

A Kennel Visit with:

Carleez Pomeranians

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

by Carol Leemhuis



I am told my love for animals goes back to before I can even remember. I was the child who tossed aside dolls received as gifts without wanting to open the box but cherished every stuffed animal. My two favorite stuffed animals were both dogs, "Drooper" and "Bruno." When I was four years old I ran across a parking lot to meet a St Bernard who looked just like my stuffed dog Bruno. My mother (who is afraid of dogs) was not at all amused.

Along my journey to my first dog, my parents tried to pacify my wish with several aquariums, parakeets and a guinea pig. When I was eight, I mustered up the courage to get out of bed to propose a business opportunity to my parents. I suggested that I could board other

people's dogs while they were on vacation and then the dogs would go back home. My theory was that I would prove that I could take care of a dog or two, my parents could keep the cash and I would enjoy the company of the dogs while in my care. It sounded like a great plan in my mind. I was sent straight

quality, big ears, a flatter coat and was an incessant barker who grew to be fourteen pounds. That dog was the best friend any child could have wished for. She taught me that dogs don't question us, they love us unconditionally and are always there to listen and not judge us or just to lick away a tear. Penny lived to be



fifteen and saw me through college.

After Penny knew a dozen tricks and was a full fledged household member, I asked for another dog. Each time I asked I was told that we had a dog and one was all we would



Photos on this page
Top Left: Carol
Center: Our New Home
Bottom Right: My husband John

back to my bed with my business proposition.

At long last, as a nine year old my parents chose a Pomeranian as my childhood confidant. "Penny" was already named, about four months old and certainly at least four pounds when we brought her home. She had a longer nose, wasn't show

have. Over time I heard, "When you grow up and have your own home you can have as many dogs as you

want.” That today is my philosophy.

When other teenagers went to work at movie theaters and fast food restaurants, I went straight to local animal hospitals to find my first job. For eight years I worked in varying positions. I started as kennel help and progressed into receptionist, veterinary technician and surgical assistant. I learned that the ‘hand’s on’ part of work is my true passion. I acquired unimaginable knowledge while caring for the animals and had the opportunity to work under many talented veterinarians. Much of what I learned there during high school and college still applies to the dogs today.

I graduated from college with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nutrition from The Pennsylvania State University. I went on to complete a residency and became a Registered Dietitian (RD). So much of what I learned nutritionally and medically has been instrumental for my breeding program and can be applied to our day to day care of the dogs.

After graduation, I married my husband John. He is a teacher in an urban city school district. He loves his job and is very busy with teaching, coaching and refereeing. He also works to mentor underprivileged children from local urban areas. My residency program was grueling and upon completion John knew that I was ready for another pom. His intentions were great however his knowledge of where to acquire a Pom was not as good. We welcomed “Lacey” into

our home. She came straight out of a pet store and was complete with AKC papers and champions in her pedigree. I had told him I wanted one from champion lines. She was a terrific dog although she suffered from separation anxiety and barked when left alone. I tried radios, tape recordings, citronella collars, and distraction toys, everything I read about that made sense. I then headed off to obedience school with my puppy that liked to bark.

At that time we lived in an apartment building and Lacey was litter box trained. I wasn’t at all amused with the instructors whose focus was for me to train my dog (who barked indoors) while working outdoors on control exercises with her so she would understand not to bark indoors. She quickly learned everything from ‘sit’, ‘down’, ‘stand’, ‘come’, heeling outside for miles and other control exercises. Everything was later trained with hand signals and attention to detail. She was the star of the class, and she still barked. I went ahead and taught her all of the AKC Novice and Open Obedience exercises to compete at Trials and began competing. They told me her barking would subside over time. My Novice A dog completed her Companion Dog (CD) title in four shows with class placements and earned High In Trial (HIT) at the 1995 APC National Specialty in NYC. Lacey later went on to earn her Companion Dog Excellent (CDX) title becoming Princess Lacey II CDX. She never gave up barking.

Lacey’s barking problems led me to shows, and shows led me to want a pom that looked like a champion even more than I had wanted one previously. My husband John then brought home “Spencer” because he looked “just like Lacey” and he needed a home and some TLC to become a good canine

companion. Teaching Spencer to trust people took nearly four years. He was described by the animal communicator as “a savant” and I believe that to be accurate. Spencer was shown in seven shows and qualified in all seven becoming Spitfire’s Animated Suspense CD. Spencer retired to live with my husband’s family in Florida and be a pampered pooch. I was still determined to own a pom that looked like show dog.

