

Charles Born

For those who do not know me, my aunt Margurite Manhart introduced me to Cocker Spaniels and dog shows in 1964 by sending me into a match show ring with a little buff bitch named Penny who a year later became my first champion. Marguerite founded Sugarbrook Kennels, a premier black cocker breeder in the late 40s, 50s, and early 60s. She was my mentor and eventual collaborator in breeding cockers. Penny and her daughter Rosa later went to college with me and became the hit of the university student union.

I joined Margurite as soon as I received my graduate degree to launch a very small breeding program using our registered kennel name, Sugarbrook. I owe a debt of gratitude to Toni Mills and Laura Henson for encouraging and supporting me to breeder/owner-handle our dogs. In rigorous competition and with many professional handlers in the Northeast, I was able to compete and win in the show ring with not only our dogs but those from other breeders as well. Along with my aunt, none of this would have been possible without the guidance and friendships from some of the greatest, such as breeders Laura Henson (who was also a co-breeder on a few litters), Ruth and Art Benhoff who were like a second mom and dad to me, Harriet Kamps, Betty Durland, and Bonnie Pike (we met in high school through mutual mentors) along with handlers like Ted Young, Johnny Paluga, Bill Ernst, Terry Stacey, and Tom Campbell.

I had to give up showing when my career in corporate marketing required frequent global travel. Wanting to continue in some way, I supported the breed by volunteering and mentoring. I had the privilege of mentoring prospective cocker judges from the ringside on many occasions and was always ready with a pair of scissors and thinning shears to trim feet or top knots for friends. I judged probably over 15 specialty sweepstakes and was honored to have been chosen twice to judge the ASC Futurity. I was president of the American Spaniel Club for three of my thirteen years of service on the Board of Directors. Now retired, I'm currently president of the ASC Foundation Board having served on the Board for well over a decade and I've expanded my love of animals to Mojave Tortoises volunteering as an adoption coordinator for captive tortoises here in Southern Nevada. It's an honor to be nominated and considered as a possible judge for the 2026 Flushing Spaniel Show and am grateful to all my friends and mentors who have provided me with knowledge, experiences, and warm memories from these last 60 years in Cockers.

Thank you.

Kevin Carter

My journey in cockers began in 1983. After having shown Afghan Hounds for 3 years, my partner, Robert, and I decided that we loved the temperament, look and movement of the Cocker Spaniel. In order to gain a better understanding of the breed, we began sitting ringside at shows to watch the cockers and before long we knew the "look" we wanted when searching for our first cocker.

We were fortunate to find "the look" we were seeking in the exquisite line of Laura Henson's Kaplar Cockers. Laura was very kind and helpful when we approached her but unfortunately, she did not have a black female for sell at the time, so she referred us to Charisse Krauth of Kimoke Cockers who had just had a litter out of Kaplar lines. We were blessed to purchase our first cocker (appropriately named Laura after Laura Henson) from Charisse and that, my friends, is how our kennel, Cameo Cockers, got started.

Laura was an outstanding black bitch with an amazing show career. She won the first time in the show ring and never disappointed going forward. She quickly achieved her championship title with several Specialty and Best in Sweepstake wins. During her specials career she racked up numerous Group placements, often beating out many of the top winning specials of the time, and I am very proud to say that Laura was owner-handled throughout her entire show career.

Over the years we only bred a few litters, but we were known for producing beautiful black cockers with sloping top lines and correct movement; and in my opinion, there is nothing more lovely than a well-balanced, correct moving cocker spaniel. I still get chill bumps when I see that in the show ring.

In addition to exhibiting my own cockers for 30+ years, I also handled for several other outstanding breeders for about 7 years. I am thankful to my clients for trusting me with the care and presentation of their beautiful cockers and we were fortunate to have many acquiring Group, ASC, and Westminster wins and placements.

It's been about a decade since I have been actively exhibiting in the show ring but I stay involved in the breed by attending shows on a regular basis to observe our beloved breed and to socialize with fellow dog showing enthusiasts. Additionally, I currently serve as the Assistant Treasurer for ASC and as Show Chairman of the Carolina Cocker Spaniel Club. I guess being a part of the dog show world is simply in my blood...I can't help myself, but I do love every minute of it.

My love, care and respect for the American Cocker Spaniel is beyond what I can express in words, and it is truly a immense honor to be nominated and considered as a judge for Futurity at the ASC January 2026 Flushing Show.

Dana Cline

In the late 1960's, Dana Cline's parents gave him his first Great Dane and from that moment he knew that he would have a lifetime of involvement with this breed and with dogs.

As a young child he exhibited in 4H, training in both obedience and conformation. He found the dog show world in his teenage years, spending nearly every weekend traveling to shows, helping professional handlers and handling dogs for friends with other breeds as well. While his main interest was always in Great Danes, he worked hard to learn about other breeds and to become more active in all breeds. All of his weekends spent at dogs shows eventually led him to a career as a professional handler, where he specialized in Danes and sight hounds, but also handling various other breeds along the way.

