

Elvenhoene, Telvara, Fontelania, Romoc, Craigowl, Cottismeer, Alansmere, Milkeyn, and Salador, just to begin what would be a list too long for these pages.

Here in the U.S. many breeders owe Molly a great debt as they imported from her and built on her genetic legacy via other imports whose pedigrees fostered the Homerbrent lines. When I began in Cavaliers in 1987, we purchased a little dog whose background was almost entirely Homerbrent, and he has been rather typical in that he lived a long and extremely healthy life (almost to 15) and had the most marvelous outlook—exemplifying, in addition to conformational excellence, two of the hallmarks of Molly's breeding program: sound health and typical happy Cavalier temperaments.

No account of Molly's life would be complete without a mention of the great Ch. Homaranne Caper (Caper), who sired 16 champions and won the Cavalier Club's Stud Dog trophy for seven years. His get achieved 67 CCs. He lived to 15, passing in 1991, and his sire before him, Aust. Ch. Homerbrent Henry, lived to 16.

Caper was officially bred by Molly's daughter Anne (of Homaranne), then still living at home, who owned his dam, the great producer Ch. Homerbrent Captivation. It was Molly, however, who chose him from his litter, and he lived with her as her great favorite for all his life.

Of Caper, Norma Inglis (of Craigowl) wrote, "He was majestic, full of class and refinement with a devilish sense of fun. He typified the Homerbrent look that many wanted to emulate. He was small, well boned, excelled in outline, and very sporting in nature, with a dreamy head. Soft, gentle, all male."

At Blenheim I saw Molly for the last time. That is the way I will always remember her—standing proudly for photographs beside her lovely Best Puppy Dog.

The Cavalier world will not see her like again.

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

## Chihuahuas

### Beginnings

My first exposure to Chihuahuas came when I was 17. My mother brought home this tiny puppy, and we suddenly had the first dog that Mom was willing to let into the house. My brother and I had tried to convince her that our old Redtick Hound, Rebel, belonged in the house, but she wouldn't buy it.

Anyway, Sammy the Chihuahua was the first official housedog. I didn't think much of the breed, but she immediately took a liking to me—for

Sammy from a certain mauling, Mom allowed the old hound in the house on cold nights. Thus he became our second housedog.

I tell this story to explain how my love affair with the breed began, and it continues more than 40 years later. I know that everyone comes to their breed in different ways; my start was random and unexpected, but all the more cherished because of it.

Over the years the Chihuahua has become stronger as a breed and has gained quite a bit of respect in the sport and among people in general. There are some misconceptions that people still have, but that is what education is for. Chihuahuas have proven

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what reason, I will never know—and I kind of liked her from the start, too.

She was a small bitch, probably no more than four pounds at maturity, and she lived a very healthy 16 years. Sammy taught me a lot about this small breed. She was all Chihuahua, the big dog in a small package. Someone once said, "It ain't the size of the dog in the fight; it's the size of the fight in the dog." They were talking about Sammy. She was absolutely fearless, like a lot of other Chihuahuas I've known.

This fearlessness doesn't always work for them and can give owners a lot of scary moments. Sammy wasn't scared of the devil with horns; and the only thing that saved her from being eaten by a neighbor's dog one day was that old Redtick Hound, who stepped in and "read from the book" to the neighbor dog.

My mother witnessed this confrontation, and after Rebel saved

that they can compete both in the show ring and in the real world. They compete in conformation, obedience, rally, and agility. They are therapy and service dogs, and I recently heard about one in Japan who qualified as a search-and-rescue dog.

My association with the breed has given me much enjoyment, and while there have been times when it was difficult and painful, the experience is something I would not have wanted to miss.

I would hope that we all examine how we got into the sport from time to time, because it gives us a perspective on just how much work and sacrifice it requires. It also gives us bit of compassion for folks just starting out. This is a good thing, because we need to encourage and educate those who show an interest. We won't live forever, and someone has to take care of the breed.

If you love Chihuahuas or are just interested in learning more about



them, please visit our website, [chihuahuaclubofamerica.com](http://chihuahuaclubofamerica.com).

