

The National Steinbeck Center Announces: Travels with Charley Look Alike Contest and International Dog Fashion Show Celebrates

50th Anniversary of Steinbeck's Journey with a Poodle

Non Profit Press Release For Immediate Release

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SALINAS, CA, CITY OF LETTERS (June 15, 2010) This summer, hit the road with your dog and journey to the 30th annual Steinbeck Festival in Salinas. On August 7th, in celebration of the 2010 Steinbeck Festival's exploration of Journeys: Steinbeck Around the World, and the 50th anniversary of Steinbeck's trip across America with a poodle, the National Steinbeck Center announces a series of literary canine contests.

National Steinbeck Center Executive Director Colleen Bailey announced today that you can enter your "Charley" in our lookalike contest during the Steinbeck Festival on Saturday, August 7th at 1:30 p.m. Calling all Charleys. Do you have a Charley look-alike? Let us be the judge. Entry fee is \$10.00 per dog and the funds benefit the National Steinbeck Center.

The contest will be held at The National Steinbeck Center at One Main Street in Salinas. Check-in is in the lobby. All participants must register by July 31st to attend. To register please call the Museum store at (831) 775-4721 and provide your first and last name, your dog's name and pre-pay the \$10.00 entrant fee.

There will be two contests. The \$10.00 participation fee is for the entire event. Participants are welcome to participate in one or both events. At 1:30, a Charley Look-Alike Contest will be held, with prizes both for the dogs that look the most and the least like Steinbeck's standard poodle, Charley. At 2:00 pm, an international dog fashion show will be held (all breeds of dogs welcome), with prizes for the best internationally-dressed dog. Extra points will be awarded for international literary clues in your dog's costume. Dress your dog in his or her finest international apparel, pick a theme and country and come have some fun!

Local reporter from the Monterey Herald Mike Hale will be the judge of the best Charley look-alike. Sarah Cruse from Quail Lodge and Max, her Black Standard Poodle, will MC the event. The winner of the best Charley look-alike event will receive a Staycation with their pet--one night at the Hofsas House in Carmel (subject to availability.) The winner and his or her pet will enjoy dog-friendly Carmel and the Hofsas House pet concierge Cajun will make sure that everyone has something to do! The winner of the best-dressed international dog contest will win \$100 gift certificate to PetCo.

The National Steinbeck Center unveils its 2010 Steinbeck Festival, *Journeys: Steinbeck Around the World*, to be held from August 5 – 8, 2010. The festival will explore journeys of all kinds, throughout America and the wide world, through the eyes of John Steinbeck and others. Each year, hundreds of people from all walks of life attend the annual four-day festival, which includes talks, tours, film and the visual and performing arts. This year, for the first time, the Steinbeck Festival will be celebrated not only in Salinas, City of Letters, but in literary locales throughout the wide world, from Berlin to Hanoi to Paris. Tickets for the Steinbeck Festival are now on sale at www.steinbeckstore.org, or by phone at (831) 775-4721.

2010 FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

JOURNEYS:

- Cup of Gold: A Wine Journey through Steinbeck Country

FOOD:

- Circumnavigate the Globe through World Cuisine by Celebrity Chef Wendy Brodie

TALKS:

- *Next to My Passport: Travels with Steinbeck*, by PBS-featured Ted Conover, author of *The Routes of Man: How Roads are Changing the World and the Way We Live Today*.
- Steinbeck Behind the Iron Curtain, with Petr Kopeky
- *My Journey with Steinbeck*, an interview with biographer Jackson Benson
- *A Journey through Literary America* with Thomas R. Hummel
- Google Lit Trips: A Grapes of Wrath Virtual Ride-Along with Jerome Burg

PANELS:

- Japan and Steinbeck with Professor Yuji Kami, Executive Director of the John Steinbeck Society of Japan, and Japanese Steinbeck scholars

MUSIC:

- Travels with Singer/Songwriter Charlie Faye: on her 10-Month Tour to America 's unique cities

ART:

- *The World in Mind: Photographs* by Tamra L. Dempsey

Background on the Theme of The 30th Annual Steinbeck Festival:

While John Steinbeck was most famous for his books set in California , much of Steinbeck's work was written in or about places far from his home state. Steinbeck traveled regularly to Mexico, and over one third of his works are either set in Mexico or feature characters of Mexican descent. He spent time in Europe , and during WW II Steinbeck served as a war correspondent for the New York Herald Tribune in Great Britain and the Mediterranean area. *A Russian Journal* (1948) was an account of the author's unique journey to the Soviet Union with the photographer Robert Capa. In 1959 Steinbeck spent nearly a year at Discove Cottage in England, working with Morte d'Arthur, one of his favorite books from his childhood. After returning to the United States, he, along with his wife's poodle, Charley, became reacquainted with his own country and in 1962 the national trek was published as *Travels with Charley in Search of America*. In later years he also provided special reports abroad, including in and about Vietnam, and divided his time between New York City, Sag Harbor and California.

Today, John Steinbeck's literature is translated throughout the world. Its popularity has never wavered in Europe and Steinbeck has a vibrant following in the Pacific Rim. His enduring and universal themes continue to touch people of all backgrounds.

Background on the National Steinbeck Center :

The National Steinbeck Center is located in Salinas, California, the birthplace of John Steinbeck. The National Steinbeck Center is a museum and cultural institution whose mission is "to tell the story of John Steinbeck's rich legacy, and to present, create and explore stories of the human condition." The Center offers three visitor experiences: the John Steinbeck Exhibition Hall, which houses seven themed theaters with film clips and interactive exhibits from the Nobel prize-winning author's works, the Rabobank Agriculture Museum, which explores the stories of the Salinas Valley "from field to fork," and changing art and cultural exhibits and a variety of educational and public programs. For more information about the National Steinbeck Center or past festivals, please visit the National Steinbeck Center's website at www.steinbeck.org.

For more information on upcoming events or to purchase tickets call (831) 775-4721.