



FETCH!

The newsletter of Fetching Companions

Holiday Issue

November 2007

Season's Greetings!

Spring, Summer and Fall have faded inexorably, one into the other, and will soon morph into Winter. The holiday season is once more at hand—and we hope it will prove to be a healthy, joyous, and prosperous one for you and your loved ones.

But rescue knows no season. The number of cast-aside dogs never diminishes, and our volunteers are ever on the job, even as they prepare for the holidays. There's nothing quite like juggling holiday activities with tending to a rowdy, untrained foster dog or two, or perhaps one with a bad case of kennel cough. On

the other hand, there's something very special about fitting a dog into a welcoming family who will give it a wonderful new life.

Please consider sharing in the generosity of a tax-deductible donation. It will help us bestow the gift of new hope and life upon abandoned dogs. And if you'd like to get more deeply involved, think about volunteering with us. It's not the world's easiest avocation, but it's one of the most fulfilling you'll ever experience.

...there's something very special about fitting a dog into a welcoming family...

s a m e sense of satisfaction we feel, t h r o u g h

Bringing a New Dog into Your Home

A lot of the techniques for introducing a new dog to your family and home are just good common sense. But dog psychology differs from our own in any number of ways, so some good techniques aren't at all obvious. Here's a checklist of things to do or consider when taking a new dog in:

- Arrange to adopt on a Friday, so you'll have ample time to give your new dog plenty of attention.
- If you have another dog, introduce it to your new dog on neutral ground, so there are no territorial issues. Your front yard may be fine. To make the dogs feel they're a pack, have someone walk one dog on leash while you walk the other alongside on another leash. Keep them far enough apart so they can't reach each other. As you gain confidence in their ability to get along, bring them closer and eventually allow them to complete the nose-to-tail "doggie handshake." If you have a cat, things are a bit more complex. Ask your FCRR volunteer or a good trainer for advice.
- Feed all dogs in securely separate areas until you're sure food won't cause a conflict. You may have to do this long-term. Make sure no high-value items are accessible, such as beef bones. They can be a source of conflict. Take care that toys don't cause conflict. You may have to put the toys up until the dogs become fast friends.
- Take the dog to your backyard for a potty break. If you have to go through the house to get there, do so quickly so it can't do its business indoors. Once the deed is done, shower the dog with enthusiastic praise. It's possible that your adoptee's housetraining may not transfer to your home immediately. Plan on an accident or two. After cleaning up, dampen the area with a good enzymatic cleaner to kill lingering scents that may encourage future accidents. Don't use a cleaner containing ammonia; it will leave a scent similar to urine. In the unlikely event that accidents persist, any FCRR volunteer or good trainer can help you through the problem.
- Take your new dog to your vet to establish a health "baseline." Many vets will perform the first exam for free, excepting medications, if they know you've rescued the dog. Don't forget to take all shelter and vet paperwork with you. It will allow your vet to enter vital vaccination and other medical data on the dog's chart.



Little Pup, Big Heart

It's hard to imagine turning a pup out on the streets to fend for himself after he was hit by a car, suffering a serious injury, but that's what happened to Lucas, a six-month-old Lab mix pup, though he was four months old at the time.

A Good Samaritan rescued him and got him to us. As it turns out, he had no bones broken, but his shoulder was wrenched so badly that he suffered neurological damage. The bottom line is that he has no feeling in his left forepaw, so he can't use it and drags it when he walks.

Lucas has captivated everyone who has seen him. It's not just a matter of puppy cuteness; it's that Lucas is such a game little guy with a heart as big as all outdoors. He rushes headlong into life and is an absolute joy have around.

We're hoping that the damaged nerve will regenerate, but it's been weeks with no sign of improvement. It's more likely than not that his foreleg will have to be amputated. Lucas will do fine on three legs, but we had hoped for a better result. Unfortunately, there's no good alternative—there is far too much danger of further injury and infection without amputation. And canine prosthetics are not in the cards, still being in the experimental stage.

One needn't feel sorry for this little trooper, though. He'll do almost as well on three legs as a normal four-legged dog will, running, jumping and roughhousing with the best of them. Even so, we could use some help with his expenses. Above all, we need a good home for him.

Lucas will do fine on three legs, but we had hoped for a better result.

