



Sheltie Showdown



A publication of the Central Indiana Shetland Sheepdog Club

May 2012

Club Meetings

CISSC holds membership meetings at the Circle City Veterinary Specialty & Emergency Hospital, 9650 Mayflower Park Drive, Carmel, IN 46032. We meet in the Rehab Room on the ground floor. This room has a private entrance on the right side of the building. *Note: meetings start promptly at 7:30 p.m. and end promptly at 9:30 p.m.* Well-behaved dogs and puppies are welcome.

Directions to Circle City Vet Clinic: From I-465, take exit 27, U.S. 421/Michigan Road. Go north on 421/Michigan Road to 96th Street and turn left (west). Turn right on Mayflower Park Drive. 9650 is on the left.

Remaining membership meetings for 2012: Jan. 6th, March 23rd Awards Banquet, May 4th, July Picnic TBD, Sept. 7th, Nov. 2nd

Board meetings for 2012: Feb. 22nd, April 6th, Aug. 3rd, Oct. 5th

May Meeting Program

Understanding proper structure in dogs is paramount for both breeders and performance enthusiasts. We will view and have a short discussion on the Pat Hastings video entitled the *Puppy Puzzle*. This is a 55 minute video on how to evaluate structure in puppies.

2012 Officers

President: Kathleen Morphew
Vice President: Carole Creech
Treasurer: Doug McKee
Recording Secretary: Cheryl Sharp
Corresponding Secretary: Kathy McKee

Board of Directors

Jaye Athy
Elizabeth "Babs" Beck
Linda Lee
Kathy Underwood

Standing Committees

Agility Trial: Babs Beck
Awards: Kathleen Morphew
Education: Carole Creech
Equipment: Doug McKee
Historian: Kathleen Morphew
Judges Selection: Carole Creech
Legislative: Carole Creech
Librarian: Karen Burton
Membership: Kathy McKee
Policies & Constitution: Cheryl Sharp
Sheltie Info Line: Tom Schultz
Showdown: Carole Creech
Sunshine Committee: Kathleen Morphew
Website: Jaye Athy
Club Website: <http://www.ciissc.net>

2012 CISSC Upcoming Events

Herding Clinic & Instinct Test

May 5, 2012

Muncie, IN

Instructor and Testor:

Tammy Van Deusen

*Due to a cancellation,
one instinct test slot is available.*

Audit spots are still available.

Contact Carole Creech for more information.

Fall Agility Trial*pending AKC approval

November 17-18, 2012

Pawsitive Partners Dog Training Center

Beech Grove, IN

Judge: Arlene Spooner

Dogs are miracles with paws.

~Susan Ariel Rainbow Kennedy



President's Corner

CELEBRATE THE JOURNEY!!! In 1963 a few people met in a kitchen to form the 500 Shetland Sheepdog Club. It wasn't until 1979 that we had gone through all of the steps and procedures to be a member club of the ASSA and to be licensed to hold our first AKC Show.

The steps with AKC included holding multiple B and A matches, submitting membership information - which included copious records on dogs owned, titles earned, shows attended, litters whelped...remember this was before everything was totally computerized - to fully present who we were as a club and as members, and of hosting educational events and club programs.

The road to AKC Licensed Club status was a huge labor of love for several club members. But it was a drop in the bucket to what was to follow in 1985 and 1991 - hosting the ASSA National Show. We have continued to grow with the addition of Agility Trials. The public education events that we hold each year also help us fulfill the AKC Compliance requirements.

In 2013 CISSC will celebrate our 50th Anniversary as a club. It has been quite a journey to this point in our history. I hope that the journey continues and that we can find many ways to celebrate the journey past, present, and future!



Sincerely,
Kathleen Morpew

About the Newsletter

The *Sheltie Showdown* is the official newsletter of the Central Indiana Shetland Sheepdog Club and is published six times per year. Subscriptions are free to members and to other clubs on an exchange basis. Non-members may subscribe by contacting the editor for the current subscription price. Subscription is free to non-members if requested via email. The deadline for news and advertising is the 15th of the month before publication. Send news and advertisements to: *Sheltie Showdown* c/o Carole Creech, 12945 Fleetwood Drive, North, Carmel, IN 46032 or email whitehall.shelties@yahoo.com.