—Bruce E. Shirley, San Antonio, Texas;  
bshirky@texaskachina.com ♦

### Chinese Cresteds



#### The Advantages of Getting an Adult Dog

In the last year, we have placed a record number (for us) of adult dogs. Some prospective owners have called specifically looking for an adult, and some have come to see a puppy and ended up taking home an older dog.

There is some misinformation on the Internet to the effect that older Chinese Cresteds never really bond well to a new person. In fact, there are some very good reasons to add an adult dog to your family.

Most older dogs will settle in very well to a new home in 30 days or less. I know it's a blow to our egos, but most Cresteds will bond with the human holding the dinner dish. In my more than 20 years in this breed, there have only been a few—fewer than five—who might have pined away for me if they had gone to another home. And even with those few, I may be overestimating my importance.

I remember one 2-year-old Crested who was in the back seat of the car with his new family pulling out of our driveway; I couldn't even get his attention to tell him goodbye. That boy never looked back.

Another 5-year-old girl jumped into the open car and settled on the passenger seat before her new person could finish signing the registration papers.

Before you say that it sounds like my dogs can't wait to get away from my house, consider this: Dogs raised with a lot of love and attention just assume that they will always be treated well, and most are excited about a new adventure. Many former show dogs miss the attention of being the special dog who gets to go places all the time; in a home where they are the only dog, they can, once again, be that special dog. Of course there will be a period

of adjustment, but not one dog has ever come back to me because he couldn't adjust to his new home.

Adult dogs are usually house- and lead-trained, have all their shots, and have been socialized. All this saves the new owner a lot of time and effort. In our busy world, this can be a real advantage.

When you bring home an adult dog, you pretty much know what you have. All puppies are cute, but not all of them grow up to be what we expect. (I bought the cutest Saint Bernard puppy many years ago. I had no real understanding that he would grow to be 195 pounds!)

A powderpuff may be a beautiful brown color as a puppy; chances are good he will be cream as an adult. With an adult, the teeth are in and extras will have been removed. Ears are either up or not. Taping is not an issue, and you won't be disappointed later if you can't make the ears stand.

Most people looking for a show dog know that taking home a 3-month-old puppy is risky. You look at the pedigree and keep your fingers crossed, or else you wait until the puppy is older. Pet folks used to want their puppy at 8 weeks and would get upset that they couldn't take him home until he was 4 months. Now the general public, being better educated, seems to have realized the advantages of adopting an older dog.

—Sue Klueckhardt-Gardner, Palmdale, Calif.; Tamoshire@qnet.com ♦



### English Toy Spaniels



#### Light a Fire

After a certain amount of time in any activity, it is common to become blasé. Fortunately for all of us, we can do something about this problem. Recently I was at such a point in my dog game. I was lacking enthusiasm for all of my dog sports (of which there are many) and needed to

"light a fire" under myself to get back in the game.

For me the "fire" came in the guise of a tracking class. Yes, you read correctly, tracking with an English Toy Spaniel. The opportunity presented itself, and I had always toyed with the idea of tracking but was intimidated by the unknown.

I signed up, with much trepidation, and soon found myself obsessed with finding property to track on and blocking out chunks of my days to follow my dog around various fields. My recently retired dog was back in the game, and I along with him. I read everything I could get my hands on, and suddenly realized I had rediscovered that new-to-the-game enthusiasm. I was falling in love with my hobby all over again.

I am not suggesting that everyone should take up tracking; what I am suggesting is that sometimes you need to add a new component to the things you have been doing for a long time.

Like me, you could venture out into a new sport. English Toy Spaniels will surprise you with the things they are capable of doing.

If you have strictly been a conformation participant, try a little performance. Take a rally class, and let your little dogs show you what they can do. I often have breeders tell me they have a great agility prospect. Instead of trying to place that dog, take a go at it yourself. You could try therapy work, or even canine freestyle.

I will freely admit it does not always work out. I took a freestyle class a couple of years ago, and after about a year of work, I decided it was not for me. Do I regret it? Absolutely not! I learned a lot about my dog and myself and had plenty of laughs along the way.



There is nothing but time to be lost, and most of us lose plenty of that in front of the television.

Maybe you have no interest in performance whatsoever. Maybe, then, you could try something new in your breeding pro-