

SHELTIE TALES

January 2008

Newsletter of the Shetland Sheepdog Club of Southeast Florida, Inc.
www.sscsefl.com

2007-2008 Officers and Board Members:

President: Hector Hector
Vice-President: Dione Houchins
Secretary: Meredith Hector
Treasurer:
Board of Directors: Lorna Staab
Karen Salvage
Maryann Lannon

Committees:

Breeder Referral: Maryann Lannon
Newsletter Editor: Holly Potts
Show Chairman: Lorna Staab
Website: Jana Thomas
Holly Potts
Membership: Karen Salvage
Lorna Staab
Maryann Lannon

Upcoming Club Events -----

Next General Membership Meeting: Tuesday, February 12, 2008, at 7:30 p.m.

Location: Home of Lorna Staab
410 Southeast Second Avenue
Pompano Beach, Florida 33060-8074

Directions: I-95 to Atlantic Boulevard. Go east on Atlantic Boulevard. Turn south (right) on South Cypress Road. Turn east (left) on Southeast Fifth Court. Turn north (left) on Southeast First Terrace. Turn east (right) on Southeast Second Avenue.

Back-to-Back Specialties: Friday, March 7, 2008

Location: South Florida Fairgrounds
9067 Southern Boulevard
West Palm Beach, Florida 33411

Club Information-----

2008 Back-to-Back Specialties: Our specialties will be held Friday, March 7, 2008, at the South Florida Fair Grounds, 9067 Southern Boulevard, West Palm Beach, Florida 33411. Sweeps judge will be Colleen Andrus. Breed judges will be Robert Piccirillo and Stanley Saltzman.

The premium list may be downloaded from the club's website at:

<http://www.sscsefl.com/2008%20Specialty/SSCSEF%20March%207,%202008.pdf>

Membership Dues: Membership dues were due January 1, 2007. As a reminder, a membership will be considered as lapsed and automatically terminated if such member's dues remain unpaid by March 1, 2007. If you have not paid your dues, please contact Meredith Hector at 954-472-7945 and give her any updated address, E-mail address, or other contact information on yourself and make arrangements for *immediate* payment.

Nominating Committee: The nominating committee has nominated the following members for club positions:

- ✓ President: Dione Houchins
- ✓ Vice President: Meredith Hector
- ✓ Treasurer: Lorna Staab
- ✓ Secretary: Karen Salvage
- ✓ Board: Hector Hector, Maryann Lannon, and Bonnie Thatcher.

Additional nominations may be taken from the floor at the February meeting after which time the nominations will close. All nominees may present their qualifications to the general membership in writing for submission in the February newsletter. The annual meeting and elections occur at the March meeting.

Sheltie Talk: *Sheltie Talk* has been called "the best breed book ever, of any breed." In recent years there have been times when it has been difficult to purchase. However, good news is in the offing. A new hardcover edition is planned for release in early 2008. If, as a club, we order five or more copies, we would be entitled to a 15% to 20% discount off the retail purchase price (15% off the purchase of 5-9 copies, 20% off the purchase of 10-19 copies). Would you like to purchase your new edition through the club at a discounted rate? If so, please E-mail Holly Potts (hpotts@sunridgeshelties.com) and let her know as she will keep track of those interested in purchasing the new edition.

Members with New Litters on the Ground -----

Karen Salvage of Sunspun Shelties (<http://www.sunspunshelties.com/home.cfm>) is pleased to announce the arrival of four sable and white puppies, one boy and three girls, born on November 22, 2007. The sire and dam are: CH Heartsong's Renaissance Man ex Sunspun Street Dancer.

Interesting Article -----

Early Spay-Neuter Considerations for the Canine Athlete One Veterinarian's Opinion

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Those of us with responsibility for the health of canine athletes need to continually read and evaluate new scientific studies to ensure that we are taking the most appropriate care of our performance dogs. This article provides evidence through a number of recent studies to suggest that veterinarians and owners working with canine athletes should revisit the standard protocol in which all dogs that are not intended for breeding are spayed and neutered at or before 6 months of age.

