



Chesapeake Area Rhodesian Ridgeback Club

Spring 2009

If you have any comments or suggestions please email your Newsletter Volunteers:
Jessica Bowers ~
ontherocksrr@yahoo.com

Message from "The Lion's Den" - Message from the President

Spring can't get here fast enough!! I don't know about everyone else, but I can't wait for the 20 degree days and frigid wind chills to depart! I am looking forward to weather that allows us to get back to long walks and hikes with our dogs or weekends filled lure coursing instead of being cooped up inside!!!!

Remember to also take advantage of the CBARRC Yahoo Group email list if you are seeking advice on anything Ridgeback! Its also a great way to stay in tuned with what CBARRC is doing.

Looking forward to another fun year with all of you and your dogs!

As you'll see in the newsletter, we have a nice handful of events planned for the club this year, the first being a lure coursing practice on April 4th. So make sure to register if you haven't already!

Cari Messick
President



Upcoming CBARRC Events

4/4/2009 ~ Lure Coursing Practice
Lovettsville, VA

5/16/2009 ~ Spring Fun Day!!
Dickerson, MD

9/27/2009 ~ RRCUS Supported Show
w/ CBARRC luncheon
Millwood, VA

11/14/2009 ~ Fall Fun Day
Croom, MD

More events page 2 & 4

The CBARRC Pack -Member Brags

18 month old male Ridgeback, **Symetri Spring Into Action**, call name "**Hero**" won 2 points on February 15, 2009 at the Spartanburg Kennel Club in Greenville, SC. "**Hero**" is owned by **Candace Gartland & Eileen Bailey**. Bred by **Eileen Bailey**. Handled by **Darlene Bergen**.

Stephanie Lea Matulich brought home 13 week old puppy **Inkozosana Sibongile**, "**Ink**" **Stephanie** has to share how absolutely adorable she is. Of course she is desperately spoiled as well. She is now 7 months old and 80lbs of muscle. She loves making her mom proud during walks with all the comments on her beauty.



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Kushinda Good Knight Walton UK, went Best of Winners for 2 points while **Kushinda's My Bad Image, She Wrote, Jessica UC** went Best of Opposites for 2 points at the Annapolis Kennel Club on January 19, 2009.



Kushinda Good Knight Walton UK is owned by **Dr. Kammi Kai & Kimma B & Karrie D Hefner & P Wieland**, bred by **Dr Kammi Kai & Kimma B & Karrie D Hefner** and handled by **Karrie D Hefner**

Kushinda's My Bad Image, She Wrote, Jessica UC is owned **Dr Kammi Kai Hefner & K B Hefner & K D Hefner & D Denny**, bred by **Kimma B Hefner & Karrie Hefner** and handled by **Dr. Kammi Kai Hefner**. BOTH of these Ridgebacks were out of the BBE class. Congratulations!!!

Member Profile—**Shelley Windsor** Oak Hill, VA

What dogs are currently in your household?

I have two ridgebacks, Breeze (CH Jasiri's Get Off of My Cloud, JC, CGC, HIC) and Izzy (Jasiri's Walk This Way). Izzy is from Breeze's first litter.

When did you get your first Ridgeback? And what made you decide on one?

We got our first ridgeback in 1990. My husband insisted that we get a dog because he was working the night shift and I was home alone. He suggested a ridgeback and once I saw the puppies, it was love at first sight. I had no experience with a dog much less a ridgeback. Boy, have I learned a lot since then! Breeze was our second ridgeback, and I can't stress the importance of training and socialization at an early age, and finding a supportive breeder.

"I can't stress the importance of training and socialization at an early age, and finding a supportive breeder."

What is your profession and what do you enjoy doing outside of the "world of dogs"?

I am the controller of a small government contractor in Virginia. For the past several years, I have been taking night and weekend classes, and studying for the CPA exam. I successfully passed last year, so I'm just trying to play catch up with my life!

