

H.O.T.



NEWS

Heart of Texas Akita Club Greater Dallas/Ft. Worth Newsletter

News Brief

- 'Hachiko: A Dog's Story' is expected to be released in the US on Dec. 18, 2009. The title may be changed to 'Hachiko: A Dog's Tale' (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1028532/>)

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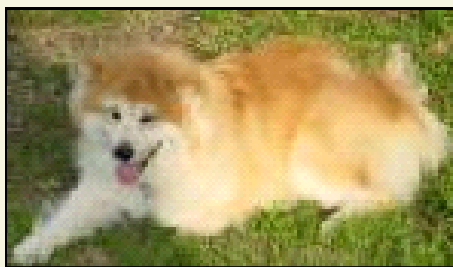
FINALLY – A MARKER FOR THE LONG-COATED GENE

By Jim Sjoberg

For some time we have been interested in genetics. Even before we bred dogs we learned a little bit about genetics because of our interest in breeding cattle.

We had Hereford cattle and preferred the polled variety because there was an increasing tendency for packing companies to use only hornless cattle in their feed lots. It's still very strange to me, but true, that the polled variety of Herefords (and I assume other breeds) is dominant genetically. That

would mean that a horned animal would be the product of a cow and bull—each of whom contain at least one horned gene.



Long-coated 'Tanner'

With regard to dogs, there are a number of things which have been the object of genetic studies for years

that are important. Irish Setters used to have a large amount of PRA (Progressive Retinal Atrophy) in their genetic makeup, and unfortunately this malady usually occurs after the animal is well into adulthood and has probably been bred, if he is a quality specimen. By doing years of research Irish Setter, breeders were able to discover that the gene that causes PRA is a recessive gene. Subsequently, they funded the research to find a marker for that gene whereby even a young animal could be se-

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RESPONSIBILITY BEGINS AT HOME

"It seems unbelievable that people should be allowed to own [Akitas] without some form of restriction."

June 20, 2009, Belfast Telegraph reader editorial

"At some point we have to admit these animals are just too dangerous and it's time to get them off our streets." June 14, 2007, Rep. John Lesch (DFL-St. Paul), Minn, commenting on his bill that would make ownership of several breeds, including the Akita, a crime.

It is coming. More and more people are demanding something be done about aggressive dogs. Unfortunately, the knee-jerk solution is often to outlaw the breed. Certainly,

we all want to do something to help fight such legislation and sometimes the best place to begin is at home.

One method is through temperament and obedience

testing through the American Temperament Test Society, Inc. (ATTS) temperament test (TT) and the AKC's Canine Good Citizen test.

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From the Desk of Wilma Montz

The “dog days of summer” certainly are upon us. What does that mean? From a scientific point of view, it’s the hottest, most humid time of the year and, depending on where you live, it goes from early July to early September.

How we all envy **Jessica** and **Daniel Allen** enjoying the upper altitudes of Colorado Springs and **Teresa** and **Wayne Brown** in up-state New York, far from the sweltering heat of the city.

Meanwhile, looking at what we as a club has accomplished and what we have set our sights to do in the months ahead, we are “hot to trot.”

Heart of Texas Akita Club (HOT) had a very busy spring, beginning with another successful hosting of a regional specialty show and an after-specialty dinner that raised several hundred dollars for rescue, which by the way, was much appreciated by *Akita Rescue of Western New York*, who thanked us for our \$500 donation in a very nice letter.

We also donated \$100 to *Responsible Pet Owners Alliance* to help combat breed-specific legislation in Texas and the nation as well as put a halt to other no-sense animal legislation.

Much like the fallen defenders of the Alamo during Texas’ fight for Independence, we took a stand for our beliefs and convictions and in doing so had this year’s *Akita Club of America* (ACA) National Specialty Show moved out of Dallas. We discussed and voted in favor of ACA re-visiting the issue of recogniz-

ing Japanese Akitas as a separate breed from the American Akita and we added our name to the list of many local and national dog clubs that petitioned the Texas state legislature on several insane pending actions and will continue to do so with **Donna Bennett** as our Legislative Liaison.

During the past six months, our beloved Akitas stole more than their share of the limelight in the show ring and in performance

“During the past six months, our beloved Akitas stole more than their share of the limelight in the show ring and performance circles.”

circles. Looking at the line-up during our March Specialty brought certain tightness to my throat as I looked at all the nice Akitas being bred and shown by our members.

