

GDSCWTC Letter from The President

October 2018

This quarterly letter focuses on one of our programs that started in late 2016, early 2017. "Head Start" is a program that allows our club to grow membership and to introduce new puppy owners to the world of Wheatens.

Our club breeders support this effort on a voluntary basis by enrolling their puppy owners in the program by paying a one-time \$10 fee for each. This provides a one-year special associate membership to GDSCWTC that allows them to utilize the member section of our website, participate as members in our Facebook, and participate in all our club-sponsored member events.

We currently have four club breeders that participate in the program.

- Molly O'Connell – Stratford Wheatens
- Bergman/Chevalier – Heirloom Wheatens
- Beth Sorenson – Ceili Wheatens
- Bob & JD Johnson – DeLaney Wheatens

Our club has grown from 108 members in 2016 to 147 members this year. Approximately 85% of this growth has come from Head Start. We have also seen a large number of those Head Start members continue as regular members after the first year. This past year, 19 members converted to regular membership after their one year as a Head Start member. We will hope to see more next year as their one-year membership concludes.

Keep in mind these Head Start (HS) members are not just "pretty faces" sitting on the sidelines, but contributing members of our club. Terry Hock, one of our original HS members, has taken on the development and maintenance of our club's website. Many others contribute behind the scenes to make sure our various activities succeed without a hitch.

We encourage our breeders to participate with their puppies that they place in the front range of Colorado. These new owners can then have the best chance of full participation in our many club activities. These include events such as grooming seminars, agility fun day, barn hunt, and herding instinct tests. Patrice has also sponsored and led a series of classes entitled "Dog Shows for Dummies," focused on conformation showing. We are working to plan more and different fun events in 2019.

In order to make sure our HS members get some direct contact on a continuous basis, we have created the position of Head Start Liaison who is Nancy Burton (one of our current Board members) to be the contact point for anything related to the club and its activities. She can help explain our K9 jargon to our new HS members. Breeders are still the primary contact regarding questions and issues with their puppies. It is this constant contact and interaction that I feel is the main ingredient in seeing HS members convert to regular membership as they see value.

I think it is programs like Head Start that acts as a catalyst for keeping our club moving forward. We are always open to new ideas from our membership and are glad to hear from you about anything that is on your mind. Don't forget to attend our meetings when you can on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at The Bistro (at Aspen Grove), 7301 S Santa Fe Dr #180, Littleton, Colorado.

Have a great holiday season

Robert Bergman

President, Greater Denver Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club, Inc.