



The Retriever

Official Newsletter of the Labrador Education and Rescue Network

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Special Thanks to Prince of Peace!

After hearing about the Labrador Education and Rescue Network (L.E.A.R.N.) on a local radio station, seventh grade students at Prince of Peace Middle School in Milwaukee, WI, decided to make needy Labradors their class's community service project. When asked if they wanted to participate, every student's hand went straight up! The children used their lunch and recess time to make 28 fleece bones (dog toys) for the Labradors as well as to fill boxes with other items of need to the organization. On Tuesday, November 6, 2001, students invited L.E.A.R.N. to their school where they presented the organization with three boxes of toys, along with treats and other goodies, for the rescued dogs.



Among the donated items were new collars, treats, and, of course, the fleece bones made especially for the Labradors by the students. The students' teacher Sue drummed up such enthusiasm that not only her class, but the entire school came to the presentation.

Along with a few L.E.A.R.N. volunteers, several Labs went to Prince of Peace to receive the fleece bones properly. One volunteer spoke to the students about the importance of respecting animals and treating them nicely. She counseled the students on how to deal with situations in which they observe someone displaying

cruelty to animals and stressed the need to inform an adult, such as a teacher or their principal, about cases of animal maltreatment.

Another volunteer and her Lab Hailey gave a demonstration on field commands. Hailey's ability to respond to requests would make him eligible for an advanced degree, and his performance captivated the entire school. Some of you may have seen Lisa Allis, a seventh grader, handing (*Continued on Page 2*)

L.E.A.R.N.'s mission is to assist in the rescue of unwanted Labrador Retrievers by placing them in homes through fostering, adoption and referral. In addition, we strive to provide public education regarding Labrador Retrievers and to promote responsible ownership and the humane treatment of all dogs.



Inside this issue, we're featuring more proof that there's a home for every dog; details about LEARN's Annual Luncheon and Silent Auction; a recycling opportunity that benefits Labs; a compassionate remedy for puppies who bite; winter activities for you and your canine pal; dog book reviews, and more!



Special Thanks to Prince of Peace! (cont.)

(continued from page 1) Hailey a fleece bone in a photo that appeared in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (11/7/2000). This article was the paper's "picture of the day" and resulted in seven people calling the school to inquire about LEARN.

Immediately after the presentation, the LEARN volunteers went to pick up another nameless Labrador in need and called him Prince of Peace ("Prince" for short) as a tribute to the students. Prince, a black male, has since been adopted and has happily settled into his forever home with cat Carmel and baby sister Isabella. He was given a birthday of December 8th and on a night when dinner was ordered out, he was given his very own hamburger. A pretty lucky fellow!

Since November the dedicated students at Prince of Peace have continued their project and made even more fleece bones for Labradors. Their



teacher, Sue, who's license plate says "LUVLABS," organizes the fleece bone production into different groups, each with a specific task: cutting the fleece, pinning two halves together, turning the bone inside out (after Sue has machine sewed the halves), and stuffing the bone. And how the Labs love those big and fun fleece bones! They carry them around, show them off, play tug of war with them, greet family members at the door with them, and even use them as a pillow. Prince of Peace's yearbook will feature this great and ongoing community service initiative.

The Board of Directors along with the volunteers and the loving Labbies wish to extend our deepest appreciation to the students of Prince of Peace Middle School! And a very special thank you to their teacher, Sue, who made this possible!



Help LEARN and the Earth!

"Cash for Critters" has begun offering a fundraising opportunity for which L.E.A.R.N. is eligible. For each empty ink-jet or laser printer cartridge received, "Cash for Critters" will make a contribution to L.E.A.R.N. to help our dogs. Jenni Feldkirchner has generously volunteered to coordinate this effort, so if you have empty cartridges to donate, please contact her at jennif@idcnet.com or call her at (608) 270-3820. You may also mail them to her at 6930 Winstone Drive, Madison, WI 53711. Thanks for helping!!

