

declared:

"We are determined to ensure that the show ring is a positive force for change and that we help to move breeds forward by only rewarding the healthiest examples of a breed. ... The veterinary checks were introduced to ensure that dogs with exaggerated features do not win prizes."

Logical words, right?

On the face of it, such a philosophy might make sense, if it did not give free rein for spurious definitions of what constitutes "exaggerated features"—the flat face of the Peke, the haws of a Clumber ... or the prominent large eyes of the Cavalier?

The inherent deception of words like these is that they disguise the very real motivations of the speakers. Of course, who wouldn't want dogs to be healthy? We can all get behind that, can't we?

However, when we have non-specialist veterinarians at dog shows overturning the good opinions of some of the most respected conformation judges, every one of them a breeder himself, we have lost the heart and soul of the sport. It has fallen away.

Breed judging then becomes dependent on the sanction of non-breeders and judges—medical people who may or may not know what they are talking about when they make their pronouncements.

And who is to say what their alliances are outside of their medical profession? Are they animal-rightists themselves? Do we get to "vet" the vets?

As I write these words, I have just read a statement from one of the vets who disqualified dogs at Crufts. Alison Skipper wrote in *Dog World*:

"... [A] breed can have very moderate conformation and be plagued by serious inherited disease issues, such as the Cavalier, or it can be relatively healthy in terms of invisible problems and yet have clear issues with some aspect of its body structure. This high-profile breed scheme is a hugely important step towards reducing the problems associated with extreme conformation."

I leave it to you to interpret these words as you may, but it seems to me there is a thinly veiled agenda at work: the zealot's clear call to act the hero and punish those breeds that fail to measure up to their ideals. We need to recognize that the Cavalier may be a target of such an agenda in the future.

For all of us here in the United States who love purebred dogs and dog shows, the 2012 Crufts initiatives must be recognized and rebelled against if we do not want to see them accorded validity at Westminster, or Santa Barbara, or your local specialty show.

We must speak up against "dangerous dog" legislation, fight for the right to dock and crop, and above all support our AKC Canine Legislation Support Fund, the NAIA, and our parent clubs.

The anti-dog groups are as clever as can be in their chipping away at the rights and freedoms that we enjoy in this country. We must not be lulled into the deep sleep from which we cannot awake. And that means *all of us*—whether or not we own a breed directly affected by a particular proposal. *Viva la revolución!* —Stephanie Abraham;
landmarks.properties@snet.net;
American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club website: ackcsc.org

Chihuahuas Success: As Much Preparation as Motivation

What motivates you? What makes you wake up at 4 A.M. to show your dog?

The motivation to show can be a mixed bag. It can include love for your breed, enjoyment of fellowship with those who love dogs, desire to be the best, and much more. Many people are driven by a strong competitive streak. Some may simply aspire to finish a dog to a championship. For others it can be a burning desire to succeed, predicated on a fear of failure.

Are successes because of luck, fate, or destiny? Make your own luck! Keep your ears and eyes open, and your mouth closed. Luck is applying lessons

you've learned, even when it would be more convenient to do otherwise. Everyone encounters obstacles as well as opportunities. Sometimes one leads to the other, and we need to recognize the difference. Simply put, good luck is the ability to learn from bad luck.

Fate and destiny both refer to a pre-determined course of events. They can be distinguished in that fate is defined as "inevitable," while destiny is used with regard to the finality of events as they have worked themselves out, determined at least in part by our own actions. Therefore, although fate is unalterable, we are in charge of our own destiny.

To be successful, we must look at our dog—not just in the face but at his body and structure, including both front and rear assembly.

We need to acknowledge where he falls short and be objective about what our eyes see. We should not overlook faults and health defects in our dog. Unless quickly diagnosed and addressed, the presence of defects can lead to the demise of a successful breeding program. The Chihuahua Club of America has a list of health testing suggested for our breed.

We need to read and reread our standard and come to understand it. Developing an "eye" for a good dog is the ability to view a dog as one piece and to recognize balance, quality, and correctness in any breed.

If you find you are unable to truly grasp what your standard means, seek a successful person to be your mentor.

To help in the development of your eye, sit next to the designated mentors at shows and ask about what you're seeing in the ring.

To be successful, we must truly be objective about to what we choose to reproduce or put in the show ring. As breeders, we must always strive to improve the next generation.

If a problem is discovered in a breeding program, we must be prepared to adjust our plans, even to the point of starting over with new foundation stock.

