



# The Splash!

The Official Newsletter of The Association of Canine Water Therapy

Dedicated to and Inspired by the Dogs in our Lives

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Summer 2007

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## The Pet Support Suit Story

*By Eric and Victoria Swisher  
Animal Suspension Technology*

We didn't wake up one day thinking we would build harnesses for disabled dogs. We were just trying to help some friends solve a problem. It really all began with one dog.

In 2006, our friends Joanna and Steve were volunteering at the local Alternative Humane Society, where they met Bernard, then a healthy pup.

Not long after they brought him home he began having problems with his balance. His condition quickly worsened, and he became unable to walk on his own. Before long, he couldn't even stand without assistance. His muscles were weak and under-developed from lack of use, and Bernard was being given steroids in an effort to help put some meat on his bones. His increasing size and ever-diminishing coordination were presenting a growing problem for his owners. There was no hope of a cure, and several vets suggested that Bernard be put down.



*Bernard*

Not yet willing to give up on their little dog, Joanna and Steve began to try the various harnesses and slings available while they looked for an alternative to euthanasia. None provided the lift or control they wanted, and Bernard would slither out of some, while others were all straps and no padding.

Convinced that her dog was going to die within a few weeks, Joanna called us to ask if we could make some sort of sling that would let them move Bernard around the house and yard during his final days. I suppose she asked us because she knew Victoria owned a sewing machine and wasn't afraid to use it. It certainly wasn't our years of experience working with dogs (zero) or our engineering background (none). Of course, we were glad to try to help.

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# The Splash !

## President's Message

In our world – when our beloved parents and loved ones get older or slip into the special needs category – we often shop for a suitable assisted living situation where all their needs are cared for and we can show up at 4pm everyday with ice cream and visit...



Not so with our beloved canine friends. As our dogs age, they sometimes need more support and assistance and we find ourselves searching for how to accommodate. In this issue we have articles on support harnesses, mobility aides and incontinence ideas. We will try to bring you new information on this subject with each issue as our clients need us to be informed in this area. Please share your stories and handy tips as we explore together the wonderful world of special needs.

Most of my clients share with me that often these times of special needs care are the most cherished of times. For me, it has always been an honor to unconditionally give to the canines in my life.

We all look forward to your thoughts and stories, they are an inspiration to others. Please email them to [newsletter@caninewatertherapy.com](mailto:newsletter@caninewatertherapy.com) and we'll publish them on the website for all to enjoy.

*Cindy*



*Dedicated to and Inspired by the Dogs in our Lives!*

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**The Association of  
Canine Water Therapy**  
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Sequim, WA 98382  
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### Mission Statement:

The Association of Canine Water Therapy is dedicated to advancing the safe practices of canine water therapy through education, establishing industry standards and building a network of support.

### Vision Statement:

To be an Association that inspires us all to come together as a profession, to build standards for our work and to bring opportunities to further our skills.

*Photo by Nancy Levine ~ [www.browneyesgallery](http://www.browneyesgallery)*



# The Splash!

## The Pet Support Suit Story cont.

(Continued from page 1)

When we first met Bernard, he was laying on a rug in Joanna and Steve's front room. Like any puppy, he was excited to see new faces, and he began wiggling his little legs and barking. Suddenly, he lurched to his feet, only to immediately topple over again. He lay there, barking and wiggling on the rug, as we introduced ourselves to him and he ate a few snacks. He was a happy, friendly little dog; he just couldn't walk across the room for every treat in the pet food aisle.

This would be a challenge. Our mission: to create a sling that would allow Joanna and/or Steve to move Bernard, and not allow him to slip out. And, if possible, for it to wrap around him while he lay on the floor, since he couldn't stand up to help with putting it on. Also, since Bernard spent most of his time crawling around, it would have to be durable, yet comfortable. We focused on creating a harness that could meet all of these requirements, and we hurried, dreading the possibility that we might not finish in time.

We had some ideas: Velcro® and quick-release buckles to secure it firmly to the dog's torso, shoulder straps and a "bib" to keep him from slithering forward, padding and wide straps to spread the support under the dog. Also, we didn't want Joanna and Steve to have to feed Bernard's legs or head through loops of strap; we wanted the straps to clip on around the dog.

We finished a model of the first harness and went over to try it on Bernard. We wrapped it around him, clipped on the handles, gave him a

little lift, and.... Nosedive! Bernard tipped forward, his head hovering just above the floor. Our design clearly needed some refinement.

We made an alteration to the shoulder straps and returned a couple of days later to subject Bernard to a second fitting. Wrap. Clip. Lift.... Eureka!



Bernard was up and level. He wiggled, but didn't slip out. He lunged, but remained on his feet and under control. I gave him a test lift and held him

suspended for a few seconds – he felt completely balanced. In no time at all he was actually doing a reasonable imitation of walking, with Steve and Joanna helping, one on each side. Victoria and I high-fived each other as we looked on. It felt good to help our friends help their pet.

