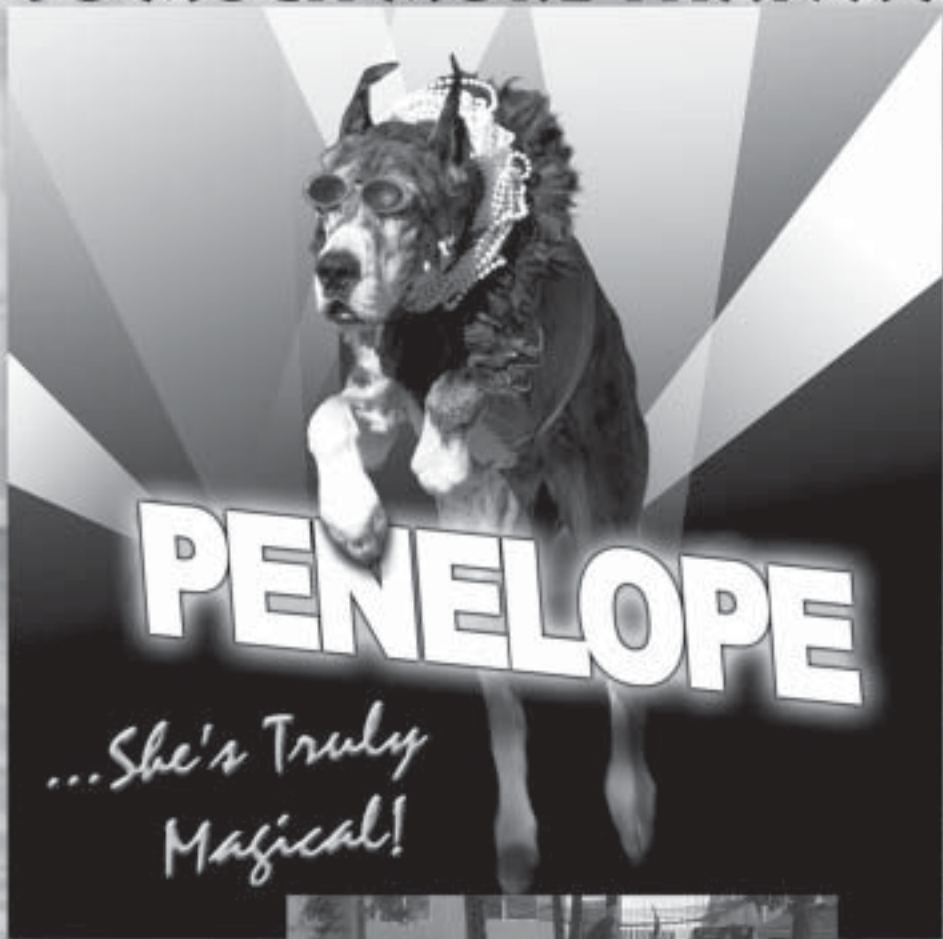


**HEALTHY, SOUND & BEAUTIFUL
SHE'S SO MUCH MORE THAN A MERLE**



*...She's Truly
Magical!*

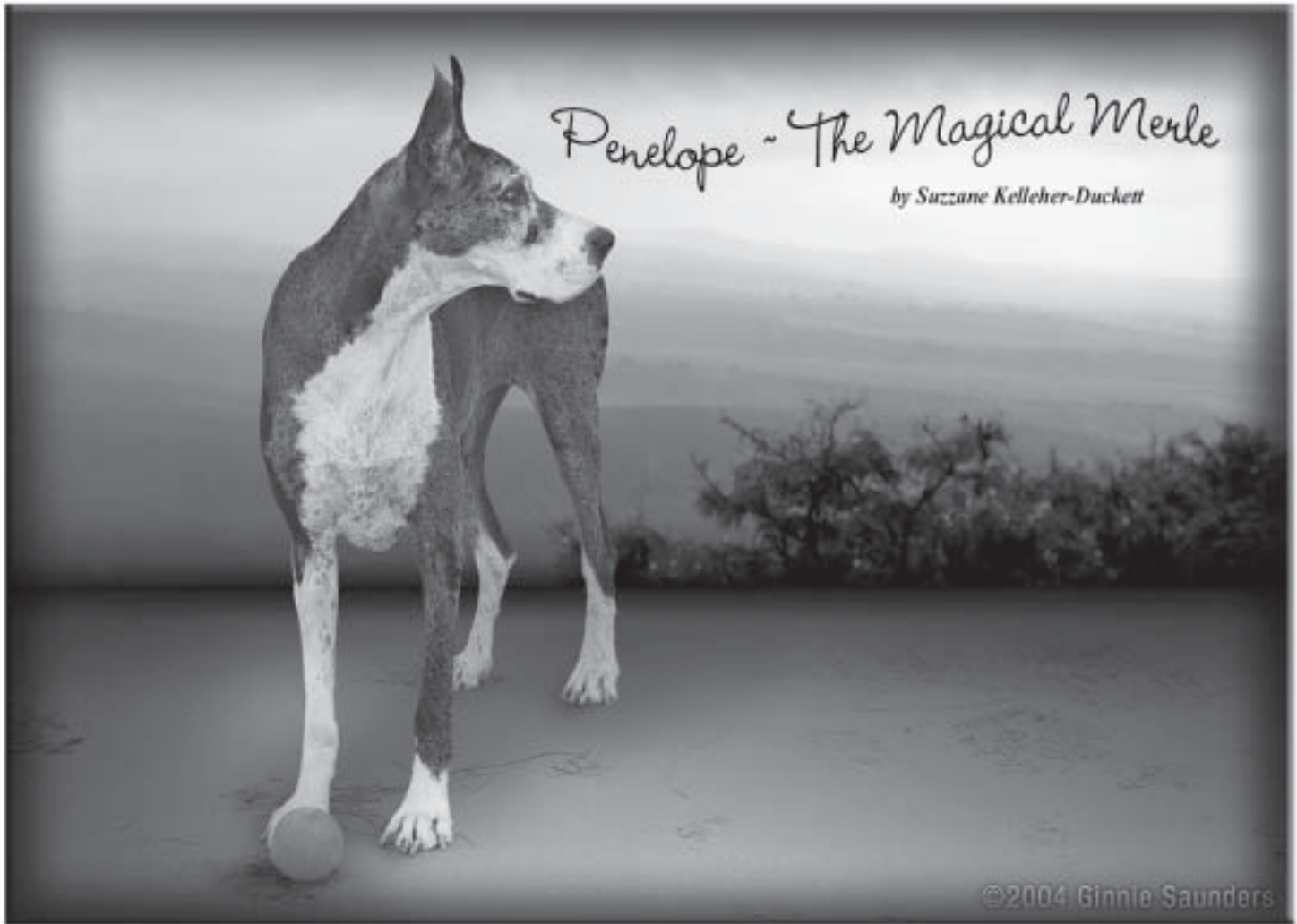
Not to be outdone by
her Ch/Agility titled
daughter, Lava...
Penelope starts Agility
at 8 years young!



(Daneridge's Camelot x Ch. GMJ's The Zacharia P. Steele)



Owned/Adored by:
Suzzane Kelleher-Duckett
Pacific Coast Harlequins
(661) 250-3920
<http://www.pchgreatdanes.com>



My husband and I had been married less than a year and had just moved into our first home when we decided it was time to add a canine companion to our family. He had his heart set on a Great Dane but I wasn't convinced this was the right breed for me. Mostly because I had been told that a Dane would have a difficult time keeping up with my activities, mainly horseback riding, mountain biking and hiking.

We talked about and looked into all sorts of other breeds but always came back to the Great Dane.

We went to the breeders, Maryann Wilson and Greg Louganis, to look at a litter with one thing for certain...we wanted a male. We played with all the puppies and tried to keep our focus on the boys but there was one puppy that just stood out from the rest. You just couldn't help but notice this puppy. This puppy was a spitfire, jumping, barking, playing and demanding our attention. Long after the rest of the litter fell asleep this puppy was still going and didn't close its eyes until my husband picked it up and held it in his arms. That was it, my husband was in love! This outgoing, rambunctious, demanding, little merle girl was ours from that moment on. She would soon be known as "Penelope" and registered as Daneridge's Penelope Steele.

As Penelope grew it became obvious that all I had been told about Great Danes simply wasn't true. In fact there were many days I couldn't keep up with Penelope.

