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Special points of interest:

- T Ch Fernamber Nymph named Tracking Dog of the Year 2005 by the Tracking Club of Victoria.
- Fernamber Silhouette CDX TD earns her Tracking Dog Title.
- Fernfall Stand By Me CDX gains her Test 1 pass.
- Goorambat Awatere CDX earns his Companion Dog Excellent Title.

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Fernamber Off Lead

Welcome to our Summer Issue

This is Zulu, the Flat Coated Retriever. Zulu stayed with us for two weeks at the end of November, but has now flown up to Sydney to live with her new family.

Zulu's story is not known. Her original owners surrendered her to the RSPCA, where she was adopted by a lady who could not keep her because she did not get on with her Labrador. So Zulu went back to the RSPCA. Luckily, The Flat Coated Retriever Association was told she had been returned and I collected her on their behalf to stay with us until she found a new home.

Zulu is a delightful dog and already knew all the basic obedience commands. As all retrievers do, she loves to have a toy in her mouth—especially soft balls and teddies! Good luck Zulu—we wish you a long and happy future. Teagan, Paddington, April and Ashley are breathing a sigh of relief that things are back to normal again!

Congratulations to Kim and Bella, T Ch Fernamber Nymph who was awarded Tracking Dog of the Year for 2005 by the Tracking Club of Victoria. Bella gained all her tracking tests this season and earned three Excellent Grades. Kim also trained Tully, T Ch Fernamber Tradition who won



Zulu, the Flat Coated Retriever

this award in 2002. Well done Kim—an outstanding result!

At the last tracking trial for the season, Teagan, Fernamber Silhouette CDX and April, Fernfall Stand By Me CDX competed successfully with Dawn as their handler and Cheryl as April's tracklayer.

Teagan earned her Tracking Dog Title with a Test 2 pass graded Very Good and April passed her Test 1 with a Good grading. Hooray for the two older Golden!

On Cup Day Cheryl spent a very pleasant day at Northcote's Obedience Trial. The committee invited her to spend the day and have lunch with the Judges and Stewards. It turned out to be the first hot day of the season and although it was very hot in the rings, it was quite pleasant sitting in the shade watching the judging.

Congratulations to David and Daniel, Goorambat Awatere CDX who gained his CDX title at Ballaarat's Obedience Trial in November. On to UD next!

Christmas will be here before we know it—so to everyone, season's greetings! Make the most of your time with family and friends.

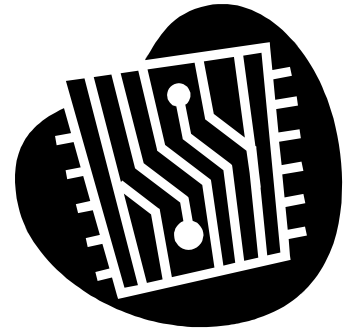
We will have puppies for Christmas—Piper's (Goorambat) puppies were born on 28 November and will be four weeks old on Christmas Day .



The Microchip

A Radio Frequency Identity Device (RFID) is a method of identification which uses a signal transmitted between an electronic device such as a "tag", "transponder" or "microchip" and a "scanner". The information can be used to identify the transponder and by reference to a stored database can identify whatever is carrying that transponder. RFID can be used to identify almost anything be it car, industrial sub-assembly, animal, fish or bird. The RFID devices commonly used in animals are passive in nature. They have no source of power of their own, but pick up the energy they require from the scanner. Devices of this type are called transponders, and small transponders are commonly called microchips. This method of energising the transponder severely limits the effective operating distance

between the scanner and the transponder. The scanner creates an energy field when it is turned on and the transponder picks up energy when it enters the field. The transponder uses the energy to power an integrated circuit. The integrated circuit (the actual microchip) creates a signal of specific characteristics including the transponder's identification data. The signal is received by the scanner which interprets it, converting it from binary data to decimal or other format, and then sends it to a display, a computer, or other device. In some cases transponder data alone is sufficient to identify whatever is carrying the transponder. However, in many other situations, and in particular the identification of domestic animals, it is necessary to refer to information stored in a database registry to effect identification.



Microchip technology can be used to identify almost anything

Cleaning Minor Cuts

Bathe the cut to remove any dirt and contamination. If you find on closer examination that the wound is very contaminated, it is best to take your pet to the vet so he can be anaesthetized if necessary to thoroughly clean the wound.

If the cut is less than four hours old, use a saline solution as this causes less damage to the tissues than other fluids and won't slow down the healing process. Make your own solution by adding one teaspoonful of salt to 600 mls of water.

If the cut is less recent when you discover it, use an antiseptic solution instead;

although this will slow healing, it will kill any bacteria present and reduce the likelihood of infection. Proprietary antiseptics such as Dettol and Savlon must be thoroughly diluted or they will cause cell damage.

When bathing the cut, don't poke at it more than absolutely necessary, as this is more likely to push dirt in, than to remove it. Ideally clean using a plastic syringe or a clean bottle to run the saline or antiseptic solution over the wound. If necessary use a swab of cotton wool, but don't scrub, change dirty swabs for clean ones frequently. Swabs must be wet so that fibres do not stick to the wound.

"Antiseptics must be diluted so they don't cause cell damage and slow healing. A saline solution is a better alternative."

Home Alone

Many dogs and even some cats suffer from intense boredom when their owners are at work during the day. This leads to destructive behaviours, excessive vocalisation, escape behaviours and even obsessive compulsive disorders.

Prevent problems like this by giving your pets a split lifestyle.

When you are home, provide your pets with a rich and full lifestyle involving affection, attention and a varied training and play routine.

