



SHELTIE WISE



The monthly newsletter of the Shetland Sheepdog Club of No. NJ

October 2009

Club website: www.sscnj.org

Pat Marchello, editor --jetsong@comcast.net



Meeting Notice Friday, November 6th

**PLEASE NOTE the MEETING
SITE CHANGE FOR THIS MONTH ONLY**

Please join us on Friday, Nov 6th, **7:30 pm at the Pat Marchello's house, 1131 Springfield Ave, New Providence. Phone: 908.665.0575**

Among other things, we will be discussing the upcoming Holiday Party and our recent specialties.

Club notes



Our Officers for 2009-2010

President: Donna Colletti
Vice President: Lisa Stoddard
Treasurer: Ursula Dudek
Corresponding Secretary: Sylvette Hartroth
Recording Secretary: Connie Deetz
Board members: (1) Cathy Miller
(2) Vacant

As you read in the email from Lisa Stoddard, we need to fill one board position. If you are interested, please contact Donna Colletti.

BRAGS from Donna

Proud to announce several Pinnacle dogs have earned new titles.

Pinnacle Visible Flash (Chance) earned his RN.
Pinnacle Sir Wolf of Windsor (Windsor) earned his NA and NAJ.

Pinnacle Wittle Teddy Bear (Teddy) earned his RN and OAJ.

Pinnacle Finnegan Begin Again (Finnie) earned his ARCH and CD.

Pinnacle Dutchess Wee Won (Chessie) earned her MXJ.

Pinnacle Dazzling Delight (Dazzel) earned her CD.

Pinnacle Hot Fudge Sundae (Sundae) earned his RN.

Pinnacle Grand Conductor (Maestro) is half way to his UDX.

I want to give a big Thank You to Sylvette for training my 2 big boys who are Case Pinnacle Galactic Voyager (Gazer) and Case Pinnacle Solar Flare (Red) and getting their CGC titles on them. They apparently won over the tested with their unflappable, steady and loving nature. Thank You again Sylvette.

I also want to acknowledge Pinnacle Princess Ariel (Ariel) and CH Ironmoon National Tryst (Trista) because they are busy doing therapy work which is great work.

A cry from Sylvette

I have a cry (Malashel Pinnacle Ladies Man CDX), My dog Sly had to be put to sleep on Monday 10-19-09. He was 14. I got him when he was 3 years old and he was my silly boy and made me laugh. He was also on Pet Star and had gotten his CDX. I miss him and he's also missed by his best dog buddy Sundae.



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: October 20, 2009
Contact: AKC Communications
Phone: 212-696-8343
E-mail: communications@akc.org

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

**Inaugural Meet the Breeds
an Overwhelming Success**

New York, NY – This past weekend, the American Kennel Club, along with our friends at the Cat Fanciers' Association, hosted 36,000 people over two days at Meet the Breeds in New York City. As anticipated, it was an unparalleled success resulting from the participation of nearly 200 dog clubs and cat councils and the support of over 100 vendors and 16 sponsors –and especially our proud presenting sponsor and provider of both the AKC and CFA pet healthcare plans– Pet Partners, Inc.

Meet the Breeds showcased the joys of pet ownership to an audience of dog and cat lovers who were eager to learn about the diversity of breeds and responsible pet ownership in such a welcoming and positive setting. This family-friendly event educated children of all ages –including local Girl, Boy and Cub Scout troops– in a way that engaged them and created lasting memories with dogs and cats.

The genesis for Meet the Breeds –where potential pet owners can touch the dogs and talk with experts away from the hurried ringside atmosphere at dog shows– came from The Kennel Club's "Discover Dogs" in England. AKC President Dennis Sprung envisioned an event like this in the U.S. and expanded the concept to include the CFA. With Meet the Breeds having been held in conjunction with the AKC/Eukanuba National Championship for the past eight years, and being a consistent draw for crowds and media attention whether in Tampa, Orlando or Long Beach, it was clear a stand-alone event in a large metropolitan venue was in order.

Indeed, the recent media coverage, both pre- and post-event, is testament to the tremendous appeal of this format and the public's desire to experience cats and dogs outside the show ring. In addition to frequent coverage from New York-area media outlets like WNBC, WCBS, the *New York Post* and the *Daily News*, national coverage appeared in print outlets such as *USA Today* and *New York Times* while television coverage included NBC's "Today" and Fox News Channel's "Fox & Friends," which did multiple live broadcasts from the event floor. Prior to the event, AKC and CFA rang the opening bell at both NASDAQ (with licensee Jakks Pacific) and NYSE (with licensing agent 4Kids), which was broadcast live on CNBC, Fox Business Channel and many other stations.

