Blrish Wolfhound Foundation



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Focus

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Rescue Update From Texas, After the National Specialty

by Ann Sury, SCIWC, Rescue Chair

The IW Specialty this year in Greeley Colorado was a wonderful event. I was fortunate to be able to attend and represent the work of SCIWC Rescue.

For me personally, it was very exciting to attend my first Specialty and share the story of "The Texas 72". Thanks to Deborah Sanders of the Rocky Mountain group, I was able to have a booth to help tell the story. The booth included a notebook of submitted diaries, framed feature stories, electronic frame slideshow of early pictures I took of hounds and large framed visuals of the chronological steps during the rescue process. While there, I had the opportunity to meet rescue members from other states to discuss their rescue experiences. Products were sold in the booth with proceeds benefiting rescue. Dedicated space on our club website now features these items so ongoing orders can benefit the Rescue cause.

"The Texas 72" presentation during the Specialty that Dr. Melanie Mercer gave, was well received and got a standing ovation to a packed room. Lady, #737 and her owner, Kim, who live in Colorado, visited the booth and presentation. Beth & her husband, that own Shae #688, flew in from Alaska to attend the Specialty. They helped at the booth and shared their perspective on what it's been like having one of these hounds. She attended the Auction and now has several more IW items due to winning bids. On the way back to Dallas, Melanie & I stopped by the Bowens in Colorado. It was heartwarming to see how great Atticus, #663 is doing. Randy & Shannon Bowen generously donated a wonderful pottery piece that was sold during the Specialty's live auction.

SCIWC member, Melanie Mercer was formally elected Vice President for IWCA. She chairs a newly formed Rescue Committee that will make recommendations to the Board on improving policies and procedures for Rescue. She also co-chairs the Liaison Committee. Melanie was honored with the AKC Sportsmanship Award at the

Judge's Dinner. IWCA commissioned a piece by Margie Milne to recognize the Houston SPCA for their service to "The Texas 72". It will be accompanied by a \$1000 check from IWCA to the HSPCA.

I wish to thank the members of the Foundation for their continued financial support of "The Texas 72". It was my pleasure to attend the Specialty and share what good can come out of a bad situation. My hope is to help efforts to aid future rescues and prevent a situation like this from happening again. In the meantime, much progress has been made with the Fostered or Adopted hounds. Small steps translate to big achievements when they can go through a doorway, come into a room, can be touched or even walk on a leash. I applaud the Mentors, Rescue Committee members and Foster/Adoptive homes for their dedication and commitment. We celebrate success however small. At this writing, there are only five challenging hounds left to place. Please enjoy the few individual success stories that I have provided to the FOCUS.

(See pages 4 & 5 for the success stories)



The Texas 72 Booth at Nationals

PVCS In The Irish Wolfhounds



Submitted by Mariellen Dentino MD

What Are PVCs?

In a normal heartbeat the atria (upper or filling chambers of the heart) contract and send a signal to the ventricles (lower or pumping chambers of the heart) to contract. When the ventricle contracts early without the usual signal from the atria it is called a premature ventricular contraction or PVC. If the atria or upper chamber contracts early it is called an APC or atrial premature contraction.

APCs may be a precursor to atrial fibrillation but they are not associated with sudden death. Although single PVCs are not symptomatic, sometimes these early beats come from different sites in the ventricle (multifocal) and or occur in multiples (couplets,triplets). This can lead to ventricular tachycardia or ventricular fibrillation and these rhythms are associated with fainting and even sudden death. In certain breeds such as Boxers or Dobermans PVCs on a screening EKG are a known precursor to DCM (dilated cardiomyopathy) or sudden death.

What do PVCs mean in the IW?

PVCs are a sporadic arrhythmia and thus the incidence is not certain in the IW.

In Germany 2.6% of hounds were reported to have PVCs on screening Ekgs done at a veterinary hospital in asymptomatic hounds.

In England an incidence of 4% was reported. These screening EKGs were done at shows and at private kennels.

In the Lifetime Cardiac Study (USA) 2.6% of asymptomatic hounds had PVCs on the entry EKG. These EKGs were done at shows or iw gatherings.

Many of these hounds continued in the LCS, and follow- up ekgs were available on 65 hounds with PVCs .

In this population of 65 asymptomatic hounds with PVCs on a screening EKG, 17 or 26.1% did NOT have PVCs on subsequent EKGs. Multiple abnormalities including AVBlock (16.9%) and APCs (12.3%) were noted on follow- up EKGs in this population and were usually transient. 18.4% of this population developed atrial fibrillation during follow up.

