

# Cochins International

August 2008

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## President's Report

Hello everyone!

July already, and by the time you read this it will be August. It has been really hot here in Virginia and I know we aren't the only ones with hot humid days. I was sorry to hear about all of the devastation that occurred in the Midwest due to the rain earlier this summer, and I am hopeful that all of our poultry fancy brethren didn't suffer too many losses. I've heard of a few that did indeed lose birds to high water, and also from others that fared much better. If there is any way that we can help out any of those breeders that lost birds, we should do just that, when they are ready to get some breeding stock. This is a hobby that fosters friendships, and part of those friendships is being there when we are needed in whatever capacity possible.

You'll find a write-up and results from the Eastern and Western Nationals in this edition. Both of our Nationals were held in the spring with good turnouts. I was at the Eastern National, which was an All-Cochin event, as most of you know, and did much better than I could have hoped for, but I'll let you read the results for yourself. It was a lot of fun being part of something that hasn't happened in over 30 years! For those that couldn't attend, you missed a gathering of some of the best Cochins brought together under one show hall roof that I've seen in some time. The Blacks and White classes were outstanding, but the other varieties stole the show in my opinion.

As for club business, I want to let everyone know, that I will not be running for President again this fall. Our club elections are

right around the corner, and I feel it's time for someone else to step up and take the helm. I would ask that the person(s) that does volunteer to run for the position do so knowing that they are making a commitment to the club and our members. The President of any organization needs to be the leader and work to advance the organization's cause, no matter what it is. As far as Cochins International goes, we need someone that is willing to write an article for the Poultry Press on a regular basis. Someone that will attend as many of the Nationals as possible and someone that is willing to work with the other Officers and Directors to make sure that the club runs smoothly, the finances are well accounted for, and that we meet the expectations of the membership. They need to oversee the awards and master breeder points program and mediate any issues that arise. Basically we need someone that's willing to work at the job.

I will continue to put together our Breeders Directory, but I have been involved in an official capacity since 1998, first with only the newsletter, and then the newsletter and the presidency. Jay Smith has taken over the newsletter and it is someone else's turn to be President. I have recently taken over as Show Superintendent for the Virginia Poultry

*(President continued on page 3)*





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*(just a couple more on the next page)*

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***(President continued from page 1)***

Breeders Association and that will take up a good chunk of my time organizing our two annual shows. I take this hobby very seriously, and I feel it's time for me to focus on getting the VPBA shows back to where they used to be a few years ago, hosting some of the largest poultry shows in the country. This isn't my last article for our newsletter, but I did want to get the word out so that you can think about who you would like to lead our fine organization starting in 2009.

Cochins rule!

Tom

**News from Northeast II**

Hello from North East District II. I wish I could report that our district has finally reached some common sense about the Avian Influenza testing but that is just not the case. Some states are still sticking to the required testing within 10 days of entering the state in spite of the fact that the NPIP is looking at more reasonable 180 day testing requirement. Bill Wulff, in the recent issue (July) of the Poultry Press mentioned the necessity of our national organizations becoming involved in the NPIP meeting every other year and I can't agree with

him more. As a dues paying member of both the APA and the ABA, I feel compelled to spread the word that both of these organizations owe it to their members to participate in any national level meeting that can directly impact their memberships. We all need to speak in a unified voice to the leadership of these organizations that we need some political activism on this front or we will no longer need the APA and the ABA. It's just as simple as that.

I've been fortunate here in Delaware where we can get the testing done for free and I am not aware of anyone being unable to get tested to go out of state to a poultry show, however that is not the case for all of the other states in our district.

As of this writing, I have not placed the district meet for 2008 and would welcome your suggestions. The show must be in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Virginia or West Virginia. Additionally we would like the show to have a good number of cochins exhibited. If you have a suggestion, let me know. I'm kind of leaning toward a Virginia Show as it has been quite a while since the District meet was in Virginia. Let me know what you think. Special meets can be placed at any show and all I need is to be contacted or to see an advertisement in the Poultry Press of an upcoming show to send out the show report forms for a Special meet. There is really no reason, we can't have a Special meet at any show in the district so please feel free to let me know.

