

# The New York Dog

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magazine

## 441 Festive Fashions

Kristin Chenoweth  
and her Maltese,  
Maddie

"I looked up my  
family tree and found  
three dogs using it."  
—Rodney Dangerfield

# Joy!

Deck the Halls with  
Kristin Chenoweth  
and her Maltese  
Maddie

Inside!  
America's Next  
Top Dog Model



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# MODEL CITIZEN

by Larry Ryan

A stunning Dachshund is crowned America's Top Dog Model.

It's a regular 'rags to riches' story for the newly anointed America's Top Dog Model, Mia, a stunning Dachshund from Valencia, California. Despite her current lofty perch at the pinnacle of canine beauty and style, her beginnings were unfortunately, far more humble. The Dachshund was languishing in the unsavory conditions of a breeder in Lancaster, California. Thankfully, she was spotted by the Ruckelshausen family: "When we got there, the conditions of the kennel were so poor - I was in shock," explains Pam Ruckelshausen. "When I got in the car, I saw my mom holding this cute, little Miniature Dachshund in her arms." They shyly liberated the precious pooch and aptly named her Mia - Missing In Action.

America's Top Dog Model is fast becoming one of the nation's most popular and esteemed dog contests since the inaugural event in 2005. This year's contest was an elaborate affair with several events leading up to the finale: The Worth Avenue Pet Parade,



America's  
Top Dog Model  
- 2006 -  
Mia  
Valencia, California

Big Boss." Pam says. "Every employee that enters the office gets a personal greeting. When they see her quickly roll onto her back, that is their queue - it's time for a belly rub."

As if winning the Dorothy Bauer-designed Swarovski crown wasn't enough, Mia has been showered with innumerable fabulous prizes since her victory march: a doggie dream house, a luxurious pet chaise from Posh Living, a designer pet pillow by Red - For People And Pees. And Mia will take her rightful place on the coveted cover of the 2007 America's Top Dog Model Calendar, with the 11 other finalists following in a pack behind.

Mia has taken to her new role like a duck to water, explains Pam: "She is not familiar with the word 'dog,' she is a Princess." But don't be alarmed - there have been no Naomi Campbell-style diva tantrums to report of just yet, with her family keeping her paws firmly on the ground. "She is employed at Larry & Joe's Plumbing Supplies, and her name tag reads, 'The

## “DON'T BE ALARMED—THERE HAVE BEEN NO NAOMI CAMPBELL-STYLE TANTRUMS JUST YET.”

The Annual Doggie Ball, Walk For Wildlife 2006 with Animal Planet's Jeff Corwin, and exclusive events at Three Dog Bakery and Robb Stuckey Interiors. Along the way, there were several evenings of bow-wow fun, with red carpet, "Best Dressed Doggie" events, not to mention a three-day photography extravaganza for 40 chic pups. Finally, on May 30th judgment day arrived, with a select panel of independent judges convening to select America's Top Dog Model. And the beautiful, 6-year-old Mia emerged victorious.

Alongside her plumbing job and her modeling exploits, Mia loves chasing animals in the park and boating with her family. But home is where the heart is: "At nine o'clock sharp every evening," says Pam, "you will see Mia get up off the couch and head down the hallway to her room, where she crawls under the covers, sleeping on her back with her feet straight up in the air." But her publicist declined to comment on the rumor that Mia refuses to get out of bed for less than 10,000 dog treats.

America's Top Dog Model, visit [americastopdogmodel.com](http://americastopdogmodel.com)

### MAIL THE 'PRINCESS'

Write to: Mia, America's Top Dog Model, c/o Pam Ruckelshausen, 1234 Main St., Valencia, CA 91355