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March 2009 Newsletter



Dear friends,

Welcome to our March Newsletter from www.bestdoggietips.com.

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We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Anybody who doesn't know what soap tastes like never washed a dog. – *Franklin P Jones*

Recipe - Cookie Bones

This recipe is from the I Love Dogs cookbook which you can download free at [BestDoggieTips](#).

Ingredients

1¾ cups flour
½ cup brown sugar
1 egg yolk
2 tbsp toasted wheatgerm
¼ cup sesame seeds
12 tbsp butter
½ cup ground walnuts
½ cup vanilla extract

To Make

Combine all ingredients and knead until thoroughly blended. Divide dough into 6 parts and roll each part into a log. Freeze.

When needed, thaw and roll into 1/2" thick slabs and cut into bone shapes. Bake at 375°F (190°C) on an un-greased cookie sheet for approximately 13 min.

Makes 36 servings.

We hope your best friend enjoys this tasty **dog food recipe!**

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Justice for Karley

Some stories just touch our heart, and we recently learned of the following appalling case from DoggySpace.com. Here is Karley's story.

From KTLA News - November 8, 2008

How can any human being just murder a puppy for no reason?" dog owner Shelley Toole says fighting through tears.

Her family can't sleep. They say Monday, their next-door neighbor, in some kind of violent rage, beat their puppy so badly the dog had to be put down. Karley was a six-month old shepherd mix.

What may surprise many people is the fact that the neighbor is Los Angeles County Assistant Fire Chief Glynn Johnson. An online biography lists a stellar 30-year career with the department. It says he's an expert in counter-terrorism, among other areas.

But his neighbors of the last ten years have a very different picture of the man. Jeff Toole, Shelley's husband, says he believes Chief Johnson "needs a lot of help." Riverside County investigators tell KTLA the fire chief admits to beating the dog -- but says it was in self-defense because Karley attacked him viciously.

The Tooles say Monday evening, Karley got out and went to neighbor Travis Staggs' home. He lives on the other side of Chief Johnson's house. Staggs says he was walking Karley home when Johnson stepped in and said he would take the dog back home. Staggs says he reluctantly handed over the puppy, and that's when it happened in Johnson's front yard.

Travis Staggs tells KTLA that Glynn Johnson simply started beating the dog, and that the dog had not attacked Johnson first. According to this witness, Johnson hit the dog repeatedly with a closed fist, put his hands in the puppy's mouth and tried to break its jaws, and eventually beat the dog over the head repeatedly with a large rock from the front yard. Staggs says he tried to stop the attack but couldn't. The Toole family later decided to have Karley put down because of the extent of her injuries.

"It scares me, knowing I live next-door to this man," says Travis Staggs.

The Tooles say they will take civil action against the assistant fire chief regardless of the outcome of the criminal investigation. Riverside County deputies tell KTLA they are conducting more interviews with witnesses in an attempt to determine what really happened in this case. If detectives find enough evidence that the dog beating was unwarranted, they will hand the case over to the district attorney for a possible animal cruelty charge, which is a felony.



The Tooles say there is a "history of violence" with Glynn Johnson, and deputies say they are looking into these claims as well.

"This man needs to go to prison for what he did," says Shelley Toole. She adds, "Karley was my baby, and he took her away from me."



*From The L.A. Times -
December 19, 2008*

After weeks of protest and outrage, dozens of demonstrators Thursday celebrated the arrest of Los Angeles County Assistant Fire Chief Glynn Johnson, who stands accused of savagely beating a neighbor's puppy last month with a rock.

Carrying signs saying "Jail the Puppy Killer!," about 50 people marched in front of the Riverside County district attorney's office chanting, "Thank you, D.A.; now make Johnson pay."

Johnson, 54, was arrested Tuesday, charged with one count of felony animal cruelty and the use of a dangerous weapon in the commission of a felony. He was released on \$10,000 bail and faces up to four years in jail if convicted in the beating of 6-month-old Karley, a shepherd mix. Johnson, who could not be reached for comment Thursday, reportedly told investigators that he acted in self-defense.