That might have been that, except for a couple of things. One was that every time we saw Joanna and Steve they would thank us repeatedly and profusely, telling us what a difference the "Suit" (as they called it) made in their lives, and how much it helped Bernard every day. The other was Maggie (below), a German shepherd that belonged to another friend, Susan. During weekly walks with Susan and her dogs over the past couple of years, Victoria had been watching Maggie grow progressively older and weaker and less able to see. At this point she was completely blind and needed help getting into and out of Susan's small truck. At over

eighty pounds it was difficult for Susan help her, and because she couldn't see, Maggie was hesitant, which made things even more difficult. Victoria told me she wanted to build a suit for Maggie.

This posed another challenge. While Bernard was essentially a cylinder with feet, having a belly about the same circumference as his chest,



Maggie

Maggie's belly circumference was several inches smaller than her chest. A large version of Bernard's suit would be loose on Maggie's belly. How would we make a suit that fit as well at the back as at the front?

While solving this "Body Taper" issue for Maggie, we realized that it should be possible to fit most dogs, most *animals* really, with adaptations of the same basic formula that we derived to create the tapered model for Maggie.

That is when we first started measuring dogs. I'm sure people thought we were nuts, asking if we could measure their dogs, then whipping out measuring tapes and notepads and descending on their pets. If they had more than one dog, even better. We would

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# The Splash!

## The Pet Support Suit Story cont.

(Continued from page 3)

move from dog to dog, performing our peculiar data-gathering ritual and muttering to each other about girth, body tapers and bib lengths. We must have looked like a pair of lunatics, but eventually we used that data to devise a system of sizes and variations that would cover most body types, and have since fitted many kinds of dogs, from Shih Tzu to St. Bernard.



All this time, Joanna and Steve had been using the suit to move Bernard. Instead of deteriorating further, he was actually growing stronger, with the help of daily "walks" in his suit. Weeks passed, then months, with Bernard growing stronger and healthier. Believing that he would be with them at least a while longer, Steve built a cart that attached to the support points of Bernard's suit and held him suspended in an upright position while he walked. In this "Bernard-Mobile" the suit acts as the transmission, literally harnessing the power of the dog and allowing him to move himself.

Meanwhile, Maggie's suit was working just as we had hoped. Not only did it help Susan to get Maggie in and out of her truck, but Maggie seemed to sense the support and became less hesitant and more willing to make the

leap. It also made guiding her easier as they walked the uneven trail around Lake Padden.

Having seen what a difference the suit was making for Bernard and Maggie, we began to wonder about other dogs in need. After consulting our vet to make sure we couldn't damage animals with our harness, we began to search for parts suppliers, put together a website, generate promotional copy, and do all of the other things necessary to start getting the word out. All of this has been even more challenging than creating the original harness or adapting it to fit other dogs, but it has been very rewarding, knowing that we are helping dogs in other states and countries.

We've been surprised by the variety of reasons our clients have purchased our harnesses. We anticipated that owners of weak or disabled dogs would be our main customers, but underestimated the interest from owners of active dogs. One woman in Texas bought a yellow suit to put on her dog when they go sailing. Another in Leeds bought a suit to help her control a 100 lb St. Bernard puppy. One fellow emailed us to ask about lowering his dog over small cliffs while out "bouldering" with his friends. We have also been asked about flotation suits and saddlebags.

Of course, most of our clients are sub-active, but many are actually using the suit as part of a rehabilitative effort. Our very first client told us the suit (he called it a vest) was helping his dog "re-learn to walk". And not too long ago we sold a suit to someone who wanted to use it and a winch system to move his dog in and out of a hydrotherapy pool he had just

installed. (*see right*)

Hydrotherapy... for dogs? That sounded interesting. We began to check out various websites. Before long, we discovered the Association of Canine Water Therapy. The more we read, the more we began to think that our suit could prove useful for these dogs, both in and out of the pool. We are excited by the possibility that it might provide some benefit for them, as it has for Bernard.



Bernard will be two years old in September! He still can't stand on his own, but he's off steroids, fully grown, healthy(ish) and remarkably strong. Though he wears his suit almost all day, every day, he has no bald patches or chafing and hasn't suffered any suit-related injuries. Steve has built a series of increasingly refined carts for him, and added a large ramp to the front steps of their home, so Bernard can be guided in and out more easily. The dog that was once expected to live only a few more weeks now has Joanna and Steve planning for the long-term.

A couple of months ago they got the idea to celebrate Bernard's second birthday by taking him along on the Whatcom Humane Society's annual Dog Days of Summer walk around Lake Padden, which will happen this year on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. They decided to get an early start on training, to

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# The Splash!

## The Pet Support Suit Story cont.

(Continued from page 4)

slowly increase Bernard's stamina enough for him to make it around the lake on the day of the event. Incredibly, Bernard made it all the way around on his first try- 2.6 unpaved miles! We are currently working with Steve to make his carts available to other dogs that need a cool ride with a "custom suspension system".

We continue to be inspired by Bernard's tenacity and vigor, and by Joanna and Steve's unflinching dedication to their dear pet. We're also amazed by all that has happened in our lives as a result of helping Bernard. It's surprising where you can end up when you follow a dog that can't walk.

