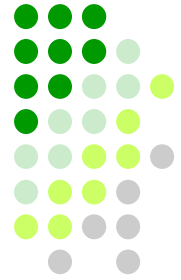




WONDERFUL Wheatens



Letter From the President

We had an awesome start to summer with temperatures in the thirties in July and then something went wrong in August. Were did summer go? The dogs seemed to enjoy the cooler weather in August for walks and playing in the yard. Even sleeping at night was much more enjoyable for all, however I think most of us would rather have a nice hot August as summers are always too short in Alberta.

One of the clubs highlights this summer was the launch of our website. A BIG THANKS goes out to Barb Zimmerman for organizing it along with the computer expertise of, web master, Andrew Lindstrom. We couldn't have done it without both of you. It looks great. Make sure to view it at www.wonderfulwheatens.ca. They will continue to add and up-date the site so make sure you visit it often.

With many members vacationing and spending time with family and friends over the summer the club only hosted one summer walk. Marichal Binns planned it on a Saturday evening. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend, but understand it was enjoyable. With fall on the way we are looking forward to getting back in touch with all of you

Wheaten fans at more Wheaten walks and club functions.

The NACA dog show was held in June. Congratulations to all the winners who competed and those who achieved their titles.

It is with great sadness that I announce to you that our excellent newsletter editor, Chris Currie, has resigned. Chris has been editor for 4 years, volunteering her talent and time for our club. She has done an awesome job keeping us informed by producing well-organized, informative newsletters that always included a touch of humour. A GI-GANTIC THANKS to you Chris for going above and beyond to satisfy the demands of editor.

Our club would like to host another grooming seminar if you the members are interested. Please continue reading for further details.

Looking forward to seeing you, an important part of our club, at our functions this fall.

Karen Sontag



Volume 5, Number 2

Summer 2007

CLUB EXECUTIVE

Alberta Director:
Susan Mitchell
(780) 922-6110
susan@pikupstix.ca

President:
Karen Sontag
(780) 960-2664
cksontag@shaw.ca

Vice President:
Lisa Fleming
(780) 436-7330
sunnydayze@shaw.ca

Secretary:
Murray Mitchell
(780) 922-6110
murray@pikupstix.ca

Treasurer:
Sue Robson
(780) 436-1958

Newsletter Editor:
Chris Currie
(780) 475-5093
ramadaca@shaw.ca



Dear Pet-Pourri

by Susan Perry

"Bits and Bites"

In Canada it is estimated that more than 4 Billion dollars are spent annually by pet owners on food and frills for their pets. There has been a substantial increase in the sales of organic foods and treats and pet nutritional supplements. More dog owners are choosing to have their pets groomed professionally that attempting it themselves, some even having regular appointment monthly as they do for their own hair. Frills such as designer clothing for dogs is a booming business. Centres that offer not only grooming and kenneling are branching into pet massage therapy. A soon-to-open hydro therapy centre for animals is coming to Edmonton and already exists in Calgary as well as several large centres across the country. These centres not only provide therapeutic sessions for arthritic pets, they provide programs that are similar to aqua-aerobic for humans, a non-shock means of exercise for your dog. There also exists people that class themselves as dog therapists, canine behaviorists etcetera, that can charge as much on an hourly basis as a human therapist does. And of course there is also the pet psychics that can understand your pets emotions and thoughts for a price. Long gone are the days of the dogs that were kept for working purposes only and were thrown the scraps to eat. They were groomed by rubbing against the nearest rough board fence or by crawling under the bushes. They slept in whatever cover they could find and gratitude was shown to them by their owners by the fact that they were allowed to work. As I gaze at my two wheatens currently sprawled on the living room carpet after a full meal and a romp outside in their grassed yard filling with toys, I muse, "what a life-eh?"

Travel with your pet by air has become more and more difficult as more airlines are refusing to take dogs as cargo. The result of this is that those that can not stand to be parted from their 4-footed friend are choosing to holiday by car. If

this is so, there are a few items that should be considered and planned on prior to travel.

Make sure you will be keeping your dog safe in the vehicle. If you do not have room for their crate, they need to be in a 'doggy seatbelt' in the back seat while the vehicle is moving. Dogs get used to the seatbelts very quickly and it does guarantee that they will not be injured or injure anyone in the vehicle if a sudden stop is necessary.

