



The NLRC was organized in 1996 with the idea of creating a national club that would preserve and promote the Labrador Retriever. Everyone in the Labrador community is welcome...from pet owners to old timers.

We are a National Lab Club formed by the members, for the members, working together for the preservation, betterment and service to the Labrador Retriever.

THE LABRADOR CONNECTION

AUGUST 2009 ELECTRONIC EDITION

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Lounging Labradors and a rooster...

The first sign of the predator was the hen, deceased but left uneaten...

The second sign was the hen's companion, a rooster, who was quietly circling the area, he was missing his entire complement of tail feathers, he was in complete tatters, the damaged rooster seemed more harmed cosmetically than actually being damaged physically. He didn't carry himself with any of the pride that one normally sees in roosters strutting about with....he was a sorry sight, just hanging back, walking around the perimeter of a catastrophe that no one had witnessed. I don't even know to whom he belongs to, I assume he and his hen were off for some alone time when they encountered trouble in the form of a hawk or from a neighborhood cat. I didn't expect to see this rooster again, but I did.

The tattered rooster made his reappearance daily in the yard, emerging from wherever he was roosting each evening, like clockwork he softly clucked and cocked his head as he approached cautiously. I wondered why he was still here. he'd tip toe quietly up to the screen door and look in. Looking in wasn't enough for this rooster.

The screen door was slightly ajar one morning and there was the poor rooster, a sad, still sullen thing who had quietly entered the house, softly clicking his way into the kitchen...politely eating a piece of dog kibble he had found.

My labs? Lifting their heads and accessing the rooster, they laid their heads back down on the cool tile and seemed to know he deserved a break that day. They gave him no more notice than they would to the turning on of a fan.

Me, though...I certainly noticed! I was absolutely way too anxious about rooster poo, knowing that a rooster's poo-pile can rival the size and mass of a puppy poo-pile — I simply had to show that rooster back outside because I was fairly confident that the rooster was not house trained.

The rooster complied at my approach, and when I turned to look at my 4-legged roommates I could not help but ponder why they seemingly did not care that we just endured an incursion of the poultry kind? Maybe it's the 105 degree weather we've all seen on a daily basis this summer or perhaps it was something else that caused all who encounter this poor ragged bird to let him be, he's had enough drama in his lifetime and it shows in his still missing plumage. Under normal circumstances I would have expected a single paw to have been placed on his back and for there to be shower of slobber atop the rooster.

Sympathy at his desperation for assistance compelled the placement of chicken scratch and a water bowl for him where I hoped the rooster would find it. Coming and going quietly, he consumed all that was placed there for him. The rooster has improved significantly, both in appearance and in confidence. The little guy raps politely on the screen door to announce he is here. He waits, very patiently for someone to notice that he had knocked. Never knocking more than once within a reasonable span of time, he is arguably the most polite rooster ever to knock on anyone's front door!

Our Labradors do notice his arrival though. Picture the 4-legged family members standing on the inside of the house, wagging their tails back and forth....quietly, the only movement is the endless back and forth of their happy tails-a-wagging...and then there's that rooster, waiting on the other side of the screen door, standing tall on the steps, the labs looking through the screen door at the rooster with their deep gorgeous Labrador-brown-hued eyes into the single, cocked yellow eye of the rooster, the rooster's black pupil dilating rapidly as he focuses at the labs through the screen door. The rooster waits, quiet like the dogs. The rooster doesn't wag his tail though, he is still missing his plumage.

I refill the roosters dishes, the furry family members return to the cool tile for a well deserved nap...their sentry duties fulfilled, their interest in the visiting rooster nothing more than a memory....the roosters' coming and going are now a routine. I still don't know where the rooster sleeps at night...I don't know where he goes or if he will return tomorrow, but he walked into our lives and the bold little guy has even knocked at our door and walked into our home. This once tattered rooster has flourished and the only question that remains, is if he will be knocking at the door again tomorrow.

story by: Sandra Underhill

BIOSECURITY MEANS PREVENTING DISEASE

by [Bretaigne Jones, DVM](#) reprinted with permission from www.RoyalCanin.us

Every owner wants to have healthy animals, not only because the pet is happier, easier to live with, and will enjoy a longer life, but because diseases are costly. There are the tangible costs of veterinary visits, diagnostics and prescriptions, but there are also intangible costs in terms of decreased ability to produce, increased loss of puppies, and a shorter breeding career. More importantly, some diseases are able to affect people and in order to protect everyone in contact with those animals, we must control contagious diseases. This is biosecurity.

How do we maximize our disease control and minimize our expenses? Quite simply by knowing the goal, the right products to use, and by using them correctly.

Let's start at the beginning and walk through the process.

