

# Lines

from Linda

by linda ayers turner knorr



## Fourth Down And Goal To Go...

# Carmen Battaglia

Those up starts of '58 stirred big time rumblings! In mid-October of 1958, Virginia Tech came to Campbell Stadium in Tallahassee with every hope of raising its record to 4-1. It left a 28-0 loser. It is still referred to by most sports writers as FSU's biggest victory of all time. That infamous Florida State University football team's members included our own American Kennel Club Director, Carmen Battaglia and movie actors Burt Reynolds and Paul Gleason.

The Seminoles football program listed the young football hero, Battaglia as follows: "Number forty two, five foot nine, one-hundred-seventy-five pounds, from Niagara Falls, New York. Always a hard competitor... an excellent pass catcher and a big heart on defense." This describes the same Carmen Battaglia we all know.

Growing up in Niagara Falls, New York, Carmen always had a dog. None were pure bred, but they were the joy of his life. Most of his childhood was fun. His family always got together on the holidays and Italian feast days. Typically Italian, there were plenty of good times surrounded by the smell of warm baked bread and spaghetti sauce.

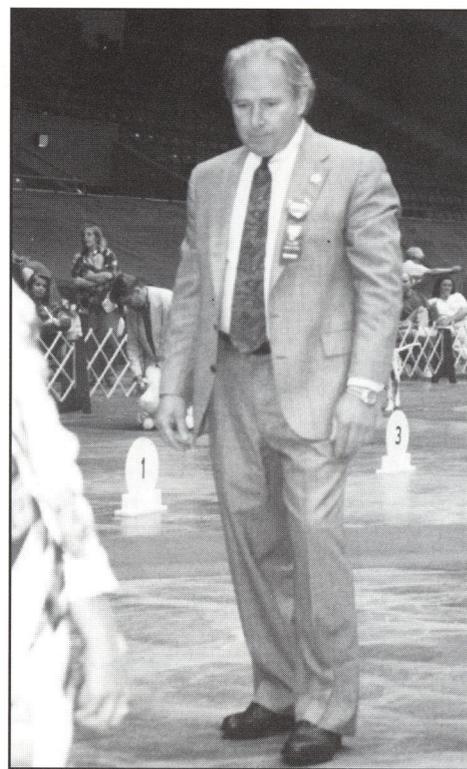
Carmen's godfather was also his uncle, Sam LaVerde. Sam owned and trained race horses. His horses were trained to run hard and to be close to the rail at the first turn and then work their way up into a competitive position to win. One of his best thoroughbreds was a grey stallion named *Glendale Indian*. A crowd

favorite because of his colors and his drive to win, he was considered to have unusually good conformation and great temperament for a racing stallion.

Uncle Sam ended up with a small group of nephews who could help at the track. Carmen would spend as many weekends as possible going to the workout track, helping to clean stalls, brushing down horses and learning their structure and movement... information he would later use in his career with dogs.

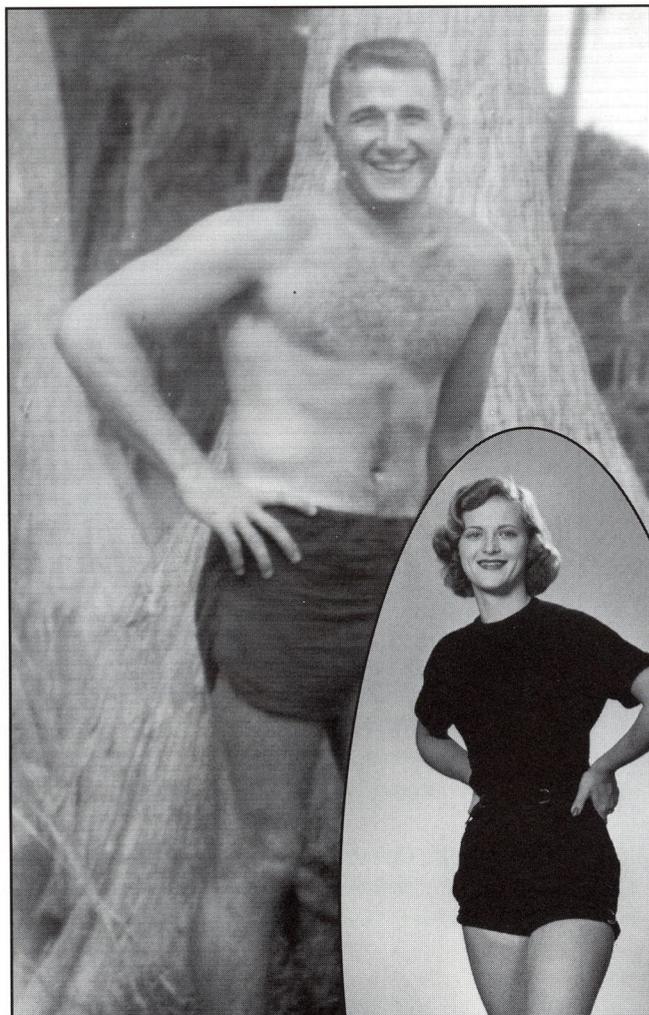
Things seem to happen for reasons sometimes hard to understand. Battaglia grew up with one sister, Frances, who was always healthy and very much a steady part of their family's life. One the other hand, Carmen was a sickly child with all of the known childhood diseases, including rheumatic fever, which lingered until high school. For several years the family doctor suspected that Carmen might have a heart murmur. Luckily he didn't, but he did end up with bowed legs. His parents bought him a three-wheel bicycle and raised the seat so he had to stretch his legs. The doctors told them that riding would help correct and strengthen his legs, and it did.

