

Meet Your Breeders

Jumoke Basenjis ~ Quita Basenjis

Laurie and Bryan have known each other since 1982, each having our own beginnings in the basenji breed. Laurie bred under the kennel name of Quita, and Bryan bred under the kennel name of Jumoke. Prior to our marriage in 2002, we bred four litters which involved our dogs: a litter in 1987, a litter in 1999 and two in 2001. To this day, we have her dogs, his dogs, and our dogs; though we think they tend to shift about when they are bad dogs. All these dogs are as much Quita bred as Jumoke, though we chose to drop the Quita kennel name. Laurie and Bryan agree more often than they disagree when it comes to breeding. When we do disagree, we have the utmost respect for each other's opinion. It's truly wonderful to have very candid discussions about the dogs and breeding.

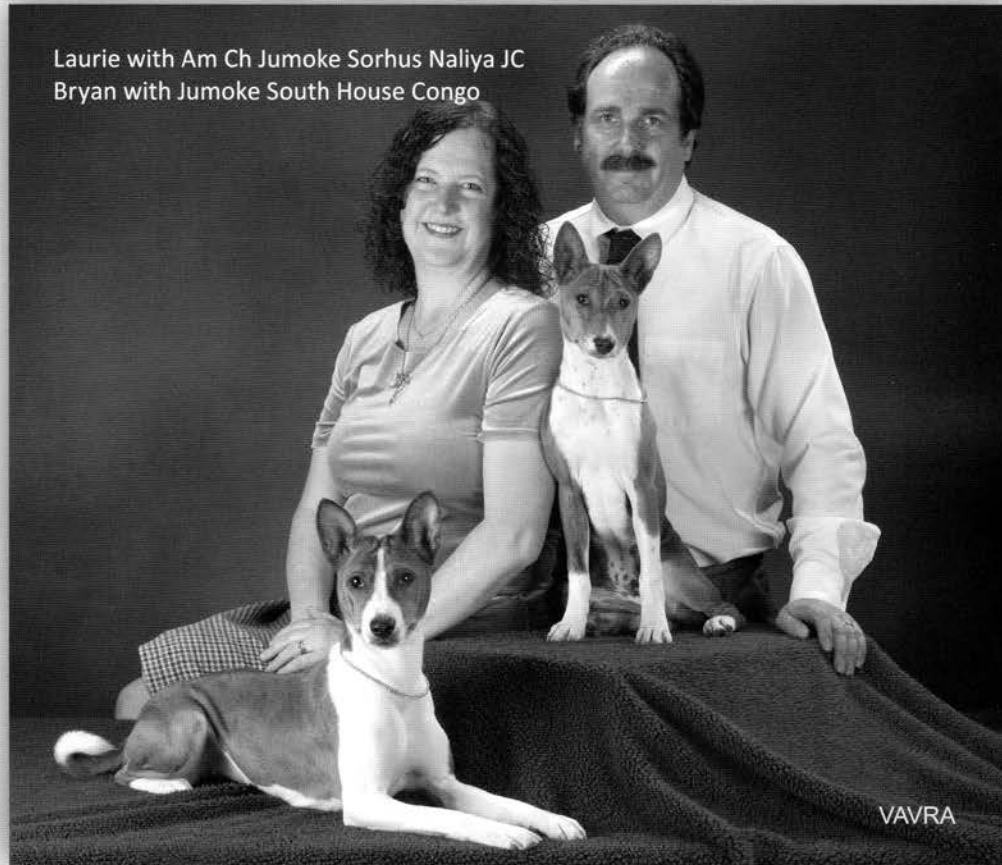
We chose to respond to this interview individually and jointly in order to give the reader insight into the different paths which we have experienced and the common goals we share.

1. How did you get started in Basenjis?

Bryan: In 1977, my mother purchased a basenji for my father and fulfilled a long-time dream. He boasted about the breed's fearless nature, reputation as a lion hunting dog, and physical attributes like being fast and agile. I suspect he was influenced by the novel and subsequent movie, *Good-Bye My Lady*, though I doubt he would ever admit as much. Lady was a very typical basenji and very loyal to my father. He would roughhouse with her, which resulted in ferocious-sounding battles as she was a very vocal basenji. She was always gentle using her teeth during these play sessions yet not so gentle with strangers. Dad would ultimately play dead, and her mood went from play to concern as if someone flipped a switch. It was as if Lady felt she done something to cause this condition.

