

FLORIDA LUPINE NEWS

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*Published Quarterly
for Members and Free
to Veterinarians,
Shelters, Donors,
Sponsors, Rescues,
and Animal Welfare &
Control Agencies.*

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What is the Florida Lupine Association?

By Kim Miles

The Florida Lupine Association, Inc., (FLA) was borne of the need for an organization that focused on the needs of wd owners and the responsible ownership of wolfdogs in Florida.

In 1997, many of the wolfdog owners who also dealt with wolfdog rescue saw the need for a cohesive organization that could be an active voice for and focus solely on wolfdogs and their owners in the state of Florida.

Toward the latter part of 1998, these same individuals decided that such an organization was now imperative due to (1) the large numbers of animals coming into rescue (both wolfdogs and dogs sold to unsuspecting buyers as wolfdogs); (2) the large numbers of unscrupulous "wolfdog" breeders in the state of Florida (and the nation); and (3) the large numbers of uneducated and/or irresponsible owners.

We met numerous times in the winter of 1998-1999 in an attempt to iron out the specifics of our objectives and how we would accomplish them.

On February 25, 1999, we held a meeting in Orlando to solidify our goals for Florida Lupine: both short-term and long-term.

Our six-month goals were to construct the Articles, the Bylaws and the Mission Statement for FLA and then to register the organization as a Non-Profit Corporation in the state of Florida.

With our objectives outlined and a clear sense of purpose, we submitted our Non-Profit Articles of Incorporation to the state in early June of 1999. On June 7, 1999, our Articles were approved by the Secretary of State and FLA was official.

The objectives of the Florida Lupine Association, as stated in the By-Laws, are as follows:

1. To provide education and information to members, breeders, governmental officials, shelter operators, and the general

public for the ultimate benefit of lupines: wolves and wolfdogs.

2. To track legal issues and legislation as it pertains to the wolf and wolfdog, and for the ultimate benefit of these lupine animals, in the state of Florida and to assist governmental agencies with these issues and legislation as needed.
3. To coordinate and cooperate with other national and regional wolfdog and animal clubs or organizations for the ultimate benefit of the wolfdog.
4. To advance the interests of the wolfdog by encouraging cooperation and sportsman-like conduct at canine events: obedience trials; training classes/trials; working classes/trials; and/or wolfdog rendezvous.
5. To encourage and to promote the responsible and prudent ownership of wolfdogs.
6. To assist in providing/locating a safe and healthy environment for wolfdogs in the state of Florida through a coordination with rescue and placement networks.

With our Bylaws, Articles and Constitution finalized, we have met, and even surpassed, the short-term goals we set up for ourselves in February 1999.

We have now entered into the six- to twelve-month goals we established in the February meeting: to solicit members; to establish contacts in various Animal Control (AC) agencies and Fish & Game and to become an organization that these agencies recognize and respect; to publish quarterly newsletters; to find a server host and to begin creating the Florida Lupine website; to work out the logistics of hosting an annual rendezvous for wolfdog owners to meet; to create a database of members and supporters; and to create a large database of indi-

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Florida Lupine Association, Inc.

A Non-Profit Organization
Dedicated to the Betterment of
Wolfdogs and Wolves in Captivity.

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- Sheila Blanton, Director, and Staff of Tallahassee-Leon County Animal Service Center;
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- Cheryl Dollar, Director of Jefferson County Humane Society;
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Letters, ads, and articles do not necessarily reflect the views of FLA. We welcome all comments, ads, and articles but require that they are signed and include a phone number and address. FLA and the editor reserve the right to edit any material submitted for publication in the *Florida Lupine News* Newsletter.

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(Members are entitled to a 10% discount.)

Deadlines for Submission:

Spring NL: March 15 Fall NL: Sept. 15
Summer NL: June 15 Winter NL: Dec. 15

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individuals interested in fostering and/or assisting with rescues.

Our longer-term goals (one-two years) include a heavy focus on membership. We hope to create a large database of both supporters and members and we hope to be able to offer annual or semi-annual rendezvous that provide speakers, money-raising auctions, T-shirts, and other assorted FLA memorabilia, along with being able to obtain insurance to cover such events.

Florida Lupine is a long way from being what we hope it will eventually become; however, we have greatly exceeded our expectations of the February 1999 meeting.

We have established a clearly

defined Constitution; we have incorporated Florida Lupine as a Non-profit business in the state of Florida; we have established contacts with both Animal Control agencies and the state Fish & Game Commission; we have built a database of members and supporters that we hope continues to grow and to expand; we have begun creating the FLA website; we have opened a bank account; and we have begun publication of the *Florida Lupine News* Newsletter

We hope you are as proud as the Board of Directors with the accomplishments of Florida Lupine in its first year of inception. To become an even better organization in the year 2000, we will need your input and your continued support.

