

**William R. (Sil) Sanders**

## 1. Why Westies?

When my family brought home a Westie puppy, I was a young teenager; I fell in love with his confidence, boundless enthusiasm, and his rugged soccer play.

## 1. From whom did you obtain your first Westie?

Anne and I purchased our first Westie from Dorie Eisenberg, KarRic Kennel.

## 1. Was this Westie purchased as a pet or show dog?

He was purchased as a pet – but later Dorie convinced us to show him.

## 1. Who was your most important mentor and why?

Margaret Barr and Pat Winans were both important. Margaret because she helped get me involved in Obedience and Earthdog as well as encouraging me to get more involved with the WHWTCA. Pat because she encouraged me to take an active role in the newly formed San Francisco Bay WHWTC.

## 1. What do you remember most about these mentors?

Margaret – (a) her sitting at her kitchen table surrounded by her dogs when I would come over for a visit, her dogs racing out to bark at a squirrel on her fence eating the peanuts she left for them, and her consternation that her dog's joyous barking would scare away the squirrels. And (b), Margaret and two of her dogs doing an obedience brace demo at the first SFBWHWTCA fun match, and at each turn, the outside dog sneaking in to be the one right beside Margaret.

Pat at any show, busily trying to groom her dog, stopping and helping any new person who wandered by.

## 1. Who were some of the other mentors that influenced you? How did they do so?

I have been lucky to have had many wonderful and generous mentors. Jess Nixon (Cairns) in Earthdog, Shirley Hammond (Dobermans) in Tracking.

## 7. To date, what has been your most important/ memorable moment in Westies?

QT passing his VST (Variable Surface Tracking test early one morning in Missoula, Montana and earning his Champion Tracker title.

## 8. What is your favorite dog show? Why?

Montgomery County takes that title. All the energy of the people grooming their dogs early in the morning, watching Westie after Westie strut their stuff in the dewy grass, chatting at ringside with all the Westie breeders we only get to see once or twice a year is energizing for every Westie lover.

## 9. If you groom your own dogs, who taught you to do so?

I tried to teach myself using Marvin's book and quickly knew I was talentless so I turned the job over to Anne who has excelled.

## 10. If you are or were a breeder, who taught you to evaluate litters and young stock?

I learned this critical skill through trial and error plus the advice of many friends and the judgment of many dog show judges.

11. When you look back, which of your Westies would you consider your favorite *or most influential*? Why? Which Westie not owned by you did you consider a favorite or most influential?

Alicia who taught me how to train her to track and Mr. Q who taught me many of the details of what he was smelling on the track and how he wanted to follow it.

CH Skaket's Chunkies, U.D., C.G. who demonstrated that I was not alone in doing lots of performance sports with my dogs.

12. Also looking back, which sire, in your opinion, had a *strong* influence on the breed?

While I will not name him, the sire which brought out CMO in our own dogs which caused us to investigate genetic disease in Westies and encourage the breed to focus more on breeding healthy dogs.

13. What was your most memorable Montgomery County moment? Roving moment?  
MCKC – QT taking 20 minutes to overcoming a difficult first corner on his first TDX track at Fair Hill and going on to pass.

Roving at Southern California – Mr. Q as a young puppy won WD and was in competition for BOB. After all the specials were sorted out, the judge gaited him and he looked great. She quietly told me to go into second-in-line thinking she would place me Best of Winners. As we strutted along this long line of specials, the look on the face of the handler in front who was afraid the judge was going to put Mr. Q up for the breed and her relief when I moved in behind her.

14. If you attended the Centennial in 2009, what were your greatest experiences from it?  
It was watching QT as a veteran strut around the ring and win his class.

15. What Westie author/artist influenced you the most?

John T Marvin influenced me most because he gave the Westie fancy access to a detailed history of the breed.

16. Do you have a favorite Westie collectible(s)?

My favorite is a Black-and-White pub decoration – a metal box with B&W artwork which plugs into the wall. The top opens up, barking Westie and Scotty heads emerge and bark loudly, and then return to the box and then the lid of the box closes.

17. Are you or were you active in any regional Westie Clubs? Which one(s)?

I was a founding member of the SFBWHWTC but since moving away from the Bay Area, I am no longer active.

I am active at times in the WHWTC of Puget Sound.

18. What do you think the future holds for the breed? Where would you like to see Westies in 10/20 years?

In 20 years, I'd like to see people able to breed or buy a healthy puppy with little risk of skin disease.

19. How best can WHWTCA members assure the future well-being of the breed.

We need open, transparent discussion of our dogs whose health is poor as well as our dogs that do well in conformation and performance events.

20. What advice can you impart to present and future Westie enthusiasts?

Train your dog to do everything with joy and enthusiasm. The activity will be great for your dog, your relationship with your dog, and yourself.