



# Gasterville Natural Pet Nutrition

February 2006

Volume 1, Number 2

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## Featured Breed Links

<http://www.adopt-a-greyhound.org>

<http://www.centralohiogreyhound.org/>

<http://greyhound.marinar.com/>

<http://www.greyhoundrescuerehab.org/>

<http://www.greyhoundclubofamerica.org/>

## Other Links

<http://gastervillepet.tripod.com>

*Part blog, part photo album, the site is updated at least monthly*

## Contact Us

<http://www.gasterville.com>

[admin@gasterville.com](mailto:admin@gasterville.com)

## February is Pet Dental Month!



According to the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), pets can live longer, healthier lives if oral health care is managed and maintained throughout their lives. In fact, proper dental care can add as much as five years to your pet's life.

Dental care of dogs and cats is one of the most commonly overlooked areas of pet health care. In fact, a recent AAHA study showed that approximately two-thirds of pet owners do not provide the dental care that is recommended as essential by veterinarians. What's more, the American Veterinary Dental Society reports that 80 percent of dogs and 70 percent of cats show signs of oral disease by age three.

Dental disease doesn't affect just the mouth. It can lead to more serious health problems including heart, lung and kidney disease, which makes it all the more important that you provide your pets with proper dental care from the start.

### Home Dental Care

A complete home dental care program for your pet will include both regular brushing and a proper, nutritional diet. But, how *does* one brush the teeth of a dog or cat?

### Brushing Your Pet's Teeth

Introduce a brushing program to your pet gradually. Don't over-restrain your pet and keep brushing

sessions short and positive. Praise and reassure your pet though out the process.

1. Start out week one by allowing your pet to lick a toothbrush covered with pet toothpaste, while you hold it. End the so that your pet associates a good time with the toothbrush – with a treat and a lot of TLC.
2. By the second week, you should be able to lift the lip and gently brush the canines. If there is any protesting from your pet, take a break. Again, follow each session with a special treat and TLC. Make the initial sessions short and positive, and try to end before the first sign of rebellion.
3. During the third week, lengthen the "brushing" time and gradually increase the actual tooth brushing. Again, give a treat at the end with lots of TLC. Over time, you'll be able to establish a regular, enjoyable tooth brushing routine.
4. Special pet toothbrushes and pet toothpaste are available. Don't use toothpaste for people because it could upset your pet's stomach.

### **A Special Offer from Gasterville Natural**

We're offering a dental care pet kit throughout the month of February. Each kit contains a dual-end toothbrush with two different size brushes for any dog or cat and a 1.4 oz tube of toothpaste.



Kits are offered at the special price of \$5.00, which includes delivery. Email us at [Gasterville@yahoo.com](mailto:Gasterville@yahoo.com) for information on placing an order.

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## **Pet News**

### **Can Man's Best Friend Detect Cancer?**

Man's best friend can be a great source of company, but dogs might offer much more than that.



A study published in the March issue of the journal *Integrative Cancer Therapies* suggests that dogs'

extraordinary sense of smell can detect people with both early and late-stage lung and breast cancers.

The dogs in the study detected breast and lung cancer 88 percent of the time, with few false-positives.

The research, led by Michael McCulloch of the Pine Street Foundation in San Anselmo, California and Tadeusz Jezierski of the Polish Academy of Sciences, is the first to test whether dogs can detect cancers only by sniffing the exhaled breath of cancer patients.

The study included 86 cancer patients – 55 with lung cancer and 31 with breast cancer – and 83 healthy patients. Five household dogs – three Labrador retrievers and two Portuguese water dogs – received three weeks of training to detect cancer by scent. They were then presented with breath samples from the cancer patients and the controls, captured in a special tube.

The dogs were trained to identify cancer patients by sitting or lying down directly in front of the test station containing a cancer patient sample, while ignoring samples from healthy volunteers.

The researchers said the results of the study show promise in using dogs to help with cancer diagnoses, especially in the earliest stages. But they said more study is needed.

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### **Mouth-To-Snout Resuscitation – Part II**

We reported last month that a Salem, Massachusetts firefighter saved a family pet by giving the dog mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

Now, the San Francisco Chronicle reports that an area real estate agent, Jeanie Reitzell, has outfitted every fire truck from Danville to Pleasanton with snout-shaped oxygen masks to help save pets suffering from smoke inhalation, in honor of her own beloved pet.

The Humane Society provided the masks to three area fire departments. The masks come in several sizes and can fit everything from a 6-pound cat to a 150-pound St. Bernard and firefighters were trained in their use.

