



Russian Toy Club of America

Interview: Valery Novikov

Valery Novikov is the President of the National Club of Russian Toys, President of the Russian Boxer Club, Honorary Member of the Kings County Kennel Club of New York, Inc., FCI Breed Expert, Instructor in dog training, professional handler, the author of several books and numerous articles about dogs.

Interview conducted by Angelica Cain, exclusively for the Russian Toy Dog Club of North America. July 2010.



Valery and his Russian Toys (left to right): Baryn'ka iz Armii Lyubvi, Zhorzhik Chernenkiy iz Armii Lyubvi and Solnechnyy Zaychik iz Armii Lyubvi. Photo: Eugenia Novikov, 2010.

AC: *“Hello Valery, Thank you for the time you agreed to share with us. I represent the club of Russian Toys in the USA. Friendship with the Russian National Club of Russian Toys is very important for us. Thank you for all the support we have from you and for your agreement to answer our questions. I want to start with a question about your very first experience with dogs. What influenced you to get your life involved with them?”*

VN: “Hello Angelica, I am very glad that you finally have a Toy Club in the USA. Congratulations and God bless!

We never had dogs in my family when I was little. However, since I turned five years old, despite the fact that I'm a city dweller, my grandmother began to take me into the forest.

When I was eight, I started to go to the forest every day either alone or with my friends, spending time among the animals, birds and plants from sunrise to sunset, returning home only to have dinner and to sleep. The biological sciences and mathematics were the only things that I have diligently studied in school.

Near our house there have always lived mutt dogs, I was giving them a lot of time and often they were my companions during my forest trips. I remember my first experience in training dogs. Not so far behind the forest there was a pasture with some cows, which left huge cakes of dung. One of my dogs thought it was the best dessert. After he ate it even the flies were scared to get close to him. I wanted to stop him from eating the poop, so I brought from home some red and black ground pepper. I chose the biggest cow cake, sprinkled on the pepper, mixed it well with a birch stick. I was fully convinced that after such a ‘delicacy’ my dog would forever change his taste preferences. However the dog with amazing speed and happiness finished the spicy delicacy and looked at me with expressive gratitude (Laughs).”

AC: *“That is a very funny story! What year did you get the first dog of your own? And when did you get your first Russian Toy? Could you share with us the story of its acquisition?”*

VN: “In 1975, when I was 14 years old we brought the first dog into our house! It was a charming four month old East European Shepherd puppy! With this dog, I was constantly spending my time involved in training and competitions. In 1980, on a training platform, I met my future wife, the owner of a small but stocky and very self-confident Boxer. Since then I became interested in Boxers. We have continued day after day to devote our lives to different types of dog training and regularly attended dog shows with our Boxers.

In those years, it didn't even come to our mind that we need a little dog. It took several years for us to understand that working dogs are not everything. We came to realize that we absolutely needed a tiny little dog, contact with which would give us completely different emotions in our daily lives. Some people start with a little dog immediately, while others need time to mature.

While attending dog shows for a long time we began to pay attention to the rings of the toy dogs, which were so small that



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if they were standing in the grass you could only see their big hairy ears. At that time this breed was called the Moscow Longhaired Toy Terrier. Among other things, we were very attracted by the fact that this breed was Russian. Our choice was a foregone conclusion.



Valery's wife, Eugenia, a wonderful woman and a gifted breeder. Toys (left to right): Benefis iz Armii Lyubvi, Anfiska iz Armii Lyubvi, Babochka iz Armii Lyubvi and Blanka Agat. Photo: Valery Novikov, 1994.

To get a puppy we of course first went to Eugenia Zharova, who was recognized as the founder of the long-haired breed of Moscow Terriers. However, she learned that our family had three children and two Boxers. She categorically refused to help us in owning a puppy.

Through other sources we found another breeder, who at that moment had puppies. It was clear for us then that this breed

was young and there were not so many available dogs. We knew that it would be expensive, but we did not expect it to be so much! The price for a tiny puppy equaled the average salary in Russia for several years. (It was a period of crisis in our country and the salaries were about \$20 per month!) But retreat was impossible. Due to the fact that our Boxers were very popular those days we were successful in collecting money for the new dog. As the result in early 1991 we brought home the first Russian Toy. Her name was Blanka Agat, and with her first litter our kennel 'Iz Armii Lyubvi' began its story. Even though we bred Boxers first, we still hadn't registered ourselves as a kennel."



