The National Dog Show

25th ANNIVERSARY

PRESENTED BY PURINA



A Thanksgiving Tradition

Hosted by

THE KENNEL CLUB of PHILADELPHIA

November 14-15, 2026
Greater Philadelphia Expo Center
Oaks, PA

NBC
Broadcast at Noon
Thanksgiving Day, November 26

Dr. RuthAnn Lobos
Purina Veterinarian

What goes into your pet's bowl starts with who's behind it.

Great pet nutrition takes more than quality ingredients. It takes people who really know pets. That's why Purina's food is backed by nearly 500 global experts dedicated to understanding what pets need to thrive. Our veterinarians, scientists, behaviorists, immunologists, nutritionists and more work together to advance pet nutrition and help pets live happier, healthier lives.

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The National Dog Show 25th ANNIVERSARY

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WELCOME!

Welcome to The National Dog Show Presented by Purina® hosted by the Kennel Club of Philadelphia.

On behalf of the members of the Kennel Club of Philadelphia, I thank you for joining us today as we celebrate both the **25th annual National Dog Show Presented by Purina®** and the Kennel Club's annual showing of purebred dogs in the Philadelphia area. The Kennel Club of Philadelphia had its first purebred show in 1879 and it became an annual event in 1933. The Kennel Club of Philadelphia proudly supports a number of canine-related organizations and has donated over $1.1 million dollars in the past 9 years. We have a lot to celebrate this year!

The National Dog Show Presented by Purina® is broadcast annually on Thanksgiving Day at noon on NBC and has been thrilling dog lovers ever since it began in 2002. We estimate that since then, one quarter of a billion people have watched!

Enjoy the dog show and follow us on social media at www.Facebook.com/natldogshow

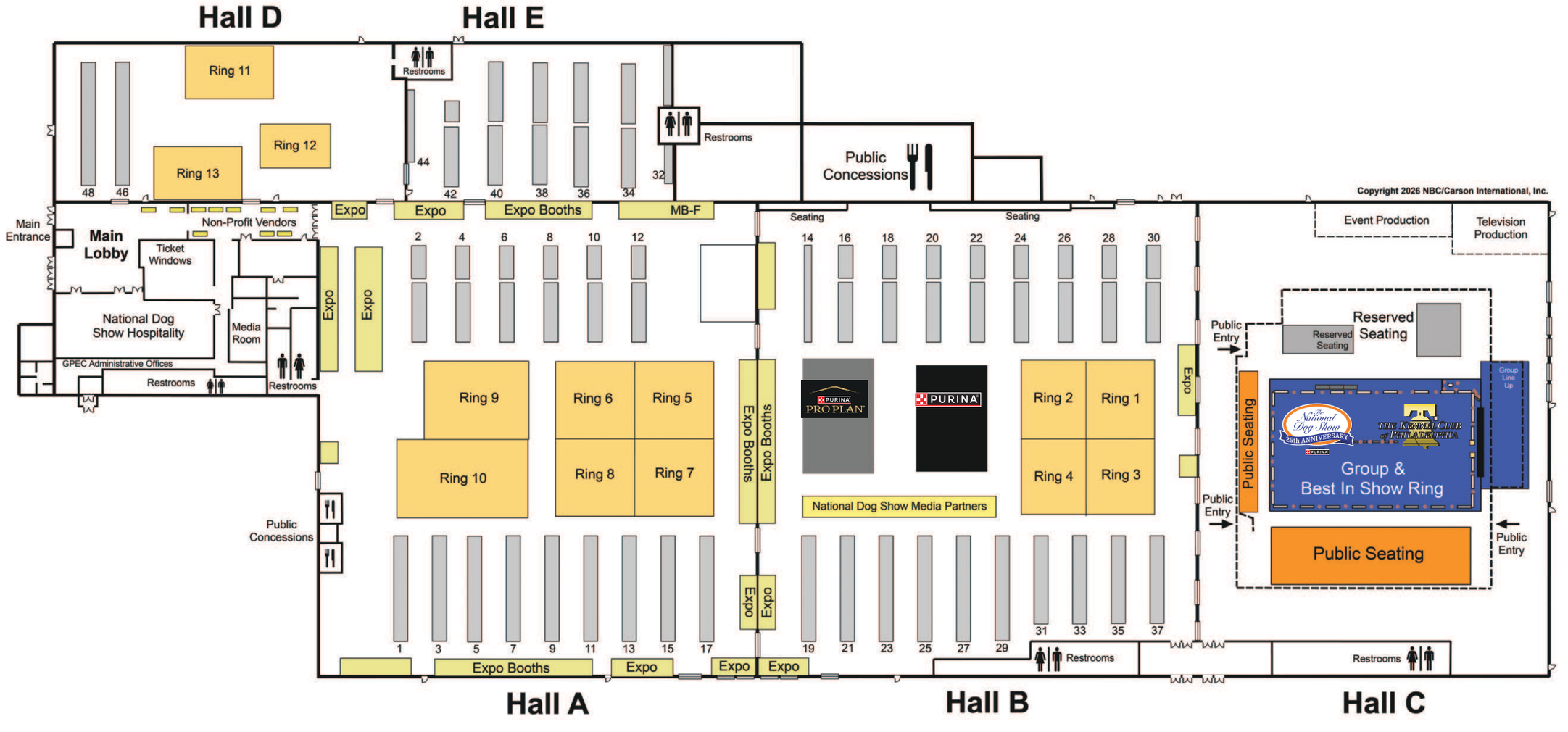
Happy Thanksgiving!
Wayne Ferguson,
President, Kennel Club of Philadelphia



GREATER PHILADELPHIA EXPO CENTER MAP

The National Dog Show 25th ANNIVERSARY
PRESENTED BY PURINA

HOSTED BY
THE KENNEL CLUB of PHILADELPHIA



visit www.NationalDogShow.com

Program ©2026 NBC and Carson International, Inc.
Photography: Simon Bruty, See Spot Run Photography-Steve Donahue, Maggie Fan Photography, Steve Surfman.

NBC Watch The National Dog Show Presented by Purina® Thanksgiving Day at Noon, November 26, on NBC.



The National Dog Show 25th ANNIVERSARY

PRESENTED BY PURINA®

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2026

8:00 AM	Breed Judging Begins	(Halls A, B, & D)
9:00 AM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
10:00 AM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
11:00 AM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
11:30 AM	Purina Pro Plan Incredible Dog Challenge Agility Show	(Hall C)
12:40 PM	National Anthem Ceremony	(Hall C)
1:00 PM	The National Dog Show Group Judging	(Hall C)
6:00 PM	The National Dog Show Best In Show Judging	(Hall C)

**Please be advised that Best In Show often starts later than 6:00 PM*

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2026

8:00 AM	Breed Judging Begins	(Halls A, B, & D)
9:30 AM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
10:30 AM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
11:30 AM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
12:30 PM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
1:30 PM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
1:45 PM	Kennel Club of Philadelphia Group Judging	(Hall C)
5:00 PM	Kennel Club of Philadelphia Best In Show Judging	(Hall C)

Visit the National Dog Show Social Media Booth in Hall B.



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INCREDIBLE DOG PERFORMANCES

Watch Incredible Canine Athletes and their handlers perform their skills throughout the weekend in Hall B, next to the Purina Booth.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2026

9:00 AM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
10:00 AM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
11:00 AM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)
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1:30 PM	Purina Incredible Dog Team	(Hall B)

Go to incredibledogchallenge.com and carsonevents.com to learn more about the upcoming Incredible Dog Challenge events in 2027!



VISIT THE BENCHING AREA!

Check out the benching area where show dogs and dog handlers prepare for their big moment!

Please be sure to ask the dog handler/owner before you pet their dog.

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HOW TO WATCH THE NATIONAL DOG SHOW

in person and on television as if you have been doing so for all of its 25 years.

By DAVID FREI - Co-host of NBC's National Dog Show

Wow! Where am I?

- Welcome to an all-breed dog show, The National Dog Show Presented by Purina® and hosted by the Kennel Club of Philadelphia.
- The Kennel Club of Philadelphia is one of 5,000 member clubs of the American Kennel Club.

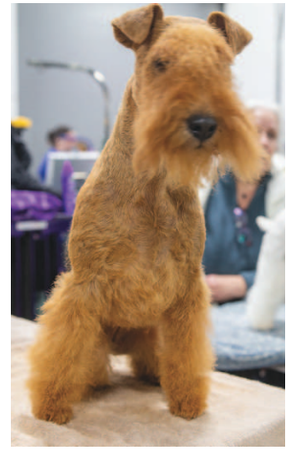
What am I looking at?

- Imagine your daily dog walk, multiplied by - in the words of Buzz Lightyear - "To infinity and beyond."
- There may be some 2,000 dogs of more than 200 breeds and varieties competing here today. You'll never see that on your daily walk with your dog.



Where do I start?

- It's just fine to walk around, to look and point and smile.
- Start in the benching area, where the dogs are assembled, basically sorted by their breed.
- Find your favorite breed, maybe it's the breed of your dog at home. Or find something new and different.
- The dogs may be sitting on their crates or grooming tables, just looking at everything that is going on, or they may be getting groomed for their competition.



I have so many questions.

- Ask away! Right there with the dogs you will find their handler or breeder or owner (that could be one person).
- Talk to them, ask them about their breed; it may be a breed that originated in a country far away from Philadelphia.
- These are all fair questions to ask: "What's the deal on that hair?" "What does he weigh?"

"What was she bred to do?" "What country do they come from?" "What is their personality?" "Are they good with kids?" "Will they fit my lifestyle?" "What's their name?" "May I pet them?"

I want to know more!

- Ask about care and responsible ownership; these are people who have devoted their lives to their dogs.
- And by all means, ask about the great sport of showing dogs.

Can I touch?

