



# DAWG Tales



Best Dawg Rescue • [www.dawg-rescue.org](http://www.dawg-rescue.org)

Spring 2008

Dear Friends,

Hope your new year was off to a good start! January had barely begun when we received our first emergency call. An Animal Control officer told us he had just taken in a miniature poodle near death and hoped we could help. The outrage of her story—she was found on the steps of an apartment complex on a bitterly cold day—propelled us into action.

We met the Animal Control officer at our veterinarian's office and couldn't believe what we saw: sticks for legs, ribs and bones clearly visible through her skin, and a limp tangle of overgrown reddish fur, with clumps of excrement all over her. What sort of monster would do this to any living creature?

The entire veterinary staff swung into action, clipping her fur so they could examine her, providing fluids and emergency food and, later, blood transfusions for severe anemia. It was touch-and-go for a while, but after several weeks of intense care, Amy rebounded. Our veterinarian took her home over the first weekend, and then a veteran volunteer agreed to foster her. With continued care and check-ups, Amy regained strength and ran with the other dogs in her foster home, although she

was also happy to rest in her foster mom's lap. It didn't take long for us to find a loving adoptive home for Amy where she will never be in peril again.

As for this issue of DAWG Tales, we have dedicated most of the space to the topic of over-vaccination. Vaccinosis has been covered by mainstream magazines and hundreds of web articles for many years, but we believe most dog owners aren't aware that over-vaccinating is unnecessary and can lead to serious harm and disease. Most pet owners want to trust their veterinarians to do what's best, but we suggest that you evaluate your veterinarian and call the shots (excuse the pun) by being well-informed about all aspects of the care of your dog.

We had such an outpouring of honorary and memorial donations throughout the holidays

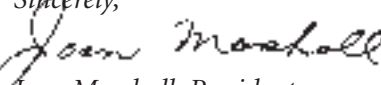


**Amy, from near death to adopted (see page 7).**

that we are including the listing in this issue, as well as a special note from a DAWG friend who sent a picture and story about her dogs, now together again on "Rainbow Bridge."

We also will "catch you up" with adoption pictures from the latter half of 2007 and beginning of 2008. That's the fun part of DAWG Tales!

We hope you enjoy our newsletters, our best effort to keep in touch with you and provide you with information you can use to give your dog a long and happy life. We welcome feedback and hope that our newer readers check our website, [www.dawg-rescue.org](http://www.dawg-rescue.org), for back issues of DAWG Tales.

Sincerely,  
  
Joan Marshall, President

## TIME TO SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL

We want to “shake” up some preconceived notions, “rattle” some cages, and hope you will “roll” with the following.

Seriously, the following article is on a critical topic that has not caught the attention of many well-meaning animal guardians: the practice of yearly vaccines and the resulting “vaccinosis” (over-vaccination).

Does your veterinarian apprise you of your **option** to vaccinate (except for rabies, which is mandated by law)? Some veterinarians scoff at the **American Animal Hospital Association’s specific recommendations to reduce the use of vaccinations**. Others say they don’t follow the recommendations “yet” (despite the fact that the recommendations have been available since 2003). For that matter, does your veterinarian explain the range of possible vaccine reactions and that reactions can occur weeks or even months later?

Most veterinarians also do not advise clients of the merits of **blood titers**, which are especially critical if clients have elderly or compromised dogs, or dogs who may have had a **vaccine reaction** in the past.

What’s a blood titer? According to Lorie Long, writer for *Whole Dog Journal*, “...an annual titer test, to check a dog’s level of immune defenses, should replace the habit of vaccinating dogs annually whether or not they need it.” [For an “easy read” explanation, please refer to [http://www.canine-epilepsy-guardian-angels.com/titer\\_test.htm](http://www.canine-epilepsy-guardian-angels.com/titer_test.htm) and [www.whole-dog-journal.com](http://www.whole-dog-journal.com) for related articles.)

Never heard of a blood titer test or been offered one as an option to vaccines? Never been asked to report a vaccine reaction or know what to look for? If so, something is wrong.

Do you know that four or five diseases are simultaneously injected into your dog when you agree to a Distemper/combination vaccine? In other words, the typical “Distemper vaccine” is really a combination shot including other vaccinations (hence the initials DHPP, or Distemper, Hepatitis, Parainfluenza, and Parvovirus). Does your dog get a Lyme Disease vaccine? Do you know that your dog can still get Lyme Disease

**A mutt is a dog. He is the stuff of dogginess, a creature allied to species, not breed, and untrammled by human hand or preference. A mutt knows that you have chosen him for himself, and not because he is of the type you set out to get.**

—Jean Hanft Korelitz

anyway? If this information is new to you, why?

