

Dear President-Elect Obama,

It is well known that you have promised your children a puppy when you move into the White House. Due to consideration of allergies, it is rumored that the selection may be a Goldendoodle. As President of the Golden Retriever Club of America, the largest AKC member breed club, I discourage this choice as well as the selection of any deliberate crossbreeding of AKC breeds. The current fad is the production of "designer" dogs, most of which are bred without consideration of genetic problems and sold to consumers at outrageous prices.

There are several AKC breeds which are less likely to exacerbate allergies; these breeds may be found at www.akc.org/about/faq_allergies.cfm. A Parent Club rescue is also an excellent source for dogs that, because of varying circumstances, may need a new home. This can be a wonderful opportunity to obtain a nice dog, without going through the trials of puppy hood.

I would like to share with you a statement which is published on our web site at www.grca.org.

The Golden Retriever Club of America is dedicated to the health and welfare of the Golden Retriever breed while conserving the original breed function - that of a "working retriever." A purebred dog offers to his owner the likelihood that he will be a specific size, shape, color and temperament.

The predictability of a breed comes from selection for traits that are desirable and away from traits that are undesirable. When a breed standard or type is set, the animals within that breed have less heterozygosity than do animals in a random population. The Goldendoodle is nothing more than an expensive mongrel. Because the genetic makeup is diverse from the Poodle genes and the Golden Retriever genes, the resultant first generation (F1) offspring is a complete genetic gamble. The dog may be any size, color, coat texture and temperament. Indeed Goldendoodles do shed. Their coat may be wiry or silky and may mat. Body shape varies with parentage but tends to be lanky and narrow. Behavior varies with the dog and within a litter with some puppies poodle-like in attitude and others somewhat like the Golden Retriever.

The Golden Retriever Club of America is opposed to crossbreeding of dogs and is particularly opposed to the deliberate crossing of Golden Retrievers with any other breed. These crossbreeds are a deliberate attempt to mislead the public with the idea that there is an advantage to these designer dogs. The crossbred dogs are prone to all of the genetic diseases of both breeds and offer none of the advantages that owning a purebred dog can afford.

Compared with the problems you will face when you assume office, the selection of a pet is very minor. However, this choice will have a far-reaching effect in the dog community. I urge you not to endorse the crossbreeding of any "designer" dog, especially Goldendoodles, by bringing one into the White House.

Respectfully,

Dianne Barnes, President and the GRCA Board of Directors