



May 2006

# The Hound's Herald

## Gasterville Natural Pet Care Newsletter

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Welcome to the May edition of The Hound's Herald, our first issue sent to you with Constant Contact - hopefully, using a newsletter service will help us bring you the latest pet care news and information in a more timely manner!

#### **A Hilton for Hounds**

*Pet Hotel Planned for Cleveland Area*

Crain's Cleveland Business reports that a luxury pet hotel is set to open in Orange Village (an eastern suburb of Cleveland) this fall for pet owners who don't want Fido and Fluffy to suffer the indignation of a "traditional" kennel.



Beverly Hills resident and Pepper Pike, Ohio native Howard Perlmutter is returning to Northeast Ohio to open Barkley Pet Hotel and Day Spa, a \$4.5 million

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undertaking. Although the venture sounds like something you'd find in Beverly Hills, Mr. Perlmutter wanted to open the hotel and spa in Northeast Ohio. He points to land being cheaper and that market research indicated the business could be successful in the region. At the moment, there is no specific opening date.

Plans call for the hotel to employ 40 and to initially only accept cats and dogs. Pets will spend their days enjoying such luxuries as in-suite television, aromatherapy treatments and a pool equipped with an underwater treadmill.

Prices per night? Well, if your pet doesn't get a massage every day, prices would range between \$23 and \$65 per night.

### Domestic Abuse Protection for Pets

*Maine Becomes the First State to Enact Law*

Here in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, a not-for-profit organization called SAFE (Safety for Animals and Families in Emergencies) was founded to assist victims of domestic violence with the care and safety of their companion animals. Maine has taken this important step to another level – a law that allows judges to include pets in protection orders for those leaving abusive relationships.

It's no secret that an abuser certainly wouldn't hesitate to injure or even kill a beloved pet in order to show their power and control over their victim. CNN reports that the bill's sponsor, Rep. John Piotti, cites a study that found that 71% of pet-owning women in a Utah shelter reported that their abuser had either harmed, killed or threatened their pets.

Other states, including California, Connecticut, Louisiana, Nebraska, Ohio and Tennessee have statutes reflecting the connection between domestic violence and animal abuse or at least encourage cross-reporting among the various legal agencies involved – law enforcement, child protection and animal control.

If you are in the Cuyahoga County area, please visit SAFE's website. There you'll find how you can help, including monetary donations, donations of pet supplies, even opportunities to foster the companion animals of abuse victims, until they can find a permanent home for themselves

and their pets.

For more information about Cuyahoga County's SAFE Program: [SAFE](#)

Find out more about Maine's new law....

### Cats in the News

*It's Not All Grooming and Sleeping!*

**COLOGNE, GERMANY:** Reuters reports that a cat saved the life of a newborn baby abandoned on the doorstep of a house in the middle of the night. The cat meowed loudly until someone woke up. When the homeowner opened the door to see why the cat was making so much noise, they discovered the newborn. A police spokesman said the baby boy was taken to the hospital with only mild hypothermia as overnight temperatures had fallen toward zero. There is no word on what happened to the boy's mother.

**CONNELLSVILLE, PA:** A 2-year old cat named Zoey has been nursing a black pug puppy, along with her own three kittens, since the pup was rejected by his mother. Although Zoey doesn't usually like dogs, she's made an exception. It's not unusual for mothers to adopt other species in nature, said William Shepherd, a Uniontown veterinarian. Although the pup can drink cat's milk, Zoey may not be able to keep up as he gets older and bigger.

**EDMONTON:** From the Canadian Press comes the story of Willoughby, an affectionate year-old orange tabby with a little something extra - six legs. Marjorie Hervey, founder and president of the Hervey Foundation for Cats, says that she has never seen anything like Willoughby's genetic fault. Willoughby is able to get around with four front legs, although two of the limbs will likely be amputated. The surgery will cost about \$2,000.

The Hervey Foundation for Cats

## Nine Feline Feelings

- Narcissism - Not because they are selfish, cats simply refuse to alter their program to fit ours. They feel no need to please.
- Love - Cats display their love for us by seeking our company, and by exposing to us their most vulnerable body parts (ears, belly), showing trust in the highest degree.
- Contentment - More of a state than a fleeting emotion. "Everyone has seen a cat sitting, legs and tail tucked neatly underneath, eyes half-closed, and sometimes even purring."
- Attachment - Cats appreciate the companionship of people and other cats, and they also feel an attachment for place.
- Jealousy - An everyday jealousy occurs in multi- cat households. One cat assumes the prime spot under the covers and another kicks him out, for example.
- Fear - Cats live in the moment, so fear only what is in front of them.
- Anger - Anger is short-lived and fixated on the source, often expressed with hissing and an arched back. Steer clear of an angry cat. When crossed, cats can scratch or, even worse, bite causing deep puncture wounds with their long, sharp teeth.
- Curiosity - Bring something novel into the house, even a box or a bag, and a cat becomes completely absorbed, climbing into it, sniffing around.
- Playfulness - One of cats' key emotional states.

Source: "The Nine Emotional Lives of Cats: A Journey into the Feline Heart" by Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson

[Find out more....](#)

## Featured Breed

### *Labrador Retriever*



Part of the Sporting Group, the Labrador Retriever is the most popular breed in the US and in the United Kingdom. With their strong build, Labs have functioned as retrieving gun dogs, used to hunt waterfowl or upland game for long hours under difficult conditions, but most of us know them as loving family companions.

