

Send us your email
address for the next issue

Special points of interest:

- Keep your offers of help coming. If there is nothing you can do today—there will be something you can do tomorrow. The bushfire survivors will need our support way into the future.
- To everyone who has lost someone in this tragedy—our thoughts are with you. You are not alone.
- Farewell Libby and Phillip, lost at Strathewen 7 February 2009

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Fernamber Off Lead

Welcome to our Autumn Issue

SAM became the most famous koala in the world when firefighter David Tree stopped to give her a drink amid the devastation of Victoria's bushfires. Pictures of Sam travelled around the globe and featured in major world newspapers. The image provided a much-needed picture of hope in a week filled with news of despair.

Yesterday Sam was recovering in Mountain Ash Wildlife Shelter. Carer Jenny Shaw said she suffered burns on her paws and was in a lot of pain. She was put on an IV drip and is on antibiotics and pain relief. Sam should be able to be released back into the wild in about five months.

Mr Tree said he was surprised by the reaction to the photograph, which was snapped by a fellow CFA volunteer on a mobile phone. He was backburning at Mirboo North when he saw the stricken koala. "I could see she had sore feet and was in trouble, so I pulled over the fire truck. She just plonked herself down, as if to say 'I'm beat'," he said. "I offered her a drink and she drank three bottles. The most amazing part was when she grabbed my hand. I will never forget that."

Mr Tree and his brigade then received an emergency call-out to save a house, but minutes later Sam was picked up by wildlife carers. (*Herald Sun Megan McNaught*)

The devastating bushfires in Victoria have stunned everyone—even those of us who have not lost loved ones or property. So many have lost so much. But the tragedy has brought out the best in us. So much money has been raised for the survivors and so much help of all kinds has been given. People have offered to do whatever they can. It was amazing to see the Queensland flood victims donating their cash relief money to the bushfire fund. A farmer from Queensland loaded up a truck with hay, horse halters and other supplies and drove it down to Kinglake to distribute to needy livestock owners. (and he was just one of many doing similar work.)

Fun4Paws—a pet walking company offered



David Tree from Mirboo North CFA gives water to a Koala affected from the Bushfires.

to coordinate accommodation for displaced pets. They received over 10,000 email offers of foster care and the sheer numbers crashed their email. The Red Cross and Salvation Army are overwhelmed with supplies. Six dogs and four puppies, needing homes, could not get into a shelter because the shelters were overflowing—all of them found homes in a day.

There were a few blots on the copybook of this outstanding effort—the lowlife who stole two donation tins filled with money for the bushfire and some other scoundrels taking advantage. Shame on you!



Cold-Water Tail

"Cold water tail," and "Wet tail" are euphemisms for a relatively common occurrence in sporting dogs. The tail of the dog hangs down from the tail base or is held horizontal for three or four inches and then drops down. A flaccid tail episode is a painful, but relatively benign affliction that can occur after swimming, after a heavy hunting day or even after a bath with cold water. It is not always associated with swimming or water, but can happen after a heavy day of work that involves a lot of tail action. The majority of limp tail cases have been reported in sporting dogs— Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, Setters, Pointers and Flatcoats and Foxhounds. Almost all dogs that suffer through an occurrence return to normal within a few days. Affected dogs may or may not have a repeat incidence during their lifetime.

This affliction has been described by the layman as a "sprain," "fibrosis" or a "cold in the tail." The affected dog is miserable at the onset and the tail is painful. It can be disturbing—fostering conjecture on a possible fracture or spinal cord disease. A study by Janet Steiss DMV found that the limp tail syndrome is associated with damage to the tail muscles. Dogs that were examined early in the course of the disease showed elevations in serum creatine phosphokinase, a muscle enzyme. There are similarities between this condition and "delayed onset muscle soreness" in humans. Underconditioning or overtraining has been implicated in many cases of dogs showing symptoms of limp tail syndrome. Recovery time may be shortened if anti-inflammatory drugs are given as soon as the condition is observed.



Ready to go

Canine Geriatric Vestibular Disease

This disorder is characterised by a very sudden onset of signs. Head tilt, rolling of the eyes (nystagmus), hind leg weakness and falling may be mild or severe (the symptoms are similar to vertigo in humans).

Approximately 30% of all patients suffer from transient nausea, vomiting and anorexia. The average age of onset is 12 years.

The nystagmus (rolling of the eyes) resolves over a few days, depending on the direction the eyes are rolling. Up and down will have the quicker recovery, followed by

diagonally, with sideways being the longest. The weakness and head tilt gradually improve over 1 to 2 weeks. Rarely is the head tilt permanent.

The prognosis for recovery is excellent. No therapy is recommended although nursing is necessary. Because of the head tilt the dog may be unable to find his food, or to eat and drink without assistance. In severe cases help may also be needed to get the dog up to urinate and defecate. Recurrent attacks are unusual.

"The prognosis for recovery is excellent."

Quiet in Church

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?"

One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."



Quiet please

Like Human, Like Dog!

When dogs learn new tricks, they do not simply copy what they see, but interpret it, suggests a new study, which provides evidence that man's best friend possesses a human-like ability to understand the goals and intentions of others.

In the experiment, a well-trained Border Collie demonstrated to untrained dogs how to pull a lever for food using her paw. If she did this while carrying a toy ball between her teeth, the dogs in her audience would instead tug the lever with their mouths when their turn arrived. These animals appeared to be thinking that she used her paw only because her mouth held a ball, say researchers. Friederike Range at the University of Vienna and colleagues trained the collie to always pull the lever with her paw. They also taught her to do the same while carrying a toy ball

in her mouth. Forty other dogs--none of which had seen the food lever before--observed the collie pull it for a biscuit 10 times. Half of them saw the collie carry out the task with nothing in her mouth. Almost all of these observers used their paws when given a chance to tug the lever for food.