The Return of Lab Haiku

Despite a multitude of impassioned pleadings, Lab Haiku returns! We always respond to the desires of our readers, but not always in the way they'd prefer. So hide the kids, here it comes!

Persuasion

*look into my eyes
you will give me a cookie
and then you will wake*

Divine Privilege

*what is his secret?
people rub Buddha's belly
why can't they rub mine?*

Communication

*your bulletin board
can never convey as much
as a good fire plug*

Anatomy 101, Part 2

*you think you're so smart,
opposable thumbs and all--
you can't even fetch*

continued on page 2

The View from Chaos Manor

Larry Mittell, President

Here at Chaos Manor, as we fondly call our home, holiday preparations get short shrift. Tending to our many fosters seems to occupy every waking moment. But we, and for that matter all FCRR volunteers, draw much satisfaction from our work. The act of rescue is its own reward.

FCRR saved 72 dogs in 2006, our first full year. The total for this year, as of the end of November, is 65. That's a lot for a tiny little rescue like ours. I'm prouder than you can imagine of the dedication and hard work of our volunteers. They deserve far more thanks than mere words can express.

Meanwhile, back at the Manor, foster dogs Dutchess, Lucas and Brody have been in long-term residence, convalescing from various ailments. A new addition, Samantha, by contrast healthy, is quite possibly the world's fastest Lab. At least she's the quickest I've ever seen.

Dutchess is an eight to nine year old purebred black female whose owner was about to euthanize her. She was blind, diabetic and had a badly-torn knee ligament. We fully restored her sight with lens implants, brought her diabetes under control, and fixed the knee ligament via surgery.

She's fully recovered, healthy, and ready to go. Unfortunately, interested adopters back away the moment they hear of the daily insulin injections, though they're child's play to give. It's too bad, because they're missing out on a wonderful companion.

Dutchess has a couple of interesting and entertaining quirks—she hates small aircraft and has the odd distinction of being able to shuffle backwards more quickly than I've ever seen a dog do. So we've got the world's fastest Labs, forwards and backwards.

Lucas' story is on the previous page. He's a feisty little guy,

brimming over with big dog spirit, in spite of his handicap. When he's at play with his foster mate, Samantha, it's a spectacular sight to behold. He and she go at it full-tilt, non-stop. Sammy is faster, but Lucas hangs in there with his cleverness. Sleight-of-paw, to coin a phrase.

Samantha is a petite, high-energy, two year old yellow sweetheart. She loves cuddles and takes treats ever-so-gently. But the moment she gets in the yard, she blasts off at blinding speed, running sizzling laps to get the kinks out. She's also a bit of a brat, but a little obedience training will set that right. She'd be a terrific pick for a physically active family, and would make a great jogging or hiking companion.

Last but not least is Brody, a beautiful two year old yellow male, who is just about recovered from knee surgery. The poor guy was limited to short potty walks for weeks, but he's now to the point that he can be placed into a new home, and will probably be officially available by the time you read this.

With this panoply of injuries, we have literally thousands of dollars invested in the health of Brody, Dutchess, and Lucas. Fortunately, that's not the case with the majority of our dogs. If it were, we'd be out of the rescue business pretty quickly, but it underscores the point that our adoption fees don't cover our costs. We rely on public generosity to make up the difference and allow us to continue to occasionally exercise our compassion in rescuing dogs in need of expensive medical treatment.

After you've taken care of human needs and charities, please consider a tax-deductible contribution to FCRR in any amount. You will quite literally help save the lives of innocent, cast-aside Labs who would otherwise suffer a tragic fate, through no fault of their own.



Dutchess has had both her sight and health restored

Behavioral Problems

Despite our best efforts to evaluate the behavior and temperament of all of our foster dogs, in rare cases, undesired behaviors can and do pop up after adoption. Below are some we've seen. We hasten to add that we're not trained behaviorists and the training methods listed may not work in every case. We encourage you to engage the services of a good trainer/behaviorist. They're not cheap, but their advice can be worth its weight in gold.

• Separation Anxiety

Some dogs become extremely anxious when they're even temporarily separated from their owners. In the most extreme cases, this can manifest itself in destructive behaviors, such as digging, attempts to claw through doors or walls, destruction of furniture or other objects, or escape from the yard. Many owners think their dog gaining revenge, but this simply isn't so. In many cases, you can work through the problem with a little help and advice from your FCRR volunteer. In the severest cases, you'll need the services of a professional trainer/behaviorist.

undesired behaviors
can and do pop up

gently pinching the skin around the neck, the way the dog's mother did when it was a pup. Walk your dog on the side of your choice, say "heel," then when it's paying no attention to you, suddenly reverse direction or make a sudden turn. The dog will be brought up short.

