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Special points of interest:

- Ashley's six puppies, two girls and four boys arrived on 23 January 2008
- Thunderstorm phobias in dogs are common and can be contagious

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Fernamber Off Lead

Welcome to our Autumn Issue

Well I am so busy that I don't know what to do next! Ashley had six gorgeous puppies on 23 January who are the most superb time wasters.

We have a routine—pick up the wet papers in the puppy room, feed the puppies, feed Ashley, have a shower and get dressed, feed the puppies, feed Ashley. Then start all over!

The puppies were five weeks old during the last week of February and they are getting cuter by the minute!

I must have rocks in my head, because I have agreed to do yet another newsletter. This time for my gym class. We meet as a group three times a week and it certainly helps when you have friends encouraging you. None of us are doing anything stupendous, but each of us is working away at our own pace improving our fitness.

Another Christmas has passed us by—I hope everyone had some quiet time with friends and family and some extra goodies! Everyone should be looking ahead to the new year—I hope you accomplish some of your goals at least! But watch out—a quarter of the year has already gone!

Happy Birthday to Paddington, Tully, Charlie, Morgan and Topaz, Shamrock, Meg and Teagan who were seven years old on the 26 February. Hard to believe that it has been seven years since Paddington arrived and even harder to believe that April is twelve years old and Teagan is ten!

Some more special four legged friends have left us for Rainbow Bridge. Their families are missing them terribly. Rest In Peace, Benny, Sophie and Remy. You will certainly meet again one day— far beyond the horizon.



Ashley and her six puppies on the day they were born.



We're a bit bigger now!



What's for lunch!

It's Up to Midge!

As a 2.7-kilogram Chihuahua-terrier mix, she looks like she belongs in Paris Hilton's purse. But Midge, short for Midget, has the will, skill and nose of a 45-kilogram German Shepherd. The newest recruit for the Geauga County Sheriff Department could well be the nation's smallest drug-sniffing pooch.

Sheriff Dan McClelland began training seven-month-old Midge for drug duties when she was just three months old. Like many police departments, Ohio's Geauga County has had German Shepherds and Labrador Retrievers for years.

In fact, visitors often ask, "Is the big dog out?", referring to the 56-kilogram Brutus, says Lieutenant Tom McCaffrey, Brutus' handler. Still, Brutus' intimidating, deep-pitched bark disappears when Midge playfully wrestles with him in the grass

outside the old county jail. That is where the dogs train and Midge watches the bigger dog wriggle through cabinets, vents and other spaces in search of marijuana.

There seems to be a trend towards smaller dogs for police use. Trainer Dave Blosser compares dogs like Midge favourably to larger breeds. "Size-wise and endurance-wise, they last longer," he says.

On the other hand, dogs that are too small may not be able to get around obstacles, and there could be a credibility problem, says trainer, Bob Eden.

"A Jack Russell Terrier may make an extremely capable narcotics dog," he says, "yet some agencies would shy away from such a breed simply because the dog doesn't have the same respect from the public as a Lab or Shepherd might."



The newest drug sniffing recruit!

Go Wild and Freeze!

September Morn

This is a GREAT game for families with an energetic pup that jumps up when overexcited. This game teaches dogs to sit politely when told to, even when very wound-up. Go Wild & Freeze becomes even more fun when children are players in the game, as it teaches the kids a positive way to play with their puppy and manage his behaviour.

What to do: First teach Fido to sit for a treat by holding one just above his nose then raising it slightly. As the pup reaches upward for the treat, his rear will go to the floor in a sit. Praise "Good Sit" and give the treat.

Next, teach the kids and other players how to get the dog to sit for a treat. Now you're ready to start the game!

Call "Go Wild!" and have everyone jump around, wiggle, wave arms, and make happy sounds. After a few seconds, call "Freeze!" and have everyone stop and stand tall. When the action stops, the player closest to Fido asks him to sit and gives him a treat when he does. Then start another round. Each time wait a little longer before calling "Freeze"... after a few rounds, Fido will automatically be sitting when the players stop and stand tall.

www.hometown.aol.com/morndogs/myhomepage

“ Go Wild and Freeze is a great game for families with an energetic pup. ”

Too Much of a Good Thing

Fat dogs die younger, have more health problems and cannot romp with ease. It may be hard to resist those begging brown eyes, but you have to.

There are many dogs who take begging to Olympic levels. They sigh, moan, inch closer, rest a drooling mouth on your leg and bark to remind you to feed them

Love is not a treat. Love is doing what is best for your loved one, which sometimes means not giving them what they want.

Love your dog. Keep him slim. Raw vegetables such as carrots and green beans, make great low calorie treats



Give the man veggies!

Fear of Thunderstorms

Fear of thunderstorms is common in dogs, and tends to get worse as they age. It is partly genetic. While some aspects of this problem remain a mystery, we know a lot that can make life easier for thunderstorm-phobic dogs and their families.