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Bragging Rights!



From Karen Adams:

Indee, Indiana Joan II, earned a leg in Open JWW and Open Standard on April 1, 2012 at the GLKC agility trial. Indee earned her OAJ this weekend **(NEW TITLE!)** at Merrillville and her second OA leg. She is owned by Mo Boulanger and bred by me.

Gilda earned her third Ex. A Std Pref. leg at the GLKC trial on 3/2/12 under Judge Scott Chamberlin for her AXP **(NEW TITLE!)**. All three legs were with first place finishes. On March 31, 2012 at the Tippecanoe and Rally Too CPE trial, she earned her second CPE Level 2 Snooker leg completing her CL2-S title **(NEW TITLE!)**. That same weekend she earned her last Level 3 standard leg for her CL3-R, her last leg in Level 3 Wildcard for her CL3-H title, a Level 3 Jackpot leg, legs in Level 3 FullHouse and Jumpers for her CL3-F title **(NEW TITLE!)**, a Level 4 Colors leg and a Level 4 Jumpers leg. Gilda qualified in 8 of her 9 runs that weekend!

Riff earned a Level 1 FullHouse leg at the Tippecanoe and Rally Too CPE trial the weekend of March 31 and April 1, 2012 completing his CL1-F title **(NEW TITLE!)**. He has now completed all of Level 1. He also earned legs in Level 2 Standard, Colors, Wildcard, Snooker, Jackpot and 2 Level 2 Jumpers legs. He qualified in 8 of his 9 runs that weekend!

From Babs Beck:

In February Bravo received his CDX-C (**NEW TITLE!**) with a score of 197 1/2. The "C" means he earned this obedience title in a different obedience venue-- Companion Dog Sports Program, CDSP. Bravo received two more awards; (**NEW TITLES!**) USDAA Performance Standard Champion and USDAA Performance Jumpers Bronze. Both were earned in 2011, February 11 and April 10 respectively.

From Carole Creech:

Socks, Ch. Cameo Chase A Dream, made the first cut in Best of Breed competition at the 2012 ASSA National in Kissimmee, FL. Socks had not been in the show ring since he finished last July. Needless to say, we were so excited that he made the cut! Look for Socks in the summer issue of *Sheltie International*.

From Bettie Hartsock:

Prelude's Blackberry Kisses (Jackie) first show was 2nd place in the 6-9 puppy class with more than two puppies in the class. This was at the Terre Haute Kennel Club show, Sat., April 21.



AKC NEWS

Annual Registration Statistics

Here are the annual registration statistics for litters and dogs for your club's breed since they are no longer published in the AKC Gazette. We realize the importance to parent clubs of knowing the number of AKC registered dogs and litters for breed analysis so the following ten years of information for your breed are included in this letter.

Annual Registration Statistics for Shetland Sheepdogs

Year	Litters	Dogs
2011	3409	7083
2010	3969	7583
2009	4594	9045
2008	5241	10188
2007	6155	11755
2006	6515	12822
2005	6981	14278
2004	7868	15605
2003	7964	15690
2002	8770	17453

Editor's Note: This really brings home why the AKC wants every puppy registered!

March 2012 Awards Banquet



Great restaurant, dinner
and awards!
A good time was had by all!

2011 AWARDS PLAQUES

Carole B. & James L. Creech & Marilyn Marlow
CONFORMATION CHAMPION
CH Cameo Chase A Dream
Bushy Run Kennel Club
July 2, 2011

Karen E. Adams
NOVICE AGILITY PREFERRED
Baccara Alpenglo Ms Chevious, NJP
Indiana Collie Club
May 14, 2011

Jay & Judith Oxley
NOVICE FAST
Loulee's Little Man Tate NA, NF
Fort Wayne Obedience Training Club
October 22, 2011