The young man quickly became tired of being a weak and sickly kid. Uncle Sam made Carmen a set of weights by filling two coffee cans with concrete, and attaching them to each other by a steel pipe. He also made sure that the boy had a dog and encouraged him to regularly work with both. At age fourteen, Battaglia was nearly as strong as his most of



his classmates. Godfather Sam was strong and smart... a perfect role model. Carmen worked hard to become like him. It paid off... Battaglia grew as big as everyone else and soon he was twice as strong as most kids his age. He could run faster than most and had great body balance and quickness. It was natural for him. These skills he would need to become a college football player.

In November of Carmen's high school



*Carmen Battaglia at FSU just prior to the Auburn game*

*Nancy Van Cleve Battaglia*

senior year, his father died. It was just before a big football game. That was a very hard year. Carmen had promised his dad the day before he died that if anything were to happen, he would take care of his mother. When he made that promise he did not know he would lose his dad the following day.

Had it not been for his mother and his high school football coach, things might have been different. The coach wanted him to visit the University of Maryland with the opportunity for a college education. Without their support, he might have ended up in one of the steel plants in Buffalo or the industrial plants in Niagara Falls. Taking their advice, Carmen went on the recruiting trip to College Park, Maryland and met the head coach, Mr. Tatum. This was a great thrill because Tatum had taken the University of Maryland to a national championship the year before. Battaglia want-

ed to be a part of that winning spirit!

A few weeks later, another recruiter from Florida State University contacted the young recruit. His name was Frank Toomey. Coach Toomey was in western New York looking for prospective football players for Florida State University. At that time FSU was building its program and was recruiting players from all regions of the country. Considered tough and quick, with good athletic skills and a great attitude,

Carmen Battaglia would be a great addition to any football program. FSU was determined to build a team of national prominence. The university offered him a full scholarship and a chance to get a good education. It was also an opportunity to play early and be a part of a big time football program. But located in Tallahassee, Florida, FSU seemed a long way from Carmen's home.

His mother said, "You'll see the south and play football in many parts of the country." He took her advice. That decision turned out to be a very good one!

College life and undergraduate school was uneventful except

for the experience of football, the travel it provided and the beginning of some life-long friendships. The football star majored in criminology and, by the end of his senior year, made the Dean's List. His roommate was Vic Prinzi from Waverly, New York and his closest friend was Burt Reynolds from West Palm Beach, Florida. The three men began what has blossomed into life-long friendships. Burt injured his knee and left school for a career in the movies and the New York stage.

During undergraduate school, it was Nancy Van Cleve, from Atlanta, Georgia, a tall and very attractive girl who captured the heart of Carmen Battaglia. In high school during the summers, the former cheerleader was a model at Rich's Department Store. Her tall slender

body helped her to become part of the famous FSU Flying High Circus. She specialized in high wire acrobatics. They met during their freshman year and married four years later in Atlanta.

