



# A Dog's Point of View

an official publication of Retriever Rescue of Colorado, Inc.

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ISSUE 1, VOLUME 2

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## Off to a grand start...

Welcome to the second edition of the Retriever Rescue of Colorado newsletter. I want to thank everyone for the wonderful comments about the newsletter. We hope to continue providing you with valuable information and insights.

If you have a friend that is a dog lover and they are not receiving this newsletter but would like to, have them send their email address to the editor. We will be happy to add them to our quarterly email even if they are not a volunteer or adopter with RROC.

Our first quarter has started with a bang and we have been frantically trying to keep up with all the requests to take in dogs.

Fortunately volunteer and adoption applications have also been pouring in. RROC is developing a great volunteer base and we continue to add to it weekly.

**58  
lives  
saved**  
as of April 3, 2007

We had a great turnout to our training session in February. A lot of good ideas were brought up and many questions answered. (See page 9.) We hope to have another training scheduled soon for those who have recently come on board. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact one of the board members.

We also had a wonderful turnout at the PetExpo. Many adoption and volunteer applications were taken and the foster dogs and volunteers had a great

time meeting and greeting people. Thanks to all of you who helped support RROC at this event.

We have more events coming up and they are a wonderful way to get our name out to the public and to bring in much needed donations. They are also a lot of fun and a great way to meet other RROC volunteers and foster dogs. See page 10 and watch your email for event schedules and please consider donating a few hours of your time.

Also, take a look at page 10 for easy and fun ways you can help RROC acquire extra funding.

I don't think we can ever say "thank you" enough to our volunteers. We would not be here without you. You are our life blood and our life line. "Thank you" really doesn't say enough.....

**Julie Cox, President**

[www.retrieverrescueofcolorado.com](http://www.retrieverrescueofcolorado.com)



## Letters to the Editor

*Since joining RROC as a volunteer, I have come across countless dogs that I have wanted to put into RROC's system. Fortunately for Ruthann, I've only bothered her with a few. It breaks my heart to have to turn these dogs down and I can only image what Ruthann goes through daily. If you have not read this, please take a moment to do so. If you are currently not a volunteer with RROC, please consider offering your services so that we can give more dogs the help they so desperately need.*

*Deborah, Editor*

Hi, Folks!

Quite a number of you have sent me requests to take in dogs from various sources recently. I thought I'd let you in on what is happening in the intake world right now. We always are asked to take many more dogs than we possibly can take, but right now it's especially horrible. Every shelter and rescuer I talk to agrees that this is the worst it's ever been. One shelter we've helped in the past has been forced to put down more dogs this month so far than they did all last year. There are just far too many dogs out there to save them all, as sad as that fact is. We do our best and help as many as we can.

We have been asked to take in about four times as many owner surrenders lately as we usually get. Four of these are for senior dogs. Two owners wish to abandon their old dogs because they now have babies. Another involves a gentleman who has had to go into a nursing home and is unlikely to return. I turned down three Golden/Lab males today alone. They range in age from 7 months to 3 years. All are nice dogs, beautiful dogs, sweet dogs. We already have three Golden/Labs in the program. We can't take more until the ones we have in are placed. One of the ones we were offered is a

very sad case in which a woman is going into the hospital at the end of the month and she's going to undergo extensive and invasive treatment that will leave her unable to care for her child, let alone her dog. The facts make it even sadder than that, but we just are not in a position to take the dog.

We can't take in any more puppies until we place the ones we have and I've been offered so many puppies in the last week that I'm not even keeping count any longer. It's a strange fact of rescue that applicants want adult dogs when we have lots of pups, males when we have lots of females, black dogs when we only have yellows and chocolates, and special needs when we don't have any! At present, we have a bunch of applicants who want adult females with very specific characteristics. We have lots of males in with those traits but nobody matching their requirements. We've been asked to take lots of males from all over the place, but we don't have the applicants for them.

At the moment, we have no open foster homes. That means we can't take any dogs we are offered. When I commit to dogs, I gamble that foster homes will be open. If you've ever counted up the foster dogs in my house, you'll see how often

I've lost that gamble! But it is because of the generosity of the foster families and those of you who do phone interviews and home visits to place our dogs and to free up the foster homes, as well as all the other busi-ness of the rescue, that lets us continue to accept any dogs at all.

I chose to send out this fairly depressing email because I wanted everyone to know that we are just not at liberty to take in all the dogs we'd like. We can't promise our friends and coworkers and neighbors that we can take in dogs they refer. It's tough, because we'd like to think that belonging to the rescue group would just about guarantee that we can be available to help when we do learn of a dog in need. Unfortunately, it's just not that simple. The other board members have heard my rampages about not bringing in dogs. The fact is that I am always working on several dogs at a time, hoping we'll have a confluence of foster home openings, applicants, and transportation to get them in when I can. If someone commits to another dog, these dogs are bumped. For most, we are their only chance.

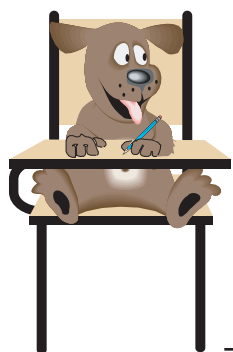
What we have accomplished together is truly remarkable. We've brought in 50 dogs this year so far. Looking over their names, I can tell you that the majori-

ty were slated to be euthanized had we not stepped in. Others would have been dumped into shelters where they would have been overlooked because their unique natures just wouldn't be shown in the chaotic environments of even the best shelters. Let's face it: Labs, especially black ones, are available in every shelter in the country and their silly, loving, loyal sides cannot be displayed when they reside in a 4' by 6' kennel run with barking dogs surrounding them night and day. Many of the mixes we've saved had even less of a chance of being seen for the wonderful dogs they are. It's a great feeling to know that we intervened in the lives of all of our dogs to make sure they will have happy lives where they will be loved. We need to focus on helping the ones we can. We're part of the solution of animal overpopulation.

Let's hope there will come a time when we need to search for dogs to bring into the program. At the moment, there are days when I am afraid to read my email or answer the phone because there are just so many people asking for help for retrievers. Every one we can take is a clear success!

