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Contact: Daisy Okas

Phone: 212-696-8342


PRESIDENTIAL PUREBRED PUPS ARE A WHITE HOUSE TRADITION


New York, NY – From Washington’s Foxhounds to Bush’s “Barney,” presidential purebred pups are as traditional as baseball and apple pie. Twenty-two U.S. presidents have owned purebred dogs and most shared the White House with them. While some dogs had jobs – “Millie” authored a book, “Him” and “Her” modeled for *Life* magazine, and “Laddie Boy” oversaw high-level meetings from his hand-carved cabinet chair – all were well-loved not only by their devoted owners but also by the country.

“It’s no surprise that presidents love their dogs. Dogs give unconditional love and can even help reduce stress levels,” said Gail Miller, Director of Media Relations, AKC. “And, from an image standpoint, nothing humanizes a candidate more than seeing him lovingly dote on his pet or toss a ball around on the White House lawn.”


“With presidential elections just around the corner, the tradition of purebreds in the White House will continue regardless of who wins in November,” added Miller. “From a dog-eat-dog perspective, the election is really between Bush’s Scottie and Kerry’s German Shepherd.”

The American Kennel Club takes a look back at some of the most famous four-legged friends in American history.


 **George Washington**, the father of our nation, is also the father of American Foxhounds. In 1770, Washington imported a number of hounds from England and in 1785, he received a number of French foxhounds from the Marquis de Lafayette. These hounds, carefully bred and maintained by Washington, are the founders of today’s American Foxhound. More than 30 hounds were listed in Washington’s journals, including “Drunkard,” “Tipler,” and “Tipsy”.

 **Thomas Jefferson** became interested in Briards while serving as minister to France. He purchased a pregnant female named “Buzzy” and started his breeding program. Lafayette also sent Jefferson purebred dogs – two Briards to help protect his sheep.

Presidential Purebred Dogs/2

 **James Buchanan's** large Newfoundland, "Lara," was a celebrity around the White House because she would lay motionless for hours with one eye opened and one eye closed, always sure to keep an eye on her owner.


 **John Tyler** bought his wife an Italian Greyhound named "Le Beau."


 **Ulysses Grant's** son, Jesse, owned a Newfoundland named "Faithful." President Grant, having observed his son's heartbreak over the untimely deaths of several of his previous dogs, told his White House staff, "If this dog dies, every employee in the White House will be at once discharged."


 **Rutherford B. Hayes** owned a Cocker Spaniel named "Dot," a Newfoundland named "Hector," a Greyhound named "Grim," and an English Mastiff named "Deke."

 **Grover Cleveland** owned a Poodle (although some reports say it was a Pekingese)


 **Benjamin Harrison** owned a Collie named "Dash."

 **Theodore Roosevelt** owned a St. Bernard named "Rollo," a Pekingese named "Manchu," a Chesapeake Bay Retriever named "Sailor Boy," a Manchester Terrier named "Blackjack," and, a Bull Terrier named "Pete," who ripped the pants of a French Ambassador.


 **Warren Harding** owned a Bulldog named "Oh Boy," and an Airedale Terrier named "Laddie Boy." "Laddie Boy" not only had his own hand-carved cabinet chair to oversee high-level meetings, but also invited all the neighborhood dogs to the White House for his birthday party, where they dined on dog biscuit birthday cake. "Laddie Boy" is even immortalized with a statue in the Smithsonian.


 **Calvin Coolidge** owned three Collies, "Prudence Prim," "Rob Roy" and "Ruby Rough," an Airedale Terrier named "Paul Pry," two Chow Chows named "Blackberry" and "Tiny Tim," a Bulldog named "Boston Beans," an Old English Sheepdog named "Calamity Jane" and a Wire Fox Terrier named "Peter Pan."


 **Herbert Hoover** owned two Fox Terriers named "Big Ben" and "Sonnie," an Elkhound named "Weeje," an Irish Wolfhound named "Patrick," and a German Shepherd named "King Tut."

 **Franklin D. Roosevelt's** Scottish Terrier "Fala" reportedly received more fan mail than many presidents did. FDR also had a Bullmastiff named "Blaze," two Irish Setters named "Jack" and "Jill," a Bulldog named "Pal," an English Setter named "Winks," another Scottish Terrier named "Meggie," a German Shepherd Dog named "Major," and a Great Dane named "President," which made things confusing in the White House.

 **Dwight D. Eisenhower** owned two Scottish Terriers named "Caacie" and "Telek," and a Weimaraner named "Heidi."


 **John F. Kennedy** owned a Welsh Terrier named “Charlie,” an Irish Wolfhound aptly named “Wolf,” a German Shepherd Dog named “Clipper,” and an English Cocker Spaniel named “Shannon.”

 **Lyndon B. Johnson** owned three Beagles named “Him,” “Her,” and “Edgar.” (Both “Him” and “Her” appeared on the cover of *Life* magazine.) He also shared the White House with “Blanco” the Collie.


 **Richard Nixon** owned a Cocker Spaniel named “Checkers,” a Yorkshire Terrier named “Pasha,” a Poodle named “Vicky,” and, an Irish Setter named “King Timahoe.”

 **Gerald Ford** owned a Golden Retriever named “Liberty.”

 **Ronald Reagan** owned a Bouvier des Flandres named “Lucky,” and, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel named “Rex.”

 **George Bush** owned an English Springer Spaniel named “Millie,” who is the author of a “dogobiography,” *Millie’s Book*.

 **Bill Clinton** owned a Chocolate Labrador Retriever named “Buddy.”

 **George W. Bush** owned an English Springer Spaniel named “Spot” (daughter to Millie) and now owns a Scottish Terrier named “Barney.”

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The American Kennel Club (AKC), founded in 1884, is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of purebred dogs. The AKC maintains the largest registry of purebred dogs in the world, oversees the sport of purebred dogs in the United States, and along with its 4,500 licensed and member clubs, educates the general public about responsible dog ownership. More than 15,000 competitions for AKC-registered purebred dogs are held under AKC rules each year including conformation, agility, obedience, tracking, herding, lure coursing, hunt tests, and field and earthdog trials. Affiliate AKC organizations include the AKC Canine Health Foundation, AKC Companion Animal Recovery and the AKC Museum of the Dog. For more information, visit www.akc.org.