Please note that this program will not accept any Epson cartridges; you may visit the website <http://www.kashforkids.com/home.htm> to see if your cartridge is accepted. (If you don't have Internet access, you may call Jenni for assistance.





A Home for Every Dog

L.E.A.R.N. believes that there is a home for every dog and that's why every dog or puppy that enters L.E.A.R.N.'s foster network is adopted. Some are adopted almost immediately while others, typically more senior dogs or those with special needs, must sometimes wait several months for their forever home to discover them. But for any dog who comes to L.E.A.R.N.—even those with costly medical needs or a



Tiny

behavior issue like separation anxiety—we always know that there's a family somewhere who will see all the good and provide the love and guidance that the dog needs to be the best he or she can be.

In the same week in January, two special needs dogs, Tiny and Goldie, were adopted. This is even more proof of what we already knew—there's a home for every dog!

Tiny, a small 6 year-old purebred black female, had been brought to a vet clinic to be put to sleep by her owners who no longer wanted her anymore. In fact, they had stopped feeding and caring for her, so she was very sick. She suffered a nasty fungal infection all over her skin, and her hair was falling out due to poor health and complete neglect.

A wonderful veterinarian saved Tiny and nursed her back to health. The fungal infection went away and her hair started growing back. The vet also discovered that poor Tiny suffered from food allergies, accounting for some of her scratching hair loss.

While Tiny could easily win an award for her inner beauty, sweet nature, friendliness to others, and happiness to be alive, Tiny's external appearance made it difficult for some to recognize her outstanding qualities and character. In fact, at the peak of her hair loss, she could have passed as an exotic sea and water animal from a certain island in the South Pacific.

Goldie, a gorgeous yellow female purebred lab had been surrendered to a shelter due to severe separation anxiety. Goldie's owners had adopted her from an acquaintance and then left her alone during the day, locked in the bathroom. She became scared and anxious enough that she knocked the door down. Well, wouldn't you do the same if you were locked in a bathroom all day or even trapped in an elevator? One of the shelter volunteers felt sorry for Goldie, scared and lonely in the shelter, and took her home so that she'd have the company of two other dogs and could be given the structure of daily exercise and training. Goldie relaxed, and she never displayed any destructive behaviors; during her foster care, she finally entered a humane and responsible home and responded very well.



Goldie

You may have seen these girls for many weeks on L.E.A.R.N.'s website. Now you can rest assured that their forever homes have discovered them and that they are well on their ways to long, happy, healthy, and loving lives! Many congratulations to both of their new homes. Yet again, there is a home for every dog.





Winter Activities for You and Your Best Pal(s) to Share!

Cross-Country Skiing with your Dog

For winter enthusiasts who have snow, why not ski with your dog! There are two ways of doing this. The first way is: you ski, your dog runs along off-leash. The second way, *Skijoring*, comes from the Norwegian word for "ski driving." Originating in Scandanavia, skijoring began as a combination of cross country skiing and dog mushing. In practical terms, it's skiing with one or more dogs attached to you with a line hooked to a wide waist belt. If you try skijoring, for safety of all, be really comfortable on those skis!!

The challenge in skiing with your dog is finding a place where dogs are allowed. This is most easily done on wooded hiking trails or a golf course without groomed ski trails. Historically, dogs and x-c skiers have not mixed well because dogs and their humans have too frequently un-groomed the trails and left other signs of their presence. However, for those interested in a destination ski trip with your best pal, more and more Nordic ski centers have been designating a portion of their trails for skiers who want canine companionship or help up those steep hills. Some of these trails require that your dog be on a leash at all times and others allow off-leash excursions. If the dog trails are groomed, both skier and dog are usually pay a trail fee.

Since allowing dogs to accompany skiers at a Nordic center is a very new idea, it's important to take responsibility for your dog so a bad experience or two does not hinder progress to date. Be sure to thank the employees for having a trail for dogs! Bring treats to replenish your pal's energy while exerting in the cold!

