

## HERDING GROUP



*Pembroke Welsh Corgi puppies, Andelys Kennels, c. 1940s*

*Jans Keys*

begin to accept your loss, deal with its consequences, and begin to slowly move on.

Coming back is important in terms of staying involved with dogs and the associated events. Baby steps first. You might think about stewarding at an event, where there will be plenty of shoulders to lean on should you need them. Perhaps help evaluate a litter of puppies, using what you know about the breed

and its development. Consider attending an event that you previously enjoyed with the dog you lost. Rescue groups are always in need of foster homes, as well as transportation resources for Corgis who have lost their homes; consider volunteering. You may wish to make donations in memory of your lost friend. Perhaps create a special memory shelf to hold items associated with the life the two of

you shared. Planting a tree or shrub in a favorite spot might help the healing process.

And, of course look to other dogs in the household for comfort and support. Continue (or start) their training in events that you enjoy. Enroll them in a class or enter them in an event to help your heart and soul start coming back. Train kindly, remembering that they are not the one you lost. If there are no other dogs in the household, your heart will know when the time is right to add a new family member. You can honor the lost one while acknowledging that nothing will ever erase the memories of a beloved dog.

### *2017 National Specialty*

We invite you to come back to the annual gathering of Pembroke fanciers from around the world. This year's national specialty will be held in and near Purina Farms, Gray Summit, Missouri, September 23–30. Check out [www.pwccanational.com](http://www.pwccanational.com) for all the details.

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### **Pulik**

I asked Renee Beymer to join me in writing this column, since she has the first Pulik to

title in the new AKC Therapy Dog program (<http://www.akc.org/dog-owners/training/akc-therapy-dog-program/>). Renee remains active in therapy pet work in her local community, and she is very proud of how her Pulik have provided an important service.

### **PULI AS THERAPY DOGS**

Scientific research shows that people benefit from positive interactions with dogs, with a decrease in ‘stress hormone’ (cortisol) levels along with an increase in the ‘cuddle hormone’ (oxytocin). Puli owners know that when we pet and/or hug our Pulik, we feel great. Some Puli people have chosen to share the love and companionship of their Puli with others by becoming a therapy dog team.

Therapy dogs are dogs who go with their owners to volunteer in settings such as schools, hospitals, and nursing homes bringing hearty doses of joy. When a corded Puli enters a facility, heads turn. The flowing coat and happy face bring smiles to most faces followed by questions starting with “What kind of dog is that?” It is never hard to start a conversation when you have a Puli at your side (whether your Puli is corded or sports a more anonymous shaved-down appearance). From working with a child who is learning to read to visiting a senior in assisted living, therapy dogs and their owners work together as a team to

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improve the lives of other people. Therapy dogs also provide cheer and entertainment for the ill and injured in hospitals. Sometimes animals heal mental wounds more easily and faster than traditional medicine, by providing a non-judgmental presence for those in need. In addition, they might sit with patients during chemotherapy infusions and visit at airports.

The AKC Therapy Dog Program was initiated to recognize AKC dogs and their owners who have given their time and helped people by volunteering as a therapy dog and owner team. There are titles for as few as 10 and as many as 400 visits. AKC does not certify therapy dogs; the certification and training is done by qualified therapy dog organizations. Further information on the program can be found at <http://www.akc.org/dog-owners/training/akc-therapy-dog-program/>.

We are aware that many Pulik have provided therapy-related services to many adults and children over the years, often becoming local celebrities in their own right. One particularly heartwarming story is of Pulioosha, who was rescued from the rubble at the World Trade Center after 9/11 and later became a therapy dog. Many Puli owners have not recorded all the details of their visits, and cannot be officially recognized with a title(s), but nonetheless have given selflessly of time and effort to share their compassion and love of the Puli to help

others. In some cases, they are Puli Club of America members who have been able to use therapy dog visits to help meet some of the requirements needed to earn a Versatile Puli title from the club.

Five Pulik (three female and two male) have applied for and received AKC therapy dog titles. And as noted earlier for other Pulik, these five have likely participated in many, many more visits than those recorded. Three of the titled Pulik have completed 100 visits and received the Therapy Advanced (THDA) title, while the other Puli logged 50 visits for the Therapy Dog (THD) title. The five therapy dog-titled Pulik are:

Superfly Cascade of Black, THDA, CGC—“Anika” (F), owned by Renee Beymer. “Anika” was the very first Puli to receive AKC recognition as a THD and THDA (December 2014).

Sinergi Strawberry Beret, ACT1, THDA, CGC—“Sari” (F), owned by Renee Beymer.

Mezok Oltes-Rosea Emelt, THDA, CGC—“Noe Sophia” (F), owned by Judith K. Roush.

Ch. Prydain Vertigo, BN, RN, THD, CGC—“Dizzy” (M), owned by Jodell Grandey.

Ch. Mezok Ramanok, CD, BN, RE, HT, NAJ, NAP, OJP, NFP, RATN, THD, CGCA—“Parker” (M), owned by Julie Schuh.

What makes a good therapy dog? In order to perform safely and comfortably in a variety of settings, a therapy dog should be friendly,

patient, confident, gentle and at ease in all situations. Working as a therapy dog seems to come naturally to some Pulik. Put their vest or scarf that identifies him as a therapy, and the most animated Puli settles down to spend time with his human, spreading calmness and encouragement to those they visit.

Each type of therapy-dog visit has different requirements and expectations for the Puli team, and it is the job of the handler to determine which visits work best for the team. As a partner of a therapy-dog team, the handler is the Puli’s advocate. It is the handler’s responsibility to make sure their Puli does not get stressed, while it is working.

Obviously, every dog needs training, without which they cannot do therapy work. There are programs specifically to certify pets and their handlers to qualify to perform pet-assisted therapy. Registering organizations for therapy dog teams differ, so it is important to do your research to determine the proper fit for you and your Puli. A list of therapy dog organizations is found at <http://www.akc.org/events/title-recognition-program/therapy/organizations/>.

While a registered therapy dog team can go into any number of facilities, the team must have prior approval from the specific facility they plan to visit and the team is covered with liability insurance by the therapy dog organi-

zation who certified their skills. A therapy dog is not to be confused with a service dog, which actually provides a “service” to a person with exceptionality (i.e., seeing eye dog for the blind, seizure alert dog, etc.). Service dogs stay with their person and have special access privileges in public places such as on planes, at restaurants, etc.

It is also important to note that not every dog is meant to be a therapy dog. It takes a special dog and owner to become a therapy dog team. It’s up to us to help our dogs discover what they’re best at.

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## Pyrenean Shepherds

Our guest columnist is Joni Monney-McKeown, of Nashville, Tennessee.

### THE PYRENEAN SHEPHERD AND ITS CORDS

For many judges, one of the challenges of judging the Pyrenean Shepherd is the breed’s unique coat—not only the various types of coat found in the breed, but also their cords.

While most corded breeds have cords over their entire bodies, the Pyrenean Shepherd’s