- Yes, with permission! But first ask their people. Then they may be giving their canines their final touch-ups before heading into the ring.
- Name a sport where you can hug the competitors on their playing field. Have you ever hugged Bryce Harper (Phillies) or Jalen Hurts (Eagles) or Joel Embiid (76ers) at a ball game?



What is going on in the ring?

- The conformation competition is like an advancing bracket in sports—think March Madness. The dogs compete at three levels. When they win, they advance to the next level.
- They start at the Breed level against other dogs of the same breed (remember, there might be over 200 different breeds in competition). The breed judge selects the one that, in his/her mind, most closely matches that ideal dog as Best of Breed or Best of Variety. That dog advances to the next level which is . . .
- . . . its Group. Those 217 breeds and varieties are divided into seven Groups—Sporting, Hound, Working, Terrier, Toy, Non-Sporting and Herding. Now, a different judge in each group selects a winners and those group winners advance into the final competition . . .
- . . . Best in Show. Those seven group winners come together and yet another judge selects one of them as the ultimate winner for the day, Best in Show. Another dog is selected as Reserve Best in Show (first runner-up).

What else is going on?

- In addition to all the dogs in the conformation rings, there are a lot of dogs running around!
- The dogs that you see running, jumping, negotiating obstacles and weave poles are competing in agility, the AKC's hugely popular and competitive activity. In fact, it is so popular that the National Dog Show's "sister", the "Incredible Dog Challenge", has become a hit sporting event seen on NBC's Peacock Network.
- Watch Junior Showmanship, competition for youngsters ages 8–18, where they are judged on their talents in presenting the dogs.

I have run out of time, I didn't get to see everything!

Watch us on NBC on Thanksgiving Day, noon-2pm in all time zones: The National Dog Show Presented by Purina® and Hosted by The Kennel Club of Philadelphia. The show repeats on NBC Saturday night and often on the Peacock Network, as do many of our previous shows through the years.



VISIT THE MYRIAD BOOTHS

especially the Purina booth, to learn about pet nutrition and the AKC booth to learn about all the great things the AKC does for all dogs.

And of course, there are lots of vendors and food!

NBC | peacock

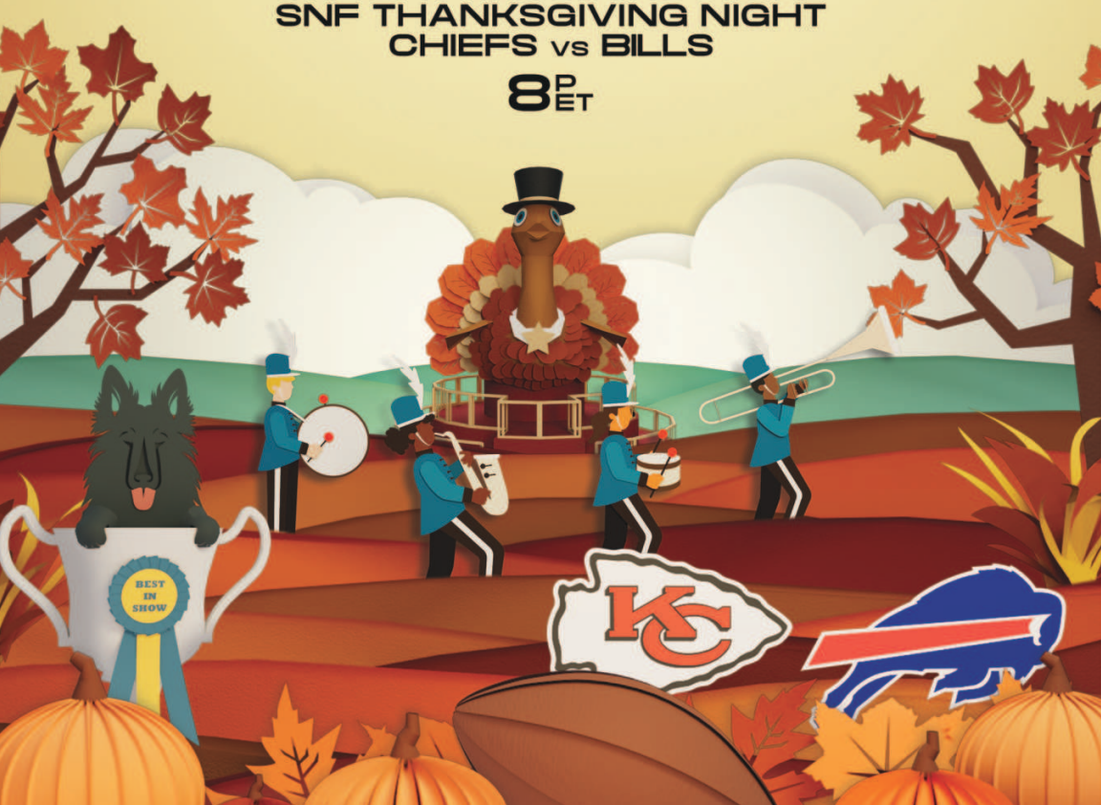
THANKSGIVING DAY

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26

100TH ANNUAL
MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE
8:30A ET

NATIONAL DOG SHOW
12P ET

SNF THANKSGIVING NIGHT
CHIEFS vs BILLS
8P ET



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THREE NEW BREEDS

The National Dog Show welcomes three first-time competitors in 2026

Basset Fauve de Bretagne	**Russian Tsvetnaya Bolonka**	**Teddy Roosevelt Terrier**
(bah-SAY FOHV duh Bruh-TAWN-ya)	(RUSSIAN svet-NYE-ya BO-LONK-A	Terrier Group
Hound Group	Toy Group	



Basset Fauve de Bretagne - Hound Group



The Basset Fauve de Bretagne, also known as the "Fawn Colored Brittany Basset," is a small, stocky, rough-coated, hardy dog that is energetic and fast for its size. Smart, courageous and determined, the Basset Fauve de Bretagne is a serious hunter, easily adaptable to different types of game and terrain. It is also an excellent companion dog, cheerful, intelligent and eager to please. This breed is just as happy romping in the field as it is curled up next to the family on the sofa.

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DOOZIE'S DOGHOUSE
FROM THE WORLD OF GABBY'S DOLLHOUSE
ONLY ON
NETFLIX | NOW PLAYING
DreamWorks Doozie's Doghouse © 2026 DreamWorks Animation LLC. All rights reserved.

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Russian Tsvetnaya Bolonka - Toy Group



The Russian Tsvetnaya Bolonka, or Bolonka for short, is a member of the Bichon family. Bolonki were originally bred to be the ultimate house pet for apartment living. Sweet, loving and eager to please, the Bolonka is a small companion dog that is friendly, clever and intensely loyal to its family.

The Bolonka is fairly independent for a toy breed and requires early socialization with people. It does well in formal training such as obedience, rally, tracking and agility when trained with a firm but gentle hand.

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10
COVERAGE YOU COUNT ON

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Teddy Roosevelt Terrier - Terrier Group



In 1999 the "Type B" Rat Terrier became known as the Teddy Roosevelt Terrier in honor of the 26th President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt. The Teddy Roosevelt Terrier is a lively, friendly and affectionate dog with its family but can be somewhat of a one-person dog.

While the breed will keep the family farm and home free of rats and mice, the job for which it was bred, it also excels in companion sports such as agility and obedience. Teddies get along with other dogs and have a strong protective nature. Teddies can adapt to nearly any lifestyle, whether you show in conformation rings, work in agility trials, or just want a great companion for your home or farm.

Breed description information sourced from AKC.org



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ABOUT JUDGING

The judges examine the dogs and place them according to how closely each dog compares with the judge's mental image of the perfect dog as described in the breed's official standard. The main consideration is the dog's conformation or overall appearance, temperament, structure and movement.

Best of Breed
In order to win Best In Show a dog must first be judged the best of dogs of its same breed competing in the show. Some breeds have more than 100 dogs entered. The winner of the breed moves on to the Group judging.

First in Group
Each of the 217 AKC recognized registered breeds and varieties are assigned to one of seven groups (Sporting, Hound, Working, Terrier, Toy, Non-Sporting, and Herding) representing characteristics and functions for which the breeds were originally bred. By winning the Group competition, that dog joins an elite group of winners of the seven group competitions that go on to compete for the ultimate Best In Show award, the coveted gold and blue rosette, and to become winner of The National Dog Show.

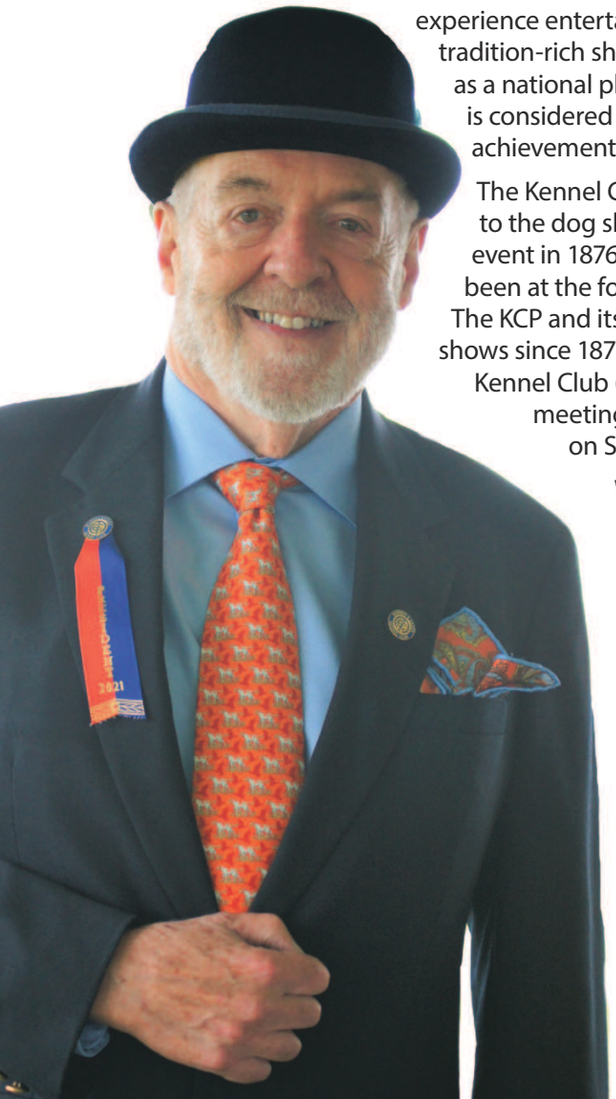
Earning Points
A dog will begin its show career by competing to become a "Champion." To earn an AKC Championship title (and to be able to place Ch. in front of its name) the dog needs to win 15 points at AKC shows. Points are earned by defeating other dogs of the same sex and breed in classes held specifically for non-champions. Points used to determine national rankings are recorded by the AKC and based on the number of dogs defeated. A dog gets one all-breed point for each dog defeated at a dog show. The top dogs in the country easily have more than 50,000 points in a given year.

