

proper Chesapeake. If the breed continues this way, we will stray away from the correct Chesapeake Bay Retriever type.

A breed should be able to determine the breed of an animal by looking at its silhouette; one should not have to be up close to differentiate it from other breeds. The Chesapeake standard describes hunting and retrieving dogs who are supposed to be willing, strong, and capable of retrieving in the worst conditions. I hope that today's breeders will follow our breed standard to achieve this and not defer to producing generic-looking animals—good, sound dogs that have lost their breed type.

I also hope that we will not lose the protective and alert nature of our dogs. It is important that I feel safe living alone with my dogs by my side. I admire the guard instinct of my dogs and their ability to distinguish friend or foe. Chespeakes should be social but not love everyone they meet, allowing anyone into their home. The Chesapeake's loving, protective instinct allows the breed to stand in a class of its own.

I implore all who breed these animals to understand and adhere to the standard. It is our responsibility as breeders to keep the progress the breed has made in uniformity and temperament. —S.D.

Thank you, Sheila.

Please feel free to send your comments. —Nathaniel Horn, Columbia, Md.; Kcboy01@yahoo.com ♦

Curly-Coated Retrievers

To Breed or Not

During my first 15 years of owning Curly-Coated Retrievers, I did not even think of breeding a litter of puppies. Training for obedience and tracking were the main activities then, and I gave no thought to either dog showing or breeding. My first three Curly bitches were not what I considered quite the "showgirl" type. My first one was a very refined type of bitch and was doing very well in obedience when she was suddenly killed at a young age. Our second bitch

had the patterning coat problem that occurs sometimes in our breed, and at one time she was actually completely bald for a matter of months. Our third Curly had separation anxiety as well as coat issues, and she was certainly not to be shown or bred.

Then along came my fourth Curly with the stipulation from her breeder that she would be bred. Since she had Australian working lines from her dam and lovely conformation lines from her sire, I was very happy to agree to breed her in the future. She would then be completely mine, as she was co-owned until I fulfilled the agreement.

The breeding went along as planned, but at whelping time she had uterine inertia and a subsequent C-section, with the delivery of one live pup; all the rest of the litter had been reabsorbed. Unfortunately, she was never able to produce any more live pups, as a second breeding produced one still-born, severely deformed puppy. She was spayed at that point.

After my first breeding experience, another one of my bitches was bred to an overseas male but did not conceive. A subsequent breeding also resulted in no pups, and she later was spayed.

Having had these rather poor experiences with breeding, I may breed one of my bitches. However, I felt a need to first see a normal delivery of Curly puppies. I was very fortunate to be able to do this recently. A very nice litter of nine puppies was born in my area, and I took part in this good experience. The bitch was relaxed and very cooperative, with all nine puppies being delivered within four hours. I again visited the litter when they were 6 weeks old, and I was pleased to see how nicely they are developing. All of this, for me, was such a positive experience that now I shall give thoughtful consideration to breeding again. I realize that all deliveries do not go well, but at least I do know that sometimes everything is just about perfect!

—Ann Shinkle, Grand Island, Fla.; annshinkle@aol.com ♦

Flat-Coated Retrievers



We think Genevieve Dever for sharing the following tribute. Genevieve lives in Minneapolis with her three Flat-Coated Retrievers. She trains them all in field, conformation, obedience, and rally. Her mother, Joan Dever, is her role model in the sport of dogs and inspires Genevieve to practice good sportsmanship each time she competes and trains.

Joan Dever, a Grand Lady

"A champion of the breed." "One of the first people to welcome us into the Flat-Coat world." These are just a few of the kind words used to describe a true steward in the world of dogs, Joan Dever, my amazing mom. She got her first Flat-Coat in 1977. We had no idea how that one dog would lead us into the wonderful world of Flat-Coated Retrievers and dog showing.

There are many people who work tirelessly to better a breed and the sport of showing that breed. So many of us work hard to raise, train, and show our companions. Some of us go a step further and provide assistance with breed clubs and rescue groups. And then there are people like Joan. She dedicated so much time and energy to all of those things and more. She worked tirelessly as the Flat-Coated Retriever Society of America's membership secretary to bring people looking for Flat-Coats together with the "perfect" match of a puppy or adult. She encouraged all those new owners to join the FCRSA and to do activities with their dogs and with other fanciers of the breed. She was very protective of the breed, encouraging new owners to spay and neuter unless they became true students of genetics and of the breed and planned to be as cautious as she was in the placement of puppies.

As a member of the judges' committee for the FCRSA, she helped mentor judges at the breed's national specialties and at local shows in Florida and

