



## *Congratulations on your new Staffordshire Bull Terrier!*

*The Staffordshire Bull Terrier Club of America wishes to extend best wishes to you and your new Staffordshire Bull Terrier and welcomes you to the world of Stafford ownership. The SBTCA is the AKC parent club for Staffordshire Bull Terriers in the United States. Its objectives are to do all in its power to protect and advance the interests of the breed and to encourage good care and sportsmanlike competition among Stafford owners.*

Since its recognition by the American Kennel Club in 1975, the Club has remained dedicated to preserving the integrity of the Stafford as a "foremost all-purpose dog" that is equally at home in conformation, performance sports, therapy and public education, or sleeping on a child's bed. The Club is rightfully proud of its accomplishments that include publishing a 40+ page magazine three times each year, promoting the breed on its informational website, conducting a National Specialty and supported regional shows, organizing breed-related seminars, and recognizing and educating its membership and the public at large.

In addition, for owners not wishing to engage in dog shows or performance sports, the SBTCA offers opportunities to work with others in committees devoted to legislation, health issues, breed rescue and rehoming, and public education.

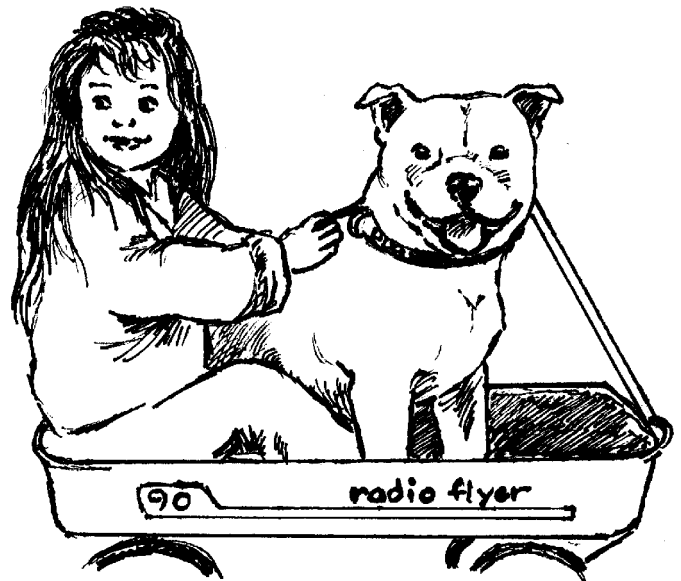
### ***History***

Authorities generally agree that the breed can be traced back to the Mastiff-like dogs through the old Bulldog which, when crossed with British terriers, produced the first "Bull and Terriers." Books published in the early 1800s that refer to "Bull and Terriers," "Pit Dogs," and "Fighting Dogs" confirm that the cross existed then.

The old-fashioned Bulldog was a fierce, courageous animal used in the sports of bear- and bull-baiting as early as the mid-sixteenth century. When these sports fell from public favor and were outlawed, their supporters turned to dog fighting and sought to create a sporting dog that, while retaining the legendary courage and ferocity of the Bulldog, would incorporate the greater agility of the terrier.

In 1938 the first championship points were awarded to Staffords in Birmingham, England. The first two members of their sexes to claim championships were the bitch, Ch. Lady Eve, and the dog, Ch. Gentleman Jim in 1939.

The first Staffordshire Bull Terriers brought to the United States lived their lives out simply as companions; it was not until 1975 that the AKC elevated the Stafford to the status of a breed that could be shown outside of the Miscellaneous Classes. The first Stafford to be registered in the AKC Stud



*In England, the Stafford is known as the "Nanny Dog"*

Book was the English import, Ch. Tinkinswood Imperial. The first US champion was a bitch, the Australian import, Ch. Northwark Becky Sharpe.

The Stafford is a well-kept secret: smart, healthy, rough and tumble, comfort-loving, and a family pet and chum without equal when properly trained and socialized.

### ***Characteristics & Temperament***

Although individual differences in personality exist, there are certain traits resident in every Stafford. They are tough, courageous, tenacious, stubborn, curious, people-loving and comfort-loving, protective, intelligent, active, quick, and agile. They are extremely "oral" youngsters and need a safe alternative to furniture, children's toys, and clothing for their busy jaws. Staffords love to play tug-of-war and to roughhouse, but YOU must set the rules and YOU must be the boss. Begin working with your Stafford when he is a puppy.

The Stafford's alert, muscular appearance is very striking. They look tough, and that can be a positive deterrent to thieves. But because of their natural fondness for people, most Staffords are vulnerable to theft—they tend to protect people and not possessions. When left in an accessible place they will welcome the attentions of a friendly thief as happily as a friend. Be forewarned! As with other members of the Bull and Terrier family, they can be the biggest people lovers in the world.

This love of mankind does not extend to other dogs, and although your puppy may tolerate and even play with strange dogs, do not expect this behavior from an adult dog.

