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## Animal Crackers

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## Most Popular Breeds

The American Kennel club registered 1,175,473 purebred dogs in 2000. For the 10th consecutive year, the Labrador retriever led, accounting for 14% of all AKC registrations for 2000. Golden retrievers were in second place, followed by German shepherd dogs, dachshunds, beagles, poodles, Yorkshire terriers, Chihuahuas, boxers, and Shih Tzu.

Breeds come and go from the top-ten list. However, only six have held the number one spot since 1925: German shepherd dogs (1926 to 1928), Boston terriers (1929 to 1935), cocker spaniels (1936-1952 and again from 1983 to 1990), beagles (1953 to 1959), poodles (1960 to 1982) and Labrador retrievers (1991 to present).

Rottweilers and chow chows were subject to fad levels of popularity in the 90's. Registration for both have decreased significantly, Rottweilers decreased 64% in the past seven years, and chow chows are down 92% in the past ten years. This shows the public's tendency to acquire the "in" breed often without sufficient consideration of what living with that breed entails.

The Labrador with 172,841 registered led the sporting group. Leaders in the hound group were dachshunds with 54,773 registered. Boxers had most registrations in the working group (38,803) while the top breed in the terrier group was West Highland whites with 3,364 registered. Leading the toy group were Yorkshire Terriers (9,365), tops in the non-sporting group were poodles (45,868) and leaders in the herding group were German shepherd dogs (57,660).

Dedicated breeders understand the importance of educating the pet-buying public and help them select a breed that will fit into their lifestyle.

## PON

The Polish lowland sheepdog (Polski Owczarek Nizinny), sometimes referred to as a PON has been recognized by the American Kennel Club and now is shown in the miscellaneous class. It is expected to be in the herding group if it demonstrates continued growth. At this time, there are fewer than 2,000 in the United States.

The PON has been described as a tail-less bearded collie. In its native land it herded sheep

and geese. The breed suffered a major setback during World War II when most records were lost or destroyed. A Polish veterinarian is credited with resurrecting the breed from fewer than a dozen animals after the war.

The PON is said to have an incredible memory. They are working dogs and their innate suspicion may make them seem aloof and shy. They must be trained from puppyhood for showing.

Their coat is long, dense and shaggy. It mats quickly if not brushed several times a week.

The PON is not a breed for everyone. They require a strong-minded handler who understand the dog's working dog personality.

## False Pregnancy

Pseudocyesis is an exaggeration of the normal physiologic signs shown by any nonpregnant bitch in the latter part of the estrous cycle. Signs include weight gain, mammary gland hyperplasia and lactation, nesting and mothering of inanimate objects. Absence of pregnancy can be confirmed by abdominal palpation or ultrasonography. Signs usually appear six to 12 weeks after estrus and disappear in one to three weeks. Treatment is not recommended unless the signs are unusually severe or prolonged.

There are reports that these bitches make good foster mothers.

Ovariohysterectomy will prevent recurrence.

## Russian Blue

Russian blues are said to have originated in the neighborhood of Archangel in northwest Russia. Some say they were the favored cats of the Russian czars and that Queen Victoria had two as pets. There are stories of them riding into battle on the shoulders of Cossack militia. They probably were brought to England by merchant sailors. They made their first appearance at a cat show at the Crystal Palace in 1875 as the Archangel Cat, competing in a class with all other blue cats. They obtained recognition as a separate breed in 1912 and were accepted by the Cat Fanciers Association in 1947.

These cats are known as the ballerinas of the cat fancy. They are elegant, lithe and graceful. They may appear heavier than they actually are because of the dense, plush coat. They are bright blue with silver-tipped guard hairs that produce a silvery sheen. Their eyes are a vivid green.

Russian blues are good apartment cats. They are undemanding, playful and very intelligent. They will use their paws to open doors and cabinets — their curiosity and cleverness can make them interesting and challenging companions.

Most Russian blues are quiet cats but have a wide range of vocal tones and sounds. While they often are considered shy, their behavior stems from caution about unfamiliar people or situations rather than fear.

This is a minority breed on the cat fancy, ranking about 17th in CFA registrations. The average litter size is only three kittens.

## Book Review

**Dogs for Dummies, 2nd edition by Gina Spadafori (Hungry Minds, Inc., 909 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. \$21.99)**

This is a reference book for the novice and seasoned dog owner. It also is useful for anyone considering purchasing or adopting a dog. There is a check list of signs that indicate that your dog needs immediate veterinary attention and a list of items for your canine medicine chest.

