



Tips, advice and some fun facts about our best little friends who mean so much to us!

October: A Month of Beauty and Celebration!

The leaves are beginning to change colour while the days are getting shorter and shorter—it's that time of year again! Autumn is here and with the chillier weather she brings delightful scenery, which is a wonderful time for walking our best little friends outdoors. But she also leaves with a host of ghouls and frightening goblins, so we've got to prepare our dogs for the sight of people in scary costumes and masks, as well as the noise of fireworks.

So this month I've included some good tips to help you and your dog through this frightening time of year. Of course, when combined with a little consideration for our dogs' needs, it's also a fun time of year, so I do hope that you and your dogs have a lovely time this month.

As usual enjoy the rest of this newsletter. I truly hope it brings you helpful and enjoyable reading for the changing season.

Joan

How to Stop the Demons Getting to Your Dog!

Even if we're having lots of fun on Halloween and Guy Fawkes Night, it can be absolutely terrifying for our dogs. Some dogs dread the noise so much that they'll do anything to escape and can even injure themselves while trying to find safety. That's no reason to forego the festivities, though, because there are things you can do to help your dogs relax and enjoy the evenings along with you.

- Desensitization: This is more of a long-term process that helps dogs adjust to loud noises, but it's never too late to start! You can play a recording of fireworks, thunder or gunshots in your home, beginning at a low volume, to introduce the noise to your dog. Slowly increase the volume over time so that they can adjust. Reward them when they remain calm with the noise and they'll associate it with good things.

- Limit Affection: This is the hardest thing to do when our dogs are frightened, because we want to comfort them and let them know that everything is OK. But when we pet them and say, "It's alright," while they're in a state of panic, it reinforces the behavior. Instead, use commands such as "sit" and reward them for following your direction. They'll soon understand that listening to you means nothing bad will happen to them, which helps them stay calm.

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My Boys 'Big Adventures':

HAVING FUN!



(Danny having fun in the woods)

I just love to go 'walkies' and one of my favourite places to run, play and look for trouble is the in woods and fields at Sandymoor. I was so excited in this photo as I could see a rabbit in the distance and was asking mum if I could go chase it. She wouldn't let me, so I chased a squirrel up a tree instead. I can't wait until my next visit ...



I'm an approved member of the Pet Care Trust, and British Dog Groomers Association. So you can have peace of mind knowing that while your dog is in my care it will be groomed to the highest standard and will be given the greatest level of care at all times.

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Groomed really well and left so nice, gasps from your friends they're sure to entice!

..... Continued from page 1

- Remain Calm: Dogs often mimic what they sense in us, their owners, so when we're anxious or fearful of loud noises, you can bet they will be too. By ignoring loud bangs (when possible) and staying relaxed, we help our dogs do the same.

Most importantly, we must not punish dogs for their fears, as this only makes it more stressful for them.

These things help our dogs get used to the noise, but taking some extra precautions will ensure they stay safe. To lessen the impact of fireworks, you can draw your curtains and let them stay in an area that helps them feel safe—even if it's under the couch! But if they'll be out in the garden or if there's any chance of them escaping your home, be sure to lock your gates and have proper identification attached to their collars. This is the worst time of year for dogs running away, so it's important that we do all we can to keep them home safely.

If you'll be seeing lots of masks and costumes around your home this year, try wearing one around your dog beforehand so that they can get used to the sight of it. To do this, let them sniff the mask before you put it on and let them watch you do this. Stay calm and cheerful while letting them sniff at your hands; reward them with a little treat if they stay relaxed at the sight of you in a mask. And if you have little ones, remind them not to jump out at the dogs while in their costumes. But because some dogs can become aggressive when frightened, it's best to keep them on a lead and under your calm command if you'll be around costumed strangers.

Grooming Nervous or Frightened Dogs!

While grooming is a pleasant experience for most dogs, a few can become very nervous. They may not like getting bathed, having their hair blown dry, their nails trimmed or even just the strange settings and various grooming tools.

This can happen for many reasons; unfortunately, some dogs may have had a bad experience with less than reputable groomers or weren't introduced correctly to grooming during their first visit as a puppy. Others just have anxiety over things they're not overly familiar with.

