

## **Not Just for Breeders!**

A Report from the June AKC CHF Breeders' Symposium  
from Marilyn O'Cuilinn

At the May meeting the Health and Research Committee voted to send a representative to the AKC CHF Breeder Symposium held June 5 and 6 at the Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine in Ames, Iowa. For many years someone from HRC/OESCA has attended the AKC CHF Parent Club Conferences, but this is the first time a representative has gone to a Breeders' Symposium. We have experienced the great value of the Parent Club events and wanted to see what the Breeders' Symposia have to offer, and I am very lucky to have been chosen to go.

These events are devoted entirely to canine health and are held four times a year in various locations throughout the U.S. in conjunction with a veterinary college. While only a limited number of club representatives are accommodated at the Parent Club Conferences, the Breeders' Symposia are open and available to all. The registration fees are modest. For the two-day meeting in Ames it was \$150. Participants could come for both days or only one day at a reduced fee. Some are one-day events. Dates and locations, agendas, speakers, topics, and fees are available on the AKC CHF web site, [www.akcCHF.org](http://www.akcCHF.org).

I was amazed at the quantity, quality, and practicality of the information presented over the two days. As with Parent Conferences, one comes away with an overload of information. Luckily there are lots of take-home materials furnished for review of the mind-boggling amount of information provided plus lists of resources for obtaining even more.

All presenters, most of them faculty at the ISU College of Veterinary Medicine, are expert in their fields and speaking from many years of experience, clinical practice, and current research.

The first day of the symposium opened with Pat Hasting's presentation, "How Structure Affects Performance" which all by itself is an excellent reason for attending. In addition to other topics, she spoke about specific structural attributes that allow performance dogs to do their tasks well, comfortably, and with lasting soundness. Her photos of dogs in action were excellent illustrations of those attributes or lack thereof! Some of her "Puppy Puzzle" evaluation criteria were also discussed and illustrated.

The entire second day was a special session on reproduction, ranging from choosing the stock most likely to breed successfully to pedigree analysis to nutrition from puppyhood through old age.

There was time for extensive question and answer sessions and discussion as well as the valuable opportunity to exchange experiences and information with other attendees, 65 of them, representing many breeds and many levels of experience. The majority have been "in dogs" for 20-30 years, but there were also those much less experienced, anxious to gather as much good information as possible.

So if you would like to know the status of the CIV vaccine and whether you should be giving it, why all breeding dogs should be tested for Burcellosis before each breeding, how seriously the Leishmaniasis outbreak threatens your dogs, or where you can find the latest recommendations for all vaccines, the answers were there.

More topics and questions:

What's really in dog food? What does ash have to do with it? Are the premium foods worth the extra money? What, exactly, is "crude protein"? What

supplements are beneficial? Which can be dangerous or just useless? What's a truly effective probiotic? Is caloric intake related to OCD?

What structural issues are the result of a short sternum? Are barrel hocks preferable to cow hocks? Why is a ewe neck undesirable? Is movement determined solely by angulation?

What are the normal vital sign values in neonates? What bacteria can cause disease in the first 5 days of a puppy's life? How are these treated? What are the most effective breeding techniques? What are some veterinary issues in management of the stud dog? How do you analyze a pedigree to choose breeding stock intelligently?

These represent a very small sample of the questions and subjects being addressed at these conferences.

The Canine Health Foundation is one of AKC's greatest achievements, and their sponsorship of these symposia is an extremely significant contribution to the health, wellbeing, and improvement of the lives of purebred dogs, open to all and made as accessible as possible by offering them in different areas of the U.S.

Ron Rella, AKC Director of Breeder Services, and Erika Werne of Canine Health Foundation have put together one heck of a valuable and extremely interesting "traveling show". It isn't necessary to be a breeder to benefit. Those who are passionate about dogs and dedicated to providing the best lives possible for them can gain immensely beneficial knowledge from these meetings. If you are a "dog person" and passionate about your OES it's the best registration fee you will ever spend - breakfast and lunch included! Go if you possibly can!

Dates for the 2011 Symposia has not been finalized, but the locations will be:

Colorado State University  
University of Minnesota  
University of Texas – Arlington  
University of California – Davis

Watch for the announcements with dates and more information on  
[www.akcchf.org](http://www.akcchf.org).

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Program and Agenda. Breeders' Symposium, Ames, Iowa June 5 & 6, 2010

Day 1

How Structure Affects Performance: Pat Hastings

Breeding Options and Techniques: Dr. Lin Kauffman

Hips, Elbows, and other Orthopedic Certifications: Dr. Karl Kraus

Canine Ophthalmology and the Importance of CERF: Dr. Dave Whitley

Managing Genetic Disease: Dr. Matthew Ellinwood

Canine Nutrition: Dr. Joe Wakshlag

Vaccines and Vaccination Protocols: Dr. Christine Petersen

Day 2

Basic Pedigree Analysis: Dr. Matthew Ellinwood

Semen Evaluation and Preservation: Dr. Bruce Christensen

Testicular and Prostatic Disease: Dr. Bruce Christensen

Veterinary Management of the Stud Dog: Dr. Lin Kauffman

Pregnancy Management and Whelping: Dr. Bruce Christensen

Neonatal Nutrition: Dr. Joe Wakshlag

Infections Disease of Puppies: Dr. Lin Kauffman