I want to get on one additional band wagon this month. As a show secretary of the Delmarva Poultry Fanciers Club, I find it more and more disturbing that many district representatives of the breed clubs are not performing their duties and placing meets at the shows. I realize that it takes a little time, but there is no reason a person has to beg each year to get a meet for their show. I've had meet reports sent to me, well after the shows and as someone involved in placing meets for the Cochin Club, I find this unacceptable. One

of the best things about having a meet placed at a show is that if given prior notice, the show committee can help promote your breed and advertise your special meets as they promote their own show. This draws more birds to the show and benefits the host club in addition to the breed clubs.

If you have any suggestions for me for how Cochins International can better serve its members, feel free to let me know. Our club remains active and we have been fortunate to have a lot of meets placed at shows across the country. If you want to contact me, I can be reached by email at [richbar@starband.net](mailto:richbar@starband.net) or by phone at (302) 659-1211. My mailing address is Rich Barczewski, 6827 Underwoods Corner Road, Smyrna, DE 19977. Keep those cochins hatching and I look forward to seeing you at the fall shows.

*Rich*

## 2008 Eastern National Meet

The Eastern National was held at Newport, TN, on April 4<sup>th</sup>, hosted by the Something to Crow About Poultry Club. Thanks to the exhibitors who supported the first All-Cochin Show in over 30 years. We had 240 Cochins entered, and there were some outstanding birds in attendance. Thanks to Bob Carothers and Jamie Matts for their judging scrutiny in placing the classes.

The rundown of the winners is as follows: Overall Champion Cochin, White Pullet (Large Fowl), By Tom & Sandra Roebuck; Reserve Overall Champion Cochin, Black Cockerel (Btm), By Tom & Sandra Roebuck; Reserve Champion Bantam, Brown Red Hen, By H. Craig Carroll; Reserve Champion Large Fowl, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place White Cochin Pullet, By Tom & Sandra Roebuck; Black Cochin Bantams, BV – Cockerel by Tom & Sandra Roebuck, RV – Pullet by John



*Overall Champion Cochin, 2008 Eastern National Meet, a white pullet (large fowl), by Tom and Sandra Roebuck*



*Reserve Overall Champion Cochin, 2008 Eastern National Meet, a black cockerel (bantam), by Tom and Sandra Roebuck*

Burgess; Partridge Cochin Bantams, BV – Cock by Tom & Sandra Roebuck, RV – Hen by Tom & Sandra Roebuck; White Cochin Bantams, BV – Cock by Maxie Chastain, RV – Hen by Judy Gantt; Birchen Cochin Bantams, BV – Hen by H. Craig Carroll (Best AOV Cochin), RV - Cockerel



*BV White Bantam, 2008 Eastern National Meet, a cock, by Maxie Chastain*

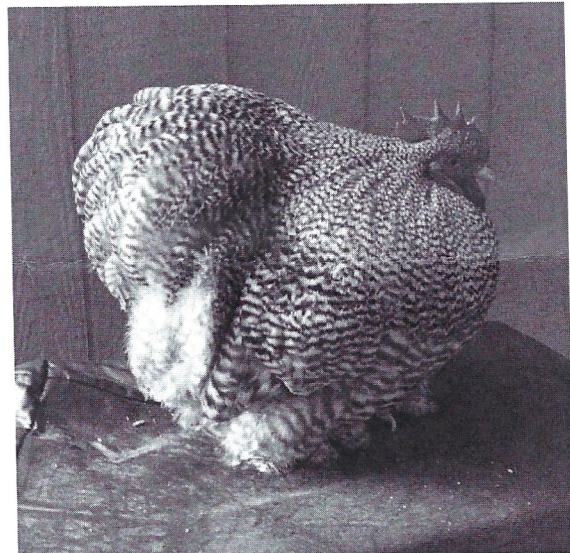


*BV Blue Bantam, 2008 Eastern National Meet, a hen, by Judy Gantt*

by Red Murchison; Barred Cochin Bantams, BV – Cock by Maxie Chastain, RV – Pullet by Maxie Chastain; Blue Cochin Bantams, BV – Hen by Judy Gantt, RV – Pullet by H. Craig Carroll; Splash Cochin Bantams, BV – Pullet by H. Craig Carroll (Reserve AOV Cochin), RV – Hen by H. Craig Carroll; Buff Cochin Bantams, BV – Pullet by Tom & Sandra Roebuck, RV – Cockerel by Tom & Sandra Roebuck; Brown Red Bantams, BV – Hen by H. Craig Carroll, RV – Pullet by H. Craig Carroll; Red Cochin Bantams, BV – Cock by Hagler Bantams, RV – Pullet by Hagler Bantams;