### Animal Suspension Technology

#### The Pet Support Suit

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### A Note From Cindy Horsfall On the AST Pet Support Suit

"I have had the benefit of seeing and working with this pet suit product and I must say that the quality of this support system for dogs is wonderful. I love how it comes up under the chest and the seams criss-cross under the belly in order to displace the weight over as long of a distance as possible. Highly comfortable for the dogs to wear, easy for the person to use and Eric and Victoria are wonderful people to work with. I highly recommend this Pet Support Suit."

## New Member Discounts



**ACWT Members will receive a 10% discount  
on their purchase of a Pet Support Suit.**

**Please visit the ACWT Member Area  
of the website for your discount code.**



**Alison White of The Total Dog Canine Swim Center  
is offering ACWT Members  
a 20% discount on their purchase of the**

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[www.k9kozy.com](http://www.k9kozy.com)



# The Splash!

## April 2007 Meeting Highlights

### ACWT Quarterly Meeting held on April 30, 2007 at Heavenly Spa in Fall City, WA

Members in Attendance: Teri Sahm, Sandy Fisher, Doris Kopp, Carol Swindaman, Linda Voelker, Cindy Hickman, Joyce Bietham, Tina Ellenbogen, Cindy Hill, Cindy Horsfall, Vonna Goetting, Beth Meyer and Cassie Sawyer

Guest Speaker: Dr. E.B. Okrasinsky, DVM

The social hour and potluck dinner started at 5:00 pm. Thanks once again to Teri Sahm of Heavenly Spa for allowing us to use her facility to hold this event. At 6:30, our Guest Speaker, Dr. E.B. Okrasinski, DVM was introduced by Carol Swindaman. Many thanks to Cassie Sawyer for the following write-up on Dr. E.B. Okrasinski's presentation!

Our April 2007 ACWT meeting was most fortunate to be attended by Dr. E.B. Okrasinski, DVM, Diplomat ACVS. He graciously agreed talk to our gathering of members and friends



at the lovely Heavenly Spa in Fall City, WA. Dr. EB is recognized as an expert orthopedic surgeon, who is respected and trusted by clients and colleagues. His practice, Veterinary Surgical Services, travels to animal hospitals throughout the Puget Sound performing procedures and mentoring surgeons.

Dr. EB began his discussion of canine orthopedic surgery with the fundamentals of how wounds heal. He felt that the basic physiology of how the body responds to an incision (a controlled wound) or a traumatic injury would be particularly relevant to water therapists and canine caregivers who often work with dogs in some phase of the healing cycle. He provided a helpful handout that defines the physiological events and their typical timeline.



Figure 4-4. Changes in wound strength during the phases of wound repair. Note that the time axis is not to scale. (From Holgood G, Burba D: Wound management and bandaging. In McCracken DSM [ed]: Clinical Textbook for Veterinary Technicians, 5th ed. WB Saunders, Philadelphia, 1998, p 177.)

He started with *clot formation*; wherein the body quickly controls internal hemorrhaging. Without this step, there could be no others.

*Inflammation and debridement* are the immediate chemical and cellular events set in motion after wounding which are critical in creating a healthy wound environment. We tend to think of inflammation as just an unfortunate consequence, but it is vital to clot formation and bringing the bodies repair resources into the wound.

Cytokines are protein and peptide chemical messengers that signal cells to begin the repair of a wound.

Leucocytes (white blood cells) and lymphocytes migrate into the wound stimulating the bodies' immunologic response. During the bodies clean up or debridement process, phagocytes (eating cells) remove necrotic tissue and foreign debris. This process may also be assisted, mechanically, by the surgeon in order to facilitate healing in an unhealthy wound.

The **repair or proliferation phase** begins within several days while the body is still cleaning up the wound. *Vascular ingrowth* is the budding of new capillaries to carry oxygen and stem cells into the wound. In *fibroplasia*, stem cells become fibroblasts, which secrete ground substance and later collagen. Cellular proliferation leads the way to the laying down of delicate granulation tissue, a loose connective tissue framework, which fills, feeds and protects the wound.

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### Disclaimer

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# The Splash!

## April 2007 Meeting Highlights cont.

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**The maturation phase and remodeling phase**, usually begins after several weeks and continues indefinitely. Random collagen fibers, that have been deposited, begin orienting, cross-linking and remodeling into a fibrous scar tissue with a higher tensile strength. Epithelial, or skin, cells begin to migrate from the edges of the wound over the maturing granulation tissue, although the new skin is never as thick as the original. Wound strength usually peaks around 2 years post-injury, at only 80% of the original tissue strength.

The resulting scar, or connective, tissue is not the same as the original tissue because only bone and liver cells regenerate with identical cells. The pliable nature of the scar formed is largely dependant on the mechanical stresses placed on it during healing. It may be ‘loosely organized’ or ‘tightly organized’ depending on the motion it was subjected to as it matured. As therapists, we strive for the happy medium that will allow for a strong repair *and* good range of motion.

