

STILLWATER, Okla.—Ms. Hilary Branscum, Oak Hollow Bordeaux ( [www.oakhollowbordeaux.com](http://www.oakhollowbordeaux.com) ), of Pink, Okla., is an owner/handler/breeder of Dogue de Bordeaux show dogs also called the French Mastiff. She took Nellie, a 3 ½ year old Dogue de Bordeaux, to Oklahoma State University's (OSU) Center for Veterinary Health Sciences to have her bred. Last week, the dog was back for a sonogram to determine if, in fact, she is pregnant.

Originating in France, the breed's general appearance is a powerful dog, built low to the ground, very muscular, and features a trapezoid shaped head. Their short coat comes in shades of fawn to mahogany with a black or red mask. White patches are permissible on the chest and extremities of the limbs.

“This breed was recognized by the American Kennel Club (AKC) on July 1, 2008,” explains Branscum. “Before that, we would show the dogs with rare breed organizations, such as the United Kennel Club (UKC), and in Canada.”

Branscum prefers having her show dogs artificially inseminated. This is because she uses studs from other states to improve her breeding program. Her veterinarian, Dr. Craig Thomas (OSU Class of 1995) of Warr Acres Animal Clinic in Warr Acres, Okla., referred Branscum to OSU for their veterinary theriogenology services.

Nellie had the procedure performed at the veterinary center's Boren Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital just weeks before. Using fresh chilled semen from a male dog in California, Dr. Chelsea Makloski, resident in Theriogenology, assisted by Dr. Chris Schreiber, intern in Theriogenology, surgically implanted it inside Nellie.

Branscum owns multi-champion titled dogs. She prides herself in doing obedience training with their dogs, noting that some of them become therapy dogs.

“My hope is to eventually obtain some frozen semen from Europe,” says Branscum. “Gigi, another dog of ours, recently placed 4th in group at an AKC show. She was the first female to place in group and only the second Bordeaux to place in group. We are so proud Gigi made breed history!”



Gigi was bred by Angie and Scott Reed of Evergreen Bordeaux. Gigi's sire is Rising Star's Hugo Boss owned by Jennifer Roberts. Gigi holds three champion titles and Branscum is hoping to finish her out with an AKC title at a November show in Chickasha, Okla. The dog is on the Top 25 List with Eukanuba, which qualified her for an invitational only show event scheduled in Long Beach, Calif., this December.



As Dr. Gregor Morgan, faculty veterinary theriogenologist, 4th year veterinary student Rebecca Bilby and Branscum hold Nellie, Makloski performs a sonogram on the first-time mother to be. Smiles of excitement spread across their faces as Makloski confirms two puppies, possibly three.

Nellie's litter of puppies will be due around Christmas 2008. Because the breed features such a large head, Branscum will schedule a cesarean section birth for the first-time mom.

"This is so exciting," smiles Branscum. "I know Nellie is going to be a great mom."

OSU's veterinary theriogenology section is responsible for providing services related to reproduction in all the common farm and companion animal species. Currently on staff are three board certified theriogenologists, one resident and one intern to service the needs of the public. With respect to dogs, the section provides fertility and infertility work ups, processing of semen including fresh chilled and frozen semen for shipment, not just within the U.S., but worldwide.

"A very common procedure used is to time the bitches' cycle through hormone analysis so that we know exactly when to inseminate," explains Morgan. "This facilitates high pregnancy rates."

"I greatly appreciate Drs. Morgan and Makloski for all of the hard work and support they have given me throughout the years," adds Branscum. "OSU has a wonderful staff and it is always a pleasure to work with them. I truly cannot thank them enough for the wonderful babies they have given us!"

The Oklahoma State University Center for Veterinary Health Sciences is one of 28 veterinary colleges in the United States and is fully accredited by the Council on Education of the American Veterinary Medical Association. The Center's Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital is open to the public and provides routine and specialized care for small and large animals. It also offers 24 hour emergency care and is certified by the American Animal Hospital Association. For more information, visit [www.cvhs.okstate.edu](http://www.cvhs.okstate.edu) or call (405) 744-7000.

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