However, when you are away, provide an equally rich and stimulating lifestyle through games and amusements that occur without human intervention, throughout the day.

Provide frozen bones, frozen Kong toys, rolling treat balls, sand pits with buried treasures, water troughs to play in and many other tricks you can invent to provide your pets with a rich 'home alone' lifestyle.



"I'm bored!"

Pulling on the Lead

Pulling on the lead is a behaviour that we often inadvertently teach our dogs. In our efforts to get the dog not to pull, we put considerable backward pressure on the front of the dog's neck. This activates a response from pressure sensors in the dog's skin, which react by causing a reflex pressing response from the dog in the opposite direction.

Thus putting pressure on the front of the dog's neck by pulling back on the lead causes the dog to pull forward!

It is not your job to hold the dog in position; it is the dog's responsibility to make sure the lead remains loose in all circumstances. You have to encourage him to do this initially by putting in a position where you can reward his efforts.

Have a selection of treats handy so that you can give quick rewards. Start walking quickly ignoring the dog completely. If at any stage he looks up at you or is at your side for even a second, reward him quickly and say a word like "Steady" or "Close", as you give the treat.

Repeat this and if the dog starts to pull, do something different like walk backwards away from him or suddenly change direction. By doing this you interrupt the pulling and give yourself another chance to reward your dog.

This all takes time but it will work depending on how motivated your dog is by food. You may find using a favourite toy more effective.



Reward your dog for walking on a loose lead

Alzheimer's Aid Dog

Alzheimer's Aid Dogs© is a project in Israel with Yehuda, a 62 year old with Alzheimer's as it's pioneer. In Yehuda's words "this dog has given me quality of life by releasing me from the prison walls of my own home. This is the best thing that has happened to me."

Polly, a Smooth Collie, and the world's first Alzheimer's Aid Dog, has been trained to bring her owner home safely, avoiding physical obstacles such as holes, dangerous sidewalks, parked cars and traffic. The dog's role is essential because when Yehuda gets confused or anxious as a result of the disease, he can forget all his

pedestrian skills. And on those mornings when Yehuda doesn't want to get out of bed, Polly pulls the blankets off him and brings her toys until he gets up and plays with her. Polly has learned to identify Yehuda's distress signals and his family has learned to read Polly's reaction and respond accordingly. Polly is very strict about keeping eye contact with Yehuda 24 hours a day and he is no longer afraid to leave the house. Yehuda can't imagine life without Polly. She excels in bringing him home safely. Moreover nothing can distract her from her task. Together they are one great team.

*"This dog has given me
quality of life
by releasing me
from the prison of my
own home."*

Tessa's Travels

One day our dog Tessa got out of the gate and decided to take a trip into town. A lady rang up and said that she had bought some bones from the pet shop and Tessa was having lunch with her.

Mum said she couldn't come and pick up Tessa right away because my little sister Juliet was asleep. She asked if Tessa was being a pest. The lady said that she was fine and that Tessa could stay with her.

Half an hour later, the lady rang again and said she had to leave for work, but that she would put Tessa in a taxi and send her home. She didn't want her to get run over or lost.

A short time later Tessa arrived back home in a taxi with a laughing taxi driver who refused to be paid!

Amelia Leicester, Bowral NSW



Home again ...
dreaming of bones.

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

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Officer Minton and Austin
during a Search and Rescue mission
at Shepherds Mountain



Dash and Dot ask,

*"If dog barks his head off in a
forest and no human hears him,
is he still a bad dog?"*

We wish everyone a very happy festive season

and the very best for 2006,

Cheryl and Goldens,

April, Teagan, Paddington & Ashley

Austin the Police Dog

Part of a regular police dog's job is to be ready to attack, subdue and hold a suspected criminal. Even though these dogs are superbly trained and obedient, their aggressive spirit makes them unsuitable for search and rescue work in which an innocent person, sometimes a child, needs help and comforting. That's why the Austin Police Department in Texas has a special search and rescue dog.

Austin is a three year old Golden Retriever. K-9 Austin is a special dog with a special story. Austin himself was found and rescued as a puppy from the woods east of Houston, Texas by hunters. He was turned over to the Golden Retriever Rescue Group of Houston, where Texas Hearing and Service Dogs purchased him and provided training before donating him to the Austin Police Department.

Austin is currently certified in advanced tracking, area search, disaster search, evidence search, cadaver search and air operations. He is trained to search for missing children and adults. This includes missing aircraft and crash victims, missing Alzheimer's patients, missing hunters and lost hikers and climbers. The K-9 team can also be lowered into a hazardous terrain environment by helicopter. Austin's friendly temperament makes him ideally suited to conduct demonstrations at schools, universities, hospitals and public events.

When airline travel is required for training, or when other government agencies request his assistance out of town, Austin is allowed to ride in the passenger cabin with his handler, Officer Minton.

Police dogs play a vital role in search and rescue. A dog's ultra sensitive hearing, night vision, and keen sense of smell have proven to be invaluable when locating missing persons.

A search dog's success stems from the fact that every human being has a smell—not a smell detectable by other human beings, but one discernable by animals.

How the animal detects this scent is dependent upon the training it has had in trailing, tracking, or in air-scent techniques. By following scent, search dogs are able to locate missing persons even when they are hidden from view.

Experts estimate that a single search and rescue dog with its handler can be as effective as 20 to 30 trained human searchers in locating missing persons. Because of their extraordinary abilities, dogs are often able to reduce the search time, thereby increasing the chances that the person will be found alive.

Often at the end of a search, a police search dog will be found licking the face of the missing person, welcoming him or her back home.