I saw a show prospect puppy that I just had to have but he wasn’t available. “Rocky” had placed second in a class of 26 at the APC Summer Nationals Puppy Match. A week later my phone rang and Rocky was available. I drove to get him and was very excited. We had conformation classes, grooming lessons and training lessons. I worked with Rocky for three months and we were ready to enter our first shows. But, it was not meant to be. Rocky was not growing adult coat and his puppy coat was falling out. By nine months of age he was almost completely bald and he was neutered. When Rocky was about five years old he grew some hair in a few spots and I put a Companion Dog (CD) Title on him. Rocky is almost 13 now and has never recoated other than the one time with long fuzz in some places. Rocky was pictured in a catalog at Nationals completely bald asking for everyone’s help in “Won’t you be a part of the solution?” My first show prospect attempt was a crash course in Alopecia X.



Lacey



Rocky

Camilla Knight of Sundown Poms offered me the opportunity to own a five month old boy who was deep in the uglies. He was the repeat breeding of her soon to be first champion. If I wanted to grow him out and show him, he looked promising. I debated and pondered the decision. I knew when I asked

Jerrie Freia of Janesa Poms for her opinion and she replied with, "Honey, if you don't take him, I will" that he must be going to grow into a nice adult. She had bred both of his parents and knew the lines well. The puppy already had a name and I took "Zeke" home with me. About four weeks later I assured

Camilla that the ugly duckling was turning into a swan and I wanted to get my feet wet showing him. I'm sure she didn't believe me. I sent her a picture of him free baited in my yard with his short puppy tail nearly touching his head and she promptly agreed.



Photos of Zeke in the Group ring

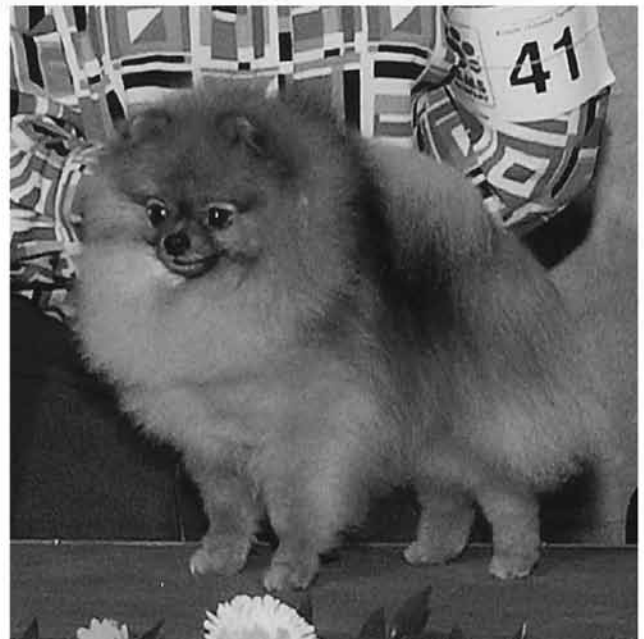
Zeke

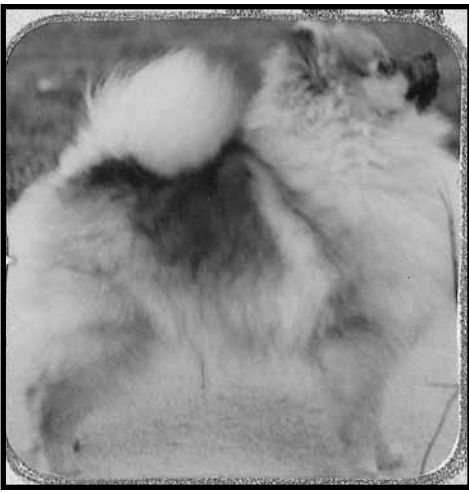
BISS Ch. Sundown Hide N Zeke CD ROMX GC

Zeke Shown as a Veteran



Zeke Winning a Group Placement





Zeke at 5 months

Zeke set foot in the conformation ring at nine months of age and finished his championship novice owner handled two days after his first birthday with three major wins, four Best of Breeds over specials and two group placements becoming CH Sundown's Hide N Zeke. Along that quick journey three judges told me that he should be specialed. I was naïve and thought they meant for me to go show my own dog. In hindsight, I am sure they meant for me to let him mature and someday when he was ready to show him or better yet hire a handler to do so.