Blanka Agat. Photo: Valery Novikov, 1994.

AC: "How did you come to such name for your kennel – 'iz Armii Lyubvi'?" (The English translation from Russian means 'From the Army of Love'.)



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VN: "I really like the famous group "Army of Lovers" but the name is not from there. This name comes from the wonderful song by the Russian singer and poet Bulat Okudzhava:

'Oh, great immortal army
Above the power of speech and wealth.
Where everyone is the same,
Love doesn't have officers.

Let you trip never end –
I admit only these words.
Through the winters and storms,
Spring always comes to Moscow."

AC: "How many Russian Toys do you have in your house at this time and how many of them are in the whole kennel?"

VN: "I have 7 Russian Toys living in my house. All of them are long-haired. And a few more live in houses of my friends."



Blanka Agat hunting a cat. Photo: Valery Novikov, 1994.

AC: "Can you tell us what the most important business you accomplished was regarding to the Russian Toy breed?"

VN: "I just do the work I believe I was handed from Above and nothing more."

AC: "I found that you sold the brother of your Liliput and Lovelas named Lel Iz Armii Lyubvi to the USA. Do you still have information about the owner?"

VN: "I do not have the exact address. Lel Iz Armii Lyubvi was sold through an intermediary. But anyway, it is not so important anymore because he was born on 07.07.1995, and most

probably he is no longer alive. If talking about his children, then I cannot say much as well. About seven years ago I had a visitor from the USA. She was a Russian-speaking woman with an American citizenship. She was the owner of a black and tan daughter of Lel. It was a nice quality dog I should say. And that is the all information I have."



Boxer Zhuzha and two 3 month old Toys Anfiska iz Armii Lyubvi and Altyn iz Armii Lyubvi. 1992.



Anfiska iz Armii Lyubvi holding Iris iz Armii Lyubvi. Photo: Valery Novikov, 1995.

AC: "In your opinion which one of your dogs played the most important role in the breed development?"

VN: "Surely it is Lovelas!"



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Valery and Lovelas iz Armii Lyubvi. BIS JUN Russia 1996.



Lovelas iz Armii Lyubvi, 9 years old. Photo: Valery Novikov.

AC: "Analyzing all the Russian Toys you have ever had which one do you admire the most and why?"

VN: "A good artist is never completely satisfied with his pictures."

AC: "How about sires and dams of other breeders. Which ones do you think did the most for the breed development?"

VN: "Each widely-used dog leaves its mark on the breed, each one of them is good in something and not very good in something else. But the breed exists and develops with their use."

AC: "What progress has been made by foreign breeders of Russian Toys? Have they contributed significantly?"

VN: "The word 'foreign' at this time in Russia is a little inexact. If Belarus is 'foreign', then, first of all their work should be noted. Many of their dogs are now widely used in Russia, and their descendants are very recognizable. There is a very good stock of dogs available in Finland, mostly due to their very proactive elderly companion breeder Vihtori Hakiainen. You can also find some very competitive livestock in Sweden. Recently I was judging Toys in Luxembourg. Almost thirty of them were presented, both local and from surrounding countries. One of them even came from Vladivostok, Russia. In general, their dogs are very decent, but all are very different."



Boxer Atlanta and Korolevich Iz Armii Lyubvi. Photo: Valery Novikov, 2000.

AC: "Looking back at the first Russian Toys and at modern Russian Toys, how did the breed change?"

VN: "First of all, the breed has grown in numbers, and in the early nineties we worried for its future because there was the possibility of extinction. Now we can relax."

Regarding the exterior - the dogs became much larger. In the early days, dogs with a height of about 25 cm (10 inch) looked like elephants and there were only few of them, but now it is the norm. Additionally, significantly more frequently, you can see dogs with long noses and flat foreheads.

It's difficult to say if it is good or bad. On one hand Toys become more functional and resilient. They give birth more easily and



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are able to have more puppies. On the other hand, they are becoming rougher and more massive. Many experts do not respect the gentle little dogs, the real toys.

Now quite often we see a very tall, but most importantly, very massive dog, of course, with a full set of huge teeth and a huge head. Of course they look like Toys, but still, the word 'Toy' gives other associations.

