



# SHELTIE WISE

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

Sept 2006

Club website: [www.sscnj.org](http://www.sscnj.org)

Pat Marchello, editor --jetsong@comcast.net

## Meeting Notice – Oct 7th

The next meeting of the SSCNNJ will be on **Friday, Oct 7<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm** at the Westfield Community Center.

Since the October meeting will be the last meeting before our Fall Specialty, please make every effort to attend this meeting so we can make sure we have all the show bases covered.



Guests are welcomed. If you have a friend interested in shelties, why not invite them to a meeting! (Directions to the meeting site can be find at our Website – [www.sscnj.org](http://www.sscnj.org) )

## Meeting refreshments..

Please mark your calendars!

October	Tina
November	Aneita and Jessica
December	Herb
January	Mike and Joyce
February	Diane
March	Lisa and Kathy
April	Elaine
May	
June	
Sept 2007	Donna

If you have signed up to bring refreshments and cannot make the meeting, please call the next person on the list.

## Dues are due.. *did you forget?*

This is a reminder to anyone who has not paid their dues that they are due by October 1st. Please note, that if your dues are not paid, you cannot vote. If you have any questions, please contact Ursula – [wildoakshelties@cablone.net](mailto:wildoakshelties@cablone.net) or by phone at 908.354.3252

## 2007 Calendars – *Don't miss out!*

The calendars will again be at the October meeting. What are not sold will be offered for sale at the Fall specialty. If you can't make the meeting and want a calendar, please contact Ursula at [wildoakshelties@cablone.net](mailto:wildoakshelties@cablone.net), phone 908.354.3252, or ask a friend to pick one up for you.

## What's on our website

If you haven't been out to *the members* portion of our website in a while, here's a reminder of what's currently there:

Constitution/By-Laws (pdf )
Code of Ethics (pdf)
Current Membership list (pdf version 2005-06)
List of Officers & Committee (will be updated after elections)
Roles and Responsibilities of Officers/Board Members
Membership Application & Code of Ethics (pdf)
Club Policies -- Breeder Referral Policy
Sheltie Wise (pdf versions)

**New members**, if you don't know how to access this portion of [www.sscnj.org](http://www.sscnj.org), please send me an email or ask a fellow club member. Pat ([jetsong@comcast.net](mailto:jetsong@comcast.net))

## Members Brags:

On September 4th at the Mid-Kentucky KC show under Mrs. Patti Widick Neale, **Marma's Ryan**, owned by Buddy & Ursula, took WD for his 3rd major which finished him. At the same show, **Chisterling Figures Trade Off**, also owned by Buddy & Ursula, took WB/BW/OS for her 1st major which bring her to 12 points. To say the least it was an exciting day at Wildoak. A day or two later, Jolene went WB for a point.

At Chattanooga KC shows on September 16th & 17th, 8 1/2 month old **Wildoak Polar Express** took WD/OS on both days. On Sunday (9/17) his littermate, **Wildoak Waldenwood Holly Berry**, took Breed.

*From Elaine...*

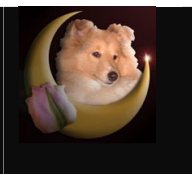
**Malashel's Uptown Girl** ( Tess) is now a Champion, finishing with a 4 pt. major at Harrisburg. Meg, my parti girl got her first CD leg at Somerset Hills.

*From Aneita...*

**Allspice A Knights Tale** shown by Kathy Dziegiel has 8 pts now. We are very proud of our Tiger son (out of Tea' one of Joannes champion bitches)

At Hershey at their grooming competition I won best technical and won best terrier in class going on to compete for best in show in my level. Completing my requirements to be certified in terriers and passing my written non sporting test.

Upcoming events,  
seminars, clinics etc.



**Nov 11, 2006 -- AKC Obedience Seminar**  
Presenter: AKC Field Rep  
Sponsoring Club: Somerset County Dog Obedience Club

FYI: Kay Ruskin - 17 Lafayette Lane Basking Ridge, NJ 07920 --- Phone: (908) 647-1357  
Email: pagodashihtzu@aol.com  
This seminar will meet AKC obedience and rally judges' educational requirements. This seminar will be for one day only.

**November 11, 2006** – Long Hill Twp. NJ  
Improving Canine Social Skills - Reading Canine Body Language  
Presenter: Brenda Aloff  
Sponsoring Club: Garden State All Terrier Club  
Contact Information:  
Vallie Beckwith -  
Email: sandpiper07933@yahoo.com  
Phone: (973) 543-1809  
This will be a two day seminar.

