

## 05-18 Scottish Terriers

The good we do!

I'd like to shed some light on something we do as breeders of pure-bred dogs. Rarely acknowledged by the press or public as it really should be, we are at the forefront of much of the health research that benefits our breed and all dogs. You may wonder how we do it. It's simple – we support and help fund studies.

Just one example of research in Scotties, I will use Deborah Knapp DVM's study at Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine on bladder cancer. As breeders of Scotties, we have taken a particular interest in helping Dr. Knapp because of the prevalence of bladder cancer in our breed. We have brought dogs to her for diagnosis and counseling. We have met matching funds and we have made our own veterinarians aware of progress in research.

This is a good thing. And, it benefits all dogs. It is the commonality that we share as breeders who strive to produce offspring that are as healthy as we are reasonably able to do. This drives the support we give research. I am not so sure that we would see the kind of funds and personal support if we removed pure-bred breeders from the equation. This is a metric I think would be worth noting. It would be an excellent point to bring up the next time we are chastised for breeding or berated for wanting to buy a purposeful bred pup.

From my own personal experience, my old gal was diagnosed with a bladder tumor over two years ago. My first reaction was to talk to fellow club members and get their input. My next call was to Purdue. I was so impressed with the reaction I got from Dr. Knapp's assistant. She shared information with me and also suggested that I have the oncologist I was working with contact them for additional input. I was lucky. The tumor was operable. We were able to remove it and "reset the clock" so to speak. I was asked about chemo but knowing my line and its longevity I declined the treatment. Instead, I decided to follow the NSAID treatment of Piroxicam that was being recommended by the studies at that time. My vets at the clinic have been amazed at the progress of my gal. She turned 13 last November. As of this writing, she's still doing well, and the tumor has increased but at a very slow rate. It is still in the least invasive area. We have had two years of excellent quality of life! Without a study like Dr. Knapp's, I don't know that I would have seen the same results.

This is just one example of what good we do as breeders. It is the blood, sweat and tears that we put into every litter we bring into the world. We always ask more from our vets and the research community in order to help produce the best we can. In doing this we benefit all dogs as well as the accidental mixes, the rescues and the not so carefully bred dogs. I, for one, would like to see this trumpeted more broadly throughout our country.

Perhaps it is the rallying cry that the AKC can use to help promote pure-bred ownership. Perhaps our breed clubs can do more to spread that word. I know my own experience recently helped an owner of a rescue beagle who has also been diagnosed with a bladder tumor. She and her local vet had no idea about the research or treatment options. I directed her to Purdue and my oncologist. Paying it forward, it's the good we do!

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