

The Tora

Official Club Newsletter of the Kai Ken Society of America

September

2020

President's Message

Welcome to the September edition of the Tora. Hope everyone has stayed safe and healthy through this pandemic. We are finally starting to see a few events start to open back up. I encourage anyone who has not yet registered their dog with AKC/FSS to do so. The club can help you with any pedigree or form issues you may have. We are currently only 7 dogs away from the 150 required to move from FSS to Misc. Now that we are so close, AKC has asked us to formally request the KKSA be designated the parent breed club. This is an extremely exciting step and the formal letter was recently submitted to the AKC. We also have club elections coming up for VP and one of the board members positions. Next year we will hold an election for president, secretary, and the other board position. I encourage all members to get involved in the club in any way you feel comfortable with.

KKSA President, Stacey Pestel



KAI KEN
SOCIETY OF
AMERICA

2021 Calendar Contest

We are designing our very first, KKSA exclusive, Kai 'Kan' Calendar! Join us this year by submitting your photos for consideration in the calendar! We expect calendars to be available for sale by early November through mid December. We need a minimum of 20 submissions to design our first calendar! Submissions are due no later than October 19, 2019

How to submit:

*Be a KKSA member.

**Not one? No worries! You can apply for membership at our website, www.kaisociety.org

***Why become a member?**

Join us in getting AKC recognition!

Receive an exclusive monthly newsletter

Find community events near you

Special access to exclusive merchandise

Submission guidelines:

Submit one portrait or two landscape pictures of Kai Ken (no collages).

Photos must be clear & focused on the Kai Ken(s)

JPEG format

Minimum 800 pixel, Recommended 1600 pixels

Minimum 200 dpi, recommended 300dpi

No digital zoom

Along with the following optional text:

Call name

Reg name

Owner(s) Name; Breeder(s) Name

Location

Photo credit or instagram handle

You are responsible for correct spelling for your submissions



Selection Criteria:

Action or seasonal shots- Shots that show a dog in motion or an emphasis on seasons (Sitting on a hay bale, Wearing a bow tie for Valentines etc).

Shots that focus on dogs rather than on people.

Photos will be selected by a four person committee that includes two KKSA board members and two KKSA general members.

Submit Here: <https://forms.gle/6mHJzoJTQyKj8wCU9>



Q and A with longtime Kai owner and new KKSA member, pilot Charles Ziegelheim

“Dog is my Co-Pilot” is for most of us a funny saying, but in the case of Kai Ken Ren and her owner Charles, it’s the literal truth! Here is the story of how Charles and Ren have grown together over those eight years and how Ren learned to do something that even for some humans can be a bit scary! You’re clear for takeoff, Charles, let’s hear it!

CZ: I’ve had Ren since 2012 when I lucked out and her original home dropped out. She came from Stacey at Suteishii Kennels at 6 months old. So, not quite a puppy, but definitely a sassy adolescent! My first dog was a foster Shiba Inu named Tsune, and from there I looked into more of Japan's dogs. Out of the six NK breeds (and seeing your awesome adventures with Juno), the Kai just seemed the perfect balance of independence and natural inclination to "partner" with their owners as a unit of two, rather than owner and dog. That's my ideal relationship for an adventure buddy!

What is your line of work?

CZ: I’m an airplane pilot and currently fly mostly smaller propeller planes. Right now my work consists of oil & gas survey flying

with the mission being to find methane leaks in infrastructure. That can be anything from leaks at the pumps, to unlit gas flares, to refineries. The work has taken me across Texas, New Mexico, Denver, and Illinois, with the latest trip being all the way out in NE British Columbia. My base is in New Mexico, which means something has to be done with Ren when I travel... so I just bring her with me in the back seat of the airplane!

My work plane is a Cessna 182Q. It seats four people and a great deal of cargo for it's size. Myself and my copilot have two bags each, and Ren has her own bag with bowls, food, bags, and plenty of cow ears!

What is Ren like in general- her personality?