These phases of wound healing are not distinct events on the timeline but are simultaneously overlapping and ongoing within a given wound. Healing speed and success are dependent on many factors including the type of wound, the presence of infection, the animals’ age and

health, the use of interfering medications and adherence to a good wound care protocol. With respect to our level of understanding, we can better support our client dogs and their people in realizing the critical importance of giving the body time to fully progress through these phases and recognizing when is safe to begin soft tissue work such as massage, isometric resistance, encouragement of weight bearing, stretching, or scar work.

The next part of Dr. EB’s talk focused on the canine stifle, or knee, which is considered the joint with the greatest instability in the dog’s body. Lameness due to injury of the knee is the most common orthopedic injury in veterinary practice and Americans spend billions of dollars each year on surgical repairs. He focused on the anatomical aspects of the knee that create the instability, namely, the round femoral condyles resting on a flat tibial plateau. This relationship of the bones is held in place by only 4 ligaments, 2 meniscuses, and the tendons of the leg muscles. The mechanics of the ACL (or CCL) injury most frequently involve a twisting (internal rotation) of the lower leg (tibia). Because the

*anterior (or cranial) cruciate ligament* stretches across the bony prominence (medial condyle) of the femur, it is at risk for being crushed up against the intercondylar prominence of the tibia during certain movements. A ligament tear may then be further complicated by the failure of a meniscus, one of the cushioning pieces of fibrocartilage between the femur and the tibia.

We also learned about the history of surgical repairs for this injury, the first of which was in 1917. Until the 80’s, the repair was most often ‘anatomical’ in that it involved a ligament replacement (or simulation) with a fascial graft, a synthetic graft, or an allograft (transplant tissue) or an extracapsular repair, which uses flo sutures or fibular head transposition to simulate stability. Some of these procedures are still in use today, depending on breed size, budget and the preferred method of the surgeon. A failure of one of these methods is usually due to the materials either lacking the strength of the original ligament, lack of isometric characteristics, or weakness of the anchor points. Essentially, the strength of these repairs relies on scar tissue, which is 20% weaker, as we previously discussed.

Dr. Slocum developed a new approach in the mid 80’s that actually changed the angle of the tibial plateau, surgically, creating an inherently more stable joint. This is achieved through measuring the angle of the flattened top of the tibia (the

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# The Splash !

## April 2007 Meeting Highlights cont.

(Continued from page 7)

plateau), which is normally 20-30 degrees. Next, a curved bone cut is made through the tibia and the head of the tibia is subsequently repositioned to a more favorable angle of 5 degrees. This new position is held in place by a titanium bone plate and screws, and bone cells fill in the gap cut by the saw. This procedure is called TPLO or Tibial Plateau Leveling Osteotomy, and is in frequent use today. Another newer procedure, involves a slightly different repositioning of the plateau is called the TTA, or Tibial Tuberosity

Advancement.

One final highlight of the talk given by Dr EB, was his recommendation for post-operative care. For optimal healing, he suggests good wound care for 10-14 days until staples/stitches are removed. With surgeries such as the TPLO, 8 weeks of strict rest is typical for bone healing. At around 4 and 8 weeks, radiographs will confirm the healing progress and progressive leash walking can begin. This is often the timeframe when we, as water therapists, begin to work with our canine friends. We provide

encouragement to reintegrate their previously injured body parts through healing touch and the magic of water therapy.

Many thanks to Dr. EB for sharing his medical knowledge and expertise for the mutual advancement of our beloved dogs and ACWT!



**Vonni Goetting, LMP, SAMP, and an ACWT Member, videotaped the first half of the meeting (which covers the topic of Wound Healing) and it is available for purchase.**

**If you are interested, please send a check for \$10 (to cover duplicating, shipping and handling costs) to:  
ACWT, 325 E. Washington Street, #237, Sequim, WA 98382**

## What does Canine Water Therapy mean to you?



Lexi North in her wading pool



Alvin (bulldog) & friend at Happy Tails Resort & Spa



Baxter demonstrates a new type of growth chart: a pool skimmer at Happy Tails Resort & Spa



Rosie & Cricket during a session with Cindy of La Paw Spa



Venus Fisher, official Lifeguard at K9 Aquatics, oversees Brodie Fisher's swim session



# The Splash!

## August 2007 Meeting Information

### The Association of Canine Water Therapy

Invites you to a

## SUMMER BBQ

**Sunday, August 19, 2007  
at Happy Tails Resort & Spa in Auburn, WA**



*Potluck BBQ from Noon to 2:00 pm*  
Hot dogs and hamburgers (beef and veggie versions)  
with all the fixings & beverages will be provided.  
Please bring a side dish or dessert to share with others.



#### *Guest Speakers and Events from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm*

The Benefits of Magnetic Therapy for Dogs by Dr. Kimo Jow of Auburn Veterinary Hospital  
The Benefits of Canine Acupuncture by Dr. Diane Driscoll of Twin Lakes Veterinary Hospital in Federal Way  
Discussion and Show & Tell about aides to help with senior dogs, such as booties, carts, walk-about's, etc.  
"Be a Dog" relay races in the pool..Be sure to bring your dogs and your swimming attire!