On that happy note, I'll say good night!

Ruthann Marina



## Teaching them the Rules...

### *Getting Your Dogs Undivided Attention*

One of the first steps in training your dog is to get him to give you his undivided attention when you say his name. This might seem very basic, but it is astonishing how many dogs do not respond right away when called.

This exercise can be done either with a clicker or with verbal praise such as “Good boy.” You are also going to need some of your dog’s favorite treats and an area or room where there are not many distractions.

To begin, enter the room and hang out for a little while until he is comfortable. Say your dog’s name once, in an upbeat and happy voice. As soon as he looks at you, click and reward him, or if you don’t have a clicker, say your verbal praise and reward him.

Then, you want to repeat the process by letting your dog get a little bit distracted, maybe sniffing around the room. Call his name again, and as soon as he looks at you, click and reward.

Repeat this process every few minutes. Call his name, let him look at you, click and reward as soon as he looks at you, and then give him a little while to get back into his routine of being distracted.

Do this for about 10-15 minutes. You want to be able to say the dog’s name and have him immediately turn and look at you. It is alright if he doesn’t look directly into your eyes. He may look at your hand as he is associating it with the treat or he may start walking towards you. At this stage, your only interest is having him respond to you when saying his name.

If you say your dog’s name and he doesn’t look at you, then touch him on the side or pat him on the back to get his attention. As soon as he turns around and looks at you, click and reward. Repeat the process, click and reward and he’ll soon begin to make the association without you having to touch him every time.

Ok, so now your dog is looking in your direction when you say his name, but he is more likely than not, looking for the treats. He’s going to quickly learn that the treats are in your hand or pouch. If you stop the training here you are basically teaching the dog to look for treats. So once your dog is looking at you every time you say his name, you need to progress to the next step.

Take the treats and put them on the counter or somewhere not on your body. Repeat the process of calling your dog’s name and getting him to look at you. At this point he might initially start going toward wherever you have put the treats. However if he looks at the treats and not at you, don’t praise him, don’t click, and don’t reward. Give him a minute, call his name again, and as soon as he looks at you and not the treats then you click and reward.

Keep repeating this process. It is very important to be patient with

this. Dogs are very intelligent and eventually he will understand what you want. He’ll begin to look directly at you.

Your next step is to have him look you directly in the eyes and really make a connection — have him acknowledge that you and he are communicating.

The way you want to do this is by calling his name, but you don’t want to give any type of response at all until he looks you directly in the eyes.

This is going to be an intuitive process for your dog. He is going to instinctively want to look at you because you are communicating with him. Call him; repeat the process. However, only when he looks you in the eyes do you click and reward.

Sometimes he will be looking at your hands, or at your feet or look in your general direction. This is natural because this is what’s worked up to this point. So it is very important that you have

## TEACHING THEM THE RULES (CONTINUED)

patience with this and that you don't click and reward until he looks in your eyes.

If you have a little bit of trouble with this, you might want to have your dog sit, call his name, and then when he is looking in your general direction, hold the treat up in front of your eyes. The dog's eyes will follow the treat and then look at you in the eyes. When he makes eye contact with you, that's when you click and reward.

Once you are able to grab your dog's attention simply by saying his name and having him look you in the eyes every time you say it, it's time to add further distractions.

You've probably had the experience of walking your dog and he sees something that is really, really interesting to him. No matter how many times you call his name, he pays you absolutely no attention.

Well, it is time to stop that behavior. Basically what you're going to do is the same exercise, but you are going to add some distractions around him. What you want to do first is have your dog in front of you, say his name, and then as soon as he looks at you, click and reward. Now, while your

dog is still looking at you, have a friend or spouse walk into the room or approach the dog from the side. At this point your dog is most likely going to turn and look at the other person. As soon as he does this, that person needs to immediately turn away from your dog and not show any interest in the dog at all. As soon as that happens, you say your dog's name, and click and reward as soon as your dog looks at you and away from that person.

Because you have just introduced a new thing into the equation your dog may not immediately look at you. Don't get frustrated. Simply give your dog a minute or two and he will eventually lose interest in the other person. At this time, simply say your dog's name, and as soon as he looks at you, click and reward. Add some extra praise as he has just overcome a major obstacle.

Once you get a positive response, give it a few minutes and then repeat the entire exercise. Let your friend approach, let your dog check out your friend, call his name and as soon as your dog looks at you and stops paying attention to your friend, click and reward.

Now you can continue to make this exercise

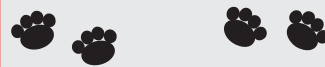
more and more difficult to the dog by having more people enter the room, or by gradually moving this outdoors and into environments that are more and more distracting. Your ultimate goal by building on this exercise is to be able to have your dog immediately drop everything and give you his full undivided attention as soon as you say his name.

Do this 10-15 minutes a day until you feel that your dog is focused on you. Establishing this foundation with your dog is extremely important. If you have your dog's attention and focus, your other training is going to go a lot faster and easier.

### Follow the Leader, LLC In-Home Dog Training

is effective and fun for both dogs and owners. Whitney Mouton, CPDT, comes to the owner's home which allows her to develop training methods that meet each dog's individual needs. She is successful at teaching owners how to be leaders for their dogs and is efficient in achieving immediate results. Whitney uses positive reinforcement which is motivating for the dog and therefore leads to a well-trained furry companion. Whether an owner has a new puppy that needs guidance in everyday behavior, or an older dog that needs work on a few issues, Follow the Leader, LLC is the right choice.

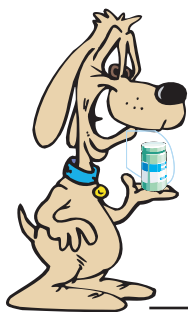
Whitney has trained hundreds of dogs from puppy age to advanced level. She is a Certified Pet Dog Trainer and a member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers. She is also an evaluator for the AKC Canine Good Citizen program. Her passion for dogs has blossomed into an understanding of canine behavior which she is eager to pass on to any dog owner. Contact her to schedule an appointment or for any questions.



