

Exclusively Afghans

MARCH 2012



Remembering Mary...

Mary Kelson LeFebvre
August 27, 1942 – February 5, 2012

By Barb Strusinski

My first memory of Mary was in 1952. Our family moved back to St Paul and our house was across the alley from Mary's house. My sister, Jean, and I were playing with our herd of stick horses and Mary came over and asked if she could join us. Jean and I rarely played with dolls and had quite an involved stick horse collection. It fit Mary's idea of fun and she immediately became a good friend and constant companion. Our summers were spent riding our horses around the neighborhood. Mary loved horses and dogs and so did we. Our parents wouldn't let us have dogs and we kidnapped the neighborhood dogs, who didn't stick around long with no food.

Mary attended Nativity grade school where she took piano lessons from the Sisters. We went to Ramsey grade school and I took piano lessons from a private teacher. We both had pianos at our houses and played mostly duets of Chop Sticks and Heart and Soul. In the summer Mary and I walked around the block for hours singing the current popular songs. Mary had a beautiful alto voice and we harmonized. There was no TV and our time was spent outside riding bikes, playing ball and horses.

When we went to High School Mary's mother had her go to St Joseph's Academy. Jean and I went to St Paul Central. For Mary's sophomore year she talked her mother into letting her go to Central. Mary had a couple tragedies in her life when her father unexpectedly died in his 50s and her younger brother, Dickie, died suddenly at the age of 8, two months after their father died.. My brother was a close friend of Dickie and was an honorary pall bearer at the age of 8. Mary's mother was a nurse and managed to support the two of them through Mary's high school and college years.

In 1962 we got our first purebred Collies. Mary's dog came from a different breeder, Lois Jahn. We got involved with the Collie Club of Minnesota and started doing obedience with our dogs. I showed my Collie in conformation a little. She won a BOB and 3rd in the Working Group. The breeder that Mary got her Collie from, Lois purchased a Ch Crown Crest Topaz daughter from Kopperwood Kennels and had a litter sired by a German dog in the area. John Meier, who owned Ch Belden Dhi-Mond bought a bitch from her and bred her to his dog. Mary and Jean got puppies from that litter and soon after I bought a puppy from Lois Jahn sired by Ch Belden Dhi-Mond. Mary also got a dog from that litter so there we were with four Afghans and two Collies between the three of us.

I had married in 1963 and Mary and Jean moved to Coon Rapids with their dogs. We continued being active in the Collie club and eventually Mary and I joined the local Afghan Hound Club, still in its infancy. There were two factions in the club at that time. The people who wanted the club to be a sanctioned, recognized breed club and put on Specialty shows and those who just wanted to enjoy their Afghans, do some coursing and not "knuckle under"

to the AKC. Mary and I having been members of a Breed club knew the direction the club needed to head and with the help of devoted people and years of working towards our goal we succeeded in having our first Specialty at the Hippodrome at the State Fair Grounds with Kay Finch as our judge.

Marilyn Bergan had started a club newsletter, "The Afghan Hound Crier" and Barb Bornstein had refined it to a real magazine. Mary and I helped out and soon became co-editors. It was fun and rewarding. There were no computers in those days. Mary did all the typing and I did all the layout. We supported it by selling ads that were laid out with the lettering taken from a sheet of letters one at a time. I had to take the photos and the set up to a printer where it would be printed and bound like a magazine. Besides the local club news and ads we found articles regarding Afghans and current information on various topics: Breeding, Conformation, Hip Dysplasia, Interviews of members, cartoons, etc. Mary and I were editors for seven years before we could no longer make it self-supporting and the quality of the ads, mainly the photos, was always a worry. Also, at that time we were putting together the premium lists and show catalogs for the club. It was a great time for Mary and me. We would get on each other's nerves and sometimes argue about details but always managed to get the work done and enjoyed the feeling of success of a job well done.