Liz Carroll & Jane Masters
COMPANION DOG
Prelude's Show 'N Tell, CD
Greater Lafayette Kennel Club
September 17, 2011

Sheila Kitchens
NOVICE AGILITY
River Tyne Bust A'Move Boy, NA
Agility Club of Evansville
August 21, 2011

Jane Masters
RALLY NOVICE
PRELUDE'S PANACHE
March 27, 2011

Jane Masters
NOVICE AGILITY JUMPER
PRELUDE'S PRADA
May 29, 2011

Elizabeth Ann Beck
2011 PRESIDENT'S AWARD
MERITORIOUS SERVICE
2011 Agility Trials Chairman

Cheryl Sharp
2011 PRESIDENT'S AWARD
MERITORIOUS SERVICE
2011 Spring Show Chairman

Kathy McKee
2011 PRESIDENT'S AWARD
MERITORIOUS SERVICE
2011 Trophy Chairman

Gregg Smith
2011 OUTSTANDING NEW MEMBER

2011 AWARDS PLATES

Elizabeth Beck
MASTER AGILITY CHAMPION 2
MACH 2 Bodacious Bravo
Indiana Collie Club
May 15, 2011

Karen Adams
NOVICE AGILITY PREFERRED
Baccara Alpenglo MsChevious, NJP
Indiana Collie Club
May 14, 2011

OPEN AGILITY PREFERRED
Baccara Alpenglo MsChevious, NJP, NAP
Field Spaniel Society of America
August 14, 2011

Jay & Judith Oxley
NOVICE AGILITY
Loulee's Little Man Tate NA, NF
Greater Lafayette Kennel Club
December 3, 2011

Bettie Hartsock
NOVICE AGILITY
Qism's Tornado Warning, UD, NA, NAP, RE
Field Spaniel Society of America
August 14, 2011

NOVICE AGILITY JUMPER
Qism's Tornado Warning, UD, NA, NAP, NAJ, RE
Field Spaniel Society of America
August 14, 2011

Jane Masters
MASTER EXCELLENT JUMPERS WITH WEAVES
Prelude's Perfect Timing, CD, MX, MXJ, MXF
Field Spaniel Society of America
August 13, 2011

MASTER EXCELLENT FAST

Prelude's Perfect Timing, CD, MX, MXJ, MXF
Fort Wayne Obedience Training Club
August 6, 2011

Jay & Judith Oxley

AKC Rally Excellent

Prelude's Show 'N Tell, CD, RE, BN, CGC
Queen City Dog Training Club
December 3, 2011

Jay & Judith Oxley

MASTER AGILITY EXCELLENT

Prelude's Perfect Timing, CD, MX, MXJ, MXF
Agility Club of Evansville
August 21, 2011

Kathy McKee

NOVICE FAST

Coastal Keeara Euphoria, MX, MXJ, NF, CGC
Fort Wayne Obedience Training Club
October 21, 2011

MASTER EXCELLENT JUMPERS WITH WEAVES

Coastal Keeara Euphoria, MX, MXJ, NF, CGC
Greater St. Louis Agility Club
April 16, 2011

MASTER AGILITY EXCELLENT

Coastal Keeara Euphoria, MX, MXJ, NF, CGC
Derby City Agility Association of Louisville, Kentucky
June 3, 2011

Kathy McKee

MACH 3

CH MACH3 Keeara's Glorious Sunrise, PT, OF, CGC, VCX
Derby City Agility Association of Louisville, Kentucky
September 3, 2011

Sheila Kitchens

OPEN AGILITY

Road's End American Girl Unleashed, NA, NAJ, OA
Agility Club of Indianapolis
February 19, 2011

OPEN AGILITY JUMPERS

Road's End American Girl Unleashed, NA, NAJ, OA, OAJ
Agility Club of Indianapolis
February 19, 2011

AGILITY EXCELLENT

Road's End American Girl Unleashed, NA, NAJ, OA, OAJ, AX
Central Indiana Shetland Sheepdog Club Agility Trial
November 20, 2011

