



Dear friends,



Welcome to our December Newsletter from www.bestdoggietips.com. Our recipe this month is for a special Christmas treat – Dr Harry's canine cookies. We've also got the sequel to our story last month - An Interview at the Dog Pound written by Sally Hull. We've also got another story from Sally called Valour. And we've got some great fun stuff for Christmas – dog jokes, some special Christmas carols, and Doggie Ten Commandments. We've also got a feature on how to help your dog have a happy Christmas. We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

**Merry Christmas to you and your doggie families from
Hamish and all of us here at BestDoggieTips.**

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My goal in life is to be as good of a person my dog already thinks I am. – *Andy Rooney*

Recipe - Dr Harry's Canine Cookies

Ingredients

2 - 3 cups fresh parsley, finely chopped
¼ cup carrot, finely chopped
¼ cup grated mozzarella cheese
2 tbsp olive oil
2¾ cups wholemeal flour
2 tbsp unprocessed bran flakes
2 tsp baking powder
½ cup water

To Make

Preheat oven to moderate (180°C or 350°F for a gas oven, 200°C or 390°F for an electric oven).

Grease or line 2 baking trays.

Mix the parsley, carrot, cheese and oil in a bowl. In a separate bowl, mix all the dry ingredients (flour, bran and baking powder). Now add the parsley mixture and stir well to combine. Gradually add water and mix well. Add more water if needed to make dough moist.

Empty the dough out onto a floured surface, and knead well for 1 minute. Roll out to 1cm (3/8") thick. Use a small cookie cutter or glass to cut out shapes and place on prepared trays.

Bake for 20 - 30 minutes. Place on a wire rack and cool until hardened. Store in an airtight container. Makes around 36 cookies.

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Interview at the Dog Pound Part 2

written by Sally Hull

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It had been two weeks since I visited the local dog pound and its denizen. The story, not surprisingly, had attracted a lot of attention from rescue groups in the area. They were pleased someone from the city paper had taken the time to write a story on why dogs end up in the pound. It was hoped it might raise some awareness.

I found my mind wandering back to that sad place time and again. I wondered how feisty little Patsy was, and if she had been adopted yet. I also worried for Popper, the young Border Collie. I was deeply troubled in my spirit.

As I sat staring blankly at my computer screen, trying to concentrate on another story, I felt the familiar warmth of a little chin resting on my knee.

"Hi Sweetie." I stroked the soft fur of my own dog, Sophie. She always knew when I was upset. They all seem to just know. There was then a gentle nudge of my arm on the opposite side as my other dog, Banner, vied for my affections. Border Collies, both of them.

"I have to go back," I said, looking into Sophie's intelligent eyes. "I have to know."

Return to the Pound

Once again, I found myself in that foul smelling kennel area. No matter how many times you clean a place like this, the stench is always there. It must be hell for dogs, having such a keen sense of smell.

Pete's old kennel had a new tenant, some sort of Labrador mix. She was black with small white markings on her chest and paws. There was a food dish in the corner, the kibble untouched by the look of it. She lay on her side, whining. I could see she had recently had pups by the swollen teats. Poor girl.

I moved past the Lab, to Spartan's old kennel. Empty. Good. I held my breath as I approached Popper's kennel, hoping beyond hope that he had been adopted. I was not prepared for what I saw. This once proud, handsome young Border Collie was now a quivering mass in the corner of his kennel. He glanced up at me briefly, a flicker of recognition in his eyes, then he began to cough violently. His tail was tucked tightly between his shaking legs.

"Oh Popper!" I cried. "What has happened to you?" Popper simply cowered into the corner, shrinking away from my voice.

"It's his breed," a familiar voice spoke from behind. "They're too sensitive. The noise and smells drive them crazy. Intelligent fellows like him can't take the long hours of boredom and lack of

companionship." I turned around to see my little friend Patsy, the Jack Russell Terrier. I peered through her kennel gate.

"Ah Patsy," I shook my head. "I had hoped you would have found a nice home."

"I did," Patsy replied. "Well, at least I thought I did. The day you came here, someone came in and chose me. It turned out the same...another person who wanted a cute little dog, but not the work it takes to keep them happy. She brought me back just three days later, tired of my constant playing and running about, bouncing off the furniture." Patsy stood on her hind legs, resting her little paws on the gate. "But guess what? A man and a little girl came here yesterday, they smelled VERY good too! They petted me, and played with me. Then they threw a ball for me. I brought it right back to them like a good dog!" Patsy was becoming very excited. Her stubby little tail wagged rapidly back and forth, making me grin. "They kept talking about something called flyball! The man said they were going to go talk to someone named Mom, and maybe they would come back."