**December 10, 2006** – Gettysburg, PA  
Understanding the Notion of Motion  
Presenter: Pat Craig Trotter  
Sponsoring Club: Chambersburg Area Kennel Club  
Contact Information:  
Sandie Rolenaitis -  
Email: rodel@shibas.net  
Phone: (717) 528-7067

**January 27- 28, 2007 -- Harrisburg SSC Seminar**  
**Myra Savant Harris --Canine Reproduction Whelping and Puppy Intensive Care Seminar**  
Spring Garden Conference Ctr. Middletown, PA.  
Please check the Harrisburg Shetland Sheepdog site at [www.harrisburgssc.org](http://www.harrisburgssc.org) for the latest Seminar new

**Advanced and Observers**  
Presenter: George Alston  
Sponsoring Club: Schooley's Mountain Kennel Club  
FMI: Pat Klinger - Email: ricklinger@worldnet.att.net  
Phone: (908) 637-8124

**January 27- 28, 2007 -- Harrisburg SSC Seminar**  
**Myra Savant Harris --Canine Reproduction Whelping and Puppy Intensive Care Seminar**  
Spring Garden Conference Ctr. Middletown, PA.  
Please check the Harrisburg Shetland Sheepdog site at [www.harrisburgssc.org](http://www.harrisburgssc.org) for the latest Seminar new

**April 1-8, 2007 – ASSA National Specialty**  
Linn County Fair & Expo Center  
Albany, Oregon  
**Judges:**  
Linda C. More – Best of Breed  
David Calderwood – Bitches  
Daniel Wheatcroft – Dogs, Jr. Show  
Futurity – Susan Beacham

**May 3, 2007 -- Piscataway, New Jersey:**  
**Pat Hastings Puppy Puzzle Presentation / Evaluation Seminar**  
Presenter: Pat Hastings  
Sponsoring Club: Pembroke Welsh Corgi Club of the Garden State  
Contact Information: Karen Gunzel -  
Email: kgunzel@aol.com  
Phone: (973) 228-4192  
This will be held in conjunction with the National Specialty.

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*I found the following article at Dog Channel.Com This site has a wide variety of articles.*  
[www.dogchannel.com](http://www.dogchannel.com)

## Stack and Attention

**The whole country is watching. Are you doing it right?**  
With more and more dog shows on television, we have time to watch not only dogs, but also their handlers. I've been taping the shows so I can go back and study how people handle different breeds. While viewing one recorded Terrier group, it took me back to a moment a few years ago, when I sat next to dog trainer Gary Wilkes at Westminster Kennel Club while groups were being judged.

Gary was one of the first disciples of Karen Pryor, the author of Don't Shoot the Dog! and inventor of clicker training. Gary had given a seminar with Karen Pryor a few weeks before the Garden and his skill at shaping the behavior of puppies while we in the audience watched made our mouths drop open. Gary has a private practice in animal behavior and training in Phoenix and lectures internationally, so I wondered what he was thinking as he leaned forward in his seat to watch the Terriers being stacked. I elbowed him and whispered, Are you enjoying the show?

When he turned to answer, he shook his head in amazement. These people are terrible dog trainers, he replied. Go right down the line almost every one of them is rewarding the dog for doing the wrong thing.

This was Westminster, so some of the handlers were icons of our sport. As Gary explained what he saw, he opened my eyes.

Watch what happens, he said, pointing to one team. The dog is posing, holding his position, doing everything right. At that moment, the dog was gazing intently at the handler's hand, which he knew contained a bit of liver. Suddenly, the dog broke its stack and what did the handler do? Handed him the treat.

Did you see that? Gary asked. He rewarded the dog for moving!

Now the handler had one hand free to set the dog up again. After he did so, he picked another bit of liver out of his jacket pocket and hid it in his fist.

The same scenario went on all night. Gary drew my attention to another pair. Sure enough, as soon as that dog moved, the handler first gave him the treat, and then restacked him. The dogs have trained the people to give the treats when they decide, said Gary. Things were topsy-turvy.

As I watched the taped dog show, my thoughts went back to Gary Wilkes and his ideas for training. I spoke to him by phone and email from his Phoenix home.

**Q.** *Why do the dogs hold their stacks for so long, when they know the handlers will reward them when they break?*

**A.** The dogs pick up on any signal that consistently precedes the reward. If you move your hand in a particular way (and conformation handlers are incredibly stylistic), or say a word, or cluck your tongue, or lean to the left just before you give the bait, the dog uses that signal to learn what caused the treat. In effect, these sights and sounds become a signal that means end of behavior. Anyone who has ever done any clicker training will recognize this process perfectly. To see how this works, consider a common handler signal that consistently precedes that actual treat reaching into the side pocket of a sport coat. The dog learns that no amount of movement on the part of the handler is meaningful until the hand goes back for the liver. At first, the dog experiments to find out any other thing that might get the treat delivered faster. After many repetitions where only standing still does the trick, the dog drops back to whatever posture has most consistently caused the behavior of reaching for the liver.

**Q.** *Are the dogs so smart they learned the game?*

**A.** Not smart, just perceptive. This is exactly the same way

a dog learns that the sound of the door bell means someone is at the front door.