At the same time we often see an extremely thin tiny dog. If it is a smooth-hair it can have a lot of baldness. And, of course, almost always with an incomplete set of teeth, because in such small jaws there is not enough place for all the teeth, but it is still a Toy.

Where is the truth? The truth is always in the middle. This truth is the same in any breed - it is a very fine line, almost like a razor blade. To be able to pass on this blade without stumbling is the sign which shows the talent of a breeder."

AC: "Where is the breed moving to? Can you describe what we should try to achieve in their exterior while breeding? In fact it is still developing. Are there particular traits that are desirable to develop or is it all at the discretion of Mother Nature?"

VN: "The breed is moving towards stability. It was not developed by us, and we have no right to radically change it. But our duty is to improve and enrich it. In my opinion the modern breeders have a lot of work to do.

First of all – the most common problem in our breed, especially among smooth-hair dogs is disharmony in the body shape. It is the straight shoulders, tilted too much in the elbow, and especially high hip or a roached back in motion. I really hope that by and by there will be fewer such dogs in our rings.

The second important point is the decorative, very distinctive and attractive look of our dogs. They really should have an appearance that causes every observer to be attracted and charmed at first sight. This especially applies to long-hair dogs.

In my opinion the third important point is to pay attention to the completeness of the incisors.

So there are enough problems for us to work on. And there is no need to invent new chimeras (fantasy). If you are a talented breeder - just make good dogs. If you are not talented - invent

chimeras, because there will be no other chance for you to be noticed."

AC: "Are there fundamental differences between the breeding of Russian Toys and other breeds of dogs? Perhaps it is in the selection of dogs, the expected and received results... Or, is this work essentially identical?"

VN: "Each breed is extremely specific, and each has its own direction of development. Of course, there are many similarities in the breeding process between different breeds. But there are many differences as well. In my opinion the Russian Toy is a very fertile breed for breeders. With proper selection it very soon gives a perfect result.



Three children of Valery and Eugenia (left to right): Daniel, Katerina and Daria. Russian Toys (left to right): Lovelas iz Armii Lyubvi, Benefis iz Armii Lyubvi, Babochka iz Armii Lyubvi and Anfiska iz Armii Lyubvi. Boxers: Zhuzha and Kol'ya. Photo: Valery Novikov, 1993.



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AC: *"Tell us briefly, if it is not difficult, what do you think about the current Russian Toy standard? Do you like it? Is there something that you would like to improve or to change?"*

VN: "The fact is that 80% of the words written in the standard are written by me. The rest is also by me, but after the recommendations or after very strong recommendations in the course of project approval by the Bureau of the RTTK (Russian Toy Club), registering in the RKF (Russian Kynological Federation) and in contact with the Commission of FCI Standards in the process of its acceptance.

I think that, despite the many criticisms in the Internet and print media, our standard is very good. It is compact and clear. For comparison you can look at the standards of other breeds, for example the Beagle.

I have repeatedly heard the proposal to categorically specify the ratio of the lengths of the muzzle and the skull in a ratio of 1:2. But we should always remember that indicating the ideal proportion, we mean that the deviations to the 'left' or to the 'right' from the ideal points will bring it to a fault. But that is not what we have. A Russian Toy with a slightly more elongated muzzle is still a Toy. But if a little shorter than 1 / 3 of the head, then it is almost a Chihuahua. The head of a Toy with the proportions 1:2 definitely looks beautiful, but that would be the maximum allowed proportion and not the average. That is why the leadership of the RKF during negotiations about the Standard recommended using a different formulation.

Regarding the leg's length. From the beginning it was planned to set the standard as 51-53%. But the FCI experts recommended excluding the percentages, because of the fact that not all breeders and not all countries can understand it well.

At this time there is only one thing that surely needs to be corrected. In the 'Disqualification' part we should add the phrase 'the existence of an open fontanel.' I think it will be amended next year."

AC: *"I'd like to ask what you think about the hairless Russian Toy. (I named Valery the breeder in Russia who breeds this kind of Russian Toys.) I understand that it is out of the breed standard, but each new breed had to start with something that did not fit the current standard. When we only had the smooth-haired line, any long hair on a Russian Toy led the dog*

to disqualification. Maybe the naked line is a new step in the development of the breed?"

