

would try to follow and got zapped every time. I recommended a real fence—and a rather tall one.

I believe that Wire Fox Terrier owners must be very much like their dogs. They must lead an active, interesting life, love easily and deeply, protect and defend what is theirs, and laugh a lot.

—Virginia Matovic, *Maple Plain, Minn.*; [brlarlea@citlink.net](mailto:brlarlea@citlink.net) ♦

### Glen of Imaal Terriers

Frank, Mary ... and Augie

At the March 2011 meeting of the AKC Delegates in Newark, New Jersey, our breed celebrated another milestone. For the first time, a delegate from the Glen of Imaal Terrier Club of America was seated. This also signified that our club had completed the long process of becoming an AKC member club, a journey that lasted even longer than our quest to gain AKC recognition for our breed. I was honored to be appointed to serve as the first AKC Delegate for our club.

On the drive to Newark, while enduring the inevitable traffic snarls of the New Jersey Turnpike, I had time to reflect on the decades-long process that brought us to this point, and especially on the efforts of two very dear friends who helped make this possible.

Frank and Mary Murphy, of Kansas City, are two of the founders of our club and have served our breed in various capacities since the beginning. In 1986, when there was just a handful of Glens in this country, they prepared an elaborate, information-packed presentation that they hoped would bring the Glen of Imaal Terrier, and its newly founded parent club, to the attention of the American Kennel Club.

Frank went so far as to call the AKC, at its old headquarters at 51 Madison Avenue, to inquire whether it would be possible to make the presentation in person. His chutzpah paid off, and an appointment was made. On the morning of the meeting day, Frank's flight to New York was delayed several hours due to

weather, making it unlikely that he could get to the meeting on time. Calling the AKC to inform them of this, he was told, "Get here safely, and we'll keep the place open for you." And so they did. This momentous after-hours meeting put us in the starting gate.

Countless challenges would present themselves in the years to come. Frank and Mary were involved with confronting many of them. We would need to compose a constitution and bylaws, an AKC-approved breed standard, a code of ethics, as well as public- and judges' education materials. We needed to produce a newsletter and create a website. Frank, who is both an attorney and an accomplished author of nonfiction, was someone whose counsel I sought repeatedly throughout the process. Mary did no less than serve as our newsletter co-editor for many years, and she designed our first website. She has also served three separate tours of duty on our club's board of directors, one of them currently. It has often been said that in any breed club there are those who do, and those who whine; Mary has always done the former and never engaged in the latter.

Frank and Mary also provided us with one of the most heartwarming and inspiring details of our long journey: A few months before Frank's fateful meeting with AKC staff in 1986, the Murphys imported one of their foundation Glens from Scotland, a good-looking fellow named Augie. He lived a long and wonderful life of nearly 18 years, leaving us just a few days after we were informed that the breed was officially AKC recognized. His life fittingly spanned the entire duration of our journey, as if he was standing guard until the task was done. —*Bruce Sussum, New York, N.Y.*; [BLUEKAFKA@aol.com](mailto:BLUEKAFKA@aol.com) ♦

### Irish Terriers

To Our Health!

The Irish Terrier Club of America has recently embarked upon a new Health Survey with the Orthopedic

Foundation for Animals (OFA).

Organized originally to focus on hip dysplasia, the OFA has expanded its mission as "to promote the health and welfare of companion animals through the reduction in the incidence of genetic disease." It accomplishes this through the collection, collation, and dissemination of data it receives—as in our case—through an online survey of Irish Terrier breeders and owners.

The survey can be found at [ofa.org](http://ofa.org). The site is very user friendly. There is no cost to respondents or to the ITCA. All data is used only in aggregate and is kept confidential. No survey results are traceable to any individual dog.

You might be thinking, "So what good is it?" Information, especially accurate and scientifically processed information, is like gold when used properly. Armed with the survey results, breeders can raise questions and concerns they have with breeders or owners of the dogs they are considering breeding to. With what they learn from those inquiries they can proceed (or not) with a fuller appreciation of what impact they may have on the breed. If nothing else is gained by your cooperation other than alerting breeders to questions they need to resolve before breeding their Irish, this effort will have more than served its purpose.

As healthy as the Irish Terrier is, cancer, autoimmune diseases, skin afflictions, cataracts, heart disease, kidney and liver problems, and other serious afflictions have been noted enough to raise concern in our breed. The sources of many of these problems, however, are in question: are they genetic, or something else? This survey will not answer all our questions. But we hope it is a step toward the advancement and understanding that will lead to the breeding of healthier Irish Terriers.

The quantity of honest and complete data is critical. More data increases the quality and the reliability of the findings that the OFA can disseminate.

