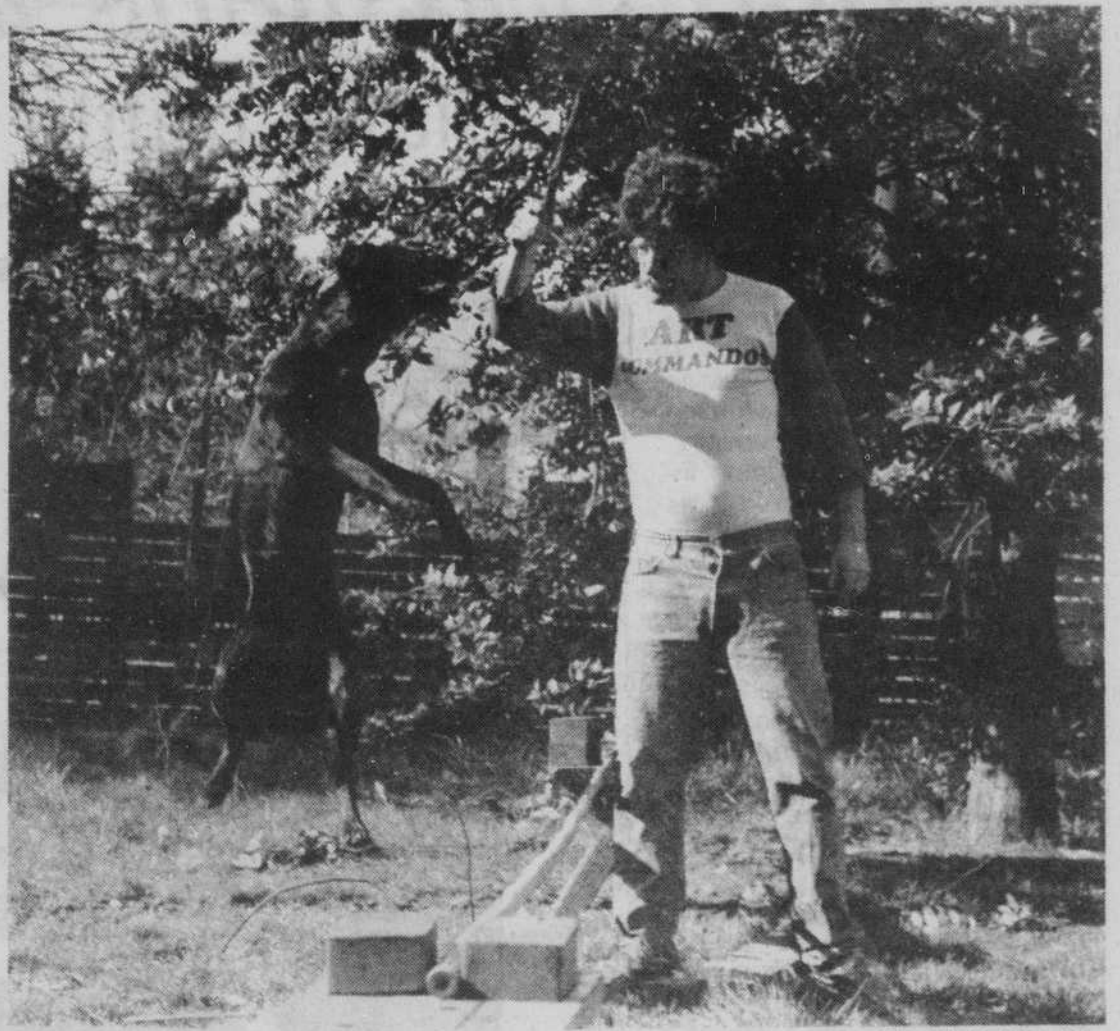




Photos by AnaMaria Bell

Paul Ollswang, a local caricaturist and his labrador retriever, Fedelio, participate in a bit of early morning stick grabbing.

Aaaand they call it puppy love .

Couch pose most popular, professional dog portraitist says

By ANAMARIA BELL
Of The Emerald

Paul Ollswang covers the walls of his home with Vermeers and Rembrandts, but he draws dogs. It is sometimes easier to portray a dog than a person. Ollswang, a professional dog portraitist believes people are fairly vain but dogs are not.

He charges \$15 a sitting, \$3 for each additional pose and \$2.50

for a couch pose. He says the couch poses are the most popular.

Ollswang insists it is more pleasant to sketch dogs because eventually, the owner will settle for something which depicts the dog's personality.

With people, he says, there are two problems to worry about: "what they look like and what they think they look like."

He recalls an incident when "a

very nice gentleman" wanted a sketched portrait of himself and his dog. "The problem was the man had a receding chin," says Ollswang. "He was very happy with the way I drew his dog, but he kept saying 'no, no, that's not the way I look.' Dogs don't complain.

"People have dogs because of their personalities," says Ollswang, and he explains a portrait records that personality. "A cartoon portrait is a perfect way to grasp this concept."

He enjoys discussing what the dog looks like with the owner before doing the portrait. "It is interesting to see how they perceive their dog," he adds.

"What they are portrayed as depends on their personality," says Ollswang. He explains he can see dogs' personalities more

readily by their looks and actions. "And that is what I try to grasp," he adds.

Drawing a dog's portrait isn't easy. A typical problem "is that generally, they sit with their back to me if their master is in the room." He often has to scrunch the dog around to make it symmetrical.

Ollswang began doing dog portraits as gifts for friends several months ago. By word of mouth other people became aware of his work.

"It's really nice how a little drawing can make someone happy," says Ollswang. "It gives me a great feeling knowing I can do something so different."

Ollswang enjoys observing dogs to guess what they may be thinking. He says he notices how a

dog twitches while he sleeps and believes they have dreams also.

Ollswang psychoanalyzes his own dog, Gracie, a Norwegian Husky. "It is like having a friend with a drinking problem. Gracie is an Ingmar Bergman type of dog who contemplates life behind sad big brown eyes and sighs at everything. He prefers to be with the pack," says Ollswang.

Fedelio, his passive labrador retriever is more Ollswang's child-like companion. "I like having someone to follow me around and obey," he says. He plays with Fedelio in his backyard for an hour every morning, setting up boards and bricks for her to jump and exercise.

Ollswang finds dogs more personable than cats. "I'm allergic to them," he remarks.

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