More and more pet owners are refusing the constant assault of vaccines that have—until now—been routinely given each year. Yes, it is an assault if you are injecting a bit of a disease into a body. Are the risks worth it?

That’s not to say vaccines aren’t valuable. Of course they are. The issue is **frequency/overuse of and adverse reactions to vaccines**. Some veterinarians, who already embrace the topic and are cautious about vaccines, link over-vaccinating to the erosion of a dog’s immune system leading to disease.

You need to make informed decisions about anything you put into your dog’s body. If a veterinarian says he or she wants proof that vaccines can cause harm, ask him/her to prove that they don’t! Drug companies educate veterinarians on the effectiveness of their vaccines, and drug companies invest in minimum research to get vaccines approved. That doesn’t mean they are safe! Proheart®, a six month heartworm injection available a few years ago, was later linked to serious reactions and death. Its use was quietly discontinued.

It’s so much easier for a veterinarian to tell you that your dog needs yearly vaccines to prevent a specific disease and limit discussion (if there is even a discussion at all). If a vaccine needs to be re-administered each year, why aren’t children vaccinated yearly?

**Will Falconer, DVM** takes the discussion to a higher level with this: “What is not measured by the titer test is any part of the cell-mediated immunity, especially the memory cells. . . . *A previously vaccinated adult dog who has a gradually falling titer over the years very likely still has immunity from the memory cells*, so don’t forget that a titer test won’t show this immunity. If you equate a low titer in a vaccinated adult with a lack of immunity, you could make a very costly mistake in your animal’s health care, by vaccinating again.” <http://www.alt4animals.com/vaccinations.htm>.

We all want to trust physicians and veterinarians, but how do you go about evaluating them? Here’s a helpful basic checklist of questions to ask your veterinarian, with handy prompts/answers from us.

*(continued next page)*

## Veterinarian questionnaire:

### Do you give annual vaccinations as a requirement or offer them on an optional basis?

Most veterinarians send yearly postcards reminding clients that their dog's vaccinations are due. What the postcard SHOULD say is that *an annual check-up is due*, not necessarily vaccinations. For example, College Park Animal Hospital's reminder cards state: "When you call for your appointment, please ask us to check your pet's vaccine status. New research shows adult pets may not need vaccinations every year for some diseases. Rabies vaccinations must be given on or before the due date." Kudos!

### What are the risks of vaccination?

A good veterinarian will bring up the risks and benefits of vaccinations in a fair and objective fashion. If you haven't been apprised of the risks and benefits, why not?

### Are you familiar with the American Animal Hospital Association's (AAHA's) vaccination recommendations?

You need to rely on a veterinarian who is up-to-date on findings and recommendations within the veterinarian field. Otherwise, you are not going to be adequately informed and provide appropriate care for your dog, nor can you rely on your veterinarian doing what's best for your dog.

### Do you follow the AAHA recommendations?

AAHA's recommendations and "core," "non-core," and "not recommended" vaccinations are fully explained on: <http://www.aahanet.org/PublicDocuments/VaccineGuidelines06Revised.pdf>

Please download and take to your next appointment.

### If you do NOT follow the AAHA recommendations, why not?

There is no middle ground here. Don't you expect your veterinarian to follow current recommendations rather than ignore current data?

### Do you insist on giving vaccinations at the same time?

Many veterinarians say they give all shots at once as a "convenience" to their clients. However, you should be given the option to space out vaccinations so they are not all given at the same time. Injecting several diseases simultaneously is a lot of "bombardment" on a dog's body. In addition, if this were

Are you given an option to receive an *individual* vaccination that normally is in a combination shot (such as DHLPP) rather than the entire combination shot?

Not many veterinarians do this, but single vaccines are available and should be an option, especially if blood titer results demonstrate that only one vaccine might be appropriate.

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## You need to make **informed decisions** about anything you put into your **dog's body**.

done, how would you know to which vaccine your dog may have a reaction?

### What reactions should I look for after vaccination and how long may vaccination reactions occur?

Anything from listlessness to fever and convulsions can result from vaccinations. Rabies vaccinations have been known to cause temporary aggression! Do not dismiss any change in your dog's behavior or health and be sure to report any reaction to your veterinarian. (Another reason to space out vaccines is so you know which vaccine may have caused the reaction.)