CZ: Ren is a very interesting kind of dog. In a home environment, she's very quiet, reserved, and watchful when there are more people around than just myself. In an outdoors urban environment she's all about investigating everything and everyone, to include how their hands taste haha. However, she really shines in an outdoor rural or woodsy environment. When we're backpacking or camping she likes to take point on the trail and keep a good twenty to forty feet ahead, with frequent check ins.

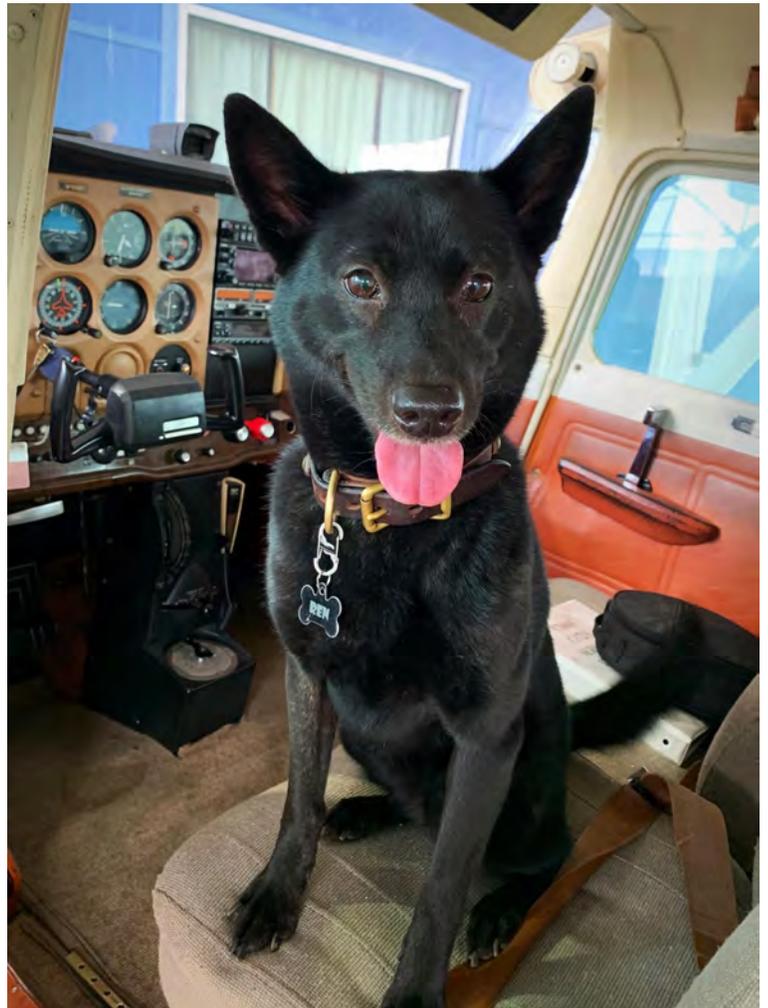
She's very much a "sticky" dog in the sense of essentially being my shadow. If I'm doing something, she wants to be there watching. If I'm working on the computer, she'll want to be within ten feet with ears on standby for sounds of getting up. Motivation to go be active is definitely not lacking, but if I sleep in then she's absolutely happy to sleep in too.

Flying in a plane is a loud experience, a novel experience, and it's different I'm sure from riding in a car or truck-how has Ren handled vehicles and new things and noise all her life?

CZ: She's always been a great car dog, thankfully! It may have been normal puppy curiosity, but I proactively took her on trips to Taco Bell for crunchy beef and cheese tacos. That turned into a twice per week ritual that has her able to discern the word "taco" or "car ride" from under a bed on the other side of the house. Her harness also only goes on when we do fun, positive things like hikes. So harness going on means big time fun stuff!

Noise has generally been a concern, but not much of a fear. Some dogs will shiver and pant to the point of exhaustion, but Ren takes a more practical approach. She'll physically de-stress by panting, but generally she takes shelter under the bed from thunder, fireworks, or loud bangs without the heavy anxiety.

