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Special points of interest:

- Welcome to a bumper issue of Fernamber Off Lead
- T Ch Fernamber Tradition awarded Highest Scoring Tracking Dog 2002 by the Golden Retriever Club of Victoria
- Our two Golden Retrievers, Paddington and April, return at last after four and a half days lost
- Teagan's puppies have their own website <http://teagans.puppies.2002.tripod.com>

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Fernamber Off Lead

Welcome to our Autumn Issue

At the Gibson household we had a very unusual Christmas.

In December, Cheryl had a fall in which she fractured her hip and spent eight days in hospital. She came home with a set of crutches to be used for at least six weeks. (...Eleven weeks now and still counting...) And this with a litter of six four week old puppies at home! Thankfully, Cheryl's parents helped look after the puppies (and Cheryl!).

The Sunday before Christmas, April and Paddington decided to climb over our front fence and disappear. After four days of searching, our hopes were fading that we would ever see them again.

On Christmas Day they were still missing, but we were getting phone calls from people who had seen them. And they were not that far from home, just hopelessly lost.

Both friends and strangers were absolutely wonderful in helping locate our lost dogs. On Christmas Day strangers were out searching for them and took the time to ring us with sightings. On Boxing Day with the help of friends, the two dogs finally recognised Clive and came home, very skinny and tired, with cuts and scrapes, but basically okay. We count ourselves very



Amber, Teaka, Edynn, Swahili, Maxie and Tom
Fernamber Eternity, Echo, Edynn, Equinox, Excalibur and Eclipse

lucky to have them back.

We are humbled by the goodwill shown to us by our friends and strangers who went out of their way to assist us.

A week later, Teagan's puppies left for their new homes and it became very quiet at our house. Amber now lives with Kylie and Jeff in Caroline Springs, Teaka lives with Pia and Noel in Bayswater and Edynn lives with Lynn and Mark in Lara. Swahili flew all the way to Adelaide to live with Doug and Sarah and another Fernamber puppy, Chester. Maxie flew even further, all the way to Kalgoorlie to live with Jasmin and her family. And Tom lives in Gisborne with Sue and Phil and their family.

The Dog Did It!



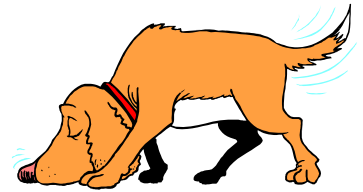
Tracking

A dog follows a trail in two ways. *Tracking* is where the dog follows the person's exact path. *Trailing* is where the dog follows the person's scent, which may not follow the exact path because of the many factors affecting the dispersal of scent such as wind and temperature. Water does not disrupt a tracking dog. The dog will simply cast around for the trail on the other side if the water has carried surface scent away. If the water is still, the scent remains on the water surface. Trained dogs can locate corpses in the water and dogs can even trail people in cars from the scent that escapes from the vents.

Some Tracking terminology: A Track Solid dog follows the newest track. A Track Clean Dog follows the correct trail even if it crosses other trails laid at the same time. In disaster work dogs lead their handlers

towards any human scent; this is "tracking solid." A Bloodhound, given a scent article, will "track clean", finding that individual regardless of track crossings.

To start trailing an individual, the dog needs an uncontaminated scent article. The best items are clothing or something that the person has directly handled. If the article is contaminated the dogs will then do a "missing member" search. The dog notes which scent on the article is not present and searches for that person. Tracking competition simulates finding a missing person. The dog must follow the track of a 'missing person' locating articles 'lost' by that person along the way. The tracks increase in difficulty and complexity with older and longer tracks, more turns and diversionary tracks, as the dog qualifies at each level.



For more information on Tracking see The Tracking Club of Victoria's website www.trackingclubvic.org.au

Scent Trails

Consider scent in all its complexities as a ghost you cannot see or even understand. Your dog however "sees" it quite clearly and understands it well beyond our comprehension.

For the dog, the sense of smell is not only powerful but his preferred means of interpreting his world. Humans on the other hand are primarily visual.

A dog explores his world using scent while we explore our world through vision.

When you begin working with your dog and scent, you must remember that you are not teaching your dog anything new.

You are simply defining how you want him to do what he already naturally does—use his nose.

Your dog lives in a world permeated by scent and he understands it implicitly.

