



ANIMAL CRACKERS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ~ FEBRUARY 2022

From KCRA 3

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, Calif. —

A dog separated from his owner last summer as a wildfire forced evacuations in the Sierra was found after a backcountry skier spotted the animal in deep snow last month, prompting an intense rescue operation.

Russ, a pit bull-terrier mix, ran away from his owner's vehicle in August as the Caldor Fire roared toward South Lake Tahoe, according to a Facebook post by [Tahoe PAWS and TLC 4 Furry Friends](#), the nonprofit organization that assisted with the dog's rescue in late December.

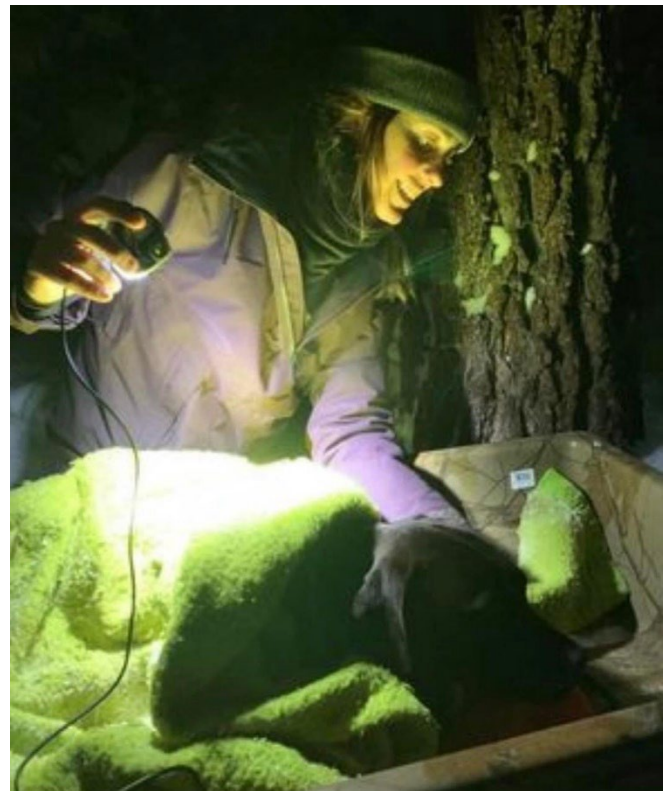
The owner was forced to evacuate because of the blaze, after searching for the dog and reporting him missing to animal services officers, the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) reported Saturday. "It was assumed that Russ had been lost for good," TLC 4 Furry Friends officials said on Facebook.

But on Dec. 16, a man skiing west of Tahoe saw the dog and posted photos of the animal online.



Leona Allen, an experienced animal tracker who volunteers with TLC 4 Furry Friends, and her volunteer partner, Elsa Gaule, strapped on snowshoes and trekked up the steep terrain following what they hoped were dog tracks.

This content is imported from Facebook. You may be able to find the same content in another format, or you may be able to find more information, at their web site. Allen told the Chronicle she spotted the dog in the snow and feared he was dead.



"So I walked up, and all of a sudden he opened his eyes and lifted his head, and I screamed. It was just involuntary," said Allen, 61. Allen and Gaule earned the dog's trust and brought him down the mountain wrapped in a blanket on a sled.



Russ was in good health, Allen said, and within days was reunited with his family, who live in Riverside County, according to the Facebook post. TLC 4 Furry Friends officials said that, “When contacted, the owner was ecstatic to find out that his dog was alive!”



If you are interested in volunteering with TLC 4 Furry Friends (animal search and rescue) or Tahoe PAWS – a Community Animal Response Team (disaster/emergency response), please contact Wendy Jones at 775-721-3647 (DOGS) or tahoepawscart@gmail.com. Donations may be made at

Tahoe PAWS
 PO Box 8292
 South Lake Tahoe, CA 96158.
 Venmo or PayPal @tahoepaws
 Zelle-775-721-3647



Dog Stats

(By Ed and Dolores Ransom)

Month	Volunteer Hours	Adoptions
November	366.0	9
December	338.5	8
January	312.0	16
Total	1,016.5	33.0



Health tips

by Doc Hopper

Beware of Playdough!!!