Favorite activity with your dog(s)?

Lure coursing! It's amazing how excited they become when they realize it's bunny time. We also enjoy taking long walks and play-

ing on the wooded trail in our neighborhood.

Any memorable or funny story about you and your dog(s) you would like to share?

For Breeze, it was watching her reaction to the site of her first real bunny. When the bunny took off one way, Breeze ran the opposite way. The bunny scared her only that first time! Now, she looks forward to the chase. For Izzy, she's a funny story every day.

She has a fleece monkey that she nurses or basically sucks on daily. She will not allow anything to happen to that monkey (as in de-stuffing, like what they typically do to any stuffed toy in the house). My husband finds it quite funny to throw the monkey at me once Izzy gets it nice and wet.

Do you attend CBARRC events and what do you enjoy about CBARRC?

We do attend events, especially the lure coursing. I love seeing all of the other ridgebacks, as well as all the friends that I've made.

Is there anything new or different that you would like to see CBARRC offer?

Given everyone's time constraints, I'm appreciative of anything that CBARRC offers. I'd love to see more events closer to home, but we can't have everything.



Upcoming Events—MD/WV/VA /PA/DC

<p>Conformation: 4/9-12/2009 ~ Harrisburg, PA Lebanon Kennel Club Chambersburg Area Kennel Club Harrisburg Kennel Club, Inc. Mason And Dixon Kennel Club</p>	<p>5/22-25/2009 ~ Hampton, VA Langley Kennel Club Gloucester Kennel Club</p>	<p>MDIHC ASFA Trial & AKC JC Test 5/25/2008 ~ Hanover, PA AKC Trial & AKC JC Test</p>
<p>4/18-20/2009 ~ Timonium, MD Old Dominion Kennel Club Of Northern Virginia Baltimore County Kennel Club, Inc. Catoctin Kennel Club</p>	<p>5/30-31/2009 ~ Charlottesville, VA Charlottesville-Albemarle Kennel Club, Inc.</p>	<p>Agility: 4/3-4/2009 ~ Westminster, MD Capital Dog Training Club of Washington DC</p>
<p>4/23-26/2009 ~ Lewisburg, WV Beckley West Virginia Kennel Club Magic Valley Kennel Club, Inc</p>	<p>6/5-6/2009 ~ Fishersville, VA Skyline Kennel Club, Inc.</p>	<p>4/4-5/2009 ~ Gloucester, VA Merrimac Dog Training Club</p>
<p>4/25-26/2009 ~ Chesapeake, VA Chesapeake Virginia Dog Fanciers Association</p>	<p>6/7-8/2009 ~ Harrisonburg, VA Shenandoah Valley Kennel Club, Inc.</p>	<p>4/11-12/2009 ~ Gloucester, VA Hampton Roads Obedience Training Club</p>
<p>5/16-17/2009 ~ Manassas, VA Mattaponi Kennel Club</p>	<p>6/20-21/2009 ~ Richmond, VA Virginia Kennel Club, Inc.</p>	<p>4/11-12/2009 ~ Morgantown, WV Mountaineer Kennel Club, Inc</p>
	<p>Lure Coursing: 4/18-19/2008 ~ Hopewell Furnace, PA MDIHC ASFA Trial</p>	<p>4/18-19/2009 ~ Westminister, MD Potomac Valley Golden Retriever Club</p>
	<p>4/25-26/2008 ~ Williamsburg, VA SHOT ASFA Trial</p>	<p>5/2-3/2009 ~ Harmans, MD Oriole Dog Training Club</p>
	<p>5/23-24/2008 ~ Hanover, PA</p>	

Day with the Dogs –Events for you and your Ridgeback –Hunting w/ Ridgebacks

By: Kimberly Green

How did you get involved with HRA and what is your role within the club?

