

under the care of the Rescue Trust on almost a nonstop basis. Our volunteers are able to drop everything and come to the aid of a Cavalier in need. It is unfortunate, but at this time we must report that we have experienced a marked increase in the number being surrendered to rescue.

Just like breeding, rescue is not for the faint of heart. It can tear your heart out at times. You will cry, you will laugh; you will experience a kind of reward that can only come when you look into the eyes of a Cavalier you have taken into your care. Rescue is rewarding in so many ways. We need more experienced Cavalier people for key roles in rescue.

We are forever grateful to the global Cavalier community who came together and made all this possible. It was a monumental undertaking, but we didn't leave any behind.

While this operation had a very successful ending for the dogs, we cannot dismiss the problems surrounding it. We, as members of the dog fancy, must be mindful of the damage a situation like this can do to the breed when fueled by anti-breeder rhetoric or breeder vilification. A monumental social-media campaign was waged against this breeder. This breeder was labeled a "puppy mill" over and over again. This breeder's dogs were *not* abused or neglected, as had been told all over social media. These dogs did not come from a puppy mill. What was most troubling was the fact that other breeders jumped on the bandwagon to criticize this breeder in a public forum. Do we not realize when we do this to another breeder, we open the door to anti-breeder sentiment by the animal-rights groups? If we determine a breeder has too many dogs, what is to stop someone from determining all breeders have too many dogs? Food

for thought. —R.B.

Thank you, Renee.

—John V. Ioia, M.D., Ph.D.,
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American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club, ackcsc.org

Chihuahuas Golden Oldies—Old Dogs Rule!

What defines a senior pet? Chihuahuas are among the longest-lived breeds, and many are still bouncing around at 15, with others living to 20 or more years of age. The important thing to remember is that every dog is an individual, so the age at which they begin to show physical or mental decline can vary.

Most of us have a few retired show dogs whom we would like to place in loving homes. We know some lucky new owner can discover these wonderful gifts of the dog world. So the next time you are contacted for a puppy, why not suggest "old faithful," and tell the prospective new owner all the wonderful things an older dog can bring to their life?

Here are some points you might mention to help these "golden oldies" find a forever home.

They are a known quantity. You know their personality and that they are not going to get any bigger. What you see is what you get.

They are restful. If you want a pet to hang out with you while you watch TV or read a book, a senior is the way to go.

They aren't necessarily inactive. They love to for walks, bring back a ball, or follow you around the yard as you plant flowers—and they won't dig them up.

They are usually already house-trained. They've lived in a home and know the drill, whether it's going outside to potty or using a puppy-pad. Every once in awhile you may meet one who isn't housetrained,

but older dogs can learn just as quickly as youngsters if you take them out consistently and on a schedule.

They are wise in the way of the world. Older animals are observant, and they know how to learn, either by watching other animals in the family or from picking up on your cues. Watching them and seeing what they know and how they apply it to their new life is fascinating.

They come with a senior discount. An older dog may be as young as 3 years old, but they will come with a reduced price and be just as loving to their new family as a puppy.

They bring the gift of love and joy. The older dog usually fits easily into a home because they are already experienced at living with other animals and people. They may have many good years ahead to bring happiness to a loving family.

Some people say that older dogs are grateful because they know you have given them a second chance at being that "special" dog. True or not, they will bring happiness and joy to any home.

Adopting an older dog can bring more benefits than one may realize. So next time you are contacted for a puppy, don't forget about your "golden oldie." You *can* teach an old dog new tricks!

—Virginia (Jenny) Hauber,
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Chihuahua Club of America,
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Havanese Why Volunteering Is Important

Volunteers are vital to the successful running of a dog club. They give of their time, energy, and skills freely.

If you are looking for volunteers for your club, personal contact with potential volunteers is important, even if it is through a group e-mail

list or a Facebook page. Other club members are a wonderful source for names of people to contact.