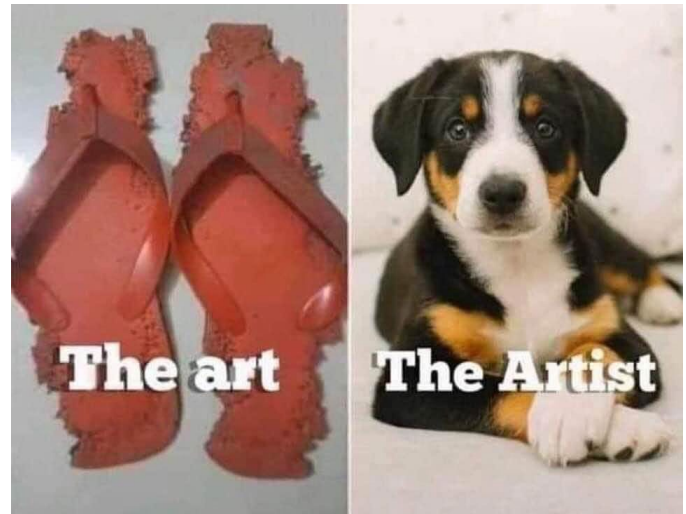
If you do homemade playdough for your kids and you have a dog, be very careful to keep the playdough AND completed ornaments, etc. away from your dog - it can be deadly.

Homemade playdough consists of flour, water and salt. Dogs may enjoy the salty taste, however it can cause salt toxicity, which can be fatal. When a large amount of salt is ingested, the sodium diffuses throughout the body. When the sodium reaches the brain and central nervous system, water builds up and tissues swell. As the brain swells, pressure builds up, resulting in severe neurological disorders. As the pressure builds, it causes seizures, coma and death.

There is no antidote for salt toxicity. In some mild cases, where less salt is ingested, the dog may survive, however, if the dog eats enough, it is fatal.

From one person: "Most dogs probably won't eat it but mine did and we had to put her down.

Recipes for playdough contain a lot of salt, usually 1/2 cup, and I learned firsthand that this can be lethal. In our ignorance, we thought nothing of her eating the playdough, but her sodium levels were soon so high that she went into seizures and by the time we got her to the vet, our best option was to euthanize her, as she was suffering brain damage due to swelling of her brain."



And one last "be aware" from social media but again, great info AND a happy ending!

So, here's the story.....

We went to Amador yesterday morning. Got our spot set, got the dog on his lead, and gave him a bone. We were baiting our hooks (hadn't even casted once) and one line hit the ground. Almost instantly, he grabbed the blob of cheese. Kelly screamed, I jumped on him, and I worked to pry his jaws open. He started swallowing too fast.....

We didn't know what to do, Kelly held the line, because we didn't know if it was good or bad to let it go. I was completely on top of the dog, holding his mouth open, and see were both trying to stay calm. We got the vet on the phone and they informed to not tug or pull, to cut the line, and to bring him right in. The guys fishing next to us (Doug was one guy's name) offers to watch our stuff. So, we split, and raced to the vet. The dog seemed fine.....

Once we got there, they took care of us and him. Got his X-Ray, communicated the possibilities, and patched him up quickly, and in a very caring manner.

They told us that it's actually best to let your dog swallow a hook if you see it happening. Once it's IN the stomach, food and mucus will keep it from snagging on the way out. They said that inducing vomiting AFTER it's swallowed is the easiest and most effective cure. [But only under the supervision of a vet – don't try this at home!] In our case, our action caused the hook to snag in his throat. LUCKILY, it snagged high enough she could grab it with forceps.

Otherwise, we'd have made a trip to Sacramento to an ER vet with and endoscope. We LOVED the care and treatment we got from Acorn Hills. We want them to become our regular vet.....

Went back, cleaned up our stuff, and Amador was gracious enough to refund our fees. HIGH stress, HIGH adrenaline, and BIG worries yesterday, but it all turned out OK, \$900 later....

My emotional support dog after one day with me



Bits and Pieces

FOCAS would like to welcome the new Animal Services Manager, Mike Vasquez. Mike has 12 years of experience in Animal Services, which includes 2 years in LA, 2 years at UC Davis in nutrition, and 8 years at the Sacramento SPCA.

We look forward to developing a good working relationship with Mike.



5 Ways to Support Your Dog's Teeth

By <https://www.dogsnaturallymagazine.com/>

(This is a long article but I thought it important to share as many don't think about dental care for their dogs and it's very informative!)

