

SAMOYED PEOPLE

The Samoyed Quarterly
Talks With
Duvella Kusler
VELLEE
Potlatch, Idaho

*This interview was conducted
at the home of Duvella Kusler
in August, 1982
by
Lori Plampin*

*How did you get started in dogs
in general, or Sammies in particular?*

Well, going back way before Sammies, I have always been a person that was very close to animals even as a child we had dogs in and around our home, and animals of other sorts. I can remember when I was very small we lived on a farm, my father would sell the calves to the butcher and I would cry, even as long as four or five months later. I cried because the animals were gone. But after we were married and had our children we had dogs for pets for the children, mixed breeds. After we moved out here, we didn't have the dogs confined and, of course, we're very close to the highway, as you can see, and they would wander out there and get killed. So we eventually decided that if we had a larger dog, now this is something for the record, the cars would see a larger car and stop, still not thinking, well why don't you build a fence and confine the dogs. So we went to Spokane and unbeknownst to me or the children my husband went down to the Spokane Humane Society, with the idea of getting a larger dog and someone had taken a Sammie in there. I had never heard of a Samoyed before. My husband knew what they were. I did know it was a very beautiful dog and I couldn't understand why anyone would take a dog like that to the pound. But this man and lady had divorced and he had acquired the dog and was out of town



working during the week. Since he couldn't care for it he took it to the pound, feeling that someone very definitely would come along and we were there just three or four days later, so we brought him home.

He was 5 years old and his name was Kazar, an excellent dog and we just loved him. On the way home he chewed my hat. It was just after Easter and I had this new hat, and he chewed it. My husband and son laughed

and said that shows he's a good hunting dog. We had Kazar for a number of years and after he was gone we got another Sammie and this went on and on. Eventually, when our third, I believe, they were purebreds but not registered, was gone we happened to notice in the paper that someone in Spokane, Washington, or north of Spokane, had a litter of puppies for sale. So we dashed right up and bought one. This was our third Sammie and this was



Ch. Saroma's Snow Beauty O'Vellee

Kahmook's Kloshe (Beautiful White Dog). We paid \$25 for her, but she was registered and that was a big deal to us at that time. Her ears never came up; she had floppy soft ears. She didn't mind too well and was spoiled.

We saw an ad in the paper that they were having obedience classes over in Moscow. So we decided to take her to obedience. Now this was when she was about a year old. When we got over to the class, it was being sponsored by Palouse Hills Dog Fanciers Association, they asked if we'd be interested in joining their club. If you did, you could get your obedience training \$5 cheaper and we were thrifty. We were raising kids and buying a home or whatever. We decided to save the \$5, never dreaming it was going to cost us thousands later.

We joined the club with our Samoyed that had floppy ears. But she was an excellent obedience dog, however, we never showed her in the trials because of her ears. I was going to, but my husband wouldn't let me. He didn't think it was a good representation of the breed and he was correct, but I loved her and I thought, "I don't care if her ears are down."

We went to our first show the following spring at Palouse Hills and

we were just workers, but I didn't know what I was supposed to do. I didn't know which way was up at a dog show, and I thought the people were nuts running in and out of the ring with the same dog all the time. I just couldn't make heads or tails of it. But we knew then that we did want to get a dog that we could take in the ring. So about two years later, I believe it was before we actually acquired what I would consider a show dog. We were going to the shows, traveling to see animals. Tacoma and Portland areas, wherever, and watching the Sammies and getting acquainted with the Samoyed breeders, learning about the breed, the bloodlines, reading magazines, whatever. During that time we did pick up a couple of Sams that didn't turn out the way they should have because we still didn't know exactly what to look for. Eventually we learned by hard knocks that we were going to have to get into a completely different bloodline from what we had. We couldn't breed out the faults that were popping up in these particular dogs that we had.

So you had three or four dogs at this point?

Yes, very disappointing. You didn't breed any of them? We tried a couple of breedings,

but we were still getting ...

Not what you wanted?

Yes, because we didn't really know ... we knew that you were supposed to linebreed and by not checking back far enough in the pedigrees we were breeding dogs that had the same faults that our dogs had, but they were linebreeding and we just didn't know. So finally I kept hearing the name Lila Weir, and we had seen dogs at the shows that she had bred, but we hadn't met her. So I wrote to her and naturally she answered my letter very quickly. I still give Lila a bad time and say if you wouldn't have answered my letter I wouldn't have been in this racket. (laughter) We corresponded for a year or more, I think, before we actually met. She knew that we were traveling to these shows, however, it seemed like the shows that we would go to she would be away somewhere else and we just didn't have the opportunity to meet. She knew that we wanted a show dog and she felt that we definitely were interested or we wouldn't have been going to all these shows without a dog. She finally contacted me and told me of this litter that she knew about that was sired by their Ch. Tod Acres Fang. I think if I remember correctly, it was a litter of 9 with 1 bitch, and they would sell the puppy bitch to a show home only. So I called the people immediately. It was Valerie Robbins who lived in Belview, I believe, or just out of Seattle. She said yes, they had planned to keep her, but since we would show her, they did agree to sell her. On the way over there they decided that they hoped we didn't come because they had changed their mind and they didn't want to sell her. But after we got there and had driven that far to get her, which was about 300 or more miles, they wouldn't let us down. They didn't tell me this until afterwards. I don't know if I would have had the nerve to take her away from the little boys or not, if they would have told me that. That was our Ch. Saroma's Snow Beauty of Vellee, we called her Neena. That was our founda-



Ch. Saroma's Snow Beauty O'Vellee (Neena)

Checking the gait of her grandchildren.



Ch. Vellee's Chayka

tion bitch, so we actually started with her.

What year was that?

This was in 1961, I believe, that we got Neena. In March of 1961 if I'm correct, give or take a few months or whatever. I could hardly wait until she was old enough to go in the ring. So I took her to training classes. She was six months and one day old when I took her to her first point show and that was in Tacoma, Washington and Derek Rayne was judging. I think we were probably the first ones to the show that day because we were so nervous. We couldn't sleep all night the night before, and we had what we thought was a beautiful puppy bitch. Here we were and we wanted her to get accustomed to the show grounds so she wouldn't be frightened when she went in the ring. We walked her around for like an hour before or more, around the ring and it's a wonder we hadn't worn the poor little thing out. We finally got in the show ring, and she was the only one in the class. She was well-trained and so was I because I'd been going to training classes. However, I was naturally very nervous. She got the blue ribbon and I guess I was hooked. There was no competition, but the judge did make the remark to me, "You have a very nice puppy here." Well, to me, that was just the same as if he had said Best-in-Show.

So there were no other females at all?

No, she had to come back in for Winners Bitch, of course, but there were no other puppy bitches. Well, I just knew I had it made because he had told me this was a lovely puppy bitch. We went back in for Winners Bitch and he didn't even give my poor little puppy a look because she wasn't

deserving. I could see that later, but I thought why did he say that and then not give her a second look when we went back in for Winners Bitch.

A beautiful bitch that took the points, I can't remember the bitch's name right now, but she was a littermate to Ch. Noatak of Silver Moon. I know Chum was Winners Dog that day and finished his championship. But



Ch. Vellee's Chayka

I was pleased. I can see now when I look back at pictures of Neena that she actually was a very ugly puppy. She was very, very slow maturing; from a very slow maturing line. No one else would dare say that, even yet, I don't think. But she was slow maturing and she was ugly. You know, long legged and she was really at a gangly stage and she should have never been in the show ring at that time. I went to every show with that puppy, this ugly duckling. Lila used to say to me, in a very friendly way, you know some people will keep taking a dog in the show ring and out of the show ring when it's really kind of too bad because

the dog isn't ready, it isn't winning and other people will think, well this puppy's been shown or this dog's been showing and showing and it keeps going in the show ring and it never wins anything and it isn't the dog's fault. I agreed with everything she said, never dreaming she was talking about me and my dog and wanting to say, why don't you leave her home. But I was right there, the first one in the ring everytime, and needless to say when Neena was ready to win she was well ring trained.

She eventually finished her championship?

Once she was mature, she went zing, zing, zing. She was two and a half years old before she was really ready to start winning. A beautiful moving dog, not really what you would ever call a real pretty dog, not quite the type of head that I desire in a dog, not bad but kind of iffy; nice size bitch, good leg length and could move like nobody's business. I felt that she really did her winning on her movement, which is the thing really, rather than prettiness, they've got to have that movement. It's funny now when I stop to think back how I kept roaring in the ring with this ugly duckling. I see that often now when I'm judging, and it reminds me of myself way back when. Lila and I have laughed many times about how she tried to be so nice to me and suggest other people doing these things and all the time she was meaning me.

Who did you breed her to?

She was bred to Joli Kaluna of Vellee. We couldn't seem to find a stud. I relied upon Lila quite a bit for the information and helpful hints of where to go and eventually they came up with this litter that she suggested, and it did blend in very, very

well. So we got Joli Kaluna of Vellee, we called him Ruff.

So you got him after Neena?

Yes, after Neena and we were in a big hurry for him to mature enough to use him at stud because Neena was getting to be 3 1/2 years old.

Where did he come from?

From John and Lila Weir, Joli Kennels. He was out of Kobe's Binki of Encino from Margaret Tucker and Ch. Joli Fang that belonged to the Ross'. We went to the Weir's when they were three weeks old, the puppies, and looked them over. We kind of had our eye on him right at that time, but we went back again when they were seven weeks old and watched the puppies and we both picked him out and never changed our mind from when we first saw him. As I said, we could hardly wait until he was old enough to use for stud. Of course, we were very fortunate we lived very close to Washington State University, where they have this veterinary college, and, of course, I'd rely upon them. There were people who kept saying, don't use him when he's too young, you'll have inferior puppies and so on. It wouldn't be good for the dog, wait until they're at least a year old. Some will say 18 months or whatever. So I finally went over and talked to Dr. Ott, head of the small animal clinic, and I asked him, and he said, "Oh that's an old grandmother's tale. If they're old enough to sire a litter of puppies, they're not going to be inferior, just stop and think about it. If a sixteen year old boy has a child, is the child inferior because it was a young father? It really makes a lot of sense," he said, "I would not advise you to use him regularly, but use him one time and then wait until he is mature." So he was only 9 1/2 months when he was used for stud on Neena, and three of that litter of five finished their championship. So I really didn't consider them being inferior puppies.

Did you breed her more than once?

Yes, we bred her three times to him, but the other two litters were never as satisfactory as the first one. I guess this happens quite often and you wonder why. But the first litter was nice. In this litter there was Ch. Vellee's Ready, Ch. Vellee's Kloshe and Ch. Vellee's Chayka, which we had kept ourselves. Vellee's Ready and Vellee's Kloshe were eventually sold in the Midwest. Chayka, that was a rather strange situation also. We sold her as a puppy as a pet because she was kind of different. Her ears were really close together, just laid up against each other, just right to a point and we thought they'll never straighten out. So there was a young couple in the town of St. Maries, about sixty miles north of us. They had come down and wanted a puppy, so we sold her to them. At about three months of age, they were going to be moving into an apartment and couldn't keep her and

they came down to see if we would take her back. I was afraid that if we didn't, they may turn her loose or something. Sometimes you never know in a situation where they have to get rid of a dog what they're going to do. So we did take her back. They had bought her on, I guess you'd say, a time payment plan, so we refunded the payments they had made and we took her back. We thought well, we'll resell her or whatever. Right at that time we had quite a few dogs and she was more or less kind of out in the kennel. She

a lot of fun with this puppy." But we still didn't know what we had. It was still, as far as I was concerned, Neena my baby. No puppy was going to come along and beat her. (laughter) The next day down in Lewistown, Idaho under Carly Harriman, again Neena was Winners Bitch, but Chayka was Reserve again from the Puppy class and he also commented on what a lovely puppy with so much regal quality. I'll always remember this. I thought maybe that puppy is pretty nice. Shortly after that we entered her in a show at Long-



Ch. Joli Kaluna of Vellee at 11 yrs. of age.

was six months old, I think, and one day my husband said, "You know, that bitch is getting so that she looks pretty nice out here. I'm going to bring her in and let's groom her up and enter her in the upcoming show," that was coming along very shortly after that in Spokane.

We entered her in the Puppy class and she was Reserve from the Puppy class over several adult bitches including her own dam. That was under a judge from Canada names William Pimm. He made the remark what a nice puppy she was. My husband showed her that day and he said, "You're going to have

view, Washington. My husband was still handling her and he didn't do a really great job of handling. He was very nervous in the ring. That was under Phil Marsh and she went from the Puppy class Winners Bitch, Best of Winners, Best of Opposite Sex over a bitch special. That hurt me terribly because Neena was first in Open but her daughter came along and won. I thought now you little stink, you're going to stay home until I finish this bitch. I don't believe Neena could have beaten her, in any way shape or form. I can see that now. So we kept her home until I finished Neena.

