

essary in a breeding program, and they can be of great value, but they can also bring in all sorts of faults. With outcrosses you generally are working with the phenotype of the animal, rather than the genotype.

Discuss your needs with the stud-dog owner. Hopefully, she will be forthcoming enough to tell you about the shortfalls in her breeding program. Be aware that just because the stud produced great pups with other bitches does not mean he will with yours. It comes down to the luck of the draw, or how the genes fall.

With linebreeding you are usually working more closely with the genotype as well as the phenotype. The key to linebreeding is to know the background on the line as far back as possible, and here you may be relying on what others are willing to tell you. When you know the line and you breed complementary types, it can work well. You will get more consistency and hopefully fewer inheritable problems simply because in the development of that line, many problems will have been bred out.

Do not choose a stud dog by his pictures. Try to see him in person, and ideally see some of his get as well. Also remember what an expert in genetics once told me: Just because a top dog has had several good offspring, consider how many bitches he was bred to to produce them. Look at those statistics and the virtues of the dog, and then make your decision.

Remember, it is the whole dog that counts; if you forget one virtue while searching for another, you may regret it. You may be able to get a good head in one generation, but if you lose that great laid-back shoulder and a rear to match, it may take several generations to get that back.

Don't forget that substance and quality should be one of your aims. Seriously consider what the breed was bred to do, and look for that type.

Do not allow personal feelings to influence your decision in choosing a stud dog. The right dog for your bitch is the right dog, no matter who owns it. It would be wonderful if you could afford

to send your bitch to whatever dog you choose, regardless of cost. In this economy, cost may be a consideration. However, with chilled or frozen sperm available, you may just be able to swing it. With any luck, the money spent may be worth it if you are able to get the one you want in that litter.

—Virginia Matamie, Maple Plain, Minn.;
briarlea@citlink.net ♦

Glen of Imaal Terriers

The Eyes Have It

Back in 1996, long before the Glen of Imaal Terrier was an AKC-recognized breed, when you could count Glen breeders in America on less than two hands, we began to encounter adult Glens who were developing an eye disease that was being diagnosed as PRA—progressive retinal atrophy, the canine equivalent of retinitis pigmentosa in humans. The form of the disease in our breed was of late onset, with the earliest diagnoses not being made until the dogs were over 2 years old, and most not manifesting diagnosable symptoms until much later, at as late as 7 to 9 years old.

Though imported dogs were among those being diagnosed or were the parents of those being diagnosed, the reaction from some of our colleagues overseas was not what we hoped. A litany of "explanations" was proffered, including "This is an American problem—it's something in your water," "You're raising your pups in too bright a light," and my favorite—and I kid you not: "It's due to the fallout from the Chernobyl nuclear cloud." Happily, denial was in the minority and short-lived. Soon the international community got on board in the effort to address the problem. But what to do?

Enter Maura High. Maura was and still is the chairperson of our club's health committee. She's a no-nonsense gal who decided that we needed to get an expert in on this, pronto. She aimed high, befitting her name, and in early

1998 she called the leading expert in the field, Dr. Gregory M. Acland, of the Baker Institute at Cornell University. He also teaches at University of Pennsylvania. Maura cut to the chase, informing Dr. Acland that we had incidences of PRA in Glen of Imaal Terriers and that we'd like his help.

As Dr. Acland remembers it, there was a moment of silence, after which he asked, "What's a Glen of Imaal Terrier?" After further discussions, he joined the cause, bless him, and in the years to come he examined hundreds of Glens, traveled great distances to meet with us and our dogs at club events, counseled us about how to continue with our breeding programs, and kept us posted on the exhaustive research that he had undertaken.

This past June, 12 years after Maura's bold move to call him, Dr. Acland announced that he and his team had found the very gene mutation that causes a form of PRA in our breed so unique that it is unknown in any other breed to date. This mutated gene is responsible for a disease he has labeled cone-rod dystrophy III (crd3). The mode of inheritance is simple recessive—that is, both parents must contribute a copy of the mutated gene for a Glen to be affected with this potentially blinding disease. He also announced that a gene test was immediately being made available through Optigen, the Cornell-based laboratory. This is a gene test, mind you, not a marker test, so there is no issue with false positives and false negatives. Glen breeders may now confidently arrange matings that will not produce any pups affected with the disease as long as at least one parent tests "clear," and any person purchasing a Glen from such a mating may do so with equal confidence. —Beverly Susman, New York, N.Y.; BLUEKAFKA@aol.com ♦

Irish Terriers



The Power to Do Good

As breeders, owners, and enthusiasts we all have the power to do good. Every time the phone rings, an e-mail





arrives, or we are stopped in a public place and we are asked about our dogs, we have the opportunity to make a positive impression. We have the chance to share our enthusiasm, appreciation, and knowledge with others who may not know much but are investing the time and effort to make honest inquiries. We can explain what our breed was bred to do, why it looks like it does, and how it interacts with its surroundings and people—and maybe we can help people decide if the breed is right for them.