Dental disease is the most common medical problem in dogs. The high incidence of dental disease is important, but more significant is that your dog's teeth affect his whole body. And your vet may not be making the connection between your dog's teeth and other diseases. So, when your dog has dental disease, it can lead to much more serious health issues.

A proactive approach in choosing the right diet and supplements can make a big difference in keeping your dog's teeth (and his whole body) healthy.

[Your Dog's Microbiome Begins In his Mouth](#)

We know that the microbiome plays a critical role in maintaining a healthy immune system and regulating inflammation. And it supports digestion and gut health. But did you know that the microbiome in the oral cavity has a huge influence on your dog's teeth? And thus, ultimately on the health of the whole body too!

This explains why probiotics ... and prebiotics ... are now getting a lot of focus in medical research regarding oral health.

Let's look at how to improve and keep your dog's teeth healthy, starting with diet.

The Best Diet for Your Dog's Teeth

Your dog's dental health starts with his diet. It should contain species-appropriate ingredients along with probiotics and [prebiotics](#) which help to strengthen your dog's oral health. And here's why.

Ideally, your dog's diet will be a balanced fresh food diet with a low carbohydrate/starch content. Dogs are not designed to eat high levels of carbohydrates like starchy root vegetables, tapioca (starch), peas, chickpeas, lentils, etc. Yet most pet foods in the marketplace have high percentages of these types of ingredients. In fact, "grain-free" varieties of dry kibble foods often include even higher levels of starch and carbohydrates than some of the comparison options.

Because starches metabolically break down into sugar, these types of diets can fuel more inflammation and imbalance in the body. As such, one of the major systems that are affected by imbalance is the body's microbiome where 80% of your dog's immune system is found.

Adding probiotics and prebiotics (1) to your dog's diet is another way of supporting dental health. Your dog's teeth and mouth are the entrance to the gastrointestinal tract. This is essentially **the beginning of your dog's microbiome and where you'll establish** a healthy balance of beneficial bacteria.

Meat products, fish, and eggs are part of a healthy diet and contain amino acids which will break down bacteria and glycolic acid which is a form of sugar ... and that reduces dental disease even further. And here's what research says about using probiotics for oral health.

Probiotic Research and Oral Health

In efforts to find alternatives to antibiotics and avoid growing issues of antibiotic resistance, researchers are looking at the use of probiotics to achieve and maintain improved oral health. The world health organization defines probiotics as "live microorganisms, which when administered in

adequate amounts, confer benefits to the health of the host".

Over the past decade, many studies have focused on examining the microbiome of the mouth, or oral cavity. According to this 2017 review (4) by the University of Jordan, numerous positive findings have been published regarding the preventative role of probiotics in the oral cavity.

One document shows that probiotics offer improvement in conventional periodontal treatment but that improvement ends when probiotic use stops. In this review (5), researchers RP Allaker et al examined studies that used probiotics in addition to clinical periodontal treatment. They saw a noticeable improvement in the status of those patients compared to the patients with clinical treatment alone. This supports the use of probiotics instead of antibiotics and could address the dilemma of [antibiotic resistance](#).

In 2017, researchers co-authored a review (6) of 15 articles and studies using probiotics for preventive and therapeutic use in oral health and disease. Here are some of the conclusions supporting the use of probiotics in oral health management.

- A 3-month study in 2016 by the team of A Morales et al showed that when *L. rhamnosus* (a widely used probiotic) was used as a first step in periodontal therapy, there was the same improvement as surgical treatment alone. Follow-up was at 12 months.
- A study in 2015, by JK Lee et al, found that probiotics slowed the development of gingivitis when used in a 14-day protocol.
- In 2001, dairy products containing probiotics were used in a 7-month trial on 450 children by researchers L Nase et al. They found this could be an alternative to improve oral health in children.

Probiotics go hand in hand with diet and nutrition as preventive care to maintain your dog's dental

health. Let's look at how to put these changes into action.

Why Kibble Is Bad for Your Dog's Teeth

Diet and nutrition choices are paramount to overall health, and especially dental health. Although it's a common myth that [kibble](#) is good for teeth, it's just a myth. In fact, most kibble is too small to do any good. There's just not enough chewing going on.

