



HURON RIVER LABRADOR RETRIEVER CLUB

OCTOBER 2005 NEWSLETTER

HRLRC PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello club members,

I would like to issue huge heartfelt thanks to each and every member that contributed to the success of our 2005 specialty show. I heard many positive comments from exhibitors and judges alike. To top it off, we had ideal weather that made a good show even better. Congratulations to all the winners!

Good luck to all those HRLRC members who will be heading to the many fall specialties. Some of the nicest Labradors in the United States and around the world are owned by fellow club members. May your dogs once again do HRLRC proud.

In Labs,
Jeanine

HRLRC CALENDAR

NOTE NEW MEETING LOCATION: Meetings are the 1st Friday of every month unless otherwise noted. Board Meetings begin at 6:30pm, General Membership meetings begin at 7:30pm and both are at the **LIVINGSTON CONSERVATION CLUB** which is on McClements road and old 23 just one mile south of M-59 and one mile west of old 23. Dogs welcome. Please help us keep this wonderful facility and make a good impression- clean up after yourselves.

November 4, 2005	Membership/Board Meeting, Livingston Co. Conservation Club
December, TBD, 2005	Membership/Board Meeting, Holiday Party to Follow, Bring a Dish to Pass, Norgren's Home
January 6, 2006	Membership/Board Meeting, Livingston Co. Conservation Club
February 3, 2006	Membership/Board Meeting, Livingston Co. Conservation Club
March 10, 2006	Membership/Board Meeting, Livingston Co. Conservation Club
April 7, 2006	Membership/Board Meeting, Livingston Co. Conservation Club
May 5, 2006	Membership/Board Meeting, Livingston Co. Conservation Club

HRLRC WINS-N-GRINS

Sunset Double Stuff, Owned by Kim Teall, Bred by Nancy Todd, earned her WC at the GLLL WC/WCX event

Danjacs Black Magic Woman CD, CGC, TDI Owned by Kim Brown, earned her WC at the GLLL WC/WCX event

Wyntrees Wingbeat Of Abilene, Owned by Pam Nichols, earned her JH at the Buckeye Retriever Club Hunt Test

GRCH Pathway's Whispers In The Wind, WC, CGC, Owned by Patty Wayne, earned her UKC Grand Championship

SHR UCH Wayne's Memories and Dreams WC, CGC, Owned by Patty Wayne, earned her Started Hunting Retriever and has earned two legs towards her JH

U-CD GRCH SHR Wayne's Candy Victorian Angel, WC, JH, CGC, WCX, CD, Owned by Patty Wayne, earned her CD at the Monroe KC show and was HIT at the Huron River LRC Specialty

Huntmor's Work of Art, Owned/Bred by Tom & Stacy Quake, Carol Lynn Johnson, BOS in Sweepstakes, Huron River LRC

Mar-Jo's That'll Be The Day, Owned/Bred by Mike & Judy Merians, 1st Open Yellow Dog, Huron River LRC

Sunset Lubberline Spinnaker, Owned by Pauline & Maurice Mortier---Mid Jersey LRC, 1st in Open Yellow Dog & Reserve Winners Dog on Day 1 and First in Open Yellow Dog on Day 2

Tantara Lubberline Billy Flynn, Owned by Pauline Mortier & Leslie Williams DVM ---Mid Jersey LRC, Fourth in 12 - 18 Black Dogs & 2nd in 15-18 month Sweeps Dogs on Day 1 and Third in 12-18 month Dogs on Day 2

Dear HRLRC Members,

Thank You all so much for sharing in my special triumph. This was a goal that was very special for Blades and I, for many reasons. The outpouring of support from you has really touched my heart. It makes me very proud to be a member of a club where we can all appreciate the significance of goals and accomplishments different than our own. A special thanks to those of you who championed the beautiful picture, it really says it all.

Fondly,
Kim Bryson & Blades

THE WHELPING BOX

Disclaimer Clause: This list is of litters of our members that are in good standing with our Club and the American Kennel Club. The Huron River Labrador Retriever Club, Inc makes no warranties expressed or implied as to the condition of any dogs being offered for sale, standards or practices of any breeder, the quality of their animals or the accuracy of any of the information contained within the HRLRC, Inc listing, website or any links from the website. HRLRC, Inc. does not endorse, recommend or guarantee any kennel, breeder or dog listed. **Reminder:** Send \$10 litter ad fee per month/per ad to Laura Reich 5558 Sunkist, Oxford, MI 48371. Please indicate in the memo section of the check the month that you are paying for. These litter ad fees go towards the HRLRC Rescue Account. Please call or email the Laura Reich (laura@lor-allabs.com or 248-969-6998) to renew or update your ad. Deadline for receiving the ad is at the membership meeting of that month.

Members may join [Hrlrc dogs@yahoo.com](mailto:Hrlrc_dogs@yahoo.com) for up to the minute litter communications!

Woodhaven Kelrobin Irish Tweed, WC, CGC (OFAPGood/Normal/OFCA/Optigen A)

6 yellow males, 5 yellow females, Whelped: 10/15/05

UAGI Woodhaven Two for Roughing, WC, CGC, Am/Can. CD (OFA24G/OFEL/CERF)

Contact: Laura Michaels, 810-655-6767, kelrobin@comcast.net or www.kelrobin.com for pictures

CH Hightide BonaVenture's Cap'n Jack (OFA24G/OFEL/CERF/Optigen A)

2 Black Males, 2 Black Females, 1 Chocolate Male, Whelped 8/1/05

Banners Bittersweet Windfall

Contact: Nancy Chargo 810-686-0967

Banner St Nick at Easthill (OFA26E/OFEL/OFCA/CERF)

All Chocolate Litter, Due Oct 29th

Tradesman Singin in the Rain

Contact: Gary Cooper

Other Events

WE ARE CURRENTLY IN NEED OF SOMEONE TO PUT THIS TOGETHER, OTHERWISE THIS WILL BE THE EVENT CALENDAR. FURTHER DOG SHOW INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT www.INFODOG.com

Upcoming Events

AKC Shows

Date	Name of Show	Judge	Entries close:	Location	Comments
11/5	Spirit of St. Louis LRC	Regular: Nancy Arbuckle; Sweeps: David Vollette		Weldon, MO	
11/6	Spirit of St. Louis LRC	Regular: Pauline Mortier; Sweeps: Karen Davies-Helmer		Weldon, MO	
11/11	Greater Muskegon KC	Judy A. Doniere	10/26	Grand Rapids, MI	
11/12	Kalamazoo KC	Dr. Asa Mays	10/26	Grand Rapids, MI	
11/13	Grand Rapids KC	Mark Threlfall	10/26	Grand Rapids, MI	
11/17-18	Raleigh Durham LRC	Dogs & Intersex: Judy Chambers; Bitches: Pluis Davern; Sweeps: Angela Ewald		Smithfield, NC	
11/26	Jaxon KC	Brian Meyer	11/9	East Lansing, MI	
11/17	Sandusky KC	Judy A. Harrington	11/2	Columbus, OH	
11/18	Dayton KC	Marianne Reder	11/2	Columbus, OH	
11/19	Lima KC		11/2	Columbus, OH	

