

ferent situations, including disasters – such as the earthquake in Haiti where dogs found people beneath the rubble – cadaver searches, drowning situations, and avalanches. Search and rescue training is a rigorous process starting from puppyhood. Once training is completed, dogs are tested and certified by SAR organizations. Breeds that most commonly work with SAR are German Shepherds, Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, and Bloodhounds, among others.

* Explosives detection. Dogs have been serving our country at home and abroad for many years saving lives by warning their handlers of explosive devices. These canine heroes work with the police, Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and military to locate dangerous materials. The dogs go through an intense training course to learn how to locate and identify a wide variety of explosives and to alert their handlers of its presence. Breeds that excel in this kind of work include the German Shepherd, Belgian Malinois, and Vizsla.

* Cancer detection. Believe it or not, scientists were able to train Labrador Retrievers to sniff out cancer in patients' breath by smelling samples and sitting down in front of the one that was cancerous. Cancer cells give off different odors than regular cells and they change the way a person's breath smells – a dog's keen nose can tell the difference. In

one case in particular, the Lab correctly diagnosed the disease 98 percent of the time, whereas a test that is commonly used found the cancer only 10 percent of the time.

* Allergy Alert dogs. Peanut allergies can be life threatening. Stepping up to the job to alleviate parents' fears when their kids leave the house are a variety of dogs that have the uncanny sense to sniff out even the slightest trace of peanuts. These dogs are trained to detect the allergen and its residue at schools, during social events, and everyday activities and alert their owner. Their training is similar to that of a police dog learning to track scents or drugs. Breeds that most commonly work as allergy alert dogs are the Poodle, the Golden Retriever, and the Portuguese Water Dog.

From the Afghan Hound to the Turkish Van, AKC Meet the Breeds is the world's largest showcase of dogs and cats and offers pet lovers a unique opportunity to play with some of the country's rarest dog and cat breeds while educating themselves about responsible pet ownership and choosing the right breed for their lifestyle. Presented by PetPartners, Inc., this family-friendly event will showcase 160 AKC registered dog breeds and 50 TICA registered cat breeds – in booths individually decorated to depict each breed's country of origin, historical purpose/function, and attributes as a family pet – include fun animal demon-

strations and more than 100 vendors selling unique holiday dog and cat items.

Visit www.meetthebreeds.com for more information on these detection dog breeds, or meet them in person at AKC Meet the Breeds November 19th and 20th at the Javits Center in New York City. Tickets allow admittance for one day and can be purchased online at www.meetthebreeds.com. You can also see these dogs at the AKC/Eukanuba National Championship December 17th and 18th at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida.