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**Special points of interest:**

- T Ch Fernamber Silhouette CDX awarded her Tracking Champion title
- T Ch Fernamber Echo CD awarded her Tracking Champion title
- Ch Fernamber Apparition awarded her Australian Champion title
- T Ch Fernamber Echo CD awarded her Companion Dog title
- Fernamber Tambourine NRD CDX awarded her Companion Dog Excellent title
- T Ch Fernamber Nymph awarded Highest Scoring Tracking Dog

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# Fernamber Off Lead

## Welcome to our Spring Issue

Welcome to the 20th issue of Fernamber Off Lead! Can you believe it!

We have three new Fernamber Champions! Hooray! Congratulations to Missie, Ch Fernamber Apparition who qualified for her Australian Champion title— and to her proud owners Vickie and Darren!

Congratulations to Teagan, T Ch Fernamber Silhouette CDX and her daughter Teaka, T Ch Fernamber Echo CD who are now both Tracking Champions. Well done Pia and thank you to Teagan's clever handler, Dawn!

Daniel, T Ch Goorambat Awatere CDX owned by my sister and brother-in-law also qualified for his Tracking Champion title. Well done!

When Teaka qualified for her Tracking Champion title in August, she earned the 40th Fernamber title! These titles were awarded to dogs bred at Fernamber and dogs owned by Fernamber. Well done to everyone on this milestone!

Proving she is multi talented Golden Retriever, Teaka, T Ch Fernamber Echo CD also earned her Companion Dog title in June.

Also in June, Bella, T Ch Fernamber Nymph was awarded Highest Scoring Tracking Dog by the Golden Retriever Club of Vic.

In July, Meg, Fernamber Tambourine NRD



April TD and T Ch Teagan

CDX qualified for her Companion Dog Excellent title. And Teagan and Teaka both qualified for their Tracking Dog Excellent titles. Well done, Pia, Kim, and Norma!

So all our news this issue relates to titles earned—but that is what happens when you have very clever Golden Retrievers!



## Breed Specific Legislation

Breed Specific Legislation (BSL) refers to any legislation that discriminates against particular dogs, based solely on their breed or physical appearance. It is the canine equivalent to racism and has just as little basis in fact.

Governments around the world have touted Breed Specific Legislation as an answer to the problem of dog attacks on people. It has seen varying levels of restrictions and penalties placed on dogs and their families because of their breed or physical appearance. In some places, the Breed Specific Legislation has been harsh enough to bring about the eradication of certain breeds of dogs.

Breed Specific Legislation has been around for a long time, over 10 years in some places. It has had absolutely no success in

reducing the incidence or severity of dog attacks anywhere. It has been discredited thoroughly in every shape or form.

The reasons for the failure of Breed Specific Legislation are many. However, one of the main problems is that, it places the blame for dog attacks on dogs and not on people. Whilst there are exceptions, the majority of dog aggression to people has a root cause in human cruelty, neglect, failure to train and socialise or some other provocation. People have forgotten how to behave around dogs and, particularly in the case of young children, can do things that frighten them. The most likely response to fear and unfamiliar situations for many dogs is aggression.

Education of people, and training and socialisation of dogs are the keys to finding an effective solution to dog attacks.

## Raining Cats and Dogs

In merry old England, village houses were roofed in a material called "thatch". Thatch is a grass material such as straw.

In the harsh winter weather the peasants would bring their farm animals into their specially designed farmhouses for shelter. The family would benefit from the warmth provided by the animals being inside the house, and the animals would be protected from the harsh weather. Animal feed of hay and grain was stored in lofts under the roof of thatch.

Pests such as rats loved this warm environment and ample food supply. So dogs and cats were important for

controlling the rats in the lofts and thatch. The dogs and cats would make their beds in the warm thatch because it was usually dry and there were rats for dinner.

However, when the weather was at its worse, and the rain poured down at its heaviest, the thatch straw would eventually become wet and very slippery. So in periods of heavy rain it would not be uncommon for a farmer to cast a look out his front door to find the cats and dogs sliding out from the thatched roof.

Hence, the saying for heavy rain, "It's raining cats and dogs!"

## Mutual Grooming

Mutual grooming is greeting and bonding behaviour in dogs that helps to maintain pack order.

Dominant and submissive dogs both groom each other, but the solicitation and order of grooming is quite specific. The dominant dog can seek grooming or deliver it whenever he wants to do so; the submissive dog must wait to be asked or approached.

Owners of two or more dogs can learn a lot about their pets by watching mutual grooming sessions.



Learn more at the  
Endangered Dog Breeds Association  
website [www.edba.org.au](http://www.edba.org.au)

*The new edition of  
"The Dog Owner's  
Manual"  
by Karen Hedberg  
is available.*

[www.watermarkpress.com.au](http://www.watermarkpress.com.au)  
02 6385 1111



The pack structure is supported  
by many behaviour rituals.

## Jenna Finds her True Love

Jenna the black Labrador was trained by Australian Support Dogs in Sydney. She was partnered with Ian who lives in the Atherton Tablelands. Ian was born with Spina Bifida and Cerebral Palsy and uses a wheelchair. Except for carers helping him for a couple of hours a day, Ian takes care of himself.

Jenna and her trainer, Dianna flew to Cairns to meet Ian. Dianna reports that Jenna had a quick look around and then she noticed Ian. She went to him, placed her paws on the arm of his wheelchair, gave him a sniff, then a kiss on the cheek and then lay down at his feet. And that was it! From then on Jenna was either beside Ian or lying nearby where she could watch him. Jenna had "found her man!" Jenna opens and closes the sliding doors, kitchen cupboards and fridge door.

She picks up dishes and puts them into the kitchen sink. She fetches articles, either ones that have been dropped or requested items from shelves, benches and tables.

