

The Dairy Business

By
Newton Bair

Old Dogs Learn New Tricks

Gretel, the family Labrador, is 14 years old. That's about 90 years in terms of human age. She has been a part of our household ever since Christmas 1972, when she arrived in a small shoe box wrapped in poinsettia spangled paper, secured with a red ribbon.

That Christmas gift has truly endured the test of time, stretching both her love for the family and her sometimes frustrating habits, over the intervening years.

She was sired by a Labrador, whom she resembles somewhat, but she is really a mixture of breeds. Her mother was a Springer Spaniel, with long black hair, a white chest and big feet. Like most Spaniels her tail was docked, so that when Gretel and her eight brothers and sisters were a month old, they too had their tails shortened.

I'm reasonably sure that it was not done by a veterinarian,

because it looked more like a hatchet job.

Regardless of the method used, it was a most fortunate operation from the point of view of the household. Nothing in the house would have been safe from the club-like appendage which was her original equipment. She uses the remaining two inch stub to express her innermost joys as well as a warning of impending invasion, sparked by a knock on the front door or a strange vehicle in the driveway. The frantic oscillation of that short stub would spell disaster if it still possessed the full length and swing of a mature tail.

Speaking of tricks, Gretel never really mastered any that are worth mentioning.

She was 2 years old when our neighbor Randy, who had no dog of his own, enrolled her in 4-H dog obedience class. She learned to 'sit' and 'stay' and 'lie down,' with

a bit of reserve for her own desires on the subject.

The rest of her obedience record must be tempered with a large degree of forbearance and allowance for other distractions. We always hoped that Randy learned more than Gretel did, enough from the course to benefit himself and any other dog that might own him in the future.

Some psychologists will say, (or maybe it is from the pen of a dog lover), that a family dog will take on the character of it's owner. Judging from what I observe of Gretel's character, I am noisy, opinionated, lazy and an expensive glutton. If she is indeed a reflection of myself, I am also quite friendly and lovable, especially when patted on the head and not kicked while lying down in front of the kitchen door. There has to be some redemption from an otherwise useless existence.

But who would dare say that any creature is useless? Every farm needs a dog, whether for chasing livestock or guarding the property or just plain companionship.

Our farm was never without a dog. It was an essential part of farm life. I remember every one of them, from Lady, who had a natural herding instinct, Blizzard, who was from one of her annual and prolific litters, through Mike the Shepherd, and finally Chester, who was martyred by a car while chasing a vicious stray out of the front yard. They were all mutts, but every one had a character that made them a vital part of the farm life at the time.

Gretel would have made a fine farm dog if given the opportunity. Although she has become strictly a

house pet, she loves to roam the fields, chasing groundhogs and squirrels, and is a jealous guardian of her property. Skunks and rabbits are her nemesis. She hates bicycles and trucks, and would gladly pursue every vehicle that passes the house. But alas, she never became acquainted with

cows, so her education is limited.

Arthritis and old age has slowed her down, and she will probably never learn any new tricks. She lives her life as dictated by a dog's will, eating when hungry, barking when happy or excited, and licking my hand when in need of affection. Who needs new tricks?

Dairy Sales And Dispersals

(Continued from Page A34)

Astronaut Marie Cow, EX-96 3E.

The next dam classified EX-93 3E with 24,600 milk and 937 fat.

Second high price of the sale, \$4,100, came on a 4-year-old sired by Bell. She was due at sale time to Glendell Lincoln. Classified VG-85, her top record stands at 19,850 milk and 740 fat. Her dam, a Mars Tony daughter, produced a high record of 23,150 milk and 906 fat.

Dave Butler and the Illinois Holstein Association managed the sale.

The BROOKVIEW ELITE SALE held in Ohio averaged \$2,125 on 60 head. A 4-year-old Bell daughter topped the sale with a bid of \$5,500. Classified VG-88 with an Excellent mammary system, she produced a best record of 25,640 milk and 1,009 with a 4.3 test in 325 days. Her dam, an Elevation daughter, produced four records over 1,000 fat.