Echocardiograms were available on 23 of these hounds. No hound with PVCs as the only arrhythmia had an abnormal echocardiogram. No hound in the PVC only population developed DCM (dilated cardiomyopathy).

Are PVCs associated with early death in the IW?

Date of death and cause of death information was available on 26 dogs and 31 bitches with PVCs. For this population mean age at death was 8.2 years- bitches 8.6 years and dogs 7.7 years.

There were 4 reported sudden deaths-3 within a year of the tracing with PVCs. In the LCS total database the incidence of sudden death in the general population was 3.9% and in the overall PVC population was 9.6%.

Cause of death in hounds with PVCs

Nine hounds had many years of normal EKGs and within a year of developing PVCs 7 had died of osteosarcoma and 2 of lymphoma. Cardiac irritability shown by this arrhythmia may reflect the inflammatory nature of certain malignancies.

Table 1				Table 2			
Dogs			Bitches	1			
	Osteosarcoma	9		Osteosarcoma	12		
	Euthanasia for rear weakness	6		Hemangiosarco ma	3		
	Pneumonia	2		Lymphoma	1		
	Trauma	2		Euthanized for	7		
	Sudden Death	2		rear weakness			
	Megaesophagus	2		Sudden Death	2		
	Bladder Atony	2		Pneumonia	1		
total	Lymphoma	1		Megaesophagus	1		
		26		Infection	1		
				Post op bleeding	1		
				Bloat	1		
				Ruptured chemodactoma	1		
			total		31		

Further investigation of PVCs in IWs

The IWF supported a study with Dr. K.E. Schmitt to examine the hypothesis that PVCs on a screening EKG in the IW were a benign arrhythmia not associated with structural heart disease or clinical consequences. 19 hounds entered the study with an EKG,holter monitor,blood work (there are metabolic conditions that can cause PVCs),and echocardiogram. On holter exam there were 7 dogs with worrisome ventricular arrhythmias although the screening EKG had shown only benign appearing PVCs. 6 of these hounds were started on medication for the ventricular arrhythmias. At the end of the study period 13 dogs were deceased. 11 were non cardiac and 2 dogs had sudden death.

The IWF has continued to fund investigation into this arrhythmia. Dr. Bill Tyrrell et al will follow 15 IWs with PVCs on screening EKGS and NO worrisome ventricular arrhythmia on holter monitor. Blood work and echo will be obtained at initiation into the study. The hounds will have yearly echo, EKG and holter monitor and be followed through their lifetime.

This study will hopefully provide data for vets and owners that in THIS population of IWs PVCs ARE a benign arrhythmia.

Hounds are still needed to participate in this study.

Conclusions

In the population of 65 asymptomatic IWs with PVCs on a screening EKG 26.1% did not have them on subsequent EKGs.

In the LCS data the mean age at death in a population of 819

Testing Eyes at 2015 IWCA Nationals

Submitted by Frances Abrams

In addition to providing the testing at the IWCA Specialty, Dr. Steven Roberts provided a summary of eye diseases and their occurrence in the Irish Wolfhound based on the CERF/OFA research database Unlike the open databases such as the Canine Health Information Center (CHIC) this includes all dogs tested for certification. Unfortunately, over the period from 1991-1999 there were only 511 Irish Wolfhounds tested. From 2000-2009, 750 IWs were tested and from 2010-2012 only 221 were tested. While this points to a slight upward trend, it is clear that most owners are not testing their dogs at all, let alone on an annual basis.

Problems in the IW Breed (1991-2012)

The most common lesion overall was distichaisis, a disease in which eyelashes are abnormally located on the eyelid margin. This can occur at any point in a dog's life. Inheritance is not understood,



Photo by Mary O' Malley

hounds was 7.4 years and mean age at death in the PVC population(65 hounds) was 8.2 years. So certainly PVCs are not a predictor of early death in the Irish Wolfhound.

There were no abnormal Echos reported in this population and no hound in the PVC only population died of DCM. PVCs are NOT a precursor to DCM in the Irish Wolfhound.

The incidence of sudden death in this population was much higher than in the general population (9.6% vs 3.9%). This plus the surprising number of serious arrhythmias found on holter monitors in this population suggest PVCs are NOT ALWAYS a benign arrhythmia in an asymptomatic hound.

All data suggests that IWs with PVCs should have a holter monitor.

