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Special points of interest:

- Fernamber Rhapsody awarded her Companion Dog title.
- Goorambat Mikasa awarded her Companion dog title.
- Golden Retrievers will be at the Royal Melbourne Show on Friday 19 September.
- Obedience at the Royal will be judged on Wednesday 24 and Thursday 25 September.

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Fernamber Off Lead

Welcome to our Spring Issue

The big news this issue is that Cheryl was offered a part time job at the Moreland City Council and went back to work—with her walking stick!

We were very excited when another Fernamber Golden gained her Companion Dog title. Leah, Fernamber Rhapsody, lives with Ernie and Colleen in Broken Hill. Congratulations Leah and Ernie.

Congratulations also to Piper, Goorambat Mikasa, who earned her Companion Dog title in June. Piper lives with David and Kerryn Cunningham.

Another Fernamber girl doing well is Meg, Fernamber Tambourine, who recently earned her first qualifying score towards her Companion Dog. Well done, Meg and Norma.

On a sadder note, several Golden Retrievers have recently left us for Rainbow Bridge. Our condolences to Thelma and Morgan who said goodbye to Flint; to Norma, Ellie and Meg who lost their long time mate, Jed; to Beryl who sadly lost her Golden boy, Blair; and to Dorothy and Annette who are missing their girl, Dana.

In July we spent the weekend in Albury with Paddington and April. Boy, does it get



Bailey (Fernfall Sea Legend) and Fern (Pointgold Unforgettable) Ashley's (and Leah's) father and grandmother.

cold at night up there. Our poor dogs slept in the car and in the morning it had a thick covering of ice!

In August we attended a Golden Retriever picnic at Cardinia Park. Five Goorambat Golden Retrievers who turned one year old were present, together with their mother and father and three of their grandparents. Altogether there were fifteen Golden Retrievers at the picnic which was enjoyed by all—especially the birthday cake!

Golden Retrievers will be at the Royal Melbourne Show on Friday 19 September.

Fernamber Off Lead

Our email list receives a Fernamber Off Lead newsletter which looks the same as the mailed copy but comes in colour! The emailers get our newsletter faster than the posted version which has to travel by road!



All you need to view the newsletter is a copy of Adobe® Reader® on your computer. You can download the reader software free from Adobe at www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html

If you would like to receive Fernamber Off Lead by email just send an email to us at cgibson@fernamber.com and we will add you to our email list.

If you are having problems reading the email document let us know and we can send a hardcopy of our newsletter.

We would like everyone to be able to see Fernamber Off Lead. We want to show off our handiwork after all!

Teaching New Tricks

The golden rule of training is that behaviours which are rewarded will be repeated. Your dog will repeat the things you choose to reward with praise or treats.

Free Shaping is a very effective way to train natural behaviours such as sitting, lying down or barking. Watch for the behaviour you want and reward it. Timing is critical—the dog should be rewarded within one second of the behaviour.

You may prefer to 'mark' the behaviour using a clicker or a special word like "Yes!" and then give a treat. The marker sound tells your dog he got it right and gives you time to get the treat out of your pocket. (A clicker is a small plastic device that makes a distinctive "click" sound when pressed.) Once the dog understands what he is being rewarded for, he'll be happy to repeat the behaviour. Then give the behaviour a

name that will tell him when to perform it. From then on only reward the behaviour if you asked for it first.

Prompting is anything you do to get your dog to perform the behaviour. A prompt can be a squeaky toy to get your dog's attention, touching your dog's rear to induce a sit, or a using a food treat to lure or guide the dog into position. Prompting does not teach the behaviour but it results in a rewardable response. For most trick training a lure is the most useful prompt. A lure works like a magnet. Let your dog nibble the treat but do not release it until you get part of the behaviour. Luring is best for behaviours that aren't likely to occur naturally. Stop having the treat in the luring hand as soon as possible but never totally eliminate rewards. You wouldn't work for nothing - why should your dog?



Behaviour which is rewarded will be repeated.

Speak on Command

Free shaping is probably the easiest way to teach 'speak on command'. When your dog barks, use your clicker or marker word ("Yes!") and reward. Your dog will probably be surprised that you have rewarded him for barking!

The good thing about teaching your dog to bark on command is that by training an 'on' switch you'll also strengthen your control of the 'off' switch. When your dog has barked for a few moments, say your chosen 'off' cue such as "Enough" or "Quiet" in a normal tone of voice. When he responds, reward immediately.

Practise the 'on' and 'off' regularly. If your dog is not inclined to bark naturally, you'll have to find a way to excite him—try tying him up and waving his favourite toy around or ringing the doorbell. Initially reward even small vocal responses, then withhold the reward unless you get a stronger response.

Once your dog fully understands this trick be sure to reward him only when he barks in response to your signal or cue and reward him just as frequently for responding to your 'Quiet' cue.

"Free shaping is probably the easiest way to teach 'Speak on Command'."

The Benefits of Trick Training

Tricks have real and important role in the life of your dog. Tricks are a delightful way to exercise, train and play with your dog. They are as valuable as obedience exercises and a lot of fun.

They can be used as a valuable tool in behaviour modification programs by providing a fun and positive alternative to nuisance behaviours such as barking.