We were also proud to host a few "boldface names" at the event itself including fashion designer Michael Kors and famed columnist Cindy Adams who brought along her dogs Jazzy and Juicy to greet the huge crowds at the Yorkshire Terrier Club of America's booth. Whoopi Goldberg, co-host on "The View" and Mario Lopez, host of "Extra" also attended, showing up to tape segments that will air shortly on their respective programs. Media impressions are still being tabulated, but between our advertising campaign and the publicity generated by the event, we have already reached more than 300 million people with our Meet the Breeds message: the first step in responsible pet ownership is to "meet the breed" which entails doing research and selecting a pet that fits your lifestyle.

An event of this magnitude isn't created in a vacuum so I'd like to thank the hard-working staff at the American Kennel Club, led by Gina DiNardo in organizing club and staff participation; Michael Canalizo for handling the endless logistics associated with the venue and to Daisy Okas and her communications staff for getting the word out to the public. Many other staff from both the New York and North Carolina offices were critical to the success of this event and I am very grateful for their efforts. I know it took tireless attention to detail and many late nights to pull off an event of this magnitude.

Last, but most certainly not least, I want to thank all the participating AKC parent and local specialty clubs that sent representatives to host the breed booths and perform in the demonstration rings. Also, I'd like to thank Parent Club Delegate Committee Chairperson Pat Laurans for her assistance. She advocated for increased parent club participation and while we may have had celebrities in attendance, we all know that the real stars the public came to see were our beautiful animals. Without all of us working together as a team, this event could not have been possible. I thank everyone who contributed and congratulate you all on your great success.

Sincerely,



Ron Menaker
Chairman

###

The American Kennel Club (AKC), proudly celebrates its 125th Anniversary in 2009. Since 1884 the not-for-profit organization has maintained the largest registry of purebred dogs in the world, and today its rules govern more than 20,000 canine competitions each year. The AKC is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Along with its nearly 5,000 licensed and member clubs and its affiliated organizations, the AKC advocates for the purebred dog as a family companion, advances canine health and well-being, works to protect the rights of all dog owners and promotes responsible dog ownership. Affiliate AKC organizations include the AKC Humane Fund, AKC Canine Health Foundation, AKC Companion Animal Recovery and the AKC Museum of the Dog. For more information, visit www.akc.org.

More.. Meet the Breeds

As you know, we partnered with Tri-State at this event. This email is from Becky Jarit (Tri-State SSC)

I would like to thank, by name, the SSCNJ members who volunteered to help man the booth this past weekend. Thank you to Herb O'Brien, Anita Frey, and Barbara B., special thanks to Lisa Stoddard, Cathy Miller and Sylvette Harthroth for volunteering both days (and full days!) of the weekend and bringing more dogs to have at the booth. And while we are at it, a bit of thanks to my husband, Paddy, for being a good sport about wearing the kilt all day long all weekend.

All contributed to a successful and educational booth.

Thank you Lisa for the following photos:



Cathy & Sylvette with the pups.



A photo of the booth. This was joint effort with Tri-State SSC.



More of the booth.



Early in the morning a look down the cat fancier's area.



Autumn, Sundae & Iris, 3 tired pups towards the end of the day.



Autumn and Iris with a friend.

Scary stuff.....

Gail gave me permission to share this with you.

Since yesterday afternoon, I have been dealing with a horrific illness in one of my dogs that I feel its important to let people know about.

Yesterday afternoon, I put a 2 yr old perfectly normal bitch in her crate while I did a few chores around the house. When I went back outside to let the dogs loose, she was very lethargic and had vomited and pooped in her crate. Lots of ropey saliva, heavy breathing... obviously a dog in distress. I ran her down to my vet's office.... the vet there was not one that I normally see but hey! It was emergent so I had to take what I could get. He checked her over and felt she had a seizure... told him, no, I don't think she had a seizure as she had been crated in the same area with 6 other dogs and one of them (these are shelties...all would have barked) would have barked had she been thrashing around a crate.

He was pretty insistent about the seizure even though I tried to explain that she would not be getting more lethargic if she was post seizure, she would be waking up.

He checked her blood sugar which was low and gave her "a lot" of glucose to bring the blood sugar back up. Said she was dehydrated from the diarrhea (she had only pooped once at that time) and vomiting. Brought her home and she was minimally response by the time I got home 15 minutes later. By the time I carried her in the house and put her on a blanket, she was unresponsive. So, I scooped her up and ran her out to the car and off to the ER vet.

To get to the point of this long, unpleasant situation, Lola was quickly diagnosed as having hemorrhagic gastroenteritis (HGE). I wanted to let people know what her symptoms were so that if you see something similar, RUN, don't walk, to your nearest vet or emergency clinic!

HGE has a VERY rapid onset so acting quickly is vital. Lola probably would have had a better response had I taken her to the ER vet to begin with so that IV fluids could have been started immediately.

