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What dreams are made of . . . Pam and Michael Korcek

IVANLEE SHELTIES

By Debby Gayton
Wintercreek Shelties

If you enjoy feel-good movies, chances are you've seen "It Could Happen to You", a story about a cop and a waitress. Well that's exactly how Pam and Michael Korcek began their soon-to-be adventure together - minus the lottery ticket (and of course both were single). As romantic as their first meeting sounds, it was just the beginning! Since that first day, all of their dreams have just seemed to fall into place. Join us on the journey with Pam and Michael Korcek, from owner/handlers to professional handlers, with a little love mixed in for good measure.

Growing up in Oregon, Pam fell in love with the Sheltie breed after watching every Lassie TV show and movie she could find. She purchased her first pet Sheltie when she was eighteen years old, and shortly after moved to Southern



California. Pam quickly trained her dog in Obedience and obtained the Companion Dog title. Watching the Conformation ring, she found herself being pulled toward these beautiful animals. One dog in particular stole her heart, Ch SumerSong Winter Shadows. His beauty inspired Pam, and was the beginning of her love of the Conformation venue.



Ch SumerSong Nighthawk ROM

Wanting to become a skilled handler/groomer Pam was thrilled to have the chance to be mentored by Susan Ellingson, of A-Robb Shetland Sheepdogs. Sue taught her a great deal about showing along with proper assessment critiquing a dog's virtues and faults honestly. Carefully analyzing movement and structure were stressed as most important, and knowing that a



great dog is not just a pretty face. Pam learned to develop in her mind's eye how a Sheltie, correct to the standard, should appear. Sue was an expert groomer and handler and the inspiration for everything Pam has carried through her life with Shelties.

With her Sheltie education firmly in her mind and her grooming ability finely tuned, Pam went out on her own and showed in Conformation. She had two beautiful A-Robb Shelties to guide her. She then acquired two Ch SumerSong Nighthawk ROM grandkids, who became the foundation of her AOAC breeding program. A few points were won and new avenues and adventures were taken. Pam and Shirlee Brundage DVM of Kylin Shelties became great friends, sharing knowledge and love of this wonderful breed.

It was the late 80s and a very routine day for Pam. She went to work at the restaurant she managed for a normal day. Across the restaurant sat a young police officer in full uniform. Pam thought he was the most handsome man she had ever seen. She describes him as having a halo over his head. She was smitten. Unbeknownst to her, Michael says he could not stop looking at her beautiful eyes and he really wanted to get to know her better. It was inevitable that the cop and the waitress would

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IvanLee, cont'd.

meet and marry.

Eighteen months later they became Mr. and Mrs. Michael Korcek and have been happily married ever since. If you know Michael you can hear him saying this with his famous smile: "I never thought when I said "I do" I was saying "I do pull the dolly, I do tote the crates, I do scoop the poop...I do...I do...I do!"

Shortly after marriage most people are busy picking out baby names. But Mike and Pam had the dilemma of picking a kennel name. They thought possibly Korcek Shelties but decided most people would have trouble pronouncing the Czechoslovakian name correctly. After days of bouncing names back and forth they decided on IvanLee Shetland Sheepdogs in honor of Pam's father Ivan Lee Durham.

In 1995 the Korceks, along with their Shelties and son Matthew, moved from Southern California to Pam's childhood home, Lebanon, Oregon. The family has enjoyed two beautiful acres along the Santiam river for many years. An acre of beautiful green shady grass, with direct access to their home, is enclosed for their Shelties to run and play. Their property is landscaped with old cherry trees, weeping locusts, and



bursts of perennial color from spring to fall.

The IvanLee Shelties live a spoiled life inside and outside the Korcek's home. Pam is a homemaker and spends most of her day working with the dogs. They have a dedicated room heated and



air conditioned for the times the dogs are in their crates. Keeping their numbers low has allowed them to have the dogs inside with them most of the time.

Dog and puppy training is done in and outside the home. As a child, their son Matthew was a great help to his parents, playing with and socializing puppies. He also loved to take puppies to fun matches and did some Junior Handling.



Matt, now serving in the U. S. Air Force, and Ch Liora

Matthew helped with many puppies before picking his own "special" dog. This beautiful bi blue dog later became IvanLee's first home bred champion, Ch IvanLee Mercy Reigns Liora. Matthew, now an adult, is serving overseas in the Air Force, a great pride to his parents. When the time is right, Matt's "special" dog Liora, will find her final home with her buddy Matt.

One of Pam's greatest talents with puppies is her ability to socialize and evaluate them. She spends most of her time while they are maturing in training and molding the perfect little personalities. Pam takes great care and consideration in matching up a puppy with the

right home. She recognizes that acquiring a Sheltie is not like going to a car lot and purchasing a new car with options. She wants the match to be perfect for the dog and the new owner. Her talent in matching puppy to new owner is validated many times over. Often



people have wanted a second IvanLee Sheltie because they were so pleased with the first.