The judges are looking for characteristics that allow the dog to perform the function for which his or her breed was developed.

'LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

WAYNE FERGUSON, today's show announcer, is President of the Kennel Club of Philadelphia. Wayne has been immersed in the dog world for over 50 years and has bred and shown top Saint Bernards. Through the years he has served as President of the AKC Canine Health Foundation and Director of the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine and is President and Show Chairman of the time honored Morris & Essex Kennel Club.

Welcome to the 25th annual edition of The National Dog Show Presented by Purina® hosted by The Kennel Club of Philadelphia.



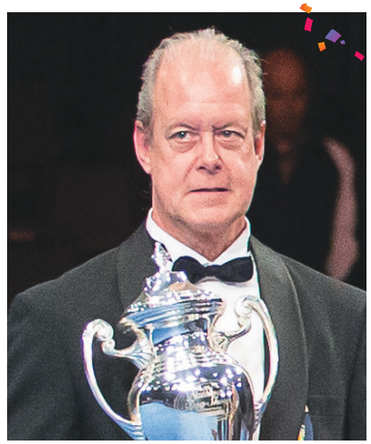
We continue to build upon our efforts to make our show experience entertaining and educational for all. Our tradition-rich shows are a regional treasure as well as a national phenomenon and a win at Philadelphia is considered one of Dogdom's greatest achievements.

The Kennel Club of Philadelphia is no newcomer to the dog show world. Since hosting a major dog event in 1876 at the Centennial Exposition, we've been at the forefront of the purebred dog world. The KCP and its predecessors have been presenting shows since 1879. Our club predates the American Kennel Club (AKC), which was organized at a meeting of the then Philadelphia Dog Club on September 17th 1884.

We are not only one of America's oldest continuing sporting events but our annual National Dog Show TV special is the most widely watched canine event in the world, capturing 20 million plus viewers a year with its broadcast on NBC at noon on Thanksgiving Day and an NBC prime time encore presentation the following Saturday.

We hope you enjoy your visit to our shows and return many years to come.

Sincerely,
Wayne Ferguson, President



FRANK DEPAULO – Show Chairman

Frank is a long time KCP member and has been Show Chairman since the 2014 KCP shows. As such, he acts as overall coordinator of the various aspects of the physical staging of the dog shows, including venue and judging ring setup arrangements, the competition schedule and the smooth running of the judging process. Frank is a lifelong dog lover who founded Tahari Kennels in 1979. Since that time, he has bred many Best In Show champions in the Ridgeback, Pointer and Whippet breeds that have carried the Tahari prefix. Frank continues to show and campaign dogs and is an AKC licensed judge. In addition to his role with the KCP, he is a lifetime member of the Lehigh Valley Kennel Club and a long time member of both the Rhodesian Ridgeback Club of The United States and The American Pointer Club in which he has held various positions, including Show Chairman, Board of Directors, Vice President and President. Frank lives in Pennsylvania with his wife Judy and his two daughters.

THE KENNEL CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA

WHO'S WHO

OFFICERS
Wayne Ferguson – President
Stanley Broadbent –
Vice President and Permanent Ring Steward
Sally Fineburg – Secretary
Milan D. Lint – Treasurer and Judges Committee

BOARD of DIRECTORS
William Burland
Frank D Paulo – Show Chair
David Frei – Publicity Chair
Peter Green – Judges Committee
Michael Halstead – Marketing Chair
Steven Sansone – Vendor Chair
Alan Welsh – AKC Delegate

MEMBERS
Doug Berlin – Show Committee
Connie Butherus – Hospitality
Carol Commerford Welsh – Trophy Chair
Julie Cramer - Hospitality
Judy DePaulo – Show Committee
Olivia DePaulo – Show Committee
Sally Fineburg – Show Committee
Lauren Gerloff – Hospitality
Robert McLaughlin – Show Committee
Sooz McLaughlin - Hospitality
Mari-Beth O'Neill – Scholarship Chair
Cynthia Sansone – Hospitality
Beth Sweigart – Hospitality
Corey Krickeberg – Show Committee
Sarah Krickeberg – Show Committee
Kelly Shupp – Hospitality
Ed Shupp – Vendor Committee

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS
Lisa Burland
Sally Halstead
Peggy Helming
Debbie Scott
Eric Tweer
Ann Vicklund

The Kennel Club of Philadelphia's National Dog Shows are sanctioned by the AKC, the principal registry for purebred dogs in the United States and the largest registry in the world. The AKC's Canine Health Foundation is the world's largest funder of exclusively canine research, with a mission to develop significant resources for basic and applied health programs with emphasis on canine genetics to improve the quality of life for dogs and their owners. The AKC and its affiliate, AKC Companion Animal Recovery, have been crucial in providing long-term care to displaced animals.

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217 BREEDS AND VARIETIES IN 7 GROUPS

SPORTING
English Setter
Gordon Setter
Irish Setter
Irish Red and White Setter
Pointer
German Shorthaired Pointer
German Wirehaired Pointer
Wirehaired Pointing Griffon
Weimaraner
Vizsla
Wirehaired Vizsla
Brittany
Spinone Italiano
Bracco Italiano
Chesapeake Bay Retriever
Curly-Coated Retriever
Golden Retriever
Labrador Retriever
Flat-Coated Retriever
Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever
Nederlandse Kooikerhondje
Barbet
Irish Water Spaniel
American Water Spaniel
Boykin Spaniel
Field Spaniel
Welsh Springer Spaniel
English Springer Spaniel
Clumber Spaniel
Sussex Spaniel
Lagotto Romagnolo
English Cocker Spaniel
Cocker Spaniel (ASCOB)
Cocker Spaniel (Black)
Cocker Spaniel (Parti)

HOUND
Afghan Hound
Saluki
Azawakh
Sloughi
Ibizan Hound
Pharaoh Hound
Greyhound
Whippet
Borzoi
Scottish Deerhound
Irish Wolfhound
Rhodesian Ridgeback
American Foxhound
English Foxhound
Harrier
Beagle (15)
Beagle (13)
American English Coonhound
Black and Tan Coonhound
Bluetick Coonhound
Redbone Coonhound
Treeing Walker Coonhound
Plott
Bloodhound
Otterhound
Norwegian Elkhound
Cirneco dell'Etna
Basset Hound
Basset Fauve de Bretagne
Grand Basset Griffon Vendeen
Petit Basset Griffon Vendeen
Basenji
Portuguese Podengo Pequeno
Dachshund (Smooth)
Dachshund (Longhaired)
Dachshund (Wirehaired)

WORKING
Great Dane
Cane Corso
Dogo Argentino
Giant Schnauzer
Standard Schnauzer
Doberman Pinscher
German Pinscher
Rottweiler
Boxer
Akita
Black Russian Terrier
Chinook
Alaskan Malamute
Siberian Husky
Samoyed
Bernese Mountain Dog
Greater Swiss Mountain Dog
Saint Bernard
Newfoundland
Leonberger
Portuguese Water Dog
Anatolian Shepherd Dog
Great Pyrenees
Kuvasz
Komondor
Bullmastiff
Boerboel
Dogue de Bordeaux
Mastiff
Tibetan Mastiff
Neapolitan Mastiff
Danish-Swedish Farmdog

TERRIER
Airedale Terrier
Irish Terrier
American Staffordshire Terrier
White Bull Terrier
Colored Bull Terrier
Staffordshire Bull Terrier
Miniature Bull Terrier
Kerry Blue Terrier
Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier
Welsh Terrier
Lakeland Terrier
Wire Fox Terrier
Smooth Fox Terrier
Parson Russell Terrier
Russell Terrier
Border Terrier
Bedlington Terrier
Manchester Terrier (Std)
Rat Terrier
American Hairless Terrier
Teddy Roosevelt Terrier
Miniature Schnauzer
Australian Terrier
Cairn Terrier
Scottish Terrier
Sealyham Terrier
Cesky Terrier
West Highland White Terrier
Skye Terrier
Dandie Dinmont Terrier
Glen of Imaal Terrier
Norfolk Terrier
Norwich Terrier

TOY
Cavalier King Charles Spaniel
Pug
Chinese Crested
English Toy Spaniel (B&PC)
English Toy Spaniel (KC&R)
Havanese
Italian Greyhound
Toy Manchester Terrier
Miniature Pinscher
Papillon
Affenpinscher
Brussels Griffon
Shih Tzu
Pomeranian
Toy Poodle
Maltese
Silky Terrier
Yorkshire Terrier
Biewer Terrier
Russian Tsvetnaya Bolonka
Russian Toy
Toy Fox Terrier
Japanese Chin
Smooth Coat Chihuahua
Long Coat Chihuahua
Pekingese

NON-SPORTING
Standard Poodle
Dalmatian
Xoloitzcuintli
Finnish Spitz
Keeshond
Chinese Shar-Pei
American Eskimo Dog
Tibetan Terrier
Tibetan Spaniel
Lhasa Apso
Lowchen
Shiba Inu
Schipperke
Poodle (Miniature)
Bichon Frise
Coton de Tulear
Boston Terrier
French Bulldog
Norwegian Lundehund
Chow Chow
Bulldog

HERDING
German Shepherd Dog
Australian Shepherd
Bouvier des Flandres
Beauceron
Belgian Laekenois
Belgian Malinois
Belgian Sheepdog
Belgian Tervuren
Briard
Berger Picard
Border Collie
Collie (Rough)
Collie (Smooth)
Shetland Sheepdog
Miniature American Shepherd
Bearded Collie
Canaan Dog
Australian Cattle Dog
Bergamasco Sheepdog
Old English Sheepdog
Polish Lowland Sheepdog
Entlebucher Mountain Dog
Norwegian Buhund
Finnish Lapphund
Icelandic Sheepdog
Spanish Water Dog
Pyrenean Shepherd
Puli
Pumi
Mudi
Cardigan Welsh Corgi
Pembroke Welsh Corgi
Swedish Vallhund
Lancashire Heeler

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Each of the 217 registered breeds and varieties are assigned to one of the seven groups generally representing characteristics and functions for which the breeds were originally bred.