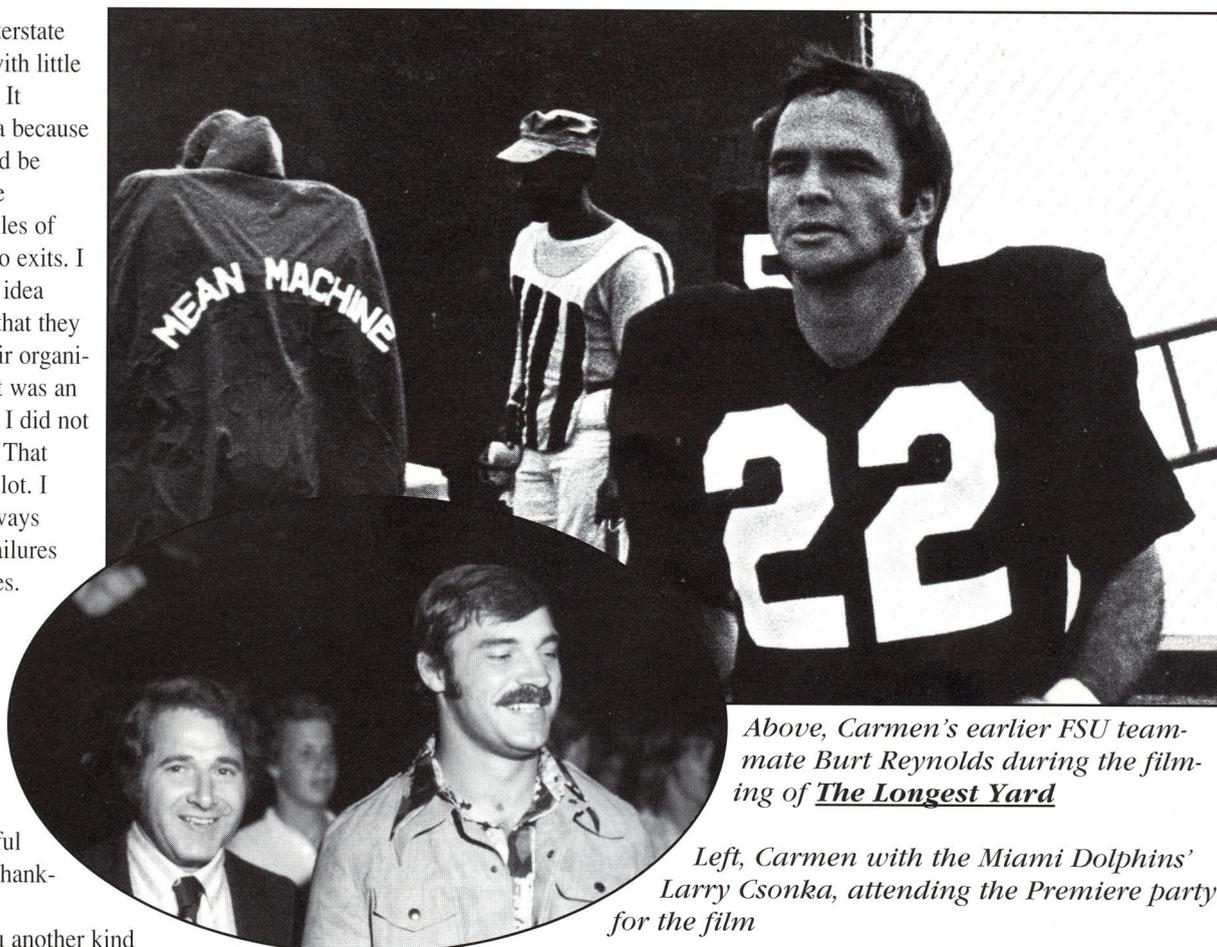
"My degrees were in psychology, criminology and sociology and I wanted to work for the FBI, but as it turned out, I was too much of an academic person, according to J. Edgar Hoover. Perhaps he thought I was also a little brash about trying to get the job. I had sug-

*"In those days they weren't interested in research. That turned out to be an interesting experience. It made me realize it is very difficult to be the captain of your own destiny when you are always a passenger on someone else's ship. What I learned is that there are no perfect men, only perfect intentions."* CARMEN BATTAGLIA

gested that I could do research and come up with new and useful ideas. In those days they weren't interested in research. That turned out to be an interesting experience. It made me realize it is very difficult to be the captain of your own destiny when you are always a passenger on someone else's ship. What I learned is that there are no perfect men, only perfect intentions.