There was a lady from Seattle, who had very nice Sammies and she had a bitch that she was showing at the same time. It seemed like we'd go to the shows and one time she would have Winners Bitch and the next time I would have Winners Bitch. It was just kind of touch and go between the two of us. When I finally finished Neena she said, "Oh, I'm so glad you finished her now maybe I can get mine finished." And I said, "Ah ha, I have one at home that's better than this." So I brought Chayka out and we started doing the same thing again; Chayka would go up and her bitch would go up. Chayka finished very quickly though, she matured very young. She didn't last as long. You know how they do, they're kind of over the hill when they're like about four or five years old when they mature so fast. But she did mature, she had a lovely coat and she had bone and an excellent head, showmanship like you can't believe. She was a good winner, she had several Best of Breeds and several Group Placements and a Group I. I took over the handling, when they start winning I take over. (laughter) I had the opportunity to get away to the shows more often than my husband. He couldn't get away from his work quite as easily as I could. She was a joy to show. We campaigned her in the Northwest quite heavily.

What was her full name?

Vellee's Chayka.

How many litters have you bred?

I think, if I remember correctly, we have only had a total of eleven litters including 3 Pom litters. We have never really tried to flood the market. We more or less would breed a litter to keep our own show stock going and that was about it. We never really went into breeding litter after litter. We tried to be very careful with our breeding program and I think we did quite well for no more than what we bred. I'm happy with it.

What was your best litter?

The first one with Neena and Ruff ... as far as winning, let's put it that way. As far as producing, I think I have to say that the second generation from Neena and Ruff produced better than what the first generation puppies did.

Were several of those champions bred then?

Yes. Even the second and third generations. Because now out of Chayka we have Ch. Vellee's Silhouette and Vellee's Shadow. Shadow never completed his championship, he certainly should have, he was a nice dog but he hated the show ring, absolutely hated it. I'm sure you're aware how difficult it is to do anything with a dog that is constantly trying to get out of the ring. He wouldn't put any effort into his movement. Now here he was excellent and he was a good mover, with good reach, good drive, but he'd go in that show ring and drag. I actually could outrun the dog and I definitely can't run very fast. You just couldn't



*Kahmooks Kloshe
Note soft ears -*

do anything with him. If he would decide to turn on, he did very well and I think we retired him from the ring with about 10 points, including one of his majors. I even sent him to California one time and he was the same way down there his time or two out. Then he'd just go dead. John Coloma had him and he just couldn't do anything with him either. The dog worried himself to death while he was down there. He was a pacer because he was away from home and he started losing weight so we had to bring him back home. I thought if he hates it that bad, why push him into it.

Silhouette had a large litter which she had bad luck with, and we lost all the puppies except those two. Chayka was only bred twice; she was actually bred three times but the third time she didn't conceive. It was her litter from Ch. Shaloon of Draylene that produced Silhouette and Shadow. Silhouette was a very nice bitch, she was small, but she was very typey, had a lot of spark and she finished her championship at a very young age. She coned her way through a lot of wins. She was showmanship from the day she was born until the day she died.

What a difference in the litter-mates.

Yes, so different, size-wise and personality-wise, both. Shadow was a good size dog, nice size dog, but with a personality that wasn't very desirable. Silhouette was probably 20 1/2" if I stretched her, but she was a corker, and remained a puppy until the time she died. We'd have many people come here and they'd look up and say who is the puppy and at that time she was maybe seven years old, but she still looked like a puppy. From Silhouette was Ch. Vellee's Joli Sparkle of Life owned by Vicky Vogley, and he has produced very well. That's what I always felt, the grandchildren did more for the breed than what Chayka really did, other than she produced Silhouette that produced Sparkle.

Who do you think was your best

winner?

Chayka!

Do you help your bitches whelp?

Yes, we help them breed and whelp. More than one time I had called my husband home and had him take the day off because for some reason or other when they start whelping I just come unglued and just get very nervous and he was more relaxed with that part of it. I called him a kennel boy because he did all the grooming, the help with the breeding. Of course, he did take the dogs to the ring but he didn't really like it that much because he's a more nervous person and he really couldn't concentrate on the dog that much. But he put points on dogs and also had group placements on dogs, but he was very nervous in the ring. But he did all the kennel work and grooming and the whelping. Of course, if we felt that we were in any trouble whatsoever, as far as whelping, why we would just bundle them up and take them over to Washington State, which is only 25 miles away, the university there at the med school. However, we only had to do this twice, but there was more than one time I had to call for information and they'd give me the information on the telephone about what to do.

So you never had any C-sections?

No, we never had to have a C-section, no problems whatsoever.

Did you supplement feed any of them?

Yes. We used to start supplementing their feed usually by four weeks, at least. We never had to when they were younger than that, as far as tube feeding or anything. We were always very lucky, very fortunate. Of course, we only had eleven litters. Probably if you're getting up in the twenties and thirties litters you're bound, naturally, to run into more problems, than when you only have eleven.

One of my questions was, what do you think about tube feeding?

I never had to do it but I would if I had to and I think it's an excellent way to feed puppies. If they have to be taken from the mother I would certainly hate to have to ever do it because I can't imagine someone tube feeding me. They say that it doesn't hurt them, but I just can't see why it wouldn't. I'm sure it would be frightening to the puppy as well as to me. I've used a bottle on the puppies and that is kind of tricky to make sure that it isn't coming too fast and strangles them. I don't know, maybe tube feeding wouldn't be quite as dangerous as bottle feeding. But as I said we were fortunate and didn't have to do these things. Our bitches were good mothers; Chayka was the least best mother. The first week or so she was great but after that she could care less who took care of those puppies, as far as cleaning up behind them. We'd go back and Neena was the babysitter, she'd babysit everybody's puppies, she loved them and it didn't make any dif-

ference whether they were hers. We had a little Pomeranian at the same time and she'd even babysit the Samoyed puppies.

How many were usually in your litters?

I think the largest litter we ever had was eight and the smallest five. However, we didn't always save that many. We had a little problem with Neena after her first litter, I think it was, with saving puppies and we also had the same problem with Chayka. That was the litter where we lost the ones that Silhouette and Shadow were from. I used to argue with the vets at Washington State because they say there was no connection as far as hereditary as to why we were having fading puppies. We even had this problem some with Silhouette. It was always after the first litter.

It never happened during the first litter?

No and I couldn't understand that. I knew of other families around that had dogs that were from some of the same lines that also had problems with saving puppies, and I couldn't help but believe that there was something hereditary about it and I still believe that. I used to take my pedigrees over there and we'd sit down and go over the pedigrees and say this dog is related to so and so and this one had fading puppies and whatever. Dr. Robinette that was in charge of that particular area of the vet school would say, "You're probably right but we go on a theory and you're going on experience." He said this is why vets and breeders sometimes don't see eye to eye because I was going on experience. To me it acted something like blue baby type thing in humans; a blood disorder, an RH factor.

Do you know how many champions you've bred?

I can't think right off the bat. Whenever I need to know anything like this I call Vicky Vogley. She keeps a record of everything and this is one question I forgot to ask her last week when I was talking with her. She's an expert at keeping records and I do have all these records. I would say probably about eight.

Who or what has influenced your breeding the most?

To start with, it was definitely Lila Weir. Then, of course, Sandy Wacenske and I worked together when we were both starting in dogs at the same time. We used to discuss things back and forth together on our breeding programs, or whatever. I would say probably Lila Weir was the most influential in the breeding.

What was your long-range goal?

Best in Show, of course.

However, that never happened, but I had a Group I, I was getting close. (Laughter)

So you're not really done with breeding?

The major part of it, yes. We do plan to breed this young bitch that we have up here. However, she's kind of

plain and not cooperating. She's only had one season and she's two years old and that season was when she was eighteen months old. So I don't know if she's going to have a cycle of every eighteen months or what. But I'm holding my breath that she has another one, because we have the stud in mind that we hope to breed her to.

What is her registered name?

Her name is Gebba Snowblaze Almost Sugar. Her dam's name was Pinehill Sugar of Snowblaze. The dam died very unexpectedly when the litter of puppies were ten weeks of age. So we named her Gebba Snowblaze Almost Sugar and we call her Saccharin. Most of the time Sacky.

Who do you plan to breed her to?

A young dog that's owned by Dr. Meyers, that I think the pedigree should blend in very well with hers. He's a lovely dog. I don't know how the Meyers feel about this, but of course I've talked to Barbara and told her that that's who I had in mind. He is out of Ch. Snowblaze Mr. Pinkerton, which goes back to our Joli Kaluna. I think the breeder was Jack and Sandra Post and the dog is out of, as I said, Snowblaze Mr. Pinkerton and their Sasha that was Winners Bitch a few years ago when the National Specialty was held in Denver.

What is the most dogs you've ever kept here?

The most we ever had, adult dogs, were twelve at one time. However, a time or two when we had puppies, naturally, it would be a few more. We tried to keep it at anywhere from nine to twelve. That is a lot of dogs and in this area where we live the people aren't that doggy oriented as far as show-wise. Of course, they thought we were nuts. To them twelve dogs is a terrible thing, but as they became accustomed to what we were doing and so forth, I think they could understand it. But sometimes, you know that was breeding stock, show stock and pet stock. Because certainly you have many pet quality dogs in your litters and what do you do with them, except love them to death.

You said that you do help with mating and whelping, what kind of help?

We stay to see that the bitch doesn't lay down or try to get aggressive with the dog and vice versa, or move, we turn the male if they need help like that. We were always quite fortunate in the males taking care of their own duties. There was a time or two when they really didn't care for the bitch that maybe was sent here. I have one funny incident that I've told many times and everyone gets kind of a charge out of it and when I stop and I think back about it it had to be hilarious. Some people in Ohio sent a bitch out here to be bred to our Joli Kaluna and he actually would have no part of that bitch, he just absolutely did not like her. She was very sexy, she did everything she could think of and he just couldn't get turned on, I guess

you'd say. So I waited until about her thirteenth day and I called this lady and told her what was happening and I just felt terrible because they had shipped that bitch all the way out here and he just did not like her. So I told her that we had this son of his, Vellee's Flash and he was a nice dog, quite similar to his dad, a good breeding and everything, so she said, "Yes, go ahead and use him." She knew our Flash anyway and had a pedigree on him. She had pedigrees on several of our dogs because she had bought dogs from us before. Since it was getting so late in her season I thought well now when I get home from work, I was getting home from work along about two o'clock in the afternoon at that time, I'll go ahead and put those two dogs together. Because Flash had seemed awfully interested in her when his Daddy was supposed to be doing the work. So I set up this pen that we have that we always use and we put it out on the north side of the house and then that way we'd come in until they'd get together and then we'd watch through the window, because sometimes if we'd go away they'd get to things a little bit sooner. So I put this pen up out there and I had no more than turned my back until he had her and so I had a bunch of old blankets and things and I just king of hung them around the pen. Of course I got in the pen with them so I could get him turned or whatever. Everything was going along nicely and a car drove in and I couldn't get the pen open to get out. This man got out of his rig and he started coming over towards this pen and I thought, "Oh, my God, what's he going to think." I finally got the pen open and got out before he got completely over there. He just kept walking right over to the pen; I guess he wanted to see what was in that pen with all those blankets and things hanging around there. He started backing off and he said, "I see you raise puppies." I said, "Yes and from the looks of things we're going to be having some more." He said, "Now I'm sure that you are ... this is old hat with you and I don't want you to be embarrassed." I told him I wasn't embarrassed, but I could have died. He was a vacuum cleaner salesman and so he started talking vacuum cleaners, and I said, "You know, I'm really quite busy right now and I have all the vacuums I need and I don't want to take up your time, and I really don't have the time to talk to you." I often wonder what he went home and told his wife that night! I really was embarrassed, but I wouldn't let it show.

Have you ever refused to service a bitch?

Yes, I have.

For what reasons?

Because they hadn't been x-rayed. In fact, I guess that's the only reason that I haven't.

You haven't had people come with pets that you felt the pedigree wasn't ... ?



Ch. Veltie's Joli Sparkle of Life

No, you know, that's really strange, the people that have come here with pedigrees when I would see them, there was always a tie in, when it was just pet quality.

