

outdoors

Dog shows improve breed, good place to shop

By Lam Meese
outdoors writer

If marriages are made in heaven, then Cobo Hall in Detroit is heaven for dogs. It's also good for prospective dog owners.

Next Sunday is the annual Detroit Kennel Club dog show, billed as the largest one-day, all-breed bench dog show in North America.

No one gets rich from dog shows. Any proceeds from the DKC show go to charity. You have to like dogs to get caught up in the madness.

"A dog show," writes Roger Cairns in "A Celebration of Dogs" (1982), "is a cross between an office picnic, a bloodless bullfight, root-canal work, a Miss America pageant, and a tax audit by an IRS person who is jealous of you, as they all are."

Dogs win points in "conformation" matches — judgments in which experts decide how closely an individual matches breed standards for height, shape and general appearance.

After breed judging, the best move to group judging. There are 24 breeds in the sporting group, 20 in hounds, 18 in working class, 23 terriers, 15 toys, 14 herding and 11 non-sporting. At the end of the day, the seven who win best in group are judged for best in show.

Win enough points and your dog earns the title of champion.

CHAMPIONS are used for breeding. That's why a show is a place where doggy marriages are made.

Two years ago, we were puppy shopping to replace the valiant poodle who had been our "alpha wolf" for 16½ years. A show like the DKC's, with several thousand dogs and most of the nation's 125 recognized breeds, is an ideal place to shop.

Parks photos on display

Photographs of activities at nine Oakland County parks will be on display this month and in April at area community centers, shopping malls, colleges and office buildings.

The exhibit is sponsored by the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission.

Photographs will be displayed through March 14 at the Auburn Hills Campus of Oakland Community College, 2900 Featherstone, Auburn Heights; March 17-21 at the Tel-Twelve Mall, 12 Mile and Telegraph, Southfield; March 21 through April 4 at the

Moreover, Cobo Hall on the Detroit River is a whole lot closer than New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Harrisburg, Kansas City or Frisco, where the other bench dog shows are held.

In a "bench" show, dogs are stationed on benches the entire day except during judging. There is a display of dog photographs and directions on where breeds are stationed.

Admission is \$4.50 for adults and \$2.50 for kids, plus a couple of bucks for parking. It's a tiny cash investment when you're picking a companion who will live with you for 10, 15 or more years.

We were able not only to check out breeds but meet breeders and get to know dogs as personalities — and after all, you're really buying personality. We picked up cards and leaflets from several breeders and even had a chance to play with some prospective mothers. We fell in love with a rollicking member of one of the northern breeds.

The next couple of weeks we culled the library shelves for background books, confirmed our hunches about the northern breed, and in one telephone call placed our order for a puppy — the daughter of an American champion sire and an American and Canadian champion dam.

Result: The champion dogs produced a textbook-perfect litter, and we got exactly the kind of pup we wanted. Purebred sure beats random-bred.

TROUT FISHERMEN who want to learn the ultimate step in that art — tying their own flies — can take a course beginning March 22 at Oakland Community College's Highland Lakes campus, 7350 Cooley Lake Road, Union

American Center Building, 2777 Franklin, Southfield.

In the exhibit are photographs of the waterfalls and wave action pool at Waterford Oaks in Pontiac; golfing at Glen Oaks in Farmington Hills; Springfield Oaks in Davisburg; White Lake Oaks near Pontiac and Red Oaks in Madison Heights.

The Bicycle motocross track, tennis and platform tennis courts at Waterford Oaks and camping scenes at Groveland Oaks in Holly and Addison Oaks in Oxford are also part of the photography show.

Lake.

The first two-hour class will meet at 7 p.m. that Tuesday in 224 Student Center Building. The course runs seven weeks, during which anglers will learn how to tie most of the common patterns in fly fishing.

Get registration information from the Highland Lakes office of student activities at 360-3041.

Pruning trees topic

Two workshops on proper pruning of fruit trees will be conducted by the Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service March 12 at Bailey's Vineyard, Adams north of Long Lake, Troy.

The sessions run from 9 a.m. to noon and 1-4 p.m.

Bill Muller, a retired horticulture extension agent, will focus on pruning grape vines and apple trees.

Cost is \$5 per person. Enrollment is limited. To register, call the Oakland County extension office, 508-0887.

Short shots

• "Musical photo paintings" of Richard Vernick will be presented at 7:15 Monday, March 21, in the Fine Arts Building of Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills. Slides of Austria, Mexico, France, Canada and the western U.S. will be synchronized with classical music. General admission of \$5.00 covers the show, coffee and French pastries. Students and senior citizens admitted for half-price. Make reservations by calling OCC at 471-1781 or 471-1595.

• Columnist Monte Nagler will teach his beginning photography class series at the Farmington Community Center starting March 30. Phone the center at 477-8404 for registration information.

Macomb County. The ol' "whistle-mouth bass" starts spawning runs in the closing days of winter and can give you quite a scrap on light tackle at this time of year.

Salmon and trout are being caught in the St. Clair River by anglers trolling with downriggers.

Perch fishermen are having some luck in Lake Erie off the wall at the Hoffman Access Site at Bolles Harbor.

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