Orthopedic Considerations

A study by Salmeri *et al.* in 1991 found that bitches spayed at 7 weeks grew significantly taller than those spayed at 7 months, who were taller than those not spayed (or presumably spayed after the growth plates had closed).¹ A study of 1444 Golden Retrievers performed in 1998 and 1999 also found bitches and dogs spayed and neutered at less than a year of age were significantly taller than those spayed or neutered at more than a year of age.² The sex hormones, by communicating with a number of other growth-related hormones, promote the closure of the growth plates at puberty,³ so the bones of dogs or bitches neutered or spayed before puberty continue to grow. Dogs that have been spayed or neutered well before puberty can frequently be identified by their longer limbs, lighter bone structure, narrow chests and narrow skulls. This abnormal growth frequently results in significant alterations in body proportions and particularly the lengths (and therefore weights) of certain bones relative to others. For example, if the femur has achieved its genetically determined normal length at 8 months when a dog gets spayed or neutered, but the tibia, which normally stops growing at 12 to 14 months of age continues to grow, then an abnormal angle may develop at the stifle. In addition, with the extra growth, the lower leg below the stifle likely becomes heavier (because it is longer), and may cause increased stresses on the cranial cruciate ligament. In addition, sex hormones are critical for achieving peak bone density.⁴ These structural and physiological alterations may be the reason why at least one recent study showed that spayed and neutered dogs had a higher incidence of **CCL rupture**.⁵ Another recent study showed that dogs spayed or neutered before 5 1/2 months had a significantly higher incidence of **hip dysplasia** than those spayed or neutered after 5 1/2 months of age, although it should be noted that in this study there were no standard criteria for the diagnosis of hip dysplasia.⁶ Nonetheless, breeders of purebred dogs should be cognizant of these studies and should consider whether or not pups they bred were spayed or neutered when considering breeding decisions.

Cancer Considerations

A retrospective study of cardiac tumors in dogs showed that there was a 5 times greater risk of **hemangiosarcoma**, one of the three most common cancers in dogs, in spayed bitches than intact bitches and a 2.4 times greater risk of hemangiosarcoma in neutered dogs as compared to intact males.⁷ A study of 3218 dogs demonstrated that dogs that were neutered before a year of age had a significantly increased chance of developing **bone cancer**.⁸ A separate study showed that neutered dogs had a two-fold higher risk of developing bone cancer.⁹ Despite the common belief that neutering dogs helps prevent **prostate cancer**, at least one study suggests that neutering provides no benefit.¹⁰ There certainly is evidence of a slightly increased risk of **mammary cancer** in female dogs after one heat cycle, and for increased risk with each subsequent heat. While about 30 % of mammary cancers are malignant, as in humans, when caught and surgically removed early the prognosis is very good.¹² Luckily, canine athletes are handled frequently and generally receive prompt veterinary care.

Behavioral Considerations

The study that identified a higher incidence of cranial cruciate ligament rupture in spayed or neutered dogs also identified an increased incidence of **sexual behaviors in males and females** that were neutered early.⁵ Further, the study that identified a higher incidence of hip dysplasia in dogs neutered or spayed before 5 1/2 months also showed that early age gonadectomy was associated with an increased incidence of **noise phobias and undesirable sexual behaviors**.⁶ A recent report of the American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation reported significantly more behavioral problems in spayed and neutered bitches and dogs. The most commonly observed behavioral problem in spayed females was **fearful behavior** and the most common problem in males was **aggression**.¹²

Other Health Considerations

A number of studies have shown that there is an increase in the incidence of **female urinary incontinence** in dogs spayed early,¹³ although this finding has not been universal. Certainly there is evidence that ovarian hormones are critical for maintenance of genital tissue structure and contractility.^{14, 15} Neutering also has been associated with an increased likelihood of **urethral sphincter incontinence** in males.¹⁶ This problem is an inconvenience, and not usually life-threatening, but nonetheless one that requires the dog to be medicated for life. A health survey of several thousand Golden Retrievers showed that spayed or neutered dogs were more likely to develop **hypothyroidism**.² This study is consistent with the results of another study in which neutering and spaying was determined to be the most significant gender-associated risk factor for development of hypothyroidism.¹⁷ **Infectious diseases** were more common in dogs that were spayed or neutered at 24 weeks or less as opposed to those undergoing gonadectomy at more than 24 weeks.¹⁸

Finally, the AKC-CHF report demonstrated a higher incidence of **adverse reactions to vaccines** in neutered dogs as compared to intact.¹²

I have gathered these studies to show that our practice of routinely spaying or neutering every dog at or before the age of 6 months is not a black-and-white issue. Clearly more studies need to be done to evaluate the effects of prepubertal spaying and neutering, particularly in canine athletes.

Currently, I have significant concerns with spaying or neutering canine athletes before puberty. But of course, there is the pet overpopulation problem. How can we prevent the production of unwanted dogs while still leaving the gonads to produce the hormones that are so important to canine growth and development? One answer would be to perform vasectomies in males and tubal ligation in females, to be followed after maturity by ovariectomy in females to prevent mammary cancer and pyometra. One possible disadvantage is that vasectomy does not prevent some unwanted behaviors associated with males such as marking and humping. On the other hand, females and neutered males frequently participate in these behaviors too. Really, training is the best solution for these issues. Another possible disadvantage is finding a veterinarian who is experienced in performing these procedures. Nonetheless, some do, and if the procedures were in greater demand, more veterinarians would learn them.

