

• Canine Connection •

from Sarah Richardson's Canine Connection

* Celebrating our 7th Anniversary helping Chico area dogs and their people!
Wishing you the best in 2009! *

✦ Highlights ✦

Gone to the Dogs!

Welcome to this inaugural issue of "Canine Connection", a fun and entertaining newsletter about all things dog and wonderful! We're launching this newsletter as a celebration of dogs and of the 7th anniversary of Sarah Richardson's Canine Connection. We love dogs! And, just as much, we love helping people and dogs connect through positive training, "play" care, seminars, and other events! Since our founding in 2002, the dog world has changed in many ways. Positive training is becoming more popular as people learn that it IS possible, preferable, and FUN to train dogs without force and intimidation. An understanding of healthy dog play has increased and dog parks and day cares have emerged to

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LIVING WITH DOGS

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5 Training Tips for Easier Walks

Spare Your Arms. Use a humane no-pull harness or head collar such as Easy Walk Harness, Sensation Harness, Halti, or Gentle Leader. All use natural counter-balance approaches to curb pulling without hurting the dog—unlike choke or prong collars that can slow pulling but have been shown to cause extensive tracheal damage and considerable pain. Walks should be enjoyable and painfree, for you and your dog.

Develop Situational Awareness. Be on the lookout for cats, squirrels, other dogs who may not be comfortable greeting fellow canines on-leash, and toddlers who could get knocked over by a high-energy pooch. Be ready to cross the street or wait out of sight behind a parked car.

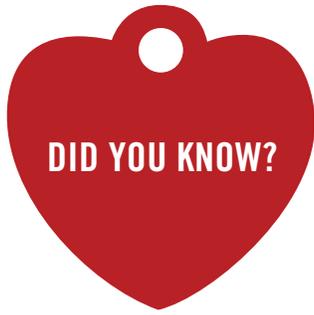


Come Prepared. Carry treats or a favorite toy to reward pleasing manners like sitting at curbs, not barking at other dogs, not chasing birds, polite greetings of friendly humans, and loose-leash walking. Any behavior you reinforce is going to happen more often. In other words: If you like it, reward it.

Go Often. If your dog's workout regiment amounts to a stroll around the block twice a day, surplus energy and under-stimulation will make it tough for him to behave when you take him out and about. The remedy? Amp it up. Find ways to allow him off-leash runs or playtime with other dogs, throw balls or Frisbees, take long hikes, hire a dog walker, or use a doggie daycare. The more exercise your dog gets, the more calm and attentive he'll be.

Get Help. If your dog is very challenging to walk, consider hiring a trainer to help you—or, if you're already working with a trainer, ask his or her advice. Your walks, too, can be a picture of interspecies harmony.

"Train with
your brain, not pain."
- Pat Miller



These Nose Jobs?

1. Land Mine Detection.

Dogs' sensitive olfactory receptors can pinpoint mines four inches underground or more. Trained to search in straight lines against their instincts, mine detection dogs prevent thousands of deaths and injuries in war-torn countries every year.

2. Scat Sniffing.

Dogs help wildlife researchers by locating scat from endangered species and, with their sophisticated inborn search technique, allow their handlers to cover vast areas.

3. Termite Detection.

Beagles and Labs are the exterminator's best friends. The dogs identify pest infestations in the hidden crawl spaces of houses that show no outward signs of termites.

4. Truffle Sniffing.

Why have dogs replaced pigs as the favorite tracking animal of Italy's truffle hunters? Pigs tend to eat what they find. Dogs settle for a biscuit.

5. Lifeboat Rescue.

When rivers flood or boats sink in lakes, dogs help track down survivors caught in vegetation.



A WORLD OF DOGS

The Hybrid Craze—When Only an Oodle Will Do

How can an adorable little Maltipoo inspire controversy? Who isn't charmed by a Puggle? Mixing two known breeds is very attractive to some and a hot-button subject to others. The story of hybrids begins with Labradoodles. An Australian breeder wanted a hypoallergenic guide dog for the blind and created one by mixing Labrador Retrievers with poodles. Over the next decade, he bred the resulting Labradoodles, as he named them, to other Labradoodles until the characteristics he sought were reliably present—breeding true, to use an industry term.



The Labradoodle zoomed to popularity in the US, and more poodle crosses followed. The idea of non-shedding versions of favorite breeds was a popular one, spawning yorkipoos, schnoodles, poovanese, goldendoodles, even cadoodles, a collie-poodle mix. Soon the allergy-friendly aspect became secondary. Every two-breed encounter, random or intentional, received its own label. Pugs crossed with Yorkshire terriers became Pugshires. A basset hound and a Beagle? A Bagel, of course.

Why the contention? Well, much of the enthusiasm for hybrids springs from the theory that a mix of two breeds results in the best of both worlds. Just as in run-of-the-mill mutts (a mix of unknown origin), this is often the case. But it's equally true that without careful selection through generations for the desired traits, there's absolutely no guarantee. A hybrid may just as well unite any health and behavioral problems that plague its purebred parent breeds. Plus, the current love affair with Oodles and Uggles naturally diverts attention from the perfectly lovable anybody's-best-guesses in the nation's shelters.

Polemics aside, for those with dreams of schnoodles—and for mutt lovers and purebred devotees—where you get your puppy matters. Just like you should adopt from a shelter, not from a cardboard box in an alley, it's prudent to do your homework before getting a hybrid. Ask lots of questions and meet your puppy's parents, if you can. Why risk getting, say, White Fang's un-trainable nature packaged with Scooby Doo's IQ?