She enjoyed playing games, especially hide n seek, ball and keep away. It didn't take long before she learned to cheat. It was always about winning for Penelope.

My husband taught her all sorts of silly games, for example she could identify over a dozen toys. If you asked her to bring you the pink pony she went to her toy box and brought back the pink pony. If you asked her for knot baby she would bring back the fleece tug toy with a knot tied in the middle, if you asked for the monkey she brought you the monkey. This game would go on and on.

At just 6 months old she started going along on trail rides. She became a great trail dog and loves to be around the horses.

She kept us very busy and enjoyed a long list of activities from Trick-or-Treating every year at Halloween to hiking, swimming at the beach, playing with doggie friends and spending long afternoons at the local school yard playing with children. Penelope has always ADORED kids!

One thing was certain Penelope was very active physically and mentally. The more we gave her to think about or do the happier she was.

She is outgoing, energetic, extremely intelligent, and often stubborn, "I must be the center of attention" kind of girl. She was that way as a puppy and not much has changed over the years except for her now distinguished gray face.

In December 2003, I volunteered to work the "Meet the Breeds" booth with Penelope at the AKC Eukanuba Invitational dog show being held in Long Beach, California. Each breed booth was staffed by a person to answer questions, and a dog of that breed to meet and greet the public. The booths were well decorated and offered the public educational information regarding that individual breed, its history, and its breeds' characteristics.