When dogs become nervous during grooming, it can make the process a bit difficult, as they can be fidgety or even become aggressive from their fear. When this happens, extra special care and consideration is required. It's so important that grooming is as pleasant and stress-free as possible, and thankfully, there are methods to use in the shop and at home that help dogs overcome any

fears they may have.

The following list of strategies is the at-home version of methods we use during grooming, which can help make the whole process feel like second nature for your best little buddy.

* Whenever you run a bath or use the sink, you can cup a little bit of water in your hand and let your dog sniff and lick at it. Eventually, you can run the little bit of water over their heads and down their backs, while praising their calmness, so that they find it a relaxed and enjoyable experience.

* To help them with the noise of dryers and clippers, you can turn on a hair dryer or hair clippers while they're in the room with you and calmly talk to them. Once they approach you, praise them. If they remain calm, continue praising them as you blow a light whoosh of air over them with the dryer or hold the handle of the vibrating clippers near to them. What's important here is that they don't perceive it as being a "big deal".

* Handle their paws as often as possible, as this encourages them to be less protective of their feet.

When dogs have a great deal of anxiety at home or with grooming, one of the best things we can do for them is give them lots of exercise. If you're concerned about your dogs' nervousness or behaviors during grooming, try taking them for a walk before their appointment—this gives them a chance to relieve themselves and to get rid of some excess energy. 30-45 minutes of walking is ideal, but of course, there's not always time for that, so any little bit can help.

If you have any questions or concerns about your dog's comfort level with grooming, please let me know, and we can figure out the best course of action to make it the most pleasant experience for all of us.

Doggy Humour!

A traveler was checking into his hotel when he noticed a dog sleeping on a chair close by.

He asked the rather grumpy receptionist, "*Sir, does your dog bite?*" to which the receptionist replied, "*No*".

The traveler reached out his hand to pet the dog and it immediately leapt from the seat and sunk its teeth into the man's hand.

"I thought you said your dog doesn't bite!" exclaimed the traveler. To which he got the reply "*Sir, that is not my dog*".

Rainbow Bridge!

I was so shocked to receive a phone call from Toby's owner to say that he had passed away.



Last time he was in for grooming he looked fine, but unfortunately a few weeks later he developed liver failure and passed

away. Toby was such a lovely little Yorkie; his owners had rescued him from a local dog's home and asked me to be his groomer. I remember the very first time I groomed him. He had kennel cough from being in kennels so he couldn't come to me for grooming as it's very contagious. So, I suggested that I groom him at their house. He was such a good boy on the grooming table, and continued to be as good as gold every time he came for grooming.

I will really miss his visits and I know he owner's are devastated at his passing. Run free at Rainbow Bridge little Toby ...

Word Search!

The following Word Search contains 8 common words relating to dogs. The words are listed below:

M P T U N E U T E R G O D P
U S E G I G Y Z P X R C C M
S O Z S M O Q S I P A D M L
S E I L I U G A H V T A J I
N B L B F C I R C M O F G H
D V A S I I R Z O K L R O S
A H I M A G T E R O M X O U
W I C O W W C E C T M U L R
C W O M J M K T I X E W F B
Q O S B I C R E M G E K L E
K K X V Z A A N M A J P F U
Z T E D I I Y S C T O O L P
D B R N O A S H A A P J H S
X B E T A N I C C A V L Q D

Groom, Neuter, Vaccinate, Microchip, Brush, Exercise, Socialize, Train.

Pet of the Month!

Would you like to see your dog star in the 'Best Friends Newsletter' as 'Pet of the Month'?

If you would, then send me in photos of your best little buddy. The best photo will get selected each month to feature here.

A Wonderful World of Dogs!

! A Tibetan mastiff has reportedly become the most expensive dog ever sold. According to ananova.com, the dog named Yangtze River Number Two, was sold to a woman in the Chinese province of Shaanxi for around £350,000. This price beats the previous record by a staggering £260,000.

! A Border Collie puppy named Pixie is learning sign language after it was discovered that she is profoundly deaf. Liz Grewal, who has been an owner of deaf dogs for six years, is teaching the youngster to recognize hand commands. So far the bright young pup has learned to sit, lie down and come on command with hand signals.

