

This interview was conducted at the home of Ann Schultz by Dr. Robin Lyle and Jason Lyle on June 28, 2008.

Name: Ann Schultz

Kennel Name: Edan www.edangsd.com

Location: Horton, Michigan (90 miles west of Detroit)

Occupation: Reading Recovery Teacher (individually teaching the lowest functioning children in the first grade).

GSDbyDesign: How many years have you been involved in GSDs?

Ann: I bought my first German Shepherd puppy in 1977, and bred my first litter in 1979. Trying to get started in GSDs was very hard. I didn't have a mentor, just books. I went to two Nationals in Niagara Falls before I decided which direction I wanted to go and it was Reno (Ch. Cobert's Reno of Lakeside ROM). Before that I had bought two bitches. One had a horrible temperament and pancreatic insufficiency and had to be put down at 4. The other one looked like a giraffe, but I loved her and she died at five from a brain tumor.

I was starting to get discouraged and that is when I bought the Reno daughter. If you are going to do well at anything, you have to be persistent. Don't give up. Don't get discouraged. Go to dog shows. Read all you can. I read all the old Redbooks to see where the top producers were coming from and developed a plan. My plan was that I was going to get a champion.

GSDbyDesign: How did you get started?

Ann: I had bought Jennarick's Felicia (the Reno daughter) from Dick Jennings in Iowa. I showed Felicia myself for a while and soon learned that she wasn't show quality. I think that I won a Reserve as a puppy at a 1 point show and that was the pinnacle of her show career.

I decided to breed her to CH Doppelt Tay's Hammer ROM. I just loved that dog's great character. It was a copycat breeding that produced Topflight's Sue, a bitch that finished in seven shows and, back then, that didn't happen very often. Felicia missed, so six months later, it was back to Pennsylvania (for another breeding). This time she had two puppies: a beautiful male and bitch. Unfortunately the male was a monorchid. The bitch was to become CH Awlful Good of Edan CD TC ROM. Awlful was the #2 Living ROM dam at one time, and is very high on the list today with more than 500 ROM points. When Awlful was 10 weeks old, Jim Norris saw her and said to me, "This is your ticket into German Shepherds!" He never lived long enough to see how profound the statement was. Every dog in my kennel today goes back to Awlful!

GSDbyDesign: Who was the most influential person in your breeding program?

Ann: There have been so many people over the years. I listened to everyone. I tended to watch other successful breeders, determined where they are going and talked with them. Jim Norris was probably the most influential. He helped me a lot. In the early 80s, there were a lot of aspiring breeders in the area, so Jim would come to Jackson once a week and teach informal handling classes. I would not have been as successful at handling if it hadn't been for him.

At that time he was a judge and temperament evaluator for the GSDCA. He handled GV CH Hollomar's Judd . . . and, I believe, he was the judge that put Lance up as GV. (*Editor's note: Ann is absolutely correct. The 1967 National Intersex Judge was Jim Norris.*) He had been diagnosed with terminal cancer, but he kept coming and teaching classes and told no one about his illness. It was very sad when he passed. I called his wife after I had gone GVx and told her that it probably wouldn't have happened if it hadn't been for his help and I wish that he would have lived longer. She told me he knew, because she was sure he had been looking down at that National.

GSDbyDesign: Who are some of your all-time favorite GSDs - of your own breeding or otherwise?

Ann: There are many, but the one dog I absolutely loved was Houston (FV MV 3X Sel CH Houston of Wildwood ROM). He should have been a Grand Victor. He was Select #2 twice. There are a lot of dogs I really liked. I don't want to go there because I am afraid I'll leave a good one out. Some of my favorite dogs that I have bred or owned are:

CH Awful Good of Edan CD TC ROM – Awful is my all-time favorite. When Awful was 6 months old, our house burned. I had four dogs in the house. I can't tell you how awful it is to turn into my driveway, see five fire trucks in my front yard and know all my dogs were in the house. Awful was out in a run and was the only dog not in the house. I lost my 14 year old bitch, Annie. I had bought her as a pet and obedience dog from Stahl Farms. She was my real love at that time and knew over 200 words. The other three dogs were out on the front lawn and the firemen were giving them oxygen. One was Awful's brother, and he died at a year of pneumonia from the smoke inhalation. The other was my dysplastic bitch and she had a brain tumor shortly after. The third was my long-coat and she died several years later from respiratory problems.

