

## 2008 Vizsla Club of America Welfare Foundation Health Survey

\* New Vizsla Health Survey!!! Go to: <http://www.ipgwcu.org/vizsla> \*

\* Introducing Dr. Randall Rieger, Ph.D. & Staff \*

The New Vizsla Health Survey is now live online as of January 21, 2008. We are very fortunate to have a professional staff on board to help us gather information to facilitate accurate scientific research to benefit our vizsla breed. The 2008 Vizsla Health survey is located at: <http://www.ipgwcu.org/vizsla>

**Dr Randall H. Rieger**, Ph.D., Professor of Applied Statistics at West Chester University, PA will be overseeing this project. Dr. Rieger was kind enough to write the following for *The Vizsla News*, to introduce himself and his staff to our members. Dr. Rieger writes:

The **West Chester Statistics Institute (WCSI)** is excited to have the opportunity to be involved in this Vizsla National Health Survey. We look forward to providing you with a clear and comprehensive outlook of the overall health of this great breed. We would like to take this opportunity to let you know a little bit about our Institute and to introduce the individuals who will be working on this project.

The West Chester Statistics Institute provides statistical support, analysis, and education on projects for the academic community and for business, industry, and other research institutions. WCSI is a non-profit organization, committed to providing hands-on, supervised educational opportunities for current West Chester University students in the Applied Statistics Graduate Program. The WCSI group employs 5 PhD statisticians with diverse backgrounds, including biostatistics, educational research, epidemiology, financial statistics, and psychometrics. We also have other PhD statisticians on call in case any issue outside of our collective expertise should arise. This diversity of staff allows us to tailor staff competencies and experiences to different tasks, and make us eligible to collaborate on a variety of projects. WCSI provides expertise in study design, data management, statistical programming, and statistical analysis. For more information about WCSI, please visit our website at [www.wcupa.edu/wcsi](http://www.wcupa.edu/wcsi).

*Dr. Randall H. Rieger, Professor of Statistics at West Chester University, is co-Director of the West Chester Statistics Institute. He is also the Director of the Graduate Program in Applied Statistics at West Chester University. Dr. Rieger earned his BA degree from Bowdoin College and his MS and PhD in biostatistics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Rieger has published research on a variety of topics in biostatistics, epidemiology, education, and medical and genetics research. In his free time, he enjoys distance running, bicycling, and going on hikes with his wife and Labrador retriever. Dr. Rieger will be directing this project and conducting the statistical analyses.*

*Dr. David L. Bolton, is an Assistant Professor in the Secondary and Professional Education Department. He teaches courses on educational evaluation and measurement and educational technology for pre-service teachers, as well as research methods and assessment for counselors. Dr. Bolton earned his PhD in Research and Statistics from The Florida State University in 1991, as well as a Masters Degree in Research and Statistical Methodology from Andrews University. His specialty areas include instrument development and causal model analysis. His research focus is upon the use of technology in the classroom. Dr. Bolton has studied extensively in Germany and speaks fluent German. Dr. Bolton will be working on the design of the health survey.*

*Thomas A. Gibbons is a Statistical Programmer at Wyeth Pharmaceuticals. He is also working toward an M.S. in Applied Statistics at West Chester University. Thomas earned his BA degree from Neumann College and also has a great deal of continuing education in the field of computer science. During the last 5 years, Thomas has been working in pharmaceutical research on a variety of clinical trials in the areas of neuroscience, oncology, and diabetes. In his free time, he enjoys golfing, running, and spending time with his wife and two children. Thomas will be managing the database and conducting statistical analyses.*

*The website will be designed, hosted, and maintained by The Internet Presentations Group (IPG) of West Chester University. Founded in 1995, The Internet Presentations Group is one of the oldest Web design businesses in Pennsylvania. Over the past nine years, IPG has grown into a multifaceted Web design group that draws from all levels of the University: undergraduate, graduate and faculty. Initially, IPG focused solely on designing websites for governmental agencies and non-profit organizations. In the past two years, IPG has expanded our client list to include commercial organizations and will continue to serve clients according to their specific needs. IPG creates*

*new websites, redesigns existing websites, and provides maintenance services with fast turnaround times. IPG is directed by Dr. Michael Pearson, Associate Professor of Communication Studies at West Chester University. Dr. Pearson is a scholar of media and mass communication, with an interest in distance education, computer-mediated communication, and multimedia presentation technology. He holds a B.A. from Iowa College, an M.A. from William Patterson College, and a Ph.D. from Temple University.*

As you can see, there is a very capable and professional staff on board for the 2008 Vizsla Health Survey project. However, we will need all Vizsla owners with Vizslas born from 1992 until present day to enter the health information for each of their Vizslas on the online survey provided. It is now up to all of us to make this health survey successful so it provides the current health information on our breed to assist owners, breeders, veterinarians and researchers.

