

Dominique News

Quarterly Newsletter

April 2007 – We Welcome Spring!

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www.dominiquechickens.org

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President's Message

Hello Fellow Dominique Breeders,

I am Eddie Martin from Anderson County, South Carolina, and I have been asked to serve as your interim president. My wife, Pam and I have had standard Dominique's for a few years now. We have been like many of you for many more years: just wanting to be owners and breeders of Doms! I have been blessed in many ways that will help me with my duties. My great grandfather, Ridgeway, had Dominique's that he took great pleasure in, while keeping them plentiful and pure as they were. I have a lifetime interest and experience in the selection and breeding of farm animals. It just seems like yesterday that I looked up Reverend David Hyman in the phone book and asked to visit with him while he was serving a church in the City of Anderson. He has turned out to be a friend, advisor, encourager and sounding board to us in our chicken raising efforts.

I have learned a lot from David. I asked him to help us do some culling on our first crop of birds from a hatchery. He showed up on his visit to the farm and declared my birds too young to cull. Later he came back and helped us get down to our base breeding flock for the next year. He had a 'Standard of Perfection' in hand each time. He talked about the birds as he culled and praised the use of individual ID. He encouraged me to keep good records and he also encouraged us to get good birds and stick with them.

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So, my first message is to encourage you to do the same: set goals for you and your Doms. Know the standard for your birds. Either get help or give help to fellow breeders if you can. Know when and how to cull. Use some method to identify your birds or groups and families of birds. Lastly, keep good records and build your flocks and bloodlines.

We'll talk more about Dominique's and 'Dominique folks' in coming newsletters.

Eddie Martin

Eddie holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Clemson University and currently works with the United States Department of Agriculture as an Agricultural Engineer. Eddie and his wife Pam own a farm in rural Anderson County, South Carolina, where he enjoys raising donkey, beef cattle, St. Croix sheep, and the Dominique chicken.

CLUB NEWS by Tracey L. Allen

Fall 2007 Elections, 'Election Time Rolls Around Again'

As much as some of us dread election years (of all sorts), it is our privilege and duty as Americans not only to vote but to step up and donate our time, energy and resources to support causes that we believe in. This includes everything from national politics to your local chicken club. In the past we have had little support from members of the Dominique Club in helping run this club. This lack of support from club members must change if this club is to remain a viable organization.

Currently, all Board of Directors hold full time jobs, manage their own flocks (sometimes as part of larger farm operations) and are doing all the work of the club. The President and Vice President are responsible for helping with public relations as well as reminding the rest of us about up-coming events and issues we need to remember. Joe Minieri, the webmaster, posts information on the website for us and is helping us upgrade the website as we get time.

Elizabeth is managing to handle all the meet requests, paper work and mailing ribbons by herself. This is a big job and she is doing the same for other clubs as well. Without her help we would not be placing meets at shows and there would be less incentive for members (and non-members), especially juniors to show. Shows are a big way of attracting more members and getting the word out about the value of Dominique chickens.

I am now doing just the treasurer position which involves frequent correspondence by e-mail with Bryan to keep the database accurate as to paid up members and the transfer of monies back and forth to pay for newsletter supplies, postage, etc. Also, included is the monthly deposit of dues and other checks which entails a trip to the bank when it's open because it can't be done via ATM (well, it could but that would cost the club more money for an account that would permit this).

Thankfully, Bryan Oliver stepped up to do both the secretary and newsletter editor positions this year. He is the one who answers daily requests for information by mail, e-mail and telephone. He mails out brochures (which he redesigned and printed at his own

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expense – they are fabulous!) when inquiries come in about the club. He also collects monies for dues sent to him instead of the treasurer, adds and updates members in the database, mails the checks to me, chases down the other BOD members for their contribution to the newsletter, collects and types other information for the newsletter, has the hard copy of the newsletter printed, applies stamps and mails, sends online version of the newsletter via e-mail to Jeff Shaske in Florida who graciously donates his time to put it in Adobe (pdf) for us, then e-mails it to Joe Minieri who posts it online, sends a general e-mail to all members with current e-mail addresses letting them know the new newsletter has been posted and then follows up on all bounced e-mails by mail or phone call. We are also working on having new hen and cock pins made since we have run out, club patches are also getting low. We have also designed/ordered a very nice coffee cup with the club logo to use as a fund raiser for the club. Are you getting tired yet?