On choosing a breed — "Start with an open mind. Keep these factors in mind — size and space requirements, activity level, fur factor and trainability and dominance."

"Information about breeds and breed clubs may be found on the American Kennel Club Web site at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org). Bad breeders have discovered the Internet. Good breeders use their Web sites to educate; bad ones to merchandise. Proceed carefully."

"A proper diagnosis and an appropriate course of treatment are essential when your pet is ill. While learning all you can about a disease is a fantastic idea, you need to understand your limitations as a pet owner. No book, friend's advice or web site can make up for the expertise of a good veterinarian."

"According to the American Animal Hospital Association, the first eight months of a dog's life equal 13 years in human terms. At a year a dog is a teenager. After the age of two, when a dog is about 21, every dog year equals approximately five human ones. Giant breeds such as great Danes are senior citizens at six. A Lab may be considered old at eight. A little dog like a Pomeranian, however, could behave like a healthy adult well into her teens. Obesity not only shortens lives, but makes the years that

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remain miserable, especially for older dogs with arthritis.”

“Reputable breeders don’t let puppies go until they’re a week or so older than seven weeks, and maybe longer for a tiny breed.”

“If all you want to do is go to a dog show, check out Infodog ([www.infodog.com](http://www.infodog.com)) for schedules of nearly every canine event.”

These excerpts should give you an idea of the wide range of information in the book.

**What Labs Love (Hungry Minds, Inc. \$16.99).** 100 photographs by Ed Camelli with text by Mike Singer reveal the characteristics that make the Lab one of the most sought after companion animals.

## International Laminitis Conference

**Dr. James Orsini**, associate professor of surgery, organized the First International Equine Conference on Laminitis and Diseases of the Foot. The event, held February 8 and 9 at Palm Beach, FL drew more than 200 attendees from the USA, Canada, Europe and South America. It brought together veterinarians, researchers, farriers, trainers, breeders, owners and farm managers for a comprehensive overview of laminitis and the latest diagnostic and treatment options for this disease.

Topics discussed were: Clinical Review of Laminitis; Epidemiology of Laminitis; Introduction to Developmental and Acute Laminitis; Review of Current Diagnostic Modalities and Clinical Therapeutics; Clinical Management of Acute Laminitis; Chronic Phase of Laminitis. Among the speakers were Robert Sigafoos, farrier at New Bolton Center, and Dr. Eric Birks, assistant professor of sports medicine.

The event was supported by Mr. and Mrs. John Castle, who have provided extensive research support to Dr. Orsini. On Thursday evening, they invited the conference participants to their home, the former Kennedy compound. Corporate support for the conference was received from Merial and Fort Dodge. The Thoroughbred Charities of America also supported the conference.

# 2001 Penn Annual Conference

The 2001 Penn Annual Conference attracted more than 800 veterinarians, 225 technicians and 80 exhibitors. The two-day event was held at the Adam’s Mark Hotel, Philadelphia, January 31 and February 1. Several companies supported the conference as sponsors and patrons. Associate Dean Charles Newton presented plaques to the sponsors.

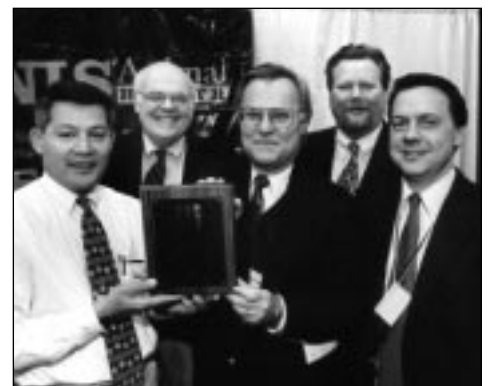
The 2002 Penn Annual Conference will be held January 30 and 31 at the Adam’s Mark Hotel.



Welch Allyn



Antech Diagnostics



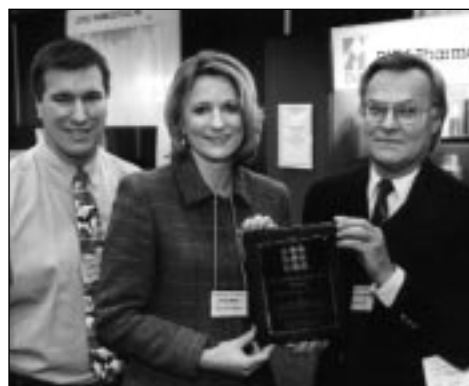
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