

Inside Westminster Dog Show 2006

For the people and dogs competing at Westminster, winning isn't the only good thing.

Annamaria DiGiorgio

Cheryl Schaefer of Fayetteville, New York, and her Bulldog Ch. Kendee J Edgar of Poolsbrook. The Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show held annually at Madison Square Garden in New York City is the most prestigious dog show of the year. And while winning Best in Show (BIS) is everyone's goal, leaving without taking home the top honor doesn't mean the trip to the show was without purpose.

Cheryl Schaefer of Fayetteville, New York, attended Westminster with her Bulldog, Ch. Kendee J Edgar of Poolsbrook. Although the 4-year-old brindle-and-white dog didn't win Best of Breed and the chance to compete in the Non-Sporting Group, Schaefer said he still had a great time.

"He loves the people," she said, as J. Edgar licked my hand. "Westminster is the Kentucky Derby of dog shows, so we're just honored to be here. We're having a blast."

Like many people at Westminster, Schaefer is J. Edgar's owner and handler. This means J. Edgar lives with her yearround and she shows him personally in the show ring.

Nancy Lonas and her Yorkshire Terrier Ch. Sparkling Blu Dreams of Glory. "He's a pet first and a show dog second," Schaefer said. "The two of us are real pals."

Nancy Lonas and her Yorkshire Terrier, Ch. Sparkling Blu Dreams of Glory, who finished seventh in her breed, agreed with Schaefer.

"The dogs are pets," Lonas said. "Glory's my pet. She sleeps on the bed with me and she's spoiled!"

Two-and-a-half-year-old Glory has been showing in conformation for 2 years and has won six international BISs. Through all their travels, Lonas's favorite part of the dog shows isn't just the dogs.