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meet this need. The health benefits of pet ownership and interaction have been further documented, showing that sharing our lives with dogs may actually extend them. Holistic health approaches for our dogs are more accepted and available. New breeds have even been developed (see this issue)! Welcome to the world of dogs! Here at Sarah Richardson's Canine Connection we live it, love it, and want to share our commitment to creating better lives for dogs and their people with YOU!



DOGS IN ACTION

Agility

Dog lovers and dog ignorers alike recognize the tunnels and seesaws of an agility obstacle course. This fast-paced and spectator-friendly sport is popular across the globe and has spawned many championships, some international, some even televised. (The sport, by the way, is not just for dogs. Rabbit Agility is in vogue in Scandinavia and the UK.) The ubiquitous image of an agility champion is a Border Collie—or perhaps a Jack Russell Terrier—but title holders include yorkies, papillons, spaniels, boxers, poodle mixes, even a Belgian Tervuren.

Any breed of dog can compete, including mixed breeds, and most healthy, active dogs can be trained to compete at entry level. Physical strength, athleticism, and a high energy level are essential for anyone wishing to go further. If agility appeals, find a local club or training facility and sign up for classes. Or, if you live in a remote area, purchase an agility starter kit for your back garden and a good book on the subject. To learn more, visit United States Dog Agility Association at www.usdaa.com or North American Dog Agility Council at www.nadac.com.



HEALTHY DOG

When Pooches Get Pudgy

Most dog owners, when quizzed, readily agree that obesity is all-too-common in dogs. Few, however, feel the subject is relevant to them. That's because we're notoriously poor at assessing our pets' weight. (My dog isn't fat; he's just furry!) While some breeds are prone to overweight, no dog is immune. And the list of possible consequences is long and chilling. Arthritis, hip dysplasia, diabetes, kidney stones, cancer, heat intolerance, hypertension, and a decreased lifespan, to name but a few.

If your pooch is flabby, consult your vet about the appropriate amount of food and measure carefully at mealtimes. Switch to low-cal cookies or treat with carrots. Then amp up the exercise. If time is in short supply, consider hiring a dog walker or enrolling in a doggie day care. For advice and inspiration, read Marty Becker's book *Fitness Unleashed!*

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The Labrador Retriever

Stomach on legs, expert swimmer and counter surfer, famously trainable—the Lab is a dog of many distinctions. The well-socialized Lab is bouncy outdoors, gentle when cuddling on the couch, and can put her paw to anything from tracking to agility, from competitive obedience to police and therapy work. The Lab is the most popular breed worldwide, even in countries where the Cottonelle Puppy ad has never run on TV. Life with a Lab is not without challenges, though. Given half a chance, she'll chew her way through carpets and shoes, eat candy wrappers off the sidewalk, and dive into any mudhole. The cure is training and ample exercise, essentials if your Lab is to thrive. For a Lab in the limelight, catch *Marley & Me* in theaters this holiday season.

To adopt a Lab, visit your local shelter or rescue group.



OUR SERVICES

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OUR FACILITY

Our safe, modern, indoor training center is complete with climate-control, cushioned rubber flooring, comfortable seating, restroom, and outdoor play yard. At our store you'll find only the best training equipment, treats, toys, and food - supplies that will enhance your dog's training, behavior and well-being.

OUR STAFF

As a nationally Certified Pet Dog Trainer and Certified Dog Behavior Consultant, Dr. Sarah Richardson is one of a handful of people in the nation to have achieved the highest levels of certification and education in dog training. For more than a decade, she has worked professionally with dogs of all breeds and behaviors. Sarah and her dogs are frequently featured in the national publication, "Whole Dog Journal", a leading information source on positive training and holistic dog care. She and her staff are passionate about providing you with information and assistance that will help you bring out the best in your dog!

OUR SERVICES

Group Classes

- Puppy Kindergarten (socialization & training for pups 3 to 5.5 months)
- Levels Obedience (flexible, self-paced program for dogs 5.5 months up)
- Small Dog Obedience (just for dogs 25 pounds and less, 5.5 months up)
- Freestyle, Agility-for-fun, Tricks and Clicks, Rally Obedience

Private Training

Therapy Dog Certification

Educational Seminars and Events

Dog Day Care (oops, we mean "Play Care" since it's so much fun!)

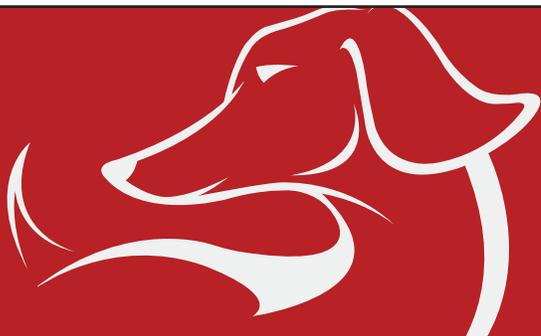
The best equipment, toys, treats, and other supplies

VISIT OUR WEB SITE FOR INFORMATION, SCHEDULES, AND
REGISTRATION - www.TheCanineConnection.com



Wintertime Wisdom

- ✓ **Stick with biscuits.** Seasonal indulgences are for you, not your dog. Candy, chocolate, onions, turkey bones, and fattier-than-usual treats can all make dogs sick.
- ✓ **Guard the greenery.** Shiny presents and light chains on the Christmas tree could be mistaken for chew toys. Mistletoe, holly, poinsettias, and amaryllis bulbs are pooch poison.
- ✓ **Curb the merriment.** For your dog, that is. Big parties stress some dogs. If wearing antlers and being continually petted is not your dog's cup of tea, give him a quiet room or comfy crate to hang out in.
- ✓ **Be mindful of...** Antifreeze, salted sidewalks, frostbite, the need for doggie coats and increased food rations in the cold. And remember: Indoor puzzle games can entertain your dog on days when the weather is fit for neither man nor beast.



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