**Follow the  
Leader, LLC  
In-Home Dog  
Training &  
Dog Walking**



**Whitney Mouton, CPDT**  
303-941-2024  
Email:  
ftldogtraining@comcast.net  
www.followtheleaderdogs.com



## Product Review...

*There is a plethora of canine products, accessories and books relating to food, health, training, cleaning, etc. etc. etc. This spot will be used to review products or books that our volunteers have found especially useful. If you have an item you'd like to have showcased, please send the information to the editor.*

### BOOK REVIEW

#### ***The Other End of the Leash Why We Do What We Do Around Dogs***

Patricia B. McConnell, PhD  
Ballantine Books

This book was recommended to me by Whitney Mouton and boy am I ever glad I read it. It is a wonderful perspective on why we do what we do when we are with our dogs. She delves deeply into primate behavior (us) — kissing, hugging, eye contact, body language, etc. — and how canids (dogs) view and interpret our behaviors. It totally amazes me that humans and dogs can coexist at all. I think we must chalk it up to a dog's ability to adapt, accept and love us no matter how inane he thinks we are acting.

Dr. McConnell also gives wonderful tips on training and how to interact with our dogs in ways that bring out the best in them. This book is fascinating and filled with insights that will keep you reading until the wee hours of the morning. It will help you connect with your dog in a completely new way and will enrich and enhance you and your dog's relationship.

Her writing style is delightful. She weaves a lot of stories and humor into the book, making it easy and enjoyable to read. I zipped through my first reading of the book because I kept wanting to know what was next. My second reading, I took a little slower and made numerous notes and highlights.

I'd highly recommend this book to those of you who want to know "Why is my dog looking at me as if I'm crazy?"

Deb G

### BOOK REVIEW

#### ***The Daisy Sutra Conversation With My Dog***

Helen Weaver  
Budda Rock Press

This book is touching, heartwarming, and funny. It will make you laugh and cry. For any of you that have loved and lost a dog it gives hope and joy — knowing that they are not only with us when they are alive but after they have passed on.

I have always known that we can communicate with our animals. It's just a matter of knowing how to listen to what they are telling us. When Indy was alive I often felt I knew exactly what he was thinking and that he knew what I was thinking. We have a bond that will never break and when he died a piece of me died with him.

This book touched my heart and soul. Daisy's and Helen's story mirrored my own story with Indy in many ways. It helped me find peace with the decision that had to be made. It gave me hope that I will see him again.

This book is just a story, a dialogue of sorts. No preaching, no animal rights sentiments, no raising of a banner. Just a story of the love between a person and her dog. It does make you think, it does raise some questions. But they are questions only you can answer for yourself.

Again, I'd highly recommend this book to anyone who shares that special bond with their dog and who knows that no matter what our species, we can all communicate with each other.

Deb G



## Candid Canines...

*This spot will be devoted to photos submitted of foster and/or adopted RROC dogs. Send us your funniest, most endearing, or thoughtful poses with a short caption. (Only 1 photo per household, per quarter, please).*



Did you really wake us just to take a photo?  
*Newton and Buddy*



Can't a guy catch a few zzzz's around here?  
*Tubbs*



Snooze time....

*Sam and Heathcliff*



## Coordinator Updates...

*This spot will be devoted to reports from our busy coordinators. They will let us know what's been happening, where they need help or just share a story or two.*

### Foster Coordinator

*Deb Riley*

#### Breaking All The Rules for Chester

When I became involved with RROC I set certain rules for myself:

- I would only be involved in events
- I would never, ever foster
- I would only foster puppies
- I would never foster more than one dog at time
- And finally, I would never, ever adopt a dog

I fostered my first dog one week after my first event. I have fostered numerous puppies. I have even fostered older dogs. I have fostered two puppies at once. Yes, I broke all my rules but I was certain I would not break my finally rule. After all, between my hubby, two teenage children and two golden retrievers of my own, how could I possibly take on another dog?

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our newest member of our family, Chester. Chester is the most beautiful three year old, male, golden retriever I have ever met. I said that I would foster him even though I normally didn't foster bigger dogs but since he was a golden, one of my family's most favorite breeds, how could I say no? Certainly as handsome as Chester was he wouldn't be sticking around foster care long!

Chester is a fine example of one of the problems when people choose their dogs based on looks. Looks can be deceiving which is one of the reasons I respect the way the RROC matching policy works. We do not let potential adopters choose their dogs based on looks; they are matched by the dog's needs and then the adopter's needs. I know Chester's matches were with the best people and even after explaining his special needs, Chester has severe separation anxiety and can not be left in

a crate or confined, that they were good matches, but I couldn't let Chester's good looks fool another family.

Chester was adopted and returned twice and then lived in a doggie daycare where he received personal attention by a trainer. After two weeks of torturing myself with his picture as my computer screensaver, I decided he had to come home. Home with us. Home where we will put up with whatever he has to offer. Home where we will work on his counter surfing, garbage picking, slipper eating, carbohydrate overloading, and peanut butter eating ways. Home where we won't give up on you Chester because you know what? "If you love something, set it free. If it comes back then it was meant to be." Chester you are meant to be a Riley and we will provide you with the life of Riley!



### PI/HV Coordinator

*Debbie Davis*

Hi everyone,

These past three months have flown by, and we have been very busy at RROC. We have many new volunteers, doing everything from transports to fosters to events to my personal favorite . . . helping with phone interviews and home visits! I want to thank all of you for keeping up with the demand for PIs and HVs as the apps flood in during these past few frenzied months. It's been very impressive to see some of you respond within minutes to my email requests, and cheerfully allow me to double or even triple up on you as I run out of volunteers that aren't already assigned one or two or more. I am thrilled to have all the new volunteers we have helping in this capacity, and everyone has been so conscientious about screening the applicants to determine if they are worthy of our wonderful

dogs. To those of you that were able to attend the training session on Saturday, Feb 24th, thank you so much for taking MORE time out of your busy schedules, and I hope you all learned as much as I did about how we can best serve the dogs by being as thorough as possible in our screening process, and just as importantly, conveying our observations in our notes that we then forward to Rachel and Julie to match the applicants with the right dog. For those of you that weren't able to attend, I have some updated information to email to you . . . as soon as I have a spare minute. If anyone reading this isn't already volunteering for phone interviews and/or home visits and would like to learn more about them, please email me at [deborah.davisiii@gmail.com](mailto:deborah.davisiii@gmail.com). I'll give you everything you need to get started in this fun, rewarding, and important part of placing our dogs into great homes. Thanks again to everyone for all that you do to help the dogs. It is all about them!