For flying, I just borrowed the conditioning strategy used by other owners with hunting Kai. I would bring Ren to the airport with me and we'd just walk around or watch some airplanes take off to get used to the noises. Then we'd walk around the hangars while airplanes taxi'd past or idled. Eventually she would register the noises but not react to them. Meanwhile, I would bring her to the hangar to run around while I cleaned the



airplane or did other managerial tasks, and would lift her in and out of the cockpit. She already has a positive association with car rides, and the inside of the plane feels very car'ish with the seating. So when the next extended work trip came up, I just loaded her up in the back with her "adventure" harness and off we went. The cottonballs went in her ears only after the engine was running at high throttle, which made her understand that "weird things in my ears = loud noise goes away". So now she will tolerate them and has progressed to curling up for a nap during flights! She also gets in-flight meal service beef jerky, which is the designated plane right special treat.

How does Ren act about going flying? Approaching the plane? Getting in? On takeoffs and landings? In the sky?

CZ: Getting in is always a good time! She hops up to the pilot seat on her own when just hanging out at the hangar, but she can't get to the back seat when we have equipment loaded in. So she will ask me with her eyes to go in, I'll tell her "up!", she'll stand and put her paws on me ready for a lift, and she'll get her scoop up to the back passenger bench.

Takeoffs and landings are concerning, because they're loud and strangely angled, but once we're cruising she's ready to pull the shades down and put her sleep mask on. If she gets up to re-adjust and do a shake, resulting in cottonballs flying from a head shake, then she'll put her paw on my shoulder with big "IT'S LOUD!" eyes. I'll turn the autopilot on, if it's not on already, and then put the cotton back in. Then it's usually right back to curling up and hanging out.



When we unload or load the plane, she's circling the plane and "helping" by following whoever is moving stuff around.

It doesn't really matter what we're doing, but if our pack is doing things then her job is to

do what our pack is. She's happy to have a role and be involved! We've built a really valuable trust between us, and she trusts me to keep her safe. There's lots of praise involved with doing a good job, even if that job means occasional "paw" and "high five", plus just being present for making it to our destination! So she's definitely happy for that and enjoys the "We're here!" scratches and sprint to the grass to smell completely new places upon parking.

Are there any safety things you want to highlight? Does she have any special gear, ears or goggles, or harness?

CZ: Safety wise, and this is for any dog that flies, it's very important that they get a thorough walk beforehand. There is no pulling over to the side of the road. So after packing the plane, which is exciting on it's own since things are happening, take a walk and empty out. Definitely no sitting in the lap during critical phases of flight, meaning takeoff and landing. Ren will lean over and half ask/half try to get into my lap, but a blocking forearm gets the message across that it's not time. We don't fly in anything other than clear skies, so there's no real probability of events causing her to be in a panic state. It's not impossible, but proper flight planning involves complete avoidance of those scenarios. As for equipment, she just has cotton balls for her ears, which seem to work great. She can't hear my voice when I was testing them with the engine running, and there is no pressure over her ears. I wouldn't like my ears to be folded over and pressed to my head for three or more hours, so I decided to skip the popular dog earmuffs.

Let's hear some more stories about Ren, she sounds very trusting and adaptable!

Absolutely! Some Kai can seem very low key and either timid or distanced at first impressions, while others can seem hyper

and spunky. Resilient and brave isn't the general first set of descriptors if we're being honest. Don't let their appearance fool you though. They absolutely develop a deep and complex relationship with their chosen person, and potentially persons. I only add that second part as you will definitely know if you're among that Kai's Chosen One's.

Over the years I've noticed that Ren has developed a different strategy than most other dogs that I've had and have seen. For Ren, we haven't had a constant home territory as I've gone to various schools, changed careers, and moved to follow the work. So, for her, I am her territory. Wherever I put my bags down, that room is now her territory and she'll prevent other cats or dogs from coming in and having their way. Not always the most ideal when visiting friends, but it's manageable. The big positive is that she immediately has her designated safe zone to go and escape when she's had enough socializing or simply needs some quiet.

