



Pulik



Getting Involved

While watching the presidential inauguration, I received an e-mail informing me that the club's AKC GAZETTE breed columnist had resigned and asking me to contribute an article to help fill in until a new columnist could be appointed. The message arrived at the exact moment when our new leader was promising hope and change, urging all of us to get involved and give something back to our country. The coincidence was not lost on me, and I not only agreed to write a column, but I also volunteered to take on the job of columnist. I was reminded of a previous conversation with another PCA member about how important it is to the survival of any club to get members involved and to encourage new people to step up and volunteer.

All members of a club have an obligation to do whatever they can to help make that organization a success. Our participation can come in many forms. Volunteer for committees when vacancies are advertised in *Puli News*. Take the initiative and write the board to ask if there is some task that needs doing. Arrive a day early at the national specialty and offer to help set up trophies, ring equipment, tables, chairs, and so forth. Do not assume that someone else has it covered. If a specific job is already taken, I am sure you will be offered another one. If you are new to showing dogs, there are still many areas in which you can help that do not require dog-specific skills. Write the show chairman ahead of time and offer to be in charge of raffle tickets, shirt sales, dinner reservations, or whatever is needed. All it takes is a pair of hands and a willing spirit.

If your dog is good around children, take him to visit school groups, scout packs, and day cares and speak to children about responsible pet ownership and the joy of the human-animal bond. Get to know your local politicians and look for opportunities to discuss the importance of supporting

responsible pet owners.

Be involved with your local all-breed club and participate in community activities that affect dog owners. Take your dog to an obedience class and earn a Canine Good Citizen® certificate for your dog. Every good impression you and your dog make in the community will help to offset negative images of dogs and their owners. To paraphrase another president: Ask not what your dog club can do for you; ask what you can do for your dog club.

I am very pleased to have been appointed as the breed columnist for the Puli Club of America, and I hope many of you will volunteer to be a guest columnist. I would appreciate your input and ideas on topics that you might like to see discussed in this column.

—Sherry Gibson, Manchester, Tenn.;
gibsons@blomland.net ♦



Uncoiffed and Unscissored

In many breeds, the coat is a very important breed characteristic. The same is true for the Pyrenean Shepherd, but in a different way than you may expect.

An important yet easy-to-miss word found in the "General Appearance" section of the breed standard is *uncoiffed*. *Uncoiffed* means to have unstyled, uncombed, or unarranged hair. While many breeds may be described as "natural" or "rustic," this is an important point in our breed that should not be missed. The dogs should appear as a rustic herding breed that would look no more out of place if found working in the High Pyrenees of France than it would in the conformation ring.

Another vital element is that the breed should also be *unscissored*. The natural look that is traditional for the breed allows no trimming anywhere on the dogs, except to neaten the feet. The breed standard even goes so far as to say that no ribbon should be awarded to any dog that has been scissored, especially on the face.

The Pyrenean Shepherd should never

be presented in the breed ring fluffed, puffed, over-brushed, with sculpted feet, a trimmed head, or a part down its back. To do so is to distract from its unique breed characteristics and history. Unlike many modern breeds, many of the earliest photos of the Pyrenean Shepherd in the late 19th and early 20th century look essentially the same in both coat and type to the national specialty winners of today, because of the extreme care in maintaining these important breed characteristics.

In addition to being uncoiffed and unscissored, another unique characteristic of the breed's coat is its great diversity. The breed is found in two varieties: smooth-faced and rough-faced. As is clear from the name, smooth-faced dogs have short hairs on the muzzle, as well as on the fronts of their legs, and have a moderate-length body coat. Rough-faced dogs have naturally short hairs on the end of the muzzle that progressively lengthen, giving the dogs a unique windswept look that is *not* the result of grooming or trimming. The head should never have excessive hair and the eyes should be clearly visible. (Neither a moustache nor beard is characteristic of the breed.) Also within the rough-faced are found two distinct coat types: long and demi-long. Additionally, rough-faced dogs with long coats may also be allowed to cord on the elbows, croup, and thighs. In all coat types the quality is more important than the quantity.

No matter what coat type a Pyrenean Shepherd possesses, it should be a utilitarian coat that, while clean and well-kept, would be equally as useful on the farm as it is in the show ring.

An uncoiffed and unscissored Pyrenean Shepherd of outstanding type is a sight to behold. May we all as breeders, judges, handlers, and fanciers help maintain this classic, traditional look. —Joni Johnson, Rock Hill, S.C.;
jonijohnson@terrablue.net ♦



Guest columnist Yvonne DeFreitas has owned Shelties for more than

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COLUMNS/DEPARTMENTS

- 2 PRESIDENT'S LETTER
- 8 EVENT SHOTS
- 10 ON ALL FRONTS
- 14 BETTER BREEDING
- 16 THE JUDGE'S EYE
- 18 BEHAVIOR AND TRAINING
- 20 THE VERSATILE DOG
- 22 HEALTHY DOG
- 40 AKC SHOPPER
- 73 CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
- 96 TIMES PAST

BREED COLUMNS

- 41 BREED COLUMNS SPOTLIGHT:
LÖWCHEN
- 42 BREED COLUMNS INDEX
- 42 TOY GROUP
- 53 NON-SPORTING GROUP
- 62 HERDING GROUP



24

FEATURES

24 Flexible Flyers

Fast, furious, and thrilling, the AKC National Agility Championship showcases canine talent from all over America.

By Penny Leigh

30 Healing Water

A troubled teen and a tenacious terrier add up to a perfect picture.

By Kirsten Marek, DVM

32 10 Tips for ... Screening Puppy Buyers

From the heart of Bo-Mania, Portuguese Water Dog fanciers share insights on making a sensible choice.

By Mara Bovsun

36 Blood Siege

What happens when a Poodle's immune system attacks his platelets?

By Jeff Grognet, DVM



32



50

AKC NEWS

- 4 AKC® UPDATES
- 75 DOG AND LITTER REGISTRATIONS
- 76 SECRETARY'S PAGE
- 89 MAY BOARD MEETING

ON THE COVER

Parson Russell Terrier *by Steve Surfman*

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