

SANDSTONE LABRADORS

Susan & Robert Leonard

I grew up loving animals, especially dogs, but had a mother that didn't believe in having animals in the house. When I married my husband Robert in 1989, I knew the minute we bought our first home I would be getting a dog of my own. I grew up babysitting a family who had Golden Retrievers and thought, when the time came, that would be the breed I would be getting, but Robert wanted a Labrador.

My horse was semi-retired when we started dating in the horse-zoned community of Brookville, Long Island. One of the families on the cul-de-sac had a gorgeous yellow male named Dublin, bred by Richard Curtis Sawyer, Jr. of Deck'Ins Labradors. I had never seen such a beautiful Labrador, and knew without having read the breed standard that this was



Ch Deck'Ins Sandstone Boomerang, "Boomer" (Ch Northwoods Sandman x Deck'Ins Nutmeg of Portledge)



GCh MoonLit's She's The One At Sandstone, "Stella" (Ch WhiteWing American Epic, "Sawyer" x MoonLit's Hot Diggity Dog, "Frankie") going WB to finish at SMLRC October 2017 under Marion Daniel, handled by Erin Hall

what they were supposed to look like. Curt used Karen and Charlie Schultze of Northwood Labradors' stud dogs for his girls pretty exclusively. I put my name on his list for the pick male and waited nine long months for his Deck'Ins Nutmeg of Portledge, "Nutmeg" to be bred to Ch Northwood Sandman, "Mug." I chose what would later become Ch Deck'Ins Boomerang of Sandstone, "Boomer" at five weeks of age, based on what I knew of structure and movement in horses. I still had no idea I would end up showing him, and had yet to read the breed standard. Robert didn't want to neuter Boomer, and I was adamant that we would not be keeping an intact male if he wasn't sound with good enough type to be shown. Curt recommended

that we have Karen and Charlie evaluate him and take it from there.

We got together with the Schultzes, and Karen thought Boomer had promise, and was insistent that I learn to show him myself if I was going to have a real "go" in Labradors. I can honestly never thank her enough for that advice. Karen Schultze was a wonderful handler who had shown BISS Am/Can Ch Davoeg Silky Beau, owned by the Dohertys, for most of his specials career. I went home from that first meeting, bought every book I could find on the breed, and enrolled in a breed handling class near our home in Chappaqua, NY. Turned out Boomer was quite a show dog and was WD, BOW for two points at 11 months of age his first time out, Easter Sunday 1992 with

me handling. Needless to say I was hooked! I love to compete, already had a lot of miles showing horses, and I still love to be at the end of my dog's lead in the ring.

When the Schultzes retired from Labradors, the great BISS Am/Can Ch Cedarwoods By Design, "Brig" came to live with us at age six to finish out his career, and be a constant companion and guardian to our children.

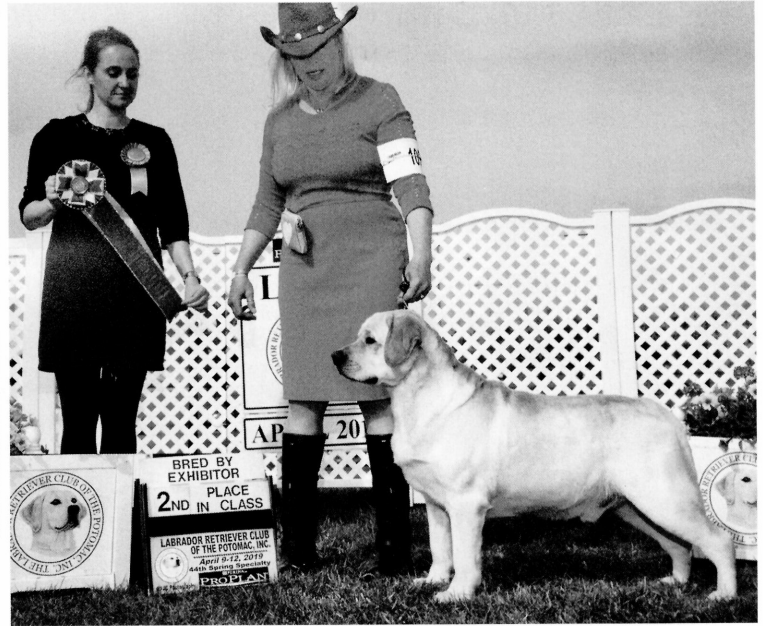
In September 1993, shortly after the birth of my first child, we moved to the Chicago area for Robert's job. With a newborn I didn't even try to go to a dog show until early 1994. At our first show I looked at the catalog and saw that Jeff and Joan Ingelli of Ingelnook Labradors had an entry in the 9-12 Puppy Dogs

