

## TOY GROUP

but may also have a role in a dog's ability to concentrate, pay attention, learn quickly, and retain lessons learned, she said.

Of particular interest to Brussels Griffon owners are studies that connect early spay/neuter to ailments common in our breed. In Austria, a 2005 study by veterinary researchers led by B. Vidoni found that small dogs who were neutered and spayed had three times greater risk of patellar luxation. In my own program, I breed only Brussels Griffons who rate '0' on the Orthopedic Foundation Association scale of 1-4. Yet several times owners have come back to me with 2- or 3-year-old dogs with high grade patellar luxation, whose parents had no patellar luxation at all. This was perplexing, until I considered the possible role early spaying and neutering played in the condition.

Also of interest for Brussels Griffon owners is a study in the 2005 Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association which showed that adverse reactions to vaccines were 30 percent more likely in spayed bitches and 27 percent more likely in neutered males. The allergic reactions included hives, anaphylaxis, cardiac arrest, cardiovascular shock, and sudden death. Twice I've had Brussels Griffons collapse after receiving a vaccine, and I've heard other owners report similar incidents of post-vaccine anaphylaxis. My dogs are intact, so it's scary to

hear that this condition occurs more frequently in fixed dogs, as most puppies I've sent to good homes have the operation.

Considering these findings, we must give some thought to what we tell new owners about getting their male puppy neutered or their female puppy spayed. Most veterinarians they will visit will urge them to have the puppy sterilized, often right away. New owners need to be aware of the whole story.

—Sharon Sakson

[American Brussels Griffon Association](#)

## Cavalier King Charles Spaniels

### REMEMBERING ROBERT SCHROLL

The news of Robert Schroll's sudden passing on December 6 hit the Cavalier family and the dog world like a sledgehammer. The loss of the tall, energetic, and healthy 70-year-old man seemed impossible to his friends, family, and those he mentored in the care and breeding of his beloved Cavalier King Charles Spaniels.

Robert was not only a respected groomer and breeder but also the caregiver for his beloved husband, John Gammon, who has been at his side for over 45 years, and a caregiver for John's mom. Together Robert and John have been longstanding residents of Clarksville, Tennessee, and leaders in the

American Kennel Club, Robert serving as president and AKC Delegate for the Clarksville Kennel Club from June of 2000 until his death.

Robert met John while working for the legendary handler Ted Young, Jr. Robert was the farm manager at Tedwin from 1975 to 1977. Robert had a long history and knowledge of horses and their care and breeding.

After moving to Tennessee in 1977, Robert and John got their first two Cavaliers—littermates, a black and tan dog and a Ruby bitch. They attended their first Cavalier show in 1980, where the Ruby bitch became the first Ruby to win a specialty. Since then, they have bred, owned, and handled four ACKCSC national-specialty winners and five all-breed Best in Show winners, including the breed's first BIS. Additionally, Ravenrush has nine Registry of Merit and three Legion of Merit Cavaliers. Robert and John are both founding members of the ACKCSC. John served as the first ACKCSC President, and Robert as a Director.

Robert was honored by being selected as the overwhelming choice of the membership of the American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club to judge Best of Breed at the club's 25th-anniversary national specialty in 2019.



Stephanie Abraham, Patty Kanan, and Robert Schroll at the 2019 ACKSC national specialty.

Robert was also selected to present a breeders' education seminar at the same national. Equipped with a PowerPoint presentation, Robert gave us the history of many of the early prominent Ravenrush Cavaliers, explaining their exploits, triumphs, and genealogy. He provided us the stories of the breeding program that he and John Gammon launched and profiled some great dogs, like BISS Ch. Ravenrush Impressario, whose sire was Ravenrush Tartan, ROM, LOM, and dam was Ch. Ravenrush Perfecta, ROM. Impressario was Best in Show at the very first ACKCSC national specialty, in 1997, and is

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a true foundation of our breed. He was beautiful. I know; I was there. Attendees enjoyed stories of Ravenrush Tartan, Kindrum Redcoat, and BIS Ch Ravenrush Gillespie. Cavalier breeders might want to begin pedigree studies to see who is behind their dogs.

What many in the dog world don't know is that Robert earned both a Bachelor of Applied Science (BASc) and a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Business Administration and Management from New Hampshire College. He helped establish an Upward Bound Project in 1971, working with high school students from troubled homes through the school year and then an intense summer school program. He also served as Graphic Designer for the Tennessee State House of Representatives and then the State Senate Engrossing Offices from 1977–1980.

Robert will always be remembered for his humility, his friendly smile, and his caring way. It was my pleasure to call him friend.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions in his name to the [AKC Canine Health Foundation](#).

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## Chihuahuas

### SELECTION—THE FUTURE OF THE CHIHUAHUA

Our breed's parent club, the Chihuahua Club of America, and the AKC are guardians of the Chihuahua's breed standard. The breed standard is a blueprint of the breed's specific qualities such as *appearance, movement, and temperament*. It is our "word picture" of the appearance and behavior of an idealized Chihuahua. The breed standard is "the standard or model which breeders endeavor to achieve."

The basis of judging in conformation dog shows is *breed type*, which is the combination of characteristics that are typical of a particular breed. The judge looks at the entered dogs to discern the ones who most perfectly resemble her mental image of ideal breed type. The goal of the conformation show is to identify breeding stock for the future of the breed.

One of the biggest stumbling blocks to proper selection is allowing what we *like* to stand in the way of something that is equally correct and fully acceptable. These "likes" can develop into obsessions, and sometimes they do not fall within the range of preference. Restricted vision serves as a detriment to the breeder and to our breed as a whole. If decisions during puppy selection are based entirely on a personal preference, we risk inaccurately interpreting the breed standard.

We see this in the show ring, with Chihuahuas exhibiting such traits as extremely short muzzles and curly tails, both of which are incorrect according to the standard. Only when we select within the confines of our breed standard do we work to produce better dogs.

Selection of our puppies will influence the future of our breed and should not be taken lightly. The longer people breed and watch puppies grow and mature, the more proficient they will be in evaluating what stands before them.

If we are doing our job as breeders with the best possible intentions for the future of our breed, some very good dogs will be neutered or spayed, while those who are even better will be retained for future breeding. There is no doubt that neutered and spayed stock of the best breeders is far superior to much of the stock being used by others.

It behooves all breeders to work in the best interest of the breed. *Selection* is what it's all about, and it's the key to breeding success. An inability to look at your dogs objectively can wreck your dreams for the future and derail years of hard work. Successful breeders who produce quality dogs year after year are consistent with their selection process. They maintain a picture of the type they are trying to produce and know the ingredients that make



Chihuahua: October 1991 (Joann Muscolo photo)

up that type.

Finally, your ability to select wisely will depend both on your in-depth knowledge of dogs in general and your breed-specific knowledge. Read your standard until you know it forward and backward, and understand what you are reading. Above all, think of the future of our breed when selecting your next show puppy.

—Virginia (Jenny) Hauber,