Awful was my first competitive show dog. I was going to show her myself—no professional handler for me. I put most of her points on her and both of her majors. She was just short of six years old when I finished her. Using a handler, she got several major reserves at specialties – when it took more than 30 bitches for a major. When she was nearly three, I had almost decided to give up showing as she only had a few points. I went to every show, no matter who the judge was. I learned slowly that some judges know a good GSD, but there are more that don't. I think this is why I have always favored specialty shows – at least my dog is being evaluated by judges that are active in this breed and care about German Shepherds.

I went to my first futurity with Awful in 1980. There were 52 Junior Bitches shown in her class and she took a fifth place. It would be 1985 before I got my first piece of wood.

In 1982, when Awful was 2.5, I bred her to CH Cassey v Bleibtreu. When she was a couple weeks in whelp, a friend of mine called and asked me to accompany her to the Ann Arbor KC show. I entered Awful in BBE, because I was virtually assured of a blue ribbon, as usually no one showed in this class. Eugene Tenges, Treasurer of the GSDCA, was the judge. Awful won the BBE class, as she was the only one in it. We then went Winner's Bitch and Best of Breed over Specials. Gene told me that Awful was a very nice bitch and she should finish. She was six weeks in whelp at that time and it showed. I think that I would not have continued to show if this hadn't happened. It was more about knowing which judges were knowledgeable and which weren't. I am still learning and making mistakes here today.

From that first breeding I got Am/Can CH Baddest of Edan (whom I handled to all of her points) and Bestest of Edan ROM (dam of Am/Can CH Earth Wind and Fire of Edan ROM). Awful had all her single points, but I couldn't get her majors, so I bred my third litter in 1983, sired by Sel CH Alabama of Shiloh Gardens, an absolutely drop-dead gorgeous sable. That litter was a disaster. Four puppies; two with bad hips and two with bad elbows. I had never heard of elbow dysplasia. After that I x-rayed my dogs for both elbows and hips. This was well before it was recognized as a serious problem in the breed.

After her litter, I returned to showing her. She got her first major at age five and then her second major a few weeks later. I put the two majors on her myself, including several group placings in the working group. Recently, someone asked me if owner-handling my bitch to GVx was my most exciting moment. I said no. Finishing Awful was – and still is – my most exciting moment in German Shepherds. She was everything a German Shepherd should be. She had great character, showmanship, and correct structure. She was a great producer and lived to be fourteen.

I had bred her daughter, Bessie, to Jock the first time and she had missed. I just loved his two sons: Sel CH Hoheneichen's Magnum ROM and Up N'Adam. Therefore, she was bred to Sel CH Proven Hill's Up N' Adam in 1984. This breeding produced Am/Can CH Earth Wind and Fire of Edan CD ROM. He was the first dog to get me noticed in the breed as a breeder. Very few well-known breeders came to him, as I was still a no-name in this breed. **I then realized that bitches make your kennel and dogs make your name.**

1985 was a banner year for me. **I basically had not done anything after being in the breed for eight years. Most people might have been gone from the breed, but I never give up. I have always set goals and worked hard to achieve them. Sometimes I wonder why!**

I had called George Berstler when Eatit was 4 months old and told him I had a star. I was a no-name, and I had to give him names of knowledgeable people that would back this up (which I did), before he consented to show him. I won my first futurity plaque that year, going Best in Futurity at the Mid-Atlantic under Judy Teidel. That same year, I put the final two majors on Awful and finished her. She also had a litter sired by Eatit. CH Gone with the Wind of Edan ROM came from that breeding. I also had shown Dawnhill's Carli for her owner, Dawn Hirdes, in 12-18 at the Triangle, and won her class one day and ended up buying her on a co-ownership.

CH Gone with the Wind of Edan ROM

Awful and Earth Wind and Fire were bred twice. In the first litter, she produced CH Gone with the Wind of Edan ROM. Gonna had 9 puppies total: 3 crytorchids, 4 champions and 2 that died very young (probably the best two). She produced CH Count Dracula in the first litter ever sired by CH Hoheneichen's Flag ROM. Drac won his futurity and maturity and finished in 5 shows before 17 months of age. However, he died before two from autoimmune-related issues. Many felt that he would have been a Grand Victor had he lived. Gonna was also dam of BOS Mid West Maturity CH Knock Your Socks Off of Edan (who died from autoimmune at six); CH Live Wire of Edan (who, after returning from the west coast, came down with aspergillus in her lungs and is the only survival from this horrible disease that I know of, and lived to be almost 14); and CH Cookie Monster of Edan. One and Only of Edan was better than Count Dracula and died very young from an autoimmune-related neurological problem, and Cold Nose Warm Heart of Edan, who won numerous Best Puppies, died from pulmonary stenosis at 10 months. The dogs in this breeding were not ever used in my breeding program. It is really hard to knock-out outstanding animals, but dead is dead.