First, we need to understand exactly what it is we are trying to accomplish. Our goal is to prevent the exposure to, and spread of, contagious diseases. We are going to achieve this by decreasing cross-contamination of **organic materials** between animals, and between animals and humans. This means urine, feces, mucus, vomit, saliva, sneezing spray, afterbirth or aborted tissues, and pus.

Okay, so now we know what to avoid. Next question, who is responsible for minimizing the risks of spreading disease? Everyone who handles the animals, or is in the kennel, is responsible for biosecurity. Part of this responsibility is knowing how diseases can be spread, and how long a risk exists after contamination. Direct contact between animals (nose to nose contact, which can occur through fences or over walls) that are housed together or share a common play time, breeding, and sometimes showing, is certainly understandable. Occasionally overlooked is the indirect exposure where an infectious agent (virus, bacteria, fungus or parasite) is on an inanimate object or surface which is then available to the next animal. Common exposure risks are found in soiled bedding, toys, dirty hands of humans, and dirty boots or clothing. Don't forget the role that tools and other materials may pose such as hoses, squeagees, leashes, fencing, etc.

There are two key approaches to establishing a good program of biosecurity. The first strategy is to decrease the number of infectious microorganisms your animals and staff are exposed to. This is accomplished through practices such as having a dedicated quarantine area, stocked with its own supplies, in a controlled location and using a standard isolation period for animals new to the grounds, or returning from being off the grounds (showing, breeding, training, etc). The animals held here, whether because they are sick, are in isolation to make sure they aren't sick before putting them in the general population, or have been exposed to a sick animal, should always be handled, fed and treated after all the healthy animals have been taken care of. By handling these animals last you are limiting the direct and indirect exposure routes to anything within that immediate area. Ideally you would have dedicated personnel do all the caretaking for this area to further limit possibility of contamination. Dishes, toys, supplies and equipment used here should never be used anywhere else in the kennel. Conspicuously label such materials as "isolation" or "quarantine". And, of course, every person should be cleaning their hands when they come in and before they go out. A foot-bath is also a good idea as long as it is tended appropriately.

The second strategy to establish good biosecurity is to maximize the animals' resistance to disease. Vaccinations are a vital tool in this endeavor as they can build protective immunity before the dog is exposed to a pathogen. Routine deworming with the appropriate drug is a strong approach as well. Know what parasites you are fighting, and know the best and safest drugs to use to succeed. Equally important, if not more so, is keeping your animals as healthy as possible through good management and nutrition. It is important to recognize that certain nutrients enable a dog to activate its own immune response quickly and effectively.

By far, the biggest and most common mistake that is made in trying to prevent disease is simply not fully cleaning an area or surface before using a disinfectant. Cleaning can be the least expensive part of a sound biosecurity plan, but the most important. We have to distinguish between cleaning and disinfection, because they are not the same thing.

To clean, we are going to use soaps or detergents. These agents work by suspending dirt and grease off the surface so it can be washed away. They don't kill harmful microorganisms (unless they have an added component such as found in anti-bacterial soap). Degreasers are more powerful soaps or detergents specially formulated to get between layers of dried-on materials such as body oils and sticky, greasy feces, slobber, etc. Without the use of soaps or detergents, you are only dealing with the top surface of "dirt", while infectious agents are hid



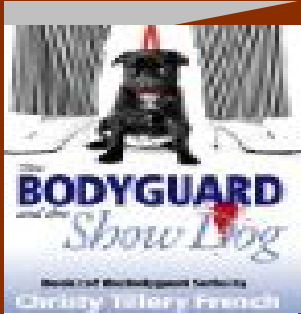
A TONGUE IN CHEEK LOOK AT DOG SHOWS submitted by Vicky Creamer

This is a very tongue in cheek look at dog shows. The author picks on everyone, so don't be offended. Ms. Lewin divides dog show people into two categories, those with and those without dogs. We appreciate Ms. Lewin's generosity in sharing her observations and wit with this Field Guide. Ms. Lewin's home is in Falls Church, VA, where she can be found attending in many categories at a dog show near you: as BS, EOH, judge and hard-working "other".

To a novice, a dog show can be a daunting experience. The initial impression is often one of a single-purpose county fair where many grim-faced people run about with numbers on their arms and dogs in tow, and where, if one can judge by their facial expression, only about 1 in 20 of them is actually having fun. Following is a short list of the most frequently encountered personages at a dog show, and how to identify them by their typical plumage, temperament, demeanor and call.