She's a watchdog, and she takes her job seriously. When on the trail and trotting ahead on point, she'll stack up and "boof" to alert on strangers ahead and will put her full trust in me after "asking" about obstacles. Stream in the way or fallen trees? It's time to stop, look back at me, and "ask" what to do. If I say "lets keep going", then we each work our way around to keep going. If it's a "hold on" then she waits for a next indicator of what to do or will cooperate with a lift, even if it's over a scary grid-type bridge that you can see through to a rushing river a dozen feet below. Thunder in the distance, but I'm still hiking? Looks like we're still hiking!



You have travelled a lot with Ren, and moved a few times, and gone to school, and through all the changes she's always been there.

CZ: Ren has always been my spirit dog, and that's easy to say. It's not that any of the other dogs that I've had were less either. To touch on the less fun aspect first, I'd have to say it's that we have a dynamic and understanding that doesn't have a lot of noise there. She doesn't necessarily enjoy having complications to that dynamic. So with multiple dogs there were increased elements of managing dogs, at least with having adult dogs come into the mix. Having to manage adult dogs was not really adding to our dynamic. Instead, it was more like having two separate dogs. One would be taken out and the other would be put away. That's stressful and Ren reacted very negatively to being "put away", when her whole life has been the two of us operating as a unit. Kai are generally easy to integrate into packs or have new dogs integrate in with them, but not so much with my on-the-move stages at the time.

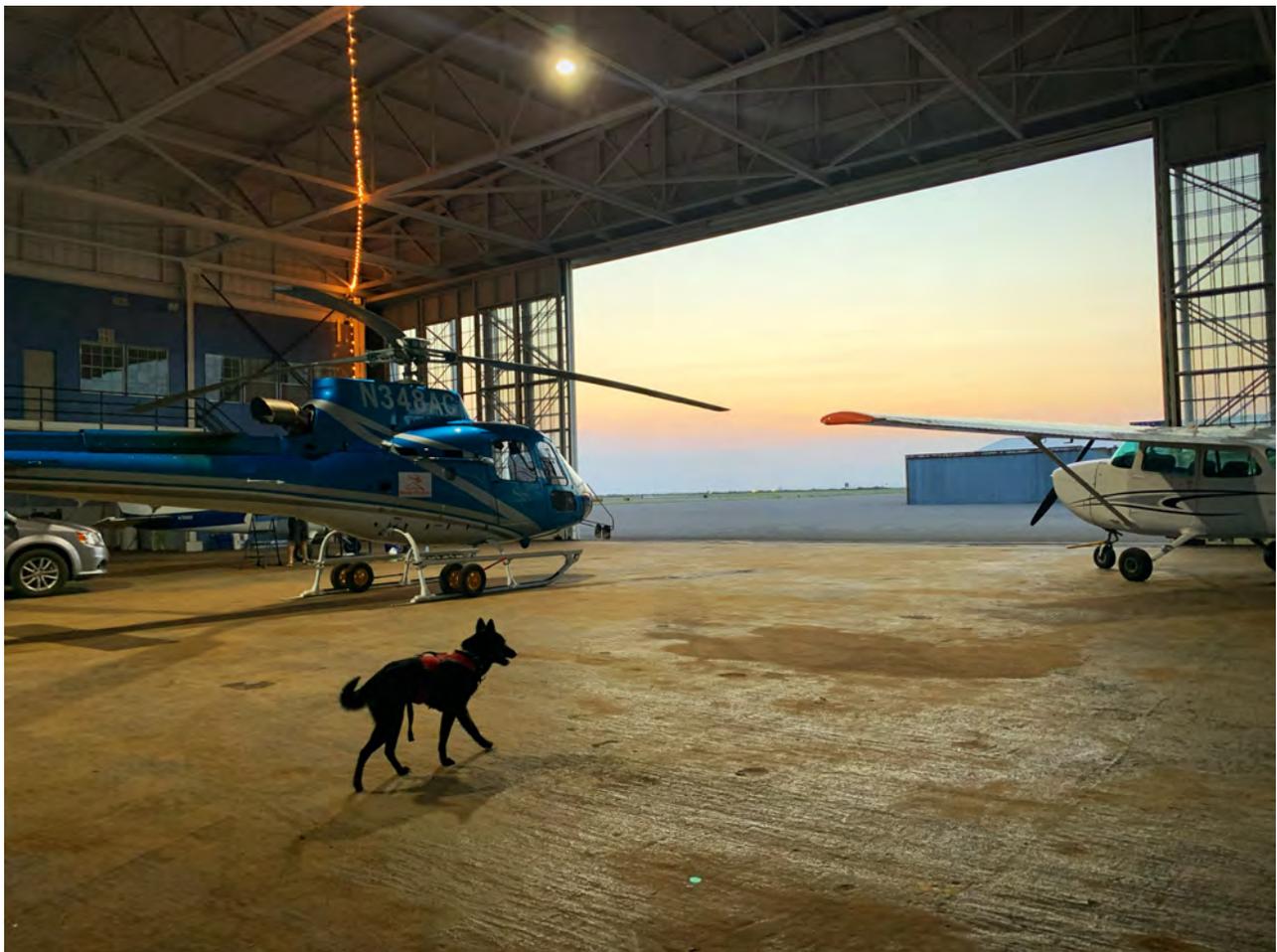
On the more positive side, Kai just seem to read you and flow along. That's super different from a lot of my other dog experiences. Kai seem to monitor and operate like they're holstered to your hip. The closest second has been Hokkaido, which seem to be their inverse. Hokka watch you and seem to figure out what they think the next thing could be. Contrasting the two seems to be a good way to highlight the Kai traits. Subtle is the name of the Kai game when it comes to the human-dog relationship, and the reward for the requisite patience is a very deep bond.