Upon moving to Oregon, the Korceks re-acquainted themselves with fellow ex-Southern California Sheltie people, Barbara and Charlie Vann. The Vanns of CharBar Shelties became mentors and family members to the Korceks. Being taken under their wings in a new area was truly a blessing to Mike and Pam. Two of their champions, Am/Can Ch CharBar's Wings Of a Dove "Joanna" and Ch CharBar's Masquerade NAJ "Jakob", resulted from this wonderful friendship. He has become a key factor in their breeding program (see his page, *International*, Spring 2008, p.88).

While Barbara shared her Sheltie knowledge with Pam, Charlie and Michael could be found discussing RV traveling. Being a retired truck driver Charlie taught Michael everything there is to know about RV-ing. What fun they



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IvanLee, cont'd.

had traveling together to dog shows. Charlie was right there to help, teaching Michael important things, like which gears to use when negotiating hills and mountains. One burned-out minivan transmission was laid to rest while trying to keep up with "Charlie Bird" flying down freeways, up, down and over hills.

For Mike and Pam this is truly a shared hobby/profession. They compliment each other, sharing strengths in all areas. Observing them from a distance you see they are aware of each other's needs before speaking. Whether Agility or Conformation, they both speak the same language.

Agility...Alaska...Agility... Alaska. Heidi Vania has played a significant role in IvanLee Shelties in Alaska. She has obtained many Agility accomplishments and her first IvanLee Sheltie is now MACH IvanLee Dot Com "Dot". She is now putting titles on IvanLee Glacial Reflexion MX MXJ "Ice" and recently acquired her third IvanLee dog, IvanLee Angel of Music, a daughter of Matthew Korcek's special dog Liora.



**MACH IvanLee Dot Com
PT OF**



Michael and Pam's appreciation goes out to Heidi and her success with "Dot", which has opened many Alaskan doors. The Korceks say there are probably more IvanLee Shelties in Alaska than any other area except Oregon. They look forward to going to Alaska to visit the "Fur Kids" and the friends that have brought so much joy to their lives. Many IvanLee Sheltie owners compete across the country and can be seen on the IvanLee Performance web pages.



**Ch Kylin Hard Copy AX AXJ
"Elliot"**

The IvanLee breeding program is small but serious. As with Ch SumerSong Winter Shadows ROM being their inspiration for Conformation, Ch Kylin Hard Copy AX AXJ "Elliot" was their inspiration for Agility. Elliot was a plain little black dog but his attitude, carriage and bright intelligent look made heads turn. Elliot is most significant in the current IvanLee breeding program. His bright light shines through the eyes of many of their Shelties they are showing today. Starting with a good foundation and bringing in wonderful dogs like Elliot continues to keep IvanLee on track with their goals. They strive to maintain the quintessential Sheltie essence while combining it with correct structure, temperament, melting expression and overall balance.

IvanLee's goal is to breed beautiful, intelligent, highly social dogs that can perform in all venues. To Mike and

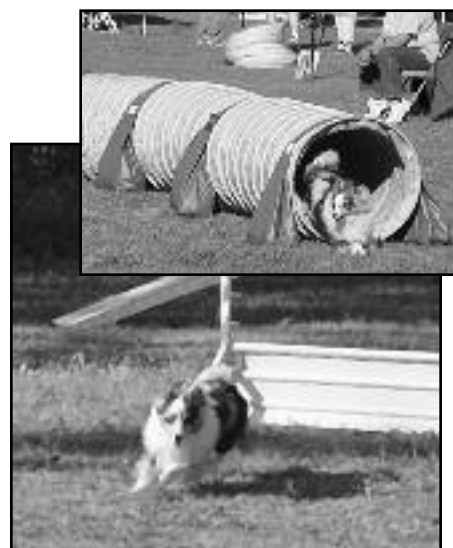


**Ch IvanLee CharBar MercyMe
IvanLee's second homebred
champion**



**BearCreek IvanLee Cornerstone
shown by Pam and owned by Pam
and Doreen Gelina**

**IvanLee Glacial Reflexion MX MXJ
"Ice"**



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IvanLee, cont'd.

Pam's credit they own, co-own and have bred six American Champions, two Canadian Champions and two International Champions. They also have multiple high level achieving Performance dogs in competition.

"It could happen to you", and following their tradition of good luck, the cop and the waitress continue to have wonderful things happen in their lives.