This myth comes from the belief that tartar is the best indicator of oral disease. However, it's now known that **gingivitis is a more accurate indicator of the level of oral infection. Feeding kibble doesn't promote cleaner teeth at the gum line ... where it really matters.**

And there have been some interesting studies done that show that pathogenic bacteria thrive in a carbohydrate-rich environment like in the mouth. And kibble has a high carbohydrate content. In this 2019 study ([7](#)), researchers found that eating any type of carbohydrate resulted in reduced bone height in the jaws of mice. But protein had no effect.

They concluded that dietary carbohydrate had a negative effect on periodontal disease and the quantity of carbohydrate eaten had more impact than the type of carbohydrate (i.e., eating direct sugar vs other types of carbohydrate made no difference).

But it's not just that kibble doesn't clean the teeth. Kibble is also heavily processed using high heat and pressure. This creates AGEs (Advanced Glycation End Products) and HCAs (Heterocyclic Amines) which are pro-inflammatory and even carcinogenic. As a result, dry kibble and other heavily processed foods actually fuel inflammation and disease in the body. This includes the mouth and oral tissues. So, it should come as no surprise that kibble's not on the oral health care list. But here's what is on the list:

1. Raw Meaty Bones
2. Probiotics and Prebiotics

3. Antioxidants
4. Fatty Acids
5. Brushing Teeth

Now let's look at them in detail.

5 Ways to Support Your Dog's Teeth

1. Raw Meaty Bones

It's believed that a raw food diet contains **natural enzymes that help resist bacterial plaque**. Many veterinarians and pet owners have seen healthier teeth and gums in dogs eating raw food diets and raw meaty bones.

Raw meaty bones provide an active chewing and gum cleaning advantage. In contrast, cooked bones are more brittle and can splinter when chewed. That's why cooked bones come with the risk of damage to the tissues in the intestinal tract. Another concern about dogs chewing bones is the risk of damaged or [broken teeth](#). Veterinary dentists report that large-shaped raw bones, such as marrow bones or knucklebones, rarely cause broken teeth.

This is in contrast to small, thin long bones and similar shaped objects which are common culprits in damaging teeth. This has to do with dog jaw anatomy and how your dog chews his bones.

Larger, bulky objects aren't chewed with the same angle and force on the large teeth at the back of the cheek and mouth compared to smaller and longer objects. In fact, common items known to break a dog's teeth are nylon bones, cooked bones, antlers, hooves, and bully sticks.

2. Probiotics and Prebiotics

Probiotics provide oral health benefits when you give them orally or apply them directly onto your dog's gums ... especially when using multiple strains of bacteria. This direct action allows these beneficial bacteria to form colonies to create a healthier biofilm in the mouth. (Biofilm is a community of microorganisms like bacteria that form a slimy or sticky layer on surfaces – like

plaque on teeth. Biofilm protects the microorganisms and makes them harder to eliminate.)

Research shows oral probiotics applied topically **reduce inflammation and bad bacteria** that lead to periodontal disease. And they improve bone density. Giving a daily oral dose of probiotics and rubbing some on the gums is a simple way to provide oral care for your dog and improve his dental health. Use a gel or liquid or a powdered [probiotic](#) (you can also empty out capsules) and rub it on the gums.

And if your dog has doggy breath, you'll notice fresher breath when using probiotics.

PREBIOTICS

Soluble fibers are [prebiotics](#) and already have benefits for your dog. These types of fiber are the main food source that feeds and sustains the probiotics living in his gut and colon. Prebiotics help maintain your dog's healthy gut flora ... which supports his immune system. Prebiotics are fermented by beneficial bacteria (or probiotics) to form short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs). SCFAs are essential in fighting pathogenic bacteria.

In the mouth, soluble fiber (prebiotics) has additional functions. These fibers block bacterial sugar-to-acid and sugar-to-plaque production. In other words, this stops sugar from producing plaque by inhibiting microbial enzymes (amylase) that break starches down into glucose.

MAKE A PRE- AND PROBIOTIC SLURRY

A great way to keep some of these pre- and probiotics in your dog's mouth is to create a tasty slurry for your dog. Use a probiotic supplement with some soluble fiber like a medicinal mushroom supplement or some finely blended dandelion greens or garlic, and stir this into some bone broth. Let your dog slurp it up to coat his teeth with these immune-boosting nutrients that will also fight plaque. This friendly bacteria will produce short-chain fatty acids [\(2\)](#) [\(3\)](#) that help fight periodontal

disease as well as inflammation in your dog's mouth.