PVCs in an asymptomatic hound with a benign holter monitor exam are felt to be a benign arrhythmia in the Irish wolfhound. Data is being collected to examine this hypothesis.

In older hounds with many years of normal EKGs the appearance of PVCs may suggest an underlying malignancy- in the data it was osteosarcoma or lymphoma.

In the population with date of death/cause of death follow-up available, there were 31 bitches and 26 dogs. In most sub populations there were slightly more bitches than dogs but no real difference in sexes could be identified.

although it appears to be more common in some breeds than others. This condition can be quite painful to the dog. Approximately 5.2% of wolfhounds tested had this problem.

Second most common was iris cysts, with about 5% of dogs affected. These are fluid filled sacs arising from the iris, to which they may remain attached or break free. They usually occur in adult dogs. Again, inheritance is unknown but these generally do not affect vision. This does not affect breeding but should be noted.

Cataracts cause opacity of the lens and can cause blindness but some occur as part of the aging process, some are caused by trauma, and some are the result of infectious or metabolic disease. The prudent approach is to assume cataracts are hereditary where no other cause is known. A large number of the cataracts found in IWs were "unspecified" but there were many in the anterior and posterior cortex. 181 dogs of the 1482 had either a cataract or an incipient cataract. This, however, covers a wide variety of categories.

Progressive retinal atrophy (PRA) is a degenerative disease of the retina that progresses to blindness. This is known to occur in Irish Wolfhounds and to be heritable in all dogs. It can be detected with an electroretinogram (not part of standard screening) prior to clinical detection. In this population of 1482 dogs, only 2 dogs with PRA were identified. A concerted effort to remove carriers from the breeding population by wolfhound owners appears to have been effective in preventing this disease, again indicating the value of routine testing. This is also the only disease that has a presumed autosomal recessive inheritance.

Another disease assumed to be inherited is retinal dysplasia. This comes in a variety of forms. The majority of affected wolfhounds seem to have retinal folds, which may resolve with maturity, may not affect vision and do not necessarily preclude breeding. A few dogs with geographic retinal dysplasia were found in the population tested. It is recommended that these dogs not be bred, although the heritability is not actually known.

Testing Results

The results for the dogs tested this year are provided below. Most dogs were normal or had findings that were minor. However one dog had a tumor. Fortunately, with early detection, the tumor was treatable. This points to the importance of regular eye testing, not just for breeding, but for the health of your dog.

Irish Wolfh	ound Eye C	ertification	ı Clin	ic						
Animal Eye Center; Dr. Steve Roberts, 215 W. 67th Ct, Loveland, CO										
Hosted at the Irish W	olfhound Specia	lty - 5/25/201	5; Greel	ley, CO						
	Ge	Gender			Age (yrs)					
Eye Findings	Male	Female	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Normal	7	7	3	4	4	1		2		
Disticha		2		2						
Cataract	2	1			2		1			
Corneal dystrophy		1					1			
Persistent Pupillary Membrane - iris to iris		1			1					
Iris melanoma	1				1					
Lens sclerosis (normal aging change)		1							1	
Total	10	13				23				

Thanks again to Dr. Roberts of the Animal Eye Center in Greeley and his staff, Rachel Fulton and Brenda Roberts for running the eye testing. They were an amazing team. And thanks also to my excellent volunteers Ron Rutter, Sally Love and Beth Stobart who held dogs.

Sweetie, #644

A lucky puppy was one of the first hounds to leave the Houston SPCA bound for Dallas.



Early Sunday morning, October 5, 2014, Donna Drake started her five hour drive from the Dallas area to Houston, to pick up 2 Irish Wolfhound puppies. She had no idea what to expect.

The puppies were housed in a separate area from the adult wolfhounds. After a brief visit to see the puppies she was taken to the area where the adults were housed. What she saw was heart breaking and emotionally difficult to describe even today.



The girls were referred to by number and estimated to be approximately 3 months old. One of the girls was severely underweight at 17 pounds, weak with general muscular wasting. The other girl was approximately 25 and appeared in slightly better condition. On arrival at the SPCA on September 12, both were saturated with urine, covered in feces and infested with live fleas and flea dirt. They were also found to be positive for hookworm, guardia and demodex. They were cleaned up and started on treatment for worms, diarrhea and fleas.