PROFESSIONAL HANDLERS: Professional Handlers (PHs) are those who show dogs for a fee, so the dogs' owners are spared the joys of kneeling in the mud in their own business suit, or having their last pair of pantyhose split on the second day of a 10-day circuit. PHs can be discerned from other exhibitors by several methods. One is their somewhat officious and aloof manner around ringside (which is difficult to master when you have muddy knees and/or split pantyhose). Outside the ring, PHs rarely acknowledge anyone except the judge (whom they know personally), other PHs (whom they know personally), and their own kennel help (whom they either know rather too personally, or who are from foreign countries and have unpronounceable names, or both). Kennel help, by the way, are those nubile young men and women who race back and forth from the grooming area to ringside like orbiting comets, bringing dogs to their PH to show and taking already-been-shown dogs back to their crates in a never-ending cycle. This is called "learning the business". Meanwhile, the PH stands there, dog less, squinting at the competition and deciding whether to get his or her armband the usual half-second before going into the ring, or give the steward a real shock and get it a whole minute ahead of time. PH plumage is the nicest seen among those at the dog show, besides that of the judges and the junior handlers (q.v.), because the kennel help are the ones who do the dirty work outside the ring. PHs has no reliable call, but do sometimes change color abruptly in the ring when they don't receive the award they expected. Generally leaving speedier in motion when leaving the ring than when they entered it.

OWNER-HANDLERS: Owner-Handlers (OHs) are people who show their own dog(s), rather than hiring a PH. They are roughly divided into two groups: Experienced OHs (EOHs) and Novice OHs (NOHs). We will discuss them separately. At first glance, EOHs may be difficult to differentiate from PHs. Their plumage is similar and their general look of competence, control and 'cool' is the same. The way to tell them apart is outside the ring. EOHs always have a dog with them because they don't have kennel help to bring them their dog at ringside. Also, EOHs do talk to people and usually gravitate to, or form on their own, small circle of other EOHs almost from the moment they arrive on the grounds (The really well established EOHs are generally prominent breeders, and they often arrive at the show with their very own personal circle of communicants, called "disciples".) EOHs know everyone who has their breed and they know all the dogs in their breed by registered name, call name, pet name, pedigree, show record and degree of quality (which they are constantly critiquing). This allows them to chatter on freely in rarified terms about the latest bleedings, wins, dogs and people without a newcomer having a clue as to what they're talking about. (By contrast, the PH might not even remember the name of the dog they have on the end of the lead at any given moment). If an unknown competitor shows up, EOHs give their dog a quick visual once-over and then talk about it behind their hands. EOHs never buy a catalogue. They arrive at the show in enormous motor homes with six ex-pens bungeed on the front, even (continued pg 13)



The Bodyguard and the Show Dog



Humorous Training Games



Show Dogs

BIOSECURITY MEANS PREVENTING DISEASE continued

ing and living well underneath. If you've got young people helping out, it's a good idea to write out the correct process and post it in key locations to reinforce the information.

Start with removing the animals from the cage or run. This is a good time to let them go to the exercise area. Remove the feed and water dishes, toys, and bedding, which will be cleaned, too. Remove as much of the organic material (feces, vomit, etc) as possible. Wet down all surfaces with hot water to loosen any soiling. Use a solution of warm or hot water and detergent (follow label directions for correct dilution) to break down organic material. Scrub all surfaces, including fences, with a brush or power sprayer. A word of caution about using power sprayers—the force of the spray will disseminate and aerosolize viruses, bacteria, fungus and parasites, so control the pressure and direction of the spray, and try not to breathe in the moist air. Here is an important step that frequently gets forgotten—rinse off the detergent thoroughly. Another important factor is to squeegee standing water so that when you apply the disinfectant it doesn't get diluted and lose impact.

Now we are ready to use a disinfectant. This is a chemical agent that kills harmful microorganisms. A disinfectant does not necessarily remove dirt or grease. All kennels should be using a disinfectant that will kill parvovirus (not all of the disinfectants labeled for use against parvovirus are truly effective, but more about that later). Several factors are important to know about each disinfectant you are using. Dilute bleach can be a fantastic disinfectant, but it can lose efficacy in hard water. Do you have hard water in your kennel? How hard? You need to know. Water temperature is very important with most disinfectants, as many will work better in very warm water. Pay attention to the type of material you are trying to disinfect. Some disinfectants are corrosive over time. AND, some disinfectants are potentially toxic to animals (and people) such as phenols.

(Continued page 5)

NLRC Membership -- Open Enrollment

Please feel
free to forward
our
newsletter to
interested
family and
friends

*National Labrador
Retriever Club*

Membership in the National Labrador Retriever Club, Inc. is open to all Labrador enthusiasts; however, to join you must be in good standing with the American Kennel Club, Inc. and should consider the guidelines set forth in the [NLRC Code of Ethics](#) when engaged in any activities involving the breeding, exhibiting and selling of Labrador Retrievers.

Two types of annual individual memberships are offered:

Full (voting member) \$30

Associate (non-voting) \$20

Click the below links for NLRC

Membership forms:

[NLRC Membership Application Form \(that can be printed and mailed in with your membership fee\)](#)

Or to both apply and pay online

[NLRC Membership Application](#)

Are you listed in our [NLRC Breeders Directory](#)?