3. Antioxidants

Recent studies have linked **chronic oxidative stress with oral bacteria that leads to periodontal disease** [\(8\)](#)[\(9\)](#). Oxidative stress is free-radical damage to the body's cells and tissues. In fact, a proper balance between free radicals and [antioxidants](#) is crucial for healthy periodontal tissues. This means antioxidants play an important role in your dog's dental health. And there's a wide range of antioxidant-rich foods that can be added to your dog's diet including berries and green leafy vegetables.

Here are a few supplements that can increase antioxidant capacity.

- Glutathione [\(9\)](#), superoxide dismutase (SOD) and catalase are powerful antioxidant enzymes. They're highly protective against free radicals and in reducing oxidative stress.
- Low levels of the antioxidant called Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) has been linked to periodontal disease in humans. Beneficial effects on periodontal health have been reported after supplementation of CoQ10 in the diet, and also with topical application onto the gums.
 - CoQ10 can be a helpful supplement for dogs too, and this nutrient is also present in fatty fish and organ meats. Many holistic veterinarians recommend 1mg of CoQ10 per pound of body weight daily (which is much higher than the typical recommended dose of 15 to 30 mg per dog per day).
- Folic acid is another nutrient studied for its effects on oral health, such as preserving gum tissue and reducing the incidence of gingivitis and periodontitis.
-

4. Fatty Acids

[Fatty acid supplements](#) can also help **manage periodontal inflammation**. [Omega-3 fatty](#)

[acids](#) benefit many aspects of your dog's health ... and they support oral health and periodontal tissues, as well as joint, heart, kidney, and brain health.

6. Active Plaque Removal (AKA Brushing Your Dog's Teeth)

Nutritional support is great, but it is also very beneficial to do active oral hygiene for oral health maintenance and preventative measures. The best approach to plaque removal is with **regular tooth brushing** at home. Daily brushing may seem like a daunting task, but regular dental care at home provides an enormous health benefit for your dog. This can help to maintain a healthy mouth by keeping teeth clean, reducing plaque buildup, maintaining fresh breath, and helping to prevent gum disease. This is especially true for small breed dogs, who are even more prone to significant levels of dental disease.

When you're doing these daily brushings, you'll be able to note any loose teeth, tartar buildup, or bad breath that need to be addressed by a veterinary dentist.

The product used on the toothbrush is actually not as important as the action of wiping away the plaque biofilm.

That said, MCT oil applied onto the gums or used on a toothbrush can work very well. MCT oil's medium-chain fatty acids (MCTs) offer antimicrobial properties. It's also been shown to help draw out toxins when used on the gums. In summary, paying attention to the health of your dog's teeth and mouth is a vital component in overall health and wellness for your dog. Regular oral hygiene or brushing is helpful, but you can also make a tremendous impact by feeding a raw diet and giving some key nutrients and supplements that benefit oral health.

Your efforts to keep your dog's teeth and gums healthy will ultimately improve his quality of life, vitality, and resilience to disease.

Amazon Wish List

We have a number of items on our Amazon wish list if you are so inclined to get that special valentine's gift for the animals at the shelter!

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1A9Z9XB4FN6VY?ref=wl_share

The dogs, in particular, are requesting some Kongs. They say please and thank you in advance

How to Figure Out Your Dog's Mood Tell-tail signs that your dog is feeling groovy

By [Julia Lane](#), November 2008, Updated October 2021 ~ From The Bark



The next time your dog greets you when you come home, closely watch his tail. What a dog's tail does speaks volumes, whether it's rigid or [swishing circularly](#), or if the [dog's tail is moving slowly](#) or quickly. Tail wags are far more complicated than you might think. Now, add one more indicator to the list: the direction of the tail's wag. Scientists have discovered that a happy dog will wag harder

to the right, and an anxious dog will wag harder to the left.

In humans, it's well documented that the brain is divided into two cerebral hemispheres—left and right—which serve different functions and control opposite sides of the body. Most animals also demonstrate a difference between “left brain” and “right brain” functions. It is believed that the left brain in animals specializes in “approach and energy enrichment,” such as finding food. The right brain specializes in “withdrawal and energy expenditure,” such as fleeing in response to fear. Because the dog's tail is located along the body's midline, researchers questioned whether or not the tail displayed emotional asymmetry.