When planning your destinations, check out where the off-leash areas for dogs are, the parks that allow dogs and of course depending on how you will be spending your nights, the accommodations that accept pets. (some may insist that the dog be crated in the room) There are several websites to access this type of information-try **dogfriendly.com** and **petscanstay.com** Another useful website for campers and hikers is **petfriendly-canada.ca**

Make sure you leave room in your packing for your dogs' own food, dishes and treats to ensure that he/she feels more at ease about eating on the road. If you are spending a long day on the road, remember that your dog will require less food at meal time due to less activity for the day.

If you are planning to visit family or relatives, make sure you check with them first, do not presume they love dogs like you do or that they may have a not-so-friendly dog themselves. In such a case you may want to kennel your dog briefly at that destination (taking more research and planning) Always carry your dog's vaccination documentation just in case these situations arise. They are also necessary if you are going across any borders out of country.

Pre-planning can make for a very enjoyable holiday for you and your dog, they may not appreciate the scenery but they sure will appreciate being with you!

"Dogs don't mind being photographed in compromising situations"
-Elliott Erwitt

Dealing with Barrier Frustration

It's important to determine whether the dog is primarily frustrated or guarding.

By Jean Donaldson

(Used with permission from: Dogs in Canada)

My Miniature Schnauzer 'Max' is loving and clever. He loves to play with other dogs off leash, so we take him to a dog park most days for fun and exercise. I'd also like to take him for more walks around our neighborhood, but Max ferociously barks, growls and lunges at the end of his leash if he spots a dog – any dog, even a park buddy! It's not only embarrassing, but concerning. Is he aggressive because he's closer to his own territory? Have we spoiled him with so much off-leash play? Should we stop going to the dog park? How can we make Max more of a gentleman on leash?

Max's stellar off-leash play history and wild-man antics on leash strongly suggest that he's experiencing barrier frustration. Let's first gain some understanding of exactly what barrier frustration is, then get into how you might be able to dial it down.

We've all experienced frustration, a suite of emotions and behaviours in response to externally imposed limits. Psychologists studying frustration usually refer to concepts like the blocking of goal-directed behaviour or the cessation of expected rewards. A car that suddenly won't start, a photocopier that jams when you're in a rush and a spouse who changes the channel in the middle of a critical moment in your favourite TV show all might elicit acute aggression in you.

Research on a wide variety of animals has shown again and again that frustration can elicit aggression. One psychologist in the 1930s went so far as to suggest that all aggression was frustration-related. Nobody thinks this anymore, but there is good consensus these days that frustration can directly cause aggression and that the mechanism may be in the serotonin system in the brain.

Medications that reduce impulsivity also mitigate aggression in response to frustration, suggesting a link between frustration-induced aggression and impulse-control in general. It's also been found that within a species, individuals will differ in the degree to which they respond to frustration with aggression. This certainly aligns with the observations of dog people. In what appear to be similarly frustrating situations, some dogs display signs of stress but without aggression, some put on impressive aggressive displays and some are utterly phlegmatic.

Dogs also seem to differ with regards to how impulsive they are, i.e., how hair-trigger they are in response to attractive environmental elements: smells, other dogs, people, ice cream on the sidewalk, critters, etc. Intensity and impulsivity are not the same thing. Intensity is partly a function of impulse-control but also of degree of motivation. A dog may be highly motivated by cats and so, in spite of otherwise great impulse-control, lose it when he spots a cat. And a dog that isn't necessarily off the charts motivationally may lack impulse-control and thus have zero lag between perceiving things and charging up to them.

Motivation can be cranked up with deprivation. Dogs and people become incredibly interesting to sociable dogs that are isolated for long periods. Chronic isolation situations can be very agitating. For example, long-term confinement to a backyard with a view of passers-by will ironically often produce aggressive displays in what would otherwise be a friendly dog. Dogs with predispositions to guard when on the owner's property may also display at intruders, so it's important in an individual case to ascertain whether a displaying dog is highly social and so primarily frustrated or less social with



“The other day I saw two dogs walk over to a parking meter. One of them says to the other, ‘How do you like that? Pay toilets!’ ”
- Dave Starr



Dealing with Barrier Frustration (cont.)

By Jean Donaldson

(Used with permission from: Dogs in Canada)

strangers and therefore primarily guarding.