## Intake Coordinator

*Ruthann Marina*

### Are rescue dogs bad dogs?

There seems to be an assumption that rescue dogs are all bad dogs. They've arrived at our doors through bad behavior on their part. Those who adopt them are individuals with unusually big hearts, willing to put up with naughty dogs to save them. We've had people tell us they are willing to take these dogs off our hands, as though our dogs are especially burdensome. The idea that our dogs have come to us because of actions on the part of the dog owners rarely seems to be considered. The reality is that the majority of our dogs have done nothing wrong or have done some minor transgressions that have landed them into rescue!

Reviewing the dogs taken into RROC's program, we see that most were surrendered to us or to a shelter that contacted us because the original owner did not have enough time to devote to the dog. The common factor in all of these was that the people were not available to the dog. We've had

numerous dogs come to us because of what I like to refer to as change in circumstances in the family. These include divorces and break ups, relocations, marriages, and births of babies. Dogs are often forgotten in divorces/break ups or are used as pawns. For some reason, moves to other states are frequently used to explain the need to give up dogs. I often wonder which states prohibit dogs! People give us their dogs when they move in with new partners and the combination is not as happy as anticipated. We've had so many dogs given to us because, as they tell us, they got dogs before having kids and now they no longer need kid substitutes! And plenty of people give up the dogs when their kids move out, since they got the dogs for the kids in the first place! In none of these instances is the dog to blame.

Another common reason for surrendering dogs to rescues or to shelters is that the dogs are too active. Our breeds are potentially very active dogs. They were bred to do jobs that require stamina and strength. Without direction, these traits can become liabilities for the dogs. When the dogs design their own games and these

include things people do not like, the dogs often suffer. We get many dogs who have had no obedience training. These are the dogs who jump on people for fun, who bark to get attention, who chew inappropriate items, and do other unacceptable things. There are two obvious choices in response to these behaviors: to dump the dogs or to train them! Since our breeds' success was due mainly to wanting to please us, they are obviously easier to train than most other breeds! Still, the easier choice is to surrender the dog.

Lots of people give up their old dogs. Once dogs reach senior status or even middle age, some people do not think they have value. Sometimes this is because people believe old dogs can no longer perform the tasks for which they were obtained, such as to hunt or to protect the family. Other times, it's because the family decides to get a puppy and then dumps the older dog when the older one corrects the puppy. I have had the discussion about returning the puppy rather than dumping the senior for doing what a senior should do with far too many people who are

utterly shocked that I would suggest they return a cute little puppy.

Speaking of puppies, we've had more than our share of puppies, including litters. We get the puppies from people who have unplanned litters or who think they can make money from selling these puppies and soon find they cannot place all the pups. Once again, none of this is the fault of the dogs.

We've received dogs because the owner has collected too many animals. In these instances, the owners often have to surrender multiple pets at once to satisfy court orders or threats of confiscation by animal control. We've also received dogs because the owners are redecorating and the dogs will no longer match the décor. Obviously, the dogs cannot be to blame for these circumstances.

False expectations are to blame for numerous surrenders. I can't tell you how many people are shocked that retrievers require any training. It seems people think all the retriever breeds come pre-trained! People do not realize that retrievers can be absolutely hyper unless given chances to expend some of their

energy. Bored dogs get into all sorts of things. Some people who purchase dogs of our breed have no interest in discussing crate training, obedience training, or adequate exercise! Similarly, there are lots of people who are shocked that retrievers shed, that they will get so big, or that these breeds are mouthy and chew all sorts of inappropriate items.

This is not to say all our dogs are perfect in every way. Most dogs have at least one bad habit and rescue dogs are no different in this respect. Most of us address the bad habits or learn to live with them.

Instead of thinking that dogs who end up in rescue are bad dogs, it's probably better to be generous to their original families and to realize that these dogs were just not good matches. The goal of rescue is to correct minor bad habits and to find the best possible match for every dog and the best possible match for every applicant. Rescue is really worthwhile when an adopter tells us this is the best dog in the world! All of us who have adopted rescue dogs know that these dogs are true gems!



#### SUGGESTIONS FROM RROC'S TRAINING SESSION (2/24/2007)

- Steve Stapp suggested putting Rachel's story about Xander on RROC's website.
- Steve also thought a great motto for RROC would be, "IT'S ALL ABOUT THE DOG, NOT ABOUT THE PERSON."
- Jessica suggested that we do our own micro-chipping.
- Ruthann will start scanning the vet records directly to the foster homes.
- Wil suggested that fosters might put their own ID tags on their foster dogs as soon as they get the dog. He also brought up the idea of taking a digital camera on HV's, in case a fence, or some such thing might be in question.
- Wil also suggested having some sort of photo ID for RROC volunteers to wear when doing a home visit.
- Steve asked if our HV Coordinator knows when and where a HV is being done.
- It was suggested that the word RROC be put somewhere in the subject line when sending official RROC correspondence, for ease of identifying said emails.
- Rich offered to contact other city websites for us.
- Jessica suggested having some sort of RROC ID to maybe put in the glove-box or on the dash when doing transports.

Our Volunteer Coordinators are very much like puppies. It takes very little to make them happy.

Just say the magic word, "Yes".

Yes, I will do a home visit. Yes, I will foster a dog. Yes, I will transport a dog. Yes, I will donate my time to that event.

Just say "yes" and see their little tails wag.

Make a commitment today to one of the coordinators and you'll have a friend for life.





