

# A VISIT WITH LYDIA

HOW WESTMINSTER'S TELEVISED  
DOG SHOW CHANGED HER LIFE

*"As a breeder of purebred dogs, I know the dedication and hard work it takes to not only produce healthy and 'sound tempered' dogs but to present them properly to the judges who evaluate our breeding stock. I take much pride in adhering to the AKC Code of Ethics and always present a professional appearance and display Sportsmanship-like conduct. Each dog's health and welfare are my top priority at all times and each dog is shown to their fullest potential in the ring."*

**L**ydia Goiffon started showing dogs in AKC with her family in 2007 when she was 13 years old. Along with her younger sister Ellie, she alternated between being ranked #1 and #2 Junior Handler of Australian Terriers for three consecutive years. Since then, she has shown a variety of dogs for people—including several Australian Shepherds—gaining a great deal of experience not only in showing her Terrier breed, but other breeds and groups as well.

In 2016, Lydia decided to take her hobby to a new level and offer her services to others. "Showing for others as a Junior Handler was rewarding and provided an excellent way to learn more about a variety of breeds. I know, from my experience, there is a need for ring-side pickup, grooming and weekend handlers at dog shows. I can professionally fill those needs with experience, passion and dedication to my trade, taking excellent care of the dog, making each dog look their best and competitive in the show ring."

Lydia has loved animals all her life. Her family has raised and owned many dogs and cats over the years. When Lydia was just 18 months old, her parents brought a new puppy into their family, the first dog Lydia can remember. She was a mixed breed Shih-Tzu and Poodle mix that they named Abby. She became Lydia's best friend, and knowing what she knows now, was her first heart dog. Abby passed away at almost 15 years old; Lydia will never forget her and still has her picture on her desk.

How did you decide to start showing dogs? "While our family was watching the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show on television, my younger sister





(who at that time was 8 years old), told my mom that she would like to show dogs some day. At that time our family was moving from our suburban home in the Twin Cities to our new country home and lifestyle in Wisconsin. Our quest to research and pick the right breed for us to show began.”

Their family narrowed their decision for a new breed to three breeds and ultimately decided that the Australian Terrier breed was the best fit for their family and their future desire to show and breed dogs. According to Lydia, it was not an easy task to locate a quality breeder in their area of the Midwest part of the states. Of the two Australian Terrier breeders they contacted, one made it clear she was not interested in placing a show dog with their family and junior handlers, the other was not the kind of breeder the family was looking for.

Eventually they found a breeder outside of their area and purchased two female Australian Terriers—one for Lydia and one for her sister Ellie to show. They began working with a local trainer and started showing their dogs. Their first Judge was the notable Mr. Peter Green at a show in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

Since that first show, Lydia’s handling has contributed toward many top awards for their Australian Terriers, including: AKC Championships, Grand Championships, Best of Breed at Westminster 2015, Best of Winners at the National Specialty, Multiple Best in Show (NOHS), Reserve Best in Show,

Multiple Group 1s, Award of Excellent at the 2014 World Show in Helsinki, Finland and #1 ranked in the US. These are among the top honors.

Lydia was home schooled which enabled her to travel with her family across the country to a variety of shows, including a trip to the World Dog Show in 2014 held in Helsinki, Finland. What was it like to show your dog at the World Dog Show? “It was an incredible experience, meeting so many wonderful people and beautiful dogs from all over the world. The entry for Australian Terriers was over 100 dogs. I was honored that my Australian Terrier Jake, was awarded ‘Excellent’ and finished in the top 7 Australian Terriers entered. We learned a lot about our breed standard, type and fine tuning our grooming skills. It was a trip and experience I will never forget.”

In 2015 BIS/RBIS/BISS/MBIS-NOHS GCH Ch Dunham Lake Unanimous Decision, “Jake,” shown by Lydia was awarded Best of Breed at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, under Judge Dr. Jerry Klein. It was this very show, 8 years prior, that they watched on television, that began the adventure for Lydia and her family. “What an honor and thrill to be a part of this exciting event. It was my first time in New York.” I don’t enjoy flying and prefer the country life, but this incredible dog show in New York is something I look forward to participating in many more times.”

In 2014, Jake made history in the breed as only the 2nd Red Australian

Terrier to ever win a Best in Show, which was awarded by Judge Mrs. Gloria Geringer. Also Jake is the only Australian Terrier to win a Best in Show-National Owner Handler, he has received two Best in Show-National Owner Handler Series in 2015.

For more information about Lydia and how you can contact her, visit her website at Lead by Lydia at [www.lead-bylydia.com](http://www.lead-bylydia.com) ■

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*As a reliable and professional person who loves animals, Lydia Goiffon has groomed and handled show dogs for a variety of breeds since 2007, most noted for the Australian Terrier breed. She is located in Northwestern, Wisconsin. Services include: ring-side pickup, grooming and weekend handling. She will represent your dog in the conformation show ring professionally, with experience and confidence, making your dog look their best, and working hard for you whether in the breed ring, group ring or Best in Show ring! Lydia is a member of the Cambridge Minnesota Kennel Club. Along with her sister and mother, breeds #1 ranked Australian Terriers in the US, multiple BIS and multiple BOB Australian Terriers at Westminster under the kennel name Dunham Lake Australian Terriers. They are also very active mentor’s and encourage new people in the breed to participate in not only conformation events, but other AKC performance events as well. Lydia’s other interests include riding and training her horses, working with the elderly as a CNA at a nursing home and finishing her Nursing Degree.*