

Obamas Closer to Deciding on First Dog

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We are told the Obamas are getting closer to making a decision on the dog that will live with them in the White House, and it is the Portuguese Water Dog that appears to be the likely breed.

This is great news! As I wrote in a past blog, the PWD is an active, medium-sized dog covered in soft curls or waves that many allergy sufferers have been able to live with very successfully. As a breed, the PWD boasts one of the most dedicated, pro-active parent clubs in the country. The Portuguese Water Dog Club of America has spearheaded many health studies over the years, and takes its responsibilities as a guardian of its chosen breed very seriously. Member-breeders who wish to advertise in the award-winning club magazine must first submit a list of health clearances for the dog(s) they wish to advertise. No clearances, no ads.

The country is full of dedicated PWD breeders who participate with their dogs in a host of AKC disciplines: from conformation and obedience to agility, water trials, and pet therapy. Breeders are committed to producing well-rounded, versatile dogs that retain the instincts of their ancestors and are much more than generic show dogs.

To succumb to the unfortunate trend of “designer dogs” and purchase a labradoodle would send an unfortunate message to the American public, and validate a breeding practice that is deplored by serious fanciers, shelter volunteers, and veterinarians alike. To encourage the deliberate creation of more Mixed Breeds – that are given silly names and sold at outrageous prices – at a time when rescue groups have deserving, housetrained purebreds available for adoption and shelters across the country likewise have health-checked, loving mixed breeds to place in good homes is unconscionable.

The Obamas are smart, well-read, and reasonable people; I applaud them for doing their research and favoring a breed that, in terms of size, activity level, and grooming, meets their specific needs. The Portuguese Water Dog is an absolute charmer and I wish them many years of happy ownership with a new canine addition.

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