Here is some additional information regarding the health survey.

The 2008 Vizsla Health Survey is sponsored and funded by private donations to the Vizsla Club of America Welfare Foundation, Inc. The purpose of this health survey is to scientifically research what the real & current health issues are in the Vizsla breed. It is also important to find if the number of Vizslas affected with certain health issues is actually significant and what the average age of onset is. What Vizslas are dying from is another major question we would like to answer. Due to this survey focusing on current health issues and other questions we have regarding current Vizsla health and research, **we are asking that only purebred Vizslas born from 1992 until present time be submitted to this survey.** Each Vizsla owned should have an individual health survey submitted separately.

This survey marks an important starting point to watch so we can be able to spot future trends in Vizsla health issues. Future health surveys will also be used to help to track increases and decreases in Vizsla health and disease incidence. One of the major goals of this project is to assist Vizsla breeders by identifying what our most significant health issues are. Hopefully, identifying significant Vizsla health problems and concerns will inform and educate breeders, researchers, veterinary professionals and Vizsla owners and allow breeders to make better breeding decisions. This health survey will also be available to veterinarians and researchers to better assist them in caring for, treating and establishing research protocols for Vizslas. The survey will also help to better inform the public and future Vizsla owners and puppy buyers of what health issues they may possibly encounter when purchasing or adopting a Vizsla. All research data will be tabulated and statistically analyzed by West Chester Statistics Institute.

The Vizsla Club of America Welfare Foundation, Inc also sponsors canine and Vizsla specific health and research grants and studies. Knowing what Vizsla health issues are the most significant and urgent will help the VCA WF focus funding where it is needed the most.

The results of this health survey are being tabulated and analyzed by a disinterested 3<sup>rd</sup> party, independently contracted by the Vizsla Club of America Welfare Foundation, Inc. Personal information and pedigree information is NOT part of this survey and is not needed in any way to allow your Vizsla to be part of this survey. Information submitted is not tracked and no Vizsla's names are allowed or asked for. All Vizslas, healthy or with health issues are encouraged to complete this survey. If your Vizsla was included in the 1996-1997 Vizsla Breed Health Survey you are still welcome to resubmit that Vizsla's health information, as long as the Vizsla was born from 1992 forward.

Even if you have a healthy Vizsla, there are some conditions that are included (such as: allergies, ear infections, temperament problems, etc.) that you may not remember or think of until looking at the actual health survey itself. So please look at the survey in advance, if possible and complete the survey even if you consider the Vizsla(s) you own to be healthy. Vizslas that are healthy are also important information needed to be included in this research project.

Vizsla owners in foreign countries worldwide are also welcome to participate. Though Vizslas with health issues born in the United States are our main focus, the health of the Vizsla breed globally should be of importance to all of us who love, care and are stewards of this breed. So please feel free to fill out the

Vizsla Health Survey no matter what country you live in. If you own a purebred Vizsla, please participate. Foreign countries health information will be tabulated separately.

In addition, donations to the Vizsla Club of America Welfare Foundation, Inc. are always needed to continue funding research and health and welfare issues important to the Vizsla breed. This health survey is made possible by private donations to the VCA WF. The Foundation is intended to be a charitable, non-profit organization as defined by the IRS. As a result, the Foundation can offer the advantage of tax-deductible contributions to its donors and contributors for the gifts they make. For more information or to make a donation to the VCA WF to support future health and welfare projects that support the Vizsla breed, please go to <http://clubs.akc.org/vizsla/welfarefoundation.htm> or mail a donation directly to: Pat Carnes, VCA WF Treasurer, P.O. Box 639, Stevensville, MD 21666.

I will also try and keep the membership updated and informed on how this project is progressing throughout the year. It is up to all of us as members to help get the word out to all Vizsla owners. The VCA WF would appreciate regional clubs and Vizsla owners and breeders with websites to add a link from their websites to the: [www.ipgwcu.org/vizsla](http://www.ipgwcu.org/vizsla) Vizsla Health Survey website and help encourage all Vizsla owners to participate in this project. Again, all purebred Vizsla owners anywhere in the world are welcome to participate as long as the Vizsla was born between 1992 until present day. Please pass the word and website address on to anyone you know who owns a Vizsla.

[www.ipgwcu.org/vizsla](http://www.ipgwcu.org/vizsla)

Lynda Ruffini  
Vizsla Club of America  
Health Chairman  
[wldwing@verizon.net](mailto:wldwing@verizon.net)