Not realizing must have been good karma. With me holding his leash as his biggest handicap, Zeke went on to be ranked #6 in 2002 and #8 in 2003 shown just half the year. He won two Best In Specialty Shows (BISS) and many group placements along the way, as well as completely winning my heart. Zeke would walk on hot coals if I asked him to. He earned his Companion Dog (CD) Obedience Title in 2000 with class placements. Zeke still loves to show. Taking him in the ring today is the fastest way to make me teary eyed. I am grateful for every day I have with him, for all that he has taught me about Pomeranians and about life and for all that he has left me in his children. He can be found

every night on my pillow. Thank you to Camilla Knight for creating Zeke and letting him come rule my world. Presently he is known as Multiple BISS CH Sundown's Hide N Zeke CD ROMX GC.

Because of Penny and Lacey I had to have show dogs. Because of Zeke I had to have puppies. I watched other breeders for eight years while showing before I decided to try having a litter. I asked a lot of questions. I spent time just sitting and listening to old time breeders talk. The person that shared the most information was Jerrie Freia (Janesa Poms) who has been breeding poms for almost forty years. I spent a lot of time soaking up information like a sponge and filing in my memory for the future. Thank you to Jerrie Freia for sharing. I finished a lot of dogs along the way prior to breeding any of my own. In 2002 my first litter was born. I chose Carleez as my kennel name because my breeding program would be a combination of my efforts and Zeke's genes. So Car-Lee is for my name and Z is for Zeke's. My first litter was born 56 days from the first breeding. All three puppies survived and two went on to become the first Carleez champions. CH Carleez Dr Zeuss, a black & tan, finished from the Bred By Exhibitor Class and CH Carleez Ollie Ollie In Free was owner handled by Debbie Barrett to his championship.

Funny names you notice? When Zeke sired his first litter for his breeder Camilla Knight she named the four girls Sundown's Catch Me If You Can, Sundown's Mother May I?, Sundown's Peekaboo At Janesa and Sundown's Ring Around The Rosie. At that point in time a theme was created and it stuck. Zeke's kids have been named after kid's games, kid's toys,

kid's sayings and simply kid stuff.

My first litter was a lot of beginner's luck creating two champions. I have found much heart break along the way, as most of us do. The breed is plagued with health problems and no one likes to talk about them because we are all judged when we do talk about them. Worse yet, things are repeated (and not always correctly) and then rumors start. It's a frustrating cycle. I do support health testing and all of my adults and puppies have been checked and nearly all of our adults are registered with CHIC (Canine Health Information Center). I don't believe the system is perfect, but it is a starting point.

From before the first litter and through 2008, I lived in the City of Pittsburgh. I worried on a daily basis about the dog laws and neighbors. I had little reason to worry other than the horror stories we hear about nationwide. But, when it comes to worrying I have that down to a science. If anyone needs something worried about I can take care of that for you. During this time frame, I had an occasional litter to have a new pom to show myself. With my new additional poms, I no longer had room to keep dogs for others that I had shown for in the past. I knew I needed to move to the country.

Finding a place in the country and keeping my job of then fifteen years proved challenging. I am required to live in the county I work in and there isn't much country land left in the area. While I searched for land, a joint venture was begun with Laurie Otis of Horizon Poms. We decided to find some girls with old kennel names behind them, not necessarily from show breeders. We wanted girls that were from free whelping lines of bigger litters, mom's that had lots of milk, good patellas, big pretty



CH MACH4 Carleez Boom Boom Boom and CH MACH2 Carleez Front Page News

teeth and teeth that often fell out on their own. We were searching for kennels that had puppies in the uglies that were growing adult coat at four and five months of age. We found several breeders that had what we wanted and purchased girls as broods. We knew it might take a generation or two to accomplish what we wanted but it has been working. We bred those broods to our older stud dogs that were still healthy and correctly coated. Children and grandchildren of our joint endeavor are in the show ring and winning.

Two girls that have given me great success came from Gail Garvey of Gar-V Pomeranians. Thank you Gail! The girls are half sisters out of CH Gar-V's Desert Windsong ("Mariah") owned by Gail. First I bought "Zeeka" CH Gar-V's Zeek-A-Boo. Zeeka produced a champion for Gail and went on to produce

seven champions and two titlists for me which earned Zeeka the ROMS award from APC. One of her sons, CH Carleez N Gar-V's Magic Dragon ("Puff") has won multiple Best In Shows in Latvia where he now resides and is owned by Marina Desinova. Zeeka's half sister who has also been a great producer for me is "Lily" Gar-V's Beau-tiful Windflower and she has three champions to her credit presently and more kids in the ring. One of Lily's sons, CH Carleez Defies All Logic ("Logan") is a Best In Show winner in Hong Kong and is now owned by Choi Leung Hin.

