



# The Cavalier Chronicle

March 2014  
Volume 6, Issue 03



## Presidents Message

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## Upcoming Events

Next meeting  
April 1st

### President's message March 2014

Here it is, almost April. Before you know it the year will be almost gone.

To all those who attended our concurrent Specialty this year, we would love to have your comments, pros and cons. We are in process of trying to decide what we want to do about our future specialty shows. Do we give up Thursday, do we keep Thursday and have our Specialty like in the past, but with Griffin Kennel Club without a cavalier entry, do we move to another date, show site? So many decisions. The board would love to have your input.

On another note, our April meeting is the

time when nominations can be taken from the floor.

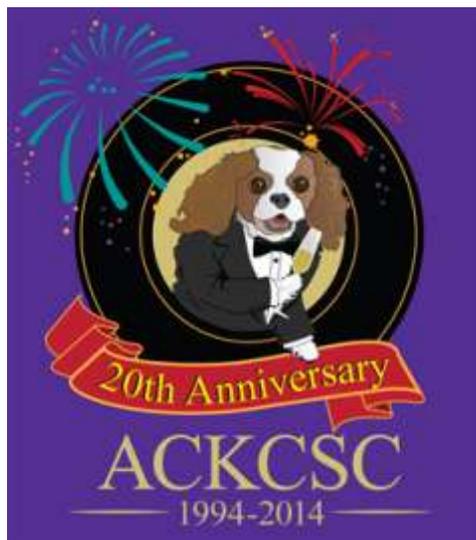
If you or you know someone who would like to be an Officer or Board Member, this is the time to make a nomination. If the person you are nominating is not present, you need to have a signed note from them, stating that they would accept the nomination. The elections will be held at our meeting in May.

Hope to see you on April 1<sup>st</sup>. No April

**Fools...**

Have a blessed day,

Alice Alford, President



### 20th Anniversary ACKCSC National Specialty Show! April 21-24, 2014 Harrisburg PA

A National Specialty Event is not just a dog show; it is an annual gathering of those interested in sustaining and improving the breed, addressing its health concerns, and keeping up-to-date on that latest information pertaining to the breed. The Event includes a health clinic, judge & health education seminars, social events, a Charitable Trust Banquet & Auction, Futurity and Sweeps, four days of Conformation competition, and Rally, Obedience & Agility trials! **If you love this breed, you'll want to be a part of the 2014 National Specialty Event.**

The 2014 National Specialty will be held as a stand-alone specialty show. The show has gone "back to its roots" and will be held at the beautiful Radisson Pennsylvania - Camp Hill Resort.

Next club meeting is April 1st with speaker **Nicole Piscitelli, DVM, DACVIM (Cardiology)**

Club Officers for 2014/15

Mark Fitchpatrick, Correspondence Secretary

## Aprils Speaker

**Nicole Piscitelli, DVM,  
DACVIM (Cardiology)**

Georgia Veterinary Specialists

455 Abernathy Rd NE

Atlanta, GA 30328

(404) 459-0903 -- work (203) 913-2816 -- cell

[nicole.piscitelli@bluepearlvet.com](mailto:nicole.piscitelli@bluepearlvet.com)

I was born in Buffalo, NY, and raised in the Rochester NY area. I knew from a young age that I wanted to be a veterinarian. I attended veterinary school at the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC) at the University of Prince Edward Island, and graduated in 2006. I completed an internship and residency in cardiology at Florida Veterinary Specialists in Tampa, Florida, under the mentorship of Dr. Alan Spier. After finishing my residency, we moved to Nashville, TN where I worked for a year, and then decided to move to Atlanta. I have worked at GVS since April 2012, and I continue to travel to Nashville, TN monthly to see cardiology cases (they have no cardiologist in Nashville).

**Meeting will cover a Basic Overview – set the stage on what we’re dealing with and what it means in the Cavalier world**

- MVD – what it is, in simple terms
- What are the official statistics on # Cavaliers with it, what were you seeing in practice?
- Symptoms - murmur, cough, increased blood pressure, low energy, fainting – what other symptoms should we be looking for?



• Diagnosing – role of auscultation, ECG, other tests and what each one provides to the clinician and owner

• Treatment - typical treatment protocols – medications, etc.

