

When at ringside, concentrate on your dog rather than visiting and chatting with other exhibitors. It takes concentration to notice subtle differences in your dog's attitude when in his view he is surrounded by legs and other dogs. How you compensate for changes in his mood and attitude can make a difference between winning or losing in tough competition.

While you are concentrating on your dog, you must also be aware of everything going on around you and how that could affect you and your dog. You might see a dog who is coming too close to yours, and hopefully you will react before your dog does.

The mental preparation is especially important when you have made the cut and you realize that you may be in line for a good win. The adrenaline will be pumping, and your actions will speed up. Adrenaline makes your motions less smooth, and your strength increases, so that little jerk you gave on the lead became a hard yank. Take a deep breath, relax, and slow down a bit. When nerves start up, you may find yourself looking at your dog's fault every few seconds, to check that it is still hidden. All that does is call the judge's attention to what you do not want noticed. Instead of emphasizing a fault by fussing at it, use subtle presentation to look at and admire the best features of your dog. Human curiosity being what it is, you can draw the judge's attention to what you want him to see.

The power of your mind is as important in showing dogs as in any endeavor. Everything you do before and during the time you are in the ring has a mental component to it. You must believe in your dog, and you must transfer that belief to the dog so that he feels as if he is the greatest dog in the world. Our Wires tend to believe that anyway, so we are a bit ahead of the game.

The better you can control your thoughts, fears, and emotions and learn to concentrate, the more likely it is that your dog will show better and have a better chance of winning.

—Virginia Matanic,
briarlea@citlink.net
 American Fox Terrier Club website:
aftc.org

Glen of Imaal Terriers

I relish being able to see something I love through the fresh eyes of someone with a newer or different perspective. I am pleased to introduce you to our guest columnist, Gary Herman, with his fresh look at our breed and how these creatures change our lives.

Fresh Eyes

Cuchulainn (pronounced *koo-HOO'-lin*) is my 6-year-old Glen of Imaal Terrier. He is an amazing creature. I met him for the first time six years ago in a hotel parking lot. He was 5 months old. Meg, his breeder, and I had previously made arrangements to meet where she was participating in hunting trials with her Cocker Spaniels. It was a brisk autumn evening when I first laid eyes on this blue pup who would change my life forever.

Before deciding to get my Glen, I researched the breed as vigorously and as thoroughly as I possibly could. There is a dearth of literature about Glens, but where there was information, I drank it up. Before I even met one, it seemed to me the Glen of Imaal Terrier was the perfect breed. Or at least the perfect breed for me. Now I know it is. Since owning the breed, many have asked me, "Why a Glen?"—to which I answer, "Why any other?"

Cuchulainn quickly became part of the family. After he was a year old, I introduced him (and myself) to agility. Those who participate in such training know how incredibly rewarding it can be. He quickly picked it up and even excelled. He attacked his obstacles with great excitement and speed, and he would only veer from the course to offer the judge a polite greeting from time to time.

Together we attended agility trials, about twice a year for a few years, and we failed to qualify only when his han-

dlar went awry in the ring. A handful of blue ribbons and a few years later, the excitement had waned for him, and he had become more stubborn in the ring. That's the thing about Glens; they are intelligent but stubborn. You have to keep inventing new incentives for them to perform. Oh, he still runs the course perfectly, but at such a leisurely pace as if to say, "Yawn! Are we there yet, so I can get my treat?"

A few years later, and I have a second Glen, Coailainn, and a small child. The two dogs are wonderful with my little girl. They are playful and attentive. They all get along great. Yes, it helps that she gives them scraps from her plate when my back is turned. One of my daughter's first words was *dog*.

I quickly found it was a good idea to heed the warnings posted on the GITCA website about Glens and small children. The dogs just don't realize their own strength. Incredibly affectionate, even a small "kiss" from one of them can put my 20-month-old daughter on her backside.

A lover of everything Irish, I was first attracted to the breed for its origins. Six years and hundreds of experiences later, I have come to realize the breed is so much more than just being Irish. These Glen of Imaal Terriers are an irreplaceable part of our family. —G.H.

Thank you, Gary.

—Bruce Sussman,
BLUEKAFKA@aol.com

Glen of Imaal Terrier Club of
 America website: *glens.org*

Irish Terriers

The Ubiquitous Show Personality

It wasn't long after the end of regular monthly program of the Wunderkind Kennel Club—a club at which they register a lot of breeds that leave you wondering, "What kind of dog is *that*?"—when the real order of club business commenced across the street at The Hair of the Dog Tavern.

My friend Red McGaw was holding the floor better than he was holding his drink. "I don't want no gosh-danged,

gentrified, city-slicked-up son of a gun telling me that I have to show some fawning, tail-waggin', liver-stupefied moon pie of a dog in order to win a dog show. My dogs is dog fighters and bear hunters, and we don't want no namby-pambies."

"Wh-wh-what about me?" Harold stammered. "The only thing my dogs should care about is herding, and it don't matter to them what they herd. My old Bess would herd a leaf blowing across the yard. 'Course, some doggy psychologist did say she was obsessive-compulsive. Heck, it ain't natural for her to stand there wagging her tail trying to look happy. She's worried about some sheep you and me cain't even see. It makes her a great herder, and I wouldn't want her any other way."

Belle Apox, who can grow a beard with the best of them, had her concerns about her renowned specimens of that old breed, the Monongahela Brush and Swamp Terrier. "You seen what they call sparring in my breed? They want them dogs and bitches to coo and preen and court like preppies at the prom. It's all arched necks and waggin' tails, or it's 'oh, my, that's all wrong.' My bitch don't want a date. Some bitch gets cute with her, and it speaks to the farm dog in her. She pulls up her lip to show those ivory knives and points her tail backwards to help her hold her balance when the fertilizer hits the ventilator."

My friend Ms. D. asked, "So what you're saying is that there's only one type of personality that is wanted in a show dog?"

"That's about the size of it, sis," Belle said. "No matter what they got written in them fancy standards about how each breed is supposed to be ... well, they only give out them ribbons to the happy, tail-waggin' liver-baiters in the show ring."

"I guess you have a choice, then." Ms. D. said.

Belle eyed her suspiciously. "Which is what?"

"You can breed dogs as they were meant to be, or you can breed show dogs."

—Ellis West, *e.f.west1@att.net*
Irish Terrier Club of America website: *itca.info*

Kerry Blue Terriers Buyer Inquiries

When I was a kid, there was a song that began, "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 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 who does not shed and 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 of Kerry Blues.

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 breeder has its advantages, whether they are looking for a dog for show or as a pet. Let every potential buyer know of all the benefits.

—Carol Kearney,
heritagekerry@optonline.net

United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club website: *uskbt.com*

Lakeland Terriers Spending Health Care Dollars Wisely

Veterinary expenses are for most dog breeders a make-or-break item in the budget. You can plan for feed costs, grooming products, replacement equipment, and other normal and usual expenditures. But the wild card is the big veterinary bill that breaks the bank—for an injury, or for