Lady loved the hunt; one of her favorite games was to attack the water hose. We had a lot of water pressure, which made the end of the hose wiggle and resemble a snake that needed to be attacked. The result was water sprayed everywhere--better than any sprinkler on a hot summer day in Southern California.

And when the day was done, she took great care in keeping my Dad's feet clean--a trait she reserved for only him. But like many basenjis, she had other traits which were not so amusing. Lady chewed on the window sills and other moldings around the house. She destroyed the door jams and cabinet in the bathroom as a result of dad securing her there when we were gone; he did not have the heart to cage a dog. She was impossible to catch if she got loose. As kids, we no doubt created this characteristic



Laurie with Am Ch Jumoke Sorhus Naliya JC
Bryan with Jumoke South House Congo

by chasing her like a game of tag. She would also tree any cat she found, which did not make our neighbors happy.

She did have only one fear: the broom. As a puppy she was racing around the house, as basenjis do, to find the circular path that led through the kitchen. She brushed against the broom propped in the corner and knocked it over; a loud bang followed as it hit the floor. The noise startled her, and, from that day on, she believed the broom to be an evil beast out to get her.

These are the memories of a basenji

that influenced me to choose the breed when I was in a position to own a dog; nothing less than a basenji would do. As a family, we had several breeds of dogs while I was growing up, but none impressed me more than Lady. A very close second was Sugar, the Boxer we had in Hawaii. No breed other than the basenji has ever impressed me with its loyalty, independent nature, superior attitude, and clownish play.

My first basenji was Tesseract Mountain Music, by Ch. Sunhue Tony Vikentor x Tesseract Wild Fire at Tennji, who I purchased for \$125 from Yvette Smith Walker in the late summer of 1981. Monty was 10 months old and was sold to me by Sheila H. Smith. Yvette, her daughter, had recently moved out of state and put Sheila in charge of placing Monty.

I bought Monty strictly as a pet with no interest whatsoever in dog shows. As Monty matured he became overly protective of me, and I discussed this problem with Sheila Smith. She advised me to meet with Melody Russell, who owned Monty's sire, Tony. Melody and I met and

became good friends. I was quite impressed with her dogs' good natures. She also had a Pembroke Welsh Corgi at the time and a Rhodesian Ridgeback, who, I was warned, had a wild tongue. The Ridgeback did like to lick faces and used her weight to get the advantage.

Melody recommended classes from Jane Anderson to resolve Monty's issues. The classes covered handling for conformation showing; I was bitten by the show bug, and it was in these classes that I first met my future wife Laurie.

Ch. Amun C-Zara was my second basenji and first champion. I acquired her the summer of 1983 when I was seeking a companion for Monty. Judy Lange, her breeder, told me about C-Zara, who had been placed with a family that claimed she was untrainable and destructive. Poor C-Zara was chained outside, an outcast, and had not been socialized. C-Zara was a lot of work but soon became my own Lady; we enjoyed 16 years of companionship.

Laurie: I grew up owning mutts but I was always interested in getting involved in the sport of showing dogs. I never had a purebred dog until my research led me to the basenji. I was attracted to their clean, athletic build and their independent nature. I met Susan Coe at the Seattle Kennel Club dog show and got my first basenji from her in 1981. I was able to visit the litter several times before I took my little girl home. I finished Ch Akuaba's Ruffian myself, and also my second basenji, Ch DazeDun Akuaba Rascal Quita, F.Ch, LCM CDX. Basenjis were an integral part of my family and helped me raise my own sons. I became involved in the Evergreen



Jumoke South House Congo

the unlimited trick dog and dazzled many with her ability to roll over and break dance, but there came a time when I felt C-Zara could use a basenji companion.

I decided to breed C-Zara in the fall of 1985 as a means to provide her the ideal basenji companion, a son, and continue my interest in showing. She produced three puppies, which was ideal. I placed the only female, Klahanie, and kept the two boys, Moke and Ku. C-Zara, Moke, and Ku earned their championships, but it was Ku who cemented my interest in breeding basenjis. His championship came easy, with multiple Best of Breeds and group placements. Several established breeders and a few judges pointed out what made Ku exceptional: Ku had excellent structure and movement, the result of breeding C-Zara to her uncle, Ch. Rameses Golden Phoenix.