• What is the typical progression? from grade 1 to heart failure for example, can we predict a rapidly degrading situation?

• Is early treatment helpful? What constitutes early treatment, at what stage in diagnosing – for ex. A grade 2 murmur. Does it make a difference? is this wishful thinking?

•Nutritional management? Is there a heart-health diet? Supplements? Are these relevant before a murmur is found? What about after?

•Dental care? Relationship?

•Latest research?

• Newest medications? tips here - are there people meds we should save?

• What is the greatest indicator of a long lived Cavalier? Is the protocol working? Do we know the prevalence of murmurs in dogs whose parents were clear at 2.5 years or older, and grandparents at 5 years or older?

• What should we tell our pet owners if we get a call that there is a problem?

## The CKCSCGA 2014 Nominating Committee

The CKCSCGA 2014 Nominating Committee has met. The slate of officers for 2014 is:

- President - Alice Alford
- Vice President - Linda Whitmire
- Recording Secretary - Denise Newlon
- Correspondence Secretary - Mark Fitchpatrick
- Treasurer - Sue Bess
- Board Member at Large - Paula Ayers
- Board Member at Large - Missy Crane

The slate will be officially presented during the April meeting. At that time nominations will be taken from the floor. Those being nominated from the floor must be regular members in good standing. Those making a nomination must be regular members in good standing. If the person being nominated is not in attendance the person making the nomination must present a letter from the person being nominated stating that they accept the nomination. The election of officers will take place at the May meeting. This is your opportunity to serve the club by being on the board. Please give consideration to running for an office.

## March's Speaker

Timothy J. Holling,  
Executive Field Agent

### Our Southern Region Inspector for the AKC.

Last month's speaker was our Southern AKC inspector. His job is to inspect kennels, breeders establishments and any facility selling AKC registered puppies. Tim went over what happens during an inspection, what types records you need to be keeping on every dog in your kennel.

AKC rules require that each dog must be individually identified. Records of whenever a dog is mated to another, and if a female when resulting litter is whelped.. You must also keep records of who you have sold puppies to. All these records must be available when the inspector comes to your kennel for inspection. Tim pointed out that all these forms are available on the AKC website that you can print and you can read more about other requirements from the AKC about litters, registration of litters and selling puppies. Great tanks to Tim for an informative presentation.



The AKC also has a downloadable '**Pet Emergency Planning Guide**' called AKC Reunite—the way home for lost pets. Do you have a plan incase of a natural disaster?? Develop an emergency or disaster preparedness plan.

## Show Closings On 3/26/2014

[The Valdosta Kennel Club, Inc.\(2nd Obed\)](#)

Perry GA, Thursday, April 10, 2014

[The Valdosta Kennel Club, Inc. \(1\)](#)

Perry GA, Thursday, April 10, 2014

[Pyrenean Shepherd Club of America\(Rally\)](#)

Perry GA, Friday, April 11, 2014

[The Valdosta Kennel Club, Inc. \(2\)](#)

Perry GA, Friday, April 11, 2014

[Atlanta Kennel Club, Inc.](#)

Perry GA, Saturday, April 12, 2014

[Combined Specialty Clubs of Atlanta \(1\)](#)

Perry GA, Sunday, April 13, 2014

[Combined Specialty Clubs of Atlanta \(2\)](#)

Perry GA, Sunday, April 13, 2014

[Greater Atlanta Toy Dog Association Inc.](#)

Atlanta GA, Sunday, April 13, 2014

[North Georgia Hound Association](#)

Perry GA, Sunday, April 13, 2014

## Show Closings On 4/16/2014

Oconee River Kennel Club Show

May 3 & 4th 2014

## Our Club Website...

Have you visited the Club website recently? Be sure to check it out as we now have it updated with all our Specialty results! In addition, we have added a few new “tabs” of information, such as the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary ACKCSC Specialty Show and a Legislation tab. We have also tried to “fill in the blanks” for our pictures of Member of the Year and Ten Year Members too! However, we still are missing a few pictures! So if you happen to have a photo of a Member of the Year or Ten Year Member that you could help us out with, please email it to Sharon Utych ([utych@earthlink.net](mailto:utych@earthlink.net)) to be updated onto the website.