One time there was a bitch that had been bought in Hawaii and you just couldn't believe it. The people lived in Pullman at that time. They were on the faculty over there at Washington State. I had a restaurant in Moscow, Idaho and she had heard about it and she came over there and talked with me. I asked her to bring the pedigree, however, their bitch had already been x-rayed, they were familiar with hip dysplasia and all that. When I saw that pedigree I was happy to see that she was sired by a littermate of Saroma's Snow Beauty that had been sold from Seattle and gone to Hawaii to live. So it tied in very well and it was a nice litter of puppies.

That was another kind of funny thing. This lady wasn't familiar with breeding programs, or dog talk, and she couldn't bring herself to say bitch, it was "my little girl" - I was the

same way when I first started, I might add - I explained to her how to watch for her when she came in season and this and that. So one day she came in my restaurant and handed me this note and when I opened the note it said, Miley is menstruating. (laughter) I kind of had to laugh to myself and explained to her to take her down to the vet school and have a smear test done and they would tell her exactly when ... because she didn't want to bring her over and leave her, she was her baby. I told her to take her dog in and they would tell her exactly when to bring her over and she did. She was here then for four or five days and she came back into the luncheonette one day and said to me very shy like, "Is Miley still a virgin?" I said, "No, she isn't." (laughter) To her that meant her baby was a big girl now.

What do you think a Sammie puppy should sell for?

In this area they certainly don't sell for nearly as much as what they do in your area, or in the East and Midwest. I think that for show qual-

ity puppies you should start at at least \$300 or \$350, but you just can't get that out here in this area, you just can't. The Seattle area I think is a little better than here. This was another reason why we never really raised a lot of litters, because we couldn't keep them all and you just couldn't get a decent price for them. I feel that if a person doesn't pay a good price for a puppy they are not as concerned about what happens to the puppy. If they pay good money for a puppy they're going to make sure that the puppy ... you feel very certain that they're going to take good care of the puppy. We never would sell to someone who didn't have a confined area and when I say confined area, I didn't mean chaining. I meant a fenced in area with an area to play.

We have refused the sale of a couple of puppies. In one particular instance this fellow became very upset with me because I wouldn't sell him a puppy. She was eleven months old and she was pet quality, but she was a nice puppy and she had good breeding. They lived in a mobile home and they were going to tie her when they were in school; they were both in school at the University of Idaho. I told him no because the puppy had never been tied, she's going to bark and your neighbors will become unhappy about that, and they'll come back to you and you'll come back to us, and it is really no fault of the dog. I don't believe in tying a dog, she isn't used to it and she's going to be unhappy. He was very upset, but I didn't let him have the puppy. He thought I was too fussy and I guess I was, but that's my feeling. We learned the hard way ... we never did tie a dog. Even when we would let them run loose, people would say we're 200 feet off the highway and they won't go to the highway, well that isn't true. Sammies are roamers.

Do you sell on terms, or is it cash only?

As a rule it was cash only, not especially because we requested it but because that was just the way people did it. Except for Chayka, who was sold and returned to us. I would maybe hesitate to sell on terms. It would depend entirely upon who the person was and how well I knew them, etc.; if they were involved with dogs and had been for some time, I don't think I would hesitate that much. The most important thing to me is that the dog would be going to a good home. I have even placed show dogs in homes that I knew wanted a show dog and really didn't see that they could buy one, when maybe I'd have too many dogs on hand and I needed to get the dog out and I wanted to see someone get a good dog. This has only happened once or twice, but we have done that.

How do you feel about co-ownerships and puppy back agreements?

If you know the person very, very well and you have a mutual agreement,

on paper, I think it probably is all right. I know a lot of people do it. Again, where we only had the eleven litters it really wasn't required. I did that one time with Vicky Vogley with her Silva. Silva was a puppy that my husband had taken for a breeding of the bitch that he co-owned with a lady and then we in turn sold her to Vicky. She was looking for a brood bitch. She was interested in another one that we had bred and had sold that was again for sale. That particular bitch was a little bit older. I wasn't particularly happy with the bitch that Vicky was considering buying, but I thought this puppy, Silva, was a very, very nice puppy at that time. The other bitch was beginning to get a little soft in the back. She was a little older and they had let her get extremely fat, I don't know if it was from that or what. I knew that Vicky was interested in breeding stock and show stock. After all the bitch had come from our place so I felt that I should tell Vicky that I didn't think that's what she wanted because of the topline. She agreed with me and she appreciated my telling her this. So I told her about Silva and that if she would like to see her I would send her out and for her to feel free to ship her back if she wasn't perfectly satisfied. I think that Silva was, at that time, probably five or six months old. She was to the point where you could see she was a nice bitch. They loved her immediately, Vicky's husband said that when she turned around in the crate, when they picked her up at the airport, and looked out at him he thought it was the most beautiful head he'd ever seen. She did have a lovely head and she produced very, very well for Vicky.

After Silva was bred, Vicky chose the stud and I just left everything up to her. It didn't make any difference to me because she's such a conscientious breeder and person, I knew that everything was going to be great there. We took a puppy from that litter, that was Christori's Paka of Vellee. I went back to Chicago and picked her out. She kept three bitches there at the house until they were five months old because I couldn't get out there before that and they were all three in crates, separate crates, when I went down to the family room to look at them. I'll always remember Paka was in the center crate when I saw her. She was still in the crate and she looked at me like this has got to be it. I stayed there five days and not one time did I ever change my mind after I saw the three of them out. Vicky had also said that she was sure that's the one I'd pick so she had kept herself from becoming attached to her because she was almost sure that that's the one I would pick.

Paka was a nice bitch and I was judging quite a lot at that time and I wasn't doing justice to that puppy, getting her out to the show ring and whatever. I finally decided that it

wasn't fair to Paka and it wasn't fair to Vicky that I had pick of the litter and wasn't campaigning her to her fullest extent. When Dr. Meyers had seen her the first time after I brought her home, he said if you ever decide to sell her I'd like to have first chance, and I said okay. As time went on and I could see that I wasn't getting her out like I should, about the time I'd think about going to a show I'd get an assignment in the area and then that would stop things. So I called Dr. Meyers and told him that I had decided to sell her and he said, "Are you sure," and I said, "Yes, I'm going to for her good. It isn't fair to Vicky that I took pick of the litter and I'm not doing what I should and I felt a little guilty about it." He still wanted her but he said I'm going to give you two weeks to think this over because I don't want to come down and get her then have you be sorry for what you're doing. I said, "Well, I'm going to feel bad about it because I love her very dearly and she was a nice puppy." So I waited the two weeks, called him back and told him that I still felt the same way. They decided to come down the next night. He said, "Now are you going to be upset," and I said, "Yes, I am upset, but I did my crying before you got here." But she was close and I'd get to see her. There were only a few places that I would have ever let Paka go, and that was one of the places. I would have let her go back to Vicky, and, of course, there were a few other places. She was a very lovable bitch and she produced well for them. She finished very easily. I'm very proud of her, and I'm sure Vicky is. She agreed with me that it was the thing to do.

What do you feel is a fair stud fee?

Well, I've kind of got out of that part of it for a few years and I'm really not sure just exactly what they do get, but I would say probably \$150. I don't know for sure just exactly what they're getting for stud fee at the present time on their champions.

Do you think it should make a difference if they're champions or not?

I think so, yes. I think that the dog has earned that. He should get the opportunity to raise the prices a little bit as he gets a title.

At what age do you like to place puppies?

Pet stock we never let them go before eight to ten weeks, when you can definitely tell that they're pet stock right from the start. We never let them go before eight weeks. Show stock, if we felt that they were potential show quality, then we would try to keep them four or five months. After six months you can tell that they aren't going to fall apart. I'm sure that it's very disappointing if you sell something for show quality at eight weeks of age and then it comes back to you at ten months or whatever, and it's just absolutely gross! It's very difficult to tell before that time. So I would say that show quality you should keep around, if at all possible, until they're three to five months, or even older.

When you were saying the price should be \$350, or something like that, is that for an older dog?

No, I think the older they get the more the price would be if you definitely feel that they're going to be and know that they're going to be show quality, then you would price them



Ch. Pinehills Sugar of Snowblaze and puppy, Gebba Snowblaze Almond Sugar.

accordingly. If they've been out to shows, if they're past six months of age and they've been out and maybe even won their class or a point or two, then you price accordingly. At least that's the way I feel I would do it and I have done that. If I bought something I would feel that it was fair if the other party did that.

At what age do you like to do your evaluating?

I think I start practically from day one, and you change your mind from day to day, that's for sure.

It's an ongoing process?

Right. You can kind of tell bone, the shape of the skull and so forth right away. After they get a few weeks old you forget it for awhile, that's for sure. On some, now for instance like Neena, as I said, was a regular ugly duckling, she was naturally cute when we brought her home, because she was like ten weeks old at the time or something like that, and she was a little fuzzy thing. She did go through a very, very gangly teenager age for a long time. Ruff, Kaluna and Chayka matured fast, they were never ugly puppies. Ruff was very masculine looking right from the day we brought him home. There was no doubt about it. When you looked at him you knew right off that he was a male. He was a nice dog. He could have been a little larger, he wasn't an overly large dog, he was well within the Standard; cobby dog, very typey looking, lovely head.

I know you mentioned you started with linebreeding, how do you feel about inbreeding, linebreeding and outcrossing?

We never really did any inbreeding. I think that once in a while when circumstances prevailed, inbreeding is all right. I certainly wouldn't do it more than one time. If you inbreed one time then you should go out quite a ways the next time or even possibly outcross. I think inbreeding is all right if you have the qualities in a dog and bitch that you want.

Have you done much outcrossing?

No, we really haven't. Even when we bred Chayka to Impy, which is Shaloon of Drayalene, you see that it still went back to your California line. Kobe and I brought in Drayalene. We did that for a special purpose, we needed some angulation in our dogs and Impy had this. He was producing it and we got it. That was a good breeding, it was a very good breeding. Chayka was a little straight in stifle, Neena was a little straight in stifle, they moved well. I've heard a lot of people say that a dog that is straight in stifle can't move, but that can be wrong, some can. Because Neena won on her movement and she was quite straight in fact. The same with Chayka. I've had other people tell me that and I know it was true. I could see it myself, but I wasn't awfully happy to say they had this. This was exactly the reason that we bred to Shaloon of

Drayalene.

Would you breed to a dog with a serious fault, if he had other outstanding points?

No, I don't think so. We tried that when we were first getting started, going back to the dog with the floppy ears. Different people said you can breed it out. Well, we tried breeding it out and we were still getting a thin ear and also soft ears. However, there would be one or two in the litter that the ears wouldn't come up on at all.

So you never really got rid of the trait at all?

No, it was still there.

Do you think some traits are more difficult than others to get rid of?

I'm sure they are and I would say floppy ears is one of them, also the soft ear and the thin ear. That isn't what our Standard calls for, so

sun's shining on the opposite side and you can almost see through it. You do see that once in a while, the thin ear. Their ears should be thicker as our Standard says.

Many people seem to want to breed to the current big winner, how do you feel about that?

I think they're missing the boat, I think they should go back to what produced the big winner. At least a littermate to the sire if the sire is no longer available, or even think of the dam. I think a lot of people put too much emphasis on a stud dog. I think the dam has just as much to contribute to this as the stud dog, maybe sometimes more. When we were first starting in dogs, there was a fellow that lived in Spokane, Washington that owned a dog by the name of Jack Frost. I'm sure some of the people that have been in Samoyeds longer than I have will remember the fellow's



Ch. Reddison of Vellee

I think we should stay away from it as much as possible.

Do you think it's both the thinness of the ear and the size?

The thinness of the ear and the size both contribute to the ear that doesn't want to come up on its own. But I think that probably the size may have more to do with it than the thinness, but I still don't like to see a thin ear that looks pinky when the

name. He told me and my husband one time when we were visiting him that the ugliest bitch that he had in his kennel produced the best but she was never show quality. She was bred to several different studs and she always produced well. So that kind of proves a point, that they do contribute quite a lot more than what they're given credit for. After all if we didn't have nice producing bitches we wouldn't

have many good dogs, we wouldn't have any dogs if we didn't have the bitches.

I've also heard that the bitch has more to do with the temperament of the puppies, simply because she's around them more. How do you feel about that?

Well, that's probably very true, I never really stopped to think about it. But it sounds very reasonable.

For instance, a shy temperament bitch might influence her puppies.

