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Study of Caudal Cervical Spondylomyelopathy Using the CT Scan

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Thank You

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We thank the following clubs:
Airedale Terrier Club of Greater Philadelphia, PA.
Allentown Dog Training Club, PA.
American Irish Setter Foundation.
American Shetland Sheepdog Association.
Bayshore Companion Dog Club, NJ.
Belgian Sheepdog Club of America.
Bucks County Kennel Club, PA.
Bryn Mawr Kennel Club, PA.
Central Illlinois Shetland Sheepdog Club, IL.
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Central Pennsylvania Collie Club, PA.
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Tidewater Kennel Club of Virginia.
Union County Kennel Club, NJ.
Upper Marlboro Kennel Club, MD.
Virginia Beach Kennel Club, VA.
Wallkill Kennel Club, NY.
Watchung Mountain Poodle Club, NJ.
Waterland Retriever Club, PA.
Western Michigan Shetland Sheepdog Club, MI.
Wilmingan Kennel Club, DE.

Study of Caudal Cervical Spondylomyelopathy Using the CT Scan

A number of dog breeds are affected by Caudal Spondylomyelopathy, commonly called "Wobbler Syndrome," the disorder is most frequently seen in Doberman pinchers and great Danes. Two surgeons here at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine are conducting a pilot study to determine the value of Computed Tomography (CT) scans to increase our understanding of this disorder. Dr. Nicholas J. H. Sharp, a visiting surgeon from the University of Liverpool, England, and Dr. Gail K. Smith, Assistant Professor of Orthopedic Surgery here at the School, have received a small internal grant to help conduct the investigation.

"These funds will enable us to study five Doberman pinchers both before and after they undergo surgery for the condition," said Dr. Sharp. The disease commonly affects middle-aged Dobermans between four and eight years of age, and males appear slightly more susceptible. Dr. Sharp explained that in affected animals the spinal cord is compressed in the neck as a consequence of unstable vertebrae. "Most of these dogs at first show only slight signs," he said. "Their gait may be slightly different, but as the disease progresses, they will become increasingly more uncoordinated. Most dogs are not in pain, although they may become suddenly paraplegic. This is frequently seen when a disc gives way, prolapsing into the neural canal and damaging the spinal cord."

"Treatment is the stabilization of the affected bones in the neck," said Dr. Sharp, "There are many techniques but none are considered ideal." In this study the two surgeons will evaluate the animal by doing a myelogram, this being an x-ray taken where the spinal cord has been outlined with an opaque dye. In addition, a CT scan will be performed which permits a view of the affected vertebrae in cross-section, showing the compression of the spinal cord more clearly than the radiograph. After these two tests, one of the standard surgical procedures will be performed. "Generally we decompress the disc and then fuse the vertebrae to stabilize the area," the animal will be examined later in the recovery period again employing a myelogram and a CT scan.

"By looking at the condition prior to and after surgical treatment, we hope to ascertain whether the procedure accomplished the goal of reducing the pressure on the cord and stabilizing the affected area of the neck," Dr. Sharp said. "The CT scan allows us a really close and detailed look in a way which gave in December past nil appear on the list. We apologize. These organizations will appear on our next acknowledgement.

Dedication
The cottage adjacent to the Allam House at New Bolton Center was dedicated as Hill Cottage on Dec. 6, 1985, in memory of John J. Hill, III.

Mr. Hill, a dedicated horseman, was master of the National Hunt Farm, a member of the Radnor Hunt, and vice president of The Devon Horse Show. He was a member of The Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture and the Quaker City Farmers, and a friend of the School, particularly New Bolton Center.

Mrs. John J. Hill, III, Mrs. D. Story MacDonald and Mr. John J. Hill, IV, at the dedication of Hill Cottage at New Bolton Center.