Our Newsletter tab has been updated also. There are still some missing newsletters, so again, if you happen to have any of those missing issues on your computer, be sure to send them to Sharon to have them updated to the website!

Our Trophy Fund drive is now open ALL YEAR on our website. Here you can make a safe and secure donation ANYTIME to the Trophy Fund to offset costs for the 2015 Specialty Trophies! We still have a form you can download, complete and mail into our Treasurer. Now we have two great ways to support our Trophy Fund Drive!

Our Legislative page will be updated when there is news from the GA Canine Coalition to share and there is a link available to always check out the AKC website on updated legislative matters!

Here are a few fun statistics regarding our website traffic...

Did You Know that from January 13, 2014 to March 18, 2014?

We have had 2966 visits to our website of which 2370 were unique visitors

Approximately, there are 36 visits to our website a day lasting about 2 minutes 37 seconds.

The number one page that is visited most often is our RESCUE page (2000 views)

The next top 5 pages visited are: Home page (1348), GA Breeder Referral (1266), Breeder Info Tab (682), Therapy Dogs tab (174) and AL Breeder Referral (244)

We have had visits to our website from other sites with our link: ACKCSC.org (13), Onofrio.com (17), ackcsc.org (14).

**Most used search engine to “find” our website is google (2031), then bing (138).**

As you can see from the statistics, people come to our page looking for rescue information, breeder referrals and information on becoming a therapy dog. These are most likely prospective pet people or pet people looking for another pup or rescue. Our website is our face to the public and a way to keep them informed about our breed and our club involvement! If you have not visited our site lately, go check it out at <http://www.ckcscatlanta.org>



## Tips and Tricks

**NEW FEATURE I'M TRYING.** Please submit your own tips and tricks for fellow cavalier lovers. Any grooming, training, showing, traveling, food and treat tips that you can share!!!!



### ***I found this cool website BARKBOX.com***

When you sign up for BarkBox, every month you will receive a box in the mail with four or more carefully selected products and presents for your dog – anything from toys, bones and all-natural treats to hygiene products and innovative new gadgets!

If your dog is begging for more or you want to gift a favorite item to a friend, we'll give you exclusive opportunities to order more products at a great rate.

A portion of proceeds from each box will go to help doggies-in-need. To learn more about our causes, read about our giving program.

Whether you've known your furry friend for years or have a new special canine in your life, Bark-Box is the monthly necessity for keeping your pup entertained and feeling well loved.

To get a better idea of what's in the box (and to see some cute and happy dogs),

As low as \$19/month. 10% goes towards supporting a rescue group.

1. Choose dog size.

Tell us how big your dog's bark is. We've got goodies for every dog size.

2. Choose plan.

Monthly, 3-month or 6-month plans available. Cancel any-time. Free shipping.

3. Get BarkBox.

BarkBoxes are shipped on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Get excited!

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
CKCSCGA - REGULAR MEETING**

March 4, 2014

Holiday Inn Northlake 2158 Richwood Dr NE, Atlanta, GA 30345

**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA:**

- Welcome Guests
- Roll Call
- Approve Minutes of Last Meeting
- Report of President
- Report of Corresponding Secretary
- Report of Recording Secretary
- Report of Treasurer
- Reports of the Committees
- Election of New Members
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Adjournment
- Brags

**MINUTES:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 PM by Alice Alford.

**WELCOME GUESTS:** No guest, but we welcome Claire as a new member.

**MEMBERS ATTENDING:** Quorum Present? Yes.  
 Regular members: Mark Fitchpatrick, Alice Alford, Sharon Onorato, Missy Crane, Shannon Schilling, Linda Whitmire, Sue Bess, Jim Utych, Jan Schmidt, Larry Crane, Denise Newlon.  
 Associate members: Claire Ellis, George Manning, Beverly Manning.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:**  
 A motion was made by Denise Newlon to approve the January minutes. The motion was seconded by Missy Crane. Motion was carried.

