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Pet Guide: Columbus Pet Expo

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By Marguerite Marsh

If you've never seen a cat push a shopping cart, glimpsed a rare Spinone Italiano or gotten splashed by a dock diving dog, you'll want to head to the Columbus Pet Expo this weekend at Vets Memorial.

Organizers are trying to fill Vets with as much fun, education and interaction as the place will hold, from dogs and cats to less common pets like alpacas, horses, birds and reptiles.

Highlights from the packed schedule of events are pet performers like the K-9 Revolution Frisbee Dogs, the diving Buckeye Dock Dogs, the Amazing Acro-Cats and Bwana Jim's Reptile Show.

"Every year we try to improve," said Mythanne Reno, director of the expo. "And every year we hope people will be surprised."

This year, the expo is hosting the North American Kennel Club's National Competition of Rare and

Ancient Dog Breeds on Saturday and Sunday. The show spotlights breeds you may have never seen before, like the French Coton de Tulear or Italian breeds like the Spinone Italiano and Cane Corso.

"In fact, our judges are flying in from Italy," Reno said.

If you love felines, you'll want to catch the Amazing Acro-Cats from Chicago. They not only perform tricks like riding skateboards, climbing ropes and running an agility course, they also play instruments in the Cat Rock Band.

Dogs will also be active, participating in agility competitions as well as dock diving, carting and frisbee fun. Shelter dogs will get new styles and strut down the runway as part of the expo's grooming demonstrations.

And if you're in the market for a pet, check out the Pet Adoption Area in the West Hall - close to 50 shelters and breed rescue groups will be offering adoptable dogs, cats, ferrets and bunnies.

Children will want to hang out in the Kids' World area, with a beagle bounce house, pony rides, crafts, games and a coloring contest, plus pictures with the Easter bunny. The Scooby-Doo van will make an appearance, too, along with a flat-screen TV playing "Scooby-Doo" cartoons. (P.S., stop by Bob Evans restaurants for free-admission tickets for kids, found on the coloring placemats.)

A live auction at 1 p.m. Sunday will raise money for the nonprofit rescue groups, humane societies and pet shelters participating in the expo.

"One of our main focuses is the rescue groups," Reno said. "And 100 percent of the auction proceeds go the participating nonprofit groups."



When: Friday-Sunday, March 26-28
Where: Veterans Memorial, Downtown
Web: columbuspetexpo.com

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