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Lagotto Club Of America  
[www.lagottous.com](http://www.lagottous.com)



# Lagotto Club of America

## Fall 2009 Newsletter

### Fall Was Exciting!

#### *Events Abound in the Lagotto World*

##### *A Message from the Editor*

This newsletter comes a bit late this year, as we wanted to make sure that we were able to highlight all the events surrounding the Lagotto.

From the “Desert Days” Raduno in the Southwest, to events in New York, the Northeast Raduno in Connecticut, and the Italian Raduno, our members have been busy getting to know each other as they have traveled from all points of the US and into Europe.

We appreciate your patience but think you will enjoy the articles and photos from these events, included in this edition.

### Desert Days SW Raduno 2009

#### *By Judith Martin*

The weather was sunny and pleasant as we hosted just under 40 Lagotto owners, Lagotto wannabees and some curious others.

We had a handling demonstration, a Fun Match with an AKC judge, a Rally demonstration, a Chuck Wagon Steak Grill, door prizes and a great raffle with exciting gifts.



Guests came from AZ, NM, CA, WA, TN, MS and NY, with more than 25 Lagotti and one Wheaten Terrier. The dogs played games, played in the kiddie pools and generally had a great time together running around on 2 acres.



A “Fun Match” was held, with winners in the following: Best in Match, Vando, owned by Judith Martin, Best Opposite was Inka, owned by Hanne Rantala, and Best Puppy in Match was Apollon, owned by Faith Robb.



Big thanks to Jocelyn Slatin for allowing us to use her home for our Raduno.



Also thanks to all those who chipped in and helped make our Raduno very special. We hope we can meet more of you next year.

## Columbus Day Parade

*An AKC Event in NY City*

On Monday, October 12, 2009, the American Kennel Club took part in the annual Columbus Day Parade on Fifth Avenue in NY City. As a real treat for the crowds, this year the rare Italian Dog Breeds were highlighted in the parade.

Why you ask? Well, Columbus Day is a celebration of Italian-American culture, so a fun way to introduce these breeds to the onlookers.

Our Lagotto family was represented by Paul and Ellen Lemberg, accompanied by Mocca. Thank you to all three of you for proudly acting as the PR Ambassadors for the Lagotto and the LCA.

For more information on this event and AKC photos, please go to the link:

[http://www.akc.org/news/index.cfm?article\\_id=3988](http://www.akc.org/news/index.cfm?article_id=3988)

## Meet the Breed Event

*By Lisa Erdekian*

The Lagotto Club of America was invited to join more than 175 dog breeds and more than 40 cat breeds at the first-ever, stand-alone American Kennel Club (AKC)-sponsored Meet-the-Breed event in New York City. This event, and the events leading up to it, beginning with 13 Italian breeds walking in the Columbus Day Parade and on-the-street interviews with dog owners, were designed to promote the purebred dog and cat and responsible pet ownership.

Participating as the parent club of a Foundation Stock Service breed, the LCA booth was located next to the Labrador Retriever booth, across from the Leonberger booth and around the bend from the ever-popular Golden Retriever booth. With such prime positioning, it was no wonder that a

seemingly endless stream of the more than 40,000 attendees stopped by to marvel at the six Lagottos positioned at our booth during the two-day event.

Representing the breed were Kiera, Nike, and Cosmo (with Caleb Williams, courtesy of Bob Zimmel), Nina (with Lisa Erdekian and her daughter Alyce), Massi (with Ani Dorian and her son Nick), Maggie (with Joe and Mary Ann Casteluccio), and Meta (in spirit only, as Judith Schutzman was unable to bring her.) The puppies were kept in a pen and rotated in and out throughout the day, while Nina, the grand dame of the booth, patiently modeled the qualities of a mature Lagotto. We featured at our booth six blown-up posters of the Lagottos, a continuously running DVD loop of Lagotto photos, and a tri-fold Lagotto brochure.

Bob appropriately acknowledged the efforts of the volunteers and the dogs when he wrote, "Thanks to all of the volunteers who made our booth such a hit. I am sorry I missed it. AKC will surely have noticed us."

