

shown and winning presented this way. A pin brush, Poodle comb, and Greyhound comb may be used to get the desired results. Add nail trimming and teeth cleaning, and a PON is ready for the show ring.

Some people argue that the judges put up the trimmed dogs, so if one wants to be competitive then one must trim. However, the argument can also be made that if judges were not presented with dogs that have been trimmed, none would be rewarded. Another argument sometimes heard is "The handler does it." Well, who's paying the bill? Handlers should listen to their clients. It's not the handler's job to uphold the standard. It would seem, then, that the onus is on the exhibitor-owner.

Judges judge what is brought to them. Most judges know how to put their hands on a dog, watch its movement, and discover their virtues and faults. It shouldn't be necessary to trim a dog for the purpose of making it "easier" for the judge to evaluate an exhibit.

In the end, it comes down to this: As an owner-exhibitor of a Polish Lowland Sheepdog, it is up to you to uphold the standard of the breed. Once headed down the slippery slope of trimming it may be too late to pull back. Is it worth possibly forever changing the look of our breed just for some wins?

Are you a standard-bearer?

Comments and suggestions are always welcome. —*Russ Tesarz, 205 Colonial Ave., Concord, NC 28025; retesarz@aol.com* ♦



Les Was More

I recently learned that Les Benis had passed away. I never thought of him as old. In 1956, when I was 8, I vividly remember watching on television Hungarians in the streets of Budapest being shot down as they threw Molotov cocktails at the Russian tanks that were killing them. They were

yelling into the cameras filming for Huntley and Brinkley, and Walter Cronkite, "Where are the Americans?" Les was there. He was 21. The Americans never came, but somehow, he managed to get out and make his way to America.

Les was incredibly brilliant and overflowed to the end with contagious enthusiasm for all aspects of life. He was a successful architect, pilot, Coast Guard Reserve officer, husband, father, AKC judge, author, and Puli breeder.

As a Puli aficionado, he was more kind, generous, and thoughtful than anyone I've ever encountered in the dog world. If he learned something that could help him win or be a more successful breeder, he would share it with others rather than using it for a competitive edge. This is because of his love and passion for the preservation of what he considered God's greatest gift to man—the Puli. This manifested itself in his book *This Is the Puli*, a work that still defines all aspects of the breed today, even though, sadly, it is currently out of print.

In 1976, I fell in love with a girl at work. She would bring an ugly shaggy dog to work with her every day and leave him in her car, which she carefully parked in the shade. At breaks and lunch, she would take him water and play with him. She told me he was a very special breed of dog—a Puli-mix, and that his main characteristic was that he was more sensitive and intelligent than all other dogs, protective of his owner, and sensibly wary of strangers. She also told me about the world's foremost authority on the breed—Les Benis—as if he were a rock star.

I began sneaking cheeseburgers to the dog, and the girl couldn't believe it when one day she went to get the dog out for a walk and he ran past her, jumped in my arms, and licked my face. My plan worked. She decided she'd have to marry me!

In the 30-odd years since, we bred and campaigned many champion Pulik, even winning breed at Westminster. Les became a trusted friend, coach, cheerleader, and confidant.

They're all gone now: Les, my wife,

and the kids. But I still have two little Pulik who run to my arms and lick my face when I come home from work late at night. My heart yearns for that world Les brought us.

But, thanks to Les, I know now that somewhere in time there's a great open meadow, full of fluffy white sheep that shine in the morning sunlight. And in the shade of the great tree of life, sits a shepherd who looks out over that meadow and watches. And a Puli runs through it. —*Tom Motter, 1051 N. Colorado St., Salt Lake City, UT 84116; tmotterksj@msn.com* ♦



For guest columnist Judi Maloney, of Bayfield, Wisconsin, getting involved with pet therapy in her retirement years was a natural extension of her previous career as a medical social worker and her lifelong love of dogs. Maloney is a founding member of Lake Superior Paws for Love and helps evaluate new human-dog teams for participation in the group. With her 5-year-old Sheltie, Jenna, Maloney regularly visits nursing homes and elementary schools, where she presents age-appropriate programs about being safe around dogs. Other group members participate in a read-to-a-dog program for children with reading difficulties.

Therapy Dogs Make a Difference!

Many Shelties are particularly well suited for pet therapy. Participating in pet-therapy visits can be rewarding and fun for the dog, the owner, and most importantly, for the individuals the team visits.

When evaluating dogs for therapy work, we look for confident dogs who are people-oriented without being "in your face"—dogs that are generally calm but interact happily when asked to do so. Passing the AKC Canine Good Citizen® test is an important first step for all would-be therapy dogs; previous obedience training is

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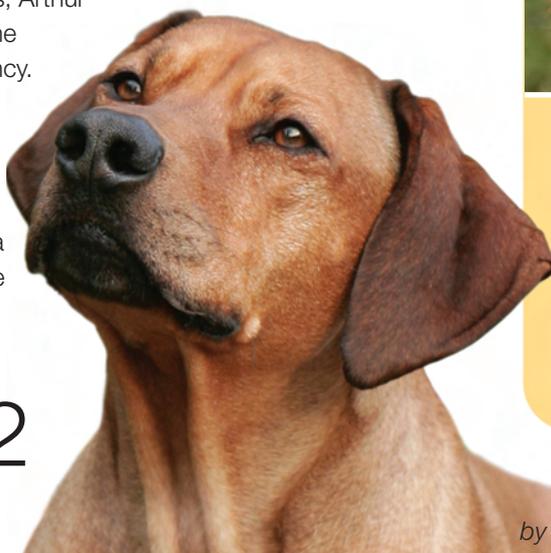
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