AGILITY EXCELLENT JUMPERS

Road's End American Girl Unleashed, NA, NAJ, OA, OAJ, AX, AXJ
Derby City Agility Association
September 3, 2011

Sheila Kitchens

NOVICE AGILITY JUMPERS

River Tyne Bust A'Move Boy, NA, NAJ
Derby City Agility Association
September 3, 2011

OPEN AGILITY

River Tyne Bust A'Move Boy, NA, NAJ, OA
Greater Lafayette Kennel Club
December 2, 2011

Jane Masters

EXCELLENT AGILITY JUMPER

PRELUDE'S BEC'N CALL HT, OA, AXJ
February 4, 2011

Jane Masters

NOVICE AGILITY

PRELUDE'S PRADA NAJ
June 25, 2011

Jane Masters

NOVICE AGILITY

PRELUDE'S PROTOCOL PT
May 1, 2011

NOVICE AGILITY JUMPER

PRELUDE'S PROTOCOL PT, NA, NF
June 25, 2011

AGILITY FAST NOVICE

PRELUDE'S PROTOCOL PT, NA
June 11, 2011

fwd by wyoma clouss, Idaho Capital City KC

<http://www.naiaonline.org/articles/article/the-clinical-truths-about-pure-breeds-mixed-breeds-and-designer-breeds>

Pure Breeds, Mixes, and Designer Breeds

By: **Jerold S. Bell, DVM** Date: **03/26/2012** Category: | **Animal Welfare** | **Canine Issues** |

THE CLINICAL TRUTHS ABOUT PURE BREEDS, MIXED BREEDS, AND DESIGNER BREEDS

We deal with genetic disease every day in our practice in pure-bred, cross-bred, and mixed-breed dogs and cats. There is a general misconception that mixed-breed dogs and cats are inherently free of genetic disease. This may be true for the rare breed-related disorders; but the common genetic diseases that are seen across all breeds are seen with the same frequency in mixed-breed dogs and cats.

There are a growing number of breed-specific genetic tests available for pure-bred dogs.

How many old mixed-breed dogs do you have on NSAIDs versus pure-bred dogs? There is no difference genetically between an old pure-bred dog with hip arthritis and an old mixed breed dog with hip arthritis. They both have hip dysplasia. The pure-bred dog may have received the label many years earlier due to early age screening, but the disease process is the same. We genetically counsel owners of large-breed puppies to feed lower calorie foods to provide for a slower, more uniform growth rate that does not contribute to the development of hip dysplasia.

Autoimmune thyroiditis is the cause of primary hypothyroidism in dogs. The phenotypic test to identify affected dogs is thyroglobulin autoantibodies (TgAA).¹ Based on thyroid profiles run at the Michigan State University DCPAH, 10.7% of 55,053 mixed breed dogs tested affected for autoimmune thyroiditis. The average frequency of affected in pure-bred dogs is 7.5%.

This does not mean that mixed breed dogs are more prone to autoimmune thyroiditis. They are more likely being tested due to clinical signs, while a percentage of pure-bred dogs are undergoing pre-breeding screening. However, these results show us that this hereditary disorder is seen frequently in both pure-bred and mixed-breed dogs.

As discussed in the previous hour, the most common feline hereditary disease is feline lower urinary tract disease (FLUTD or FUS). This, and feline diabetes are seen most frequently in mixed-breed cats, though some pure breeds have an increased prevalence.² Autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease (PKD) is also occasionally seen in clinical practice in mixed-breed cats with Persian or Himalayan ancestry.

Mixed-breed dogs often receive health tests only after they have started showing symptoms of illness.

Breed-specific genetic diseases tend not to spill out into the mixed-breed populations. Exceptions to this however, are ancient mutations that occurred before the separation of breeds. These disease-causing genes mutated so long ago, that the mutation (and its associated disease) is found in evolutionary divergent breeds.