Second high price of the sale, \$5,100, came on a 3-year-old daughter of Mars Tony. Just fresh, she is producing 100 pounds of milk per day; during her first record she produced 20,850 milk and 866 fat. The dam, an EX-91 Kit Builder daughter, produced a high record over 22,000 milk.

Premiere Associates managed the sale and Keith Stump served as the auctioneer.

The SOUTHERN NATIONAL SALE held in Missouri averaged \$1,700 on 54 head. Topping the sale at \$8,000 was a May heifer calf by Ned Boy. The dam is the Leads Chief Day cow. Classified EX-92 2E, her top record stands at 39,000 milk and 1,400 fat. She is a member of the Super Donor Cow Club and has produced over 50 offspring.

She has a cow index of plus 1,325 milk, plus 56 fat and plus \$178.

A bull calf from the same flush as the sale topper and born in June sold for the second high price of \$5,000.

James Ellis auctioneered the sale and the Missouri Holstein Association managed the sale.

Julie Dotson, secretary for the Missouri association, noted the average is up from 1985 and reflects a realistic market.

The FIRST DON WHORTON PRODUCTION SALE held in Alabama averaged \$1,142 on 90 head. All the animals sold were identified grades between 2 and 3 years. The cows also calved within the last 30 days.

Topping the sale with a bid of \$1,575 was a just fresh 2 year old sired by Reckers Ace. On the sale day she produced 70 pounds of milk. Her dam produced a top record over 20,000 milk.

Irvin Yoder auctioneered the sale and Southern Holstein Marketing Association managed the sale.

Prices in the following Canadian sales have been converted to American dollar values. All classifications are also Canadian.

The STONETOWN COMPLETE DISPERSAL averaged \$3,132 on 86 head. A Citation Topper-Red daughter topped the sale with a price of \$27,840. The 10-year-old cow classified Excellent. Her cow index stands at plus 4 milk and plus 7 fat. She is due in March 1987 to Triple Threat.

Her dam is a Very Good Marquis Ned daughter. The granddam produced five record over 1,000 fat and produced a lifetime record over 200,000 milk.

The second best price of \$21,228 came on a 2-year-old daughter of Glenafton Enhancer. She sold with a five pregnancy guarantee.

The dispersal was held to dissolve the family corporation. Owners Don and Leita Stevens will continue under separate title.

Michael Brubacher, John Willsey and Col. Don Walton shared the auctioneering assignment. Brubacher Sales Limited and Tavistock Dairy Sales Limited managed the sale.

The AARON LEE DISPERSAL averaged \$2,088 on 118 head. A bid of \$13,920 on a Hi Silo Haven Jet Star daughter topped the sale. The 6 year old classified Excellent and is due in February to Hanover Hill Starbuck. Her cow index stands at plus 2 milk and plus 3 fat with a best production record of 20,000 milk and a 4.0 test.

Her dam is an Excellent Fond Matt daughter with a top record of 21,000 milk and a 4.4 test.

An Elevation daughter sold for the second high price of the sale, \$12,528. The 7 year old classified Very Good and produced a top record of 25,000 milk and 1,100 fat for a 4.7 test. She is the third consecutive generation to produce records over 1,000 fat.

Brubacher Sale Limited and Hays Farm International Limited managed the sale. Mike Brubacher and Brant Walker auctioneered the sale.

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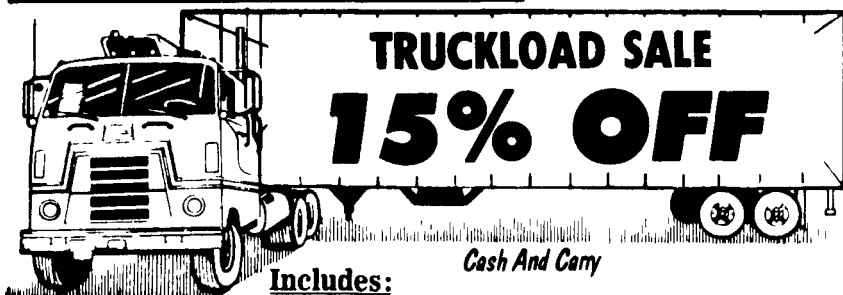
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