What kinds of flights can she go on?

CZ: Thankfully, my company is all about our companions. My boss and department director were asking me if I'd need pet friendly hotels from the get go, and proactively told me that hotel pet fees were absolutely fine when it comes to arranging lodging. So Ren can go with me on any flights! Generally though, I only bring her

along for the to/from flights while moving to different states. Actual day to day survey flights would probably be no fun with all of the steep turns, long hours, and extreme temperatures of 35F to as high as 104F. I wouldn't want to bring a passenger along for that, so I won't bring Ren for it. That's my general attitude towards her. If it's not fun *for her*, then I won't be putting her in that situation.

If it's a non-flying day or I need to go back to do some work at the hangar, then she comes with me. It's one of her favorite places actually! The airplane is stored in an old WW2 bomber hangar, and I'm the only one in there. So she gets to scamper around a hangar thats roughly the size of half a football field, if not a little bit larger. We'll go for a sprint around the hangar and up the stairs to the upper catwalk, then back down to the other side of the hangar every now and then too. Two of a Kai's favorite things, heights and sprints!



Any stories you'd like to share with other Kai owners? Or advice about helping Kai try new things?

CZ: Advice for trying new things: start small, start positive. Kai tend to choose suspicion and conservative risk attitudes over being bold and impulsive (unless it involves cats, squirrels, or birds). All dogs look to their owners to see how they're reacting, but Kai don't just look. Kai *observe*. They will watch, think about it, and make up their minds about it being worth exploring, dangerous and worth avoiding, or dumb and not worth their time. That decision can happen super quick and then be super tedious to overcome. So, it's better just to take your time and take it at your Kai's pace. Over time I picked up on her discrete stress behaviors. It's fun for her, so it's fun for me! The same strategy will work for anything. Throw in lots of scratches, "good dog"s, and occasional extra special activity treat and you'll have your own Adventure Kai in no time!

Many thanks for sharing so much about your life and connection with Ren! Safe journeys!



Congrats!

There have been very few shows due to COVID-19 closures this year, but KKSA member Autumn Arsenault has found some in Michigan for her dogs at Shōga Kennel.