—Have a Wonderful New Year!!

From the Desk of the Secretary

By Beth Palmer

The Florida Lupine Association has wolfdog information pamphlets currently on display in the Leon County, Bay County and Wakulla County Animal Control lobbies.

Between 10-01-99 and 12-15-99, seventeen wolfdog info packets have been mailed to people responding to the "Free Information to Potential Wolfdog Owners" ads in the *Tallahassee Democrat* and *Bay County Thrifty Nickel*. We had hoped to have more respondents to these ads, especially in the Bay County area as this county is saturated with mills and breeders.

Ten special request information packets have been mailed between 10-01-99 and 12-15-99. These special info packets have been requested for information on (1) safe containment for wolfdogs, (2) being a responsible breeder, (3) finding an ethical breeder, (4) breed-specific legislation information, and (5) sample puppy sales contracts with spay/neuter clauses.

The info packets and special request packets are free. If you know of anyone who would like a wolfdog info packet (individual or animal agency) please call the office (toll free) with the name and mailing address: 1877-860-2100 extension #192500.

Fifty eight Animal Control (county only) questionnaires were mailed out on 10-23-99. Only Baker County replied to this questionnaire. Once again, we had hoped for a better response than this! We will resend these in the hopes of determining where Florida's big problem areas are and *what* the problems are there so that we may offer assistance.

From the Desk of the President

By Al Mitchell

Seasons Greetings!

As I look back over 1999, there has been much effort expended on behalf of our furry friends. The decision to incorporate Florida Lupine Association was not one which was made lightly. Associations come and go, but several of us were unhappy at the lack of a Florida-wide organization dedicated to helping the wolfdog and educating their human companions and regulators.

Following months of intense work and many ICQ (internet) conferences, FLA was finally born in June. Since that time, we have (1) made inroads with governmental officials at the local levels in many counties, (2) established credibility with the Florida Freshwater Fish and Game Commission, and (3) assisted in numerous rescues, placement evaluations, and even in some bite cases. Our educational outreach is beginning to take hold as we are now in contact with veterinarians, animal control officials, shelter operators, and Fish and Game officials.

We have assisted in the push for USDA to publish the recent definition change to include wolfdogs as dogs. Now that the public comment period is over, we eagerly await the final adoption of this change which will, hopefully, remove the rabies vaccine issue from our list of concerns.

1999 has been a very full and prosperous year for our endeavors and we are proud to welcome our new members into our pack. Join us in our efforts to have a presence in each county by the end of 2000.

From the "Virtual" Desk of the Webmaster

By Jody Haynes

It has been a somewhat long and drawn-out affair, but the FLA website is now up and running at <<http://www.floralupine.org>>. The site presently contains a short summary of the history and the goals of the organization, a list of the current officers and their contact information, and a downloadable membership application (in Microsoft Word format).

Our ultimate goal is for the FLA website to be a comprehensive online reference for (1) general information and education about wolfdogs; (2) legal issues relating to wolfdog ownership in Florida; (3) recommendations for the responsible ownership and breeding of wolfdogs; (4) information on wolfdogs needing rescue; and (5) links to additional wolfdog information on the internet.

The development of the FLA website is obviously not going to happen overnight, and we welcome input from all of our members so as to make our site—your site!—a success. Any comments, ideas, and/or criticisms relating to the website should be addressed to me at the following e-mail address: "webmaster@floralupine.org".

We have also established several additional e-mail addresses for specific requests or needs. For more information on FLA or to request that a free membership packet be sent to a friend, feel free to write our Secretary, Beth Palmer, at "info@floralupine.org".

Rescue-related information and questions should be directed to "rescue@floralupine.org".

Comments, ideas, complements, and/or criticisms regarding the Florida Lupine News Newsletter should be sent to Kim Miles at "editor@floralupine.org".

Finally, if you feel like writing to someone on the FLA Board of Directors, feel free to send an e-mail to our President, Al Mitchell, at "president@floralupine.org".

Happy surfing!

Note: The Board of Directors of FLA, Inc., would once again like to thank John DeMott and Gary Antosh for their generous donation of website space that has made "floralupine.org" possible.

Ban on wolf hybrids tough to enforce, state finds: Biology stands in way of state's hybrid wolf ban

By S.J. KOMARNITSKY
Daily News Mat-Su Bureau

PALMER - A canine-identity problem is confounding state wildlife officials trying to enforce a ban against owning, selling and breeding wolf hybrids.

Worried that hybrids are dangerous to humans and threaten native wolf populations, the state Fish and Game Department asked the Alaska Board of Game last year to specifically outlaw hybrids. The board voted unanimously to do so.

The state hoped there would be a genetic test that would distinguish between wolves and their hybrid cousins, said Wayne Regelin, director of the state Division of Wildlife Conservation.