If your club is going to be successful in recruiting new volunteers, you must *ask* people—it is rare for people to line up to offer to chair a committee position.

There are benefits, too, for volunteering; it is a great way to make new friends, since you are working with a group of people with a common interest, and a great way to get to know people from all backgrounds and walks of life. When researchers at the London School of Economics examined the relationship between volunteering and measures of happiness in a large group of American adults, they found that the more people volunteered, the happier they were, according to a study reported in *Social Science and Medicine*.

When it comes to volunteering, passion and positivity are the only requirements. Volunteering is a fun and easy way to explore your interests and passions. In doing volunteer work, you find doing something meaningful and interesting can be a relaxing, energizing escape from your day-to-day routine of work, school, or family commitments. Volunteering also provides you with renewed creativity, motivation, and vision that can carry over into your personal and professional life.

Meet the new you. You'll discover skills you never knew you had, and you may be surprised at what you're capable of achieving. Every person counts!

So you don't belong to a dog club, but would like to volunteer? I am not aware of any breed rescue that doesn't need volunteers. There are many ways to help, from fostering a dog to sending out notices electronically, and all sorts of things in between. You don't need to physically be there. There are many jobs waiting to be filled that can be done

without you leaving your house.

—Claudia McCracken,

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The Havanese Club of America, Inc., *havanese.org*

Italian Greyhounds Dog People Are Great

I don't like writing about myself, and actually this story isn't about me. It's about dog people. My grand champion bitch Mimi and I are incidental characters in what happened on the third day of a show weekend in December of last year.

Sunday started out decently enough as Mimi and I walked from the car toward the show rings. I was aware of some people with a large dog behind us, but that certainly isn't unusual for a show site.

Then the dog decided to sniff Mimi, and she wasn't eager for the attention. She ran ahead of me to the full extent of her lead, the big dog following.

I couldn't stop myself quickly enough and tripped either over the dog's lead or the dog himself and fell flat on my face. In trying to break my fall, I must have let go of Mimi's lead.

I'm unsure of the time element, but when I looked up, I was surrounded by people, and Mimi was nowhere in sight. Someone from the fairgrounds security appeared, followed by two paramedics. Blood seemed to be everywhere. All I could think about was *where is Mimi?*

The paramedics bandaged my nose and wanted me to go to a hospital. I refused to leave without Mimi. People were looking for her. She had been seen on the parking lot, and then she had disappeared. I had to sign a statement that I had refused medical transport. The fairgrounds security man drove me all over the site on his golf cart. There was no sign of Mimi.

The other IG people, Lorraine

Ebdon and Gary and Julie Shiozaki, missed their ring time to help me look. Even professional handler Curtiss Smith drove to the high school campus away from the show because someone had said the loose IG was spotted running around there. He sent someone back to get me because Mimi wouldn't go to him. By the time we reached the school, however, Mimi had taken off.

Everyone, even total strangers, wanted to help, but after combing the area for several hours it became apparent that Mimi must have crossed several busy streets and had completely disappeared.

The police and animal control were notified. People wanted me to go home, and I finally agreed to let Lorraine drive my car while the Shiozakis followed.

Home was an hour and a half away. We had only been there a few minutes when Deb Wolfenbarger, president of the Italian Greyhound Club of America, called. Someone had called her to tell her about Mimi's disappearance, and she had posted it to Craigslist. Within minutes she had gotten a call from someone several miles from the show site. Mimi had run into the woman's yard and, completely exhausted, had allowed herself to be picked up. The woman had taken her to the local emergency clinic.

I changed quickly out of my bloody clothes, and my husband drove me back to Orange County. I couldn't believe that Mimi had been found. I hadn't expected to see her again, at least not alive.

Other than badly torn pads from her expedition, she was fine and very happy to see us. IGs don't usually have much traffic sense, and that she survived four hours of running through city streets was miraculous.

I learned also firsthand how wonderful dog people are when push comes to shove. Total strangers still