



AIREDALE TERRIER CLUB
OF METROPOLITAN
WASHINGTON, DC, Inc.
Newsletter

www.airedales-dc.org

March 2017



Airedales in the Scottish Walk in Alexandria

Club Officers

President	Corally Burmaster
Vice President	Karl Broom
Corresponding Secretary	Ginger Robinson
Recording Secretary	Ginger Robinson
Treasurer	Jeanne Esmond

Directors

Pam McKusick
Jeff Miller
Wilder Leavitt
Mary Morningstar

Committee Chairs/Coordinators

Airedale Rescue	Pamela McKusick
Breeder Referral	Pamela McKusick
Newsletter	Jessica Rabin
Scottish Parade	Wilder Leavitt
Specialty Ads	Jessica Rabin
Specialty Show	Corally Buraster
Trophies	Deb Todhunter
Website	Karl Broom

Website: www.airedales-dc.org

The Club Objectives

- (a) To encourage those who breed Airedale Terriers to do so responsibly and with the welfare and improvement of the breed having highest priority.
- (b) To urge members and breeders to accept the standard of the breed as approved by the American Kennel Club as the only standard of perfection by which Airedale Terriers shall be judged.
- (c) To do all in its power to protect and advance the interests of the breed by encouraging sportsmanlike competition at dog shows and obedience trials.
- (d) To conduct sanctioned and licensed specialty shows under the rules of the American Kennel Club.
- (d) To institute and maintain programs which promote the welfare of individual Airedale Terriers through rescue and education, and through any other means which the Club considers helpful.

Newsletter Disclaimer:

Newsletter articles are the views and opinions of the authors and are not official Club policy. Club policy is made only by motions passed by the board or by the voting membership.

From the Editor

I hope all of our members and their Airedales enjoyed the holiday season!

As a club, we added to the festive atmosphere with our participation in the Scottish Walk, as Wilder Leavitt reports.

For members who have young dogs, Ann Riley addresses the question of how to curb some excessive puppy enthusiasm in group play situations, while I share some of my research on the optimal time to spay or neuter.

Sadly, several of our members are mourning the loss of their Airedales. I know all of us will keep them in our thoughts.

Please help me ensure that the newsletter reflects the interests of our members by contacting me with ideas for features, questions for Ask the Trainer, and news of your dog's accomplishments. I look forward to hearing from you at jgrabin@aacc.edu.



Jessica Rabin's "Willa" enjoying her holiday presents.

Airedales in Alexandria

By Wilder J. Leavitt

Who knew that all I needed to do to get thousands of people to smile at me, wave at me, and clap their hands together for me was to get an Airedale Terrier. That's just what happened on December 3, 2016 when members of our club, non-club Airedale owners, and my wife, Mary Morningstar and I participated in the 2016 Annual Scottish Christmas Walk Parade in Old Town, Alexandria, Virginia. But as I walked proudly along the city streets, reality slowly set in; the crowds of old and young alike weren't cheering for me, but for the 45-pound, 2 ½ year old, black and tan showstopper trotting along next to me. I think she knew it too; she was strutting along like she was prancing down a Milan catwalk, tail high and a spring in her step.

Sandwiched between a fife and drum corps and several dozen Scottish Deerhounds right behind us, about thirty of us and our prized four-legged friends marched through the colonial-era streets saying hello to onlookers and trying to avoid errant deposits of hard-candies strewn here and there on the asphalt clearly dropped by earlier revelers. Dogs and owners met, shared stories, and proudly paraded from block to block stopping now and then to allow giggling children to pet the pooches. We carried the ATCMW banner out front and dogs of all ages, some acquired from breeders and some rescued, crisscrossed the group wearing decorative Scottish-themed ruffs around their necks. Our youngest marcher, a four-month-old barely trained to walk on a leash, made it through the whole parade on his own four paws.

Events like last December's parade are dichotomous. We are drawn together through a homogenous interest: our love of dogs and, in particular, our love of the Airedale Terrier. But when we come together, we are also offered the unique opportunity to hear and share diverse stories and perspectives about how we got our dogs, what we feed and how we care for our dogs, and what activities we seek



out for our Airedales. For Mary and me, showing off our own pride and joy was fun. But meeting new people, seeing their dogs, and sharing the bright, brisk winter day with those along the parade route made it a truly enjoyable experience. And nothing brought more smiles to all of us in our group than turning a corner and hearing an excited spectator yell, "Yeah! Here come the Airedales." We hope you will join us in December 2017 for our next parade.





Spotlight on Rescue

There are currently no dogs in rescue, but unfortunately, that can change at any moment!