But there was a problem. There's apparently no way to tell, at least no way definite enough to hold up in court.

They are too similar genetically, said Keith Roehr, a Colorado veterinarian who spent four months on a committee studying the issue of canine hybrids for the Colorado legislature.

Many of the same genetic markers found in dogs like malamutes and German shepherds, which have wolf ancestry, also turn up in modern wolves, he said.

"There's a lot of differences," he said. "But nothing you can hang your hat on."

Even in cases where people advertised wolf hybrids, states have been unable to enforce the law.

"A lot of people, at the advice of their lawyer, would say, 'Oh, I thought it was hybrid, but I found out this was a malamute,'" he said. "The case would fall flat."

No one knows exactly how many wolf hybrids there are in Alaska, but state officials estimate they could number in the thousands, including those kept for pets and sled dog teams. At least one business, Wolf Country USA in Palmer, advertises wolf hybrids for sale.

Wildlife officials say owning a wolf hybrid has always been illegal in Alaska. But the law was not clear until

the Game Board adopted the new regulation, which specifically added hybrids to the category of banned animals.

Before that, officials considered hybrids off-limits because they were not on a list of about 70 animals like cats, guinea pigs and goats that are allowed to be kept in the state.

Regelin said, "We didn't want people to say that the law doesn't really say hybrids are illegal when that's the intent."

But so far nobody, including those responsible for enforcing the law, has figured out how to implement it, even when kennels openly advertise hybrids.

"We're looking at it," said Col. John Glass, director of the state Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection. "But it's going to be tough to do."

Glass said so far there's been little done to try enforce the law in Alaska and he doesn't expect there to be much.

"We've got bigger issues out there," he said.

Both Wolf Country USA and another operation, Wolf Safari, have been notified of the new law, Glass said. Wolf Country USA has sent a letter to the state saying the law is too vague to be enforced, he said.

There's little middle ground when it comes to wolf hybrids.

Supporters say they make safe pets, are more intelligent than dogs and if treated correctly are more loyal.

Mark Whatley, a Wasilla-area resident who owns two hybrids as well

as two dogs - a malamute and a chow mix - said his hybrids are like members of the family.

"There's a lot of love and emotion that comes back from the animal, and there's a lot of understanding," he said.

They are more work though, he said, and he doesn't recommend them for everyone. They're more aloof and need a strong hand to show them who is boss, he said. They also need someone who is going to be at home.

"You can't be single or working all day," he said.

But detractors say hybrids are dangerous and often not trained well. And whereas wolves are timid and shy, hybrids tend to be braver around humans and are more known to attack than wolves.

Werner Schuster, who runs Wolf Country USA with his wife, Gail, said he considers his animals as safe as any dog.

"You have to see our puppies here," he said. "They'll just lick you to death. They're friendly, friendly, friendly."

The two have run the facility just off the Glenn Highway for 12 years and have sold hundreds of hybrids, he said. He said they currently have about 85 hybrids, including a couple dozen puppies.

"They're the same as sled dogs," he said. He said he doesn't advertise them as sled dogs because "they sell better as wolf hybrids."

—Anchorage Daily News
Reprinted with Permission

The Lesson

A female wolf left four or five pups alone in a rendezvous area in the Brooks Range one morning and set off down a trail away from them. When she was well out of sight, she turned around and lay flat in the path, watching her back trail. After a few moments, a pup who had left the rendezvous area trotted briskly over a rise in the trail and came face to face with her. She gave a low bark. He stopped short, looked about as though preoccupied with something else, then, with a dissembling air, began to edge back the way he had come. His mother escorted him to the rendezvous site and departed again. Apparently the lesson had taken, for all the pups stayed put until she returned that evening.

—Excerpt from *Of Wolves and Men*
By Barry Holstun Lopez

Florida Lupine: Response to APHIS rabies proposal

As mentioned in the previous FLA newsletter, APHIS, a division of the USDA, submitted a proposal to amend the Virus-Serum-Toxin Act which requests that canine biologicals (i.e., vaccinations) be approved for use in wolves and wolfdogs. APHIS published the proposal online <<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>> on September 28, 1999 for public comment for a period of two months.

The following is the reply from the FLA Board, favoring the proposed amendment to include wolfdogs and wolves in all canine biologicals.

Docket No. 99-040-1
Regulatory Analysis and Development,
PPD, APHIS, Suite 3C03
4700 River Road, Unit 118
Riverdale, MD 20737-1238

Comments below refer to Docket No. 99-040-1. This docket proposes the recognition of canine biologicals currently for use in dogs as also being effective in wolves and wolf/dog crosses.

The Florida Lupine Association, Inc., is **in favor of this proposal** and we will discuss the reasons below.