A few minutes of this and your dog will keep his eye on this crazy person and start turning when you do. Say "heel" each time the dog gets its leash correction. Once it gets the drift of this new game, you can fine-tune the dog's heeling with gentle leash-pops. There's another useful device that requires less training and vigilance—a head halter. It works on the principal that the dog will walk in the direction its head is pointed. The halter simply allows you to do the pointing. You will need an experienced person, preferably a trainer, to show you how to fit and use it.

• Food Possessiveness

If, while it's eating, your dog shows signs of food possessiveness when you come near, start feeding it by hand. Sit down on the floor with the food bowl in your lap and offer a handful of kibble. Keep doing so until the meal is finished. After you've done that for a few feedings, your dog will perceive that you're no threat to its food. Eventually, you should be able to feed the dog normally and even take kibble from the bowl while it's eating. Always put the food back immediately to reinforce the notion that you're not a threat.

• Pulling On-Lead

You need a correcting collar to train a dog to walk nicely on-lead. Choke chain collars are not so good because, among other things, there's no limit to how tight they can get-- they can do permanent harm. A properly-fitted pinch collar is much better, though it looks like a medieval torture instrument. There's a limitation to how tight it can get (have a knowledgeable person show you how to fit it) and it delivers a much more effective correction,

Lab Haiku

(continued from page 1)

The Sentinel

you've got things to do.
I'll guard the steak platter well
until you get back

An Untimely End

squeak! squeak! squeak! squeak!
squeak!
but then an awful silence
toys are so wimpy

The Leader

I carry the leash
in my mouth to make a point--
who's really in charge?

The Linguist

you've too many words.
only a few are needed
like "cookie" and "walk"



Hercules, a one-year-old pup, came to us with a spiral foreleg fracture. He's 100% recovered after surgery and has a new family already!

The DeGeneres Controversy

could it happen to you?

Most of the nation was at least somewhat captivated, if not exactly gripped, by the drama that unfolded in prime time recently—the Ellen DeGeneres/Iggy meltdown. You will recall that Ms. DeGeneres adopted a dog, Iggy, from a rescue organization. She then broke the terms of the signed adoption agreement by giving Iggy to another family. Subsequently, the rescue people exercised their legal right to confiscate the dog, and did so, placing Iggy with a third family.

Some would say that the adoption agreement in question contains Draconian terms that no one should have to abide by. But we have similar terms in our adoption agreement, and we'll ask you to sign it when we place a dog with you. So, are they reasonable?

First, no one should lose sleep worrying that we'll break down their door in the dead of night and wrest their dog from them. Our primary concern, after the health and welfare of the humans involved, is the

health and welfare of the adopted dog. We ask that the dog be treated humanely, which no reasonable adopter will fail to do, and we ask that we be allowed to act as the dog's safety net. If the unthinkable should happen and you're unable

We have never asked an adopter to return a dog and it's very likely we never will.

or unwilling to keep it, we'll take the dog in and, ideally, correct whatever problems it may happen to have and find it a new home.

It's simply common sense, something in short supply in the DeGeneres/Iggy situation. We have never asked an adopter to return a dog and it's very likely we never will, so long as we're able to continue to do a good job of matching dogs and families.

On the other hand, we'll always take care of the dogs we've placed. All an adopter need do is to let us know if we can help.

In case you're wondering, there's no truth to the rumor that Ms. DeGeneres has applied to adopt an FCRR dog.

Canine Health Myths

There are a number of widely-held but erroneous beliefs about canine health that sometimes cause deserving dogs to be bypassed by potential adopters, so we attempt here to dispel some of these misconceptions

erroneous beliefs...sometimes cause deserving dogs to be bypassed by potential adopters,

Hip Dysplasia

This is commonly believed to be a severely crippling condition that eventually leaves a dog owner with no option but euthanasia. The truth is that administering modern joint

supplements, together with giving the dog regular low-impact exercise (like walking or swimming) and keeping it at a lean body weight, can

often keep a dysplastic dog symptom-free for life. The key is to start these regimens

before arthritic changes become severe enough to cause pain and limit mobility. X-rays can disclose the presence of dysplasia and its severity.