Contributions to Airedale Rescue are tax deductible. Your contributions help pay for vet care, housing and food for rescued dogs. You can also volunteer by fostering, walking dogs, grooming, etc. Please contact Pam McKusick to donate or volunteer! Contributions may be sent to Pam at 5056 Ten Mills Rd. Columbia, MD 21044

For Consideration: When to Spay/Neuter Your Puppy

By Jessica Rabin

I'm an English professor—not a scientist, vet, or medical doctor—and this is an opinion piece. That said, I recently had the chance to do some research on the optimal time to spay/neuter a puppy, and I learned some information that I thought might be of interest to others. My mother got a 3-month-old Standard Poodle, Tristan, last spring, and she was willing to consider the possibility of waiting to neuter him. Here's what I presented to her:

When I got my first Airedale in the late 90's, common practice was for pet owners to spay or neuter by 6 months. Since then, however, numerous scientific studies have shown adverse effects for dogs that are altered before their growth plates have closed. This happens later in larger dogs, who need the extra time to mature compared to smaller breeds. Currently, many veterinarians recommend delaying s/n until dogs are fully mature, and many breeders who used to include wording in their contracts requiring s/n by 6 months now require buyers to leave the puppy intact for up to 18 months, depending on breed characteristics. I spayed Willa at 17 months (after one heat cycle) and am glad I waited.

While no one wants to contribute to pet overpopulation by producing an unplanned litter, there are numerous scientifically-validated reasons for delaying s/n, including orthopedic soundness, reduction of the likelihood of behavioral issues, and lowering cancer risk. Interestingly, some of the reasons that people perform s/n at 6 months (including reducing mounting and aggression) are, in fact, made worse by early s/n.

Canine Companions for Independence, the country's largest Service Dog organization, did a double-blind study 25 years ago to determine the optimal time to s/n their dogs; the results were not at all what they expected. They had hoped to find evidence in favor of early s/n so that puppy-raisers wouldn't need to deal with intact dogs. However, they found a significantly higher washout rate (i.e., dogs that were incapable of becoming Service Animals) in both males and females altered at or before 6 months compared to those altered at over 12 months of age. In 2008, CCI opposed California's proposed law requiring early s/n with the following position statement: "Calling AB 1634 the 'California Healthy Pets Act' is a misnomer. Surgical sterilization of preadult dogs has been shown to increase the risk for several significant behavioral and health problems. CCI did a study on the effects of prepubertal gonadectomy (i.e., sterilization) in 1990, and found significant increases in failure rates due to both medical and behavioral reasons in those dogs that had been sterilized early. This research has been repeated elsewhere with the same results. Increased incidence of health problems such as urinary incontinence, osteosarcoma, hemangiosarcoma, obesity and orthopedic problems as well as behavioral problems such as environmental fear and interdog aggression are strong arguments against prepubertal sterilization for any dog, but especially those destined for a working

role." The current CCI puppy raiser contract mandates that the dogs remain intact until they are returned to CCI (usually between 15 and 18 months).

Other more recent studies of 1000 Golden Retrievers (2013), 2500 Vizlas (2014), and 1200 German Shepherds (2016)—all published in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*—found early s/n was linked to aggression, fearfulness, and reactivity, as well as undesirable behaviors such as mounting. These dogs also experienced higher rates of hypothyroidism, pancreatitis, and some types of cancers, as well as CCL ruptures and hip dysplasia.

Most dog parks, training facilities, and competition venues permit intact males and only restrict females in season. While behaviors such as aggression and mounting are problematic, these behaviors are regularly displayed by altered dogs of both genders. The assumption that intact dogs are more likely to display unacceptable behavior is simply unfounded.



Willa and Tristan

Admittedly, there are some accommodations one has to make with an intact dog. Going through a heat cycle with Willa required a bit of extra work and vigilance. Overall, however, I was surprised to find that having a female in season was not that big a deal: keep her on leash outside of the house and in a pair of britches inside. In fact, Willa continued to come to work with me every day throughout her cycle without any difficulties. I wouldn't want to be going through a heat cycle twice a year with a Service Dog, but as a one-time experience, it wasn't a problem. For Tristan, I warned

my mother that she would not be able to let him off leash on their walks in the country and suggested that she remove him from a public dog park if she noticed another intact male. Even so, these short-term accommodations seem a small price to pay to support a puppy's long-term physical and behavioral well-being.

A scientist by training, my mother was swayed by the evidence and agreed to wait on neutering Tristan, a decision that is working out well for everyone. Tristan just celebrated his first birthday, and you wouldn't know he was intact without looking. He did get kicked out of a *Good Manners* class, but that was because the instructor deemed him too advanced and insisted that my mother to move him up to *CGC*.