Background: The Labrador is believed to have originated on the island of Newfoundland, now part of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. The name Labrador was coined by the Earl of Malmesbury and other breeders in England. It is also suggested that the name originates from the Spanish or Portuguese word for workers, "labradores". The first known written reference to the Labrador is in 1814 in "Instructions to Young Sportsmen". The first Yellow Lab on record, named Ben of Hyde, was born in 1899. The modern Labrador Retriever is among the oldest of the modern "recognized" breeds; according to the AKC, pedigrees exist back to 1878 with the AKC recognizing the Lab in 1903. The first registration of Labradors by the AKC was in 1917.

Physical Qualifications: The AKC's qualifications include the Lab's "short, dense, weather resistant coat", "powerful jaws" and their "'kind,' friendly eyes, expressing character, intelligence and good temperament". Approximate weight of dogs in working condition are 65 to 80 pounds for males and 55 to 70 pounds for females. Labradors come in black, yellow and chocolate.

Personality: A Labrador's ideal disposition is kindly, outgoing, trainable, eager to please and non-aggressive. It's no wonder that Labradors have such an appeal - gentle, intelligent and adaptable, they are an ideal dog. Labrador Retrievers are known to be one of the fastest learning breeds of dog and respond well to praise. Labradors are often used as guide or assistance dogs. Their fun-loving boisterousness and lack of fear can result in mischief, however, and may require training and firm handling at times to ensure it does not get out of hand. Most Labs enjoy retrieving a ball endlessly and are considerably "food and fun" oriented, very trainable and open-minded to new things, and thrive on human attention and interaction, which they find hard to get enough of. Because of their retrieving bloodlines, almost every Lab loves playing in water or swimming.

## Health and Wellness

- Life expectancy is generally 12 to 13 years, and it is a healthy breed with relatively few major problems.
- Labs are sometimes prone to ear infection, because their floppy ears trap warm moist air. This is preventable by regular checking to ensure that a problem is not building up unseen. As a preventative measure, some owners clip the hair carefully around the ear and under the flap, to encourage better air flow.
- Labs are all about the food! It's imperative for owners to control food consumption, or your Lab may become overweight which is a health risk. Because they are so blatant in their enjoyment of treats, have hearty appetites, and are just too adorable to say "no" to, it may be difficult to keep the treats away. But keep in mind that excessive weight is a strongly implicated risk factor in the development of hip dysplasia, arthritis and diabetes, and also can contribute to poor health when your Lab becomes older.
- Labs may be prone to hip dysplasia, especially with larger dogs, although not as much as some other breeds.
- Many times Labs also suffer from the risk of knee problems – once again, a proper weight should help avoid this difficulty.

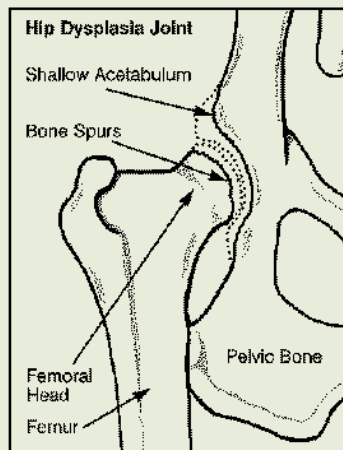
**Other Considerations:** - Because Labradors are so popular, they are often reared in puppy mills where the people responsible care primarily for profit, and not for the dog's well being. Labs also commonly fall victim to being stolen. Microchipping for Labradors—as for any dog—increases the possibility of finding lost or stolen dogs, since the microchip cannot be easily removed like a collar or dog tags.

We normally include links to various rescue organizations, but there are too many to list! No doubt due to the breed's popularity - if you'd like to contact a rescue organization, a Yahoo or Google search will bring up countless organizations making life easier for this wonderful breed.

[Find out more....](#)

## Featured Health Concern

### *Hip Dysplasia*



Hip Dysplasia is a term most dog lovers recognize, but what is it exactly? Very simply put, it's the wearing away of the protective cartilage of the hip joint. An excellent explanation is given at the Pet Education site, listed here: [Explanation of Hip Dysplasia](#)

Hip dysplasia can be found in dogs, cats, and humans. In dogs, it's most common in large and giant breeds, although it can occur in medium-sized

breeds and even in small breeds, although this is rare. Purebred dogs are more disposed to hip dysplasia, although it can happen in mixed breeds, particularly if it is a cross of two dogs that are prone to developing the disease. The breeds most prone include German Shepherds, Labrador Retrievers, Rottweilers, Great Danes, Golden Retrievers, and Saint Bernards.

Risk factors include a genetic link - if a parent has hip dysplasia, the offspring are at greater risk for developing hip dysplasia. Obesity is another. Carrying around extra weight will make the degeneration of the joint even worse. Another factor may be rapid growth in a puppy during the ages from three to ten months, hence the caution to not feed your large breed puppy a high protein diet. Even exercise may be a risk factor since it appears that dogs that are genetically susceptible to the disease may be at risk if they are over-exercised at a young age. Muscle strengthening exercise, such as running and swimming, may be a better choice than activities where a lot of force is applied to the joint, such as jumping activities - like playing Frisbee.

You may notice breeders mention that their dogs have "OFA certification" or they mention OFA score - this is something to look for should you decide to adopt a puppy whose breed is susceptible to hip dysplasia. The Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) has set the standard for many years. Using a seven point scoring system, hips are scored as normal (excellent, good, fair), borderline dysplastic, or dysplastic (mild, moderate, severe). Since there is a genetic factor in the disease, a breeder who can say their breeding stock has been certified or scored by the OFA stands a better chance of breeding disease-free pups.

**We hope you have enjoyed this issue of The Hound's Herald and the new format.**

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**Until next month,**

Kathryn Gaster Allen  
Gasterville Natural Pet Care

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email: [gasterville@yahoo.com](mailto:gasterville@yahoo.com)  
phone: 216-276-2229  
fax: 267-224-1404  
web: <http://www.gasterville.com>

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