

# Papillon Club of America Health & Genetics



## STEPHANIE KOENIGER



My husband Neil and I live in Anchorage, Alaska, a place we love and where we raised our family - a son and a daughter. Although I never had a dog as a child, I was fortunate to marry a man who had raised and loved dogs since childhood. Early in our marriage, our family pet was Labrador Retriever. Since I have always been a 'small dog person', I soon added a small mixed breed dog to our family and then a Chinese Pug. Later my husband added an English Bulldog.

We saw our first Papillons at an obedience class where we and our dogs were enrolled. Although the Papillons never returned to class, we were intrigued and began to research the breed. About 2 years later, in early 1994, I acquired my first Papillon. The breeder encouraged me to consider showing her. After attending a few shows to learn and watch my husband show his Bulldog, I took a deep breath and went in the ring with my Papillon. Turns out my little Papillon girl was a natural 'show dog'. She strutted herself to her championship in short order and I was hooked!

I have been a PCA member since 1995 and attended my first PCA National Specialty in 1998 in San Diego. Since then I have attended many more. I am also a member of the Papillon Association of Puget Sound and have attended several of those specialties as well. We are active members of the Alaska Kennel Club, the Toy Dog Club of Alaska, and the Non-Sporting Dog Club of Alaska. We thoroughly enjoy showing our dogs in the Alaskan all

breed shows across the state. When we can do so, we also like to travel to shows in Canada and the Pacific Northwest. We and all of our dogs have driven several thousand miles with our travel trailer, marveling at the scenery, visiting friends and family, and enjoying dog shows along the way!

In the last 24 years, we have enjoyed raising, showing and occasionally breeding our Papillons and Bulldogs. We've shown most of our Papillons and Bulldogs to their AKC championships, with several of them also earning their Canadian and International championships - all owner handled. We had our first Papillon litter in 1997 and our first Bulldog litter in 2000. In 2014, our 4th generation homebred Papillon earned her AKC championship! In all of our breedings, we strive to improve on what we have, including conformation, temperament, and especially health. To that end, I avail myself of every opportunity to expand my knowledge and understanding of canine behavior, structure, function, health and nutrition. Genetics is the scientific basis for understanding our canine companions. By participating on the Genetic Research Committee, I hope to promote and further that understanding for the fancy as a whole.

Since the 2012 identification of the genetic mutation for one type of PRA in Papillons, I have developed a strong interest in canine genetics, the value of DNA testing and "smart breeding." I maintain the PRA1 and NAD Test Results listings as well as the worldwide Statistics for both DNA tests. I also help to maintain the Papillon Pedigrees.org database, including posting health test results. My goal is to inform, educate, and support owners and breeders about issues related to the rapidly expanding world of canine genetics and DNA testing!