

2010 GPCA National Specialty / World Conference

The 75th Great Pyrenees Club of America National Specialty and 4th World Conference will be held at the Lancaster Host Hotel & Conference Center in Lancaster, PA during the final week of April, 2010.

This international celebration of the Great Pyrenees / Pyrenean Mountain Dog will begin on Sunday, April 25th with a bus tour of the Amish communities of historic Lancaster County. That evening we will encourage those who have arrived at the hotel to join us at an informal mixer in the hospitality room.

On Monday we will have a bus tour to Washington, DC to get an overview of our national capital, visit some of the major monuments, and then open the doors and allow us to continue to see the sites on our own. We will regroup and return to Lancaster for dinner and another mixer.

Tuesday we have a special bus trip to Philadelphia to see the historic sites and visit the University of Pennsylvania Veterinarian School for a tour of their facilities and to learn about some of their canine health projects; this part of the tour will be hosted by Dr. Abigail Smith, daughter of C. Seaver and Edith Smith of Quibbletown Kennels. That afternoon we will return to the hotel for an international social.

Wednesday begins the World Conference Breakfast roundtable discussions groups. Our goal is to involve everyone, encourage open discussions and make new friends. We will ask attendees to get their breakfast from our buffet tables and then find their place cards at the tables around the room. After eating, we will ask our table leaders to open conversations on the morning's set of breed related topics; there will be different topics each day. The ideas, opinions and issues raised at each table will be recorded and collected so that we can put together consensus summary statements on each topic.

Wednesday also begins our breed competition venues, after a break to allow people to complete final grooming of their entries. We will start the competition with Obedience and Rally. That will be followed by the Futurity – conformation judging of Pyrenees 6 to 18 months of age which were nominated for entry by their breeder before the litter was born. In the afternoon we will conduct our Draft Dog Test which combines obedience training with the dog's willingness to pull a weighted cart over a predetermined course. The remainder of the afternoon will be filled with GPCA committee meetings which are open to all. In the evening we will hold our world famous Fun & Games Activity for people and dogs, guaranteed to generate gales of laughter and good times.

We will begin Thursday with the second World Conference Breakfast, using a new set of topics for discussion. After a break for grooming, the day's show activities begin with the Puppy Sweepstakes – conformation judging in which the awards are a division of the entry monies. The regular dog show conformation competition starts with the judging of the Dog breed classes (for those dogs who have not earned their Championship status). That evening we are hosting a health seminar on Osteosarcoma in Large Breed Dogs presented by Dr. Kerstin Lindbald-Toh of the Broad Institute at MIT.

Friday morning, after the World Conference Breakfast, we will have a Rescue Parade for dogs which have been rescued from bad situations and re-homed with their handlers. This is followed by the Veterans Sweepstake competition where the awards are a division of the entry fees. The conformation competition continues at mid-day with the judging of the Bitch breed classes. In the late afternoon we will conduct our GPCA Annual Meeting and Awards presentations; all are invited to attend. After the

meeting we will relax and enjoy ourselves at the kick-off party for the 2011 GPCA National Specialty, hosted by the Wisconsin Great Pyrenees Club.

Our final World Conference Breakfast will be held on Saturday morning. Our Judges Education Committee will hold a seminar for potential Great Pyrenees judges as a part of the AKC judges vetting process. Our competition continues with Junior Handling which judges the handling abilities of young people between the ages of 9 to 18. The highlight of the Specialty, the Best of Breed Competition, will begin at 11:00 am under the critical eye of our judge, Dr. Robert Brown. The ring will be filled with a wonderful array of Champions, plus the winners of the Veterans, Bitch and Dog classes. The ultimate prizes are the Best of Breed, Best of Opposite Sex, Best of Winners and Awards of Merit rosettes. We will follow that with the judging of the Best Stud Dog and Brood Bitch classes, plus the Brace competition.

Saturday evening crowns the week with the National Specialty/World Conference Banquet and Auction. A fun time of good food, good friends and good memories.

For those who are able to join us, there will be an informal open-house party at the Coombs' farm outside Gettysburg, PA on Sunday. The farm is about 1 ½ hours west of Lancaster. Everyone is welcome.

We hope that you will be able to join us in Lancaster for a weeklong celebration of our breed!

Jean Pero

Whitney Coombs

2010 GPCA National / 4th World Conference Co-Chairpersons