



Sheltie Connection

Newsletter of the Utah Shetland Sheepdog Association
September 2002 Volume 9 Issue 8 Single Issue \$1.00

SUPPER PARTY

CAREN & ERNIE CIAMPINI ARE HOSTING OUR PARTY AND NEED YOU TO RSVP AT:
ciampini@relia.net or call them @ 801-731-6420

FEE IS \$10.00 PER MEMBER

Please come & join us, it will be great fun.

The dress will be Western and we will have

- * Dutch Oven
- * Cowboy Poetry
- * Banjo Music
- * Fun Fun Fun!

(IF YOU WISH, YOU CAN INCLUDE YOUR NEXT YEARS DUE AT THE SAME TIME.)
MAKE ALL CHECKS OUT TO USSA (CASH ACCEPTABLE)



The President's Message

Dear Club Members:

As you know, the ASSA is holding its Nationals in Ogden, UT, in 2004, and the committee will be here this September to walk through the event site (Weber County Fairground) and to see what our local club is all about. I look forward to hosting this event, and wish to briefly discuss some of our accomplishments of the past year.

Before I begin, I would like to thank all of you for your help and participation in the many events we have had. I love the responsibilities that come with being your president, and appreciate the effort the board, the officers, and the members have put into making things work so well. The support I have received has been superb and has allayed the need for micro management. This has made my job much easier. You have all come through beautifully.

I consider this year to be the finest for our association thus far, and want to recall some highlights. The Christmas party was a memorable experience. In January, Cheryl Sorenson thrilled us with an informative and educational presentation on showing and confirmation. Thank you Cheryl! In February, the Winter Olympics exceeded many expectations, and it was exhilarating to welcome the world into our backyard.

Representatives from Petsmart came and introduced clicker training to us-and who among us has a dog that could not use a little more obedience? Folks from Glover Nursery presented invaluable ways to minimize damage to our lawns and gardens. We also had Barbara Petty give a presentation on agility testing-which is a delightful activity indeed, and a fun part of what we do. Thank you Barbara!

The Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Certification was a wonderful success. We were all able to learn a great deal about the rigorous training required to qualify for this certification, and ended up certifying all 12 of our dogs, which is quite impressive. Furthermore, we raised valuable funds for the Sheltie Rescue campaign-aided both by the Specialty, held in May, and our ongoing book sale. I thank the many of you who volunteered your time and energy.

Now more about the upcoming party. And it is a party! Let's remember that it is not a board meeting. Any concerns, complaints, or questions should be brought up with Mel, not the National Board members. These folks are interested in meeting us and getting to know some interesting things about us and our dogs. We should get to know their names, and make sure they know ours. Let's strive to make a positive impression and ensure that the committee members leave with fond memories.

The party will be held at Ernie and Caren Ciampini's house, and they have requested that people do not bring their children or pets. This event is for ASSA members and their significant others and for those potentially interested in joining our association. We need to be considerate and remember to set up and clean up together. Previously, plates of food, drinks, and chairs had been left for others to clean up. Let's not have that happen again.

It is imperative that we arrive on time and that everyone remembers to bring what they had promised. If we arrive with a positive, upbeat attitude, and are mindful that everyone present is engaged in a meaningful way, we can ensure that all of the National Board members have a worthwhile sojourn and depart with a feeling of time well spent. Let's have a fun party!!!!

Respectfully,

AvaJane Pickering, Ph.D.
Administrative Director

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2002

Sept 7

Summer Party at the “Ciampini’s”

NOTICE!!!

Please come to the Sept. 18th club meeting. We will take nominations from the floor for the 2003 club year.

REMINDER...

We need to start thinking about our dues. They are coming up real fast.

Payable to USSA

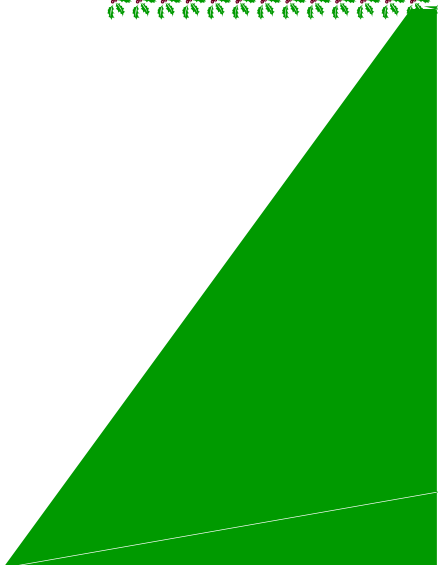


CHRISTMAS PARTY

Saturday, December 7, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. @ Chuck-A-Rama - Party Room 1960 South Highland Drive, Salt Lake City
Holiday Party and Dirty Bingo

RSVP by November 30 by paying the Treasurer, Rachel Holmes,
Admission of \$8 / person with a \$6-\$10 gift

COME AND HAVE FUN WITH US.....