The same ancestral autosomal recessive mutation for the progressive rod cone degeneration (prcd) form of progressive retinal atrophy (PRA) is found in the American Cocker Spaniel, American Eskimo Dog, Australian Cattle Dog, Australian Shepherd, Chesapeake Bay Retriever, Chinese Crested Dog, English

Cocker Spaniel, Entelbacher Mountain Dog, Finnish Lapphund, Golden Retriever, Kuvasz, Labrador Retriever, Laponian Herder, Norwegian Elkhound, Nova Scotia Duck Trolling Retriever, Poodle, Portuguese Water Dog, Silky Terrier, Spanish Water Dog, Stumpy Tail Cattle Dog Swedish Lapphund, and Yorkshire Terrier.³ This list continues to grow as more breeds are discovered with the same defective gene. The question is not, "Which breeds carried this defective gene during their development", but "Which breeds did not lose this defective gene during ancestral development."

It is also not surprising that prcd-PRA affected dogs (who must receive the defective gene from both parents) have been identified in Labradoodles (Labrador Retriever x Poodle crosses), Goldendoodles (Golden Retriever x Poodle crosses) and Cockapoos (Cocker Spaniel x Poodle crosses).

Collie eye anomaly is another disease caused by an ancestral mutation that preceded the differentiation of breeds. The same causative mutation for choroidal hypoplasia has been molecularly identified in the Australian Shepherd, Border Collie, Boykin Spaniel, Lancashire Heeler, Longhaired Whippet/ Silken Windhound, Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever, Rough Collie, Shetland Sheepdog, and Smooth Collie.⁴

The most common hereditary diseases occur across all pure-bred, mixed breed, and designer bred dogs. These include cancer, eye disease, epilepsy, hip dysplasia, hypothyroidism, heart disease, autoimmune disease, allergies, patellar luxation, and elbow dysplasia. Labradoodles are being diagnosed with hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia, and inherited Addison's disease; all recognized disorders in both parent breeds.

The production of designer breeds – planned crosses between two breeds to produce offspring has become a growing trend in commercial dog breeding. Puggles, Yorkipoos, Cavishons, and Labradoodles, to name a few are all coming into our clinics. Owners believe that these pets will be genetically healthy because they are cross-bred. As we treat these patients, we know that this is not the case.

Therefore, the discussion is no longer between pure-bred and cross-bred, but between purposely-bred and random-bred dogs and cats. **There is not much that we can do about genetic transmission in randomly bred animals, but for purposely bred animals, breeders must use due diligence to prevent inherited disease.** Responsible breeders perform genetic testing of parent breeding stock for breed-susceptible disorders.

Official test results should be made available to prospective breeders, and the pet and breeding-stock purchasing public. This is facilitated through open health databases and genetic registries. It doesn't matter whether a breeder is a large commercial breeder, or only breeds once. It is no longer acceptable to say that genetic disease "just happens." In today's environment, not testing for documented breed-related hereditary diseases is irresponsible and unethical breeding.

OUR ROLE WITH GENETIC REGISTRIES

There are several genetic registries that have been established to assist breeders and owners with genetic disease control. The Canine Eye Registry Foundation or CERF (www.vmdb.org/cerf.html) is a closed database showing only normal eye examination results by ACVO boarded veterinarians. The not-for profit Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA: www.offa.org) has semi-open registries for hip dysplasia & Legg-Perthes disease, elbow dysplasia, autoimmune thyroiditis, congenital cardiac disease, patella luxation, deafness, and several other genetic disorders. In addition, all normal CERF examination results are automatically sent to, and included in the OFA database. Some of the Optigen (www.Optigen.com) tests, if contracted by the parent club, are also automatically sent to CERF and OFA for inclusion in their databases.

It is only through the open reporting of affected dogs and cats that knowledge of disease risk can be identified through the test results or health status of close relatives. **It is important that as veterinarians we encourage open reporting of health results by counseling breeders to initial the boxes for open disclosure of test results on the OFA submission forms.** For many breeds of dogs tracking hip dysplasia for example, over one-third of the applicants check the box on the OFA form for open reporting.

The days of stigmatizing conscientious, health-testing breeders who have produced dogs or cats with hereditary disease are gone. No one wants to produce affected offspring from their matings, and no one should be blamed if this occurs (unless the breeder is not doing the recommended health testing). It should be everyone's goal to produce healthy offspring, but this is not possible if the only available health information is about normal dogs and cats, but not abnormal dogs and cats.

