

ACDCA Good Sportsmanship Award Nomination

I would like to nominate Steve Waltenburg for the Good Sportsmanship award for the following reasons.

For the most part the herding world is typified by people who embody the principles of good sportsmanship but even there a few very special individuals stand out in the crowd. Steve Waltenburg is one such individual. There are few handlers and/or trainers who are more competitive and driven to be at the top than Steve but he never lets that drive “run over” those who he is competing with and against. When he wins, which is often, he is gracious and humble, giving much of the credit to his dog. When he loses you will find him in the front of the line to congratulate the winner. Both experienced handlers and “newbies” are treated as equals by Steve and both will find Steve willing to listen to their training issues and trialing woes. And if his advice is sought he will freely share all that he knows to help the “seeker” out. Steve is passionate about helping newcomers to the world of herding find their way. The list of people who he has taken under his wing and poured all of his experience and wisdom into is a very long list indeed. His desire to help newcomers to the sport extends to our next generation of herders also. As his work schedule and resources allow Steve plans on doing “kids only” clinics free of charge to help these youngsters get off on the right foot.

Most years at the herding committee’s annual HIC testing you will find Steve, hot, tired and dusty but always willing to test “just one more”. Every dog gets a fair shot on the stock and every owner gets a fair evaluation of their dog along with a massive dose of encouragement to “keep at it”. In Steve’s mind every dog that walks into his ring to be tested has potential and every dog that walks out of his ring still has that same potential, regardless of if the dog showed him that potential during their time on stock or not. No one ever walks away from Steve feeling like their dog is a failure.

Anyone who has been around the ACDCA National Specialty herding trials over the years has seen Steve work from dawn to dusk (and beyond) making sure every thing from the arenas to the stock is just right so all the exhibitors have the best possible experience. And in between all this work you will see Steve in the arena doing what he does so well, working as a team with his dog, making it all look so easy.

A lot of people will start herding with one breed of dog but then switch to a different breed as their goals and ambitions change. Steve instead opts to show people just how good the ACD can be at all levels and in all venues of herding. There is no one in the ACD community who is a stronger believer in the working ACD than Steve Waltenburg. Steve is a special man with special talents, special insight and most importantly a special heart. And all of this he freely shares with those around him.

Respectfully submitted,

A member in good standing who has asked to remain anonymous

NOTE: the original nomination is signed but the signature has been deleted for publication at the request of the nominator