In 1993, dogs were reclassified as a subspecies of wolf (*Canis lupus familiaris*) by the Smithsonian Institute and the American Society of Mammalogists in the *Mammal Species of the World, A Taxonomical and Geographic Reference*.

In the last few years, as DNA research has advanced technologically, many studies have been conducted to indicate that the genetic relationship between wolves and dogs is so close that "dog" does not warrant separate species status. In fact, Robert K. Wayne (1993), canine evolutionary biologist at UCLA, asserted that dogs are a diverse group of modified wolves: "Dogs are gray wolves, despite their diversity in size and proportion."

More recent evolutionary and molecular genetic studies reaffirm Wayne's findings: dogs in some clades are more closely related to wolves than they are to dogs in other clades (Vila, et. al., 1997). Therefore, it defies logic to approve biologicals for one subspe-

cies (*Canis lupus familiaris*) while denying the other subspecies (e.g., *Canis lupus arctos* or *Canis lupus tundrarum*) when molecular genetic studies have shown that not only are wolves the direct and recent ancestor of dogs, but also that some dogs are genetically more closely related to wolves than to other dogs (Vila, et. al., 1997).

Not only are we advocates for the responsible ownership of wolfdogs, but we are also involved in the rescue and placement of wolfdogs in Florida. In our dealings with various wolfdog owners, we have seen numerous wolfdogs (and dogs coming into rescue as alleged wolfdogs) that have never been rabies vaccinated. This presents a clear threat to the well-being of other mammals in this state as Florida has a relatively high rate of rabies outbreaks.

Many wolfdog owners are aware of some kind of rabies issue; however, much of the "issue" appears to be shrouded in myth. Some owners suffer the belief that the rabies vaccine will kill their animals; thus they refuse to have their wolfdogs vaccinated.

In fact, Pasco County, Florida, filed a lawsuit against Frank Furuya for failure to vaccinate his wolfdogs. Furuya feared that the lack of approval for wolfdogs meant that the rabies vaccine could be potentially harmful, even fatal, if administered to his animals; therefore, he refused to vaccinate them. The case was dismissed because Pasco County's definition of "dog" in its ordinance was too restrictive: "a domestic dog, *Canis familiaris*".

Pasco County is now rewording the ordinance, changing the definition of dog to "'dog' means, but is not limited to, any genetic hybridization thereof, including but not expressly limited to wolf hybrids and coyote hybrids"; however, in the absence of an approved vaccine, Pasco County is still unable to mandate that wolfdog owners vaccinate their animals—a serious concern to the county and health officials.

Wolfdog owners are not the only ones who suffer under the erroneous belief that the "lack of approval" for the rabies vaccine translates to "it fails to work" in wolves and wolfdogs. Many veterinarians suffer the same beliefs,

some suggesting that it isn't worth the expense or effort of vaccinating and some refusing to vaccinate altogether. Approval of the vaccine will prompt these veterinarians into encouraging owners to vaccinate their wolfdogs and wolves, rather than deterring them from doing so.

On a final note, there is much debate over the number of wolfdogs present in the U.S. Much of the confusion arises from people selling or buying dogs that are portrayed as wolfdogs when they are, in fact, dogs. On the other hand, many are afraid to claim they have a wolfdog and, therefore, maintain that they have a mixed breed dog.

Nevertheless, the National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA) estimates that between 300,000 and 2.5 million wolfdogs and wolves are kept as pets in the United States. If even half of these pets are unvaccinated, 150,000-1.25 million (using NAIA's figures) is an extremely large number of canines to be unprotected from rabies—an especially dangerous health hazard for all mammals living in areas with relatively high outbreaks of rabies.

Until approval is granted for the use of canine biologicals in wolfdogs and wolves, states and counties with these animals will remain at risk; rewriting county and state laws mandating vaccinations for wolves and wolfdogs may be somewhat effective, but without federal approval of these biologicals for said animals, vaccinations cannot be legally enforced.

Sincerely,
The Board of Directors
Florida Lupine Association, Inc.

CITATIONS:

Vila, C., P. Savolainen, J.E. Maldonado, I.R. Amorim, J.E. Rice, R.L. Honeycutt, K.A. Crandall, J. Lundeberg, and R.K. Wayne. 1997. Multiple and ancient origins of the domestic dog. *Science* 276.

Wayne, Robert K. 1993. Molecular evolution of the dog family. *Theoretical & Applied Genetics* 9: 6.

Breeding season once again approaches

By Kim Miles

“Responsible and reputable breeders strive for perfection and thus, find reasons NOT to breed; hacks, millers and backyard breeders strive to find all sorts of excuses TO breed,” stated a well-known breeder, Schutzhund trainer, and rescuer of Doberman Pinschers.

Breeding season is once again upon us. While dogs come into season at any time of the year and usually have two cycles per year, wolves come into season in the Spring and cycle once annually.

