

## Back to Basics Showbreeders Translate Murphy's Laws

by Laura Post

One of my favorite books of all times, "No Hidden Meanings" by Sheldon Kopp and Claire Flanders has an illustrated eschatological "laundry list" of 43 truths that have worked their way into my subconscious only to surface at various opportune moments. At 4 am one morning, while trying to catch a nap in the veterinary clinic closet on my son's bean bag chair (a chair meant only for 12 year olds) and keep two C-section pups warm at the same time, a couple of these truths came to mind:

- 1) All important decisions must be made on the basis of insufficient data, and
- 2) All solutions breed new problems.

From this beginning, the list quickly grew (#3 being: An unplanned C-section will occur at 3 am. A planned C-section will also occur at 3 am.) Knowing I was not alone with my observations, I queried other breeders about the quirky nature of breeding and showing dogs and below is a sample of the contributions.

Murphy's Laws On Breeding:

Corollary to #3: Your terrific vet who is almost happy to do a 3 am C-section because she too is a breeder is sure to be at her national specialty the night of your emergency C-section. (Phil Weinberger)

4. Fertility (there are no sterile barn cats) is inversely (not to be confused with perversely) proportional to desirability of cross, ease of insemination, and waiting list for pups.

5. In case of breeding with chilled semen from hundreds of miles across the country - your bitch will be at her peak on Sunday when there is no Fed Ex delivery available for your area. (Sherry Raley)

6. The puppy that has a conformation to rival AKC standards will also be a good three inches outside the accepted size range or will have a bad bite. (Carla Hughes)

7. A dog's misbehavior will be in direct proportion to the number of people who are watching.

8. If you think your dogs all have water, they don't. (Cecilia Porter)
9. If you are wondering if you have latched the gates so that the dogs can't open them, you haven't. (C. Porter)
10. If there are two pairs of shoes laying side by side on the floor - your puppy will pick the most expensive pair to chew to pieces.
11. Only the good die young. (C. Hughes)

On Showing:

1. There is an inverse relationship between distance and ring time: the further you have to travel to the show, the earlier the ring time. (P. Weinberger)
2. Plan on rain the day you pack for a show and preferably the entire week prior to the show so that your dog's furnishings will look their worst.
3. If a dog is going to get injured/ill, it will be minutes before or during a show. (Sara Kautz)
4. Your dog is less likely to pee on the gate and poop in the ring UNLESS the judge is Ed Bivin. (P. Weinberger)
5. If you count on a judge taking 15 minutes per group, he or she will break the records on fastest judging times. Likewise, if you need to get an early start home after showing, plan on being able to read War and Peace in its entirety before its your time to show. (S. Kautz)

and last but not least:

6. As soon as you send in those entries, the little "star" will either blow all coat or damage herself in some way that you just can't cover up. (S. Raley)