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Johnny

Jodie Foster of Malabo APD

PORTUGUESE WATER DOGS

The Breeders' Perspective



"Isabelle"
Specializing in
cancer scent detection.

CATHY DUGAN -
AVIATOR PORTUGUESE WATER DOGS

1. Why did you choose your breed and how long have you been involved?

I have long admired Portuguese Water Dogs from when they were in the miscellaneous class back in the 1980's. I even went to the Crufts Dog Show in 1991 to learn more about the breed. I acquired and co-owned a female PWD in 1994 and finished my first home bred champion in 1998. I love the exuberance and generosity of this breed. They are happy workers and a joy to live with. They are praise driven and very, very smart! Sometimes too smart!

2. Where did your breed originate, and what was its main purpose?

For centuries, Portuguese Water Dogs were used on fishing boats in Portugal to assist with the catch. They carried messages between boats, took nets out, herded fish into the nets and then helped pull the catch in. Men and dogs working together on a small

vessel demanded a strong work ethic and a "get along" personality. Their strength and power as swimmers is undeniable. And yes, they do have webbed feet.

3. What is the most distinctive physical and mental characteristic of your breed?

Portuguese Water Dogs are distinguished by their impressive heads, strong muscular bodies and a tail that is carried over their back. PWDs come in two coat types and two clips - neither is to be preferred. These are intelligent, spirited, self-willed and loyal companions. They will work for praise and make wonderful conformation and performance competitors. They are equally effective as therapy dogs. I work as a hospice nurse and in many situations my PWDs serve to bridge the gap with patients that often cannot be explained. We've also had dogs involved in search and rescue, cancer scent detection and land mine detection training.

4. Which kennel, domestic or foreign, has given the most to the breed, and how?

There was a cadre of breeders who helped establish the breed back in the 1970's led by Diane Miller. There are many influential kennels today. Our PWDs came from the fine lines developed at

Driftwood, Nautique, Robel, Farmion and Roughrider.

5. Which sire and dam have contributed the most to your breeding program?

Sire: CH Aviators Anchors Aweigh, "Anchor" is by far my star stud dog. He has produced multiple Champions and is the sire of our #1 PWD "Lady Bug", CH Aviators Luck Be a Lady. Anchor was Winner's Dog, Best Puppy and Best of Winners in 2002 at the Portuguese Water Dog Club of America National Specialty when he was nine months old. Dam: Aviator's Daughter of Fortune, "Isabelle". She is the dam of five champions including a 2007 Top Ten winner. She is the grand dam of our 2008 #4 ranked champions, "Dickie" CH Aviator's Lucky Charm and the 2009 #1 ranked PWD, "Ladybug". Isabelle did not become a champion herself because she was too busy working in clinical trials for cancer scent detection research.

6. What is the greatest achievement you have had in dogs?

My greatest achievement has been keeping the right dog! Ladybug was a standout from the beginning and then we were blessed with the opportunity to campaign her in 2008 and 2009.

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She has won three Bests in Show and is the #1 PWD all systems this year.

7. Which dog not bred or owned by you, do you wish you could have owned and why?

I am a big fan of a dog named CH Robel Christopher Robin. I first fell in love with his kids in 1997 at the PWD National and then was able to meet him in person some years later. My dog Anchor is very similar in style and type and is Christopher's grandson.

8. What advancements in structure, health and/or temperament have you seen over the years?

The Portuguese Water Dog Club of America has developed a strong policy and program geared towards improving the health of our dogs. PWDCA maintains an open health registry of health data we all can use to make our breeding decisions.

PWDCA members through their support and stewardship have made huge strides in health research. We have virtually eliminated pcd/PRA through genetic testing as well as GM-1, Storage Disease. A new test is now available to determine genetic markers for Juvenile Dilated Cardiomyopathy. I am proud to be involved with a breed fancy that takes health issues seriously to correct and improve the health of our perfectly wonderful dogs. There has been a marked improvement in fronts and rears since I started in the breed. I also understand from some of the veteran breeders that our dogs today aren't as tough and stubborn as some of the early dogs.

9. Do you think the standard is adequate? If not, what areas need attention?

The standards for PWDs are concise in words but I am aware that the variety of coats, clips and colors can be overwhelming to the newcomer. We have had to be very open to create as much diversity as possible, having started back in the

1970's with very few dogs. I think in the coming years, it may be helpful to add a height minimum and maximum DQ. Some of us confuse size with substance. The PWD is intended to be a dog of moderate size, and I know that height as a DQ in Dalmatians has served to moderate the size of that breed. Also, some definition of acceptable colors may be helpful so as to more clearly define the breed.

10. What is the most common judging mistake in your breed?

The challenge facing judges is to find the best Type, Movement, and Attitude amongst a wide variety of coats, colors and clips. This is a "hands on" breed to determine overall substance and muscle development. Remember, no discrimination is to be made against either clip - Lion or Retriever - and no preference is to be given to coat type - Wavy or Curly.

Bonus - Share some "words of wisdom" (100 or less) to better your breed. In advising people interested in the PWD, I would say to be prepared

for a very intelligent dog who will be your constant companion. They enjoy performance, therapy work and many other things as long as it is in the company of their people. PWDs will work for praise!



"Sailor" Aviators first home bred Champion.



Ch. Aviators Anchors Aweigh