As well as work Jenna has play sessions with Ian and is his constant companion. Jenna's ongoing training will include fetching Ian's phone for him and unloading the clothes dryer, dragging the clothes basket to the line using an attached strap, taking the clothes from the basket and giving them to Ian to hang on the line. Ian is a calm handler and a good problem-solver and they are set to make a top team. They are very attached to each other and Ian has some of his own ways of doing things with Jenna. She responds beautifully to his recall command of "Come here my love"! It certainly looks like they have a great future together.



Dianne with Ian and Jenna  
Australian Support Dogs are trained to help people with disabilities.

## Intervening in a Dogfight—Safety First

If you witness a dogfight the best way to stop the fight is to distract the dogs. Try to divert them by yelling loudly in a harsh gruff tone, hose them down or throw a bucket of water on them. Dogs that have a high play drive may respond if you throw a ball.

Grabbing a dog's collar, even if you know the dog, can be dangerous. It just stirs them up even more. By trying to hold them back, their aggression can be directed at you. If you don't know the dogs, don't go in to try and break up the fight. Stay at a cautionary distance and try yelling at them. Once you have distracted them and they stop fighting don't try to pick up either one

straight away, the other dog may bite you. Let them calm down and take a minute to assess the situation.

Ensure the dogs avoid eye contact with each other. If they maintain eye contact and one dog develops a death stare, that dog is ready to go back for more. If you can't distract the dogs enough to stop them, wait until they stop. Rule number one is not to get in-between fighting dogs.

Avoiding personal injury should be your main aim. If you do get bitten, you will be unable to help an injured dog and you could end up with a painful infection.

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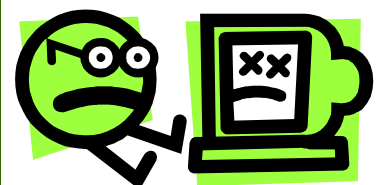
*"The best way to stop fighting dogs is to try to distract them."*

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## A Bad Computer

How can you tell if you have just bought a bad computer?

The lower corner of screen has the words "Etch-A-Sketch" on it.



Oh no!

The Newsletter from  
Fernamber Golden Retrievers

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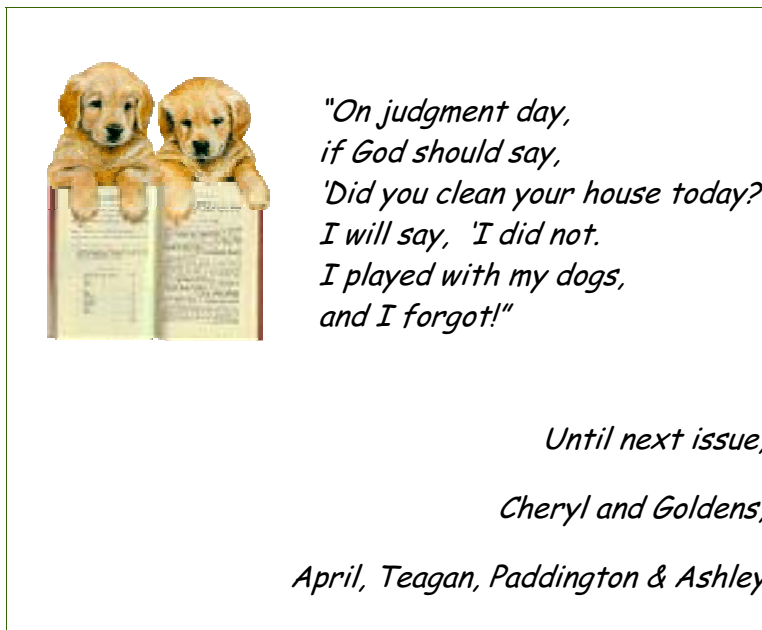
*Golden Retrievers are  
the Clever Companions*

See our previous issues at  
[www.fernamber.com/page9.html](http://www.fernamber.com/page9.html)

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



The key to successful training is  
communication.



*Until next issue,*

*Cheryl and Goldens,*

*April, Teagan, Paddington & Ashley*

## Do I Make Myself Clear?

Dogs, like humans, are group living social animals. Because of this the basic social rules are very similar for both species and this has enabled a close bond to develop between man and dog over many thousands of years.

The young puppy who comes into our home is willing and able to become part of our family, all we have to do is continue and develop the lessons he has learned in the nest. But this is where the difficulties start, as we are verbal animals and dogs are non verbal animals.

This simple fact is extraordinarily difficult for humans both to understand fully and to implement. The inability of people to recognise it is brought home to me almost everyday at my behavioural practice when owners tell their dogs to 'Sit down!' when they want their dogs to sit; a little later that will say 'Down!' when their dog jumps up at them; and then later still will say 'Down!' when they want their dog to lie down. I see very few disobedient dogs but I do see very many confused ones!

In fact many dogs learn in spite of their owners. I also hear owners say very proudly "My dog doesn't need any commands now. All I have to do is give him a signal!" without realising that it is in

fact signals that dogs find easy to interpret and sounds which are much more difficult for them to understand.

Dogs communicate mainly through body language and are absolutely brilliant at picking up on our slightest movement and anticipating what we are going to do next – so much so that many owners think their dogs can read their minds when in fact they are reading their body language.

Although this gives them a great advantage in some situations, it also has real disadvantages if their owners do not realise what signals they are giving their dogs. In fact quite often the poor dogs are given conflicting instructions by their owners who often give one signal with their body and another one with their voice! All too often the dog is then accused of being disobedient or stubborn!

The key to successful dog training is communication. If your efforts are not successful, ask yourself why, before you try another attempt. The answer is nearly always because there was a failure in communication!

Sheila Bailey  
UK Registry of Canine Behaviourists