#### *About Our Speakers*

Dr. Kimo Jow has been a small animal veterinary practitioner in Auburn, WA for the past 28 years. His facility, Auburn Veterinary Hospital, Inc. has a total of 3 veterinarians on staff and was established in 1942. Dr. Jow and his partner are the 3rd owners of the business. In addition to dogs and cats, they treat and care for pocket pets (hamsters, rabbits, ferrets, etc.) and do limited avian care. Dr. Jow is involved in the local community as both a resident and participant in various community activities and groups. He is married and has four children, ranging in ages from 13 to 22. He is interested in many outdoor activities as well as stamp collecting, traveling and meeting new people. He has been a wellness consultant since 1994 and, as he writes, has "appreciated the continual wellness in his life from Nikken's innovative technologies."

Dr. Diane Driscoll became part of the Twin Lakes Veterinary Hospital team in 2006. She received her Bachelors degree in Biology and German from Arizona State University and her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Colorado State University in May of 2006. Dr. Driscoll has special interests and skills in veterinary acupuncture, pain management, and treating exotic animals. Originally from Mesa, Arizona, she relocated to Seattle with her boyfriend Keith for the outdoor activities and career opportunities. Her first passion is kayaking, but she also enjoys playing soccer and hiking. Her greatest kayaking achievement was the entire Grand Canyon that took a total of seventeen days to complete! Other members of her family include Kiska, a shepherd mix, and Bikrim and Drizit, her bearded dragons.

#### *Location*

Happy Tails Resort & Spa is located at 23419 SE 354th Street, Auburn, WA 98092 ~ 253-939-1111  
For directions, visit: <http://www.happytailsresort.com/map.htm>

**Non-members can join us for a \$10 donation  
or can join as a Supporting Friend for \$30  
and participate in this event and ALL events for a year!  
Also, enjoy the many other benefits of membership!**

**Visit [www.caninewatertherapy.com](http://www.caninewatertherapy.com)  
for an application or join the day of the event!**



*Dedicated to and Inspired by the Dogs in our Lives*



# The Splash!

## Splints Give Ill Dog A Leg Up On Life

By Anita Porterfield

With just 24 hours remaining until his appointment with death, Trudy Sundin's Old English sheepdog received an unexpected reprieve. Wesley, born with congenital defects in both back legs, could no longer walk, run, or stand. But an innovative use of splints commonly used in the treatment of canine leg fractures saved Wesley's life.



*Wesley*

"It was during the Thanksgiving holidays that his legs completely broke down," explains Sundin, an assistant in veterinarian Steve Rapp's office. "He couldn't get up. We tried everything, including large doses of prednisone. I knew he couldn't go on in this condition."

As Christmas approached, Sundin couldn't bring herself to unpack her holiday decorations. Emotionally, she could not deal with not hanging up Wesley's Christmas stocking.

"We had put Wesley on glucosamine, chondroitins and steroids," says Rapp. "He showed some improvement, but as time progressed Wesley became more and more out of his comfort zone. He began to get severe muscle atrophy. We were interpreting this as pain. Now we think that he probably

didn't hurt, he just didn't have the strength to get up. His quality of life was very quickly deteriorating."

According to Sundin, Wesley was also depressed. Always a happy dog with a sunny disposition, Wesley was now miserable.

With no hope on the horizon, Sundin and Rapp set the date for putting Wesley down. "I went into Dr. Rapp's office on Monday morning, the day before Wesley was scheduled to die," she explains. "I told Dr. Rapp that I couldn't do this to Wesley. Other than not being able to use his back legs, there was nothing wrong with him. He was basically a healthy dog. So I asked Dr. Rapp to please figure out a way to save him."

Rapp, who has a background in animal orthopedics, decided to construct braces for Wesley's hind legs. Odds were against success with such devices, but it was worth a try. The vet devised a list of materials and supplies that he would need to craft the braces and Sundin called one of their sales representatives to place the order. To Sundin's amazement, the sales rep told her about some flexible splints that had just come on the market. The splints had been introduced for treating canine leg injuries, but Rapp believed they might work for Wesley's condition.

The splints, modeled after human counterparts, are constructed of polypropylene and are designed to fit the contours of the animal's legs. They are first heated in water, and then molded around the limbs. After cooling, they become rigid and retain a correct fit. Velcro straps hold them in place, eliminating the need for bandaging. On the bottom of each

splint is a non-slip traction grip. Since Wesley would be required to wear them during all of his waking hours, Rapp cushioned the inner surfaces of the splints with casting material. "The first concern I had," admits Rapp, "was that he might try to chew



*Wesley, Trudy and Dr. Rapp*

them off. But Wesley, being Wesley, seemed to realize immediately that the splints were for him and that they would help him. From the very start, they gave him the support that he needed."