While many of the booth visitors were merely curious, many others were genuinely interested and asked probing questions about their health, breed standards, temperament, and talents. Some even inquired about purchasing a dog. We directed most visitors to our website for additional information and even recruited a few new Yahoo Group members. "It was gratifying to see people return two and three times to ask additional questions and relate to the puppies "just one more time," said Nick Dorian.

The booth did not escape the notice of the many AKC exhibitors and judges. As Caleb so aptly noted, "The event went smoothly and generated a ton of interest from AKC exhibitors and judges. The club and its members should carefully weigh AKC recognition and the impact it will have on the breed."

*Editors Note: Go to "AKC Meet the Breeds" for more info on this event.*

## The N.E. Raduno

*By Ani Dorian*

The 2009 North East Raduno was held on Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> in Old Saybrook, Ct. and was the international event of the season. Lagottos represented 9 states and Canada from as far away as New Mexico and Florida. Our Club President, Bob Zimmel, presided over the two days of events which included demonstrations of grooming, obedience, agility and water training. Novice Lagottos participated in their first time agility with the help of Donna Bennet, owner of D-Tails in Old Saybrook, Connecticut. Toni Kaye-Wolff, a professional dog trainer who has been on 20/20 and many morning news shows provided individual and group tips for Lagotto owners. Sunday turned beautiful and Jane Harding, from Cutwater PWD led the dogs in a water training lesson which included water retrieving on the picturesque Connecticut River in Essex.



And of course, throughout the Raduno, Caleb Williams and Jim Cunha of Classic Handling, provided advice and immeasurable help with obedience, grooming and event support items too numerous to mention!

"Pro Shooter in Training" Nick Dorian, age 15, took hundreds of photos, and can be found at the link:  
[http://picasaweb.google.com/dorianscale3/NERaduno2009?authkey=GvIsRgCJmu96fA\\_7jlkAE&feat=directlink#](http://picasaweb.google.com/dorianscale3/NERaduno2009?authkey=GvIsRgCJmu96fA_7jlkAE&feat=directlink#)



Dogs and owners had a great time meeting, many for the first time. Many siblings had a chance to catch up with each other and meet new Lagotto friends. The venue was a doggy day-care center that provided much appreciated shelter from a Saturday of heavy rain.



The Raduno also provided for a gourmet extravaganza hosted by Bob and his wife, Linda, owners of "Alforno", in Old Saybrook, Ct. Bob's staff provided lunch on Saturday,

gourmet dinner on Saturday night and a variety of his restaurants famous Florentine pizzas for a Sunday farewell.



It was truly a memorable event with many participants asking about next year. Whew!



## Italian Raduno in Bagnara, Italy

By Hilarie H. Gibbs-Sykes

This year I was once again able to attend the Raduno in Italy. Saturday, just under 130 dogs competed in conformation, the highest entry ever. The weather was perfect, the dogs were wonderful. This was my second Raduno and I thought that the overall quality of the entry was better than what I saw in 2007.

While the greatest numbers of Lagotto were Italian, Swiss and Swedish owners were also present in force. As well there were dogs from Slovenia, Germany and the UK. One major difference from showing in the US is that the dogs are not moved (gaited) to the same extent that they would be here - I also heard one of the Swedish breeders comment about this difference.

On Sunday, just over 100 dogs competed in the Provo di Lavoro, which are the proving trials for aptitude of searching the truffle.

*Cont. next column*

The trial was held in several different areas on a mountainside farm. The terrain was very steep, the roads muddy. Five judges in five separate locations judged the various groups. Among other things the dogs were judged on the size and compactness of the holes that they dug when finding a truffle. (The hole should be shallow and compact).

The entrants - people and dogs - wait at a distance from where the actual search by a dog is occurring. When it is time for the next person, the handler and dog are called to an as yet unsearched area for their trial. If you do not have an entry in the trial, there is little to see. However, there was ample opportunity to mix and talk with folks from all over Europe while the trial is underway.

The Italian Raduno is held in mid-October every year on the grounds of Professor Giovanni Morsiani's villa in Bagnara and the nearby mountains. It is a wonderful opportunity to see Lagotto and meet breeders from all over Europe. I hope that others will have the chance to attend in years to come.

