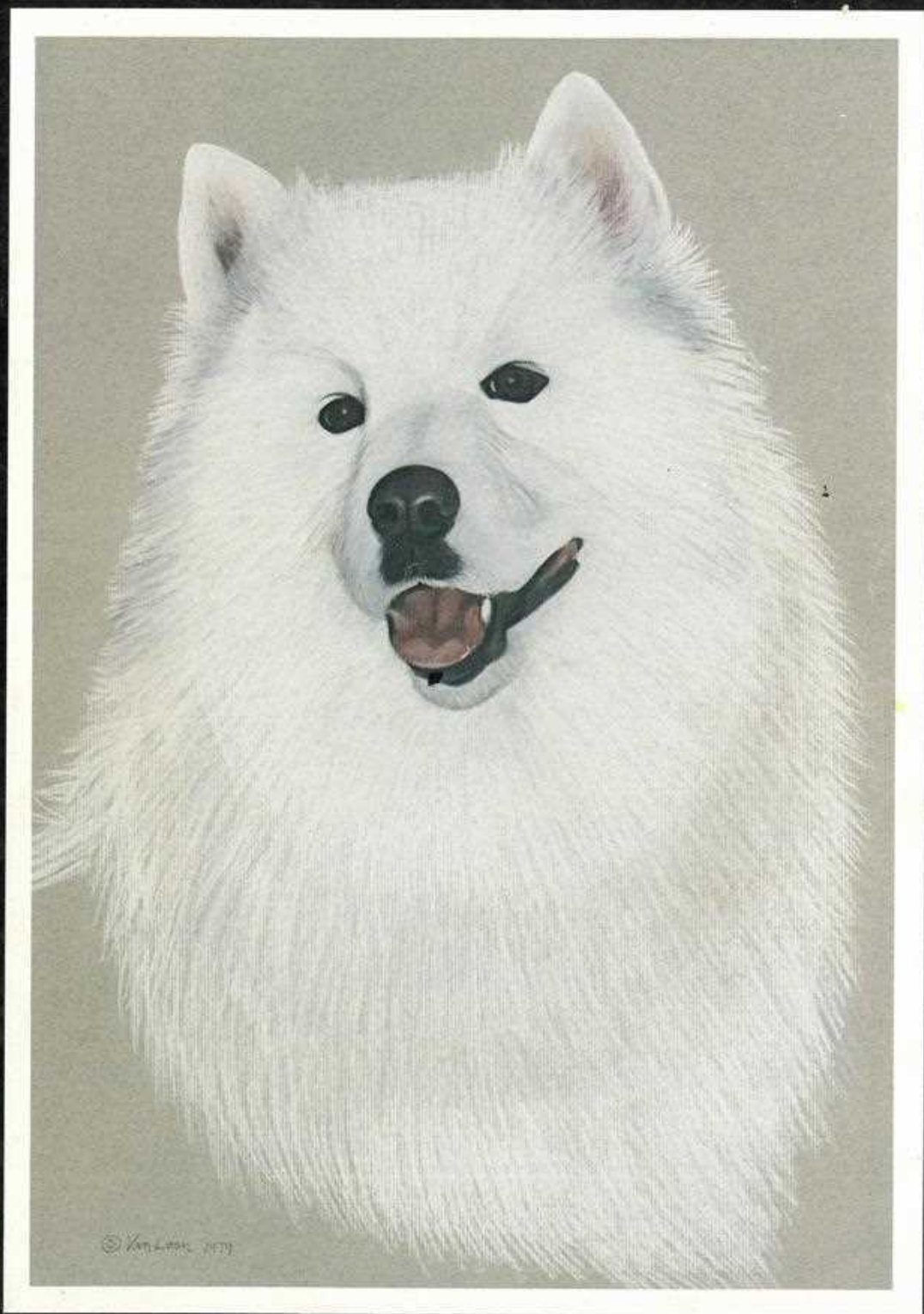
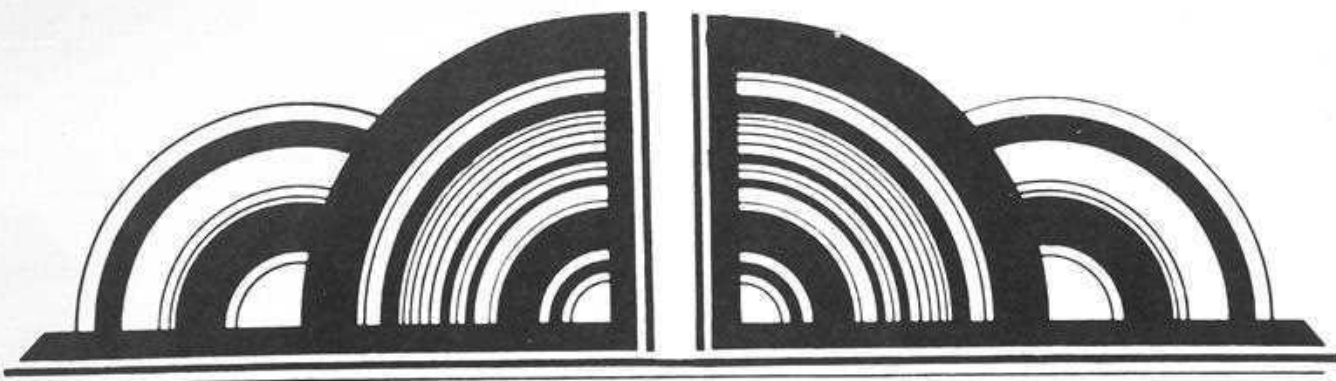


The
SAMOYED
QUARTERLY



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SAMOYED PEOPLE

The Samoyed Quarterly
Talks With
JOAN LUECK
Oakwood Farm Kennels
Oxford, Michigan

This interview was conducted at the home of Mrs. Lueck on December 1, 1979 by Judie Treuschel.

How did you first get started in purebred dogs and why Sammies?

I had a Sammie when I was just five years old. I picked him out; it was NO accident and I really fell in love with him. He lived until I was out of school and off to college, when he died of old age. I didn't have another dog again, but every time I thought about getting a dog, it was always a big, white dog.

After college, I went to Detroit to work and worked there for about ten years. In the meantime, I was married and planned to move to the country.

When we felt we could afford to buy a farm, we bought one in Oxford and I immediately wanted a dog. I had NO thoughts of show dogs or of EVER breeding dogs at all. I just felt I wanted a dog for companionship and wanted to have something with me. I began investigating different breeds and wasn't sure what I was going to buy.

After looking through A.K.C. books and talking to different people, I decided I wanted a Samoyed again. I began looking (this was in 1964 or 1965) and I started checking all around Michigan to see who had dogs available; Samoyed dogs. No one had them! I couldn't find a puppy anywhere.

I contacted Laura Porier, who had been in Sammies since about 1915 and knew all the dogs in the country. Her husband was a professional handler and they were very active in the breed. I talked with her and told her I was looking for a Samoyed and she invited me

to her home. I went to her home and found that she and her husband were so knowledgeable about the breed that I was fascinated. I spent the entire day at their house and listened to their stories about their early dogs and traveling with the dogs to the shows. At that point, I knew I wanted a very GOOD dog, not because I wanted to show or breed it - but just because I wanted a very nice animal. They decided I'd passed the test. They had examined me all day and questioned my reasons for wanting a dog and decided that maybe I deserved to have some help! She said she'd check and see where there were some good puppies.

Of course, at that time, I had no idea how the dog industry worked, so I didn't know there was a Samoyed Club of America and had no idea whom I could contact for a dog. I liked the Poriers and decided I would just let them take the lead. I started going to her house a couple of times a week and got so attached to them that they became like part of my family! I'd go have lunch with her and we'd talk dogs all day and she was still checking into where I could get a dog. She'd contacted a few people, but there really were so few Samoyeds in the country at that time that you couldn't just pick up the telephone and buy a puppy!

As I became more and more acquainted with them, we started traveling. We started going to other states and checking with a few breeders that were available to see if they had puppies. We'd stop by and visit different people and we just became very close friends. Finally, she located a litter of puppies with Ruth Bates Young, a close friend of hers and Ruth lived in Dayton, Ohio. We decided to go down there for a weekend.

At that time, my husband was very opposed to me getting a dog. He

didn't want the dog hair in the house and thought we didn't need a dog. He traveled on his job and was gone all the time; so I had no companionship at home whatsoever and really felt I needed a dog! I neglected to tell him why I was going to Dayton, Ohio. I just told him that Mrs. Porier and my sister and I were taking a little trip for the weekend.

The three of us went off to Dayton. At that time, Ruth had several puppies - several LITTERS of puppies. When we arrived at her house, she showed us all three litters and Mrs. Porier picked one male out of the three litters she thought was just magnificent. Of course, at that time, I wanted a puppy so badly that she could have told me ANYTHING was magnificent and I probably would have just taken the puppy and gone right home with it! This little puppy was only three weeks old, so I couldn't take it home! I bought the puppy from her and agreed to come back and pick it up in a few weeks. I came home and didn't know HOW I was going to tell my husband that I'd bought this puppy! I thought about it and spent about a week trying to plan a way to tell him that we were getting a dog.

I went out and bought the A.K.C. book on dogs and showed him this beautiful breed called the Samoyed. I started trying to sell him on getting a puppy. He was opposed in every way to this idea. He said the dog had too much hair; it would be a problem living on a farm with a long-coated dog; the dog was too big; the dog might bark too much and annoy people, but I had already bought the dog and was quite sure I would be able to talk him into liking the dog once I got it home!

The weeks passed and finally I had to tell him I'd bought a puppy because I had to go pick it up. When I told him I had actually PURCHASED the

puppy and had to go get it, he was VERY angry with me. He decided since I'd already bought the dog and there was no way of changing my mind, he might just as well make the trip down to Dayton with me! We left here and got into Dayton quite late at night and checked into a motel. I was SO excited that I couldn't sleep that night.

At 5 o'clock the next morning, I was shaking Les to get him out of bed, so we could have an early breakfast and go over to the kennel to pick up our puppy. In fact, in following years, he always laughed and told everyone that was the only night he ever knew of for me to get up at 5 o'clock in the morning!

We went down and picked up the puppy and when we got into the car to bring it home, it almost seemed the puppy knew that Les was the one he had to make up to. He crawled into Les' lap and laid his head on Les' knee and the puppy was SO good all the way home! He didn't cry and we stopped two or three times and put him out on the grass so he could exercise. He was SO CLEAN in the car and so GOOD that Les started petting the puppy. By the time we got to Detroit, which was about a 5-hour drive, the puppy had slept in Les' lap all the way. When we arrived in Detroit, I'd left my car at my sister's house, so we stopped there to show her the puppy and I told Les I'd take the puppy with me in my car and meet him at home. He said that was okay - the puppy was fine in the car, with him! I went home in my own car, alone, without my little puppy!

Once we arrived home, the puppy was SO attached to Les that I lost my dog! The pup followed Les all around the yard and when Les took the Jeep and went back into the woods to work on the tractor, the pup was always sitting up there next to him. It became quite a joke in the neighborhood because everywhere Les went in that Jeep, the dog would be sitting right next to him! A couple of people stopped in our yard to ask me if that was a Polar Bear in the Jeep! The dog became quite a neighborhood figure.

At the time I bought the puppy, I had no desire to show a dog, but I had promised Ruth Young that I would show this puppy for her or at least HAVE it shown by someone. When the puppy was about a year old, I hired a professional trainer to come to the farm every morning and train the dog. I still had no desire to go into the ring myself, but felt if I could hire someone else to show the dog that I would be fulfilling my promise to Ruth Young and at the same time would not become unduly involved in dog shows myself! I had the man come and train the dog in Obedience, which was the wrong kind of training. But, of course, I didn't know it at the time. The dog was marvelous, if you told him to "sit" or "heel" or "come." But so far as show training, he had NONE whatsoever!

As I talked more to dog people

about dog shows, I realized that I had to have a professional handler in conformation. I started searching to find who would be close in my area that would be a good, reliable person to show the dog. I was introduced to a man named Bob Fisher, who lived not far from the farm. He agreed to show the dog. I decided what I'd have to do would be to get the dog professionally groomed because I knew nothing about grooming or preparing a dog for a show. Laura Porier had a friend who did grooming and she got the dog groomed for us and off we went - to our first dog show.

