

ASCWTA

The Prairie Wheaten

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Inside

Arthritis - Health Concern	Page 2
Grooming A Wheaten	Page 6
Proposed Grooming Seminar	Page 8
St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program	Page 9
An "Athlete's" Story	Page 10
Recipes For Dog Treats	Page 11
Scenes From Our Wheaten Walk	Page 14

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Arthritis

Health Concern by Carolyn Fox and Roz Bacon

Arthritis is a pain in the joints. In this common disease joint cartilage deteriorates. Surfaces that are supposed to be smooth and glide easily over one another become rough. Lubrication in the joint also decreases making movement difficult and painful. Although it does not lead to death, arthritis can be one of the most incapacitating diseases found in man or beast.

A trip to the vet is advised before any treatment. It is possible that a dog's stiffness or lameness could be caused by a something other than arthritis. A complete physical exam, the animal's history, X-rays, blood and laboratory tests will help with the diagnosis. Arthritis comes in various forms. Diagnosis must be accurate as various joint diseases call for different treatment protocols.

Signs Of Arthritis:

- stiffness
- unwillingness to lie down or get up
- difficulty climbing stairs or getting into a vehicle
- changes in appetite or behavior
- aggressiveness or snappiness
- reluctance to go for long walks
- limping
- restlessness when standing still
- swelling
- pain on movement
- "ratcheting" sound in joints
- range of movement restricted
- licking or biting at the area that is painful
- not wanting to be touched
- chilly and intolerant of cold
- intolerant of heat

Causes of Lameness That Could Be Mistaken For Arthritis:

- too long or ingrown nails
- matted hair between the pads
- a pulled or infected nail
- a sprain or strain
- pulled muscle
- a spasmed back
- a wound
- tumours

Types Of Arthritis

Degenerative Joint Disease

(Osteoarthritis): results from the destruction of cartilage that protects the bones of the joint. Destruction could be the result of normal stress on abnormal joints. An example is of this is hip dysplasia which is a malformation of the hip socket. This is not a major problem in Wheatens because reputable breeders have their dog's hips X rayed at two years of age. The X rays are submitted to The Orthopedic Foundation for Animals in Columbia, MO. where an OFA certificate is issued grading the health of the hips. An online database containing the hip status of individual dogs is available to assist the breeder and veterinarian in reducing the frequency of hip dysplasia by making informed choices in their breeding program.

Destruction of cartilage could also be the result of abnormal stress on healthy joints. Abnormal stress could be caused by injuries from a fall or accident, overly strenuous exercise, or constant jumping over obstacles. Degenerative arthritis may appear after years of abnormal stress. Cartilage has no nerves so the damage can progress with no signs of pain until the joint is already severely damaged.

One in five dogs is diagnosed with Osteoarthritis. There are probably more but in many cases the slowing down and

stiffness is simply attributed to old age. The longer a dog has lived, the more wear and tear its joints will have had. The heavier a dog is the more stress on the joints. Because genetics can be a factor, chances of developing arthritis increase if the parents had it. Nutritional deficiencies at any stage of life can also lead to the poor development and/or maintenance of joints.

Inflammatory Joint Disease: can be caused by underlying immune-mediated diseases or by infection. This type of arthritis usually affects many joints and can be accompanied by fever, anorexia and an over-all stiffness. Immune-mediated arthritis is caused by a weakness in the immune system and can be hereditary. Infectious joint disease can be caused by bacteria, by tick-borne diseases and by fungal infection.

Ways To Help Your Arthritic Dog:

- first and foremost provide a premium diet free of all chemicals and preservatives
- control your dog's weight
- give a reasonable amount of controlled exercise
- provide warmth and good sleeping areas free of drafts
- a firm orthopedic foam pet bed* reduces pressure on joints
- heated orthopedic pet beds are also available
- a soothing massage can relieve stiffness
- elevated feeders* make eating and drinking more comfortable
- ramps help pets get down stairs or into a vehicle easier
- get early diagnosis and recommended therapy from your vet

*available at some local pet stores or from Pet Supply House catalogue. Phone 1-800-268-3716 or online shopping at www.petsupplyhouse.com

The Prairie Wheaten

Arthritis Therapies

In most cases arthritis cannot be cured. It is managed. Pain relief is the major goal. Always seek your vet's advice before administering any medication or supplement to your dog. Watch for side effects in all treatments. Keep in mind that if your dog is not helped by one treatment, it may be helped by another.

Buffered Aspirin: A buffered aspirin formulated specifically for dogs may provide anti-inflammatory and pain relief, but as with all aspirin products there is a risk of intestinal upset or gastric ulceration. Giving aspirin with food could reduce the possibilities of side effects.

NEVER use Acetaminophen (Tylenol) for the relief of pain in your dog. It is not an anti-inflammatory and can have toxic effects on a dog's liver. Ibuprofen (Advil) can cause serious effects in dogs as well - there is no safe dosage.

Glucosamine and Chondroitin: These two supplements have been widely used to treat both animals and humans for osteoarthritis. They are "nutraceuticals", not pain killers. They work to heal damage that has been done. Glucosamine and chondroitin are normal substances found in the bodies of living animals. Glucosamine provides the building blocks to synthesize new cartilage. Chondroitin blocks destructive enzymes that break down cartilage in the joint. Because these are naturally occurring supplements they are safe and show few side effects. It takes at least six weeks for the damaged cartilage to begin healing and most animals need to be maintained on these products the rest of their lives.

