

Barking It Up for Microchipping!

By Sandy Wells

She turns heads wherever she goes. Striking star quality charisma and looks, this stunning gal transcends all language barriers. She walks the talk. No bones about it. This female has a mission, and she's hot to trot the pavement to get it done! Lulu the Collie is fast becoming the "barksperson" to raise public awareness and promotion of microchipping pets.

Born on Pearl Harbor Day, Dec. 7, 1998, to father Lassie VIII, mother Star Attraction, Lulu, was adopted at eight-weeks-old by celebrity actress-writer, Coco d'Este, who is also Lulu's trainer. With parents like that, she was pre-ordained to be in showbiz, but her owner wants to accomplish more than that.

"I want to help other animals, and if it takes Lulu's celebrity to open that door, then she's more than happy to participate." As if on cue, Lulu barks her approval!

"Most people don't know you can get just about any pet microchipped," d'Este informs us. "Mice, rabbits, birds..." She cites the Hurricane Katrina disaster as

an example. "If more people had their pets microchipped, more beloved pets would have been returned home. The companies allow not just a local number to be listed as a contact, but out-of-state and even out of the country. So if there's a communication problem, other friends and/or relatives can be contacted to rescue the animal. Collars can come off and then the pet has nothing to identify themselves. Anyone can take the animal in to the vet or pound to get it scanned for a chip - free! It's the pet's best chance to be claimed.

D'Este is also working to get the City of Los Angeles and microchip companies to provide low-cost clinics. "I haven't gotten my calls returned yet! Some vets charge too much and a lot of people can't afford it, especially if they have more than one pet." D'Este invites the public to contact their local neighborhood council, veterinarians and pet stores and request that they help with this mission.

Aside from her quest to further microchipping, d'Este has been booking



Coco d'Este and Lulu.

Lulu in other venues such as an appearance on the TV show, *Ghost Whisperer*, *In the Mix*, First Miss Dog Beauty Pageant and the Ralph Lauren Kids Polo Collection print ads. "Lulu has made many personal appearances to help promote other animal causes (Paw'd Squad, PETA, ASPCA, Wildlife Way Station, Pet Orphans, Humane Society), as well as just being the celebrity she is." They both were guests at a recent convention (where Lulu's "pawtograph" was given out to raise money for animal rescues), as well as presenters of a Special Recognition Award at the San Fernando

Valley International Film Festival Gala, which had heavy celebrity attendance. "Everyone wanted their picture taken with her!"

The panting image of her sable colored daddy, Lulu is hand-command, verbal and spelling trained to perform many tricks. Lulu is AKC Canine Good Citizen Program certified and is being certified as a therapy dog, which gives her entrée to hospitals, nursing homes and other establishments where a healing presence and friendly face is needed.

For more information on Lulu, go to her website www.LuluTheCollie.com.