I smiled. Maybe they would come back. In the meantime, I had some questions for Patsy. "What has happened in here since my last visit?" She dropped back down onto her haunches, and became sullen.

"I hate this place," she said. "That Lab down there?" I nodded. "Well, she came in with ten puppies. Someone just dumped them all like garbage at the front door. That was last week. Five days ago, some of her young became very, very ill. I remember smelling the sickness...the smell of blood. The workers came in, they called the sickness Parvo. They were very agitated. Six of her young died, the other four went behind the steel door." Patsy shuddered. "She has been mourning since, and will not eat."

"Lord have mercy," I whispered.

"That's not all," she said. "The disease has run through the kennel, and others have gone behind the steel door. I suppose I was lucky, I was vaccinated. So was Popper, but he has The Cough." As if on cue, Popper once again was seized by a coughing fit behind us.

"I have to get out of here," Patsy wailed. "I am so frightened!" Once again I was questioning the logic of my return to this God forsaken place.

"Oh Patsy," I opened the door to her kennel and picked her up in my arms, cuddling her close. I could feel her trembling.

"You smell different," she said suddenly stopping and sniffing me. "You...smell...like one of...THEM."

"Them?" I asked.

"A Rescuer!" she sniffed me once more, her little tail wagging rapidly. Just then, the door to the kennel room opened, and a pound worker and a man with a little girl came in. The little girl rushed toward Patsy's kennel, but stopped abruptly when she saw me holding her.

"Oh no!" she wailed. "You aren't taking my dog are you?" I quickly put Patsy into her waiting arms, and said "No young lady, she is all yours! But take very good care of her, she is one special little dog."

"Yay! Daddy look!" she squealed as Patsy planted little dog kisses all over her cheeks. "Daddy, is she really mine?"

"Yes Honey, she is really yours," her father beamed. The worker instructed them to be sure to bleach the bottoms of their shoes as they left, and I saw a brilliant sparkle in Patsy's eyes as she looked at me over the shoulder of her new little master. This time, I was certain, it would be okay...at least for this one little dog.

As I left the building, and the many sad and despairing dogs it held, I could not help but wonder how anyone with a heart could abandon their beloved and devoted pet. Ignorance and selfishness are the cause of so much grief. These amazing animals give humans their whole hearts. They serve them, protect them, and give them unconditional love regardless of how they are treated. Their capacity for forgiveness is something I will never comprehend...and yet they are so often treated like trash by the very ones they trust. Their loyalty is repaid with blind indifference.

Opening the door to my car, I wiped a tear from my cheek, and looked down. "Patsy isn't the only dog who will find out what flyball is, right Popper?" Popper looked up at me, a glimmer of hope returning to his glazed eyes, his tail wagging slightly between his legs. I knelt down, cupped his sweet little face in my hands, and looked him in the eyes.

"It's off to the vet with you, and then when you are well, you are going to meet your new brother and sister."

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

This is a work of fiction, and as such, I have chosen to end it on a happy note.

I truly wish all pound stories ended in such a manner, but sadly, this is not the case. For most animals, the story ends quite differently. According to the Humane Society in the USA, THIRTY EIGHT ANIMALS PER MINUTE are put to death for no other reason than THEY EXIST. **Responsibility begins with YOU.**

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<http://chattypet.com/pets/show/74>

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Valour, the Story of a Chained Dog

written by Sally Hull

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Valour could feel the life ebbing from his thin frail body. It was -30 with the wind chill. His chain kept him prisoner, and held him fast. He was surrounded by his own excrement, and his dog house was tipped over and out of reach, so there was nothing to shield him from the bitterness of winter.

He could see the house, knowing there was warmth within, but his howls fell on deaf ears. Nobody came to his aid. Nobody cared. After all, he was just a dog.

It had been this way since he was a pup. They brought him home, and chained him to the dog house. In the beginning, the little boy came out to play with him, but soon the boy tired of him, and the only human contact he had was the master filling his dishes with water and a cheap, tasteless dog food a couple of times a week. There was never so much as a pat on the head. In the winter he never got fresh water, he had to eat snow...and that snow was usually fouled by his own waste. The endless hours of boredom drove him to the brink of insanity. He often chewed on his paws until they bled.