"It was the 1960's and the age of technology was moving in and I wanted to be part of it. I had made a proposal to the FBI, which involved placing small computers in police cars that could be parked along interstate highways. My idea was to have technicians key in the license tag numbers of cars as they passed. If the car was stolen, another high speed chase

car further down the interstate could make the arrest with little or no risk to the public. It seemed like a good idea because the stolen vehicles could be trapped on the interstate between at least two miles of fenced interstate with no exits. I was told that the whole idea would never work and that they could not use me in their organization. Unfortunately, it was an idea before its time and I did not know how to market it. That experience taught me a lot. I learned that you can always learn more from your failures than from your successes. No one could have predicted the events that happened over these twenty years, and no one could have predicted the outcomes. I have been blessed with some good and wonderful times, and for that I'm thankful.



*Above, Carmen's earlier FSU teammate Burt Reynolds during the filming of The Longest Yard*

*Left, Carmen with the Miami Dolphins' Larry Csonka, attending the Premiere party for the film*

"Now let me tell you another kind of story and what I have learned about my roots and the impact it has had on my professional background as a behavioral scientist, administrator and dog judge. My first job after graduate school was at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. I was the Assistant Dean of Men and loved it. I was only twenty three and younger than most of the graduate, law, medical, and dental students. To overcome the handicap, I began dressing to look older. I studied the older deans and watched how they slumped in their chairs, put their fingers to their cheeks in meetings and made hand gestures when they spoke.

"Fortunately, a year earlier I had met Mr. Albert W. Boldt, the Regional Director for the Atlanta office of a large federal agency. At that time it was called the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Today it is called the U.S. Department of Education. He was responsible for programs that provided financial assistance to students attending post secondary institutions. Strangely enough, it was all because of those moments of truth that my career changed for the better. With his advice and encouragement, along with some determination, luck, good timing and the help of some close friends, I was able to rise up from a very doubtful beginning. I applied for a position in the federal government, passed the

written test

along with their group and individual interviews. The offer of a position was the beginning of a new career with many opportunities.

"My first federal job was exciting. I worked as a member in a special group called "Project 50" - an idea of President Kennedy's. He wanted fifty young men to be trained to know the ins and outs of the executive branch so, when he wanted to make things happen in the bureaucracy, there would be trained professionals who could accomplish his goals. It was great training, better than a graduate school. It involved training on military bases and in all facets of how our government works. It even involved training in the country's planned response to international problems such as total and limited nuclear war. My assignments involved trips to Cape Kennedy and the Red Stone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama as well as many other cities.

"For a short time we were trained as government agents with investigations focusing on internal national security. I was given assignments involving background investigations, some of which were interesting and, at times, a little risky.

"After the assassination of the President things changed. The project was dismantled and it was time to leave. Many agencies want-

ed to hire us because of our unique training and contacts. I went to work for the U.S. Forestry Service and was transferred to Tallahassee, Florida so I could complete a Ph.D. After graduate school, I transferred to Atlanta and began work on a number of projects. The two most interesting ones involved a computer project called the Management of Human Resources (MOHR), which was a data base with the search capability to find talented scientists worldwide. It would search through over 100,000 employees to find those with special skills and abilities, usually for some special project and international assignment.

"The other job involved the Job Corps, which began as a project of President Kennedy. Initially, it had the same start-up problems and was not working very well, in part because most of the students were court referrals from three-generation relief families. These unfortunate youngsters had no role models and did not understand the middle class work ethic... if you work hard, you can get ahead.

"My next assignment lasted from 1970 to 1990. Initially I worked for Dr. Ben Boldt, the man who encouraged me to join the federal work force. My most challenging assignment included supervision over the program for dis-

