…I did not want to hear bad news. Sometimes we just know things, don't we? Upon announcing that I was calling for Dr. Cellio regarding Carly, the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier, the receptionist paused and said “Ohhhh…let me get him.” The pause confirmed that I would be hearing bad news…and I did.

“Carly has a very large brain tumor (meningioma, most likely) between her skull and brain. It is a chronic slow-growing tumor pushing in on the brain that has been there for some time. I am surprised that clinically she is not showing more symptoms.” Dr. Cellio suggested I come to the clinic immediately so we could discuss the “options.” I made it to the clinic in record time; armed with a pad of paper to take notes…I moved into “business mode” so I would not break into tears and sob hysterically. Her tumor was about the size of a ping-pong ball.

The goal is to “prolong a good quality of life...or not.” In cases like this, there are four options: 1) Medication Only - anti-seizure medication and prednisone and you will have 3 to 6 months until it “gets out of hand.” 2) Chemotherapy - there is a specific drug that can be given orally that works on the brain that is well tolerated and at a reasonable cost (spread out over 6 months). The negative:

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this treatment works best on small, fast growing tumors. Carly's tumor is large and slow growing. This type of treatment may not provide any benefit. 3) Radiation – this can be pursued because the tumor is so close to the skull. Disadvantages - 18 treatments, anesthesia each time, and possible radiation to other parts of brain. Dr Cellio did not recommend this and the life expectancy is 6 months. 4) Surgery - because the tumor is on the outside pushing into the brain, it is possible it can be removed. Advantage - removal of the bulk of the tumor, can determine type, how fast it's growing and determine additional course of action. Dr Cellio did not feel comfortable performing surgery on this size of tumor and would refer me to MU (University of Missouri). Disadvantage- risks of surgery and possible damage to other brain tissue. The average life expectancy is 1½ years. I only cried a little as we talked. However, I could barely see through my tears to get to the car for the long ride home.

The next day, I spoke with Dr Cellio again as I was discouraged...I felt like I had no options. I asked him what he would do if it were his dog. He recommended a surgical opinion from Dr Joan Coates at University of Missouri. Dr Cellio agreed to call her so I could get in faster...the earliest would be 2+ weeks because it was possible that Dr Coates was not “in the clinic” and I would have to wait until she rotated from the classroom. In the meantime, Carly was placed on prednisone and an anti-seizure drug with no guarantees that seizures would be prevented. I remained on heightened alert. What should I do...do nothing? Get a second opinion? Over the weekend, I decided to take action. Carly was 8+ years young, in good health, and did not present like a dog with a huge brain tumor. She deserved to find out if surgery was an option to prolong a good quality of life. Luck was with us as Dr Coates was “on clinic” and could see us sooner than later.

On October 29, Carly and I drove two hours to the University Of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine for the surgery consult. They were expecting us and shortly a pleasant neurology resident, Dr Laura Vasquez, and first-year vet student, Krystal Azerolo, met with us to take a look at Carly. I was expecting Dr Coates...I was on my way to learn how things work at a vet school clinic. They took Carly “to the back to examine her” and I received a pamphlet that explained the exam process and the time it would take...about an hour. Great... an hour to stew. I went and had a so-so lunch at the cafeteria.

Upon completion of the exam, Dr Vazquez and Krystal Azerolo explained the options and called in Dr Coates. Carly was a good candidate for surgery to “debulk” the tumor and I was warned...warned there was no way to get it all. Radiation would be required after surgery. The cons... she may not make it through surgery and the pros...average life expectancy is 1½ years. And... she wanted to operate the next morning. Wow... the next day? This is a big decision and I like to think about big decisions...analyze the pros and cons, what if this, what if that? I didn't even know what questions I should ask. I started crying...just a little.

Quickly... I looked at the three women...all petite, hard-working vets and a soon-to-be vet. Was Krystal Azerolo related to Bob and Elaine Azerolo? They both are from St Louis. Was this a good omen since I co-own Carly with the Azerolos? The cost was what I expected, not an issue since I would do anything for her. I was at a point where I needed to make a decision about putting her down or go for surgery. Dr Coates was available to do the surgery the next day... otherwise she was not on clinics for several more weeks. If Carly didn't make it through the surgery, I would be okay with the surgery decision since she would be instrumental in educating vets as she has done educating me these last 8+ years. In two minutes, I decided to have Dr Coates do her best to remove as much of the tumor as possible...The quickest decision I have ever made. The two-hour drive home alone was a long one.