*BV Mottled Bantam, 2008 Eastern National Meet, a hen, by Judy Gantt*



*BV Barred Bantam, 2008 Eastern National Meet, a cock, by Maxie Chastain*

Columbian Cochin Bantams, BV – Hen by Tom & Sandra Roebuck, RV – Cock by Tom & Sandra Roebuck; Mottled Cochin Bantams, BV – Hen by Judy Gantt, RV – Pullet by Judy Gantt; Blue Mottled Cochin Bantam, BV – Pullet by Judy Gantt; Black Frizzle Cochin, BV – Hen by Red Murchison (Champion Frizzle), RV – Pullet by Red Murchison; Lemon Blue Frizzle, BV – Cock by Red Murchison; Red Frizzle, BV – Pullet by Red Murchison; White Frizzle, BV – Hen by Judy Gantt (Reserve Champion Frizzle), RV – Hen by



*BV White Frizzle Bantam, 2008 Eastern National Meet, a hen, by Judy Gantt*



*RV White Bantam, 2008 Eastern National Meet, a hen, by Judy Gantt*

Red Murchison; Blue Frizzle, BV – Hen by Red Murchison, RV – Cockerel by Red Murchison; White Cochin Large Fowl, BV – Pullet by Tom & Sandra Roebuck, RV – Pullet by Tom & Sandra Roebuck; Black Cochin Large Fowl, BV – Hen by Kay St. Amour, RV – Cockerel by Kay St. Amour; Buff Cochin Large Fowl, BV – Cock by Tom & Sandra Roebuck; Blue Cochin Large Fowl, BV – Hen by Kay St. Amour; Overall Champion Junior Cochin, Black Bantam Cockerel by Drew Bishop; Overall Reserve Champion Junior Cochin, Blue Cock (Large) by Daniel Cox.

Our Largest classes were in the Black and White Bantams, with the Barreds, Blues, and Buffs all having good class sizes as well.

## 2008 Western National Meet

Our Western National was held in Sedalia, MO at the Missouri State Poultry Association Show on April 19, 2008. We had a total of 166 Birds in bantam and large fowl including the junior and open show. Jamie Matts judged the open show and James Miller judged the Junior Show. The Overall Champion Cochin was a bantam Black hen shown by Robert Rhodes, and the Overall Reserve Champion was a Large Black hen shown by Gerald Church. The Junior Champion was Breanna Bergquist with a bantam Black hen and she also had the Junior Champion Large Fowl which was a Black hen. In the Black Bantams, BV and RV went to Robert Rhodes; White Bantams, BV - Ken & Bernita Miller, RV - Pam Hamilton, Buff Bantams, BV & RV - Annamay Carlson; Blue Bantams, BV - Lori Thorpe, RV - Annamay Carlson; Mottled Bantams, BV - Ken & Bernita Miller, RV - Annamay Carlson; Splash Bantams, BV - Annamay Carlson; Partridge Bantams, BV & RV - Annamay Carlson; Columbian Bantam, BV - Annamay Carlson; Silver Laced Bantams, BV & RV - Annamay Carlson; Red Bantams, BV - Annamay Carlson, RV - Pam Hamilton; Birchen Bantam, BV & RV - Annamay Carlson; Barred Bantams, BV & RV - Annamay Carlson; Buff Columbian, BV - Bob Smith; Golden Laced, BV - Annamay Carlson; Blue Mottled, BV & RV - Alhman Family; Birchen Frizzle, BV - Lori Thorpe; Mottled Frizzle, BV - Sierra Rains; Large Fowl: Black, BV & RV - Gerald Church; Buff, BV & RV - Gerald Church; Partridge, BV & RV - B & W. Poultry.



## News from North Central

### *Greetings from District 3*

I hope everyone's Spring and Summer went well, and lots of little chicks running around. The only Spring show we were able to attend was the Greenville, OH show. This was the first time in several years we attended the show. We were able to visit Dick and LaWanda Knox, in Paris OH. The Knox's were the ones who we purchased our first show quality cochins from in 1999. I am sure many of you remember the Knox's and their many wins with cochins. They are just the nicest people, and we had the pleasure of visiting with them for several hours. The Knox's don't have chickens, but they still have a few geese on the property, and of course Dick still has his fantail pigeons.