My full intentions concerning my ridgebacks are having a dog good enough to win in the show ring but also good enough to hunt true to the breed. I spoke to Matt Valdivia about doing a Florida Hunting Ridgeback Club and he asked how serious I was to take on such the task alone, my response-Dead Serious. At that time we spoke of doing a nationwide hunting association and the wheels started to turn. Matt and I made the decision together to start organizing the Hunting Ridgeback Association. I have been completely involved since day one of the HRA.



I was the first official judge for the HRA and I have hosted a few events with several planned for the near future.

How long have you been hunting with dogs?

For the entirety of my childhood I was exposed to raising and training hunting dogs. My father instilled many attributes in me over the years, but the ability to train a successful hunting dog is one of my most treasured accomplishments.

How do you teach them to hunt and what training techniques do you use? Why?

Positive reinforcement, encouragement, and lots of patience are the key ingredients

My hunting training program is very different from most ridgeback owners. First, my dog learns off of a leash long before they learn how to be on a leash, this is where they become a master of the Recall command. Once recall is understood we then put it to the test as much as possible until perfected. I also encourage my dogs and praise them for chasing squir-

rels, rabbits, birds, etc...This is where most owners are already telling their dogs no, don't do that, come here...In the middle of them doing their chasing game, I recall them and praise them immensely for their excellent recall.

The main reason I train my dogs this way is to tell them it's ok to be a ridgeback with prey drive, until I give them the command to stop. This is how I tap into their natural instinct and lay the building blocks for a well mannered ridgeback that truly knows how to hunt. Either a dog has instinct or it doesn't, you can not teach a dog instinct. A ridgeback will let you know when he is ready to hunt, you can not force them—it could take up until they are two years of age before they actually "turn on" and fully understand the entire concept.

What are the main things you need to know to keep yourself and your dogs safe?

The most important thing to always remember is you are your dog's partner. Their safety depends on you and your ability to recognize a hazardous situation.



What can you expect at a HRA event?

Great fun for you and your dog, lots of socializing amongst dogs and owners on a non-competitive level. The dogs are evaluated on a one on

"Your dog should be very successful in their recall skills before you ever taken them on an actual hunt."

one; every dog can qualify and can walk away with a designation or title. Owners have a chance to see their ridgeback in a completely different demeanor, ask questions and understand why their ridgeback's behavior is very different in these given situations.

What is the difference between a

HRA Qualifier and HRA Hunt Trial?

A HRA Qualifier is an instinct evaluation which is performed in a more "controlled" environment versus an actual HRA Hunt Trial. At a Qualifier you dog is evaluated closely with helpful instruction from the judge given to the owner and dog.

A Hunt Trial is just that, you can take your dog on actual hunt and have them judged by an experienced HRA judge.

If a ridgeback doesn't qualify at an event would there be any reason to enter the dog for another evaluation? If so, why?

The judge can give you that answer on a case by case basis. I have seen many dogs on the verge of showing their full potential to Qualify. The ridgeback kept looking back at the owner thinking they might actually get into trouble for doing this, since the owner has probably gotten on to the dog for doing similar actions before. Sometimes with a second attempt and a lot of reassurance and encouragement from the owner, the dog will show his true abilities.

What training do you suggest the dog knows before trying to hunt?

Your dog should be very successful in their recall skills before you ever take them on an actual hunt.

How do you find out where hunting trials are held?

Announcements are made at varying intervals prior to the events with basic details like game class, club or individual sponsorship, approximate area, dates of event, and cost. These announcements are made on the main ridgeback sites-RR Folk, RR Forum, and RRCUS Members only as well as any club's website that is sponsoring the upcoming event.

Is there a way to practice for an HRA Event?

No, there is nothing that you should be practicing with your dog. Since this is an "instinct evaluation", we really want to observe what comes to the dog naturally.

What website(s) (will need addresses, please) do you recommend people visit to learn more about hunting with your dogs?