**Q.** *I'm a show person, inculcated with the idea that professional handlers know everything. In fairness, they call themselves handlers rather than trainers. As handlers, many are incredibly adroit. I once saw Clay Coady handling a Westie with incredible brilliance at Westminster. He was using the huge video monitor above his head to see where the judge was looking so that he could present the dog in the best possible manner. It was simply awesome to see.*

**A.** More of the problems with training are at the bottom of the sport, with the beginners, rather than with the handlers.

**Q.** *How would you train a show dog?*

**A.** How DO I train show dogs, you mean. I've done it periodically over the years, usually as a trouble shooter. I have an ethical problem with making terrified dogs shine in the ring, however, so I always make sure the dog is basically mentally sound before I teach them to look pretty.

1) *Associate a signal with the bait.* I use a clicker it's the best tool for the job. Conformation people rarely accept this advice readily, so they will have to use some other signal that means end of behavior. Their objections break roughly into two categories: a) I'm not taking a clicker into the ring; and b) a word works just as well.

To make this perfectly clear, the clicker is in fact a construction tool it is not used in performance. Having a clicker in the ring is like having the Best in Show Judge at Westminster trooping into the ring with a 20-foot long string of toilet paper on her shoe. Conformation people should indeed be offended by boobs who use a clicker that way just as they are offended by newbie show-folks leaping left and right taxing the capacity of a squeaky toy to get their Papillon's attention.

However, to quote Latin for a second, *abusus non tollit usum*. This ancient rule translates as the abuse of a tool is not an argument against its proper use. Using a clicker to help a dog identify the precise behavior is exactly what it's designed to do. There is no better all-around tool for marking correct behavior in training. Anyone who claims that using a word, like good or yes, works as well is simply not very experienced. If you doubt this recommendation there is a simple way to find out if my advice is sound try it and then decide for yourself.

2) *Use visual markers on the ground to help the dog see where his body is in relation to the handler and judge.* You can put a T on the ground with masking tape that will become the dog's literal guideline for stacking. This also ensures that you will click consistently over many repetitions and have fewer guess and by gosh rewards for marginal posture or position.

3) Use tactile markers on the ground to help the dog feel where his feet should be. You can use a piece of soft rope, paper plates or virtually any combination of lines/spots to tell the dog when his feet are in the right place. I usually put a piece of rope down to make the top bar of the visual T mentioned in #2 above. You can also put down paw-sized pieces of non-skid floor material that will help the dog sense instantly if his feet are placed right. The possibilities are endless to create a tactile training aid for this.

4) Start working on obedience and fun behaviors that have nothing to do with conformation. Owning a dog with a varied behavioral repertoire is my idea of a responsible dog ownership. The old bugaboo that you won't be able to stop obedience and everyday behaviors in the show ring is unfounded. Dogs can understand that a particular set of behaviors are fine for one context and not another. Keeping them in ignorance to avoid embarrassment in the ring is most often an admission of the handler's lack of skill, not of the dog's lack of ability. Just remember, a dog's mind is a terrible thing to waste—just look at those ----- (Feel free to fill in your favorite dumb as a rock breed and have a good laugh.)

**Q.** It generally takes people weeks or months to get dogs to stand still for shows. Would your methods be quicker?

**A.** Perhaps simply accepting and acknowledging that a breed dog should be trained like any other dog is a huge short cut. Many conformation handlers are afraid to teach behaviors such as sit or down because they incorrectly assume that these behaviors will occur in the ring, unbidden. {publish-page-break} By keeping the animal virtually ignorant of the process of obeying simple directions, they trust that an ignorant dog is better than a rehearsed dog. Judges, nominally exhibitors themselves, pander to the idea that a dog's reaction in the ring must be a spontaneous exhibition of the dog's personality. Between the fear of embarrassment that a dog might offer an obedience behavior in the ring and the judge's desire to see natural behavior, little thought is given to even fundamental training issues. Like any skill, if you abandon the fundamentals, you can forget the advanced stuff. In the absence of understanding how to stretch the duration of a behavior, for instance, lesser handlers must forever attempt to keep the dog's waning attention with treats tossed ever higher, wider waved squeaky toys and broader arm movements. More experienced handlers tend to intuitively build duration of a stack without really knowing how they did it. The reality is that they copied the more successful handlers either intentionally or inadvertently.

**Q.** How would you retrain those handlers who are making mistakes?

**A.** I'd get them away from the context of conformation as quickly as possible. I once had a client, Robin Young,

whose Border Terrier had suddenly gone soft when examined by the judge. It was less than a month until the national specialty, and Robin had already bought airline tickets, paid entry fees and made hotel reservations. The first thing I taught the dog was down. Robin just about had a seizure at this suggestion but to her immense credit, she trusted my judgement. A month later, the dog took the Breed at the specialty. The dog did not go down on the table or anywhere else in the ring. He didn't shrink back from the judge and didn't act frightened. Why did I pick down? Because from down, all you have to do is put a treat on the ground about a foot in front of the dog's nose and you get a stand. Once your dog will do down, you can do repetitions of down-stand until the cows come home. By removing the context of conformation for awhile, we all got a break from the problem. Needless to say, stress is the quickest way to destroy a dog's confidence and the last thing I wanted was to risk drumming the same context of failure into the dog, over and over again. By looking at it as a simple training problem, it helped all of us focus on what we wanted without the anxiety of assuming that the past failure would be carried over to next show.