The Greenville show had approximately 1400 birds, and the bantams were well represented, though the large fowl were not there. What a shame. The Reserve Champion featherleg went to Diane Delaney, on a black cochin cockerel.

We are all saddened in the Poultry Fancy by the loss of a Great Poultry Man, Bill Bowman. I have shown Brahmas with Bill for the last 9 years. I had great love and respect for this man. Anyone in the fancy knows Bill or has seen his birds in the Poultry Press, and what a great man he was. For those of us that had the pleasure to know him, he will be greatly missed. Bill has given me great honor in allowing me to care for his birds. I plan to do my very best in showing and raising the Bowman line, and to continue Bill's legacy.

The Best to all in the upcoming Fall Shows

*Kendra Aldrich*

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## From the Southwest

It was a rainy spring and summer here in Missouri. Grass had to be mowed at least once a week. But it was a great hatching season – lots of chicks running around. Ken has been working on rare colors this year. We are cutting back next year as the price of gas and feed keeps going up.

It was a great show season this spring. The Cochin National Western was held at Sedalia, MO April 19. Congrats again to Robert Rhodes on grand champion bantam black cochin and Gerald Church on Res Grand Champion on a large fowl black hen. It was a great show – lots of very nice looking birds.

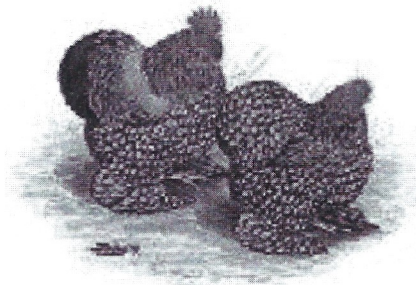
Hutchinson, KS had our district meet this spring. It was a very nice show and Ken & Bernita Miller had the champion cochin. Our next show coming up is The Missouri State Fair in August at Sedalia. It promises to be another large showing to Cochins.

Southern MO Poultry Club will have their show the second Saturday in October at Sedalia and Hutchinson will have their fall show in November. There will be others, but not yet sure of dates.

Our one-day two-shows have been a great hit with most of the exhibitors. Any help you can give secretaries would be appreciated. It does take a lot to work to put on these shows.

Have a great and safe autumn.

*Bernita Miller*



## Canada Checking In

Two of our early spring shows have come and gone. The Prince Edward Island Spring show was held on May 17. Judge Rick Porr preceded at the show in Charlottetown P.E.I.. At this Special Meet, eighteen Cochin bantams were exhibited. Best of Breed Cochin Bantam went to Alan Hamilton with a black hen. Alan also placed Reserve of Breed Cochin Bantam with a Black cock. Alan's black hen was selected Champion Feather Leg & the cock was selected Reserve Feather Leg. Trever MacDonold took BV Buff & RV Buff. Steve Webster placed BV Blue & RV Blue. Many thanks to Trever MacDonold for submitting this show report.

Our second Special Meet was held on May 31 at the Fairground in Meaford, Ontario (Georgian Classic). Troy La Roche judged the show. A total of sixteen Cochin bantams were exhibited. Overall Champion Cochin was a buff cock bantam by Don Stephenson. Overall Reserve Champion Cochin Bantam went to Jim Lever on a Black hen. Don Stephenson also placed Best of Breed with a buff cock and Jim Lever Reserve of Breed with a black hen. Don Stephenson's buff cock was selected Champion Feather Leg. Many thanks to Dick Misener for submitting this Special meet show report.

All the best until later this year,

*Hans Maas*

## And From Northeast I

Hello NE District 1

I hope this article finds you all well and everyone had a successful hatching season. Now is the time to watch those babies and hope one (or two) becomes this year's champion. I had great success in hatching buff cochins this year, but my whites were not so cooperative. I have a few eggs under hens now, as my bator is

turned off, but I usually don't like hatching out this late as the babies never seem to thrive as well as their earlier hatched siblings. As the chicks start to grow, it becomes very tight in the coop, but it's imperative not to overcrowd them to avoid disease and make sure the prospective show birds flourish.