VN: "I'll be very glad if our breed develops a new coat type. This applies to the option of wolfhound (thick hair), and to the option of hairless. I am only speaking about real hairless Toys as opposed to 'bald' dogs. Hairless dogs and bald dogs are quite different concepts.



Bald Russian Toys (Pictures are used with the permission of the owner)

In the cynology (the science about dogs) hairless dogs have the presence of the half lethal dominant gene for Hairless, HR. This gene we could get from the Chinese Crested dog. If we do that we must first consciously practice crossbreeding, well knowing that resultant dogs will no longer be a pure breed, but with the presence of the HR gene. Then continue to breed, generation after generation, taking great care in the process. It will take half a lifetime. And few people or perhaps none are ready for this commitment.

Baldness in dogs, the condition properly called alopecia, is quite another matter. This is a partial or complete loss of hair on some specific areas. In the dog it is always regarded as a handicap or illness. It almost always indicates an extreme weakening of the phenotype. Unfortunately, in our breed, there are many more than the twenty of this type, as implied by the website you gave the link for. I meet them at almost every dog show. This hair coat type is usually seen in extremely small and immature doggies, often creating the impression of a premature embryo.

Continued breeding of abnormal traits such as baldness especially with dwarfism is dangerous and unacceptable.

Along the same lines, we could obtain a new breed – The Cryptorchid Toy (One Testicle Toy). That's so cool and unique!



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Most of dogs have two testicles, but these dogs have only one! With great advertising, like the site you mentioned for the bald dogs, they would be sold like hot cakes. (Being sarcastic here)

On that website I only see bald and ugly smooth haired dogs. I see such dogs all the time in shows. They are not hairless - they are bald. A perfect and honest name for that type would be a 'Bald Russian Toy'."

AC: "Valery what is your attitude toward breeding the long-haired with the smooth-haired Russian Toys? Are you in the agreement with the prohibition by the RKF against breeding the two different coat types? How do you feel about it?"

VN: "I have an absolutely negative attitude toward the RKF prohibition, and I know it surely will only cause bad things and damage the breed."

AC: "You have a great experience working with dogs. Have you seen the following patterns, or can you call them myths?"

1. There are some dams who always give puppies resembling their fathers. (In other words inverse prepotency or inverse predominance, such females are called the matrix)

VN: "Toy dams do not give enough puppies during their entire life for real statistically valid assessment of their descendants. Undoubtedly, some children are born very much like the mother, but this is not enough for the full proof of the theory.

Another factor is males. Actively used males produce many more puppies during their life than one single female. And it is much more interesting to observe the possible prepotency in males.

Males, as well as females, manifest themselves in different ways with different dams. In some cases, children are born exactly like the father. There are very strong similarities not only in the body structure, but in the expression of the eyes and in their mentality.

But, in general, every educated breeder knows certain facts about his/her animals such as that there may be a strong probability to get gorgeous ears and a full set of teeth from one dog, but almost certainly puppies with poor hair on the ears and an incomplete set of teeth from another dog. Similarly one could expect a long waist and curved or short legs from the first dog and perfectly built puppies from the second. Which to choose?

The ability to choose the right partner is the chief creative talent of a breeder. All of his knowledge and all of his intuition is designed to do just that."

2. Prepotency can be seen in some males as well as some females. (I mean, it is not associated with the sex, but rather the heritage or the line of certain animals)

VN: "The concept of this theory in general seems doubtful to me. Statistically and scientifically it is not proven in our discipline. Surely this topic has serious work in other animals such as horse breeding, but not in the science of cynology. From both these areas it has been known for a long time that the outstanding breed characteristics are more strongly manifested not in the children, but in the grandchildren. By the way, among people, children often resemble their grandparents and not their parents. Although from a position of genetics this is quiet paradoxical."

3. The amount of the white color is determined by one gene, meaning that even if we start breeding from a couple of animals each with a white patch on the chest and select the offspring with the greatest amount of white, then over time we can get a full white color with no spots.

VN: "The amount of white spots on the body, according to the latest genetic concepts, is defined by at least with two loci C and S with series of different genes on each loci. If talking about the fawn and light fawn dogs, then it is determined by the chinchilla color gene C^{ch}. The spots on the chest, feet or head, are determined by the presence of the Irish spotting gene Sⁱ.