The mental stimulation of learning is more tiring than physical exercise and a great way to wear your dog out—even on rainy days! Friends will be impressed even by

simple tricks, making your dog a great ambassador for dogs in the community.

Most importantly of all, tricks are a fun way to communicate and play with your dog.

Try these new tricks.

- Shake Hands
- Roll Over
- Spin
- Take A Bow
- Speak On Command



Tricks are fun for your dog to learn

Hot Spots

'Hot spots' are rapidly appearing, oozing, skin infections called 'acute moist pyoderma'. A hot spot starts because something irritates the dog's skin. The body's response is to either itch or create an inflammatory response at the site. In cases of itching, the dog then rubs, licks or chews the site and adds to the problem. These sores can develop into severe problems in an hour or two.

The most common irritants are fleas and allergies. These cause itching that leads to the skin infection. But there are many other sources of irritation. Tick bites, burrs, mats, mosquitos, and summer heat all contribute to an irritation that can develop into a hot spot.

The best treatment is prevention. Keep fleas off your dog. Groom and bathe your dog to keep his coat in good condition. If

allergies are a problem, work with your vet to control the itching they cause. In some dogs, all of this won't be enough and you will occasionally see hot spots anyway. The first step in treating a hot spot is to get it dry. Bacteria like the hot moist environment of irritated skin. Using something to dry the sore makes it harder for bacteria to grow. Clipping the hair over and around a hot spot can help it to dry. There are lots of astringents and antiseptic solutions that will help dry the sore as well. If the hot spot doesn't respond very quickly to efforts to keep it dry, then you should seek help from your vet. Small areas of acute moist pyoderma can become large areas quickly. Some dogs will continue to dig and scratch until they really damage their own skin. Your vet can make your dog comfortable pretty quickly in most cases.



Hot spots can spread rapidly

National Parks

Dogs and other domestic pets are not permitted to visit National Parks and Conservation Reserves for a very important reason. National Parks exist to protect Australia's unique native wildlife. They are vitally important for the many species whose survival is in danger.

Dogs are not indigenous to Australia so our wildlife is not adapted to living with them. Smaller animals can be killed and larger ones disturbed and frightened away by dogs. Even if your dog is obedient and on lead his scent is enough to scare away native wildlife.

Many visitors to National Parks are there specifically to see native animals and birds in their natural habitat.

Feral dogs and cats cause terrible damage among native birds and animals in parks.

Dogs are allowed in most State Forests. At all times dogs must be under control and should not disturb wildlife or annoy other people.

Dogs are allowed at certain times in some reserves provided they are on leash and under control. For full details contact Parks Victoria on 13 1963 or info@parks.vic.gov.au

Our very best wishes to
 Thelma who has been
 given a clean bill of
 health after her recent
 stay in hospital and also
 to Clive who is on the
 mend after surgery.

Beware of the Dog!

Upon entering the little country store, the stranger noticed a sign saying;

DANGER! BEWARE OF THE DOG!

posted on the glass door. Inside he noticed a harmless old hound dog asleep on the floor besides the cash register.

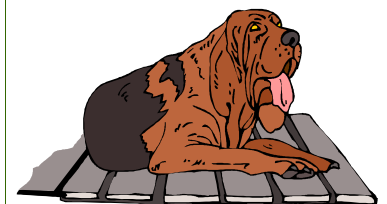
He asked the store manager, "Is THAT the dog folks are supposed to beware of?"

"Yep, that's him," he replied.

The stranger couldn't help but be amused.

"That certainly doesn't look like a dangerous dog to me. Why in the world would you post that sign?"

"Because," the owner replied, "before I posted that sign, people kept tripping over him."



Beware of the Dog!

The Newsletter from
Fernamber Golden Retrievers


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the Clever Companions*

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www.
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com**



Dash and Dot ask,
"If a dog barks his head off in
the forest and no human hears
him, is he still a bad dog?..."

Until next issue,
Cheryl and Clive,
and our Goldens, April, Teagan, Paddington & Ashley

A Monster in my Closet

There's a monster in my closet.
He lives behind the door.
It's quiet and it's dark in there.
He doesn't even snore!

But my mama takes him out sometimes.
That's what really makes me shake!
She plugs his tail into the wall
and he roars like an earthquake.

He sucks down at the carpet
It's a frightful sight to see.
He goes at it so hungrily,
he might even suck up me!

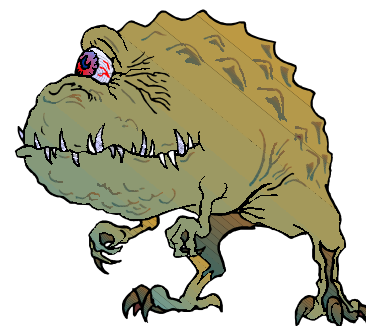
That's when I run away and hide
but I still can hear him moan.
When a monster's running through your house
There's no place to be alone.

I'm shaking and I'm quaking
and I think that it's the end.
Then suddenly, a miracle!
All's quiet once again.

Now he's back inside the closet
and from beneath the bed I'll creep
and check behind the closet door
to make sure he's fast asleep.

I spy his name across his chest.
It's written there to see.
My monster's name is Hoover.
Please Hoover, don't eat me!

Barbara Emaus



The Monster in my Closet