**REPORT OF PRESIDENT:**  
 Alice was fairly pleased with our specialty. Not thrilled with the idea of the concurrent specialty. If we do it again we should do it on Saturday. If we do move, we may completely give up our **Thursday, but if we don't like a concurrent specialty, then it won't matter. We will have to find another date for our specialty.**

**REPORT OF RECORDING SECRETARY:**

Nothing to report

**REPORT OF CORRESPONDING SECRETARY:**

Nothing to report

**REPORT OF TREASURER:**

Beginning Balance as of 12/31/2013	\$13,217.53
Total Income	\$ 4,701.90
Total expenses	<u>( 2,076.09)</u>
Ending Balance as of 2/28/2014	\$15,843.34
Savings Account Balance	\$10,027.77
PayPal Account Balance	\$ 2,257.43
Petty Cash	\$ 114.00

Total Assets as of 2/28/14 \$24,455.05

Total Members 69

All existing members renewed.

**Linda wants to know why we aren't using the health and education fund.** Sue will take action and investigate the purpose of this fund.

Missy suggested using fund to support an All-Breed Fun Match coupled with an educational table.

Shannon checked with Sue to determine whether or not the % allotted towards Trophy Fund from auction was reflected in **this month's report. This will show up in the following month's records.**

25% was proposed to donate to CKCSC charitable donation. Linda motioned to round up the amount to \$150. Missy seconded. Motion passed.

Made \$1223.00 for the Specialty weekend.

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:**

**Show committee:**

Working on judges for next specialty

**Puppy Picnic**

Considering simply proceeding with November 2 for the next Puppy Picnic rather than rescheduling based on multiple schedule conflicts in the spring or November 15 for a second date.

**Trophy Committee**

No report

**Hospitality committee**

No report

**Program Committee**

No report

**Nominating Committee**

Nominating committee was selected by email in April.

Mark Fitchpatrick – Chair, Sharon Utych, Margie Roe

Brenda Martz – Alternate, Jon Alford– Alternate

Existing board was polled. All members have indicated they would stay except Shannon Schilling requested to step down. Committee has to be formed by March 1. In April a new slate will be presented. Nomination will be taken from the floor at the April meeting. May meeting will be an election vote on new board.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**None**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Suggested cutting back on 1<sup>st</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> place prizes. Do supported entries for Marietta show and Jonesboro show.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

At 8:01 PM Linda Whitmire made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Missy Crane. The motion carried.



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*WE'RE MORE THAN CHAMPION DOGS. WE'RE THE DOG'S CHAMPION.*

AKC and FCI officials recently met at AKC's headquarters in New York to discuss many areas of common concern and interest. Among them was judging approval. We became aware that FCI has guidelines for its judges regarding compensation when judging outside of their own country. While of course this is not binding on AKC clubs, we believed that any club anticipating that it might invite a visiting judge should be aware of it. As a reminder, visiting judges from an AKC recognized registry may be approved to judge up to eight All Breed assignments in one calendar year.

### **A CONSIDERATION IN INVITING VISITING JUDGES**

Many AKC clubs do include visiting judges from other countries on their judging panels. Many of these judges are from countries with FCI member clubs with which AKC has reciprocal agreements regarding judging approval. In each case, the terms agreed to between the club and the judge are contractual matters between the two parties and not something with which AKC would become involved. However, we did wish to make AKC clubs aware of the terms the FCI informed us of that these FCI visiting judges are accustomed to when they have assignments at shows in other FCI countries. Section "a" below is from the FCI Regulations for Show Judges and 1 and 2 are the Appendix consisting of the Complimentary Rules for the Travel Expense of Judges. The exchange rate is of course always subject to change, but currently 50 Euros would equate to \$68.79 and 35 Euros \$48.15.

.AKC clubs are of course not bound by FCI rules or guidelines, but may wish to consider them when deciding upon a fair and reasonable financial arrangement with visiting judges it plans to invite.

#### **a. Travel arrangements**

Judges are free to make private arrangements with show organizations, which may differ from those stated in the Appendix to the Dog Shows and Show Judges Regulations of the Fédération Cynologique Internationale. However, when such personal arrangements have not been made, they should expect to be provided with the benefits stated in the appendix. It is advisable that financial arrangements should be laid out in advance in the form of a contract or written agreement between the judge and the show organization and have to be honoured by both parties.

