



## NEWSLETTER

No. 1 April 2003

*'To provide a platform for the reception and transmission of information about the health and well being of the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier'*

### Why WHI?

Whilst, in general, Soft-Coated Wheaten Terriers are healthy and robust dogs there are underlying genetic problems within the breed that owners and breeders need to be aware of. Renal Dysplasia was identified in the 1970s and it has been at the centre of the concerns of the SCWT Club of GB throughout the last two decades. However, there are other problems, e.g. PLE, PLN and Addison's Disease that have not received so much attention.

The founder members of WHI have felt for some time that information about these syndromes should be in the public domain, and have felt that this would be best disseminated via an independent Health Group. Thus it was, on the 16th February 2003 that an inaugural meeting was held and the foundation stone for **Wheaten Health Initiative** was laid.

The aim of this enthusiastic group is to be able to work freely in an effort to help, educate, advise and keep breeders and owners abreast of up to date information and testing procedures from around the world. It is also to promote the necessity of early testing, in an endeavour to keep hereditary problems at bay.

We want to develop an open approach to sharing information, both here in the UK, and with breeders and owners in other countries.

It is not our intention to alarm, but to make as many people as possible aware of diseases that *could* affect our lovely breed. By encouraging early testing it should be possible to identify where problems are occurring and hopefully, in time, eradicate them.

### "Their Health in our Hands"

Our Logo is designed to demonstrate the fact that the health of this beautiful breed is, literally, in the hands of us all, owners and breeders alike, and to depict our vision of global co-operation.

It is the duty of all Wheaten Terrier owners and breeders to build up knowledge of the ancestry of their dogs and to understand the health issues and testing protocols as they are developed.

In owning a Wheaten, you take on not just a dog, but a shared responsibility for the future of the breed.

*Their health really is in the hands of all of us.*

### Spreading the Word

We feel that information should be disseminated to the Veterinary profession too, and intend to explore ways of having testing protocols published within Veterinary Publications. Being a numerically small breed, we feel that anything mentioned in relation to Wheatens may jog the memory of a vet should he/she have a Wheaten client.

### Not Just Health

Socialisation and training are extremely important issues too, and we hope to develop clear information and advice on these topics.



Our leaflet, handed out at Crufts, received a great response, and the [wheatenhealth@hotmail.com](mailto:wheatenhealth@hotmail.com) mail box has certainly been busy.

We are investigating the development of a Web Site to disseminate information as widely and efficiently as possible. We are also considering a **Chatroom** where breeders and owners can share information, and matters relating to Wheaten health can be freely discussed.

### Gaining Information

In May this year Barbara P, Maria and Sandra will be attending the SCWT Health Conference at Keystone, Colorado, USA, where they will have a unique opportunity to interact with key researchers involved in the SCWT Health Programme.

The main speakers will be:

**Meryl P. Littman V.M.D., D.A.C.V.I.M**

**Paula Henthorn Ph.D**

**Shelly Vaden DVM, D.A.C.V.I.M.**

**Wendy Beers D.V.M.**

On their return, they plan to produce a report on this exciting event to share with supporters of WHI. Hopefully, later this year new testing facilities will be available to all Wheaten owners here in the UK.

## **Health Seminar**

WHI has invited **Janet Petros**, Health Chairperson, Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America, to present her **Health Notebook Seminar** on the hereditary diseases that could affect the breed, i.e. Renal Dysplasia (RD); Protein Losing Nephropathy (PLN); Protein Losing Enteropathy (PLE) and Addisons Disease.

This event is taking place on  
**26<sup>th</sup> October 2003**  
and will begin at 10.00 a.m.

at  
The Warwick Suite,  
The Sports Connexion,  
Ryton-on-Dunsmore,  
Coventry.

*The fully inclusive cost of this event is £15.00*

This is an excellent opportunity for owners, breeders and veterinary health care professionals to learn about the health issues that could affect the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier.

Owners of other breeds that are affected by or predisposed to these diseases will also be welcome.

## **In The Future**

⇒ More news on the progress of Wheaten Health

Initiative

- ⇒ Guidelines to becoming a Supporter of the Wheaten Health Initiative
- ⇒ Latest information on the Seminar
- ⇒ Development of a regular Newsletter

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*We would be grateful if all of those contacting us for more information can provide us with an electronic address for future contact and dissemination of information*

### ***And finally ....***

We are always willing to listen to your thoughts and ideas. We have an open door, so please, come and talk to us.