



Dog Costume Parade Raises Money for Charity

Hundreds of costumed dogs convene in Long Beach, Calif., and show their Halloween spirit.

To celebrate what's been touted as the world's largest dog Halloween parade, hundreds of dogs convened in Long Beach, Calif., over the weekend dressed in their costumed best. They came outfitted as angels, pirates, aliens – and even as a jailed Paris Hilton.

The seventh annual Haute Dog Howl'oween Parade boasted more than 600 registered canine entrants along with many other dogs who showed up with their owners to watch as the costumed dogs sauntered along a 12-block parade route. The event has continued to grow each year, with this year's festivities drawing the largest number of participating pooches.

"I think it's popular because people love their dogs and we're all here to celebrate with our dogs," said event organizer Justin Rudd. "Just the fact that they're in our lives and the connections we have with them – they mean the world to us."

A panel of judges chose 13 finalists, and named four additional winners for best costume on a dog, best float, best group, and best costume on a human. The best costume on a dog – the grand prize – went to a Great Dane dressed as a three-headed dog, and won Natural Balance dog food for a year.

In addition to entertaining the crowds, the event raised approximately \$16,000 for the Community Action Team, a nonprofit organization that benefits children, animals and the environment. Money was raised through parade entry fees, donations, and T-shirt sales.

"They [dogs] are like children," Rudd said. "To be able to have an event like this where we can come and celebrate the holiday – I think this is the kind of event where dog lovers can come and hang out and be friendly together."

-Heidi Hatch, Associate News Editor for DogChannel.com