Fun-filled day at 20th Dogathon

Event at UPM promotes awareness on strays and importance of neutering them

By CH HONG YEEN

It was a day of fun in the sun for man's best friend at the 20th Dogathon at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in Serdang last Sunday.

Takal@k Sog, dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, said the event marked the 20th edition of the annual event with the theme “The Big 20: One fifth of a century; one dog for eternity!”

Professor Dr Mohd Hair Bejo, dean of the faculty, said the aim of the event was to promote awareness on stray animals and the importance of neutering them.

It is also to raise funds for the annual Projek Pengkasian Haiwan Terbiar (neutering of strays) or Pro-Kasih, an initiative done by veterinary students to address the issue of strays, he said.

A total of 850 dogs were registered for the event—150 short of the organizing committee’s goal of gathering 1,000 dogs.

But that did not deter any of the dog owners from having a fun outing with their furry companions.

There were dogs of all breeds and sizes at the event, but it was the large dogs like the St Bernard and Great Dane that were a crowd-puller.

Avid Cheong’s 26-month-old Great Dane might have weighed in at a whopping 81kg, but the gentle giant sat quietly as people took photos with him.

Cheong, who also attended the event last year, said he had hoped to meet other owners of the breed.

Cheng, who also attended the event last year, said he had hoped to meet other owners of the breed.

There are not many events for dogs, especially outdoors. There also aren’t many parks that allow dogs. The ones I know of are Desa Park City and Central Park in Bandar Utama.

Dogs need social events, just like humans,” he said.

The event started with the dog race, the highlight every year. Chan Chee Song and his five-and-a-half-year-old mongrel Milo emerged champion in the men’s-large dog category.

The 32-year-old programmer said he first saw Milo when the mutt was wandering around Jalan Neighbourhood. He had been living in Malaysia since 1997, said there were no gatherings for dogs and owners on such a scale elsewhere in Malaysia, and that was why they made their way to UPM to support the event.

“UPM is a pet-friendly. You can even take your dogs to the shopping mall. In Japan, many places are quite pet-friendly. You can even take your dogs to the shopping mall. It is quite restricted here, but I understand each country has different regulations,” he said.

One of the student volunteers said the games were designed to foster interaction between dog and owner.

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The winners for the men’s-large dog category in the Dog Race.