NLRC Members with full membership rights can apply to participate on the NLRC website Breeder Directory by completing the applicable section on the PDF membership application and submitting a \$10 fee.

Any questions? Contact our Membership Chair:

Deb Arnold 262-849-0962
twin_cedars@prodigy.net



BIOSECURITY MEANS PREVENTING DISEASE continued

Information on the product label can save you a lot of money, and grief. Not all disinfectants are compatible with all cleaners. Some cleaners inactivate particular disinfectants. So you just spent money and effort for nothing more than a fancy rinse job. Make sure you dilute the product accordingly. If two ounces will work well, why use four? Then, use accurate measuring devices to ensure you are using the appropriate amount of disinfectant for the volume of water. Don't eyeball it. Chances are you are throwing away your money when you do that. Pay attention also on how best to store the container (away from light? cool area? in a well-ventilated area?) not only to get the most of your investment but to make sure you don't get an undesirable chemical reaction. Some products have a relatively short shelf life, so don't stock up on bottles of disinfectant that will take you a year to use if they are only good for 6 months. Look for the necessary contact time. This is the time the disinfectant solution needs to be in contact with the surface in order to kill the microorganisms. For example, bleach needs about 10 minutes. So a quick spray and wipe does nothing. After the appropriate contact time, rinse the disinfectant off. Even dilute bleach can be irritating to skin, fur and respiratory tissue, especially for very young animals. And you don't want them licking it either. Finally, allow the area or surface to dry before putting the animals back in.

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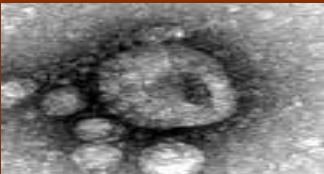
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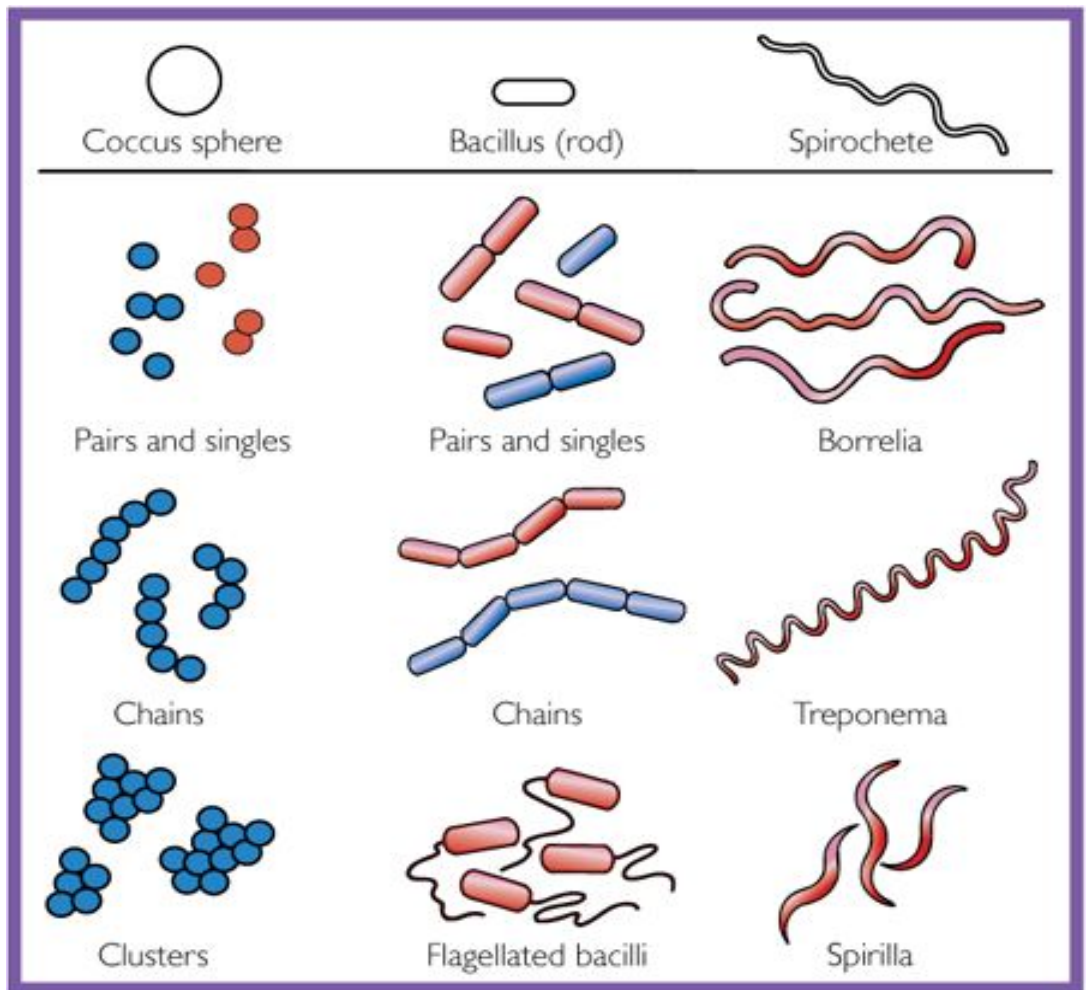
Parvo virus