What sacrifices are you ready to make on your road to happiness? Dreams do find direction. Make yours come true. —Virginia (Jenny) Hamber; wynjynchis@yahoo.com; Chihuahua Club of America website: chihuahuaclubofamerica.com

Chinese Cresteds When a Dog Eats Like a Bird

Just when you think you have seen everything ... After 40-plus years of raising show dogs, and growing up with pet dogs before that, you pretty much think that you have experience with anything that might happen.

Not necessarily.

I went into the dog room to feed my Chinese Cresteds a couple of weeks ago and noticed a very strange substance in the pan underneath one of my boy's crates.

"What the heck?" I thought. "That doesn't look familiar."

I pulled the pan out so I could get a better look and found—could it be?—birdseed!

The birdfeeder has been in the backyard for months, and none of the dogs has bothered it nor the birds that eat there. Now, obviously, this little man had decided that if it was good enough for the feathered ones, it was good enough for him.

As I assessed his condition, I became somewhat alarmed. In his three years, this boy had never been sick. Always a really good eater (put down the dish and get your hand out of the way good), he has eaten lots of not-really-recommended substances before, with no ill effects. But this time, he didn't look good. Head down, shivering a little, he had a hang-dog look.

I checked my watch. Of course, this happened at 6:30 P.M. on a Saturday. I could call my vet at home, but I hate to do that if it's not a true emergency.

I decided that before making that call I would check the Internet for information. The Internet knows everything, right? But what to look for?

Finally, I typed DOG EATING BIRD-

SEED into the search bar.

Imagine my surprise when a whole list of things came up. Apparently, my dog was not the first one to eat birdseed.

As I read through the information, it seemed this problem was fairly common. Wow. This was new to me.

One comment that caught my eye read, "If a dog eats birdseed, it won't do him any real harm unless the seed was in the bird at the time." *Ha ha*. I was in no mood for a joke, but still I felt a little better seeing people write that most likely this wasn't going to kill him. I decided to watch him until the next morning and see.

Over the next few hours, that dog threw up what must have been at least two-and-a-half to three pounds of seed. He wasn't looking any worse, but he sure didn't look any better.

By the next morning (after very little sleep for either of us), he still looked pretty bad. I called my vet the minute he opened, and he assured me that my dog should be fine as soon as he got rid of all the birdseed.

Well, that should be fairly soon, I thought, since it was erupting from both ends now. How much could be left?

Finally, I went through the medicine cupboard and found some Reglan. I thought that a small dose might help—the dog, that is. I gave it to him (I'd given it before at my vet's instruction and know the proper dosage), and then I realized that I could use some coffee.

By the time I got the coffee made and came back to check, he was sleeping comfortably. (Yes, I was sure to check that he was breathing OK.) I took my coffee and went outside and moved the birdfeeder into the gazebo, out of the dogs' reach.

I don't know whether the Reglan actually helped or my dog was just empty at that point, but from then on he started feeling better, and by the next morning he was back to his normal self.

Maybe you have experienced this before, but for me, this was a new one.

Leave it to a Chinese Crested to find new ways to keep us guessing. —See *Klincksandt-Gardner*; Tamoshire@Qnet.com; American Chinese Crested Club website: chinese-crestedclub.info

English Toy Spaniels Clicker Challenge

How many times have you wished your dog would just behave a little better?

If only they would gait better or stand on the table a little better. Maybe you are working in agility, but your dog is fearful of the teeter-totter, and you wonder if you can ever get past that last hurdle.

If you are not already doing so, I challenge you to try a bit of clicker training. Yes, it does take a little work to get a feel for it. But once you do, it's amazing how things will just start to "click" into place.

Let's get started. Most places that sell dog supplies can get you a clicker, but a pen that you can click will work as well. Alternately you can use a key word, such as "yes," in place of a clicker. For beginners, however, I feel that use of the clicker, if possible, is a little cleaner.

Next you need a good quantity of small and delicious treats. Little bits of meat or cheese work well, but anything your dog covets will do.

First we must "load" the clicker. This means we are attaching a meaning to the sound for the dog. They must understand that click means a treat is following. (Think of Pavlov's dogs.) Also beware that some dogs are initially afraid of the sound. If this is the case, I will put the clicker in my pocket to soften the sound.

At first, simply click and then give your dog a treat immediately afterward. Do this until you can click while the dog is turned away from you and it results in him whipping his head around in anticipation of the treat. At this point we are ready to train a behavior.

Let us try walking on a lead. The