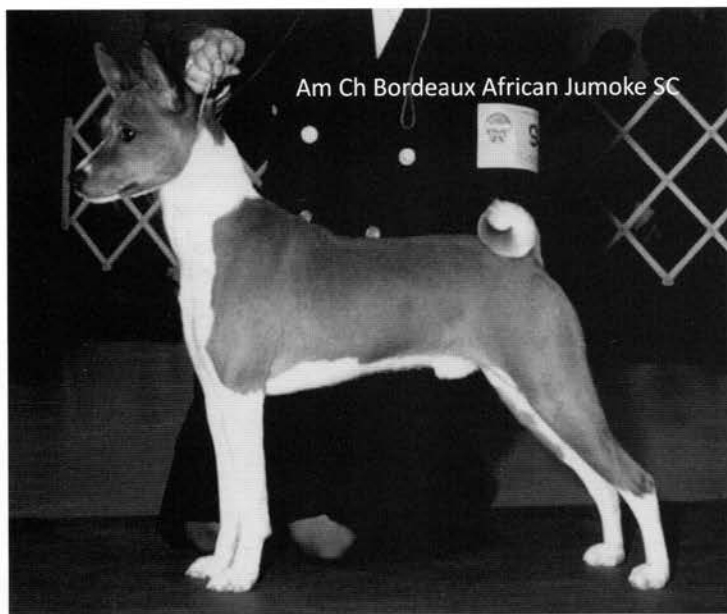
Moke and Ku always were at odds with each other. Ku was a true alpha male who had no problem starting a fight over the slightest issue, and Moke could do no right. I placed Moke with George and Marcia Woodard in 1987, which was the start of a wonderful friendship (Note: greetings from Marcia who had the pleasure of copy editing this article).

Laurie: My first litter was born in 1985. I enjoyed training, showing, and coursing and wanted to have my own puppies to show. Every litter I have bred has been with the hope of breeding my next basenji to show.

3. What persons influenced you most strongly?

Bryan: My first litters were influenced by Judy Lange, Amun Basenjis, C-Zara's breeder, and my admiration of some of the top winning dogs at the time. It was not until Sheila Smith and Sheila Ann Frost produced Ch. Anasazi Whidbey Osiris that I took notice of the consistency of the dogs they produced. The dogs did well in the ring, but were not necessarily the best moving dogs. The head type was very consistent, and you could usually identify a dog bred by Sheila and Sheila Ann simply by the head. Whidbey demonstrated how good movement and type produces a balanced basenji. It became apparent that while breeding a good moving dog is difficult, it's even more challenging to breed a good moving basenji. A foundation based on type is necessary to breed the latter.

My friendship with Sheila increased over the years, and I consider her my primary mentor of the breed. When Sheila decided to retire from



Am Ch Bordeaux African Jumoke SC

Basenji Club and worked on many committees, including the Basenji Owners Manual, the BCOA National in 1986, and Lure Coursing.

2. Why did you start breeding? When?

Bryan: I never dreamed that I would be breeding basenjis when I purchased Monty and acquired C-Zara, but shortly after C-Zara's arrival, I lost Monty. He escaped from my yard and was never seen again. I searched for many months and never gave up hope that one day he would be found.

C-Zara and I went to dog shows and competitive obedience and formed a strong bond in spite of her early lack of socialization. C-Zara was

breeding, she gave me Saintly, Ch. Anasazi Chatelaine Du Senji, who is the foundation dam of most of my dogs. I suspect Sheila would have liked some of the dogs Laurie and I have produced, and, with others, she would have wondered what the heck we were thinking. It would have led to fascinating discussions; I will always miss Sheila's words of wisdom.

Melody Russell, Fanfare Basenjis, influenced the temperament I expect from my dogs. Her dogs were often not socialized or trained as well as the other breeders' in the area, but yet Melody's were often very affectionate and accepting of new situations. They possessed a self-confident basenji personality. Temperament is a must in any good breeding program.

Laurie: Susan Coe, Sheila Smith, Sheila Ann Frost, Melody Russell, and, of course, Bryan Gregory.

