

## Reflections

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With the holiday season upon us and the new millennium around the corner, I cannot help but wonder a few things:

Who will be the last person to get a title on a Min Pin in 1999?

Who will be the first to finish their dog in 2000?

Who will whelp the last Min Pin litter of 1999?

Whose will be the first of 2000?

If you think you might qualify for any of these, please let me know and provide me with information on the dog, owner and handler and the location, date and time of the happening. We will try to feature you in an upcoming issue. (To confirm whelping information, please send a photocopy of the litter registration.)

Memories. My beloved Lucy crossed the "rainbow bridge" in July. She was my first Min Pin, and I am still rocked with grief over her loss. An awesome ambassador for the breed, she greeted every stranger as if an old friend, and she had a big, toothy smile and wagging stub-tail for everyone. She is gone but not forgotten, as I am reminded of her constantly through the antics of her children and grandchildren. Without the alpha canine here to discipline these energetic girls, the natural order of things is out of whack; none of them yet have all the ingredients it will take to fill her paws. It is kind of like watching a "Min Pin roller derby" as these bossy girls try to work the pecking order out amongst themselves.

Puppy mills in the next millennium: One could only have hoped that by 2000 we would have evolved past this type of horror. I hear that the new term is "puppy farm." The attempt by these people to make what they do sound more appealing is sad, but their operations flourish only because there is a market for their "crop." Boycott their crop and the distributors and you will make a tremendous contribution towards reducing the number of puppy mills.

The upcoming gift-giving event of the year. Remember: "A puppy is for life, not just for Christmas." Please run past that pet store you may be tempted to go into. Call the AKC at (919) 233-9767 or visit the AKC Web site ([www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)) for a referral in your area for a purebred puppy from a reputable breeder. If you would like to give someone a puppy as a gift (and are sure that the person has researched the situation and would make a suitable and loving home for a Min Pin), it is not ideal to present them with a puppy under the tree. Instead, you can wrap them a lovely new crate, a photo, some toys and a gift certificate for training, neutering or the first vet visit. It is better for the new owner -; and safer for the puppy -to let it remain with the breeder until after the holidays. Once all the holiday hoopla has died down, the new owner or family will have more time to spend with the new dog and focus on its training. I hope that each prospective owner will consider taking a rescue dog into their life and home

Male or female? People often ask me the difference between the sexes in Min Pins. I find that the males are very laid back and easygoing. As for the girls ... well, sometimes their idea of a good time is taking one of their brothers and bouncing him off the woodwork! My sister has one of my male puppies, and he has come to appreciate being an only child. When she brings him to my house, the girls treat him like a Timex watch -; they want to see if he can "take a lickin' and keep on tickin' The things that really matter.

What is a new old friend"? It is someone whom you might have known of, corresponded with or spoken on the phone with but did not meet in person until months or years later. I have enjoyed meeting every one of my "new old friends" in Min Pins. We have dined together, chatted and shared a passion and commitment to our breed. It just flat out does not get any better than that Let's treasure what is dear to us our family and friends, be they two-legged or four-legged. And at that magical hour as we ring in the new year, let's make a toast to honor those we have lost this past year and open our hearts to the new ones soon to enter our lives. Remember, there are no strangers, only friends we haven't met yet. Happy holidays!