## Upcoming Events Calendar...

### RROC EVENTS

**Saturday, April 14**

Pet Palace  
Quincy and Parker  
Aurora  
11:00-3:00

**Saturday, April 21**

PETCO  
Adoption Fair  
Colfax Avenue  
Golden  
10:00-4:00

**Saturday, April 29**

My Pet's Place  
at Redstone  
Open House  
Santa Fe  
Littleton  
11:00-4:00

**We need volunteers and foster dogs for all of these events.**

**Please call or email Cindy Poorman at (720-480-5946) labsrroc@comcast.net**

**This is a fun way to meet other RROC volunteers and some of the foster dogs.**

**Visit our website for additional information.**

**Hope to see you there!**

**Watch your emails for more scheduled events!**



## Canine Chuckles...

*Know a funny story or joke about a canine? Have a funny photo. Submit it to the editor and help give our volunteers a good laugh.*



## \$ EASY and FUN WAYS TO MAKE MONEY FOR RROC \$

### ELITCH GARDENS

Buy a ticket to Elitch Gardens for the private event day on April 22 and RROC makes money. Tickets are \$20.99 and RROC receives \$5 for every ticket sold. In addition a free one-day return ticket will be given which can be used on select days through the rest of the season. The park is open April 22 from 10-6 and is exclusive for nonprofit organizations. Encourage everyone to buy a ticket and help RROC. Order forms are on the website.

### GoodSearch

For every online web search you do through [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com), money will be donated to RROC. First time users need to put RROC into the charity field to ensure that RROC receives the credit.



## Canine Vitals...

# Canine Cancer... A Growing Epidemic

## Thanks to

**Dr. Deborah Colgin  
Brooklyn Veterinary  
Clinic in  
Castle Rock  
303-688-9352**

**Deer Creek Animal  
Hospital of Littleton  
303-973-4200**

**Mesa Veterinary  
Hospital of Golden  
303-237-0542**

and

**Dr. Haas  
Pet Palace Vet  
Clinic in  
Aurora  
303-699-0477**

**for going above  
and beyond in  
providing  
exemplary  
veterinary care  
to the dogs  
of RROC!**

Cancer and other degenerative diseases are increasing alarmingly in our pets. Cancer has become epidemic in all breeds, but Golden Retrievers have been particularly affected and have a 63% death rate due to cancer.

Can you safeguard your dog from cancer? In its simplest sense, cancer is a failure of the immune system to inhibit uncontrolled growth of certain cells. As these cells multiply, they form tumors. If the tumors are unchecked, they metastasize, sending out cancer cells that develop into tumors in other parts of the body. The various factors that cause the initial cell growth are hot topics in cancer research, but are still poorly understood. However, studies are showing that various factors do contribute to cancer and include: **over-vaccination, poor diet, environmental toxins, stress, and poor breeding.**

### Prevention is the Best Defense

Dogs are our companions and therefore they share our environment. They breathe the same air, drink the same water and walk across the same lawns that we do. Research shows that the cancers

dogs get are exactly the same as the cancers humans get.

Prevention, of course, is the best defense against cancer. Besides giving our dogs the healthy basics of life such as good food, clean filtered water, regular exercise and grooming, we can do many other things to keep them well. These include early spaying and neutering, providing regular exams, scheduling biannual exams for dogs 8 years and older, having frequent oral exams, and paying close attention to changes in eating and bowel habits.

### Vaccinations

A minimal vaccination protocol is recommended by holistic vets and veterinary colleges. Increasingly, overvaccination has been identified as a health risk. According to current research the recommendations now coming out of all the U.S. veterinary schools indicate that annual re-vaccinations are unnecessary. The current recommendations are every 3 years for most vaccines, although it is thought that many vaccines last much longer than that.

Vaccines disrupt the immune system especially

combination vaccines that are given annually. Label directions warn veterinarians not to vaccinate a sick animal and many doctors are now including injured or stressed animals in that caution. Responding to decades of research by immunologists, veterinary textbooks and colleges no longer recommend annual vaccinations for dogs, but most veterinary clinics continue to prescribe them. They also routinely prescribe antibiotics, steroids, and other symptom-suppressing drugs which also take a toll on the immune system.

Be pro-active with your vet. Do some research so that you can confidently and intelligently discuss your concerns.

### The Right Diet

Many veterinarians blame grain-based pet foods for diabetes, digestive problems, and other canine disorders. After all, the canine digestive tract evolved on a diet of prey animals, consisting mostly of meat and bones, not wheat and corn.

Every few years, aflatoxin, which grows on corn, rice, and other grains, contaminates pet foods and kills dogs. In addition to caus-

ing liver damage, aflatoxin is a potent carcinogen, so even “safe” levels that don’t cause obvious disease outbreaks can contribute, over time, to cancer.

Another carcinogen found in grain-based foods is acrylamide, once believed to exist only in industrial waste. This tasteless, invisible by-product is formed when high-carbohydrate foods are fried or baked at high temperatures.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers acrylamide so dangerous that it set the “safe level” for human consumption at almost zero, with the maximum safe level in drinking water set at 0.5 parts per billion. A small serving of French fries contains over 400 parts per billion. No one has tested pet foods, but any processed foods that contain carbohydrates, especially those extruded at high temperature like grain-based kibble or canned under high heat and pressure, pose a risk.

“Considering how ubiquitous these carcinogens are,” says San Francisco area dog health researcher Mary Straus, “and considering that cancer cells thrive on carbohydrates, avoiding grains altogether may be one way to help lower the risk of cancer.”

In his book, *Work Wonders: Feed Your Dog Raw Meaty Bones*, Australian veterinarian Tom Lonsdale observes, “We need more information

about the cancer epidemic in domestic dogs. However, basic nutritional and medical principles tell us that diet is the likely main factor. Without waiting for extra information, and because cancer often takes years to develop, it’s best to start puppies on a cancer-prevention diet early. From the whelping box to the grave, let ‘Prevention, not treatment’ be our motto.”

### Dietary Supplements

Antioxidant supplements, which help protect the body from damage by free radicals, have many health benefits, including cancer protection. Food-source antioxidants, vitamins, and other nutrients derived from whole foods are recommended by many holistic veterinarians because they are recognized as food by the body and are more easily assimilated than synthetic vitamins grown in a laboratory.