When we arrived at the show, I had no idea what a dog show was about. I had a handler that I felt would take care of it all and I stood at ringside and tried to decide what was going on in the ring. It was SO hard to understand who the people in the ring were and what they were doing because there was so much confusion and you couldn't see with all the people in front of you! I watched the dog and was so enthused about how beautiful my dog looked, that it never occurred to me what had happened when the judge started handing out the ribbons! The judge placed him as Winner's Dog. I saw the handler coming out with the ribbons and I asked Les what had happened! Les started laughing and told me my dog won. I was so excited I jumped up and down and started crying; I threw my arms around Les and was SO happy that I was hooked on dog shows from then on!

Who was that dog?

The dog was Ch. Velko Chipaquipa. He was my first show dog!

After Velko, where did you go from there?

That was so long ago! Immediately, we started going to absolutely every dog show we could possibly reach by car!

With this one dog!

Yes. We showed him every weekend and found we were meeting such lovely people in other areas. I got SO involved in showing dogs; yet, with no thought of getting another one!

But, an unfortunate thing was happening at home! The dog was very attached to Les and Velko was very big and strong. It was very difficult for me to handle him! I had problems handling him on the lead - he handled me! He generally dragged me all over the yard. He was a marvelous companion for me and I took him everywhere with me in the car, but he was a very hard dog for me to handle myself and I never ONCE - EVER showed him in the ring. I decided what I needed would be to get TWO nice bitches, for myself! Still, with no thoughts of breeding; I just wanted to have the companionship of a nice dog I could take with me without being knocked against the wall and down the stairs - and dragged down the street!

I discussed this problem with Laura Porier and one day she called me and said a woman who had been

breeding her line had two six-month-old bitches that she wanted to sell immediately! I jumped in the car and went to Laura's house; it was quite late at night when I arrived there. Laura said the two bitches were very nice and I bought them immediately and drove home with the two bitches in the car!

Were they the same line as Velko?

No, they weren't. They were Laura Porier's. They were inbred on her line; her old dogs. Ch. Velko was of Topacres breeding from Ruth Bates-Young.

What happened when you came home with these two bitches?

Well, by then, Les was so attached to Velko that he really didn't mind my getting the two bitches, but I think he was a little concerned that two bitches and one dog might lead to more! He was a very good sport about it and decided maybe we needed a little bigger, fenced yard. He bought more fencing and started enlarging the yard and, of course, the two bitches immediately fit right into the household. We had a marvelous time with the two females and the male. I STILL had no intention of ever breeding dogs!

Did you show the bitches?

No, I didn't. At that time, as I recall, I had talked to someone about getting a female and I got a telephone call from out in the Northwest. There was a male and female puppy out of a litter that were available for sale, but the breeder wanted both of them sold together! I purchased those two. They arrived at about the same time I got the two bitches from Laura Porier! All of a sudden, I had five Sammies.

What did you do with the two from the Northwest?

I started going to Michigan State - immediately - with my first dog. What actually was taking place was that I took my first dog to Michigan State and told them I wanted him checked for everything a dog could possibly have! I didn't know what a dog COULD have, congenitally, hereditarily, acquired, or otherwise! I wanted to know what faults and problems dogs could develop. They x-rayed the dog and his hips were good.

Did you know about dysplasia then?

I had heard the word, but I didn't know what it was. I wanted the dog's eyes and ears checked. They put me through Michigan State University. The dog was checked and I learned quite a lot about acquired, congenital and hereditary diseases of animals.

On the way home, Les and I stopped and had dinner. We were talking about congenital, hereditary disease in the human and the animal and I told Les I would bring ANY dog I'd EVER have to Michigan State and have it completely evaluated from the veterinary point of view, so I'm better informed on what problems that a dog might have and I'd have a better understanding of the animal and so that I could enrich my own education on he-

reditary problems in animals!

He looked at me for a few minutes and said, "It's up to you what you do with your animals, but be assured that there is a difference of opinion among all of us scientists! You may get into some problems and you might have some disagreements with veterinarians yourself!" We discussed that for a few minutes and I made the decision on that day, with my first dog, that I would examine that dog from a veterinary point of view, from every aspect I possibly could, because unless I did that, I couldn't possibly take good care of that animal or even understand him!

You said that your husband was a scientist?

He had a PhD in pharmacy from the University of Wisconsin and was Vice President of the Parke-Davis Company.

Let's go back to the littermates you got from the Northwest. What happened with them?

Without naming names, my early dogs were an education for me. A number of them were dysplastic and they had other problems. Some had temperament problems. They were OFA certified, yet they had other problems I felt made them difficult for me to keep. I was forced to start thinking about the dogs in a little more scientific fashion!

Had you bred a litter by this time?

No. As I was sorting through these dogs, I was looking at them as a study. I was evaluating them and learning to understand what the breed was like and still had no plans or intentions of breeding! I was just trying to understand the breed and collect a few dogs as my own personal pets, yet I wanted them to be very good, quality animals.

After the littermates, what happened?

Les bought me a puppy I selected, from out of state. It was a Christmas present from Les and was flown in. I don't think he thought I NEEDED another dog, but I thought I did. Now, my number was up to seven.

I still hadn't bred anything and had no plans to breed anything! A very good friend of mine had a bitch who was out of the same kennel as Velko, a Top Acres breeding. She decided she wanted to have a litter of puppies. She was strictly a pet person, but wanted a litter of puppies. (Probably why many people have them; just a fun thing for her.) She wanted to enjoy the puppies and really didn't think about breeding, as anything she would ever do again, but she came to me and asked if I'd let her use Velko for breeding. At that time, I wouldn't have considered it without professional help. I discussed it with my veterinarian and he said he and his wife would come to my home and would do the breeding for me and show me the proper way to breed dogs so they wouldn't be injured in any way. I immediately made an appointment at

Michigan State and took the bitch that belonged to my friend up there and had her hips and eyes examined. We decided to do the breeding.

The breeding was done. My veterinarian came out and I felt I would probably never do much breeding, but I loved Velko very much and was very pleased to have this very nice bitch from his kennel, to be able to breed him to. I had planned to keep a couple of puppies out of the litter and my friend was going to keep a couple of puppies.

As it turned out, there were only three puppies in the litter. I kept two and she intended to keep the one puppy, but found it was a little too much for her, having the mother dog and her own, human, baby. She felt it would be better if she gave me the third puppy, also. I ended up with the entire litter, which I raised until they were well over a year of age and, in fact, finished one champion out of the litter!

Now, you're up to ten.

I'm up to ten and now I need a kennel! (Laughter.)

You built a kennel?

We had a forty-foot, enclosed cement porch across the back of the house. I had dog runs set up on that porch and would hand transport the dogs in and out, every day, to the outside runs. Now that I had this number of dogs, it was beginning to be too much of a chore to care for these dogs under these conditions.

I talked with Les about building a little building just to put eight or ten dogs in. He asked me if I needed to have a room in the building for feeding. (At that time, I was keeping all the food in large metal garbage cans.) I told him that no, I'd just leave the garbage cans in the kitchen in the house and didn't think I needed a separate area to feed the dogs in the kennel because there wouldn't be that many dogs in the kennel.

We started planning the kennel and as the weeks wore on, Les was drawing the kennel on the drafting board. The kennel got bigger and bigger and bigger! We finally ended up with a kitchen, a grooming area, all automatic watering up and down both sides of the kennel, 14 runs on the inside and about eighteen to twenty large exercise runs on the outside! That was so they could come out of the kennel and go into large exercise areas. The kennel had a washer and dryer, stove, refrigerator - and after we built the kennel, we'd go to the kennel to have breakfast with the dogs!

This kennel I'm sitting here looking at now was built for ten dogs?

That was SUPPOSED to be the little building to put eight to ten dogs in! It just grew by leaps and bounds like everything else has grown on this farm!

That's funny! When did you breed your first litter?

Just as we were building the ken-

nel building, I had a call from Joan Sheets, whom I had become very well-acquainted with, saying that Doris McLaughlin (in Denver) had a very nice adult bitch and dog for sale that were both OFA certified. I called Doris and told her I'd like to buy the two dogs. The one male was out of Chief and Jinka. He was Silveracres Ivan and the female was a granddaughter of Chief and Jinka. She was sired by Ch. Polar Star's Nika Frost. Her name was Silveracres Tsaritsa. I purchased the two and Doris put them on a plane (I waited several weeks before Doris was ready to ship the dogs). When she phoned me that the dogs were coming, I was SO excited that you would have thought I had NO dogs at home, even though I had ten! Les and I rushed off to the airport and, by now, I'd sold my Bonneville and traded it in for a station wagon - but little did I know I was well on my way to buying a van, which would be followed by a motor home! (Laughter.) The thing just kept right on growing!

Off we went, to the airport. I walked up to the crates where John and Cajun were and I immediately fell in love with those two dogs. We opened the back of the station wagon and they both jumped right in! I was so excited and thrilled with those two dogs! When we picked up the crates, I saw a note on the one crate that Cajun was in.

Doris had written a note that Cajun was in her second day of season. I immediately checked Cajun and couldn't see that she WAS in season. I thought, perhaps, Doris thought she was in season, but she really wasn't. Big John showed no interest in Cajun whatsoever and they were riding loose in the back of my station wagon all the way from the airport to home! As soon as we got home (it was quite late), Les and I took the two of them out in the yard and let them have a run in the big yard. We fell in love with those two dogs. They were just marvelous; so friendly and happy and we were very pleased to have them in our home.

I put them to bed in crates for the night and the following morning, I got up and took them out in the yard for a run, turned them loose and the farm was still strange to them, so they very carefully walked around the yard and looked it all over and quietly disappeared around the side of the house.

I was walking right out in the yard, just ten or twenty feet behind them, but wasn't paying any attention to them since they were hidden around the side of the house! It wasn't five minutes until I heard Cajun screaming, I went running around the side of the building and, sure enough, John was breeding her!

I hadn't planned this at all, but they were tied and there was nothing I could do about it. Following the breeding, I immediately ran to the telephone and called Doris and said, "Oh, Doris, something terrible has happened!"

Doris got very upset - and after

the phone call, I realized she probably thought the dogs had been run over by a car or something; but, I told her this TERRIBLE thing has happened ... John had bred Cajun! Doris started laughing and said, "Why do you think that's so terrible?" I told her I didn't want to have a litter of puppies! Then I asked her if she really thought that Cajun would HAVE a litter of puppies! Doris laughed some more and said we'd just have to wait and see!

I refused to think about having a litter of puppies because I wasn't psychologically prepared for breeding dogs! I called my vet on the phone and told him what had happened and asked him if he thought she should have a shot. He said he really didn't think so and that since it was so early in her season, she probably wouldn't conceive anyway. As it turned out, Cajun began gaining weight and I became more and more alarmed. Finally, my veterinarian confirmed that she was, INDEED, going to have puppies.

My farm turned into something that looked like the Iranian revolution! I was SO excited about these puppies that I ran all over trying to find out exactly what was the best way to build a whelping box, what kind of room they should have, what temperature they should have - everything had to be ABSOLUTELY PERFECT for these puppies!

The farmhouse was so large, we decided we'd just take one of the rooms in the farmhouse and turn it over to Cajun and her pups! We set the room up with a large medicine cart on wheels that had all kinds of medications (cotton balls and heaven knows what all). I had no idea how you went about WHELPING a bitch and had NO intention of DOING IT! I was going to have the vet do it, but I wanted to be absolutely sure he had everything he needed to do the delivery! (Laughter.)

When it came time for whelping, I called my vet and his wife who had been a Collie breeder for many, many years. He said he's have his wife come over and when she needed him, she'd call him - he thought I needed medical assistance more than Cajun did!

He sent his wife over and we spent the afternoon drinking coffee and talking and waiting and waiting for Cajun to have her puppies. My young niece who was about ten years old at the time and my veterinarian's son, who was ten ... the two youngsters were out playing in the yard all afternoon. At nightfall, my veterinarian's wife thought we should probably go in and sit with Cajun because she thought Cajun would be whelping a puppy just any time!