In 2007 the Korceks ventured out into a new area with Shelties, professional handling. Pam had handled for friends here and there but this was a big step. In 2006 Pam and Mike sent soon-to-be Ch IvanLee Mercy Reigns "Liora" out with professional handler Jan Williams. Jan put a 5 point Specialty Major, a 4 point Major and a National placement on Liora, who came home only needing two singles to finish. When the time came to finish Liora, Pam assisted Jan on three show circuits in exchange for Liora's championship. It happened quickly, but with enough time for Pam to refine her grooming and handling skills with tips from Jan and others.

As Pam brought her dogs back into the ring following her summer show circuit more doors and dreams were opened up. A few of her friends asked if she would handle for them. Their long-time friend Cherie Kessler, of BearCreek Shelties was one of the first to request handling services. I was also one of those friends. We have a very promising Champion that was RWD at the 2006 ASSA National under breeder/judge Linda Churchill. "Flash" was Specialed for awhile after gaining his title but was not placing enough to keep him out on the circuit. I decided to bring him home and Special him myself. With not much success on my own with placements I asked Pam to show him at a few shows. What a good move for us - and Flash. In the last year they have two Specialty BISSs, 20+

BOBs, a few BOSs, two Group placements, and one Group 1st. Our boy, with Pam at the end of his lead, is now the dog we knew he could be and they are still going strong.

DREAMS DO COME TRUE . . .

Pam and Michael's client list continues to grow. Local breeders and friends have sent their dogs to the Korceks, who have a knack for being successful with dogs other handlers were unable to point. This is due in a large part to how the dogs are treated while being shown, and made to feel at home.

After using handlers themselves, Michael and Pam know what's best for client dogs. Their integrity shines through in their actions, and according to Michael and Pam, there is just no other way it should be done.

INTEGRITY:

Consistency of actions, values, methods, measures and principles.

ETHICS ON HANDLING:

- Committed to their clients' interests foremost, IvanLee dogs are secondary.
- Client dogs are top priority, meeting special needs when traveling.



Pam and "Flash", taking Group 1 BISS Ch. Coastal Wintercreek Storm Warning



Pam and friend/owner Deanne Snedeker with Arenray Rialto "Riley"



- Traveling, their RV is air conditioned to assure the client dogs' comfort.
- Dogs are walked several times a day and have ample time stretching out in ex-pens.
- Awnings, easy-ups and shade cloth are used when needed.
- Personal time given to each dog.
- One-on-one time for playing, loving and addressing any extra training needed.
- When at home client dogs have time to enjoy the shaded dog yard for exercise.
- Couch time is given to all as well as frequent interactive time with Michael and Pam.
- Bedtime is spent in individual crates in the heated/air conditioned dog room.
- Any special diet needs and requests are taken seriously.

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IvanLee, cont'd.

In competition, the client dogs take priority over Michael and Pam's dogs. If necessary, they will hand off their own dogs to stay on the client dog. They have trained very special people to assist them at shows. Cori Olsen and Wendy Donadio, both Sheltie breeder/handlers, and Sandy Turnidge, a Boxer breeder/handler. All have been invaluable to the Korceks. Michael wears many hats at dog shows: valet parking attendant, dolly-puller, book-keeper, coffee fetcher, ringside assistant and of course, does all the BBQ'ing. He has also been known to do a pretty darn good job of handling and winning when wearing his Hawaiian shirt.

The friendships the Korcek's have made handling dogs are some of their most treasured. Watching, and sharing the joy with one another is the best feeling. They feel they owe their success in handling to the first clients that trusted them with their Shelties. Deanne Snedeker with "Gunner" and "Riley", Surendra Subramani with "Ravi", Debby and Jim Gayton with "Flash"



**Michael, wearing his Hawaiian shirt,
and father and daughter:
IvanLee Festival Of Lights "Holly" as WB and her sire,
BISS Ch Coastal Wintercreek Storm Warning as BOB**

and "Buzz", Betty Rose with "Shade" and the Dieberts with "Asher".

Another dream come true was being asked to judge Sweepstakes at the Northern Nevada Shetland Sheepdog Specialty. This was Pam's first assignment and a wonderful opportunity and in keeping with the tradition of "it could happen to you", the cop and the waitress continue to live "happily ever after" in a small country town in Oregon called Lebanon.

They continue to dream, and best of all, they make dreams come true for others.

If you ever find yourself in the Willamette Valley area Pam and Micheal would love for you to stop by for a visit. They attend most northwest shows and are known for the best BBQs and potlucks in the area, so pop in for a feast. Look for the Jayco RV trailer fly-

ing the American flag, where you'll find a group of Sheltie folks sharing good food and GOOD company.



**Pam awards Best in Sweeps to
Homewood Inspiration
at the NNSSC Specialty, Fall 2008**



Hobby/kennel shop