

## President-elect's Puppy Promise Creates Buzz

**As Inauguration Day nears, the Obamas' dog breed choice remains a mystery.**

Posted: December 13, 2008, 5 a.m. EST

As President-elect Barack Obama's inauguration on Jan. 20 nears, just about every major newspaper, magazine, and TV and radio broadcast station has pondered the question: What kind of puppy will the first family take to the White House?

Various celebrities have offered advice on what breed should fill the spot of first dog. Animal welfare organizations have seized the opportunity to raise awareness about responsible dog adoption and ownership.

Since his Nov. 4 acceptance speech, when the president-elect said to his two young daughters that they have earned a new puppy, the topic has become one of the most discussed stories of the year.

The interest in what kind of dog the Obama daughters will get – and in the Obama family in general – shows no signs of fading. As reported in USA Today recently, "Obama is the one little bit of hope in an otherwise dreadful holiday season," according to trends guru Marian Salzman.

Even David Frei, the longtime co-host of USA Network's annual telecast of the popular Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, has weighed in on the issue. During a recent conference call to promote the AKC/Eukanuba National Championship dog show in Long Beach, Calif., the conversation turned to the Obama puppy hype.

Frei told reporters about his ideal choice, "I would say a Standard Poodle, a Portuguese Water Dog, or an Irish Water Spaniel." The American Kennel Club has also offered to help Obama make good on his puppy promise.

The results of an AKC poll revealed that the public would like to see the Obamas pick a Poodle. The breed was among those that dog experts deemed suitable for allergy sufferers, including Obama's daughter, Malia.

Then there's the remark Obama made about getting a dog from a shelter who is a "mutt" like him, which created excitement in the animal shelter world. Whether the dog ends up being a purebred or a mixed breed, the Obamas don't plan to add a new four-legged member to the family until spring, according to news reports.

Until then, the puppy debate goes on. "I think it's generated more interest on our website than just about anything," Obama has stated.

- Read more about the search for the Obama dog -