Of course, using the correct selection you could easily obtain a Russian Toy with a completely white color. But what would it be for? Each breed has its own traditions, created not by us, but by its founders. Who would have an idea to develop a white Doberman or a Rottweiler? The Russian Toy was developed before us, and we are only its temporary trustees. We must save it in the traditional form."

4. Many breeders believe that Russian Toys with a lot of white spots are inclined to be blind.

VN: "There are many breeds which have had a white type of coat for many centuries – the Kuvasz, the White Poodle, the South Russian Shepherd and others. None of these breeds have inherent health problems because of the white color. The Russian Toy is not an exception.



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These are not albino. It means that they have very lightly pigmented hair, but their skin is richly colored.

A different concept is albinism, however in all my life I've never met a real albino dog, although there are some present in the world. In albinos in the early embryonic stage, the stage of formation of the secondary embryonic tube, the development of a specific group of proteins fails. This blocks the synthesis of pigment proteins that determine the color of the hair, skin and iris of the eye. These pigments, eumelanins and feumelanins, are also important for the normal function of the visual and auditory analyzers. That is why true albinos are very prone to problems with hearing and vision. Fortunately for dog lovers, these albinos are very rare.

If it is just a white dog and not an albino, they do not have any problem."

AC: "Does it mean that the Russian Toy standard prohibits the white color not because of health reasons but purely for aesthetic reasons?"

VN: "It is a tradition and we should respect it."

AC: "And then the next question, where do inbreeding types and styles end and where does the constitution type begin? For example, if we compare different types of Russian Toy – those with a muzzle like the 'Chihuahua' and those with the 'fox' style muzzle, strong bones vs. refined, very tiny size compared to a larger dog, etc. Often they look like different breeds."

VN: "It's simple - put a good Russian Toy next to a good Chihuahua. If you understand what's going on it will be quite clear that the similarity between them is only their small size. The 'foxy' type, as you call it is acceptable but only if the length of the muzzle is shorter than the head as it says in the standard. Another thing is the 'chicken' type as I call it. It is when there is a clearly lowered muzzle with a mediocre lower jaw development with a clear tendency toward an improper bite."

AC: "Can you give the statistics on how many Russian Toys are registered throughout Russia to date? And how many of them are champions?"

VN: "Every year in Russia over four thousand Russian Toys are born. I think nobody can give the exact number. There are several alternative organizations that register the dogs and give their own pedigrees. In previous years it was exotic to meet a Toy on the Moscow streets. But now you can meet this breed in

each backyard. How many of them are champions? Of course, I can easily give you these statistics. But what's the point? Does a dog become better because of receiving a title, or be worse without it?"

AC: "Regarding the birth rate of Toys in Russia, does the number grow every year?"

VN: "The rate of reproduction of the Russian Toy in Russia has not changed in the last few years. It is consistently slightly more than four thousand puppies a year, including both coat types together."

AC: "Valery, I want to talk a little about you as a Judge. Why did you choose for yourself the path of a dog expert?"

VN: "I did not choose the way of the expert - the way chose me. Learning about dogs in all aspects more and more, trying to find out about them, and especially about my own breeds as much as possible, it was a natural result."

AC: "What do you think of dog owners, who come to you with a dialogue during the dog examination? Do you think it is correct for a dog owner to ask from the judge for advice regarding the breed/feeding/breeding/etc.?"

VN: "Attempts by handlers to enter into conversation during the examination are unacceptable and unethical. An expert at this time is very focused and busy, having often a very limited time. Do not disturb him! If he decides that it is necessary to say something to you, then he will do it himself. But once the examination is ended, if the expert is not too tired or isn't in a hurry, of course, it is very interesting to talk about different topics."

AC: "Is it right for the dog owner to challenge the assessments during the examination or after?"

VN: "No, it is not! The decision of an expert is final and is not a subject to change. Going into the ring is as if you are saying to the expert, 'I have come to know what you think about my dog, whatever it is.' If you strongly disagree with the judgment of an expert, or you are not interested in his judgment, or it is very irritating for you, then it means only one thing - never go into his ring."

AC: "What a paradox - breeders represent a breed, but you do not always agree with what they represent (an extreme type



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or an "outsider"). You are the judge of the dogs and it means that only the dogs of 'your' type will win. But nevertheless, there are very progressive kennels which breed dogs other than 'your' type but still have a weight in the Russian Toy society. What is your attitude to such a split? And what advice would you give to new breeders - to listen to the judges or to other breeders? Or, perhaps to find something of their "own" in the standard about what the breed should be. Should there be only one way of seeing the breed and reading its standard or is diversity within the same system normal?"