In this article, I'd like to highlight the accomplishments of one of our experienced Cochin breeders – Norman Rau. Norman has always been a great competitor and a true sportsman. Many funny stories can be told about show high-jinks with Norman and this is one of the reasons I got so involved in the hobby as he made it fun to attend shows and compete with him. I purchased some of my first buff bantams from Norman, as well as Bob Hawes, and they have remained the basis of my breeding program. I asked his son, Karl Rau, to provide some background into their Cochin beginnings and his article can be found later in this newsletter. Also, Norman's name is listed under numerous varieties in the CI Master Breeder points section at the end of the last newsletter.



*A photo of Norm's starred wins, proof of his success in breeding and showing Cochins since the 1980s*



The spring shows have pretty much wrapped up in New England. I attended two shows this spring, and have included the results below:

New England Bantam Club – May 5 (33 Cochins) B BB White C – Bill Sirrinc, RB Black P – Linda Blackman. Jr. BB White C - Aaron Leighton and RB was a Blue K by Chris Miranda.

Central Maine Bird Fanciers – May 5 (43 Cochins) B BB White K and RB White P by Donna Lamb, St. BB Black C and RB Buff C by Megan Lewis. Jr. BB White H and RB White C by Aaron Leighton.

This year's NE1 District Meet will be held at the Boston Poultry Show at Spencer, MA on November 2. This is the second year at this location and it is a great site. I'll soon be sending letters with more information and soliciting for award contributions for this district meet.

If anyone else has exciting Cochin news or show results that you'd like to see in my article, just drop me a line and I'll make sure to add it to future articles. As always, feel free to contact me with any comments and questions: [lamb@psicorp.com](mailto:lamb@psicorp.com) – 978-374-2481.

Wishing you all great summer and a champion Cochin at the fall shows,

*Donna*

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## From the Membership Chair

I hope everyone enjoyed the summer season and raising some outstanding cochins. My hatches have been great this year. Fertility was good and the chicks have been extremely healthy. I read in the ABA Quarterly about an old remedy I had forgotten involving Apple Cider Vinegar. In very wet seasons, coccidiosis tends to thrive. We certainly have had that this year, so I add the vinegar to my chicks' water daily. I even put some in my adults' water weekly. A second article I read recently suggested the vinegar helps with gut health in

adults. I thought it might help keep the birds from getting what we call "the greens". Anyway, I have had no cocci or other problems.

I have several good examples of the various colors and hope to be able to have many culled or sold before winter. I don't want to have too many to feed; prices are going to be very high. I am raising a few from my best mottled hens that didn't want to lay well because they had been shown frequently this spring. My last hatch finished in July. That is late, but I had room in brooders to take them through winter.

Please notice your newsletter label. If you have 07 after your name, you have not paid your 08 dues and will be removed from the club directory within a month after the newsletter is mailed. So please sit down and send a check or money order. We don't want to lose anyone. We have around 200 members and like to keep it at that number.

I read an excellent article in Poultry Press about networking with other breeders in order to save some of the existing rare varieties. It would be great if three or four breeders decided to work on golden laced or silver laced or red. That way each breeder could keep a couple of trios and then share within the network to improve breeding or show stock. I have done this with a few members and the results have been very satisfying. We communicate with each other to compare color markings and type. If someone has too many of one sex, we can share some or maybe swap. I have been able to cull some early because someone else in the network had noticed a color problem, allowed the chicks to grown, and noted the results. This saves everyone feed, time, and space. Most importantly it might save a variety. That would be worth it all. Good luck at the Fall shows and I hope to see you in the Cochin aisles.

*Matt*

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## Our Secretary/Treasurer?

It's hard to believe how fast time flies anymore. Seems like just yesterday I was planting my garden and already we are reaping the rewards. It has been a great growing year here in upstate New York. I would have to say it has been my best year as far as hatching and raising chicks as well. I have hatched roughly 550 with a few more set under broody's.

I am really trying to build up a decent size flock of mottled large fowl. One day soon I hope to have extra to spread across the country. The mottled pattern is definitely my favorite.

It was a busy spring also for judging. In January I passed my ABA test so now I have both of my licenses. I had the pleasure of judging the western National in Missouri and had a wonderful time thanks again to the Miller's and the Ahlman's.

As far as our treasury goes it seems to hover right around \$4000. When you are sending your dues to Matt please make sure to make the check or money order out to Cochins International. It makes it easier for Matt and me.