The best results come from products formulated specifically for dogs. Some product names are: ArthriSoothe, Winston's Joint Formula, Drs. Foster and Smith's Joint Care, Glyco-Flex and

Cosequin. Each of these supplements has a different formula and may contain vitamins, manganese, sharks cartilage, yucca or boswellia as well as glucosamine and chondroitin. Some pet food companies are producing arthritis formulated diets and dog biscuits containing glucosamine and chondroitin. Before purchasing, read the label carefully to make sure the other ingredients are healthy.

Although the benefits of glucosamine and chondroitin have been known for many years we might wonder why they have not been promoted by more vets or doctors. The main reason is that these products cannot be patented so offer little incentive to the big pharmaceutical companies. It is the big pharmaceutical companies that keep vets informed of the latest discoveries. Millions of dollars are spent in research. Pharmaceutical companies need a patented product to promote and thus recoup their investment.

Various glucosamine/chondroitin products available at some local pet stores or: www.animalanimal.com or www.vitamincircle.com

Adequan (Polysulfated

Glycosaminolycan): This product helps prevent the breakdown of cartilage through a product administered in a series of shots given over a few weeks. Although there are favourable results, the expense and inconvenience of weekly injections are a deterrent when many oral glucosamine products are available and effective.

Corticosteroids: These prescription products, in pill or injectable form, were used for many years to treat the pain and inflammation of osteoarthritis. Their use is now controversial. They have many undesirable side effects - excessive drinking and urination, skin thinning and hair loss, redistribution of fat throughout the body and liver problems. They are now used only in older animals where all other products have failed.

Rimadyl: The Rimadyl drama has been played out on the Internet and in the media. Here is an example of a large pharmaceutical company, Pfizer, seeing an opening in the \$3 billion annual pet drug business and developing Rimadyl. Millions of dollars were spent on marketing. TV ads featured elderly dogs who once hobbled around now running and romping free from pain. It seemed like the fountain of youth. When Rimadyl finally came out on the market in January 1997, vets had waiting lists of clients clamoring to get the popular new wonder drug for their arthritic dogs. Rimadyl promised to be more tolerant on the gastrointestinal system than aspirin and produce fewer side effects than steroids.

While some dogs were having great success with Rimadyl other dogs were having serious medical problems leading to death. Five months after release Pfizer complied with requests to change the package insert and letters were sent to veterinarians with the latest information on side effects. By April 1999, Rimadyl was believed to cause a possible 49 adverse side effects from mild gastrointestinal upset to changes in behavior to serious liver or renal dysfunction resulting in death.

On the Internet there are happy stories of miraculous cures with Rimadyl in dogs who were suffering debilitating arthritis. There are also heartbreaking stories of death from the side effects of Rimadyl as well as information on a class action suit against Pfizer. A group known as B.A.R.K.S (Be Aware of Rimadyl's Known Side Effects) has been formed on the Internet.

If Rimadyl has been recommended, or your dog is currently taking it, inform yourself of potential side effects. Your veterinarian may not have warned you or may not know them. If your dog has any adverse reaction take him to the vet immediately. Prompt action may save your dog's life. Your vet should then file

The Prairie Wheaten

an adverse reaction report with Pfizer. Some veterinarian costs related to treatments for adverse reactions or death caused by Rimadyl are being reimbursed by Pfizer.

For a balanced view of Rimadyl's benefits and safety problems, including a complete list of adverse reactions, do a Search for Rimadyl at:

www.gooddogmagazine.com - a sort of consumers reports for canines.

For more information from people who have had bad experiences with Rimadyl visit the Senior Dogs website at: www.srdogs.com The B.A.R.K.S. Group mentioned earlier can be found at this site as well. Pfizer's Rimadyl web page is: www.rimadyl.com

EtoGesic: Manufactured by Fort Dodge Animal Health, EtoGesic acts like Rimadyl. It is also a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory. Gastro-intestinal side effects may occur in some dogs as well as dry eye syndrome and photosensitivity. Some dogs respond better to EtoGesic, some better to Rimadyl. Either drug may cause side effects. Either drug could cause relief.

Anecdotal reports and more information: www.srdogs.com/Pages/etogesic.html

Cartrophen Vet: This drug was developed by Arthroparm Pharmaceuticals in Australia before Rimadyl. The drugs are radically different in that Cartrophen purports to promote the regrowth of cartilage and the generation of synovial fluid. It can be obtained by prescription in capsule or injectable form. Lethargy and a rise in body temperature have been reported in the first 48 hours.

Anecdotal reports of success with Cartrophen Vet can be found at: www.srdogs.com/Pages/care.cd.html under "Arthritis".

Arthroparm Pharmaceuticals website is: www.arthritis.au.com

Vitamin C: Studies have linked Vitamin C to the control and prevention of many diseases. It is an antioxidant and important in the synthesis of collagen and cartilage. The benefits of Vitamin C for degenerative joint disease are only speculative. Reasonable doses of Vitamin C do not seem harmful. Research may someday show it prevents or treats joint disease. Do not use a human form of Vitamin C for your pet. Powdered ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) is available at health food stores and can be mixed into your dog's food. It does however, have a bitter taste. It would be more effective to use a canine formula such as C-Flex. This is a unique calcium ascorbate complex specifically ph balanced and non-acidic, making it easier for dogs to digest.