**Q.** I had no idea you had so much to say to the breed exhibitor.

**A.** Very few dog people want to hear that their 20-ish years of hacking around the breed ring can be blitzed by a method that makes their knowledge obsolete. I have yet to be invited to speak to any breed club anywhere about teaching dogs to stack and gait. The best is an occasional all-breed kennel club that really wants the information for obedience. When the seminar happens, a few people show interest in the conformation stuff, but there is very little follow up, if ever. {publish-page-break} I think the top handlers are a delight to watch and I have great admiration for their accomplishments specifically because I know what sort of leg weights they have overcome to soar like eagles.

Robin Young also raised two litters when I was working with her one clicker trained from about four weeks, the others not. There was a marked difference in the dogs as early as seven weeks. They clicker trained Borders didn't act like typical Borders. They were incredibly attentive, curious and stalwart. Karen Pryor's dog Twitchett came from the clicker-trained litter.

Interesting ideas for us to work with, aren't they? If Gary's ideas interest you, you can read more about them at his [website](#).

Posted: Mon Jul 19 00:00:00 PDT 2004

## Old dogs can learn new tricks—with help

### Exercise, diet helps keep elderly canines spry, study finds

[Reuters](#)

Updated: 12:44 a.m. ET Feb 14, 2005

WASHINGTON - Exercise and a diet fortified with vitamins, fruits and vegetables helped older dogs learn new tricks and kept them spry in an experiment that scientists said could teach humans a thing or two.

Beagles given either the fortified diet, regular exercise or both did much better in learning new tricks than dogs fed regular chow and allowed to lie around more, the researchers reported on Tuesday.

Dogs are similar to humans in their dietary needs and the way they digest food, so the findings have implication for people, said Molly Wagster of the National Institute on Aging, which funded the study.

Dogs also can develop memory and learning problems as they age in much the same way people do.

#### Lessons for humans

“This research brings a note of optimism that there are things that we can do that may significantly improve our cognitive health,” Wagster said in a statement.

“The combination of an antioxidant diet and lots of cognitive stimulation — which was almost the equivalent of going to school every day — really did improve brain function in these animals,” added Elizabeth Head of the University of California at Irvine, who worked on the study.

“We’re excited about these findings because the interventions themselves are relatively simple and might be easily translated into clinical practice for people.”

For the study, Head, William Milgram of the University of Toronto in Canada and colleagues studied 48 older beagles over two years.

Writing in the journal *Neurobiology of Aging*, they said they divided the dogs into four groups that got either standard care; a diet supplemented with tomatoes, carrot granules, citrus pulp, spinach flakes and supplements; standard care plus extra exercise and play; or the special diet and the special play and exercise regime.

A second set of 17 dogs aged 1 to 3 got either a standard or fortified diet.

Tests included having to find a hidden treat. The older dogs clearly benefited from the special diet and the special exercise program, the researchers said.

All 12 of the older beagles that got a supplemented diet and exercise could solve a difficult problem, compared to eight of 10 dogs that got the enriched diet alone and two of eight dogs that got no special treatment.

Last week the U.S. government issued new guidelines that encouraged Americans to eat more fruits and vegetables and to exercise for at least an hour a day to improve their health.

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### Visiting our breeds history....

## “Peter”



**Ch Halstors Peter Pumpkin ROM** was a sable dog bred by Edith Overly from [Fair Play of Sea Isle ROM](#) ex Am/Can/Bda Ch Sea Isle Rhapsody of Halstor and whelped July 13, 1965. "Peter" was acquired by Tom Coen (Macdega) as a young show dog. Under Tom's guidance he had an impressive show career: [ASSA Specialty Best of Breed](#) in 1968 and again in 1974, 105 Best of Breed wins, 3 all-breed Best in Shows, and over 40 group placements.

His sire record was even more impressive. At the time the first *ASSA Handbook* was issued, covering the 1968 - 1970 period, the leading sire was [Ch Timberidge Temptation ROM](#) with 32 Champions. Peter had sired 12 Champions at that point, and the dog appearing most likely to beat Temptation's record was [Ch Lingard Sealect Bruce ROM](#),

who had just tied with [Ch Merrymaker of Pocono ROM](#) for 4th place with 25 Champions. By the second *ASSA Handbook*, three years later, Peter was up to 49 Champions and Bruce had 42. Their final standings are 160 Champions, including 10 ROM's, for Peter and 46 including 2 ROM's for Bruce. Peter heads [Part IIe](#) of Line CHE and is in Family [2 Part I](#).

