

## Projects Update

### Education

The Foundation educates the public about the Kerry Blue Terrier through a comprehensive computer web site—<http://www.kerryblues.info>—and its internet newsletter, KB-L.

### Recently Completed

- Published multiple historic articles and pictures
- Developed a relationship with *The Whole Dog Journal* to reprint articles for free on our web site

### On-Going

- Continue to place ads in newspapers to counter puppy advertising
- Update directories of breeders, groomers, handlers, and trainers
- Pose Question of the Week
- Advertise in dog magazines
- Continue to add new web content
- Publish "Best of KB-L" and "My Kerry and Me"

### Rescue

The Foundation provides assistance to Kerries requiring rescue and owners requiring help with their Kerries.

### Recently Completed

- Since January 2003, rescued and/or assisted 20 homeless or at-risk Kerries
- Provided an online Adoption Questionnaire which can be used by all Kerry breeders and rescue groups
- Established the "Kerry Blue Terrier Endowment" to provide for the future funding of the Foundation
- Developed the Pet Store Alert program, which helps track pet stores that sell Kerries and assists the puppy buyers

### On-Going

- Scan the web for Kerries in need through our Shelter Scout program
- Mentor Kerry owners who have problems with their Kerries to avoid the need for rescue

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## Health Survey 2004

*Daryl Enstone, MSc & W. Jean Dodds, DVM*

The goal of all members of the Kerry fancy—breeders, exhibitors and performance competitors, and pet owners—is a physically and mentally sound, happy, attractive, and long-lived dog that conforms to the breed standard. Despite the best efforts of committed breeders, health problems do crop up in all breeds, including Kerries. Prof. George Padgett (1998) documented 29 genetic defects occurring in the Kerry breed, based on his review of published veterinary literature and veterinary teaching hospital records.

Surveys are a way of obtaining information about the health risks and problems within a breed. In 1999, the USKBTC published the results of the first ever health survey of the Kerry Blue Terrier breed. This survey provided Kerry fanciers with a listing of concerns about cancers, PNA, autoimmune diseases such as thyroiditis and hemolytic anemia, various skin conditions, and other problems that occur in Kerries. The survey collected one information form per owner, providing a collective accounting of all dogs owned by that person. This format tallied the health concerns of owners and generated a baseline knowledge of the most common and the most serious problems in the breed. This was an extremely important and valuable step; however, it was unable to provide an estimate of the prevalence of each health concern in the breed. Since 1999, mailing lists and private reports to health and genetics representatives have provided additional, anecdotal information suggesting more concerns about cancers, the autoimmune neurological disease degenerative myelopathy, and hermaphroditism, which did not specifically feature in the USKBTC survey.

The current survey is designed to provide information on the type and prevalence of health problems in Kerries. It is based on a number of surveys previously carried out; in particular, the Old

English Sheepdog Club of America survey in 1990, and the Bedlington Terrier Club of America survey which is currently underway. This format requests that each owner fill out a detailed survey form for each dog they have owned during the last five years.

This new format will generate data not only on the presence, but also on the prevalence of each problem in the breed.

What exactly is prevalence and why do we want to know about it? Prevalence is a measure of the number of dogs with a particular health disorder, disease, structural fault or abnormality at any given time, divided by the population of dogs at risk. Prevalence is expressed per 100 dogs (i.e., as a percentage), which is termed a point prevalence rate. For example, from the Old English Sheepdog survey results (see Dodds 1995), of the 740 dogs entered in the survey, 99 of them were hypothyroid, and therefore the prevalence of hypothyroidism in the breed was 13.4%. Knowing the prevalence of each disease in the breed helps those who care about the breed decide which problems to be most concerned about when planning breeding programs or targeting health research dollars.

The 2004 survey consists of tabular response forms and a list of disorder codes. Each owner fills out the table of information requested about themselves. Then, one table is filled out for each dog owned in the past five years by answering the questions and by entering the codes for each disorder the dog has experienced. Additional information about each dog is welcome and owners may attach extra pages, if desired. To avoid duplicate reports on the same dog, if you have transferred a puppy or adult to a new home in the last five years, please do not report on that dog. Instead, encourage the new owner to report.