—BigPawsOnly



Corona Virus

—Cornell University



Micro-organisms come in three basic shapes. Chart by Stepp/Woods, 1998



BELQUEST NOTHIN' BUT THE FACTS – “UNO”

Vicky Creamer's (Belquest) Belquest Nothin' But The Facts - "Uno" on 6/18/09 was 1st in 5-9 month sweepstakes at the Greater Pittsburgh Labrador Retriever Club under Judge Laura Witts (Minefalls Labradors).



BELQUEST COSMOPOLITAN – "COSMO"

Vicky Creamer's ([Belquest](#)) Belquest Cosmopolitan - "Cosmo" on 6/11/09 was Best in Sweepstakes for 9-12 months sweeps at the Labrador Retriever Club of Greater Boston under Judge Sharon Luckhart (High Caliber Labradors).

On 6/12/09 Cosmo was Best in Sweepstakes for 9-12 months sweeps at the Labrador Retriever Club of Greater Boston under Judge Greg Lynch (Kellyn Labradors).



BELQUEST GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY – "GQ"

Vicky Creamer's ([Belquest](#)) Belquest Gentlemen's Quarterly - "GQ" on 6/12/09 as 1st in the 9-12 month sweeps at the Labrador Retriever Club of Greater Boston under Judge Sharon Luckhart (High Caliber Labradors).



GRAMPIAN RAPTOR MYSTIQUE, RE, CGC, TDI, CC – “MERLIN”

Barb Burri's ([RaptorLabs](#)) Burri's Grampian Raptor Mystique - Merlin has earned his APDT Rally Championship and is now ARCH Grampian Raptor Mystique, RE, RL-1, RL-2, RL-3, CTL-2, CC, CGC, TDI
The APDT rally championship requires 100 champion points and 5 Q's (a double Q is qualifying in APDT Rally Level 1 and Level 2 at the same trial with scores over 190) Merlin was bred by Robin Anderson and is owned, trained, handled and loved by Barb Burri.



BURRI'S LOFTY LADYHAWKE – "Hawke"

Barb Burri's ([RaptorLabs](#)) Burri's Lofty LadyHawke, "Hawke" completed her Rally Advanced Title in Springfield MA on 7/3/09. Hawke is sired by: CH Willcare's Master of the Hunt, CD, JH with MacDonald's Majestic Madison and is owned, trained, handled and loved by Barb Burri.



UKC BISS GRCH ENTERPRISE'S GREAT ADVENTURE – "Curtis"

Christina Trojak's ([StormyCLabradors](#)) UKC BISS GRCH Enterprise's Great Adventure, "Curtis" whelped 6/08/08, sired by: CH Lubberline Martingale with Hyspire's Breathtaking and bred by Enterprise Labradors is loved by Cristina & Steve Trojak. Curtis is Champion of Champions & Best in Specialty Show, United Labrador Retriever Association (UKC), under judge Tammy Dewitt, 6/11/2009; Winners Dog/Best of Opposite Sex, Little Fort KC, under judge Lorraine Bisso, 6/12/2009; 2nd place 12-18 class, Winnebago Labrador Retriever Club Specialty, under judge Traci Stintzcum, 6/13/09; Champion of Champions and Best of Breed, GSKC (UKC) under judge Mary King, 6/11/09 where Curtis earns his Grand Champion title. As of July 19, 2009, Curtis is ranked #1 Labrador in the UKC.

Animal Rights is Wrong — by [Loretta Baughan](#) to read full article, click [here](#)

It always amazes me to see how many people fall prey to the slick photos of puppies and kittens national animal rights groups use to solicit donations. Too often, people who support these organizations are misled into thinking they are actually helping animals or their local humane societies. Despite having a name that suggests an active role in overseeing or operating local humane societies, in reality the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) is little more than a \$200-million dollar lobbying organization tirelessly working to ramrod their anti-animal, anti-people agenda into law.

On occasions where cases of animal abuse or neglect become the focus of media attention, HSUS jets into town to hog the spotlight while soliciting donations from the unsuspecting public. Like a thief in the night, HSUS packs up and exits—*along with the public's donations*—as soon as the media's attention fades, leaving struggling, underfunded local animal shelters and rescue groups bearing the financial burden of care for the confiscated animals.

