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January 2024

The Schaferhunde News
The German Shepherd Dog Club of Greater Kansas City
Founded 1923

2023 Officers
President-Debbie McHenry
Vice President-Sally Hamm
Treasurer-Pat Robinette
Recording Secretary-Jeanne Harmon

2023 Board Members

Lunette Stone
Ken Sanders

**Iryna Sanders
Pat Robinette
Rosi von Fintel
Nelson Hinman Jr.**

President's Message:

Happy New Year! It's hard to believe but it is 2024 already! We are meeting again this year at the very nice North Kansas City Community Building; Ryan Hall at 1201 Clark Ferguson Drive, North Kansas City, MO 64116. The facility offers a serene environment with a contemporary look that includes a stone fireplace and floor-to-ceiling windows. Guests will enjoy the view that overlooks the premiere terrace and manicured grounds of Macken Park. Best of all, dogs on lead are allowed to attend our indoor meetings along with their "well behaved" owners! Our next meeting is January 9th at 7pm when we will present and vote on the slate of new officers and board members. All current members will be able to vote at this election but if you must be absent please email your vote to our secretary Jeanne Harmon, harmonranch@att.net prior to Tuesday night's meeting. Communication is our goal this year, looking for solutions to meeting our goals and including all members in the process. I look forward to seeing everyone as we kick off a new year with our beautiful dogs!

Debbie

Meetings

Don't forget that our meetings are held on second Tuesday of the month at Macken Park; 7pm

North Kansas City Community
Building; Ryan Hall at 1201 Clark Ferguson Drive, North Kansas City, MO
64116.

Just in case of inclement weather conditions; I have set up a Zoom call to be held at 7pm Tuesday evening. We will have a VERY brief meeting and take the vote to install new officers/board members at

that time. Thank you for your cooperation. If the meeting is held as scheduled; we will NOT have a Zoom call.

Debbie McHenry

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71920295627?pwd=07YGIDHY2BFc01UC9ehtVGMAAdZyqI8.1>

Meeting ID: 719 2029 5627

Passcode: vFRW7b

2024 Slate

President: Debbie M.

VP: Valerie S.

Secretary: Jeanne H.

Treasurer: Pat R.

Board member: Rosi V.F.

Board member: Nelson H.

Board member: Lynette S.

BRAGS

Please send your brags to me, Tammy Peterson at ibperfect1@icloud.com

German Shepherd Dog Club of America

If you're not already a member of the GSDCA, you should join. There is very informative articles, what's happening with our breed, show schedules, etc.

<https://www.gsdca.org/>

Why Health Testing Your German Shepherd Is Important

Responsible breeders are well aware that hip dysplasia and other inherited diseases can be controlled or even eliminated through selective breeding practices. DNA testing for specific diseases remains the gold standard for determining a dog's genotype (genetic makeup), but because DNA testing does not yet exist for many disorders—or is not readily accessible to many breeders—phenotypic evaluations are our best alternative for eliminating inherited diseases from German Shepherd gene pools.

What is a phenotypic evaluation?

A phenotypic evaluation is any test used to determine the structural, biochemical and/or physiological condition of a dog. For example: The [Orthopedic Foundation for Animals \(OFA\)](#) uses a phenotypic evaluation (grading system) to determine the quality of your German Shepherd's hips and elbows. These are graded based on breed, sex, age and the physical appearance and condition of different anatomic areas of the joints. Other examples of phenotypic evaluations are thyroid panels to test for hypothyroidism and the [trypsin-like immunoreactivity \(TLI\) test](#) used to screen for exocrine pancreatic insufficiency.

There are also a number of genetic test kits that can be purchased to help breeders identify whether their dogs are effected, carriers or clear of breed-specific conditions and diseases. These tests cannot however, accurately determine if an animal will develop a particular disease, but the information can help breeders avoid doubling up on genetic issues known to plague the breed.

What are some of the health issues associated with German Shepherds?

Like many breeds, German Shepherds are predisposed to a number of genetic health conditions, many of which can be emotionally and financially devastating to both breeders and owners. The number of affected dogs in the German Shepherd population is no more or less than that found in many

breeds. Though daunting, the list below serves as a reminder as to the importance of health screening and why our efforts to improve the health of our dogs—and reduce risks to future buyers—is so important.

Through the decades, numerous health issues have been introduced into the German Shepherd gene pool through animals carrying diseases including hip and elbow dysplasia, degenerative myelopathy (DM), digestive disorders such as irritable bowel disease (IBD), small intestine bacterial overgrowth (SIBO), exocrine pancreatic inefficiency (EPI), bloat (gastric dilatation and volvulus), panostetis (PANO), chronic superficial keratitis (CSK) or pannus, cataracts and corneal dystrophy.

Other disorders documented in German Shepherds include perianal fistula, hypo-thyroidism, mega-esophagus, demodex, von Willebrand's disease, sub-aortic stenosis (SAS) and cardiomyopathy. Various forms of cancer such as hemangiosarcoma and osteosarcoma are also common.

Do you need to have your pet German Shepherd tested?

Yes. The reasons for screening your pet German Shepherd are two fold. Even though your puppy will not contribute further to the gene pool, it is essential for your breeder to collect health information on your dog. Many genetic disorders are passed onto puppies from parents carrying recessive or hidden genes. Both parents can test clear for a particular disorder, yet still pass the disease onto their offspring. By testing your pet German Shepherd, you provide your breeder with valuable health information about their breeding dogs. Test results on your German Shepherd, along with information on other close relatives, allows puppy buyers to apply greater pressure on breeders to produce normal, healthy puppies and adult dogs.

Which tests should be performed?

Most dog owners are familiar with hip testing because hip issues are common in many breeds. Though the level of testing desired for breeding prospects is extensive, pet owners are strongly encouraged to do their part to help breeders improve the overall health of all German Shepherds. Breeding dogs, at a minimum, should be screened for hip and elbow dysplasia and degenerative myelopathy (DM). It is best to also screen for heart issues as these, too, are predisposed to German Shepherds. Breeders and owners can have OFA advanced cardiac screening performed at a reasonable cost. This simple screening can help to identify serious, underlying conditions.

If a German Shepherd breeder tells you that their dogs do not need testing because they are free of genetic defects, they are either not knowledgeable about their breeding stock (or the breed) or they are not telling you everything you need to know about your puppy's lineage. All German Shepherd lines carry varying degrees of risk for serious genetic disorders. There are no exceptions. Education yourself about the diseases known to exist in the lines of the dogs you are considering and quiz your prospective breeder. If they cannot, or will not, discuss with you the levels of risk—find another breeder. Learn to be a discriminating buyer. Lowering your risk as a buyer is to a great extent, up to you. If buyers don't require breeders to breed healthier dogs, and you don't ask for and verify information about their dogs, the result can lead to a situation that could be financially and emotionally devastating for you.

<https://gsd-living.com/health-testing/>