



MENTORS

Within the last year or so, the Tibetan Mastiff community has said good-bye to a number of people who have played a significant role in the establishment of the breed in our country, including the amazing Mary Fischer, whose shoes I will try to fill as I write this column. These were people whose names we all recognize even if we did not know them personally and/or whose kennel names appear in nearly every pedigree in the U.S. They were icons of the breed. The responsibility to guide the breed into the future falls on those of us who have benefitted from their knowledge and expertise as they mentored those of us who were to follow. Mentoring is both a privilege and a responsibility. As I have reflected on this, I had to stop and consider what makes someone a good mentor. I have identified 7 characteristics (7 P's) embodied by these champions of the breed that we need to impart to the next generation of Tibetan Mastiff enthusiasts to insure the survival of our breed:

- 1) **Passion.** Display a love and zeal for the breed as a whole, without getting entangled in the differences that can divide and destroy us. Exhibit the kind of dedication that is a driving force to stand up and do what is best for the breed in spite of obstacles and opposition.
- 2) **Participation.** Be a part of the greater Tibetan Mastiff community through club membership, showing, rescue, etc. Make yourself available when needed. Share knowledge and experience while learning from others. Work together to identify and correct problems within the breed. Educate the general public. Be a part of "the bigger picture".
- 3) **Preservation.** Appreciate and maintain the characteristics that distinguish the Tibetan Mastiff as a breed and which the Tibetan people have valued and cherished for centuries. Perpetuate true type, temperament, and function.
- 4) **Principles.** Be honest and honorable. Breed with integrity. Honor your commitments (contracts). Treat both people and dogs with respect. Be humble when you succeed and gracious when you lose. Practice the Golden Rule.
- 5) **Patience.** Listen and answer questions about our breed, even when you've answered the same questions a million times before. And then answer them again. Remember that you didn't have all the answers when you first started out, either.
- 6) **Pride.** Delight in your dogs. Your enthusiasm will attract others to the breed.
- 7) **Perspicacity.** Have a thorough understanding of the history of the breed and a clear vision for the future. Work to make that vision a reality.

With a heart for the past and an eye for the future, new mentors will be stepping up to lead us forward. Let's welcome them and give them our unmitigated support and encouragement!

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Noble Legacy Tibetan Mastiffs