

# Papillon Club of America Health & Genetics



## CHERYL MAASS



My Papillon family, along with my husband Mark and I live in Avondale, Arizona. The first 51 years of my life were spent in Ohio and Indiana until Mark's job transferred him to "The Desert". Talk about an adjustment! It's been almost two years and I still can't get used to the heat!

I've always had a soft spot in my heart for animals having had dogs and cats as pets all my life. One fateful day as I was flipping through the channels on TV, I ran across some dog agility trials that were being run. A flash of black and white dog swept across the screen and I was instantly mesmerized by this flying ball of energy, beauty and grace. I watched this curious-looking dog with the huge ears finish its race and waited to see how he would place. Well, he blew everyone else away with his time and as I watched the owner being interviewed after his win, I observed this beautiful dog beam with pride at his

accomplishment and I knew this dog was my next breed, that is, after I found out what the breed was !

Obviously it turned out to be a Papillon and we currently have five full-time Papillon residents now. We started out with a pet-quality pap and soon discovered we needed another one as we didn't want to share just one dog. We got our second pap from a local breeder who talked us into trying to show dogs for fun. It turned out that I really enjoyed showing even though I rarely won. I decided if I was going to be serious about showing I'd better study up on the breed and begin looking for some real quality dogs. We got another couple of paps, getting better quality each time, but I still had much to learn. Getting a top quality Papillon seemed impossible !

After we moved to Arizona, Andi Meloon and I met at a dog show. We soon became good friends which has led to our current co-ownership of a beautiful bitch. I owe more to Andi than I could ever express. Her friendship, guidance and generosity are invaluable to me. I've been involved in two breedings and I feel being involved in the Genetics Committee with the National Papillon Club will give me a solid foundation to gain knowledge and breed intelligently from the start rather than making all of the beginning breeder's mistakes.

Three of my five Papillons have developed epilepsy which is being controlled with medication. I know the feeling of heartbreak when your beloved dogs fall victim to any sort of illness. We need to prevent as many genetic ailments as possible to promote a healthy and happy Papillon breed for the future. I look forward to learning from and giving to the Genetics Committee and all its members in the future. I love working on fundraising projects as they allow my creative energies to run wild, so feel free to give me your fundraising ideas !

Thank you for this honor.