## Photos from Italian Raduno

Taken by Ken Weiss





## Now why would I want to do THAT?

### The Lagotto Romagnolo and AKC

By Mel Sykes

Okay, you found the cutest puppy in the world and he is yours!! In YOUR home! Playing with your cats! Piddling on YOUR rug....OOPS! Better go take care of that. We'll wait.

Now, let's talk about registration, the American Kennel Club, the Lagotto Club of America, and your purebred Lagotto. If you purchased your Lagotto from a breeder that is a member of the LCA and a resident of the US, you shouldn't have a problem. Your breeder will register your puppy with the AKC.

If you purchased an imported puppy, this is for you. First, why? Why register your puppy with the American Kennel Club. Allow me to give the short version.

Every breed of purebred dog maintains what is referred to as a Stud Book. Unlike the title, the Stud Book is a record of every dog that enters the US. In the USA, a group of interested Lagotto owners (who would later help form the Lagotto Club of America) asked the American Kennel Club to keep the stud book. Why? Because they have over 30 million dogs of all breeds in their registry, and they do a good job at accuracy!

Why do we care about your pet? In order for the Club to be recognized by the American Kennel Club a certain number of dogs across the U.S. must be recorded in the AKC's Lagotto Stud Book. At this point in the recognition process, the AKC keeps records on our dogs in their Foundation Stock Service. As the name implies, every full 3 generation Lagotto in the U.S. that is listed with AKC is a part of the Foundation of the breed. It is important for all Lagotto in the US to be registered even those that are spayed or neutered.

One of the biggest reasons for is to move the breed from it's current status

of "rare" breed. Rare breeds are the darlings of puppy producers, who move into these hard-to-find and high demand breeds motivated purely by profit. When health, conformation and breed type are ignored, it can take years to repair the damage to the breed.

With every dog that is registered, the Lagotto takes another step towards full recognition, so please – register your Lagotto! For detailed information on the process, please go to: <http://www.akc.org/pdfs/ADFSS1.pdf>

If you have questions or need help, contact Mel Sykes, Secretary, Lagotto Club of America [secy@lagottous.com](mailto:secy@lagottous.com)

But before you do that; is that another pee spot on your rug?!



## THE IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATING TEMPERAMENT IN BREEDING DOGS

*THE NICE, USER-FRIENDLY DOG*  
By Adrienne Perry

Many people seem to believe that there is only "one" good temperament: "the nice dog." Every dog is nice at home (one hopes anyway), and to the people it lives with. The true test of temperament comes with the stresses of the unknown: the vet's office, the dog show, the kids down the street, perfect strangers, physical correction, pain of injury and diagnosis, strange footing, loud noises and thunderstorms, strange dogs, the trip in the car. Not all breeds react to all of these the same way. I think our Lagotto Romagnolo standard could use clarification on what good temperament is beyond the statement that extreme shyness and aggression are incorrect, that the dog is active, easy to train (which I would not qualify as temperament) and tenacious. What is the *scale* of acceptable behavior? How

should they respond to extreme stimuli?

The problem lies in defining what *correct temperament* means. But here's my experience, with 19 years in rottweilers, 10 years as a vet tech, and several years as a professional dog trainer, *most people that have a dog with an actual temperament problem are oblivious to it, make excuses for it and in general are in denial about it...even when they have just witnessed the dog trying to take off my face for some everyday, ordinary act.* Hip scores on the other hand are quantifiable. Critiques and judging and achievements against competition are as well. It is much easier to judge qualifications in these categories. But if we're going to be saying temperament comes first than I think we're going to have to come up with better ways of quantifying what "it" is.

A breed's original job has a lot to do with its temperament. Dogs that were bred for jobs where they had to make their own decisions (guardian flock dogs for example) are going to be different in temperament than those bred to hunt with a companion or sit on a wealthy lady's lap. Breeds used in Schutzhund have extraordinary pain tolerance and bravery---trying to train through intimidation rarely works because of it, they also test right off the Volhard puppy test for having no pain sensitivity and being a poor candidate for training (far from the truth).