Lily's daughter "Madison" Carleez Made To Order ROM is producing well for Linda Pelz (Dreamweaver Poms). I am hoping Lily's last litter will give me another girl to go forward with.

Zeeka and Lily are also the mothers of two of my proudest achievements in poms. Since my beginnings are in rooted obedience and companion/performance events, I especially enjoy watching agility and obedience Pomeranians. I will always be indebted to George and Janice Smith for loving, training and showing "Boomer" and "Paige" to become the first male and first female Pomeranians in the history of the breed to become Dual Champions in



Photo by Lidija Mihalova

CH Carleez N Gar-V's Magic Dragon ("Puff")



CH Carleez Defies All Logic ("Logan")



Above: Two views of the dog's bedroom & sleeping areas

Below: Separate areas under the roof in the side dog yard (Left) and The big fenced play yard (Right)



both conformation and agility. At the time of this writing Boomer is CH MACH4 Carleez Boom Boom Boom and Paige is CH MACH2 Carleez Front Page News. I am in awe when I watch them perform at their teamwork, the precision and the devotion. Thank you to all of them. They can be seen at www.agilitypoms.com

Few of my litters would exist without my fabulous friend Laurie Otis. My work schedule is not compatible with whelping. Laurie enjoys whelping and has two jobs that are compatible with unpredictable whelping times. She takes my girls home when they are due and I pick them up after they have puppies. I will always be grateful for her generosity, devotion to the poms and her friendship. Without her help, my litters and my successes would be far fewer. Thank you Laurie.

Additionally, my husband John is a huge part of the day to day work of keeping and raising Carleez Poms. He is in charge of mowing the dog yard, much of the pooper scooping and some of the daily pom care. Most of all, he is my chief baby sitter while I am away at dog

shows. He has learned a lot about dogs and does a great job socializing puppies and pampering those that need it. His help is greatly appreciated. I'm glad he has learned to share in a little bit of my chosen hobby.

Finally, I am grateful for my parents who did a great job of raising me and instilling values in me that are good to have on the journey of life and the rocky road of raising and showing dogs. In spite of not understanding my need for even more dogs, my parents have been very supportive. Occasionally I am lucky enough to have them accompany me to a dog show and spend the day with one or both of them. Those are always wonderful days. My father is quite a handy man and has helped with construction and remodeling of many things that are just for the dogs. Thank you to both of them.

In December 2008, we finally got to move to the country. I consider it freedom. The search for the setting with enough land, no neighbors and where dogs would be legal finally ended after more than two years of constant searching. At long last my dogs can bark. I have no limits other than how many poms I can take care of. I

can leave for work and feel good. I can sleep at night. With the purchase of the house came lots of work, much of it still in progress. It wasn't the style home I would have chosen but the setting was nearly perfect so we would be doing a lot to make it work with the house and the dogs. The house is a split level home. I had the entire lower level tiled for the dogs. The upper level was done in laminate and tile. All of the floors are pom proof and easily cleaned. The dogs have a room that is 18' x 24' that is all theirs, as well as the family room that they share with us.

Off the side yard of the house we had a roof built over the yard that is 24' x 18' so that the dogs can go outside in a downpour or a blizzard and not get wet. It also provides wonderful shade on hot days. Under the roof there are six separate areas separated by privacy fence. Due to the size, slope and shape of the side yard and the placement of the door to the house, everything had to be custom fit to the location. A drainage system was put under the yard and the area under the roof was filled with gravel. This can be easily hosed clean. Outside of the roof the yard opens up into a huge fenced area for the poms with six foot vinyl privacy fence. There is lots of room to run in the grassy yard for exercise and playtime.

Presently I have finished over 30 championships on poms and pointed many others. I have put five obedience titles on poms. Six of my champions were finished from the bred by exhibitor class. I am breeder or co-breeder on eighteen pom championships to date.

