

OUR LIVES: Crazy canines



Hat's the way to do it!

ou would love to



Pride of place



Pink pup



Malty sea dog



Rising fun



Romantic rover

'Gimme a short bark and sides, please!'

Think grooming your pup means giving him a quick bath? Think again. We meet the dog owners who are going to extremes

A bouquet of pink roses sits on a carpet of red love hearts. In the background, soft music is playing and a candle casts a golden glow over everything. It could be a romantic scene being played out in a boudoir in Paris.

But in fact it is on a dog — in Northampton.

No, your eyes are not deceiving you. This hound has been dyed, coiffed and stencilled for the Extraordinary Grooming Show 2014, the UK's first creative-only grooming competition.

Here, dogs are clipped, embellished and sprayed into fairy-tale characters, sea creatures and magicians.

The only limit to what can be achieved is their owners' imagination — and these imaginations are incredible.

The show is organised by the League of Extraordinary Groomers — also known as Tanya Stevens, Joanne Bealoe and Su Eld-Weaver. They are all dog groomers with their own businesses. Together, their aim is to teach and

demonstrate safe creative grooming. Tanya says: 'The artistry of grooming captures our imaginations. The Extraordinary Grooming Show combines our skills with a love of art and spending quality time with our dogs. It's wonderful.'

Visiting the show is an eye-opening experience. Everywhere you look are pink, green, orange and red dogs.

Your eyes are not deceiving you

Among the whimsical wofers taking part is a poodle that looks as though it has leapt straight from *Alice in Wonderland*. A white rabbit has been fashioned on its back leg, next to the toothy grin of the Cheshire Cat. The dog's owner sports the jaunty top hat and crazy bow tie of the Mad Hatter.

Another daring dog appears to have stepped out of a circus ring. It

has a top hat and ringmaster's moustache and its fur has been transformed into a multicoloured clown costume, while its back legs have been clipped to resemble a show horse.

Nearby, against a backdrop of the African plains, stands a majestic lion

with a full mane, protecting its cub.

A touch of Vegas glamour is added by a pimped-up pooch representing Sin City. A head-dress of red feathers matches the Vegas sign on its midriff, while diamonds and sequins add bling.

One magical mutt has a rabbit



Nose to rose

popping out of a hat on its back while its owner waves a wand and hopes they'll be the ones to walk away with a prize.

But the bar has been set high.

Su has taken US competitions by storm with her bright orange octo-poodle and Japanese geisha-themed hound.

This time, there are four different categories to judge.

Carving Class sees owners crafting designs with clippers, trimmers and scissors.

In the Salon Creative Class, groomers are tested on their use of stencils or freehand techniques to add tattoos, colour and other embellishments.

The Runway Section allows dogs and stylists to show off their work on the catwalk.

And the final category is the Extreme Creative Class where

Edited by Sian Gregory



Betting on a winner



Just the ticket

Does your pet like to dress up? Send your pics to tab.sian@bavec.co.uk. We'll pay for any we publish.