I think that could be very true. I really had never heard that and I haven't thought about it before, but I think it could certainly be very true. Now I have had a dog or two that were shy, one in particular was Flash. He turned out to be rather shy. He was out of Saroma's Snow Beauty and Joli Kaluna and neither one of them were shy, they were very outgoing and had very nice personalities. I think, actually, Flash's problem was our fault, I think he was kennel shy. We had quite a few dogs right at that particular time and he may not have been getting the attention he needed. Some dogs can grow up on their own and it doesn't make any difference. But there are others that need attention from day one. He grew very accustomed to his own little hacienda and he did not like getting out of his run; he didn't like traveling. A lovely dog, beautiful dog, very, very typey, with tremendous coat, a pretty dog, but he didn't even like it if he was changed from his run to one of the others. He had to be in his own, otherwise he paced, he drooled, he was nervous, upset, he was a chore to care for, he really was. So consequently, even though I had suggested breeding him to that bitch, at that time I didn't realize his personality. He was never used as a stud again. I didn't like his personality.

But you did say he was the one used on that one bitch under the blankets?

Yes, and they did produce a nice litter. It was a nice litter and several of them finished, and the people were very happy. However, that's the only time he was used as stud.

How many litters do you think a bitch should have?

It would depend I guess on how well she produces, but not more than one a year or one every eighteen months until they're six years old, maybe. We never bred ours that often. I don't believe in just puppy after puppy, litter after litter. Some people will breed a well-producing bitch twice in a row if they're in good physical condition and then skip two or three seasons. But they may be doing that for a purpose because maybe their stud dog is no longer going to be around, or maybe it's getting up in years and they do want another litter from them. However, with the frozen semen now I think if this really gets going good, will probably take care of some of that.

Do you think, if you're going to breed them a couple of times fairly

quickly, it makes a difference: if the first litter was small or large, would you be more likely to breed again?

If a litter was large I don't think I would be apt to breed again. If it was maybe a small litter where it didn't drain the bitch down to skin and bones, it probably wouldn't be that damaging to the bitch if she had maybe one or two or three puppies, to breed them again their next cycle if they have been well cared for and back in physical condition. But if they had a large litter I certainly wouldn't consider it at all.

What do you look for when you're evaluating your puppies?

Movement, of course. Of course, when they're real tiny you can't really tell about that. Also I look for cow-hocks and I look at the head and bone. You can tell that right away. Even though the bones are tiny you can still compare. But I'm quite a gait nut so I'm very conscientious of their movement. I judge the dogs on TV and the pets walking down the street, (laughter) you just automatically do this if you see a dog on TV moving away from you you're going to watch to see how it's moving. You'd be surprised how many you see ... I'm not talking about show dogs on TV, I'm just talking about dogs in general. Or if you're in town or in the city park you'll see a dog walking down the street and you just subconsciously watch the movement; horses, cows, whatever - people! (laughter) Not really.

Did you cull?

We only did once.

What was the reason for that?

We had two puppies with major faults, hereditary.

Would you have for any other reason, if certain things had shown up?

Not unless it was very drastic. But in this particular instance I didn't feel that it was something that we wanted to place in a home for a pet, for several reasons. I was ready to quit breeding right then, I told my husband that if this was going to be part of it I'm done.

Were these both in the same litter?

Yes and it upset me and bothered me, the fact that the puppies had to be put to sleep.

You hear sometimes of people that that's the way they restrict the size of the litter and decide how many they're going to have.

I've heard this also. I've also heard that people once a dog is over a show career or breeding career that they have the dogs put down because they have served their purpose and I think that's one of the cruelest things that can happen. Our dogs live to a ripe old age unless they become physically unfit or in pain or whatever, then yes, but it bothers me to do this. We had to have Chayka put down - she was in a lot of pain. She developed a uterine infection that was very toxic and she was suffering. When we first

discovered this, of course I had her over at the clinic. They told me that it would come to the point where she would be suffering a lot. He told me when it happens don't let her suffer. She was only ten years old when this happened. She got down and she couldn't get up and she just screamed with pain, and so immediately we took her right over. It was probably one of the hardest things I've ever done.

Do your dogs usually live longer than ten years?

Yes. They usually live until they're twelve or fourteen. That was a sad day when I took Chayka over there. However, I happened to have a friend, a very close friend, that worked there. She met me at the lobby and asked me if I'd like her to take Chayka in and I said, "Yes, I would." She said she'd stay with her the whole time. I just couldn't do it myself, she was too close to me, she'd done too much for me. But whether they were winners or not, I felt the same way, I always cried and carried on.

We had a little Pomeranian that was a little spoiled house pet. We bought her as a pet but we decided to show her. We had just exactly what we paid for, pet quality, so we only showed her a couple of times. She had everything wrong with her that a Pomeranian shouldn't have, the flat coat, the mask, too much bone, too long in the back, but she was a doll and she was like a child to us. We both still miss her very much and that was probably the saddest time, when we had to have her put to sleep because she had arthritis very badly and she was really suffering, but she was old at the time this happened. That's the part I don't like in raising dogs. Even prior to the time that Muffin, the Pomeranian, had to be put to sleep, I would think, Oh what's going to happen when we have to put her to sleep, how am I going to take this? I still miss her very much and she's been dead probably six or eight years. We acquired her and Neena right at the same time, I think it was three months apart and they were practically raised together, they were very good buddies. Neena was the only one, actually, that Muffin would tolerate of the Samoyeds. Neena wasn't allowed to come too close to Muffin, personal property.

I would like you to describe what you feel the ideal conformation of the Sammie is, overall?

Naturally, I feel that the ideal Samoyed is what our Standard calls for. I like a Samoyed that is approximately 23-23 1/2, maybe even 24 inches at the withers.

What about a female?

21 1/2, 22", Chayka was a 22" bitch, however, I had several people, (I never had a judge) who felt that she was too large. She was a good size bitch, but when it came to winning breed and group placements I think you need a larger bitch to compete against the male. Getting back to what I like,



Vellee's Chayka

I don't want an overly large dog, I don't like a dog with too heavy of bone, to the point where they're going to look punky. I'd want enough bone so that they'd look like a working dog, that's for sure. I like a good head. I like a small ear, thick, well covered with hair, broad muzzle. I don't care for the longer length of head, as well as I do the shorter, I like it in proportion. However, I'm not going to say that I wouldn't go along with the head of either type, because body has preference over head, as far as I'm concerned.

Now at one time in my life and in breeding, I may not have thought this way, but when I started judging I had to change because I know that the dog doesn't pull the sled or do the work with his head. If they don't have a good body they're not going to be able to stand up out there. There have been times that I have given the dog Winners, or bitch, whichever the case may be, that maybe I didn't really care for the head, but they would have a body that you just couldn't overlook and movement. Or they may even

have ears that were too large, more than what I prefer, but yet I would overlook that because they had such a lovely body. I definitely feel that this is the way it should be and I think that any breeder or exhibitor and surely any judge would feel the same way. However, there's been a few times that I feel that maybe the prettiest has, not in my particular situation, but other times that I've seen happen, that I think maybe the prettiness of the dog has been overwhelming and that they didn't pay maybe as much attention to the movement. But I feel that the dog should be able to move, because if they can't move they're not put together properly and that's all there is to it. The tail carriage, up and over naturally, I don't care for a dog with a low set tail. When I say dog I'm not talking about the male per se, but dogs and bitches.

Coat-wise, I can go along with the dog that doesn't have all the glamorous type coat, as long as the coat is of good quality. I prefer one that has a quantity as well, but I have gone along with dogs that have been partial-

ly out of coat; or at least I have placed them, maybe not always giving them the purple ribbon or the Best of Breed ribbon, or whatever. I've placed them to let the person know that I do like that dog because when they're letting it all hang out you certainly can't miss it. And coat can certainly hide a lot of that. As I said, I prefer a quantity of coat, but quality is really the most important thing.

What about eyes?

I like a dark eye, I can go along with a medium light eye, and perhaps there have been times when I've gone with a dog that maybe had a lighter eye than what I really liked if they had all the other qualifications. I like the almond shaped eye, definitely, I don't care for the round eye that really takes away from the appearance. It seems like, for some reason or other, if you see a dog that has a round eye, they really stand out.

How about pigment?

It's more desirable if they have a full pigment, but I'm not against going along with a dog that has broken lipline, unless it is very excessive.

How about snow nose, does that influence you at all?

Not that much, no. It doesn't bother me all that much. They're undesirable, certainly ... cosmetic type of thing. However, our Standard doesn't call for it. If I had two dogs of equal quality, then yes, if I had to get down to the nitty gritty. I would have to penalize the dog with the lighter nose. But it isn't too often that you get one that is so equal that you have to use that as your final decision, at least I haven't.

Let's talk about fronts.

I want a good front, I require that they must have a good front. I don't like the bow-legged type out at the shoulder, down in the pastern type dog. I want a straight front.

How about the 45 degree angle, do you feel that's possible?

Very rarely is there a dog that has a complete 45, but I like a good angle, yes. As much as you possibly can get, up to the 45, but I don't think that you find it too often. It's pretty rare.

What about the rear, as far as angulation?

Yes, I like angulation, as I said, this was one of the problems that we had there at one time that we needed more angulation. I like the angulation so that they have the reach and the drive and so forth that they need with the angulation and I want a straight rear. I do not like a dog that has long hocks, that is undesirable as far as I'm concerned. The Standard doesn't call for it. But we do see it from time to time, sometimes a little too often. And quite often, it seems to me, that I will find that if a dog is extra long in the hocks it has a tendency to be cowhocked, or close in the rear at least.

Do you feel there's a certain re-

relationship between length and height that you should see in a Sammie?

Yes, I think they should be, what our Standard calls for, the 5% off. I certainly don't like to see a dog that is too short and cobby because they aren't going to be able to reach like they should. I don't want to see them too long in the back, as a rule you'll find that they are weak in the back, if they're too long. I think the 5% makes a very eye appealing dog and gives them the strength they need and the proper movement, without having other things wrong with them.

Let's talk about movement - what should a dog look like coming at you, going away, from the side, can you describe that?

I think this has probably been said over and over and over but ... Naturally coming at me, I want a dog that single tracks. Side movement that's reaching, driving; not reaching so much to the point that they're going to be lifting the legs so high in the front that they're going to wear themselves out. I like to see the topline remain as level as possible. A dog that is straight coming and going, let's put it that way; not toeing in or out.

What is the ideal Samoyed foot?

A hare foot, I do not like the cat foot that we are seeing all too often in a lot of our Samoyeds these days. That middle toe should be longer than the other ones, making the hare foot. When the middle toe is the same length as the other toes you're going to get your cat foot; and not only that, the exhibitors are trimming their feet to make them look like cat feet. True they look neater but that isn't the true type of foot and that isn't what the Standard calls for. The dog with a cat foot is not going to be able to walk on the top of the snow, they're going to break through so they need that longer foot to stay on the top. If you stop and think about what the dog was bred for, this would tell you that they shouldn't have a cat foot and we are seeing this too often. I don't know where it's coming from, and I don't understand it. If I had a dog that had cat feet or too short of toes I would let the hair grow and try to shape it to look like a hare foot so that you can fool the judge, because after all that's what the exhibitor is usually trying to do, fool the judge. (laughter) Of course judges are onto this, because they have exhibited themselves. They should know what to look for and one thing is cat feet on Samoyeds. No, I am not happy when I see this.

How about color, does that affect you at all?

It doesn't bother me a bit.

Do you feel that has anything to do with the picking?

I think that it is very essential that we do have the biscuits, if we had pure white dogs, eventually we would be losing our pigment. I think the white dogs are maybe more eye appealing, but I don't pay a bit of attention,

as far as biscuit. We've always had a little biscuit in ours, not a lot, but there's a little gal that we have out there, Saccharin, has freckles and she should have been called Freckles. Most all of ours have always carried some biscuit in the head, across the top of the head and the ears and so forth. Once in a while you'll see some that do have so much biscuit it really deters away from the attraction, but I still wouldn't let it change my thoughts, if it's a good dog, no way would I consider giving it to a dog that wasn't better just because he had more white coat.

Do you think the white is preferred over the biscuit by judges?

Yes, I do. Maybe not breeder-judges. But it doesn't bother me at all, not at all.

How would you describe the ideal temperament of a Sammie?

I like a very animated dog, I like a pleasant, outgoing temperament. Not a withdrawn dog, shy. In a show ring I certainly do not like to see a dog that looks like it is hypnotized. I like it standing more carefree and on its own, but animated. I don't want one that's dancing up and down that you can't see all four feet on the ground at one time. But I like an outgoing dog.

How intelligent do you feel the Samoyed is compared to other breeds?