Surgery: Some forms of degenerative joint disease can be treated with surgery. An example would be hip replacement in dogs with hip dysplasia. A new form of surgery to ward off hip dysplasia has been developed by veterinarian professors at North Carolina University. The drawback is that it must be performed on a puppy less than 22 weeks old. Dysplasia is often not diagnosed until a dog is much older.

Chiropractic and Acupuncture: Chiropractic adjustments followed by acupuncture treatment helps pain management in some arthritic dogs.

Homeopathy: The sooner treatment is begun, the more likely deterioration will be slowed. Some of the remedies for use in the early inflammatory stages are as follows.

- *Rhux Tox. 6c.* This is an important remedy for musculoskeletal pain. Rhux Tox is used when arthritis pains are aggravated as the animal first moves but symptoms ease after continued movement. Other symptoms in this patient include pain that worsens with cold and lying at rest.

- *Bryonia 6c.* When the patient's pain is intensified by movement and the dog does not want to budge this remedy may be helpful. The affected joints in this patient may be swollen and hot. The dog may be irritable and prefer to be left alone.
- *Arnica Montana* This is useful for the patient with an intense pain that feels like a bruise. Other symptoms of this dog are his preference to lie still and fear of touch due to the pain.
- *Ruta Graveolens* This remedy may be helpful for spinal arthritis where the patient is worse when sitting and lying around, but better when moving about.

These and other remedies can be found in the books: Dogs: Homeopathic Remedies by George MacLeod, MRCVS, DVSM, Vet FF Hom and Homeopathic Care For Cats and Dogs by Don Hamilton, DVM

Herbal Treatment: A rosemary brew is recommended. Feed chopped, raw parsley and comfrey leaves mixed in with the dog's meat. Comfrey is the "arthritic herb". Boiled nettles are thought to be curative. Massaging the painful area with a lotion composed of 4 tablespoons olive oil, 1 tablespoon linseed or sunflower oil, and a half teaspoon of eucalyptus oil is helpful.

This advice is from The Complete Herbal Handbook for the Dog and Cat by Juliette de Bairacli Levy

MSM: This is methylsulfonylmethane, a source of biologically active sulfur, which is critical in the formation of collagen and glucosamine - vital components for healthy bones, joints, ligaments and tendons. Good results may take 6 - 8 weeks. MSM is for long term maintenance. Without the supplement, limping and discomfort could return. Available at some local pet stores or: www.animalanimal.com

The Prairie Wheaten

Chinese Herbal Remedies: These herbal remedies have proven safe and effective for over 3,000 years. Specially formulated remedies are vet-tested and come in easy to swallow pills. Chinese remedies often work when Western medicine doesn't.

Available at some local pet stores or: www.animalanimal.com

Shark Cartilage: Available in tablet or powdered form, shark cartilage may provide relief from the pain and crippling effects of arthritis. It can be successful in many severe cases where traditional treatments have failed or produced harsh side effects. Some shark cartilage products also contain glucosamine.

Available at some local pet stores or from Pet Supply House 1-800-268-3716

Magnets: Some people think that a strong magnetic field stimulates circulation, boosting the healing process. Magnetic collars and magnetic pet mats may be available at some local pet stores or: www.animalanimal.com

Copper: The "Freedom Collar" is made of 99% fine copper thread woven into a soft band which fastens with a buckle around the dog's neck. The collar is believed to work the same way as copper bracelets to relieve the pain of arthritis in some humans. Freedom Collars available at:

www.freedomcollars.co.uk

Arthritis Preventative Measures:

- Most important of all, provide the best possible nutrition throughout life - good food builds and maintains good bones.
- Maintain an optimum weight.
- Do not improperly jerk on collars and leashes - you may put undue stress on your dog's upper cervical vertebrae.
- Keep your dog from stressing joints with abnormal jumping from heights - i.e. help him down from the grooming table.

In Memoriam

It has come to our attention that these Wheatens have passed away.

The Cibart's Murphy in May - age 15

James Bastion's Bandit in December

The Fritz's Trego

The Hamilton's Keely in August - age 5

The Johnson's Malley in September - age 14

The Clark's Shreddie in September - age 14

Our thoughts and our sympathy goes out to the loved ones of these wonderful Wheatens.



President's Report

Our president, Margaret Stewardson, is recovering from a second surgery to repair a broken femur suffered in an accident in September. Margaret hopes everyone had a good summer and all the Wheatens survived the heat. She's sure they will be looking forward to the cooler Autumn weather. Margaret hopes to be moving well enough with her walker to get to the Wheaten Walk to see everyone. She's been somewhat lonely being confined to the hospital or her home. A big thank you from Margaret to ALL who helped out in various ways and came to the rescue with the care of her dogs. As well, a sincere thank you to the club for the fresh fruit basket she received in the hospital.

Birth Announcement

Margaret Stewardson's "Beatrice" - Ch.Medwinn's She's Got Wil' Power CD TT - had 7 healthy puppies on June 6, 2001. The 4 girls and 3 boys survived the HOT HOT summer without an air-conditioner. All are in their new homes except for "Prissy", the one Margaret has kept.

Correction

Please note that in the last issue, "Paxton's" name should have read: CH. Wicklow Jonaire Kaxton E-male in the National Director's Report and in the caption accompanying the Specialty 2001 congratulatory picture.

