

The Gazette

Bulldog get-together had a few wrinkles

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It was a dog day afternoon bulldog variety at downtown Percy Walters Park yesterday as bulldog owners paraded their wrinkled, slobbering pets around.

The first annual Bulldog Club meeting brought together bulldogs and owners in what organizer Jill Salomon called a rare, friendly, and non-competitive event.

Knots of camera-clicking admirers stared at the \$800 pets as the dogs panted in the noon heat.

"I don't know how much fun they're having, but the people seem to enjoy it," said Howard Levine of Cote St. Luc.

Levine said the assemblage of bulldogs looked "like a furniture store full of chesterfields."

While some people may find bulldogs ugly, Salomon vehemently disagreed. "People who think they're ugly don't know them.

"I'm obsessed with bulldogs," she said.

"They're friendly and gentle and sweet."

Bulldogs are the best pets in the world, said Debbie Axelrad of Houston, Tex. "Once you have a bulldog, you just don't want any other dog. I think they're cute."

Axelrad, who had been away from her bulldog, Chauncey Bolsover Fearnought, for two days, but brought photos of the dog.

Bulldogs are all comical," said Levine. "They're very stubborn. If you tell the dog to stay, he'll go."

When Levine takes 6-year-old Brisket out for ice cream, "he'll run 15 miles an hour. I can't hold him back."

But on the trip back home, he's "a 70-pound human anchor" and it can take two hours to get back, he said. Sometimes Levine has used a shopping cart to get Brisket home.

Another bulldog Levine used to own was filmed drinking beer at a downtown bar by ABC Sports during the 1976 Olympics.

Karl Schmidt's wife was afraid of dogs as a child. So to cure her, her father bought the fiercest looking dog he could find - a bulldog.

"The psychology didn't work out too well. She was still afraid of other breeds, but not bulldogs."

Now the couple breeds bulldogs and has 11 of them at their St. Hilaire kennel.

"If you give a bulldog affection, you have a friend for life."

Schmidt said it's ridiculous that bulldogs are used in Canada Post ads asking people to keep their dogs from attacking mail carriers. "A bulldog wouldn't do that."

Bulldogs require a lot of care, said Milton, who was wearing a Georgia Bulldogs hat and a T-shirt featuring a bulldog. "You have to clean their faces more often because of their creases."

"They never obey," said Philippe Poussier, owner of 2-year-old James Henry. "They do exactly what they want."

He said James Henry often stops in front of stores to window-shop. "He's extraordinary."