From the day he was born, he has explored his world using his nose. He knows about scents floating through the air, scents pooled up on the ground, actual tracks left by both humans and animals, and he can distinguish amongst the scents in his world to an astonishing degree.

from *'Following Ghosts'* by Suzanne Clothier & John Rice www.flyingdogpress.com

Giving Your Dog a Tablet

When giving your dog a tablet, gently take hold of his head from above, placing your thumb and finger on either side of the muzzle. Squeeze firmly in and up just behind the canine teeth. The dog's mouth should open.

Use your free hand to hold on to the tablet while lowering the dog's jaw. With the mouth open wide, place the tablet as far back on the tongue as possible, pushing it even further with your index finger.

Gently close and hold the muzzle while your dog swallows. You can encourage this by stroking the underside of the throat downward.

Finally give your dog lots of praise and a food reward each time he swallows a tablet.

If you follow these steps you will find that both you and your dog are much happier when it is medicine time.



"I'm still waiting—
is it all over?"

Vaccinations . . . Too Many, Too Often

A growing controversial issue for dog owners concerns vaccination. People are questioning the frequency of vaccination, the safety and effectiveness of vaccines and even whether to vaccinate at all.

There should be absolutely no debate over the health benefits that million of dogs have derived from the widespread availability of vaccines. Vaccines have played a significant role in enabling animals to live longer, healthier lives. Do not forget the rampant parvovirus outbreaks of the 1980s and before that distemper and hepatitis. Undeniably vaccines have made possible the control of these deadly infections.

Canine Distemper and Infectious Hepatitis are far less prevalent today because of vaccines. Together with Canine Parvovirus they are all highly contagious, virulent diseases. Distemper is incurable, with over 50% of dogs and 80% of infected puppies dying. Many survivors have permanent damage and suffer seizures or paralysis. Infectious Canine Hepatitis is also highly contagious and dogs of any age are susceptible. Mortality is around 10%. Canine Parvovirus caused a widespread epidemic in the 1980s that resulted in thousands of deaths.

But vaccination is not always benign. It is a potent medical procedure associated with both benefits and risks for the patient.

Allergic reactions caused by vaccines may be local or a generalised hypersensitivity reaction. Common signs of local reactions are swelling and itching. Signs of a generalised reaction include restlessness, vomiting, diarrhoea, laboured breathing and collapse. Other effects may include pain, soreness, stiffness and lethargy. Seizures or changes in behaviour have been reported in a small percentage of

dogs following vaccination. Most vaccine associated reactions are immune related.

Holistic practitioners believe that by injecting vaccines we are presenting foreign material in an unnatural manner.

They believe vaccines result in autoimmune diseases. Autoimmune diseases are caused by abnormal immune system responses. An example is autoimmune haemolytic anemia where the body's own red blood cells are destroyed.

The body's exposure to vaccine differs from the usual exposure to disease.

- Vaccines are given in combination; disease exposures do not commonly occur in multiples.
- Vaccines are given several times over a short period of time; disease exposures are not usually so concentrated.
- Vaccines are injected into the body, bypassing the body's natural defences; normally disease organisms must overcome these defences before they can cause disease.
- Modified live virus vaccines can shed in the environment and mutate.
- Vaccines are administered to puppies at an age when their immune systems are not fully developed.

The American Veterinary Medical Association in September 2001 reported that the risks to animal health from non-vaccination are significant.

A major concern is the level of immunity within a population. An important component of preventing high rates of disease is the building of sufficient immunity in a population. Once a certain proportion of a population is immune to a disease, the natural spread is interrupted

(Continued on next page)



Vaccination time

“There is growing realisation that vaccination is not always benign.”

The Burglar

A burglar discovered a malnourished dog when breaking into a house in England and called in an animal abuse report on the owner .

(Bolton, England)



They won't get away with this!

Vaccinations . . . Too Many, Too Often (cont'd)

and the disease declines. If the rates of vaccination fall below the necessary population coverage then the disease regains a hold and epidemics can occur. If enough people choose to not vaccinate their dogs there is a very real concern that diseases such as Canine Distemper, Infectious Hepatitis and Canine Parvovirus may again reach epidemic proportions. The AVMA are currently conducting studies on the issues of vaccinology and immunology to ascertain the safety, efficiency and duration of immunity of vaccines. Currently our knowledge of the immune system is incomplete.