In 1971 we had our first El Shazaam litter. Ch Taji of Kedar was bred to Rissla of Kedar, a Ch High Life Zarak Kuhn daughter out of Taji's sister. When they were 8 weeks old Mary got El Shazaam Marcus of Moornistan from Bill Moore. The combinations of the old Crown Crest dogs and the Moornistan dogs proved to be a great foundation for El Shazaam. Mary brought in El Shazaam Rose of Eldar from Bob and Penny Reay, who also went back to Moornistan. We had many wonderful times showing our dogs and breeding a few litters. During the 70s and 80s it was very difficult to finish a dog in the Midwest. Some of the Open classes had 20-30 dogs in them. Many of our dogs, who had points, including majors, did not get that last point.

Mary had a great eye for a dog. She also could set a dog up and make it look terrific. Her dogs meant so much to her. Mary and her dogs lived with us from time to time and Lloyd LeFebvre slept on our couch in Burnsville for a period of time while building their home in Stillwater. Lloyd made many of Mary's dreams come true. She got the horses she always wanted and someone who loved the dogs like she did. They were building their dream house when Lloyd became ill and died. As fate would have it we had just built a house next door to our first house in Hugo and Mary purchased our old house that was set up for dogs. We were close neighbors again.

One day, on the way to a dog show Mary announced "I might be getting married." I thought I knew everything about Mary but I didn't. Not long after that Scott (Dale) Kelley moved here from Florida. He had been interested in the Moornistan and Majara lines and Bill Moore referred him to Mary. Scott had been in Afghans for several years and a friend of Leslie Stoffels. His kennel name is Amerikas. Scott, Mary and I bred some litters and also got some puppies from Kristie Jones. They finished the first two dogs from Kristi and were showing their new puppies from Kristie when Mary became ill. Scott took care of Mary as she became an invalid. He did the cooking, shopping, and grooming of all their dogs, besides working. Scott is still our next door neighbor and we hope he will be there a long time.

Mary had one of the best senses of humor. She would laugh at things until she cried. She had many friends who are missing her. A part of me is missing without her. Not to be able to ever talk about our dogs again with Mary is unimaginable to me.

WHAT IS A TITLE?

Not just a brag, not just a stepping stone to a higher title, not just an adjunct to competitive scores. A Title is a tribute to the dog that bears it, a way to honor that dog. It is an ultimate memorial.

A Title will remain in the record and in the memory for about as long as anything in this world can remain.

Few humans will do as well or better in that regard, and though the dog himself doesn't know or care that his achievements have been noted, a Title says many things in the world of humans, where such things count.

A Title says your dog was intelligent, and adaptable, and good natured.

It says that your dog loved you enough to do the things that please you, however crazy they may have sometimes seemed.

And a Title says you loved your dog, that you loved to spend time with him because he was a good dog, and that you believed in him enough to give him yet another chance when he failed, and that in the end your faith was justified.

A Title proves that your dog inspired you to have the special relationship enjoyed by so few, that in the world of disposable creatures, this dog with a Title was greatly loved, and loved greatly in return.

And when that dear short life is over, the Title remains as a memorial of the finest kind, the best you can give to a deserving friend, volumes of praise in one small set of initials before or after the name.

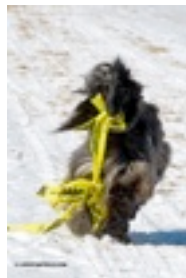
A Title is nothing less than love and respect, given and received permanently.

By Sandy Mowery

Presidents Message

Saturday, February 25, the Greater Twin Cities Afghan Hound Club hosted a Fun Run at Nate's King's Ranch. Lorene and Lynn registered and inspected the dogs, Rich ran the Lure (all day LONG), Lee was Hunt Master and Al and Anna took turns at Paddock Master. Sandy Nelson organized and picked up pizza for lunch and Susan made her world famous rice crispy bars and other treats and brought a number of food items including veggies and dip etc. It was a huge success with over 100 dogs running. Lois Stanfield photographed the dogs and sent some of the photos from the Fun Run that is included in this newsletter. The weather was chilly, but not freezing and cooperated for the event. It was perfect for the dogs and some owners had their dogs running 2 to 3 times. The Club members did run their Afghan Hounds at the end of the event and we ran until dark. Thanks again to all the Members who worked so hard and made this event possible. It was amazing fun for those who worked it and those who attended and ran their dogs as well.

On another note, our Club is in real need for Lure Coursing Operators - if you are interested in being trained in for this position - please let the Board know.



UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

Saturday and Sunday, March 31 and April 1 – CAT in Ramsey, Minnesota

Saturday and Sunday, April 21 and 22 – AB AKC Lure Coursing
Princeton, Minnesota

Friday and Saturday, June 22 and 23 – AB AKC Lure Coursing
Princeton, Minnesota

BRAGS, BRAGS, BRAGS

Barb Strusinski reports that Winston (Ch Kryslaur El Shaaam Bluberi Swirl) finished his championship at SCVKC last August with a 3 point major. He was Select Dog at Land O' Lakes.

Janet Williams is proud to inform us that she cleaned her "frickin dog room" and also that Lloyd went Best of Winners at Granite City.

Barb Church is beaming about VV (Ch Zavin's Vivacious) aka Very Vivacious. VV was awarded Winners Bitch for 2 points at St. Cloud and became a new champion. Barb goes on to say that VV does not want to quit showing because it is her greatest love. After tax season, Barb will come up with a new idea to keep VV happy. Barb claims that at her house, "It's all about VV all of the time."

Susan Weatherhead informs us that "Princess Parker" is 2 points away from being a Bronze Champion.

Sandy Perkins has a new Borzoi from Lee Griffith. His name is Penn, he's 3 ½ years old, and looks a lot like Connor. Penn has settled perfectly into Sandy's household. He is finished and really isn't serious about lure coursing because he will run a little bit, then spots someone in the crowd, and goes to visit them.

Congratulations to everyone and their dogs for all of your accomplishments! Please report your brags at a GTCAHC meeting or you can email them to me at suemedure457@gmail.com.

OTHER NEWS

It's that time of the year again...**Membership Renewals are due!** Please send your renewals to Anna Tyler, Membership Chair, 416 Iris Lane SW, St. Michael, MN 55376.

Julia Drees has to re-home some of her dogs. Contact Julia if you can help her out or if you know of any available homes.

The GTCAHC donated \$400 to the Afghan Hound Club of America Charitable Rescue Trust for a special needs Afghan Hound named Michaela. Michaela is with Anna Stromberg and so far has had vet bills over \$4000.

Lorene French and Lynn LaBahn attended the Comparative Oncology seminar at the U of M sponsored by the Lake Minnetonka Kennel Club. The seminar included discussion on the similarity of cancer in animals and humans. The GTCAHC will donate \$100 to the Comparative Oncology study.

For any dog obtaining a new CAT lure coursing title, the Club will be giving a "New Title" medallion. A New Title medallion will also be given to any member of the GTCAHC when their Afghan Hound achieves a new title in any venue from January 1, 2012, and forward. It will be the club member's responsibility to contact an officer of the club to let them know of their Afghan Hound's new title. The club will also be offering "New Title" pictures at the upcoming lure coursing events.

SPECIALTY 2012

Plans are moving along for the GTCAHC Specialty to be held in August...but...we still need people to help with the following events:

Thursday night: Decorate ring

Set up canopies

Set up tables and chairs (must be set up by 8 a.m. Friday)

Friday:

Help with auction and raffle

Sell raffle tickets

Set up for lunch

Clean up (take down decorations, canopies, pick up trash)

We need EVERYONE to help in some way to make this year's show a success. PLEASE volunteer by contacting Sandy Nelson if you can help!

RAINCOAT RAFFLE

We are currently having a raincoat raffle and are in the process of selling tickets, which are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. This is a great way for you to support your club and to also have a chance to win a very nice raincoat.

Designed and made by Sandy Nelson, the raincoat is complete with boots, a snood, and even a button for detail. Contact her at karizmaafghans@comcast.net or 763-232-2032 for tickets. This is a great raffle item to win for your dog, or it would make a wonderful gift for one of your Afghan Hound friends. Just take a look at how stylish and happy Tru looks modeling it!



The next GTCAHC meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 18, 2012, at 7 p.m. at Sandy Nelson's home. Her address is 9420 Magnolia Way North, Maple Grove, MN 55369. Plan to attend!!!

Anna Tyler: President
Lynn LaBahn: Vice-President
Sandy Nelson: Recording Secretary
Lorene French: Corresponding Secretary
Al Saiko: Treasurer
Sue Medure: Newsletter Editor