Lethargy, vomiting, diarrhea... look to see if you notice any blood in the excretions. Gums were pale grey and sticky and extremities were cold. Her temp was normal These dogs decline rapidly so do not delay!

There is a lot of speculation about what causes this.... it is most commonly seen in small dogs (yorkies, mini poodles, doxies, bichons, etc) but can happen in any breed at any age and any sex. The jury is out as to whether a dog that has this once is more susceptible to a reoccurrence.

I am not trying to scare anyone but I do prescribe to the notion that forewarned is forearmed!

After a horrible evening and night, Lola turned the corner and now seems to be improving steadily.

Gael Silverman

<http://galashelties.net>

Unfortunately, we received this update for Gael:

Despite Lola's improvement over the weekend, she went into cardiac arrest this morning and died. We are absolutely devastated to lose this little spark of sunshine! Lola was sired by CH Buzz out of a Quill daughter. She had just turned two Sept. 28th.

Genes and height

Kim Schive

Foxglove Shelties/Carlisle, Mass.

(The following was part of a discussion about "Genes and Height" on the ASSA yahoogroup.)

I'm glad this interesting discussion has continued. I'm going to agree with Charlotte [McGowan] and Malcolm [Hart] on the usefulness of an ideal size as opposed to an allowable range. I'm also going to agree that the range of size genes in our breed--which include Collies as well as toy breeds--make the height issue more challenging. But I'm going to disagree with any implication that polygenes might somehow behave differently in Shelties than they do in any other living creature.

We're always talking about how "Shelties don't follow the rules." But they do. We're the ones not following the rules. It's much easier for us to make excuses than to make the hard choices we would need to make if we really wanted to get the size problem under control.

Why is it useful, as Charlotte suggests and Malcolm concurs, for a standard (or individual breeders) to set an "ideal size" in the middle of the allowable range? Precisely *because* height is a polygenetic trait and follows the rules governing all polygenes.

All polygenetic traits are normally distributed in the population. Let me say it again: ALL polygenetic traits are normally distributed. A "normal distribution" is your quintessential "bell-shaped curve"--a symmetrical curve that is highest in the middle and smoothly decreases on either side.

Take a moment to grab pencil or pen and paper and draw yourself a bell curve.

Now draw a line that bisects your curve right at the middle--or the highest point.

That's the population mean--or average value--for that trait. If we are talking about Sheltie height, that's the average height. The area under the curve represents the number of Shelties that will be found at any point along the range encompassed by that normal distribution. Your mean bisects the bell curve--cuts it in half--meaning that 50 percent of Shelties are taller than average, and 50 percent are smaller than average.

But look at your curve and think about what it represents. Where are most individuals in your population? Right around the average! As you move further from the mean in either direction, you find fewer and fewer individuals. In other words, most Shelties will be right around the average height for the population. A few will be significantly small or big, and far fewer will be extremely small or utterly huge.

So, if you want the majority of Shelties to be within the 13- to 16-inch range, what should the mean of your population be?

(I'll give you a minute to think about this.)

Got it? Right, the mean of the population should be 14.5 inches--right in the middle of the range where we'd like to find most of our dogs. A population mean of 14.5 inches wouldn't mean we'd never get oversize or undersize dogs, but it would mean that the majority of our dogs would be in size.

What is our actual population mean? What is the average size of the Shelties we're breeding? I'm pretty sure it's greater than 14.5 inches. So we still have a normal distribution, but our normal distribution is shifted to the right of where it should be.

What does this look like?

On the same piece of paper, draw another bell curve about

an inch to the right of the one you already drew and draw in the mean, or average, of this new curve. Label the mean of the first curve 14.5; label the mean of the second curve 15.5. Do you see the difference in the two resulting populations? When your actual population mean is 15.5, you have a *lot* more dogs going oversize.

So that's Number One. If we *really* want the majority of Shelties to be in size, the mean, or average, of our breeding population needs to be 14-1/2 inches.

Next question: Why, as Charlotte suggests, can tightly bred, small stud dogs be so very useful in helping to control size? First, because a dog can have a greater impact on the breed than a bitch. Second, because a tightly bred animal is likely to be more prepotent for his qualities (both good and bad), including size (there are scientific reasons for this, but I'm not going to go into them here). And third, because size is a polygenetic trait subject to environmental influences--including sex.

Poor Charlotte, moving from one breed that makes no size distinction between dogs and bitches to another! (Although I've seen her Paps, and I will say she's coping well. <g>) It's fine to write a standard that does not recognize any distinction between the size of dogs and the size of bitches. But writing your standard that way does not make it any less of a biological fact; it just makes things harder for breeders and gives us one more factor to consider in making our breeding decisions.

