NATIONAL
SHORTHORN LASSIE
INFORMATION HANDBOOK

A practical guide to the National Shorthorn Lassie Queen Contest, responsibilities, attire, and program history.

Updated August 2026

A WELCOME

About This Handbook

This handbook answers common questions regarding the National Shorthorn Lassie Queen Contest, the Shorthorn Lassie Association, and related program materials. The formal application is available through the American Shorthorn Association website or the National Shorthorn Lassie Queen Coordinator(s).

American Shorthorn Association 7607 NW Prairie View Road, Kansas City, Missouri 64151 | www.shorthorn.org

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01 CONTEST AT A GLANCE

Key Program Details

Membership	Paid National Shorthorn Lassies membership is required before applying.
State representation	Each state may present candidates. If more than one candidate from the same state, only one may serve as national royalty.
Registration fee	$250, submitted with the application.
Application deadline	October 1.
Contest	Cattlemen's Congress in January.
Schedule	Contest dates, coronation timing, and required activities will be listed in the official contestant schedule.
Travel	The state, association, or parents are responsible for contestant travel and lodging expenses.

Schedule priority The Queen Contestant Activity Schedule takes priority if it conflicts with another activity during Cattlemen's Congress.

02 CONTEST RULES AND PROCEDURES

Before Applying

- Read the current National Shorthorn Lassie application carefully.
- Confirm paid membership before submitting the application.
- Submit the typed application and $250 registration fee by October 1.
- Email a full-costume photograph to the Queen Coordinator(s).
- Direct questions to the National Queen Coordinator(s) or a National Lassie Board member.

Contest Participation

- Each state is responsible for selecting a qualified candidate.
- Parents or states are responsible for the contestant during Cattlemen's Congress.
- Contestants must follow the official schedule and attend all required activities. Missing required activities may result in disqualification.
- Contestants may participate in other Cattlemen's Congress events when schedules permit, but Queen Contest activities take priority.
- All pre-contest and on-site instructions must be followed.

Photo Book

Bring one 8 x 11-inch photo book, limited to 40 pages, that tells the story of the contestant's involvement in the Shorthorn and beef industries.

- Personal information and family
- School, church, and community activities
- Shorthorn activities and shows
- Overall involvement in the Shorthorn and beef industries

Schedule notice Contest schedules are expected approximately one month before the contest.

03 ELIGIBILITY AND CONDUCT

Eligibility

- An unmarried young woman age 16-21 as of January 1 of the current year may be nominated by a state Shorthorn association, state Lassie association, or a group of Shorthorn breeders within a state without an association.
- To retain the title, the National Lassie Queen must remain single and uphold high moral standards throughout the one-year reign.
- Applicants should demonstrate active interest in Shorthorn projects and participation in Shorthorn organizations.
- Contestants must be paid National Lassie Association members when applying.

Conduct During the Reign

- Wear the complete Lassie Queen costume while serving in an official capacity.
- Do not distribute ribbons or participate in official photographs unless in full costume.
- Do not consume alcohol, drugs, or use tobacco while attending, or traveling to/from, a Shorthorn function during the reign.
- A parent is responsible for providing a chaperone for travel to and from Shorthorn events. Chaperones must be over the age of 18 and not a significant other of the royalty.

Program standard These expectations support a consistent and professional image for the National Shorthorn Lassie Queen Program.

04 CONTESTANT EVALUATION

Contestants are evaluated through four separate ranking processes. The National Lassie Queen Chairman compiles the rankings and keeps the results confidential until coronation.

1. Application	Three judges rank contestants using the application score sheet.
2. Interview	A judging panel ranks contestants using the personal interview categories.
3. Photo book	This should be provided while conducting interviews and at the luncheon.
4. Board observation	The National Lassie Board ranks contestants based on interactions with breeders and other contestants during Cattlemen's Congress. Each contestant also gives a short introduction at the annual meeting.

Judges' scorecards will be provided to the Queen Coordinator(s) following their evaluations. Copies will be available to contestants following coronation.

05 QUEEN AND LASSIE RESPONSIBILITIES

National Royalty Responsibilities

- Represent the program at national events, meetings, and shows.
- Coordinate with state queens to extend Lassie representation.
- Provide an end-of-year report at the annual meeting and detailed expense account to the treasurer.
- Deliver speeches throughout the year as needed.
- Submit timely travel reports to Shorthorn Country and the National Shorthorn Lassie Board.

Required Attendance

- Cattlemen's Congress
- North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE)
- National Junior Shorthorn Show and Youth Conference

Travel Funding

National Queen	A fund is established for the National Queen to help offset travel expenses and pursue future endeavors. Additional expenses are the responsibility of the Queen and/or parents.
National Lassie	A fund is established for the National Lassie to help offset travel expenses and pursue future endeavors. Additional expenses are the responsibility of the Queen and/or parents.

06 OFFICIAL ATTIRE

Attire Stewardship

Any official attire provided by the National Queen Coordinator(s) must be returned at the end of the reign with every component accounted for. Keep attire in the condition received, dry clean as needed and before the next national contest, and replace missing or damaged parts before the competition. The leather banners are signed by each royalty at the end of their reign and provided to the new royalty. Satin sashes are for the royalty to keep.

Contestant Attire Checklist

- ☐ 1 kilt and kilt pin
- ☐ 1 black jacket
- ☐ Simple black boots ending just below the knee
- ☐ black bodysuit
- ☐ Black hose
- ☐ State crown
- ☐ State sash

Fit and presentation The kilt is worn slightly above the knee. It is recommended that royalty members keep their makeup and accessories simple and complimentary to the outfit.

07 HISTORY AND HERITAGE

The Lassie Movement

- The National Shorthorn Lassies were officially organized in 1956 at the Chicago International Livestock Show.
- W. Henry Dilatush is recognized as the father of the Lassie movement and proposed a women's auxiliary in 1955.
- Mrs. Henry Baum led the organization. Ann Bullock of Missouri became the first National Lassie Queen in 1956.
- The organization helps promote Shorthorn and Polled Shorthorn cattle.

Meaning of the Costume

Because Shorthorn cattle originated in the British Isles and important breed improvements came through cattle imported from Scotland, the national Scottish costume was selected. The Lassie Queen tartan is Royal Stuart.

Kilt	A short, pleated garment traditionally worn in the Scottish Highlands.
Tartan	The checkered or cross-barred cloth, usually woolen, with narrow bands of color.
Plaid	A shawl-like garment wrapped around the body and fastened at the left shoulder. This piece is no longer a component of national attire.

08 FINAL CHECKLIST

Candidate Submission Checklist

- ☐ Paid membership confirmed
- ☐ Typed application complete
- ☐ Application submitted by October 1
- ☐ $250 registration fee included
- ☐ Full-costume photograph emailed
- ☐ 8 x 11-inch photo book prepared, maximum 40 pages
- ☐ Travel, lodging, and chaperone plans confirmed
- ☐ Official schedule reviewed
- ☐ Official costume complete

Contacts and Resources

Contest questions Contact the National Shorthorn Lassie Queen Coordinator(s) or a National Lassie Board member.

2026 National Shorthorn Lassie Association Board:

- President – Jacalyn Meisner, Illinois
- Vice President – Hannah Olson, Wisconsin
- Secretary – Sydney Miller, Michigan
- Treasurer – Pam Dressen, Minnesota
- Queen Coordinators – Christina Wenderski, Illinois and Brianna Duerre, South Dakota
- Publicity – Kaila Williams, Oklahoma