I don't want to rush the year along but I look forward to seeing a lot of our members out on the show circuit this fall. I have been hired to judge in Virginia and Texas at the stock show in Fort Worth. Back when I was younger I would have never imagined this hobby would be taking me across the country and that I would have made such good friends in other states. It has been a great hobby and I hope it will continue for many years to come. On that note hope everyone had a great summer and may you have a bird or two on champion row this fall. Take care,

*Jamie*

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## Okay, the Southeast, too

The 2008 Eastern Cochin National, held in Newport, TN was a success regarding the quality and depth of birds represented. Great to meet Craig Carroll in addition to the "regulars". Welcome to Linda and Daniel Cox who are new exhibitors. Welcome back Tim and Sandra Baldwin, hope to see you again soon. Due to Gleen Loy's health, we missed seeing Gleen and Faye. Get well soon Gleen. Otes and Sandra were unable to come due to Otes' being sick. Otes is feeling better now. Congratulations to all the winners. I would like to say "Thank You" to those that contributed in whatever way to this show – contributions, exhibiting, planning, sponsoring, cooking, or secretarial. It was all a job well done and a relaxing stay in the Smokies.

Several weeks ago the Bishops, Rays, and I met at Otes' and went out to eat. Instead of our normal fish camp outing, we ate Mexican. The food was appetizing and the fellowship was great. We needed to get together and cheer Doug up as he had tendon repair surgery on his shoulder. Doug wasn't used to being in slow-mo and being inactive. He's much better now and is back at work.

The majority of my chicken friends have actually hatched more chicks than usual with the exception of Otes and myself. John Burgess, Maxie, Doug, Marty, Shari, and Sheryl are leading the way. I didn't start hatching until May but the chicks seem to be growing fast and all the birds should be ready for the ABA National in FL in January. I'm glad I cut back because feed is soooooo expensive.

My thoughts and prayers are with those in the Midwest that were affected by the floods. The US seems to be suffering from one extreme to the other. From severe tornadoes, drought, fires, and the recent flooding, it affects all of us in some way. Help in what way you can.

Anticipation!! Excitement!! New Places!! New Friends!! I'm planning a trip to the

West Coast. I will be staying with my friend Sheryl Butler who lives near Seattle, WA. We are taking a 1200 mile road trip and adventure to the Ventura ,CA show where the APA National is being held. Doddie Truedson, Marjorie Best, and another lady will be going with us also. Can you imagine five crazy chicken lovers together? Sheryl and I are also going across the border for a show in Canada the next week end. Twill be a once in a lifetime experience.

I would like to recognize and pay tribute to Bruce Robinson and Dan Delaney for their contributions to the Poultry Fancy, especially in the area of cochins. You've done a lot for raising the bar and setting a standard of quality that we all need to accomplish. Will miss seeing Dan being so serious and will miss Bruce's sense of humor. Both of you will be missed but not forgotten. We don't realize when we meet someone and make new friends that they in some way will be a part of our live's forever. Wish you the best, Dan and Bruce, for whatever your future holds – growing, changing, and moving forward is a part of life.

Judy

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## Our International Friends

Summer is upon us here in the USA and the heat and humidity are making their presence felt here in Virginia as usual. This is always a time of stress for the birds as they begin showing signs of their annual molt. Ample fresh water, the reduction of grain in their diet and employment of a fairly large fan in the hen house should serve to reduce some of the stress brought on this time of year.

From Europe comes word that Peter Heywood, President of the English Cochin Club, will have his "Eightieth Birthday" during August! "CONGRATULATIONS " go to Peter for achieving this milestone along with wishes for many more!!

Also in England, the Royal Show was held at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire 3-6 July. The competitive poultry show was conducted on the 3rd and 4th followed by an exhibition of purebred poultry on the 5th and 6th. One of the highlights of the competitive show was a visit by Prince Charles (Prince of Wales) on Friday, July 4th. Prince Charles viewed the birds, chatted with their owners and then presented the award for "Best Juvenile" to a very excited young exhibitor.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of September, the 4<sup>th</sup> International Cochin Day will be held in Zeddum, Holland once again. A good turn-out is encouraged and expected from all across Europe!

Work is underway to produce a book about Cochins and Bantam Cochins to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Dutch Cochin Club in 2011. Numerous breeders are preparing material for the book which is expected to be in full color and contain 128 pages.

Also underway is a joint effort by the Cochin Clubs of Germany, Belgium, Denmark and Switzerland to produce an anniversary calender with high quality photographs. Their goal is to have the calender ready for release in time for the show season which begins this fall.