CH Love at First Bite of Edan ROM

CH Love at First Bite of Edan ROM (Awful's daughter) was the repeat and was also bred to Flag with no problems and most of her progeny lived to be very old. Lovey was from Awful's last litter of two and was born by c-section 72 days after breeding her. The male was a monorchid. Lovey was kind of like my first breeding that produced Awful. I showed Lovey five or six times as a puppy and she couldn't even win a class. I decided to keep her nonetheless, since she was from Awful's last litter. The ugly duckling turned into a swan by a year and had two four-point majors by 14 months and was finished at 17 months. Lovey retired at four after winning 68 BOBs, and 28 BOBs or BOSs from specialties, and was the #1 Winning Bitch in the country one year. Even though she didn't have a litter until four, she was the dam of CH Inherit the Earth of Edan ROM (96 BOBs), CH Notforlovenormoney of Edan ROM, Uh Huh of Edan ROM, and Mommy Dearest of Edan ROM, from four litters, plus numerous champions, and received her ROM by age seven.

AOE GVx CH Dawnhill's Carli CD

George Berstler put a major on Carli that same year, but for numerous reasons I sent Earth Wind and Fire to Terry Howser to finish. I also decided I could show Carli myself. I first showed Carli as an adult at the winter Triangle shows when the entry was over 200. Dave Rinke was the judge and we went WB and BOB over a ton of specials. Dave was doing the National that year and she now had 9 points. Terry took Eatit out and finished him in 7 shows under Jack Newton, Mary Vurma, and Sandy Card. I then put a 4-point major on Carli under Leon Breault, and Bob Eaton finished her with a 5-point major a month later. My co-owner now wanted to put a real handler on her for the National. The breeder of her sire told her, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." So Carli, Eatit and Awful flew to the first National I had ever shown in, except for a futurity finals. I had gone to the 1982 National in Cleveland and remembered sitting in the stands wondering if I would ever have a dog good enough to show at a national. The time was here.

Earth Wind and Fire went fourth American Bred dog under Ed Barrett, in a class of 56. I then showed Awful to fourth in a huge veteran bitch class. Then it was Carli's turn. I was in the first group, which consisted of some of the best bitches and handlers in the country. Over half of the group went select. When we went around for our individual, there was very little applause. We were both no names from Michigan. The show was in Atlanta, GA, at an outside covered horse arena. The temperature was 96

degrees with humidity even higher in September. We worked our way up until Dave was down to three bitches: Carli, Charlie Mardecz's beautiful bitch (Am Sel CH Can CH Valmy's Perhaps Love ROM), and Cusick's Stoneridge's Koni Felicia. Dave gave each of us a chance in front. By now the house was coming down when Carli got to lead. I think I was in third and had gone by Dave when he pointed and the next thing I remember is George hugging me and me saying, "Did I win?" It was pretty exciting. The late Pat Turrise taped that national and I remember getting chills watching it when she said, "**Carli is not only owned by Ann Schultz; she is being handled by Ann Schultz.**"

We had to go to the dinner, but we didn't have tickets and the Fords gave us their tickets – that's the kind of people they were. I remember being handed a bill for half the champagne, \$250, because that is what they did back then. Thankfully, one of my friends covered it for me until later.

CH Earth Wind and Fire of Edan CD ROM

Earth Wind and Fire (Eatit) was one of the best dogs I ever bred. He was masculine, clean coming and going, had a beautiful suspended side-gait, and an iron back. He was just gorgeous and a good producer as well. He was shown in specials twice at the National and that was one of the biggest disappointments in my showing career. The first year he showed well, but didn't do anything. The next year was the killer. We had gone to Houston and Ralph Roberts was down to the last twelve in specials and Eatit was in 11th. He cut the last two and then called it. I thought his handler, Steve LaRosa (who handled him throughout his specials career), was going to cry. I vowed then that if I ever went back, I would be going home with a Select. Eatit died suddenly Oct. 30, 1991. This was one of the most devastating things that ever happened to me in dogs. To make it worse, a beautiful 11 month old out of Sel CH Gunner x a GVx CH Carli daughter died the same night, and Count Dracula was dead less than 2 weeks later.

1993 GV CH Bethesda's Earth of Jada-Edan ROM

Eatit's last litter was whelped after his death. Denise Collins allowed me to have the choice of the whole litter and Bethesda's Earth of Jada-Edan was my pick. ET had a whirlwind career, winning Best in Futurity under Mary Ann Imhoff in Minneapolis, and then getting 10 more points in his next six shows. He went to the National with Kent Boyles and won Am Bred and Winners Dog under Betty Radzevich. What a thrill! Now I was going to have a Select: They always gave the WD and WB Select, didn't they?

