



# Spotted News

AUGUST 2007

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**This year's SOS Reunion** is almost here. It is on August 4<sup>th</sup>, at Lori and Greg Holz's home. Don't forget the NASCAR theme. If you haven't yet responded, there is still a few days. Give us a call at 414- 365-2679. It's going to be lots of fun and you don't want to miss out.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE!**

## DALLY UPDATE

### LOOKING FOR A HOME

**Patches** is an 8-year-old boy who was surrendered to a shelter in northern WI. He lost one of his front legs in an accident as a puppy, but can move around great on 3 legs. Although he only has 3 legs, he has a lot of energy, but only requires short walks. Sounds like a contradiction, but that's Patches. You need to meet him to see how wonderful and affectionate this little boy is.

**Elly** is a 13 week old female puppy that is liver and white. When she arrived in our foster program, we discovered she was more Pointer than Dal, but she is still a real cutie.

### FOUND A HOME

**Doogie** found his forever home with previous adopters, Tom and Sandy Jensen. They've enrolled him in training and the fun begins.

## “SPOT SOS”

Please join us on September 8 in Greenfield, WI. We have been invited to walk our Dalmatians in the 9am parade during the Midwest Regional Firefighter Combat Challenge. We are also working on having a fundraising booth for Friday evening and Sat. More details to follow...

We are sad to announce that **Checkers** who was adopted in May 2002, died in May 2007. She was 14 years old. She live a good life. Both Checkers and her brother, Duke came as a package. They were older and joined a pack of 5 dals. Our hearts go out to Joseph Portiera. We know that Checkers has gone over the Bridge and is able to run and play again. Below is a picture of Checkers with her brother Duke, back in 2002.



## ADOPTION SPOTLIGHT

### **FRANKIE**

We continue to love and adore our Frankie (from Molly's litter about 4 years ago.) The vet at his recent annual check-up said he's in "excellent health and shape." I remember when he was just a puppy and SOS brought him and his brood to our house so that we could pick out a dog. You covered all the puppies in a blanket. I think that is why today Frankie must dig himself under blankets to sleep. I've never seen anything like it. Anyway, take care all and keep up the good works over at SOS!

The Suizzo family



# THE POSTAL SERVICE WE NEVER HEAR ABOUT

Our 14 year old dog, Abbey, died last month. The day after she died, my 4 Year old daughter Meredith was crying and talking about how much she missed Abbey. She asked if we could write a Letter to God so that when Abbey got to Heaven, God would recognize her. She dictated and I wrote:

**Dear God,**

Will you please take special care of our dog, Abbey? She died yesterday and is in heaven. We miss her very much. We are happy that you let us have her as our dog even though she got sick. I hope that you will play with her. She liked to play with balls and swim before she got sick. I am sending some pictures of her so that when you see her in heaven you will know she is our special dog. But I really do miss her.

Love,

Meredith Claire

P.S. Mommy wrote the words after I told them to her.

We put that in an envelope with two pictures of Abbey, and addressed it to God in Heaven. We put our return address on it. Then Meredith stuck some stamps on the front (because, as she said, it may take lots of stamps to get a letter all the way to heaven) and that afternoon I let her drop it into the letter box at the post office.

For a few days, she would ask if God had gotten the letter yet. I told her that I thought He had.

Yesterday there was a package wrapped in gold paper on our front porch. Curious, I went to look at it. It had a gold star card on the front and said "To Meredith" in an unfamiliar hand. Meredith took it in and opened it. Inside was a book by Mr. Rogers, "When a Pet Dies". Taped to the inside front cover was the letter we had written to God, in its opened envelope (which was marked Return to Sender: Insufficient address). On the opposite page, one of the pictures of Abbey was taped under the words "For Meredith" we turned to the back cover, and there was the other picture of Abbey, and this handwritten note on pink paper:

**Dear Meredith,**

I know that you will be happy to know that Abbey arrived safely and soundly in Heaven! Having the pictures you sent to me was such a big help. I recognized Abbey right away. You know, Meredith, she isn't sick anymore. Her spirit is here with me--just like she stays in your heart--young and running and playing. Abbey loved being your dog, you know. Since we don't need our bodies in heaven, I don't have any pockets!-- so I can't keep your beautiful letter. I am sending it to you with the pictures so that you will have this book to keep and remember Abbey. One of my angels is taking care of this for me. I hope the little book helps. Thank you for the beautiful letter. Thank your mother for sending it. What a wonderful mother you have! I picked her especially for you. I send my blessings every day and remember that I love you very much. By the way, I am in heaven but wherever there is love, I am there also.

Love,

God and the special angel who wrote this after God told her the words.

# **Exercise Your Dog**

Is your dog driving you crazy? Is he "hyper" and getting into trouble? Maybe you even keep him outside because he is "too wild"? Well, chances are that part of the problem is lack of sufficient exercise. Boredom and lack of physical activity are common reasons behavior problems develop. A tired dog is a good dog!