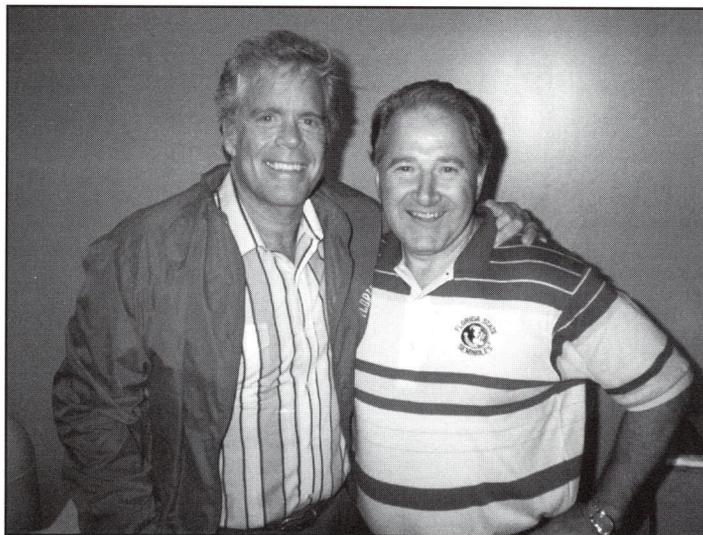
# LINES FROM LINDA BY LINDA AYERS TURNER KNORR

D R . C A R M E N B A T T A G L I A - C O N T I N U E D

advantaged students. After that I was promoted into a new career which began as assistant regional commissioner and then the regional administrator, which was the highest ranking nonpolitical position in the service. During these nineteen years, I supervised over one hundred fifty professional and technical staff members through four division directors and several branch chiefs. My regional operating budget exceeded two million dollars and my program exceeded five billion dollars. Work focused on the delivery system for student aid programs, organizational development, audit resolution, managment and policy analysis. I also served as a part-time faculty member at the Dekalb College in Decatur, Georgia.”

The skills Dr. Battaglia developed with the government would later be useful as he became interested in holding office with dog clubs. First with the German Shepherd Dog Club of Atlanta, then the German Shepherd Dog Club of America as he was elected President and AKC Delegate. Today, as a director of the American Kennel Club, his work experiences and education are well suited to his responsibilities.

When they married, the idea of getting an AKC-registered dog was something Nancy and Carmen agreed upon. Nancy was very much interested in obedience, agility and the working aspects of dogs. Within a few years she was teaching obedience classes and doing well in competition. It was during graduate school that Carmen met some businessmen who wanted to breed dogs. They asked for his guidance in their breeding program. They thought that because he was a graduate student at Florida State University doing animal research he could help. At that time most of his research involved the horseshoe crab, which is the only animal that predated the dinosaurs. These large round crabs with four eyes live on the bottom of the ocean most of the year and only surface during the breeding season. Battaglia’s research was part of a large Navy grant which had been awarded to FSU. This work was carried out at the Marine Biological Laboratories on the Florida coast. During the summers, scientists from Woods Hole, Massachusetts would visit the laboratories to conduct research of their own. They were helpful in



*Actor Doug McLure with his football hero,  
Carmen Battaglia*

Carmen’s design of a breeding program for the businessmen. His approach was to basically follow the principles and ideas developed by Mendel. In a short while, their breeding program was doing well. They were breeding better than average dogs and Carmen was collecting valuable data about what worked, learning much about the careful selection of sires and dams and how to evaluate litters and make puppy selections. His research led him to conclude that this is a two step process that most people try to do in one.

The following year he graduated and began work at Emory University as Assistant Dean. Fortunately, he was able to continue with some of his own research and was able to work on two projects. The first project involved raising pigeons which reproduced quickly. He began to test the fundamental theory on the homing instinct and also the advantages and disadvantages of line- and in-breeding. With pigeons, the measure of success was more objective than with show dogs. Whichever flew the fastest in competitive races at two-hundred, three-hundred, four-hundred and five-hundred miles was the winner. This series of experiments also reinforced what Dr. Battaglia learned about the value of pedigrees, pedigree depth and the importance of selecting the right mates.

That same year, the Yearkey’s Primate Laboratory was relocated from Florida to Atlanta and became part of the National Communicable Disease Center (CDC) near Emory University. He had met many of the Yearkey’s researchers while a graduate student

at FSU and followed their research ideas closely. They had much to say about the long-term efforts of socialization, early training and methods of reinforcement.

These years were, for the most part, fun-filled. Nancy and Carmen handled dogs, and attended many workshops, seminars, shows and trials. The Battaglias then met Rachel Page Elliott, Michael Fox and Steven Seager who were part of a national lecture circuit. Later, Carmen would join that lecture circuit talking about breeding methods and his own research. These events and the opportunity to give talks at dog clubs served as encouragement to write articles for club newsletters. He always wanted to write a

book, a goal he set for himself during graduate school. When his job with the government put him on the road, week after week Carmen found that airports, airplanes and many nights in motels provided a perfect opportunity to write.

