

# The ultimate dog and pony show comes to Cal Expo this weekend



**Susan Laird**

The Arts columnist

**E**l Dorado Hills is a place where animals are loved to the point where they become family members. Since I live in the area, I know there are many equestrian folk in the community. Even more of you are members of the “doggy set.”

I have a real treat for you this week, then. Some of you may be aware that every year, there is a larger-than-life horse expo held at Cal Expo every summer — the Western States Horse Expo. This event is

known throughout the country as the “gold standard” of equine expositions by exhibitors and horsemen alike. To add to the fun this year, the Horse Expo is introducing a Dog Expo. Horses, dogs and animal lovers will be in Sacramento from all over the western states. The expo will be held this weekend, June 11-13.

Consider this a “two-for-one” dog and pony show extraordinaire.

At the Horse Expo, visitors will have the opportunity to see a large number of breeds on display. Whether in the arena or in their stalls, these equines will shine as they show off their finest qualities. There will be education “clinics” covering a multitude of horsey topics, a “Driving Derby” where hitches, carts and

carriages compete, “Rigs and Digs” — dream horse trailers, trainer’s challenges and more.

An “Equine Dream Art Show” will be on display, as well. This is a juried art show with all original, never-before-displayed art. Vote for “People’s Choice” as you see the work of equine artists from all over the world.

## BreyerWest

Those who collect Breyer model horses are probably aware of Breyer-Fest, an event held every summer in the eastern U.S. This year, Breyer is holding a 2010 tour event — and it will be exclusively at the Western States Horse Expo. These model horses embody the dreams of horse lovers young and old. There will be model horse shows (seriously, this is a fascinating event in plastic),

workshops, artists and sculptors, a swap meet, crafts, model horse painting (takes more talent than one would think) and there will be a special edition available.

## Dogs rule

The Dog Expo is a new feature this year. For an inaugural event, the scope and scale planned by the organizers is absolutely impressive. There will be over 300 booths with canine information, plus a dog adoption area. There is something for everyone: dog clinicians, a splash dogs exhibit, Frisbee demonstrations, agility, canine art and more. There will even be doggie makeovers by Jarden Animal Solutions.

## Leave Fido at home

Because of insurance issues, the only dogs at the Expo will be those who are performers. So leave Fido and Fifi at home.



Photo courtesy of the Western States Horse Expo  
**RENOWNED GAITED HORSEMAN Larry Whitesell will teach riders to get horses to respond to subtle cues at the Horse Expo in Sacramento this weekend. His clinics are a shot in the arm for riding programs, providing very intense instruction to all levels of riders that instills an eagerness riders will carry with them so they can further their relationships with their horses at home.**

Besides, you don’t want them to get a “heads up” on all the tips and trick you will learn. Experts like Uncle Matty will teach on topics ranging from picking the perfect puppy, basic training, treats versus praise, first aid and health issues, dealing with aggression, house training and more.

Interested in learning what it takes to make a champion show dog? Come see how to get involved in showing and learn the ins and outs.

Service dogs will also have their moments in the spotlight. There will be demos on K9 units and search and rescue will showcase their special dogs.

A variety of dog breeds will give demonstrations plus you can bring home a special dog from the adoption/rescue row.

I’ve only brushed the surface of all that will be

available. For more information, there are two websites (listed below) and Facebook has a very informative fan page (search “Western States Horse Expo”).

The Western States Horse Expo and Dog Expo will be held at the Cal Expo California State Fairgrounds, Friday, June 11, through Sunday, June 13. Hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$18 per day for adults, \$5 per day for children 7 to 13 and free for kids 6 and under. \$45 gets you a three-day ticket. Parking is \$10. Cal Expo is located at 1600 Exposition Blvd. in Sacramento. For more information call (800) 352-2411 or visit [horsexpo.com](http://horsexpo.com) or [dogsexpo.com](http://dogsexpo.com).

Promote your arts or entertainment event by contacting Susan at [slaird@handywriting.com](mailto:slaird@handywriting.com)

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