We went in and sat by the whelping box. We allowed my niece and the veterinarian's son to come in and sit very quietly in the corner. The two children sat there and never spoke a word. They were very frightened and didn't speak at all. FINALLY, the first puppy came and those children didn't

ask a single question. They sat there for about half an hour and didn't utter a sound. They just STARED at that new puppy! After that first puppy was whelped, we sent the children outside to play and my veterinarian's wife whelped the entire litter.

It was 2:30 in the morning before the whole litter had arrived, but the next morning my sister called me on the phone and said that her daughter, Melanie, was playing down the street with Douglas, the boy next door, and she heard Melanie from the kitchen window saying, "Oh, Dougie, Dougie, you'll NEVER believe this. Puppies are born in a plastic baggie! And you have to break the bag and let the water run out or the puppy will drown!"

How big was the litter and where did they go?

There were seven.

Did you keep them all?

No, I didn't keep them all. My sister's neighbor (the one with little Dougie) got so enthused about these puppies that Dougie just had to have a puppy. I kept three here and every puppy in the litter went to personal friends of mine! One puppy went to a close friend of Les' in Madison, Wisconsin and one went to a family in this area who were close personal friends of ours.

I actually had A.K.C. registration in MY name on the ENTIRE litter! None of the puppies in the litter were placed for breeding or show by anyone else!

At this time, you still weren't really into showing or breeding, but you had all these dogs...?

I WAS, but I didn't THINK I was! I was involved in it and was spending 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with the dogs and kept telling everyone I wasn't involved.

By then, I had the kennel building, about ten dogs and a litter of puppies. (I was keeping puppies out of the litter.) I got an American and Canadian championship on Oakwood Farms Silvacarrie and an American and Canadian championship on Oakwood Farms, Silvacarrie. Unfortunately, Putta was dysplastic and also had cataracts, so he was never used for breeding, but Carrie was OFA certified and I took her to Jim and Joan Sheets' dog, Ch. Sam O'Khan's Chingis Khan and bred Carrie to Jingo and got American and Canadian champion Oakwood Farms Kari J'Go Diko out of that litter.

At this time, you were really into it?

Yes, REALLY, REALLY, into it! I'd gotten very much into studying the differences in the various lines and the differences in the temperament of the animals and the diseases they acquired; and also their hereditary problems. By this time, I had joined an all-breed kennel club and had become so involved that I was losing contact with all of the interest I'd had prior to the time I got the dogs.

Now that you had this number of

dogs, you were probably into lines and types? Had you settled in upon your own line or your own type?

Now, remember, I STILL was not going to become a dog BREEDER. I had NO plans to establish my own line and no plan to become a breeder of dogs. I just happened to have a large group of dogs and I had become very emotionally attached to them and still didn't really plan to do anymore breeding than that one accidental litter between Cajun and Big John!

Actually, I think what precipitated my becoming a dog breeder was the fact that I was quite determined and didn't want my animals to suffer the affliction of hereditary problems. I recognized that nothing could be 100% controlled, but I was very disappointed in the fact that the dog industry, in general, was very calloused to the hereditary problems with mankind that we can't make ANY attempt to correct them because who can breed humans in a scientific fashion? It's just not done, but we CERTAINLY can breed animals in a scientific fashion. There is really NO reason whatsoever for these dogs to suffer from the things they are suffering from! I was quite determined that whatever dogs I had, I would make every attempt possible to first breed them so they didn't HAVE these hereditary defects; secondly, if they DID have defects, I had to know about it or there was no way I could help the animal.

So, my breeding of dogs was a situation of self-defense. I found that in all of the dogs I was buying from around the country, many were growing up affected with hereditary defects that made them unable to live a happy and healthy life. I started breeding dogs in the hope of providing dogs just for myself that were very sound. I never had any desire or intention of breeding dogs for the general public; but, as I began to breed dogs, I became more and more involved in the genetics of dog breeding and started inbreeding my dogs very closely and found the only way I could produce good dogs for myself to enjoy was to breed my OWN dogs to my OWN bitches and, finally, reached a point where I had a great deal of predictability in both the defects that might be apparent in the litter and also the good qualities were coming through the litter. I was able to predict many things I would get out of a litter. This gave me a lot of personal security because if I felt I needed or wanted a dog that, perhaps, was very large to keep in the house with me as a personal guard dog, I felt I had the number of animals and the knowledge of what was behind them genetically to be able to produce the kind of dog I needed. Of course, my one little dog I started out with developed into 40 or 45 dogs after about three or four years. Once I started breeding dogs, my numbers increased and increased until I kept 45 dogs here in this kennel for a number of years!

Has anyone had a great influence

on your breeding program or has it all been what you wanted to do?

Do you mean on whether I would breed or HOW I would breed?

How you would breed.

Yes. Dr. Uvie Mostovski at Michigan State University has been the greatest influence on my dog breeding of anyone I've known. He's very knowledgeable about genetics. He's an excellent radiologist; he was also generous enough to put me in contact with Dr. Champion (who bred Arabian Horses and was very knowledgeable about genetics). I was able to glean so much help and information from those people that this was the only glimmer of hope I had in being able to acquire a security for myself in producing dogs that I liked and wanted.

So you weren't really greatly influenced by what another breeder was doing?

Absolutely none whatsoever because I was always going up the down stairway - when everyone else was going right, I was going left. I bred my dogs for myself ALWAYS and NEVER for other people. This is one reason why I had a great deal of difficulty, sometimes, in explaining certain trends that were occurring in my kennel. You reach different plateaus, genetically, when you breed dogs. When you first start to breed dogs and you have examined them and recognize that there is a certain fault or problem that seems to be the most prevalent in a group of dogs you are breeding, you MUST make every effort to get that most severe problem under control.

What problems were you seeing?

The problems I had in the beginning were with hip dysplasia. I was producing a very high number of dysplastic puppies out of OFA certified stock. OFA was just getting started at that time and no one really had any knowledge about the genetics of hip dysplasia and it is unknown at THIS date what the true genetic makeup of hip dysplasia is. It was my experience during the early years that if a person was weak of heart, you could not POSSIBLY bring hip dysplasia under control because you had to cull or at least cull from breeding, any animal that was dysplastic. I never, in my entire number of years of breeding, ever bred ANY dog or bitch that was not OFA certified. I would NEVER give stud service to any bitch that was not OFA certified. I found that by linebreeding very closely and compiling a number of generations of OFA certified dogs that I had PERSONALLY x-rayed myself, I was able to bring hip dysplasia under control to a degree where, at this time, it can never bother me again. Almost all of my puppies certify OFA; there is an occasional puppy that is dysplastic, but I can produce so very many dogs that are of good conformation and move well (have nice personalities and also be OFA certified), that I don't have to have fear of ever being without good companion dogs for my-

self for the remainder of my entire life!

Can anyone else say that?

I never asked anyone else the question. I really don't know how other people feel. I don't know what other people are doing. I feel personally grieved that we see so many people attempting to breed dogs, who only have a few dogs. Through my own experience over the past years, I know without any question that this is a failure for them. Unless you can breed repeatedly and prove out your breeding stock, you are constantly frustrated with dog breeding. You MUST be able to first ascertain a goal. What kind of dog do you want and what are your goals in your standards for your own personal dogs? What methods will you undertake to produce these dogs that will satisfy whatever it is within us that makes us want to breed dogs? After all, dog breeding is very demanding, a very personal thing.

There are very few humans who can live as closely to any animal as we dog breeders live with our dogs. There is something within us that makes us WANT to breed these dogs and makes us WANT to LIVE with them. And, if we once begin breeding dogs, it's like eating popcorn: you take one handful and then another and soon you've eaten the whole bowl! Dog breeding is very much the same way. You breed one generation, then you want to breed the next generation, then another; and if you don't have the facilities, space, time and situation to be able to do this, you're wasting your time and money and are possibly creating a problem for the purebred dog industry in general, in that there are many people breeding dogs who cannot assume the responsibility for those puppies! They sell their puppies to homes that aren't good, reliable dog pet homes. Many of the general American public does not feel that a dog is a member of the family. They feel a dog is an acquisition. Therefore, they treat it far less than a human and considerably less than an acquisition. They feel that a dog has its rights - and part of the rights is to run loose, breed freely and take its chances with the Lord. Well, we all take chances with the Lord, but if we don't help these animals, so they are kept secure, then there really isn't any point in selling the animal to the person. There are far too many people who don't make any attempt to keep their animals fenced, who don't give them proper medical care. If a dog breeder is going to put so much sacrifice and time into producing puppies, the breeder can't afford to sell puppies to a home like that because there's nothing meaningful that will come out of that puppy.

At what time did you begin to consider yourself a breeder?

I think yesterday!

Of the dogs you have owned or bred, which has come the closest to your ideal?

I don't have an ideal. I love the dogs and accept each dog as an individual. There are dogs that I've bred that I became personally attached to because there was something in that dog's personality that appealed to me and we became great pals for life. There are other dogs I took care of with a happy heart because it was my obligation, but I can't say I particularly wanted to spend a lot of time with that animal as a companion.

Now, you didn't ask me whether or not I have a STANDARD!

Do you have a standard?

I have a standard, but not an ideal, and that's very important because I see many people who have a mental vision of an animal and they are attempting to attain one animal who meets that vision and there is NO SUCH ANIMAL that can ever be born!

We have to set a standard. We must set a standard for conformation, for temperament, for type, for soundness and we must shoot for that standard in our breeding program so that a high percentage of our dogs will fall close to that standard without having a particular ideal in mind.

So, you breed to your very own personal standard and that is genetic soundness?

Yes. My concept of a type for this breed, my personal taste in the personality, character and integrity of the animal. In other words, it's my version of what I think a Samoyed should be.

It's very much like my mother's Christmas cakes. She takes a handful of this, a little bit of that, a pinch of this, some of that and comes up with some very unusual recipes. This is her version of baking. She's baked for many years and is an excellent baker, so she will take ingredients and not even measure them; she just cooks by feel. I breed dogs by feel.

In the beginning, you had these dogs - some from here, some from there, some from everywhere - so, when you started, you were actually outcrossing.

Yes. My very first litter was a linebred litter: Silveracres Ivan and Silveracres Tsaritza was a linebreeding. The first stud service I did on Velko was a linebreeding. Following that, I produced a couple of outcrossed breedings and, through doing these breedings, I was able to decide that it didn't make any difference whether you outcrossed, inbred or linebred, so long as you had a plan and knew why you were doing it and could, with some reliability, ascertain what would come out of the litter.

You do a lot of inbreeding, now, don't you?

The only breeding I do now or have done for quite some time is my own dogs to my own bitches. I'd NEVER consider under ANY circumstances, breeding one of my bitches outside of my kennel. The only stud services I will permit here are to outcrossed bitches that are of very fine lines and are very good quality animals. I would

NOT consider at any time or for any reason would I EVER outcross one of my animals.

What have you been able to improve or sustain in your breedings?

Reliability. There was no reliability whatsoever, no predictability, when I started breeding the dogs. When you outcross dogs, you have no idea what genes those animals carry, so it is completely impossible to predict what you are going to get in the litter.

As you begin to inbreed, you are undergoing a process of culling. You are breeding only good animals because it would be self-destructive to inbreed anything but very good animals. The more generations you inbreed, the fewer negative genes you'll be working with. It's somewhat like taking a large brown sack and filling it with every kind of pea and bean known to man. If you close your eyes and put your hands in that sack and pull out a handful of peas and beans, you'd have so many different varieties that you probably wouldn't be able to identify most of them. However, if you only placed four different kinds of peas and beans in that sack, when you close your eyes and put your hand into that sack, you'll be able to feel and identify those peas and beans because you only have four in the sack to begin with.

Is there anything you would still like to improve?

No, there isn't really anything I would like to improve. What I'd like to do is just continue inbreeding them and keep only the best that comes out of the inbreeding. There really isn't anything I CAN change about the dogs, now, because genetically they've become so deeply established that there is no way I could change them unless I began to outcross which I have no desire whatsoever to do.

Do the Oakwood Farm dogs have their own "look"?