Peter's [contributions](#) to later ROM Shelties are overwhelming. There are dogs whelped within the last 10 years that are over 50% Peter, even though Peter does not even appear in a 3-generation (or sometimes more) pedigree of the dog.



Britain's best-selling canine newspaper

## DOGS CAN BE JEALOUS TOO

DOGS ARE intensely jealous creatures who experience a range of complex human-like emotions, a new study at the University of Portsmouth has revealed.

The study of 1,000 domestic animal owners in the south of England challenges the long-held scientific belief that only humans and chimpanzees are able to experience secondary emotions such as jealousy, guilt, shame and pride.

The research, carried out by University of Portsmouth psychologist Dr Paul Morris and colleague Christine Doe, uncovered examples where jealous dogs acted as 'uninvited chaperones' between couples sharing romantic moments.

Dr Morris, who is an animal behaviour expert, said dog owners showed 'remarkable consistency' in reporting jealous behaviour. Dogs could feel intense pangs of jealousy and animosity when in a 'love triangle' involving the carer and another person or animal, he said.

"The study set the typical behavioural index of jealousy as pushing between the carer and the third party, and this is what happened more than 80 per cent of the time," he said.

"The significant aspect of these findings is that most academic theorists agree this behaviour is appropriately labelled as jealousy."

He said it was readily accepted in the scientific community that dogs, cats, horses and other non-primate animals experience primary emotions such as anger, anxiety and surprise. Secondary emotions such as jealousy, pride, embarrassment and shame are considered by scientists to be the exclusive domain of humans and perhaps chimpanzees as they have the cognitive capacities required to support the complex range of secondary emotions.

But this thinking, Dr Morris said, may have to be revised. "The study systematically investigated evidence for a wide range of emotions including jealousy, pride and guilt in a wide range of domestic animals," he said. "Our study

provided good empirical evidence that has convinced many scientists that dogs at least demonstrate behaviour that is very like human jealousy.

"The data clearly suggest that complex emotions are present in a wider range of species than once thought and that animals do indeed have rich emotional lives."

Dr Morris delivered the research findings in the paper *Proud Horses and Jealous Dogs: Evidence for Secondary Emotions in Non-Primate Species* at a recent conference of the International Society for Research on Emotions in America. He has also been invited to present his paper at the BA Festival of Science at Norwich Research Park in early September.

*\* RESEARCH is being undertaken into the quality of life of companion animals. David Morton of the Biomedical Service Unit at the University of Birmingham is keen to hear from a variety of pet professionals in order to measure the quality of life of an animal as well as assessing what exactly gives pleasure and comfort to animals during their lifetime.*

*The study will attempt to answer such questions as: how can we recognise good welfare in an animal; how can owners decide when an animal's quality of life is not worth enough to keep it alive; and are there philosophical reasons why this issue is not raised by some?*

*As well as answering these questions – which at present must be resolved subjectively – the study aims to determine what attributes humans to conclude that a dog is happy or depressed. Anyone who would like to be involved can email [d.b.morton@bham.ac.uk](mailto:d.b.morton@bham.ac.uk)*

dogworld – September 6, 2006 – 10:34

<http://www.dogworld.co.uk/>



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

CANINE HEALTH FOUNDATION

## NC State Scientists Looking for Genetic Clues in Canine Epilepsy

[Tuesday, June 27, 2006]

**Raleigh, NC (Chad Austin, Communications Office NCSU)** - The AKC Canine Health Foundation announces that investigations underway at North Carolina State University are examining the role genetics plays in canine epilepsy, which might also reveal clues about how the disease works in humans.

A pair of studies involving Dr. Karen Munana, associate professor of neurology at NC State's College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM), will explore why some dogs respond poorly to seizure medication.

Approximately 5 percent of all dogs suffer from seizures, and a large percentage of these dogs have an inherited form of epilepsy that causes recurring seizures. While

veterinarians have made progress in treating epilepsy in dogs, about one-third of epileptic dogs don't respond to medication. The epilepsy is more prevalent in certain dog breeds, but veterinarians still don't know the underlying cause of the disease.

In the first study, Munana is collaborating with Dr. Katrina Mealey of Washington State University, to evaluate the effect of a known genetic mutation of a specific protein -p-glycoprotein - in certain herding breeds that have epilepsy, such as collies, Shetland sheepdogs and Australian shepherds. The mutation of p-glycoprotein could provide researchers some answers about why some epileptic dogs don't respond to treatment.

P-glycoprotein is a protein that pumps drugs out of the nervous system. Other studies have shown that certain dog breeds are deficient in p-glycoprotein. Munana's investigation hopes to determine what effect a deficiency in p-glycoprotein has on a dog's response to seizure medication.