The craniectomy was on Thursday, October 30. Krystal Azerolo's job was to keep me informed on what was happening with Carly. Surgery started at 9am and concluded at 1pm. I got the call later than I expected: “Carly made it through surgery, is breathing on her own in an oxygen tent and is being closely monitored. The next 24 hours are critical. If her status changes for the worse, Dr Vasquez will call tonight. Otherwise Krystal will call Friday morning. The tumor was large, deep and bloody...the brain is very swollen from the tumor. Biopsy results will be available next week.” At 6PM she was still conked out from the anesthesia, surgery and pain medication. She lived through it...my tough terrier girl is the best!

Krystal called the next morning to let me know Carly made it through the night! I later learned that they were quite concerned she would not make it. Sometimes it's good not to know everything. I asked when I could see her and arranged to visit her for an hour on Sunday to give her more time to recover...Just three days after the surgery.

Upon arrival at the MU Vet Clinic, Dr Vasquez and Krystal (she is related to Bob Azerolo) ushered me into a sitting room, updated me on Carly's progress and explained what to expect when I saw her for the first time. Her incision was huge! Her entire head including ears was shaved down to the skin...but the beard remained! This was the first time in my 12+ years of owning Wheatens that I actually saw those big, brown, beautiful, expressive eyes! She looked like a Schnauzer/Poodle Wheaten mix with her various hair trimmings. But the most exciting part was that despite the trauma of a four-hour surgery and being heavily medicated, she remembered me and was thrilled to see me! The vet was very pleased with Carly's reaction when seeing me. I spent an hour quietly stroking, speaking to her and softly combing her...hair still grows!

Carly returned home on November 7 with a bag of pills (a special pill box purchase was required) and lots of instructions. The first few weeks were difficult as she was very ataxic (wobbly) due to the Phenobarbital. I kept her separated from the other two dogs for safety's sake and worried if I had made the right decision. As time passed she became more stable on her feet and more like she was prior to surgery. The histopathology of the tumor diagnosed a meningioma. Radiation began the week of Thanksgiving so that all 21 daily treatments would be completed by Christmas. My life revolved around picking Carly up on Friday afternoons, returning home for the weekend, and returning her to MU on Sunday evenings. All in all, I spent 10 hours of driving/meeting with the vet each weekend, five weekends in a row, racking up over 2500 miles. Books on CD are wonderful!

Carly returned home from her last radiation treatment on December 24. I was thrilled to have her home. She was full of energy and acted like a puppy! We return to MU on February 15...
for a follow up CT scan...the goal is no growth of the remaining tumor ... a reduction in the size of the tumor would be wonderful. Again, the goal is to prolong a good quality of life. I don't know how much time I have with her... so bear with me as we travel this path. Meanwhile, give your Wheaten a hug!

Update - On Sunday, February 1, while attending the SCWTCA Board meeting, I received a call from home. Carly was experiencing prolonged facial and body seizures that were unlike any previous ones. I raced home, administered liquid Valium rectally and raced Carly to the emergency room. There, blood was drawn and she was placed on a higher level of Phenobarbital and Valium. That evening, the emergency vet told me to prepare for the worse. Monday morning I consulted with the local neurologist and MU neurologist, Dr Coates...after a night of sadness, tears and reflection, I was prepared to put her down. Both vets believed Carly deserved more time to assess what was going on...what a roller coaster ride. I brought her home to monitor her as she acclimated to the new drug dose. Carly could no longer see or hear on her right side. She was uncomfortable standing and would turn to the left. She was really out of it...was it the medication, brain damage from the prolonged seizures, radiation side effects, or all of these? I scheduled a visit to MU for a neurological consult. On February 10, Dr Coates confirmed what I strongly wanted to deny. The remaining mass was compressing on the left side of her brain and causing loss of perception on the right and circling on the left. Carly was "worsening and may not improve." Management of her seizures was the best treatment to maintain Carly's quality of life. They could not further treat her meningioma and, due to its large size, it was compressing the surrounding nervous structures. All this was a compassionate way of saying...it's time. I left with 2 week's worth of medication. I was not quite ready to say goodbye to her.

During the two-hour drive home, I resolved to schedule an appointment with my vet for Monday, February 16 so I could share one last weekend with my girl. On that day, Carly ate her breakfast with gusto and shared a little of mine. It broke my heart when I asked her to "speak" on command and she DID...five different times. We took one last, short wobbly walk up and down the block and patrolled the yard one last time. I took her by Clancy and Sabrina's crates to say goodbye as we left the house for our final car ride together. At the vet's office, she pottied outside on command...darn she was a good girl...I miss her so much.

WHAT WE DO FOR LOVE...
The same condition and another choice, just as thoughtfully made by Jody Sylvester

Ch Gleanngay Rebel Rouser "Hamish" October 9, 1998 - January 13, 2009

The first seizure (in mid September 2008) came when he was resting at my feet, on the Wheaten afghan he believed was his own. Of course it was a Saturday evening, when the vet was closed and Sunday loomed as well. He was immediately fine afterwards, easing back into a conscious state, looking into my eyes as I held him, and kissing me and Willow, HIS Wheaten, who was also very concerned. It was the first indication we had that there was a thing wrong with this healthy, robust and much loved 10 year old Wheaten. He was, after all, always the life of the party. You only had to ask him.