The Prairie Wheaten

Grooming A Wheaten

by Carolyn Fox

Grooming is an important part of Wheaten ownership. Often the Wheaten is chosen because of its beautiful, soft, non-shedding coat. The non-shedding feature, although a wonderful advantage, is often the bane of a busy owner. If the hairs that loosen from the body remain in the coat and begin to mat, that busy owner may have a nightmare on his hands. A matted Wheaten may be forced to endure hours of painful pulling and tugging on its hair and skin to remove the mats with mat rakes and other tools of torture. Wheatens beyond "mat rake" recovery may simply have to be shaved to the skin.

Most reputable breeders supply a new puppy owner with a manual covering all aspects of Wheaten care which includes grooming information and perhaps even a grooming chart (trimming guide). If you were able to visit your breeder in person you probably got a hands on demonstration. If for some reason you were overlooked, or simply need a refresher course, we offer this grooming information.

Getting Started: Get your puppy used to the grooming routine from the beginning. It won't be so hard on him (and you) when he is larger and has more coat. If he will lay on his side while being combed you are better able to get under all the layers - he will learn to relax and may even sleep during the whole procedure! It's much easier to train an 8 to 10 week old puppy to relax and get used to grooming than it is to "fight" with an 8 to 10 month old full grown puppy. It takes time to teach them to relax but if you are persistent in your efforts it is well worth the effort. Remember, he may be stubborn at first and not want to lie there - you must firmly but gently teach him that he does what **YOU** want.

A grooming table of some sort is convenient and comfortable. If you do not wish to purchase one, groom on top of a regular table using a non-slip rug or

mat. By the time your puppy reaches 8 to 10 months, more frequent grooming for a few months may be required as the coat goes through a transition stage from puppy coat to adult coat. As it mats easily at this time, don't let the coat get ahead of you!

Regular Combing: For grooming, use a pin or slicker brush and a good metal comb. Many Wheaten owners find the "Greyhound comb" works well. This is a metal comb without handle - one half has fine teeth, the other half has medium teeth. Some prefer to groom with a comb that has a comfortable handle. As he gets older, you will learn how often to comb your Wheaten to maintain a mat free coat. Our Max is combed thoroughly once a week. Even though his coat is very thick it only takes 20 - 30 minutes to do a good job. Alan uses the slicker brush to brush the hair back against the grain starting at the skin and brushing upwards. With metal combs (fine and medium) he then combs from the skin downwards with the grain. As well as getting loose hairs away from the skin it allows all skin to be visually examined for rashes, wounds, ticks or other problems. It is important to get to all areas including "armpits".

Removing Mats: THE BEST CURE FOR MATS IS PREVENTION. A Wheaten who is combed regularly will never have mats. Mats form when loose hairs are left in a dog's coat to kink, knot or intertwine with one another and sometimes with dirt, grit or vegetative matter as well. The formation of mats can pull on tender skin causing pain. Mats also aid in the formation of hot spots or irritation of the skin with eventual infection, skin outbreaks, or possible fungus or insect invasion. When removing a mat work gently to avoid irritation of the skin. Start at the outside of a tangle, slowly progressing toward the skin. If the coat is severely matted work in short sessions and praise your dog often for putting up with the painful process. A variety of mat rakes or dematting tools are available for severe mats. These have long razor sharp blades that can slice



through mats and tangles allowing a comb to then pass through. Blades with serrated edges seem to work best. The only solution for felted mats may be shaving. This should be done very carefully, possibly by a professional, to avoid nicking the dog or causing further irritation to already inflamed skin.

Bathing: BEFORE BATHING YOUR WHEATEN ALWAYS COMB HIM OUT. Loose hair and mats tighten up to become even worse problems during a bath. A hand held shower attachment for the bathtub is useful for bathing your dog. A non slip rubber bath mat in the tub will make your pet feel secure on his feet. Apply an ophthalmic ointment to protect the eyes and insert a cotton ball in each ear to prevent water from entering the ear canal. Thoroughly soak your pet and apply the shampoo, massaging it all the way through the hair and into the skin. You may wish to use a gentle, non irritating "tearless" shampoo. Don't forget to wash behind the ears as well as the top and bottom of the ear flaps. Rinse away all shampoo completely, paying particular attention to the armpits, groin and between the toes and pads. A second application and rinse may be required. Apply conditioner or creme rinse with the last rinse for a softer more manageable coat. Squeeze excess water from the coat then rub vigorously head to tail with a large towel, first with the grain then against the grain. Comb through wet hair to prevent tangles, then let the pet dry in a warm draft-free area. For a full fluffed appearance or on cold winter days, blow dry the hair with a warm, not hot, setting. While blow drying (or combing or trimming), a grooming arm is beneficial to keep your dog from jumping off the grooming table.

The Prairie Wheaten

Nails: KEEP NAILS TRIMMED - not simply as part of the grooming process but for your pet's health as well. Untrimmed nails can cause a variety of problems including limping and/or painful broken nails which can bleed profusely. If the hook is cut off each week you can keep this under control and it doesn't become a traumatic experience for either you or the dog. Styptic powder such as "Kwik-Stop" is available from most pet supply stores and will stop bleeding immediately if you accidentally draw blood. When styptic powder isn't available, kitchen flour will do the trick, but it is not as effective. If he will lay down on his side relaxed, it will be much easier. Using good quality nail trimmers cut the nail below the quick on a 45 degree angle, with the cutting edge of the nail trimmer toward the end of the nail. It is a good idea to make several small nips instead of one larger one. Trim until you see a black dot towards the center of the nail when looking at it head on. This is the start of the quick you want to avoid. If the nail should splinter, several strokes with a "pet" nail file will leave the nail smooth. After trimming, the nails should not touch the floor while the dog is standing. When the nails start to click on the floor it is time to trim them again. If this becomes part of your regular grooming routine, your pet will learn to accept it quite willingly.