While a deficiency in p-glycoprotein makes certain breeds more susceptible to the side effects of certain drugs, the deficiency might also help combat seizures in dogs by keeping more of the seizure-fighting drugs in the nervous system. Munana says that in human studies, some people have been shown to be unresponsive to certain seizure medications because p-glycoprotein is overactive, pumping too much medication out of the nervous system and into the bloodstream.

"What we are looking at is this one protein that could impair the ability of these drugs to get into the brain and control seizures," Munana says. "We want to see if this genetic mutation is used to the dog's advantage if they have seizures. If some dogs lack the pump that pumps the drugs out of the nervous system, it might allow them to keep more of the seizure drug in their brains and have a better effect on seizure control."

In the second study, Munana is working with colleagues Dr. Natasha Olby of the CVM and Dr. Greg Gibson, William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor of Genetics in NC State's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, as well as a researcher from Duke University, to conduct genetic screenings of dogs to determine whether dogs that respond poorly to seizure medication have a specific genetic profile.

After gathering blood samples from dogs that do and do not respond to anti-epilepsy drugs, the scientists will analyze the genetic material for 30 different genes to determine whether an epileptic dog's genetic makeup might influence their response to seizure medication.

"With a simple blood sample, we can have more tools to help unravel the missing links to why some dogs respond poorly to medication," Munana says. "Embarking on both of these studies at the same time will help us move forward

in our understanding, diagnosis and treatment of seizures and the genetic basis of this disease."

Munana and her colleagues are also calling upon the general public to assist in the research projects. Dog owners of rough or smooth-coated collies, Shetland sheepdogs, Australian Shepherds - or any dog that has been diagnosed with epilepsy and is being treated for seizures - who are interested in participating in the studies may contact study coordinator Julie Osborne at [julie\\_osborne@ncsu.edu](mailto:julie_osborne@ncsu.edu) or 919.513.6812 for additional information.

Munana adds that unlocking clues about epilepsy in dogs could also lead to similar breakthroughs in humans.

"The hope we have in screening dogs is that we will also find some commonality between the genetic material we find in dogs with what we see in human epileptic patients," Munana says. "These projects could have ramifications and applications for human epilepsy as well."

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## CONGRESS PASSES AKC-SUPPORTED VERSION OF "PETS" BILL

*--Bill Addresses Challenges Faced By Pet Owners During Disasters--*

**From:** AKC's Canine Legislation Department

**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2006 1:16 PM

**New York, NY** — This week, the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives passed by unanimous consent the "Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006," known as "PETS." PETS addresses the problems experienced by pet owners before, during and after the 2005 hurricane season. The enacted bill includes the stronger Senate language -- which the AKC supported and lobbied for-- rather than the weaker House version of the bill. The bill now goes to the President, who is expected to sign it.

Amidst evacuation for hurricanes Katrina and Rita, many pet owners were forced to leave their pets behind because emergency relief agencies, transportation facilities and shelters were not equipped to accommodate them. This caused some persons to resist evacuation orders, slowing down the process and putting human life at risk. Equally problematic was the public reaction to the widespread publicity given to the plight of the pets that were left behind. A recent AKC survey revealed that 67 percent of pet owning households nationwide said they would refuse future evacuation orders if they were unable to take their pets with them.

The PETS bill requires that disaster relief and emergency management agencies include provisions for the needs of households and individuals with pets and service animals in disaster relief plans as a condition for federal approval of such plans. The bill also makes providing services to individuals with household pets and service animals a legitimate activity on which to spend emergency and disaster relief funding, and authorizes the federal government to provide funds to states and local authorities for animal emergency preparedness purposes, and for procurement, construction, leasing, or renovating of emergency shelter facilities that will accommodate people with pets and service animals.

AKC President Dennis Sprung commended the Congressional action, saying "I want to thank the Congress for acting promptly and decisively to address this problem. This legislation will go a long way in assuring that the disastrous situation that occurred in 2005 is not repeated. I also want to thank the many members of the purebred dog fancy who supported and helped advocate for the passage of this important legislation."

Sprung also noted that the successful passage of the PETS bill was a collaborative effort involving many animal interest organizations and AKC was pleased to be a leader among them.

During the aftermath of hurricane Katrina, the AKC sent staff to the affected areas to assist with the needs of displaced animals and affected fanciers. Many individuals as well as 545 AKC clubs and organizations made donations to the AKC/CAR Canine Support and Relief Fund, enabling AKC to organize and support multiple airlifts transporting dogs to facilities out of the affected region. In addition, AKC recently hired a full-time employee who is responsible for coordinating disaster relief efforts on behalf of the AKC and AKC/CAR.

Click here to visit [AKC's](#) website

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## Musings

by Richard Biby, Contributing Editor  
Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

From time to time, people tell me, "lighten up, it's just a dog," or, "that's a lot of money for just a dog."

They don't understand the distance traveled, the time spent, or the costs involved for "just a dog." Some of my proudest moments have come about with "just a dog." Many hours have passed and my only company was "just a dog," but I did not once feel slighted. Some of my saddest moments have been brought about by "just a dog," and in those days of darkness, the gentle touch of "just a dog" gave me comfort and reason to overcome the day.