Jeanine Asch, *President* • Patty Wayne, *V President* • Judy Matice, *Treasurer* • Angela Ewald, *Corresponding Sec* • Stacy Quake, *Recording Sec*
Board Members: Gary Cooper • Mike Merians • Pam Nichols • Tom Quake • Barb Paveglio

11/20	Central OH KC		11/2	Columbus, OH
11/27	Ingham Co. KC	Suzanne D. Hemminger	11/9	East Lansing, MI
11/28	Ingham Co. KC	George E. Marquis	11/9	East Lansing, MI
12/15	Lorain Co. KC		11/30	Cleveland, OH
12/16	Medina KC		11/30	Cleveland, OH
12/17	Richland Co. KC		11/30	Cleveland, OH
12/18	Western Reserve KC		11/30	Cleveland, OH

CKC Shows

Date	Name of Show	Judge	Entries close:	Location	Comments
11/18	Kent KC	Marilyn Foulds	11/1	Chatham, ON	
11/19	Kent KC	Thomas E. Nesbitt	11/1	Chatham, ON	
11/20	Kent KC	Todd C. Jardine	11/1	Chatham, ON	

Other Events

CONFORMATION CLASSES TUESDAYS at 7P.M. with Lindsay Strutt. Arboroads Farm is located at 3660 S. Maple Rd. in Ann Arbor I-94 to exit 175 (Saline - Ann Arbor Rd.). South about 3/4 mi. to light at S. Maple. Turn left to second drive on the right. Drive back to large building. For More Information: 734 662-6518 arboroads@aol.com or www.arboroads.com

December 17, 2005 Rosemont, Illinois Skokie Valley KC will hold its first ever all breed Sweeps on Saturday, December 18, 2005 Winnebago Labrador Retriever Club will hold its Sweeps on Sunday, and is Supported Entry for both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday Sweeps Judge: Patricia Block (Sumo), Saturday Judge: Dr. J. Donald Jones Sunday WLRC Sweeps Judge: Steve Kirschner (Big Sky) Sunday Judge: Col. Jerry Weiss

Club Info

Please update your membership directory/email address for Ruth Acherhoff-Aust to Ruth AA@earthlink.net

BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

October 7, 2005, Livingston Co Conservation Club

Board Meeting

Attending: Gary Cooper, Jeanine Asch, Patty Wayne, Stacy Quake, Pam Nichols, Barb Paveglio, Judy Matice, Mike Merians

Meeting called to order 6:32pm by Jeanine Asch.

Presidents report... Specialty came off very nice! We had a lot of new workers that all did a little and made everything nice as no one had to do all the work.

Specialty Report:

Judges were taken out to dinner and show chair was not invited. Monroe offered judges dinner on Saturday.

Judges sitting ringside need to be careful that they are not doing further judging.

Mike mentioned that the board needs to set a budget so everyone knows expectations and what is accepted by the club.

Possibility of using one secretary for all specialties next year? We need to figure out the cost we paid per dog and what they are charging per dog.

We need to know the quality of ribbons? Can we advertise in their catalog?

We need to look into announcing system so that awards/notices can be heard? Megaphone? Karaoke Machine?

Travel for the judges? Reimbursement at IRS mileage rate or approve rental of economy car?

Sweepstakes reimbursing hotel, travel expenses up to a certain amount.

Treasurers report approved as printed by Stacy, Patty seconded.

Secretary's report approved as read by Judy, seconded by Mike.

Trailer is set up for next year's picnic already.

HRLRC list rules are going to be put in print.

Sunshine committee is vacant. Board will take up. Secretary will carry box of cards for use as needed (blank is best).

Bonding. Club names can be changed. We can change the amount of coverage as assets change even within the 3 year policy. President, Treasurer, Raffle Chair/ Mike motioned we purchase bonding with Sportsman's Ins Co. for the amount of \$20,000 for up to 5 people at a cost of \$281 for a 3 year policy. Patty seconded. Motion passed.

Moving bank account and purchasing checks needs to be checked into to avoid the \$17/mo fee. Possibly where rescue account is? Motion will be visited next month.

Board meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm by Jeanine Asch.

General Membership meeting

Attending: Gary Cooper, Jeanine Asch, Patty Wayne, Stacy Quake, Pam Nichols, Barb Paveglio, Judy Matice, Mike Merians, Delores Richards, Stella Blair, Frieda Paison, Denise Misaras, Dave Misaras GUESTS: Laura Forbis, Tyler Davis

7:39 called to order by Jeanine Asch.

Secretary's report Jeanine motioned that approved as passed, Gary seconded. Passed.

President's report: Spirit of the Specialty was awesome and the show went over very well!

Corresponding secretary report: Binder on PR material from AKC sent to Jeanine.

Treasurer's report distributed to membership. 'Jillie' print raffle to go into rescue print?

Specialty report: Next year we should mail parking passes as some were not given out to the people they were supposed to be. Judge transportation should we reimburse? Current IRS reimbursement rate is 48.5 cents per mile. Airport to hotel to show site are qualified only. Looking into shuttle service? Maybe something we decide on a year to year basis. A flat fee to offset their costs instead of per mile? Patty Wayne motioned that we provide a \$20 reimbursement for each trip made by drivers handling judge pickup from the airport to the hotel as one trip or from the hotel to the airport as one trip for the 2005 specialty. This would work out to be Denise Misaras \$20, Pauline Mortier \$60, Gary Cooper \$20 and Barb Paveglio \$40. Pam Nichols seconded. Motion passed. Whew! Why did Monroe not handle getting them back to the Airport on Sunday? Gary will follow up with Monroe on this.

Costs on Sunday were handled by MKC and Nancy Arbuckle, but we had to cover Saturday's judges costs. Why???

Ads. We had a questionable ad placed in this year's specialty catalog. Next year we can put a disclaimer and a statement of the clubs position on nonstandard colors and "designer" Labrador crosses. Stacy will work on a wording for that front sheet to be included next year to protect the club for if a labradoodle/silver breeder would want to place an ad in our catalog.

Entry closing date of Wednesday of a holiday week did not work well. Can we move it to a later day that week (Friday?)

Show chair was excluded from judges dinner and hurt feelings were caused. Next year show committee and show chair will be handling arrangements for judges and shows to prevent confusion. If you are on the show committee you should not be showing.

Premium has outdated language and errors. Committee for looking at it needs to be formed. Jeanine Asch, Gary Cooper and Michelle VeuCasovic have volunteered.

The old notebooks are missing. Run a notice in the newsletter that the show chair, hunt test books are missing. Have you seen them? 2007 judge suggestions need to be sent in as well as volunteers for the show chair position. Moa Pearson returned a signed contract for our 2006 sweeps assignment. Suggestions were given of judges that can judge multiple breeds as well as good Labradors judges.

Pam is mailing directories to those that have not already received them.

