

# Thoroughly modern Millie

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BY: Jennifer Sommer

MENDOTA - One day, Karen Keefe's husband surprised her with a new Boston Terrier puppy he brought back from Michigan. "It was just the start of her making a difference in people's lives," stated Keefe.

She quickly found out that Millie was just something special. Keefe had her certified as a Canine Good Citizen and started looking for opportunities for her. After searching the Internet, Keefe decided to try to get her new puppy into modeling. She read Jo Jo Harder's book *How to Become a Top Dog Model* and followed all the advice, but nothing came of it. Then she submitted Millie in the America's Top Dog Model contest this year and recently found out that Millie was a finalist.



*America's Top Dog Model finalist, Millie, will do anything for her small tennis ball that owner Karen Keefe is hiding in the palm of her hand. The 2-1/2 year old Boston Terrier will be featured in a calendar as part of the contest prize winnings. (Reporter photos by Jennifer Sommer)*

Keefe, excited about the award, said Millie is very photogenic, sits well for the camera and would be well suited for modeling. She added, Millie has an exceptional disposition, and works well with people and other animals.

As part of her prize winnings, Millie will be featured the month of August in the 2014 America's Top Dog Model Calendar. Keefe hopes this "feather in [Mollie's] hat" will help her with Mollie's modeling pursuits.

Headquartered in Boca Raton, Fla., America's Top Dog Model contest is a national search for top dogs that make a difference. Now in its ninth season, contest themes have included fashion, home, travel, entertaining, and green living. This year's theme, "Jet Set Paws!" was designed to celebrate America's favorite travel companions.

Thoroughly modern Millie is no stranger to travel, either. Keefe and her pup recently returned from visiting her father in Davie, Fla. "Millie flies in her special carrier under the seat in front of me," said Keefe. While in Florida, Millie tagged along to dog friendly restaurants and played at the local dog park. Keefe said her

and Millie's semi-annual visits give her father something to look forward to.

When Keefe is not traveling with Millie, Millie plays with the other dogs on the Keefe's small farmette just south of Mendota. Their other pets include five horses, five cats, and six dogs. Keefe agrees that taking care of all the pets is a lot of work but worth it for the joy they give. And even though she considers Millie a "diva dog," Millie does not get special treatment over the other animals. "We're blessed with a furry family," she added.

Millie also spends time doing community service. Donning one of her many outfits, she sets off to visit the residents of the Mendota Lutheran Home or participate with the Starved Rock Kennel Club's Paws for Reading program.

What are Millie's future plans? Millie has an invitation to do a doggie fashion show at an upcoming MASS (Mendota Area Senior Services) pot luck dinner, Keefe hopes to enter her in the Mendota Sweet Corn Parade, plans to continue her visits to the Mendota Lutheran Home, and keep reading to preschoolers with the Head Start program. "I just want to get her out there and have fun. She's just that good," said Keefe.

Keefe also hopes to one day have her certified as a therapy dog. In the meantime, Millie will go around being Millie-wagging her tail and making a difference in the lives of those she meets.

More information about Millie can be found on her very own website, [www.modelingmillie.com](http://www.modelingmillie.com).