

From the Editor

Travels in your van and recliner

Allan Reznik

Welcome to our Travel Issue. Serious dog people seem to be on the road every weekend, and however posh or modest the conveyance, the safety and security of our beloved charges is the major priority.

Trusty correspondent, exhibitor (and former race-car driver!) Alice Bixler was the perfect writer to report on the latest fleet of canine-friendly vehicles in "Drive to Win" (page 32). From efficient SUVs to practical minivans to luxurious motor homes, Bixler investigated what's new on the market and consulted owners for unbiased user commentary. There are lots of valuable buying tips here and a bit of fantasy thrown in as well. Must-reading if you're considering an upgrade.

With a hobby that has us clocking unlimited miles yearly, our misadventures are remembered long after the points and awards are forgotten. We went to professional handlers, owner-exhibitors and trialers to recall some of those war stories and share them with readers. Not surprisingly, the better ones have lasted the test of time and get funnier with each retelling. If some of these trigger memories of your own, please share them with us. Send them to areznik@bowtieinc.com and we'll include them in an upcoming letters column. In the meantime, have a laugh by reading "Travels and Travails" (page 38).

Thinking of travel in more global terms, Japan certainly stands out as a country breeding superior show dogs and sharing them with the U.S. In 2004, white Toy Poodle Ch. North Well Chako JP Platina King ('Coleman') triumphed as America's top-winning show dog of all breeds. Three years later, a Toy Poodle bitch from Japan, Ch. Smash JP Win A Victory ('Vikki'), accomplished the same feat, handled by another Japanese import, Kaz Hosaka, a protégé of the late Mr. and Mrs. James Edward Clark. The Afghan Hound Ch. Poseidon of Montain Top One JP and the Papillon Ch. Queen Bless JP Principal Kid triumphed as No. 1 in their breeds for 2007 as well. Author Bo Bengtson, who has judged in Japan, sheds light on that country's dog-breeding prowess in "Eastern Marvels: Japan's Influence on the American Dog Scene" (page 28).

Another contribution from the prolific Bo Bengtson in this issue is an excerpt from his exciting new book, *Best in Show: The World of Show Dogs and Dog Shows* (page 48). This is a monumental work, meticulously researched and written with passion and great love of the sport. Bengtson is a Swede by birth, now residing in California, who has lived all over the world. His thoughts on breeding, and what makes a great breeder, are thought-provoking; an eloquent antidote to the naysayers who feel one must keep large quantities of dogs to make a contribution to the fancy. Having never kept more than three or four dogs at a time, Bengtson has still produced some 120 champions bearing his Bohem prefix ... proof positive that bigger is not always better. If you've never traveled to the distant lands Bengtson takes us to, prepare for a journey with a most knowledgeable tour guide. Best of all, it's a trip that can be relived each time you dip into the book.

Curl up in an easy chair, where there's always plenty of leg room, and enjoy the travels that beckon you in this issue.