See the website www.xcski.org, the primary source for this article, for additional info including important skiing and skijoring courtesies.

Baking Biscuits with and for your Dog

Not keen on winter, snow, or skiing? Just come in from the trails? You can bake and eat biscuits together! "MacPherson's K-9 Cookbook: Easy-to-Make dog Biscuit Recipes" will help you get going together in the kitchen. LEARN thanks the publisher, Sawbuck Ventures Ltd., for allowing us to share a recipe. This recipe has been successfully taste-tested by the finicky MacDuff (not relevant for those of you with "chow-hound" Labs!)

This cookbook contains many different recipes that include low fat, plaque removing, flea fighting, vegetarian, and soft/easy-to-chew benefits. This is a great way to help keep your dog's diet free of harmful chemicals, additives and preservatives found in many commercial pet products. You can also choose a recipe to accommodate any health problems or allergies that your dog may have, and most likely, you will save on the high cost of dog biscuits. Happy baking!

Bowser's Ranch-Style Beef Bones

Makes a dark, textured, crunchy, meaty-flavored biscuit. Makes about 80 (using the small K-9 Cutter that comes with the book—equivalent to a small cookie-cutter)

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. Lean ground beef
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 3 cups all purpose flour
- 1 cup quick cooking rolled oats
- 1 cup water

Reminder!! These biscuits have no preservatives, so they should be eaten in less than 3 weeks. They may be frozen and stored. If they've been sitting around for a while, check for signs of mold before feeding them to your dog or eating them yourself!

Instructions

1. In a blender or food processor, combine beef and beaten eggs until well blended and set aside.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour and rolled oats. Gradually mix in beef mixture with your hands, until well blended.
3. Add water and stir to form a sticky dough
4. Divide dough into 2 balls, so it is easy to work with.
5. Knead each dough ball on a well-floured surface, about 2 minutes, adding flour until the dough is no longer sticky.
6. With a rolling pin, roll dough to between ¼" and ½" thickness.
7. Cut with K-9 Biscuit cutter and place on a lightly greased baking sheet.
8. Bake 1 hour at 350-degrees F
9. Cool on a rack and store, at room temperature, in a container with a loose-fitting lid



Baking Biscuits with and for your Dog (cont.)

If interested, you can find this cookbook in most health-oriented food stores in the Wisconsin-Illinois area, including Whole Foods Markets (Chicago, Evanston, Waukegan, Madison); Beans & Barley Market & Café (Milwaukee); Kauffman's Country Store (Beloit); Williamson Street Grocery Co-op (Madison); and, many food co-ops. For further information, the publisher is Sawbuck Ventures Ltd., 2225 Northey's Rd., RR3 Lakefield, Ontario, K0L 2H0 (tel. 705.652.6831)



LEARN's Annual Luncheon and Silent Auction

L.E.A.R.N. will be hosting our 2nd Annual Spring Luncheon and Silent Auction on Sunday, April 21, 2002 starting at 12:00 at Brydges House in Waukegan, Illinois. We hope you will all be able to attend, and bring a friend or two!! Our website will soon have information on reserving a place at the luncheon.

We also need donated items for our Silent Auction. Last year, items included gift baskets, pictures, beanie babies, and, of course, dog-related items. If you or someone you know are able to donate something, it will help L.E.A.R.N. to help Labs. Please contact L.E.A.R.N. at learn dogs@yahoo.com or at (847)-289-PETS to contribute an auction item. We are happy to provide a donation letter for tax purposes.

Last year's luncheon was great fun for all lab enthusiasts who attended!



Dog Book Reviews

Looking for a new book to read? Interested in learning more about dogs or having some good entertainment? Here are some suggestions that will likely entertain as well as educate.

