

Canine Conservancy: A Seminar by Doug Johnson June 2023

This presentation is done to make you open your mind and stretch your concept of what is like to be a breeder. How you are better success and ways you might change your approach to breeding and other breeders. It is meant to support all breeders. This seminar is a journey.

It starts with what is possible. A kid in his bedroom looking at a dog encyclopedia. I could have never imagined this type of breeding success as a kid. My first litter producing a WKC BIS winner and then doing it again a few years later with another endangered breed. It proves that if I could do this...any one can.

- Beginners luck coupled with generations of well-bred dogs behind your foundation.
- Canine Conservation. It has become important to me to have people join in the movement. Be a part of the changing demographic of the sport. We are only a journey together. Our lives intersect and we grow and change in the sport together. CC is part of that broader mission.

STATE OF THE NATION. WHAT HAPPENED, how did we get here and what can we do about it. 911 this is an emergency.

- The world stages: Endangered breeds. FCI and the animal rights movement. HUGH probably of breeds dying. Where is the Alpine spaniel. Will the Otterhound be next????????????????? Sussex????????????????? Are you able to help????????????????? Will you help????? What are you doing to help or do you even care about this? Should we be PRESERVING breed????
- The very popular DOODLE DISCUSSION.....remember we are PRO BREEDER! Doodle breeders are clever and have out marketed the pure-bred dog breeders.
- As AKC breeders/exhibitors...it is important to know where we fit. Overall the purebred dog breeder represents only 5% of puppies sold in a given breed. I am told it is more like 35% in Irish Setters. Which means that 65% of dog purchased from the AKC system are not bred in show/conformation homes. I think this is shocking information. Where are the others coming from. "backyard" breeder, high volume breeders and puppy mills discussed. DISSPELLING some myths of breeders. High volume doesn't mean bad. Backyard breeders can be responsible breeders.

Preservation breeding

- What is it, how it became part of the popular vernacular and its original intent. Original phrase was a result on the AKC seminar, to preserve gene and a look in a kennel not to save every breed. I have never believed that popular breed breeders were preservation breeders. They were breeding true to type dogs as defined by the standard. I was focused on the preservation of the genetic traits that produced those classic type elements. It became a buzz word. I moved to conservancy. This is closer

to the actual definition I was after for the minor breeds and breeders of them. The massive effort to not let breeds go extinct.

- Think of these other terms in other areas of your life: seeds, trees, sheep and pigs
- The plight of the rhino---trips to Africa opened my eye to what we are really doing with is conservation.

This was instrumental in my brain process with regard to breeding and ways we can show successful outcomes for less known and low populated breeds.

This is the self-reflection portion of the seminar.

- Are you standing in the way of others progress?
- Are you limiting your breeds advancement?
- Are you inclusive or exclusive?

It is past time to open the kennel to anyone, the allow others to use your dogs. It is important for the advancement of the breed and will come to benefit you and the breed as a whole in the long run.

Becoming an accountable breeder.

- An elevation from being a responsible breeder. Accountable for the dog for life, accountable to the buyer for the life of the dog, developing a relationship with the buyer. ETC.

Having your vision and your own unique prospective of the breed. Defining the look and type of your kennel. Creating a brand identity.

Discussed the three phases of learning, learning to see.

Better Breeding starts with making better choices.

- This is where we start: it takes time....you have start somewhere so....you need to look at your bitch and make an educated decision on her quality....is she worthy and why....what do know about her good qualities. You must be genetic testing, taking advantage of the new technology and all the breed specific research you can prior to breeding. What physical traits are you hoping to capitalize on? What are you going to look to improve? Over time you will be planning over many generations.
- REMEMBER: We all start somewhere. Generally, we don't start with the level of quality we want to produce. We often start with what needs to be upgraded. Where we start in the sport is luck. We generally go into the sport very green and the dog we buy is the "best" we could find or afford.

Today's breeders have to work harder. The tools are out there. EVERYONE IS WATCHING.... the stakes are higher. The PUBLIC have a higher awareness and a higher expectation. You have to not only make good breeding choices but you need to make better choices in veterinary care, husbandry and socializations, where you place puppies. You have to reevaluate all aspects of your breeding program and what you do with it.

- Are you making the best choices for them.

- Are you an accountable breeder...standing behind your product. You are informed and able to predict the outcomes of your breeding's because you have utilized the tools needed to make better decisions.

So, while we are working as an artist to DESIGN or PLAN a breeding, you have to use the tool of science and technology to get to you to the place you need to go.

We are molding genetics.....like a potter uses clay.

- When you build your breeding program you are selecting similar traits and retaining those traits to represent your desired look, the positive points you enjoy about your breed...the expression, the front and bone mass or whatever type trait or physical trait you want in your breeding program. We collect dogs that look and act alike.
- The goal is to build this family of dogs that looks and acts alike. Often times you have a puppy who will remind you of dogs you know in their pedigree....GREAT DOGS NEVER DIE.....we see them time and time again in our carefully planned and designed breeding programs.

Often times, we are on our own making our way through this sport planning breeding programs. Over time you will learn that you must build your own family and work within your family to advance your breeding breed. You may be swimming upstream, but you can do it. You have to stay on your path, free of fads and/or the stud dog of the day/moment. Don't worry about winning, concern yourself with concurring your breed.

Think about this:

- Who will be breeding your breed in 10 years, 20 years and so on?
Perhaps the most concerning problem in our sport today is the lack of new breeders. How can we work to protect and improve a breed when we have no one to breed them? Who is going to replace you?

So, this is a recap of the seminar. There is much more to it. As a result, I am I am happy to have anyone reach out to me with questions. clussex@aol.com

Thanks again for sharing your time with me. Together we can all make a difference.

Doug Johnson