And if having a pretty face just wasn’t good enough any more, more members are going the extra mile to show that Akitas can succeed in other venues, like **Lawrence** and **Angie Collins’** super team of *Blaze* and *Teddy* in Agility and passing the temperament test (TT), **Teresa’s Joji** in Tracking and Obedience and **Betty Bogard** and **Rene Uribe’s Kiyoko** becoming certified as a Therapy Dog.

AKC was busy tracking championship titles earned by **Carlos Rodriquez** and **Javier Ventura** owner-handled *Patron*, *Mambo* and *Yuvia* to their AKC Championships! **Mike** and **Donna Bennett’s** home-bred two new AKC champions: *Ta-Da* earned her Championship title so

fast we hardly got to watch her grow up and let us not forget *Nani*, the late bloomer who wasn’t shown until age two but earned her TT and AKC championship titles by age three. **Dawna** and **Sid Mauldin’s** baby girl *Fudge* ended her days of showing by blazing a trail of big wins from one end of the coast to the other. Now she is at home preparing for the next big challenge... motherhood.

The second half of YOX (2009 Year of the Ox) continues to present many challenges: Our Darling Mikey is again running for ACA President because things just haven’t been the same without

him at the helm. When Mike wins, Donna will give up the reins as ACA Region 4 Rep and we shall miss her because she has been fantastic in that role.

In September we vote in a new Board of Officers and work has already begun to put the wheels in motion for our application for AKC accreditation.

We are look forward to getting more of our Akitas temperament tested, hosting a Fall Fun Match and participating in *Akimatsuri*. **Terry Jo Pyper** volunteered to develop guidelines for HOT’s Mentoring Program and we wish continued success to everyone hard at work to preserve and protect our breed.

Keep cool during these “smoking” hot dog days of summer...

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time.

We are the ones

we have been waiting for.

We are the change that we seek.”

-Barack Obama

MARKER FOR THE LONG-COATED GENE

(Continued from page 1)

lected by use of this marker and consequently not mated with another animal that carries this gene. That would result in no animals being produced exhibiting PRA. In other words by a relatively simple mouth swab and genetic analysis you could determine whether your Irish Setter carried this recessive gene, and then you obviously would not breed it to another animal that carried that recessive gene. You are avoiding any possibility of producing a dog with PRA. Keep in mind, you can still produce carriers of the gene, so subsequent testing is always required in order to insure that you will not produce the malady.

We discovered one day, when Karen Blohm-Mangone posted an e-mail on the JACA list, there was a company who had discovered a marker for the long-coat gene in Akitas.

Further investigation revealed there are two genes responsible for this condition. Most of you have seen long-coated Akitas, and although they do have their charm, they are not universally accepted as a desirable offspring from purebred Akitas. I hasten to add, there are breeders who have suggested that when "long-coats" are not a product of your breeding program, all of your coats suffer in quality. I cannot attest to this, but I thought it was worth noting.

The company who does the testing is called VetGen, and they are located in Ann Arbor, Mich. My correspondence with them was with Dr. George J. Brewer.

The cost for the analysis is only \$50 per animal. There are no discounts for multiple animals. Carol I had and bred a Japanese import bitch, and the resultant litter contained two long-coats. This proved both the sire and dam carried the long-coat gene, but obviously they each also carried the short-coat gene because that was what they were phenotypically (what they looked like).

Later we bred a bitch from that litter to a littermate, (accidentally) and the litter of four contained no long-coats. That doesn't prove anything except that we were lucky *or* one of these (either the sire or the dam) did not carry the long-coat gene.

Subsequently we bred the same bitch to an unrelated sire and produced three puppies, one male and two females. All of them had normal coats. At two years old, the male from this litter was used as a stud and produced a litter with three long-coats and four normal-coated dogs.

The math would indicate that if both carried the long-coat gene, and in this case we're sure they did since they had to in order to produce long-coats, there should have been 25 percent long-coats.

For those of you that know a little about genetics it would look a little like this: bitch (I X S), male (I X S). If they were distributed according to probability, and there were four puppies, there would have been one (I X I), two (I X S) and one (S X S). In other words

one normal-coated animal that was *not* a carrier, two normal-coated animals that were carriers, and one long-coat. Any other combination would simply be a matter of how lucky or unlucky you were.

We had a unique opportunity to do two things:

- 1) To test whether VetGen's system would accurately determine whether or not our male carried the long-coat gene, and;
- 2) To test our two females and determine whether or not they carried the long-coat gene.

We swabbed the mouths of the three animals, and the results came back from VetGen that the male carried the long-coat gene (a fact we already knew, but provided a good test on VetGen's results).

Fortunately both the bitches tested negative on the long-coat gene. We intend to breed one of the bitches, and it is very valuable for us to know we will not be producing any long-coat puppies.