Yes, definitely. It is NOT possible to inbreed a line of dogs without establishing certain faults and certain good attributes, which are very common to that group of dogs.

What is distinctive about the Oakwood farm dogs?

I think probably some of the other breeders might answer that question even better than I. The one thing I've noticed that constantly repeats itself in my dogs is that they have far better rears than fronts. They have very similar heads, they generally move very well with good flexion and extension. They are all very gregarious dogs and are dogs you can't ignore very well because they won't allow you to. They are very strong and very outgoing dogs.

How many litters have you bred?

Thirty-seven litters - unless I've missed a few.

What do you look for in your planned breedings?

I don't look for anything in a planned breeding. I PUT it there. I planned it several generations before and when I select animals for breeding, I

know what is behind the dog because I owned all of them; therefore, I'm able to predict and to plan which bitches should be bred to which studs, in order to get the highest number of quality animals.

Do you assist with the breedings?

There is no way I'd ever permit dogs to breed freely. I not only assist with the breeding, I completely commandeer the entire operation. The only way I'll EVER breed animals is to have a trained assistant with me. The stud is on a leash, the bitch is on a leash, the bitch is brought into a room first. Then the stud is brought in on a lead. They are watched very closely and held for breeding. I'll take no chance whatsoever on an animal being injured during the breeding process.

Do you help your bitches whelp?

I don't help them whelp, I whelp for them. I've had several bitches who simply refused to have a puppy until I got into the whelping room. My dogs are very dependent on me and I on them. When a bitch is due to whelp, I bathe her, clip her and completely prepare a whelping room for her. I bring her into the whelping room two weeks prior to whelping. She's kept either in the whelping quarters in the basement of my house or, during the summer months, I open the old farmhouse and turn the whole farmhouse into a summer home and do the whelpings up there.

But, the bitch is kept in the whelping quarters for two weeks prior to breeding. During that period of time, she is allowed to go to an outside run that no one but her uses and is permitted to go out for exercise several times during the day; but, most of the time she's kept in the whelping room with her bones and toys and is prepared to have her babies.

Do you supplement young puppies?

With vitamins? No, I don't. I feed very well; I use a lot of ground beef. I boil it and add it to their puppy food and they're fed four times a day. They're fed so well that I feel, sometimes, we over-vitaminize animals. I think if a litter is very large, I'll supplement the little babies with Esbilac or give additional food, but I don't like using vitamins. I keep them here and have several bottles right now, but somehow I just don't like giving it to the dogs.

How do you condition your dogs?

I don't. I just allow them to live under healthful conditions every day. There isn't anything different that I DO for them. They have very large runs; we have an eight-acre fenced yard, so the dogs are able to get out and run on eight acres. We also have two one-acre areas that are fenced that the dogs can run on separately and we have many other fenced areas here for them. The kennel is cleaned and disinfected every morning and the dogs are regularly groomed so there really isn't anything extra I can do to condition them.

They condition themselves?

Yes, they just stay that way.

They never really get OUT of condition. Now, if I were to decide to pull a dog and start showing it, I'd bring the dog up to my house and give it a bath and keep it on white towels every night and make sure that its feet were wiped off every day, when it comes into the house, and I'd be sure that dog's coat was kept very white, if I were going to show it.

How many champions have you bred or finished?

I think around twenty-three in the United States and about nine in Canada.

Who has been the biggest winner?

Diko has been the biggest winner. American and Canadian champion Oakwood Farms Kari J'Go Diko.

How old is Diko?

He's eight now.

How old was he when he won the Specialty?

He was five.

I have the distinct impression that Diko is very dear.

Diko's name means "little darling."

When Diko was a little tiny puppy, he was only about four or five weeks old when the litter started eating out of little pans in the basement, in the whelping room and when I'd go down with the food, Diko wouldn't eat; he'd run over to me and scramble up on my leg. I'd have to pick him up and hug him and kiss him, then put him down on the floor. He'd immediately run over to his dish and start eating, but he refused to START eating until he'd had his hug and kiss! By the time he was six weeks old, he was lying on my shoulder while I was in the house doing dishes. He just insisted he'd be with me constantly from the time he was born!

How many Sammies do you have here now?

I have about eighteen now.

What is the most you've ever kept?

For a number of years, I kept between 40 and 45. When I tell people I'm down to 18 dogs, they look at me with alarm, but I feel that with only 18 dogs, I'm goofing off! I feel like I don't have any dogs around here!

What does an Oakwood Farm puppy sell for?

They sell for all the way from a gift to \$500. It just depends upon the situation and I think this is true with every kennel.

What do you look for in a prospective home?

Humanity, firstly. I will, under no circumstances, sell an animal to a person who doesn't love animals. When someone comes to me for a dog, I spend several hours talking to that person before I decide if I'll consider selling a dog to that individual. If I feel this individual loves animals then I know I'll have an opportunity to try to educate them on how to take good care of the animal. If I know that person loves an animal, that individual will be conscientious with the animal. This is the only way I've been able to get such

a vast number of my dogs x-rayed and their eyes examined. I'm very, very careful whom I sell to.

Do you sell on terms or cash only?

Never would I ever sell a puppy on terms. If an individual does not have the cash to pay for a dog, they shouldn't be buying one. There's no way they can take care of a dog with the amount of expense involved in veterinary care and food, if they can't pay cash for it.

How about puppy-back terms?

Very seldom will I sell a bitch with papers on her. Actually, I very seldom sell a dog with its A.K.C. papers. All of my dogs are sold under a written, legal contract that is signed by the purchaser and myself. I do NOT like my dogs bred unless they are being bred by a knowledgeable individual or being bred by someone who will permit me to assist them or advise them and guide them through the breeding. Consequently, I rarely sell papers when I sell the dog. The dog is sold strictly as a pet.

What is in the contract?

My contract covers everything that could possibly affect both the life of the animal and the security of the individual who is purchasing the dog and my own security in selling the dog.

Firstly, the purchaser is assured that this puppy has been examined by the veterinarian and is free of parasites; that the puppy is in good health and has had all his inoculations and that the dog, in my judgement, is in excellent condition. The puppies are ALWAYS bathed within 48 hours of the time of leaving here. In the contract, any possible problem that may develop in the future between the purchaser and myself is forthrightly discussed. When A.K.C. papers are not being transferred, I state it in the contract. The fact that it is required that the puppy must have a hip X-ray and eye examination at one and two years of age, is also stipulated in the contract. Any other discussion I have with the individual is placed in writing because I'm well aware that a few months or a few years later, neither of us will remember what we verbalized, but we will be able to pull out a written contract and re-read it and understand what our agreement was!

It's obvious that you control very closely what you have bred. Have you sold many dogs to other people where they've been able to take them out and finish them and, perhaps, base a breeding program on them?

Yes, I have. Anyone who came to me who was a conscientious lover of dogs and wanted to do something positive with their animals rather than to bring destruction on the breed, I was always very happy to give them an unlimited amount of my time in order to help them establish their own dogs and to make my entire kennel available to them, so that anyone who wanted help could always get it from me.

At what age do you prefer to

grade your puppies?

I never quit grading my dogs. I study and evaluate them as new whelps. I watch them every day of their lives. Even as old dogs, I study them and watch them to see if they're developing any sign of rheumatoid arthritis or any other geriatric disease or problem that might be harmful to my kennel. I really never quit evaluating my dogs.

When I sell a puppy, it is always with the reservation that I attempt to sell to people who love the animal. When I sell them a dog, I'm selling them my lifetime assistance on the dog. If I have a puppy I feel is very good in conformation and I feel that dog should be out in the ring, I attempt to sell it to an individual who wants a dog for the show ring. If I have a puppy that is cowhocked or has a bad front, or whose head is unsightly, I then find a pet home where the people have never seen a dog show and are not at all interested in showing dogs.

However, when I sell a puppy, it is ALWAYS with reservation - and discussion with the purchaser - in the event that a puppy I've sold as show quality at the age of six months or one year or even two years has NOT met the standards that I like to keep for this kennel, then I request that the purchaser please not show the dog, but return it to me and I'll give him another puppy or they may certainly keep the dog as a pet - and I'll just GIVE them another dog that IS of show quality. I feel it is VERY injurious to the purebred dog fancy to have dogs out on the show mats that are of bad quality. It is very urgent that we make every effort to improve the quality of dogs that are out at the dog shows, at this time.

Do you cull?

Nature culls the dogs for me. I don't make the dogs; I'm not God. I just sit and attempt to put the dogs together so I'll have a high percentage of fairly good quality animals. When I have congenital defects that are obvious at birth, those puppies are euthanized. If I have temperament problems that develop later in life with an adult dog, that dog is euthanized. If I have a dog that has a very serious illness and cannot possibly be helped medically, then it is euthanized; but, never, under any circumstances, would I euthanize a dog that is of good health, nice temperament, simply because it does not have good conformation. I feel this is a very serious disrespect for life.

How many litters do you feel a bitch should be allowed to have in her lifetime?

That depends upon the individual bitch. It is my judgement that if animals are properly bred, they very seldom need to be bred because the puppies are of such good quality that you don't need to breed the parents very often. You'll be moving down the generations so quickly that you'll seldom ever need to breed the animals. You'll have so many good animals that you just won't be able to use them all.

What's the most you've ever bred one bitch?

Silveracres Tsaritza was my very favorite animal of all that I ever owned. She had five litters. That was the largest number of litters I've ever produced out of one bitch. The reason she had that number of litters is because the temperament of her puppies was so good that I just was saturated with the temperament on her puppies.

Is that what made her special to you, her temperament?

Yes, she had the most magnificent way about her of any animal I've ever owned. It is my judgement that never could there ever be two animals alike, just as there never could be two humans alike. It is impossible to duplicate heredity, but Silveracres Tsaritza, I feel so sure, will be my very favorite animal of all I ever owned in my entire lifetime. She slept on my bed for ten years, was with me constantly, and was an ideal personality for me.

Did she produce well for you?

Yes, very well. Actually, I did far better when I got several generations away from her and had her in the pedigree three or four times. I got better results that way, than with what was directly produced by her.

Would you consider her your foundation bitch?

Oh, definitely. She produced my first litter. Having produced five litters early in my breeding program, she definitely has to be my foundation bitch.

What do you consider is the ideal age for placing puppies?

I wouldn't even consider placing a puppy under eight weeks of age. I prefer to place them at ten or twelve weeks, if they're going for show; I like to sell them at six months and older. I feel that people who want to show dogs should have every opportunity and avail themselves of every opportunity to get the best dog they possibly can because they're going to put quite an investment into the showing. They should ALWAYS buy dogs over six months of age who have had preliminary hip X-ray and eye examination. So, when I'm selling a dog for show... Frankly, I like to sell a dog that's over two years of age that is already OFA certified and has had an eye examination.

What do you charge for stud service?

My stud fee is, technically, \$500. However, that is a fee that in some breeds, particularly in the Samoyed breed, that people feel is totally unreasonable. I have always felt there was no reason to breed dogs or to do a breeding unless you think you'll get very good puppies. The fee itself should not be the determining factor. The important thing is whether or not you feel you're going to get very good puppies.

I think the purebred dog industry has destroyed itself by placing a zero value on the life of an animal. The price for puppies is so low that people can buy one and take it home and run it over with their car or kick it down

the basement stairs, or poison it with D-con, and go right out the very next week and buy another one. The price of stud fees is so low that people are breeding dogs all over the United States and most of these animals are ending up in the Humane Society and animal shelters. We simply have SUCH an overpopulation problem in dogs that has been created by a very low price, it makes the life of the animal of no value whatsoever.

What do you consider a very serious fault in the breed?

To me, the most serious fault in any breed is a disease entity that is hereditary. Any dog can catch a disease, such as distemper or a virus of many sorts, and become ill. These things, many of them, hopefully can be cured medically; however, the congenital hereditary defects in the animals destroy the life of the animal. These defects, such as hip dysplasia, progressive retinal atrophy, hearing defects and orthopedic problems such as stifles, hocks, shoulders, osteochondritis, cause severe pain to the animal, which does not permit the animal to live a healthy happy life. It also brings severe pain to the conscientious pet owner because that individual is not able to enjoy his dog because the dog is ill, and many times the dog has to be destroyed. So, to me, the most serious defects in animals are those defects which the people are putting INTO them. The breeders are creating these defects. Your defects of conformation in a dog are of very minor importance, compared with the disease entities.