Injections

Dogs with diabetes, severe allergies or certain other conditions require frequent and sometimes daily injections. The general belief is that this entails the inconvenience of frequent visits to the vet and therefore expensive bills. In reality, you can do it easily and quickly at home. Your vet can show you how in a few minutes. It's simple, quick, and essentially painless. Once your dog associates getting a shot with getting a food treat, she'll line up eagerly for that shot when the appointed time rolls around.

Altering

There is a pervasive and persistent belief that spaying or neutering kills a dog's spirit, leaving it with little or no energy and a dull, listless, uninteresting life. Nothing could be further from the truth. Spayed or neutered dogs are every bit as

energetic and playful as intact dogs. Most experts suggest that there are long-term health benefits, too.

Dry Nose

A warm, dry nose doesn't by itself indicate that your dog is sick. While a dry nose can accompany some diseases, neither condition implies the other. If you're concerned and want to be sure your dog doesn't have a fever, use a rectal thermometer. If the dog has been at rest for a bit, it should read something like 100 to 102 degrees. Exercise or stress will elevate this somewhat. If it's much above 102 degrees for long, medical attention is advisable.

Conversely a dog with a wet, cold nose could be running a fever. If your dog has symptoms of illness or unusual discomfort, don't let that cool snout fool you. It's probably time for a trip to the vet.

Roll Call

adoptions since our last issue

ADOPTER	DOG	DATE
Lynne Ashforth	Bella	06/09/07
MacKenzie Bilunas	Brownie	02/19/07
Jill Blackstone	Angel's Pup #3	08/10/07
Hank Boerenko	Lucky	12/30/06
Shell & Brian Brian	Rosy	07/07/07
Bill Carnett	Bixby	07/30/07
Tracy Chamberlin	Travis	02/21/07
Mathilda Christoffersen	Wesley	02/27/07
Michelle Chubarov	Dora	10/22/06
Lori Clark	Rusty	07/31/07
Becky Cook	Taffy	06/22/07
Chris Crampton	Tucker	05/05/07
Lisa DeMayo	Maggie	06/03/07
Meg DiGiuseppe	Velvet	07/07/07
David Dormann	Hunter	08/29/07
Regina Dudley	Hopper	12/13/06
Louise & Bill Ehrich	Nutmeg	06/05/07
Cindy Fairbank	Arowin	01/27/07
Rikki & Kevin Fortson	Angel's Pup #4	08/15/07
Janalee Foster	Otto	08/24/07
Michael Fox	Jake	07/02/07
Jordanna Fraiberg	Rocky	03/10/07
Linda Frankel	Cassie	05/14/07
Susan Fritsche	Guaymas	12/10/06
Dennis Gerber	Bailey	03/05/07
Danielle Good	Sawyer	08/15/07
Elizabeth Greengross	Princess	12/10/06
Stephanie Gustafson	Logan	02/12/07
Rudene Haar	Angel's Pup #7	08/25/07
Eric Hammond	Sherman	08/19/07
Kyle Jeffers	Cubby	05/22/07
John Jimenez	Scout & Angel's Pup #6	08/22/07
Cynthia Jones	Mabel	08/12/07
Neil & Jodi Kay	Penelope	02/10/07
Ellen & Dan Kessler	Rosco	12/02/06
Shaya Kirkpatrick	Angel's Pup #1	08/14/07
Doyle Ladwig	Tug	01/27/07
Joey Leavitt	Hercules	11/10/07
Kathleen Leonard	Coco	10/29/06
Charlotte Lindsey	Helmut	05/07/07
Sam Lodge	Bodie	03/17/07
Lisa Ludecke	Duffy	07/05/07
Angela Mackenzie	Eavee	07/28/07
Jim Matthews	Zack	03/19/07
Sherry Mendoza	Grady	10/08/07
Megan Miller	Beau & Jessie	12/07/06
Sherry Miller	Gabby	04/23/07
Robert Moorer	Sierra	05/31/07
Jacquie Muniz	Lucy	06/12/07

