

THE WEEKLY WAG
NEWSLETTER
BANKSTOWN SCHOOL FOR DOGS

June 2010

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Flyball Coordinator- Craig Edwards

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Elvira Nikolaou & Trinity – Staffy X

Anita Ko & Max – Shar Pei

GRADUATIONS

Kindy – Infants

Andrew Masterton & Rusty

Well done!

SAUSAGE SIZZLE



With the cold weather upon us we thought it would be a good idea to have a soup and sausage sizzle to warm everyone up. We will be holding this on Sunday July 25th, after training. This will be free to all handlers and family so hope you will all come along. This is a good opportunity to socialise with other handlers and their dogs.

AGILITY

Just a reminder that agility is held on the 2nd & last Sunday of each month. If there are handlers who wish to train for agility on other Sunday's you are most welcome but you will have to put out and put away the equipment that you use. Don't forget though, it doesn't take much to put out a set of weavers and most dogs take longer to learn this exercise than any other, so come along and do some training on other days.

FLYBALL

Flyball is on each Sunday and starts from 9am until the end of training, so if you wish to try your dog out and see if it enjoys flyball, just talk to one of the handlers who are training and they will be only too happy to help you.

DOG BEHAVIOUR

I was reading an article on dog behaviour this week and thought it might throw a bit of light on why dogs misbehave. Or what we think of as misbehaviour.

Dogs are intelligent creatures but in most cases, they are not very complex. Like some people they like the simple things in life – food, drink, walks, warm shelter and good companionship.

Now, most dogs pull on leads, jump on furniture, chew up shoes, escape out the front door, pee in the house for two reasons

1. It feels good
2. No one has taught them what else they might do to get the things they want. In other words the dog is untrained.

Nature or years of evolution have taught your dog that if something feels good, do it. If following a scent trail leads to a rabbit, which in turn leads to a full stomach – do it again. If peeing leads to a comfortable bladder – do it again.

Unfortunately humans do not find this acceptable behaviour. So it is up to us to train our dogs to behave in a manner that is acceptable to us but still satisfies the dog's natural instincts.

Now I am not going to go into reams of instructions on how to train your dog not to do the things you don't like but I will say, "Look at the dogs behaviour from the dogs point of view". If your dog lies on the couch it's because it feels good. So provide a nice comfortable place for him/her to lie that you will be happy with and move it around so he can be close to you. A dog is a pack animal and does not like being left out in the cold. Ok, I know that a lot of you out there prefer your dog to stay outdoors and that is OK too, just make sure it has somewhere warm to go on these cold nights and in the summer provide a cool place in the shade for him.

So your dog digs holes in the garden. This is also a natural thing for dogs to do, they like the feel of the soil, there are also nice smells especially if you have put down fertilizer, and it is a good idea to bury things. Particularly bones and things that can be dug up at a later date when they are feeling a bit peckish. Again give them somewhere to dig like a sandpit, and then they will leave your flower garden alone. Washing on the line is great fun to tug, so provide lots of toys for the dog to play with. A good idea is to tie a tug toy to something and show him how he can have fun tugging that instead of the washing. Don't forget though, that to a dog the washing is the same as a tug toy, so either hang the washing high so the dog can't reach or give the dog an area where he can play away from the washing. Most dogs as they grow older manage to grow out of the really troublesome behaviour but until they do, try looking at the problem from the dogs point of view and find a happy alternative.

A LETTER FROM HARRI

G'day it's me travell'n Harri, Our next port of call was Apollo Bay. Crikey this Australia is a big place, aye? We seem to travel for hours and hours and there's still plenty of roads left to discover. The trip to Apollo bay went without a hitch and once again we had a quick look around town (it's pretty little) and then off to check out the accommodation. Mum was really worried about this joint. It was the most expensive one of the lot and looked really wonderful on the internet **and** it got a 5 paw rating (the best) in the travelling with dogs book but Mum "just had a feeling". Well her feelings were right. The place was great. In a beautiful position with beautiful views and the house was something else **BUT ... dirty !!!!** Now my Mum hates dirt. She keeps our house spotless so she wasn't too happy but we all got in and did a quick clean up ... well I supervised and before you knew it we had it all ship shape and how good was it. It was on a farm and we couldn't see any other place from our cottage and it overlooked our own little beach. It doesn't get much better than that, aye? You should have seen my bed. First off I didn't want to use it because other dogs had been there and it was a bit grotty but Mum soon sorted that out. She covered it up with my very own covers and then my very own doona and I was as happy as a pig in mud. It had the most terrific view of the southern ocean. I reckon my bed was the best bed in the house. Crikey it was

a lovely cottage. Such a shame we can't recommend it. Mum did complain to the owners but I don't think it will make any difference. They were a pretty sloppy lot. I've no idea how it got a 5 paw rating in the dog book. Anyway, no problems, we still enjoyed our stay there and sure made the most of the great position. We were soooooo lucky with the weather too. It was just perfect. We had been told that it blows like the dickens on that southern ocean but it was just perfect for us. We were also told that the flies would be unbelievable but, guess what? No flies. We had to be happy about that. We spent four days at Apollo bay. Didn't do much except go for long beach walks and lots of drives around. Mum and Dad did lots of walking without me. I had to stay in the big Mother a lot because they wanted to see the 12 Apostles (whatever they are) and they are in a National park and I'm not allowed in National parks. What's with that? I'm a lot better behaved than a lot of humans. Mum reckons so too. She was disgusted with the state of the National park. There was rubbish everywhere. What's wrong with Australian people? We have some of the most beautiful scenery in the world and what do we do? **Trash it!!** Mum reckons there was human excreta in the bushes. How bad is that? She doesn't even leave mine behind so **WHY** aren't I allowed in National parks? Unfair, I say!! Anyway she reckoned the coastal scenery was superb despite the litter and I must say I have to agree with her. I saw a fair bit of it and it was pretty good. Very different to Queensland. The little villages were nice too and again very friendly toward me. I did lots more sitting under tables at restaurants. Dad didn't do any cooking here. Reckoned the pots and pans and stove etc. were too dirty. Some excuse, aye? The highlight for Mum and Dad though was one afternoon we stopped at a little wharf where there were lots of fishing boats and we found one boat owner that was selling freshly cooked lobsters. They bought one and took it back to our cottage where we all sat on the verandah, overlooking the ocean, and ate freshly cooked lobster and drank freshly opened champagne. I didn't get to try the champagne but I did try the lobster. Don't know why they thought it was so good. I much preferred the big meaty bone they got from the butcher and it was **free**. Unlike the lobster. It cost an arm and a leg according to Dad. Not as dear as in the restaurants though. Dad reckoned he couldn't afford to buy one in a restaurant. We are off to Robe next. I'll miss our cottage at Apollo bay. It was great to be able to walk out the side door straight onto our own little beach. Oh! And at night there were Rabbits. Struth they are good fun. Poor Mum. She reckons she will have one arm longer than the other by the time we get home. You see ... I see a rabbit and I'm off. I forget everything and if I'm on a lead at the time heaven help anyone that's holding onto the other end. Anyway stay tuned for Robe. It's not famous for Robes you know! Up the Irish ... Harri!!