Compared to other breeds I don't know ... I think they're pretty smart, they can outsmart me many times. Of

course since we haven't really had a lot of other breeds, I've heard some people say they're dumb and stubborn, but I can't see that at all. The one that we did have in obedience, she was an excellent obedience dog. My husband trained her, and, of course, he's a perfectionist; when he does something he does it very, very well. Not only in that but other things. She was very good and she picked it up real fast. Saccharin, out here, for instance, and I really haven't worked with her all that much. She's alone in the kennel at the present time and she gets a little bored, so in the evenings, especially, she has this tendency to bark at the birds. So I will go to the door when she's barking and she will immediately go in the kennel. But if you go to the door and she isn't barking, like any time during the day, she never goes in the kennel. But she associates her barking and us coming to the door with her being reprimanded and going to the kennel. Now if I go to the door while she's barking, I just point to the kennel and she walks in the kennel, then she peeks back out the door to see if I'm still there. If I'm there she'll back up and if I'm not there she'll come on back out.

Going back to Joli Kaluna, old Ruff as we called him, big Ruff and the young Ruff we called little Ruff; it should be reverse because little Ruff was actually larger than big Ruff. When Ruff was coming home after a show we would drive over the hill and



Ch. Vellee's Silhouette

he would start backing up in his crate, pulling back because he knew when he got here that he had to get out, and he wasn't finished with his ride. He didn't want to get out because he knew he would have to go back to the kennel. Many times I wouldn't be able to get him out of that crate because he would be pulling one way and I would be pulling in the other direction and he wouldn't come out - he was strong. So I finally had to outsmart him, I got so that I would stop at the service station up here at the top of the hill, he would get out of his crate because he thought we were going someplace and then I would close the crate door, put him back in the station wagon and then when I got to where I was going I could get him out. In that particular instance I was smarter than that dog. It was only when he was in his crate he would back up.

Do you think Sammies are happier when you have more than one?

Yes, I do. I think that they get a little bored. Leland co-owns little Ruff, Christoris Tribute To Ruff, with Vicky Vogley and he will more than likely be bringing him home the first time I go back to the Chicago area. I more than likely won't be back there this year, I have quite a few assignments coming up in other directions. So I doubt if he will be home much before next Spring, but he will be coming home to stay then. He needed to be campaigned and there were bitches wanting to be bred to him. I don't know if the bitches wanted to be bred to him, but the owners were wanting to breed their bitches to him. It's so expensive to ship a bitch this day and age and Vicky was willing to handle him and take care of the breeding and so forth and so on. She wanted to campaign him for a while so he's back there with her.

But he's finished?

Oh, yes. He's been finished for quite some time. He's been producing very well, he has 9 champions so far.

How do you feel about Samoyeds being in the house a lot? Do you feel it's better for them to be out?

I think it's better for them. Ours seem to be happier out, now they love to come in, but they're ready to go out and usually on their own. Neena would never have gone out, she would have lived in, and she did live in most of the time. She was raised in the house practically from day one because she was alone when we first got her, just her and Muffin the Pomeranian, and they were raised in the house. We really didn't have that much of a kennel at that time. We had a little old kennel that's out here at the side and we had two runs. Then after we got so many, I didn't feel it was fair for one to be in all the time so she still had to take her turn going out. She always had her nose out of joint when she was out there, she loved to come in.

She was an adorable dog to live



Vellee's Shadow

with, very easy to live with. Some are not easy to live with. This one up here isn't that easy to live with because she's a busybody. You have to entertain her the whole time she's in here, constantly. Old Ruff was easy to live with, but Neena was the easiest to live with of any that we've ever had. She actually could do everything except talk, she was a very intelligent dog. When she was being campaigned and I stopped to exercise her I never put her on a lead or anything. She just hopped out of the car, did her duty and walked along beside us. I used to travel with a lady that had Norwegian Elkhounds, and she was amazed. She said, "I couldn't think of taking one of my Elkhounds out of the car because they'd be long gone." Even when we would be at the shows, I mean like at the motel, and would take the dogs outside to exercise, the only time I would ever put a lead on Neena was if we had to cross the street. But if I was on the same side of the street, she never left my side and she wasn't obedience trained, this was just her. She always slept free in the room. We would be getting ready the next morning to get to the show

grounds and it was hustle bustle, this and that, and she would stretch out right in the middle of the room and you would have to step over or around her whatever you wanted to do, she wasn't about to be getting up until it was time for her to leave. Then when it was time to go, all I would do was rattle the chain and, boy, she would do a somersault, she was on those feet and ready to go. She was just a jewel.

Do you think it is better for their coat to be kept out?

Yes, I do. They have a tendency to have a dry coat, flaky if they are inside too much. Neena, by the way, was a littermate to Saroma's Polar Prince, Peppy, that Martha Beale owned. They were very much alike size-wise, Peppy was a prettier dog than Neena was. I'm not saying Neena was an ugly dog after she matured, but I can't remember Peppy going through the gangly stage that Neena did. But they were the same type, quality and quantity of coat, not profusely heavy coated, but sufficient, and a very good quality. The movement was a lot alike. I think it was very easy to tell they were littermates. Peppy did a lot of winning and I was always just as

pleased as punch when he would win because he was a littermate to Neena. The time Chayka went Best of Opposite Sex from the puppy class, that day the Best of Breed was Peppy and he went on to Best in Show that night. So I always bragged a little and said that Chayka was Best of Opposite Sex to the Best in Show dog.

Do you feel the Samoyed Standard is a good one?

Yes, I do. I don't feel that there are a lot of changes to be made. I think maybe there could be a few things that could be clarified. Boning heavier than expected leaves that description rather loose. I don't know just exactly how one would go about clarifying it. Other than saying medium boned or heavy boned. Some people may consider a medium boned dog differently than what I consider a medium boned dog. Saccharin I consider being light boned. I shouldn't say that because a judge might say I said she was light boned. But I would prefer seeing her with a little more bone. But others may consider her bone to be sufficient for her size because she isn't a very big bitch at all, she's a little on the small side, but not too small.

Do you think there should be any disqualifications or any other major changes?

I think probably a size disqualification if anything.

Minimum or maximum?

Both. If I was going to have one I'd have both. I would say what it is now at 23 1/2". To me that is an ideal size. If they were going to change it at all, maybe even 23 3/4", but I certainly wouldn't have more than a maximum of 24". I think then they begin to get oversized.

And that's true for bitches as well?

Yes.

Do you think that the larger bitches produce any better?

They may have a little easier time but I don't know that they produce any better.

Do you feel that Samoyeds should be speclated?

Yes. There's no reason why people shouldn't campaign their bitches. If they have a good bitch I think they should let the people know, that you're proud of it, that she's good and that she should have her recognition the same as the dog. I think that's disproven in many breeds, maybe not only in Samoyeds because we have had several Samoyed bitches that have done very, very well for the breed, as well as in the show ring; right at the present time there're good bitches being campaigned that are doing very well and I think that they certainly deserve it. I can think of a couple, right off hand, without mentioning names that are doing very well and they're very, very nice bitches. Other breeds, look at them, some of the winning that the bitches are doing.

What I hear a lot in the heavier coated breeds is that it's a little tougher to campaign a bitch, than in like Greyhounds, for instance where the coat is virtually the same.

Oh, you mean due to the fact that they don't carry as much coat.

That bitches have more trouble winning in heavier-coated breeds.

That could very possibly be true. However, Chayka didn't seem to be affected because she did carry a heavy coat. However, if you did have a bitch ... for instance Neena, did not carry a heavy coat ... when she got to be about 6-8 years old, she had a beautiful, beautiful heavy coat. But at the time she was being exhibited she never had much. Her picture, if you'll notice, is not good because she always looked shy on coat. We never could understand it.

Does that happen often?

I really don't know. Chayka never seemed to get a heavier coat after she got older. Of course, Silhouette and Chayka always carried a heavy coat; Silhouette more so than Chayka. That was another thing I think we got from Impy - coat. He had a very profuse coat and Shadow and Silhouette both had that and it was passed right on to Sparkle.

Do you feel that a dog being in the Top Ten or the Top Twenty means a lot?

Well, I don't know. There's pros and cons both ways. I don't know who



it means the most to, the owners, the breeders, the handlers, or who. Sure it means a lot but you have to consider how much that dog has been shown. How big are the shows, what's the size of the entries, how many other dogs did he actually compete against ... all of that is something you have to consider. It would be very, very difficult living where I live, to have a dog in the Top Ten unless you shipped the dog to another area where the shows were right at your back door. I'm out here in the tooleys and we just don't have that many shows around. When I was

exhibiting I traveled to the Seattle area, Portland area, etc. Sure we have some shows, but I could never get a dog in the Top Ten keeping him in my own area.

I always felt and others have told me that at the time Chayka was being campaigned had she been in another area going to shows every weekend, she would have been right up there. She would have given them a run for their money. Because there was a period of one or two years, in the Northwest, that the people that were campaigning their dog told me she was the one they had to beat. I handled her myself and they often would tell me that I would go in the ring with two marks against me, one because I had a bitch and the other because I wasn't a professional handler. At that time bitches were not winning much at all. It isn't so unusual to see the bitches winning now, but at that time you really had to have an outstanding bitch to win. I think this is why when I'm judging I give the bitches a fair shake. Because I had so many Best of Opposite Sex ribbons that the judge would say you've got a lovely bitch, but ... Especially when she would place in the Groups and everyone else that had placed was a professional handler with a dog, and womens' lib wasn't in yet. She was a good dog to show and handle, she was a fun dog, an animated dog.

Do you feel that the popularity of the Samoyed has or will hurt the breed in any way? Or do you even feel that they're becoming that popular?

I think they're becoming more and more popular in some areas. However, I think in the Northwest they aren't as popular as they were when we first started. When we were exhibiting dogs, it wasn't unusual to see an entry of thirty or forty, all the time, in the Seattle area I'm talking about. The point system was terrible; to try and get a major because it was very high. Now it's down, you don't see nearly that many entries. I think they are becoming more popular in the Midwest and the East, of course California has always been very popular. I don't know if you would say they are taking in the nation overall. Every year you see more that are being registered, so I guess they are becoming more popular. I think that it could be very detrimental to the breed if they do become too popular. I think the bottom line is to watch your breeding program. I think most people that are really truly interested in the breed, exhibiting, breeding, whatever, do pay very careful attention to their breeding. They may be like we were when we first started, they learn ... we had to go through a lot of hard knocks but we were learning. I would imagine that there were people at that time that had been in the breeding program for a number of years, been exhibiting, who thought we were doing some dumb things, but we

didn't realize it. I think that this is the way it is now. Maybe people are producing some things that aren't really desirable but it's because they're new and they may be a little kennel blind. We were kennel blind at times, I know that. I always thought that my husband was maybe a little more kennel blind than I was. Personally, after I started judging, to go back a little ways, this is kind of funny ...

We had this one particular dog that my husband cared for. He was a very nice dog in many ways but I didn't care for his personality and I did not like his tail set at all. But my husband insisted that this dog should be shown. I hadn't been judging very long, maybe a couple of years, and there was going to be a show in Spokane and Lewiston, Idaho on two consecutive days so he entered the dog. He was a nice looking dog, moved quite well. So I took the dog to the show, well he drooled, he was nervous, he would not stand, he wouldn't do anything. He didn't have a good tail set. He could put it over when he wanted to but he didn't often want to. So we ended up fourth in a class of four and that's exactly where we should have been. The next day in Lewiston, Idaho, the same thing, he drooled and panted and took off something terrible. We ended up fourth in a class of four again. So when I got home that night I told my husband if this dog is ever shown again, you'll be the one that handles him. He said "Why?" I said, "I would never do anything for a dog like this, why should I expect another judge to?" So that was the end of the dog's show career. He's up north of us about 70 miles, we placed him in a pet home. It was an older couple that took him and just adored him. He didn't have to go to the shows and pant and drool and embarrass me. I really didn't exhibit a lot after I started judging, I think that the decision should be made to do one or the other.

How did you get your kennel name?

My husband's name is Leland and mine is Duvella, we took part of his name and part of my name and worked it together; the last half of his and the first half of mine, Vellalee. Then after we had a litter or two of puppies, we discovered that it was difficult to find a name to go along with that, because after all we had nine letters used right there and you had so many L's it sounded like you were trying to sing a song. Then we eventually decided to have the name registered and shortened it to Vellee. I think it sounds much better.

What do you feed your Samoyeds?

