



Wh-e-mail

The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of Victoria Inc.

Recent Activities: At the end of January we held our first Committee meeting for 2011. We organised Club activities up to June 30th - see the Calendar of Events in this Wh-e-mail. We also made a decision to ask non-members for a small gold coin donation when they attend club functions.

In the past, we have been able to share web access with the NSW club. That arrangement is no longer available, so we are preparing to develop our own site. If you, or someone you know has relevant skills, we'd be interested in talking to you.

For the first time, the club officially participated in the Pet Expo at Caulfield Racecourse. On both the 19th and 20th of February, we presented a breed display, utilising club members, photographs, handouts, and of course, live wheatens! As usual, the wheatens attracted a lot of interest and attention. Thanks to everyone involved.

Coming up soon: Originally, we planned to hold a March picnic to celebrate St Patrick's Day. However when we found that the Melbourne Irish Festival Committee has organised The St Patrick's Family Festival 2011, we decided to have our picnic at their festival. See the invitation in this Wh-e-mail.

Some club members have been interested in trying herding with their dogs, so Angela has researched the details. We are planning a herding day for beginners at Double K Herding Training at Nyora (South Gippsland). Possible dates are either Sunday April 17th, May 22nd, or May 29th. If you MIGHT be interested, please email Angela with your preferred date, **by this Tuesday, March 1st**. We can then book for the most popular date.

Register of Wheaten Deaths

As part of our commitment to wheaten health issues, the club has designed a template to use as a register of wheaten deaths in Victoria. The intention is to try to record ALL wheaten deaths in Victoria, to enable future analysis about average age of death, causes of death etc., and to provide an opportunity for research if new health issues arise.

In the past, the deaths of wheatens have sometimes been marked by accusations and rumours. Some dogs have been under suspicion of inherited diseases/syndromes, without any official diagnosis. The Victorian Register template has been designed to emphasise the importance of a veterinary diagnosis in identifying a cause of death, and to reduce the risk of speculation and innuendo.

The information for the register is shown below (reduced size):

The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of Victoria Inc					
Reg.No.					
D.o.D.					
Register of Deaths: Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers (Victoria)					
Dog's Call Name	Dog's Registered Name/Number	D.o.B./ Age	Sex	Owner(s) Name & Contact Details	Vet's Name & Contact Details
Cause of Death					
Vet's Diagnosis	Obvious (eg. snake bite, hit by car, old age etc.)		Unexpected Death Without a Diagnosis		

So, when your wheaten dies, please get in touch with the club secretary. We will ask you to record the information in the register, and we will be happy to publish a tribute to your dog in Wh-e-mail.

Secretary: vicdotwheatenatgmaildotcom

Committee: vicdotwheatenatgmaildotcom

The Importance of Keeping your own Pathology Test Results By Phyllis

A few days before Christmas, Derry was 'unwell'. Oh all right, Derry's not famous for being dignified and discrete. She had urinary incontinence. It took me awhile to realise what was happening, but once I did, off to the vet. They did a simple urine analysis which indicated she had a fairly mild urinary tract infection (UTI). Because her urine specimen showed some crystals, we discussed the possibility of kidney/bladder stones. I decided that a plain Kidney/urinary tract/bladder (KUB) x-ray would help to rule out the most common stone varieties. (Do I sound like an expert here? >30 years first hand experience helps a lot.)

As I had already fasted her for 12 hours, I asked if it would be OK to do her annual blood and urine tests, even with the UTI. The vet determined it wouldn't be a problem, so we did them too. The KUB showed no signs of stones, normal kidney size, and no obvious problems. I gave the vet, a copy of my spreadsheet, which records ALL Derry's path. results, starting with the blood tests done on the day she was to be spayed, when neither Derry, the vet, nor I, thought she was well enough for the operation. Those test results confirmed that she wasn't well enough at the time. Every time she has had a urine test or a blood test, I record the results, as well as the blood and urine tests associated with monitoring for PLE/PLN. I record the lab's reference range and I also record whether at the time of the test, Derry was fasted, had water withheld (it was an accident), or was fed within the previous 12 hours. The vet gave me, 7 days worth of antibiotics for Derry.

When he rang with the blood and urine results, we were able to compare them with all her previous results. There was no evidence of kidney disease or obvious serious health issues. In the vet's words "They are a beautifully normal set of results, for Derry." And that is the key. Derry's results are not perfect according to the text books. But they are extremely consistent for her.