When I moved to the country my goal was to create what I wanted to move forward with for my breeding program. Due to his age, this needed to begin with the creation of some new Zeke children. While I do agree with most breeders that line breeding produces some of the best show dogs, I have seen that

most of Zeke's nicest kids are outcrosses. I decided to purchase some girls that would be outcrosses to breed to him. This has opened the door for me to have some different bloodlines and work with some fabulous breeders. Thank you to David and Carlene Gilstrap (Mountain Crest Poms), Jackie Klein (Silver Meadows Poms), Celeste and Robert Solano (CR Poms), Sharon Yampiro (Great Rivers Poms) and Cheryl Kerr (Keody Poms) for helping me on my quest. I now have some youngsters out of Zeke which look very promising from litters out of girls from these breeders. My plan is to use those offspring as the rest of the foundation for the future. Zeke presently has sired twenty champions at almost twelve years of age and I expect some of these puppies that are three to seven months of age to go on and become champions. These outcrosses and their daughters should be a good foundation to take into the future and line breed upon. I hope to produce many more healthy and beautiful representations of the breed. A beautiful profile held together while moving is to me the essence of the breed.

I have three young boys presently residing with me to breed in the future. I prefer to prove a boy when they are young and then wait until they are older to really consider focusing on them. I'd like to see them be in good health and have healthy coats prior to having lots of puppies for me. Waiting in the wings are CH Animation's Jeckle (Black), CH Carleez Cops & Robbers (Black & Tan) and major pointed Carleez Against All Odds (Black). Thank you to Lorinda Vasuta and Darren Lane (Animation Poms) for letting Jeckle come to Pennsylvania. Additionally, I had the pleasure of owning and finishing "Wally" BIS GCH Horizon's A Fly On The Wall HOF. Thank you to Laurie Otis for sharing one of the great ones. Wally is presently owned by Ron and Marilyn Smith (Starlight



Left: "Jeckle"



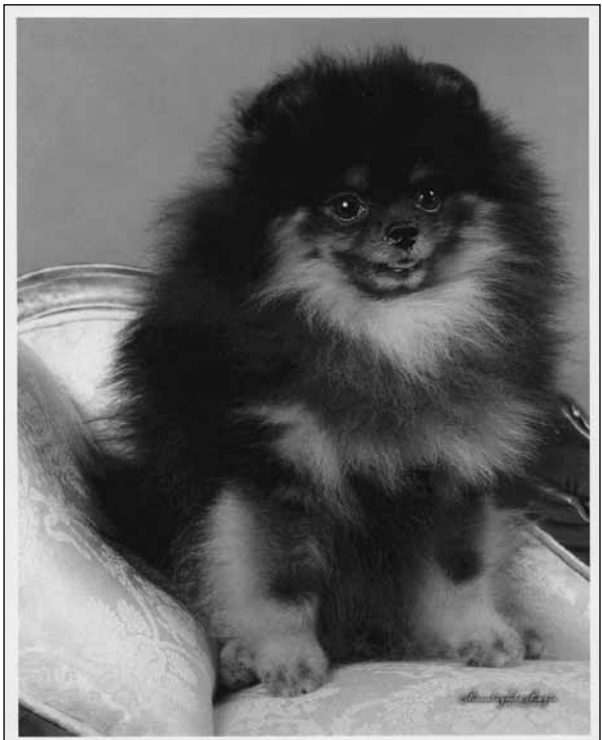
Center: "Bandit"



Right: "Collin"



BISA, GCH Horizon's A Fly On The Wall HOF
"Wally"



My First Bred by Champion "Zeuss"
CH Carleez Dr Zeuss

Paws) and Krystal Morris (Cliffrose Poms). Wally is being campaigned by handler extraordinaire Curtiss Smith (Kali) of Arizona and assisted by Deronda Sharp. A very memorable day indeed was June 13, 2010 when Wally won Best In Show at the Flagstaff Kennel Club Show. Thank you to all of them for believing in Wally and giving him this incredible opportunity. Wally will again be a part of the stud force here after he retires.

I presently have seventeen dogs over six months of age, three young prospect puppies and Rocky who is neutered. Five of those poms are black & tan, two are black, one is beaver, and the rest are varying shades of orange, cream and sable. The color I would really like to have that I am missing is red. Anyone out there that would like to help me with creating red poms, I am ready. Most of my girls that have been good mothers have stayed here until they are four to six years of age. After that they have been spayed and retired to find a

lap to enjoy for many years. Girls that don't enjoy being mothers have retired younger, as well as those that are unsuccessful at motherhood or pregnancy.

I hope to see many of you at shows for years to come. I would like to see our breed continue its' winning ways at the group and BIS level which has really climbed in the past decade. Additionally, I hope we can improve on the health and longevity of our breed. Thank you to all who have been good sports at the show, good friends in life and may we all remember to enjoy our poms each day so that they may have great lives while they are a part of ours.

Best wishes.

Carol & John Beemhuis

Carleez Pomeranians

