



www.bestdoggietips.com
October 2009 Newsletter



Dear friends,

Welcome to our October Newsletter from www.bestdoggietips.com.

Contents

Recipe – Magic Doggie Biscuits	Page 2
Psychiatric Service Dogs	Page 3
Composting Dog Poop	Page 5
Cancer Drug Approved for Dogs	Page 7
To Desex or Not?	Page 8
Fun Stuff – 8 Questions Dogs Ask God When They Die	Page 9
The Weird & The Wonderful	Page 10

We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

"I have found that when you are deeply troubled there are things you get from the silent, devoted companionship of a dog that you can get from no other source."

- Doris Day

Recipe - Magic Doggie Biscuits

Ingredients

500g (1 lb) chopped chicken liver (it's OK to use the food processor)
1¾ cups plain flour
1 cup fine oatmeal
2 tsp chicken stock dissolved in ¼ cup boiling water
2 eggs, beaten

To Make

Preheat oven to 180°C (350°F). Line a baking tray with cooking paper (or wax paper), then spray with cooking spray.

In a large mixing bowl combine the liver, chicken stock and beaten eggs, and mix through thoroughly. Slowly add the flour and oatmeal, adding a little at a time and mixing thoroughly as you go.

Spread the mixture evenly onto the cooking tray and bake for 25 to 30 minutes until cooked (test the centre with a skewer until it comes out clean).

Allow to cool, then loosen around the edges and invert the pan onto a bread board. Tap the base of the pan until the slice slides out. Cut into bite sized squares.

Can be refrigerated for up to 2 weeks and can also be frozen successfully.

(Based on a recipe from the I Love Dogs cookbook available at BestDoggieTips.com)

[Back to Contents List](#)

Psychiatric Service Dogs

These trained canines alert owners to warning signs of PTSD.

Iraq war veteran Jennifer Pacanowski was unaware that she was racing dangerously down the freeway at 85 miles an hour when she felt a wet nose nudge her elbow.

She immediately slowed down.

The wet nose belonged to Boo, Pacanowski's 110-pound Bull Mastiff, warning her that her anxiety levels were rising, a dangerous state given that Pacanowski has post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from her experiences as a medic in the war.

Boo, who turned 1 in August, has been with Pacanowski, helping her deal with the world since last December.

"Sometimes I forget where I am and will go back to the war in Iraq. He brings me back to reality and makes me realize that I can't run people off the road. It's a frequent thing with PTSD to have road rage," said Pacanowski, who returned to the United States at the end of 2004 and now lives in north-eastern Pennsylvania. "He's a comfort. I also know I'm not alone, and people can't just sneak up on me without his knowledge."

Boo is one of a team of "psychiatric service dogs" being used all over the country to help people with various mental health issues, including bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders and, perhaps most notably, PTSD.

"If a dog observes when a person with PTSD is escalating, the dog will be able to signal that they are escalating and, given it's so early in process, the person can manage and even prevent the escalation," explained Joan Gibbon Esnayra, president and founder of the Psychiatric Dog Service Association.

The dogs have been in service for about 12 years and while patients and professionals alike know they work wonders, there has been no real empirical evidence of their value.

That's where the U.S. Department of Defense comes in. It's starting a 12-month study to find out exactly how the dogs help by comparing soldiers with PTSD who have dogs with a similar group of soldiers without a dog. Researchers will measure changes in symptoms and medication use.

"We want to provide evidence for something we know observationally and help create a movement towards the use of psychiatric service dogs," said lead investigator Craig T. Love, senior study director at Westat, a research corporation in Rockville, Md. "It's time to make a change."

"A recent survey showed that 82 percent of patients with PTSD who were assigned a dog had a decrease in symptoms, and 40 percent had a decrease in the medications they had to take," added Dr. Melissa Kaime, director of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP), who spoke at a telebriefing last month. "I fully expect this will be positive trial."

What diagnoses may be assisted by a PSD?

All DSM-IV Axis I disorders such as, Major Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia, Panic Disorder, Agoraphobia, Social Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, PTSD, etc.

What tasks can PSD be trained to perform?

- Remind handler to take medication on time
- Turn on lights & search a room for intruders
- Warm handler's body during a panic attack
- Interrupt repetitive behaviours
- Attend to handler during emotional distress
- Accompany handler outside of the home
- Alert to mania, panic attacks or dissociation
- Interrupt dissociative episodes or flashbacks
- Hallucination discernment
- Mitigate hyper-vigilance and fear
- Provide a safe grounding presence
- Mitigate paranoia with reality testing

There's more on dogs like Boo at the [Psychiatric Dog Service Association](#).

[Back to Contents List](#)

Composting Dog Poop

Several years ago, dog owners in the college town of Ithaca, N.Y., began worrying about all the plastic bags filled with dung that ended up in the landfill.