His first book was about the disadvantaged students in the United States. It was popular but had a specialized audience and, consequently, a limited circulation. It was distributed by the University of Tennessee, Space Institute. The second book, published in 1979, was entitled *Genetics: How To Breed Better Dogs*. It was an early success. The second, third and fourth printings were even more successful, primarily because the name was changed to *Breeding Better Dogs*. The word “genetics” in the title frightened many would-be readers.

“With serious interest in the work of the Education Committee, a parent club looking for help and two close friends who encouraged me to get involved in the work of the Education Committee, I found myself being drawn into assignments for the German Shepherd Dog Club of America. My friends, the actor Redd Foxx and university professor Dr. Walter Frost, were good dog people. Walter was Chairman of the Education Committee and wanted help. Redd Foxx was serious about the breed and wanted me to work on the board. Within a few years, I found myself on the Board of the GSDCA. Over the next several years I chaired the first committee on policy and procedures, budget and finance, video and genetics. I served as president of the



Burt owned a Rhodesian Ridgeback and Dinah Shore, whom he was dating at the time, had a Bassett Hound she could not get bred. Carmen recalls that once, while at her home in California, Shore complained that she had bred her Bassett to the last two or three Westminster win-

*Nancy Van Cleve Battaglia as a high-wire performer at FSU*

ners without success. Carmen suggested she use a local stud, which turned out to be more productive.

Burt was always supportive of the Battaglia's four children and is like an uncle to them. After his marriage to Loni Anderson, Reynolds developed an interest in Carmen's youngest son, Matt Battaglia, who was an All-American middle linebacker at the University of Louisville. Matt was signed by the National Football League's Cleveland

Browns. He also played for Ottawa in the Canadian Football league. His last team was the NFL Philadelphia Eagles. Reynolds saw in Matt the potential to be an actor and within a year he was enrolled in Burt's acting school in Florida. He graduated and is now living in Hollywood, doing pictures and commercials.

parent club from 1989 to 1993 and then became delegate to the AKC.

"That year Nancy developed lung cancer, which was temporarily arrested. I quit work to be home with her, but within ten months it spread to her brain, and within the next few months to her liver. She died a terrible death on August 5, 1993. I needed time off from everything and when asked if I would consider running for a Director's position, I had to decline. The shock of her death and my run-down condition left me in no shape to take on such a serious task. Thanks to my family and many close friends, I survived that first year."

The friendship between Burt Reynolds and the Battaglias has always been close. Burt always liked Nancy and loved her home-cooked spaghetti dinners. Carmen was involved in the premiere of Reynolds' movie, *The Longest Yard* and helped to host it. The premiere was at Florida State University during the football season and it was Carmen who brought in Larry Csonka of the Miami Dolphins and Lee Majors, "The Six Million Dollar Man," as special guests.



*The Battaglia children, left to right: Theresa, Matt, Mary Ann, Vince*

Vince, the oldest Battaglia son, pursued a career in the military as an Army medic on helicopters. He now works in the emergency room at Rockdale Hospital in Conyers, Georgia, and flies night and emergency rescue missions. For adventure, he is a rock climber!

Two daughters were born to Carmen and Nancy Battaglia. Mary Ann is a nurse specializing in rehabilitation. Theresa, the youngest girl, was recently named "Teacher of the Year."

"In the summer of 1994, I was contacted by Mr. Jim Smith, Chairman of the Board for the American Kennel Club. He asked if I would consider being a candidate for the Board of Directors. I gave it some thought and agreed to be a candidate. Three people were being considered. I didn't think I would be selected because I was least known of the candidates. After my interview by the full board of twelve, I was sure that I would not be selected because of my frankness and the direct and spirited way I handled questions during the lengthy interview. For example, when asked to respond to questions about the future role of the AKC, education of the breeders, the judges program, health issues, problems of image and relationships with the delegate body, my responses and suggestions were straight forward... some may have considered my views about management to be different, but they were based on what I had learned over the years. I can only summarize some of my responses and views in the following way:

**1. BUDGET PROCESS** - Require each department to justify its annual budget request, annually. Once approved, spending should be tracked by month/quarter and reported back to the Board.

**2. THE GAZETTE** - The general public and the novice usually only read the *Gazette* for information about dogs. They do not read it to learn about awards and who won them. My suggestion was to list the seminars and workshops in the *Gazette* rather than in the awards publication, which is separate from the magazine and where they are now listed.