A Staffordshire Bull Terrier desires, more than anything else, to be with its people. Never tie a Stafford up in the backyard and ignore it. It will make the dog miserable.

From the time he awakens in the morning until the quiet of night, a Stafford lives life to the fullest.

### ***Care & Training***

Your Stafford is a "natural" dog and generally robust. The short coat of this breed requires little grooming other than an occasional brushing and a bath.

Care of nails, ears, teeth and anal glands are the same as they would be for any other breed (beginning when young and attention on a regular basis).

The Stafford prefers plenty of shade and access to water on warm days (a child's wading pool is a popular choice among Stafford owners and always used under supervision).

Watch carefully to be sure that your Stafford doesn't become overheated during intense play in the summer months. If necessary, find the nearest source of cool water and soak your dog to lower its body temperature. He'll enjoy it and so will you. In colder weather, expect extra cuddling and cozing up.

Staffordshire Bull Terriers can boast a number of obedience, agility and flyball degrees and are "quick studies," provided the trainer utilizes a positive, creative approach. Staffords are smart with a capital "S." Young puppies enrolled in Kindergarten Puppy Training classes can begin to learn good habits and mix with other puppies. In addition to AKC obedience competition, Staffords have been successful Therapy dogs and have even "gone to ground" with other terriers!

Staffords are exuberant, impulsive, sometimes bullheaded... and surprisingly sensitive. A trainer must learn to be persistent, patient, and firm. Rome wasn't built



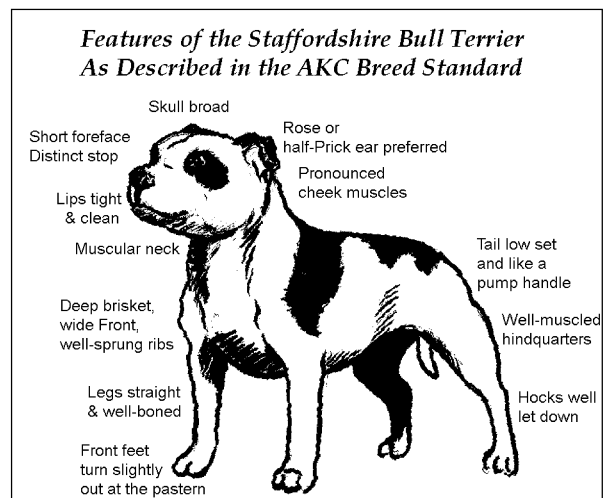
in a day, and a great deal of ground may be lost in trying to adhere to the sort of inflexible techniques and rigid timeframe advocated by some popular training books.

Basic obedience training (at the very least) is a must for any Bull and Terrier. It helps to maintain control in unexpected situations. Because of their impulsive natures, the other cardinal rule is "always think ahead." An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Dogs with direction and a sense of their position in the household hierarchy are happier than those who never learn manners.

### **Health Considerations**

Statistically, the breed enjoys robust health although incidences of mild dysplasia, hereditary cataracts, cleft palate, and elongated soft palate do occur occasionally. It is a good precaution to screen through OFA or PennHip for hips and elbows and CERF for eyes. Less frequently, cases



of PRA (progressive retinal atrophy), deafness, demodectic mange, and distichiasis (inverted eyelashes that can irritate the cornea) have also been documented.

Many SBTCA members support health research for the Stafford through the AKC Canine Health Foundation—a nonprofit charitable organization whose mission is to help dogs live longer, healthier lives. Supporting the Canine Health Foundation will help ensure a healthy future for all dogs. For more information about ongoing health research to help the Staffordshire Bull Terrier, see [www.akcchf.org](http://www.akcchf.org) or call toll free 888-682-9696.

### **Spay/Neuter**

Please consider spaying or neutering if you have decided not to breed or exhibit your Stafford. Doing so does not bar you from obedience and performance competition. Becoming a breeder is a huge responsibility, and there is much to consider. A responsible breeder will take into consideration good health and temperament, genetic concerns, soundness, and appearance before breeding dogs. They also take a lifelong interest in the puppies they produce by maintaining contact with the new owners and either taking the dog back or re-homing it, if this becomes necessary. The SBTCA Code of Ethics mandates and defines responsible breeder behaviours, among other things.

### **Identification**

Protect your Stafford in case it is lost. Identify your dog with a collar and tags. AKC Companion Animal Recovery (CAR) now offers a free dog tag with recovery information. A 24-hour toll-free hotline is available with staff to help locate the owners. Further protection, using a permanent tattoo or microchip, can be added and registered with AKC CAR. There is a 100% re-homing rate with enrolled animals. Call 800-252-7894 or go to [www.akccar.org](http://www.akccar.org) for more information.

### **More Information**

For additional information, visit the SBTCA website:

<http://clubs.akc.org/sbtca>