4. What have you seen improve in Basenjis over the years?

Bryan & Laurie: Over the years, we believe side gate and topline have improved. We used to see far more dogs in the show ring that were high in the rear, lacked rear drive, had dips behind the shoulders, or top lines that sagged. We still see these faults today, but the emphasis on side gate has made it more difficult to finish such dogs. Unfortunately, this has come at a cost.

But the primary improvement in the breed we see today is the enviable elimination of Fanconi Syndrome. The prospect of having the means to eliminate Fanconi opens up the future of many breeding programs. No longer do breeders have to fear line breeding due to the possibly of producing Fanconi. This offers the opportunity to concentrate on the recessive traits which define a basenji. We still have some remaining health issues to resolve, but none of these have stifled breeding as much as Fanconi did. Breeders can now employ many time-honored breeding practices used to define and refine breed type and movement. We foresee an explosion of very nice basenjis about three generations after the end of Fanconi.

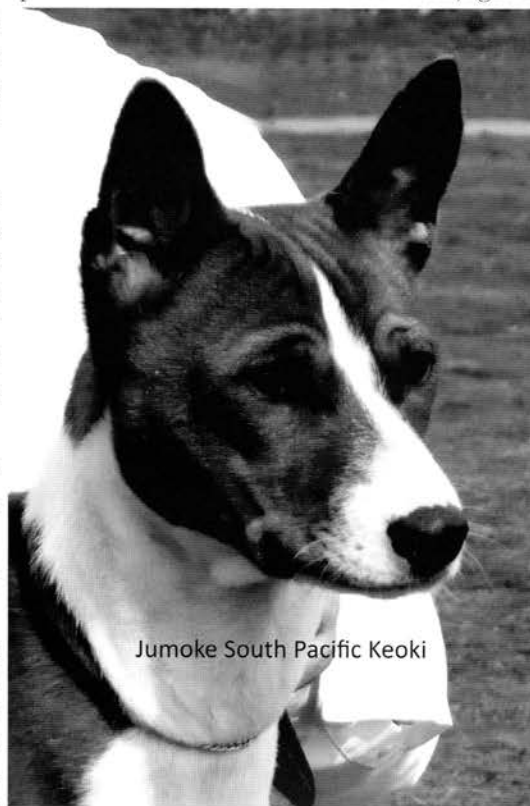
5. What do you think today's Basenji breeders need to pay special attention to?

Bryan and Laurie: This is a very difficult question. What does today's breeder need to pay special attention to? Small, hooded ears properly set on the head; fronts set under the body with good shoulder layback and angulations; high tail sets that produce the distinctive rear shelf a basenji should have; short muzzle tapering into an overall chisel-featured head; square profile; healthy, long life span. The list goes on. We see fewer and fewer good examples of signature breed type and movement in today's dogs. Also, too many dogs are lost at an early age due to early onset of arthritis or cancer.

Overall balance should be the focus of today's breeders. So much emphasis has been placed on the side gait of our dogs that we are on the verge of losing some of the distinctive traits which have defined the breed. The issue at hand is that a dog with a nice, open side gait can overcome many breed deficiencies in the show ring: poor head type, large ears, big feet, short necks—all are forgiven under many of today's judges in favor of the side gait.

Sadly, we often see judges and breeders admiring side gaits that are

not characteristic of the basenji breed nor of good locomotion. The effortless basenji gait is one of ideal efficiency: no wasted motion.



Jumoke South Pacific Keoki

It's a smooth, easy gait in which the basenji covers a fair amount of ground with as little effort as possible. Often we see exhibitors moving their dogs too fast and emphasizing a quick gait that covers as much ground as possible, without breaking stride, rather than an effortless gait. We see dogs doing the "goose step": raising their stretched-out-straight fronts and dropping them only to contact the ground with their front foot perpendicular to the chest. No efficiency of gait there. We see exaggerated rear drive: extending the rear legs up and well beyond the rear foot's contact with the ground—flashy, but wasted motion. We see dogs pushed beyond the point where rear overreaches their fronts—a confrontation of front and rear leg motion for which the dogs must compensate. We, too, have exhibited our dogs too fast and pushed a side gait to make it flashy and get that ribbon.