**3. JUDGES EVALUATION** - This is the topic that was of great interest to the board, because it touches the essence of AKC. I believe that the current system works well, but could be improved.

**A.) Application Process** - We need to develop a philosophy about judges. I suggest-

ed a plan that treats judges as if they were employees. In that respect, there would be a program that would help with their development. This approach assumes new judges and those doing breeds for the first time should draw, develop and improve with additional assignments. It assumes the AKC would develop a philosophy about training, growth and development.

Acceptance of this philosophy means work must begin to help judges reach their goals. Such a change in philosophy for a company like the AKC means we will look for ways to develop and improve our judges. Some need more training than others. Some will be "promoted" faster than others and evaluations, which are important, need to be realistic. Letters to judges about their applications need to be written in flat language so they can provide meaningful information. Most judges want to know what needs to be done and how to measure and get approval. We should tell them where they are weak and if additional work is needed. We should also be clear that there are no guarantees, only the promise of a fair and impartial evaluation.

#### **B. The Process for Advancement -**

Assumes judges are current on the rules about additional breeds. For example, the policy of one for one, or the one about finishing one group before moving on to another, etc... these are not well understood and those with only a few breeds, or even a group, do not understand why others get new breeds or they do not. Policies need to be referred-to each time breeds are approved and disapproved. When an applicant is denied breeds, feedback needs to be more complete and explicit, explaining the reasons.

**C. The Observer Program -** This is a good program which is like on-the-job-training. I think it was criticized by many judges because the AKC stated that observations need to be under 'experts in the breed' but then refused to identify them or to define what constituted an expert. My suggestion was to rein-



*National Hispanic Heritage Ball, White House, Washington, D.C., 9/90*

*Dr. Alex A. DeJorge, President, Puerto Univen*

*Dr. Carmen L. Battaglia*

*Dr. Laura F. Cavazos, U.S. Secretary, Department of Education*

*Dr. C. Wayne Freeberg, Director, State of Florida*

state the observer program as a two-phase activity. First, as voluntary non-credit activity for the joy of learning. In this instance, each judge could observe under anyone of his choice to learn about a breed, but for the application process and evaluation purposes, greater weight could be given to those who observe under judges who have judged the breed, or place emphasis on learning under those with the most experience. More weight should be given for observations under the more experienced judges.

#### **D. Field Representative Evaluations -**

Feedback is needed in three areas:

1.) *Ring procedure and the procedure used to judge the specific breed.* Since all breeds are not judged in the same way, knowledge of the procedure is important.

2.) *Feedback from those who are knowledgeable.* While this can lead to self-serving comments from losers and those who dislike a judge, feedback from ringside could be weighed and carefully used for what it is actually worth. Sometimes it will have little value, other times it will be helpful.

3.) *The reps should offer their opinion about the skills, capability and knowledge of the judge and whether there has been any growth in judging since last observed.* Every judge usually improves in his skill to judge a

breed with experience. The tenth assignment of a breed should be better than the first in most cases. Information from the reps will help if they have knowledge of the breed observed. If they do not, an impression should not be given and the question marked 'NA.'

**E. Continuing Education -** This is an area that needs more attention. Judges seminars, kennel visits, discussions with breeders and videos of specialty shows should be included in the consideration for advancement. The AKC needs to state what its expectations are, relative to continuing education, much like professional organizations do for their members.

**4. APPLICATION -** The current application covers the necessary information and should be continued.

**5. THE AKC VIDEO TAPES -** Videos for each breed standard are complete and they serve a useful purpose. I suggest that fifteen to twenty minutes be added to each one to show how each breed should be judged, along with some explanation about puppies, their growth, changes and development. These additions could be done for less than two thousand dollars per tape. I'm afraid this idea did not meet with as much favor as I thought it should, and for reasons I did not understand.

**6. DELEGATE FORUM -** The AKC's best ambassadors are the delegates and the delegate committees. They should serve a more important role as the AKC addresses its future."

With another roll of thunder, the FSU Seminoles of 1995 claimed victory in the Sugar Bowl! When the Delegates huddled to make the call for new Board members, Carmen Battaglia found himself sidelined...as momentum built it was...

fourth and goal with the clock ticking....

## TOUCHDOWN BATTAGLIA!!!

*Linda Ayers Turner Knorr*