



DAWG Tales




Newsletter of Best DAWG Rescue, Inc.

Fall 2003

Best Dawg Rescue, Inc. • PO Box 34213 • Bethesda, MD 20827 • 301-407-BEST • www.dawg-rescue.org

Message from the President

Welcome to DAWG Tales... the first edition.



What a year this has been! A core group of experienced rescue volunteers began developing Best Dawg Rescue (DAWG) in the early spring. By the summer, we were booking shows at local Petcos and receiving a constant stream of inquiries about our animals posted on a website that was barely out of "construction." We were off to a running start!

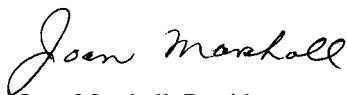
DAWG was born to ensure that overlooked and medically needy animals (mostly dogs) get the chance they deserve. Why are these dogs passed over by adopters? Maybe they're depressed or older, or maybe they don't look their best because of an easily remedied medical condition such as mange or a broken limb.

Our Maisie is an example of a dog who had many strikes against her. Large areas of her body were scabby and furless due to scabies. She also had heartworms, requiring several months of treatment. On top of that, because she had given birth to 11 puppies as a stray, she was emaciated. Mother dogs usually aren't adopted, and Maisie didn't have a chance. So we made sure her pups went to other rescue organizations, and we selected her, providing everything she needed. Today she is a playful, spunky girl seeking the home of her dreams. Sure, dogs dream!

We hope to continue to save the Maisies in shelters as often as possible. Donations have increased from a trickle to a fairly steady stream, allowing us to take in a constant number of wonderful dogs. We take them to weekly adoption shows to find the right match for each dog. We meet great people at weekly

shows: some applicants, others eager to volunteer or help in other ways.

As the year closes, we have accomplished much. . . but so much more lies ahead. Many puppies purchased as holiday gifts will soon be heading for shelters. And, of course, stray, untrained and unappreciated pets still pour into area shelters each day. We will try to help as many as possible, with your help.



Joan Marshall, President

HEALTH

Caring for Animals

—By Joan Marshall

EXTERNAL PARASITES—

From time to time, most pets have parasites such as fleas, ticks, lice, or mites on their skin or in their ears.

The bites of these external parasites can be extremely irritating and can cause serious skin disorders or even disease. If you notice your pet scratching frequently, or if you discover bald spots or redness on the skin, please see your veterinarian. The vet can best detect and eliminate these parasites.

FLEAS—The flea is a pest that can jump readily from dog to cat or even to people. The life cycle of the flea is about 30 days. The eggs are dormant in cool weather—but with the advent of milder days, they hatch into worm-like larvae that eventually become adult fleas. See your vet for the best treatment. As you rid the pet's body of fleas, simultaneously cleanse his sleeping quarters and other equipment. Aerosol sprays can be used for this purpose.

Regular and thorough vacuum cleaning of the living area also helps to remove flea eggs, larvae, and pupae. Getting rid of the fleas not only makes your pet comfortable, but also reduces the chance of her acquiring tapeworms since fleas are a part of the tapeworm life cycle.

LICE—Lice are not just unpleasant, they can become a source of danger for your pet. Often dogs with just a few lice are very "itchy" while those harboring thousands of lice may not scratch themselves at all. Because lice are small, they sometimes escape notice. The female will lay eggs which will hatch and develop into adult lice in just three weeks. The constant bloodsucking, if extensive, can cause severe anemia in puppies and greatly weaken mature dogs.

MANGE—"Mange" is a skin condition caused by mites. Two types of mange—demodectic mange, also known as "red mange," and sarcoptic mange, also known as "scabies"—are seen in pets.

Dogs suffering from "demodectic" mange may not be itchy. This mange is most common in young dogs and is marked in the early stages by small areas of hairlessness, accompanied by a red, irritated appearance. Other dogs may have flaky skin. Demodectic mange is not contagious to other animals or people.

"Sarcoptic" mange is an itchy disease that affects dogs, cats, and people! In pets, owners usually see hair loss and irritation, especially on the face and ears to start.

Veterinarians usually treat mange by clipping, using medicated baths or dips, and possibly administering oral medication or injections. Scabies is contagious to other animals and people.

TICKS—Be sure to look for ticks during your daily grooming of your pet and care-



fully remove any you see. Your vet can provide medications to repel and kill ticks. Ticks may cause serious skin infections or even paralysis. Some ticks serve as carriers of serious diseases to pets as well as to humans including Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Lyme disease, and ehrlichia.