I believe it is important that we assess each situation individually. For canine athletes, I currently recommend that dogs and bitches be spayed or neutered after 14 months of age.

References:

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Editor's Note: <http://www.caninesports.com/SpayNeuter.html> is the link to where you can find this article online. This article was reprinted with the permission of Chris Zink, DVM, PhD, DACVP.

Another interesting online article that you might enjoy reading is entitled "Long-Term Health Risks and Benefits Associated with Spay/Neuter in Dogs" and is found at: <http://www.naiaonline.org/pdfs/LongTermHealthEffectsOfSpayNeuterInDogs.pdf>.

Member Brags -----

Lorna Staab is very pleased to announce the arrival of four puppies—all girls—on January 15, 2008, at Skyehaven Shelties (<http://www.skyehaven.ca/Puppies.htm>). Puppies are sired by BPISS/BISS AKC/UKC/CKC CH Cameo Dreamchaser, "Chase," ex Can CH Skyehaven Caught By Design, "Chanel."

Dee and Walter Silverstein are pleased that "Annie," a/k/a Tapestry Centre of Attention, took Reserve Winner's Bitch on January 11, 2008, at the Clearwater Kennel Club. Then, on January 18, 2008, at the Tampa Bay Kennel Club, "Annie" again took Reserve Winner's Bitch. "Annie's" sire and dam are: CH Reinmaur's Firecracker ex Playland Some Like It Hot.

Bill and Irene Munsey are pleased that "Bart", a/k/a Donlyn's As If Bi Magic, was Winner's Dog, Best of Winners, and Best Bred-By Exhibitor on January 10, 2008, at the Manatee Kennel Club for two points. "Bart's" sire and dam are: BPISS/BISS AKC/UKC/CKC CH Cameo Dreamchaser ex Donlyn's Indigo Lace.

Dione and Bill Houchins are so proud that Heather Houchins graduated with honors from Concord University with a BS in Education on December 15, 2007. She is currently teaching in West Virginia.

General Membership and Board Meeting Minutes -----

SSCSEF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 9, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:25 p.m. Attendees were Frank Lannon, Maryann Lannon, Dione Houchins, Holly Potts, Lorna Staab, Hector Hector, Bonny Thatcher, Karen Salvage and Meredith Hector.

No business items were raised. Karen Salvage made a motion to close the meeting, Maryann Lannon seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Meredith Hector

SSCSEF GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

January 9, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Attendees were Frank Lannon, Maryann Lannon, Dione Houchins, Holly Potts, Lorna Staab, Hector Hector, Bonny Thatcher, Karen Salvage and Meredith Hector.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the November meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Officer and Board Reports

President: Hector thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a New Year. He spoke about the importance of recruiting new members and cultivating existing ones in the coming year.

Vice President: Dione raised the discussion of future seminars and the possibility of having a joint seminar with another Florida club. Seminars mentioned included breed specific options like Tom Coen, and Kim Schive or more general interest options such as those involving canine reproduction and health. After considerable discussion, it was decided that more investigation needs to be done before moving forward with any future seminars.

Treasurer: Meredith provided the bank statement. Also, Lorna and Holly volunteered to audit the books before the March election.

Secretary: No report.

Committee Reports

Breeder Referral: For December and January Maryann reported 6 in area emails and 2 out of area emails as well as 5 in area phone calls and 3 out of area phone calls.

Sunshine: Maryann reported that a sympathy card was sent to Cindy Theiss on the death of her Father.

Newsletter: Holly has nothing new to report in regard to the newsletter.

Website: No report.

Show: Holly indicated that she had touched base with both breed judges and things are in order. Bob Piccirillo is to let Holly know whether or not his wife would be accompanying him which would dictate whether he flies into Fort Lauderdale or West Palm Beach. Dione has been in contact with our sweeps judge and things are in order there as well.

Old business

None.

New business:

Nominations from the floor were opened and none were received.

Hector polled the members regarding their possible interest in collaborating with other sheltie and Collie clubs in the state for a combined Specialty. A meeting is being held at the Mid-Florida sheltie specialty next month. Considerable discussion ensued with consensus that there was interest by our club to explore the idea further. A number of our club members will be attending the Mid-Florida meeting

With no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Meredith Hector