Now, he could feel the pain and misery was coming to an end. As the cold finally sapped his life's breath away, Valour felt warm for the first time in his life. He went to sleep.

~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~

Valour blinked. What was this? Warmth. Blankets. He lifted his head. He was laying on a bed. No...IN a bed. Morning sunlight spilled across the quilt that covered him. Panic. Where am I? He heard a dog howling outside the window. It sent a chill up his spine, it was so filled with despair and fear.

He suddenly had awareness that something very strange and magical had transpired in the deep cold of the winter night. He was given awareness...

Valour had switched places with the Master.

He leaped out of bed in his human body, strangely not awkward, but as though he had been this way his whole life. He looked out the bedroom window. There, chained to the dog house outside was the Master, in Valour's old body. He was shivering, crying and desperate to be relieved of his hunger, loneliness and cold.

Valour gripped the window sill, his knuckles turning white. His eyes narrowed as he looked out upon the Master. He was overcome with righteous anger.

He strode purposefully into the kitchen, his eyes darting about, taking in everything. There...he found what he was looking for. He reached over and pulled the sharpest knife out of the knife block on the counter. He gripped it tightly, and made his way to the door. In bare feet and pyjamas, he trudged through the snow towards the Master. The Master cowered, shivering, fearing what was to

come. Valour grasped the Master, placing the knife between his throat and the collar,. The Master screamed in terror. Valour jerked the knife upwards with one violent thrust. The knife severed the collar, and along with the chain, it fell to the ground with a dull thud. Picking the Master up and cradling him in his arms, he made his way back to the house. He kicked the door open and carried him over to the fireplace to warm him. He fed him, and gave him clean water. He then covered him with a blanket, and sat beside him, saying nothing, but stroking his head thoughtfully.

You see, Valour had been given the brain and the body of a man, but he still had the heart of a dog, a heart that beat with compassion, love and a forgiveness beyond human comprehension.

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Dog Jokes

The World's Smartest Dog?

As a butcher is shooing a dog from his shop, he sees \$10 and a note in his mouth, reading: "10 lamb chops, please."

Amazed, he takes the money, puts a bag of chops in the dog's mouth, and quickly closes the shop. He follows the dog and watches him wait for a green light, look both ways, and trot across the road to a bus stop. The dog checks the timetable and sits on the bench. When a bus arrives, he walks around to the front and looks at the number, then boards the bus. The butcher follows, dumbstruck.

As the bus travels out into the suburbs, the dog takes in the scenery. After a while he stands on his back paws to push the "stop" button, then the butcher follows him off.

The dog runs up to a house and drops his bag on the stoop. He goes back down the path, takes a big run, and throws himself -Whap!- against the door. He does this again and again. No answer. So he jumps on a wall, walks around the garden, beats his head against a window, jumps off, and waits at the front door. A big guy opens it and yells at the dog.

The butcher runs up and screams at the guy: "What in the world are you doing? This dog's a genius!" The owner responds, "Genius? I don't think so. It's the second time this week he's forgotten his key!"

A Great Way to Clean Your Toilet!!!

Great Directions here for a real clean toilet!!! Easy too!!!!

1. Lift both lids on your toilet bowl and add a couple of capfuls of shampoo to the water.
2. Go to the other room where the cat is sleeping, pick it up and soothe it while you carry it towards the bathroom.
3. In one smooth movement, put the cat in the toilet and close both lids (You may need to stand on the lid, afterwards). The cat will self agitate and make ample suds. (Never mind the noises that come from the toilet, the cat is actually enjoying this.)
4. Flush the toilet three or four times. (This provides a "power-wash" and "rinse")
5. Have someone open the closest door to the outside (Be sure that no one is between the toilet and the outside door.)
6. Stand behind the toilet as far as you can, and quickly lift both lids.

7. The cat will rocket out of the toilet and run outside where it will dry itself. After this procedure, both the toilet and the cat will be sparkling clean!

Sincerely,

The Dog

Beware of the Dog

Upon entering a small country store, a stranger noticed a sign saying DANGER! BEWARE OF DOG! posted on the glass door. Inside a harmless old hound dog was asleep on the floor beside the cash register.

He asked the store manager, "Is that the dog folks are supposed to beware of?"

"Yep, that's him," he replied.

The amused stranger inquired, "That certainly doesn't look like a dangerous dog to me. Why in the world would you post that sign?"