Leon Kochian, a professor of plant biology at Cornell and, more to the point, the owner of a yellow lab, recalled the thinking at the time: “This is Ithaca. There’s got to be a more environmentally sensible way to do this.”

This year, with Mr. Kochian’s nudging, one of the city’s dog parks — part of the Allan H. Treman Marine State Park — became a dog waste composting park.

Special corn-based bags, made by the Biobag Company, based in Florida, are available at several stations in the park. Dog owners put the bag and its contents into large bins near the park’s entrances, which are removed once a week by a company called Cayuga Compost.



Dog owners of Ithaca can now contribute to an environmental experiment: dog waste composting

At its composting facility, Cayuga dumps the waste into a pile — mixed with a bit of yard and wood waste — quite separate from the company’s regular food-waste compost.

And there it will sit — until the company figures out what it might be good for.

Late next year, Cayuga plans to run tests to determine the composition of the dog waste (after all, a dog’s diet is arguably more varied than virtually any other animal’s, in accordance with the whims of their owners). If it matures into nutrient-rich compost, it might be applied to potted plants or landscaping, said Mark Whittig, Cayuga’s operations manager. If the compost is of poorer quality, it could be used for blending with topsoil, he said.

The Ithaca group believes that theirs is the first such dog composting park in the nation, though it is not certain. A similar program is in place in the large Pacific Spirit Regional Park in Vancouver, and an experimental program is also under way at a dog park in Montreal, where the compost is processed on-site with the help of sawdust.

The Ithaca program costs roughly \$6,000 a year, according to Mr. Kochian, who said that more than enough money for the first year has already been raised in donations. So far, the Ithaca compost organizers are delighted with the enthusiasm their project has generated.

[Back to Contents List](#)

Cancer Drug Approved for Dogs

FDA: First Drug to Treat Cancer in Dogs Approved

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today announced the approval of Palladia (toceranib phosphate), the first drug developed specifically for the treatment of cancer in dogs.

Palladia is approved to treat canine cutaneous (skin-based) mast cell tumours, a type of cancer responsible for about 1 out of 5 cases of canine skin tumours. The drug is approved to treat the tumours with or without regional lymph node involvement.

All cancer drugs now used in veterinary medicine originally were developed for use in humans and are not approved for use in animals. Cancer treatments used in animals are used in an "extra-label" manner.

"This cancer drug approval for dogs is an important step forward for veterinary medicine," said Bernadette Dunham, D.V.M., Ph.D., director of FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine. "Prior to this approval, veterinarians had to rely on human oncology drugs, without knowledge of how safe or effective they would be for dogs. Today's approval offers dog owners, in consultation with their veterinarian, an option for treatment of their dog's cancer."

While canine mast cell tumours often appear small and insignificant, they can be a very serious form of cancer in dogs. Some mast cell tumours are easily removed without the development of any further problems, while others can lead to life threatening disease.

Palladia is a tyrosine kinase inhibitor and works in two ways: by killing tumour cells and by cutting off the blood supply to the tumour. In a clinical trial, Palladia showed a statistically significant difference in tumour shrinkage when compared with an inactive substance (placebo).

The most common side effects associated with Palladia are diarrhoea, decrease or loss of appetite, lameness, weight loss, and blood in the stool.

Palladia is manufactured by Pfizer Animal Health Inc., New York City.

NB: It is not known when or if Palladia will be released in Australia. A spokesperson for the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) said its availability in Australia is dependent upon an application being lodged with the APVMA by the manufacturer or its agent. Alternatively, a registered veterinary surgeon may seek to import the product or use a human registered equivalent under his prescribing rights for treatment of animals in his care. A final option would be for a supply permit to be issued.

[Back to Contents List](#)

To Desex or Not?

Each year in Australia alone tens of thousands of healthy and friendly dogs and cats are euthanased by shelters because there are simply not enough homes for them.

Most owners view desexing as a way to control unwanted puppies or kittens, or to calm their animal's behaviour. But what most owners don't realise is that desexing can actually prevent life threatening diseases.

Desexing female dogs helps decrease the incidence of breast and ovarian cancer. Also, the chance of female dogs developing pyometra (an infection of the uterus) is dramatically reduced.

Desexing has the same benefits for male dogs, with the risk of testicular and prostate cancer, as well as hernias, also reduced.

Up to 50% of 5 year old undesexed male dogs already have an enlarged prostate due to high levels of testosterone circulating in their system. In some cases this can completely obstruct the colon causing severe constipation and, if left untreated, a slow and painful death.

The benefits of desexing are:

- 🔊 It reduces the risk of cancer and other diseases
- 🔊 It stops the cycle of mating and unwanted litters
- 🔊 If female cats continue to breed they can suffer from physical and nutritional exhaustion
- 🔊 Pets are less likely to wander, fight, and subsequently get injured or lost

The behavioural benefits are also worth considering. Undesexed female dogs and cats generally have a higher risk of aggression and erratic behaviour associated with being on heat such as escaping and staining.