### Can you give single vaccines, such as Distemper, without it being combined with other vaccinations, such as Parvo?

### Do you offer the use of blood titers?

Blood titers for most vaccines offer minimum proof of inoculation sufficient to fight disease. No vet should dismiss blood titers.

### Do you vaccinate older or compromised dogs who have already been vaccinated?

To do so is a needless insult to a delicate immune system of an elder or frail dog. Some vets have been known to say dogs need vaccines more as they grow older. They cannot substantiate this claim but say a dog is more prone to disease. Yes, that's true, so why assault a dog's immune system with more of a disease he is already vaccinated against?

(continued next page)

## Don't take our word for it—read on!

**Dr. Charles E. Loops, DVM**—“The first thing that must change with routine vaccinations is the myth that vaccines are not harmful. *Veterinarians and animal guardians have to come to realize that they are not protecting animals from disease by annual vaccinations, but in fact, are destroying the health and immune systems of these same animals they love and care for.* . . . Vaccinations represent a major assault on the body's immune system. Vaccine-induced chronic diseases range from life-threatening conditions such as auto-immune crises to conditions destroying the quality of life of an animal as in chronic skin allergies.”

**Dr. Dee Blanco, DVM**—“You take healthy animals and often very quickly *after you vaccinate*, you can see simple things like *itching of the skin* or *excessive licking of the paws*, sometimes even with no eruptions, and *licking of the air*. We see a lot of *epilepsy/seizure*, often after a rabies vaccination. Or dogs or cats can become aggressive for several days. Frequently, you'll see *urinary tract infections* in cats, often within *three months* after their [annual] vaccination. If you step back, open your mind and heart, you'll start to see patterns of illness post-vaccination.”

**Dr. Pat Bradley, DVM**—“In a general and frightening context, I see the overall health and longevity of animals deteriorating. The bodies of most animals have a tremendous capacity to detoxify poisons, but they do have a limit. I think we often exceed that limit and overwhelm the body's immune system function with toxins from vaccines. . . . I also see behavior problems such as fearfulness or aggression. Often guardians will report that these begin shortly after vaccination and are exacerbated with every vaccine.”

## What does “the other side” say?

**Robert Snyder, a Public Health Advisor at the Centers for Disease Control**, has stated that there is “evidence that the more you stimulate the immune system, the better it works.” Yet veterinarian **Christina Chambeau** believes that by injecting a vaccine into an animal we are effectively by-passing the body's normal lines of defenses and presenting to the animal foreign material in an unnatural manner.

Perhaps **Dr. La Rosh at Fort Dodge Laboratories** is on the right track for the middle ground: “Wouldn't it be nice if veterinarians had a simple test that . . . would assess serum antibody titers of all the common diseases vaccinated for and give the owner a readout of levels of

protection against the diseases. Then the veterinarian could specifically customize a vaccination schedule for that patient based upon chances of exposure to the disease, chances of a reaction to the vaccination, the dog's health status and age, and the owner's comfort zone. No doubt someday that will happen.” (Source: [www.thepetcenter.com](http://www.thepetcenter.com))

Until that day, don't be forced to agree to inject your dog with numerous vaccines! And don't be put off by a veterinarian's “tsk, tsk” to your questions. Weigh the risks and benefits of each vaccine as one of many factors in an overall health plan. Yes, the operative word is “health.” What's more important . . . repetitive vaccines when a dog is likely to

be sufficiently inoculated, or a thorough yearly exam (preferably more than every 12 months), with blood work to determine overall health?

Above all, if you have an older or compromised dog, or one that has exhibited a reaction to any vaccine, please resist revaccinating, and be sure to visit your veterinarian twice a year to ensure you're on top of the inevitable “silent” health changes in your dog!



It's not too early to donate a special (new, collectible) item or gift certificate to **DAWG Day Afternoon's Silent Auction**, to be held in October, 2008. Contact us at [dawg@dawg-rescue.org](mailto:dawg@dawg-rescue.org) for more information.

**From Bark Magazine:**  
72% of our readers sing to their dogs!



## Mollie and Madison: The M&Ms (a tribute by Joan Mora)

Our miniature schnauzers were born of the same litter on December 8, 1991, a year after we were married. When we first took them home in early January, my husband held one in each hand, their scruffy faces mirror images of each other, and I snapped a picture. As puppies, they scrambled around in a little cardboard box until they found their way through the hallways of my dog-friendly office. We hung a Dog's First Christmas ornament from our tree the next year, my hand on my belly, wondering if I'd ever love this person inside me as much as I loved those puppies. By then, Madison had taken to lying in my lap each night, sprawled on his back, emitting tractor-beam love rays from his soulful eyes. Mollie, aloof and thin-skinned, slunk nearby in a fluffy red sweater, impersonating a cat.

