

Hello, my name is Kathy Genuardi. I have been involved with the American Pit Bull Terrier for thirteen years as a pet owner, breeder, show enthusiast, and a weight pull competitor. I am the Co-owner of AlleyKat American Pit Bull Terriers, and the Treasurer and Rescue Coordinator of the Independence Allied Performance Breeders and Training Club based in Bridgeport, PA.

As most of my experience involves the American Pit Bull Terrier, or APBT or Bulldog as they are referred, I speak on the behalf of this breed and as a representative of the Independence APBT Club. However, feel free to substitute the name of any of the listed breeds : American Staffordshire Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, etc.

The first bulldog(APBT) I owned was Belle, the greatest dog anyone could ever hope to have, a veritable "Lassie" or I should say "Petie" of Our Gang, as he was a "bulldog". She would allow children to crawl over her, climb on her back and ride her, dress her up, pull her ears, or her tail, and would respond with a lick on their face and a wag of her tail. She lived agreeably in my home for thirteen years with an assortment of dogs, cats, birds and small animals, and she was a friend to every human she met. I could talk for hours on the dogs I have owned and known but I know you would rather hear facts.

Fact: The American Temperament Testing Society, (St. Louis MO, Carl Herkstretter) stated that as of 12/95 with 2700 total dogs participating in their certification process, the overall passing rate for all breeds is 78% - the American Pit Bull Terrier has an 81% success rate, the American Staffordshire Terrier has 80% success and the Rottweiler stands at 79% - Fact: the first three breeds you wish to target in your legislation fall slightly higher than average. The ATTS has stated that they are adamantly opposed to any breed-specific legislation, instead favoring a "punish the deed not the breed" law.

Fact: The AKC's Canine Good Citizen program, developed in response to growing anti-dog sentiment, does not currently keep breed numbers (per Mary Burch in FL). However, in the CGC tests that Independence has handled, the APBT has a 100% passing rate, with an average for all breeds at 83%.

Fact: The Delta Society, which handles Pet Therapy, Assistance Dogs and educational programs nationwide has 2- American Staffordshire Terriers, 1- American Pit Bull Terrier and 1- "pit bull" actively participating in their programs

The UKC's policy regarding the fighting of dogs states in part..."1. The UKC and BLOODLINES magazine are against the pitting of one dog against another..." 2."...will not knowingly accept an advertisement or article pertaining to the fighting ability of a dog..." Regarding the person associated with dog fighting the UKC says "...1) all dog registration privileges will be revoked for life. ...2)The person(s) will be barred for life from participating in or entering any UKC licensed events...." Again we see the owner being made responsible for the dogs actions as it should be.

In fact the American Pit Bull Terrier and the related breeds are first and foremost companion animals which also compete in conformation shows, or weight pull events. They may be obedience titleists, agility competitors, or tracking dogs. Their capabilities and accomplishments are limited only by the time and energy restraints of their owners!

A Senator's aide was quoted in the September 25th edition of the Philadelphia Northeast Times . In this article he discounted figures that show that of the 240 dogs that have been declared "dangerous" since the 1990 law went into effect, 48 are Rottweilers and just 30 are pit bulls. He says that the figures are misleading because according to the AKC's registration numbers there are more Rottweilers than "pit bulls", therefore the "pit bull" has a higher percentage of bites. First, the AKC does not register "pit bulls", they register two breeds the uninformed label with the generic name of "pit bull". Second, he is not including the American Pit Bull Terriers registered with the ADBA and the UKC. The ADBA alone currently registers over 330,000 American Pit Bull Terriers. This figure along with the UKC registration figure greatly reduces the percentage of the bite statistics. Third, who is identifying these animals? The owner, the Humane Society, or the distraught victim? As you have seen here(will see here) today, even those persons knowledgeable on the various dog breeds can not always pinpoint a "pit bull". Actually, there is no such breed as a "pit bull". This is a generic name for a type of dog, similar to the nouns shepherd or collie or terrier. In Philadelphia County where I currently reside, the number of bites attributed to the generic name "pit bull" account for only 6% of the total number of bites. In Montgomery County where I grew up, and where the County Seat of Norristown has claimed in the past few years to have a "problem" with the "breed", the "pit bull" is attributed with only 3% of the bites for 1995. Again, the problem with these figures is in the identification of the animals. Are these animals registered with a Nationally recognized authority? Are they mixed breeds whose owners want to hang a macho name tag on their dogs because the papers and TV tell them what a "tough" dog the "pit bull" is?

available through the normal channels, will it establish a State High Risk Program, as it did for the mandatory auto insurance laws? If the State and the Counties do not have the funds to adequately enforce the Dog Law as it currently stands how will they fund such a program?

In a telephone call with a State Representative I commented that as representatives of our State Government, I believe the legislators involved in drafting these restrictions are promoting Racism and Discrimination in our Commonwealth. He answered by stating that I was being ridiculous and taking this to an extreme, as they are talking about animals. Am I? Are they? Websters' 9th Edition New Collegiate Dictionary defines Race as: "1) a class or kind of people unified by habits, community interests or characteristics."

As fanciers of the American Pit Bull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier and the Staffordshire Bull Terrier we fit the definition of a Race. Discrimination is defined as: 1) a process by which two stimuli differing in some aspects are responded to differently and 2) act, practice, or instance of discriminating categorically rather than individually. As the owner of an American Pit Bull Terrier I am being told I should muzzle my dog thereby identifying me to the public as a pariah, because as I was told on the telephone by this State Representative, "...if you want to own that kind of dog...you can expect to be thought of as a dog fighter." Is this an example of the equality on which our Bill of Rights was founded?

Each day as I play with my dogs and work with them I am reminded of what it means to make the most of each moment. Of all the breeds, the "bulldog" takes hold of life and lives each minute to the fullest, whether chasing a ball or playing with the neighbors kids. They are perpetually happy, even when reprimanded they will come to you, lay their head in your lap and say "I'm sorry...and then give that Bulldog grin that says all is forgiven. Thank You.