Dr. Bonnie Beaver, president of the American Veterinary Medical Association, says she's not surprised by Rapp's ingenuity. "As veterinarians, we are expected to deliver the highest quality care to our clients. Often times this involves not just knowledge of diseases and treatments but quite a bit of innovation and creativity. It is so gratifying when a companion's quality of life is restored and the human-animal bond can be maintained."

Although it took awhile for Wesley to get the hang of his new "legs," on

*(Continued on page 11)*



# The Splash!

## Splints Give Ill Dog A Leg Up On Life cont.

(Continued from page 10)

December 23, he stood up by himself and walked over to Sundin.

"As soon as he realized that he was no longer limited," says Sundin, "he became a new dog. His depression lifted and now he runs and plays like a puppy. He even chases the cat."

Wesley has shown steady improvement with his new links to life. He just celebrated his sixth birthday and has gone on his first camping trip since receiving his splints.

"I've been in orthopedics for years and I've never seen anything do what these splints have done for Wesley," says Rapp. Still, he cautions that not every animal will respond so well to such treatment.

"Just because they have worked so well for Wesley doesn't mean that they will work in every situation. But they were worth a try and Wesley was very accepting of the help."

And that's a shaggy dog story with a happy ending.

*Note: This story was first published in the San Antonio Express News on April 5, 2005. It is reprinted on www.nowpublic.com as a tribute to Wesley. I "interviewed" Wesley and his Mom, Trudy, at length for the article. An Old English sheepdog owner myself, I was completely taken with Wesley. I have never observed a canine companion so full of joy and with such a zest for life. Wesley clomped around in his braces with a doggy grin that lit up the room. And*

*when least expected, he took off like a rocket and chased the cat.*

*Wesley, after over two years in splints, was recently diagnosed with canine degenerative myelopathy, a progressive, fatal neural disease common in German Shepherds, Old English sheepdogs and Labrador retrievers. Wesley and his owners were on a camping trip in Colorado—camping was his favorite pastime – when he became totally paralyzed. He will be missed by his family and a multitude of friends. I am lucky to have met Wesley. He was all that a dog can be. My original story ended with "And that's a shaggy dog story with a happy ending." I stand by my original words. Wesley made a lot of people happy.*

## ACWT's New Member Benefits Coordinator

Hello to the membership of the Association of Canine Water Therapy! My name is Ellen Bloome and I am glad to be a part of this emerging organization as the official investigator of member benefits. Please allow me to tell you all a little about myself. I have been a Physical Therapist for 26 years and am looking forward to a complete career change as a Warm Water Canine Body Worker. I have recently completed the Level 1 training with Cindy and am progressing toward setting up my business, Canine Water Works, here in warm, sunny Boca Raton, Florida, by the end of 2007. I am also finishing up my Holistic Care for Companion Animals Certificate from Clayton College of Natural Health and will be initiating study in canine massage by next year.

I have been hunting for professional liability insurance for our membership since returning home from Washington this past June. I will keep the membership updated and as soon as I find the best possible coverage and we can make it available through the ACWT, I will let everyone know!

I have also been looking into inexpensive toys, some of which float. I had called PET EDGE, but they do not offer a discount to our membership. They do have periodic sales on dog toys that are inexpensive. Their website is [www.petedge.com](http://www.petedge.com). I have also found another inexpensive site, [www.i-pets.com/dogtoys.html](http://www.i-pets.com/dogtoys.html) that has decent pricing on their dog toys, for land and for water.

If anyone has insurance coverage at this time and could provide me with a website or contact, please do so!

Please contact me at [memberbenefits@caninewatertherapy.com](mailto:memberbenefits@caninewatertherapy.com) if you have any questions or comments. I am happy to learn along with you!

Now my paws are tired,

*Ellen*

**Welcome to the ACWT Ellen Bloome!  
Thank you for all the enthusiasm you bring to our group!**



# The Splash!

## Client Testimonial Winston and Happy Tails Resort & Spa

I adopted my dear sweet Winston four years ago from the Seattle Animal Shelter. He is now 18 years old, a miracle for a dog that large. He is part Lab and Irish Wolf Hound, a wonderful mix for a dog. If I could find another one with that mix I would adopt it.



*Winston*

When I first got him, at 14, he was a very energetic athletic dog who LOVED the chuck-it and chasing tennis balls. In fact he was obsessed with it. I knew after the first day I took him to the doggie park that I had to buy a chuck-it, as he would run up to anyone who had one and bark at them until they tossed the ball for him. I would also take him down to the Sound and he would love to swim for the tennis ball.

Later on his life, around 16, he had a couple of strokes and wasn't quite as steady on his feet. I then decided to take the ball away from him and direct his athletic exercise to going

on walks instead of running. He wouldn't swim anymore either, because he didn't have the confidence he previously had.

I could see where his muscles were deteriorating as he got older. Then my vet mentioned how good swimming was for older dogs. I live close to a lake and during the last summer I would put a harness on Winston, bribe him into the lake with a treat, and then make him swim in place for 10 minutes 5 days a week while I held the harness. I could really see the difference in his ability to walk and the increase in his muscles. However, as the summer came to an end and the weather and water became colder, I could not continue taking him to the lake.

