



RAT TERRIER
CLUB OF AMERICA

ABOUT THE RTCA

The idea of the Rat Terrier Club of America germinated around 1990, but did not take form until 1993. The vision of the original handful of members was to establish and promote the best qualities of the Rat Terrier while maintaining the breed's original purpose as a working terrier. At the time, the club wasn't about the members, it was about the breed, and the structure and function of the club itself was informal. This small group concluded that the best way to ensure a high quality breed standard and preserve the best qualities of the Rat Terrier was to have the breed recognized by the American Kennel Club. Thus began the long arduous years of struggle to achieve the goal of AKC recognition for Rat Terriers.

While the RTCA worked toward AKC recognition, to further advance the breed, it also helped other Rat Terrier clubs get started and work toward breed recognition in the United Kennel Club (UKC). When this milestone was achieved on January 1, 1999, the breed quickly advanced in public recognition which contributed toward our ultimate goal of AKC recognition for Rat Terriers.

As the public became more aware of the breed, our club experienced growing pains because of increasing demands. With our reputation as the Rat Terrier club seeking AKC recognition, the number of members increased. At the same time greater public awareness demanded larger amounts of our time as inquiries about Rat Terriers grew dramatically. The club found itself stretched in several directions trying to fulfill these demands—with limited volunteer staff. We did our best to keep everything running as smoothly as possible, but, larger numbers of members necessitated a more structured organization than had previously existed. With the support of our club members, financial and otherwise, our club structure continued to improve as our breed advanced in recognition.

We reached our first primary goal on July 19, 2004 when AKC accepted our petition and admitted Rat Terriers into their Foundation Stock Service (FSS) designation. After our acceptance into the AKC FSS, months were spent translating several thousand RTCA Rat Terrier breeding records into an acceptable AKC format for what would become the foundation stud book for AKC's Rat Terrier breeding registry.

Once our breeding records were turned over to AKC and qualified Rat Terriers had received their AKC FSS registrations, we then petitioned the AKC for approval for Rat Terriers to participate in AKC Companion Events. We received this approval on January 1, 2006. Shortly after this we were approved for AKC Earthdog trials, a common terrier skill. We are also pursuing approval for AKC Lure Coursing, but because this skill is unusual for terrier breeds, the AKC requires more proof that the breed has this ability before granting their approval.

We spent most of 2008 restructuring our club to meet AKC's parent club requirements. AKC approved our new Constitution and Bylaws on July 11, 2008. Our members officially ratified it and the RTCA Board instituted the new document on October 1, 2008. We are now in the process of working with AKC on the Rat Terrier breed standard. Once we have AKC's official approval for the Rat Terrier standard, it will be put before our members for a ratification vote. Once this document is ratified, we can then petition AKC to advance Rat Terriers to their Miscellaneous designation and our second primary goal will be achieved. In the future we will be working for our third primary goal, which is to meet AKC's requirements for full AKC Rat Terrier breed recognition.