



Courtesy photo.

Sailor, a herding breed known as a Briand, took home an honor at the Philadelphia Dog Show a couple weeks ago. A program about the show will be aired on NBC-TV Thursday after the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Dog-day afternoon goes with turkey-day events

By TONY CADWALADER

Thanksgiving Day won't be completely devoted to turkeys. In fact, you might say the national holiday is going to the dogs. NBC-TV, trying to capitalize on the strong viewer-ship of its Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, is using the parade show as a lead-in to a major dog event show — "The National Dog Show Presented by Purina," showing from noon to 2 p.m. in all time zones.

Therefore, the family-oriented parade audience of millions will thus be delivered directly to the National Dog Show, giving it a great chance for the kind of TV ratings that may enable the show to become a holiday entertainment staple.

The television show is a two hour event presenting the show's highlights culled from the Kennel Club of Philadelphia's two annual benched dog shows, which took place over the weekend of Nov. 16 and 17 at the Fort Washington Expo Center outside of Philadelphia.

Two area residents got into the action: Peter Serge of Kennett Township entered Lollipop, a St. Bernard who is currently learning the dog show ropes. Lollipop's handler is Marian McShane. Lollipop didn't make it to the winner's stand, according to the show's Web site.

However, Dr. Lana Sheer of Chadds Ford, entered Sailor, a Briand, who did.

Sailor took Best Opposite Sex honors at the show. Though not a champion yet, Sheer said the show was good for her 6-year-old who has received the American Kennel Club's

Good Citizen Award — an award devised to ensure that dogs are well-socialized with respect to both people and the animals.

The Philadelphia show is one of only six bench shows — benched dogs are required to be on the bench in attendance at the show between a certain time (noon to 5 p.m., in this case) — specifically so the public can visit and spectators can actually meet the dogs. Sheer said it's a good experience for the dogs because it helps them get acquainted with people. "Socialization is very important," the retired physical chemist said. "I enjoy [the bench shows] immensely."

She's been showing since 1970 and breeding Briands at Bailywick Briands kennel since 1980. Bailywick Meilleur Windjammer d'Sagi, CGC is Sailor's registered name. The breed Briands, a herding dog, goes back to at least the 11th century and before to the time of Charlemagne.

"He and I had fun in the ring," Sheer said. "I'm looking forward to the [television] show."

While all the results won't be revealed here, (Group and Best in Show winners results can be found on-line at www.infodog.com), it can be revealed that in what show organizers called "a remarkable performance," a single dog was named Best in Show in both the Saturday and Sunday shows, triumphing over 1,770 entries on Saturday and 1,720 on Sunday, which may be reason enough for dog enthusiast to tune in. And organizers were quite happy the turn out as about 15,000 spectators visited the historic and prestigious KCP shows over the two days.