"The Humane Society of the United States works with local Humane Societies across the country. We don't control every local Humane Society in this nation. These organizations strive to the greatest degree to provide homes for animals and to encourage adoption, to spay and neuter animals. And if a decision is made to euthanize, it is a failure of society, not the local organizations who are striving to do their best." — Wayne Pacelle, President and CEO The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) testimony at the *Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007, the Animal Fighting Prohibition Enforcement Act of 2007, and the Preventing Harassment through Outbound Number Enforcement (Phone) Act of 2007* hearing before the subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security; Committee of the Judiciary in the House of Representatives, February 6, 2007, pg 104

"Primarily they felt that the organization took on many issues purely for their publicity value, regardless of the facts of the case; subtly misrepresented itself in its fund-raising efforts by leading contributors to believe they were donating to local humane societies for animal rescue, when in fact these groups received no money from HSUS; and frequently sought to gain credit for the work of smaller less funded organizations." — Dogs Best Friend by Mark Derr (2004), pg 257. *(to read the remainder of Loretta Baughan's article, please visit the [Spaniel Journal, here](#))*

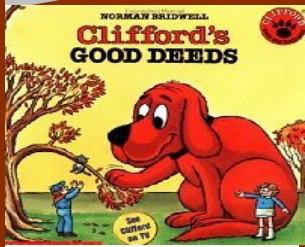
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Loretta Baughan is the founder, editor and publisher of [Spaniel Journal](#). She is an award winning [professional photographer](#), owner of [Autumnskye, LLC](#). Loretta is a member of the [Dog Federation of Wisconsin](#), the [National Rifle Association](#) and is the Wisconsin contact for the [Sportsmen and Animal Owners Voting Alliance](#). ([SAVOA](#))

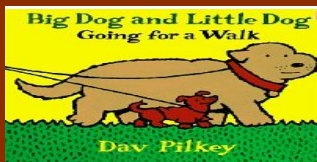


A tongue in cheek look at Dog Shows

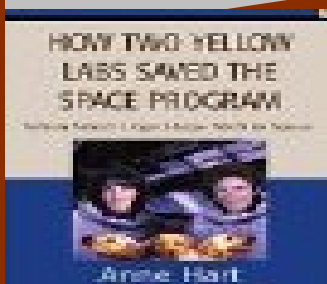
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Clifford's Good Deeds



*Big Dog and Little Dog
Going for a walk*



How two Labs Saved the

One. They execute turns with military precision, and they always come to a halt with their feet exactly together. Then they lean over stiffly and praise their dog in a mechanical manner. If the dog misbehaves, the OE may erupt in a sudden display of noise and violence, but then immediately returns to that grim pacing. It's frightening. The more advanced OEs carry small baskets or pouches with them, full of dumbbells and gloves called 'articles'. These are only handled with tongs and are guarded jealously lest anyone touch them. For all that, OEs as a group generally have affable temperament so long as one approaches them after they have shown their dog. (Not right afterwards -- give them 15 minutes or so to get their blood pressure under control). They are known for their physical stamina (all that heeling), adaptability (practicing and showing in all kinds of weather, on all kinds of terrain), helpfulness (suggesting training solutions for your dog, which they've never worked with), mental stability (surviving every sort of embarrassment from their own dog in the ring), and big hearts (those with small hearts don't survive their first 5-minute out-of-sight down stay). The only exception to this affability is the exhibitor competing for an OTCh. OTCh.-level competitors, like African Cape Buffalo, are dangerously unpredictable and should be left strictly alone.

JUDGES: Judges are those official-looking officials in the middle of each ring. Their plumage is wildly variable but generally falls somewhere in the range of sporty to dressy, depending on the weather and the venue. At some of the fancier shows, plumage can become positively splendid, including sequins on both males and females. No matter what the attire, the infallible means of identification is the purple badge they wear. This badge is critical for the judges because it gets them free meals, free hotel rooms, free transportation and a check from the club treasurer at the end of the day. Conformation judges are usually seen in the middle of the ring with a line of dogs and handlers tearing around them in a circle, trying to look like they're having fun. The judge scrutinizes them all with feet slightly spread (for balance), hands clasped behind the back or folded across the chest (to keep them out of the way), and eyes squinted (to look sagacious). Older judges have been known to fall asleep in this stance, so it behooves the first exhibitor in line to get clear instructions ahead of time as to when to stop running around the ring. The call of the conformation judge cannot usually be heard outside the ring as they are given only to short consultations with the exhibitor nearest at hand. Younger judges may be chattier than older judges. Some elderly judges have been known to reduce their instructions, over time, to a combination of grunting and pointing, which the exhibitor must then interpret and execute properly. It's a skill. Obedience judges look like high school gym teachers sans the whistle. They tend to be more athletic than their conformation counterparts, as they must follow each exhibit around the ring as it performs the exercises. They carry a clipboard and a pencil everywhere with them, and they can be heard calling commands to the exhibitors, who in turn, command their dogs. This makes the obedience rings much more interesting to watch than the conformation rings, where everything seems more private and quite inexplicable from the outside (and sometimes from the inside). Because of all this activity, obedience judges' plumage runs more to the practical/sporty side of the spectrum than the conformation judges' do. Obedience judges are very particular about their rings, pacing them off, inspecting the ground for dog-distracting detritus, personally setting jump standards to their own satisfaction, and measuring everything in sight with their own personal tape measure (which they all carry), so as to make it fair for each competitor. Conformation judges, by comparison, have been known to lose half their entry in a ring crevasse and mark them all absent before noticing anything was wrong. Obedience judges are also skilled at totting up entire score sheets of two-digit numbers in five seconds or less.