Ask the Trainer

by Ann Riley

Q: My 10-month-old dog is getting into some trouble in his playgroup because he's started poking other dogs with his snout. If the other dog doesn't want to play, he just pokes harder. When he pokes a smaller dog, some of the other owners are afraid the smaller dog will get hurt. It would be great if the other dogs would correct my puppy themselves, but since they won't, what should I do?

A: I would love to see a video of this before I weighed in. But I would at least like to have more information about these interactions.

First, I would like to make sure that your puppy is not going to harm one of these small dogs. If he is drawing blood, the answer is yes, but I think that is not the case here, and I am proceeding on that assumption. Next, are the other dogs upset by your dog's behavior, or only the owners? Things that would worry me would be small dogs rolling on their backs and yelping while your dog persists in poking them. Even dogs showing other calming signals like turning their heads away, turning their backs, etc. and having your dog continue would indicate that he is not paying attention to, or ignoring other dogs' cues. What else is your dog doing during these play sessions other than nose-poking his buddies? Does he intersperse this behavior with play-bows and try to get other dogs to chase, or does he go up on his toes, stand over the dog and continue to poke mercilessly while the other dog cowers on the ground? If another dog growls or snaps at him, does he respond by backing off, bowing, or some other show that he means no harm?

Another important question is: does your dog get enough exercise? If his big chance to stretch his legs for the day is also his playgroup time, he may just be too wound up when he gets to the park. It's really difficult for adolescent dogs to control themselves, especially in an exciting, ramped up environment packed with dogs and people. A 20-30 minute walk, or vigorous game of ball in a fenced yard, before the play session might get rid of some of his energy before he gets to the dog park, and make it easier for him to control his enthusiasm.

Let's proceed with a couple of ways that you might manage this, and I think this is probably more of a management problem than a training problem. If it is only the people who are really bothered by the nose-poking I would suggest some tactful management of human behavior combined with some redirecting of the dog. You could try empathizing with the dog (owner) on the receiving end, apologize for how rude your dog is and say that you are trying to work on this. Distract (but do not correct) your dog with a ball, or some other toy that will break off the offending interaction. Let him go back and try again.

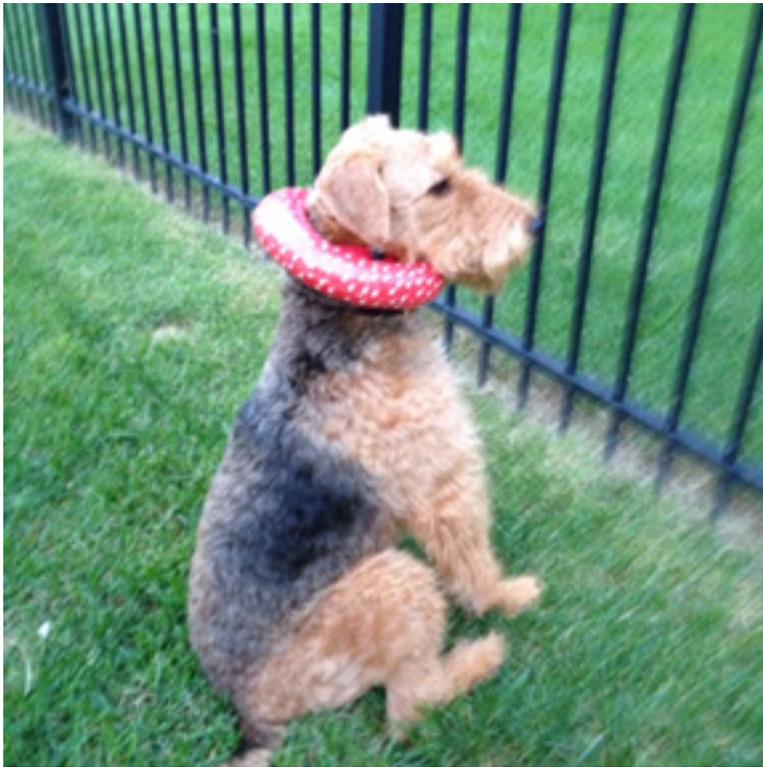
I know this may not be possible, but I would strongly recommend finding a dog playgroup of larger dogs who will either appreciate your dog's joyful roughhousing or let him know that his behavior is not acceptable. (My dog would LOVE to play with this guy!) You may still take him to your usual park most of the time, but if he could play with bigger dogs, even less frequently, but regularly, it might really help him. However, big dogs might only rein him in with other big dogs so you might need to find someone with a small terrier who will teach him the rules of the road without hurting him. If you are taking an obedience class, ask your teacher if she (or he) knows some dogs and sympathetic owners nearby who might be willing to help you with this by letting their dogs play with your dog on occasion. People who are actively training their dogs in a class are likely to be more knowledgeable about normal dog behavior and perhaps be less bothered by puppy boisterousness.