Ears: Ear infections can be excruciatingly painful. Examine the ears for problems and clean them once a week to fend off infection. Dampness in the ear canal promotes formation of bacteria and fungus - the reason for placing cotton balls in the ears at bath time. To keep the ears clean do the following: While holding the ear up and back, use a cotton ball to remove surface dirt in the ear canal. Place recommended amount of ear cleaning solution in the ear. Gently massage the base of the ear between thumb and forefinger to work solution throughout ear. Gently wipe out the ear with cotton ball or gauze pad. Repeat until canal is clean and dry. If your dog

has a very hairy canal you may wish to pluck those hairs from the inside of the ear canal, using your fingers or hemostats (round tipped tweezers) which may be purchased from your vet or pet supply store. Astringent ear powder makes this process a lot easier. Use extreme caution in the ear canal. Long hairs left in the ears of a long-haired dog provide a perfect breeding ground for bacteria. Any foul odour, discharge, red inflammation or pawing at the ears may be signs of ear mites or infection. The sooner an examination by your vet, the better. Recurring ear infections are often caused by allergies to food or environment (i.e. dust mites).

Eyes: Keep the corners clean of dirt on a daily basis.

Teeth: Dental care kits with toothpaste specifically prepared for dogs, tooth-brushes and finger brushes are available at most pet supply stores. Brushing your dog's teeth helps prevent gum disease and plaque build up. You can obtain an old tooth scaler from a dentist to carefully clean all the yellow build up from the your dog's teeth if necessary. If you choose not to do this, have your vet do it for you as needed. A dog who is used to having his mouth opened and handled will make your vet's job easier during a physical examination.



As a young puppy, Max was taught to cooperate on the grooming table for his weekly comb out.

Pads: Keep the hair clipped out from between the pads on your dog's feet. Small blunt-nosed scissors are good for this job. With long hair growing around the pads the dog will have trouble getting traction on tile floors and will also have a tendency to bring in more dirt, mud or snow than necessary.

A list of basic grooming supplies:

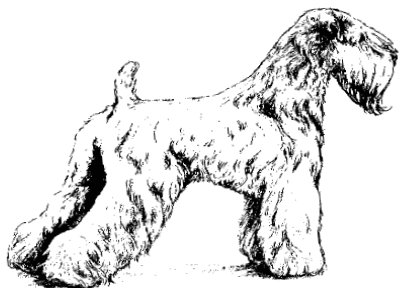
- grooming table - grooming arm optional, but very useful
- slicker brush
- fine and medium combs with comfortable handles
- Greyhound comb
- small blunt tipped scissors
- good quality nail clippers
- pet nail file
- styptic powder to stop bleeding
- thinning shears for trimming
- straight shears
- dental care kit
- pet shampoo and conditioner
- dematting tools are available, but hopefully not required
- quality hemostats (to remove hair from ear canals)
- ear cleaning solution and powder

If you should have trouble finding any of these supplies, all are available in The Pet Supply House Ltd. catalogue at 1-800-767-9991

The Prairie Wheaten

Trimming: Included with this newsletter is a basic trim and grooming guide. Using this guide you could learn to trim your own Wheaten. Should you feel intimidated, remember that all Wheaten owners who trim their dogs started at a point of “zero knowledge” on the subject. Some of us who now have a number of years of experience are willing to demonstrate grooming techniques. (See “Proposed Grooming Seminar”) It is hard to go too wrong if you use thinning shears. Thinning shears keep the Wheaten coat looking natural by avoiding scissor marks. Trimming a freshly bathed dog produces the best results. A grooming table with a grooming noose and arm provides the ideal work area. As you scissor, comb the thinned hair out of the coat often. Step back to view the results then continue with small sections at a time, keeping the final “look” in mind. Working in front of a large mirror allows you to see both sides of your dog at the same time and gives you a good prospective on how your final “look” is advancing. Copies of the grooming guide pages could be laminated and pinned up near you for guidance.

For those who have neither the time or inclination to trim a Wheaten we are compiling a list of professional groomers who do a good Wheaten trim. Please submit your choice of good groomer and their location and we will publish a complete list in the next issue. So far we have: Lydia at Petcetera in Regina and Reg at Furs Made Fabulous in Regina. If you happen to have a groomer who is unsure of the Wheaten “look” you may wish to make a copy of the guide for them.



Before

After

Max is securely in place for his trim with a grooming arm and noose on the grooming table. Carolyn uses thinning shears on his coat to prevent scissor marks. Three and a half hours of work - that's after his comb out, bath, pad trimming and ears have been done by Alan - and Max is transformed into a “handsome” trimmed Wheaten.

PROPOSED GROOMING SEMINAR

Local club “experts” are willing to put on an informal grooming seminar if enough interest is shown. Combed and bathed Wheatens would be welcome for demonstration purposes. Trimming with thinning shears or with electric trimmers could be demonstrated. We could also help with your Wheaten trimming problem areas. Other club “experts” would be on hand to answer your questions and demonstrate grooming procedures on your Wheaten, from combing to cleaning ears to clipping nails to trimming pads. Other club “experts” would keep us supplied with coffee and food.