There was just something about the tiny one with bright, dark eyes and a sweet, hopeful expression. That was when she became Sweetie. She was so weak she had trouble walking from the house to the grass, so the patio became her potty area for about a month. She also never barked in the begin-

ning. After the first week Donna scheduled a visit to her vet for an exam and bloodwork. What the blood work revealed to us was liver dysfunction. In early Nov, she underwent a nuclear medicine study with ultrasound that confirmed a large, intrahepatic portosystemic shunt within the mid liver. After being in her care for the first month her weight went from 17 pounds to 26 pounds.

The next step was for her to have a consultation with an Sweetie, #644 A lucky puppy was one of the first hounds to leave the Houston SPCA bound for Dallas. The next step was for her to have a consultation with an internal medicine vet for medical management and treatment options. After the consultation she was placed on a prescription hepatic diet. She was also placed on Lactulose and antibiotic (Lactulose is a laxative to help rid the intestines of ammonia toxins produced in the liver). Almost immediately after starting the hepatic diet and medications her strength increased. She became very active when out with the other dogs, her weight was up to 40 pounds and she discovered her bark which she exercised frequently and loudly.

Her next appointment with the internal medicine vet was in early February approximately 3 months after starting medical management, her weight was up to 63 pounds. Long term treatment options discussed included medical management, surgical correction of the shunt or a new minimally invasive procedure called Percutaneous Transjugular Coil Embolization (PTCE). It was decided early on that the complicated surgical procedure was not an option for Sweetie due to the size and location of her shunt. PTCE looked promising but is a new procedure only being done at a few centers across the US. Luckily, Texas A&M Veterinary Teaching Hospital is one of those centers

February was a special month for Sweetie and her household. On February 15, 2015, the Drake's final adoption of Sweetie was approved by SCIWC.

On April 2, 2015, Sweetie and Donna traveled to Texas A&M to start the evaluation. As of May 14, 2015 no decision has been made. As we wait, Sweetie continues to progress with medical management, as of May 11, her weight was up to 80 pounds. She loves being outside with the other dogs (3 wolfhounds and a three-legged greyhound) and gets involved in the chase when they try to catch squirrels. Sweetie is a friendly, tail wagging, outgoing youngster who loves to visit Petsmart, Three Dog Bakery and go for walks in the neighborhood. She seems to think any person or dog she encounters on her outings are there just for her.

We don't know what is in store for Sweetie but we do know that she is enjoying life now. If she crossed the Rainbow Bridge tomorrow she has had a caring, loving home for the last 7 months. We are hopeful she will be with us for many months and hopefully, years to come.

Many thanks to SCIWC, the tireless volunteers in the Houston area and the foster/adoptive homes for all of these dogs.

Ginny, #746

Ginny rarely moved. She wished to be invisible





Ginny wanted to be invisible during her stay at both the HSP CA and Prestonwood Kennels. She was in need of special attention and became Michael's 'special project' in Austin where Baire was also being fostered in October. Patience paid off.

Margo will never forget the moment that she and her husband spotted Ginny, in January 2015. She was huddled on a soft mattress, trying to be invisible. In spite of four months of loving care with her foster family, she was still terribly shy and fearful. She sat next to Ginny for 30 minutes, not looking at her as she quietly placed her favorite treats nearby. One by one, she nibbled the snacks; until finally, she licked Margo's hand in thanks. That was it. She loved Ginny.

These days, Ginny shares the home with four rambunctious Golden Retrievers and one crabby, elderly Beagle mix. They celebrate Ginny's small victories:

- · Sleeping all night in their bedroom, surrounded by Golden Re-
- Strolling through the house slowly (no bolting)
- Coming inside when called, instead of running the other way
- · Relaxing with Margo in her office
- Romping and wrestling and playing bitey face with her best pal, Bijou the Golden Retriever
- Approaching Margo (!) as she stands nearby
 Staying nearby when friends come to visit, instead of fleeing

They realize that it may be months or years before Ginny is entirely comfortable with her strange new world. That is all right with them. They have the time, and the patience. Ginny is worth wait-

My Motto: Bark early and often/what's mine is mine, what's yours I can steal/are you going to eat that? At all costs be dignified,

Turn-ons: (anything that looks like a rabbit)

Favorite Snack: Freeze dried Duck Hearts & scrambled eggs

Greatest achievement: Holds a Dogtorate I Psychology Ginny, #746 Ginny rarely moved. She wished to be invisible.

I'm most neurotic about: Humans coming near me when I stand

Biggest lie I ever told: "no, I haven't eaten yet.

Most enjoyable thing I've ever chewed up: 3 bedroom window sills

My best qualities: I have a heart of gold.

Favorite sleeping position: Upside down with my feet in the air.