Seizure followed seizure over the ensuing days. I got used to having the syringe of Valium and the emergency vet numbers pinned on the side of the frig in case I needed them. My vet suspected a brain tumor, as he was over six years old and was suddenly having seizures.To get to the facts, I took him to the University of Florida's veterinary school at Gainesville. Our first trip revealed no additional body tumors but the second trip I was shown CAT scans that clearly showed a well-defined brain tumor, complete with the "tail" characteristic of a meningioma tumor. It is a particularly aggressive tumor, and this one was firmly located between his orbital lobes, non operable in terms of removal. My choices that day were to put him through radiation and chemo, try herbal assisted cancer meds, or to put him down on the spot. I opted for the herbal/cancer med treatment. When I drilled the vets about the radiation, they admitted radiation did not represent a cure, or even a chance for a cure. Just some borrowed time. Perhaps. Perhaps not. We used capsules and powders and phenobarbitol and what I can share with you is that both my vet and I learned a lot about quality care. Early on, he had clusters of seizures at the full moon, so we dosed him up with extra phenobarbitol at that time, and backed off before and after. That really helped. The meds (detailed online through the vet school) kept his organs functioning well, despite the cancer and steroids in his body. His last bloodwork, which came in after his death, was perfect. Until the last day or two, he played like a madman, loving, making us laugh as he always had. In the end, the tumor grew and caused him pain, which I could not let him endure. Hamish died in my arms on January 13, 2009, just over 10 years old. Loved forever. 🐾
HOLWEIT’S STANCHER, CGC, CD, RA IS AWARDED THE SCWTAC MYSHAWN’S WHEATEN AMBASSADOR AWARD 2008

Duffy (Holweit’s Stancher, CGC, CD, RA) recently earned one of the highest awards given by the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Association of Canada—the Myshawn’s Wheaten Ambassador Award 2008. Given annually by the association through the generosity of breeder Margaret Stewardson in memory of her champion dog, “Shawnie”, this award is given to the dog that achieves a minimum of at least three titles and registered with the Canadian Kennel Club (CKC). These titles must be from different areas of competition and performance. Duffy’s numerous titles in obedience and Rally-O, his work in pet therapy and evaluation, and his outstanding fundraising for the American Cancer Society’s Dogwalk with his “brother” Mark John Stancher (Fivetime Golden Bone Award Winner) were applauded. Also his versatility and willingness to try new experiences were commended. Duffy has been Herding Certified at Raspberry Ridge Sheep Farm, taught to Skijor at Lake Placid’s Mt. Van Hovenberg annual program, learned to track with the Hudson Valley Tracking Club and kayak with his owner, Dorice Stancher.

“Your information just blew me away,” commented Ms. Stewardson, one of a panel of three judges. “The fact that your dog has a long history of being active and performing for years was of great interest to me. The work you have done speaks for itself. I’m very happy to have a dog of this stature chosen for this award.”

A week after receiving the award, Stancher decided to enter Duffy in competition at the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America’s National Specialty. He hadn’t been shown in a year, but seemed eager when re-introduced to the exercises during practice. He earned a first place blue ribbon in Open A Obedience, and a first place blue ribbon in Rally-O at the excellent level. “He’s nine years old now, but he still keeps surprising me,” commented Ms Stancher.

I rescued a human today.

Her eyes met mine as she walked down the corridor peering apprehensively into the kennels. I felt her need instantly and knew I had to help her. I wagged my tail, not too exuberantly, so she wouldn’t be afraid.

As she stopped at my kennel I blocked her view from a little accident I had in the back of my cage. I didn’t want her to know that I hadn’t been walked today. Sometimes the shelter keepers get too busy and I didn’t want her to think poorly of them.

As she read my kennel card I hoped that she wouldn’t feel sad about my past. I only have the future to look forward to and I want to make a difference in someone’s life. She got down on her knees and made little kissy sounds at me. I shoved my shoulder and the side of my head up against the bars to comfort her.

Gentle fingertips caressed my neck, she was desperate for companionship. A tear fell down her cheek and I raised my paw to assure her that all would be well.

Soon my kennel door opened and her smile was so bright that I instantly jumped into her arms. I would promise to keep her safe. I would promise to always be by her side. I would promise to do everything I could to see that radiant smile and sparkle in her eyes.

I was so fortunate that she came down my corridor. So many more are out there who haven’t walked the corridors. So many more to be saved. At least I could save one.

I rescued a human today. (author unknown)
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