Bottom line: Identical genes for size will produce a larger dog if they are expressed in an environment of male hormones than in an environment of female hormones. That means a good small stud dog has "smaller size genes" than a bitch of the same size. A 14-1/2-inch male is probably, on average, the genetic equivalent of a 13-1/2-inch bitch. Throwing a good quantity of that dog's genes into the mix is going to go a long way toward pulling the population mean back in the direction of the 14-1/2 inches it should be.

But sex differences go the other way, too. A 15-1/2-inch bitch has "bigger size genes" than a male of the same size. If that 15-1/2-inch bitch was a male, she might well have been bigger than 16 inches.

I'm not saying we shouldn't breed 15-1/2-inch bitches. But--and this is where you should take another look at that bell curve you drew--you'd better hope 15- or 15-1/2 inches is not the *average* size bitch we're breeding!

Furthermore, you shoot yourself in the foot every time you breed an oversize bitch. Nobody breeds 17-inch dogs. Why is it somehow okay to breed a 17-inch bitch? Answer: It's not. You'd be much better off breeding oversize males than oversize bitches, but this is the opposite of normal practice. Again, it's not the Shelties that aren't following the rules; it's us.

Finally, let's talk about those Collie genes. I agree with both

Malcolm and Charlotte that the Collie genes (along with the other genes that went into the mix) make our job much more challenging, but perhaps the most important effect of those genes, along with the genes from toy breeds that went into the mix, is to change the shape of the normal distribution--*not* to change the way polygenes behave.

Still have your paper and pencil? Okay, turn your paper over to the blank side and draw three more bell curves (not overlapping, just one beside the other). Make the first one about four inches long from one end to the other; make the second about 2 and a half inches long from one end to the other; and make the third one an inch, or less, from one end to the other.

Any of these curves can represent the range of values for a given polygenetic trait in a particular population. If we're still talking about height, the first curve you drew might represent Shelties, a population subgroup in which you'll find individuals ranging from very small to very big. And the last curve you drew might represent people from the Massai tribe in Africa, who, as Malcolm noted, are all pretty tall. But height, in both cases, is polygenetic and follows the rules for polygenes. Just because you don't have a lot of variation in a particular population, like the Massai, doesn't mean height isn't polygenetic in that population subgroup. Even within the tribe, some Massai are taller or shorter than others, and men are, on average, taller than women. A Massai child who has a period of long illness in childhood will end up being a shorter adult than his identical twin brother who remained healthy. And I'm willing to bet that any Massai family who moves to London and lives down the street from a McDonald's will end up with children who are somewhat taller than their already tall parents. (And, Malcolm, as to why you might not see this same tendency in a few generations of Shelties, it's because our dogs are being selectively bred--unlike our children! We're actively eliminating big dogs from the breeding pool, so dogs that may have been in size and bred from in 1950, now go oversize and are sold as pets. The fact that most of our dogs are reaching their maximum potential as far as height is a good thing! When what we see is a lot closer to what we'll get, it makes the job of selecting for correct size that much easier to do... if we ever decide we really want to do it, that is.)

Another example of a polygenetic trait is the tendency to retrieve, something that's been heavily selected for in certain breeds and not at all (or to a much lesser extent) in others. Among retrievers, you're not going to find a lot of variation in retrieving ability. Even the worst retrievers in a retrieving breed are going to be pretty darn good by my standards. And the best retrievers will be phenomenal. But even with a small range, it's a polygenetic trait that follows the rules. In Shelties, of course, you have a much wider range of retrieving ability--from the dog that stands and grins while you run after the ball yourself to the dog, like one I once had, that will chase a ball and bring it back until he falls over from exhaustion. What would happen if Sheltie breeders decided that the

kind of retriever we wanted was a dog somewhere in the middle of this range--the one that, say, runs after the ball, picks it up, and then drops it? If we started seriously selecting for this kind of retrieval behavior, two things would happen. First, the population mean would shift from wherever it is now and move closer to where we were aiming. In other words, within a decade or so, the average Sheltie would be likely to show some interest in a ball, chase a ball, and pick it up. But the other thing that would happen is that the shape of our bell curve would change. It would become shorter from end to end and higher in the middle. By eliminating dogs on both extremes of retrieving ability--the ones that showed no interest whatsoever in balls as well as the flyball fanatics--we'd end up with fewer dogs on either extreme and a whole lot more bunched up in the middle.

In fact, this is the same thing we'd like to do with size in Shelties; we'd like to change the shape of the curve to have fewer on either extreme and more in the middle, right around our (still hypothetical, unfortunately) 14-1/2-inch mean. And selection is the way to do that. You want fewer Collie-sized Shelties? You need to actively select against those Collie-sized genes. Our dogs follow the rules. We need to start following them, too.

And if you've gotten all the way to the end of this email, congratulations! You deserve a prize!

-Kim

Note: The Charlotte she refers to is Charlotte Clem McGowan and Malcolm is Malcolm Hart, Hartmere (UK).