For male dogs, it eliminates "spraying" and that embarrassing urge some dogs have for them to mount other dogs or people's legs.

These unwanted behaviours can lead to many animals being surrendered at an early age.

And as for those myths:

- 🔊 **Desexing will make my dog fat (or lazy)!** The only way a pet can gain weight is from overeating and lack of exercise.
- 🔊 **Animals should have one litter first.** The chance of breast cancer in female dogs actually increases with every "heat".
- 🔊 **Male dogs will lose their "manhood".** It's frustrating for a dog to be stuck in a yard with no access to female dogs. Desexing reduces this frustration.

[Back to Contents List](#)

Fun Stuff - The 8 Questions Dogs Ask God When They Die

- 🐕 8. Dear God, are there mailmen in Heaven? If there are, will I have to apologize?
- 🐕 7. Dear God, when we get to Heaven, can we sit on your couch? Or is it the same old story?
- 🐕 6. Dear God, is it true that in Heaven, dining room tables have on-ramps?
- 🐕 5. Dear God, when we get to the Pearly Gates, do we have to "shake hands" to get in?
- 🐕 4. Dear God, if a dog barks his head off in the forest and no human hears him, is he still a bad dog?
- 🐕 3. Dear God, more meatballs, less spaghetti, please.
- 🐕 2. Dear God, are there dogs on other planets or are we alone? I have been howling at the moon and stars for a long time, but all I ever hear back is the beagle across the street.
- 🐕 and #1: Dear God, about that neutering... can I have them back now?

[Back to Contents List](#)

The Weird & the Wonderful

Hey May be an (Ex) President, but He's Not the Boss in This Household!



Former French President Jacques Chirac has announced that he has given away his beloved dog after it attacked him for a third time.

Sumo, a Maltese terrier, is reported to have bitten him in the stomach in their apartment in the capital, Paris.

Mr Chirac's wife, Bernadette, said the dog had been treated for depression after finding it difficult to come to terms with leaving the Elysee Palace.

The dog is now said to be enjoying life on a farm in the French countryside.

Since stepping down from office in May 2007, Jacques Chirac has admitted he has found retirement hard going but apparently it is his dog, Sumo, who has suffered most acutely. Used to roaming the large gardens of the Elysee Palace, the Maltese terrier has found downsizing to an apartment on the Quai Voltaire unbearable and, according to Mrs Chirac, severe depression has turned him from an innocent white fluff-ball into a ferocious attacker of ex-presidents.

In January this year, Mr Chirac had to be hospitalised after the dog sank his teeth into an unnamed body part.

In this latest attack, Mrs Chirac said that Sumo had been lying quietly at her feet but flew into a violent rage on the approach of her husband. The dog leapt up and nipped the former French leader in the stomach.

"I was very scared because there was blood. It's terrible, the small teeth like that. He was going wild. He wanted to jump up and bite again," she said.

Mrs Chirac, who noted the dog had never turned against her, nevertheless made the regretful decision to send Sumo to a farm in Seine-et-Marne. He is said to be "very happy" there, and so far has kept his teeth to himself.

Deaf dog rescued from hole

Scooby, the Cavalier King Charles spaniel, was trapped in a cave for 3 days.

Rescuers cut down trees, shifted boulders and used search and rescue equipment to finally free Scooby just before 6pm. The deaf dog had been trapped in the hole at a property near Wollombi since Sunday.

Earlier, Melissa Newton, whose son Jack owns the eight-year-old King Charles spaniel, said they were horrified when Scooby ran up a hill on their property and disappeared into a small cave three days ago.



SAFE: Scooby is welcomed back by his family.

"We thought a snake got him," she said. "We thought he was dead."

After two days of silence, the family were amazed to hear Scooby crying on Tuesday.

RSPCA inspectors tried on Wednesday to free Scooby, however, they were unsuccessful and rescue specialists from the NSW Fire Brigade and RSPCA were called.

They spent more than eight hours working to free the trapped King Charles spaniel, using two cameras to find him.

Scooby was spotted in a large chamber with two access points, leaving him comfortable but almost impossible to access. Both entries were too small for rescuers to access, even with minor excavation.

Concerns over the stability of the rock ruled out further digging, so rescuers decided to leave a trail of food to try to lure him out.

The dog remained calm throughout the ordeal, sleeping on a small rock ledge in the large opening he had found.

RSPCA Northern Regional team leader Kylie Prowse said the fact that Scooby was deaf had probably helped him stay relaxed throughout the rescue operation.

"Most dogs would be howling," she said.

RSPCA inspector and rescue specialist Slade Macklin said the specialist equipment and skills brought by the NSW Fire Brigade rescue unit to the scene had made the successful rescue of Scooby more likely.

[Back to Contents List](#)