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Sandstone, cont'd



*Ch Sandstone Jungleland, "T'Challa"
(MIBISS, BIS Ch Shalimar's The Animator, "Cyrus"
x GCh MoonLit's She's The One At Sandstone, "Stella")
guided to both majors by Erin Hall*



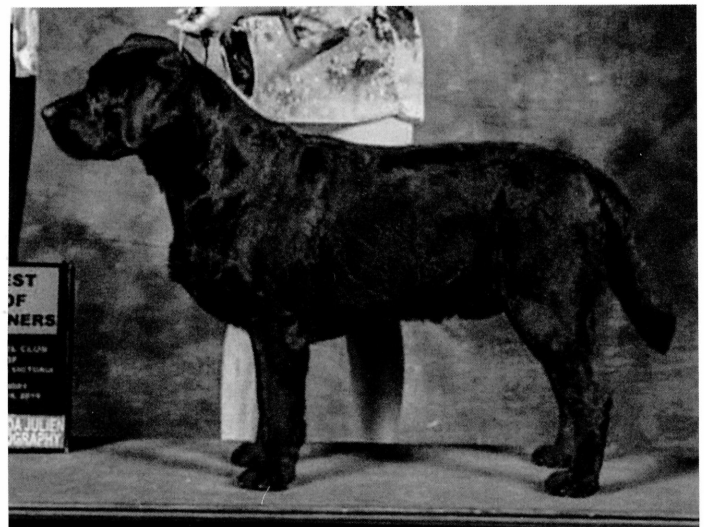
*Sandstone Countin' On A Miracle, "Castiel"
2nd Place BBE Yellow Dogs Potomac 2019 under Vanessa Malkmus*

class that was by Brig. I couldn't wait to make friends with them after judging, especially since "Oscar", Ch Ingelnook Designed One, went WD for a major. Jeff and Joan Ingelli knew Karen and Charlie well and became our dear friends, mentors and aunt and uncle to my daughters Chloe and Carly. The Ingellis had a few stud dogs that influenced my breeding program tremendously, and it was Jeff Ingelli whose relentless teasing pushed me to become the competent handler I am today. As he put it, I looked like one of those dudes trying to guide an airplane in to a gate (he wasn't wrong)! Jeff was a wonderful handler who showed Boomer because he lit up like a Christmas tree for him. I had a second baby by then and just couldn't travel enough to do him justice.

Everyone pays their dues in this fancy with disappointments and heartache, and suffice it to say, we went through that, trying to build a solid bitch line—mainly with fertility issues. As much as I loved the look of the lines I started with, I knew I needed to get a bitch that had that look, but with a differ-

ent pedigree. I will never forget seeing the photos of a heavily pregnant yellow girl, MoonLit's Hot Diggity Dog, "Frankie", owned and bred by MoonLit Labradors, pop up on my Facebook feed while I was trying to figure out who I was going to try to get a quality puppy from. Frankie was in whelp to Ch WhiteWing American Epic, "Sawyer, a lovely dog owned by Barb Stinehelfer. Susan Bennington had beautiful dogs similar in type to what I was looking for, and I messaged her about getting a puppy. I had third pick, but I knew the litter would be consistent in quality and that I had a very good chance to walk away with a solid prospect. Little did I know how right I was! That peach collar puppy was my first choice and became my bitch of

a lifetime, and singlehandedly changed the course of my breeding program and my life forever, GCh MoonLit's She's The One At Sandstone, "Stella", aka "Princess Paws". I had pretty dogs before Stella, but none that produced like her, or had been the showing machine she still is at age seven. Stella was still a puppy when we moved to the Houston area for Robert's job in July 2013.