THE SEVEN GROUPS

SPORTING GROUP

The invention of the gun led to the development of the sporting, or gun dogs, to aid in hunting upland game birds and waterfowl, performing at the direction of the hunter. While a number of these breeds perform more than one task, it is generally the duty of pointers and setters to point and mark game, for spaniels to flush game, and for retrievers to recover dead and wounded game.

HOUND GROUP

Originally classified as sporting dogs because of their function as hunters, breeds in the Hound Group vary greatly in size, shape and coat. Most of these breeds were developed to hunt somewhat independently of their humans, who usually followed on foot or on horseback as the hounds chased down the prey. This group informally consists of scent hounds, dogs that hunt by tracking a scent, and sight hounds, who spot their game and run it down.

WORKING GROUP

While the uses and appearances of the dogs in the Working Group vary, most are powerfully built and intelligent, performing various tasks for their handlers. These dogs are working farm and draft animals. They guard homes and livestock, serve heroically as police and military dogs, security dogs, guide and service dogs, and hunters.

TERRIER GROUP

Almost all of the terriers evolved in the British Isles. The geography of the specific area (water, rocky terrain and more) helped to determine the exact duties of each breed but it usually involved hunting vermin and varmints ranging from rats to badgers to otters and more. These are dogs of great determination, courage and self-confidence, with a strong willingness to go to ground in search of their quarry.

TOY GROUP

Toy dogs have been around for centuries, and are bred for one purpose: to be companions for their humans. Many have been bred down from and still resemble their larger cousins. Their small size and portability make them ideal for city dwellers and those with limited space.

NON-SPORTING GROUP

The AKC originally registered dogs as either Sporting or Non-Sporting. Eventually, hounds and terriers were split from the Sporting Group and the Toys and Working dogs were split off from Non-Sporting, with the Herding Group eventually splitting from Working. Today, the Non-Sporting Group is literally every breed that is left, resulting in a wide variety of sizes, shapes, coat, function and history.

HERDING GROUP

Herding is a natural instinct in dogs that is seen in the wild. Humans have used that instinct to their advantage on farms and ranches with herding dogs who have the sole purpose of gathering and moving livestock from one place to another.

The seven Best In Group winners compete for Best In Show!



Hosted by

THE KENNEL CLUB of PHILADELPHIA

The National Dog Show 25th ANNIVERSARY PRESENTED BY PURINA

NBC

Broadcast at Noon Thanksgiving Day
November 26

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2025 BEST IN SHOW WINNER



GCHS Prairiewind's Sxongs of Summer at La Neige, a.k.a. Soleil

Soleil the Belgian Sheepdog won Best in Show before a capacity crowd and some 20 million holiday television viewers. Co-owned by Connie Jasinski of Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina, Pat Snow of Sapulpa, Oklahoma and Nancy Maye of Towanda, Kansas, Soleil represents the very best in the Belgian Sheepdog breed. As the #1-ranked Herding Group dog in America, Soleil's victory came over a top-rated lineup including a Miniature Schnauzer, Shih Tzu and Bichon Frise with stronger on-paper credentials.

Soleil has competed in well over 100 shows with her handler, Daniel Martin, claiming her seventh Best in Show title at the National Dog Show, a record for her breed. Soleil's registered name is GCHS Prairiewind's Sxongs of Summer at La Neige.

"That dog was 'on.' Didn't put its foot down wrong. Didn't miss a beat," offered Best in Show Judge Charlie Olvis, who made the call, delighting the crowd at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks. Olvis continued, "And it is in drop-dead gorgeous condition. I mean, gorgeous condition."

Martin, who brought Soleil to Philadelphia from their home in Princeton, North Carolina, stated, "I knew that this would be a fierce, intense competition. Soleil loves the energy and she feels it. That's her magic. She'll do whatever we ask of her. She's a winner."

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BEST IN SHOW WINNERS

Who is your favorite to win Best In Show this year!



2025



2024



2023



2022



2020 and **2021**



2019



2018



2017



2016



2015



2014

2025 - Belgian Sheepdog - GCHS Prairiewind's Sxongs of Summer at La Neige, a.k.a. Soleil

2024 - Pug - CHGC CH Andi In CAHOOTS a.k.a. Vito

2023 - Sealyham Terrier - GCHP CH Goodspice Efbe Money Stache a.k.a. Stache

2022 - French Bulldog - GCHP Fox Canyon's I Won The War at Goldshield (a.k.a Winston)

2021 - Scottish Deerhound - GCH Foxcliffe Claire Randall Fraser (a.k.a Claire)

2020 - Scottish Deerhound - GCH Foxcliffe Claire Randall Fraser (a.k.a Claire)

2019 - Bulldog - GCHG Diamond Gold Majesu Pisko Bulls (a.k.a. Thor)

2018 - Whippet - GCHP Pinnacle Tennessee Whiskey (a.k.a. Whiskey)

2017 - Brussels Griffon - Ch. Somerset Wynzall Hashtag (a.k.a. Newton)

2016 - Greyhound - GCH GrandCru Giaconda CGC (a.k.a. Gia)

2015 - Skye Terrier - GCH CH Cragsmoor Good Time Charlie (a.k.a. Charlie)

2014 - Bloodhound - GCH Flessner's International S'cess, MT (a.k.a. Nathan)



2013



2012



2011



2010



2009



2008



2007



2006



2005



2004



2003



2002

2013 - American Foxhound - GCH Kiarry's Pandora's Box (a.k.a. Jewel)

2012 - Wire Fox Terrier - GCH Afterall Painting the Sky (a.k.a. Sky)

2011- Wire Fox Terrier - Ch. Steele Your Heart (a.k.a. Eira)

2010 - Irish Setter - GCH Windntide Mr. Sandman (a.k.a. Clooney)

2009 - Scottish Terrier - Ch. Roundtown Mercedes of Maryscot (a.k.a. Sadie)

2008 - Pointer - Ch. Cookieland Seasyde Hollyberry (a.k.a Holly)

2007 - Australian Shepherd - Ch. Buff Cap Creslane Arctic Mist (a.k.a. Swizzle)

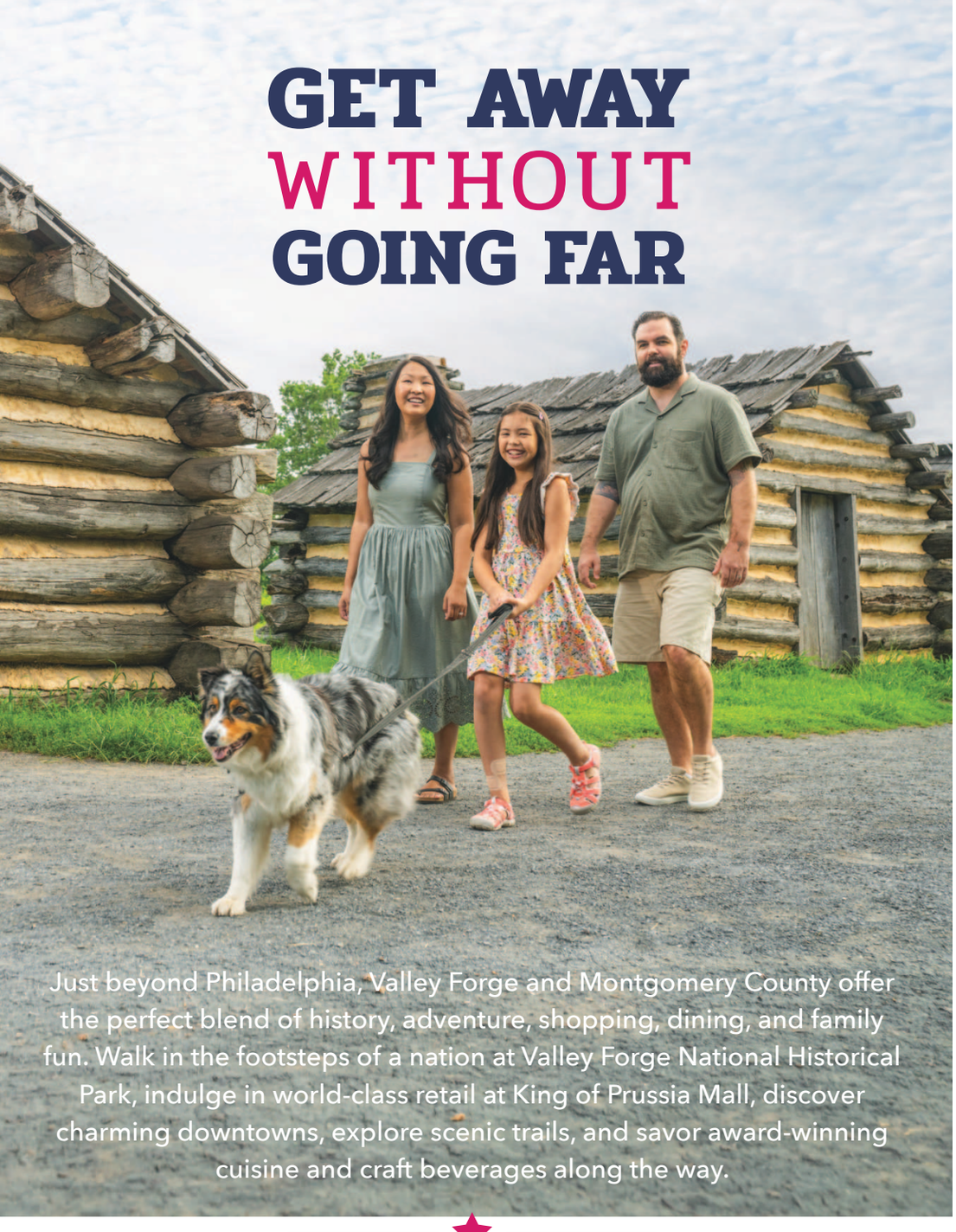
2006 - Toy Poodle - Ch. Smash JP Win A Victory (a.k.a. Vikki)