Breeding has always been a favorite aspect of this sport for Mr. Cline and currently breeds and exhibits Italian Greyhounds. He has bred over 100 champions in numerous breeds, primarily Great Danes, but also Borzoi, German Wirehaired Pointers, Miniature Bull Terriers, Bull Terriers, Beagles, Italian Greyhounds, and Tibetan Mastiffs. Mr. Cline is also a Breeder of Merit. He was a long-time member of the Great Dane Club of America and a member of the Italian Greyhound Club of America.

Mr. Cline is an All-Breed Judge. He has judged in a number of foreign countries, multiple National Specialties, as well as many of the country's top shows. He was also the Recipient of the 2017 AKC Judge of the Year.

Stephanie Kaul

My love affair with purebred dogs began at 10 years old, when I showed my first cocker spaniel in junior showmanship. After college, getting married, starting a family and building a career, I returned to dog shows and began my cocker spaniel breeding program under the Samamari prefix. Since then, I've bred and/or finished over 50 champions, and dogs I've bred, owned or handled have won multiple Bests in Show, Bests in Specialty Show, AKC National Championship; Westminster group placements and bests of variety, Sporting Group wins and group placements. My proudest wins are those I've achieved at the American Spaniel Club shows, where cockers I've bred, owned, or handled won Best of Breed, Best Opposite Sex to Best of Breed, Best of Variety, Best Stud Dog, Best in Futurity, Best Cocker Spaniel in Show, Winners Dog, Winners Bitch, Best of Winners, Best Puppy in Show. and much more.

I have served on the ASC Board many times and thoroughly enjoyed my terms as Zone IV Director and Second Vice President. I served as the show chairman for two successful and profitable ASC national specialties in 2013 and 2018 and am the show chair for the upcoming National in 2024. I am the editor of our breed publication, *The Bulletin*, and am also an ASC approved breed mentor for Cocker Spaniels.

I've had the honor (and absolute pleasure) of judging more than 30 sweepstakes, including the prestigious American Spaniel Club Futurity. I judged the Cocker Spaniel National Specialty in Sweden and am an AKC licensed judge for Cocker Spaniels, English Cocker Spaniels, German Shorthaired Pointers, German Wirehaired Pointers, Welsh Springer Spaniels, Clumber Spaniels, Sussex Spaniels, American Water Spaniels, Irish Water Spaniels, English Setters, Nederlandse Kooikerhondje, Pumik, and All-Breed Juniors.

My love for judging is evident when I'm in the ring - from interacting with exhibitors to finding that dog that just takes your breath away – I revel in every moment. I am forever grateful to my mentors for sharing their incredible knowledge and talents with me. I share my life with my husband, four children, and, of course, several merry cocker spaniels.

I am incredibly honored to be nominated to judge at the 2026 ASC Flushing Spaniel Show. Thank you all for your consideration.

Tommy Smalley

Thank you to everyone that nominated me. I appreciate it greatly! You may know me from some dogs I've bred or owned from working at shows with Lisa Arnett or perhaps from my drawings. You may not know me at all. Like many of us, I fell in love with cocker spaniels as a child after seeing Lady and the Tramp. I was thirteen when I got my very own "Lady." We lived in the south at the time, so I named her Dixi. She was just like the character. and I was hooked. A few years later I went to my first dog show and was even more addicted to these perfect, dark eyed beauties. I met Nancy Gallant. and she gave me a chance with my first foundation bitch CH. Gallant Midnight Star. Star's claim to fame other than winning five-point specialty majors and best of varieties over multiple specials, is she's the dam of ASC BIS winner CH. Gallant Colorado's Best. I actually bred her in my very first litter. Talk about beginner's luck. I have loved this breed for forty years and have been involved in showing and breeding (on a very small level) for 30 years. I think I can do a good job judging because I look for type first, the very essence of a cocker spaniel, and I just love this breed with all my heart. Thank you so very much for the nomination. It's true what they say, it is an honor just to be nominated.

April Stich

It all began when my brother gave me my first cocker spaniel at age 5 and have never looked back. Wanting to breed a litter, I met the Roberts and learned from the best. I seriously began breeding and exhibiting in 1988 with a strong foundation. I have bred over 50 champions with the April's prefix, with national and local specialty wins. I am a board member of Farmington Valley KC, president of Meadowbrook CSC, and a life member of American Spaniel Club.

I currently teach 6th grade and have a strong belief in creating lifelong learners in my students as well as myself. There's always something new to learn.

Dale Ward

First, I am honored to be nominated to be on the ballot for the American Spaniel Club's 2026 Annual Flushing Spaniel Show. My husband, Calvin, and I acquired our first "show dog" in 1972. We showed and bred cocker spaniels under the Cottonwood prefix and are fortunate to have met many friends through our activities in the sport. We were founding members of the Greenville Mississippi KC, and I served in many offices and as show chair in GMKC over the years. I am also a member of CSC of Kentucky.

I became an AKC licensed judge for cocker spaniels in 1994, and now am licensed for goldens and several additional spaniel breeds.

I am a Life Member of ASC and have recently had the privilege of serving as Zone 2 Director for six years. I look forward to continuing to serve ASC in any way I can.