Would you breed to a dog that had a very serious conformation fault, if it had other redeeming qualities?

No, I definitely would not. I have a number of very cowhocked OFA excellents. All of those animals were placed in pet homes and I maintained the papers on them, but their conformation defect, to me, made them not usable for breeding. There is no such thing as a perfect dog, but a person must be very careful to maintain a high standard in selecting breeding stock or you are simply going to perpetuate the structural defects.

What is true Samoyed temperament?

Well, that's like love... It is all things to all people.

What is it to you?

To me, it is a very intelligent dog. It is a dog that is very devoted to his master. It is a dog that has a lot of personality and a dog that is very strong in character. Remember, this breed had to survive 50 degrees below zero; they are an arctic breed. They were never meant to be pansies. This is why this breed has to be very sparingly bred because there are very few people stout enough of heart to live with what the true Samoyed temperament really is. They are a dog that is so devoted to his home that you have a new member to your family. It's like having another human in the family!

There appears to be the start of a problem, that is aggressive Sams. Have you had any experience with aggressive dogs?

Judy, dear, it isn't the "start" of a problem. The problems we have in dogs, now, have been increasing over the years. We are just getting to a point now where our problems are overwhelming us. It's much like our energy crisis. We have had the potential problem for many years, but no one wanted to recognize the problem and now it is overwhelming us!

It is my feeling that in every breeding program you'll have throwbacks in temperament and there are dogs who MUST be euthanized because their temperaments are not conducive to cohabitation with society. In those instances, I have always euthanized the dog with no regrets but, by and large, bad temperament is created by the breeder and not by the purchaser. I know this is NOT the popular feeling of most dog breeders. Most dog breeders want to blame the purchaser for every temperament fault the dog has, but it is MY feeling that if the dog is properly bred and if the breeder is very careful about selecting a home that matches the temperament of that particular puppy, you will have a very high percentage of success in the temperament of your dogs.

I have been privileged, being able to study approximately 50 litters of puppies - combining the litters I've bred and also those to which my studs were used. I was able to see many different personalities: a difference in intelligence, attitude; some are very stubborn others are very agreeable, some are very placid, others are very aggressive.

The breeder must be very honest in analyzing their own dogs so that when they sell a dog they aren't placing an animal out in the public who is going to be a menace to society. The animal must go out as an animal who will be a member of the family and who will enhance the life of the purchaser, regardless of whether that animal is going to be used as a show animal or as a pet animal. He must not be a detriment to the family to which he is going.

Through studying the puppies which have been born in my kennel, I have seen many things I'm sure some veterinarians would disagree with me on, but that is THEIR right. We all have our own opinions. I've seen puppies who were born schizophrenic, who were paranoid; I've seen every manner of mental problems that can be evidenced in the human. The only experience I've NEVER had is that of a homosexual animal. Other than that, I've seen all types of mental problems and have culled these animals, not only from my kennel, but have attempted to get them away from people who have bought them from me - by advising that individual that the dog didn't have the right temperament for the breed and that the dog should be euthanized and that I would be pleased to replace it with

another dog. It is my feeling that if I have been able to see these temperament problems in my own puppies, I'm sure that puppies with these mental-like problems are being born all over the country and it is absolutely the responsibility of the established dog breeders to see to it that these temperament problems are brought under control so that dogs will be a companion to mankind and not a destructive force.

Let's talk about conformation. Has the breed improved during the past years?

That's interesting because sometimes when I talk with the older dog breeders, we talk about certain dogs that were so magnificent back fifteen to twenty years ago and we look at some of the dogs that are out now and try to compare them. It was an entirely different situation, showing dogs back in the '60s. Back then, there were very few Samoyeds in the country. You had two kinds of Samoyeds. You had either a very excellent, wonderful show dog that was well-known to everyone or you had the dogs whose quality was so bad that they didn't even look like a Sam, so we had no in between. We had either outstanding dogs or really bad animals.

Now, I'm seeing an entirely different situation. I am seeing many, many very mediocre dogs and just don't ever see anything outstanding; yet, the dogs that are out in the ring have improved, generally, in type, but their overall quality is really quite bad.

In what way?

They are very unsound animals. I've seen many animals with very bad rear ends, which always indicates to me that there is a great possibility for hip dysplasia. I see animals that are very fine-boned, very small, that couldn't pull my show shovel across the yard, let alone my sled! I'm seeing dogs now, for instance, at last year's Cobol Hall show. I went to watch the Breed and I was almost shocked because there were some entries standing at ringside and I couldn't tell whether it was a dog or bitch. This is very alarming, particularly to an individual with my taste because I like a male to be a very large and strong, robust, outgoing animal who is obviously a stud or he has no business being in the show ring. I like a bitch who is more feminine, quiet and looks motherly in temperament and deportment. I'm not seeing this; I'm seeing an animal that looks like it isn't a male or a female. It's almost like a lot of the young kids now who are running around with their blue jeans and the boys have long hair; girls have long hair and don't wear makeup anymore.

Many times, I'll walk into a restaurant and I'll see a group of young people sitting at a table and, God help me, I can't tell which are the boys and which are the girls. They all look very much alike and as though they all need a good bath! I'm seeing the same thing in the show ring. The stud dogs look like the bitches and I can't tell which

is which, but they all need a bath.

Do you think the breed needs to be more uniform? A lot of people are complaining about the lack of uniformity. You're saying you are seeing uniformity. You're seeing dogs and bitches that look alike.

Judy, a male should NEVER look like a female. I feel there should be a distinct difference in ALL species, between male and female. NEVER should one be confused about what sex an animal is. I think the dogs are getting more alike in that, yes, they are all looking like they're of no sex and they're getting smaller, finer-boned and far less quality in front and rear.

What about this difference in size? What are your feelings? The Standard calls for quite a variance.

Unfortunately, there are very few people who are reading the Standard. There are many people now out in the show rings who don't even KNOW there is a Standard written for the breed.

I am personally grieved at what I've seen take place in the dog industry. In past years, there were very few people showing and breeding dogs. Now, there are many, many people out running around the mats; they are pet people, are not dog breeders, are not professional dog people. They are simply pet people running around with one or two dogs, attempting to breed dogs when they don't even know there is a written Standard for the breed. This is the reason why the appearance of the dog has changed so much. It's the hands that are breeding them.

Do you have a size preference?

No preference on size. I simply look at the overall deportment of the animal. Whether the animal is sound and of generally good quality or whether the animal has outstanding defects that make it unsightly for the breed. I don't care what size an animal is, but I sure better know whether it's a boy or a girl!

Is side movement more important than coming and going?

If a dog moves properly and is structurally well-built, he will move properly if he's going forward, backward, sideward, upside down or lying on his head and scratching his belly. A proper moving dog will move properly, no matter what direction he's going in.

What is good Samoyed movement?

Good Samoyed movement is no different than proper movement on any dog. A dog should have good reach, good flexion and extension; should NOT overrun his front, as I've seen so much of in the ring. When a dog gaits, his rear leg should fall under the center point of his body. His rear leg should NOT overtake his front legs in trotting. I am seeing obscene movement in the show ring.

I recently saw a dog show where there was a Great Pyrenees entered. The Pyr had won the Breed and was in the Group. I couldn't take my eyes off the dog because his rear legs were running over his front by about four inches

when he moved! I was so fascinated that I couldn't look at anything but the feet on that dog as he was moving around the ring. I got home and called a neighbor who was a Great Pyrenees breeder and told her about the Pyr taking 2nd in the Working Group that day and that the dog was just terrible, that his rear legs overran his front by four inches. I told the breeder who was handling the dog and she said she knew which dog it was. She said it was one of the best dogs in their breed. I thought she had to be kidding, but she said he had a "beautiful head"! At that point, I ended the discussion on the Great Pyrenees.

Have you found there are more quality dogs in one part of the country than another?

Definitely not. I've found the quality is so sadly lacking all over the United States that when I see a really good dog, I want to throw my arms around him, kiss him and take him home with me. The general quality is bad everywhere. There is no particular area that is producing any better than others, but unfortunately there are different types being bred all over the country and this is not good for a breed. There cannot be as many different types as there are and have them all be correct for a breed. The dogs are NOT being properly bred or they wouldn't look this different in different parts of the country.

What is the ideal head?

The ideal head is described in the Standard. I feel the Samoyed head should be very beautiful and very pleasing. The most unfortunate thing is that people don't recognize that a dog's intelligence and his personality shows in his head as much as the anatomical structure of his skull. A dog can have a very good head for a breed and be so stupid or aggressive that you can't possibly appreciate the head. I wouldn't enjoy a head if it had four teeth stuck in my wrist or if it was sitting there refusing to come to me when I called it. To me, a good head for this breed is described in the Standard. I am seeing many dogs with very little stop; with very snipy noses and this is not correct for the breed. I'm also seeing heads that are very clubby and look as though they should be on a Chow. This is not a Samoyed head, it should be very dignified; it is a very strong head, a graceful head that emits a beautiful appearance. They must have a smiling face - and I've not seen this beautiful smiling face. I'm seeing droopy flews, bad pigmentation; if a Samoyed does not have good black pigmentation, he cannot possibly have the appearance of the smiling Christmas dog that has been portrayed by the Samoyed.

Are there problems with the mouth?

Teeth or mouth?

Both.

Yes, there definitely is. You name a problem and we have it in the breed.

Unfortunately, most breeders will

be too dishonest to discuss it with you. There are bad bites in our breed: overshot, undershot, wry mouths. These things are not a disaster, but the dog never should be used for breeding. The unfortunate thing is we have people breeding dogs who don't even know this breed should have a scissors bite. They don't even KNOW what a scissors bite is.

What about missing teeth?

I do not think we have a problem with missing teeth; however, just because I don't have the problem here doesn't mean it doesn't exist in other isolated areas.

Have you had a problem with bad mouths?

I've had overshot, undershot and have seen mouth problems that were not so severe that the dog could not live a happy life as a pet, but there is no way these animals should be used for breeding.

How important is a good foot to a Sam?

The Sam is a sled dog; he is a runner. He herds reindeer; and the last time I checked, reindeer run pretty fast, so it's my feeling that the foot on a Samoyed must be excellent. They cannot have a splayed foot. They must have good strong pasterns, good bone and must have an excellent foot to travel and do the job they are supposed to do.

Unfortunately, one problem that is contributing to the bad quality in dogs is ignorance. Many people breeding and also individuals judging dogs in the ring have not suffered themselves to study what it is they are accomplishing with the dogs. I've seen many breeders and many judges who don't understand the proper structure of the animal. Therefore, they will decide that a serious fault is a virtue in that dog and they'll place this dog to many wins; this dog will be acclaimed for having an excellent whatever, when indeed that whatever is a FAULT not a VIRTUE!

It's a conformation structural defect and the animal is being praised for it! It's a frightening experience. If a dog has a good shoulder layback, usually they'll have the proper angulation on the pastern and many times the whole front assembly will be affected by the shoulder layback in the shoulder structure. Many people don't recognize this. There are defects in shoulder structure that will bring about problems in that the legs, pasterns and feet also originate in the shoulder. The problem simply goes down the entire front quarter of the dog. It's likewise on the rear quarters of an animal.

An animal that is dysplastic will frequently have problems in other areas of his rear quarters. He'll have an incorrect or insufficient angulation on the stifle which could contribute to a stifle displacement or a problem in the hocks. It's because the hip is not fitting properly. That's the origination of the problem that is manifesting itself further down into the leg quarters of the

dog. The dog may have a hock displacement, slipped hocks (what some breeders are calling double hocks). If you X-ray the hips of the dog, you will find that the dog is dysplastic and these other orthopedic problems are secondary to the original problem of hip dysplasia in the animal.

Are you saying that shoulder layback - good shoulder layback - is seldom seen anymore and that people really can't recognize it?