EAR MITES—Ear mites can be a source of severe annoyance and disease in dogs and cats. These mites spend most of their life in the ears. Often the animal can be severely infested with the pests before there is any outward sign of their presence. Ear mite infestations can be complicated by bacterial or fungal infections. Such infections can be quite severe. To remove ear mites, ears should be regularly cleaned and treated using products provided by your veterinarian.

(Source: American Veterinary Medical Association)

SIT/STAY!

Staying on your own turf!

—By Kathy Graninger, Canine Behaviorist



The first few days at home with your newly adopted dog are very important ones. This is the time for him to learn his place in his new home and family, and to learn the limits of his property boundaries.

For the first few weeks, it is critical that you walk your dog only on your own property. (For puppies this should continue until at least 4 months of age.) By doing this, you are showing your new dog her new "territory." ALWAYS use a leash, not only for her safety but also to demonstrate that YOU are the one in charge. (I recommend a sturdy 6-foot leash—it allows you more control than a retractable one.) If you take her for a walk off your property and through the neighborhood too soon, she could mistake this area as her own "turf" too. This could have a negative effect and result in an attempt to return to these places in the future on her own, or act aggressively toward people or other animals that she sees in these places, perceiving them as trespassers. If you really feel you must take her for a longer walk than your property allows, it is best to drive to the destination, go for your walk there, then

drive back home. This will make it less likely that she will "smell her way" back to that spot.

After your new dog has established a good working knowledge of his boundaries and you have done some basic obedience training, you can be more confident about exiting your property with him on a walk. Remember to encourage her to use her own yard for "potty-breaks" before you start your walk. This too defines her property from the rest of the neighborhood! Although on rare occasions, it may sometimes be necessary for him to "go-potty" while on your walk, we should try to discourage our dogs from the simple act of "marking" when outside of their own yard. This way, not only will we teach a consistent lesson to our dog, but also we will be respectful of others...human and canine alike!

For information and lesson appointments, please call Kathy at 301-854-6310.

"Many are chosen, but few come when they are called."

—Canines, 12:1

GUS

My name is Gus, but everyone calls me Gusto. Why am I a DAWG dog? Beats me, because I had a happy life 'til my family took me to the shelter in the middle of summer and said goodbye. What did I do? I was always a good boy and thought we had a great life together. My family didn't care that I was going to be euthanized, just because they didn't want me.



Luckily a shelter person saw how terrific I am and contacted a volunteer who quickly got me out of there. Hooray!

Since then, I have learned all kinds of manners. My human friends suspect I understand everything they say (they're right, but sometimes it's fun to pretend I don't). I jump for joy when I get a ride to the adoption shows, and love the long walks I have with volunteers. Everyone

admires how I catch a treat, shot from clear across the room. That's just the beginning of all the things I know.

Even though I show a happy face at adoption shows, I am VERY sad. People visit with me, but when they hear I am nine years old, they move on. I'm just as bouncy as the pups, but people say they want a dog for a long time. Hey, I want to be with them for a long time!

I'd like to adopt you as my human friend, or maybe you could foster me until I find the right person or family. I promise I would settle in right away. Even though I have lots of energy, I don't need much exercise because I also love to sit around and snooze. I'm easy! And I'd be the best friend you'll ever have. So please call 301-407-BEST or write dawg@dawg-rescue.org for how to meet me. Thanks and see you soon!

HOUSEBREAKING HINTS

Tips That Work!

—By Kathy Graninger, Canine Behaviorist

First, I am a firm believer in positive reinforcement, versus punishment, in order to train your dog to do anything. This is also true for house-breaking. It's much better to teach your pet that he is a GOOD BOY



for going "potty" outside, rather than teach him he is a BAD BOY for going inside. Remember two key things: instinctually dogs do not like to mess in their own eating and sleeping areas (use this to your advantage); also dogs like schedules, and can become very good at learning a routine.

Try to follow these basic guidelines when you begin to housebreak your pet:

1. Your dog should be in a crate when he is not being supervised. [A crate, if properly used, is an excellent training tool, not only for housebreaking, but also for controlling/preventing destructive behaviors, and for safekeeping your pet.] If you are not watching him and he does go to the bathroom inside, he has just been rewarded on a very basic biological level—he feels much better after going potty than he felt before relieving him-

A Happy Tale . . .

We recently adopted Sam and Shiloh (A.K.A Dudley). They arrived on our dog, Spring's, 14th birthday. They are settling in pretty well.