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## Dr. Elsa Sell

*Our Health Survey Analyst*

The Foundation is delighted to have Dr. Elsa Sell as our Health Survey 2004 analyst. She was chosen for her experience in analyzing and reporting data from other breed health surveys, her background in medical science and canine health studies, and her lack of involvement in the Kerry breed. Together, they insure an unbiased analysis, confidentiality of the data, and integrity of the reporting.

Dr. Sell is founder and Board member of the Bearded Collie Foundation of Health (BeaCon), a nonprofit foundation independent of the national breed club. BeaCon provides education, tracks health of Beardies with an open health registry, and promotes research. Dr. Sell developed the group's open health registry database and online data entry system.

Dr. Sell has also served as the health chair for the Bearded Collie Club of America (BCCA) where she managed an anonymous health survey. Based on the survey results, Dr. Sell was instrumental in setting up a research project with the Canine Health Foundation to study the inheritance and genetic markers for Addison's disease in Beardies.

Dr. Sell is a member of the BCCA, Portuguese Water Dog Club of America, and 2 herding clubs.

## Health Survey 2004 ~ continued from page 2

When completing each survey form, *any condition affecting or altering the Kerry's normal state of health should be included, even if the condition is under control with treatment.* This allows the accurate determination of prevalence of these problems within the breed. It would be additionally helpful in these cases to make a note in survey form of the means of diagnosis (blood test, genetic test, biopsy, etc.), and the type of therapy and how successful it is. For example, if a Kerry suffers from dry eye syndrome, which is easily controlled with a cyclosporin ointment, this information would be useful not only in compiling the disorder frequency, but also in documenting a successful treatment protocol.

Why is it important to respond to the survey? If we could survey and receive responses from every living individual who has owned a Kerry Blue in the last 5 years, we would obtain the true prevalence of current health problems within the breed. As this goal is, naturally, impossible, we must locate and survey a group from within this population that gives an overall representation that is as close to the truth as possible—a microcosm of the Kerry breed.

This population ideally should equally represent all groups of Kerry owners—the dedicated Kerry breeders and exhibitors who are deeply interested in conformation and health issues, those that do not breed but participate in canine sports with their Kerries and are also concerned with the conformation and soundness of their dogs, and those who keep Kerries as companions and are not as interested in competition, but who want a healthy, happy, social, and long-lived companion.

To reach as many members of these population groups as possible, we are sending the survey questionnaire to members of Canadian and US breed clubs, and to a group of individuals who are non-club members and will receive the survey through the Foundation newsletter. We expect that many of the serious breeders and sports competitors will belong to at least one club. Some pet owners will also be club members, but we expect that most will not be members. In addition, the survey will be available in downloadable format on the web, making it accessible to Kerry owners worldwide.

Our goal is to get approximately equal responses from each group of Kerry owners surveyed. However, there may be varying responses from each group, depending upon their needs and particular interests. Some breeders may not wish to respond because of the perception that they may be identified as having stock that throws a particular health problem, despite all efforts to ensure confidentiality. The problems with this type of knowledge becoming public are well-known within the Kerry fancy and are a strong deterrent to revealing health disorders. This may lead to an under-representation of breeder responses to the survey. We have attempted to mitigate this disincentive by having the surveys returned to and analyzed by individuals who are not members of the Kerry fancy and who are committed to preserving confidentiality, and also by separating the survey mailers, which may contain personal identifiers, from the surveys before they are analyzed.

On the other hand, pet owners may not fully understand the benefit they are providing by returning their responses if they have a healthy Kerry. The owners who have pets who experience health problems have more motivation to return their responses, biasing the survey toward more "unhealthy" Kerries. *We cannot emphasize enough the importance of receiving data about healthy Kerries as well as those that experience problems.*

**Strict confidentiality of the survey responses will be preserved** by returning the completed forms to Mrs. Marit Marino. Mrs. Marino was selected because she has experience providing this service, and she has no connections with the Kerry community. Mrs. Marino will remove the survey mailers before forwarding the survey forms to be compiled and analyzed, thus separating any personal identifiers from the response forms. Dr. Elsa Sell is our survey analyst. Dr. Sell is an active member in Bearded Collie health issues, and has experience in that breed with health surveys and on-line health registries through her work for the non-profit charitable organization, the Bearded Collie Foundation for Health. Dr. Sell will analyze the information returned and provide a summary report to

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## Health Survey 2004 ~ continued from page 2

the KBTF Board, which will then make the report available to all members of the Kerry fancy. Our survey workers have committed to complete confidentiality regarding individual survey responses. Information about individual responses will not be released to any individual or organization, including the KBTF Board, without written permission of the animal's owner of record. Respondents can further assure their anonymity by not including a return address on the mailer or putting personal identifiers on the survey forms.