Once our son dropped the first Cheerio from his high-chair tray table, the M&Ms, as they were referred to by a dear friend (and founder of Best Dawg Rescue, Inc.!), accepted him as part of our family. After that, they'd pose lion-style, guarding their brother's play-



pen, or curl into puppy puzzle pieces in front of the fire, inseparable also in their dreams.

For years they went to work with me, barking whenever someone traipsed past my door. The humans learned to watch where they stepped, because Mollie and Madison claimed the halls as their personal racetrack, running laps until they collapsed under my desk. In December, as truckloads of popcorn tins, dark-chocolate almond bark, sugar cookies, oranges and poinsettias arrived at the office, we carefully perched the dangerous treats out of snout range. A week after their birthdays, I'd scold myself for forgetting to bake them a non-chocolate cake. I'd make it up to them by stuffing their Christmas stockings with yummy treats and rope toys.

A back-to-back storm

blanketed fifteen inches of ice-topped snow on one Maryland December. The M&M's matching-sweater-ed bodies pranced on top of our backyard skating rink, only occasionally falling through and needing rescue. In December 2004, we drove twenty-one hours from Maryland to Texas to hand deliver our Christmas gifts to my husband's family. For thirteen-year-old dogs, the M&Ms traveled well, especially after we slipped a tranquilizer to Madison, a known car-sick victim. That trip, after realizing Dallas winters were preferable to Maryland ones, we planned our move on the long return drive.

Though we happily gave away our winter coats, I packed the dog's sweaters, thinking there might be a week or two where the wind would sneak through their thin fur. Even

the M&Ms sensed a change in the air, frolicking excitedly between our moving boxes. Unfortunately, Madison didn't live to see his first December in our Texas house. But I placed his ashes on the mantle next to his statue likeness.

This year, Mollie didn't live to her sixteenth December and her ashes and statue are cuddling next to Madison's, as is the sweet puppy picture I captured so long ago. We like to think they are sprinting around a race-track in heaven somewhere, and resting near the fire, nibbling on mounds of cookies and treats.

**From *Bark Magazine*:**  
Because of the dog's joyfulness, our own is increased. It is no small gift. —Mary Oliver

**HONORARY AND MEMORIAL DONATIONS** given during the 2007 holiday season. Saving and helping our dogs is a wonderful way to give tribute to a special friend or family member (including pets). *We thank you!*

**Honorary Donations**

Emmy, from David Elfin  
Our rescues, Baby and Stuart Little,  
by Jim and Toni Honeywell  
Liesel, by Bonnie and Jonathan Klem  
Snoopy, by Dianne Thompson  
Joan Marshall, by Jennie and Lou Pilato  
Jack, by Suzanne Mattingly  
Marcia Brier, by Rick Paden  
Dr. Rhya Marohn and Mary Boyd for their  
sensational care of the Goldman family cat,  
by Joanne Goldman  
Rufus, by Neal Schmitt  
Max, the first and best DAWG,  
by Judy Hopkins and Karen Sturtz  
Radar, by Anna Bryan  
Frosti, by Gloria Pound  
Terri and Bindi, by Judith Segal  
BJ, by Michele and Doug Krebs  
Joan Marshall, who let us adopt Mandy,  
by Bruce and Toni Immerman  
Sassy and Ninja, by Anne Stepan

Maggie, who was the best kind of person in a dog suit,  
for older dogs who have less chance of adoption,  
by Charlee Hardy  
Mollie, now with Madison, by Joan Mora  
(see Mollie's and Madison's story on page 5)  
Scout and Denver, by Richard and Piper Williams  
Cayla, by M. Jacks  
Chuck, by Rank and Dorie Forte  
Prancer, by Ilene Pollack  
Lucky, by Matthew Buckley and Jacquelyn Witte  
Rippi, by Michael and Dorothy Hertz  
Missy, by Gloria Pound  
Sam, by Steven Dratter  
Mitten, the mighty rabbit, by Ryan and Beth Hess  
Suzi and Hannibal, by Mike and Helen Keplinger  
Jack, by Michael Hall and Patricia Krenzke  
My grandparents, by Luanne Seipp  
Gracie, by Marilla Guptil  
Deb LaFontaine, by Jessica Weissman  
Birch, Fennel, Marigold and Pumpkin,  
by Diane Calabrese  
Kristie, Gizmo and Melissa, by Nancy Brantner  
Our angels Nune and Dakotah,  
by Eddie and Christine Suiter  
Tara Belle and Butter, by April O'Neill  
Billy Riederer, by Iris Rainone  
Acadia, the love of my life, by Danielle Verrill  
Debbie Breuer, by Liz Dietz