From "down under " it is noted that the Pekin Bantam Club of Australia is busy preparing for their annual show to be held the last weekend of July.

In Romania, Bobo Athes has completed the interviews with Presidents of three Cochin Clubs that he mentioned were in progress in a previous issue of the newsletter. The full interview is to be published in the latest issue of Aviculture Europe. Bobo has been kind enough to provide us with a summary of his efforts which follows:

*"The latest issue of Aviculture Europe, the on-line poultry magazine, has dedicated, again, a large amount of space to the breed we all know and love: the Cochin. I am referring to the*

interview I did with some of the top Cochin breeders in the world: Peter J. Heywood, the President of the English Cochin Club, Tom Roebuck, the President of the American Cochin Club (Cochins International), Ardjan Warnshuis, the President of the Dutch Cochin Club, and Beth and Jerry Smith, National Champions in the U.S.A. The purpose of this interview was two-fold: to provide valuable information for Cochin breeders, and to convince the ones who do not have Cochins, that this is a truly special breed, which deserves all the attention it is getting.



Ardjan's favorite Partridge male

My "interlocutors" did such a great job in highlighting the qualities of the Cochin and the satisfactions they have got from breeding it, that the article turned out to be really motivating even for a "Cochin-addict" like myself, being in the same time a valuable source of sound advice. After all, even though everyone has his or her own methods, a true breeder should never stop learning, because the new information might prove more than useful. The Cochin breeders I interviewed all have their personal way of caring for their birds, and their

own views of what makes a true Cochin stand out in the show room, but they all agree on one thing: Cochins are unique in more than one sense. Their looks, size and temperament are worth all the efforts, and their gentle nature makes them be much more than a mere show-hall attraction. The interview contains a detailed discussion of the type, color and size of the birds, as well as the description of every one's method of feeding, housing and selecting the birds, rearing the chicks and keeping adults fit. Their advice is so much more valuable, as together, they breed almost all the existing color varieties in Large Cochins: white, buff, partridge, barred, cuckoo, black, blue, splash, cuckoo-partridge, silver-laced. Peter, Tom, Ardjan, Beth and Jerry also remember when they saw a Cochin for the first time, how they got their first birds, and they remember the good times and bad times in breeding them, the misfortunes and the successes, their favorite birds, the first trophies. It is not just a trip along memory lane, because they are still breeding Cochins, and continue to gather prizes, so they haven't lost touch – not even for a moment – with the "Cochin world". And this brings me to one of the most important ideas expressed in the interview: the fact that breeding these great birds one gets the chance of knowing wonderful people, who would not have had a chance to meet otherwise, and are united by their passion for Cochins. So, beyond the reward of admiring a majestic breed whenever you want to relax, you get to be part of the Cochin community, where you will always find a friend ready to advise you. I know I always have, and it is something I really treasure. And it all started with a relatively simple thing: breeding Cochins."

In closing, I hope everyone has a great summer season as one of the joys of raising cochins (large and bantam) is the pleasure you get from watching the "fruits of your labor" develop right before your eyes!! Regards to all,  
John

## Cochin Breeders; Norman Rau & Karl Rau "Pass the Baton"

*Ramblings by Karl Rau*

July 16, 2008

In the middle 1980's, my father, Norman Rau mentioned that he would like to try breeding Cochin Bantams. Always one to surprise people that are close to me, I set out to find some quality birds. After a futile search, I became discouraged and thought about abandoning my efforts. At that time I was heavily into breeding fantail pigeons and learned that a club fantail breeder from PA. was quietly raising blacks. After some arm twisting he sold me our first pair of blacks. They were quality birds but were fairly closely bred, unfortunately they were not productive.

The seed had been planted and Cochin bantams were now in our blood even though our start was rather slow. I wanted some cochins, so arranged to get some colored birds from a local Maine breeder. Big Mistake! I drove 4 hours round trip on New Years day to get them, not only did I have my one and only traffic accident in the snow storm driving home but those I bought.. blues and partridge were loaded with leg mites and never produced anything... so much for a learning experience.

Father then acquired a "bunch" of whites. He was very proud of his new whites!