Our goal is to obtain information on at least 500 dogs, in order to provide meaningful health information about the Kerry Blue Terrier. Please help out this wonderful breed; fill out the response forms and return them as soon as possible.

### References

*Bedlington Terrier Club of America Health Committee. 2003. BTCA Health Survey.*

*Dodds, WJ. 1995. Estimating disease prevalence with health surveys and genetic screening. Advances in Veterinary Science and Comparative Medicine 39: 29-95.*

*Dodds, WJ. 1990. Survey Questionnaire of the prevalence of health problems in the breed. Old English Times (Old English Sheepdog Club of America). April issue. pp. 19-20.*

*Padgett GA. 1998. Control of Canine Genetic Disease. Howell Book House, New York. ISBN 0-87605-004-6.*

*Schellenberg SJ, Tomsic ML. 1999. United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club Health and Genetics Survey, 1999 Final Report.*

## The Gift of Convenience

The Foundation now accepts credit cards for your donations, even if you don't have a Paypal account. This is especially helpful for people outside the US who may wish to pay in foreign currency, or for those who wish to accumulate bonus points (or frequent flier miles) on their credit cards. It also allows you to spread your payments over several months.

For those of you who make donations every month, quarterly, or yearly, using a credit card can make things easier. For your convenience, your gift will appear on your credit card statement, just like any other charge.

To make a donation by credit card, please fill out this form and mail it in the enclosed envelope. As always, you will receive a receipt for your tax-deductible donation.

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## The Cost of Rescue

What does it cost to rescue a Kerry? A lot, and nearly all of it is in veterinary expenses with Rescue discounts factored in. Everything else is donated—transportation, foster care, food, phone calls, crates, and all incidentals. Even so, all our Rescues this year except one cost \$500 or more.

While we've had more than our share of surgeries (oral surgery, bladder surgery, tumor removal, and neutering), veterinary costs are incurred on every dog. Those costs, on average, are:

- \$18 Office visit
- \$38 Full physical exam
- \$47 Vaccinations, including rabies
- \$78 Blood panel with thyroid test (T4)
- \$20 Fecal flotation test
- \$26 Urinalysis
- \$52 Heartworm test + preventative (for 6 months)
- \$43 Flea/tick preventative (for 6 months)

### \$322 Total

These tests are necessary to determine the general health of our Rescue Kerries, and to rule out parasites and contagious diseases before the dogs go to foster care. Any pre-existing conditions, such as ear and eye infections, and the medications to treat them add to the cost.

At minimum then, one trip to the vet will cost \$300 or more for nearly every Rescue dog. But each Kerry is worth every penny.

## What you can do to help Kerries

### Education

- publicly answer someone's question on KB-L
- write an article for the web site
- suggest articles for reprinting on the web site
- register with the Foundation to become a mentor
- alert the Foundation of any Kerry ads you see in the newspaper

### Rescue

- cooperate with a Rescue Coordinator when asked to identify, transport, or foster a Kerry in need
- alert the Foundation of pet stores selling Kerries
- search the web sites of shelters for Kerries
- encourage Kerry breeders to post their litters on our web site, which will double or triple the number of homes applying for their puppies, which in turn allows them to find better homes, leading to fewer rescues in the future
- encourage breeders to use the Foundation Adoption Questionnaire for better puppy placements

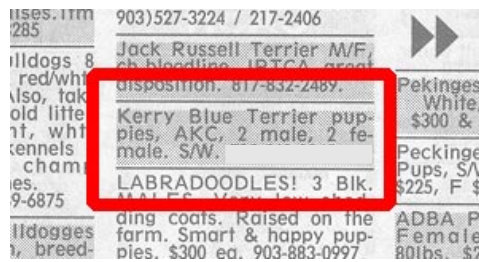
### Health & Genetics

- fill out the health survey for *all* your Kerries
- encourage all your Kerry friends to fill out the health survey
- report all major health issues with your Kerry to the breeder
- publicly share information about any major health issues on KB-L
- encourage breeders to do more H&G tests before their next litters

## Newspaper Alert

### New Education Program

Responsible breeders usually sell their puppies through referrals from their Kerry club or the Foundation. When a Kerry ad appears in a newspaper, it is often from a backyard breeder or puppy mill.