The 44 masks, which cost Ms. Reitzell \$10,000, may never be put to use, but at least they are there, just in case. A firefighter was quoted as saying that in his 28 year career, he's only rescued about half a dozen pets. Since animals have a natural aversion to fire, they are usually the first to flee or, because they hide, they die of smoke inhalation before firefighters find them.

The masks have saved at least one pet. In November of 2003, firefighters in San Mateo, who received donated

masks from the Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA, saved a Chihuahua from a San Mateo house fire.

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### **FDA Reports Diamond Did Not Properly Test Ingredients**

According to a government report, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) found that Diamond Pet Foods allowed tainted corn into its Gaston plant and failed to properly test for the naturally-occurring poison aflatoxin. The agency began an investigation after the company recalled about one million pounds of dried dog food on December 20, 2005. The report represents the agency's findings but reportedly does not penalize the company.

According to a statement issued from Diamond, the company has cooperated fully with the investigation and supports the findings that were released. Prior to the product recall, the company had stringent guidelines in place to test incoming shipments of corn for aflatoxin exposure. It was apparent by the FDA report that those guidelines were not followed. The company has taken the necessary actions to prevent these oversights from happening in the future. In addition, Diamond also has strengthened its testing procedures on incoming shipments of corn, and initiated final product testing as an additive step to its procedures. This additional step will provide an extra layer of protection prior to the bagging and shipping of products.

As a result of Diamond's cooperation with the FDA investigation and Diamond's implementation of additional testing, the United States Department of Agriculture has cleared the Gaston, South Carolina, USA facility for all product shipments, including exports.

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### **Do you have any idea?**

Is there a companion animal issue or question you'd like to see addressed in a future newsletter? Do you have a news story to share?

Send an email to [admin@gasterville.com](mailto:admin@gasterville.com) and you may see your name in an upcoming issue!

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### **Featured Breed**



#### **February's Breed: Greyhound**

We recently attended the Cleveland Home and Flower Show, where we met two rescued greyhounds. Although we'd already picked a breed to feature in the February newsletter, the decision was

made to “go greyhound” instead...especially after one of the dogs came over to lean against me, looking up with those deep brown eyes, how could we not feature this breed! This particular boy had a sad background – besides whatever he endured during his racing days, his first adoption did not turn out well; he ended up being rescued again, only this time with some serious health issues due to neglect. But in spite of that abuse, he was willing to have a crowd around him at the show, patting him on the head and stroking his back. Can you imagine being that forgiving?

### **Breed Background**

A Greyhound is considered a “sighthound” or “gazehound” – one of the ancient breeds that hunt by sight instead of scent.



Greyhounds have been the subject of a wide variety of art forms going all the way back to the tombs of the Pharaohs and appearing on ancient Greek and Roman pottery. There are pedigrees of Greyhounds in Great Britain which can be traced back unbroken to the 1700s.

Most greyhounds in the United States are used in the racing industry and are registered with the National Greyhound Association, although a minority – less than 200 a year – are registered with the AKC. Although the exact same breed, the two groups have been separated for decades and rarely are they interbred.



### **Living with a Greyhound**

With their short, fine coat, Greyhounds are easy to keep groomed – a quick wipe with a cloth, a light brushing, and an occasional bath. Surprisingly, they have little or no “doggy odor”.

They are affectionate, but not demanding. Sociable creatures, they crave your companionship and love affectionate contact. They like everyone, rarely being a one-person pet. Although some may be sensitive and others very outgoing, most Greyhounds are in the moderate range – sweet, happy and affectionate.

If they bark, they have a good reason. Incessant barking is beneath them. Greyhounds are intelligent, but not in the way you might like. Many have learned to open gates, garbage cans and other “off limit” items. Independent thinkers, they’ll do well in obedience, but with their fast learning curve, they become quickly bored.

### **Here Are Some Things to Be Aware Of**

Because of their loving nature, they will introduce

themselves by jumping up and wrapping their front legs over their new friend's shoulders. They're just being good natured, but an 85 pound male can knock over an unsuspecting adult, so you'll want to kindly discourage this habit.

They tend to have some "personal space" issues, especially when sleeping, so try not to suddenly disturb them, or they may snap in reflex. They have no problem though, climbing on top of you while you're sleeping!

You cannot trust them to run loose or stay in an unfenced yard. Because they are a hunting breed, and a very social one, too, they can spot a squirrel, another dog or a child a half mile away and will be gone in a second to give chase, make a new friend or investigate something interesting. Greyhounds have no "street smarts" and have no respect for cars, being too intent on their destination to even take notice.

Greyhounds can also have "sticky fingers" – thieves when it comes to clothes, other dog's or children's toys, and your dinner right out of the pan. You may want to invest in some child proof locks!