Initially, she showed rapid improvement on the antibiotics, but on Day 4 she started to slip back. When we went for the followup appointment on Day 10, she had deteriorated significantly. The urine sample showed a much more severe infection. I was worried. The vet prescribed a new course of antibiotics - these ones were 'the ant's pants'. He told me, "if these don't work, we're probably looking at bladder stones or a tumour." By Day 4 they didn't seem to be working. She didn't seem to me to have other symptoms to indicate stones. I was researching bladder tumours; and the news wasn't good.

Back at the vets after finishing the antibiotics, a sterile urine test gave a perfect result! But she was still dribbling and leaking like a faulty tap. An ultra sound eliminated the possibility of 'radiolucent' stones (ie. don't show up on a plain x-ray) and showed no signs of bladder tumour. So, having eliminated serious kidney issues, bladder tumours, kidney and/or bladder stones, the diagnosis is: urinary sphincter muscle incompetence (USMI). It is quite common in spayed bitches, and can appear at any age, but the possibility tends to increase with ageing. Derry is now on hormone replacement therapy and is making good progress.

I'm very relieved at the diagnosis. It was necessary to go through a structured process to exclude other possible causes. The symptoms and test results didn't clearly point to an obvious diagnosis. With wheatens, it's always necessary to at least consider kidney issues. My spreadsheet proved its worth by enabling us to rule out PLE/PLN and several other potential problems, because there were no significant changes in her results over the almost 9 years of my record keeping.

There are two other suggestions that I would make. An observant owner is a great help in achieving a diagnosis, so get a notebook and keep a record of your observations of your dog, especially when they seem unwell. Write down what you observe, what you remember, what you think, about your animal. Even if it doesn't seem to be important or doesn't make sense at the time, take it with you to your vet. Secondly, a long time ago, I taught Derry to wee on demand (all racehorses are trained to wee at a whistle). I have what can only be described as a small plastic saucepan, bought for a couple of dollars at my local Asian discount shop. I can just about guarantee that I can collect a useable specimen from Derry every time. It has been unbelievably useful.



My apologies to Julie. She contributed the story about 'Toys For Heavy Duty Chewers' and 'How to use a Buster cube' in the last edition of Wh-e-mail. I forgot to include her 'By-line'.

Also, I'm sorry about the lack of photos in this edition. Having to sort and publish hundreds of photos for our display at the Pet Expo, I'm giving them a rest for the moment. All right, I've added a few for you.

Useful contacts:

Secretary - Phyllis: vicdotwheatenatgmaildotcom

Membership enquiries - Julie: positivepawsatbigponddotcom

THE ST PATRICK'S FAMILY FESTIVAL 2011

Presented by The Melbourne Irish Festival Committee

Sunday 13th March
12 noon - 5 pm
Edinburgh Gardens
North Fitzroy



Free entry,
live Irish music and dancers.
Some food and soft drinks on sale,
but you're welcome to BYO
picnic and drinks.



Join members of **The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of Victoria Inc.**
 and owners of other Irish breeds at this family orientated event.
 email: vic.wheatenatgmaildotcom



Calendar of Events
to June 30 2011

Date	Activity/Event	Location	Time
Sunday 13 March	St Patrick's Family Festival - picnic Some food and soft drinks for sale. BYO picnic and alcohol.	Edinburgh Gardens, Nth Fitzroy [Melway Ref 2C D2]	Between 12 noon and 5pm
Sunday To be confirmed	Herding Day for Beginners	Double K Herding Training, 960 Mt Lyall Road, Nyora [Melway Ref 612 S9]	To be confirmed
Sunday 15 May	The Million Paws Walk RSPCA Fund Raiser ~ \$10.00 per dog [direct deposit to Sarah or pay her on the day] email the club	Around Albert Park Lake Meet on the West side of Beaurepaire Pavilion, facing Oval 20, [Melway Ref 2K G10]	9.15 am
Monday 13 June	Championship Show organised by The Sporting Terrier Club - Bring or buy lunch. email the club	KCC Park [655 Westernport Highway, Skye, Melway Ref 128 J12]	Noon
Various weekdays	Available on some weekdays? Bring your dog for an informal play session or quiet walk. Organised frequently, arranged at 3 or 4 days notice. email the club	Variety of dog friendly venues around Melbourne's inner and middle suburbs	Various
To be confirmed for July	Mid-winter Walk and Lunch at Daylesford email the club Yes. We are gluttons for punishment!	Daylesford To be confirmed	11.00am