Hunting and Working Airdales
www.huntingworkingairedales.com/

National Plott Hound Association
www.mynpha.com/

North American Versatile Hunting Dog Assoc. www.navhda.org/

American Working Terrier Assoc.
www.dirt-dog.com/awta/index.cfm

North American Teckel Club
www.teckelclub.org/

How do you handle injuries to the dog and handler during a hunt?

I do carry a canine and human first aid kit that should cover any and all injuries that might happen while participating in an HRA event.

Kimberly Green
Plant City, Florida

Int'l CH Kengali's Southern Comfort HBR SHR GRTC

(Senior Hunting Ridgeback, Game Recovery Tracking Certificate)



Upcoming Events—MD/WV/VA/PA/DC

Continued from page 2

<p>5/16-17/2009 ~ Gloucester, VA Gloucester Kennel Club</p> <p>5/16-17/2009 ~ Westminster, MD Weimaraner Club Of The Washington DC Area</p> <p>5/30-31/2009 ~ Queenstown, MD Talbot Kennel Club</p> <p>6/6-7/2009 ~ Eden, MD Salisbury Maryland Kennel Club</p> <p>Rally & Obedience:</p> <p>4/9-11/200 ~ Harrisonburg, PA Lebanon Kennel Club</p>	<p>Chambersburg Area Kennel Club Harrisburg Kennel Club, Inc.</p> <p>4/18-20/2009 ~ Timonium, MD Old Dominion Kennel Club Of Northern Virginia Baltimore County Kennel Club, Inc. Catoctin Kennel Club</p> <p>4/23-26/2009 ~ Lewisburg, WV Beckley West Virginia Kennel Club Magic Valley Kennel Club, Inc.</p> <p>5/16-17/2009 ~ Manassas, VA Mattaponi Kennel Club</p>	<p>5/22-25/2009 ~ Hampton, VA Langley Kennel Club Gloucester Kennel Club</p> <p>5/30-31/2009 ~ Charlottesville, VA Charlottesville-Albemarle Kennel Club, Inc.</p> <p>6/5-6/2009 ~ Fishersville, VA Skyline Kennel Club, Inc.</p> <p>6/7-8/2009 ~ Harrisonburg, VA Shenandoah Valley Kennel Club, Inc.</p> <p>6/20-21/2009 ~ Richmond, VA Virginia Kennel Club, Inc.</p>
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Howl To... – Traveling With Your Dog

By: Jessica Bowers

It's that time of year when the weather is getting warmer and more of us are making our vacation plans. If you are like me, you'll probably be faced with the decision of whether or not to bring your dog.



Traveling with your dog can be loads of fun IF you are properly prepared. If you have decided that your Ridgeback should be part of your trip, I hope you find the following helpful.

Start by keeping a collar with current identification on your dog at all times. A microchip may also be beneficial for extra security. Before you travel, your dog should have basic training. This is very important. You will be surprised just how many times you will find yourself using sit, come, and heel during the course of the trip. Once you've determined your Ridgeback's level of training is appropriate for your trip you will need to plan the transportation, accommodations and daily activities. Learning how to travel with your dog can make the experience less stressful and a lot of fun!

Getting There

By Air

Air travel for dogs is not always a great idea. Though canines are not cargo to us pet parents, they are usually considered such by the airlines. The cargo hold does not make for a pleasant travel experience, even for relaxed dogs. This is not to say that flying is not an option, just that it is not ideal. However, if your trip involves picking up a new puppy, you might have a better option. Some airlines will allow you to bring your pet in a carrier if it can fit under the seat in front of you. Before you book your flight either look at the airline's website or call to find out their policies.

By Automobile

The automobile is usually the best way to travel with dogs. If you own a vehicle, chances are your dog has ridden in it for trips to the vets, the park and so on. If not, now is the time to start. Some dogs have anxiety over riding in cars. The more positive your dog's automobile

experiences are, the more likely he will enjoy the rides. If your dog only rides in the car for vet visits, and he dislikes the vet, his anxiety is understandable. Try taking him for short, frequent car rides that end up at the park, dog supply store (where he will get a toy or treat), or another pleasant place. If your dog does not adjust to the car, then a road trip is not a good option.