Field work is increasing interest for the club. We need to look at finding land to run fun hunts, WCs, or even possibly a hunt test. City park? Member land? Alpha Omega Farms.

Christmas party location where are we planning? Does Sheila want to host it this year? Gary will follow up.

Lapel pins from Lapepinz: Cloisonne are 1.95 each, Soft Enamel 1.75, Photo etched 1.75 and a set up fee of \$60. Jeanine will ask for a sample of each type.

Motion for meeting to end made by Garry. Seconded by Pam. Adjourned at 10:01

Article

The following article by Jonathan Jeffrey Kimes (Pluperfect Kennels, Kansas City, Missouri) is reprinted with permission. The article first appeared in the 1996 Cardigan Welsh Corgi handbook.

Seven Foundations of a Successful Dog Breeder

Listed in this article are some axioms that I have created as a learning tool. These axioms are reflections of the temptations we face on a daily basis as dog breeders. If one were to make a similar list for any human endeavor, I doubt it would differ much from what I have listed. I think this list is one that we should all review from time to time, for it requires maturity and self-confidence to master-something we all should continue to hone throughout our lives. The ultimate payoff is the ability to succeed in and to enjoy our dog breeding careers.

I - ENJOY YOUR DOGS

The primary reason anyone becomes involved with dog breeding and showing is a fundamental love of dogs. We treasure the companionship, the never failing loyalty, the delight they exude. We love to have them on our beds. Their eagerness to face the new day, even when we wake them up at dreadful hours, provides us a wonderment that brings back the exuberance of childhood. They forgive us when we lose our temper, when we are impatient, when we are far less than they are. They bring out the best of ourselves, they nurture the "big" us. Unfortunately, dog breeding and exhibiting can tempt our "little" selves. It can feed a fragile ego until it becomes a raging ego. Often, this need to feel we are better than our fellow man is expressed in our possessions. We need to have the biggest winner, the producer of the most champions, the most champion puppies. We buy, we co-own, we collect. Soon we have no time for dog pleasures, no time to play or rub a grateful belly, no time to stroke a patient brow. Soon we have no room for more dogs; we stack them and crate them and store them as though they were baubles that have no meaning but to make us feel important. We lose our ability to love. Dog showing and breeding is a great vocation. It is creative and challenging and very rewarding. But we must never expect our hobby to take the place of a psychologist's work. We must never expect an unhealthy mental state to be cured by self-indulgence. Far too many people take to showing and breeding for the wrong reasons. Their houses go to ruin, their bank accounts evaporate, their credit hits the skids, their spouses and children are left to survive on their own as the breeder pursues their own manifestation of what they perceive to prove their self-worth. Being a dog breeder is a huge commitment. It means we should assign ourselves the role of lifetime student. It means we will be humbled in countless ways and in countless circumstances. It means our lessons will be of the hard knock variety if we are to truly learn them. It means frustration, long hours, late nights and early mornings. It means never getting to sleep-in again. It means finding friendships - some of which will last for a lifetime and some of which will founder, being built on social advantage. It means being quoted and misquoted and having words put in your mouth. It means being given ample opportunity to be as "small" as a human being can be. But, hopefully, it can provide an opportunity to learn to be "big," to be generous, inquisitive, and adventurous. We should never ask ourselves if we are envied or important or successful. Those questions are meaningless. At the end of the day, we should ask ourselves, "Am I proud of the person I've become? What we must always be are dog lovers. We must be their advocates. We must ensure the life of every dog we breed and every dog we own is fulfilled and an illustration of humanity at its nest hour. Our vanity must not be stroked by having our pictures in a magazine or seeing our name on some ranking system. Our self-worth must come from knowing we provide our dogs a life of love, of pleasure, and of happiness.

II - BREED FOR IMPROVEMENT NOT WINNERS

It is easy to become lost in the purpose of breeding quality dogs. For some, the attraction of the bright lights, the glamour and the glitz cause them to stray from the path. Developing a bloodline that is well considered and that is a positive influence for the breed takes considerable discipline. Too often, the seemingly slow and carefully orchestrated effort to improve a breed is crossed up with the immediate desire to breed that one big winner and become famous.

The breeder's pledge must be to harbor and safeguard the breed. No breed is in perfect shape when the breeder happens upon it and none shall be perfect when they leave. But to leave a breed in better shape than it was when you came upon it is the greatest compliment. To improve type, movement, temperament and health must be the bottom line for every committed breeder.

Such accomplishment takes a long-range plan that is carefully thought through. It requires dedication and purpose. All too often, we are sidetracked by our desire to breed to the latest big winner, and then to the next and the next. Before long the pedigree is a long list of "who's who" that have no relationship to each other, other than they found success in the ring. What is key to learn (and to believe) is success in the ring is not an automatic indication of the dog's true quality. We all wish one indicated the other but that is too easy. It would require the removal of human fallacy to be accomplished!

Dogs do not excel for all the same reasons. Consequently, you can't simply breed one big winner to another and produce more big winners. Every feature and their nature of inheritance must be studied and understood before you can "manage" the inheritance variables. Once you gain this skill, you are on the road to producing a great line of winners.

III - TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE

The breeding of fine purebred dogs should be considered the pursuit of perfection - it is not the maintenance of it. All dogs have faults, all dogs are less than ideal in some ways and areas. If not, the "ideal" has not been well enough conceived. It is very easy to fall into the trap of being defensive about one's own dogs. This usually happens because what we assume to be correct is challenged by another as being less so.

This disharmony causes confusion in our mind and ultimately unhappiness. To right ourselves, we often become defensive and try to rid ourselves of that which is causing us the discomfort - namely the opinion that does not complement our own.

We must realize that "truth" is the ultimate standard by which our decisions should be made. In most cases, a roached back is a roached back, whether we choose to recognize it as such or not. Consequently, the best way for us to not be put into a position of being unhappily surprised is to pursue knowledge relentlessly to ensure our opinion is as accurate and close to the "truth" as possible.

This knowledge is gained in many ways, one of which is learning from fellow breeders. We must fight the urge to make up our minds about something and refuse to consider another viewpoint. Indeed, we do not make decisions based on facts when we are first learning, we are depending upon what we perceive to be the expertise of others to provide that for us. If that so-called expertise is, in fact, faulty, our whole knowledge base is called into question. And that causes us great anxiety.

The best place to sit is in the seat of the knowledge seeker. Whenever provided with an opinion that is different than the one you currently hold, always seek to understand the viewpoint of the other. Why does the person perceive something differently than you? Understanding another's point of view can be the road to greater knowledge. If you shut that door and do not entertain the prospect of learning something different than what you think is truth you will never actually recognize the truth and you will not succeed in your goal.

Quite honestly, you should be more critical of your dogs than anyone else could possibly be. That is not to say you should attribute faults to your dogs they do not possess, but your evaluation must be as detailed as possible and you must strive to see clearly their true faults and virtues. From this comes the map to success.