The Canine Health Information Center or CHIC (www.caninehealthinfo.org) is a portal into the OFA health database that has been established by the AKC Canine Health Foundation and the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals. National parent clubs determine the testable genetic disorders for their breed. (For example: hip evaluation, CERF examination, and thyroid testing.) Owners and breeders can search online for dogs and view their test results. If a dog completes the recommended testing panel, it receives a CHIC number regardless of whether it passes all of the tests. CHIC is about health consciousness, not health perfection. As more testable disorders are identified, few dogs will be normal for all tests. A similar listing of tests is not currently available for cats, however breed related diseases are found on the Feline Advisory Bureau (FAB-UK) website: www.fabcats.org/breeders/inherited_disorders.

If a client is contemplating breeding their dog or cat, they can look up the recommended genetic tests to perform in their breed. Veterinarians can also assist prospective breeders by looking up and discussing the genetic disorders, recommended genetic tests, and appropriate age for testing. Prospective breeding dogs and cats (in either pure or cross-breeding) can be researched, and their genetic test results, as well as that of their close relatives can be studied.

Open registries require an atmosphere of cooperation and understanding between breeders, for the benefit of the breed. Breeding practices do not cause defective genes. If breeders are reluctant to identify affected individuals, then the usefulness of open registries will be limited.

Breeders are the custodians of their breed's past and future. "Above all, do no harm" is a primary oath of all medical professionals. Genetic tests are powerful tools, and their use can cause significant positive or negative changes. Breeders should be counseled on how to best utilize test results for the best interests of the breed. **Breeders, veterinarians, and breed organizations must educate the general public of the need to check for verification of health testing results prior to their purchasing a dog or cat.** As this happens, the overall genetic health of purposely-bred dogs and cats will improve.

This article appears in the proceedings of the 2012 Western Veterinary Conference, which took place February 19-23, 2012 in Las Vegas, Nevada. It has been reprinted with permission from the author.

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About The Author

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Jerold S. Bell DVM is a Clinical Associate Professor and Director of the Clinical Veterinary Genetics

Course for the Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine. His full biography can be found at the

[AKC Canine Health Foundation website](#), where he serves on the President's Council.

Us and the PUPPY MILLS

I am writing this as the one person I know that is really conversant with both worlds - that of the ethical purebred breeders and that of the retail puppy industry. There are others, but they are few and far between. I am your closest link to the formal pet industry, and I sincerely hope you will take what I have to say with the intent with which I say it - to give you motive to apply your efforts in a sincere, informed, and honest push to preserve the dog fancy and even the existence of purebred dogs. This means you have to spread information by coming out of your shell, each and every one of you, and actually talk to people that believe otherwise and start changing their minds. It will be slow, and not all will listen. But every inch of progress will be worth it. And everyone who rebuffs you will show only their emotions and not their minds. They count in the end, because they vote, and many also reproduce voters like them. So we need to be persistent and constant in our efforts. And maybe we can make all the difference in the world. Please read and remember this essay.

In the 1970's, the term "Puppy Mill" was already an excepted term. We even used it to describe our most accomplished and prolific breeders. The purebred fancy was in its heyday, with discretionary income at the highest level ever. More people than ever could afford and wanted purebred dogs. But, due to international conditions the work force needed to be more mobile than ever, and that created the largest public animal shelter population in history. Dog shows were about 800 to 1,000 dogs and were about 1/3 the number we see today. In the early 70's there were two all-breed kennel clubs in San Diego County. By the late 70's there were 5. Other areas saw the same percentage growth in the sport. And the term "Puppy Mill" raged on. We knew about PETA, but HSUS was not a common term.