Wolfdogs can cycle either like dogs or like wolves; however, they tend to have the annual estrus cycle of a wolf. This cycle usually revolves around

the latter part of the year (October through early December) or the early part of the year (late January through mid April).

Every year in the late winter through the late spring, we see a heavy influx of puppies and animals that need placement into caring homes. Many of these animals are pups from unwanted litters—a problem easily remedied with a simple spay or neuter procedure.

Almost all counties provide a low-cost spay/neuter clinic for those who find themselves in financial difficulties or have no permanent veterinarian. The charges range from \$20 to a little over \$100 in some of the more

urban areas.

If you do not intend on breeding your animal, please have it spayed or neutered as early as possible. The health benefits of spaying and neutering outweigh any reason for keeping the animal intact.

Intact females frequently develop cancerous tumors and cysts in their breasts; spaying decreases the chance of breast cancer.

Intact males frequently develop prostate problems; neutering diminishes these problems. In addition, neutering also decreases the amount of testosterone produced in the body, which decreases the aggression and the roaming tendencies of intact male canines.

Please spay and neuter!

So, you want to become a wolfdog breeder?

By Cottonwood Kennels

Responsible breeders produce a litter of puppies only if those pups will improve or, at the very least, compliment the line. They carefully consider the animals, and the parents are chosen for such quality traits as health, temperament, background, conformation and training ability. Their only goal should be to make their line of animals better.

Quality wolfdog breeders will not randomly breed two animals simply because the female is in season, or to allow the breeding pair to experience the joys of parenthood, or because they want to make some extra money. And they will NEVER breed animals with undesirable traits (e.g., bad jaw alignment, bad temperament, genetic disorders, etc.) because they know that these traits will be passed on to the puppies as well.

Reputable wolfdog breeders will only breed when the parents are of an acceptable age for breeding. Although wolfdogs become sexually mature at around 22 months, OFA will not rate an animal's hips until the age of two (although preliminary testing can be done sooner); therefore, the breeding would have to wait until the next

season. Responsible breeders will also breed only after the dam has recovered completely and they will not over breed.

Ethical wolfdog breeders are protective of their animals. If kept outside, the animals' enclosures will provide shade and be safe, secure, and sanitary. The animals will also be paired comfortably with other animals (e.g., three females will not be placed with one male—all intact—as such a situation is usually done to produce a lot of puppies and not for the sake of the animal).

Responsible wolfdog breeders will have buyers lined up and will take deposits on puppies before the breeding takes place. Common litters are four to six puppies, but litters of 10 are not unusual. If these breeders find they have more puppies than deposits, they are prepared to keep the remaining puppies until suitable homes are found.

If for any reason, a buyer is unable to keep his or her animal, ethical breeders will take responsibility for the animal by either taking it back or placing it or assisting its placement in another home. In such a situation, the breeders' obligation to refund the pur-

chase fee is limited to the following: if the animal was recently purchased, suffers a verifiable hereditary/genetic disorder, or suffers a verifiable temperament/behavioral disorder.

Reputable wolfdog breeders will heavily screen potential buyers. They will determine if potential buyers live in an area where there are any restrictions, and if so, what their state or county requires. They will insist on meeting potential buyers in person (at least once) or have someone they know meet with them if distance is a problem. They will also require photos or videos of the buyer's facilities and/or will inspect or have an agent inspect them.

In return, these breeders will encourage their buyers to visit them and to meet the parents in order for both breeder and buyer to determine if a wolfdog puppy is suitable for the prospective human owner. (If, for any reason, breeders have any suspicions about a potential buyer, they are both probably better off not following through with the sale.)

If potential buyers pass the screening process and decide to interview other breeders, respectable breeders should refer them to other reputable

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breeders so that the buyers can be sure they are getting what they want and what they are told. One of the primary concerns for a reputable breeder is not the sale of his or her own puppy, but that a buyer—who has passed the screening processes—purchases a quality animal from a legitimate breeder.

Quality breeders will honestly answer basic questions about wolfdogs, explaining to the prospective buyer how to socialize, bond with, and properly feed and house their new puppy. Not only will the breeders provide positive information, but the negative as well. No breed is perfect. This sharing of knowledge should not stop once the buyer leaves with the puppy. A devoted breeder will continue to be available for questions concerning the animal throughout its lifetime.

Among the information responsible breeders will divulge is the importance of training, the benefits of spaying and neutering (if the buyer is uninterested in breeding), and the seriousness of never leaving a small child alone/unsupervised with a large canine. (Note: Children being bit by the family dog has reached epidemic proportions. It is better to err on the side of caution than to make a small mistake that can have potentially fatal or life-long results.)

