

Introduction
Prepared by Proponents of AKC registration for LUA Dalmatians

In a few weeks the DCA membership will be asked to vote on AKC registration for a line of Dalmatians that carry the gene for normal uric acid metabolism. We urge you to review all of the available information about the Backcross Project and today's LUA Dalmatians, including the Questions & Answers that follow, and come to the independent conclusion to vote 'YES' for AKC registration.

Some significant things have that have occurred since the club last voted on registration. But before we look at those, let's summarize what most DCA members know – or should know – about the issue:

- 1 All AKC Dalmatians (indeed, all Dalmatians worldwide) are affected with the inability to convert uric acid to allantoin which causes some Dals to form urate sediment, crystals and stones, some of which progress to urethral blockage. Despite employing methods to manage this problem, any vet will confirm that male Dalmatians continue to block, requiring expensive treatment. Various studies have placed the rate of affected males from 13.8% to 34.3%.**
- 2 Thirty-nine years ago, Dr. Schaible introduced the normal uric acid gene into a population of AKC Dalmatians by one Pointer x Dalmatian breeding. He maintained this breed line by selecting normal uric acid producing dogs to breed back to AKC Dalmatians. The descendants are now 8 - 12 generations down from that single Pointer x Dal breeding. Over the years a few other breeders also bred these dogs, but the population was never very large and by 2004 had been reduced to a handful of breedable dogs.**

Huge strides have been made in just the last few years:

- 1 The gene that controls normal uric acid levels was identified.**
- 2 A DNA test has been developed enabling breeders to identify which puppies inherited the normal gene.**
- 3 The AKC Health and Welfare Advisory Committee (a highly respected group of scientists and veterinarians) completed a thorough review of the scientific and medical research. The Committee concluded its recommendation for AKC registration with the following statement, "Where the strict health and welfare of the breed is the over-riding concern, no other argument can be made."**
- 4 Several more breeders of AKC Dalmatians began breeding Dals with the normal gene without the benefit of AKC registration.**
- 5 A recent DNA analysis commissioned by the AKC Health and Welfare Advisory Committee has proven that this line of Dalmatians are indeed Dalmatians.**

If, despite all of the scientific information presented, you still believe this line of Dalmatians isn't purebred or you believe that there are still unanswered questions, don't use them in your breeding program. Stay away from them as you would any other dog you believe to be incompatible with your breeding program for any reason. But how can it be acceptable to deny other Dalmatian breeders from working to reintroduce the normal gene into their breeding program under the auspices of the AKC?

As breeders we have to recognize that we don't just breed for the show ring. The majority of puppies end up in pet homes where they become loved family members, so health and temperament must be essential concerns, along with the characteristics we look for in a show dog.

In our view, blocking efforts to allow AKC registration is wholly unethical. We have a growing gene pool of typical Dals from which to carefully select stock, the scientific tools to allow confidence in our selections, and the freewill to utilize these Dalmatians or not in our individual breeding programs. Allow us to breed and place male puppies without feeling guilty for saddling the new owner with the possible consequences of stone formation. Allow us to produce Dalmatians that can ingest levels of protein considered optimal for the species. Allow us to breed Dalmatians that can live normal healthy lives in the average pet household employing normal husbandry practices for pet dogs.

The club suffered from bad PR in the past over deafness and temperament issues. We believe that if the public learns we actually voted to deny acceptance of Dals with a gene which corrects such a well known, serious defect in the breed, the club will be irreparably tarnished – and rightly so.

Your vote for AKC registration is a vote to allow breeders to make a **personal choice** with respect to their breeding priorities. Some will choose to make reintroduction of the normal gene a top priority; others will continue to focus on other issues they believe are important to the future of the breed. If we are ALL allowed to be successful, it will benefit everyone!