2005 - Colored Bull Terrier - Ch. Rocky Top's Sundance Kid (a.k.a. Rufus)

2004 - Smooth Fox Terrier - Ch. Aimhi Avalon Renaissance (a.k.a. Gracie)

2003 - Doberman Pinscher - Ch. Blue Chip Purple Reign (a.k.a. Raisin)

2002 - Standard Poodle - Ch. Ale Kai Mikimoto on Fifth (a.k.a. Miki)



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The National Dog Show
25th ANNIVERSARY
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2025 GROUP WINNERS


Sporting - English Setter


Hound - American Foxhound


Working - Giant Schnauzer


Terrier - Miniature Schnauzer


Toy - Shih Tzu


Non Sporting - Bichon Frise


Herding - Belgian Sheepdog

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The National Dog Show Presented By Purina®

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The National Dog Show 25th ANNIVERSARY PRESENTED BY PURINA



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF BEAUTIFUL DOGS!

A Thanksgiving Tradition

The National Dog Show 25th ANNIVERSARY

PRESENTED BY PURINA

THE TALENT

JOHN O'HURLEY

The longtime host of The National Dog Show Presented by Purina® has warmed the hearts of millions over two decades.

Spokesperson and ambassador for the Puppy Food Bank, a non-profit providing food to pet rescue shelters across America

Serves as founding spokesperson for the National Service Dogs Monument alongside longtime broadcast partner, David Frei.

Best known as "J. Peterman" on *Seinfeld*, earning a Screen Actors Guild Award

Stars in one-man show, *A Man with Standards*, a humorous take on his life and experiences in show business, that's been touring since 2017.

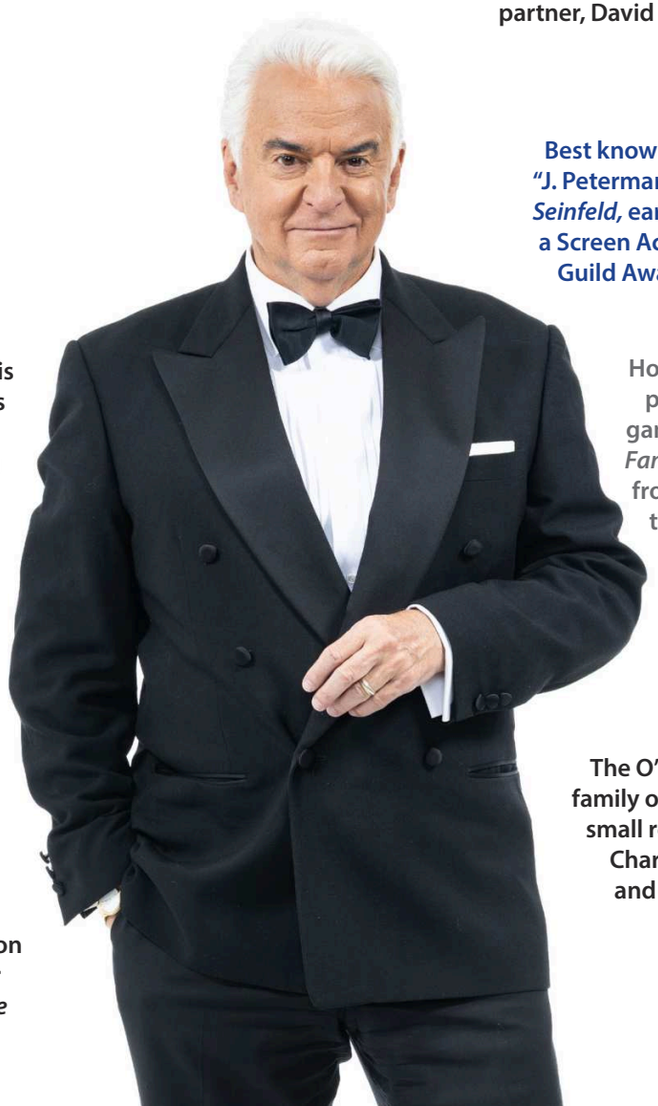
Hosted the popular game show *Family Feud* from 2006 til 2010

Dubbed *People* magazine's "Sexiest Men Alive" in 2005

Starred as Billy Flynn in Broadway's *Chicago* for many years

The O'Hurley family owns two small rescues, Charlotte and Mia.

Ultimate champion of the first-ever *Dancing with the Stars* in 2005



DAVID FREI

A prime mover on all things National Dog Show, his expertise and personality have helped establish the property as a major force for over 25 years.

Author of two award-winning books, *Angel by My Side* and *Angel on a Leash: Therapy Dogs and the Lives They Touch.*

Co-founder of the annual National Dog Show Therapy Dog Symposium at Rowan University, now in its eighth year.

As one of the world's leading advocates for the therapy dog movement, he brings True Dat for visits with David's fellow veterans at the VA Medical Center and pediatric patients at the Ronald McDonald House in Seattle.

Founder and President Emeritus of the therapy dog charity *Angel On A Leash.*

Breeder-owner-handler and judge of purebred dogs for more than 40 years working with Afghan Hounds, Brittanys and Cavalier King Charles Spaniels.

Dog Fancy magazine's final issue in 2015 included him in a retrospective "45 People Who Changed the Dog World."

Called by *New York* magazine "probably the most well-known human in the world of canines."

Owner of a Cavalier, True Dat, a certified therapy dog and trained service dog.



Inducted into the prestigious Dog Writers Association of America's Hall of Fame in 2018. Won the Purina "Better with Pets" Award in 2015 and the Purple Poppy Person of the Year Award in 2024.

MARY CARILLO

With her likability, credibility and sense of humor, she has become an indispensable part of NBC's Thanksgiving Day two-hour special.

Inducted into the Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame in 2018.

First female recipient of the Dick Schaap Award for Outstanding Journalism.

Forged a distinguished career in broadcast journalism, including a prominent role on HBO's Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel earning three Peabody Awards and six Emmy Awards.



Co-hosted the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show alongside David Frei in 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2016.

Co-authored two books: *Tennis My Way* with Martina Navratilova and Tennis Kinetics with Rick Elstein.

Grand Slam Champion, winning the 1977 French Open Mixed Doubles title with her childhood friend, John McEnroe.

BRITNEY EURTON

A familiar face across the worlds of sports and animal broadcasting, Britney Eurton brings a passion for competition and storytelling to NBC Sports and The National Dog Show Presented by Purina®.

A familiar presence on NBC's horse racing coverage, bringing her expertise, enthusiasm and knowledge of the sport to audiences nationwide.

Covers a wide range of major sporting events, including the Olympic Games, football, tennis and Thoroughbred races, including the Kentucky Derby and Breeders' Cup.

She is a Sports Emmy Award winner for Outstanding Live Special, recognized for her work in live sports broadcasting at the 2024 Paris Olympics Championship Event.



Initially pursuing a career in acting, she pivoted to broadcasting Thoroughbred racing -a sport she grew up with—while maintaining the art of storytelling.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, California, and a graduate of the University of Southern California.

Began her broadcasting career in 2014 with TVG Network, where she continues to serve as a paddock host and reporter, covering Thoroughbred racing.

Daughter of Peter Eurton, a former jockey and accomplished Thoroughbred racehorse trainer, giving Britney a lifelong connection to the world of horse racing.

NBC

Watch The National Dog Show Presented by Purina®
Thanksgiving Day at Noon, November 26, on NBC.

THE
KATHY
Romano
SHOW



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ON PHILLY'S OFFICIAL CHRISTMAS STATION

B101



Photo: courtesy International Tennis Hall of Fame

The National Dog Show
25th ANNIVERSARY
PRESENTED BY PURINA

THE NATIONAL DOG SHOW CONGRATULATES MARY CARILLO – OUR OWN HALL OF FAMER

As 2026 moves to a close, NBC's Mary Carillo is wrapping up a spectacular year.

In February, she was selected by NBC to co-host the Olympic Games Opening Ceremonies from Italy in Savannah Guthrie's unfortunate absence. It was her 17th Olympics Games anchoring, hosting, and reporting on multiple sports for NBC and CBS to an audience of hundreds of millions of viewers.

In August, she was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in the "Contributor" category, recognized for her lifelong dedication to the sport as a TV reporter, host, analyst and interviewer. The honor was an extension of her athletic career, which included the 1977 French Open Mixed Doubles Championship alongside her childhood friend, John McEnroe.