Prevention and Precautions

Too many dogs are left outdoors during storms, sometimes with no shelter at all. Anyone would be scared with good reason. Keep your dog inside during storms.

If you want to take your dog outdoors during a storm, do it safely. Some dogs do better when protected by raincoats and boots. Make the trip outside a fun adventure or calm occasion rather than a stressful experience. Special rewards for toileting outside in the rain are a good idea. Make storms occasion for special times

with your dog to create positive associations. Games, treats and special activities are time well spent during storms.

Don't be tense during storms. Be upbeat with the dog, not impatient or pitying with your touch or your voice. The dog will pick up on your emotions and body language, so make them confident.

Dogs feel "rewarded" for fearful behaviour if you pet and praise when the dog is behaving fearfully. Rewarding a behaviour increases the likelihood of that behaviour occurring more often. Give rewards when the dog is behaving confidently, calmly, or happily. Work with your dog to develop ways to elicit these behaviours so that you can do so during storms and then reward. This is powerful training that will help you and your dog in all aspects of life.



Fear of thunderstorms is common in dogs

Thunderstorm Phobia Triggers

The actual reasons for thunderstorm phobia are not entirely understood. Dogs react to a variety of things associated with storms.

The loud noise is scary to some dogs, and the dog can hear it at a much greater distance than humans can. The dog has early audio warning of an approaching storm, and most storm-phobic dogs eventually start reacting long before the sounds are loud.

Electricity in the air may be a major factor in dog storm phobia. Is there something unpleasant about this to the dog's sensations? Does it perhaps become even

scariest to a dog who has been frightened by a static shock in everyday life? We have a lot more questions about the effect of electricity on dogs than we have answers.

The smell of the air changes when a storm approaches, and of course the keen nose of a dog detects this early. The air pressure changes too, and a dog's ears are more sensitive to pressure changes than most people. In some cases, it might hurt.

Anything that has become associated in the dog's experience with thunderstorms can become a trigger for the fear.

"The reasons for thunderstorm phobia are not entirely understood."

Contagious Behaviour

Thunderstorm phobia can be "contagious" communicated from one dog to another.

This makes it all the more important to handle both the fearful dog and a new dog carefully, so that you improve how the dogs feel about storms rather than letting the fear get worse, or even feeding it by how you manage the dogs.



"Oh my goodness!"

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

**Visit us at
www.fernamber.com**



Treat thunderstorms as routine
and even time for some fun!



Dash and Dot say,

*"When I am young and silly, don't
expect more of me that you would a
human child. If I am too loud or I
break something, I was only playing.
I did not do it to anger you."*

Until next issue,

Cheryl and Goldens,

April, Teagan, Paddington & Ashley 

Dealing with Thunderstorm Phobia

Different things seem to help different dogs who are affected by thunderstorm phobia. Here are some things you can try:

1. A quiet, dark, sheltered refuge. Your dog may find the preferred spot independently, leaving you to simply make sure it stays consistently available him. Chosen places dogs include basements, bathrooms (sometimes in the bathtub), closets, and crates that are kept in secluded parts of houses.

2. If your dog becomes frantic and as a result might suffer injury or do damage during a storm, you may need to develop a good means of confining the dog. Sometimes a secluded crate works, if the dog has been conditioned to rest calmly in a crate.

3. The DAP Diffuser is showing some promising results in calming fearful dogs, and doesn't seem to have negative side effects, so consider setting one up in the area used by the dog.

4. You and your veterinarian may decide to medicate your dog with an anti-anxiety drug for the entire storm season or year-round (these medications generally do not work until the dog has been on them for weeks), or a sedative during storms. Due to the unpredictability of storms, it may not be possible to administer a sedative when it's needed.

5. For some reason, there are dogs who find it comforting to get under a "security

blanket" to combat storm fears. Due to the risk of overheating a dog, don't force this method. You might give it a try, though, monitoring the dog to see if it helps and to find a covering that provides the benefit without excessive heating. Don't leave a dog alone with the covering if the dog is likely to chew and swallow pieces of it.

6. A behaviour specialist can help you work out a behaviour modification program to work on this problem. Such a program might include a tape of storm sound effects and training for your dog that you can use when the fears start. Learning more about communicating with your dog and modifying dog behaviour in positive ways is always time well spent.

Don't take thunderstorm phobia lightly, even if the problem seems minor in your dog. Handled badly by humans, it will get worse, and dogs have been known to jump through glass windows during storms. Some dogs will throw up when it storms. Many dogs have fled fenced yards.

This is a major problem that calls for intelligent handling at the first sign. Treat storms as a routine part of life, nothing to fear, and even perhaps occasion for some special times. Do these things before your dog ever shows signs of phobia, and perhaps you'll never experience a serious case.