



Give Your Dog Back
the Heart of a Puppy

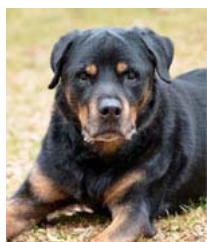


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Oldest Living Dogs & Cancer

David J. Waters, PhD, DVM.



Most scientists dedicated to discovering the biology behind why we age study worms, flies and mice in cages. Now a research veterinarian thinks it's time to add man's best friend to the list of aging workhorses that could be harnessed by researchers - and he's set out to prove it.

David J. Waters, PhD, DVM, just completed a 23-day trek where he criss-crossed the nation to visit the oldest living pet Rottweilers in the United States. Christened "The Old Grey Muzzle Tour," the trek began in Harrisburg, Pa., and finished in Seattle.

Dr. Waters visited 15 of the longest-lived dogs in the United States. His team has been studying aging and cancer in Rottweilers for more than a decade, and over the last three years, they have established a longevity database that enabled them to track the oldest living Rottweilers in the United States. There were 150 of these dogs, which are the equivalent to a 100-year-old person. Only 15 of these dogs are still alive.

A misconception of this tour that Dr. Waters clears up is that Rottweilers don't really live longer than any other large breed of dogs, but that these particular dogs have reached exceptional longevity. That means that they have lived at least 30% longer than average for their breed.

At each stop, Dr. Waters completed a detailed physical exam, including neurological and orthopedic exams and collected blood samples for DNA. He also talked to the owners about their pets and what they thought made them so exceptional.

The oldest living Rottweiler that he found was 15 years and 2 months of age. He also believes that female Rottweilers lived longer than males; just as human woman usually live longer than human men. One thing he did find in females, however, was that the removal of the ovaries during the first four years of life completely erases the female survival advantage.

Dr. Waters is a cancer scientist who has turned his attention towards aging because to better understand cancer prevention, it pays to better understand aging tissues where most cancers develop. He feels the freshest ideas about cancer prevention are going to come from the relationship between aging and cancer.

The goal is to better understand the physiology behind successful aging so they can promote overall healthy longevity in both pets and people, and Rottweilers are one of the breeds that are unfortunately cancer-prone.

The Old Grey Muzzle Tour is the work of the Center for Exceptional Longevity Studies, Gerald P. Murphy Cancer Foundation. David J. Waters, PhD, DVM is the Director of that Center, which is home to the Exceptional Longevity Database that tracks the oldest-living dogs in the U.S. He is also Professor and Associate Director of the Center on Aging and the Life Course at Purdue University. The Murphy Cancer Foundation is located in the Purdue Research Park, West Lafayette, IN.

<http://www.gpmcf.org/celsmainpg.html>
http://www.rotweilerhealth.org/longevity_study.html