Then someone mentioned Happy Tails Resort & Spa to me. I have been taking Winston there now for about 5 months. At first he hated it due to his insecurity with swimming; however, he has now adjusted quite well. The wonderful warm water and Ttouch therapy that Beth provides to Winston while on the platform he has learned to love. The method in which she gently touches him while swimming makes him feel very secure while he swims around the pool. Where he used to really fight and give us a hard



*Beth and Winston*

time trying to get him into the pool, he now goes in quite willingly. Here he is, 18 now and still walking. I attribute a lot of that to the swimming he has been doing.

I have seen many dogs at the swimming pool for various reasons. The results I have seen in the other dogs have all been very positive. I feel so fortunate that I live close enough to Happy Tails Resort & Spa where I can take Winston for his swimming therapy.

**Beth Meyer**  
**Happy Tails Resort & Spa**  
23419 SE 354th  
Auburn, WA 98092  
253-939-1111  
info@happytailsresort.com  
www.happytailsresort.com



This group has been formed to exchange information and techniques that relate to canine water therapy. You can post messages about water therapy, pool maintenance, difficult cases, and anything else related to canine water therapy that you would like information about!

Group membership is open to any member of the ACWT. New memberships do require approval, which will be done as quickly as possible. Recent discussion topics include: cement non-skid floors, ozone, chlorine and such, enclosing pools, selecting a pool or spa, and pool toys.

**Join us today at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/caninewatertherapy/join>**



# The Splash!

## It's All About the Pee

By Kathy Notenboom

My husband is very impressed with feminine hygiene products. Of course, he didn't have reason to use them, until now.

Before you let your imagination run too far astray, let me clarify: they're for the dog.

Our 11.5 year old dog Guido is having bladder control "pissues". Like the old gray mare, he just "ain't what he used to be" and neither is his capacity to hold onto his pee.



Guido

Photo by Stephanie Hamilton

Hence, poor old Guido uses belly bands and pads.

Finding the right approach for containing pee wasn't easy. We started with belly bands by Simple Solution, which also makes a cleaning solution sold under the same name. They're made of a somewhat stiff, thick denim. After Guido wore one a few

times, with a pad to absorb the pee, we noticed his skin was getting red where the denim and elastic was rubbing against him. We fixed that by putting a soft washcloth between the band and his skin. We stick the pad onto the washcloth, then insert them into the belly band. We change both on a daily basis or more often if he pees more than a couple of drops onto the pad. It doesn't take much pee for the pad and washcloth to develop a bit of a smell.

A friend offered to make a belly band out of polar fleece or similar material, putting the elastic on the side away from the skin. It's not finished yet, but we're hopeful it'll be a little more comfortable on Guido's skin.

As an alternative to the belly bands, we also found online something we call the pee pocket. This has an absorbent pouch that covers just the end of Guido's sheath. It is held on by straps, and meant to be lined with a pad. Unfortunately just like the belly band it can sometimes scratch the skin. We've avoided this by folding the sides of the pad over the edges of the pouch. One big disadvantage is that the pouch tends to shift off to one side or another as the Guido moves around. It's not too bad when he's in his cart, but if he's on the floor or furniture the pouch can shift quite a lot. If our aim is off when putting the pouch on, the pee can still end up in

all the wrong places. Oops. (And yes, we learned that the hard way.) The belly band is generally safer, if heavier and warmer.

We use baby wipes to wipe Guido's groin area as needed. The pads do pull pee away from his skin nicely, but the wipes help control the odor and possible skin irritation.

Guido sleeps on our bed at night, and protecting the mattress is important. He wears his belly band, of course. He's on top of the bedspread, under which we put a waterproof pad. Underneath it all we've put a soft waterproof cover over the mattress in case all the other methods fail. The bottom line is that we're reasonably sure of not having to change more than the bedspread in the middle of the night.

We use puppy pee pads to protect our furniture, putting a towel or blanket over them for Guido's comfort. We do the same in the dog beds he likes to lay in.

Friends have told us they use baby diapers on their incontinent girl dogs. The same principles apply: keep the area clean and dry, and change the diapers as needed.

Managing incontinence in dogs isn't just possible, it's not really even all that hard. It just takes a little creativity and a little extra work.

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# The Splash!

## Natural Solutions for Arthritis

### Expert's Guide to the Top Natural Solutions for Arthritis (reprinted with permission from Animal Wellness Magazine)

When Lynnette's eight-year-old German shepherd started limping on one front leg, she took him to the vet and found out he had osteoarthritis. She wasn't surprised. "The dog I had before also developed arthritis as he got older," she says. "It seems to be a very common disease."

Lynnette is right. Osteoarthritis is one of the most familiar conditions found in dogs and cats. Although it most often strikes older animals, it can also appear in younger ones as well. The question is, what's the best way to deal with it? While conventional medications have their place when the animal is in serious pain, many alternative therapies exist and can be used in conjunction with one another to ease the discomfort and inflammation associated with this debilitating disease. For this article, we spoke to a number of veterinarians and other animal care experts for their input on fighting arthritis the holistic way.