If you are interested in such a seminar contact Alan or Carolyn Fox at **306 543 7004** or email us at afox@sk.sympatico.ca. If enough interest is shown we will set a time and place.

The Prairie Wheaten

St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program by Christine Mirka, Ponteix, SK

Casey and I participated in the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program in Kelowna, B.C. in 1997. The following information about this program has been copied from the St. John Ambulance website at http://www.sja.ca/english/volunteer/therapy_dog_program/index.asp

“St. John believes that anyone, anywhere can benefit physically and emotionally from regular contact with the unconditional love of a dog. St. John Ambulance recognizes that many people spend time isolated from their families, often in hospitals, seniors’ residences or nursing homes. It was a natural extension for St. John Ambulance to look for a way to care for these people.

The St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program began in Peterborough, Ontario and has expanded across the country. Partnerships have been established in hospitals, palliative care units, day care centres, senior residences, rest homes, special needs schools and psychiatric hospitals where people are often restricted from having pets.

The medical profession has for many years widely acknowledged that petting and stroking pets can have a calming effect, lower blood pressure and relieve tension. Many stroke patients will lift their “useless” hand to feel the touch of soft hair. Alzheimer patients unable to remember what they had for lunch will chatter about the dog they had for many years. Those who can walk receive pleasure from holding a dog’s lead and walking the corridors. The completely paralyzed Multiple Sclerosis patient is able to cuddle a small dog on their bed. Consumers of mental health services find peace in the quiet love and petting of a dog. Mentally challenged children learn gentleness.

The Therapy Dog Program takes a volunteer and their dog into organizations on a weekly basis. Through regular visiting, a bond is created between the client, dog and volunteer. The Therapy Dog Program is an officially recognized program conducted by St. John. Every age group is helped by this type of activity.

Any dog of sound temperament can become a Therapy Dog. The St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program assesses each dog’s temperament to ensure their suitability for the program. Before being accepted as a St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog, the dog must demonstrate certain capabilities, such as:

1. Accepting a friendly stranger,
2. Sitting politely for petting,
3. Walking on a loose leash,
4. Walking through a crowd (including wheelchairs),
5. Sitting on command/staying in place, and
6. Reacting well to another dog or to distractions (noise, jogger).

Regular feedback and reassessment of goals and expectations from members of the medical, nursing, therapy and recreation personnel have contributed to an increased demand and heightened interest in the program. Currently, over 30,000 people isolated from the community are receiving visits from over 2,500 volunteers and their dogs. Ongoing dialogue and support have also ensured that program expectations are being met for our volunteers, the client and the organization.”



Casey the Therapy Dog

I have found that the Wheaten temperament is ideally suited to the Therapy Dog Program. Casey and I enjoyed many visits to Nursing Homes including an Alzheimer’s unit. I found that the residents and Casey both benefited from the experience and the staff in the facilities looked forward to our visits as much as the residents did. During one particular visit, I was chatting to the staff with Casey at my side. An Alzheimer’s patient was sitting near us, seemingly oblivious to the world around him. I was told that this resident was unlikely to realize we were even there. Casey seemed to take notice of him and walked over and put his paws on his lap. The gentleman seemed to come to life, smiling and recognizing the dog as a friendly visitor and giving him a pat.

Since moving to Saskatchewan, Casey and I haven’t been formally involved in the Therapy Dog Program although he does make occasional visits to the Nursing Home where I work.

The Prairie Wheaten

An “Athlete’s” Story by Sue Luchuck



A limp! How did that happen? What’s wrong? What’s happened to my Taffin?

As it turns out, no one can really tell me how. There are many theories, such as running on an uneven surface (a field perhaps) and stepping into a depression or jumping off of something and landing strangely, or jumping on to something. And Taffin won’t tell!

The what’s wrong part was easy to diagnose. Taffin, who is 11 years old, had torn the meniscus and ruptured the cruciate ligament on the right rear leg. Huh, you say? Well, so did I. I didn’t think I’d ever heard of those terms but once the Veterinarian explained them to me, I realized that they happen to athletes with some regularity (you know, the anterior cruciate ligament “ACL” injuries). Imagine, my Taffin having something in common with athletes!



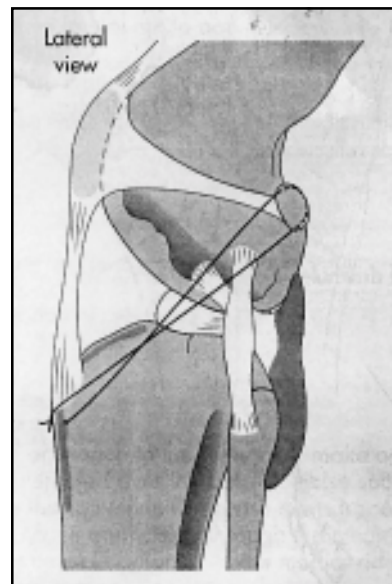
The meniscus is the soft pad that separates the kneecap from the knee joint. The cruciate ligament is the one right behind the knee that holds the knee assembly in place. With a ruptured cruciate, the knee moves around. The injury is also more common in our four legged friends that I realized and since Taffin was diagnosed I have heard many similar stories. Taffin is hypothyroid and it is more common in animals with this condition, for some reason.