We were lucky enough in specials for ET to have Bart Bartley handle him. His special wasn't being shown; so he was available. Few handlers would have been as capable as Bart at handling this moving machine. Well, Peggy Douglas did more than that. ET not only went Select; he went Grand Victor and Best of Breed. He was never shown after 23 months of age. He was a good producer and got his ROM from a few litters also.

I've Got It All of Edan ROM

I bred CH Notforlovenormoney of Edan for her last time in 1999 and she produced the best producer I have ever bred, bar none: I've Got It All of Edan ROM. "Muggles" is one of the top-producers in the history of the breed. I had bred Cutie to CH Caralon's QED Sword v Lebarland because I loved his movement, pigment and beautiful breed type. She missed, so I bred to his son, Bravo, and got Muggles.

Muggles was bred to CH T-Ho's For Whom the Bell Tolls ROM and Sel Exc CH Welove Du Chien's Rollins ROM; both before they became ROMs themselves. She has produced 10 champions to date. Two more are just a few points away from finishing and several others are just starting out. She is the dam of:

- Can Sel #4 Am CH Me First Me First of Edan
- BOS GL Fut Opening Night of Edan
- CH Organized Crime of Edan
- CH One to Remember of Edan
- Best Puppy GSDCA National CH You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet of Edan
- CH You've Got To Be Kidding of Edan
- RBIM CH If I Ran the Zoo of Edan
- BOS MW Fut CH Mmm Mmm Good of Edan
- Sel Exc CH Good to the Last Drop of Edan

- BIM SW CH Oh the Places You'll Go of Edan.

From her last litter, sired by Rollins, she has produced Take No Prisoners of Edan (11 points, both majors), Look Ma No Hands of Edan (first -9-12 bitch - Canadian National), and No Autographs Please of Edan.

Sel Exc CH Maxwell was finished from the BBE class at specialties, with Christina Szparaga handling him, in 6 shows, at 15 months of age. He went Select #6 with up-and-coming young handler Nick Fedorow, who was showing at his first National. And he is one of the best dogs I have ever bred.

Sel Exc CH Mechanical Bull

It was just lucky that I got Gilley. Marge Perry, a friend from Indianapolis, had brought her Covy Tucker Hill's Ms Morgan to breed to CH Inherit the Earth of Edan ROM (Scud) and she had missed. Scud had died when Keri was in heat again, so I offered her my only male dog, MVP (Flag x Lovey). She only got two live puppies, so I told her she could breed again. She got five this time (c-section, day after Christmas). I looked at them at 6 weeks and told her what I thought were the best ones. A short time later, I was talking to someone from her area and they laughingly told me that Keri was for sale, saying who would want her. I hung up, called Marge and bought her that day. At three months, she brought her two pick puppies up and I offered to buy the male and she told me I had to take both or I couldn't get him. The bitch looked like a pure pet, but I agreed to find a pet home for her. No one wanted a puppy that old. I was stuck. When Cari was found to be heartworm positive, Marge told me to keep the bitch to pay for her treatment. The pet bitch turned into a swan becoming CH Hey Look Me Over of Edan ROM and the mom of Gilley and Mexican GVx Am CH Prima Bullerina of Edan. Her mother, Keri, also became an ROM. Gilley got his first major from 9-12 under Randy Chestnut. I put him away for a year. When he returned, he finished with three majors from BBE in a 10-day period. Christina Szparaga got her first Select, under Helen Franklin, showing Gilley. This dog has great attitude, temperament, and movement, and produces it in his progeny.

GSDbyDesign: What is most important to you in a GSD?

Ann: Health has to be number one. Over the years, I have gotten into some health issues. I've had to drop whole lines because of some problems that came from those lines. Then I also have to have beautiful dogs with sidegait and temperament. Without health, you have nothing else if your dogs die at a young age.

GSDbyDesign: What problem(s) do you think are most prevalent in the breed?

Ann: Bloat and torsion. People are knowingly breeding on this. It's not going to go away. I think that it is a hereditary problem and not one caused by environment. I can trace lines back 20 years and many people who have the problem in their lines refuse to identify it as such. Lack of sidegait is another problem in our breed today. We seem to put up a lot of runners that the handlers hold up and run as fast as they can with them. It's hard for a lot of people to tell the difference.