I could not think of a Dane better suited for the job than Penelope. Later I was told that there was some discussion about limiting the dogs that worked the booth to only those that were of an acceptable show color. I never heard anything more about it, but vowed to make sure that Penelope's time as a breed ambassador would be memorable and that she would stand out in a crowd, making sure there was no way anyone could miss her. With the theme for the booth being Hollywood combined with Penelope's love of being the center of attention, her uniform of pearls, a purple boa and a pair of purple sunglasses was born.

I think Penelope's picture was taken at least a dozen times within the first five minutes of our arrival and we hadn't even made it to our booth yet. Once in the booth, Penelope waved to the crowds, shook hands, barked when asked, high-fived and posed for tons of pictures with the young and old alike. She was a hit, a real media magnet. She came into the spot light and stole the show! She made the front page of the California section of the Los Angeles Times in full color, her picture landed her on the inside cover of the TV Focus in The Times-Picayune, New Orleans, LA, the AKC web site, the AKC Gazette, she was photographed and filmed by Animal Planet and her picture appeared on their web site. Penelope's picture was taken literally all day long. Penelope is a wonderful breed representative in conformation, health & temperament. And on that day she proved it! No one could deny it! Putting her color aside, she is a perfect breed ambassador!!!

It was this experience that made me wonder why I had not involved Penelope in my current show activities. Of course she couldn't be shown in the conformation ring but I had been training her daughter "Lava" in agility so why not "Penelope"? I guess and I hate to admit it I thought she was too old to start at over 7 ½ yrs old. But that was all about to change... I wasn't sure how Penelope would take to agility training, but knew one thing was for sure...if it meant having the chance to be the center of attention, Penelope would surely SHINE! And that's just what she did!

I scheduled a few training sessions with my trainer who had this to say:

"Suzzane came to me about a month ago and asked if we could begin Agility lessons with her 7 1/2 year old Great Dane. I was a bit skeptical but knew that Suzzane did lots of hiking with her girls so decided to give it a whirl. Oh my! Penelope has such enthusiasm, athleticism and heart. What a girl! In just 3 sessions she is sequencing 4 obstacles. Negotiates the dogwalk like she has been doing it all her life. It is hard to believe this young girl is almost 8 years old! It is truly a treat to be involved in her Agility career."

-Kathy Marshall, Clean Sweep Agility

After our first lesson I knew there was no turning back. Penelope was destined to show the world that her age was truly just a number and that whatever her daughter was doing, she could do – and perhaps even better!

At over 8 yrs of age and being the oldest Great Dane competing in agility at the 2004 GDCA National, Penelope entered the Standard Preferred Agility class for the first time ever! (She had only learned the teeter 6 days before we left for the long drive from California to Texas). Penelope ran a perfect run, 21 seconds under standard course time in the brutal Texas heat & made history. She won First Place in her class and became the **2004 GDCA National Specialty High in Agility Trial Winner!**

On Sunday, May 21st, 2006 Penelope earned her 5th agility title at a little less than 2 months away from her 10th Birthday!!!

It has been an incredible journey as Penelope did not start her agility career until she was almost 8 yrs old. With only a handful of lessons under her belt she started trialing and has often had to take a back seat to her daughter "Lava" Ch. PCH It's What's Shakin OA, OAJ, GDCA Versatility Award Winner, 2004 National Specialty Award of Merit Winner, CGC, TDI, TT and Grandson "Rumpus" Ch. PCH Start The Commotion.

Penelope has done everything I have ever asked of her and exceeded my expectations. She has taught us all a valuable lesson about age and to those who thought she could never, she defiantly showed them that she could and not only that she could, but that she could do it with the best of them. As I picked up our ribbons that day tears ran down my face. A chapter in our lives had closed. I had an overwhelming sense of pride but there was a degree of sadness in my heart as Penelope and I said goodbye to agility.

We spent the afternoon like old times...just the two of us at Starbucks, sharing vanilla lattes and snicker doodles. I am at a loss for words to describe how I feel but as I celebrate her life I will try to spend less time reflecting on our past and more time looking forward to all the wonderful memories we have yet to share.

Don't get me wrong, Penelope is far from ready to stay home on the couch. She is still an active 10 year old, who walks 2-4 miles a day, keeps Rumpus in line, always has an opinion and makes sure you know it, she still loves to wear pearls and purple boas and is ready to high five and ham it up at the drop of hat. Especially if there is a camera! There will be no more title chasing. Her time now will be spent doing what ever her heart desires!

Penelope has earned every title and certification as a veteran...with the exception of ONE... "The Magical Merle" a title given to her by Ginnie Saunders when Penelope was only 2 yrs old. If ever there was a Dane that has lived up to a name its Penelope!!!

She is truly amazing and has set an extraordinary example of what it means to be a GREAT Dane!

She is now proudly... Daneridge's Penelope Steele, NA, NAJ, NAP, OJP, CGC, TDI, TT
2004 National Specialty High in Agility Trial Winner
The Magical Merle

But to those that know and love her . . . she is simply known as "Boo".



Penelope - The Magical Merle



Penelope - The Magical Merle



Penelope - The Magical Merle



Penelope - The Magical Merle



*Penelope . . .
Always
in my heart!*