VN: "There is no split and there never will be. There are common laws of biomechanics and the exterior mandatory for toy breeds the same as for the Bullmastiff. Another thing is that each breed is different. The Russian Toy must always be very gentle and elegant, with a small fine head – it is the way the breed was conceived.

When I see a tall Toy in front of me, then the question is not so much about its height, if it is not more than allowed by the standard, but in its type. Whatever the Toy is it must always look elegant and gentle, with a small carved head. After all, it is written in the standard.

Regarding the different types. On one hand, it is normal to have different types within the same breed. Almost all breeds have different types. But on the other hand, whatever the type is, we can welcome it only when it remains within the middle boundaries of the standard. If a type lies too close to disqualification within the standard it is unlikely to be welcomed.

Scrutinize the standard - it is all written. Whatever the dog type, if average height values are 24-25 cm (about 10 inches), then dogs with a height of the 28 cm (11 inches) may not be preferable. If it is stated that the muzzle should be slightly shorter than the skull, it means that any Toy of any type, must not have a length of muzzle with proportions approaching that of the Pinscher, nor truncated, like the Chihuahua's.

If the standard says that the height at the elbows is only slightly more than half of the height at the withers, then it should be 'slightly'. Excessively long legs, as seen primarily among the smooth-hair Russian Toys cannot be welcome. But at the same time, short legs, when the height of the elbow is equal to half

the height at the withers, and sometimes less, which are more common among long-haired dogs, are a disadvantage as well.

Any Toy of any type, if it mostly corresponds to the average parameters of the standard and at the same time is harmoniously built, is undoubtedly a great dog.

What to advise to a new breeder? Each one of us had a FIRST DOG. And this is like a first love - the best and most desired dog. And from the position of the owner it is the best in breed. The first thing to learn, starting with the first visit to a dog show, is to really understand your dog, all of its strengths and weaknesses. This is the first step to understanding of the breed and getting the sense of total harmony. If this step is performed, then it will be possible to choose the most suitable partners in the future and all the following dogs you own will be objectively great."

AC: *"What was the most vivid and pleasant dog-event in your life and which one was the most unpleasant?"*

VN: "All dog lovers are happy people. There are many striking events in our lives. I have had the same type of luck as all the other dog-persons. There were so many different and very happy events in my life that I cannot even remember all of them, nor compare them in importance. I won twice with my Boxer the 'BIS' at 'Eurasia', a dog show equal in importance to 'Crufts' or to 'Westminster' dog shows. I won with my Toy, Lovelas, 'BISJUN' at the 'Russia' show, which is one of the most important in our country. There were many other, less significant but not any less happy, victories.

But nothing can compare with the joy of the birth of puppies, with the creation of new life.

The most unpleasant event, I can name quite confidently, was the death of my tiny three month old son of Blanka, whom I named Ataman. With him died a piece of my soul. (Blanka was Valery's first Russian Toy)"

AC: *"What advice can you give to people who just met the breed but already are willing to become breeders?"*

VN: "When people are buying their first dog, they are usually buying a 'couch dog'. Every second one of these dogs, which were not very carefully selected, is coming into the ring of a dog show. However, to give advice to such purchasers is a waste of time.



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Another option is when people from the very beginning are buying dogs for the motive of earning money only. I don't find it pleasant to even communicate with these kinds of people.

And the third group is the most useful for the breed. It is when the breeder already has an experience with other breeds or has done serious research before getting into it and then decides to bring a Russian Toy into his kennel. I am very glad when such breeders appear in our breed. But I cannot tell them anything as well because often they are smarter than I am. (Smiling)"



Ataman iz Armii Lyubvi. Photo: Valery Novikov, 1992.

AC: *"Thank you, Valery, for the time you gave us and for the important information that you shared with us. We look forward to working together and to friendship with you. We appreciate your points of view and knowledge as the most authoritative person in Russia in the community of Russian Toys."*

VN: "Thank you, Angelica, for the interview. I hope my answers will help people to know more about this wonderful breed. You are very welcome to come back and once more I wish all the best to the Russian Toy Club of North America."