

TERRIER GROUP

not already have “Irish” in their names had their names amended by that one word. Now we have Irish Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers and Irish Glen of Imaal Terriers in Ireland and those countries governed by the Fédération Cynologique Internationale. (This was an especially ironic turn of events for Wheatens since they were denied recognition by the Irish Kennel Club in 1937 until they dropped the word “Irish” from their name!) We certainly understand the nationalistic pride that informed this decision, but when it came time to commit to what name the breed would be known by in the United States, we opted for the shorter version. Why? It seemed to us that adding the word, “Irish” to our breed’s name was redundant and would be akin to adding the word “American” to the Boston Terrier, or the word “Israeli” to the Canaan Dog. As in our breed, the names of those breeds already do a fine job in stating where they are from. Then there was the matter of length. Did we really need another word added onto an already long name? We looked to two breeds with long names that include geographic references, the Westie and the PBGV. Would they be better served if their names were the Scottish West Highland White Terrier and the French Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen? We think not. The Highlands are indelibly Scottish, and the

Vendée is uniquely French. Similarly, there is but one Glen of Imaal, and it is in Ireland, not Nebraska.

So, to quote the Bard once again, what’s in a name? In this case, quite a bit. It tells us that the breed was developed in a remote, starkly beautiful valley in Ireland, and in so doing, it begins to tell us why our breed evolved along different lines from its three Irish cousins, the Kerry Blue, the Soft Coated Wheaten, and the Irish terriers. Geographic isolation speaks mightily to why our breed is unique in form and function among the Irish terrier breeds as well as to why it has been so little known for so very long.

So, Glen of Imaal Terrier it is. “Glens” for short. But only one “N,” please. —Bruce Sussman

Thank you, Bruce.

—Jo Lynn,

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[Glen of Imaal Terrier Club of America](#)

Irish Terriers

WHAT YOUR MOTHER SAID

“Even money?”

I glanced from the venerable Wax Waneforth to the ingénue couple, straddle-legged puppy in tow, even now making their way under the grooming tent toward him.

I shook my head in disbelief at what he predicted and then shifted my neck to a vertical nod. “You’re on.”

After a gee-shucks self-introduction to the great Mr. Waneforth, the novices finally got around to what they had come for: a genuine Wax Waneforth assessment of their puppy.

Wax bowed his body forward and pulled his bushy eyebrows together in a fierce, contrived peer at the pup. He was stalling for time, and I knew it. My heart sank as soon as the novices began to speak.

“We already know his faults,” the man novice said, and began to list some obvious problems with the dog.

All Wax said was, “I see,” and the woman novice took it as an invitation to jump right in and attribute faults to the dog that wouldn’t have bothered breeders of great experience.

“Well,” Wax held out, “he has a nice head-piece. You might reset those ears and see if he doesn’t grow out of all those other issues as he matures.”

The couple went away in a joyful blither as if they had just heard a personal reading of the Sermon on the Mount.

The corners of Wax’s eyes crinkled with laughter as I forked over my money. “What made you think those people would voluntarily rip their own dog?”

“Part of it is that they want to ingratiate

themselves into the circle of dog-people by showing what they already know. But most of it is the culture of the negative. No good comes from it, and once you start down that path, it’s hard to change course. Here comes a higher-level case in point.”

A young exhibitor waved and came over. After a round of hellos the exhibitor began to physically examine the dog Wax had on his table. Within a few seconds the criticisms and faultfinding of the dog began. Wax steered the conversation in another direction until the exhibitor wandered away.

“What my mother taught me,” I said, “was that if you don’t have anything good to say, then don’t say anything.”

“Hard to learn what’s right with a dog when you’re studying what’s wrong with it.”

A thought seemed to amuse Wax. “Imagine coming to a show to see what’s wrong with dogs instead of what’s right with them.”

“Yeah,” I mused, “How much can you learn about excellence if you sit ringside with people who can only point out what’s wrong with a dog but are incapable of or unwilling to point out excellence?”

“Or,” Wax asked, “Why would people even want to play this game when so many players are obsessed what is wrong with dogs?”

“So, how do we start to fix that?” I asked.

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Wax smiled. "What your mother said."

—Ellis West,

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Irish Terrier Club of America

Kerry Blue Terriers

BUYER INQUIRIES

When I was a kid, there was a song that started, "How much is that doggy in the window?" It was a cute song, but the priorities were all wrong for choosing a dog to join a family. The first big mistake was to even look for a dog placed in a store-window, rather than raised and socialized by a responsible breeder in a home.

So why do people even consider this kind of purchase a viable option? Some people avoid a breeder because they say they just want a pet and believe that breeders only raise show dogs. Another reason may be that they do not want to wait for a dog and want instant gratification. This kind of faulty reasoning can lead to a purchase that ends up in a shelter. Clarifying these misconceptions with every inquiry for a dog will help potential buyers understand the benefits of dealing with a knowledgeable breeder.

Do they really know what breed of dog suits their family? There is wealth of information available from the AKC and the breed's



"Kerry Blue Terriers," by Edwin Megargee

national club, so researching the various breeds to find the perfect one for their family environment should be the first thing they do. Purchasing a dog should not be a sudden decision that is prompted by the look of a puppy in a window. Do they want a medium-sized dog that does not shed, is very versatile and intelligent, but does require grooming? If so, a

Kerry may be the perfect choice. Once they have really narrowed down their breed choice, then they should contact various breeders. The sites of both the AKC and the national breed club provide contact information for responsible breeders.

Next, they should be reminded that responsible breeders do not just breed show dogs.

The goal is to produce healthy, well-adjusted, dogs who are the best representatives of the breed. It is important to maintain the very qualities they looked for in the first place. Regardless of whether puppies will end up as show dogs or pets-only, good breeders spend the same amount of money on food, health tests and breeding, and they socialize and train all the puppies equally. All must be good pets who will live in a home with a family for most of their lives. Pet or show dog, there is no second-class citizen in the litter of a responsible breeder.

The need for instant gratification may be more difficult to conquer, if they are looking for a unique breed, such as a Kerry. Regardless, anything as important as a dog for their family is worth the wait. New owners may have to be interviewed, but this gives the potential buyer the same opportunity to question the breeder. The benefits of a breeder who will be there as a resource far outweigh anything you would get from a "store-bought" dog. Invite them to visit and see how the dog was raised, see other dogs in the line, and most importantly gain a better understanding of the support they will receive from a breeder for the life of their dog. Inform them that the breed's national club can offer dogs of all ages, as well as a dog that has been rescued.

Waiting for the right dog from the right

AKC COLLECTION