

Survey Results from the STCA

In January of 2017, the STCA formed a Strategic Planning Committee to study the question “Where have all the Scotties gone?” The mission of the Committee was to quantify the reasons for the decline in Scottish Terrier AKC registrations, Scottie entries AKC events and other activities, and to determine the contributing factors and consequences of this decline. The Committee’s objective was to form reasonable recommendations to the STCA for consideration in order to help reverse the decline in numbers and preserve the breed, as well as to suggest ways for the Club to achieve its mission more effectively.

In May of 2017, the Committee designed an on-line survey with the goal of reaching out to as many Scottie owners and breeders as possible. In three short weeks, there were over 1500 surveys returned containing a wealth of data on all aspects of Scottie ownership, health, and engagement. Questions in the survey addressed health, companion Scottie ownership, breeding, and involvement in conformation and performance events. Some of the results are as follows:

- Respondents hailed from nearly all 50 United States as well as Canada, the UK, Europe, Singapore, South and Central America, Africa, and Australia.
- 94% of respondents owned 0-5 Scotties.
- 88% of respondents were between 41 and 60+ years of age.
- Of the 1,514 respondents to the question, 349 identified themselves as STCA members, which represents @34% of total STCA members. Non-members totaled 1,165 (77%).
- Of 1,508 respondents, 1,193 (79%) indicated they are not a Scottie breeder.
- 89% of respondents indicated that they do not engage in any AKC or sanctioned events such as Conformation, Agility, Obedience, Rally, Earth Dog, Nose Work, or Barn hunt.
- When asked which factors have contributed to the decline in numbers and popularity of the Scottie breed, 54% of respondents indicated that they feel the cost of Scottie pups is prohibitive, so puppy shoppers look elsewhere. Respondents also indicated that it is too difficult to find available pups (64%) or reputable Scottie breeders (41%). Behavior issues were considered an important factor (31%) as was the belief that the public just does not see enough Scotties anymore to recognize and appreciate them (36%).
- When asked to rank in order of importance the factors in their decision for bringing a Scottie in their homes, respondents indicated that the number one consideration is health, followed closely by temperament, and then ease of integration into the family with other dogs and children. Getting a Scottie from rescue was ranked number 5, and meeting the breed standard, pedigree and gender were numbers 8, 9 and 10 respectively.
- When asked to rank in order of importance the factors to consider when purchasing a new Scottie puppy, respondents indicated that the number one factor is working with a conscientious, successful breeder. Number two consideration was working with an STCA breeder, an AKC Breeder of Merit, and an AKC registered kennel. Price was ranked #5 and the local pet store or shelter organizations were considered the least important.
- When traveling on vacations, over 70% of respondents indicated that taking their dogs with them is an important factor, followed by getting together with other Scottie owners for social events, picnics, and rallies.
- When asked to provide a wish list for activities in a regional club or local group, 77% of respondents placed importance on the social aspects of their clubs and building friendships based on a shared love of the breed. Over 65% of respondents indicated that educational presentations on health, research updates, and behavioral topics are very important. Importance was also placed the opportunity to contribute to fund raising for both rescue and health (28%), and to help with needed transportation for rescue in their region or state (31%). There was also interest expressed for informal matches and workshops to learn about performance events (21%) and conformation events (26%).

Health

The Survey identified major health concerns in our Scotties. Topping the list were the critical cancers such as TCC (bladder cancer) and lymphoma, as well as a rising concern for hemangiosarcoma. Other major concerns are liver disease (Cushings, elevated enzymes, liver cancer), and allergies. Many other diseases and disorders were mentioned with less frequency but remain of great importance to the longevity and health of the Scotties, such as kidney, heart and dental disease, orthopedic issues, endocrine diseases, and the genetic disorders Scottie Cramp (SC) and Cerebellar Abiotrophy (CA). These responses closely mirror the Health Survey conducted by the STCA's Health Trust Fund in 2015.

The input from so many dedicated Scottie owners from around the country and the world is invaluable, and the members of the Committee and the STCA are grateful to all who took the time to contribute to our body of knowledge. Moving forward with this data, the STCA will be able to address the betterment and future of our wonderful breed.

2017 STCA Strategic Planning Committee

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