I'm telling you that good conformation, in general, is so seldom seen that people don't even know what it IS anymore. You can take a dog in the ring that has an excellent shoulder layback and a good and proper chest for the breed and you'll hear five people around ringside saying that the dog is loaded on the front end!

What about pasterns?

You mean pasterns in general and what should they be?

Yes. What about the angle?

A Samoyed pastern should be somewhat angulated because this dog has got to take a tremendous pounding. He's got to get out and pull and lean into the harness, and drag a load across the frozen tundras. There MUST be angulation of the pastern; however, the breeder has got to develop an eye for the entire front of the animal. One part of the anatomy relates to the other. You can't have an animal that is "down in pastern;" you can see that immediately on the front end of the dog. That now becomes a weakness in the pastern and that animal will not be able to pull any weight.

What is the dysplasia rate you're seeing today?

In my kennel, the dysplasia rate is very low. I am probably running about 80 percent OFA certified. It is my judgement that the entire remainder of the breed, taken as a whole, is in very critical condition where hips are concerned.

From talking to other people breeding dogs, from knowing the results of many X-rays that are being done, both in my area and other areas, it is my judgement that this breed is no better off than it was fifteen years ago, where hip dysplasia is concerned. It is my grave fear that it will get far worse in the future, if we don't bring it under firm control and see to it that a way is devised so that the dysplastic dogs can no longer be bred.

Aren't other breeders as interested in this as you are?

Certainly not. Most breeders are only interested in winning dog shows. They don't particularly care if the animals are healthy and happy; they just care about whether they come away with a trophy and ribbon!

Getting back to conformation.

What about tail carriage?

Tail carriage is important to the overall look of the dog and this is true in any breed. I feel tail carriage is really the last thing I'd look at in a dog. The structural problems that are

created by an animal who is not orthopedically correct are the most devastating, contributing factor to bad conformation. If a dog's skeleton hasn't been put together properly, the rest of the dog falls apart, relative to the degree of the structural defect.

What about coupling? I've seen short-coupled dogs, long-coupled dogs - which is correct?

If a dog is put together properly, he is neither short nor long. The dog moves properly because he's built properly. He reaches out with his right front leg and his left front leg comes forward and falls under the center point of his body. The dog will move properly if he's put together right.

This idea of short coupling, long coupling - there is no such thing! The dog is either correct or incorrect. I'm seeing some Samoyeds who are very long of leg and it makes them appear as though they are short-coupled. These dogs, unequivocally, move incorrectly. Their rear ends overrun their front legs. They sidewind. They couldn't pull a sled fifty feet without collapsing. They are NOT good dogs. They race around the ring and look very flashy, but they are NOT moving properly.

The individual breeding these dogs must learn to look at where the feet are hitting the floor and forget about all that white hair that's blowing in the breeze and how glamorous that dog looks.

Have you had any experience with "winter nose"?

I've had all kinds of noses. I've had dogs whose noses got lighter in the summer, lighter in the winter and so on. This is such a minor thing. I feel we must breed and grade and analyze these dogs based on priorities. We must decide what are the most urgent factors in selecting our breeding stock and then come right down on our list of priorities to the little minor things and recognize that we CANNOT breed perfect animals, but we must attempt to maintain high quality. Therefore, we must select what are the most urgent faults to the dog and what are the most urgent good qualities.

What, in your opinion, is the most urgent fault?

The most urgent fault involves your congenital, hereditary diseases: hip dysplasia, eye diseases, heart defects. Those problems make it almost impossible for the animal to survive. Our secondary priority must be to the skeletal formation of the animal so his muscles, ligaments and tissues have something to hang on. If the dog's skeletal structure is proper then we can go to our next priority and worry about whether this dog's type is proper for the breed and whether his beauty is sufficient. Then we can start worrying about minor things, like whether his tail is tight enough or loose enough, or busy enough or spotted enough. We can then go to all the little minor things that are quite irrelevant in determining whether this dog can live a

healthy, happy life - but they are little niceties we enjoy in the dogs.

Given the choice of only one, which would you prefer, soundness or type?

Soundness, unequivocally, no question. I will NEVER change my mind on that. A dog MUST be sound. If he is sound, he'll be healthy, will move properly and will be a joy to own. But, then, I don't want to live with Lena the Hyena either!

What is your definition of bear-type and fox-type?

If a Samoyed is bred according to Standard, there is no such thing as bear-type or fox-type. This is an excuse for improper conformation. There is no such thing as different types, in breeds, not in ANY breed. That's bizarre. There's a written standard, if the dog is proper and accurate, it fits the standard and there isn't any room for different types. The dog is either proper or he isn't. In my breed, there is no such thing as the bear and the fox types.

Are there any contemporary breeders that you feel are producing overall good quality Sams?

That's a terrible question!

I always ask this one!

It has never been my wish, since I've been in dogs, to personally injure the feelings of any individual. I always feel that dog breeding, in itself, should be separated from the friendship and companionship we dog lovers enjoy with each other, so I would not want to answer that question. I see dogs coming out of breeding programs all over the country, some of which I feel are better dogs than others. There are some people breeding dogs that I worry about very much because I realize they aren't conscientious and they really don't care what they are producing. They only care about whether they'll have buyers for the puppies.

Anyone who knows me, knows what I like and how I breed dogs. They know if I like what they have or not.

You can't name a few breeders who are producing good dogs?

I'd rather not get into this!
(Laughter.)

What dogs, owned or bred by yourself, have impressed you over the years as being outstanding representatives of the breed?

In past years, I saw a number of dogs. I loved Sam O'Khan's Ghingis Khan. To me, he was a dog I could have taken home with me and loved like a member of my own family.

What did you like so much about him?

He was a very intelligent dog, very strong. He was a dog that had charisma and this is something I don't see anymore. The dog was outstanding. When he walked into the room everything stopped. You were overwhelmed by the dog, yet he was very quiet. He would simply walk into the room and stand there and look at you. I felt he was the most magnificent thing I've

ever seen. I also liked Nachalnik of Drayalene. It's quite obvious I liked both of these dogs because they're loaded over and over and over in my pedigrees in my young dogs, now.

Nachalnik of Drayalene was a different type and I hate to use the word "type" after I just gave you the lecture on type. He was a different personality than Sam O'Khan's Chingis Khan. Nachalnik of Drayalene was a very affectionate, very sweet, very friendly dog. Both animals had outstanding conformation and were both excellent movers. I feel very happy and privileged that I was able to place those two dogs repeatedly behind my dogs in an inbreeding program. I now feel I am able to reap the benefits of having known those dogs, by being able to enjoy their great great grandchildren now.

What about your foundation bitch?

My foundation bitch was the joy of my life. When she died, I felt like a part of my life was gone forever. I feel Cajun was an experience for me that will only happen once in a lifetime. Her personality was so complimentary to my way of life that I really have no hope of ever having another animal I could enjoy as I did her. She was my absolute Siamese twin! She was with me constantly, no matter where I went or where I was. She lived 100 percent in the house with me and was never in the kennel. Her intelligence and perception of my feelings were so great that I was able to derive more understanding from her than I have from any human being I've ever been friends with. Cajun always knew exactly how I felt, she knew exactly what I was thinking and she was the most ideal dog I've ever owned. She was a companion to me, a sister to me, a child to me; all the things I would ever want in a dog, Cajun was.

What about her Conformation?

Her conformation was very mediocre. I loved her; yet, I am a realistic individual and I can love a dog very well without requiring it to be perfect. After all, that dog had not come from ME, but directly from GOD and I don't feel that the dog should be disliked because of any of its conformation problems. Cajun was a good bitch, but she certainly was not the best in conformation that I've ever owned. She produced far better in conformation than what she was.

Isn't that a true sign of a good bitch?

Oh, yes it is. It really is. Her daughter, Carrie, had far better conformation than her mother and, although I liked Carrie very much (I still have Carrie), I could never establish the kind of friendship with Carrie that I could with Cajun. Carrie is a very agreeable animal, very docile, very easy to live with. She is immediately receptive to any request I make of her, but she just did NOT have the character her mother, Cajun, had.

Has Carrie produced as well as Cajun?

Carrie is the mother of Diko. She produced actually BETTER than Cajun. Diko is a Specialty winner.

How do you care for the coats?

With a lot of back pain and blisters on my hands! My dogs, in past years, were put in the tub every week. I had two girls who did nothing but groom dogs. The dogs were kept so well that I could just pull one right out of the kennel and take it anywhere and you'd have thought I just took it out of the tub. The kennel is a very nice facility because it has cement floors, is heated on the inside and the outside runs have a roof over them so the dogs are able to be kept very clean here. It is always a problem, though, when you are going to show dogs because a show coat must be absolutely sparkling white. The dog has got to be brought up into the house and given very special attention and constant grooming in order to have the coat white enough to be able to look well in the ring. I abhor the lack of grooming that is going on in the ring now. Many dogs aren't bathed for months and the coat is gray and they're full of powder. It's obvious the dog has NOT had a bath and many of them have odor. I just abhor a dirty dog. I feel a dog should not be permitted to be dirty at home let alone in the show ring.

You have a really superior kennel set up. Is there anything you'd like to change about it now that you've worked with it all these years?

Oh, yes. I have hopes of subdividing the farm and moving down south and I hope within a few years I'm able to do that. I have some big dreams about the next kennel. There are many things I'll change. Of course, the energy crisis is causing us all to think differently these days, but I'll build an entirely different kennel from what I have today. The kennel I have today was fine for the '60s; it is no good for the '80s.

How will you change it?

Oh, that's a big surprise. I won't tell ANYONE until it's done, then I'll invite everyone to stop by and visit.

You don't want to share it with us?

No, it will be a big surprise. I will give you a little hint: Solar energy! (Laughter.)

What about the way you have your runs set up. Would you do that differently?

No. Basically, I'd use the same size runs. I think these dogs require a large run. My dogs have a kennel run; are all kept in separate kennels. I'd never put two dogs in the same run under any circumstances. They also have their own bathroom run. I keep a gravel run across the sidewalk so we open a gate and the dog immediately goes across a four-foot sidewalk and goes into a large gravel run to exercise. This helps keep down urine stain on the coat, gives them rocks to run on, which is good for their feet; allows them to get out from under the roof and get

some sun, so I'd essentially set up the same basic foundation I have here.

You've always used a lot of handlers. Why?

Because I should get the prize for being the worst breeder-handler in the United States. I never enjoyed showing a dog. I always wanted to see what all the dogs looked like and how they moved and whether or not some of the dogs were showing conformation faults. I felt that by handling my own dog, I was being cheated of the opportunity of studying dogs. I also recognized, very early, that my very first attempt to show a dog showed I had no innate talent for it. I must tell you this story because if I ever write a book, this will be in it.

My very first dog show, Mr. Earl Adair was judging. This was a number of years ago, before I got gray hair and wrinkles. I was showing Cajun - and Cajun was the most delightful dog to have on a leash. She immediately responded to any request you made of her. She was always very attentive to me, but the first time I showed her, I was really quite untalented in handling and Cajun recognized that and she thought it was pretty funny. I stacked her front and when I did, she went to sit. I immediately picked her rear up and tried to stack that and when I did that, she'd cross her front legs completely over. I'd immediately jump to her front and re-stack that, upon which she would immediately sit down again. This was going back and forth and the animal was fighting me in every way she could.

Finally I thought I had her beautifully stacked, so I picked up her tail with my hand and just then Mr. Adair came by. I smiled at him and greeted him and he looked down at me and frowned. He said, "Lady, would you please look at the front end on that dog?" I looked down at what I thought was a beautifully stacked front end and there was Cajun with her legs completely crossed again. She won, in the end.

Have your experiences with professional handlers been good ones?

Very good. I enjoyed the handler's company. We had many handlers, of course, over the years. All of them became very good personal friends. There were so many handlers that I wouldn't even want to name them, but they were very fine people and were excellent with our dogs. I felt they were a very important factor in my years of dog breeding. I could never have showed the number of dogs I did. I could never have accomplished what I did without the assistance of individuals who were very capable at handling the dog in the show ring - because I was not.

Did you ever Special bitches?