The owner responded, "Because, before I posted that sign, people kept tripping over him."

Cool Lines

A Chihuahua, a Doberman, and a Bulldog are in a doggie bar having a cool one when a good-looking female Poodle comes up to them and says, "Whoever can say liver and cheese in a sentence can have me." So the Doberman says, "I love liver and cheese." The Poodle says, "That's not good enough." The Bulldog says, "I hate liver and cheese." She says, "That's not creative." Finally the Chihuahua says, "Liver alone...cheese mine!"

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A Dog's Ten Commandments

We have our ten commandments, and so do dogs.

One - Food left unsupervised on a table has been abandoned.

Abandoned food can be claimed by whoever finds it first. However, there is a time limit, so either eat the food immediately, or stash it somewhere safe (see commandment number 2).

Two - The best place to hide food for later on is in plain sight.

Try behind the sofa cushion or tucked down the side of the sofa – humans rarely pull apart the sofa to vacuum, so your food should be safe for a couple of weeks. Just plonking it on top of the bed is usually a bad idea – the humans spot that pretty quickly.

Three – Anyone on a skateboard or a bicycle is a monster in disguise.

Bark loudly and often until they go. This is very effective – it works every time!

Four – Perfect the art of looking thin at human mealtimes.

It is possible to make your face look really thin, no matter what size you are, so humans feel sorry for you and give you food from the table. If you are carrying a little extra around the middle, make sure you sit so that the pudgy bits are less visible and they just see your staving face.

Five – Don't give the ball back.

They'll just throw it again. Make them work for it by chasing you or trying to wrestle it out of your mouth. They need exercise too you know.

Six – the best way to get attention is to bark.

Humans immediately want to know what you have seen that they haven't. If you want to play and they don't, just look out the window, bark once or twice (seriously), and they'll come straight over to see what the problem is. Now shove your toy at them and smile. If all else fails – shiver uncontrollably. All humans respond to this, usually with cuddles.

Seven – Do what you can to feel the wind through your fur.

Run really fast. Hang your head out of the car window. Hitch a ride on a motor bike. Pretend you're a sled dog in the Antarctic.

Eight – Don't let them put clothes on you.

We're dogs – we already have fur coats (unless you are one of those little Mexican hairless things). It's demeaning and silly and we don't care if it is Christmas!

Nine – If you are left alone in the house, it's OK to trash the place.

But only do this once, or you might find you are not allowed in the house. Every dog is allowed one rock star moment to totally trash the place when left alone for a few hours. Just make sure you are

standing in the middle of the mess with a silly grin on your face when they get home, so that they know it's a joke.

Ten – Reward humans when they are good.

Everyone needs positive reinforcement when they do something good, so let your owners know when they have done well with a lick, a cuddle, or by laying your head on their lap. You can reward them for giving you treats, scratching your head in just the right place, taking care of you during thunderstorms, taking you for a ride in the car or taking you to the dog park.

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Help Your Dog Have a Happy Christmas

Christmas is a great time to catch up with family and friends, and most pets love the extra hustle and bustle as well as the extra pats and treats. However some anxious animals may find the extra noise and activity overwhelming.

If your pet is fearful of extra attention then set up a special comfort zone away from visitors. Place their regular bed, food and toys in a spare room or the garage. And don't forget to give your pet extra attention and walks throughout the day.

Once the visitors have all left for the day, take your pooch out for an extra toileting walk, and then bring him inside and allow him to check out the resulting chaos. Be careful though, all those new scents may make your pet feel he needs to re-mark his scent.

Likewise some visitors may not be used to sharing their lounge seat with a pet. If children or elderly people are visiting, and you have a dog who jumps or is very excitable, put them on the leash when visitors first arrive.

Dogs can overeat too at Christmas, especially if they are expert beggars. Children tend to drop food, and well meaning friends are prone to slip your pooch some meat or bones from their plate. If you are worried about your dog getting too much rich food, it's a good idea to ask your guests as they arrive not to feed the dog any scraps. There's not much you can do about the children, except follow them around yourself and see if you cannot beat the dog to those dropped chips!

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Special Christmas Carols

Australian Jingle Bells

Dashing through the bush in a rusty Holden ute
Kicking up the dust. Esky in the boot.
Kelpie by my side, singing Christmas songs
It's summer time and I am in my singlet, shorts and thongs.

Oh! Jingle Bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way
Christmas in Australia on a scorching summer's day, Hey!
Jingle Bells, jingle bells, Christmas time is beaut
Oh what fun it is to ride in a rusty Holden ute.