1. All normal travel expenses including real kilometrage (reimbursement to be decided by the FCI General Committee, a minimum of 0.35 €/km), parking, train, bus, taxi, flight (a reasonably priced economy ticket including a cancellation insurance — if possible — and an option for changeability), as well as meals during travel to the show, incurred by a judge have to be reimbursed immediately on arrival or following whatever previous arrangements made with the organizer.
2. For judging at ***all*** World ***and*** Section ***Shows as well as*** at International Shows ***in Europe***, a judge is to receive from the show organizer, in addition to the above mentioned costs (***see item 1***), an allowance" of at least ***50€ for each judging day and 35€ for each travel day***.

***For judging at International Shows outside Europe, the "allowance" amounts to at least 35€ (judging and travel day) in addition to the above mentioned costs (see item 1).***

***For all international shows*** the organizer is allowed to have daily allowance for their domestic judges according to their national laws. The English text is the authentic document.

***The changes in bold and italic characters were approved by the FCI General Committee in Helsinki, October 2013. They apply from January 1st, 2014.***

# The Whelping Pause A Naturally Occurring Event -

Revised by Myra Savant Harris 8/8/20102

Dog breeders and vets alike have gotten into the habit of identifying an event that is completely normal and natural during the **whelping process for many bitches as “uterine inertia”**. The bitch has delivered one or more puppies and then she has stopped contracting. She is no longer in labor. **She is in a “Whelping Pause”, a completely naturally occurring event.** This has **been viewed as an emergency that requires the use of oxytocin and when that doesn't work (and it doesn't) it is followed by a c-section.** This has been happening for so many years that it is a near insurmountable task to re-educate the dog breeder and **change this practice. During my seminars in the last year or so I've been asking for a show of hands of how many breeders have experienced this event; a cessation of contractions in an otherwise free whelp and I've been keeping statistics.** I see hundreds of dog breeders a year and here is what I have found: 60-75% of all dog breeders have experienced the whelping pause. Most of them have gone in for c-sections and some of them have lost their bitches. Many of them have lost puppies. **The rest of them simply didn't know that their bitch was carrying another puppy or two and so they happily went to bed after the free whelp and the next morning they woke up to an extra puppy or so in with mom.** The first thing I would like to teach you is that anything that happens 60-75% of the time is not a medical emergency; it is a normal event.

What happens when a bitch experiences a temporary cessation of contractions is not uterine inertia and it is not a medical emergency. **I call it the “whelping pause” and it is nothing more complex than Mother Nature stepping in to give mom time to** either replenish her supplies of oxytocin or parathyroid hormone, or time to bond with or feed the puppies that she has already whelped. Perhaps the puppies left behind need a lot more time to work their way down the uterine horns and out the birth canal. Perhaps they need a few more hours to develop surfactant in their lungs. This cessation of contractions can last up to **24 hours without harm to the bitch for a certainty and probably even as long as 48.** This **“pause” in the whelping of a litter** is a normal occurrence; it is a natural event. **It can last easily as long as 24 hours and I've talked with breeders who have had healthy happy puppies born as much as 48 hours after the rest of the litter.**

Litters are not delivered in the same way that a single human baby is delivered and the human terminology that we are accustomed to using is not appropriate when viewed from the perspective of the canine. Oddly enough, however, there was often a lengthy period of time between twins when a mom was allowed to deliver her twins vaginally. It was common for 3-4 hours to elapse between delivery of the first twin and deliver of the second twin. Now multiples are so routinely sectioned that everyone seems to have forgotten that a pause between twins was once viewed as normal when it occurred and it occurred a good portion of the time with no harm to mom or babies.

**There are signs and symptoms that will let you know the difference between a completely normal and natural “whelping pause” and “uterine inertia” which is actually quite rare. You may have to rethink your priorities and begin to embrace new terms, new opinions and release some of your fears and panic before you can accept that what we have been viewing as a medical emergency is actually a normal part of the canine whelping condition.** Here is an outline of what is happening in the canine reproduction world now. This is what is happening now with great regularity

- The bitch has whelped one or more puppies but has other puppies still in utero.
- She has stopped contracting completely and totally.
- She is comfortable, sleeping, and nursing her babies and caring for them just as if the whelp is complete..
- She will eat a snack and usually an entire meal.
- She will pee, poop, and drink large amounts of fluid.
- She does not show signs of distress, pain, discomfort or anxiety.
- Repeated calls to the vet result in instructions that a puppy is not delivered every 2-3 hours it is an emergency situation requiring a c-section.
- Often breeders or vets inject oxytocin (in shockingly large quantities) in an effort to re-start the contractions but the oxytocin will not create contractions. Actually you can use dynamite and you will not be able to start contractions.
- An **“emergency” C-section** is performed and sometimes the bitch or her puppies die. Breeders are told that they waited too long to call for help.