Some people try to breed in a temperament that is not correct for the breed....making it more "user friendly." One of the things that drew me to the Lagotto Romagnolo was a statement about their ability to work all day without tiring (important when hunting for truffles for a living)...that's a terrific feature for a competition working dog---and can be a nightmare for someone who only wants a "pet," to

go on walks with and snuggle. So do we breed dogs for people like me or for the larger "hypo allergenic pet" market? Is there a range in which both levels of energy can fall and still be correct?

### ***BREEDING TO QUESTION MARKS***

Another aspect for Lagotto Romagnolo fanciers to consider is the fact that we are still importing a majority of dogs from Europe. Without the ability to look at the whole litter, the parents, and see the situation where the puppy was raised, we don't know if the puppy's temperament is a product of nature or nurture. Did something happen on the plane during a critical stage of the puppy's development or was it raised in a kennel situation?



It's a question mark, if you haven't been able to see things for yourself and develop a relationship with the breeder that allows you to ask tough questions and get honest answers.

Most of us have never met the sire of our puppy and that is also a question mark unless there has been some kind of character test in the sire's country. In this day and age of advanced reproductive veterinary science, how many of us have bred to a dog --through frozen or fresh chilled semen--that we have never laid hands on in person?

We might also be influenced by dogs that we have seen in our own area of the country, especially if they are similar in temperament and come from the same bloodlines or breeder. If they are all similar, doesn't that mean something about the breed in general? Not necessarily, especially if we all have the same mentor, who has taught us all to evaluate temperament in the same manner. We need to look at temperament in the big picture beyond what is happening in our own region. With the limited breeding stock in the United States, compounded by dogs who haven't passed their hip--or other health exams—the breeding pool is

already quite small. We need to understand what the best choices are, and have a way of examining the temperament of the sire and dam that is on par with their health tests.

### ***PROOF IN THE PUDDING***

If you live in the US and get a chance to attend (or enter) an ATTS temperament test, it is a great way to spend the day. If you're lucky you'll get to see a variety of breeds responding to each of the "stress stations" and see how their reactions are rated according to their breed by the trained testers. And different breeds have different (and correct for them) reactions to all of them. We should be getting the ATTS TT title (Temperament Tested and passed) behind all the dogs names that we intend to breed, or in countries that have them, passing the character or breed suitability test. Using a standardized testing method, we can begin to quantify what good temperament is....otherwise it is merely the opinion of the owner.

*You can learn more about the American Temperament Test Society by visiting their website at [www.atts.org](http://www.atts.org)*



## **Road Trip! Bringing Home the New Puppy from a Foreign Land**

*By Therese Williams*

A few months ago, I was chatting with my dear and decidedly, patient husband. While we discuss many things, this conversation had to do with our dogs and my suggesting that we needed another dog; a female Lagotto. Now, you need to know that while my husband is kind, gentle and loves dogs, this would bring us up to four dogs, and when I got three, well that was pushing

it in his eyes. Approaching this subject was, well, let's just say "delicate," but after the initial shock wore off and he had a second glass of wine, he was much more receptive to the idea. "Puppies are a lot of work," was his reminder, but we have always had a pretty good experience so began looking forward to the process.

I contacted our breeder in the Netherlands to get on a list for a puppy, but it needed to be compatible to our male for future breeding possibilities. This time, in thinking of importing the dog, my husband had the idea that it would be much better for the puppy if I went to pick it up, versus having it shipped. Our first experience with our male had some issues, so I agreed and thought this to be a great idea, and going to a foreign country would be exciting. Now we just had to wait until our new puppy was "made", so a little more waiting.

In July, we got the word that there was a mating, but it would be weeks before we would know if there was a little girl in there for us. On September 7<sup>th</sup>, the puppies were born and in the litter of seven, three were females, one white, one brown roan and one orange. We still did not know which would be ours until they were about 7-weeks old and the breeder could see how they were developing, but that would give us time to make travel plans.



Never having been to the Netherlands and knowing nothing about the area where we would travel, I began doing my research, and asking questions; a LOT of questions! I am sure I drove the breeder crazy, but you have to understand that I am a very "planned"

person and spontaneity and I are slow to become friends.