For the last few weeks, protesters have rallied in front of the district attorney's office. Some believe Johnson's status as a fire chief won him special treatment. They are demanding that he be fired. "There were witnesses to this crime, and sheriff's deputies could have arrested him that day," said Jeffrey Toole, who co-owned Karley with his wife, Shelley. "Did he get special treatment? Yes, he did. If I had done that to his dog, I guarantee you I'd be in jail that day."

Assistant Dist. Atty. Chuck Hughes said the arrest took time because more investigation was needed. "He was not afforded any special treatment and his employment played no role in when we filed charges," Hughes said. "When a case gets submitted we review it. . . . If more evidence is needed, we send it back."

The incident has generated national attention and served as a rallying cry for those seeking harsher penalties against animal abusers. Hundreds of people from around the nation have called the Tooles offering support. The family has set up a website (justice4karley.com), and a group of retired Los Angeles County firefighters has established a fund to help pay legal costs as the family pursues a civil case against Johnson.

"We had no idea we would get this kind of support," Toole said. "We would like to see the laws change. I'd equate losing Karley with losing a child, and I want to see Johnson get the maximum punishment."

This isn't the family's first run-in with Johnson. Shelley Toole called deputies in August 2000, saying Johnson shot her dog Kahlua above the eye with a pellet gun. The deputy, she said, told her that it would be her word against his and advised her not to pursue the case.

Bryan Monell, a senior investigator with Last Chance for Animals, a Los Angeles group specializing in animal cruelty cases, has interviewed residents in Johnson's neighborhood who say their dogs have gone missing or have been shot with pellet or BB guns. Chris DeRose, founder of Last Chance For Animals, said that in his 30 years of investigating animal cruelty cases, this was one of the worst beatings he'd seen. "When you see something like this you got to take a stand," he said. "To me, it's not just an animal issue, it's a people issue."

The incident happened Nov. 3 in an unincorporated area near Riverside. Travis Staggs, a friend of the Toole family, said he was returning with Karley from a walk when Johnson approached and asked if he could take the dog the rest of the way home.

"He walked maybe 100 feet with the dog and that's when it happened," said Shelley Toole, who had discussed the incident with Staggs but had not seen it herself. "Travis saw Karley on her back and Glynn punching her with his closed fist at least 10 times to her head. He then literally pulled her jaws apart until they broke." Staggs told police that Johnson then hit Karley more than 10 times in the head with a rock. Staggs called 911. Not long after, Johnson's wife called 911 reporting that her husband had been attacked by a dog.

Karley's nasal cavity was crushed, her skull cracked in three places, her ear canal collapsed and one of her eyes lost, according to the veterinarian's report. "The vet told me, 'We can try to save her, but if she survives she will have permanent brain damage and may not be able to function,' " said Shelley Toole, who chose to have the dog euthanized. "She was never an aggressive dog. All she wanted to do was play. We took her to the river and she rode in the boat with her head over the railing. She loved the water."

Johnson, a 31-year veteran of the fire department, was treated at a local hospital for injuries to his wrist and thumb that he said he got when Karley bit his hand. Johnson was placed on paid administrative leave pending the outcome of the case, said Inspector Sam Padilla, spokesman for the Los Angeles County Fire Department. "He hasn't been convicted of anything yet, so he can't be fired," said Padilla. "It's called due process. What other people say is just their personal opinion. But you can't hold a badge if you have a felony conviction." Johnson is scheduled to be arraigned Feb. 13 at 1:30 p.m.

Latest News - February 13, 2009

A former Los Angeles County assistant fire chief who was charged with a felony after hitting a dog with a rock has sued the animal's owners, his attorney said Thursday.

Glynn Johnson, 54, has pleaded not guilty to felony animal cruelty stemming from his Nov. 3 clash with Karley, a 6-month-old German shepherd mix that was euthanized due to its injuries. Johnson's lawsuit, filed Wednesday in Riverside County Superior Court, claims negligence and intentional infliction of emotional distress. He is seeking unspecified damages from the owners.

According to Johnson's attorney, John E. Sweeney, the dog had gotten loose and was on Johnson's property when the fire official took it by the collar and started walking it back to the home of its owners, Jeff and Shelley Toole.

