

DNA your dog

RAPS will help you figure out your Fido's family tree next weekend

by **Nathalie Heiberg-Harrison**

Contributor

The Richmond animal shelter will be holding its inaugural DNA My Dog event Sunday, April 5 to raise funds for the Richmond Animal Protection Society.

The event, which runs from 1 to 3 p.m., gives pet owners a chance to find out what kind of mix breed their dogs are with a DNA test.

Volunteers will be on-site to collect a cheek swab from participating dogs that will then be sent off to get processed.

Results will be mailed to owners in about two weeks and participants also get a month's worth of pet insurance and a year-long membership to Canadian Dog.

Event organizer Christie Lagally said the cost should be around \$70 including GST and shipping, and \$10 of that will go towards the Richmond Animal Protection Society.

The shelter will also have dog and human treats on hand, and will hold a contest to guess the mix breed of two dogs.

Lagally found out that her dog Toby, who she adopted from the shelter, was a mix of seven breeds when she did his DNA test: Boxer, Chinese Shar-Pei, Papillon, Parson Russell Terrier, Rhodesian Ridgeback, Saluki and Yorkshire Terrier.

She held a mini-contest with workers at the

shelter to guess her dog's breed and says the winner didn't even come close.

"He has looked like so many different breeds as he's grown so it was so hard to guess," she said.

The shelter, which sees approximately 1,300 animals go through its doors each year, has a strict no-kill policy so its funding is always stretched as it cares for animals until they find a home, no matter how long it takes.

Helen Savkovic, a vol-

unteer at the shelter, hopes to find out what mix her adopted dog Ella is.

"Everywhere I go it's like a lottery. Everyone guesses. I hear Spitz, Border Collie, everything. But what is she?"

"I'm guessing the same as everybody else: Border Collie, Papillon and Spitz," Savkovic said, but she's not betting on it.

For more information, visit the Richmond Animal Protection Society's website at www.rapsociety.com.



Nathalie Heiberg-Harrison photo

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