During this time, my husband and I also discovered that his schedule would work out so he could travel with me and we would be able to make a little “vacation” out of the trip. This was going to be more fun than originally thought.

So, we began making travel plans not only for us, but also learning about the best airlines for bringing an animal in the cabin with us, what we had to do, what carrier to buy, what to pack, and so on. Remember, I told you I was a “very planned person” – my husband says it is more like “obsessed” than planned.

What I found out is that no airline has under seat dimensions (where a carrier would be placed) that are actually the size of a carrier. You have to improvise and make a calculated guess. I finally found one that is endorsed by Delta Airlines, and had the Delta logo stamped on it. I thought this would be perfect, and no matter what airline I was on, if it has an airline logo on it, they would be less likely to argue with me. Just so you know, it is the Sherpa Carrier in size medium.

Since I made my airline reservations directly online through the air carrier (I found this the cheapest rate), I then had to call and make the puppy’s reservation. The airline will go over the restrictions with you on the phone and want to know the country or origin and country of destination as some have specific immunization or quarantine requirements. Coming from most of the western European nations to the USA is no problem, but if the puppy is 12 weeks or older, then a rabies vaccine may be required. I was asked this when arriving in the US and had to clear the puppy with CDC (Center for Disease Control) at the airport.

Let’s go back and talk about that carrier I bought. I ordered it late so paid the extra money to have it shipped to me quickly, then sent it ahead to the breeder so it would have some familiar smells of the breeders home, and so she would get used to it before my arrival. The breeder was kind enough to have “Lily” as she now has a name, sleep in it one night, which helped a lot. In hindsight, I should have just packed it and taken it with me since we were there a week before we would be traveling back to the US. With all the shipping costs, that carrier ended up being ridiculously expensive. Live and learn.

The day finally came that we would take Lily from the breeder and back to the hotel for a short night, before getting up and beginning the long journey home. Lily slept in her carrier again that night and did great.

The day of travel began very early, and we had to take a two-hour train ride to the airport, and needed to be there early enough to begin the process there. Once on the plane, I was delighted to find out that the seat next to me was empty, so I had extra room for the puppy in the carrier. The flight crew was wonderful the entire trip and was happy to bring me small cups of water for Lily – I have been told that this is not everyone’s experience, so be forewarned and traveling at “non-peak” times of the year might be better. Our flight home was just over 10 hours, so I was very worried about keeping the puppy hydrated, but then worried about where all that water would go. I only gave her small sips every couple of hours and made sure the carrier had an incontinence pad at the bottom. I also took with me a dog-diaper and after she stayed dry for 7 of the 10 hours, I did not want to push my luck any further, so put the diaper on her. Glad I did that!

While you are really never allowed to take an animal out of the carrier in

flight, I did a couple of times so I could check her and give her just a few bites of kibble and water. The flight crew (did I mention they were great?) said nothing, but I did not abuse this. Just a thought.

Once on the ground, going through Customs was no hassle, and the only extra step was a short visit to CDC and signing a couple of papers.

All in all, the trip was a better experience than I could have hoped for, and we had a great time visiting a foreign country, meeting the breeder, seeing the other dogs, and had an easy (albeit, long) flight.

Would I do this again? Would I recommend this to others? A big and resounding “YES” to both. Words of caution though; do your homework. Even if you are not traveling to a foreign country and staying domestic, picking up the puppy is such a great experience for you, the breeder and the puppy.

By the way, any reservations about having a fourth dog on my husband’s part are now gone. Lily has him right where she wants him – wrapped around her little paw.





# WANTED

Your photos of you and your Lagotto for the Holiday supplement! While the supplement comes out in December, the photos **DO NOT** need to have a "holiday" theme. We want to see you enjoying your Lagotto in your normal lives. Please send you photos (along with names and explanation) to:

**Therese1256@yahoo.com**

Please send by December 15<sup>th</sup> as the supplement will come out by the end of December.

**Thank You**

## LCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2009

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[http://www.akc.org/breeds/lagotto\\_romagnolo/index.cfm#pt2](http://www.akc.org/breeds/lagotto_romagnolo/index.cfm#pt2)



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