Normally, for a number of years, we fed Purina Hi-Pro and then we would feed a little canned dog food along with it, usually Blue Mountain. I make some goodies, if I'm cooking some meat I take the scraps and put them in the blender and add some chicken parts or whatever, a little cottage cheese

now and then, but basically our main food was Purina Hi-Pro. We added very few supplements as far as vitamins and so forth, except when our bitches were in whelp. Then we always added the supplements. We used, also, a good grade of vegetable oil, Mazola is the brand that we always use (I should get something from these companies for advertising for them).

Neena, as I said before, lived in the house a lot and had a tendency to have a dry coat. She would scratch and make little lesions and I'd taken her over to the vet school and he said, you can buy some of the expensive brands and there's nothing wrong with it it's actually nothing more than a good grade of corn oil with a few added vitamins. When you're using a balanced dog food then it isn't necessary to feed so many vitamins so we used Mazola corn oil and every dog would get one to two tablespoons a week in their food. He also explained to me that if lard is used, which some people would do, it will go to fat and the oil doesn't. They only absorb what they need and dispell the balance. We used it from then on and I have told so many people about this and they have had complete success with it.

You said you did use Hi-Pro, do you still use that?

Saccharin is alone and she doesn't care for Hi-Pro for some reason. I think she's spoiled. She goes through Chuck Wagon, Gravy Train and this and that and we mix and combine some. We use a little more canned dog food with her. It may be 'cause she's alone, you know when you have more than one dog they are better eaters. When Ruff comes back she probably will eat more to keep him from eating it. However, they will still eat in their own separate rooms. But she is a finicky eater.

So it wasn't that you weren't satisfied with Hi-Protein?

No, NO! You didn't have the excessive amount of stools, firm stool and it just worked out well. Other people haven't had that much success with it but it worked out very well with us. And we couldn't see as long as we were satisfied with something, the dogs like it and they were doing well, why change.

Do you feel diet is important in raising a Samoyed?

Yes, I do. I think that you can overdo it by giving too many goodies and getting them too fat. Or skin problems, coat problems ...

You said that you supplement your bitches when they're in whelp, what supplement do you use then?

We just use a combination vitamin.

Do you condition or roadwork your dogs other than self-exercise?

Not a lot. When we were exhibiting a lot, my husband's garden used to be a playpen for the dogs. So they had their own exercise pen and their runs. Their runs are each 4' x 20' outside and the inside of the kennel is

4' x 4'. Their playpen was something like 100' x 100' and we'd put them out two at a time.

Were your males able to run in the exercise yard too?

Yes, they did. However, we never would go and leave them unattended for any length of time. We were always outdoors with them and we never had a problem. But we would never consider going and leaving them. There's always the possibility that one could become a little upset with the other. Quite often we would put a male and a bitch out together.

What do you feel is the best surface for a kennel run?

More than likely, I think that I would say pea-gravel. However, we have concrete and that is why the dogs we were campaigning and showing were in the playpens a lot because they had the dirt runs. Of course, they would get dirty, but it's good for their feet and it's also good for their coat. The concrete didn't cause any problem with the feet but you do have a tendency to have the coat stained. Especially on the males, it's more difficult. We even had ... The dogs that we would be exhibiting or campaigning right at that particular time had a dirt area where they could go off onto. They could be on the concrete or on the dirt, whichever they wanted. Of course, you know that they were in the dirt digging. (laughter)

How do you train your puppies for show?

Sometimes we would wait a little too long, but if you're doing it the way I'd like to and should have done it, which was the most successful, is start them with a little chain around their neck when they're about six to eight weeks old and let them walk around the house. Start with a little tiny choke chain so it doesn't frighten them when it's dangling on the ground. I would let them walk around with it for a few days, short periods at a time until they become used to it. Then I would put the lead on and let them drag the lead around. When they became acquainted with the lead we would start our little sessions. First I let them pull me. I think the sooner you start the easier it is to train them.

Do you think it's possible to over-train?

Yes, I think they become bored with it if you overdo. I think it should be just for short periods at a time, but maybe two or three times a day; a couple of times a day, or at least once a day. As I said there were a few times that we did wait a little too long ... maybe you had too many dogs because quite often this happens. And it's sad, I hate to see that, but there's only a certain number of hours in the day and especially when you're both working that you have to divide your time here and there. I think the longer you wait, and I'm sure everyone will agree with me, the harder it is to train them. Because they have a mind

of their own, they're bigger and they scream and holler and carry on, they think you're punishing them for something. I've heard a lot of people say that they trained their dogs right in the show ring, but I would hate to do that. I've judged some that I will agree they're training their dogs in the show ring. It isn't fair to the dog, it really isn't unless they're trained before they go in the ring.

What kind of collar and lead do you like to show your dogs with?

I use a regular choke chain. On the bitches I used the Resco, but on the dogs I always used the regular choke chain. I didn't always use a chain, it depended on the dog a lot. Now Ruff I always used a chain; we had nice chains, the type that was kind of like the cobra.

Are those better for the coat?

I think they are and I think they look much nicer.

What about nylon? Which is easier on them?

We never had any trouble with the snake-type chains getting tangled. I think the nylon is good also, but I felt that I had a little more control on the male with the chain type rather than the nylon. I used Resco on the bitches because I didn't have a problem with them pulling, fighting or maybe

wanting to attack another dog. I wouldn't say he wouldn't, but if another dog attacked him he would lunge.

I might tell of an incident that happened one time in the show ring. I was showing Chayka in the group ring and there was a Doberman next to her, on the other side of the Dobie was a German Shepherd. The fellow was having a little difficulty keeping the dog's attention so he was bouncing a tennis ball on the floor to keep the dog alert. The Dobie was nervous from the tennis ball bouncing and the tennis ball suddenly bounced over hitting the Dobie and of course the Dobie was ready to attack. He was already upset because somebody had hit him. He lunged for the nearest thing to him and that happened to be my dog. He grabbed her right around the neck and hung on. They don't break their hold very easy, the Dobie. The handler, now a judge, felt terrible about it, but it wasn't his fault at all and he knew that, but he still felt bad. We had a terrible time getting that dog to release his hold. A couple of other handlers came running in the ring plus one judge ... and all the time my dog was screaming her head off, she didn't know what in the world was going on. The fellow that was handling the Dobie, had his finger bit quite badly trying to open his dog's

mouth. When I saw this dog coming through the air at mine, I jerked her back and my lead broke, I had this little dainty lead. I was standing astraddle of her with both arms around her body because I knew that if she got loose she would take off because she was just absolutely petrified. My husband had come running in from ring-side to see if he could help and it was just sheer madness around there with her screaming. She was so nervous all I could think was, I've got to be excused from the ring. Then I thought, no, the show has got to go on, you can't do that. There were still four or five dogs ahead of her and at this particular show the judge was Nelson Grogh. He's now dead. He had a big huge carpet out in the center of the ring and you would bring each dog out individually and the spotlight would come down on you and they would go over the dog. There were about five dogs before Chayka's turn and I had her settled down enough that I was able to get her out there. She was still quivering in her hips because she was so frightened. She was kind of a garbage-gut and she would bait for anything so I baited her out of her fright. She did go on to take third in the group that night. I always wondered if the judge felt sorry for her or if he really did like her. However, he had given her breed over 2 male specials that morning. He did like her, I know he did. Then it was learned later that the judge didn't know what had happened, he thought the Dobie had attacked her for no reason whatsoever. I saw him about three months later down in California, and we were talking and I told him what had happened. He said, "I'm so glad you told me that because I thought it was the Dobie and I didn't give him any consideration that night in the group." He said he was a very, very nice Dobie but didn't give him consideration because of his actions; and he didn't know until I told him what happened. But it was a long time before I could take Chayka to a show that she wasn't frightened of a black dog or even a dark colored dog. I thought her show career was ruined, but she finally came out of it and she was over it completely.

Do you think Sammies are fairly resilient then?

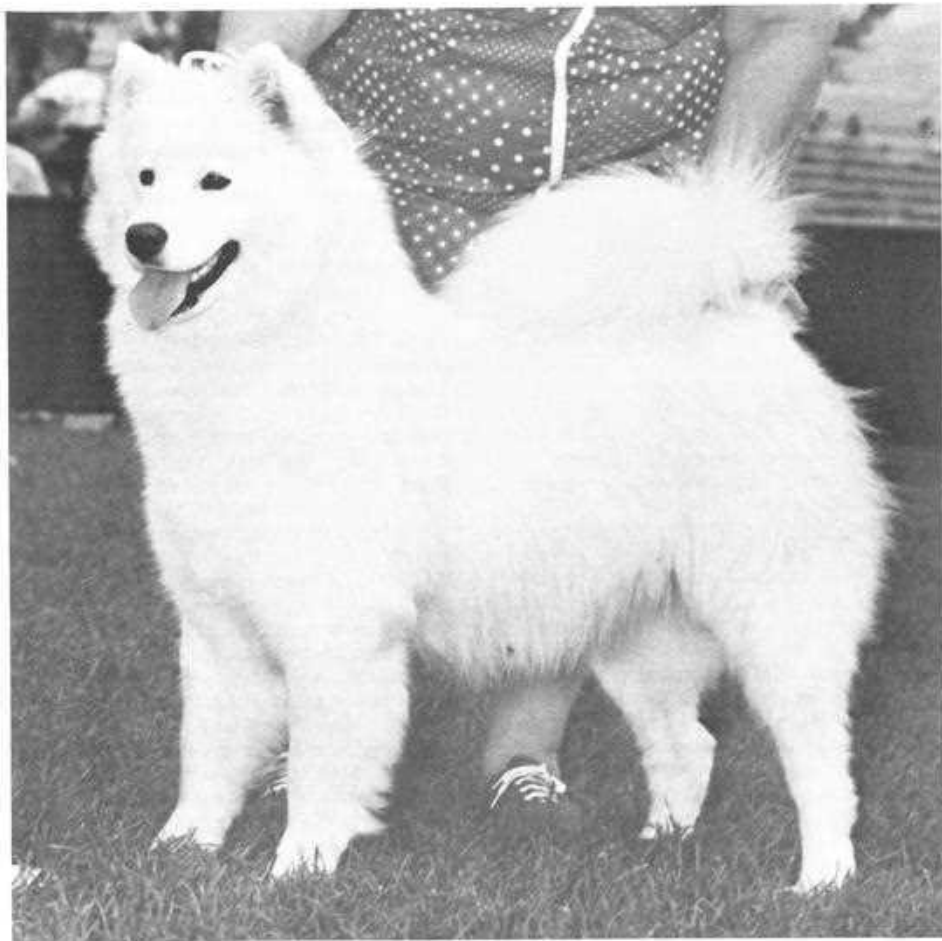
Evidently, she certainly was.

How do you feel about obedience training?

I think it's great and I would do it if I wasn't so lazy.

Do you think there's any problem with showing in breed and obedience at the same time?

No, I really don't. They can be trained to show at either. I usually always give our dogs a certain amount of obedience myself, the sit, stay, lay down and stand for examination and when I would stop them so that they wouldn't sit I would just quickly touch my hand against their flank and say stand and they knew there was a dif-



Vellee's Charisma Mist

ference.

Do you feel that training is very important to winning in the show ring?

Oh, I think it has something to do with it, yes. Because you have to be able to examine a dog and see it gait properly. If they aren't trained they aren't going to stand for examination and gait properly - they're going to pull, tug away, they're going to lead you rather than you leading them. As I mentioned earlier you have to see all four feet on the ground. So if they don't have their proper training, you're not going to be able to see this. Therefore, training does have something to do with it.

Do you feel shy dogs can be corrected by training, or do you think they're forever shy?

It depends upon the amount of shyness, I think. I think if it's a hereditary type thing, I doubt if you could ever bring the complete shyness out of them. They would always have a tendency to pull back a little or maybe not really be that outgoing or that animated. There have been times when I've been judging, I'm not saying especially Samoyeds, but other breeds, that you have a dog that you feel is the better of the two dogs that you are maybe making a decision between, but because it hasn't been trained or because of some shyness you have had to penalize. So I think training and shyness does contribute.

What are your feelings on using Samoyeds for sledding?

I think it's great myself. We have done just a very, very small amount here for entertainment with the grandkids. We have a harness and we used to hook the dogs up and let them play with them here, just a few times. Our grandkids were small at the time and they weren't able to handle the dogs or anything. The guys weren't in condition well enough to keep up with the dogs! (laughter) So it more or less fell by the wayside, but I think it's fun. We go to the sledding races at Priest River and on one occasion the Siberian people had a fun match along with the sled races and had invited me to come up and do the fun match before I was approved to judge Siberians. However, in the meantime I did become approved for them before the match actually came off. After the sledding competition they lined up all the registered Siberians and I was asked to pull out ten of those dogs that I considered show quality dogs. I was not allowed to see them move. They didn't want me to go on movement, I was to go on the dog, the body, the head and so forth. That isn't easy to do when you don't see movement, but it was fun and I pulled out my ten and seven of the ten I pulled out were champions. They were trying to prove to the public, to the people that you can have both. That was what the whole thing was about.