And now, she will be returning to one of her favorite events, as the sideline and feature reporter at the 25th Anniversary National Dog Show Presented by Purina®. At the culmination of the two-hour special, Carillo will interview the winning dog and handler for NBC's audience of over 20 million viewers.



The National Dog Show
25th ANNIVERSARY
PRESENTED BY PURINA

THE NATIONAL DOG SHOW CELEBRATES 25 YEARS AS A THANKSGIVING TRADITION

By DeDe Palmer

For 25 years, The National Dog Show Presented by Purina® has brought the excitement, beauty, and tradition of the sport of dogs into millions of American homes. Broadcast on NBC following the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, it has become as much a part of Thanksgiving as turkey, football, and the parade itself.

Each year, millions of viewers watch some of the country's finest dogs compete for Best in Show. For many, it is their first meaningful introduction to purebred dogs. They encounter more than 200 breeds and varieties, learn about the purposes for which they were developed, and gain an appreciation for the dedication of breeders, owners, and handlers.

The tradition began long before television was even a thing. The Kennel Club of Philadelphia has been presenting dog shows since 1879. In 2002, the event was introduced to a national television audience as The National Dog Show Presented by Purina®.

"It has been a pleasure of the Kennel Club of Philadelphia to introduce the wonderful world of dog shows to millions of Americans each year," says club president Wayne Ferguson. "In fact, over a quarter of a billion viewers have tuned in to watch this Thanksgiving tradition."

David Frei, the show's longtime co-host and expert analyst, emphasizes that the broadcast is about more than determining a winner.

"We work hard to show the world what a great family sport this is, and how we love doing something with the dogs that we love and that love us right back," Frei says.

That family extends across generations. Professional handler Alexis Ditlow has shown dogs since she was five years old,

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following in the footsteps of her mother and grandmother. In 2024, she won the Sporting Group with Houston, a Clumber Spaniel.

While families gather across America to watch the show, Ditlow wants viewers to understand that handlers and breeders also form chosen families behind the scenes.



Alexis Ditlow in 2001

"The dog show world has provided me with a sense of community and taught me so many life skills," Ditlow says. "As a child, you gain a maturity being there for one another; it is very special to me."

Children and young adults watching from home may even be inspired to begin showing dogs themselves. "The National Dog Show offers a glimpse into our world," Ditlow adds.

After 25 years, the show remains a celebration of dogs, family, community, competition, and tradition. Longtime host John O'Hurley captures its enduring charm:

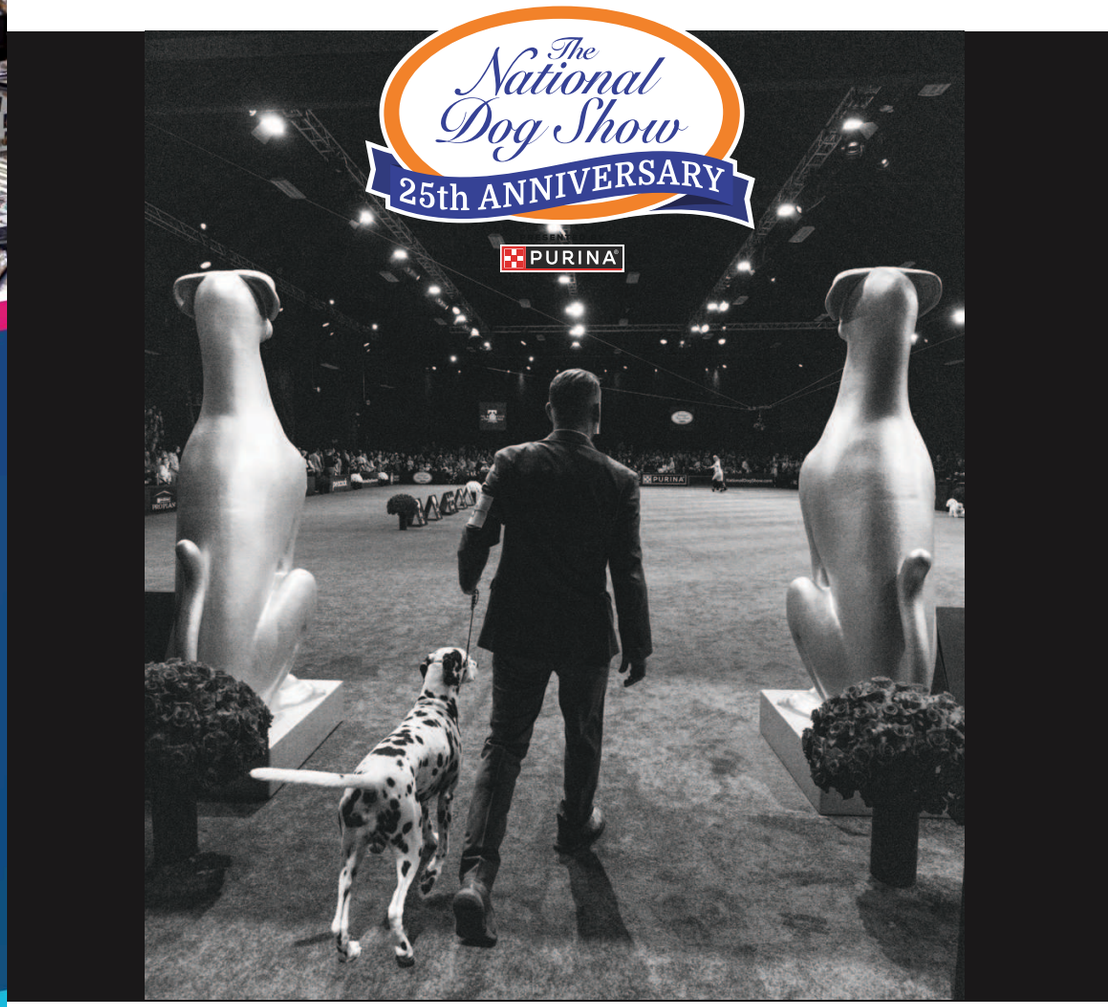
"For twenty-five years we have watched these dogs enter the ring proudly with confidence, dignity, and purpose. Yet how ironic that these same champions will return to the sofa at home and bark at a delivery truck as though defending the gates of Rome."

Whether you tune in on Thanksgiving Day or visit the show in Oaks, Pennsylvania, beforehand, the National Dog Show offers the perfect opportunity to meet the dogs—and the people who love them—up close.

"For twenty-five years we have watched these dogs enter the ring proudly with confidence, dignity, and purpose. Yet how ironic that these same champions will return to the sofa at home and bark at a delivery truck as though defending the gates of Rome."
~ John O'Hurley







THE ATHLETE AT THE OTHER END OF THE LEAD

By DeDe Palmer

To the public, showing a dog can look deceptively easy. A handler strides around a ring, pauses for the judge, and presents a perfectly trained and beautifully groomed dog. But those of us who do it know that handling demands strength, balance, coordination, stamina, quick reflexes, and mental resilience.

The best handlers make this work invisible. They move with precision, keep the dog in the judge's view, maintain distance from other exhibitors, and adjust instantly to whatever happens. (A lot can happen when you assemble dozens of dogs together.)

Depending on the breed, a handler may have to run—and run fast. The larger breeds, which can weigh 200 pounds and more, must be controlled without restricting their movement, while smaller dogs may be lifted repeatedly onto and



"What you don't see are the days between dog shows, when handlers are doing roadwork with the dogs or riding a bicycle alongside them. They have to be in condition all week long." ***~ David Frei***












off tables. Handlers bend, kneel, squat, rise, and change direction on slippery mats, uneven terrain, or wet grass. Long show days mean miles of walking.

The physical work begins before judging. Crates, grooming tables, fans, tack boxes, coolers, and supplies must be loaded, unloaded, carried, and set up. Dogs must be exercised, groomed, and cared for, often early in the morning and late at night.

And then there are the non-show days. David Frei (Co-host of NBC's National Dog Show) explains, "What you don't see are the days between dog shows, when handlers are doing roadwork with the dogs or riding a bicycle alongside them. They have to be in condition all week long."

Ernesto Lara, a professional handler specializing in Terriers, understands the toll of those long days. "I rely on the kindness of my chiropractor," he says.

Alexis Ditlow, a Pennsylvania-based professional handler, also seeks regular chiropractic care, along with massage, yoga, and stretching.

"This is an extremely physical job," Ditlow explains. "People think we just 'walk around the ring with a dog,' but they don't see the long hours, lugging crates, standing on hard floors, grooming—and the mental exertion!"

That mental stress is just as demanding. A handler must know the dog, understand the breed, read the judge, monitor ring traffic, and make split-second decisions, all while remaining calm and focused.

"Campaigning a dog is very stressful," Ditlow says. "I might want to be strategizing about a show two weeks from now, but I can't. I have to be present in order to do my job. We have to be athletes like our dogs."

North Carolina professional handler Daniel Martin also considers self-care part of caring for his dogs. After realizing that poor sleep, diet, and stress were affecting him, the handler of last year's Best in Show winner, a Belgian Sheepdog named Soleil, began eating better, walking, and swimming. He and his wife, Amanda, prepare meals to take in their RV while traveling and make time for brief mental breaks. "A good attitude translates to the dogs." As he explains, "It's a 365-day, 24-hour job."

The dog may be the one being judged, but there is unquestionably an athlete at the other end of the lead.

"The best handlers are invisible," Frei said. "They're not really invisible because they're doing their job out there every moment. But if you're looking at the dog more often than you're looking at the handler, that's what the handler is supposed to be doing."

~ David Frei (WRAL TV, Charlotte, NC)

The National Dog Show

25th ANNIVERSARY

PRESENTED BY PURINA

THE NEXT GENERATION

by David Frei

The next generation? Look at this picture: Frenchie puppies, Chessie puppies, and Siberian puppies are lining up for their future National Dog Show appearances.