There is no reason in a club that averages over 150 members that 3 people (and 5 supporting) are doing the majority of the work. The secretary/newsletter editor should be two different people. The secretary position could easily be made a lot less time consuming if one or two others would assist in answering e-mail requests for information. This is an important job for the club, but at a couple of e-mails per day during the busy time of year (and form letter answers that can be custom tailored) this would only take a few minutes of your time. It does require a basic knowledge of chickens, and if you don't know the answer you just forward the question to someone else who does!

Last year we experienced what happens when we don't have enough help. I gave up doing the newsletter, although it is my favorite part of the job, it takes quite a bit of time to do it right. In January 2006 we had 143 paid up members. By January 2007 we were down to 75 paid up members. Thanks to Bryan's efforts in contacting members by telephone and mail, many of the long standing members were regained. Now, along with the usual influx of new members in the spring we are back up to 123 members.

You know the old saying; many hands make the work go faster. Without your help, this club that has been in existence since 1973, providing a lot of information to people interested in the Dominique, could disappear. It is time to step up and offer some assistance. You may not have time to take on the whole position (none of us do) but you would be surprised the amount of good you can do just being available to help with little things!

To nominate someone or volunteer yourself for a position starting in January 2008, please contact any board member listed on the front of the newsletter. Thanks in advance!

Tracey

'My Opinion' by Gregory Johnson

As time passes, more and more poultry are being produced by commercial and artificial means. Chickens are more plentiful and good eggs are laid. Newer breeds are more efficient than older ones including the Dominique (so they say). If something were to happen in the system that hatches these

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chicks by the thousands, major profit and commercial producing poultry loss would accelerate all because the hatcheries would then be unable to produce more chicks. This is what makes the Dominique and other older breeds more superior.

One reason Dominique's are useful is their ability to brood chicks. Unfortunately, hatchery birds do not brood as well as back yard birds. Mark Fields explained this. Hatcheries seek maximum profit. They cull the hen's right before their molt when the best mothers are approximately 2-3 years of age. Hens are not allowed to brood because they do not lay eggs while doing so. Through many chicken generations of harsh culling and denying broodiness they have eliminated the "broody gene". Is broodiness a gene or a behavioral trait? I believe it to be both. Many breeds have lost their broody qualities because of commercial production. I believe those breeds can have broodiness restored. I believe in evolution to only one extent: adaptation. Adaptation is the change due to factors in the environment. These birds have adapted to the commercial environment by loss of broodiness. Performing the reverse just might bring broodiness back to breeds that lost it. Hatching non-broody chicken eggs under hens and allowing the hens to raise them over and over again is probably the only way that would work.

Why would we want hens to brood? We would get eggs and more chicks, and we wouldn't have to waste money on feed for a chicken that doesn't lay. Well what about the benefits? If an emergency happened such as a prolonged power outage or black out, what would happen? Remember the scare of Y2K? How would the strain of chickens continue? God made these birds to reproduce in this manner and denying broodiness in a flock is denying God given nature. I'm not saying not to use an incubator at all. I'm saying use an incubator to hatch chicks for others and use the hens to continue the breeding strain. Doing this will prevent the deterioration of broodiness in Dominique's. Also, you will not have to worry about the temperature, humidity, egg turning, or power outages. The chicks are faster, smarter, and grow better when brooded by a hen than when artificially brooded. Can a pack of wolves raise a child as good as a person? There are always hens that can brood better than people. Raising chicks being raised by a hen is so much easier than raising chicks in a box.

Broodiness is a great trait. The historical Dominique's were raised because of their self-sufficiency. If we lose this broody quality, will Dominique's still be self-sufficient? NO! THEY WON'T! Therefore, we draw further away in our goal of preserving the Dominique. Preservation includes preserving its traits. If we don't, we just get another "same old, same old" black and white chicken. Please allow the hens to brood.

As one of our more interactive members, Greg remains a true Dominique enthusiast. He is a busy high school student in Plantersville, Mississippi, where he plays in the schools marching band. Greg is a real chicken advocate and he really enjoys sparking interest on the 'yahoo group' posting site for the Dominique chicken. You may contact Greg via his e-mail address at dominekers08@yahoo.com; he is always open for discussion.

Informative Poultry Web-Site

Check it out!

When you are on the web and have a spare minute please check out this very informative poultry web-site by Christine Heinrichs, Publicity Director for the SPPA.

www.poultrybookstore.com

Christine is a wonderful lady with a true heart for the heritage breeds, so drop her a note and be sure to read the 'Blog' on the Dominique chicken.

