

Curb Your Enthusiasm

Weimaraners are people magnets. Just try walking your dog down a crowded street and invariably you'll be stopped by someone who just has to comment about your dog and Weimaraners in general. People comment on how beautiful Weimaraners are and that they or a relative or neighbor used to have one. The use of the past tense about ownership frequently has an underlying twinge of, "You have to be nuts to own that breed." There's a mix of admiration for the beauty of the breed and "war stories" of the dog destroying furniture, being too energetic, jumping fences, terrorizing cats and being an all-around hooligan. Even with a litany of transgressions the person still professes an enthusiastic admiration for the breed. How very curious.

If this mixed, bittersweet reaction to our breed happened to me only once or twice, I wouldn't think much about it however, it recurs. "They are so beautiful but...."

You have to wonder why our breed elicits such a reaction? My personal theory is that many people love the idea of a Weimaraner but don't realize the practicalities and responsibilities of ownership.

Let's face it, being enthusiastic about Weimaraners is second nature to us. As fanciers of the breed, we love so many attributes of our Weimaraners. They are physically striking, possessing an aristocratic, sleek silhouette with sweeping curves held together with defined muscle. Then there's their distinctive color which is an iconic hallmark of the breed. Beyond physical appearance their personality exudes intelligence, energy, fearlessness and the ability to interact on an almost human level.

It's understandable why a huge segment of the general public would love the idea of having a Weimaraner. Infatuation is second nature to those of us who love the breed. We have them, we love them and we're happy to talk about the virtues of Weimaraners and all the positives of sharing our lives with them.

However, enthusiasm is a double-edged sword. While there are so many positive attributes to be enthusiastic about, we need to make certain that it does not cloud our judgement about who should own a Weimaraner.

Take for example how enthusiasm can influence us when we place puppies.

Getting the good home for a puppy requires gathering a lot of information about the prospective owner and balancing it with what we know are the needs of a Weimaraner. When we place puppies we carefully take into consideration factors such as the physical home environment, the person's level of experience with dogs, and the time the person can devote to raising a puppy. Each of us have a litany of basic puppy placement questions and we take pride in our thoroughness in questioning the prospective puppy owners.

What is so difficult to do when placing puppies is not being swayed by the enthusiasm of the person who wants one of our puppies. We possess our own enthusiasm and therefore there's an immediate bond with others who share a "head over heels" love of the breed.

If you talk to anyone who has done Weimaraner rescue, they will vouch that many people who give up a Weimaraner shouldn't have had one in the first place. They made their decision to get a Weimaraner without realizing the needs of the dog and balancing it with what they are able to give.

Yes, there's a tremendous number of reasons to be enthusiastic about our breed but there's a huge gap between loving the idea of a Weimaraner and properly caring for one.

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