

Editor's Page

"The only fence against the world is a thorough knowledge of it." --John Locke

Our world of showing purebred dogs is small compared to the wide world, yet there is always so much going on. Think about it... not only are there dog shows, with conformation, obedience and all kinds of performance events going on every weekend and many weekdays all year long, all over the world, but there are also thousands of people in every country of the world planning breedings, whelping puppies, training youngsters and preparing show ring veterans, and often traveling to other countries to breed and/or show their dogs. There is a constant stream of news involving health research and genetic testing, airline regulations, or warnings of potentially lethal substances found in pet foods. Good news gets thrown in the mix, too, about dogs that aid humans with disabilities and illnesses and those partnering with humans in search and rescue missions. Then there is the now-familiar threat of what we generally term anti-dog legislation, which includes not only spay/neuter laws but also breed-specific legislation. Most recently in the media is the news of the arrest of professional athlete Michael Vick on federal dog fighting conspiracy charges; Vick pled guilty and awaits sentencing in December. All of this just pricks the surface of the many occurrences that affect and influence the world of purebred dogs. This issue of Dogs in Review touches on many of these topics, and you don't want to miss one item in this issue.

Records — the all-time top winners and producers in any given breed — is another subject of great interest to the DR editors, but one for which we have a dearth of reliable information. Bo Bengtson writes about records in his column in this issue, but I promised in the last issue that I would report who the all-time top Best in Show-winning Irish Terrier is, and thanks to Irish Terrier breeder John Childers I have that information, verified by AKC records. There is a tie for the record, and by the time you read this it is entirely possible that the record will have been broken, but as of this writing the two dogs who share the record of 26 Best in Show wins each are Ch. Tralee's Rowdy Red, shown in about 1983-84 by Bobby Fisher for owner Ed Jenner, and Ch. Rough 'N Ready's Recruit, shown in 1989-90 by Brad Wooldridge for Lloyd and Carol Stark. The Irish bitch that's burning up the rings this year will no doubt shatter that record before the year is out.

And back to the subject of legislation — the continuing rise of threats to the purebred dog world is evidenced by the fact that in August, the AKC took the first steps toward formation of a PAC, or political action committee. A PAC is a group that is organized to solicit funds that will go toward the election or defeat of government officials or to promote or defeat legislation. In the U.S., all PACs are overseen by the Federal Election Commission (FEC) and there are specific regulations pertaining to PACs and their solicitation of funds. AKC filed a request with the FEC to determine whether AKC and its member and affiliate dog clubs fit into the FEC definitions governing PACs. Although it is unfortunate that we live in a world where it is necessary for our registering body to form a PAC, we do, and this kind of organization will potentially give us the extra muscle we need to fight anti-dog legislation.

Although it hasn't been in the press much so far, the cities of San Antonio and Los Angeles are now facing strict spay/neuter and licensing legislation, and once again fanciers are called to contact their representatives and join forces to fight these proposed laws. The AKC and its Texas federation of dog owners, the Responsible Pet Owners Alliance, are very concerned about the proposed changes to the City of San Antonio animal ordinances, which will target responsible dog breeders and owners. You can learn more about the situations in both San Antonio and Los Angeles at the AKC web site at www.akc.org.

Enjoy this issue!

Christi McDonald, Editor