Specific research is needed to determine;

- the best protocol for vaccination and revaccination.
- the duration of vaccine immunity. The one year revaccination recommendation is based on historical precedent. There is evidence that some vaccines provide immunity beyond one year.
- the effect of revaccination of patients who already have sufficient immunity.

The AVMA recommended veterinarians create "core" and "non-core" vaccination programs and that vaccine schedules be tailored to each specific animal.

Core vaccines exhibit patient risk: benefit ratios high enough to warrant their use. They are intended for use in the majority of animals in one area. Core vaccines are those that protect from diseases that are virulent and highly infectious, thereby posing a risk of severe disease. Vaccines included in many core programs include: Canine Parvovirus, Canine Distemper and Infectious Hepatitis (adenovirus). Canine Parvovirus is an important vaccine since puppies are very likely to encounter the

virus because of its high prevalence and environmental stability. Canine Distemper and Hepatitis, caused by adenovirus, are less prevalent but serious canine diseases.

Most veterinarians still recommend annual vaccinations for all dogs. However others think that a protective immune response is likely to persist for several years following a core vaccine. Despite the absence of duration of immunity studies, there is growing support for the administration of core vaccines at three year intervals in adult dogs. Owners should discuss an individual vaccination strategy for their dog with their veterinarians.

It is quite reasonable to avoid the use of unnecessary vaccines and vaccinate no more often than necessary to provide essential protection against disease. But our ability to determine that a dog is protected is based solely upon checking antibody titers. Antibody titer tests are not absolutely predictive of the individual's ability to fight disease but indicate the strength of the immune system's memory of exposure to a pathogen.

Once a reliable clinical test is available to measure distemper, parvovirus and adenovirus antibodies, we may be better able to reduce the number of puppy vaccinations and determine specifically when an adult dog needs revaccination. Until more information on the immune system, the duration of immunity and specific antibody tests are available, it may be best to continue to vaccinate annually. It is advisable to do your own research on the vaccination issue to be aware of the benefits and risks. Keep abreast of changing knowledge in the area and discuss any concerns with your veterinarian.



How many?!

"Vaccination schedules should be tailored to the needs of each specific animal."

The Subway

A blind person walking down a street in Toronto, commanded his dog to turn right to what he thought was the subway entrance. He had miscalculated, and found himself completely disoriented in a dead end alley.

A passer-by saw his dilemma, and asked if he could help.

"Yes, thank you" said the blind man, "I was trying to get to the subway."

The man leaned over to the dog, and said slowly and distinctly into the dog's ear,

"TAKE - HIM - TO - THE - SUBWAY!"



To the Subway please!

The Good, the Bad . . . (about Dog Food)

Foods SHOULD contain . . .

- **Superior sources of protein:** Either whole fresh meats or single-source meat meal (for example, chicken meal rather than poultry meal).
- **Whole-meat source as one of the first two ingredients:** (chicken or chicken meal, for instance). Meat is the most important and natural source of protein for canines. Chicken and lamb are better than chicken meal and lamb meal. Chicken is better than poultry which indicates a variety of birds.
- **Whole, unprocessed grains, vegetables & other foods:** Unprocessed food has a greater chance of intact nutrients and enzymes.

Foods Should NOT contain . . .

- **Meat by-products:** These second class products are not handled as carefully as whole meat and are not a product of any quality. These are the things other than the meaty muscle tissue including lungs, spleen, kidneys, brain, livers, blood, bone, partially defatted low temperature fatty tissue, and stomachs and intestines.
- **Fats or proteins named generically:** For example, animal fat, poultry fat or meat meal (as opposed to the better quality beef fat, chicken fat or lamb meal. The generic term indicates that the ingredient is actually a mixed bag of ingredients.
- **Food fragments:** (brewer's rice, corn gluten, etc.) Corn is an ingredient that causes many allergy problems.



Read the label
on your brand of dog food

. . . and the Ugly (about Dog Food)

Foods Should NOT contain . . .