If you have a dog that you *must* bring your dog for a long car ride, ask your vet about possible anti-anxiety medications that can make the trip a bit easier on everyone. Otherwise, you should seek out other options. Remember, medications should be used sparingly.

If you've decided that your RR can handle the trip, make sure you make all the proper arrangements.



Plan Ahead

You will find it much easier if you plan out your rest stops prior to dog and plan to stop every 3-5 hours to allow your

dog to relieve himself, drink water and stretch his legs (more or less depending on your dog's needs). Make a list of several veterinary hospitals that are easily accessible from your route, preferably within one hour's drive from any given point. Check that they will be open during your travel.

Hotels and Dogs

If you will be staying at a hotel while traveling with your dog, cover all your bases in advance. A pet-friendly hotel is more than just one that *allows* pets – it is one that welcomes them. Some hotels offer special dog beds, turndown service (down to the treat on the pillow), dog spa services and doggie day care.

Ask what amenities are available for your dog, but remember to find out what cost is involved. Many hotels charge a non-refundable pet deposit upon arrival, then a daily pet fee. Some even tack on a special cleaning fee. So when it comes down to it, do your research about pet-friendly hotels.

Cont. on next page

Howl To... – Traveling With Your Dog—cont.

Cont. from page 4

Camping with Dogs

Camping with your dog can be the perfect way to spend time together while communing with nature. However, camping with dogs is not always a wise choice. Before you decide to bring your dog, make sure the campground you are considering actually allows dogs. Many state and national parks do not allow dogs.



Necessities

Whatever your plans may be this summer, one of the most important things you should remember is to properly pack for your trip. I am sure I'm not the only one who has had to spend time trying to find a nearby store for dog bowls I forgot to pack or nail clippers that I had left on the kitchen counter.

Some of the basics you should consider bringing are:

- * Lists of rest stops and veterinary hospitals (if driving)
- * Leash
- * Dog seat belt or crate/kennel
- * Water and bowls
- * Treats
- * One or two toys
- * Blanket and/or dog bed
- * Bags to pick up waste
- * Medications, if applicable
- * Your Dog's Medical Records
- * First Aid Kit

Grooming Supplies

Also, remember to keep in mind extras you might find useful, like an extra leash just in case something happens to yours on your camping trip or a few days extra of your dog's food, in case your trip lasts a little longer than planned.

So enjoy the good weather and if you must bring your Ridgeback along for the ride, remember to plan ahead and be prepared.



Socializing Your Puppy: We Hear It is All the Time, but What Does It Really Mean?

By: Cari Messick, CPDT

What is Socialization?:

Socialization can be defined as the life-long desensitization process of exposing your puppy/dog to new people, other dogs, new sounds, sights, and situations as possible (1). **The primary and secondary socialization periods for puppies is between the age of 3 and 13 weeks (3). By the time most puppies come from their breeder to their new homes, their best window for socializing is already beginning to close, so time is of the essence to get your new friend out in the world!**

The Purpose of Socialization:

The ultimate goal of socialization is to be able to take your dog any place, any situation, and have him stay calm, relaxed and confident. Over-excitement, anxiety or fear, and hyperactivity are all unwanted reactions in a properly socialized dog. This desensitization process does not have an ending; it is something that must be continued every day of your dog's life. However, the first couple months of your puppy's life are the most crucial time to start this process. Before that scares you, note that it really is not as hard, or time-consuming as one might



think. This is an essential part of responsible dog ownership and every dog should be socialized extensively.

