

President's Message

Health Stories. Owner stories of their Beardie's health problem continue in this issue. Response to the first set of stories varied from how interesting, to worry and becoming upset when reminded of their own experiences, to enjoying the photographs, to questions and suggestions. One suggestion that has been implemented was to include information about the health problem from the open health registry at the end of each story.

These narratives include the learning curve of interacting with veterinarians and breeders. So there are valuable lessons for all. I am grateful the owners have been willing to share the difficulties and in some cases, the rewards.

Breeder's Brochure. We now are offering a free brochure introducing owners to BeaCon. This is for breeders to include in their puppy packs as part of our educational mission. Your distribution of the brochure may help to gain participation in the open health registry to track health from puppyhood. Breeders are invited to order brochures for your puppy buyers once the litter is born; contact Lynn Zagarella (bisbubby@aol.com) to request the number of brochures you need.

e-Newsletter. You are seeing the newly designed electronic newsletter. There is more space and unlimited color (like photos of the dogs in the health stories and graphs in the OHR report). The fall 2012 newsletter went by email to 334 and by snail mail to 1546. BeaCon's major expenditure is the newsletter printing and mailing. Your having changed to the e-newsletter saves \$ for research. Give your Beardie friends this link (<http://eepurl.com/vay2f>) to subscribe to the e-newsletter.

Research. BeaCon is accumulating funds for research, thanks to many individual and several generous organizations' donations in the last year, including Beardie Camp and most recently B.O.N.E. Rescue. The latter organization has dissolved and at the wishes of founder, Mia Sedgwick (a past BeaCon director), residual funds were divided between BeaCon and Rescue.

Symmetrical Lupoid Onychodystrophy (SLO) is the current research focus. **We cannot get research started until the control group is expanded (i.e., those funds sit awaiting YOU to provide controls).** Healthy controls age 8 years and over are needed for both DNA samples and the survey on environmental and other possible triggers of autoimmune disease. The control data will be compared with those of the dogs with SLO. The goal is 100 + controls; we have only 20. Surely those dogs are out there – if they could just paw in the survey it would have been done long ago. But, they are dependent on their human. Could this be your day to contribute? If yes, go to: <http://www.beaconforhealth.org/Research.html>

If no, well then.....

(OHR) Open Health Registry Report - Year 12. Thanks to 755 owners, the data on 2182 Bearded Collies reside in the registry. The reading is interesting. Do you know how many Bearded Collie litters and pups are registered with AKC each year? Is the number more or fewer than in the founding year 1977? Do you know the most prevalent health problems? Do you know the causes of mortality at different ages? It's all in the report; read and think about what it all means for the future of the breed.