We often hear that health and/or temperament is what a breeder should pay specific attention to and that these have top priority over breed type or movement. Such focus can produce a healthier, well-adjusted dog but not a healthier,

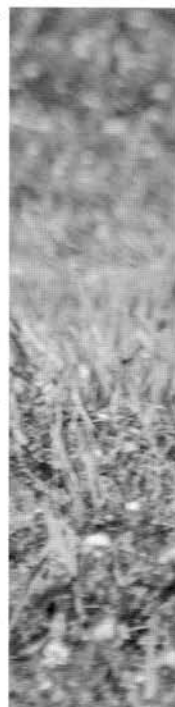
well-adjusted basenji.

Today's breeders need to focus more on overall balance and less on pleasing a judge who may know less about the breed than they do. Winning in the show ring should not be the drive of a good basenji breeding program. Too much emphasis on any one aspect of the breed, whether it be for chasing ribbons, health, or temperament, is detrimental to the breed. Breeders need to consider the whole dog: breed type (the silhouette, head, movement and coat texture), temperament, and health—an overall balance. There is no such thing as a "perfect basenji," and there will always be something to work on in subsequent generations.

6. What advice do you have to a new breeder getting started?

Bryan: Start by breeding the best possible basenji you can obtain. I generally grade the overall impression of a basenji as poor, below average, average, above average, and excellent quality. The average basenji often earns a championship in due time; below-average basenjis struggle to earn the title. Those new to basenji fancy usually start with an average basenji. Established breeders generally reserve their best for themselves or for those with whom the breeder has a confident relationship. Owners new to breeding basenjis should carefully evaluate the basenjis that they are planning to breed. Seek a consultation with several established breeders who have a proven history. It is often a better choice to purchase or lease an above-average or excellent basenji than to breed an average basenji. Exceptional basenjis are produced generally by exceptional parents.

Do not be lured into the "I can fix that fault by breeding to..." mentality. Many of the basenji's characteristic traits and good movement/structure are recessive. If



you do not see the trait or movement/structure expressed in the basenji you are breeding, there is a good chance that specific dog will not be able to produce it, regardless of the breeding pair. It can take several generations of breeding to fix that fault or refine a trait.

Have a multi-generation breeding plan. Simply breeding from one generation to another is a hit-and-miss scenario, and the odds are against you.

Read. There are many good books on the art of breeding dogs.

Laurie: The advice I would give to a new breeder includes all of the clichés you have already heard: Study the breed. Study movement and structure. Ask questions. Talk to the breeder of your own dog. Find out what was the original goal of breeding those parents (improving what trait) and whether or not that goal was achieved. Look at the grandparents. Get involved in your local club. Take your time. Recognize that it takes time and practice to develop an eye for the dogs.

7. What dogs you've seen or owned stand out as outstanding examples of the breed and why?

Bryan: One of the first dogs I was taken with was Ch. Rameses Golden Phoenix. Niki had outstanding movement. Niki was slightly long, which lend to a tremendous stride in his side gait; Ken Leighton had to work to keep up with Niki. Where Niki excelled was his front assembly. His front was set under his chest, his shoulder layback was ideal--with tight knitted shoulder blades--and he had good length of upper arm and ideal front angulations. Niki could reach the ground well in front of him and pull through as if it were no effort at all. Coupled with a strong rear and a proper rear extension, he made moving across the ground easy while other dogs had to work hard. This front assembly still is the truest coming-at-you and side gait I have personally seen in a basenji.

Ch. Anasazi Whidbey Osiris would be my overall pick for balance. Whidbey did not have the movement of Niki or some of the other basenjis known for an exceptional side gait stride, but his movement was very nice and truly fit a basenji with a square profile. Whidbey was the "you can pretty much have it all" basenji in one package: rich red and very pliant coat, profuse wrinkles, small hooded ear with ideal set, short coupled, high tail set, rear shelf. He still stands as the only basenji who won all three West Coast specialties in a single year: Evergreen Basenji Club, Northern California Basenji Club and Southern California Basenji

Club. Whidbey was truly a breeder's dog.

I have seen many basenjis since Niki and Whidbey were being campaigned in the mid-eighties: Nate, Johnny, Country Rose, Breaker, Bravo, Will, to name just a few, and all very nice examples of the breed. I could write endlessly about why I believe they are outstanding examples.