! A dog who was left tied to a railing while its owner went into a shopping market has been given a parking ticket. According to the Northern Territory News in Australia, the dog received an infringement notice tied to its lead after two traffic wardens decided that it was 'parked' illegally. A council spokesman said, "You cannot just leave a dog tied up and leave it".

Don't Drop that Fruit!

Last month we talked about the toxic effect that chocolate has on dogs, but unfortunately, it doesn't end there. There are actually fruits that can make dogs very ill, too. All unripe fruit can make dogs sick and should be avoided, yet there are ripened fruits that they shouldn't eat either.

Two of the biggest culprits are grapes and raisins. You may have already fed some of these to your dogs without seeing any harmful effects, but they can and do poison dogs. Grapes and raisins contain a canine toxin that has not yet been identified—what has been identified is kidney failure resulting from these two foods. So even though they may love them, it's best not to let them have any whatsoever.

Two other harmful fruits are avocados and black cherries. Again, it's best not to let dogs eat any of these, as it's too dangerous. But if your dogs are fond of apples, it is okay to give them the occasional slice so long as it doesn't have any seeds or stem attached—seeds contain a tiny bit of cyanide which can cause illness. And if that weren't enough, the pits of peaches and plums are harmful, too!

Dogs love to share our favorite treats, but with chocolate and these fruits, it's just not worth the risk.

Did You Know!

When out walking your dog it's better to choose different routes as much as possible. Walking is great for your dog's physical health, but taking them to new places where they can find new scents and smells can really help keep them in good mental shape as well.

Most dogs need plenty of mental stimulation to keep boredom at bay. So letting them experience new things and new places will really help perk them up, get them excited and keep them from getting bored.

More Doggy Humour!

'A Dictionary for Dogs'

LEAD: A strap which attaches to your collar, enabling you to lead your person where you want him/her to go.

DOG BED: Any soft, clean surface, such as the white bedspread in the guest room or the newly upholstered couch in the living room.

SOFAS: Are to dogs what napkins are to people. After eating, it is polite to run up and down the front of the sofa and wipe your whiskers clean.

BATH: This is a process by which the humans drench the floor, walls and themselves. You can help by shaking vigorously and frequently.

'Photo Caption Competition'



Can you think of a funny caption to go with this photo? If you can send it in to me and you could win a prize.

The best caption will win a 16oz bottle of Show Seasons Lavender Shampoo (valued at £10). Please have your entries with me before the 18th of October. The winning caption will be included in next month's newsletter. You can send in your entries via e-mail or by calling me.

Come on everyone get your thinking caps on!!!

Keeping Your Dog's Ears Clean!

Something that can easily go unnoticed in dogs is the cleanliness of their ears, because unlike us, most of them have flaps hanging down over the openings. But their inner ears can develop a build-up of dirt and waxy residue that can lead to problems, such as ear infections. To complicate matters, some breeds grow an enormous amount of hair from their inner ears that can trap this dirt and wax.

To prevent infection from dirt and debris, it's important to keep their ears clean and to pluck out excess hair. Some dogs, such as poodles, require hair plucking more often than others, but it's usually best to do it monthly.

Hair plucking requires a gentle process with specialized tools, so it's best to leave this job for the groomer. To help keep their ears clean between appointments, you can use cotton balls and canine ear solution to wipe dirt and wax away from their inner ear flaps. But be sure to avoid their deep inner ear and to use large cotton balls rather than the little swabs. However, monthly grooming is usually adequate for clean ears.

If you notice any strange odors from their ears or if they're scratching at them and whining, it's best to contact your veterinarian, as this could be from mites or an inner ear infection.

Please Pass This Newsletter Around!

If you know of anyone that you think could benefit from my services or who may like to read this newsletter then please pass this copy on to them.

Maybe when you've finished reading it you could leave it in a place where others might get to read and enjoy it as well. What about in your hairdressers, dentist or doctors' reception. Or could you take it to your work so that your colleagues could benefit from it as well.

It's always good to reuse and recycle so by passing this newsletter on or leaving it where others could get to read it really would be benefiting everyone.

To make an appointment or if you just want to ask a question please contact me at:

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