

will ever get a well-bred puppy with which to start a serious breeding program?

These sorts of stud contracts are one of the reasons that serious enthusiasts complain that it takes them years before someone will part with a bona fide show and breeding prospect. And what about all the scientific research that is revealing the fourfold increase in prostate cancers in neutered males? Not every breeder believes it is in the best health interest to neuter pet males. And they point out that they would never sell such a pet to anyone with an intent to breed it, and only let it go with restricted (non breeding) registration. If even the show-quality male pups we do not keep must be neutered, where are all the fine stud dogs going to be when we need them? Many Cavalier breeders choose not to keep males—even the very best ones. Are they all to be lost to the show and breeding world?

Interviews of stud owners often reveal a less magnanimous motivation behind restrictive stud contracts. I have had people tell me they “do not want” others to have the benefit of *their* expertise, *their* expense in importing, breeding, and raising generations of fine dogs to produce the stud in question.

The cynic in me thinks that perhaps they do not want to lose their fat stud fees to a younger male sired by their own dog. To me, that philosophy is the very antithesis of what it means to be a conscientious breeder of purebred dogs. Stud dogs come and go; they flourish and age, and eventually they leave us. And in the meantime, many of us enjoy the opportunity to mentor and teach the newer converts to the fancy who are thrilled to finish a lovely young dog. And yes—of *course* the newcomer benefits from what has gone before—all the mistakes and triumphs, the emotional and monetary investments we *all* make as breeders.

I think it behooves all of us to examine our stud contracts and our own motivations behind what we put into them. And simply to think twice about why we deny anyone who might not

be willing to sign one that included the control provisions. If you are willing to breed the bitch and deposit the check, why are you not willing to trust the person who wrote it?

—Stephanie Abraham,
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American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club website: *ackcsc.org*

Chihuahuas

Brains *and* Brawn: Rally and Obedience

Ever wonder what’s inside those great big heads on such little dogs? Well it’s a very large brain. For their size, the Chihuahua’s brain is huge. They may be small in stature, but they are not small in their ability to think and learn. Anyone who owns a Chihuahua knows just how smart these little dogs are. I’m convinced they can do just about anything.

A Chihuahua is a sturdy little dog with few health issues. They are agile, swift, and quick to grasp the task at hand. With a heart as big as their brain, they bond so closely with their owners that their desire to please is extreme. So when their “leader” asks them to perform, they will do their best. These little dogs truly believe they can do anything a bigger dog can do. Well, guess what? They *can*.

I recently have had the pleasure of learning just how competitive our Chihuahuas can be at obedience and rally events. Having placed a sweet little pet in a wonderful home, her new owner wanted to try rally and obedience. This was a new thing for both owner and dog. What excitement I felt when I was notified that at just 8 months of age, little Izzy won first in her obedience trial, after having a run-off with a Rottweiler. I only wish I could have been there to see this David-and-Goliath challenge. Once again, David won!

Rally is a fun and exciting team sport for dogs and their handlers. There are no physical limitations, and all dogs, purebred and mixed, can participate. In rally the dog-handler team move

through a course with 10 to 20 signs indicating specific exercises. The team must complete the prescribed set of exercises and are scored on their performance of them. This sport is less rigorous than traditional obedience and gives participants a chance to show off great teamwork. Rally is a friendly event, with a sense of camaraderie among competitors, so it’s just a fun-based team sport for those wanting to share some quality time and a lot of fun with their dogs. To learn more about rally events, you can visit the Association of Pet Dog Trainers website at *apdt.com/APDRally*.

In traditional obedience competition accuracy and precision are essential, but the natural movement of the handler and the willingness and enjoyment of the dog are very important as well. The training for this challenging sport helps to correct bad behaviors, deepen the bond between man and dog, and ensure safety, as well as nurture friendships with the fun and excitement of competing in AKC events.

To compete in obedience, the dog must be AKC registered, or in the AKC Purebred Alternative Listing (PAL) or AKC Canine Partners programs. To find out more about participation in AKC events, visit *akc.org*.

Don’t let the size of your dog limit the things you can do together. Get out there, get active, and have fun together. Be a great leader of your pack!

—Virginia (Jenny) Hauber, *wynjynchis@yahoo.com*

Chihuahua Club of America website: *chihuahuclubofamerica.com*

Chinese Cresteds

Back to the Standard

Breed standards are written to be subject to interpretation. They are not written to describe any particular actual dog, but rather to describe characteristics of that mythical perfect dog who we know will never walk on this earth. As judges, then, we have a huge responsibility to interpret those standards as best we can, to choose those dogs who best represent what has