### **Diet and Health**

Have you ever known someone who seems to eat all the time, but never gains a pound? That's your Greyhound. Although they may appear to be too skinny, they'll out-eat any breed of comparable size. With their genetic background, and metabolism, they require a high quality diet. What you save on grooming bills you'll spend in dog food.

Greyhounds are very healthy. Many purebred dogs have genetic health problems but these have not been proven to be prevalent in Greyhounds. Life expectancy ranges from 9 to 14 years.

An internet search for "greyhound" will yield sites containing a wealth of further, more detailed information regarding the care of greyhounds.



### **Is a greyhound for you?**

YES – If you are willing to do some research and think through your decision (of course that goes for adopting any animal).

YES – If you have a large fenced yard, or the time and ability to go on long walks. Remember, Greyhounds were born to run so they must have room to expend all that energy, which in turns, lends to their second favorite occupation, snuggling with the family and relaxing.

YES – If you want a house dog. Greyhounds are not

equipped to be outside dogs, and are not a breed to be relegated to the backyard and neglected. They are very social and desire companionship. Otherwise you'll have a dog that is bored and out of boredom come bad habits and spooky behavior.

YES - If the children in the family are behaved. Greyhounds generally love children, but will not tolerate abuse. If they cannot get away, they *may* snap a warning.

YES - If you can afford to keep a big dog - remember, they EAT like a dog twice their size.

YES - If you want an unusual, elegant, outgoing yet aristocratic purebred.

YES - If you want to open your home, and your heart, to an endearing veteran of the racetrack.

To find a geographical list of adoption groups and locate the group closest to you, visit <http://www.adopt-a-greyhound.org>.

And see the "Featured Breed Links" on page 1 for more information.

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## Featured Health Issue:

### Keeping Your Pets Healthy During Wet Weather

Although it's February, and still cold and snowy here in the northern U.S., soon enough we'll be experiencing "April showers". With snowy and rainy conditions, additional pet grooming needs become apparent. There are four main wet weather problems your canine friends may experience and which you'll want to be aware:

**One:** Ear Ye Ear Ye - Increased humidity and heat indoors increases the risk of ear infections, especially in dogs most at risk: those with very narrow ear canals like pugs, dogs that enjoy getting and staying wet, like Labrador retrievers, or dogs with excessive ear wax like cocker spaniels. If your dog is prone to ear infections, ask your vet for an ear drying agent or something to remove excessive ear wax.

**Two:** Stinky Feet - Dogs that spend a lot of time outdoors have an increased risk of pododermatitis, or inflammation of the skin on the foot. Even though Newfoundlands are almost exclusively at risk, with their heavily furred feet, get into the habit of drying off the feet every time ANY breed of dog comes indoors or ask your groomer to clip the hair from between the toes.

**Three:** Funky Fur - What smells worse than "wet dog"? How about body odor from the fungal growth on some

double-coated dogs, dogs that never dry out after a good soaking. If possible have your groomer give the dog a close clip to reduce fur and aid in drying time. Bathing your dog with an antifungal medicated shampoo can also help. A preventative measure is to invest in a doggy raincoat that also covers the belly. And they can make a fashion statement at the same time!

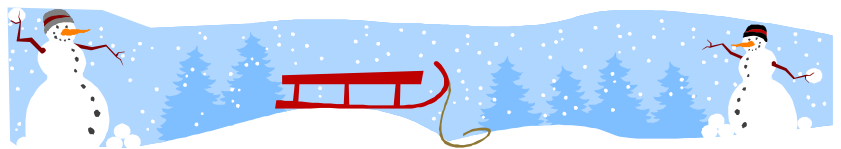
Because clean coats trap air and keep your pet warmer, disregard the belief that you shouldn't bathe your dog in the winter. Wet fur loses its insulating properties, and so does a dirty coat.

**Four:** It's Too Wet to Pee! For some pampered pets, the thought of going outside in the rain is just unthinkable. However, this can put your dog at an increased risk of a bladder infection. To prevent this problem, try to figure out exactly what it is about the wet weather your dog dislikes – if it's the wet feet, try a pair of doggie boots. If it's the feel of the rain itself, a rain jacket or sweater is the solution. As an owner, you can maintain an upbeat and positive tone and you're your dog into accepting the wet weather as just a normal part of life.

Of course, it should go without saying that outdoor pets must be provide with a warm, dry place to sleep, and extra food as needed, as they face hypothermia from wet fur and increased caloric needs if they're cold.

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Thanks for reading and we'll be back in March with more....



# Gasterville Natural Pet Nutrition

**Helping companion animals live a  
happy, healthy natural life**