Here is the problem that I have with this whole scenario: Only in the veterinary world is a patient who is eating, sleeping, caring for her young and completely comfortable considered to be a medical emergency. That would not happen in human medicine. Period.

If any of this sounds familiar to you, this information may be of interest. My opinions will not agree with those of your vet and I am sincerely sorry for that, but over time I have become convinced that my real job here is to be an advocate for dogs and this information, probably more than any I have ever taught, is a direct result of my strong desire to be the dog's advocate in every possible way.

Bitches and other mammals that deliver in litters have always taken "pauses" in the process. It happened often to my parents (who bred cockers and Chihuahuas). In my parent's case, they ignored it, accepted it and woke up to new puppies the next morning. In my case when I began breeding my cavaliers, I panicked and practically begged for c-sections because I had simply forgotten how things worked during my childhood as the child of dog breeders. I ran on a full tank of pure, unadulterated fear. I lost my mind in so many ways and on so many levels. I forgot my childhood. I forgot my decades working as a labor-delivery nurse. I forgot that the most important assessment tool we have is our patient. I forgot that I had never lost a bitch in a free whelp. I forgot that the human moms who died in OB were c-sections. I forgot that it would be my life's instinct to put mom's life and safety above that of her young in all cases. I forgot that my real treasure was my bitch that trusted me to make good decisions based on her health and well-being instead of that of her puppies. I forgot my priorities.

The best way to know if there is a problem with your bitch is to WATCH YOUR BITCH AND THROW AWAY THE CLOCK! If a bitch is sleeping and nursing her puppies, comfortable and willing to eat something, she is perfectly fine. This is clearly not a bitch that is experiencing a medical emergency. Leave her along to do the work that she has to do. Uterine inertia almost never occurs in women who are in the process of delivering their baby. It never happened at all with any of the hundreds of women who were my patients when I worked labor/delivery. So, it is extremely uncommon in humans but happens to 60-75% of all dogs breeders? It has been identified as an emergency event even though it is extremely common. What do you think is wrong with this picture? Somewhere, somehow, a perfectly normal situation in a whelp that involves a litter has been mislabeled as an emergency requiring major surgery and we breeders have hopped all over it and are having c-sections right and left with sometimes sad and disastrous consequences. The end result 100 years from now is that we will have created a species that is incapable of free whelping. Honestly, is that what you want? Is that how you want to see this species end up? Crippled by the inability to delivery their young? How can any of us call ourselves advocates of the dog if we end up allowing our fear and panic to rob our dogs of their ability to reproduce, whelp and care for their puppies?

Here is a little primer on how a bitch actually whelps. Reviewing this and comparing it to what you have seen and experienced may help to give you courage to begin a more hands off kind of whelp and give you the strength to begin to do important things.

- Put the welfare of your bitch ahead of the welfare of your puppies.
- Put the welfare of the species as a whole ahead of your fear and panic.

The bitch may take as long as two full days before she actually kicks into labor. She may be alternating digging, sleeping, pacing, just generally acting uncomfortable for as long as 48 hours before she is actually in labor. These "wind up" behaviors are usually due to "Braxton Hicks" contractions, a normal part of gestation and occurring more and more frequently as whelping day approaches. The key things for you to observe are:

- A) Does she sleep?
- B) Does she eat something offered to her?
- C) Does she consume fluids?
- D) Are there periods of time when she is not doing anything but normal activities?