IV - DEAL WITH OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE THEM DEAL WITH YOU

Sounds a bit like the golden rule that we learn in childhood. Yet it is amazing how many people forget this very important axiom. In dealing with others, regardless of the matter, think always of the other person's position. I have heard repeatedly, people state how they were burned in a co-ownership agreement. All too often the agreement is geared toward benefiting one party (often the seller) over another. Written agreements somehow are tainted as being only needed in a contentious situation. This is the first misconception. Not having a written agreement should be the very rare exception, not the reverse. Too often, should a worthwhile puppy be produced from one of these undefined arrangements, the fight is on for possession. Before contemplating selling a dog on a co-ownership or leasing it or offering stud service for a puppy back, you should think through what exactly you expect and desire from such an arrangement. Too often, these business dealings occur in the spur of the moment during a telephone conversation, and the deal is struck before either party has really had an opportunity to think it through. For some reason, rather than rethinking the situation, we tend to try to follow through on such an ill conceived arrangement only to end up bitter enemies in the end. If people would stop and think about the likely end result, they would realize the best possible thing to protect the friendship is to have a written understanding.

It is very rare a litter is going to have more than one star if any at all. Consequently, it is important to understand who is going to own that super puppy, should it appear. People are too willing to tear apart relationships should one person seem to benefit a

bit more than another. This is too sad and is reflective of the self-benefit motivation that all too many find as the driving force for their actions. When pressed, it is far better to give than to receive.

It is far better to let the other seemingly benefit than to destroy a relationship and acquire the reputation of being disreputable and self centered, if for no other reason than it makes you grow as a human being, which is probably a fair trade off in the long run.

V - BY GIVING YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE

Another pitfall breeders often experience is the inability to celebrate others' Successes. While certainly we feel the route we are taking is the best way to approach that utopian plateau of breed perfection, there are actually many routes to that same goal. It takes nothing at all away from our own accomplishments to recognize the accomplished efforts of other breeders.

This inability and unwillingness to appreciate other's efforts usually comes from having made a decision not to breed to certain bloodlines or deal with certain persons. When such a kennel then produces a success, it is difficult for us to acknowledge such an achievement for we tend to find that inconsistent with our opinion of that particular person or family of dogs. It takes quite an honest and secure person to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of others.

While it is probably good advice to hold our criticisms closer to our chest, recognizing another's achievement only brings good things. By being someone who can see the virtues in breeding lines other than your own, you gain a reputation of fair-ness and objectivity that is a very rare pearl in dogdom. You may find, over time, your point of view and your philosophies are taken with much greater weight when others do not perceive them to have originated in a mind consumed with self aggrandizement. Thus, by doing so you lose nothing and yet you gain so very much.

VI - MAKE USE OF OTHERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

One of the worst situations a breeder can find her/ himself in is to partition themselves off from another kennel or bloodline. It is highly unlikely that all improvements toward the perfection of a breed are going to come from one single kennel or bloodline. Like flowers in the field, they will spring up in various places. The clever breeder is the one who knows how to pick from the entire field those who will make the ultimate, sublime bouquet. And to do this, you must be able to use the strengths of other kennels and bloodlines. Breeders will tend to have certain biases; and quite honestly, there are certain strengths and weaknesses in most bloodlines. While you may feel you have achieved the highest ground in certain areas, there will doubtless be other areas in which your dogs and bloodlines are less strong than others. Not to recognize this fact is to ensure you will plateau quite early in your breeding career. And by that I mean you will stabilize and go no further. You must always keep a watchful eye for that very special bloom that will enhance your bouquet.

It is this sophisticated combining of families without losing the good points of your own bloodline that strengthen a kennel and move it forward in breed importance. It takes careful consideration, orchestration and pruning to come to fruition.

VII - YOU ARE ONLY AS GOOD AS YOUR MORALS

My last axiom addresses the whole issue of morality. It has many facets and many ways of expressing itself. Spreading rumors, the accuracy of which might be doubtful, is one very good example. Selling dogs on co-owner-ships as a means to control other breeders is certainly another. Accusing other lines of genetic problems while being less than entirely honest about your own is yet another. In all, it goes to the very core of who we are. Do we know right from wrong? Do we practice right in all circumstances? Dog breeding is not about that one great win or that one great winner. It is about breed improvement over time, it is about protecting a breed. Too many people are in search of some kind of sign of their self worth and they think they will obtain some special level of respect and honor if they have a big winner. Dog breeding is a lifetime's work. It is a continuum of which, no matter how quickly you want to "put yourself on the map," will ultimately be a reflection of your true character. To wit, you can't fool all of the people all of the time.

There is no honor in "adjusting" reality to give you the appearance of achieving something you have not. Politicking for wins will not make your dogs any better than they are. Faking your dogs will not make them any better than they are. You may think you can fool the world, but you will ultimately pay the price. No one wants to be a pretender. And yet, some of the worst pretenders are people who seem to be infatuated with spreading rumors about other people and dogs. These people live in glass houses and invariably they know it. The breeding of dogs is not about how you impress the neighbors, your peers or anyone else.

It is the expression of your love of dogs and your personal pursuit in creating an art. You cannot lie about the art you create; you cannot lie to yourself.

While this list, I am quite sure, sounds like a sermon from the mount, it encompasses the many pitfalls that we dog breeders face every day. Some of us are equipped to navigate these disturbances better than others, but all of us CAN navigate them. We are all tested from time to time, even the most educated, psychologically balanced, intelligent and honest amongst us. There are times when it feels much better to zing someone who has been hurtful, to control those whom we feel do not have the proper motivation, to become the ones who attract the adulation. Only through careful thought and well-considered action can we hope to become better people and therefore better dog breeders.

In the Industry News

(From the Optigen website)

OFA Registration of OptiGen prcd-PRA Results – October 26, 2005

We have been informed of a new policy for inclusion of test results in the OFA DNA registry. In an October 25th letter to OptiGen, OFA writes: “It was the OFA Board’s decision to continue the moratorium on the registration of Optigen prcd-PRA results for all eligible breeds except Australian Cattle Dogs and Poodles until such time that a) a letter in support of the test is received from the ACVO President, not a committee chair, and b) the data supporting the marketing of the test as a mutant gene test is published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal.”

With all due respect, OptiGen accepts the policies of the OFA. At the same time, OptiGen emphatically and without reservation assures our clientele that the OptiGen prcd-PRA mutation test is accurate for all eligible breeds. OFA has not claimed that this test is inaccurate. And, there is no new information to give basis to questioning the validity of the prcd-PRA test. Instead it simply appears that OFA has instituted a new administrative process for including test results in their registry.

OptiGen was first made aware of this situation by a client on October 12, 2005, when their OFA registration application was declined. OptiGen immediately queried OFA and offered to, and did, provide additional supporting information for the OFA Board Meeting October 20th. (Excerpts of the communication follow below.) On October 25th, OptiGen learned the OFA Board decision. Therefore, while the OFA moratorium is in effect, OptiGen will remove the OFA registration “sign-off” statement from the bottom of our reports (except for Miniature and Toy Poodles). Testers will be able to submit results to OFA at a later date using the standard OFA application form.

