

German Shepherd Dog Wins Healthy Smile Contest

Lucy beat out more than 7,000 pets in contest to promote importance of pets' healthy mouths.

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Lucy, a 3-year-old German Shepherd Dog, recently won the "Show Us Your Pet's Healthy Smile" contest, sponsored by The Greenies Co. The contest was an initiative aimed at increasing pet owners' awareness of the importance of a healthy mouth for their pets.

More than 7,000 pet owners uploaded photos of their smiling pals. The top 10 finalists were chosen based on votes received and the healthiest mouth was selected by Jan Bellows, DVM, Diplomate of the American Veterinary Dental College. Lucy received more than 31,000 votes.

As the winner, Lucy will receive a free Greenies dental chew each day for one year.

"It's important that pet owners know about the significance of a healthy mouth for their pets," Bellows said. "Many veterinary dental specialists believe that a clean, healthy mouth can actually prolong a pet's life. And what pet owner doesn't want to have more time to spend with their pet?"

Periodontal disease, a chronic bacterial infection in the gums supporting the teeth, is the top health problem in pets, according to the company. Studies have shown that the bacteria from periodontal disease may be linked to risk factors developing heart, kidney, liver and respiratory disease.

To help keep pets healthy, The Greenies Co., a division of Nutro Products Inc., recommends regular checkups by a veterinarian, tooth cleaning and treatments as necessary, daily care such as tooth brushing, a dental diet and dental chews.