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For more information about the long-coat test, VetGen can be contacted online or by telephone.

www.vetgen.com

Ann Arbor, Mich.

(800) 483-8436 or (734) 669-8440

FAX (734) 669-8441

E-mail vetgen@vetgen.com

M U C H O B O Y

By Cecilia Ortiz Carmean

After repeatedly seeing depressing pictures of him posted to the Akita rescue lists these past several days, several calls were made and due to him being scheduled to be put to sleep Tuesday, we were able to evaluate him and pull him for a week.

Needless to say and despite his depressing state of mind and physical condition (concertina wire scars on his back legs, ticks the size of the tip of my thumb and being heartworm positive), it was a pleasure meeting this big boy while at the Animal Control shelter.

Not only was he happy to be out the small kennel he was in, but was happy to go on car ride (Chevy Conversion Van) with me from Atlanta, Ga., to Louisville, Ky., this past Monday to spend the rest of the week. Despite the occasional and low key serenading sessions (bless his heart) he offered during this trip, I went ahead and let him sleep in the hotel room (outside his crate). I can't believe how well he behaved the whole night through.

Every once in a while he made slight whimpering sounds while he looked outside

the hotel room window - making me wonder if he was missing someone he once knew. After that, he came over by the side of my bed and gently put his big head on the palm of my hand until he felt to sleep. Can you imagine that? This led me to believe that he was once a family house dog.

Shortly after, I took him for a walk and called it for the night. As of Tuesday morning, he became playful and always gentle on the lead. I gave him a large squeaky jumping jack toy, a smoke scented bone and a one of my shirts before taking him to the vet. As of today, he's been given a nice bath, nail trimmed, ear cleaning, up-to-date shots, heartworm testing and neutering.

A humble and most sincere thank you to JoAnn, to Dorie, and everyone who have lead us to this gentle giant boy. After all the kennel depression and health issues he's been through, we have decided to bring him home. His new name is Mucho boy.

He so much reminds us of our beloved Bishop who sadly passed on in January at the age of 16 years and we could not thank the Lord enough for having him in our lives.

A N I M A L R I G H T S I S W R O N G

By Loretta Baughan

Ms. Baughan is the founder, editor and publisher of Spaniel Journal. She is an award-winning professional photographer as well as a web designer and owner of Autumnskye, LLC. She is a member of the Dog Federation of Wisconsin, the National Rifle Association and is the Wisconsin contact for the Sportsmen and Animal Owners Voting Alliance. She resides in northern Wisconsin with her husband and their three children.

It always amazes me to see how many people fall prey to the slick photos of puppies and kittens national animal rights groups use to solicit donations. Too often, people who support these organizations are misled into thinking they are actually helping animals or their local humane societies. Despite having a name that suggests an active role in overseeing or operating local humane societies, in reality the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) is little more than a \$200-million dollar lobbying organization tirelessly working to ramrod



their anti-animal, anti-people agenda into law. On occasions where cases of animal abuse or neglect become the focus of media attention, HSUS often sweeps into town to hog the spotlight while soliciting donations from the unsuspecting public. Like a thief in the night, HSUS packs up and exits - along with the public's donations - as soon as the media's attention fades, leaving struggling, underfunded local animal shelters and rescue groups bearing the financial burden of care for the confiscated animals.

Continue reading this essay at the [Spaniel Journal](#).

TT / CGC TESTING

(Continued from page 1)

"I believe that just as with conformation shows proving our dogs worthy in the show ring, we should use the TT as yet another tool to prove our dogs' temperament," said Donna Bennett.