Excerpts from OptiGen letter to OFA:

“The full information on the exact gene and mutation that causes prcd-PRA is being published. However, the schedule of publication is controlled by the patent filing process undertaken by Cornell Research Foundation. Again by way of background, the linkage/marker test was patented by Cornell and use of the patent was licensed by OptiGen. This patent (US PTO # 5,804,388) is public information and I’ve enclosed an abstract and the research publication (PNAS 95:3048,1998) that followed that patent. Although technically this patent covers the new mutation test, Cornell has chosen to seek another patent that specifically defines this mutation. That filing with the Patent Office results in a strict schedule of review and public information release.

There are several publications on the refinement of the linkage data leading to identification of the prcd mutation and these also are enclosed. Although the specific mutation wasn’t named, the clear direction of the research leading up to the mutation is strong.

Based on the initial patent and publication, the follow-up reports on linkage refinement, and the disclosure of the exact mutation to Cornell Research Foundation by researchers Drs. Acland and Aguirre, Cornell offered OptiGen the opportunity to provide the mutation test prior to another issued patent. That is, OptiGen holds a license to the patent-pending technology. On that strength, OptiGen offered the new prcd mutation test to its clients as of June 2005. And, OptiGen re-evaluated all previous test results on all relevant breeds with the new mutation test. This information is summarized in our website update.”

(From the CDC Website)

Media Briefing on Canine Influenza

Note: This is a verbatim transcript. There may be errors.

Monday, September 26, 2005
2:00 p.m.

OPERATOR: I would now like to turn the conference over to Mr. Tom Skinner, Public Affairs Specialist with the CDC. Please go ahead, sir.

MR. SKINNER: Thank you, Laura, and thank you all for joining us today for this call where we're going to discuss the publication of a Science Journal article, "Transmission of Equine Influenza Virus to Dogs."

With us today are four participants; all have played a very important role in the publication of this paper: Dr. Ruben Donis from, the Centers for Disease Control; Dr. Nina Marano from the Centers for Disease Control; Dr. Cynda Crawford from the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine; and Dr. Ed Dubovi from Cornell University Animal Health Diagnostics Center.

What we're going to do is have Dr. Ruben Donis start first by providing a three- or four-minute overview of the paper, talk a little bit about how this pertains to human health.

We'll then have Dr. Cynda Crawford provide the big picture when it comes to veterinary medicine and the issue of equine influenza virus in dogs.

Then we'll turn the call over to Dr. Nina Marano here at the CDC who's going to speak a little bit about how CDC is reaching out to the veterinary community, and we'll also have Dr. Ed Dubovi be on the phone to answer questions that may come in.

So at this time, I'm going to turn this over to Dr. Donis, who's going to speak for three or four minutes.

Dr. Donis?

DR. DONIS: Okay. Thank you, Tom. Good afternoon, everyone.

I would like to start by summarizing what is the importance of the paper, which concerns a very rare event of considerable scientific interest with regards to understanding influenza virus transmission across species barriers. And that's something that is in everyone's mind these days for a variety of reasons that you're aware of.

The paper started with an investigation of an acute canine respiratory disease in the State of Florida, and that was being investigated by Dr. Cynda Crawford, and that was back in 2004. She collected samples from sick dogs that were sent to Dr. Ed Dubovi--can you hear me well?--Dr. Ed Dubovi at Cornell University.

Dr. Dubovi started the sort of generic protocol trying to identify the usual suspects. He failed to identify the usual pathogens associate with respiratory disease.

So after several trials, he came up with a very unusual and unexpected finding; that was a virus that he thought could be influenza virus.

That's when that specimen was sent to us at the CDC, and the Influenza Branch, and initially Dr. Sasha Klimov from the Influenza Branch identified this tentatively as an H-3 virus, similar, related to an equine virus.

From there, we performed nucleotide sequencing, and determined that the sequence of the virus corresponded to the H3 hemagglutinin and N8 neuraminidase subtype.

So that usually is the type of influenza that is most commonly found in horses. Therefore, at that time, we continued the investigations, in collaboration with Dr. Crawford and our colleagues at the Influenza Branch, and several other investigators from the University of Wisconsin, Auburn University, and we were able to document that these respiratory infections, which

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continued to occur, were not only happening in the State of Florida but we identified the infection in several other states in the United States.

Subsequently, we continued--most of the investigations, by the way, involved both molecular tools, serological tools, and epidemiological investigations. So it involved a large team of investigators with a multi-pronged approach. We were able to identify that the virus was also present in domestic pet dogs.

And that's important because initially the virus was identified in racing greyhounds, and there was some speculation that the virus was exclusively causing disease in greyhounds.

So we were able to document that the disease was also present in the domestic dog population, first in the State of Florida, and then in other states.

We found that the proportion of dogs that have fatal disease is very small. Some dogs have subclinical or inapparent infections and some have severe infections. But Dr. Crawford will expand on the clinical aspects of this.

So basically, to summarize, I wanted to say that the data indicates that the virus is being transmitted efficiently from dog to dog and this indicates that the equine virus was transmitted to dogs and is now well established in the dog population.

So what about the implications for public health? We must keep in mind that this H3N8 equine influenza virus has been in horses for over 40 years. In all these years, we have never been able to document a single case of human infection with this virus. So that is something that I want everybody to take note of so to dispel, you know, major panic. That's not to say that there isn't any risk. We are going to monitor all cases of possible human exposure, but, this point, there is no reason to panic.

The other thing that I wanted to point out is the fact that the virus is sensitive or it's predicted to be sensitive--it's sensitive in the lab, and it's predicted to be sensitive to antivirals in humans.

And so the other thing that I didn't point out I think is that this is a type A virus; that is, totally different from the type B influenza viruses.

So with that, I would like to close down and turn it over to the moderator.

MR. SKINNER: Thanks, Dr. Donis. Now, I'll turn the call over to Dr. Cynda Crawford from the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine, who will spend three or four minutes sort of giving us the big picture in regards to canine influenza in the veterinary community.

DR. CRAWFORD: Thank you. And I would like to underscore what Dr. Donis has already pointed out and on a couple of occasions that this is a newly emerging pathogen in the dog population. And we have managed to accumulate quite a lot of information on this new canine influenza virus over a relatively short period of time, and this was largely due to the multi-institutional collaborative work that has involved numerous people from the CDC Influenza Branch. I would like to thank Dr. Donis and Dr. Jackie Katz, and Dr. Alexander Klimov. And it involves colleagues at the University of Wisconsin's College of Veterinary Medicine and at Auburn University's College of Veterinary Medicine, and, of course, Dr. Ed Dubovi at Cornell, who has been the biggest key I think in discovery of this new viral pathogen in the dog population.

And with regard to what veterinarians will be interested in knowing is that this virus can cause a respiratory disease that mimics a syndrome that we call kennel cough.