Of the dogs I have bred, Ch. Jumoke's Ku'Uakua Ku'Umalo had outstanding movement, and Ch. Jumoke's Moonshiner, overall balance.

Laurie and I have produced several very nice basenjis over the years; for example, Ch. Quita's Bar Code is an outstanding example of overall balance, but given that we do not promote our dogs nationally or campaign specials, these dogs are relatively unknown to the basenji fanciers outside of the Pacific Northwest

8. What do you feel are your most significant achievements with the breed?

Bryan: I believe our most significant achievement with the breed is still to come. Laurie and I expect our involvement in the breed will span another 25 years or more.

That said, there are many areas where one can seek achievement within the breed. In the conformation ring, Laurie and I have finished many champions, two or so a year; we do not keep count. However, I'm more thrilled when someone who I have been coaching finishes his or her dog, whether bred by us or someone else. It's tough to bring new people into conformation showing these days and have them succeed. Too many who are new to the sport do not believe they can finish a basenji championship without turning to a professional handler or to an experienced breeder. Some are always on the edge of giving up and need encouragement to help them along, even with dogs that have merit.

No achievement in the conformation ring will rival the satisfaction of having a new owner tell you that you did not charge them enough for their basenji puppy, the best dog they ever owned. Or the letter from an owner with whom you placed a basenji 16 years ago, informing you that their dog is doing well, that it is very much a beloved member of the family, and that they dread the day they will have to say goodbye. This is my greatest achievement and always will be.

I take pride in my contribution toward education. Whether it is for showing, lure coursing, obedience, breeding, or just the basics of ownership, I enjoy being a student and teacher of all aspects of the breed. We have had an extremely low frequency of returned dogs that we have bred over the years, probably less than five. I attribute this to education: every puppy we place goes home with our utmost support. It's one of the reasons we tend to refer prospective owners to local breeders and generally do not place our puppies out of the area. So many of the issues that the breed faces can simply be resolved through education; this applies to conformation, the sport of dog showing, the lure-coursing field, and our homes.

I'll continue to seek achievement in education, learning, and teaching what I have learned. This is the legacy I seek to leave and what I foresee will be my true contribution to the breed.

Laurie: I am very proud of our girls. With the help of leases and co-breeding, we have several girls between us that we have either owned or bred that are on the brood bitch honor roll: Ch. Akuaba's Ruffian, Ch. Quita's Window of Time, Ch. Anasazi Chatelaine Du Senji, Ch. Baru's Gabrielle of Jumoke, Ch. Jumoke Mischievous Sprite, DC Akuaba Quita Sizzler F.Ch.

Other girls that have produced well include: DC Jumoke Quita Dream

DC Can Ch UCI Int/Nat JA
Jumoke's Saylah Of Baraka
SC JOR BISP MBIF



of Qena, LCM; Ch Jumoke Quita Dream of India; and Ch Akuaba Jocasta Dulce Quita.