The only cure is surgery. The surgery happened on July 12. An overnight stay was required. The entire leg was shaved, as well as a patch at the back of the neck for the pain medication patch, and a place on a front leg for the IV. Taffin looked like a war casualty with all of her bandages. My little soldier!

The surgery involved opening the knee and moving the patella to get to the meniscus, which was removed. A stabilizing nonabsorbable suture, much like fishing line, was used to act in place of the torn ligament. The knee is reassembled. About 12 stitches were needed to close the incision, which I took out after 11 days. Antibiotics were the only additional medication required.

The hard part (on both of us) was the recovery. Orders were that Taffin was not to put any weight on her rear legs, that I was to use a towel around her middle to support her weight. This was to happen for the first week. Well, once was enough for Taffin. I mean how dignified is that?! Limited movement only around the house until the fourth week when we could go on short leash walks. Leash? Yeah, right! Absolutely no stairs for something like 6 weeks. Try 6 days. Well, she is a Wheaten, don’t you know!!!

It is now the middle of October. The hair has almost grown back and life is back to normal. Taffin still carries her leg off and on when she gets tired, but occurrences are lessening. The really lasting part of the whole ordeal is that her tail now lists slightly to the right! I don’t know why but I guess that’s why she is unique and I love her!



Lateral view showing how the heavy nonabsorbable suture passes through deep fascia surrounding the fabella and through a predrilled hole in the tibial crest.

The Prairie Wheaten

Recipes For Dog Treats

These nutritious yet delicious recipes are appropriate for everyday enjoyment or for gift giving. Use holiday shaped cookie cutters for treats and biscuits to package in festive containers or cellophane bags to give as gifts to your favourite canine friends. Do remind the recipient's owner that the biscuits should be kept frozen or refrigerated.

The recipes presented here were tested in Carolyn's kitchen and heartily approved by the enthusiastic Taste Testing Panel: Taffin, Ceilidh, Chelsea, Sadie, Chinzia, Lexi and Max.

Nutty Fruit Treats

2½ cups whole wheat flour (or various other flours)
1/3 cup chopped unsalted pecans and/or other nuts
1 cup oatmeal
½ cup dried fruit (apricots, raisins, cranberries, apples, bananas)
¾ cup milk
4 tbsp margarine
1 egg

Combine dry ingredients. Gradually add milk, margarine and egg. Knead until a dough forms.

Roll dough to ¼ inch thickness. Cut with cookie cutter and place on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 300° for 45 minutes. Keep in fridge or freeze.



Very Veggie Biscuits

3½ cups whole wheat flour (or various other flours)
½ cup cornmeal
½ cup diced celery
1/8 cup diced red bell peppers (optional)
½ cup shredded carrots
½ cup unsalted sunflower kernels
1 tsp chopped parsley
½ tsp each oregano leaves and kelp
1 clove minced garlic
1¼ cup broth (vegetable, chicken)
3 tbsp corn oil

Mix broth and oil. Add flour, cornmeal, vegetables, garlic, parsley, and sunflower seeds. Knead dough for a few minutes. Roll to ¼ inch thickness. Cut shapes and place on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Keep in fridge or freeze.

Delectable Dog Cookies

3 cups whole wheat flour (or various other flours)
¼ cup chopped unsalted nuts and/or seeds
2 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 eggs
2 tablespoons molasses
any or all of the following, to taste:
grated cheese, fresh garlic or garlic powder, nutritional yeast

Combine all ingredients and knead into a firm ball; add milk if more moisture is needed.

Roll the dough out and cut it into your dog's favourite cookie shapes. Place them on a greased cookie sheet and bake at 300° for 30 to 40 minutes or until the cookies are crispy.



Doggie Biscotti

3 eggs, well beaten
½ cup unsweetened applesauce
1 cup chicken stock
2 cloves garlic, pressed
2 cups kamut flour
1 cup millet flour
1 cup ground unsalted sunflower kernels
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon kelp

Mix the wet ingredients together. Do the same with the dry ones, though separately. Blend all ingredients well. Combine both wet and dry materials, adding flour or more liquid to make the dough stiff enough to handle, yet still slightly sticky.

Preheat the oven to 350°. Form the dough into three logs, about 14" long and 4" wide. Lay them on one baking sheet. To keep the dough from sticking to your hands, slightly oil your hands with olive oil. Bake for close to 30 minutes. Take from the oven and let them cool for 15 minutes on a wire rack.

Reduce the oven temperature to 300°. Slice the biscotti in the traditional angular way, about ½ inch per cookie. Lay the biscotti flat on a cookie sheet and bake for another half hour or until dry. Turn off the oven and let the slices stay in the oven for a harder biscotti. Freeze to retain freshness.

The Prairie Wheaten

Delicious Dog Cookies

1½ cups cooked rice*, oatmeal, or other whole grain cereal
¼ cup whole or skim milk powder
¼ cup vegetable oil
¼ cup wheat bran
¼ cup whole wheat flour, rye flour, or corn meal
any or all of the following, to taste:
grated cheese, nutritional yeast, fresh garlic or garlic powder, oregano, fennel seed, unsalted seeds or nuts

Combine all ingredients into a firm ball; add milk if more moisture is needed. Roll the dough out and cut it into your dog's favourite cookie shapes. Place them on a greased cookie sheet and bake at 300° Fahrenheit for 30 to 40 minutes or until the cookies are crispy.

* I used cooked rice and found I needed to add an egg and more flour to get a firm ball of dough that held together.