This year's program cover salutes three breeds that have been critical performers in the National Dog Show: the Chesapeake Bay Retriever and the Siberian Husky consistently have had the highest number of entries over the show's amazing run.

And the French Bulldog has always had big numbers as well, a testimony to its current standing as themost registered breed in the American Kennel Club database, and closer to home, the most registered breed in Philadelphia.

In 2002, the first year of the National Dog Show, the AKC recognized 154 breeds as eligible for competition in conformation shows; in the ensuing 25 years, the AKC has added 63 breeds, so today there are 217 breeds and varieties competing.

The Next Generation is the third series in the Star Trek Franchise. The viewership of its final episode in 1994 drew over 30 million viewers, slightly ahead of the Nataional Dog Show's annual audience of some 25 million in the list of the highest rated television shows.

It is just a slice of the history of the Kennel Club of Philadelphia, the show's host, which presented its first dog show in 1879 and made it an annual event beginning in 1933.

In 2026, NBC's National Dog Show Presented by Purina is celebrating its 25th year sharing Thanksgiving Day with its 25 million viewers

And you know what else happened in 2002? "American Idol" made its television debut. Now, 25 years later, we're both still here, with no end in sight.



The National Dog Show
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TERRIERS

PREVIOUS WINNERS:

2004 GRACIE - SMOOTH FOX TERR

2005 RUFUS - COLORED BU

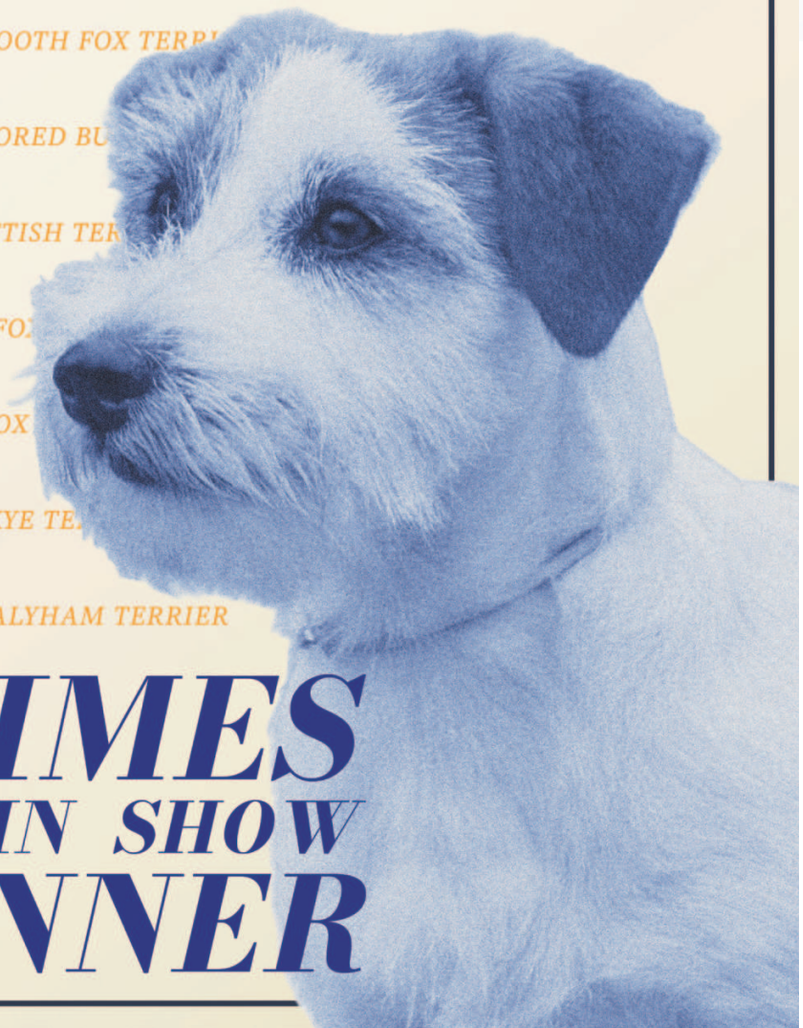
2009 SADIE - SCOTTISH TER

2011 EIRA - WIRE FO

2012 SKY - WIRE FOX

2015 CHARLIE - SKYE TE

2023 STACHE - SEALYHAM TERRIER



7 TIMES BEST IN SHOW WINNER



ABOUT THE COVER



Photographer Simon Bruty

This year's program cover was shot in New York City. It celebrates this year's 25th Anniversary of the National Dog Show Presented by Purina®! Twenty-five amazing years of beautiful dogs, and all the wonderful people that make the National Dog Show come to life every year on NBC, Thanksgiving Day at Noon!

Many thanks to the following for all their great work on this year's photo shoot:
Simon Bruty: Photography and production director
Mary Carillo, John O'Hurley, David Frei: NBC broadcast hosts
Steve Griffith: Public Relations. All the dog handlers and their beautiful dogs.



Three new breeds this year!
See pages 13, 15, and 17 for more information.

PAWS OF HONOR RECIPIENT OF THE NATIONAL DOG SHOW DONATION WITH VALLEY FORGE PARK ALLIANCE PROGRAM

By Allie Kochinsky

This past Veterans Day, history and healing converged at Penn State Great Valley in a powerful demonstration of gratitude. The Valley Forge Park Alliance (VFPA), the official philanthropic partner of Valley Forge National Historical Park, teamed up with Paws for Honor of Williamsburg, Virginia, for a special commemorative event dedicated to honoring both human and K9 veterans who have selflessly served our country.

The National Dog Show and the Kennel Club of Philadelphia sponsored the event as part of their marketing partnership with VFPA, recognizing the great work of both organizations and promoting the ensuing dog show weekend at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center. The National Dog Show has made a $5,000 donation to Paws of Honor. VFPA is annually the recipient of a donation from the Kennel Club of Philadelphia.

The program, highlighting the shared devotion to preserving legacy, honoring sacrifice, and protecting those who protected us, brought together community members, history enthusiasts, and dog lovers alike to celebrate an often-overlooked group of heroes: military and first responder working dogs.

These incredible animals protect lives without hesitation, strengthen national security, and keep our communities safe. Yet, their medical and physical sacrifices often continue long after their active service ends; that's where Paws of Honor's work begins. This remarkable nonprofit provides critical, life-saving medical support for retired military and law enforcement K9s. Many of these canine veterans suffer from severe service-related injuries and trauma, and Paws of Honor ensures they receive the dignity, specialized care, and comfort they deserve in their retirement.
www.pawsofhonor.org



The event featured two distinguished guest speakers who brought this vital mission to life.

Attendees heard from Timothy Fleming, a USMC Special Ops veteran and the Executive Director of Paws of Honor.

Fleming was joined by Ben Ridings, curator of the Emlen Physick Estate in Cape May and author of the compelling historical book *War Dogs in WWII*, who provided an illuminating historical perspective. Together, Fleming and Ridings painted a complete picture of the enduring, unbreakable bond between handler and hound across generations.

This collaboration is a natural extension of what the Valley Forge Park Alliance does every day. Just as Paws of Honor steps up to care for retired K9 heroes, VFPA works tirelessly to preserve, protect, and celebrate the sacred history and landscape of Valley Forge. VFPA's mission remains rooted in resilience, sacrifice, and the birth of the American spirit. Through educational programs, preservation projects, and community events, VFPA ensures that the stories of our past remain vibrant and accessible for generations to come.

The partnership with Paws of Honor and VFPA promotes the need for public support of both organizations. Donations to VFPA contribute to the preservation of Valley Forge National Historical Park and help foster meaningful community connections that honor heroes of all kinds, two-legged and four-legged alike.

The public is invited to join the VFPA's mission to inspire appreciation for and citizen stewardship of Valley Forge Park, where George Washington and the Continental Army encamped during the harsh winter of 1777-78, becoming a part of American history.
www.vfparkalliance.org



The National Dog Show 25th ANNIVERSARY

PRESENTED BY PURINA

THERAPY DOG SYMPOSIUM

The National Dog Show Therapy Dog Symposium is set for Friday, December 11, at Rowan University.

David Frei and Michele Pich, provide a look at the event and its progress.



David Frei (left), Michele Pich and 2025 Keynote Speaker Steve Dale. (Rowan University photo)

The keynote speaker this year at the National Dog Show Therapy Dog Symposium is Dr. Amy Binder, a Clinical Assistant Professor and Program Director at the University of North Florida who has more than 20 years of experience in animal-assisted services.

1. How unique is The National Dog Show Therapy Dog Symposium at Rowan University? Are there other conferences around the country that offer similar programming?

Michele: "It's pretty unique to have one symposium that is inclusive of so many different programs. Some individual programs have events that are only for their members, but ours is nationwide and worldwide. We have representation from dozens of organizations every time we do this. I think that's one of the things that makes it so special. It's really about coming together and sharing best practices."

David: "We hear about a few others that are trying to do their own version, and we don't think of them as competitors. Whatever we do, we want to get more dogs in more places. While we are proud of the way we do it, we are happy to see others doing it."

2. What are the prospects for growth of the symposium as you approach the 8th annual event?

David: "It's a growing activity, and we see more and more people involved with therapy dogs all the time. Through the National Dog Show on NBC, sponsored by Purina Pro Plan, we hear from a lot of people who tell us their dogs do therapy dog work when they're not in the ring. We're seeing more and more of that.

"When I first did dog shows at Westminster in 1990, you would rarely hear about therapy dogs. Then I would talk about them a little bit on the air, and suddenly everybody started telling me about the work they do with their dogs.

"I think it has grown a lot because of what we do with our dog shows on NBC and because people want to get involved and help people in need. The more people who get involved, the better it is for all of us."

3. How has therapy dog work become an increasingly important part of the National Dog Show community?

David: "It's kind of fun for us at the dog show when somebody is standing there with a blue ribbon and says, 'This isn't even the most important thing she does.' She goes to visit kids and veterans in hospitals and does all these wonderful things as a therapy dog. They'll say, 'That's more important than anything else we do in the show ring.'