Breeders who sell Kerries through newspaper ads typically don't provide the support buyers need with ear pasting, grooming, training, and dealing with health issues. They also do not generally screen their prospective homes properly, if at all. The result is that the puppies frequently end up in homes with no understanding of the breed and different expectations about its care and needs. Most are unprepared for the amount of effort a Kerry requires in terms of grooming, socialization, training, and care. In short, the puppy suffers for lack of an educated buyer.

What happens then? The undersocialized, untrained, unappreciated puppy becomes a "throw-away" adult, and ends up in shelters, in Kerry Rescue (if it's lucky), or spends its life bouncing from owner to owner.

The Foundation's Newspaper Alert program is designed to educate prospective Kerry puppy buyers. The ultimate goal, of course, is to provide enough breed information to help buyers make informed decisions, which helps ensure better homes for all Kerries.

The Newspaper Alert program consists of placing ads next to Kerry ads in newspapers, directing the interested party to our 800 number and our web site to learn more about the breed before they buy a Kerry. We hope that all qualified puppy buyers will only purchase Kerries from breeders listed on the web site or from other responsible breeders.

How can you participate? Here's your assignment: Every week, check your paper for Kerry ads and let us know if you find one—800/532-2890 or [rescue@kerryblues.info](mailto:rescue@kerryblues.info).

## Pet Store Alert

### New Rescue Program

It used to be that finding a Kerry in a pet store was nearly unheard of. Sadly, that is no longer the case. In the last year or two, Kerry puppies have been found in pet stores from NH all the way to CA, and states inbetween, including NY, MI, MO, TX, AZ, and more. Recently, 3 littermates were found in stores in CA. What kind of breeder could possibly ship perhaps an entire litter of 8-week-old puppies to a chain of stores halfway across the country? Only a puppy miller or commercial breeder interested far more in profit than the well-being and future welfare of the puppies. If anyone doubts this, there are many web sites that tell the story, including [www.yourpurebredpuppy.com/buying/common/petshops.html](http://www.yourpurebredpuppy.com/buying/common/petshops.html).

So what can we do about Kerries in pet stores? You can participate in the Foundation's new Pet Store Alert program. The purpose of this program is to locate Kerries in pet stores, provide breed information to the store personnel and/or the puppy buyers, and, if possible, gain the puppies' release so that they can be responsibly placed in appropriate homes. The ultimate goal of the program is to help curb the breeding of Kerries in puppy mills, discourage pet stores from stocking our breed, and educate the public about the exploitation of companion animals by pet stores and puppy mills.

What can you do? The next time you are at a mall, shopping center, or in an area where a pet store sells puppies, take a minute and cruise the store to see if they have one or more Kerries. That's the easy part. The hard part is leaving a store that has a Kerry on display. The worst thing you can do is express interest in the puppy (thereby creating a "false market" for the breed), or, horrors, purchasing the puppy (thereby enriching and perpetuating the puppy mill). The next thing to do is contact the Foundation's Rescue Director (Janet Joers) at **1-800-532-2890**.

Please know that there are procedures to follow in dealing with this situation—procedures that work and will give us the best chance of rescuing that puppy in the window. You (or another volunteer) will receive all the help, advice, and instructions you need to alleviate the suffering and vulnerability of that puppy. So please help us help the breed.

## Thanks to you . . .

We now have over \$15,000 earmarked for health & genetics research in Kerries. It is time to start thinking about how best to use these funds for the improvement of the breed.

The enclosed health survey is a follow-up to the US club's survey of 1999. Please provide health information on each Kerry you have or had within the last 5 years. For the price of a postage stamp, you will help identify the best use for Kerry Health & Genetics funds.

Since our last newsletter, the Foundation has started its Newspaper Alert program and our Pet Store Alert program. You can read more about both new programs on page 4.



