

Cathy Sorenson

2025 DCA Outstanding Sportsmanship Award Winner

When reading the values listed in the description for this award, thoughts immediately go to Cathy Sorenson. As a quiet person, she tends to fly under most people's radar but her list of attributes both at and outside of events goes on and on ... and on.

Cathy has exhibited for almost 60 years, living and exhibiting across the country before returning to the Northwest. She's served in local clubs and was a member of the DCA Board. She became a successful professional handler in both show and field.

Cathy is THE club member or exhibitor you WANT to see at events. She is always there exhibiting or not, at ringside early, available for last minute grooming, holding dogs, taking them back in. She takes on thankless jobs ...chief ring steward at all-breed shows, giving up her chance to exhibit, the RV parking and grooming space supervisor. She's the unentered Field Trial Secretary who camps on the grounds to greet exhibitors, the last there vacuuming, cleaning bathrooms. She's the person who enters her clients' show dogs in the trial to make a class, and gets a round of applause when she wins.

She is the person who gathers dogs from 4 states to travel to support Canadian shows. She's the one who works to build majors, and is happy for whoever wins as it is all good. Cathy is our "go to" person for litter registrations, working with shy or difficult dogs, holding handling classes in her yard to give a spot to work on ring skills.

Cathy is the quintessential ambassador for our breed ... attends every "meet the breeds," even if it means staying late. She goes out of her way to greet and encourage newbies ... is ALWAYS kind. A friend of Cathy's recently shared that at her first event with a dachshund (an AWTA trial in '93), Cathy went out of her way to make her feel welcomed. She continues to embrace newbies today ... at a show held on school grounds a family came by our ringside tent asking if the dogs in the pen were for sale. Most exhibitors would have been mortified but Cathy didn't hesitate to gently answer their questions and share our sport for over 30 minutes.

She's been a successful handler for decades, always rising above competition drama ... gracious to judges, stewards, fellow exhibitors. She prioritizes having fun ... her thrifting is legendary, providing her clubs with ring decorations, trophies, and raffle items with a comical eye.

You'd be hard pressed to find anyone who asked Cathy for help and got a hard "no." When fanciers need to rehomed dogs due to frailty or death, Cathy steps up to see them placed well. When a fancier had a health crisis in California last year, Cathy unhesitatingly took in her dogs for months.

Cathy is "old school" whereby holding successful events is, as if not more important than, winning.

Cathy is kind and supportive and inspirational. She is our Northwest (and National) treasure.