STEWARDS: The steward is the person sitting at the table by the ring gate who isn't the judge and isn't an exhibitor. As is the case in most walks of life, this most unobtrusive person, with the dullest plumage, is actually the one doing most of the work. The conformation ring steward hands out armbands to the exhibitors, lines up the

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A tongue in cheek look at Dog Shows

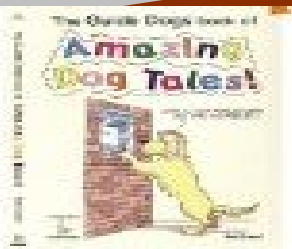
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HARRY the Dirty Dog



by Gene Zion
Pictures by Margaret Bloy Graham

Harry the Dirty Dog



Amazing Dog Tales

Love That Puppy!



Love that Puppy

exhibitors for the classes, arranges the ribbons and trophies on the table for the judge, and calls for clean up and for the photographer as needed. The obedience ring stewards perform all of the above, also stand as "posts" for the Figure-8 exercise, diddle about with gloves, and dumbbells for various retrieving exercises, adjust jumps, and generally see to it that the judge stays on time and the ring runs smoothly. Stewards dress strictly for practicality, as they have to work at the show all day. Indeed, on a rainy or cold day, the stewards may be the only people who seemed to have had common sense enough to wear boots or a proper coat, since everyone else is concerned with looking elegant. They generally carry a largish sort of bag with them, and this bag has every possible emergency item in it, from weights for holding down ribbons on a windy day, to an extra pair of socks, to a fully equipped first aid kit. The steward's job is to be prepared for any eventuality, which might befall them, their judge, or their exhibitors, and the good ones are so prepared. Stewards have a distinctive call, and one of the most highly valued assets in a good steward is a loud voice. In the conformation rings, it consists of the announcement of a breed name and class, such as "Dalmatians! Puppy Dogs!" used to summon the entrants into the ring for judging. In obedience, they quietly call out the armband number. (They call quietly because obedience exhibitors are usually at ringside when it's their turn, ready to go in. Conformation types are more likely to be carrying on some incredibly important conversation with someone and not paying attention to what class is in the ring). If an armband remains unclaimed, the steward will wave it overhead while shouting the number out. If an errant exhibitor has picked up the armband but has not reported to the ring for their class, the steward will shout out that number as well. Then he or she will fall silent, turn to the judge, and shrug.

OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHERS: The Official Photographer (OP) looks like someone on safari, but without the attending gun bearers. Typical under-plumage is slacks, all-terrain shoes and a shirt with a many-pocketed vest over top of it. Over-plumage consists of a large camera, a flash unit and a battery pack, with lots of black cording attaching everything to everything else. OPs also carry a set of plastic signs around in one hand, and sometimes a tripod. Despite these hindrances, they are notably agile and can leap tall ring fences in a single bound. When summoned, they can calculate the light angle, plunk the sign rack on the ground, fix the signs in the frame to indicate the win, position the judge, handler and dog to best advantage, drop to their knees, focus the camera, center the picture, throw a toy, snap the shutter, record the exhibitor's armband number in a notebook, wind the film, and be up and gone to the next ring in thirty seconds or less. It is breathtaking. OP behavior is noticeable for periods of frenetic activity interspersed with periods of total quiescence, during which time they actually remove their over-plumage and sit next to it on a grooming table. OPs tend to develop crow's feet due to weekends of peering into a viewfinder at the shows, alternating with weekdays of squinting at their airbrush work in the darkroom. The distinctive calls can vary in content but tend to be delivered in punchy, staccato bursts, such as "Rear foot! Your side! Back an inch!"