Shiloh is definitely not a couch potato as originally thought. He's an instigator! He always initiates play with Sam. Shiloh plays A LOT!! Shiloh enjoys barking at his toys. He plays with toys but he'll also chew Mommy's coat, his bedding, and Sam. He's gotten over his fear of going into our basement. Now, every single time I want them to go anywhere in the house, Shiloh goes into the basement. It didn't take him long to learn that's the way to go out for long walks. He still shies away sometimes when we try to pet him, and if we make gestures, but he's getting better. He is still pretty wary of Spring. We're getting dog bones for everyone especially Shiloh so he will stop chewing on coats.

Sam was a tattletale the other night. Shiloh figured out how to defeat our pen system. He went under the bed to get to the



other side of our bedroom! Sam barked and woke us up. The other night I was away (family emergency) and Tom woke up to find that Sam had jumped into bed with him. Sam considerably did not want Tom to wake up alone. Tom has reconfigured the pen so that neither

of these events can happen again. Needless to say, the boys are disappointed.

Spring thinks they play awfully rough. She wants to join in but doesn't know how. The other morning though, she playbowed at them. But it was breakfast time so nobody paid attention. This morning they were roughhousing as usual and she kept barking at them until they settled down.

(Spring is the Fun Police)

Sam begged me not to go to work this morning so you can tell he's quite bonded! Anyway, that's the latest report. They are a great joy to us, and they seem very happy to be living with us.

PS: We appreciate your recommendation of a smaller fenced area within our fenced-in yard. The boys run so fast, I'm sure I'd never find them if they had the run of the whole 3 acres!

self. Usually you can get some warning from your puppy that he needs to go to the bathroom (losing interest in the game that you and he are playing, sniffing the ground in a circle, leaving the room). Remember: the longer any bad habit persists, the harder it is to eliminate it.

2. Feed at set times; try not to vary feeding schedules. Eating at different times means having to eliminate at different times. Don't leave food out all the time or he may have to go to the bathroom all the time.

3. Feed only one type of food. [Ask your veterinarian for an appropriate food for your pet.] Altering food or feeding table scraps may give him an upset stomach, which can also make it difficult to control his bathroom habits.

4. Start your dog out on the right "paw" by teaching him the routine. After feedings and naps, take him right outside until he goes to the bathroom, then praise him greatly. Just like your dog learns where the food bowl is—and stands there

waiting to be fed—he will also learn where the bathroom (outside) is and stand there waiting to go out.

5. If you do catch your dog in the act, it is best NOT to scream at him. Startling

him may make the tendency to "go" go away. Rather, tell him "NO, NO!" in a firm calm manner. Hurry over, pick him up and take him outside until he resumes, then praise him greatly.

Thanks for giving us a great start. We hope you'll keep in touch with us as we grow!

Please take a minute to fill out and return the following information, so we may keep you updated on our dogs and our progress:

(Please print)

Name: _____

Street/Apt: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email address (optional): _____

Telephone numbers (optional): _____

Please return to: Best Dawg Rescue, Inc., PO Box 34213, Bethesda, MD 20827

THANK YOU!





Looking for a holiday gift that will help homeless animals?

DAWG T-shirts, Totes, and Sweat shirts available at shows for \$10 – \$20

6. When you take him out, tell him what you want him to do (“Go potty”). Then wait. Remember: this is not play time – at least not until after he goes. If there is a particular place in the yard you want him to go, then take him there every time. Often the smell of the bathroom area is enough to trigger the urge to go.

7. If you find an accident in the house after the fact clean it up completely. White vinegar and water works well. **DO NOT USE ammonia or ammonia-based cleaners.** Urine contains ammonia, and cleaning products with ammonia can be very confusing to our dogs. I do not recommend punishing your dog for going in the house after the fact. When punishment is given at an inappropriate time, the wrong association is made (by the dog) and this can be much more damaging.

8. Allow your dog to go out before

bedtime. Watch him and make sure he goes to the bathroom, then praise him and put him in his crate. First thing in the morning, go to his crate and—if you can—pick him up and take him right outside to his spot. Wait and praise him greatly when he is finished. Once he learns his morning routine of going to the door, you can allow him to walk there on his own. At first, you want to make sure that he can make it all the way to the door without having an accident.

9. I never recommend paper training, except under the most unusual circumstances.

Hopefully these hints can help make the burden of housebreaking a little easier for both you and your pet.

For information and lesson appointments, please call Kathy at 301-854-6310.

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Visit us at www.dawg-rescue.org