GSDbyDesign: When you select a puppy, what are you looking for (be as specific as possible)?

Ann: They must have a "Here I am! Look at me!" Attitude is everything! They must have movement. They must have good temperament and they have to have breed type. Coming and going is not as important in a young puppy. What I find is that they clean up as they mature. I've had puppies that were horrendous at four - five months and then when they reach one-year-old, they have totally cleaned up on both ends. Pigment is not that important. It is nice when you have it. Things that don't affect their movement are not as important to me. However, I do have to have an attractive dog. Most of my dogs will win in both rings, but they have to be competitive in the specialty ring for me to keep them.

GSDbyDesign: What's your process for selecting a stud dog?

Ann: A stud dog has to have movement, good temperament and pedigree. Without pedigree, no matter how good they are, I don't think they will produce. It's the same with the bitch. They don't necessarily have to be champions, but they have to have top ROM producers behind them, of top specialty-winning dogs – not just all-breed winners. Rollins was 5 or 6 years old before I bred to him. I always liked the dog's movement but I hadn't seen that many progeny out of him. I had wanted to breed to his sire, Uecker, also but he wasn't producing puppies then, I consider that one of the best breeding I have ever done. I was also the first person to breed to Flag, before he had even finished.

GSDbyDesign: How have you developed your foundation bitch line in your kennel?

Ann: I've built my kennel on foundational bitches. Going back on the Lloyd Brackett principle ("Let the sire of sire become the grandsire on the dam's side.") When I did that breeding of my Reno daughter, Jennarick's Felicia (CH Cobert's Reno of Lakeside ROM x Ch. Lakeside's Just Jamaica of Cobert ROM), to CH Doppelt-Tay's Hammer (CH Eko-Lan's Paladen ROM x Doppelt-Tay's Jessette), it was a classical Brackett breeding – although I did it unknowingly. Therefore, Paladen was the sire of the sire and the grandsire (sire of CH Lakeside's Just Jamaica) of the dam. Every dog in my kennel goes to back to my foundation bitch (CH Awful Good of Edan ROM) on a very strong pedigree. Your kennel is built on your bitches.

GSDbyDesign: What is the best thing about being involved in GSDs?

Ann: The German Shepherd! There's no other breed. I can't understand how anyone can own another dog. They have loyalty. They are versatility. They are beautiful and wonderful to live with.

GSDbyDesign: What are your goals in the breed? What else you do hope to accomplish?

Ann: I want to breed a fifth generation ROM dam. Of course, it would be nice to have another Grand Victor/Grand Victrix. I don't have a lot of personal goals in the breed right now and you need goals to keep moving ahead. I will sell almost every good dog in my kennel. I have found that if I am the breeder, that is where the joy is. It's really nice to have winning dogs out there with someone else paying the bill.

GSDbyDesign: For what contributions to the breed do you want to be remembered?

No answer.

GSDbyDesign: Is there anything else you would like to address?

Ann: Early on, I owner-handled my dogs and anyone else's dogs that would let me. I remember hating to show in the specialty ring, because I knew I wasn't going to take the points. I kept thinking that the professional handlers were all laughing at me and my dogs. Looking back, I now know that they didn't even know that I was in there. I laughingly tell people I am the only undefeated handler at the National in Best of Breed. I handled my own bitch to Grand Victrix (AOE GVX CH Dawnhill's Carli CD) in 1986.

Also, I think that handlers control this breed. **I don't think we are seeing the knowledgeable successful breeders of yesteryear because new people are not becoming students of the breed. Why should they when their handler tells them who to buy, who to breed to and what puppies to keep? I have never had a handler promote a stud dog and they are not bred to very often because of that.** Handlers tell their clients to breed to their own dogs, even if it isn't a good breeding for the bitch.

I have had a lot of good handlers. I decide where to show my dogs. I have studied judges over the years and definitely know more of what a judge likes in my dogs than a handler, unless politics are involved. I have used a lot of junior handlers and found that, yes, we lost a lot when we probably should have won; but there are still a lot of judges out there that judge dogs.

I take care of all my dogs by myself, do my own breedings and make all my decisions as to what breedings I will be doing. I am not one to listen to handlers about who I should breed to. I look at other successful breeders and make my decision from those observations, along with what I feel that I need to bring into my own program. When I go out to the kennel, I want to look at beautiful dogs that can move and are great to live with. Right now, MeMe is my housedog and there could not be a better roommate anywhere in the world.

The German Shepherd by Design will be conducting interviews of notable breeders and handlers throughout 2008. If you would like to be featured on our website, contact Becky at gdsbydesign@aol.com.