"Previously, show dogs were primarily show dogs, and second, perhaps, they were therapy dogs. Now, I think a lot of people have flipped that. She's a therapy dog first.

"You're also doing a fun activity with your dog, which is what dog shows are supposed to be. We have the added benefit of being able to make somebody smile and make their life a little better, even if it's just for a moment."

4. What is your message to prospective sponsors?

Michele: "The activity we're promoting and the things we do with our dogs are bulletproof.

"You get to do something with the dog that you love. Together, you're doing something for people in need: children, families, seniors, and veterans.

"The way we promote therapy dog work is really focused on the welfare and well-being of the animal."

"We have sponsors from a lot of different animal-related and health-related avenues. It's a great opportunity to connect with people who will see the digital marketing and what we're promoting at the event. To David's point, it's something you can feel good about."

"The way we promote therapy dog work is really focused on the welfare and well-being of the animal." ~ Michele Pich



The National Dog Show
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Rowan University
SHREIBER FAMILY
PET THERAPY PROGRAM





The National Dog Show
25th ANNIVERSARY
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THERAPY DOG BOOTH

Q&A

with Alice Hoersch, Professor Emerita, LaSalle University

Coordinator, National Dog Show Therapy Dog Ambassador Team Booth



Q: You coordinate the National Dog Show Therapy Dog Ambassador Team booth every year. How eager are the therapy dog teams to participate?

A: The teams are extremely eager. They love sharing their dogs with people. That's one of the main reasons they became therapy dog handlers in the first place — they wanted to bring enjoyment and comfort to people in all kinds of settings.

Q: People may not realize that therapy dog work can be tiring. How do you make sure the dogs don't get worn out?

A: We manage this in two ways. First, we limit each dog's time slot at the booth. Second, we watch for physical signs of fatigue. Older dogs tire more quickly, but

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any dog may show signs such as panting (which indicates stress) or becoming less eager to greet people. When we see those signals, we give the dog a break.

Q: How is the activity at the Ambassador Team booth different from visits to schools or medical facilities?

A: It's very different. At assisted living facilities, for example, my dog will walk up to each resident individually, often arranged in a circle by the activities director. In hospitals, we go from room to room and always ask first whether the patient would like a therapy dog visit. If they say yes, we go in; if not, we move on.

At the dog show booth, the dynamic is completely different — people come to us from every direction. At peak times, we're inundated with visitors ranging from small children to senior citizens. It's especially heartening when someone with a disability lights up with a smile while petting a therapy dog.

Q: What does the booth offer for young children?

A: The booth provides a safe, non threatening environment for children to interact with dogs. Parents know these are trained therapy dogs who are accustomed to being around kids. They won't bite, act aggressively, or jump on them. It's a positive, confidence building experience.

Q: Anything else you'd like people to know about the booth and your work with the National Dog Show?

A: Just that the booth is a wonderful opportunity for people of all ages to meet therapy dogs in a welcoming environment. Seeing the joy these dogs bring is what makes the Ambassador Team's presence so meaningful.

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DOGS' BEST FRIEND AWARD

All 4 Paws Rescue wins Dogs' Best Friend Award for 2026

By Tom MacNeel

For 17 years, All 4 Paws Rescue has been saving animals one foster home at a time through rescue, rehabilitation and sanctuary efforts. This year, the organization and its staff are the recipients of the Kennel Club of Philadelphia's "Dogs' Best Friend Award" for 2026.

Founded in May 2009, All 4 Paws Rescue has operated as a 501(c) nonprofit with an all-breed and no-kill policy. All 4 Paws' overarching goal has been to help each of the nearly 18,000 animals they have rescued find safe, permanent and loving homes. By allocating $500,000 of fundraising per year on care to animals they have rescued, every single animal is given a chance to receive the rehabilitation they need to live.

Interested community members can volunteer for the organization by manning meet and greet events, transporting animals, processing adoption applications, helping fund raise, and event planning. Fostering is another way to make a direct impact, giving animals a safe home while freeing up capacity for the rescue to save even more. Interested parties can visit www.All4pawsrescue.com to get more information and learn more about visits and fostering.

"We can only save animals when we have safe places for them to go," says Kristen Geddes, founder and director of All 4 Paws Rescue. "As a foster-based rescue without a shelter or kennel, the number of animals we're able to help is directly tied to the number of foster homes we have available." She emphasizes that the Malvern-based rescue has an ongoing need for local volunteers and foster families. "Every new foster home gives us the opportunity to say 'yes' to another animal in need. We're incredibly grateful for this award and excited to use it to expand our reach, strengthen our network of volunteers and fosters, and ultimately save even more discarded and homeless animals."

All 4 Paws Rescue will receive a $5,000 donation as part of the Dogs' Best Friend Award. The Kennel Club of Philadelphia established The Dogs' Best Friend Award to encourage others to help animals in need in their community and protect our region's dogs, who play a critical role in enriching the lives of our communities and families.

Philadelphia

ROCKY SEASON



PHILADELPHIA Visitor Center CORPORATION

The National Dog Show 25th ANNIVERSARY

PRESENTED BY PURINA

ROCKYFEST RETURNS WITH NDS BULLMASTIFFS

By Michelle Freeland

Once again, the National Dog Show and the Kennel Club of Philadelphia join the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corp. to celebrate the dynamic connection between the iconic movie, Rocky, and the City of Brotherly Love. Get ready for RockyFest!

While we commemorate our 25th year, 2026 is the 50th anniversary of the release of the classic Sylvester Stallone film and RockyFest is the innovative Philadelphia tourism initiative that brings thousands to the city annually to experience the excitement.

The Kennel Club of Philadelphia's National Dog Show joins the celebration by honoring the movie's memorable four-legged star, Butkus, the Bullmastiff. Butkus holds a deep connection to Rocky because he was Sylvester Stallone's real-life dog and beloved companion. So, the magic of their relationship in the movie was genuine and captivating for fans of the 1976 release.

Enter Wasabi and Rufus! These two 100-plus-pounders – both members of the National Dog Show Therapy Dog Ambassador Team – will play the role of Butkus at multiple RockyFest events, press conferences and attractions over the course of the fall, leading into RockyFest week in early December.

Rufus is an eight-year-old male Bullmastiff whose photos were part of the promotional campaign used for the Philadelphia tourism marketing plan. Wasabi, a seven-year-old female Bullmastiff, stole the show when RockyFest was first introduced as a Philadelphia tourism initiative at a 2024 press conference on the steps of the famed Philadelphia Museum of Art.

RockyFest will celebrate five decades of an underdog story that became inseparable from Philadelphia, and the Kennel Club of Philadelphia is proud to provide the four-legged friend who was part of that story both on screen and in real life. **Learn more about the celebration at https://www.phlvisitorcenter.com/rockyfest.**



Wasabi **Rufus**

PAWS FOR PEOPLE

PAWS for People and The National Dog Show Presented by Purina®
Team Up for Sixth Year Partnership!

By Avery Ngo

The National Dog Show and PAWS for People have teamed up for their sixth year together to present their annual fundraising marathon under a new name–Wag & PAWSathon! The therapy dog group works year-round as a major part of The National Dog Show Therapy Dog Ambassador team and celebrates its annual Wag & PAWSathon fundraiser each fall before appearing at The National Dog Show every November in Oaks, PA.

The partnership between The National Dog Show, the Kennel Club of Philadelphia, and PAWS for People has helped amplify the therapy dog visitation movement, positively impacting the lives of many in four states from certified therapy dogs.

The Wags & PAWSathon is PAWS for People's largest annual fundraising event, which took place earlier this year from September 17 to October 17. People of all ages were invited to participate in this 30-day celebration of Connecting, Supporting, and Celebrating by walking a cumulative 26.2 miles at their own pace.

Throughout the 30-day event, individuals and teams tracked their mileage, earned points toward prizes, and collected donations from friends and family to support PAWS for People's programs. This year, PAWS for People raised more than $50,000 through its PAWSathon event.

The celebration finished with the family-friendly PAWS Furry Fall Festival at Delcastle Park in Wilmington, Delaware. The event featured doggie games and contests, children's activities, food, music, and plenty of opportunities for the community to come together and show their PAWS spirit.

PAWS for People is proud to provide more than half of the dogs representing the Therapy Dog Ambassador Team. These specially trained therapy teams regularly visit hospitals, nursing homes, and other institutions, bringing comfort, connection, and joy to those they serve.

During The National Dog Show weekend at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks, Pennsylvania, visitors can experience one of the event's most popular attractions: the Therapy Dog Meet & Greet Zone. Guests have the opportunity to meet, pet, and hug therapy dogs, with the majority of the participating dogs proudly representing PAWS for People.

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IN MEMORY OF



Dr. Alexander Duane Butherus

The Kennel Club of Philadelphia mourns the loss of Duane Butherus who died on September 11, 2026.

Duane was an extraordinary man --a respected scientist, devoted husband, treasured friend and true icon of the purebred dog community. He possessed a remarkable intellect, a wonderful sense of humor, and a quiet ability to bring wisdom, balance, and reason to those around him.

At the heart of Duane's life was his beloved wife, Connie. Together 68 years, and married for 66, their enduring partnership was one of extraordinary love and devotion.

A chemist by profession, Duane spent 31 years as a scientist at Bell Labs., and this expertise became invaluable to one of his greatest passions: Advancing the health and well-being of dogs. He devoted decades of service to the AKC Canine Health Foundation, serving in many capacities including Board Chairman.

He was an accomplished AKC judge, a dedicated Afghan hound enthusiast, and a leader in several prominent organizations, including the Morris & Essex Kennel Club and the Kennel Club of Philadelphia.

Duane lived an extraordinary life of service and purpose and he is deeply missed and will always be remembered.

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