

smiled spontaneously, it was often clear to any who knew her that she was excited, and happy in her own way.

One male we owned only smiled with one upper lip. We trained him to smile on command as well; of course, if you can imagine it, his command was “Elvis.” It appears that with him it may have been hereditary, as his sire and at least one of his offspring smiled exactly the same way.

Some PONs never smile or they never let anyone see them smile. Then there are others who begin later in life. We’ve had a couple of different dogs that didn’t smile until later in life, and not everyone got to see those smiles—it was definitely a case of “selective smiling.”

One bitch we owned was a late bloomer and didn’t smile until she was older. Shortly after we noticed her small smile, she would also smile with a physical trigger of touching one ear in just the right place. This seemed to be a submissive expression, since she would usually do it if she was on the grooming table and having that ear combed or brushed.

Although all Polish Lowland Sheepdogs do not smile, count yourself lucky if yours does. Perhaps, let the uninitiated see your PON smile. Or don’t, and let it be a special look shared with you from your dog.

As always, comments and suggestions are welcome. —*Russ Tesarz*; Retesarz@aol.com

Pulik The Puli in Fiction

I learned recently that author Thomas F. Motter, longtime Puli breeder and my immediate predecessor on this column, has published a new novel called *The Song of Charlemagne II—The Hard Goddess*, available at the Barnes & Noble or Amazon websites.

I asked him about it, and he revealed that Pulik and a Komondor are introduced into the storyline in this second book in what is ultimately to be a trilogy. The story is set in France, where the author lived for a

year, and takes place in the period following the fall of the Roman Empire, commonly referred to by historians as the Dark Ages. It is based on the *Chansons de Gestes* and follows known historical events during the reign of Charlemagne. But it is not a history lesson, the author assures me. It is a historical romance, full of intrigue, action, and adventure!

Motter explains that the two Hungarian breeds were well established long before this period and would have been in use by the Avars, the sometime enemies of the Franks, and thus known to them.

The book, I’m told, has pen-and-ink illustrations by Tivon S. Oldman that include the Komondor in battle alongside his knight as well as Pulik herding sheep as an integral part of the king’s army on the move. The author says it was necessary to introduce the breeds at this point in the trilogy, as they become characters unto themselves and an indispensable part of the plot in the trilogy’s conclusion, to be out at the end of next year.

Very little is known or understood about the origins of the conflict between Islam and the West, Motter says. Yet, a thousand years and more after the fact, all of us are haunted by it in so many ways. Things like religious intolerance and fanaticism, women’s traditional roles in monotheistic societies, class systems stated or implied, and so much more on the contemporary scene today had their origins in this epoch.

In the author’s mind, no story or subject could possibly have more relevance than the story of Charlemagne, his knights, and, most especially, the women behind them along with seemingly inconsequential elements of the landscape of the time—in this case, a Puli and a Komondor!

The author claims that no small amount of research and scholarship went into the making of his tale. He says that he spent many hours of research in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris as well as many

additional hours on-site at known Dark Age battlefields and haunts of Charlemagne and the peers. By definition, the socio-economic, political, and religious influences and characters of the time are explored in as much detail as that given to the Hungarian dog breeds in the story.

The book has received critical acclaim from Catherine M. Jones Ph.D., chairman of the department of Romance Languages, University of Georgia and Melvin R. Davidson Ph.D., chairman of the Humanities department (Ret.), Loyola Marymount University.

If one is looking for a good read at the beach this summer or something for a judge or exhibitor facing a long plane ride to read, this one based on the age of romance and chivalry might be just the ticket! —*Sherry Gibson*; gibsons@blomand.net

Pyrenean Shepherds Life with Pyr Sheps

What are they like to live with? That’s one of the questions that people interested in the breed ask most often. They can see that the little dogs are cute, fast-moving, and responsive, but what are they like at home? Is all that activity hard to cope with, day to day?

Following are a couple of opinions from people who’ve lived with the breed for differing lengths of time.

The first story comes from Kay Johnson, who shares her Washington home with Pyr Sheps Eli and Rubi and their Malinois housemates. The smaller herders always make her smile, she said. One day in particular, young Rubi propelled her owner from a bad mood into outright laughter.

Most of us who have the breed are well aware of their ravenous appetites; they’re always ready to eat. Kay was preparing to head back to work after a weekend at home with the dogs. As a special treat to ease her departure, she had set out raw bones to thaw.

“Of course, Rubi knew this, because every time she would go past the kitchen sink, she would stand up and

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