Responsible breeders will use and enforce contracts to be signed prior to the release of a pup. If a health certificate does not accompany the pup, the contract should insist that buyers take the pups to their vets for health exams within "XX" hours of receiving the pup. The contract should also provide a 72-hour contagious disease guarantee.

Reputable breeders generally offer a minimum 30-month hereditary defect guarantee (OFA will not even rate an animal until the age of two). For example, if the puppy should fall seriously ill or die from a genetic or hereditary defect, the breeder will provide a full refund, and/or pay the vet bills, and/or replace the puppy.

Ethical breeders should be able to provide verifiable pedigrees on each parent, with the names of the owners and of the animals in the lineage, and should also include photos, if possible.

They will have researched their lines for any temperament or health problems and will only breed sound animals from sound lines. In addition, the pedigrees of the parents will compliment each other.

Only animals registered with a **reputable** wolfdog association should be bred. The litter should be registered and papers made available to the buyer upon delivery of the pup. If the papers are not available then the name, address and phone number of the association and the parents' registration numbers should be given to the buyer. (Note: While there are a select FEW good breeders not with a registry, they will still provide pedigree information as well as phone numbers to verify the information. The statement above is one of generalization.)

Reputable breeders should also be able to provide references from past buyers of their puppies and photographs of the offspring they have produced at their kennels. A good breeder's reputation will follow from past practices, just as the reputation of a bad breeder. Word of mouth is one of the best references—both for good and bad breeders.

Responsible breeders are willing to provide their buyers with the names of their vets and will be able to provide accurate documentation that their animals are current on all vaccinations and wormings. They will be able to pay for all veterinary expenses, including pre-breeding vet checks, vaccinations, worming of internal parasites, heartworm tests and prevention, flea and tick prevention, etc.

In addition, responsible breeders assist in the whelping, if necessary, and are willing to pay for an emergency Caesarean-section should the need arise. While most wolfdog breeders do not yet incorporate OFA or PENN Hip certification for hip dysplasia and CERF eye testing into their breeding programs, there is a strong movement among some wolfdog breeders in this direction. Most responsible dog breeders test their animals' eyes and hips, among numerous other things, and some wolfdog owners and breeders are beginning to see the wisdom of such testing. It is a myth that wolfdogs are not prone to some of the same genetic disorders that plague many of the dog breeds.

Many breeders of high content wolfdogs pull their pups from the

mother after ten days and begin a bottle-feeding regime that encourages bonding with humans. This supplemental feeding is done at two- to four-hour intervals around the clock. If the puppies are still nursing when they are sent home with their new owners, the breeders will either provide a mixture of the formula to the owner or give the owner the recipe of the exact ingredients so as not to shock the puppy's digestive system. The breeder should also show the buyer how to properly bottle feed and handle the pup during this time. (Note: Florida law mandates that no puppies be sold until the age of eight weeks.)

A responsible breeder will refuse ownership if the potential owner

- wants it as a guard dog;
- has small children and is unable or unwilling to supervise them at all times around the animal;
- does not have secure housing;
- refuses to answer or is vague when answering the breeders' questions;
- lives in a regulated area and would be in violation of any ordinances;
- cannot tell you what the following words mean: alpha, socialization, bonding, and submission.

Obviously this person has not researched any type of canine behavior and is, therefore, a poor candidate for wolfdog ownership.

Reputable breeders will generally not make any money off breeding, nor is this their intent. Their selling prices usually cover medical costs and the care/healthy feeding of the nursing mother and pups. Any profits are put back into the animals by improving the kennels and the overall well-being of the animals. These breeders are NOT in the breeding business to make a quick buck and find such motivation NEVER an acceptable reason to breed.

There are many factors to consider before deciding to breed or buy wolfdogs: numerous expenses and responsibilities. We hope that this article has helped you to make an educated decision about breeding and/or about buying from a responsible breeder.

Contributors:

Cottonwood Kennels; Southern Howls Kennels; Ghostly Image Kennels; Hidden Hollow Kennels; Stormy "Wolf" Renee; and Kim Miles.

The Wolfdog Rescue Roster

By Kim Miles & Beth Palmer



comes from an abusive, neglectful home. She was chained as a form of containment and a stray German Shepherd mated with her, producing the two pups in rescue on the following page.

Shelby weighs a thin 70 lbs. and though current on all shots, she is now undergoing heartworm treatment. She is a little shy but warms up after becoming acclimated. She is very playful and loves puppies and young males. She has been passed around all of her short life and is in desperate need of a loving, permanent home. She would thrive in calm and stable environment.

Nick was obtained from the shelter, so the information we have on him is limited. He weighs 80 pounds and is approximately one year old. Nick is a low/mid-content wolfdog (approximately 40-50% wolf with the remainder being a mix of Husky and Malamute). He is submissive, playful, and extremely social. He is neutered and is current on all shots, including bordatella, and is on heartworm prevention.