Christine's E-mail Address: christine.heinrichs@gmail.com / Phone: 608-243-8178

IMPORTANT MEETING

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the Dominique Club of America's national meet, which will be held in conjunction with the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, 30th Annual Conference.

November 2nd - 4th, 2007

Location: Several Selected Local Farms and the Dennis A. Wicker Civic Center, Sanford, North Carolina.

More detailed information will be listed in the July 2007 newsletter. This will be a very informative meeting with a large conservancy base, so please make plans to attend.

For further information or if you have any questions please contact Bryan or Tracey.

Our Past President and 2006 Member of the Year

As you can see, the Board of Directors have decided to appoint an interim President, Mr. Eddie Martin, until we can hold elections this fall. Mike Stichler has done an awesome job for the Club and we owe him a lot for supporting the Club as President even while on military duty overseas! I know I personally would not have been able to perform the duties of secretary/treasurer/editor/webmaster without his guidance when I started 5 years ago. His generous donation of time and expertise with Dominique chickens has helped many new members get a good start. He spent at least two hours at the 2002 National Meet in Ohio answering my never ending questions about Dominique's and chickens in general. Thanks to his hands on training I actually understand what it says in the Standard of Perfection about our favorite chicken and can now pass that information on to others. As Member of the Year for 2006, the Club presented him with a mug. This mug had the Dominique Club of America logo on one side and the words 'President of Dominique Club of America, 2001 – 2006' on the other side. This token of our gratitude is just that and I hope that he never underestimates the amount of help that he has provided to the Dominique chicken. Thanks Mike!

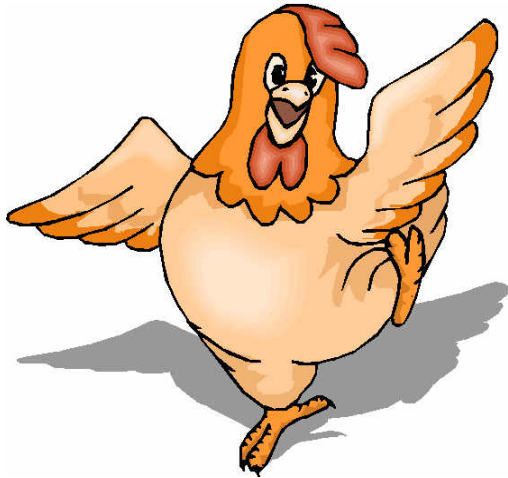
Tracey L. Allen

A Note on Club Merchandise

Please make note that we no longer have any of the Dominique Cock lapel pins and we only have approx. 7 Dominique Hen lapel pins left for purchase (\$5.00 each). These particular pins will not be reproduced, although next year we have discussed producing another set of lapel pins. Also, Tracey has informed me that we no longer have the booklet, 'Best Plans for Poultry Houses'.

New Members of the First Quarter, Welcome!

22 NEW MEMBERS!



Al & Nancy Andrews, Macon, GA
 Wilfred J. Banse, San Antonio, TX
 Christa Bauman, Coopersburg, PA
 Monte Bowen, Plevna, KS
 John A. Cook, Long Beach, CA
 Charles A. Cromer, Jr., Whitmire, SC
 Dr. Vicki C. Flerx, Gilbert, SC
 Jim Gammon, Sumner, ME
 John R. Godfrey, Monrow, NC
 Gene Griner, Augusta, GA
 David L. Hinton, Fairdale, KY
 Sam Isham, San Antonio, TX
 Cindy J. Jackson, De Graff, OH
 Robert L. Kennedy, Stevensville, PA

Michelle L. Liga, Kingwood, WV
 Gary H. Morton, Apison, TN
 Joseph & Christine Read, Ohatchee, AL
 Alban G. Salser, Pomeroy, OH
 Charlotte P. Wolfe, Lakeville, IN

Larry D. Morris, Sr., Oakman, AL
 Charles D. Prince, Greeneville, TN
 Jacob Trantham, Canton, NC &

From the Club Secretary

We truly welcome and appreciate all of our new members, not to forget each of our old members who continue to support the Dominique Club of America with their annual renewal. If any member has a question or concern please contact me via my e-mail address or feel free to contact me by telephone, before 9PM Eastern Standard Time. Please make note that all renewal dues may be mailed to the treasurer, Ms. Tracey Allen. If you have had a change of address, telephone number, or e-mail address please contact me either by phone or e-mail and I will make that change. Lastly, be sure and make your check or money order payable to '*Dominique Club of America*'.