As time progressed, with certain breeds becoming fads, those specialty clubs mounted rescue efforts for their breeds. There was massive effort to quell excessive breeding, and as fads go, those efforts seemed to work. Can you imagine there being 4 columns in one newspaper classifieds pertaining to one breed for sale? And two of those columns were "free to good home" for that breed? That is what

happened to Saint Bernards in San Diego County in about 1973. By 1980 they had fallen from number 6 in AKC popularity to about number 30 something and have continued to fall since. It was almost as bad for many other breeds of size. And lately, the Labrador Retrievers have risen to the top, displacing the various sizes of the grooming required Poodle. There is still enough discretionary income to maintain a lot of larger dogs, just maybe not so many of the giant breeds.

Meanwhile, vacuums inspire enterprise and the commercial kennels started paying attention to consumer demand, and so did the burgeoning retail trade of pet stores. Retail chains such as Doktor Pet Centers, Petland, Puppy World (San Diego) and others sprang up to help supply those wanting purebred dogs.

It was necessary to have these retail establishments because at the peak of demand, the dog fancy only bred a whopping 8% of the annual puppy crop. At their peak, the commercial breeders only produced 28% of the annual puppy crop, which they marketed professionally to stores which also marketed professionally with advertising, financing, and sometimes some sort of warranty.

Then some new diseases came on the scene. They were corona virus, parvo virus, and e-coli. And a significant number of puppies were lost to them, both by the stores and by individuals who had purchased from either stores or us. The result was a series of states-wide mandatory warranty legislation involving sales beyond a certain level. The commercial breeders took note and started applying measures involving sanitation and disease prevention. This also applied to the brokers who gathered the pups for further sales. Puppy health improved. Stores also applied protective measures, educated their personnel and the better ones made semi-annual or annual trips to their provider kennels out-of-state to keep those kennels improving. The owners of Russo's pet stores in Orange County, CA, were among those conscientious sellers, as was the owner of stores in Burbank and other north LA and south Ventura counties. These people cared about the quality of their merchandise and their customer satisfaction. They still care as much today. And it is not because

the state mandates a warranty that could cost them profit. They want satisfied, repeat customers that will spread good word about them. Wouldn't you want that, no matter what business you were in?

The commercial breeders, mostly all, and certainly all that are in business today, went through the same professional improvement processes as the retailers. They had to, or go out of business. They needed the same customer confidence that the retailers needed. Despite all this, federal legislation imposed a whole lot more of compliance actions on these commercial breeders. These actions are always costly, and it became that size of operation was all that could keep them in business. They had to produce more to make the same living. So, some sold out to others, some went out of business, some grew. Now there are fewer commercial breeders, and the total output shrank significantly. It reduced from that late 70's high of 28% to today's 22% of the national puppy crop.

And the commercial breeders continue to try to improve their products. The Missouri Breeders Association had our own Pat Hastings give some seminars about structure and conformation. This event was attended by members of the fancy as well. Probably the most significant result was that the fancy members came to meet and know the commercial breeders as real people with the same problems as themselves. The second most important result is that the hardest commercial breeders have begun to show their "products" in the conformation shows around Missouri. This gives them more acquaintance with the regular fancy and us with them. Plus it gives AKC more money from entries at the shows. And they may even win enough to become regulars, improving their breeding and "product health."

While the commercial breeders output has dropped by about 25% total, ours has dropped even more. We now produce only 1.9% of the annual puppy crop. We have dropped by over 75% since the mid 70's. The drop in AKC registrations since 1992, falling 66% may only reflect the lack of need to register, since so many of the dogs are destined to be neutered - both by our contracts of sale and compliance with local laws taxing intact animals into oblivion. And this is despite the fact that dogs are not being bred at the simple replacement rate since 2005 or before.

Now, HSUS has promoted another campaign of destruction, aiming at the major markets of the other group that has an interest in keeping purebred dogs healthy and functioning as their breeds should be - the commercial breeders and retailers. They have mounted campaigns against these comrades-in-arms sellers of purebreds by intimidating their landlords and the local governments approving the permits for their business. And buying from a pet store or a breeder has become as criminal in the minds of the public as smoking anywhere in a building except your own home.

If the commercial breeders are forced into extinction, how hard do you think it will be to place us there, too?

John Bowen, April 15, 2012
~via ASSA List