If you, too, think it's "just a dog," then you will probably understand phrases like "just a friend," "just a sunrise," or "just a promise." "Just a dog" brings into my life the very essence of friendship, trust, and pure unbridled joy. "Just a dog" brings out the compassion and patience that make me a better person.

Because of "just a dog" I will rise early, take long walks and look longingly to the future. So for me and folks like me, it's not "just a dog" but an embodiment of all the hopes and dreams of the future, the fond memories of the past, and the pure joy of the moment. "Just a dog" brings out what's good in me and diverts my thoughts away from myself and the worries of the day.

I hope that someday they can understand that it's not "just a dog" but the thing that gives me humanity and keeps me from being "just a man." So the next time you hear the phrase "just a dog," just smile, because they "just don't understand."

---- *Thank you Gail for sending this.*

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## SCENT GAMES

by John Rice & Suzanne Clothier

Long before you pull out the tracking flags, dust off the utility articles or decide that your dog needs to learn how to use his nose, he's busy using his nose to explore his world. The sense of smell is functional at birth, and from the moment he's born, your dog lives in a world rich with scents. All you need to do is teach the dog specifically how you want him to use his astonishing olfactory powers. The easiest way to accomplish this is through games. The *Scent Work Games* presented below are suitable for any breed at any age from 6 weeks on, but we recommend strongly that these games be a regular part of your puppy's development. All of these games stress reliance on his nose, not his eyesight.

To avoid confusing your dog, we recommend you choose one word which indicates food or dog toys (we use "SEEK"), and a completely different word for objects with human scent or people themselves (we use "FIND IT"). In this fashion, the dog is always clear about WHAT he's looking for with his nose and will not confuse food scents with human scent. One of the most common problems with using food to teach scent discrimination or tracking is that you must ultimately teach the dog that the food is not what you really meant at all!

**WHICH HAND?** This is the simplest of all games. With food or a toy in only one hand, present both closed hands to the dog. Ask him, "Which one?" You may improve upon this game by insisting he touch with a paw or scratch lightly at the correct hand before receiving his treat,

or simply have his nose bump your hand. If he gets it wrong, show him the correct hand but **DO NOT** give the treat! Just try again. Add lots of dramatic flair to this - dogs love a good show.

**LIGHTS OUT** This one is great fun for the dog. Show your dog a treat (preferably crunchy) or his favorite toy, and then place it out of his sight but easily accessible in a dark room. Tell him to **SEEK** - follow him in to listen for his success which you will praise enthusiastically. Obviously, the rewards for the dog are multiple - he gets a treat or finds his toy plus a very happy handler. If using a toy, be sure to reward his find with some play before starting again.

When multiple treats or toys are used, this particular game helps to build persistence and trust in the handler. The dog may initially find only 2 out of 3 treats, but he quickly discovers that persistence in searching when you give the **SEEK** command pays off. He learns to believe you - there really is another one there!

You can increase the difficulty of **LIGHTS OUT** by hiding the cookies in less accessible places (like in a shoe, or placed on a low shelf.) This can be practiced outdoors as well as in your car, or a parking lot or anywhere else!

**HIDE & SEEK** This is a doggy favorite best played at night or in a darkened house initially. Partially open closets are great (closed closets may not allow sufficient scent to escape), as are shower stalls/tubs with the curtain drawn, standing behind an open door, crouching behind a bush, standing very still near a tree (dogs, like all predators, distinguish movement much better than stationary objects) or sitting on a picnic table or laying across your car's trunk, or wherever!

To add to the dog's eagerness (or in the event that you are unable to sneak away or can't leave the dog), have someone hold the dog. They should be verbally exciting to the dog, asking, "Where did she go? What is she gets lost? Can you **FIND** her?" and release the dog with a **FIND IT** command. Give the dog a chance to work it out, but if he passes you more than twice, give him a "clue" by making a noise **AFTER** he's passed you the third time. A good clue is a distinctive but brief sound, such as clearing your throat or a short whistle that does not allow the dog to find you by using his hearing, but helps him target the general area you are in for further investigation with his nose. However the dog finds you, tons of praise is to be heaped upon his head, and of course a treat or two never hurts. Toy motivated dogs will delight in a game of fetch or tugging as a reward. As the dog gets more skilled at **HIDE & SEEK**, you can increase the difficulty of the game by throwing a blanket or tarp over yourself, not moving until the dog actually touches you, or even hiding in an area that the dog can smell you, see you (or part of you) but cannot get to you. This is useful for teaching a scratch or bark alert if desired (commonly used in drug work/search and rescue training). **ALWAYS** praise the dog generously for his brilliance.