Thirty mixed-breed dogs, family pets, served as the researchers' subjects. Each dog was put in a cage specially fitted with cameras to capture the precise angle of the dog's tail movement. The dog was then shown four separate stimuli—his owner; a stranger; a friendly cat; and an unfamiliar, intimidating dog—for one minute each.

Upon sight of their owners, all thirty dogs wagged their tails more strongly to the right side. After a 90-second rest period, the dogs viewed a stranger. The dogs' tails still favored the right side, but the angle was more moderate in comparison to seeing their owner. The cat elicited a bias to the right side, but it was even more subtle than when they saw the stranger. The large, unknown dog caused all of the dogs to wag their tails to more to the left.

The authors concluded that when the dog felt positive, or curious (as in the case of the cat), the tail wagged right. If the dog felt negative or apprehensive, the tail wagged left. Since the left brain controls the right side of the body, the right muscles of the tail expressed those good feelings. The left muscles of the tail signaled caution or concern, which is controlled by the right brain.

It's always a good idea to observe your dog's body language, whether you're relaxing at the dog park

or waiting to see the vet. Now, thanks to your dog's tail, you have another way to tell how he really feels.

Moke Hill Nuts Generous Support!!!

I saw this on Facebook and was so surprised – how cool is this? They are such a supportive business, not to mention an awesome place for treats and gifts. If you haven't been in, please stop by and treat yourself. (Especially when they have morning buns from the Blue Door Bakery in Jackson – bet you can't eat just one!)



February is FOCAS (Friends of Calaveras Animal Services) month at Moke Hill Nuts and Candies/Moke-A-Java Coffee House. During the month of February, 15% of all in store purchases will be donated to FOCAS. Stop on by. We open every morning at 7:30 on Main Street in Mokelumne Hill.



Do you like cats? Have a little extra time?

The Animal Shelter in San Andreas needs cat care volunteers!

Cat volunteers —

- Clean cages and communal room
- Socialize and play with the kitties
- Help with housekeeping duties

No experience...no problem. Training provided!

For more information, contact cat volunteer Cynthia at cpino@caltel.com

Get a head-start on volunteering with these downloadable forms available on focasweb.com.

[Calaveras County Volunteer Application](#)
[Animal Services Supplemental Questionnaire](#)

Return *both* completed forms to the Animal Services office.

Shelter and Office Business Hours are Tuesday – Saturday ~ 10 am - 1 pm & 2 – 3:30 pm ~ Closed for lunch from 1 – 2 pm

Dog Request Please!

The dogs at the shelter wanted me to let you know they are requesting some kongs please! We have them on our Amazon wish list if you are so inclined to give them a special Valentine's gift. There are actually any number of items on our wish list to choose from also.

The animals say thank you so much!

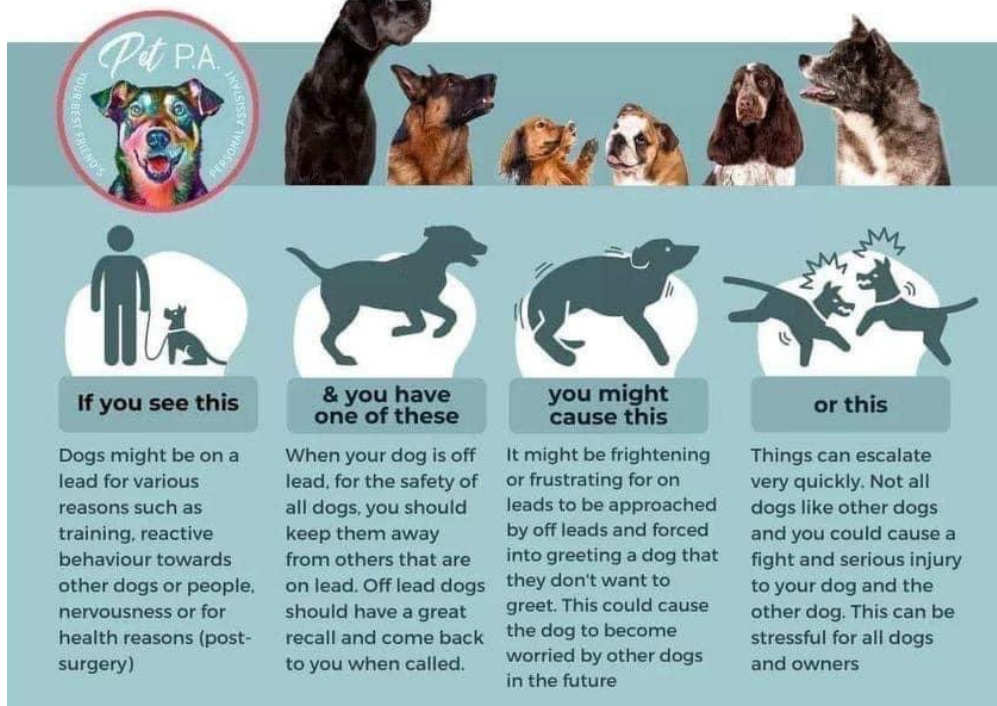
https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1A9Z9XB4FN6VY?ref=wl_share

