



# Scottie Mail



Dear Editor:  
Thank you for such a superb publication re: our beloved Scotties! My day's rating shoots up to "10" every time my mailbox contains another issue! Has the subject of Valgus Deformity of the Legs as a result of breeding for short legs—a quest for premature closure of bone growth plates—ever been addressed in GSM? We have received two adult Scotties in the past month into our Minnesota Scottie Rescue program with these deformities. One of them has now been adopted by me. We met with the orthopedic specialist at the University of Minnesota Veterinary Clinic/Hospital, Dr. Betty Kramek, last week for a consult. That is when I was told this deformity is a breed-specific issue resulting from [showring] appearance "standards" for short legs on Scotties, Westies, Bassetts, Beagles, Shi Tsus, etc. Furthermore, Dr. Kramek told me it has vertabrae dislocation impact on the backs of these breeds. Please advise me if GSM has published information on this orthopedic issue. If not, may I strongly suggest an article or two to include treatment options (which, of course, are no small matter either!). Thank you for your assistance with this concern. And, PLEASE, continue with your excellent work—many of us count on you!

Carol Johnson, St. Paul, MN

**[Editor's Note:** I am reminded of a conversation a few years ago with Fred and Marion Krupp who reported similar words from an orthopedic specialist in PA commenting on X-rays of their Rescue Scottie's legs remarking how similar to dwarfism the skeletal structure was. GSM has not yet published material on orthopedic issues, but it's a worthy topic to pursue. Carol has put her finger on an aspect of the dark side of the 'sport of dogs.' I'm afraid all of us are too slowly waking up to the long-term genetic consequences of appearance-driven breeding standards unregulated by full and open health registry records. We're too slow connecting the genetic 'dots' between our breed engineering and the health of our breed. When Cindy Cooke, in her book *The New Scottish Terrier* (1996), describes the modern Scottish Terrier 'type' that emerged between WWI and WWII as longer in head, shorter in body, and lower to the ground than their ancestors" (p.11) her reference, as in every other breed history, is laudatory, as if changes and champions are their own justification. However, making the breed "lower to the ground" is genetic engineering with consequences as Dr. Kramek's comments indicate. And for what purpose the shift

away from the original 'Scotch Terrier' type of dog bred in the highlands of Scotland as the "Diehard" and championed by STCA's founder, Dr. Fayette Ewing? Was the change to enhance Scottish Terrier function or health or longevity? No. It shaped a designer dog whose function consists of its form (see my "How Does Our Standard Grow?" GSM, Mar/Apr 2006, for photos and details of how the Scottie appearance has changed). Along with Carol readers might wish to begin their orthopedic concerns research at the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals website > [www.offa.org](http://www.offa.org) which has important relevant articles. Check out, too, Fred Lanting's articles on Dwarfism in Dogs. He's a respected AKC judge. See > "Osteochondrodysplasias, Leg Deformities, and Dwarfism in the Canine" [http://www.dogstuff.info/osteochondrodysplasias\\_lanting.html](http://www.dogstuff.info/osteochondrodysplasias_lanting.html) and "A Small Problem: Dwarfism in Dogs" [http://www.dogstuff.info/dwarfism\\_part\\_three\\_lanting.html](http://www.dogstuff.info/dwarfism_part_three_lanting.html). JGH]

Dear GSM:

Upon receiving my July/August GSM I noticed my subscription expires 9/06 and I just cannot let this happen! The day my GSM arrives everything must stop in my household until I read my magazine from cover to cover. I really enjoy every article and there is so very much information, some of which I do not like hearing but I have learned so very much from this great magazine. I appreciate your efforts and your love of our Great Breed! Thank you for a truly great and informative magazine.  
Cindy Brinkley, Danville, IL

Dear Editor:

Last December, as a Great Scots subscriber, I called you upon the loss of Suzi, my Scottie-girl of almost twelve years, who had just passed away from kidney failure. I was looking for a top breeder of Scotties on the East Coast. You mentioned White Shadow Ranch in North Carolina, because a friend of yours had two dogs from them and was pleased. Well, I called them and here's my report . . . What a place! The owners, Ron and Dot Hickey, have been in business 49 years. Ron was so proud of his dogs that he showed my wife and I all fifty of them, and told us stories of each one. We met Danny Boy, the father of the boy and girl

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Your Turn