"When the dog saw he was being led back to his own house, he started thrashing about," Sweeney said. "He got Glynn Johnson's thumb in his mouth and nearly tore the tip off." Sweeney said Johnson picked up a rock and hit the dog. "He only hit him twice, as soon as the dog was hit a couple of times, he let go and ran away," Sweeney said. Sweeney said his client's thumb was scarred and appeared to have permanent nerve damage.

A message left with Shelley Toole was not immediately returned, though Karley's owners depict events differently. Their Web site, justice4karley.com, displays a TV news story that says Johnson beat the animal without it first attacking him. The Web site shows pictures of a playful looking puppy, but Sweeney said the dog was big enough to inflict serious damage. "This was a mature dog with adult dog teeth," he said. "We have a picture of the teeth, these are clearly not a puppy's teeth."

Sweeney said Johnson had a stellar, 31-year career at the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Because he was charged with a felony he was placed on administrative leave. He decided to retire last month, a year or so earlier than he'd originally planned, in part because of the case.

"His life has been turned upside down," Sweeney said. "This was a man ready to retire with dignity ... and he goes out the back door of the Fire Department because of these allegations."

An online petition demanding felony animal charges be brought against Johnson received 14,000 responses. Johnson faces four years in prison if convicted. He is free on \$10,000 bail. His lawsuit claims the Tooles should be held liable for the dog bite, and for causing emotional distress by pressing for the criminal charges.



Please show your support for Karley and the Toole family by signing the petition at

www.thepetitionsite.com/1/justice-4-karley

or by visiting their site at

www.justice4karley.com

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Victorian Bushfire Update

We know many of you would have heard about and followed the devastating bushfires in Victoria, Australia at the end of last month. The official death toll has not yet been finalised, but stands at over 200. The toll on animals is even worse. Here is an update from the Healesville Sanctuary, which is close by the bushfire area, and has been treating many of the injured native wildlife (those that were able to survive the inferno).



The Kindness of strangers who we now call friends

It has been a trying and stressful time for many Victorians. They have had to come to terms with grief, loss and the daunting prospect of rebuilding their lives in the wake of Australia's most devastating fires.

Amidst the strain and hardship, there has emerged a collective humanity that has not just come from Victoria or Australia but from across the world with offers of support flowing to many affected communities.

Healesville Sanctuary has come under threat a number of times, but our staff and the Country Fire Authority have worked long and hard to keep us safe from harm. We are very grateful, especially to the fire fighters who have advised and protected us.

We have been heartened by the support and well wishes from across the globe. We have marvelled at the courage of people who have lost everything in the fires, yet still brought in native animals or cared for injured wildlife on what remains of their properties. We have also been grateful to our wildlife carers and the many vets who have stepped in to treat the sick and injured as well as those who have set up and run the wildlife triage points in fire-affected areas.

The staff at Healesville Sanctuary would like to thank you all for your support, compassion and humanity. While many of you may have been strangers before, today we count you as friends.

Staff at the Australian Wildlife Health Centre continue to work hard treating and caring for sick, injured and displaced wildlife. While it is still early days there are encouraging signs from some of our patients.

What happens now?

We are dealing with an increased number of injured wildlife due to bushfires and expect to see more with the fire activity remaining in the Yarra Valley and other areas of the state. We will also help other triage points when roads reopen and public access is restored.

While the full extent of the impact of the bushfires is still unknown, there is still much work to do.

It is unlikely that the surrounding unburnt bushland will be able to support remaining and displaced animals - so we will begin to see malnourished wildlife as well as those suffering burns going back into areas that are still smouldering.

We have also seen a number of animals that have been hit by vehicles - this will become more common as wildlife return to damaged areas or try to find new homes.

Many of the animals that survive will need long term care - possibly months, and some may never be able to return to the wild - which will further stretch our capacity and resources.

Our experts in Australian native wildlife are also providing a telephone advisory service for other triage centres and vets in the assessment and treatment of injured native wildlife.

Donations have allowed us to allocate additional resources to our wildlife response and we expect that demand to grow particularly with the long term care and wellbeing needs of the many injured animals.

Here are a few of our survivors (you can click their photos to go direct to the Healesville site and find out more about that animal)

Amelia Fritz



Amelia Fritz clings tightly to her teddy. It's a small consolation for one who has lost so much at such a young age. But with the tender love and care of Sanctuary staff and wildlife carers, Amelia has a fighting chance.