Carob Chip Biscotti

2 eggs, beaten
6 tbsp. carob chips
2 tbsp. honey or molasses
½ cup beef or chicken stock
½ cup chopped unsalted nuts and/or sliced almonds
¼ cup unsalted sunflower kernels
2 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. kelp
2½ cups dark rye flour

Combine and gently heat 2 tbsp. carob chips in stock. Add honey or molasses when chips are melted. Remove from heat, add beaten eggs. Set aside. In separate bowl combine nuts, seeds, baking powder, kelp and rye flour. Mix well. Incorporate liquid into dry ingredients. When thoroughly mixed, add remaining 4 tbsp. of carob chips and distribute throughout dough.

Divide dough in half and form 2 logs about 10" long by 4" wide. Place on a cookie sheet. A bit of vegetable oil on your hands will prevent dough from sticking. Place logs in a 350° oven for about 25 minutes.

Remove logs from oven. Reduce oven to 300°. Allow logs to cool on rack for about 15 minutes, then slice ½" slices in the traditional angular way of biscotti. Lay the slices flat on the cookie sheet and bake for another 25 minutes. Turn off oven and let slices stay in the oven for a harder biscotti. Freeze to retain freshness.

Note:

Kamut flour, millet flour, unsalted sunflower kernels, kelp, carob chips and nutritional yeast are available at health food stores.



**I talk to her when I'm lonesome like,
and I'm sure she understands.
When she looks at me so attentively,
and gently licks my hands;
Then she rubs her nose on my tailored clothes,
but I never say naught thereat,
For the good Lord knows I can buy more clothes,
but never a friend like that!**

-W. Dayton Wedgefarth



The Prairie Wheaten



Deborah Saucier, of Saskatoon is shown here with Lastingimage's Shania Kwain, co-owned with Helen and Jerry Larson of Winnipeg. Zoe has been doing well on the show circuit and is shown here taking Best Puppy In Show at the Saskatoon Dog Show in September.

This is Ch.Wicklow Jonaire Kaxton E-male, bred by Mike Dumelie and Barb Osborne, winning a Best Puppy In Show and First In Group, one of many wins "Paxton" has been awarded throughout the summer.



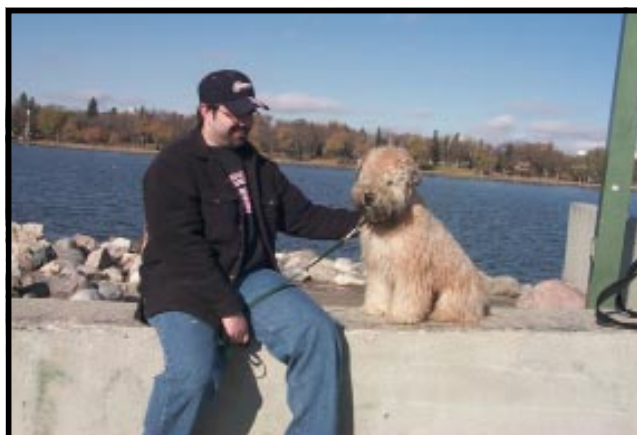
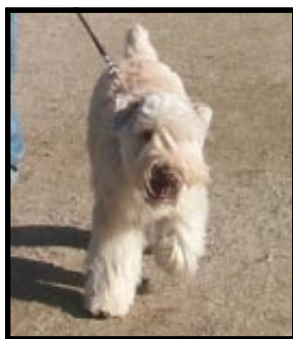
The Prairie Wheaten

Wheaten Walk

Sunday, October 21 was a cool but sunny day for our Autumn Walk. 40 humans, 21 Wheatens, and 3 other breeds came out to walk. To our delight, people came from as far away as Moose Jaw, Saskatoon and Prince Albert. As you will see in these pictures, a fun time was had by all.



The Prairie Wheaten



The Prairie Wheaten

Microchips: Do You Recognize This Dog?



This bar code doesn't look much like a dog but it actually is a Wheaten, Canadian American Champion Glengay Maximilian - "Max". If Max becomes lost this bar code would identify him and he could be returned home. This is because Max has a microchip transponder implant the size of a grain of rice containing an alpha-numerical number code implanted under the skin between his shoulder blades. A microchip reader passed over the microchip by a veterinarian or The Humane Society will read his identity, which can then be verified by records stored in the Canadian Kennel Club data base. Identification tags and collars can fall off a lost dog. Tattoos are painful when applied and can be difficult to read and trace. A microchip causes no discomfort and always remains in place, the one downfall being that is not readily visible.



***** **DEADLINES** *****

Updates

The only way we can keep our files up to date is for you to inform us of your change of address, phone number, or email address, a new puppy, or the death of a Wheaten. If you know anyone in Saskatchewan with a Wheaten who is not receiving our newsletter please inform us of that too. We will add them to our mailing list. Contact Alan Fox, the record keeper, by email or phone as listed on front cover. As you know, the newsletter comes to you free of charge but we are always willing to accept donations to offset postage costs. Donations can be sent to Sue Luchuck, our treasurer. Her address is also on the front cover. Ideas for topics to be included in future newsletters are also welcome.

Deadline for submissions for the next issue is February 1

Please make your submissions
(preferably on disk or good clear hardcopy) to:

Carolyn or Alan Fox
74 Cooper Crescent
Regina, SK S4R 4J7
or email at c.fox@dlcwest.com

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