continued on page 4

ADOPTER	DOG	DATE	ADOPTER	DOG	DATE
Susan Mutch	Cebu	09/02/06	Sherry Mendoza	Grady	10/08/07
Mindy Newhouse	Luscious	12/01/06	Megan Miller	Beau & Jessie	12/07/06
Christie Newman	Cinderella	02/03/07	Sherry Miller	Gabby	04/23/07
Joela Nitzberg	Betty	06/08/07	Robert Moorer	Sierra	05/31/07
Kathleen O'Connor	Jewelie	12/29/06	Jacquie Muniz	Lucy	06/12/07
Victoria O'Toole	Luke & Pickles	06/07/07	Susan Mutch	Cebu	09/02/06
Valerie Paris	Mocha	05/01/07	Mindy Newhouse	Luscious	12/01/06
Susie Petrizzio	Buster	11/13/07	Christie Newman	Cinderella	02/03/07
Christina Pettro	Bianca	09/26/07	Joela Nitzberg	Betty	06/08/07
Pam Putch	Doug Wilson	11/17/07	Kathleen O'Connor	Jewelie	12/29/06
Becky Radant	Abby	03/07/07	Victoria O'Toole	Luke & Pickles	06/07/07
Andrea Rawlings	Hank2	10/28/07	Valerie Paris	Mocha	05/01/07
Jennifer Resnik	Gus	02/09/07	Susie Petrizzio	Buster	11/13/07
stephanie Robinette	Maddison	05/19/07	Christina Pettro	Bianca	09/26/07
Coral Rodrigues	Liberty	08/11/07	Pam Putch	Doug Wilson	11/17/07
Jenny Rowe	Baxter	04/28/07	Becky Radant	Abby	03/07/07
Jeanne Ruiz	Hadley	04/02/07	Andrea Rawlings	Hank2	10/28/07
Art Serksnas	Hampton	03/22/07	Jennifer Resnik	Gus	02/09/07
Julie Sheer	Sammy	05/12/07	stephanie Robinette	Maddison	05/19/07
Karen Shuput	Gracie	03/23/07	Coral Rodrigues	Liberty	08/11/07
Shirley Stacy	Darwin	04/01/07	Jenny Rowe	Baxter	04/28/07
Nancy & Shell Steckel	Parker	02/01/07	Jeanne Ruiz	Hadley	04/02/07
Ilene Tebbs	Jane	08/29/07	Art Serksnas	Hampton	03/22/07
Cheryl Temple	Fargo	01/27/07	Julie Sheer	Sammy	05/12/07
Diane Vaughan	Carmine	06/18/07	Karen Shuput	Gracie	03/23/07
Debbie Walsh	Doc	09/23/07	Shirley Stacy	Darwin	04/01/07
Ethan Wayne	Dillon	07/22/07	Nancy & Shell Steckel	Parker	02/01/07
Aissa Wayne-Conrad	Angel's Pup #2	08/05/07	Ilene Tebbs	Jane	08/29/07
Howard Winderbaum	Bryce	01/27/07	Cheryl Temple	Fargo	01/27/07
Nathan Winograd	Spike	01/02/07	Diane Vaughan	Carmine	06/18/07
Stacy Wolf	Angel	08/11/07	Debbie Walsh	Doc	09/23/07
Joan Wood	Princess Aurora	03/25/07	Ethan Wayne	Dillon	07/22/07
James Wrich	Jake	08/05/07	Aissa Wayne-Conrad	Angel's Pup #2	08/05/07
David Yokoyama	Mitsy	03/23/07	Howard Winderbaum	Bryce	01/27/07
Nanette Yoshimi	Angel's Pup #5	08/18/07	Nathan Winograd	Spike	01/02/07
Cari Zirbes	Hazel	11/19/06	Stacy Wolf	Angel	08/11/07
Lisa Ludecke	Duffy	07/05/07	Joan Wood	Princess Aurora	03/25/07
Angela Mackenzie	Eavee	07/28/07	James Wrich	Jake	08/05/07
Jim Matthews	Zack	03/19/07	David Yokoyama	Mitsy	03/23/07
			Nanette Yoshimi	Angel's Pup #5	08/18/07
			Cari Zirbes	Hazel	11/19/06

Fetching Companions

an IRS Section 501(c)(3) public benefit nonprofit organization
 info@fetchingcompanions.org ♦ <http://fetchingcompanions.org> ♦ 888-412-3382
 © copyright 2007 all rights reserved



FCRR
 PO Box 3550
 Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA
 90274-9505