Now, kennel cough is just a syndrome, and it can be due to a myriad of infectious agents--bacteria as well as viruses. So the most common cause of kennel cough has been a bacterium called bordetella bronchiseptica and with information that we have to date, this still may be the most common cause of respiratory infection in dogs.

So the canine influenza virus is really the new kid on the block for veterinarians to consider in their differential diagnoses for kennel cough. They should consider canine influenza if a dog presents to them with a cough. They may have a nasal discharge and a fever also.

And because kennel cough really is an infectious disease, and it's a contagious disease regardless of the cause, whether it's bordetella bronchiseptica or canine influenza virus or other viruses, these dogs should be handled with some precautions,

precautions that veterinarians normally use when they are treating a patient that has a potential infectious disease that is contagious to other dogs. So this type of precaution would involve the isolation of the respiratory disease or at least protection of other dogs in their clinics, while this particular dog with respiratory disease is undergoing diagnosis and treatment and potentially hospitalization.

I'll also stress that despite the rumors that are out on the Internet and other such sources, this disease is not as deadly as people want to make it. Although it's a new pathogen in dogs and nearly all dogs are susceptible to infection based on our knowledge about the virus to date, about 80 percent of them will have a mild form of disease, just characterized by cough and maybe some nasal discharge that will resolve over time with appropriate therapy.

Only a minority of dogs, a small number of dogs, experience complications such as pneumonia, just like the humans infected with influenza, certain populations of humans are more prone to development of pneumonia. And it's a small number of humans compared to everyone else.

So that is the same with canine influenza virus. It's a small population of dogs that will develop complications, most likely bacterial complications and these dogs do need to be--have their treatment supervised by a veterinarian.

In addition, since not all dogs will show a clinical syndrome, showing that they have a respiratory infection, there is a minority that are infected with the virus, but will not show clinical signs to announce to everybody that "I am sick." And it is very difficult to find these dogs in the dog population. And we're working on a more rapid means of identification.

And lastly, I want to emphasize most of all that this is not the deadly virus that certain sources have played it up to be.

We have a very low mortality rate. And this is a disease that I would characterize as one of high morbidity and low mortality. Thank you.

MR. SKINNER: Okay. Thank you, and now I'm going to turn the call over to Dr. Nina Marano, who's CDC's lead scientist for public health issues related to veterinary medicine, who will give you a brief overview of how we're reaching out to the veterinary community. Dr. Marano?

DR. MARANO: Thank you. We are working with four sets of key partners to help respond to questions about canine influenza. First and foremost is that we are working very closely with our colleagues who are on the call--Dr. Dubovi and Dr. Crawford at the University of Florida and at Cornell University--to understand how this newly emerging pathogen is affecting canine health and to seek their recommendations for management with veterinary clinics, advice for veterinarians, advice for people who run shelters, and, of course, for pet owners.

We also partner with the American Veterinary Medical Association, which is the organization that represents 70,000 practicing veterinarians in the United States; and with the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, which are the state veterinarians in each state; and also with the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians.

So we feel like we have a very good solid framework for coordination and for communication between these four sets of partners.

Right now, it certainly appears that canine influenza is restricted to the dog population, and we'll defer to our veterinary colleagues' expertise and for advice and recommendations for management in the dog population. And I wanted to reiterate what Dr. Donis said earlier in the call; that H3N8 has never infected humans; and that we will certainly monitor human exposure and we'll work closely with our key partners here to coordinate any messages to monitor this emerging pathogen.

That's really all I wanted to say. Thank you.

MR. SKINNER: Okay. Ms. Prull, I think we're ready for questions, and I understand there are a large number of reporters on the call, so we're going to restrict questions to just one question, so we can get through as many reporters' questions as possible.

So let's begin with question and answer, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. And at this time, if you would like to ask a question, please press star one on your touch tone phone. To withdraw your request, you may press star two.

One moment please for the first question.

Our first question comes from Randolph Schmid with The Associated Press.

MR. SCHMITT: Hello. Yes. Dr. Crawford mentioned several times it had a low mortality rate. High morbidity and low mortality. Can you give us any numbers of what the mortality rate is?

MR. SKINNER: Go ahead, Dr. Crawford.

DR. CRAWFORD: I also want to emphasize that we don't have all the answers to the questions just yet, and we are working diligently on defining this disease syndrome in the dog population, so we have a few numbers to work with, and we are accumulating more data very rapidly on a daily basis. So these numbers could change.

At this time, I think--and it's hard to get reports of dogs that die of pneumonia. And it is even harder to get reports of dogs that have died of pneumonia in terms of was the cause verified.

But in those dogs where the cause of death was verified by diagnostic testing, we are looking at on the order of five to eight percent.

MR. SKINNER: Okay. Next question please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Our next question comes from Jacob Goldstein with the Miami Herald.

MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes. Hi. I saw a reference in the article to data collected from South Florida. I wonder if in that context or in any other for that matter you can talk at all to the extent to which this disease is present in South Florida.

MR. SKINNER: Dr. Crawford, do you want to take that question, please?

DR. CRAWFORD: We do not have any evidence that canine influenza virus was infecting the pet dog sector out of the greyhound racing industry until late this year, actually April to May 2005, when we began receiving samples for diagnostic testing from some shelters and boarding facilities, Humane Societies, and a few veterinary clinics that had dogs they thought may be candidates for infection with canine influenza virus.

So we are still accumulating samples on a daily basis to define the extent of canine influenza virus infection in dogs. But, yes, there have been some scientific evidence-based, verified occurrences of canine influenza in South Florida in shelters, boarding facilities and veterinary clinics.

MR. SKINNER: Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Maggie Fox of Reuters, your line is now open.

MS. FOX: Can you tell us a little bit about the mechanism by which this virus changed so that it could infect dogs and then pass easily from dog to dog? And can you talk a little bit about some of the species barriers that exist in influenza viruses with an obvious eye to the avian influenza virus?

MR. SKINNER: I'll ask Dr. Donis here at CDC to answer that question.

DR. DONIS: We sequenced the hemagglutinin gene and we found depending on the isolate between eight and ten amino acid changes in the hemagglutinin. We speculate at this point because we haven't finished the research that these changes may affect the interaction of the virus with cellular receptors. In addition to that, there are changes in other genes which may affect other aspects of the interaction of the virus with the host and this is exactly the most important part of the study we believe from the perspective of understanding interspecies transmission.

So the answer to your question is we're working on it and I think that it is a very, very important point.

MR. SKINNER: Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Daniel DeNoon with WebMD, your line is now open.

MR. DeNoon: Thank you. I'd like to ask if there is any work underway on a canine vaccine.

MR. SKINNER: Dr. Crawford, do you want to talk about that?

DR. CRAWFORD: Yes, there is work underway and has been for a few months now.

MR. SKINNER: Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Rob Stein with The Washington Post, your line is now open.

MR. STEIN: Thank you very much. Could you tell us in how many states now been identified and which states they are and what indications do you have as to how quickly or rapidly it's spreading?

MR. SKINNER: I'll ask Dr. Donis to answer that question, and then if Dr. Crawford has something to add afterwards.