- **Artificial preservatives (including BHA, BHT, or ethoxyquin):** BHA (butylated hydroxyanisole) and BHT (butylated hydroxytoluene) are needed to stabilize the fat in foods but are often not listed on the label. Any food with more than 12% animal fat content must have BHA and BHT as a stabilizer unless the label lists that the fat was preserved with mixed Tocopherols and Citric Acid (Vitamins E & C). Both these preservatives have been associated with liver damage, fetal abnormalities, metabolic stress and cancer. Ethoxyquin is a chemical preservative alleged to cause cancer, liver, kidney and thyroid dysfunctions and reproductive failure.
- **Artificial colours**
- **Sweeteners:** corn syrup, sucrose, and ammoniated glycyrrhizin, added to attract dogs to unappealing food.
- **Propylene glycol:** Toxic when consumed in large amounts, added to some chewy foods to keep them moist.
- **Added salt:** Too much salt, added as a preservative, irritates the digestive system and upsets the calcium/potassium balance.

“These preservatives have been associated with liver damage, metabolic stress and cancer.”

Indoor Games

Dogs require a lot of exercise, both the mental and physical kind. Here are two suggestions for fun exercise for your dog.

Hide and Seek.

Hide somewhere in your house and then call your dog. If you hide in a wardrobe, it will be extra tricky for him to find you. When he looks in the room, doesn't see you, and turns around to check the other end of the house, call his name again. When he finds you, give him a big hug and a biscuit.

Hide the Cookie.

Even a dog with no training can play this game. Most dogs like treats, and all dogs have a powerful sense of smell. All you have to do is create the atmosphere, by showing your dog the treat and getting him a little excited about it. Hide the treat and have him search the house for it. It's fun to watch the dog puzzle out where you might have hidden the goodie. You can also play this game with his favourite toy. And you can make the game harder by pretending to hide it in several places first.



Where can he be?

The Newsletter from Fernamber Golden Retrievers

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*Golden Retrievers are
the Clever Companions*

**Visit us at
[www.
fernamber.
com](http://www.fernamber.com)**



The Guisachan mansion in 1898
and the ruins today



Dash and Dot say,

"If you can keep the back end of
your dog wagging, you've got a
much better chance of getting
the front end to learn."

Until next issue,

Cheryl and Clive,

and our Goldens, April, Teagan, Paddington & Ashley

Guisachan

The Guisachan estate in Scotland was the birthplace of the Golden Retriever. Sir Dudley Marjoribanks, a British aristocrat who became the first Lord Tweedmouth developed the breed by careful and methodical line breeding, finally breeding his much admired hunting dog.

The original Guisachan estate spanned twenty thousand acres and was located near Loch Ness, southwest of Inverness. Lord Tweedmouth purchased the estate in 1854 from the Frasers who had lived at Guisachan since the 16th Century. It is said that Lord Tweedmouth was at a dinner party at Guisachan when the host William Fraser said, "If anyone gave me £60,000 for Guisachan I would sell it tomorrow." "Done!" came a voice from the end of the table. Although William approached Lord Tweedmouth the next day and told him it had not been a serious offer, Lord Tweedmouth insisted "a gentleman's word is his bond", and the sale was completed.

It was Lord Tweedmouth who developed Guisachan to its glory. He set about building a palatial home and estate. Within a few years he had built Guisachan House, the mansion; new farms; a dairy; the town of Tomich; kennels; stables for the riding horses; a laundry; a brewery; a mill; a school; and other lodges and dwellings.

The mansion was set in magnificent parkland with exotic trees from all over the world. Red deer, grouse, squirrels and pine martens were abundant in the Caledonian

Pine Forest. The farm was well known for its purebred cattle, Highland and Aberdeen Angus, and for its Highland ponies.

Lord Tweedmouth was equally proud of his dogs. In addition to the Golden Retrievers there were Pointers, celebrated for their prowess on the grouse moor, his favourite Deerhounds, and his little Cairn Terriers.

Lord Tweedmouth lived at Guisachan during the six month parliamentary recess and during that time many famous and influential people visited the estate.

Lord Tweedmouth's son was forced to sell Guisachan in 1908. In 1935 the property consisting of 22,000 acres, was sold to a Mr Hunter who resold the deer forest to the west and a large area of grazing land to the Forestry Commission. All efforts to sell Guisachan House failed. It was said that its 15 family rooms and 16 servants rooms were too many, and its five bathrooms too few. In spite of a price tag of £3,500 for the mansion standing on 150 acres, no purchaser could be found. Meanwhile, the estate was split up and sold. Then in 1939 a Lady Islington purchased the mansion for £1,500 and began to strip it preparing for demolition.

In 1961 Euan Fraser purchased the now much smaller Guisachan consisting of the home farm and a small part of the hill above it. After 107 years this part of the estate was once again owned by the Frasers and remains so today.