Lex

Lex has made a lucky escape from the fires that ripped through his home near Kinglake.



Bellarine

Her name is French for 'little shoes'. Her small blue booties have helped to protect and heal the burns to her feet.

Mary

While Mary has been recovering well from her injuries, her carer has lost her home and wildlife shelter in Buxton.





Rex

One of Victoria's Greater Gliders, Rex's wide eyes show the hope that he may one day be able to go back home.

If you would like to help support this work you can click the link below:

[Please donate to the Australian Wildlife Health Centre Bushfire Appeal](#)

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One Dog's Story

And a heartwarming story from those same bushfires....

When Peter Dowling saw his wife patting a pillow and calling it Coco, he knew the deadly Taggerty bushfire had broken her mind.

Nina Mortimer's two dogs were her babies, and on Sunday morning she was told by her neighbours they had not managed to rescue the dogs.

By the end of the day she was in Alexandra Hospital, and Mr Dowling thought his wife was in the midst of a mental breakdown.

He and his wife were away from their house on Saturday, and when they heard about the fires they told the neighbours to take their dogs to safety. The message from their neighbours was "no worries".

But it was a very different story when they drove into Alexandra on Sunday to meet their neighbours. Mr Dowling said he knew something was wrong as soon as he saw his neighbours' car.

"I walked past the car and looked in and there weren't any dogs there and I felt really bad," he told the ABC.

"I walked into the pub and I looked at them and their faces just fell. They said to my wife 'we're so sorry, we just didn't have the time to get the dogs out.'

"Nina just broke down. She said if the house was probably gone and the babies had died in there, she wasn't ever going back again."

Grief can do unusual things to people, and Nina's mind started playing cruel tricks on her.

She was convinced her dogs were still alive, and when Mr Dowling walked into the relief centre later that afternoon he saw her cradling a pillow in her arms.

"She was saying, 'The dogs are OK, Coco and Cody are fine, I've got them just here' and she was patting the pillow," he said.

"I knew she was having a breakdown so I took her to the hospital and on Monday they were booking her into the psychiatric ward."

Just as Ms Mortimer was being assessed by psychiatrists however, stories began filtering in from Taggerty of a miraculous survival story.

"I got a phone call and the neighbours said there was a rumour going around the CFA [that] there was a house still standing and there were dogs barking their heads off inside," he said.

Taggerty residents rushed up to the house to get the dogs out, and what followed not only saved the dogs' lives but three houses.

"When everyone went up there they found a shed next door that was on fire," he said.

"And if people hadn't gone up there and put that out the whole row of houses would have gone up."

The dogs had been trapped inside the house for over 48 hours as flames engulfed the area, filling the rooms with toxic black smoke and ash. But as Mr Mortimer said: "you wouldn't have known it."



Peter Dowling with his dogs Coco (l) and Cody at the Alexandra Recovery Centre

"They were fine and they were jumping all over us. We were so relieved and they were so relieved," Mr Mortimer said.

If the news of her dogs' deaths pushed Ms Mortimer over the edge, the news of their rescue was the lifeline that brought her back from the brink.

"She's become a new person, a renewed person," he said.

"She's made a lot of new friends, we all have."

Coco and Cody's escape has become somewhat of a local legend around the Alexandra and Taggerty region.

"Yesterday a friend from Narbathong came up to me and asked if I'd heard the doghouse story," Mr Mortimer said.

"Everyone's calling it the story of the doghouse. I might put a sign up outside saying this is the scene of the famous doghouse."

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Help Animals in Need

The Animal Rescue Site fund food for abandoned and neglected animals.

When you visit their site, you will see a small purple box saying '**fund food for animals for free**'. The corporate sponsors and advertisers use the number of daily visits to donate food to abandoned/neglected animals in exchange for advertising.

It doesn't cost you anything but time.

The Animal Rescue Site are currently having trouble getting enough people to click on it daily so they can meet their quota of getting free food donated every day to abused and neglected animals.