**Memorial Donations**

Snickers, my little girl whom I miss so much,  
by Karen Eskew  
Sandy, by Keith and Joyce Kroneberger  
Tasia, by Michael Hall and Patricia Krenzke

**Please support us TODAY, so we can help dogs when they need us!**

\$25    \$50    Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Annual pledge of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable (select one) monthly or quarterly

Credit donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (go to [www.networkforgood.org](http://www.networkforgood.org) and select Best Dawg Rescue/DAWG).

Gift of a security (please contact us at [dawg@dawg-rescue.org](mailto:dawg@dawg-rescue.org) to provide additional information)

Other: Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

In (Circle one) memory or honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Notification to: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Interested in helping in other ways? Designate Best Dawg Rescue to receive donations in your name at [iGive.com](http://iGive.com), [giveline.com](http://giveline.com), and [goodsearch.com](http://goodsearch.com). If interested in volunteering, please contact us at [dawg@dawg-rescue.org](mailto:dawg@dawg-rescue.org).**

# Adoption Gallery

Pictures of happy adopters with their new DAWG dogs!



Amy



Dalton



Katie Bug



Moxie



Murphy



Madison





**Sammie**



**Nutmeg**



**Sara Lee (right)**



**Olivia**



**Shelby**





**Carly**



**Schnitzel**



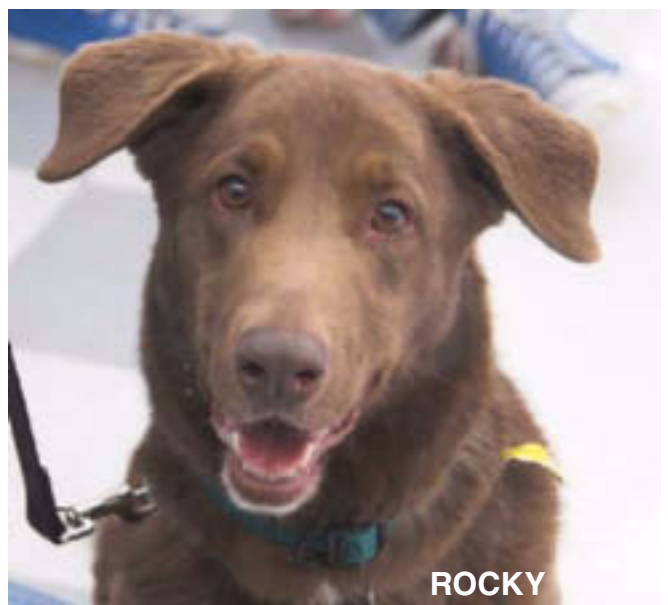
**Lady (left)**



**Streudel (right)**



**Travis (left)**



**ROCKY**

**Why hasn't anyone picked me?**

# Dawg Photo Contest



Winning photos will be chosen for the **2009 DAWG Calendar**, to be revealed/available at DAWG Day Afternoon.

Get creative and e-mail your dog's pictures to **dawg.photos@gmail.com** by June 1, 2008.

(hi-resolution files only please and picture must include a Dawg adopted dog)

**Our grateful thanks to . . .** Beltsville PETCO and Laurel PetSmart for sponsoring our weekly adoption shows; and College Park Animal Hospital, Preston Country Club for Pets and Countryside Kennels, for extraordinary care and services at reduced rates that help DAWG dogs get well and live well until adopted. We also thank the Outer Office in Fulton, MD for printing our newsletter.

## Do you have a great story about your adopted dog?

Send it and a recent photo to Dawg Rescue, Inc., PO Box 34213, Bethesda, MD 20827



**Best Dawg Rescue, Inc.**  
PO Box 34213  
Bethesda, MD 20827

## **DAWG TALES—** Published by Best Dawg Rescue, Inc. (DAWG)

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### **2008 Board of Directors**

*President:* Joan Marshall  
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**Check out our adoptable dogs and DAWG Tales in color at [www.dawg-rescue.org](http://www.dawg-rescue.org)**

**Donations throughout the year help us take in dogs with critical medical needs!**