OK, now I had to get whites and beat good ole Dad, so I wrote to Luther Vines from the deep South. Luther and I became good friends and he eventually sent me a trio of whites. The pullets he sent were very, very nice, but the cockerel was spectacular! Although perhaps a little large, his feather width and cushion were the best I had ever seen.

Soon after, our local club, the Central Maine Bird Fanciers decided to hold a small

Cochin basket show. OK now was my chance! I knew Dad would bring his whites, so I brought my new pair from Luther. The birds were caged in front of the entire membership and were judged. I tried to secretly place my 2 whites into the pens without Dad noticing... I was successful! A poultry friend Jeff Ryan was sitting next to Dad and I over heard him say to Jeff... who owns those whites? Then Jeff muttered, "I think they are Karl's".

Of course I won, as there was simply no comparison in the quality. That was truly the day we both decided to seriously embark on our journey showing and breeding Cochin bantams.

Later, even though both of us at the time were semi-rookies with the cochins, Dad was known to have said, "Even an idiot could see the huge difference in show quality of his whites compared to those acquired from Luther." To say the least his whites soon found a new home.

Although over the years we often traded birds back and forth, our flocks were separate, living 1.5 hours apart. When we showed, to this day, we always showed against each other, always kidding and having a fun competition.

In 1989, The Vines cockerel won best in show at a central Maine show. Later one pullet died, while the second pullet never laid an egg. This white male went on to breed our best whites for many years.

We knew it only a matter of time before we expanded into other colors. I had always loved color genetics and to this day raise colored homing pigeons among other pigeons... German swallows, modenas and performing rollers. [www.coloredhomers.com](http://www.coloredhomers.com)

In 1991 Dad wanted to purchase a trio of buffs from Luther. Buffs went on to be his favorite color and he along with Bob Hawes probably have developed the best anywhere. While on the phone with Luther, Luther talked dad into a third pullet for \$25. This "extra pullet" went on to breed many winners and also

was a 2x show champion. \$25 well spent!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

In the next few years other colors were purchased and integrated into our flocks. During one season I decided to experiment and cross the old white cock from Luther onto a blue pullet. The young were spectacular, one of which ended up in my Dads flock. A blue pullet also entered his flock via Bob Hawes and these were the basis for all his blues for which he has become Nationally famous.

Blacks, mottles and whites were introduced in partnership with Jeff Ryan from David Clausing. Mottles became my favorite color!

Always looking for that helpful out-cross, others were introduced, some with success, others not. Jeff Ryan purchased a black cockerel from Hooker at the National and he was traded to Dad for some buffs. He was helpful. I acquired 2 pair of blacks from C. Carroll, excellent birds. The bad news I never got anything out of the pullets but one cockerel went on to be my foundation black. So even at \$400 for the 4, it was worth it.

I personally at one point had 17 different colors of Cochin bantams... trying them all, from Partridge to Colombian and I even tried to develop some rare colors.

One of Dad's greatest moments was when one of his buff cockerels won best Cochin at the NE Congress. Our one regret is we never made it to the National, 50 hours of round trip travel was just too much.

Often Buffs were traded with good friend Bob Hawes.

Once, as a surprise, I purchased a dozen red cochins from a breeder as I knew Dad would love to have good reds... well they weren't good! They looked like RI Reds with foot feathering...after one year they were gone!

To improve his favorite color, Dad purchased buffs from all of the nationally prominent buff breeders, but none produced birds that were as good as what we had so they

were all discarded. Only the "buff" friendship with Bob Hawes proved useful.

Dad's buffs took a huge jump forward the year he crossed blues into his buffs. Although it created some color issues, the type simply got better. Later blacks and whites were introduced from Bill Sirrine and Donna Lamb and in both cases proved worthwhile.

In our later years, we raised only Buffs, Whites, Blacks, Blues, Splash, Black Mottled and Blue Mottled.

There just came a time when it was time to pass the baton to others that had more energy and time to devote to our breed of choice, the Cochin Bantam.

Yes we won far more than our share of trophies and ribbons, but it was the friendships that we garnered that will always stand out in our minds as the real trophy that we won!

To all of you that purchased breeding stock from us over the years and to those of you that "talked cochins" with us at the shows, "Thank You".

Our Cochin chapter has passed and it was great journey!

Lastly, Dad, I want the world to know...yes you were a better breeder than I. I love you!

Yours in the fancy,

*Karl F. Rau, South China, Maine*

*Norman F. Rau, Boothbay, Maine*

