

TERRIER GROUP

shows is to evaluate breeding stock. I want to see how mine measure up against those from other kennels. Showing my own dogs against each other would not be useful. Competing against professionals as a breeder-owner-handler is especially challenging, but I take great pride in showing my own dogs. Getting to meet new people at shows and talking to buyers about my breed, helping them to make better decisions about their next dog, is very important to me. Once in a blue moon I might even recognize that special spark in someone's eyes when they start to think, "This is my niche, and I can do this!" Then I can welcome and mentor someone new into the show world. Nothing would give me more pleasure.

—Jo Lynn,
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Glen of Imaal Terrier Club of America

Irish Terriers

THAT TEMPERAMENT QUESTION

I could tell before I hung up the phone that Ms. D was ready to crack the whip.

"What?"

Ms. D's eyes narrowed. "I'm going to make a flow chart for you to use when that temperament question comes up."

"Why?"

"Because it's better to overexplain than underexplain canine temperament."

"I agree that it's a complex subject."

"Particularly since many prospective clients are looking to own the universal dutiful, perpetually sweet canines portrayed on TV, and your dogs are not that."

"Well, yeah! But you really need to lay the groundwork that establishes how sweet and desirable this breed can be."

"And then right after, explain dominance?"

"Yeah, why not?"

"Shouldn't you try to determine what type of dogs the caller has previously owned? Then you could explain dominance as being either similar to or different from the dogs they've already had. And you have to explain the difference between a dogs displaying dominance toward a person as compared to dominance over other animals."

"That should cover the basics."

"What if they already have a dog?"

"Well, that makes things complex."

"Doesn't the presence of another dog bring out the concern about status that is the hallmark, if not the obsession, of dominant dogs?"

"It does show a whole different side of the dog's character."

"Or what if the caller would end up with three or more dogs?"

"Then you'd have to get into a discussion of gender-driven conflict and generalized pack behavior."

"After the caller has had dominant behavior explained, wouldn't it be a good time to ask specifically whether any of their previous dogs have been dominant dogs, as you've redefined them?"

"Couldn't hurt."

"And whether they've had any experience in training a dominant animal?"

"Or whether they've had a dominant animal who could run the whole show?"

Ms. D's eyes crinkled. "That too."

—Ellis West,

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Irish Terrier Club of America

Kerry Blue Terriers

This month's columnist is Margo Steinman, a longtime Kerry owner, and as Kilmalley Kerries, a breeder and exhibitor. She has participated in conformation, obedience, herding, dock dog, and barn hunt events. Her bloodlines are behind many of today's modern Kerries. She can be reached at margosteinman@yahoo.com.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

The Celtic Games, located at the Enumclaw

Expo Center in Enumclaw, Washington, was held this past July 25 and 26, its 69th year. At the event were Scottish bagpipe bands, meeting of the clans, and Celtic dancing, and a "Celtic Kennel" exhibition of the Celtic dog breeds. This was under a large, covered area, with decorated booths for each breed.

Five Kerries participated: my Rowan; Sharon Burnett's Rauri and 14-year-old Rocket, in beautiful condition and loving the crowds; Candi Marzano's Magic; and Jean Birkland's 12-year-old Jubie, not showing her age. Our Kerries all got along with each other and enjoyed the petting and attention, especially from the many children who were there.

Our booth was decorated with a large, beautiful mural from the United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club and a green "grass" carpet. We had a table with handouts and breed information to distribute.

The games attract large crowds, and the event is an excellent opportunity to show off our Kerries and demonstrate what they can do, as well as their happy, outgoing temperaments and gorgeous coat and color. We answered many questions and discussed the origin of our Kerries and the work they did on the Irish farms, emphasizing that they have not lost their working instincts and enjoy having something to do.

In addition to the large booths for each