***The Dog Whisperer*, by Paul Owens:** A superb choice for an overall training and communication guide, this book stresses a compassionate approach for working together with your dog. Owens explicitly rejects any training approach that uses violence (whether jerks, hits, shouts, shocks, etc.) and leads you through practical and thoughtful means of ensuring a loving relationship in which interaction (play, praise, toys, social time) becomes the reward for desired behavior. He calls his approach the 9 Ingredients of Reward-Based Dog Training. Filled with common sense, *The Dog Whisperer* also includes approaches for solving behavioral problems. The helpful insight and suggestions for good nutrition, a prerequisite for a long and healthy life, summarizes many of the issues around what's best to feed your dog and recommends additional sources for more information. On a higher level, Owen's perspective is not only common sense but also a guiding philosophy for how to relate to living beings. (See Jill's glowing endorsement of and example from this book on the next page in "Puppies!!! A Helpful Remedy for too much Biting")

***The Plague Dogs*, by Richard Adams:** The author of *Watership Down* (the rabbit book!), Adams tells the tale of two dogs, Rowf and Snitter, who have escaped from an animal research center and try to become wild animals to survive in the wilderness. Be warned: this book treats difficult and serious themes, there is considerable animal cruelty, and its best not read just before bed. The experiments from which the dogs escape symbolize science gone awry, and you would not want some of these human characters for your friends or even distant neighbors. Adams does a superb job at telling the story from the dogs' perspectives and presenting their view of the world. The dogs' journey is created into a news sensation by a opportunistic and less-than-ethical newspaper reporter who uses the escape to slander politicians. In a story of incredible suspense with many twists and turns and surprises, Adams shows us the many respects in which dogs depend on us and how their well-being is entirely our responsibility. This book will provide you with food for thought for a long time! A great and heavy read guaranteed to leave you out of breath as you near the end.



PUPPIES!!! A Helpful Remedy for too much Biting

Recently, a puppy owner desperately contacted L.E.A.R.N. to see if anyone could suggest a remedy for biting. You may find the response that Jill (a volunteer) provided very helpful—to correct a puppy's biting problem—but also to apply the logic of her response to other puppy challenges:

“Your puppy sounds a lot like mine when we first brought him home. . . . Many puppies that leave their mother/litter before 7 weeks of age have social problems (like biting) because they weren't around long enough to learn from their mom and littermates. You can't change that now, but it helps to be aware of it if you did get him too soon. Another problem with puppies is that they don't understand the word "no". We have to teach them English, and since we don't know Dog, we don't have much of a basis to start from. Eventually your dog should get it. One way that the dog may make the connection faster, and may also help with the biting, is to play the "magnet game". I got the idea from Paul Owens who wrote the book *The Dog Whisperer* [see book reviews for more information]. . . . I recommend you read it.

Tether the puppy in the room, preferably with the leash running under a door with the dog on one side and the handle of the leash on the other. Play with the puppy as you normally would. When the dog starts to bite say, "no," in a calm, firm voice and move out of the range of the puppy. When the dog calms down, go back to him and begin playing like nothing ever happened. If he tries to bite or be wild again, you move out of range. Basically, his good behavior is like a magnet drawing him near you and the bad behavior is repelling you away from him. Labs are smart little beasts; he should learn very quickly what's going on.

I got lots of advice with my nipping puppy. The breeder told us to catch his gum between his teeth so he'd bite himself instead of us. Labs have an incredibly high pain threshold and my dog doesn't have a soft mouth, so that did nothing. Holding the dog's muzzle shut just made him want to fight back and bite more. Yelping in a high pitched voice (to simulate a littermate) just riled him up more. Yelping in a low pitch voice at least got his attention, but it didn't do anything else. Sticking my hand farther down his throat did nothing. Basically any physical correction that I did had to be violently harsh to work and I wasn't comfortable doing that to my dog, no matter how mad he made me. (My dog has trouble recognizing who's boss and any physical corrections just made things worse so I've adopted a non-physical, positive training program.) The magnet game was the only thing that would work and we had fun playing it. Then one day when Cousteau was about 15 months old, he must have woken up and decided not to nip anymore. It was amazing. The scratches on my hands healed and he was fun to play with.

