2005 ATRA Year End Report

2005 was a year of change and challenge for the ATRA volunteers. Colorado joined our ranks. Two litters of puppies were born into rescue. Airedales with hip problems increased significantly. But perhaps the change that had the most impact on our rescue efforts was the number of Airedales we took in – 296 in 2005 compared to the 224 we ended 2004 with. That's a 32 percent increase!

As you might expect, expenses hit an all time high this year. However, supporters like you were there to help and we were ever so grateful. Let me share some of our accomplishments.

Ginny is a senior Airedale rescued from a shelter in bad shape. She not only had dreadlocks, a respiratory infection and mammary tumors, she lost her spirit. After a lot of vet care, surgery and love, Ginny came around. For probably the first time in her life she feels good and has been adopted by a wonderful family in Minnesota.

Arliss was a homeless fellow wandering the streets of a town in Mississippi. By the time a Good Samaritan found him, he had been hit by a car. Although his leg and hips were not broken, his back leg was injured, his breathing was shallow and he was in quite a bit of pain. Arliss finally came into ATRA's care and it was discovered that he was heartworm positive as well. After heartworm treatment and a long recuperation period, Arliss found a wonderful new home in New Hampshire.

Oliver came from a small shelter in Arkansas. He was there for 31 days, yet when ATRA picked him up he only weighed 39.5 pounds and was nothing but skin and bones. He was dehydrated, had intestinal worms, heartworm and mange. Oliver had not seen much love or attention in his young life, but that was all about to change. After a short stay with the vet, he spent a few months with a foster home who helped him through his heartworm treatment and taught him that he would never go hungry again.

Montana, **Teagan** and **Gryphon** have two things in common. All three of them were born into rescue as part of a litter of 10. All three also have severe hip dysplasia. The hip dysplasia was not discovered until they were 6 to 8 months old. They could not play like normal puppies and ended up laying down most of the time. By then they had already been adopted by loving families. Regardless, ATRA is still helping financially with each of the puppies surgeries. All three are getting a surgery called TPO (Triple Pelvic Osteotomy) that should correct their hips and allow them to lead a normal, happy life.

Princess has a true Cinderella story. Her owner had died and the family really didn't want her. She had been hit by a car and had old injuries to her hip and front leg that were never attended to properly. She needed our help and we were there for her. It was originally thought that her front leg would have to be amputated, but through special therapy and treatment at Iowa State, they were able to save Princess' leg and improve the use of it. She used an exercise ball and water therapy to strengthen her leg.

Ruby and **Remi** were surrendered to ATRA by a family who was moving overseas. Not only did this family have to leave the two of them behind, they also could not afford the needed surgery for their hip problems. Once in ATRA's care, it was determined that Remi had severe hip dysplasia. He underwent FHO surgery on one hip. Ruby's hips were not as bad. Both were overweight and needed to lose weight for their health. It was suggested by the orthopedic vet that ATRA also do water therapy with both of them. After two months of water therapy, physical therapy, and losing weight, Ruby and Remi showed great improvement. With the physical therapy program ATRA was able to provide, Ruby may not need surgery and Remi may not need surgery on his other hip. The icing on the cake was finding them a wonderful home together in Michigan.

These are only a few of the many stories of 2005. In addition to all that occurred in 2005, I would like to say that 2006 has started out with a bang. On January 2, ATRA volunteers in Kentucky went into a back yard puppy mill and brought home 8 Airedales. The initial vet bill for health screening, shots and medicines was substantial and that does not yet include spay and neuter. Thankfully, none of the dogs were heartworm positive, but one had such a bad ear infection that she could not shake her head and she walked with a list. Another girl had an abscess in her mouth from an untreated wound. One of the boys was bringing up pieces of PVC pipe, wood shavings and bone fragments. One of the girls is pregnant with a litter of at least 9 pups due in two or three weeks. None of these dogs has house manners or much socialization, but they are sweet and very grateful for good food, clean water and a warm place to stay. These dogs have never been groomed and they weigh anywhere from 33 to 50 pounds – mere skeletons of what they should be. To say the least, we have our hands full, but our volunteers are up for the challenge!

Despite ATRA'a increased costs to help the Airedales who came into our care during 2005, we were still able to help a few other Airedale rescue groups with their special needs. We donated to Airedale rescue in Oregon when they had a large influx of Airedales. We donated to the medical care of Dolly of Oklahoma. We also donated to AireCanada to help pay for Simba's surgery.

ATRA has been able to help some good families keep their Airedales – especially when we could see that the family truly loved their Airedale but had fallen on hard times or didn't know what to do. Sometimes this involved recommending a trainer or behaviorist or assisting financially with an unexpected surgery. In one case, ATRA volunteers organized a coordinated effort between several Airedale rescue groups, a breeder and a transportation organization to transport an elderly Airedale from Chicago to Florida. This was for a family with two terminally ill family members who had to combine households so mom could care for them both. They didn't think they could find transportation for their beloved Reni and were going to give him up, but we were able to help.

In addition to what is mentioned above, ATRA accomplished several other things as well:

- We expanded our committees to get more volunteers involved.
- We put together 10 different informational pamphlets on various aspects of rescue.
- We started "Spotlight on Rescue" on our Web site to highlight dogs we spent a good amount of time and money on.
- We held two Seminaires in Kansas and Indiana
- We assisted National Rescue with brainstorming on rescuing Airedales in the aftermath of Katrina
- We donated items for the National Rescue Senior Raffle
- We became licensed in the state of Colorado
- We set up a database similar to ours for Oregon rescue.
- We placed a dog with Billie Smith in his police dog training facility.
- We had several states participate in Petsmart and other adoption weekends.
- We developed a "canned" rescue poster that can be e-mailed or snail mailed to anyone doing a publicity event.
- We began microchipping our rescues using chips from National Rescue.
- We placed ads in many of our states looking for adoption prospects and foster homes.

We established a relationship with the Twin Cities Airedale Terrier Club who help with training, evaluation and referrals.
We assisted with a rescue in Mexico by providing an Airedale contact living there.
We took in a few dogs from Oklahoma that they could not handle.
We were able to get Kelso out of EDNAH through cooperation with the Humane Society of the U.S.
We consolidated donations of items in one location where they are logged and photographed for use in fundraising.
We made personal phone calls to vet offices we regularly use to ask for discounts.
We offered to host a national rescue meeting at the Week of the Airedale in 2007.
We placed a blind Airedale puppy.
We established a relationship with Irish Terrier Rescue and assisted with two Irish advertised as Airedales.
We assisted with surgery for Roofus, Leslie Eiler's service Airedale, when he broke his leg.

As 2006 continues to unfold, we plan to be there for all of the Airedales who still need our assistance. We thank you for your generosity in 2005 and hope we can count on your continued support as we move forward in 2006.

Sincerely,

Lynn O'Shaughnessy, ATRA President
1721 Peavy Road
Howell, MI 48843
517-546-8303
freespirit@pleurothallids.com