Diagnosis: barrier frustration

In Max's case, I'm putting my money on frustration. It sounds as though he has a combination of strong motivation for dogs, possibly combined with impulsivity and, importantly, a tendency to respond to frustration with aggression. His behaviour has nothing to do with being "spoiled." In fact, if you cease your regular dog-park outings, it's quite possible Max will get even worse on leash due to the more extreme dog deprivation.

Barrier frustration isn't a function of proximity to your home, either. In fact, the worst cases of barrier frustration are typically in kennels, where dogs are away from home (and far from spoiled). Kennelled dogs, however, are in a relatively static, barren environment. This increases their motivation to meet and investigate dogs and people, and, over and over, they get to perceive (see, hear, smell) them but cannot fully and freely investigate. This frustrates many of the dogs and a percentage of them have the respond-to-frustration-with-display chip.

If you think about the lives of many dogs, there's an impressive amount of physical thwarting of strongly motivated behaviour. Dog life is a continuous series of walls, fences, leashes, crates and commands. Of course, it's neither safe nor practical to allow free behaviour all the time, but one way to reduce the load that might lead to barrier frustration is to mitigate these situations where possible. For example, if on his walk Max encounters a dog that he has demonstrated good off-leash relations

with, immediately allow a close-up on-leash 'meet and greet' on the street. Even better, do several in a row with that same dog, to practise manners.

The first will be fraught with fireworks that will dissipate once Max has made contact, i.e., once the frustration is ended. The second is likely to be a non-event: the "Oh, you again" effect. This gives you a chance to praise and reward Max for doing exactly what you'd like to see more of in the future – polite behaviour on-leash around other dogs. It helps to have a clearly defined behaviour in mind to reward, such as "sit and watch me" or "walk by nicely" or even "approach dog without barking or growling." It further helps a great deal to use potent rewards. Pack small, tasty food rewards for these encounters. Praise and then feed/reward good performances.

As Max gets more polished at this new game, you may start to get better instances even on first tries with these familiar dogs. Continue to reward when he gets it right. If this becomes fluent, you may start to see better behaviour even around novel dogs. Consistently rewarding this will cause it to increase in frequency until, with some luck, it becomes his default.

Canadian Jean Donaldson is the founder of the San Francisco SPCA Academy for Dog Trainers. Her books include *The Culture Clash*, *Dogs Are From Neptune* and *MINE! A Guide to Resource Guarding in Dogs*.

Have you
hugged
your dog
today?



New SCWTA of Alberta Website

Barb Zimmerman

Check out our new website at wonderfulwheatens.ca. This internet site will help to promote our club, encourage new membership and provide updates for current club members.

A really fun feature is the everchanging Wheaten photos at the top of each page. Whenever you open the site or click on a new page, a new picture appears.

If you have pictures of your wonderful Wheaten(s) that you'd like displayed on the site, please email them to Barb Zimmerman @ brgjane@gmail.com. As well, if there is an upcoming event that you'd like posted on the event page, email the information to the above address and it will be posted.

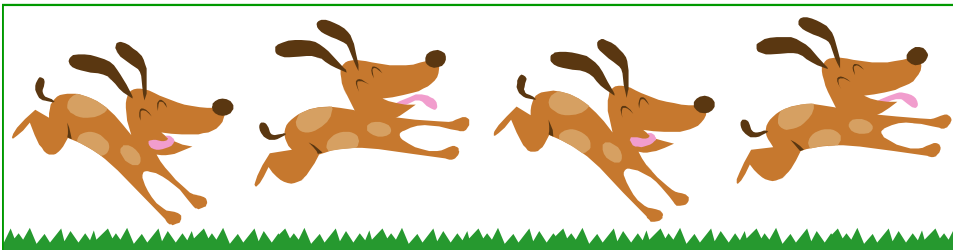
If you do not have access to a computer, phone Barb at 780-457-8635 to pass along the information or to arrange to get your pictures to me for scanning into my computer.

A very heartfelt thank you goes out to Andrew Lindstrom for creating this awesome website for us. Thank you, Andrew!!



**“Did you
smooch your
pooch today?”**

-Bob Anderson



Is Anybody Listening?

Dogs do talk, but most of us don't understand a word they say. Here's a brief guide to common canine vocalizations. Short, high-pitched barks demand attention from a family member or friend; lower-pitched, longer barks protect territory or warn of an invader; howling or mournful barks mean loneliness; whines seek attention; whining yawns indicate anxiety.