Nick would be an excellent companion for a first-time wolfdog owner. He will do well in any environment as long as he has companionship, either from a human or another canine. He is also cat friendly.

UPDATE: Nick now has a loving home with a first-time wolfdog owner who is also a volunteer at a wildlife facility.

Shelby is a mid/high-content Malamute/wolf (approximately 50-60% wolf). She one to two years old and



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Hopi and Nacoma are a bonded pair in Texas and will ONLY be adopted out together as a pair. The owner recently lost his wife and is now wheelchair-bound and in poor health. The animals are in foster.

Nacoma is a 2 year old male, mid content. He has some Malamute

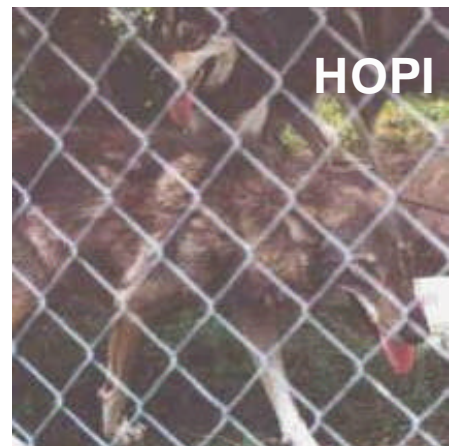
coloring but a wolfy build--long and lean. He is not people-oriented,



preferring the company of his mate instead. He is standoffish, cautious of strangers but not overly skittish.

He tolerates riding, doesn't climb, and isn't food or people aggressive. He has been bred once—to his mate, Hopi. He is intact presently, but will either be neutered or go out on a neuter contract.

Hopi is an F2 female and is 73% with Davidson lineage (DOB: 2/97). She is a very sweet, wonderful animal and loves people. She does not like riding and is not food aggressive. She is a



(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

climber, so she requires lean-ins and hotwire. She has had one litter of pups (by Nacoma). She is intact presently, but will either be spayed or go out on a spay contract.

Both **Nakoma** and **Hopi** were raised with small girls; Nacoma is shy around kids, but Hopi loves them. They are both accustomed to a minimum 900-1000 square foot enclosure (approx 30' X 30'). They are current on vaccinations, including rabies (7/99). They are worm

free and on heartworm prevention.

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Two Male Pups are from Shelby and a German Shepherd breeding, so they are low-content wolfdogs and good for a first-timer. They were born in September, making them approximately 11-12 weeks old. They are current on all shots and will go out on a neuter contract as they are too young to neuter now. These guys

are playful and friendly and are in need of a home desperately.

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Collectors

By Michelle Rivera

We all shake our heads and agree that the dog and cat overpopulation crisis is a terrible shame. Well, it certainly is, but do you believe that you can single-handedly stop this tragedy? Some people do, and their solution is to keep extremely large numbers of animals in homes or on land ill equipped to contain them. Authorities call these people "collectors".

We all know one: the eccentric "cat lady" or the "savior" with row upon row of dogs of every size, shape and color. Even though these kind-hearted, benevolent souls undertake this massive effort with the best of intentions, most find themselves overwhelmed with labor-intensive, non-stop activity just to keep the animals alive.

Collectors are unable to support the idea of humane euthanasia, so scores of animals are "rescued" only to deteriorate in filthy, overcrowded and inadequate living spaces.

The stress and lack of sanitation in these private homes are conducive to malnourishment, disease and over-sedentary lives. The collectors themselves frequently become overwhelmed with unexpected legal and veterinary expenses as well, and the health and welfare of the animals they have taken in slowly deteriorates. The results can be shocking.

Our hearts go out to these people because we know that they truly believe that what they are doing is out of

love for the animals. They go into a kind of denial and don't recognize the starvation and disease even as the animals suffer before their very eyes.

I always become just a bit wary when I hear the words "I love animals" because I know that this phrase could mean a medley of things to so many people. I much prefer to hear "I respect animals" because keeping mass quantities of animals on chains, in cages, or even loose in small dwellings is pretty darn disrespectful, degrading and humiliating to the animals. They are worthy of so much better.

Companion animals forced to exist on chains or in cages without the benefit of loving camaraderie and socialization suffer abject depression. Their misery and loneliness is as acute as that of a laboratory animal. Sometimes, there is a fate worse than death, and these animals are proof of that.

Veterinarians and psychologists who study "animal addicts" have found that this is classic substance abuse behavior. Some of the traits that alcoholics and drug addicts share with animal addicts include the following:

- repetition of addictive behavior;
- excuses for the behavior;
- denial that their personal, physical and environmental conditions are unclean;
- a belief that they are being persecuted or misunderstood;
- the presence of financial support-

ers who feel they help a "good cause";

- denial that the addiction exists;
- isolation from friends, family or co-workers who are not "into animals";
- abuse of animals through dereliction.