Every dog is different. Before beginning an exercise program be sure your dog is in good health - get your veterinarian's approval before drastically changing the dog's routine.

Factors to consider are: breed, age, weight, physical characteristics (such as short "pushed-in" muzzles), and weather conditions.

Daily walks might be enough for some dogs; others need more intense workouts. Your dog should get aerobic exercise at least three times a week - this means enough exercise to make him pant. Just because your dog is outside in the yard does not mean he is getting enough exercise.

## **Methods of exercise**

- Walking-- You can use a Flexi-leash to safely increase the distance the dog can go. (This is different than the "Controlled Walking" we do in class.) Use common sense-- for instance, do not allow the dog to invade the space of another dog, or to run into the street. (If you walk your dog in a congested area, please use a regular leash for safety instead of a Flexi.) Allow the dog some sniffing time then move out at a brisk pace.
- Running-- If you can find a safe fenced in field to let your dog run off leash, that is ideal, since the dog can set his own pace and stop when he is tired, plus he has the mental stimulation of sniffing to his heart's content. If you jog with your dog on leash pay attention not to go too far until he is in condition.
- Swimming-- very good exercise for dogs with joint problems since it is non-weight bearing.
- Fetching-- throwing a tennis ball or other toy (try a kong) for the dog to fetch is fun. You can use a tennis racquet to increase the distance the ball (and the dog) travels. If the dog is in good condition throw the ball uphill. In the house you can throw the ball up the stairs.
- Jumping-- most dogs love to jump. You can make your own jumps from materials you have around the house. Try using cardboard boxes for small dogs-- you can do this in the house. Try luring the dog with treats, and start with very low jumps of just a few inches. As a general rule, it is best to keep the jump heights at the level of the dog's elbow so as not to cause stress. All jumping must be done off leash, and never force the dog. If the dog refuses to jump it might reflect a physical problem.
- Lunge-whip-- Get a buggy whip (at farm supply stores). Attach a ball or other toy to the end. Tennis balls you can buy on-a-rope are good for this. Or put a squeaky toy in a sock and tie the sock to the end of the whip. Then twirl the whip in a big circle and let the dog chase it. Occasionally let the dog catch it too. This is one of my favorite games to play with dogs-- the dog can really get a workout in a relatively small space. Stop while the dog is still enjoying the game so he will be eager to play next time. (You can buy a dog toy called "Ball-on-a-Rope" from KV Vet catalog 800-423-8211 to use instead of making one from a buggy whip.)

- Bicycling-- you can buy a gizmo called a "Springer" that attaches to your bike. It is in most dog supply catalogs. The Springer prevents the dog from pulling over the bike if he lunges after something. Start with short distances at first.
- Frisbee-- many dogs love to play Frisbee, and it can be good exercise. But be careful to keep your throws low to the ground. Dogs have been injured from leaping in the air to catch a frisbee. You do not want to stress a puppy by playing this game at too young an age-- check with your veterinarian on this. Buy a soft Frisbee specially made for dogs, to avoid accidentally chipping teeth.
- Canine exercise balls-- Also called "Boomer Balls", these resemble bowling balls. They come in different sizes, and are made of virtually indestructible hard plastic. Big dogs such as Labs and Rottweilers love to play with these, using their feet to play "soccer", with a human companion of course!
- Another option is canine sports - any breed can do agility, flyball, obedience, musical freestyle, or tracking. Some organizations are open to mixed breeds too. Breed specific activities are herding, lure coursing, hunt tests, and go-to-ground trials.

After a session of strenuous exercise, you can wind down by gently massaging your dog.

## **Mental Exercise**

**Your dog needs mental stimulation as well as physical exercise.** Many dogs get into trouble when they are bored and have no suitable outlets.

- Buy your dog a "Buster Cube", "Roll-a-Treat" ball or similar toy. You put treats into the toy and your dog has to figure out how to get the treats out, by pawing, nosing and rolling the toy.
- Hide a toy or dog biscuit, or even a person, and let the dog hunt until he finds it. See my article titled "Find the Cookie Game".
- Let your dog use his smelling instincts to "forage" in the yard for bits of food. At first make it easy by dropping a piece or two right under his nose. After he catches on, throw bits into different parts of the yard. If your dog is high energy, let him forage for his meal instead of eating out of a bowl. Or stuff a Kong and hide it - let your dog 'work' for his food and burn off some of that energy.

Try this test to see if your dog has gotten enough exercise: Sit down to watch a TV show or read. Is your dog snoozing beside you or chewing on a bone? If so, he's probably gotten enough exercise that day. If he is getting into mischief or bugging you to play, he hasn't had enough exercise!

**Remember - a tired dog is a good dog! A tired dog has a happy owner!**



**8226 N. 67<sup>th</sup> Street, Brown Deer, WI 53223**

**Phone and fax: (414) 365-2679**

**Please email us at [sosdalrescue@earthlink.net](mailto:sosdalrescue@earthlink.net).**

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