By comparison, nearly all the dogs in the audience that saw the collie demonstrate the trick while carrying a ball went on to use their mouths to pull the lever.

"We were very surprised to see this 'selective imitation' by the dogs," says Range, referring to how the dogs' actions depended on whether the Border Collie carried a ball. "They didn't just copy blindly what they saw." She believes it is the first time that this sort of selective imitation has been shown in animals besides humans.



Teaching new dogs new tricks

Mad Cows

A man and his dog had to be rescued from a bog by helicopter after being chased by a herd of cows, police have said. The drama began when Tony Faye, 45, from Paignton, Devon, took his nine-year-old collie cross, Bailey, for a walk near Exeter Canal.

At some point during their stroll, a herd of cows apparently took a dislike to the pair and began pursuing them, forcing the man and his pet into a muddy bog. "I hit the mud and the cows were still following, so I walked out even further," Mr Faye said. "It was getting deeper and deeper - I thought I was going to die," he told the BBC. He rang the police on his mobile phone and

said he had been chased into the swamp by some cows," said Baxter Provan, a police spokesman. "He said he was hanging on to a branch and was sinking in the mud."

Devon Fire and Rescue personnel, using specialist rescue equipment brought from Plymouth, 40 miles away, were taken to the scene by the helicopter. The police in the helicopter spotted man and dog at 9.26pm waist deep in mud and clinging to a tree.

The man was examined by ambulance personnel at the scene, but did not need hospital treatment. The dog did not require veterinary treatment, said the fire service.

Driving Along?

This morning on the freeway, I looked over to my left and there was a woman in a brand new Holden Calaise doing 110 kms per hour with her face up next to her rear view mirror putting on her eyeliner.

I looked away for a couple seconds and when I looked back she was halfway over in my lane, still working on that makeup.

As a man, I don't scare easily, but she scared me so much I dropped my electric shaver which knocked the meat pie out of my other hand.

In all the confusion of trying to straighten out the car using my knees against the steering wheel, my mobile phone was knocked away from my ear and fell into the coffee between my legs which splashed and burned me, ruined the darn phone, soaked my trousers and disconnected an important call.

Bloody women drivers!!



Riding along in my automobile...

"A man and his dog had to be rescued by helicopter."

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



Johnny Appleseed
The Theory and Practice of GPS
www.ja-gps.com.au/whatisgps.html



Dash and Dot say,

"It's great to be a dog ...

*No one expects you to take a
bath every day or comb your
own hair!"*

Until next issue,

Cheryl and Goldens,

April, Teagan, Paddington & Ashley 

What is GPS?

The global positioning system is a satellite-based navigation system consisting of a network of 24 orbiting satellites. The satellites are constantly moving, making two complete orbits around the Earth in just under 24 hours. The GPS satellites are referred to as NAVSTAR satellites. The first GPS satellite was launched way back in February 1978. Each satellite weighs approximately 1 tonne and is about 5 metres across with the solar panels extended. Transmitter power is only 50 watts, or less! Each satellite transmits on three frequencies. Civilian GPS uses the 'L1' frequency of 1575.42 MHz. The satellite orbits are roughly 20,000 kms above the earth's surface. You can receive satellite signals anywhere in the world, at any time. As you move closer to the poles you will still pick up the GPS satellites. They just won't be directly overhead anymore. One of the biggest benefits over previous land-based navigation systems is GPS works in all weather conditions. How did the technology evolve? Mr Marconi figured greatly in the understanding of the electro-magnetic energy we know as radio. This technology was applied during the 1920's by the establishment of radio stations, for which you needed a receiver. The same applies for GPS - you only need a rather special radio receiver. Significant advances in radio were bolstered during the Second World War (for eavesdropping and communications necessities), and were advanced by the need for communications with early satellites and rockets, and general space exploration. The technology to receive radio signals in a small hand-held, from 20,000kms away, is indeed amazing. So what information does a GPS

satellite transmit? The GPS signal contains a 'pseudo-random code', ephemeris and almanac data. The pseudo-random code identifies which satellite is transmitting - in other words, an ID code. Ephemeris data is constantly transmitted by each satellite and contains important information such as status of the satellite, current date, and time. Without this part of the message, your GPS receiver would have no idea what the current time and date are. This part of the signal is essential to determining a position. The almanac data tells the GPS receiver where each GPS satellite should be at any time throughout the day. Each satellite transmits a message which essentially says, "I'm satellite #X, my position is currently Y, and this message was sent at time Z." Of course, this is a gross oversimplification. Your GPS receiver reads the message and saves the ephemeris and almanac data for continual use. To determine your position the GPS receiver compares the time a signal was transmitted by a satellite with the time it was received by the GPS receiver. The time difference tells the GPS receiver how far away that particular satellite is. If we add distance measurements from a few more satellites, we can triangulate our position. This is exactly what a GPS receiver does. With a minimum of three satellites, your GPS receiver can determine a latitude/longitude position - what's called a 2D position fix. With four or more satellites, a GPS receiver can determine a 3D position which includes latitude, longitude, and altitude. By continuously updating your position, a GPS receiver can also accurately provide speed and direction of travel (referred to as 'ground speed').