*Ch Sandstone It's Hard To Be A Saint In The City, "Bruce"
(MIBISS GChB Lakeside Memoir of Gallivant, "Memo"
x GCh MoonLit's She's The One At Sandstone, "Stella")*

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Sandstone, cont'd



Sandstone Pink Cadillac, "Diana" (MBISS GChB Lakeside Memoir of Gallivant, "Memo" x GCh MoonLit's She's The One At Sandstone, "Stella") going WB, BOW at the HOTLRC 2019 Specialty under Traci Stintzcum from the 15-18 Month Bitch class

Stella's first breeding was to MBISS BIS GChS Shalimar's The Animator. I chose "Cyrus" because he was reliably producing size, bone and movement with bitches from different pedigrees, and his lines were from Hyspire Labradors, with their longstanding quality breeding program. Stella is an outcross so it was very important for me to choose a dog from consistently producing lines to have the best chance to get what I was looking for. I kept two males, Ch Sandstone Jungleland, "T'Challa" and Sandstone Countin' On A Miracle, "Castiel" who just needs majors to finish. Three other puppies from this breeding are in show homes: Sandstone Investigator, "Gator", owned by Jeff and Joan Ingelli (major pointed), Sandstone Belle Of The Ball, "Bella", owned by our dear friends Sandy and BJ Bethke, Isthmus Labradors, and Sandstone Living Proof, "Trooper", owned by Mary Beth Wellington. Mary Beth was a college buddy of mine who had raised many puppies for Guiding Eyes For the Blind

but never showed in the breed ring. This didn't stop them from winning multiple BOBs and two AOHG1's with limited showing.

I went to Potomac in 2018 with Stella and my Cyrus boys with an eye to seeing some of the stud dogs that didn't compete in my area or didn't have a lot of get competing here. I always have a short list of stud dogs I have my eye on, but not all suited Stella. I had looked at a lot of dogs that week when my friend Norma Turk, Paloma Labradors, grabbed me by the elbow and asked if I had seen Memo yet. She literally walked me and Stella (who had just come into season that day) to Fabian Negrón and Tom Flaherty's bus. It takes a lot to make my jaw hit the ground, but even blowing coat in tufts he was the prettiest Labrador I had ever seen. He had everything that I want to see in a dog in a seamlessly put-together, balanced and level package – and Lord could he move. Memo was also produced from strong breeding programs from Lakeside, Paradocs and Gallivant

Labradors, something I always pay attention to. About a week or so later Stella was bred to MBISS GChB Lakeside Memoir of Gallivant, "Memo".

I kept three puppies from this litter that are just 16 months old: Ch Sandstone It's Hard To Be a Saint In The City, "Bruce" who finished with three majors, his brother Sandstone Badlands, "Koga" who lives with my daughter, and Sandstone Pink Cadillac, "Diana". Recently at the HOTLRC Specialty Diana went WB and BOW for a four-point major under Traci Stintzcum. Not to be outdone, her mother Stella was Best Veteran in Sweeps under Carol Wageley, and went on to go Select Bitch and Best Veteran under Traci. It was the kind of day you dream of as a breeder, and just beyond thrilling. The other bitches in this litter are in show homes with dear breeder friends: Sandstone Lucky Town @ Chestnut Hill, "Heddy" is owned and loved by Donna Thate and Brittany Flannery Garcia of Chestnut Hills Labradors, and Sandstone Carroway, owned and loved by Richard Curtis Sawyer, Jr., the man who bred my first Labrador. Winning at shows is nice, but these dogs have brought so many people into my life that I am lucky to call mentors and friends that it's hard to separate the interwoven fabric of life and hobby.

Having had fertility issues has taught me perseverance, and that sometimes going forward with your breeding program means learning enough about breeding and pedigrees to be able to make those good choices even when it involves starting over. If all those things hadn't happened I would never have the gifts of Stella and all her children.

Sometimes it takes twenty years to get a really great foundation bitch. I'm truly looking forward to seeing where my journey goes from here. **LQ**