The Lowdown on Lipomas

By Jeff Grognet, D.V.M.

(Used with permission from: Dogs in Canada)

As dogs age, many develop lumps. Some are malignant growths that are ultimately fatal. Others are benign. Luckily, the most common canine tumour – the lipoma – is benign and rarely needs surgical removal.

Some breeds are more susceptible to lipomas than others. Labrador Retrievers, Doberman Pinschers, Miniature Schnauzers, Cocker Spaniels, Dachshunds and Weimaraners are at greater risk. However, despite this breed predilection, lipomas are not believed to be genetic in origin.

Lipomas form primarily in middle-aged to older dogs. Obese animals are more likely to develop them compared to their lean counterparts, and female dogs are at a higher risk than male dogs.

A lipoma, as its name suggests, is composed of fatty tissue, but not normal fat. The fat cells in a lipoma grow without regulation. Because lipomas do not spread, they're considered benign tumours.

Although most lipomas are solitary, many dogs develop more than one. They can grow anywhere on the body, but are found mainly on the lower abdomen and chest. The only time a lipoma causes a problem is if it becomes large enough to cause functional difficulties. For example, one growing inside the armpit can put pressure on the foreleg, changing angulation, stressing joints and triggering lameness.

Lipomas are characteristically round and soft except if they grow under a muscle sheet, in which case they feel quite firm. It's not uncommon for other tumours to be mistaken for lipomas. Mast cell tumours can feel just like lipomas, but unlike benign lipomas, mast cell growths are aggressive, malignant tumours.

To differentiate a lipoma from another tumour, your veterinarian performs a fine-needle aspirate – inserts a needle into the growth, extracts a few cells and spreads them on a slide. A pathologist looks at the cells to determine the nature of the mass.

Even though lipomas typically grow slowly, they can become large over a dog's lifetime. The biggest one I have removed was located beside the prepuce of a senior Labrador Retriever. It was the size of a 10-pin bowling ball. Once removed, the dog, who was also arthritic, was able to move with greater ease – not surprising, since he had lost 14 pounds.

If your dog develops a lipoma, should you have the tumour removed? Some veterinarians prefer to monitor lipomas and remove them only if they grow excessively large in an awkward place. Others believe it's better to remove them when they're small because surgery is less extensive.

Sidebar:

Can lipomas be prevented? Keeping a dog on the trim side theoretically helps. As well, according to the book *Manual of Natural Veterinary Medicine*, some Chinese herbs have reportedly dissipated lipomas in people. The same might hold true for dogs.

A multi-published writer, Jeff Grognet, D.V.M., B.S.c. (Agr.), runs a veterinary practice in Qualicum Beach, B.C., along with his wife, Louise Janes, D.V.M.

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

-Doris Day



In Memoriam

"Stanza" CH. OTCH. RAGABASH'S PERRYDALE HARMONY APRIL 1994-SEPTEMBER 2007

Stanza was freed of pain on September 1, 2007. It never gets easier but with Stanza it was particularly difficult. She has been our 'wonder dog' for all these years, never ceasing to amaze us with her intelligence, her sensitivity and her eager willingness to do whatever was asked of her.

Co-bred by Jan McCormack and myself, she came to us at eight weeks of age. She finished her conformation championship with ease and headed for the obedience ring. Most of the credit goes to our daughter Erin for her training and success in the obedience ring. It was a very proud moment when Erin called us from a show in Camrose to announce that Stanza had obtained her Utility degree. Even long after Erin had moved out of our home, Stanza would nearly turn herself inside out when she saw Erin-indeed a very special bond.

Stanza also became a certified pet therapy dog and visited the local seniors homes regularly. She was my 'demo-dog' for my obedience classes, loving to show off her stuff right up until this last year. She would accompany me to schools in Leduc to speak to the students about careers in the animal business as well. She loved to do her tricks for the kids and lapped up all the attention.

Above all of her accomplishments though, Stanza will mostly be remembered and missed for her "leaning". Her favorite thing in the world was to sit beside or in front of you and lean on the closest leg, and she could stay that way for a very long time. I think she figured out early in life that it was the most advantageous position for receiving lots of pet and scratches! Anyone that has visited us will remember that about her. There will never be another 'Stanny-Bunnany' and our lives were truly blessed to have had her for as long as we did.

Susan Perry



"The most affectionate creature in the world is a wet dog."

-Ambrose Bierce