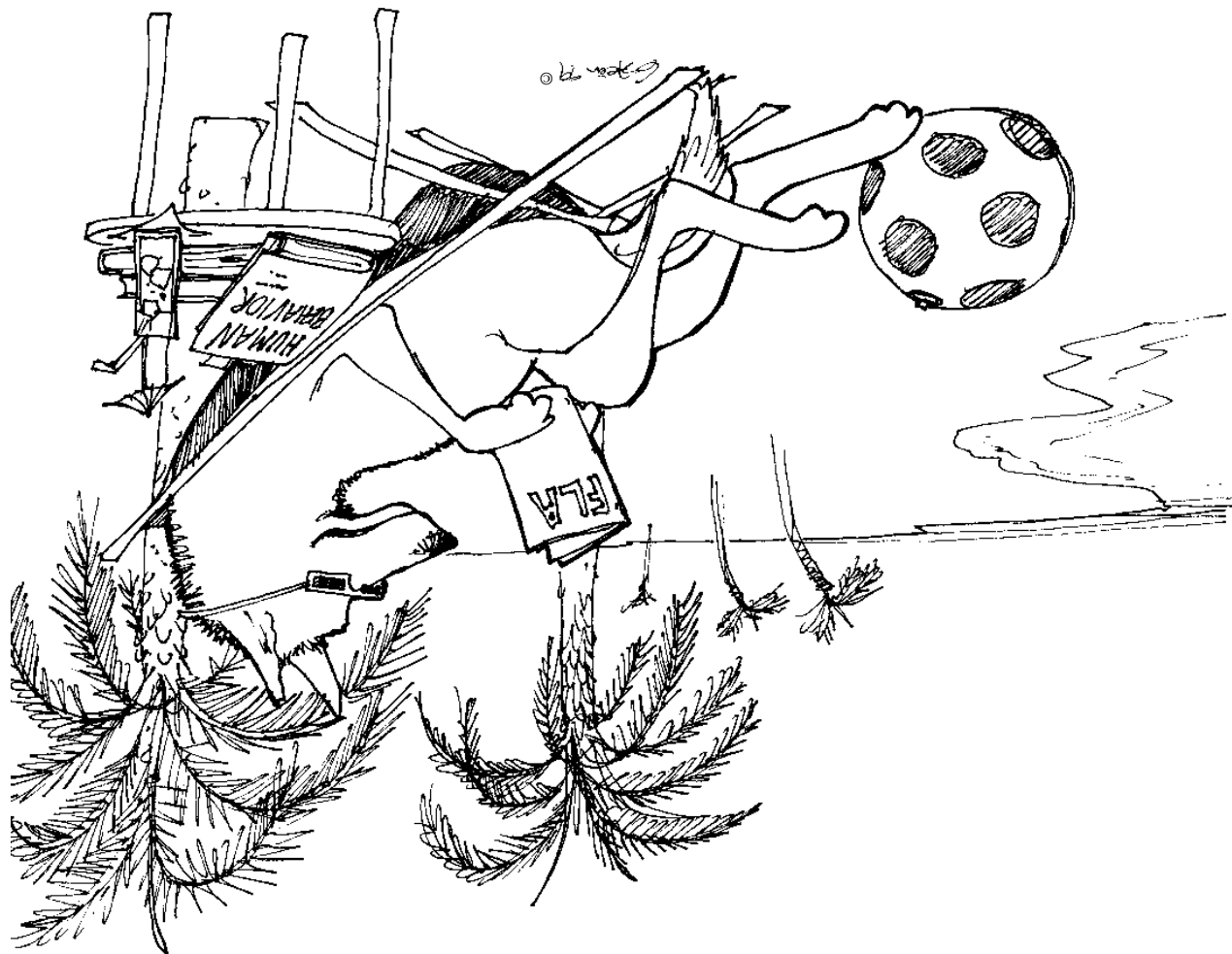
What You Can Do?

If you suspect there are collectors in your neighborhood, contact them and together you may be able to work out a solution. Do not "judge" collectors once you have identified them. Win their confidence with understanding and offer to take some of the animals into custody so as to alleviate the burden. Once you have them, you can place them in foster homes, coordinate their adoption with local shelters or rescue agencies, or have them tested for terminal diseases.

When you hear of a huge confiscation of animals, show up and offer to walk, groom and play with the animals; shelter workers and volunteer rescuers are usually overwhelmed in the face of such large confiscations.

Accept that the quality of life is more important than the quantity; humane euthanasia may be necessary for those who suffer serious behavioral problems or debilitating medical conditions.

[Editor's Note: Encourage, demand, do whatever you have to, but persuade the collector to spay/neuter so that the animals they do have, don't multiply.]



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