DR. DONIS: We have identified only one strain of the virus. As to how rapidly it's spreading, probably Dr. Crawford can probably address that.

DR. CRAWFORD: And I would like to do so in collaboration with Dr. Dubovi from Cornell's Animal Health Diagnostics Center because he has been also testing dogs.

I can speak for the State of Florida that so far from samples we've received to date that have been tested, we have documented the infection in dogs in Florida, and maybe Dr. Dubovi can expound on that.

DR. DUBOVI: From the samples we have available, we can absolutely document the infection in the New York City area, and there's other evidence to suggest that at least a dog that currently resides in Massachusetts was infected, but the question as to where it may have picked that infection up we really don't know.

So like I say, the coming week there are a number of samples flowing in from a number of these cases where there are suspected outbreaks, so that map should expand or at least be better detailed by the end of this week.

MR. SKINNER: Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Lisa Krieger with The San Jose Mercury News, your line is now open.

MS. KRIEGER: Thank you. Just to follow-up on the previous question, could you address the issue of how rapid transmission is likely to happen? Given the behavior of other viruses of this type, should it be of national concern?

MR. SKINNER: Dr. Crawford has been involved in this for well over a year now looking at this. I'll ask her to answer that question.

MR. CRAWFORD: Maybe I can address it in this way. In terms of the rapidity of spread from one state where infection has been documented in dogs to other states, it would need to travel with the dog. So to spread from state to state would just depend on a dog's movements.

However, we don't know about states other than Florida, New York and possibly Massachusetts. We can't tell you at this time if this virus has actually been infecting dogs in the Midwest or western sectors of the country even before we documented it in Florida or New York. So I have received several phone calls from veterinarians from all over the country who think they have seen this type of clinical disease in their dogs that they are dealing with.

So at this time we cannot say with any accuracy whether this virus is restricted to New York, Florida and potentially Massachusetts or if it's in other sectors of the country and maybe in North America that we just don't know about because we haven't completed testing on samples that have been graciously submitted by veterinarians all over.

MR. SKINNER: Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Amanda Spake with U.S. News and World Report, your line is now open.

MS. SPAKE: Thanks. Some of my questions have been answered, but in terms of the mortality rate, you said you think it's somewhere between 6 and 8 percent. But the first example you give in your paper of the January 2004 outbreak you have a case fatality rate of 36 percent. Could you possibly explain what the difference is here?

MR. SKINNER: Dr. Crawford?

DR. CRAWFORD: Yes. I think it's a numbers game. That first incident in January 2004 at a Florida greyhound race track was a very small outbreak largely because of the quick response of the track management in containing the dogs that were involved in the outbreak. Although a large number of dogs were infected, only a small number even had clinical signs.

I cannot speculate on why there was a higher mortality rate in that very, very small outbreak other than maybe it was just a matter of numbers. But as we've tracked canine influenza virus infection at racing greyhound tracks around the country, there are thousands of dogs that are infected but very, very few that actually succumb to a pneumonia-like syndrome. So if you test more and more dogs, your numbers will change in terms of numbers that get sick and numbers that have a fatal outcome.

I don't know if that's addressed your question or not, but I think it kind of may leave false impressions if you base morbidity and mortality rates on a single outbreak when that may have been the more unusual manifestation compared to larger populations or a larger number of dogs are followed.

MR. SKINNER: Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Barbara Tunick from The Bark Magazine, your line is now open.

MS. TUNICK: Thank you very much. My question is regarding dog owners. Since many of the exposed dogs may not show symptoms, what precaution should dog owners take when they bring their dogs to the vet or groomers, the dog parks? Are there any kind of medical treatments or precautions available?

Secondly, the exposed dogs who do not show symptoms, will they eventually get sick and are they contagious to other dogs?

MR. SKINNER: Dr. Crawford, do you want to address that one?

DR. CRAWFORD: I can address that last part. I don't know if Dr. Marano would like to address the first part with regard to precautions taken on the part of the dog owners in terms of where do they take their dogs.

The ones that do not have clinical signs despite being infected by the virus really do not show clinical signs at any point. For some reason that we do not know, these dogs simply just do not get overtly sick. Are they contagious to other dogs? Yes, we believe they are.

Dr. Marano, do you want to address taking your dog to various places where other dogs congregate or would you like for me to?

DR. MARANO: I think it's important to take a common-sense approach from what Dr. Crawford told us earlier on the call, that there's evidence that there have been some occurrences in Florida and New York, possibly Massachusetts. So I don't think that there's any cause for panic. I think that owners should take reasonable precautions in terms of if it's possible, for instance, to-- you know, if your dog is exhibiting any signs of a respiratory illness, you certainly want to get some advice from your veterinarian, and if you do present your dog to a veterinarian, you want to make sure your veterinarian knows whether your dog had been at a boarding kennel recently.

I would certainly make sure that you are using a boarding kennel, that you use one that is well-known to you, that you are familiar with, and I would continue to be alert to pronouncements that are coming out in terms of any outbreaks that are occurring in your area.

But I certainly would not be panicking at this point as far as we have to take the dog. In the absence of further communications about where this might be going next, I think it's just a time to be very watchful and alert and take a reasonable approach but certainly not to panic.

MODERATOR: Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Helen Branswell with the Canadian Press, your line is now open.

MS. BRANSWELL: Thank you. Dr. Donis, you mentioned that this strain of influenza has been in horses for about 40 years and there's no evidence of people picking it up from horses, but as it moves into domestic dogs, the possibility of contact and reassortment, it would seem to me, would be a great deal higher if it moved into vast numbers of dogs than in horses. Is that the case?

And also, I'm wondering, the amino acid changes that you've noticed, can you predict from looking at them whether or not that would make this virus more or less likely to move into humans?

DR. DONIS: So that's a very good question. So basically the number of amino acid changes is still very small, so this virus is still very, very closely related to the equine virus, and so given the, quote, unquote, safety track record of the equine virus in humans, I think it would be a stretch to really raise the level of alarm in any way.

It may actually pose even a lesser risk for humans. So the bottom line is we don't know and the bottom line we'll investigate but basically there will be a surveillance plan and we will be following up the reports and investigate with our partners in the veterinary science and veterinary colleges, and we're taking it seriously but at this point there is no reason for alarm.

MODERATOR: Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Erin Sikes with NBC, your line is now open.

MS. SIKES: Great. Actually, all my questions have been answered, so I'm good. Thanks.

OPERATOR: Thank you. We'll go on to the next question. Cindy Tamil with San Antonio Express News, your line is now open.

MS. TAMIL: Thank you. I think this has sort of been answered but I want to clarify it. People with dogs routinely take them in and get something called bordetella vaccine and I think what I'm hearing is that this bordetella vaccine that is now given is not necessarily any--that there's not gonna be any protection from that vaccine against this strain of flu. Is that known?

MODERATOR: Dr. Crawford, do you want to take a stab at that one?

