We had a busy few days in Enid, OK at the 2014 Entlebucher Mountain Dog National Specialty. Our Breeder’s Education Day kicked off on Thursday, October 9, 2014 with an in depth discussion of the Breed Standard and practical application to evaluating the Entlebucher Mountain Dog. Several dogs in attendance were evaluated hands-on for different aspects of the standard throughout the workshop and discussion. In the afternoon, we took advantage of the opportunity to evaluate a litter of 7 ½ week old EMD puppies while utilizing techniques from “The Puppy Puzzle” by Pat Hastings.

Current NEMDA BCOE breeders attended as well as new BCOE applicants and new BCOE Partner applicants (see BCOE Partner article for more info). We were all so immersed in the activities that we skipped lunch, but broke early to go to dinner where we enjoyed stories about Jen Shaul and Brian’s recent trip to Switzerland. Jen and Brian travelled to Switzerland with their Entle girl Xella for a first-hand experience of the Swiss Ankorung and EUS testing procedures through the University of Zurich. Jen was able to share fascinating observations and compelling information from her unique perspective as an active conformation and EUS testing procedures through the University of Zurich. Jen was able to share fascinating observations and compelling information from her unique perspective as an active conformation showing enthusiast for over a decade plus a participant in multiple NEMDA CEBA evaluations since the program’s inception (2009).

Friday, October 10th the park events were rained out, so the entire group went to the indoor Sooner State Agility Trial to support our fellow club members running agility. Watching such an event can really be motivational to get out and try it with an Entle! Four entle teams took on the course challenges laid out by agility judge Sherry Porter. The courses were tricky but fair and open which plays to the strengths of our breed showcasing their power and athleticism! The crowd really took notice and seemed to enjoy the flash and fun of entle agility on packed dirt! We answered many questions about the breed from spectators and other competitors interested in our breed’s potential to be their next agility teammate! There were quite a few Qualifying runs and also some NonQualifying runs with spectacular parts. You could tell the agility teams love their sport- both dogs and owners ran their hearts out, smiled ear to ear and had FUN playing together. Other than the AKC Invitationalists, this was the most entles gathered to run agility together at a trial, which brought loud cheering and celebrating!

Saturday, October 11 began bright and early with all the Masters/Excellent Entle agility teams that were running. We had an all-breed conformation show in the morning followed by our National Specialty Saturday afternoon. The atmosphere was filled with camaraderie and support for all competitors as owners circled the ring showing off their Entles to the best of their ability. Entle boy, Data earned the honors of 2014 Best in Specialty Show with quite a buzz throughout the facility since it happens infrequently to see a top performance dog also win a breeds Specialty. After completion of our National judging and pictures, judge Carolyn Herbel addressed our group with her observations about what she saw in the ring, suggestions for us as we continue forward with our breed, plus high praise and encouragement to us as breeders and exhibitors. We took a short break that afternoon before our Club dinner and Annual General Membership meeting while Entle boy, Castle represented our breed in the groups earning a Group 4 placement during the All-Breed Sooner Kennel Club show. The AGM reports can be found in the NEMDA forum under the Membership section. Performance toys were given out and three new Versatility award winners and a new Guthrie award winner were recognized.

Sunday was a whirlwind with the All-Breed Conformation and our Regional Specialty running back to back. Most members stayed to continue socializing and watch a respectable obedience debut that received compliments from judge Suzanne Hemminger and spectators who had never seen an Entle work obedience. There were congrats and cheers also for the remaining Entle agility team turning in a beautiful first place performance. Once again Entle Castle represented our breed in the groups earning a Group 3 and Bred-By Group 1.

Enid Oklahoma was a magnificent host city! The Sooner State Kennel Club, and no matter where we went, the Oklahomans we met were very friendly, accommodating and down to earth, which only enhanced the warmth, good sportsmanship and relaxing enjoyable atmosphere. The city was easy to navigate and the show site offered excellent indoor amenities with parking and events close enough to enjoy it all. Beyond the great food and fun, what makes the annual Specialty event most special and memorable is the unique mix of owners and their Entles who come from all over to perform, learn, exchange ideas, network, and help each other strengthen old friendships, as well as create new ones. Thank you to all who supported this year’s National Specialty!