**WHAT A KLUTZ** This game allows you to show the dog how important his nose is to you. Dogs like to feel useful, and this particular game helps boost a dog's confidence and self importance. As you are walking, discreetly drop an object you have been carrying or held in your pocket. Continue walking for 10-15 steps, then stop as if mildly concerned, patting your pockets and looking around. Here's your chance to really put on a performance! Ask the dog, "Where is it? Can you help? Can you **FIND IT**?"

Begin walking back towards the spot where you dropped the article, encouraging the dog to sniff the ground by pointing and telling him to **FIND IT**. As you get closer to the object, give the dog a little room so that he can find it all by himself. If he needs help, try a subtle kick of the object (after all, you are the klutz who dropped it - why not go ahead and trip over it too?) to bring it to his attention while you pretend not to notice. Once the dog indicates the article, make a huge fuss over this genius who has saved you from dropping an old glove!

Vary the type of article you use, and be sure to include metal objects such as car keys, a crumpled soda can, even a ring or bracelet you have worn. Obviously, be careful when you drop these and be sure you can find them again! Don't use valuable items - just facsimiles. Your dog's ability and willingness to work on metal objects will be helpful in the Utility ring, but more importantly, this skill could come in very handy some day should you lose your car keys. **NOTE:** Metal/hard objects do not hold scent as well as fabric or leather. This does not mean that your dog can't find them, just that his reaction may be different and he will probably have to work closer to the object before locating it.

The difficulty of **WHAT A KLUTZ** can be increased by: longer periods of time between the drop and the search, having the object thrown to the side or even off the path you are traveling, and multiple object drops. Especially fun are surprise set-ups where you plant an object along a path before taking the dog that way. You may point out the object to the dog with a question of "What's that?" and praise him for investigating, or walk past it and then send him back with a **FIND IT** command. This is a great preparation for tracking dogs who must learn to indicate on found items. A final twist for tracking prospects is the addition of objects dropped by people other than yourself. Be warned - this can be so much fun for the dog that he'll gladly show you all the neat trash dropped by other folks along the street, in the rest areas, etc.! John had been shown some unusual objects by his dogs while simply out walking.

**3-2-1-FIND IT** Use a favorite toy or even just a stick that you come across in the woods. After a few moments of playing with object, hold the dog as you throw the object into grass, brush, woods thick enough to lightly disguise the object. The dog may see and "mark" the fall of the object,

but as the difficulty of the game increases, this will only help him define the area he needs to search. Once the object has landed and stopped moving, count to 3 before releasing the dog to "FIND IT." You may gradually increase the time before releasing the dog, and of course, the heaviness of the cover (one good reason to avoid mowing your lawn regularly!)

**THINGS THAT GET LOST IN THE NIGHT** Using the same rules as 3-2-1-Find It, this game relies on the natural cover of darkness to encourage the dog to use his nose. Instead of marking the fall with his eyes, your dog may listen carefully. Once again, this only helps the dog narrow the area he will have to search. This can be played inside (throwing the object into a dark closet, corner or room) or outside. When beginning this game, don't get too enthusiastic and throw the toy very far. The point of all these games is success, not frustration for the dog. Also, be sure YOU know where the heck it landed in case the dog needs some help.

**ONE & ONLY** This is a more advanced scent game, but extremely useful to teach the dog the concept that only one object is desired from a group of similar objects. I normally start this with tennis balls (my dogs' favorites). Play with the dog for several minutes with the One & Only object you'll want the dog to find. This allows your scent (as well as lots of good dog spit) to thoroughly cover the object. Then move off to an area where you have planted several similar objects. Throw the One & Only into that area, using a 3-2-1-Find It technique. If the dog picks up an incorrect object, say nothing as you take it and put it down or pocket it, but with enthusiasm, give the FIND IT command again, leading the dog back to the general area to be searched if needed. Obviously, when the dog gets it right, reward this with a minute or two of play before repeating ONE & ONLY again. This can be combined with the more difficult levels of 3-2-1-FIND IT for really advanced discrimination by the dog.

Once your dog has mastered these games, any formal scent discrimination exercise becomes a snap for that educated nose. Furthermore, you have learned to understand just how powerfully discriminating a dog's nose can be, and to trust that when it comes to working in a world of scent, your best bet is to follow the guy who knows what he's doing - your dog.

For more information on our approach to tracking, we recommend the *Flying Dog Press* booklet [Following Ghosts: Developing the Tracking Relationship](#).

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## A Dog's Comfort...

A recent study of nursing home residents showed they were far less lonely after spending time with a dog than they did when they were visited with a dog and other people. The research was conducted by Dr. William Banks, professor of geriatrics at St. Louis University School of Veterinary Medicine.

The study suggests that the way pets reduce loneliness in nursing homes is just being with people, not by enhancing socialization between people. The finding was a surprise to the researcher, who expected the group dog visits would work better, but they did not. (*DVM Newsmagazine, Feb. 2006*).

Hope to see you all at the meeting!



Good luck to those entered at our show!