I sort of Special Cajun. I didn't seriously Special her because she was such a favorite of mine that I didn't even go to dog shows for years without taking her, even if she just sat in the van. I could have five dogs entered, but Cajun had to go along and lay between the car seats, if necessary, but

she just HAD to go to EVERY SHOW! I did Special her for a year or so, but not seriously trying to win anything with her. I just enjoyed showing her and felt that dog shows weren't a matter of life and death. They were a matter of pleasure.

Can a good handler win with a bad dog?

Certainly. We see it all the time. We've reached a point in the dog industry where very few people know what a good dog is, versus a bad dog. They don't even know. The judges don't know, the breeders don't know, the handlers don't know. How in the world can these new people who are coming into dogs, attempting to buy GOOD dogs to get their own kennels started; how can they possibly know what a good dog is when we're looking at dogs bred by breeders who don't know, handled by handlers who don't know and judged by judges who don't know?

Is judging, by and large, fair?

I think, in general, the judges aren't individuals who take bribes or who are really dishonest. I think many of them are misunderstood. I think, unfortunately, that a lot of people are condemning some judges because they don't really understand the problem the judges are faced with. The dogs are so darned bad, does it matter if you put one up with a terrible front or a terrible rear? It is my feeling that our system of judging must be changed. We are frying our judges in a frying pan. We were destroying the quality of the animals and it is all because we are trying to function with a system that was workable in the 1920's and 1930's, but in the 1980's, it is totally obsolete and if it is not changed, it will bring about the destruction of the purebred dog fancy.

How would you change it?

First, the dogs must be graded as individuals in the ring. The judge must be given a chalkboard and it should be up to that judge whether or not he wants to grade this dog, based on a numerical figure or whether he wants to use lettering or whether he just wants to say "excellent," "good," "fair" or "terrible." We should give the judge the ability to select the format he'll use in grading that animal. But, each animal must be graded front, rear, movement, head, coat, type. The animal must be portrayed on the chalkboard for what he, indeed, is. We must cease to pit these animals one against the other in the show ring. It is almost like throwing a mongoose and a cobra in a barrel! You are bound to have a bloody battle. This is not the object of breeding purebred dogs.

The object is to constantly sustain a high quality of animal that can be enjoyed by society. We must grade these dogs as individuals in the ring and the judge should be given the prerogative of simply voting yes, I'd give this dog a championship or no, in my opinion this dog isn't good enough to be a champion and I withhold the credit.

In that manner, we would be performing several functions. Number one, we would be educating the public on what faults there are in dogs. Number two, we would be getting the judges out of the frying pan. The judge knows that a dog has an overshot bite that he could stick his thumb through, but the people around ringside don't know that. It should be written right up on the chalkboard. The judge's integrity should NEVER be in question.

The judge should be able to give his opinion and have it written up for all to see. Then those who don't agree with him can damned well not show their dog anymore. If they feel that individual is astute and intelligent in his opinion of the dog, they can haul out their whole kennel for his judgement if they want. The dogs should not be winners and losers. They should be dogs, all of which have problems. Let us find out what those problems are. We should grade the dogs. The dogs who, in that judge's opinion, qualify for championship credit should be given that credit, regardless of whether there is one dog entered or 750 entered. It is irrelevant. We should not be put on a numerical system. We should simply grade dogs on the quality of the animal.

You would agree more, then, with the way the judging is done in England?

No. I like the way judging is done in Russia. A few years ago, I read a large article in the A.K.C. Gazette and, in my opinion, the way the Russians are grading the dogs in the show ring and their entire attitude about the animals certainly puts us to shame. Sometimes, it is quite obvious why we are called "dirty Americans." It is because, in many ways, we hide behind the truth. We are people who have big mouths and nothing to back them. We are all flash and show, but you have to put some muscle behind that flash and show. In Russia, when dogs are judged in the ring, the pedigree of the dog is handed to the judge so the judge can look at it and determine if the dog is well-bred or not! Then the judge will give his opinion on that dog. When the dog goes into the ring, no one attempts to obscure the quality of the animal by throwing liver and popcorn around and having double handling going on to excite the dog. It is up to the judge to KNOW if that dog has proper ears for that breed! Now, I'm getting mad! (Laughter.) I'm mad at the whole concept of what is going on in this industry; it just simply destroys me.

You can go to any dog show and stand at ringside and if you just shut up and listen, you'll hear things that are astounding! As each dog is gaited, you'll hear someone say, "Look at the terrible front on that dog." You'll hear someone else say, "He has a good front, but he's cowhocked." And someone else will say, "Oh, the topline on that dog is terrible." Now, they're talking about the same animal. NEVER do I hear people standing around ring-

side making intelligent comments about the animal. If the animal had all those things wrong with him, he couldn't even get up in the morning to walk! These people don't know what they're looking at. They have no eye for the breed or for structure. Maybe some of them could be taught, but unless someone makes an attempt to teach them, where are they going to learn? They are all clustered together at the dog shows, making these innane comments about these dogs, none of which are even true! They simply don't know what they're looking at.

It's just destroying the dogs and what is creating the problem is that we have this huge influx of new people coming into dogs who don't know where they are and they're looking for help and advice. They buy from a breeder, the breeder lies to them right down the line about the quality of the animal; about the faults and sends them out into the ring with this animal and asks them to win.

Is the breeder lying or could it be that the breeder just isn't knowledgeable, himself?

Yes, of course! Ninety-nine percent of the time, they DON'T know, so why not talk about how wonderful your dogs are when you don't know what's wrong with them anyway? You might as well sell it and say it's a show dog! Go and show it! It's great great grandmother was a champion, so that makes this puppy a show dog!

Would you do away with judging on the Group level?

Definitely; unequivocally. What I would do is have the judge select one animal that he feels should represent that breed at the end of the day. I feel there should be one animal go out into the ring and simply go around the ring and be gaited, so that if there are people left at the dog show who want to see what that breed looks like, they have an opportunity to go and see every breed walked around the ring and the general public could be educated in the differences in the breeds.

As I see it now, the dog shows are simply self-destructive. It's like an octopus eating his own tentacles. We're choking on our own tentacles. We put on dog shows that don't educate the public. We put on dog shows, which system is creating nothing but hatred and animosity among the exhibitors and breeders because they're thrown into competition with each other when they don't even understand what they're competing for! They don't even know if they have a good dog. So, they go into the ring to do battle to win a little piece of blue ribbon that means nothing to anyone. That little ribbon isn't going to help them breed and produce good dogs. They MUST get education and learn what a good dog IS. The dog shows are destroying the dog fancy.

We must change the system of judging so we don't pit these people and their animals against each other. We have a very negative, aggressive

approach to the dog industry, all of us. We're all out to cut each other's throats and then we have the unmitigated gall to complain about the temperament of the animals. If we had half the good temperament that the animals have, we wouldn't be in the ring trying to cut each other's throats.

Are you interested in judging?

Not at all. When you ask if I'm interested in judging, I judge every dog I see. If I'm going down the road and I see a mongrel, I look at it and determine that it might have a little Elkhound in it or maybe a German Shepherd for a father. I judge every dog I see and I don't need a license to do it. I'm going to leave it that way!

Does advertising influence judges?

Everything influences judges and that's unfortunate. What we must endeavor to do is change the system in dogs and we're going to have a big change in the judges. The man who can't stand in the middle of the ring with a chalkboard in front of him and critique the dog is going to have to quit being a judge because he can't stand at that chalkboard and draw a cartoon. He'll HAVE to know dogs.

In England, the judges write a critique and it's published in a newspaper, which I think is marvelous.

I agree. The United States is suffering many problems. Right now, we're going through what I see to be a very serious economic disaster. I feel we must think in practical terms. I feel we should not actually critique the dog in such a way that it would require having a secretary in the ring to take shorthand or transcribe dictation or whatever. We can't take a gun and put it to our heads. We have to do this in a way that it will be expedient. Give the judge the chalkboard and let him grade the dog: front, rear, movement, head, temperament. Let him grade the dog out and simply let him give his vote on whether he'll give that dog a championship credit. Now, that dog is excused from the ring. He's gone forever and the judge doesn't have to stand out in the middle of the ring and wonder what dog he'll put up.

Do you feel regional clubs and parent clubs play an important role? Do we need regional clubs and the parent club?

The breed club must work as an educational force. The breed clubs must stop fiddling while Rome burns and recognize that purebred dogs are in very serious trouble. People cannot afford to buy dogs anymore. When they DO buy them, they don't want to pay very much for them. Everyone is under financial pressure and we must recognize that all of these things are going to influence the dog industry. Our national breed clubs can bring very great pressure to bear upon the American Kennel Club, upon the quality of the judges, upon the professional handler's association. Our breed clubs are not doing their jobs; however, it is very

necessary that we make every effort to bring our breed clubs together and to attempt to make them a strong educational force in an attempt to see purebred dogs through the economic disaster that is lying ahead of us.

Are you a member of any clubs now?

I am a member of the Samoyed Club of America and I'm sure I will be for the rest of my life. I hope they remember to give me my honorary watch when I'm 95 years old! As far as other dog clubs are concerned, I am no longer a member of any other dog club. I found a few years ago that I'd involved myself in the dog industry to a point that was detrimental to my own personal health and my own personal life. I had become TOO absorbed in the problems of the dogs and it threatened to destroy me. I decided that in order to save myself, I had to start cutting back on much of the work I was doing. Consequently, I cut down on the numbers of dogs I had; I cut down my participation in many groups and clubs. I was sorry to have to do this, but one person can only do so much. I did my best.

Tell us about your work with OFA. I'm delighted you asked that. I'd been very disappointed if you hadn't.

OFA is one of my very favorite subjects. It is my feeling and it always has been that every animal that is exhibited in a dog show should be of show quality. That means, the dog should not have any congenital hereditary defects such as hip dysplasia, eye disease, coronary involvement. The dog should be an excellent animal. Therefore, in order to maintain a high standard in the show ring, it has been my opinion that all dogs should be two years of age or older prior to being granted their first championship credit.

I feel dogs under two years of age, six months or two years of age, should be taken to the dog shows and exhibited and graded by that little man out in the middle of the ring with his chalkboard. However, those dogs shouldn't be eligible for championship credit until they are mature. They should be two years of age, tattooed for identification, OFA certified, eye certified, hearts certified - all parts of the animal should be certified by a veterinary group and we should all submit our dogs to this prior to submitting them to championship credits.

The OFA, for me, hasn't helped me in any way to control hip dysplasia because all they do is certify a film. I had to do the work myself. There are so many breeders who expect OFA to do their work for them! OFA is nothing but a piece of paper which certifies your dog. It is up to you as the individual dog breeder to genetically study your dogs and understand, yourself, how you must control hip dysplasia. Unfortunately, there are so many people who feel it isn't necessary to prove if their dog is dysplastic or not and when they say that to me, I KNOW it IS dysplas-

tic. I don't even question it. Any dog that is free of hip dysplasia should be certified. Any dog that is free of eye disease should be certified. Any dog that is free of any corneal disease should be certified. All dogs used for breeding should be tattooed to prevent pilferage by criminal breeders. They should be tattooed because we have an unfortunate incidence in purebred dogs where people are not only stupid but are also dishonest. They will falsify records and animals. There are animals certified OFA who are indeed dysplastic because the owner falsified the dog. They substituted another dog for their dysplastic dog and the dog is, unfortunately, certified. This is because they are breeding and there are animals in their pedigree who have OFA numbers who are indeed dysplastic and the individual who is now trying to breed on that pedigree is having problems. I can absolutely attest and would open my information to any knowledgeable, experienced breeder who can understand the genetics of breeding. It is a simple problem; a simple challenge to control hip dysplasia, but we must work at it.

Would you care to share that information here?

Certainly. The first thing you must do is inbreed and linebreed your dogs. You'll get nowhere outcross-breeding them. It just isn't possible. The genetic makeup of hip dysplasia, in my judgement, is such that when you outcross, you are breeding to a different genetic pattern and you cannot bring down your numbers of dysplastics unless you breed right within your own family, very closely. You must also be certain that all dogs you use for breeding purposes be genetically evaluated.