Do you think that it helps a dog to condition and to run him?

Oh, sure. I'm sure that it does if they don't overdo it and as long as they are fed properly and taken care of in that respect.

What about the weight, do you feel that racing dogs tend to be too thin?

Sometimes, yes. I have seen some that I feel are too thin and there are some I feel are too light in bone for the show ring. I still feel that the Siberian, we'll say for instance, is a working dog and they should have enough bone to look like a working dog. I don't mean heavy boned, no way, but I don't think they should be the type of bone that look like it's going to break if they're out there maybe pulling the sled instead of racing. I think they should have enough bone to be able to be a working dog but still not so clunky and clutzy that it's going to hinder them from racing. So I would say a light-medium, maybe. (laughter) If there is some distinction there, but not a light leg bone so that they're too racy, too rangy looking. I don't like that, I like a little more bone and a little more substance in a dog.

How do you feel about weight pulling with the Samoyeds, do you think that can hurt their hindends?

Well, if it gets to the point where it's too much weight, I'm not for it. I watched some of the weight pulling one day when I was judging and I think it's too much. To start with it was fine but they kept adding on and on and to me the dogs couldn't help injuring the hindend. I noticed that some of the dogs were bleeding from the rectum. I questioned them about that because I was upset about it. They kept saying it doesn't do any harm, but I don't see how it could help from harming them.

Have you seen an attitude difference in Samoyed teams versus other teams? Do you think they're less eager than some of the others?

Yes, I do. I think they probably are a little less eager. It seems they don't get as hyped up. It seemed to me like some of the other breeds would get more hyped up. I don't know if it was the attitude of the drivers that would create this or it if was the dogs themselves. But it does seem that the Samoyed was more relaxed.

What about herding?

Oh, yes. In fact we sold a Samoyed bitch to a fellow that had a huge cattle ranch down south of us quite a ways for herding. She's dead now, it's been a number of years ago, but he had had Samoyeds before for herding and when his had died he scouted around until he learned of someone who had Samoyeds, because Samoyeds weren't all that popular in this area. This ranch was probably 150 miles from here. When I had the restaurant, I guess he had inquired from the neighbors to find out how to locate us. He came to the restaurant and talked to me quite some time. In the meantime

I called my husband at work and told him that this fellow would be there and to make sure that if he did decide to let him have a puppy that he didn't let the wrong one go because we had one in the litter that we considered pet quality. There wasn't a lot of difference when they're three or four months old. But this fellow had his mind made up, he was going to have a puppy regardless of the price. So he bought this young bitch. Afterward we called on them and she was just doing excellent. We saw her several times. She had her own sofa in this beautiful ranch home, in the regular livingroom. One was her sofa and the other was the family sofa. They called her Nikki. When they invited us in the first time Nikki went running in ahead of us and I said, "Is she allowed in?" He said, "Oh, yes." I saw this beautiful home and after all it was a farm dog, and I thought they're farm people they're not going to let this dog in the house, but he did. She ran and jumped on her sofa. She didn't only herd the cattle, but she wouldn't allow the chickens out of the chicken house. She didn't eat them and when they'd turn them out she'd herd them all back into the chicken house, then lay at the door and wouldn't let them out. They finally had to build a fence around their chicken yard so that the chickens could come out. Then she proceeded to go to the neighbors across the road and herded their chickens back in their chicken house and they finally had to build a fence.

One of the first Samoyeds we had, before we kept them confined in a kennel, used to go down and get a neighbor's chickens and herd them up here. I noticed one of the dogs laying out there with his front paws far apart. He was letting the chickens go out a little way and then he'd get them back in the pen. He was kind of carrying them in his mouth part of the time. I think eventually he would have killed them from mauling them around in his mouth, but he was very gentle with them. But given the opportunity a Samoyed will herd.

On our way to Seattle there was a large mink farm that kept Samoyeds to herd the mink back. They said they were one of the few breeds of dogs that they tried that would herd the mink back without killing them.

How often do you feed your dogs? How many times a day?

When they're little we start feeding them four times a day; morning, noon, evening and then later just before our bedtime. Then eventually we drop the bedtime feeding and then eventually drop down to two feedings a day, after x-number of months. As a rule the puppies themselves will start going without food. We have noticed that they'll start skipping one of the meals. When they start doing that we decide that they're getting more than they really want, so then we go to the two meals a day. We continue with

two meals a day until they're at least 1-1 1/2 years old. If we have a problem with keeping weight on any of the dogs, then that dog would stay on the two meals a day rather than trying to keep the weight on with just one meal a day. Saccharin is still on two meals a day, but as a rule she only eats her night meal, but we still are offering her the two meals a day.

Have you ever had any trouble with bloat?

We have never had that problem, thank goodness.

Do you keep water with them?

Yes, we do. There's water available at all times. They eat in their runs or in the stall inside. Sometimes they are quite active afterwards and that's when sometimes I become a little concerned. I guess this is one of the things that maybe you close the barn door after the horse is out, but we just haven't had the problem.

How long have you been judging?

I applied in 1970 and received my provisional shortly after. It was a little different at that time, you didn't have to go through quite as much red tape to become a provisional judge. Of course, you had your questions and answers and you had to qualify in many other respects; as to how long you'd been breeding, the number of litters, your activities and so forth and so on. I was approved as a regular judge in 1972.

How many breeds do you do now?

Eight breeds, one hound breed and seven working dogs.

Do you have aspirations to go on?

Yes, I do. In fact at the present time I am eligible to apply for additional breeds. I have been since June, but I've been so busy with judging assignments and several other things that have been going on I just really haven't had time to fill out all the forms. So I thought why write for the forms until I really have the time to sit down and fill them out. It does take a long time, a lot of research and a lot of concentration to fill these forms out properly. Also I have a little more homework that I want to do on some of the breeds that I'm going to be applying for. By that I mean you have to have personal contact with breeders of the breeds that you are going to apply for and visit kennels, talk to judges that are already approved for those breeds. There are some of the breeds that I hope to be approved for that I need a little more background on.

Is the one hound breed the Elk-hound?

Yes, it is.

Why did you decide to go into judging?

I guess after I finally became so involved in the exhibiting end and I had a friend that was a judge that kept encouraging me to go for it. I had gone to fun matches with her and judged them and she said that she could see that I had an eye for a dog.

It was a little push from her and I enjoyed doing the fun matches, section matches and I felt comfortable doing it. So I thought well, why not give it a shot. I love it, I just thoroughly enjoy every minute of it. I come out of the ring dead tired, but I do enjoy it.

Do you usually have a pretty full day of judging?

As a rule, yes. Even though I only have the eight breeds, the breeds

I have some nice assignments coming up. I enjoy them all, big - little, whatever, wherever.

Do you find a difference in quality in different areas of the country?

Not really. I think you used to more so than you do now. But people have bred back and forth, from here to there and shipped bitches to studs in all areas. I feel that the quality is pretty much the same all over.



Ch. Christori's Tribute To Ruff

that I do other than Bearded Collies, have good size entries and it's very seldom that I can do all eight breeds in one show. It's usually about four and you'll have your load.

Have you judged all over the United States?

I have been in the Midwest several times and I've been in the Louisiana area. Other than that it's been mostly the Northwest, California, and Oregon.

Have you judged outside the U.S.?

I will be going to Hawaii in September. I'm looking forward to that.

What about a difference between Canada and the United States?

Pretty much the same. In fact the majority of the dogs that were there at the show that day I judged, were dogs that had been bred to or from the States. They were good quality dogs, well cared for and shown very nicely. I was very impressed with the dogs in Toronto.

Do you think that breeders or handlers make better judges?

I don't think so. I think it's entirely on the individual themselves.

Do you think there's something to



Ch. Joli Kaluna of Vellee

the statement "so-and-so has an eye for a dog?"

Oh, yes, by all means. I think unless you have that you might as well forget it.

It's not something you can develop?

I really don't think so. I think you either have it or you don't. I think you're born with it.

Are there judges that don't appear to have it?

I think so. I think you'll find the ones that don't have it, it's very apparent to the exhibitor.

Are the placings inconsistent?

Yes. I think in some situations that it may be who knows who best or something. I don't know for sure.

Do you feel that breeder-judges do better than all-arounders?

No, no I don't. I think that maybe on their own particular breed that they're a little more picky. I think all-arounders probably have the tendency to go with overall standard of the AKC. I think maybe your breeder-judges sometimes will watch for minor breed faults a little closer than the all-arounders. But I wouldn't say that a breeder-judge is a better judge than an all-arounder at all. In fact there's a lot of breeders that do not like to show under a breeder-judge, and some won't show under a breeder-judge. I don't know why. Myself, when I was exhibiting, I liked to show under the breeder-judges and I'm not saying that because I'm a judge, or anything. I felt that if a breeder-judge liked my dog or didn't like my dog, I felt they really knew what they were talking about. I always felt very honored when a breeder-judge liked my dog. That meant more to me than if an all-arounder liked my dog.

When the dogs first come into the ring, what do you look for?

Overall appearance.

The movement comes later?

Yes, that comes later. I usually have them come in the ring and line up and I will just go down and kind of give them an overall look for overall

appearance and nothing in particular just the dog in general. Then I go back and start doing my thing.

Are you happy with the AKC's judging procedures?

Yes. I think that the procedure that they have now for judges making application is far better than the original one. It is much more complicated and more work, but I think it certainly should tell them much more. The personal interviews with the AKC rep give them the opportunity to question us on whatever they like. Also when we have contact with the breeders, exhibitors, handlers and visit the kennels you learn from the breeders. How are we to learn otherwise? It used to be, years back, when I first was approved for judging, they didn't want you to visit the kennels and become acquainted with the breeders because they thought there may be a little hanky panky later. But now they insist upon it, which is a smart thing to do. Because they can show you the good thing, the bad things and in their kennels they usually have dogs that have faults they can point out.

One of the best and most educational things that I have seen since they started this, was in Old English Sheepdogs. About a year or so ago there was a breeder down from Alaska, she was on her way to a Specialty somewhere and stopped off at a show in our area. I met her and I told her I was considering applying for Old English my next time around. She happened to have at least ten dogs with her, puppies, retired dogs. She had this one old dog that was retired which had been clipped or shaved very close. She took that dog out and showed me everything about that dog, there was nothing to hide.

Do you think that either the AKC or the breed clubs should be doing more to educate judges?

I think it would be a very worthwhile project, I really do. The AKC, I understand at this time is starting something that I think should be very educational. I believe it's a narrated slide study or video taped. Pictures tell you a lot sometimes.

How important is conditioning, handling and overall presentation of the dog?

Well, conditioning is very important, because if they aren't conditioned they're going to be overweight or underweight, which is all considered conditioning. The coat may not be in good condition, too dry. Roadwork or some sort of activities - exercise, at least a playpen so they can have some muscle tone. All of that's very important in the working dog by all means, all dogs really. You can't do anything for a soft flabby dog and quite often I find that the Samoyeds are too fat in the ring. I know that some of the handlers, when I have mentioned that I thought their dog was a little too heavy, they really don't go along with that. But you can't have a fat dog out

there wading through the snow and last, that's all there is to it.

What about professional handlers, do you feel they have an advantage?

The only way that I would say probably a professional handler could have the advantage is because they go in there with more confidence. They aren't afraid, they aren't scared to death and shaking all over and therefore passing it on to the dog. Or maybe have a big 6 foot lead all wadded up in their hand drooping down in front of the dog's head so you can't see their face. Things like this. They know how to present the dog to its best advantage, hiding faults. We try to outsmart them and they try to outsmart us. Sometimes they do, I'm sure of that. The novice handler, quite often, will go in there afraid and very nervous. It's difficult, almost impossible to put them at ease. Even though I do try when I see that it is a novice handlers first time in. If they're in the novice class, sure.

Just recently, in fact, when I was judging a show, there was a young girl that came into the ring very nervous and she had a lovely bitch. I practically gave her a handling class in the ring. I hoped that the other exhibitors didn't mind, but she had such a nice dog, that I felt it was my duty to try and help her a little. I didn't take the lead out of her hand, I don't mean to go that far, but I did have her move a couple of times until she got the dog on a loose lead. I said, "Is this your first time in the ring?" She said, "Yes." I told her to calm down and that I was human, too, and I wasn't going to bite her. I told her to be as relaxed as possible because it was passing along to her dog. She came around later and thanked me.