If your dog's behavior has crossed the line into something that is more bullying than playful, there are some interventions you could take. I would try diverting him when things get too rough. If he has a good recall, you can call him away and engage him in a short game of tug, or throw a ball, and then let him return to his pals until he gets too rough again. Alternatively, you could just walk over and clip his leash on and pull him away for a few minutes. He may learn that when he gets too rough, he loses his opportunity to play.

In summary, if this 10-month-old puppy shows no other signs of dog aggression, I am not very worried about this behavior. If he is only being playful but perhaps is not in an ideal group of dogs for his age and size, I would hesitate to punish normal, exuberant behavior that is played out in an appropriate context, outdoors, off-lead, with other friendly dogs. He is probably going to outgrow it and other dogs are probably going to teach him what is fair play and what is not. My only concern here is that it sounds like there is a substantial size difference between happy, outgoing young guy and his playmates. This can put the other dogs at risk and may justifiably worry the owners. In this case, it is probably best to find a way to distract him, or find better matched (size and perhaps age) playmates at least until he gets a bit older.

Membership Renewal

If you haven't already renewed your membership for this year, please do so quickly! They are due by March 31! Please see **page 16** for a membership renewal form. And remember, you can pay by Paypal for your convenience.



Solution of the Month

Annie, who belongs to members Jack and Laurie Abiuso, has a tendency to slip through the fence. Their ingenious solution is to put this inflatable collar on her!

ATCMW extends heartfelt condolences to members who have recently lost dogs.

Ollie Burns

Ed Burns writes: "Over the years, we have had to put dogs to sleep, but Ollie was truly the hardest I have ever experienced. He was always with me from the time we arose until we went to bed. He was so very special. Everyone in the neighborhood knew Ollie and Molly. Ollie came through Pam and the two hit it off from the start. Each Thanksgiving, I would go to Petsmart and get collars with bells. My 4 AM walks found the three of us rounding the neighborhood before I went to work. Some of my neighbors stopped me and asked if I would curtail the early walks until later in the day. The bells excited kids who thought Reindeer were running by their houses."



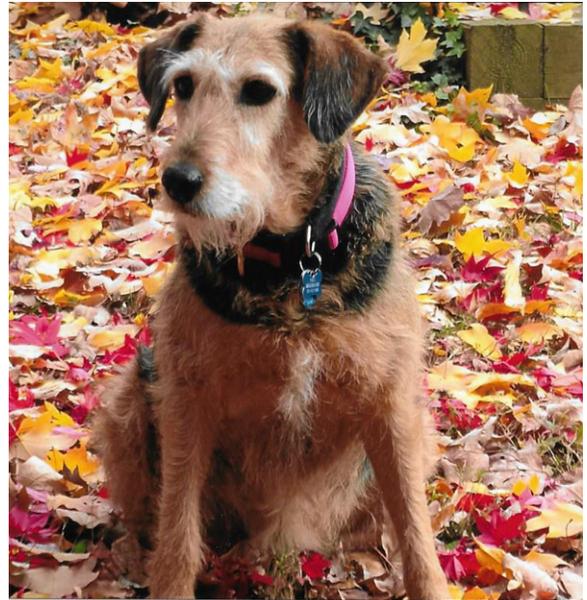
Ollie

Cora Pickard

Kathy Pickard writes: "Cora probably was not all Airedale, but she always recognized Airedales as kin! She was known as "Mia" in old rescue news, and had quite a back story for a 5 year old. I am so grateful that Pam McKusick asked me to care for her for one weekend in 2009 when she had to go out of town to pick up another dog. Due to snow, she had to postpone the trip, so I agreed "Mia" could stay with me until the trip was over. Well, "Mia" was renamed Cora and stayed with me the rest of her life! Cora was just right for me, and I loved her very much."



Cora 2009
Just after I got her from Pam.



Cora 2013

Upcoming Events

March 11, 2017- ATCMW Brunch and Meeting

The flyer with the information of this event has been sent to everyone by email. It is also included on **page 14** of this newsletter.

April 21, 2017- ATCMW Specialty

This is our annual conformation show held in conjunction with the Columbia Terrier Association of Maryland. This is historic for our Club since it is the first time an Airedale Club has taken advantage of the AKC's Parent Club Judge's Program! More on **page 15** of this newsletter.