Other things I'd suggest - get as much exercise as you can for this puppy. A tired puppy isn't going to have the energy to chew on you. You can't really run him on a leash or keep him going for hours at a time because he's so little, but short brisk walks, having him follow you around the yard at a brisk pace off leash (also teaches him to look to see what you're doing - good for heeling work), and having him run after stuff are all fairly safe ways to tire him out. Too much running and jumping will put stress on his little joints and that can cause trouble farther down the line.

Look for a training class using positive training methods. . . . It is amazing what puppy classes can do. I probably would have gotten rid of my dog had I not found a class purely by chance in the newspaper. Check out <http://www.adpt.com> for the Association of Pet Dog Trainers website, to help you locate a trainer that uses positive methods. Petsmart stores also offer classes. Some people have problems using treats to train their dog, but I got my dog doing competition obedience finishes in less than 2 weeks and I never put a hand on him. We have a fantastic bond and I can trust his commands off leash because I've never used a leash to train him. I've got some resources that saved my life (and possibly the life of my dog - the first year was NOT a good one!). In addition to *The Dog Whisperer*, I recommend any book by Ian Dunbar (*How to Teach a New Dog Old Tricks* is a good one), and *The Culture Clash* by Jean Donaldson. . . . The website <http://www.idog.com/board> has been a life saver to me as well. It's more of a cyber community than a message board and the members really care about each other in addition to their dogs. . . . I recommend that you set up a profile before you post. . . . people are more likely to respond to someone with a profile. . . . Good luck. Puppyhood can be exciting and fun, but it's not quite what the Disney movies made me believe! . . . [Cousteau]'s a great dog - now. It was a long road and we really had to work with him. We still have to work with him, but I wouldn't give him up for love or money now. It's really been worth it. I really hope that you get to that stage with your pup, too.” Thanks, Jill!!!



L.E.A.R.N. Calendar

Please check out the following upcoming events for opportunities to help us continue to rescue unwanted Labradors and place them permanent loving homes!

<u>When</u>	<u>What</u>	<u>Where</u>
March 15-17, 2002	Booth at Chicagoland Family Pet Expo, Arlington Racetrack	Arlington Heights, IL
April 21, 2002	Annual Spring Luncheon and Silent Auction	Waukegan, IL
May 3-4, 2002	Annual Madison Area Garage Sale	Madison, WI
June TBD	Booth at Winnebago Labrador Retriever Club Specialty	Beloit, WI
August 23-24, 2002	Annual Chicagoland Garage Sale	Chicago, IL
August TBD	Booth at Mounds Dogfest	Madison, WI
August TBD	Dogwash at Greentree Animal Hospital	Libertyville, IL
October TBD	Booth at Rockford Family Pet Expo	Rockford, IL



Enormous Thanks!



The following people have generously donated money, supplies, time, or services to our wonderful rescued Labradors. We could not make it without their help!

Madison Veterinary Clinic, Claudia and Dr. Jens Leubow

[insert names]

We Need Your Help!

As we near our third anniversary, we're finding ever more dogs that are in desperate need of expensive medical attention. This places a huge drain on our finances. Please consider sending us a modest donation of \$10, \$25, or \$50. All donations are tax-deductible. Thank you for your help!

Yes! I want to support the efforts of the Labrador Education and Rescue Network (L.E.A.R.N.) as they rescue stray, abandoned and unwanted Labrador Retrievers and place them in permanent adoptive homes.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Enclosed please find my check for:

- ☐ \$10.00
- ☐ \$25.00
- ☐ \$50.00
- ☐ Other Amount: _____



L.E.A.R.N.
PO Box 164
Island Lake, IL 60042
(847) 289-PETS (7387)
Website: www.labadoption.org
E-mail: Learndogs@yahoo.com