May we all continue to remember the students, family, and staff of Virginia Tech. Our thoughts and prayers continue for each one in this institution during this terrible time of loss. Also, the 'chicken world' lost a very knowledgeable friend, long time APA-ABA judge and public school teacher a few weeks ago. Mr. Danny Jones of Augusta, Georgia was murdered at his home on April 5th, 2007. Mr. Jones was a chicken expert and history

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teacher for the Richmond County School District. He was very active, judging chicken shows from coast to coast along with continuing his work in public education. Mr. Jones was a member of the CSRA Poultry Club for 46 years, a member of the Brown Leghorn Club, and a member of the Rhode Island Red Club. One man was arrested and charged soon after the incident. Mr. Jones will be sorely missed by chicken fanciers and show comers not only in the Southeast but the entire country.

My first little batch of chicks did very well as most hatched and all seemed very healthy. The weather here in South Carolina has been up and down but now seems to be leveling off with more steady temperatures. Unfortunately, we had a two or three day freeze several weeks ago which killed the peach crop here in upstate SC. That same freeze killed my blueberries and also killed several early tomato plants that I had planted. I know that many of you have experienced bad weather over the past several months which will hopefully begin to change as we move into summer. May each of you have a wonderful spring and early summer. I hope your hens prosper and your chicks thrive this season.

Take care and may God bless each of you.

Bryan K. Oliver, Secretary/Newsletter Editor

Treasurer's Report

by Tracey L. Allen

Dominique Club of America Treasurer's Report, April 2007

Deposits: \$ 260.00 Dues and Sale Items
 \$ 10.00 Club Donation by Sam Isham (Thank You Sam!)
 \$.43 Bank Interest

Debits: \$ 244.63 Includes the following:
 -Bank service charge (The bank has waived the service charge on this account as of 03/01/07):
 \$ 9.49
 -1 year advertisement in Poultry Press:
 \$ 70.00
 -Mark Fields, 2 copies of 'The American Dominique' for Club use:
 \$ 90.00
 -Mug for Mike Stichler, 'Member of Year':
 \$ 16.75
 -Hard copy of Jan. 2007 newsletter (print & mailing cost):
 \$ 84.63

Balance as of March 31, 2007: \$ 1,943.82

Poultry Breeding – Improvement/Maintenance by Eddie Martin

As keepers of minor breeds we should be studious in the ability to maintain and improve the breeds which we care for. The reality for a minor breed of scattered flocks that might suddenly become genetically isolated flocks due to the threat of a disease, such as the H5N1 bird flu strain, serves as a wakeup call to all members who have long range concerns for the breed.

Each member should ask themselves, “What can I do to preserve my flock and line(s) of Dominique’s until the chance to purchase from outside breeders is allowed?” The goal of each breeder should be to keep increases of inbreeding below 5% per generation (not per year).

This guidance is based on two assumptions. Number one, each rooster is replaced by a son in each new generation and each hen is replaced with a daughter in each new generation. Number two, a minimum number or combination of numbers of roosters and hens are used as breeders in each generation. Listed below are the possible combinations needed to keep the inbreeding at or below the set threshold of a 5% increase per year. A couple of excessive examples are also shown for illustration.

Number of Breeder Roosters used per Generation	Number of Breeder Hens used per Generation	Inbreeding Increase per Generation (%)
1	30	12.9 *
2	30	6.7 *
3	16	<5
4	7	<5
5	5	5

(* Excessive inbreeding is noted)

Maintaining your Dominique’s without potential inbreeding problems cannot be achieved without using at least 3 roosters from each line in each generation.

This is not meant to bother anyone, rather to share genetic principles that will assure that each flock is given a chance to be a sustainable flock in case of national or state control of bird movement or shipments. Also, each generation does not have to turn over each year if pen space, incubator size or other duties do not let you cycle all breeder roosters or hens through the breeding pens in one 365 day period. There are other ways to think through the genetic maintenance of our flocks that might be more suitable to your situation that we can discuss in later articles.

www.dominiquechickens.org

Please contact Bryan or Tracey if you are unable to login on the website. You will need a user name and pass word to access the member’s section of the web-site. If you have a current e-mail address and do not have this information please contact us for set up. You can then view/print the newsletters, breeder’s directory, etc. and in turn save the Club money as postage continues to increase.

Thank You!

*Please send newsletter comments to Bryan at:
BRYAN_K_OLIVER@yahoo.com – THANK YOU



