

Doing Something About Questionable Breeding

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To be [Norwich] or not to be, that seems to be the question. Although we, thanks to the diligent work of club member Carol Suggs, have made huge strides toward cleaning up our AKC registry through identifying Norwich with questionable heritage (suspected to include purebred Cairn Terriers or Norwich-Cairn crosses), we still have a monster of a job to do with other smaller registries, which I understand are many. All one needs to do is go to the computer and look up Norwich Terrier puppies, and a new world of canines of various colors and shapes will appear. Those “oddball registries” are full of nondescript little creatures labeled as Norwich Terriers. Many of my friends, peers, and enemies are upset with my preoccupation with these, as the dogs are not AKC registered, but my fear is that they might be interbred with purebred Norwich and the progeny identified as such.

Just the other day, I went to a site that advertised 10 Norwich Terrier dogs of breeding age for sale for \$1,000. “Must all go together,” read the ad. So I wrote to this gal, and she sent me photos. Just for starters, every single one of the dogs had long tails, and they were not imports—they had been born here in the States. The dogs were dark brindle to light tan, and all looked very much like Cairns. I immediately called a Cairn friend and showed her the photos, and she agreed that they were probably (purebred) Cairns. I talked to a person with Cairn rescue, and she said they would help if I chose to rescue the dogs.

I know these 10 are just a drop in the proverbial bucket. I may pursue it, however, and get the dogs off the Norwich Terrier “meat market.”

I am just stymied by the misdirected breeders out there. I don’t even blame most of them, as they think they are breeding Norwich. They have been sold a bill of goods too. This will be a long, uphill battle, as it is about their livelihood. I have made many inquiries, and some of these “breeders” have threatened

me, and now many know my email address and don’t bother replying to me. (Gosh, I hate rejection!)

My hope is that many of you will take an interest and educate yourselves enough to make it very uncomfortable for these Internet puppy-mill sellers. If they get enough constant pressure over the next few months, it may make them think twice. It may be a pipe dream, but I think we could make it reality—and make a difference.

On to the good news. Several of us have bought and used the Wisdom Panel MX test, a DNA-test kit that identifies breeds in the ancestry of a mixed-breed dog. The test has proven to be accurate with the four dogs we have tested. (The one that I had tested came back half Norwich, one-quarter Border Terrier, and one-quarter Westie.) I know that testing like this will be the wave of the future, and it cannot come fast enough for us and the beloved dogs. Visit wisdompanel.com for more information.

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