For the remainder of this letter, I could repeat my usual message about the Foundation: that we are tax exempt, that we educate thousands of people each month about the breed, that we rescue or assist dozens of Kerries each year, and that we need your donation. Instead, during this season of thanks, I want to dedicate this space to our volunteers.

All the people working for the Foundation are volunteers. My estimate is that over the last 12 months, our volunteers have donated 4400 hours of their time to the work of the Foundation.

For example, Janet Hopkins spends hours each week searching web sites of shelters for Kerries. (And yes, she has found them!) Looking at dogs ready to be euthanized day after day after day is very draining emotionally. Yet she continues her work because the goal is that all Kerries in shelters will be found.

We are thankful to people like Arlett van Dijk, who provided all 80 pictures for our grooming guide, and shares her expertise as a master groomer on the web site.

We thank Randy Hayes, Lindsey Gower, and Janet Joers, all professional writers, who have researched, written, or edited countless articles for the web site.

We'd like to thank Kevin Burke, who called all known US Kerry breeders to verify their information on our web site.

We'd also like to thank Cindy Hatzfeld for conceptualizing and managing "The Best of KB-L" and "My Kerry and Me," and to Tom Sawyer for so capably managing the Newspaper Alert program for the Foundation. And our heartfelt thanks to the many of you who have fostered a Rescue Kerry or otherwise have contributed to our Rescue effort.

Many of you have enjoyed our KB-L newslister. Thanks to all of you who have been willing to share your knowledge, KB-L continues to be a unique source of Kerry information.

I thank our directors for their willingness to work for the Foundation. A director's position on our Board is not an honorary position, but a serious job. We are especially grateful to Daryl Enstone and Dr. Dodds for their expertise and work on the Health Survey 2004.

To join our team, or if you have any questions about the Foundation, please contact me at 805/686-0809.

Thanks to you, our work continues.

Very truly yours,

John Van den Bergh, President  
johnv@kerryblues.info

## Updates

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- Provide such rescue services as breed identification, transportation, vetting, fostering, rehabilitating, home screening, placement, and follow-up
- Build bridges between the Foundation and clubs to help Kerries in need
- Expand the Pet Store Alert program

### Health & Genetics

The Foundation assists in funding research of Kerry health & genetics projects, and supports the existing health registries for data collection and dissemination on disorders that may afflict our Kerries.

### Recently Completed

- Doubled our annual contribution to our Health & Genetics fund to \$10,000
- Published multiple health-related articles on the web site
- Developed and distributed a comprehensive health survey
- Publicize existing health registries and establish new ones for data collection on Kerries and encourage owner and breeder participation

### On-Going

- Raise funds for H&G
- Identify and fund research projects to benefit Kerries
- Build bridges between the Foundation and clubs to do joint H&G projects

## Sassy's Rescue

Last July, dear little 9-year-old Sassy was released to us by her vet, where she had been for 7 weeks after both of her owners were admitted to a nursing home. Sassy was no stranger to the vet's office, having spent nearly the entire month of December there with a spinal injury, and frequent hospitalizations thereafter for a variety of complaints.



To read Sassy's 1/2-inch thick medical history is to read it and weep. Notations include: "Depressed. Too weak to stand. Poor prognosis. Unable to urinate/defecate. No appetite. Not drinking. Hand-fed." Ailments included a neurological problem, acute urinary tract infection, possible incontinence, and more. Perhaps Sassy had simply given up. It is

a tribute to her vet that she pulled through, and thanks to him, she found her way to Kerry Rescue.

In foster care, Sassy became a new dog. She rebounded under the love and care of Candi Marzano and the company of her Kerries. Sassy's playful attitude came shining through, her coat improved, her health returned, and in every way, she lived up to her vet's description of her: a very sweet and gentle dog. And a spunky one, too!

Today, Sassy is one of the crew at Tom & Kathleen Sawyer's house, where she plays hard, sleeps deep, eats hearty, hoards the toys, demands attention, and bosses good-natured Murphy whenever he lets her. She and Murphy go everywhere together—to the recent

Celtic Fair, and on their multiple daily walks. Wherever they go, they have a knack for falling into step and moving in perfect harmony—right paw, left paw, right turn, left turn. Two better matched Kerries would be hard to find. Who knows? Maybe they're soulmates!



Sassy (left) and her pal, Murphy



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