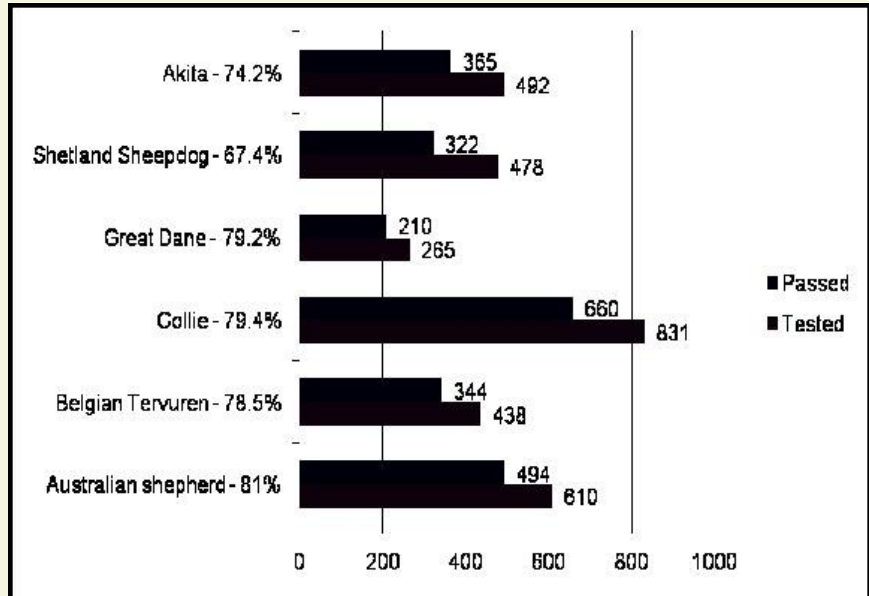
Donna considers testing an important "tool in determining overall soundness." She had her dog Ch. Mito's Zomething Different (Zima) tested when she was nearly 8 years old. Zima passed "with flying colors."

"I like to have my dogs tested because they are what I consider high-profile dogs," said Jessica Allen. "What I mean by that is if an Akita or Great Dane bites someone, it's a headline—if it's a toy breed, no one really cares so much."

"I feel by testing their temperaments through the ATTS, I am protecting myself. Not so much in a court system, but it better prepares me to anticipate how my dogs will react to strange things that they may encounter," she said.

Jessica has had two Akitas and a Great Dane temperament tested and one Akita CGC tested.

"I know what to expect from him in different situations now," Jill Drennan said of her dog, BISS Ch. London's Buckingham Palace AOM. Although "Bucky" was a



Sampling of ATTS TT overall breed statistics from 1977 to 2008. For entire breed statistics, visit www.atts.org/statistics.html.

multiple Best in Specialty Show winner and Award of Merit winner, Jill said the TT was proof to others that he has a stable temperament.

Wilma Montez has had three of her Akitas tested through the years: Sasha (age 2 when tested) for the CGC; George (age 3) and Nani (age 2) for TT.

For Wilma, the tests also make a statement about owning a dog. "As PETA and other radical

groups increase their leverage on our city and state governments, it is important for all of us to get involved and do something to show how wrong they are about hobby breeders and pure-bred dog owners."

"I am a strong advocate for responsible pet ownership and have a low tolerance level for people who don't make time to work with their

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MARKER FOR THE LONG-COATED GENE



(Continued from page 3)

From now on we plan to have all of our breeding animals checked for this marker, and note on their pedigrees whether or not they carry the long-coat gene.

Before I close this article, I would like to add a comment that I

heard during a seminar by a person whose name I cannot remember from Cornell Veterinary School. He said the beauty of this marker is *not* that it identifies PRA-carrier dogs and warns you not to breed them, but that it *allows* you to breed them to an animal that does not carry the PRA gene.

He said if you eliminated all of the animals that carried the

gene, you would certainly eliminate the disease, but you would also eliminate a lot of exceptional animals from the gene pool, and by doing so you may harm the breed more than you help it.

You can, in fact, have your cake and eat it, too, if you know that there is a marker and you know which of your dogs carry that marker.

Photos courtesy of Jim and Carol Sjoberg

WHAT IS A TITLE

By Sandy Mowery, Wisconsin

Not just a brag, not just a stepping stone to a higher title, not just an adjunct to competitive scores. A Title is a tribute to the dog that bears it, a way to honor that dog, an ultimate memorial. It will remain in the record and in the memory for about as long as anything in this world can remain. Few humans will do as well or better in that regard, and though the dog himself doesn't know or care that his achievements have been noted, a Title says many things in the world of humans, where such things count.

A Title says your dog was intelligent, and adaptable, and good natured. It says that your dog loved you enough to do the things that please you, however crazy they may have sometimes seemed. And a Title says that you loved your dog, that you loved to spend time with him because he was a good dog, and that you believed in him enough to give him yet another chance when he failed, and that in the end your faith was justified.

A Title proves that your dog inspired you to have the special relationship enjoyed by so few, that in the world of disposable creatures, this dog with a Title was greatly loved, and loved greatly in return. And when that dear short life is over, the Title remains as a memorial of the finest kind, the best you can give to a deserving friend, volumes of praise in one small set of initials before or after the name.

A Title is nothing less than love and respect, given and received, permanently recorded.

CGC / TT TESTING

(Continued from page 5)

dogs and make sure they behave appropriately in the home and in public," she said.

The TT is a 10-part test that focuses on a dog's temperament (stability, shyness, aggressiveness and friendliness) as well as the dog's instinct to protect its owner.

