

BREEDING BETTER DOGS NEWSLETTER

Newsletter # 41

"Building a Better World of Breeders"

Breeding by direction rather than by chance is now possible. With information and new skills provided by our website and newsletter this goal is within reach through continuing education for breeders. More than 13,000 breeders from 12 countries subscribe to this newsletter. Your friends can subscribe by contacting our website.

Each quarter, new information is uploaded. Look for: the bloat survey, long term effects of spay/neuter, seventeen new articles from the Nutrition Summit and the latest ideas for using DHA to make puppies smarter and more trainable.

Changes to the site include a fresh look and feel for better browsing. Look for the list of new seminars and the articles, DVD's and books. We recommend that breeders link to our site for timely updates. Please contact us through [our web form](#) and put "Links" in the subject field.

Health and Genetics

The following information is intended to raise awareness levels, not to prescribe medical treatment or offer self-diagnosis. Health issues should be combined with pedigree analysis and careful selection. Both are discussed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, [Breeding Dogs to Win](#).

Heart Failure Symptoms

Heart failure symptoms often include coughing and shortness of breath. Over the past three decades dogs have been instrumental in the development of balloon valvuloplasty which is a procedure that was first performed on a bulldog puppy in 1980. Since then many advances have occurred.

Today we know that the most common signs of heart problems are:

1. Reduced tolerance to exercise
2. Labored breathing and respiratory distress
3. Fluid retention, often resulting in abdominal distention
4. Lethargy and withdrawal
5. Fainting

If any of these signs occur in your dog contact your veterinarian.

Dreaded Diseases

Over the past ten years, improvements in health and conformation have occurred because breeders have improved their skills. The second Breeder Skill called "Breed Knowledge" means among other things, knowing the "Dreaded Diseases" in your breed. These are the disorders that can cripple, kill, and cause [blindness or early death](#). For a list of the eight breeder skills see the "[Breeding Skills](#)" article on our website.

Long-Term Health Risks and Benefits Associated with Spay/Neuter in Dogs

For those who will consider the option of spay / neuter, the benefits of doing so at an early age may or may not outweigh the risks. We have posted an article by Sanborn who has reviewed the veterinary medical literature in an exhaustive and scholarly treatise, attempting to unravel the complexities of the subject. More than 50 peer-reviewed papers were examined to assess the health impacts of spay / neuter in female and male dogs respectively. One cannot ignore the findings of increased risk from osteosarcoma, hemangiosarcoma, hypothyroidism, and other less frequently occurring diseases associated with neutering male dogs. It would be irresponsible of the veterinary profession and the pet-owning community to fail to weigh the relative costs and benefits of neutering on the animal's health and well-being. The decision for females may be more complex than males. [Read the full article.](#)

Nutrition – Changing Dog Foods

A gradual switch over a period of four days minimizes intestinal upsets. This includes changing your dog's type of food.

The recommendation is:

- ❖ Day 1: Feed 75% old food and 25% new food.
- ❖ Day 2: 50% old food, 50% new food.
- ❖ Day 3: 25% old food, 75% new food.
- ❖ Day 4: 100% new food.

Continuing Education

Continuing education includes learning about the better ways to manage and feed what you keep. This is the eighth skill. One of the best ways to learn about making those improvements is through continuing education.

Our program includes two videos.

1. The first is called “[Breeding Better Dogs](#)” which is a condensed version of the two-day seminar. It is a great resource for breeders because it offers new ideas with narration and illustrations.
2. The second is titled “[Choosing the Best Puppy](#)”. It was developed based on an unpublished study that shows that 60% of the top-winning dogs are not owned by their breeders. Reasons given were: sold too early, the lack of skills necessary to choose or recognize the best puppy and pressure from pet buyers. Experts agree that choosing the best puppy is perhaps the most underdeveloped breeder skill. [Both videos are available for purchase in our store.](#)

New [articles](#) have also been posted on our [website](#) along with the [seminars for 2012](#). To learn more about a seminar in your area, click on the contact person's name. [If you do not see a seminar near your residence asks your club to host one. They meet AKC's annual education requirement.](#)

Skin Products – A great Christmas stocking gift

This new skin product provides therapeutic relief for dry and cracked hands. Handlers, exhibitors and groomers continue to use it with good results. Go to [our home page](#) and click on the banner, called “AWAKENING”. Then click on Product Catalog and look for “Hands”.

Get Relief for Aging Dogs

When your feet hurt, your whole body knows it. You and your old dog can be more comfortable thanks to the Japanese Company (Nikken) which developed a special PetPad for aging dogs and an insole for people. Both help with the discomfort of standing and the achiness which comes with age. According to Dr. Shawn Messonnier, “magnet technology helps the body’s energy flow to allow healing and proper metabolism.” It is not a cure-all, but an inexpensive alternative to costly long-term treatments.

The magnetic PetPad helps old dogs feel better after they nap on it. The cover is machine-washable. Pictures and detailed information are on our [website](#).

Key to Success

Volumes of information are now available on most subjects. That’s why we believe, “Those who don’t read have no advantage over those who can’t.” Use our [website](#) and learn more about breeder skills, nutrition and breeding methods.