

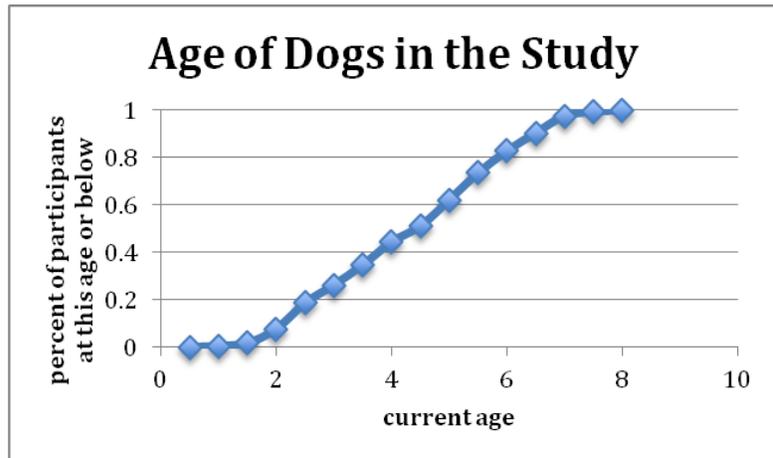
## Update on NIH Study

Dr. Heidi Parker

With the completion of enrollment in the Lifetime study at the end of 2011, we now have a clear picture of our participating population. There are a total of 238 dogs enrolled and the following is a brief summary of the group based on the introductory survey:

The lifetime study participant group is 65% female and 35% male with an average age of 4½ yrs this month. The group comprises two primary generations of SCWTs with peaks of enrollment for dogs that are currently either 2 yrs of age or 5½ yrs of age. The average age of males and female are essentially the same (4.2 and 4.5, respectively).

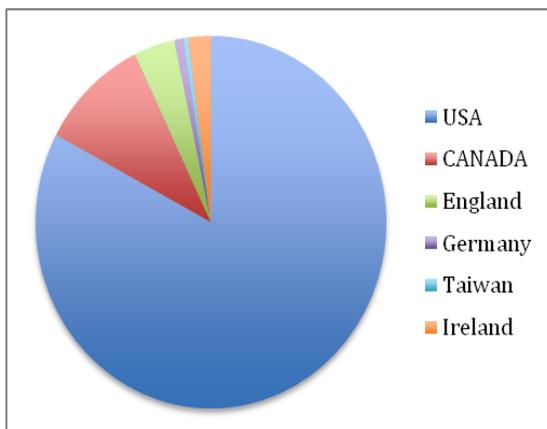
On average, owners acquired their puppies at 10 wks of age. Approximately 52% were purchased while 37% were born in their current homes. Approximately half of the males and 1/3



of the females in the study have been spayed or neutered. Just over half of the participants' owners have indicated an intent to include their dog in a breeding program and nearly one quarter have already produced at least one litter. 82% of the dogs come from the United States and represent between 2 and 3% of the SCWT population registered by the American Kennel Club.

The vast majority of the participants (80%) are currently in excellent health and 90% see a veterinarian at least once a year. The most common ailments reported to date are kennel cough (12%) and allergies (14%).

We are now reaching the end of 2012 and it is time for the first annual health survey of the SCWT lifetime study. The survey should be available online in the coming month. Watch for notices in your mailboxes with instructions for accessing and completing the survey. Information is the foundation of any good research project and with your help we will all learn more about the health of this amazing breed.



**Dr. Heidi Parker** is a Research Fellow in the Cancer Genetics Branch at the National Human Genome Research Institute of NIH. Dr. Parker received her Ph.D. from the University of Washington and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center where she studied the population to structure of the domestic dog. She continues her work on canine genetics at the National Institutes of Health by applying information gained from population studies to the mapping and identification of genes involved in complex traits and diseases. Dr. Parker is currently leading projects aimed at identifying genetic variants associated with cancer susceptibility, auto-immune disorders, and limb morphology, as she continues to study breed structure, development, and history through genetics.