With TT, no preparation is required. "We did nothing to prepare or train for the test. I believe that defeats the purpose of evaluating the true temperament," Donna said.

"As the dog's handler, you don't say a word or give them a physical command," Jessica said. "Rather you stand there or walk through the course as directed. The dog is making all of the decisions when faced with each situation."

Wilma cautioned owners to keep their nerves in check during the test, lest the nervousness will travel down the leash and affect the dog.

Akitas' ATTS pass rate since December 2008 is 74.2 percent of

the 492 Akitas tested.

The CGC requires basic obedience work. Former CGC evaluator Terry Pyper remains an advocate of the test. "I promoted it because it taught basic obedience that I believe all Akitas should have." All of Terry's Akitas were CGC tested.

The CGC is a 10-step pass-or-fail test that centers on basic obedience. It is an AKC certificate program and many people have used the test as launching point for advanced obedience work or other obedience-related activities. But the intent is to demonstrate responsible pet ownership and good dog manners.

Calling it an achievement and a goal to work toward, Terry enjoyed the challenge of having her dogs tested. She recommended if anyone was preparing a dog for CGC testing that he or she should find unusual places to practice, such as playgrounds (when chil-

dren aren't present), parks, etc. The goal is to expose the dog to new environments and situations.

She also suggested that folks take their dogs to Petsmart, or to a store with automatic-opening doors just to familiarize the dog with those types of doors.

We know, Akitas can be wonderful family members. With the breed-specific legislation movement gaining momentum, it's our duty to become the breed's champion, and the place to begin is at home.

—Teresa C. Brown

(Note: The bill introduced by Minn. Rep. John Lesch, making owning specific dog breeds a misdemeanor crime, failed to pass; however, he has promised to introduce a similar bill in the future.)

ATTS Temperament Test

Click on the button to go to the ATTS Web page



1. Neutral Stranger—Stranger shakes hands with handler, ignores dog.
2. Friendly Stranger—Stranger is friendly to and pets dog.
3. Hidden Noise—Hidden assistant rattles metal rock-filled bucket and puts bucket in dog/handler pathway.
4. Gunshots—Hidden assistant fires three shots with .22 starter pistol.
5. Umbrella—Handler/dog approach assistant; when within 5 feet, umbrella is opened.
6. Plastic footing—Handler/dog walk on 15-foot by 6-foot clear plastic strip.
7. Wire Footing—Dog only walks on 12-foot by 3-foot unfolded exercise pen.
8. Non-threatening—Handler/dog stop on path; oddly dressed stranger crosses path 38 feet away.
9. Threatening—Oddly dressed stranger advances 10 feet toward handler in threatening manner.
10. Aggression—Oddly dressed stranger advances to within 18 feet of handler in aggressive manner.

AKC CGC Program

Click on the button to go to the AKC's CGC page



1. Accepting friendly stranger—allows stranger to come to handler and shake hands.
2. Sitting politely for petting—Dog sits and allows stranger to pet it.
3. Appearance and grooming—Dog allows stranger to brush it and examine its feet and ears.
4. Walks on loose lead— Dog walks on loose leash; perfect heeling is not required.
5. Walking through crowd—Handler/dog walk through group of three or more people.
6. Sit, down and stay—Dog must sit, down and stay on command. Handler walks approximately 20 feet away.
7. Recall—Recall from approximately 10 feet away.
8. Reaction to another dog—Two handlers and dogs approach each other, stop and shake hands.
9. Reaction to distraction—Evaluator will use two distractions to test dog, such as dropping chair, rolling a crate dolly near dog, dropping a noisy object.
10. Supervised separation—Dog is left with stranger for three minutes.

Oh, Snap!



Lawrence and Angie Collins' *Teddy* and *Blaze* (left to right) showing that agility work is an Akita snap!

JUST SOME YOUTUBE 'KEETER FUN

Click on the links to see the videos

- It's not Blaze or Teddy, but who can resist watching an Akita having fun on the agility course... http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQ09ICyAPZE&feature=channel_page
- Now we have to start sharing the water bottle! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRV6xCTCCfs>
- An Akita + lake = waterdog... <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJXWK7XeFUw>
- What really happens when you're away from home... <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GULVusGRusw>
- Who says Akitas aren't Earth Dogs? <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nlsa2I5hZhs&feature=related>
- Tora, Tora and... Akita? <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bS8jXurmiW4>



Heart of Texas Akita Club Greater Dallas/Ft. Worth
Newsletter

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Half page	Color	\$10
Brag	Black/white	\$3
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