One of the simplest cancer-resisting supplements you can add to your dog’s food, according to Bruce Fife, ND, is coconut oil. Dr. Fife, the author of several books about coconut’s health benefits, recommends feeding dogs 1 teaspoon of coconut oil per 10 pounds of body weight per day in divided doses. That’s 1 tablespoon (3 teaspoons) for a 30-pound dog and 2 tablespoons for a 60-pound dog.

“The medium-chain fatty acids in coconut oil help treat or prevent all kinds of illnesses,” he says, “and

they have significant anti-tumor properties. Giving your dog coconut oil every day is inexpensive health insurance.”

Dried shredded coconut (the unsweetened kind) is an excellent source of fiber, another factor in cancer prevention. Try adding a teaspoon to a tablespoon of shredded coconut to your dog’s home-prepared food. If feeding dry food, add a little water or soak the shredded coconut first.

### Environmental Factors

Second-hand smoke is a serious problem for pets, especially those who spend hours every day at the feet of their smoking companions. “I tell all my clients who smoke that they’re putting their dogs’ health at risk,” says Dr. Hershman.

Busy highways, driveways, parking lots, and areas where trucks and cars idle are dangerous for dogs because of gas and diesel exhaust. A dog’s nose is much closer to the ground – and exhaust pipes – than the human nose, so dogs are more likely to inhale damaging particles.

Lawn treatments and agricultural chemicals are known to cause cancer in animals. Dogs pick up pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals through their feet and noses. Explore organic alternatives for your own lawn and garden.

Even household chemicals

pose a threat to our canine companions. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 150 chemicals found in the average home are linked to birth defects, cancer, and psychological abnormalities. Start looking for environmentally safe alternatives.

Use topical pesticides only as often as absolutely necessary – for dogs who regularly hike in tick-infested woods or brush, for example. Don’t apply monthly; use only as needed to protect your dog.

Of the 141 unregulated contaminants detected in water supplies between 1998 and 2003, 52 are linked to cancer, 41 to reproductive toxicity, 36 to developmental toxicity, and 16 to immune system damage. Water contaminated with 83 agricultural pollutants, including pesticides and fertilizer ingredients, flows through the taps of over 200 million Americans in 41 states.

Installing a water filter or using uncontaminated, unfluoridated bottled water sounds like a very good idea! So does avoiding fluoridated toothpaste.

Immunologist and veterinarian Richard Pitcairn, DVM, PhD, author of *Dr. Pitcairn’s Complete Guide to Natural Health for Dogs & Cats*, considers all sources of radiation (including repeated diagnostic X-rays) dangerous because their effects are cumulative in the body. He recommends that dogs not

be allowed to rest near a color TV set. Fortunately, the new flat-screen TVs and computer monitors emit much lower levels of electromagnetic radiation than older cathode ray tube models. In general, the fewer electrical appliances in close proximity to pets, the better.

### Topical Pesticides

Anyone who lives where fleas, ticks, or mosquitoes are a problem knows what a challenge they can be. Unfortunately, topical and systemic pest-control products contribute to a host of health problems, including increased cancer risks.

A well-balanced raw diet can help a dog repel parasites, but sometimes the attack is overwhelming.

"I definitely prefer natural alternatives to pesticide sprays or products like Frontline, which make the entire dog toxic to biting parasites," says Dr. Hershman. "But alternatives may not always work. When it comes to cancer prevention the less often you use conventional pesticides, the better. A good diet and natural repellents are always worth trying first."

### Cancer Preventives

There are many holistic cancer treatments which can be used to help healthy dogs remain cancer-free. Preventive treatments disrupt cancer cells before they take up resi-

dence in vulnerable parts of the body.

Become informed. Choose a preventive treatment that fits into your lifestyle and budget.

### Medicinal Herbs

Ask a dozen experts about their favorite herbs for cancer prevention and you'll generate a list too long to publish here. But a few herbal products are so effective that they are recommended by almost everyone.

"Many mushrooms have anti-tumor and immune-stimulating activity," says Carol Falck, VMD, of Pompano Beach, Florida. "They have been used medicinally for thousands of years in China and Japan, and they work very well for dogs."

Dr. Falck often uses Myco-Immune by Thorne Research, which is a liquid extract of seven medicinal mushrooms, including cordyceps, reishi, shiitake, maitake, and turkey tail. "This combination stimulates the immune system in several ways, helping it resist the growth of cancer."

She also recommends a green tea extract (G.T.-Ex by Thorne Research) because green tea enhances cellular immune function, increases natural killer cell activity, and may inhibit some cancer cell lines.

Closely related to herbal medicine is Aromatherapy.

San Diego holistic veterinarian Stephen Blake recommends massaging the paw pads of at-risk dogs once or twice per day with a drop of blended frankincense, sandalwood, and Douglas fir essential oils.

### Exercise

The lymph system is a key factor in cancer prevention. Lymph circulation improves with active exercise and deep, diaphragmatic breathing. Gentle to vigorous brushing that moves from the feet to the heart is a simple addition to daily grooming that also stimulates lymph circulation.

"Exercise is so important," says Dr. Falck. "Exercise stimulates the immune system and releases endorphins, and an added benefit of consistent exercise is increasing gastrointestinal motility, which helps normalize stools and eliminate toxins from the body. It also facilitates weight management, which is important because obesity is a risk factor for some types of cancer."

### Malillumination

All dogs can benefit from access to the full-spectrum light found outdoors, which activates the hypothalamus and keeps the endocrine system balanced. Exposure to natural light, preferably for several hours daily, is necessary for your dog's health. A shady screened porch, the shelter of a tree, even an

open window or doorway can give the dog's body what it needs.

### Emotional Well-Being

For many healthcare experts, emotional well-being is as important to cancer prevention as diet and exercise.

"I believe strongly that emotions are linked to general health via the immune system," says Dr. Falck. "We can support our pets emotionally by encouraging social interaction with people and other animals, by providing a safe and loving environment with balanced opportunities for play and rest, and by minimizing stress."

Dr. Blake strongly stresses the importance of positive thinking.

"Never talk to an animal as though he or she is a tumor instead of a spiritual being," he says. "Negative thoughts generate negative energy, which feeds the disease and weakens the patient's vital force. No matter how serious the risk of cancer, it's important to picture your dog as well and happy, not sick, and to engage him or her in meaningful conversation and meaningful activities every day."