Engine's getting hot. We dodge the kangaroos
The swaggy climbs aboard, he is welcome too
All the family's there, sitting by the pool
Christmas Day the Aussie way, by the barbecue.

Oh! Jingle Bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way
Christmas in Australia on a scorching summer's day, Hey!
Jingle Bells, jingle bells, Christmas time is beaut
Oh what fun it is to ride in a rusty Holden ute.

Come the afternoon, Grandpa has a doze
The kids and Uncle Bruce are swimming in their clothes.
The time comes round to go, we take the family snap
Pack the car and all shoot through before the washing up.

Oh! Jingle Bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way
Christmas in Australia on a scorching summer's day, Hey!
Jingle Bells, jingle bells, Christmas time is beaut
Oh what fun it is to ride in a rusty Holden ute.

A Merry Christmas Wish From Your Pets

We wish you a Merry Christmas, we wish you a Merry Christmas
We wish you a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year

The cat won't bring dead birds home, and I won't chew your mobile phone
We promise we'll be better than this time last year

The fish will keep their tank clean, the birds promise that they won't scream
We all want to do our best at this time of year

I'm hoping for a toy I can rip and the cat wants some new catnip
The birds would like a new mirror and the fish – they can't speak!

If we are very good, will you please give us some leftover food
We like turkey, ham and chicken, or even some mince pies

On behalf of all of us we'd like to thank you for caring for us
We love you and want you near (even the cat)!

We wish you a Merry Christmas, we wish you a Merry Christmas
We wish you a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year

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The Weird & the Wonderful

No One Hurt After Dog Accidentally Takes Car For A Drive

Here's a lesson for those who like to keep their vehicles clean - never take your dog with you when you're at the car wash. A Pryor, Oklahoma man learned that lesson the hard way on Thursday, after he left his pooch inside his automobile while he was busy cleaning it at one of those do-it-yourself places.

The 70-lbs. pit bull named Killys got restless while his best friend was taking care of business, jumped in the front seat and somehow shifted the car into reverse. The vehicle then started moving, headed onto the highway, drove in a loop for a minute or two, and finally, mercifully came to a stop in one of the car wash's automated lanes.

Witness Mark Walker was startled when he thought he saw a dog at the wheel. "I heard somebody holler. I walked out the front door and seen a car come off the four lane backwards and into the automatic bay. As soon as I looked around the corner I saw the dog in the car -- just the dog!"

No one was hurt and amazingly, nothing was hit. But the owner lost his car anyway when police coming to check out the report of a vehicle being driven by a dog found the man had no proof of insurance.

The officer involved, Brent Crittenden, admits his paperwork was a little odd, "It made my report quite easy because the driver information was all blank and I didn't have to fill that out."

The owner was forced to walk the canine home after the now spotless car was towed away.

Fortunately, the animal wasn't charged for his little sojourn into the human world.

After all, the dog already had a licence.

Dog goes for slimming challenge



A dog that weighs more than nine stone and needs to lose the equivalent of 51 tins of dog food is to go head to head in a weight loss challenge.

Alfie, who lives in Edinburgh, has been chosen to go up against seven other obese pets in a bid to slim down for the PDSA veterinary charity contest.

The seven-year-old German Shepherd was "skin and bone" when he was adopted by his owner, Helen Smith, of Southhouse.

Vets said Alfie should weigh about six stone.

Alfie, who is 55% overweight, is being put on a 100 day diet and fitness programme as part of the PDSA's Pet Fit Club competition.

Overweight German Shepherd, Alfie, with owner Helen Smith

PDSA vets and nurses at the Edinburgh PetAid hospital will create a specially tailored plan for Alfie, to help him shift his excess inches.

Mrs Smith, 51, admits she used to spoil her beloved dog.

She said: "When I adopted Alfie three years ago he was skin and bone.

"He hadn't been cared for properly and you could see every one of his ribs. I wanted to feed him up and spoil him with his favourite foods, but it got to the point where I couldn't say no to his puppy-dog eyes."

Alfie used to enjoy munching his way through biscuits, toast, cheese and the family's leftovers - on top of his daily large tin of dog food.

Mrs Smith added: "I want my Alfie to have a long and happy life.

"I know German Shepherds are prone to joint problems and carrying excess weight will only make that worse. I'm hoping that PDSA Pet Fit Club will help him lose flab so we can have many more years together."

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