

depicted in the standard.

Will our breed one day be classified into two "types"—the working Malamute and the conformation Malamute? Everyone wants beautiful dogs but we can't preserve the breed if we forget necessary characteristics. One of my favorite paragraphs is included on the introduction page of the new Alaskan Malamute illustrated standard. It quotes Natalie Norris, an early fancier and one of the best-known female sled-dog racers:

"The Malamute is too fine and distinguished a breed to be changed into anything but what centuries of adaptability to its environment have produced. Our efforts should be to breed not only beautiful Malamutes, but as good specimens physically as were originally found in Alaska. It isn't a question of breeding a better Malamute, but as good an Alaskan Malamute."

I wrote my first column for the GAZETTE in 1985. Over the years I've received letters and e-mails from judges and exhibitors from all over the world, and I've loved discussing Malamutes with them all. However, I have chosen to resign my position as columnist for the Alaskan Malamute Club of America. I will miss the GAZETTE staff terribly, many of whom are like family, and thank them for their past support.

—Vicky Jones, Sharpsburg, Ga.;
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Honest Breed Information

Dog owners in today's society are seriously threatened by those who are intolerant of our canine friends. In too many communities, dog owners have been challenged to work tirelessly to defeat legislation that would place restrictions on our rights as dog owners. Providing honest information about our breed to potential buyers and promoting responsible dog ownership is critical if we are to discourage these constant attacks on our rights. Responsible dog ownership begins before acquiring a pup and is a lifetime commitment.

That being said, the Anatolian Shepherd Dog Club of America is rejoicing over its second-place win (Working Group) for its Meet the Breeds booth at the 2008 AKC/Eukanuba National Championship in Long Beach, California. The ASDCA booth was the result of a huge team effort by club members to create a "rural Turkish village" that showed the origin and function of the breed. But more important than the decorations was the availability of printed handouts and knowledgeable, longtime owners and breeders who provided accurate, detailed information about the Anatolian Shepherd Dog for the hundreds of people at these open-to-the-public events.

It is the responsibility of every national parent club or regional breed club to make public education a priority. The literature that the ASDCA makes available to serious inquiries is very frank about the requirements of ownership. The educational flyers and brochures include: "Facts at a Glance," "Serious Questions to Consider Before Purchasing an Anatolian Shepherd Dog," "Advice to Prospective Owners," "Anatolian Shepherd Dog Health Handbook," and the detailed, 12-page "Anatolian Shepherd Dog Information Booklet."

The Anatolian Shepherd Dog is not a breed for everyone. It is absolutely essential for anyone considering an Anatolian to completely understand that this breed is a fiercely loyal guard dog that demonstrates a possessive attitude toward family, property, and livestock. The Anatolian Shepherd requires an owner who can be a strong, positive leader and consistently requires civilized behavior.

Several years ago, I mailed out the "Information Booklet" to a gentleman in another state who was considering purchasing an Anatolian. He called after receiving the booklet to inform me that he would never get an Anatolian. He then proceeded to criticize the "Information Booklet" as being "very negative." I responded that the booklet was not negative, just totally honest about the requirements of ownership and that it had done its job. He should appreciate the fact that he found out that the breed was *not* for him before he made the mistake of

purchasing the wrong dog.

I have noticed that more and more breeders are putting puppy-buyer applications on their web sites, containing questions designed to weed out potential buyers whose lifestyles and commitment are not conducive to owning a livestock guardian dog. Selecting a puppy is serious business. The wrong choice too often leads to unhappy relationships or even abandoned dogs. Providing honest, accurate information and advice about your breed to the inquiring public not only promotes and encourages responsible dog ownership, but can help diminish negative attitudes surrounding dog ownership. —Marilyn Harned, P.O. Box 880, Alpine, CA 91903 ♦



National Specialty 2009

The Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America's national specialty historically attracts the year's single largest entry of Berners. The 2009 national, with the theme "Bernese Summit 2009—A River Runs to It," will take place Monday, April 27, to Saturday, May 2, in Portland, Oregon, at the Red Lion Hotel on the Columbia River, at Jantzen Beach. The location itself is sure to draw a wonderful array of Bernese Mountain Dogs, along with proud owners, handlers, and devotees of the breed from all parts of the United States, Canada, and abroad. Specialty hosts are the BMD clubs of Alaska, Greater Seattle, Inland Northwest, and Oregon. On Monday and Tuesday, among other events, an exciting variety of educational opportunities will be offered through the BMDCA's unique and innovative Berner U, which has become an extremely popular component of the national specialty. With a collegial atmosphere, these expert-staffed sessions provide valuable breed-specific information and inspire commitment toward the best interest of the breed.

Tools for Knowledge

Formed in 1968, the BMDCA was fortunate to have founding members Martin and Barbara Packard recognize