The Importance of Socializing Your Dog:

A well-socialized dog can be taken everywhere (allowable by law/regulations). Under socialized dogs are hazards in more ways than just knocking somebody down through over-exuberance. A poorly socialized dog is an unpredictable animal when placed in a new, potentially frightening situation. He may bite, he may run away and be injured. He may cause injuries to others around him. A poorly socialized dog reflects badly on dog owners everywhere, and due to just such an image, many dog owners are penalized by restrictive laws and limits. So, please do *your* part and properly socialize your dog!

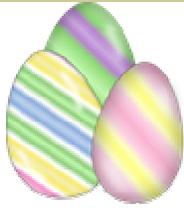
What can I do to improve my chances of having a social, non-fearful dog?

Pedigree: The genetics of the breed as well as your puppy's relatives, particularly parents and even grandparents, play an

important role in how sociable, playful, fearful, excitable, or confrontational a puppy becomes. Choose a puppy whose parents have the type of behavior that you would like the puppy to have. Of course, there is a great deal of variability between individuals, so that breed and parental behavior will not always be indicative of what the puppy will be like but it's a good start to look at that. When visiting a breeder, you should always ask to meet the parents of the puppy and responsible breeders will encourage you to meet them as well. Observe the sire and dam's behavior with strangers, children, etc as this *can* be indicative of how the puppies will be.

Puppy assessment: Even the most social and playful of puppies may become fearful and aggressive as they develop out of puppyhood. Puppies that are shy, withdrawn or fearful are often *more likely* to develop behavior issues than those that are drawn toward people and more confident. However, selecting a friendly and non-fearful puppy does not necessarily ensure that this behavior will persist into adulthood either.





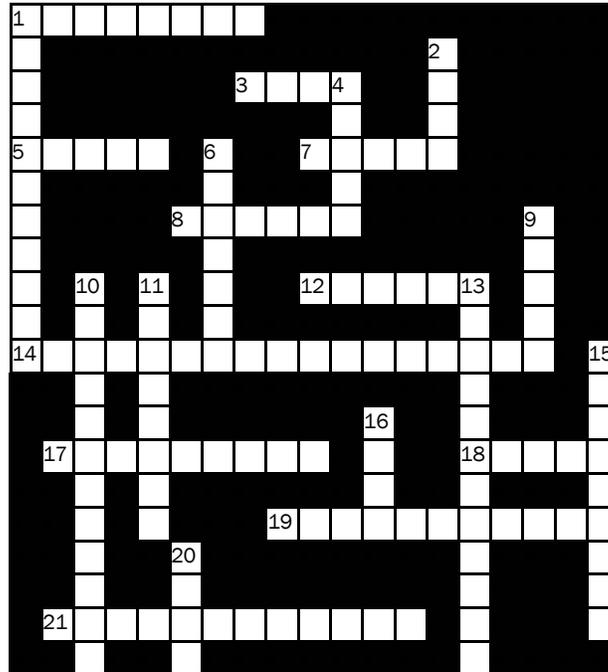
Family Fun

Ridgeback Crossword



Down

1. Country of Origin (2 words)
2. Short and dense, sleek and glossy in appearance.
4. Reach and ____ expressing a perfect balance between power and ele-
6. Acceptable Color
9. USA Parent Club
10. RR congenital defect (2 words)
11. State 2009 Specialty is held in.
13. Event where dogs are judged against breed standard
15. Number of current Regional Ridgeback Clubs.
16. The ____ should be reasonable well defined.
20. Powerful and firm with strong loins which are muscular and slightly



Across

1. Bite preferred
3. Ridgeback's favorite motivation
5. AKC Group Ridgebacks are a part of
7. Age (in weeks) puppies have to be at min. before leaving breeder
8. Everyone should at least consider adopting a ____ Ridgeback when looking for a new RR.
12. Our Regional Specialty Club
14. Ridgebacks are also known as _____. (3)
17. Slickback, Zimbabwe Flatback, etc
18. Regarded as the characteristic feature of
19. Dignified and even tempered.
21. Only Sighthounds can compete



Celebrate w/ your dog—Howl-A-Day Menu Spring Time!!!

