

## **Qatar’s first dog show a ‘huge success’**

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**By Peter Townson**

The first ever dog show in Qatar took place this weekend, where animal lovers brought their canine friends of all shapes and sizes to take part in various activities and enjoy a special day out at ‘Woofstock.’

Qatar Animal Welfare Society (QAWS) have long been looking into the possibility of arranging a “dog-friendly” event for people to experience with their pets, and decided to organise a dog show.

QAWS secretary Kelly Allen explained that initial plans for the event had been significantly less ambitious than what the final festival became.

Originally planned as a smaller occasion for people to bring their dogs for a fun day, Woofstock became a huge community event, with a strong attendance and requiring a lot of organisation.

Dogs competed in some 15 different classes, before winners went up against each other for the main event.

And the winner of the overall ‘best in show’ prize was border collie Bob with his handler, Kim Robson.

“We were delighted with the number of people that visited Woofstock and incredibly impressed with the behaviour of all the dogs that were there,” said Allen.

“Having well over 150 dogs at an event is a nerve-wracking experience, especially as this was the first of its kind, but the atmosphere was amazing,” she noted, adding “there were hundreds of smiling faces and wagging tails and without a doubt, it was a huge success.”

“We would like to say a personal thank-you to the dozens of volunteers, especially those from the American School Doha, the International School of London and the Girl Guides who were such a help in setting up and running the event,” said Allen.

Allen expressed her gratitude to all the companies and organisations that helped to make the event possible, including Byrne and the Ramada hotel among others, and Speed and his volunteers who helped to organise parking for the event.

She also thanked the judges for the dog show classes, Dr Pail Hensen, Zoe Royal, Chris Garvey and Luke Kimmond, as well as guest judges Stephanie Kear Fudda and Sven Wiedenhaupt from the Four Seasons, who sponsored the best in show award.

“Woofstock is an incredibly special event as it brings together a group of people of all different nationalities, ages and professions that all share a love of animals,” she said, adding that “following the success of Woofstock, QAWS hopes to put on more ‘dog-friendly’ events throughout the cooler months.”

“QAWS will continue to assist the animals of Qatar and hope that we soon become a registered charity and can then expand,” she added.

And looking ahead to the future, Allen promised: “Woofstock 2011 will be even bigger and better!”



The QAWS committee with best in show winner Bob and runners-up Bailey and Zsuska and their handlers