Anything else we should know about you? (I yawn every time someone talks sweet to me).

What I do for fun: I run laps in the yard & throw toys in the air.

Favorite hobby: Digging giant holes in the backyard.

She is a Super Destructo Excavator.

Strangest dream: I won the limbo contest.

If I weren't a dog I'd be a: Librarian, because I am very, very quiet.

Rosie, #643

Early on, Autumn Rose, aka Rosie, became the HSPCA Poster Hound. She was anaemic, emaciated, tick infested and heartworm positive.



Rosie was one of the sicker hounds identified at the HSPCA needing additional medical attention. She was suffering from an upper respiratory infection that ultimately killed several of the weakest hounds. When she was stable enough to be released from the HSPCA clinic, she was relayed to the Dallas area. On arrival, Dr. Melanie Mercer oversaw her medical treatment and remains engaged in her recovery to this day. During the course of the rescue operation, a direct email address was set up by Dr. Mercer and made accessible to all the Fosters so they could easily communicate as medical conditions arose, expediting treatment of the Texas hounds where necessary. Rosie now resides with JoHannah, a a valued member of the SCIWC Rescue Committee.







The Irish Wolfhound Foundation

The purpose of the Foundation is to promote the appreciation, knowledge, and understanding of Irish Wolfhounds by raising and allocating funds for research, education, and rescue.

Presidents Message

June 2015

I am just back from the National Specialty that was held in Greeley Colorado, what a great event it was. I have to brag a bit having bred, owned and handled this year's best of breed winner, CH Hound Hill Vale of Aerie, what a thrill! That aside, I wanted to say it was great to meet so many Foundation supporters in person that I would not normally see east of the Mississippi.

As you all know, it takes many volunteers to pull such an event together, I thank each and every one that was involved in this year's National. Show Chair Tracey Luty and her able show committee put on an event that was relaxed, fun, and full of good sportsmanship inside and out of the show ring.

The overall atmosphere was so welcoming in contrast to the last few years when things where so contentious. The AGM was quiet and respectful; the reconvening of the AGM the next day was also productive and without drama. I was glad that the IWCA Board approved a schedule change for the AGM so the Judges dinner could be enjoyed in a relaxed setting without the opportunity for some folks to grandstand and ruin the end of a great week.

A few more to thank: To Belle McCluskey who did a wonderful job organizing the auction which is a major fundraiser for the IWCA and the Foundation, well done Belle and committee; to our own Frances Abrams, Mariellen Dentino, and of course Dr. Bill for all their hard work with health testing; to Mel Mercer for sharing a well-received presentation on the "Texas 72" rescue efforts. The Foundation is hoping to bring Mel East this October so she can share that with the rest of us here on the east coast. We will keep you posted, a must see.

I wish everyone a happy and healthy summer,

With Best Regards, Doug Marx – IWF President

Thank You Texas 72 Donors

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Memorial for a friend who dearly loved our hounds



Irish Wolfhound Foundation - Rescue Grant Report

The end of December, 2014 brought us one more Rescue Grant request for \$189.39.

Date IW Amount State December 8, 2014 \$189.39 Male GA Final Reimbursement Total for 2014 - \$1,590.25

2015

February 16, 2015 Female \$323.80 MI

Update on the Houston, TX rescue situation - Most of the rescue hounds have now been spayed and neutered. There are only 13 hounds left to be altered.

Below is the breakdown for those hounds still to be spayed/neutered:

RMIWA - Complete Mary Ryan & PVIWC -- 2 hounds SCIWC - 11 hounds

One hound in the PVIWC group gave birth shortly after arrival to 4 puppies. Those hounds will also be altered at the appropriate age.

Every bill submitted for these rescue hounds has been paid in full, due to the generosity of all who donated funds. Many thanks!!

Jean A. Minnier - IWCA & IW Foundation - Rescue Chair

IWF Research Committee Members

Mariellen Dentino, MD, Chairman Janice M. Bright, BSN, MS, DVM, **DACVIM**

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Frances Abrams, PhD, Administrative Coordinator Frances.abrams@att.net

The Irish Wolfhound Foundation, Inc.

Focus 537 Hack man Rd. Lititz. PA 17543

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Ann and Mel with Atticus (Texas 72 Rescue #663)

Irish Wolfhound Foundation



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Please use my contribution for the following:

Research	_Education	Rescue	Wherever it's needed most
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Country:			
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All donations to The Irish Wolfhound Foundation are tax-deductable.

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