These recipes are not meant as a balanced diet. Consult your veterinarian if you have any questions.



Dog French Toast

- 6 to 8 Tablespoons of unsalted butter
- 1 loaf of day-old bread, cut into 1" cubes
- 8 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups of milk
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon

Preparation:

Melt butter over medium heat in a large heavy skillet. Add bread and cook tossing bread cubes sporadically so that they brown lightly and evenly. In a small bowl, beat eggs with milk and cinnamon. Pour the egg mixture over bread and fry until bread is well browned.

Easter's Magic Meatballs

- 1 lb Hamburger (cooked or raw)
- 2 c Dry Kibble
- 1/4 c Honey
- 1/4 c Wheat Germ oil
- Daily Amount of current supplement your dog is on

Preparation:

Grind Kibble in food processor or blender (and supplements if not already in powder form). Mix all ingredients together and freeze. Use as needed for treats, bait or weight gain.

Socializing Your Puppy: We Hear It is All the Time, but What Does It Really Mean? - Cont.

Cont. from page 5

Puppies under three months are still developing their social skills. As puppies age, these criteria do begin to become more reliable. Assessing the behavior of the parents, and understanding the behavior of a breed and looking at the individual puppy are all important factors when deciding on a pet to bring home into your world.

How to Socialize Your Dog:

The very first step, regardless of whether your dog is a puppy newly vaccinated, or an adult dog you've acquired, is enrolling in a group training or puppy socialization class that focuses on positive reinforcement training methods and offer puppy social (play) time. These classes benefit dogs at any age, and are an important step in socialization and developing a bond between dog and you, the handler. Allowing a puppy to interact with other puppies off leash in a safe, controlled environment is vital to him continuing to develop his social skills, play skills and bite inhibition (learning to control his mouth and bite pressure). Eight weeks is not too early to start! A reputable trainer will allow you to first come and observe a class. Look for the training area to be clean and the puppies participating to appear healthy. The trainer should be organized and in charge of the class. He or she should always demonstrate what is being taught and leave time to help individuals and explain when there are questions.

The Next Step:

In the first couple weeks at home, have lots of people visit your new puppy at home. If they have healthy, friendly dogs that do well with

puppies, have them bring them along as well! Visitors can give treats as they meet your dog and he can learn that being approached touched and handled mean great things for him!

In addition to loads of home visits, arm yourself with treats, and off you go. Take your dog out for walks, in the neighborhood, the local outdoor market or coffee shop, a kids' baseball or soccer game, rides in the car to pet-friendly businesses, or even in town. You should avoid dog parks and other parks where there may be a higher concentration of strange dogs and feces/urine until your puppy has had all of his puppy vaccines (usually around 14 weeks old). But other than those places, get him out as much as possible! Let him experience cars driving by (safely on leash, of course), trucks, motorcycles, engines and horns, etc. He should also be exposed to different surfaces on your outings such as: grass, pavement, steps, and grates.



Most importantly, it is so important that he meets LOTS of new people those first few weeks of life. Introduce him to men, women, children (always supervised), seniors, people with hats and beards, in wheelchairs and walkers, etc. You will most likely be a "magnet" walking around with a puppy and many people will want to stop and say hello. Hand them a treats, ask them to

crouch down while feeding the treats and give your puppy a nice pet on the shoulder or neck (many dogs do not like being petted on the top of the head). Praise and reward any wanted reaction such as sniffing, walking calmly, sitting politely and ignore all undesirable reactions like jumping, leash pulling, while redirecting attention to yourself, and have him focus on something different. If your



puppy is a little shyer it is crucial that this socialization takes place but you may need to go about it a little more slowly. Don't allow people or children to crowd around him. Instead, introduce them one at a time. You can let your puppy approach the person rather than have the person approach and bend over him.