Sept 19th- Foundation Kai Club of America show
Sarchi took Grand Champion Class, BOB, and Group 2 in show 1 and 2

Sept 12th- MIAPBT show, Sarchi tools Grand Champion class, BOB, and Group 3 in show 1 and group 4 in show 2.



CA GRCH Mijikai no Musashi Sarchi-go RACEN. (RACEN and CA are lure coursing titles! More eon the different kinds of lure coursing Kai in a future Issue!) Sarchi was bred by Marsha Short at Mijikai Kennel (Taka x Tyson) and is shown by and co-owned with Autumn.

We Lost a Mentor; Let's Not Lose the Way

By Brad Anderson

This summer, the Kai Ken lost one of its most passionate and successful breeders - Mr. Tadashi Inoue of Saitama-ken, Japan. Inoue-san was one of my Kai Ken Aigokai mentors and a person I respect and admire deeply.

Inoue-san taught me to stay humble, kind, and honorable. He was a breeder who competed only with himself, and out of love for the breed. He showed me the value of "putting in the work" - sticking to one's passion, showing up every day, and refining your craft. He understood the importance of working with other breeders and maintaining quality relationships.

This work ethic is evident in the dogs he produced, many of which have helped reseed the Kai Ken breed in the United States and Europe. To the educated Kai Ken enthusiast's eye, one can spot a Kai Ken from Inoue-san's program on sight. I believe he played a large role in defining the current Kai Ken type and did so by merely producing the kind of Kai Ken he loved.

With current world affairs as they are, and with the passing of such a great breeder (and person), I can't help but wonder where the breed will go in the future. I hope that more enthusiasts who share Inoue-san's passion and ethics will step up to start breeding and working together to preserve the breed.



Mr. Tadashi Inoue will be missed by his family and friends, the Kai Ken community worldwide, and by the dogs that loved him best.

While the fresh outlook and general scholarliness of the newest generation of breeders are positive, I see the Kai Ken falling into old patterns. The community is slipping away from global efforts of breed preservation to tribalism driven by self-serving politics and dishonesty. Repeating the same mistakes that previous breeders have made - mistakes I feel would disappoint Inoue-san - and mirroring the unhealthy atmosphere seen in current government politics.



The author with Inoue-san at the Kai Ken Aigokai national show.

The Kai Ken benefited greatly from Inoue-san's work. With his passing, I ask the community to embrace his ethics, honor his efforts, and work together again in a way that would make Inoue-san proud. He left us a special gift; let us not tarnish it with the same old mistakes made in the US and Europe in the past.



If your Kai Ken has a parent with "Sai no" in their registered name, you have Inoue-san to thank Inoue-san's Kai Ken have showed with excellence at the Kai Ken Aigokai shows for many years, including winning the Terada Cup.

Help Needed

Membership Committee Help Wanted: We are seeking 1-2 members who can act as guides or ambassadors for new members. These people would reach out by email to new members and introduce them to our resources, committees, and local events. Contact membership@kaisociety.org or talk to Cait!

Newsletter Opportunities:

The Tora can use writers on a regular or one-article basis. Is there something you know about Kai, Japan, AKC events, dog clubs, activities? Our News is for and about Kai Ken and our members' actions and work all over the country. Contact Chrystal or Lauren with ideas, articles or to write regularly!

Rescue Committee:

The Club would like to start a Rescue Committee to centralize and coordinate efforts, reaching out to local members when a Kai Ken is discovered in need of transport, assessment, foster. If you are interested in this Committee, let Stacey know. It probably only needs 2-3 people as we are fortunate to not see Kai in shelters very often. The main task for the first committee members at startup would be to establish the foundation: figure out what is appropriate for the national club to do, decide a policy on rescue in terms of structure, what the Club can do and for what dogs (verifiable Kai? mixes? We have no funding yet, and there's been a rush of people with brindle dogs claiming to be Kai or mixes- we can't help them all. Signal boosting, gathering support? If you want to decide, sign up for this!



**KAI KEN
SOCIETY OF
AMERICA**

Annual Election of Officers: October 1st
Members will be mailed a link to the ballot,
watch your email!