(They would have asked themselves but they don't have opposable thumbs!)







Do not allow unleashed dogs to approach on lead dogs

Be a responsible dog owner and respect other dog walkers



The infographic features a circular logo for 'Pet P.A.' with the text 'YOUR BEST FRIENDS' and 'THEir WORLD'. Below the logo are photos of several dogs: a black dog, a brown dog, a golden retriever, a white dog, a brown dog, and a black and white dog. The infographic is divided into four columns, each with an icon and a text box.

 If you see this	 & you have one of these	 you might cause this	 or this
Dogs might be on a lead for various reasons such as training, reactive behaviour towards other dogs or people, nervousness or for health reasons (post-surgery)	When your dog is off lead, for the safety of all dogs, you should keep them away from others that are on lead. Off lead dogs should have a great recall and come back to you when called.	It might be frightening or frustrating for on leads to be approached by off leads and forced into greeting a dog that they don't want to greet. This could cause the dog to become worried by other dogs in the future	Things can escalate very quickly. Not all dogs like other dogs and you could cause a fight and serious injury to your dog and the other dog. This can be stressful for all dogs and owners

Some dog owners just don't get it. I saw the following snippet of a story, and while I don't recommend doing this, I love that the dog owner found a way to get the message across without being confrontational!

The other day I was on the local public park (not a dog park, but dogs are allowed) walking Menta. We were on a high movement area, so I had her on a leash. Another dog, off leash, sees us and starts approaching. Menta wasn't interested and started moving away, but the dog got to us before we could leave. So, she politely greeted him back, they sniffed for a few seconds, all perfectly good and fine. Dog was young and wants to play, so he offers a couple of very polite play bows, but Menta declines and moves away. Dog gets the message and moves on. Quite good, right? Here comes the juicy part:

As I'm leaving owner comes to me with a speech more or less like this: - Hey, if your dog is autistic and doesn't even play with other dogs, go somewhere else! Don't come to the park and ruin the other dogs' days!!!!

I heard this, a wave of fury started taking over, but suddenly I think I had a lightbulb moment and switched gears completely. With the biggest, friendliest smile, I opened my arms as wide as I could and go: - Ohhhhh! Come here! I want to give you a BIG hug! *panic in her eyes as she backs up, speechless* - Hey, don't run, I'm so friendly, come on, I just want to give you a hug! I'm friendly, I just want to hug!!! *still speechless and backing away with terror now* - Wait? You don't want my friendly hug? -....no?... - neither does my dog. Have a nice day. As I walked away, I saw her just standing there, speechless, and she was leashing her dog! 😊 I think I'll try this approach more often 🐾

Mark your calendar!

FREE

RABIES VACCINE & MICROCHIP DRIVE-THRU CLINIC FOR DOGS AND CATS

>>> Open to Calaveras County Residents Only <<<

Saturday, March 12, 2022

9:00 AM to Noon

with attending veterinarian Cathy Gatlin, DVM



**Calaveras County Government Center
891 Mountain Ranch Road, San Andreas**

>> All dogs must be on leash >> All cats must be in carriers



Brought to you by Friends of Calaveras Animal Services
A 501c3 non-profit supported by community donations - focasweb.com

Questions? (209) 754-6509
Calaveras County Animal Services