<http://cancer.landofpuregold.com/prevent.htm>



## News From Around the World...

### *A True Success Story in Grand Bahama*

*17 Team Members, 253 Animals, 5 Days*

*The Bahamian Animal Rescue Committee (B.A.R.C.) was formed in April, 2005 to assist the Humane Society of Grand Bahama in their ongoing efforts in West End concerning animal population control, spay and neuter programs, and disease mitigation. The situation with wild dogs and cats has worsened since the hurricanes devastated the village in 2004. There are many more puppies and kittens in the village, resulting in a large homeless population.*

*The majority of the dogs are of mixed breed, named "Potcakes" (which is a recognized BREED in the Bahamas) after the popular peas and rice dish that sticks to the bottom of the pot. The leftover peas and rice is often fed to the dogs; hence the name they have been given. These dogs are extremely intelligent and easily-trained, and they make the most grateful and loyal companions.*

*The facts concerning the adoption rates of dogs and cats are very discouraging. About 100-200 dogs are collected each month, with only 5-10% adopted. Sadly, the Humane Society of Grand Bahama is NOT a "no-kill" shelter, so the survival of even healthy animals is minimal.*

Below are excerpts from the story about an amazing team of volunteers and what they managed to accomplish in five short days. For more information on this and ongoing clinics go to

**[www.thekohnfoundation.org](http://www.thekohnfoundation.org)**

*The week of January 15th, 2007, 17 team members, including Veterinarians, Technicians, and Assistants, along with a camera crew, arrived on Grand Bahama from North America to make a difference with the animals. This special group of people paid their own way and volunteered their time. Below is a report from Tip Burrows of the GB Humane Society:*

Three leg amputations (dogs) surgeries were performed. These surgeries took from 3 to 4 hours each, and while they cut down on the amount of sterilizations that could have been done during that time, they saved the lives of those three animals, whose only other humane option would have been euthanasia.

Our volunteer Vets, Techs and Assistants took two critical puppies home with them for two nights to ensure they did not lack for medical attention during the night. Those were largely sleepless nights for

many of them, yet none wanted to give up on those puppies and they were all back to the clinic bright and early the next mornings

The sterilized count includes at least 25 pregnant dogs and cats; thus we prevented upwards of 150 babies born only to face a bleak future.

When one considers the fact that the vast majority of these animals had no previous veterinary history whatsoever (other than many dogs who were vaccinated and dewormed for the first and only time during our distemper campaign last year), and many were in less than ideal physical condition (thus routine surgeries were more complicated), and also required and received basic treatment for other minor and some major ailments; ...and also considering that many were not that socialized and thus were terrified and some very difficult to handle (I think almost every one of us

received a minor bite or scratch at least).

This first clinic was a resounding success and hopefully subsequent planned clinics in this project will be a bit easier in the organizing. I also believe the community will respond favorably right away to the next one, as by the end of the week; we had pet owners bringing their animals themselves in droves. All the pre-publicity in the world could not substitute for them actually seeing it happen. We all had encounters with many residents of the area; all of whom were most appreciative and grateful that we chose Eight Mile Rock for the inaugural clinic.

We all have heartbreaking stories from last week, but we also have many more heartwarming ones. Certain animals that each of us dealt with personally may have touched us especially, as did certain people. Here are a

few instances.

Puff must certainly top the list of animals who won all our hearts. This poor brave dog came in with a horrifically disfigured leg. It had to be excruciatingly painful for her, yet her calm, trusting, and sweet demeanor was a true testament to the courage and tenacity of the Potcake. She, along with others, will be closely monitored by us.

Two small puppies who needed specialized diagnostic tests and exams not possible here, and likely very delicate surgeries flew back to New York with Dr. Bridgett Barry, who will do whatever they need medically and find them loving homes.

The little boy who saw the story on ZNS and hounded his mummy mercilessly to let him be late for school the next day to bring his puppies. She did, and they showed up again promptly at 4 p.m. to collect the pups, and also

were receptive to advice on how to care for them properly.

The people who heard about it on Cool-96 and went home to bring their animals, or stop by and ask if we could pick them up.

We all knew that we would never reach every animal in need in only five days, but every single animal that came in received the utmost in compassion, concern and caring treatment. Every single animal woke up from anesthesia to a caring voice and loving, attentive hands. They were cradled and warmed and given whatever they needed to recover in the best possible manner. Every time I walked in I was astounded anew by the tireless techs and volunteers sitting on the floor in the recovery area with a puppy or kitten or cat in their arms, or practically lying on the floor to comfort a large dog. Every single animal had the very best of care from admitting to discharge.

We should be very proud, that we use the best drugs and pain meds and antibiotics; we were able to provide first class care to each and every animal entrusted to us. We cannot save them all; but we made a giant step this past week in saving many more and ensuring a better quality of life for the animals we cared for.

Many tears were shed last week by almost all of us whether publicly or privately. It was exhausting, heartrending work for twelve to sixteen hours every day. Every single person wanted the best possible outcome for every single animal. We did it! And can do it again and again until we've covered this island!





# Animal Legislation...

## Become An Advocate for Animals

*Make your voice heard. Contact your representatives today.*

*Go to [www.colorado.gov](http://www.colorado.gov) for a listing of state and federal representatives.*

Across the nation, state lawmakers passed 65 animal-friendly measures during the 2006 legislative sessions, and 11 bills that would have harmed animals were defeated.

These laws include stiffer penalties or banning of dog and cock fighting, felony level penalties for animal abuse, prohibition of leghold traps, and requirement of animals in shelters to be spayed and neutered. California passed the first state law setting a specific limit on the amount of time dogs can be tethered and enacted criminal penalties for leaving an animal in a car during extreme weather conditions. **Yea California.** Nine states passed laws requiring disaster preparedness for pets.

Colorado enacted improved bonding laws which will help shelters petition for the costs of caring for animals seized in cruelty or fighting cases.