DR. CRAWFORD: The most common cause that we know of, to date, for kennel cough, is bordetella bronchiseptica. And that is what is in the kennel cough vaccine, that most people do elect to have their dog vaccinated with, in particular, dogs that are being boarded or going to the groomer, are asked--the clients are asked to have those dogs vaccinated against kennel cough or bordetella bronchiseptica, and in addition, parainfluenza virus, which is quite different from influenza virus. But there is no protection afforded by the kennel cough vaccine against influenza virus. Just bordetella and parainfluenza virus. Does that clarify your question?

MS. TAMIL: I think so. I had forgotten about the parainfluenza. I guess basically people who give their dogs these shots should not expect that these shots are going to protect their dogs from this new strain that's out there.

DR. CRAWFORD: No, there won't be any cross-protection afforded by that vaccine. However, I do urge them to keep their kennel cough vaccines updated because, once again, it may be that bordetella bronchiseptica and/or parainfluenza virus may turn out to be the more common causes of kennel cough until we know a little bit more about the pervasiveness of canine influenza virus in the pet dog population.

MODERATOR: Before we go to the next question, one thing that hasn't been really discussed that's important are some of the circumstances around Dr. Dubovi's discovery of this virus, and I was just hoping he could take a minute or two to elaborate on that.

DR. DUBOVI: In terms of circumstances, I think that the issue of this particular case sort of points out, I think from my perspective, what a number of us have been saying for a number of years, is that there's a tremendous need out there within the, particularly the animal populations and pet populations for a surveillance program just for this kind of an activity or incident.

That is, something unusual occurs within a population for which we're totally not expecting. We had some success in this area of identifying this because we took a very broad perspective on how to go about attacking this problem in the virus isolation, and fortunately, I say with some luck, were able to come up with the issue.

But I think that what the take-home message has to be in here is that we need to be looking for unusual events and we need to have the capability at our regional laboratories to be able to identify these unusual events, and like I say, we were just fortunate enough to have been in the right place at the right time to have picked up this particular event that occurred, and it's occurred probably multiple times, but to have identified a new agent in a different species, and now we can progress to try and develop the prevention strategies.

But this may not be the last time we're going to see this and we have, you know, 50 plus million dogs, we have 50 plus million cats out there, and these animals sometimes become sentinels for other things that, as I say, we're not quite expecting.

We've had the West Nile incursion into the U.S. and with an identification of that by an astute observation of a pathologist, and people on the ground, who are looking at dogs and cats and other pet animals are going to be the ones who identify these unusual events. We need to have the capability of first-ate diagnostic systems to be able to identify unusual pathogens when they come along.

MODERATOR: Thank you, and we'll take a few more questions, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Donald McNeil from the New York Times, your line is now open.

MR. McNEIL: Thank you. Could the speakers be more specific about any recommendations or precautions they might recommend. Should people avoid walking their dogs with other dogs? Should they avoid walking their dogs with dogs that are coughing? Should they avoid taking their dogs to kennels or to grooming salons or anything like that? Should kennels refuse dogs that are coughing? Are there any recommendations now?

MODERATOR: You know, Donald, this is very much a work in progress, and no formal guidance has been developed, but there are some common sense approaches that people can take, and I think Dr. Crawford may be able to elaborate a little bit more on those. Dr. Crawford?

DR. CRAWFORD: I will take the first stab at it and I encourage my colleagues to contribute their perspectives also.

I guess maybe one way to answer this question is I am taking my two Pekinese to be groomed next week to a groomer that sees many dogs during the day. I will continue to board my pet greyhound at boarding kennels when I need to.

I will continue to show dogs at the American Kennel Club sanctioned shows.

So I, myself, will continue on with my routine activities with my own dogs. They will go to dog parks. They will participate in other community activities with other dogs.

However, I think common sense is a good term to use in that dog owners who have a dog with a respiratory infection or that has just recovered from a respiratory infection should probably keep the dog at home until a couple of weeks have elapsed, number one, for that dog to recover fully, and number two, in case that dog has an infectious disease, whether it's flu or not, that could be communicable to other dogs that it is around.

I think veterinarians have become aware of canine influenza virus and have continued their practices of taking precautions with communicable diseases, and most likely upgraded their precautions in addition.

But as far as your average dog owner, I think they should continue to walk their dog on the street, do all the other dog-related activities, but just use common sense about taking your dog out in public, if it has had, or has recently recovered from a respiratory infection.

MODERATOR: Do any of the other participants have anything to add to that? If not, we'll go to the next question. Let's go to the next question then, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you.

Lance Gay with Scripps Howard News Service, your line is now open.

MR. GAY: Did you say--do you know anything about whether or not this virus can be transmitted back from dogs to horses and from dogs to other animals? Do you know anything more about the infectivity, number one.

Number two, do you know how--when the transfer took place? Has it only just been a couple of years or has there been some underlying disease here that you're just finding out about?

MR. SKINNER: Dr. Dubovi, do you want to take a stab at that one?

DR. DUBOVI: Well, it's a stab. I mean currently we certainly in most of the veterinary diagnostic systems are monitoring not only dogs but horses and should there be a canine or an--I'm sorry--equine isolation coming from horses that are associated with a problem in dogs, this virus will be isolated and the sequence being done to see if that kind of a transfer is occurring. But the evidence--at this point in time, there's absolutely no evidence of the transfer from the horses--or from the dogs to the horses.

This transfer, if you will, from horses, if that's where it came from--into the dogs is, as I say, has probably has been somewhat of a recent event in that when we just do general screens of dog samples from past years, we're not seeing any hint of a reactivity to this particular virus.

So based on that--obviously maybe some flimsy information--we can go back and test thousands of samples if we have to. But right now, the best guess is that this has not been an introduction that's occurred many years ago, but it's a fairly new one.

MR. SKINNER: Okay. Let's take one last question please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Our final question comes from Michelle Gile with KCAL Television.

MS. GILE: Hi. Thank you. Have you received or are you testing samples from California? And if so, when and where? And also is this as simple as an infected dog coughing on another dog and is that how this virus is passed?

MR. SKINNER: Dr. Dubovi, do you want to take a stab at that one?

DR. DUBOVI: I don't personally have any information on samples from California. I know Dr. Crawford had collected a number of samples, which we're currently testing, but I don't know quite the location.

So as I say, as time goes on, we certainly--I know there's samples in the pipeline coming in from California and Colorado and New Mexico, et cetera. So as I say, later on in the week, we'll have a bit more information, so I certainly can't give you any information on where and when anything has been collected out of California.

As far as transmission, is it just as simple as one dog sneezing on another? I think the best guess we have right now is that if you project how--probably influenza travels from person to person, you could probably think that that's probably how it's going to transfer from dog to dog.

MR. SKINNER: Okay. Thank you. That's going to conclude our call today. Thank you all, the participants and all the media that called in. Feel free to call the various press offices of the participants for any follow-up questions you may have. And we'll keep you posted as we learn more. Thank you very much.

Goodbye.

OPERATOR: Thank you. This does conclude today's conference call. We thank you for your participation.

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