You can have an animal that is OFA excellent who is genetically dysplastic and the animal will produce a very high percentage of dysplastic animals and I don't care how or who they are bred to. You MUST be strong enough to not use that animal for breeding. If an animal has good hips, radiographically, that doesn't mean that animal will produce good hips. The only chance that animal has of ever producing anything is if he has good hips behind him and you breed him to a bitch of his own family who has the same animals and the same good hips behind her. If you don't do this, you don't stand one chance whatsoever of controlling hip dysplasia.

Joan, are you doing any work at the university?

Yes. I feel that the dogs should be very carefully studied because the only way we can help them is by understanding the problems. When I first started breeding dogs, I made the agreement with Dr. Mostovsky that he would X-ray every puppy that came out of this kennel. The only ones that have not been x-rayed are a few that were lost or run over or the owners moved and we couldn't find them. The only dogs that were not x-rayed that were ever produced from this kennel

were dogs where it was totally impossible to get it x-rayed. Almost all the puppies ever born here have been x-rayed.

And you have documentation on them?

Oh, yes, definitely. I have records. Each litter is documented and the names, results and age of X-ray and where the X-ray was taken. So each litter is completely studied as far as congenital hereditary defects: eyes, hips, hearts, everything! Everything that would affect the animal.

I get the distinct impression after talking here with you that you are far more interested in producing genetically sound dogs than in producing champions.

Oh, champions don't mean anything to me. In fact, it's very embarrassing. People ask me how many champions I've produced or how many champions a certain one of my dogs has produced. I frankly don't even know, half the time. As I'm sitting here right now, I don't know how many champions Diko produced. I'd have to spend probably several hours and make several telephone calls because I'm not even sure what some of his children are doing in the ring right now. To me, a good dog stands on his own feet and on his own merit. He is there to be seen. We have nothing to prove to anyone but ourselves.

Unfortunately, in the dog industry, everyone seems to be trying to prove something to everybody else instead of proving it to themselves. People are out running around the show ring, trying to win. What do you do with that? Do you take that ribbon home and put salt and pepper on it and eat it? What is it worth to you? If you cannot produce good dogs, if you can't have the satisfaction of knowing that you have something you can hold onto for the rest of your life, if you don't have that security in your dogs, then all the show wins in the world are worth nothing to you because you won't stay in the game; you can't - you won't have any animals. You must be able to stay with it for the rest of your life or you're wasting your time.

Are you comfortable with the Samoyed Standard?

Yes, I'm comfortable with the written Standard. I feel it's legible.

Would you clarify any points?

No, I don't think so. I think it's fairly well written. I feel if a person studies it you won't have any difficulty if you read the Standard carefully and study it, go out to the shows, watch the dog and ask opinions of other people. I think any new person just coming into dogs who has a sincere desire to learn will certainly learn and our Standard is a good place for them to begin.

What makes your dogs different from others?

They're evaluated. If a person buys a dog from me, they can get so many answers here. It's almost like going to a library. I have information

on all of my entire litters going back generations. I feel that when I sell a dog, I want to sell to someone who is interested in studying the animal so that individual can avail themselves of all the sacrifice I've made; all the years I've put into dogs under tremendous stress and a lot of physical labor, great expense and I don't want it to be for naught. I want others to be able to take advantage of my sacrifice and use it in a positive fashion, so that they and their dogs can benefit from what I have achieved. No man is an island and nothing can go on by itself. We all must work together. We must lean on each other and help each other, particularly through the years that are coming, ahead.

When was the last time you bred a litter?

Two years ago.

Why was that the last one?

I have a number of reasons.

Probably the first most critical problem I've had is when, several years ago, I developed a carpal tunnel syndrome and I've lived through really tremendous pain. I've almost completely lost the use of my left hand and had to have surgery last May. I was in a cast for six weeks and when they took the cast off, I couldn't move my hand at all. I had to go for ultrasonic therapy three times a week and then I still was having so many problems that they x-rayed it and found my hand had calcified and I had such a very severe arthritis develop after the surgery, so that, now, I'll have to undergo a great deal of physical therapy for the rest of this winter.

I had a number of things happen several years ago, both personal and health-wise, that all happened at the same time and I just put the brakes on breeding. I've always felt that if I couldn't take proper care of the animals, there's NO way I'd suffer them to do without. Other reasons why it's not been difficult to not breed is we are really going through some very serious problems in our country and it is affecting people. I see people who are acting in ways that are very contrary to their true personality. You could say we're having a huge, national nervous breakdown. Our families are falling apart, people are getting divorced, parents are turning on their children, children are turning on their parents; we have a high dope rate, a high alcohol rate, it's become a society that is sick. It is a world in which an animal has a hard time making it because the animals can't make it unless we see them through and help them through.

It does no good to breed dogs unless you can have good responsible homes to put them in because they're just going to be destroyed anyway. I've worked too hard on my dogs and have cared too much for them to breed them and put them out into homes where they won't be taken care of. It is easier for me to just not breed them. Besides that, it's a lot less expensive to not breed them. I never had a litter

that didn't cost me money!

How have the dogs affected your lifestyle?

They have consumed it. I don't do anything with my life without thinking about my dogs first. I find that my dogs dictate where I will live, how I will live, where I go, what friends I have. They naturally consume all my vacation time; I have NO leisure time because it isn't possible to have leisure time, as I have to be here to see to the animals. My animals are dictating my life and it is my opinion that no one can possibly be a dog breeder unless they can happily enjoy this type of sacrifice with the animals. If you're not willing to make that kind of sacrifice, you can't make it; it's best not to start it.

Do you mind me asking if the dogs contributed to your divorce?

No, I don't mind you asking me anything! (Since you ran the battery down on your car, you can ask me anything!) Yes, probably you could say they were the cause of it. However, it is my feeling that many things go together to make up a divorce. People have problems, underlying sometimes, that exist from the beginning of a marriage and you either fail to acknowledge that those problems are there or you put them off until tomorrow and suddenly tomorrow is upon you. Many times we'll give a reason for doing something that isn't the true reason at all. I feel a good marriage will sustain itself through anything. It's like a relationship with the dogs. We have breeders who have bred dogs for thirty-five to fifty years. Their dogs are just a part of their life. Then there are people who are in and out, in and out, and, finally, gone.

Marriage has become this way, unfortunately. There are people who just gaily go off and get married and six months later they're separated. People have the freedom to do whatever they want to do now. You give some people enough rope and they'll hang themselves with it.

Does your ex-husband have any of the dogs?

Oh, my, no. He'll never own a dog again, for sure. I've many times suggested if he'd like a dog, I'd be happy to send him one; any dog he'd like from here because he loved the dogs and enjoyed them very much, but with his lifestyle now, it isn't possible for him to have a dog and I really don't feel it would be good for him and he really doesn't want one.

It is often said that Sammies have a keen sense. Can your dogs read your mind?

Yes, definitely. Cajun always read my mind and that was one reason we were so close. I read hers and she read mine. And we both knew it. I feel some dogs, like some people, have extrasensory perception and this is a thing you don't create; it is either there or it isn't.

How could we go about changing

some of the problems we have today in purebred dogs?

The only way we can change the problems we have now is to have the government, under the Department of Natural Resources, develop a new agency that would be responsible for the welfare of all animals, not just dogs, but all domesticated animals: horses, birds, cats. This agency should be obligated to set forth all of the rules for dog breeding or exhibiting. They should have very firm controls with punitive action in the event animals are abused or not housed properly. I've always felt the only way purebred dogs could be properly bred and a high standard maintained is to have all purebred dogs bred in large, licensed kennels where all breeding stock has been inspected and tattooed for identification, where a veterinarian is obligated to observe all the breedings done in the kennel, where all animals must be certified for congenital, hereditary defects, where the government will very strongly control the quality animal that is bred and the conditions under which it is sold.

The government should be responsible for all registration papers and pedigrees on the animals. I feel we are in need of some very strong national laws on the types of kennels that will house these dogs. We should maintain these dogs under the same physical standard; it doesn't matter if they're bred in Iowa or New York. There should be the same kennels, inspections, and rules, nationally. I feel we need some very strong leash laws that would control these animals who are running on the street. It is my feeling a very strong fine should be imposed on any citizen whose animal is caught off his property. I feel individuals who breed dogs who do not have a licensed kennel should receive huge fines. I think the entire animal industry must come under strong government controls, otherwise there is nothing but chaos as we're experiencing right now. The government should be responsible to see to it that the dog shows are properly conducted and that individuals who participate, such as the judges, handler, breeders, have all been licensed, inspected and are observed, to see to it that they are functioning under the written law and if they are not, the licenses should be revoked.

That's all rather strong.

This is a strong world. It is survival of the fittest. We are reaching the point now where we are grossly overpopulated with humans and animals. We're going to have great difficulty with food and energy in the next twenty years. I feel we are contributing to a very destructive way of life by producing these millions of animals who are running loose on the streets. Many of them are first generation progeny off purebred stock, but they are first generation mongrels. The reason the animals are so freely thrown around is because people have no sense of responsibility. The best way to get the at-

ention of the human being is to hit him on the head with a two by four. So far, in past years, people haven't responded to anything but severe penalties. We're living in age now where we have accepted a very violent way of life. We see people being mugged, thievery of all kinds; yet, with all this criminality, we seem to have lost our conscience in that we all turn our heads and look the other way and as long as it doesn't happen to us personally, we don't care if it happens to our neighbor.

I feel the only way we're going to improve the life of the animals and for ourselves is to come under strong control, with excellent legislation that will penalize the violators. You can't have a situation of anarchy. We are all suffering from the situation we've created for ourselves, now. We'll not have our freedom very much longer unless we bring our freedom under control. There are many people in this country who aren't dog lovers. They're fighting the lack of laws, they're fighting the problems pet dogs are creating in neighborhoods and unless the dog breeders set upon the problems and attempt to make some resolution, I'm afraid if the government steps in on its own, they're going to make some laws

Show & Tell... continued from page 15

produced two champions in 1980.

Everyone is asking us where we feel the Samoyed competition is the toughest to compete with. Well, over the years of showing Samoyeds (and I feel that I have probably shown as many as any handler in the United States), I've found the toughest competition in the Midwest. From Colorado back to Illinois and north and south from these areas.

I have always said that if you want to find out how good your Samoyed is, bring it to this area and see how much winning you do. I would say, without reservation, that the finest groomed Samoyeds come from Colorado. This is why Murdock's record is one the Evanses can be proud of, for he has competed against some of the finest Samoyeds in the United States. I know that, if and when he retires, there are several Samoyeds right here in Colorado that will give everybody in the country a run for the Number One spot. It makes it very hard, in an area where you do have to compete week in and week out, with this kind of competition, but it makes you appreciate your dogs winning all the more. This is why my clients, who send me class dogs and bitches, really feel good when their dogs win in this area, for they realize they have been shown against some of the best competition around.

I feel that every article should have some humor to it and I feel the best would be classic statements made by judges after the Breed - win or lose:

the dog fanciers will be very unhappy about. If the fanciers become aggressive and formulate a program and approach the government with a program, we stand some chance of getting laws passed that will assist the dogs and ourselves. Without a good program, eventually the government will step in and they'll lay down the laws on the dog lovers that will destroy the purebred fancy.

Have the years spent in dogs been worth it?

Definitely. I wouldn't be without my dogs. I can't imagine what I'd do with my life or my time, if I didn't have my dogs. Owning dogs is an experience that is different from any other. You can have members of your family you're close to, you can have friends you enjoy, but your dog is with you always. Probably I'll never get married again because my attitude is: Love me, love my dogs! I think even if I were to meet someone I could be happy with under other circumstances, if he could not accept my dogs, there could be no relationship between us.

Is there anything you'd like to add?

Yes. I'm hungry.

Thank you very much. ¶¶

"It really is a shame he doesn't have tight cat feet. It would give his feet such a neat appearance."

"If you would cut his belly coat off, it would let the judge see he has fifty-five percent leg."

"He is way too big for the Standard (Murdock is 23 1/4"). I like them smaller and he carries way too much coat."

"If you could have stopped him from single-tracking, I would have put him up."

Murdock's record as of August 1, 1980: Two Best-in-Shows; 136 Best of Breeds; 57 Group placements; 13 Group I's, 13 Group II's, 17 Group III's and 14 Group IV's. ¶¶

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