

nearby Banbury.

... and that I would bid a sad adieu to my friends on Sunday evening, all of us scattering to the four winds but leaving with a wealth of memories and hopefully a greater appreciation of the essence of the Cavalier in his home country.

—Stephanie Abraham, *Scotland, Conn.*;  
landmarks.properties@snet.net ♦

## Chihuahuas



### Mentoring Prospective Judges

If you have been approved to mentor those who are applying to judge our breed, you have been given one of the most important tasks that the club can ask you to perform. You have become a mentor by virtue of your time in the breed and your accomplishments, and you have been asked to share the knowledge that you have gained with those wishing to judge our breed. It becomes your responsibility to work from the standard in order to fully explain what it is that the judge should be looking for.



There is no perfect program for educating judges, but the mentoring program, in conjunction with the Chihuahua Club of America's judges' education seminar, can go a long way toward giving prospective judges a reasonable understanding of our breed and its structure, temperament, and proper presentation. The seminar takes the standard and explains it in detail, and as mentors we need to work from that template. Our responsibility is to help prospective judges see the picture that the words paint.

As a mentor you are a breeder, and you may also be a judge yourself. As a breeder, you have developed a lot of your own ideas and opinions of what the breed should be; however, as a mentor, you need to convey the ideal of the breed as it has evolved and been recorded in the current standard.

Always try to stay away from opinion when a characteristic or trait can be explained by utilizing the language within the breed standard.

If you are also a judge, you understand that a judge's job is to find the best representations of the standard in the ring. In order to do this, the judge must first understand the standard. We use ringside mentoring to help clarify the breed standard and to give a more complete understanding of that standard to the aspiring judge.

Ringside mentoring also calls for tact and diplomacy. Find a vantage point from where the dogs can be fully observed, and keep your conversation with those being mentored private. Do not critique the judge in the ring, but rather observe the entries and discuss them in relation to the standard. Always keep in mind that we cannot observe everything the judge in the ring can observe. Discussing the judge's placements is not necessarily productive, but we can discuss each entry and how well that individual satisfies the standard.

When you know that you are going to be mentoring, it is a good idea to have with you a copy of the standard and any other CCA-approved material you can acquire. It doesn't hurt to carry this information with you to any show that you attend; quite often, prospective judges will request mentors at shows, and especially at specialty shows. As a breed mentor, you occupy a special place in the dog world. It is your responsibility to help these new judges in understanding our breed standard and the breed itself. You also represent the parent club; these responsibilities should never be taken lightly.

In closing, when mentoring be prepared, be tactful, and always stick to the breed standard. If you can do those things, you should be a successful mentor, and new judges will benefit from your assistance.

Please visit the Chihuahua Club of America website at [chihuahuaclubofamerica.com](http://chihuahuaclubofamerica.com). —Bruce E. Shirky, *San Antonio, Texas*; [bshirky@texaskachina.com](mailto:bshirky@texaskachina.com) ♦

## Chinese Cresteds



### The AKC Parent Club Conference: A Wealth of Information Shared

Recently I had the great pleasure of attending the AKC Parent Club Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. This was my first time at this conference, and, frankly, I packed with more of a sense of duty than anticipation. As the president of my national club, it was my responsibility to go and represent the membership. I was in for a delightful surprise!

First of all, North Carolina is

absolutely wonderful. A person could not be in all that green, lush beauty and not just feel a little bit better about the world. The people are friendly and warm, and the hotel was lovely. Things were looking up.

As you would expect, there was a wealth of information disseminated. My brain was crammed with facts and ideas that I'm still excited to be sharing with members of my parent club—and with anyone else who will listen. Truly, these were some of the most knowledgeable presenters whom I have ever heard. Each of them was a specialist in his area of expertise.

I also learned something that I didn't expect to. As I sat in rooms full of people who shared my love and passion for dogs and for the sport, I realized that, in spite of what the media portrays, and in spite of ever-present anti-dog groups and their legislative efforts, we are not alone. There is a very large group of smart, dedicated people in this country, led by a very capable AKC staff who are actively involved in and concerned about the preservation of our beloved lifestyle. —Sue Klinckhardt-Gardner, *Petaluma, Calif.*; [tamoshire@qnet.com](mailto:tamoshire@qnet.com) ♦

## English Toy Spaniels



### Hanging Tongue

Recently I acquired a new puppy, and it was soon evident that he would occasionally show the tip of his