Here's the web site! Please pass the message on.....

www.theanimalrescuesite.com/

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Fun Stuff - A Dog's Pet Peeves

- ☺ When you run away in the middle of a perfectly good leg humping.
- ☺ Blaming your farts on me...not funny.
- ☺ Yelling at me for barking...I'M A DOG!!
- ☺ How you naively believe that the stupid cat isn't all over everything while you're gone. (Have you noticed that your toothbrush tastes a little like cat butt?)
- ☺ Taking me for a walk, then not letting me check stuff out. Exactly whose walk is this anyway?
- ☺ Any trick that involves balancing food on my nose...stop it.
- ☺ Yelling at me for rubbing my butt on your carpet...Why'd you buy carpet?
- ☺ Getting upset when I sniff your guests. Sorry but I haven't quite mastered that handshake thing yet...
- ☺ Dog sweaters? Have you noticed the fur?.....
- ☺ Any haircut that involves bows or ribbons. (Now you know why we chew your stuff up when you're not home.)
- ☺ When you pick up the poo piles in the yard. Do you realize how far behind schedule that puts me?
- ☺ Taking me to the vet for "the big snip", then acting surprised when I freak out everytime we go back.
- ☺ The sleight of hand, fake fetch throw. You fooled a dog! What a proud moment for the top of the food chain.....

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The Weird & the Wonderful

Clever dog uses snow bank to climb up on roof

Police get lots of calls about animals, but this one was different. A caller reported a dog was on top of the roof of a house. Animal control officer Dick Schnell said the snow in the backyard of the dog's owner's home was apparently high enough for the dog to walk up onto the roof Tuesday. He said the dog seemed perfectly content.

Schnell tossed some treats and tempted the dog to the roof's lower level, but no farther. The dog's owner was called, and eventually returned home to persuade the dog to come down.

It left Schnell chuckling and saying, "just when you think you've seen it all."

Dog gene 'may aid wolf survival'

Wolves have acquired a genetic mutation for dark coat colour through mating with domestic dogs, scientists report.



A gene for dark coats is common among wolves in Yellowstone Park

Dark coats could help wolves adapt and survive in new environments, the international team argues.

Light-coloured coats are dominant in wolves living on tundra, but dark coats have become common among wolves living in forested areas of North America.

The findings come from a genetic analysis of wolf populations in Europe and North America.

"We usually think that dogs developed from wolves. The work shows an example where dogs gave something back to wolves," co-author Greg Barsh, from Stanford University in California, told Science magazine.

Natural selection has ensured that the trait increased in frequency in the woodland wolves. But it remains unclear what is so advantageous about black coats in forested areas.

Tundra habitat is expected to decline over coming years due to the northern expansion of boreal forests under the influence of climate change.

As this happens, dark colouring could help grey wolves adapt to their changing environment.

Co-author Marco Musiani, a wolf expert from the University of Calgary in Canada, who led the research, said: "Domestication of dogs has led to dark-coloured coats in wolves, which has proven to be a valuable trait for wolf populations as their arctic habitat shrinks."

"It also shows that human activities can help enrich the genetic diversity of wild animal populations, which is a very unexpected finding."

He added: "It is somewhat ironic that a trait that was created by humans may now prove to be beneficial for wolves as they deal with human-caused changes to their habitat."

Scientists believe the black wolves appeared thousands of years ago after grey wolves bred with domestic dogs who accompanied Native Americans into the continent 10,000-15,000 years ago.

These dogs are now extinct, and experts on canine genetics generally agree that American dogs today are descended from European ones brought in over the last 500 years.

"We were really surprised to find that domestic animals can serve as a genetic reservoir that can benefit the natural populations from which they were derived," said Greg Barsh.

"It's also fascinating to think that a portion of the first Native American dogs, which are now extinct, may live on in wolves."

More puzzling is the question of what exact advantage the dark coats confer on woodland wolves. One possibility is that black colouring might help the animals blend better into the shadowed glades.

But Dr Barsh commented: "Wildlife biologists don't really think that wolves rely much on camouflage to protect themselves or to increase their hunting success.

"It's possible there is something else going on here. For example, the protein responsible for the coat colour difference has been implicated, in humans, in inflammation and infection, and therefore might give black animals an advantage that is distinct from its effect on pigmentation."

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