Socializing your puppy or dog should be a lifelong endeavor but investing the time early in his life can really make the difference and help him become a confident, balanced, well-mannered member of society.

Cari Messick, CPDT

Certified, Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers

Sources: 1. AVSAB (American Veterinary Society on Animal Behavior) Position Statement on Puppy Socialization, 2. *Before and After Getting Your Puppy*, Dr. Ian Dunbar, DVM, CPDT, 3. *Applied Dog Behavior and Training Vol 1*, S.R. Lindsay

The CBARRC Pack –member brags—cont.

Dr. Kammi Kai Hefner has been personally invited a "special guest" (i.e., expenses paid) by Lt. Col. Wallace H. Pede to attend the 5-day Graduate Judges Seminar in Louisville, KY March 11-15, 2009. The Seminar is sponsored by the American Canine Education Foundation, Inc. (ACEF). RRCUS President Christopher R. Abraham is the Secretary for the ACEF. Please see full details at <http://www.k9education.org/graduateinstitut.htm>

KKR My Sweet Midori, "Midori" received her first point at 11 months old, getting Best of Opposites on Friday, March 6, 2009. She was bred by June Greenwood and owned/handled by Jessica Bowers.



Chesapeake Bay Area Rhodesian Ridgeback Club

CBARRC Newsletter
c/o Jessica Bowers
8198 Lord Fairfax Circle
Gloucester, VA 23061

Health Watch—Degenerative Myelopathy-DM

What is Degenerative Myelopathy?

Degenerative Myelopathy is a progressive disease of the spinal cord in older dogs. The disease has an insidious onset typically between 8 and 14 years of age. It begins with a loss of coordination (ataxia) in the hind limbs. The affected dog will wobble when walking, knuckle over or drag the feet. This can first occur in one hind limb and then affect the other. As the disease progresses, the limbs become weak and the dog begins to buckle and has difficulty standing. The weakness gets progressively worse until the dog is unable to walk. The clinical course can range from 6 months to 1 year before dogs become paraplegic. If signs progress for a longer period of time, loss of urinary and fecal continence may occur and eventually weakness will develop in the front limbs.

What causes Degenerative Myelopathy?

Degenerative Myelopathy begins with the spinal cord in the thoracic (chest) region. If we look under the microscope at that area of the cord from a dog that has died from DM, we see degeneration of the white matter of

the spinal cord. The white matter contains fibers that transmit movement commands from the brain to the limbs and sensory information from the limbs to the brain.

This degeneration consists of both demyelination (stripping away the insulation of these fibers) and axonal loss (loss of the actual fibers), and interferes with the communication between the brain and limbs. Recent research has identified a mutation in a gene that confers a greatly increased risk of developing the disease.

How is Degenerative Myelopathy clinically diagnosed?

Degenerative Myelopathy is a diagnosis of elimination. We look for other causes of the weakness using diagnostic tests like myelography and MRI. When we have ruled them out, we end up with a presumptive diagnosis of DM. The only way to confirm the diagnosis is to examine the spinal cord under the microscope when a necropsy (autopsy) is performed. There are degenerative changes in the spinal cord characteristic for DM and not typical for some other spinal cord disease.

How do we treat Degenerative Myelopathy?

There are no treatments that have been clearly shown to stop or slow progression of DM. Although there are a number of approaches that have been tried or recommended on the internet, no scientific evidence exists that they work. The outlook for a dog with DM is still grave. The discovery of a gene that identifies dogs at risk for developing Degenerative Myelopathy could pave the way for therapeutic trials to prevent the disease from developing. Meanwhile, the quality of life of an affected dog can be improved by measures such as good nursing care, physical rehabilitation, pressure sore prevention, monitoring for urinary infections, and ways to increase mobility through use of harnesses and carts.

To find out more information about DM please visit,

www.caninegeneticdiseases.net/DM/mainDM.htm

**(taken from Canine Genetic Disease Network,
www.caninegeneticdiseases.net)*