

## L.A. County Fair Goes to the Dogs

**This year's Bark Park features canine performance shows, pet boutique stores, and more.**

*By Roger Sipe*

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Southern California isn't just Hollywood, Rodeo Drive, and Beverly Hills. Every year as the summer makes its final call, the L.A. County Fair kicks off in Pomona, Calif. And although you can't take your own dog to the fair (sorry, Maxie, no Tilt-a-Whirl for you), this year, the fair has extended the dog days of summer by including a special section that's full of canine fun and excitement: Bark Park.

The highlight of Bark Park is Chris Perondi's Extreme Canines Stunt Dog Show, which features high-flying, disc-catching dogs full of spunk and energy. All of Perondi's pristine athletes are dogs he has rescued from shelters. In addition to catching flying discs, the dogs perform stunts, tricks, high jumps, and an "extreme canine triathlon," which combines portions of flyball, agility, and disc catching.

The Extreme Canines Stunt Dog Show runs Wednesdays through Fridays at 1, 4, and 7 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays at noon, 2:30, 4:30, and 7 p.m.

For a more laidback performance, Soccer Collies Family Fun shows that Border Collies are a top canine athletic breed. With a real soccer ball and net, trainer Mark Lukas' soccer-playing Collies – Ms.Z (pronounced "Mizzy") and Bek (named after soccer star David Beckham) can score goals better than most humans. Whether knocking the ball up in the air or between the goalie's legs, these Border Collies are truly magnificent sports stars. Get there early if you want to be part of the show, as Lukas likes to pull members of the audience into the goal to see if they can stop these dogs!

The Soccer Collies Family Fun exhibition runs Wednesdays through Fridays at 11:30 a.m., 2:30, and 5:30 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays at 11 a.m., 1, 3:30, and 5:30 p.m.

On Saturday, Sept. 13, the Woof Fashion Competition will get underway, we mean, underway. This event allows you to enter your dog fashions with a chance to win a spa day for you and your dog. Grooming demonstrations will take place at 3 and 6 p.m. every day, and training demonstrations will occur at 5 p.m. Be sure to stick around afterwards for the daily Canine Kitchen (6:30 and 7:30 p.m.), where you can learn to whip up some tasty natural treats for your best bud.

In addition to all the dog-related activities, the Bark Place marketplace gives visitors a chance to purchase all those necessary items for their dogs: clothes, jewelry, gourmet treats and more! Located next to the marketplace is the PawPrints Art Gallery, featuring winning entries from the recent fair photo contest. Some of the categories were Best Action Shot, Best Dog and Their Person, Best Expression, and Best Puppy Portrait. There were also several junior categories.

The L.A. Country Fair runs from Sept. 5 to 28, 2008. Visit [www.lacountyfair.com](http://www.lacountyfair.com) for ticket information, hours, and directions. Bark Park admission is included in the regular fair entry fee.

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