9. Anything else you would like to say?

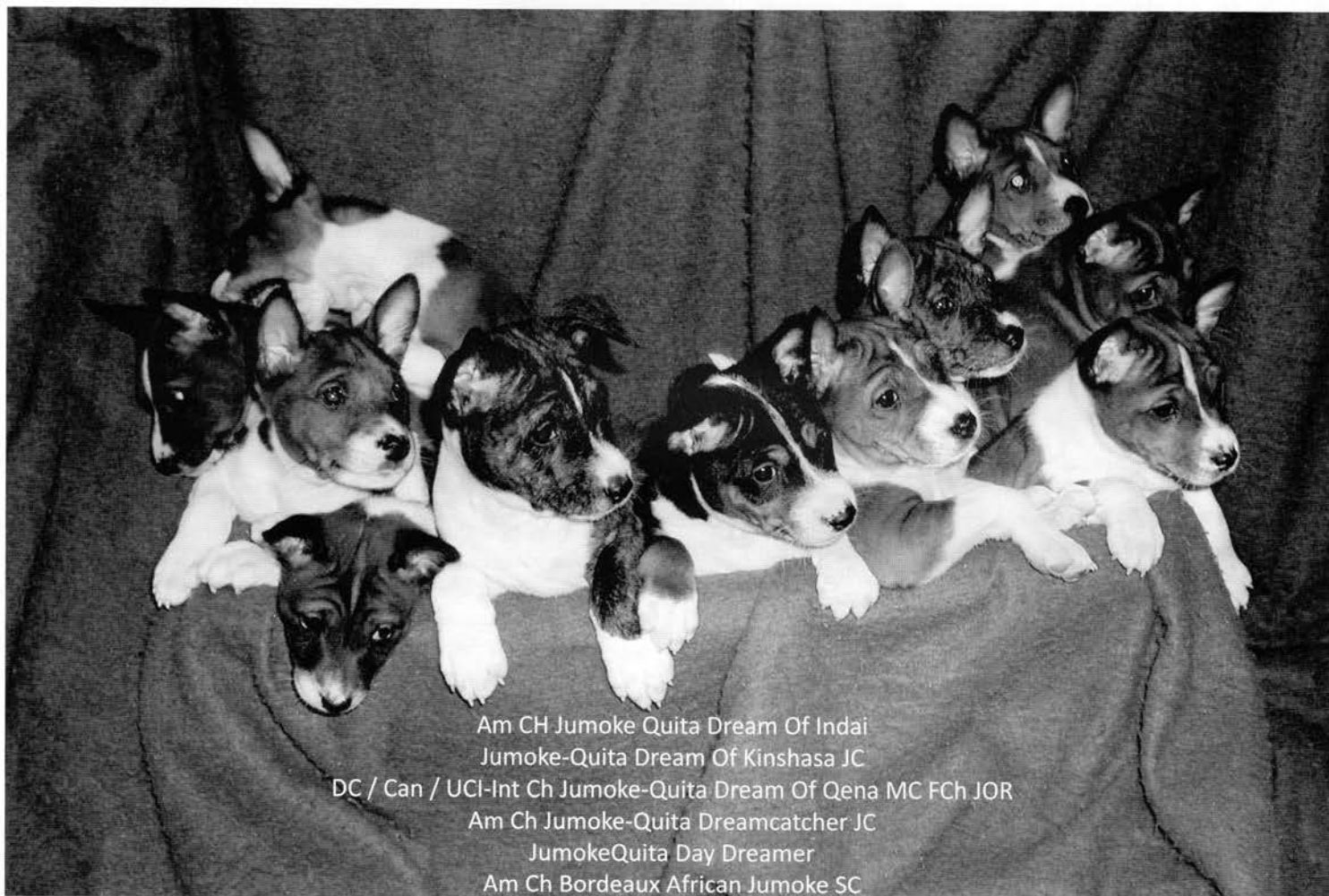
Bryan & Laurie: We have lived with Fanconi dogs for several years. It is such a relief to know that we will never produce another dog that will be affected, and that within a couple of generations, we will be free of the disease. Many thanks to all who made this possible.

10. What is your chosen kennel name? How did you choose this name? Why? Does it have a meaning? Any other information you would like to provide?

Bryan: My chosen kennel name came from the name of a new Western

Lowland Gorilla born May 9, 1985, at the Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle. The zoo staff named her Jumoke (juh-MOH-kee). It's the Nigerian name from the Yoruba language meaning "loved by everybody." The name also has roots in Egypt, with the same meaning of "loved by all." I chose the name as a term of endearment for the dogs that I breed, giving the name to my kennel's first litter whelped December 16, 1985.

Laurie: Quita: (Kee-ta). I had a beautiful Turkish Angora cat by the name of Chiquita when I got Ruffy. They were the best of friends. When it came time to choose a kennel name, I shortened the cat's name. When we, Bryan and Laurie, combined efforts we had his dogs, her dogs, and our dogs. At first we had JumokeQuita litters, but eventually we shortened this to Jumoke. ♦



Am CH Jumoke Quita Dream Of Indai
Jumoke-Quita Dream Of Kinshasa JC
DC / Can / UCI-Int Ch Jumoke-Quita Dream Of Qena MC FCh JOR
Am Ch Jumoke-Quita Dreamcatcher JC
JumokeQuita Day Dreamer
Am Ch Bordeaux African Jumoke SC
JumokeQuita African Bibi SC MC FCh LCM
AmCh JumokeQuita African Chilo JC
Am/Can / UCI-Int Ch Jumoke Quita African Luxor MC FCh JOR
JumokeQuita African Acacia
JumokeQuita African Zulika

Jumoke *and* Quita

Basenjis

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