And every time we sell a pup to someone—whether a newcomer or a longtime owner—we have the opportunity to enhance her experience of the breed. By encouraging new owners to stay in touch and by sometimes taking the initiative and making contact ourselves, we show commitment to our breed and to the owners who love their dogs. These are the sorts of interactions that help nurture a good impression of “dog people.”

Most of us have dealt with people who just don't have a clue about how to get started. Openings like “How much do you charge?” “Are your dogs healthy?” or “I need one in time for Christmas” can challenge our otherwise sunny and civil dispositions. Sometimes the urge to cut the inquiry short can be overwhelming. The alternative, however, is to dig deep and find that last bit of patience to ask some questions ourselves and impart some helpful guidance. After all, the person may not know the first thing about how to search for the right dog, but they may be earnestly trying to go about it the right way. You have the opportunity to educate and to help the person understand what the real questions and concerns should be.

It's just a little thing, but what a difference it can make. To that person you may be representing your breed, your club, and the sport. It could be that the person is trying to determine why to buy from a breeder and not from a pet store or over the Internet. It could be

that your patience, knowledge, and kindness will make such a difference that a puppy from a responsible breeder or from a breed rescue will find a good home.

Know the club representatives who can help. Contact Suzanne Brennan for information on ITCA Rescue and Debra Rybacki for breeder referral, and visit itca.info for all things Irish Terrier.

And let's not forget the dogs we have placed. We should be concerned and proactive about any health and behavior issues that are reported to us, whether the dog is 15 months or 15 years old. Our puppy buyers should be encouraged to participate in the parent club's upcoming breed-health survey. The objective of the ITCA—as that of every AKC parent club—is to preserve and protect our breed. Take that responsibility seriously, and encourage others to do the same. Share knowledge and be open and honest in all our dealings with the public, and we safeguard both our club's and our breed's reputation. Knowledge and honesty are powerful tools we can use to do good things. —Bob Clyde and Marianne Kehoe, Plainfield, N.J.; m_akehoe@verizon.net ♦

Lakeland Terriers

Reflections on Montgomery County

As I write this I am recovering from yet another Montgomery County show. I have been told that its “terriers only” format was an accident. Because of restrictions set by the AKC at the time, shows limited to a single group and awarding Best in Show were forbidden—except for Montgomery County—and so, for decades, it held an exclusive position and maintained a special provenance. Although group shows are no longer a rarity, there is only one Montgomery. It is Terrier Mecca and a magnet for the finest terriers from across the U.S., Canada, and beyond, with their admirers from around the world.

I went to my first Montgomery in 1969 and, come hell or high water (sometimes literally; reference 1972 and certain other years), I haven't missed it since. There is no question. If I went to one dog show a year, this would be the one. Its members work hard to maintain a certain elegance and class to showcase the quality entry. Forty years ago the show had a modest entry by today's standards of 700-plus. Since the mid-'80s the entry has exceeded 2,000. And even though the entry has reflected the recession in the past two years with a slight drop, it remains the most remarkable gathering of terriers in the world.

I gave up my collection of catalogs, so I don't have exact statistics, but Lakeland entries in my 40-plus years have ranged from fewer than 10 to our peak in the 1980s, when entries exceeded 60. For a “rare” breed we have been very successful in Best in Show competition, garnering that award seven times: Todhole's Monsoon Miss (1957), Ch. Special Edition (1970), Ch. Jo-ni's Red Baron of Crofton, Ch. Terra Copper's Chuca, Jamboree Jubilea (1982), Ch. Kifel Pointe of Vu (1987), and Ch. Northcote Deltar Serious Riot (2004). There have been numerous group placements. It is interesting to note that there is a direct line of descent from Special Edition. Mike, as he was known, and his son, Baron, appear in the pedigrees of all those who followed. While any win there is to be treasured, statistics are only a small part in the mystique of this icon among dog shows.

For the terrier aficionado, the real value is in the opportunity to see the best efforts of the breeder's art and to talk to other breeders and exchange ideas. The chance to broaden your perspective by viewing a variety of dogs with an open and inquiring mind is a necessity if you want to grow in this sport. Although I still get a thrill seeing a ring full of beautifully presented Lakelands strutting their stuff, this is only half the fun. Most of the breed parent-clubs