### Colorado State Legislation Pending

#### CO HB-1235

##### Animal Cruelty

Status: Pending  
*Prohibits bestiality; allows courts to issue pet protection orders.*

#### HB-1052:

##### Animal Cruelty

##### Treatment Task Force

*Creates the Colorado Animal Cruelty Offender Treatment Task Force to study treatment options and effectiveness for animal cruelty offenders. Sponsored by Alice Borodkin State Rep., House District 9*

#### HB-1296

##### Animal Owner

##### Choice of Care

Status: Defeated

*Allows animal owners the right to choose holistic health care without the supervision of a veterinarian.*

For more information go to [www.caaor.org](http://www.caaor.org)

### Federal Legislation Pending

#### Bill Number:

**H.R. 503 & S. 311**

##### American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act

Status: Pending  
*To prohibit the slaughter of horses for human consumption and the trade and transport of horseflesh and live horses intended for human consumption.*

#### Bill Number:

**H.R. 137 & S. 261**

##### Animal Fighting Prohibition Enforcement Act

Status: Pending  
*To upgrade current penalties by authorizing felony-level jail time (up to three years) for violations of the federal animal fighting law, and to prohibit interstate and foreign commerce of cockfighting weapons.*

#### Bill Number: S. 364 & H.R. 661

##### Downed Animal & Food Safety Protection Act

HSUS Position: Support  
Status: Pending

*To end the use of non-ambulatory livestock—animals too sick or injured to stand or walk on their own—in human food and require that these "downed" animals be humanely euthanized when presented at slaughter facilities.*

#### Bill Number:

**S. 714 & H.R. 1280**

##### Pet Safety and Protection Act

Status: Pending  
*To amend the Animal Welfare Act to ensure that all dogs and cats used by research facilities are obtained legally.*

*For more information on these and other bills, please visit: <http://www.hsus.org/>*

On February 21, the Humane Society Legislative Fund hosted a meeting with Congressman Ed Perlmutter, the newly elected representative from Colorado's 7th congressional district. Participants in the HSLF Town Hall meeting heard an overview of animal issues being considered at the federal level. Rep. Perlmutter listened to comments and opinions and took questions from the audience about his views on animal protection legislation. During this meeting HSLF mentioned that bills were being drafted which would require puppy mills to have yearly state inspections and would limit the number of dogs that a mill could have on its property. Stay tuned. Visit [www.fund.org](http://www.fund.org).

ANIMAL LEGISLATION continued

## BASIC RIGHTS TAKEN AWAY FROM ANIMAL OWNERS

*This article does not necessarily represent the views of Retriever Rescue of Colorado*

*By Deborah Gotto*

Unfortunately HB07-1296 did not pass, by just one vote. This now makes it a felony for any holistic health care provider to work on animals without a veterinarians prescription or a vet being in attendance during the session. The health modalities include aromatherapy, massage, acupuncture, Healing Touch for Animals®, Reiki, homeopathy, and a host of others.

This isn't a final defeat however, and there is still work to be done. You can contact your Colorado representatives to let them know how disappointed you are and that this bill did not pass. Talk or write to your vets and let them know you want these options available to you. A compromise bill is being drafted that will be submitted in 2008 that will allow holistic health care practitioners to practice without fear of a 3-year jail sentence.

We have the right to choose holistic health care for ourself, our children, and our family. We should be able to make the same choice for our animals. Most of us are responsible animals owners. When something is wrong with our pets, we first and foremost take them to a veterinarian. However there are a host of holistic alternatives that can be used as preventative measures or help in cases of chronic illness, trauma, and pain.

Four years ago my 8 year old black lab was diagnosed with an infiltrative lipoma. While this is not cancerous, it can cause death due to a blood clot traveling to the brain or heart. It is also a very fast growing lipoma and can cause the animal discomfort. Indy's lipoma was on his right hind leg. It caused a protrusion both on the inside and outside of the leg. The only alternative my vet gave me was amputation. Indy had a knee replaced on the left leg a little over a year before and the vet did have some concerns that the leg would not be able to hold up under the strain. Not wanting to risk amputation, I consulted another vet and was told the lipoma could be reduced by surgically removing portions of it. However, because it could not be totally removed without damage to the leg muscles and tendons, and because it was such a fast growing lipoma, the surgery would have to be done every 3-4 months at a cost of \$800 per surgery. Knowing that I could have either the amputation or surgery done at a later time, I chose to try some alternative measures first. Working with sound therapy, essential oils and Healing Touch for Animals®, I was able to extend Indy's life for 3 1/2 years, free from pain and without the loss of his leg. He died at the end of September, 2006 from a nasal tumor. When the tumor burst through a blood vessel in his nose we rushed him to the emergency vet. She was able to stop the bleeding but told us that the rupture could happen again at any time and that he would probably bleed to death. We knew we had to make a decision. I continued daily treatments on Indy but several weeks later something told me that it was time. I called a vet to schedule an in-home euthanasia. Before the vet came, I did a Chakra Spread which is a Healing Touch technique used to help with the dying process. On the day he died, Indy was relaxed, comfortable and in his own home. He died peacefully in my arms surrounded by the people who loved him the most.

I have similar stories with both of our horses who will turn 22 this spring. One has a degenerative bone disease and one has Cushings. We are managing to keep them pain free and living happy lives by using holistic measures.

Please visit [www.caaor.org](http://www.caaor.org) - Colorado Alliance for Animals Owners Rights to keep updated on this important issue.



## Doggie Showcase...

*This spot will be dedicated to people or companies who want to advertise a service or product. Advertising rates and sizes include business card size \$15.00; 1/4 page \$20.00; 1/2 page \$30.00, full page \$45.00. All fees will go directly to helping rescue RROC dogs. Your patronage of our advertisers is greatly appreciated.*

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You've adopted an animal, given him sanctuary, and have made a life-long commitment to him. Now you want to give him the best possible care. Of course, regular veterinary visits are an important part of that care. However, holistic healthcare products and services are also available that aim to make your pet as healthy as he can be. These products work with the immune system — not just targeting health, but building resistance to disease. Drugs, poor nutrition, vaccinations and flea and tick treatments constantly weaken the immune system. The holistic approach treats the whole body and stimulates the animal's natural ability to heal himself. Visit my website or call to learn how you can help support the health and well-being of your animal companions.

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