BREEDER-SPECTATORS: BSs (forgive the acronym) are experienced dog people who, for whatever reason, are not showing that day but came to the show to watch. They are usually in casual (non-show) plumage and are clumped at ringside, outside the tent. Like EOHs, they are often seen in small groups, huddled around the one catalog somebody bought or borrowed from a nearby NOH. However, the distinctive mark of an armband is lacking from BSs, and they are dog less. Most easily distinguished in the field by their demeanor and call, timing your identification is critical: BSs tend to exhibit distinguishing behavior only as the judge is pointing to his or her selections. At that point, they roll their

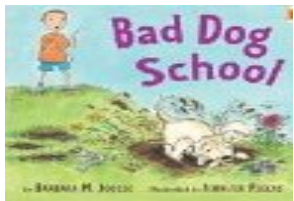
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A tongue in cheek look at Dog Shows

continued from page 14



Farting Fred at the Dog Show



Bad Dog School



Oops, Clifford

eyes like agitated horses and shriek, "You've got to be kidding!" (Alternate call: "Oh my GOD!")

NON-BREEDER SPECTATORS (i.e., the General Public): Identical to NOHs in general appearance and number of accouterments, except without a dog in tow. They fill this void in their lives by asking exhibitors if their child can pet the dog. This request is inevitably made right after said child has finished eating a hot dog and is covered with mustard, and the exhibitor is going in to show a Maltese which he just spent six hours grooming. NBSs are more likely to be seen wandering vaguely from ring to ring, or around the concession stands, rather than planted at ringside. When they do choose a ring to watch, they and their clan tend to stand annoyingly right in the ring gate, thereby preventing the exhibitors from entering. Adult NBSs are often observed making erroneous instructional comments to their fledglings, such as, "Look, dear, see all the lovely Poodles!" (When pointing at a ring of Portuguese Water Dogs). A day in the company of a flock of NBSs can be very confusing for all concerned.

AKC FIELD REPRESENTATIVE: If ever the federal government wanted to fund a Stealth Dog Show Attendee, the AKC Field Representative, known as "the Rep", would be it. Very difficult to spot in the field due to the fact that only one attends any given show, they tend to appear like phantasms and then just as suddenly melt back into the crowd and disappear. The really skilled ones can disappear from view at ju-u-u-st that precise moment when one's eyes become focused on them, making one think one didn't really see them at all. Because they are supposed to attend the show as the ambassador from the AKC to observe judges, answer questions, mediate disputes and calm the hysterical, they are rarely around when you need one. However, the Rep can most often be pinned down at the Superintendent's tent or in the vicinity of whatever club facility houses the public address system. When on stealth duty, they sit decorously at ringside, pretending to chat discreetly with a friend while actually observing the judge. After said judge notices that the Rep is watching, and has passed at least one quart of nervous perspiration, the Rep jots a few notes, smiles mysteriously, picks up his or her chair, and silently moves on to a new quarry. AKC Reps look like adult JHs -- impeccably dressed, shod and coiffed, but sometimes with the additional 'je ne sais quoi' of a hat. Hatted male Reps seem to go for the tweedy-English-country-gentleman look, while female Reps often favor swoopy, broad-brimmed confections, which may involve feathers. Both male and female Reps have that certain uppercrust-y aloofness, which surrounds all those who wield a lot of power. This above-it-all aura acts as a natural repellent to dirt, dog hair and most people, and allows the Reps to attend multiple dog shows in their best attire, in all kinds of weather, without getting so much as a micron of dust or a whisper of calumny on themselves. Superintendent's Staff: The superintendent's staff falls into two categories -- those in fancy plumage who attend to the administrative work of the show, and those in working attire who do the roustabouts' job of driving the big trucks in with the supplies and setting up the rings and tents. The roustabout types show up the previous evening to set up. This is usually a crew of six or so burly men who only need to know where you want everything placed to have it up and done in a twinkling. It's a fascinating process to watch -- just like Barnum and Bailey, but without the inconvenience of elephants. Canny grounds chairmen know that any special favors they may wish can be effectively accomplished through the liberal application of beer. At the end of the show, the crew has the rings and tents down, folded and loaded in no time, and the truck is often rolling off the grounds before the Best in Show winner is back in its crate. The administrative superintendent's staff is found in the superintendent's tent. They sit there, behind a high counter-like structure, writing things (no one is sure what) and looking annoyed if someone interrupts them with a request. Periodically, they make dashes to the rings to collect judges' books. Then they return to their counter and write some more.

OTHER PEOPLE AT THE SHOW: There are other people at the dog shows, but you're not as likely to see them around the rings because they're too busy working on show day. These people include the show chairman, the hospitality staff, the officers of the club, the catalog chairman and the parking people (you saw them when you came in). All these people have important jobs to do before, during, and/or after the show. Any exhausted-looking person in casual (maybe even dirty and sweaty) clothes, stumbling about, mumbling under his or her breath, is undoubtedly one of these and should not be arrested as a vagrant. They deserve a smile and a thank-you, because they, as well as those mentioned above, make it all happen every year for their club, and the exhibitors and spectators who attend their dog show.

