

Meet Our Dog Days of Summer Judges

Written by Arizona Foothills Magazine

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Another successful Dog Days of Summer has come to an end and we're ready to announce the winning pup! On Wednesday, September 28, we will hold our finale event. Oh My Dog Boutique in Old Town Scottsdale will host the top five dogs and their parents. Our panel of judges will do a meet and greet with the dogs and their owners. They will collaborate after the event and select a winner!



Dog photo is randomly selected and in no way reflects our judging criteria.

Meet our judges:

Kathy Shocket- AZ Insider Editor for AZFoothills.com & heavily involved in dog rescues and dog rehabilitation

Q. How have dogs affected your life?

A. Completely. Since I was a child my dogs taught me responsibility and compassion, and throughout my adult years, taking care of special needs and abused dogs has taught me patience and to appreciate the simple things in life. (Such as the miracle of a dog you've trained to set its cute little head in the lap of a sick person.)

Q. Tell us about your pup(s).

A. I try to make each day special for my dogs who suffered in the puppy mills before they were rescued by some wonderful people.

Q. In your opinion, why is having a dog important?

A. Dogs teach us compassion, responsibility and patience and how to appreciate the little things in life- every single day.

Q. What's one thing every dog owner should have?

A. Patience combined with an unconditional love.

Q. Tell us about your Dog Rescuing initiatives.

A. The rescue groups that operate on a shoestring budget or no budget at all and just the love of the volunteers – are made up of groups of people who do it not for the recognition, but because they truly don't want to see dogs suffer. I am lucky to learn from them about caring for these once abused dogs.

Johnathon Norville- Advocate for the Canine program at the TGen Foundation

Q. How have dogs affected your life?

A. My first dog completely changed my life. At the age of 26, I got my shih tzu. At this point in my life, I was still a little bit immature and having a dog made me grow up very quickly. The responsibility and reward from having a happy dog became the most important goal in my life.

Q. Tell us about your pup(s).

A. I have a 6 year old shih tzu named Cirilo. He is white with brown spots. In typical shih tzu fashion, he loves to snooze most of the day away and seems to only lift his head from the bed when it's food or "outside" time. He is the best dog and sleeps every night at my feet.

Oppositely, I have a small mixed breed dog that I saved from the streets named Winnie. I do not know what type of breed she is, but she is most closely a Chihuahua and terrier mix. She is rambunctious and very bad, but I love her with all my heart. My friends say she has an old man's face, but, even so, she is the cutest little dog.

Q. In your opinion, why is having a dog important?

A. I believe the most important thing about having a dog is the way in which it can calm a person down from the everyday stresses that we all face in our workday. If I have a bad day at work, I know that when I get home I will have two animals that will give me kisses and sit with me to cheer me up. It has completely changed my erratic behavior from my 20s into a more calm and collected 30 something year old.

Q. What's one thing every dog owner should know?

A. One thing every dog owner should know is that they are smarter than we give them credit for. I believe that most dogs act dumb when it comes to times when they are bad. But, overall, they know exactly what they are doing and why it is bad or what they are doing that is right and why it is.

Q. Tell us about your involvement in Tgen's research to prevent dog cancers.

A. I am one of the advocates for the Canine program at TGen. I have been involved with the fundraising aspects and the spreading of the word about the program. I have attended the Dog Days of Summer event to collect dog saliva samples and I have gone to PetSmart to collect samples during their "bring your dog to work" Fridays.

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Along with this work, I have also met extensively with the researchers and project managers at TGen to discuss what diseases and disorders are associated with each breed and why it is essential to have as many samples of saliva as possible to have the projects become successful. As a dog fanatic, I am very proud to work on these projects and see the final results.

Jackie Bacha- Owner, Oh My Dog Boutique

Q. How did you meet your dog(s)?:

A. Well, Penelope was a gift from my father for my 13th Birthday. She was my first dog ever, she was this tiny red ball of fur and it was instant love. I would dress her up in my american doll clothes or my old baby dresses and set up a fake stage and take pictures of her. I would also take her everywhere and I remember back then sneaking her in my "jimmied-up-backpack" (So her head could stick out) and we have been inseparable ever since... although now she has her own fabulous wardrobe (200+ outfits am i crazy?) and an array of carriers. (Her latest fav being the Susan Lanci Fringe Cuddler in Buckskin... she sits under it when its hung!)

Cici... well she was actually our last poodle that Griffin (my fiance) and I got. She is our adopted fur child and came into our lives unexpectedly...it's a long story... but she has been a perfect fit in our family and we love her to pieces!

How did I meet Navar my Standar poodle aka "my little pony." He was another gift from my father on my 23rd Birthday right as I had just opened the Shop. He was so little and had all this black straight hair and these big shaved feet... I used to call him "my little monkey" he really looked like one! He was immediately super smart... like strangely smart... and he has this personality... I know I sound crazy but my poodle really does understand what I'm saying and he thinks he is a human... only people that have met Navar get it. I mean you guys saw how he just jumps up and sits behind the counter on the bar stool at the shop!

Q. What is your favorite thing to do with your dog every day?

A. Well I am so very lucky that I get to hang out with my dogs every day at the store! But our favorite time is at night when Griffin puts on a record and we hang out in the living room and we either play with their toys or I give them massages or we do some Doga. I take about an hour each night and just hang out with them. They are the best entertainment!

Q. What has your dog taught you in life?

A. Well I learn so much from each of my dogs. But I would have to say the most significant example would be from watching Penelope. She proves that you can be tiny and be the boss! She is only a 5 lbs toy poodle and she bosses around everyone in the house... from my Standard Poodle to my Fiance! And even though she is little her confidence and determination are huge! I am kind of like that.... I mean you met me... I am 5ft tall and pretty little (most people think I'm a teenager) but here I am running OMD and my determination to keep improving / growing is endless. Although I am a much fairer boss then Penelope... I would never bark orders to my employee's:)

Q. How has your dog changed your life?

A. They have and continue to inspire me to make my passion my business and for that I am forever grateful!

Bobbie Underwood- Owner, Sonoran Desert Pet Resort

Q. How have dogs effected your life?

A. Dogs are my life, I have dogs at home and I work with dogs all day. You can say my life has gone to the dogs.

Q. Tell us about your pup(s).

A. We have a yorkie and a yellow lab. I bring my yorkie to work, to play at doogie day everyday.

Q. In your opinion, why is having a dog important?

A. I think a dog completes a family, at least it completes yours.

Q. What's one thing every dog owner should have?

A. I think having their shots up to date and having micro chip, is very important.

Q. Tell us about how Sonoran Desert Pet Resort was started?

A. We had a lab that died of cancer so we started breeding labs and then mobile grooming, then opened the pet resort. Now we do mobile grooming, grooming at shop, doggie daycare, training , pet-sitting, and boarding.