If the answer to these questions is yes...she is not in labor. Once she starts into active labor, she will usually (not always but usually) refuse food, often refuse to drink and until her "whelping pause" she will be awake, clingy and panting. Active visually apparent labor may last easily as long as 12 hours before she pushes out a puppy. This is normal. A human who is delivering her first baby can easily be in labor for 18-24 hours. Why have dog breeders started to consider any labor over an hour or two to be an emergency? The bitch may have to urinate and even defecate frequently due to pressure on her bladder and bowel. She will often present with an amniotic sac visible at the vulva, and sometimes what appear to be 2 or more sacs will be visible at her vulva. The fluid in the amniotic sack may be clear or green tinged. (Remember each puppy is in its own amniotic sac) She may not be having frequent or intense contractions at that point in time but once you can see a bag of fluid, you will know she is in labor to one degree or another. Try to remember that the first sign of a human delivery is frequently the bag of water breaking and yet mom has an easy 12-24 hours of labor ahead of her before she has even one contraction. The bag of water at the vulva is pretty much the same thing. The bag of water at the vulva, no matter what color it is does not constitute an emergency. It is an indication of impending labor; nothing more.

You can feel contractions by putting your hands on her abdomen, along the left and right sides until you feel the tightening of the uterine horns. You time them from the beginning of one contraction until the beginning of the next one. The sacs may come in and out and may remain at her vulva for a number of hours....watch her to get an idea as to what is happening. If she is biting at her rear end, squatting frequently like she has to urinate, pacing, crying, whining or pushing for an hour without results that is the time you need to consult your vet. Do not administer oxytocin. It will separate the placentas from the wall of the uterus and you will put your puppies at risk. If, as is most frequently the case, she is just having regular contractions, panting but acting normal between contractions, this is just a normal whelping. The fluid in the visible sac/sacs may be clear or it may be green tinged. . This too is normal, not a sign of anything but a whelping. It is not meconium, it is not anything but the normal color of the interior portion of the placenta as the puppies begin to loosen from their placentas and get into position for delivery. (Canine meconium is mustard yellow and puppies that are born alive with that mustard yellow color surrounding them should be watched carefully for the first few days of their lives in case they have aspirated the meconium.) So please remember: Green means nothing. Mustard yellow may well indicate a puppy with a problem.

After she has delivered one or more puppies, she may stop contracting altogether, nap, nurse her baby/babies, eat and want to go outside to void. (Take her out on a leash, with a flashlight and wash clothes in your pocket. Once the bladder has emptied, she may suddenly be able to pass the puppy that she has been working to whelp. This is common. Be prepared.) These outdoor deliveries are not about the walking part. They are due to the good effects of an empty bladder freeing up the space inside the birth canal.

A whelping pause may last....hang onto your hat.... easily as long as 12-24 hours. Her behavior is going to tell you everything you need to know. Watch her. Here is what you will observe in a whelping pause:

- All contractions have stopped.** Nothing makes them start up again.
- Mom is comfortable, happy, nursing and caring for her puppies**
- Mom will eat if offered food and will drink fluids.**
- There may be vaginal discharge resulting from the birth of the puppies who have been whelped.**
- As these puppies are nursing, short, mild contractions are occurring which are so mild as to render them impossible to monitor.**
- Once the whelping pause is over and mom has "labored down" (the puppies remaining in the uterus have moved into position for whelping) mom will resume whelping with none of the signs that were apparent prior to the whelping pause.**
- No panting, no clinging, no pacing.** Mom will grunt once and push out each of the remaining puppies with no fanfare and no displays.
- That is the nature of the whelping pause and, as long as you don't give oxytocin, there is no reason not to believe that the remaining puppies will be healthy.**

Give her small amounts of vanilla ice cream during the whelping process to replace fluids lost while panting, glucose to jump start the babies and as a bonus, it gives the mom calcium which is used to strengthen contractions. If one of the puppies has died in utero, it will often take a good long while for that dead puppy to be delivered. As long as your bitch is not showing the signs of distress that I listed above she is fine. Bitches very, very rarely die in free whelps but they die with some regularity in c-sections.

C-sections ARE NOT SAFER than a free whelp for mom or babies.

Only in the canine world is a patient who is asleep, comfortable, caring for her infant/infants and snacking considered to be a patient who requires a major surgery.

Change requires courage. Oddly enough a lot of breeders have found this courage after the loss of a beloved bitch to the complications of surgery. A lot of us have found this courage after a bitch has surprised us with an extra puppy or two the morning

after her whelping because we had no idea how many puppies were present to begin with. However it has to happen, please begin the process of allowing it to happen.

Myra Savant Harris: [myrasavant@hotmail.com](mailto:myrasavant@hotmail.com)

and web site: [www.myrasavantharris.com](http://www.myrasavantharris.com)

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