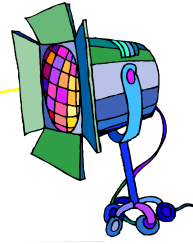


To view the rest of the photos of our K-9 Good Citizens testing go to our web site

www.utahsheltie.org

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Chris Vlachos



My life is fulfilled and blessed. I have a lovely wife, three

children, a son-in-law and am the pastor of a wonderful congregation of people in Utah County, who, like me, find God to be the ultimate fulfillment of life. But there is something else that occupies a special place in my heart, my Shetland sheep dog, Holly. And, not surprisingly, she also occupies a special place in the hearts of many others, especially those in whose lap or hospital bed she cuddles and falls asleep!

My affection for Shetland sheep dogs, and particularly for Holly, goes back to the early 60's when, as a young boy on Chicago's south side, I had a sleep-over at a friend's house. The home was peaceful. My friend Paul was an only son. Although this was a long time ago, I can remember the evening like it was yesterday. And what set the memory so deeply was their dog. Her name was "Bootsy," a Sheltie named for her white paws. She was on the small side, ladylike and gentle—a little "Lassie."

My most vivid memory of the whole evening was sitting together with Paul on the couch in the dark trembling, watching a monster movie, with Bootsy's warm and soft body asleep and snuggled between us. I didn't see that much of Paul after that night. He eventually moved. But ever since that evening I had a longing in my heart for a Sheltie like Bootsy.

Time passed—college, seminary, marriage, children, the busy life of a pastor. Last year while driven by one of those mid-age nostalgic impulses to try to locate old friends, I was able to track down an acquaintance of Paul. Sadly, I discovered that Paul had committed suicide some years ago.

I was so sorry to have heard that. It cast a bittersweet color on that whole memory. It is sad to recall Paul's mother that night making us dinner—her smile—and knowing now the pain and grief she later experienced.

But in a tender way the news reawakened my desire for a Sheltie. Providentially, last summer I met a couple who invited us over to look at some former show dogs they had for sale. Although all were wonderful, none quite hit the spot, until we met "Holly"—a beautiful 3-year-old, 14-1/2 inch sable Sheltie. She was sweet and gentle—a real lady—just like Bootsy! I brought her home, and, like a missing piece to a puzzle, she immediately fulfilled my longtime desire.

Soon after getting Holly I heard of Intermountain Therapy Animals, and we quickly became active Delta Society Pet Partners. Holly's beauty and gentle demeanor were very therapeutic to me and my family, and I sensed an obligation to share her to bring therapy to others. How fitting that the first patient that Holly and I visited was a mother who had just been informed that her child had committed suicide. Though a perfect stranger, Holly jumped up, snuggled, and fell asleep in the crying mother's lap.

The sense of calm and hope that ensued was remarkable. Perhaps Holly's sheepdog instincts can detect grief, or else she perceives the sense of assurance expressed in my mannerism and words. Whatever the case, this practice of climbing onto a lap or a hospital bed and falling asleep has since become Holly's signature in every facility and with almost every resident we visit.

So things have come full circle and beyond. Though that long ago night can never be repeated, new and even sweeter memories are being forged these days with Holly. Like Bootsy, who cuddled up in the dark during the movie, Holly's calming presence helps bring peace during the turbulent circumstances of life. Like the Captain who calmly sleeps below the deck of the storm-tossed boat, this little sleeping sheep dog emanates the fact that there is hope no matter how high the waves.

— Chris Vlachos

[ED. NOTE: Chris and Holly's first visit at St. Mark's was with a woman in her 40's whose daughter had just committed suicide. We received this poetic note from her afterwards.]

Little Holly
Holly is a people dog.
When I lost my daughter
Holly was there.
She would let me pet her, hug her ever so tightly
It was like she understood
My pain and sorrow I was going through.
She would let me walk her around,
give her treats.
Thank God for Little Holly.
Thank you for letting Chris
bring her to me.
— Peggy J.