What faults disturb you the most when you're judging?

Cowhocks, toeing in and weak back. Structure is definitely the most important thing.

What sort of faults bother you the least?

Pigmentation, lack of coat; as long as the coat is quality. Then probably I would say head. I want a nice head, but taking it into consideration I want a better body.

Have you withheld ribbons?

Yes, I have. Very seldom, but I have withheld blue ribbons. Never in Samoyeds. I have in a couple of other breeds, I think only three times. One for extreme shyness and one for lack of merit. There were two dogs in the class and I just didn't give a first place ribbon. The breeder of one of the dogs hadn't seen the dog for quite some time and when he eventually saw it he immediately had them return the dog to him and he replaced it. The dog that I had given second was extremely out of condition that day and I felt that possibly if it had been in condition I may have given it a blue. The other one that I withheld a ribbon from was on the ground, we couldn't even get it

up on its feet at all. That dog may have been a fairly nice dog, but I couldn't see it. It wouldn't let me examine its teeth or anything. I couldn't get my hands on the dog. I don't like to withhold ribbons, but I feel it's the thing to do rather than to encourage the people to continue on. Even the dog that, for instance was too fat, if I would have gone ahead and given her a first place in a puppy class, it would have encouraged her that her dog was okay because it won a blue ribbon.

Do you enjoy judging specialty shows?

Yes, I think so. I haven't really done all that many. I've never done a Sam Specialty in the U.S. I did the Canadian Specialty. I'll probably never accept an assignment to do the National Specialty in my own breed.

Why?

I'm going to get in trouble if I answer this ... There is too much antagonism between the exhibitors and breeders, too many cry babies and lack of sportsmanship.

Do you think the quality is better at a specialty rather than an all-breed?

Not necessarily, no. I think we just have more dogs entered. I have judged specialties in other breeds and I thoroughly enjoyed it. A regional specialty, that's a different story. But a National Specialty in my own breed ... I wouldn't hesitate a minute saying no.

How do you feel about an exhibitor who comes up to you after judging and questions you about your decision?

I don't mind, really. It's very difficult answering them sometimes, especially if it is a novice. So often they are kennel blind and they just can not see why their baby didn't win. I really don't mind if they do it in a respectful way without getting all uptight, and are willing to accept your answer. But when they come up all hot under the collar, this hasn't happened often only once or twice, I don't like that.

What do you feel about the dress of exhibitors, does that have any affect?

It doesn't have any effect upon me, however, I think it's courteous of them and shows a little more respect to the sport, AKC and the judge if they are at least dressed neatly and clean. I don't like to see a woman come in the ring with high heel shoes, or thongs. Now this has happened, not long ago, a young lady came in the ring with a larger dog, which she had to get out and move, with thongs on and it was slap-slap-slap. It's a good thing that her dog wasn't a nervous dog. Also, I thought, the dog in front of her or behind her could have been frightened by those thongs slapping against the floor ... I couldn't believe it. Not too often do you see people dressed this way. As a rule they're very properly dressed. When I'm doing Junior Showmanship I sometimes bring this to their attention if there's someone in the ring that isn't dressed

appropriately. You can tell them - I suggest you wear a different type of shoe or a top that isn't quite so low cut, etc.

Do you enjoy the Junior Showmanship?

Yes, I do.

And you've been doing that since you started judging?

Yes, ever since I've been judging. It's tough, the kids are good. Sometimes I feel we have to be a little too critical on Junior Showmanship judging in order to make a decision, because so many of them are so good. There was one thing ... kind of a cute little thing that happened one time in Junior Showmanship. There was a very young exhibitor, more than likely it was his first time in the ring, that I went up to and asked him to show me the bite. In Junior Showmanship you ask the handler to show you the bite. Anyway he looked at me rather strangely. I said, "Show me the bite, the teeth." He looked at me and showed me his own teeth. (laughter) There were a couple of older children on either side of him

and they were both so tickled and of course, they laughed - he was so embarrassed. He had braces on his teeth and from the look on his face I'm sure he was wondering, well, why does she want to see my teeth. He really gave me this big grin and showed me his teeth and the braces, the whole bit.

Is there anything that exhibitors do in the ring that particularly annoys you?

No, I don't think so. I'm a very easy-going person. I don't consider myself to be a rude judge at all. Once in a while you'll get someone in there that maybe tries to push their dog out a little too far out of line, thinking that you'll get a better look at their dog. It doesn't really irritate me that much, but I think you might as well move it back because it isn't going to impress me. I don't make a big thing out of it.

Do you like to see a dog free shown rather than stacked up?

Yes.

Do you have anything you'd like to add?



Vellee's Reddi



Ch. Vellee's Silver Lining of Life, owned by Vicki Vogley. Foundation bitch for Christorl.

Getting back to this number one dog. I think sometimes that the competitiveness creates a problem. We start exhibiting a dog and when the dog starts winning the points we aren't satisfied unless we get the Breed. Then if we win the Breed we aren't satisfied unless we win the Group. If you win the Group you aren't satisfied unless you win Best in Show, if you get Best in Show you aren't satisfied unless you make the number one spot.

So you feel like it can take the joy out of it?

Yes, I do. I think it can get too competitive trying to keep your dog in the number one spot. I think you work too hard, you're under too much pressure. That's when the problems arise between you and the other exhibitors, other breeders, because some people will do anything on earth to put that dog in the number one spot. What does the number one spot really mean - glory, prestige. Can that dog produce that well just because he's the number one dog? It gives a lot of food for thought. Why do you want the number one spot. Is it for your own personal ego? Is it because you feel

that the dog is actually the number one dog or just because he won more points than someone else? I think if a dog's a good producer, that's the thing. Not how many wins they have, how much winning they did. How many times you see their pictures in the paper, but what they can do for the breed.

Do you feel that advertising influences judges?

Oh, it probably has something to do with it. I'm sure there are some judges that pay a lot of attention to it. I don't pay that much attention to it. I don't think there's all that much dishonesty in judging. Perhaps the judge isn't always right, I'm not saying that they are and I'm not saying that I'm always right, but I feel I do the right thing on that day. Maybe I would see the dog at another time and I wouldn't judge it the same way because of different competition. The dog may show differently or be in different condition, so you may have a different opinion.

You mentioned earlier that you feel there's a conflict, at least a little bit of a conflict between judging and

exhibiting your own dogs. Did you want to say anymore about that?

Yes, I feel that when a person decides to become a judge, maybe perhaps exhibiting a puppy or a class dog very sparingly now and then, I don't think they should campaign a dog heavily. I feel uncomfortable in the ring standing side by side with people I have just recently judged and I'm sure they don't like it. I know they don't because I've heard comments about them being in the ring with other judges, and if they're in there with me they're going to think the same thing. I don't want that to happen. If I own a dog and am going to have it campaigned or exhibited, I think I should put it with someone else and not go in there myself. Because judges know judges and if you do happen to win, regardless if you did have the best dog in the ring and everyone knew it was the best dog, there's going to be someone who's going to say, they were on a panel together a month ago or this or that or whatever. Because the exhibitors, the losers, look for things to complain about. They actually hunt for things to complain about, and as I said even though they knew it was a better dog than theirs, they would still complain about it. So it's just better if you don't do it.

How about any specific advice to owners who would like to handle their own dogs?

Oh, I think it's great. I think if you have the least bit of urge to get out there with your dog do it. It's fun because I think maybe you will enjoy the win and the losses more. I know I did. There were very, very few times that I ever had a handler on one of our dogs when we were exhibiting and before I started judging, we did have a handler and if they won I didn't get half the thrill as when I did it myself. We haven't really campaigned or shown a dog all that much since I've been judging.

When Chayka took the Breed or Group placement, I enjoyed it so much more because I was a novice, as they called me. I considered myself as good as the professional handlers, but I guess maybe I wasn't. I didn't know how to hide the faults and things like that. I guess it was a good thing they didn't have that many faults, because I didn't know how to do that. The dogs were easy to show so I lucked out. Had I had a dog that was unruly or hard to show I don't know if I could have really. But I felt so about Chayka when she would win, because they'd say I had two strikes against me; I was a novice handler and I had a bitch. So when I would win against the big boys, I felt nine feet tall.

What is a good age to start showing a Sammie?

Start at six months, I don't know that you should do heavy campaigning, but get in there and get the experience; ring-wise, show-wise. You can train every day of the week at home, but

getting around to the shows where all this confusion is going on and the barking and the noise, the loudspeaker and so forth, that's what is going to separate the men from the boys right then.

How much grooming should be done on a Samoyed?

Well as you know there's a lot of grooming on a Samoyed to keep them up. All of our show grooming we did practically all of it at home before we'd leave. It was all taken care of, the trimming and everything. Then at the show grounds we did just the final touches; final brushes and maybe a few little nips here and there. But as far as all this clipping trimming the hocks and things like that, we didn't leave all of that to the last minute.

What do you trim?

The hocks, whiskers, some thinning on feet and belly fringe, but never scissoring or sculpturing.

Do you trim the whiskers?

Yes, as a rule we always did because they look neater. When I'm judging I don't pay any attention to whether their whiskers are on or off, I don't penalize a dog with them or without. It doesn't bother me a bit. But as a rule I did because I felt they looked a little neater. Especially if they had a real good muzzle.

Can you describe how you have your kennel set up?

I don't know as I can do a great deal on the description because that was more or less my husband's end of it. He built the kennel himself. We had runs on both sides of the building, indoor-outdoor runs. They are heated kennels, however, they didn't really care that much whether they were heated or not because they'd usually sleep outdoors. We were just at the point of enlarging the kennels, it would have been approximately 35 runs. When I decided to apply for a judge's license that squelched that because you aren't allowed to board dogs. So the new area of the boarding kennel or what was left of the boarding kennel was very quickly converted to a hydroponic greenhouse. My husband had always wanted to have a greenhouse. He had read very thoroughly for a number of years about the hydroponic greenhouses and he was very enthused about them. So that gave him the opportunity to go into that.

How long have you lived here?

About thirty-three years or thirty-five, somewhere along in there.

Where did you live before that?

I have lived in the Potlatch area all of my life; I was born probably about three miles from here. However, we did live in Washington for a short time after we were married, but then we moved back to Idaho and we've lived here ever since.

Do you have children?

We have two children, a girl, Sheila and a son, James.

Have they been involved with the dogs at all?

No, not really. They have a dog



Neena and Pom puppy, April 1962



Chayka



- our son is a hunter and he has hunting dogs mostly. Shelia has a little pet dog, but they enjoy listening to my travels, I guess. At least they have to listen. They seem to enjoy my association with the dogs and the wins and my judging.

What all have you done with the SCA?

Up until the time that I was president of the SCA, the only thing I ever did was read the bulletin. (laughter) Which I think the majority of our membership does. It's really sad that they only do that, because after I became president ... unless you are involved more with the SCA you certainly do not understand how the club is run; the things that they do and the involvement. Once you're involved in it I think you become much more interested. I was president two years and I have been on the board, I think, for three years now.

How have the dogs affected your life-style?

I guess they've changed it completely because all the time we were exhibiting, when we would start to go on vacation, we'd say, we'll go on vacation where they're having a dog show. This is just a way of life once you become that much involved in them. It's like a family, you have to think of your dogs, who's going to care for them, are you going somewhere where you can take them along. The same as if it were children. We didn't become involved in the dog business until after our children were grown. We've always had dogs. We had the earlier Samoyeds but I mean as far as showing dogs, we didn't become involved in exhibiting until after the children were gone.

What have been some of the benefits of being in dogs?

Meeting people in other areas, becoming more involved with the SCA. I love traveling, I enjoy meeting people and I think that is the biggest thing is all the new friends that I have made in all different areas.

Are most of your friends dog people?

I have both in both walks of life. I owned and operated a restaurant for a number of years and I have a lot of friends there. I would say it's probably half and half. I'm still involved with quite a few other things other than just dogs. I'm a busy type person, I don't like being idle.

What about the drawbacks of being in dogs?

It's time consuming and confining to a certain extent. It isn't all that confining any longer because we don't have that many. As I said, you have to arrange your life around your dogs if you have a number of them. I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Has it been worth it?

Oh yes! By all means. I'm sure we never would have stuck with it this long if it wasn't.

Thank you very much.

Thank you very much, it's been a pleasure. ¶¶