### NUTRITION

"Diet is one of the keys to your pet's good health and mobility," says nutritionist Susan Davis. "It's not only a critical factor in terms of the nutrients that are provided but also in managing weight. Many pets with arthritis are overweight. Excess weight increases stress on the joints and exacerbates arthritis pain."

"Pets with arthritis need a diet that is rich in antioxidants, essential fatty acids – especially Omega 3s – enzymes and quality whole foods. When choosing a diet, try to give

them as many fresh whole food ingredients as possible. Be sure to look closely at labels on all treats and foods. Many pet food manufacturers add preservatives such as BHA, BHT and ethoxyquin, food colorings and artificial flavorings to keep the product 'fresh' for long-term consumption. These additives cause additional wear and tear on your pet's health and arthritic condition.

"Ideally, a homemade diet made with fresh whole foods is best. Give your animal plenty of fresh vegetables rich with vitamins, minerals, enzymes and antioxidants and consider integrating some raw foods into the diet. Antioxidants help reduce oxidative stress and free radical damage associated with arthritis. Essential fatty acids such as fish oil and flax oil are vital to healthy joints and help reduce inflammation. Use lean, natural sources of protein such as wild salmon and meats free of hormones and antibiotics."

Susan Davis is a Certified Clinical Nutritionist who teaches people how to prepare balanced, homemade diets for their animals. For more information, visit Ask Ariel Your Pet Nutritionist at [www.askariel.com](http://www.askariel.com)

### SUPPLEMENTS

A variety of supplements can help alleviate the aches and inflammation of arthritis. "There is no magic cure," says Audi Donamor, "but supplements chosen to meet the individual needs of your companion can be very beneficial." One of the most important of these is glucosamine sulfate. "It contains glucosamine and sulfur, and is found naturally in and around tendons, ligaments, and connective

tissues," says Audi. "It has anti-inflammatory and joint regenerating properties. Glucosamine acts as the foundation for cartilage compounds, and also activates chondrocyte cells in the cartilage, which helps to produce these compounds. This allows the cartilage to hold water, enabling the joints to act as shock absorbers. Glucosamine sulfate can help reduce pain and inflammation and improve joint mobility." Chondroitin and MSM are often used in conjunction with glucosamine.

Other helpful supplements include wild salmon oil, which inhibits inflammation and provides relief from joint pain. "Vitamins C and E are also recognized for helping to reduce or prevent oxidative stress," adds Audi. "Vitamin C is important to the formation of collagen." A study from the Boston University indicated that patients with osteoarthritis who took a high daily dose of vitamin C were less likely to suffer cartilage loss and a progression of the disease. "Vitamin E, meanwhile, promotes healthy joints, and supports companion animals who are experiencing arthritic pain and stiffness. The d-Alpha form is preferred over the synthetic dl-Alpha form."

Audi Donamor has been successfully creating special needs diets for dogs and cats for over eleven years.

### HERBS

A gentle, non-toxic way to help ease arthritis and its symptoms, herbs can form an important part of the treatment regime. "Curcuma, cayenne, boswellia and tumeric are all used as anti-inflammatories," says veterinarian

*(Continued on page 15)*



# The Splash!

## Natural Solutions for Arthritis cont.

(Continued from page 14)

Dr. Karen Becker. "Cayenne also improves circulation to the connective tissues, muscles, tendons and the lining of the joint capsule." Other anti-inflammatory herbs include yucca and willow bark.

Along with individual herbs, you can choose from a variety of products specially formulated to treat arthritis and joint pain. "Dog-Gone Pain (DGP) from American BioSciences features a blend of Australian and European herbs and supplements that work together to reduce pain and improve mobility. It includes anti-inflammatory herbs such as feverfew, celery seed, and boswellia, as well as corydalis, which tones up the circulatory system, and shark cartilage, an excellent source of chondroitin sulfate."

Chinese herbs also can be very beneficial for arthritic conditions, and are usually available in blended formulas. One example is Liquid Amber. "It's used for osteoarthritis and contains about 15 medicinals blended together," says Dr. Becker.

"In TCM, as opposed to Western medicine, there are seven different definitions of arthritis, encompassing warm joints, cold joints, or inflamed joints," she adds. "They can all fall into the category of arthritis but may present very differently and therefore require different treatments. For example, ginger is a warming herb, but if you have a hot swollen condition, it's not indicated because it's like adding heat to fire. It's important to work with the doctor to find the right remedy for your animal."

Dr. Karen Becker is a holistic veterinarian and wildlife rehabilitator. She

has certification in acupuncture and homeopathy and in 1999 opened the Natural Pet Animal Hospital in Tinley Park, Illinois. Dr. Becker is also a licensed Naturopathic Medical Doctor. [www.drkarenbecker.com](http://www.drkarenbecker.com)

in between them." The practitioner must know what angle the joints are at because they vary depending on which vertebrae are affected, whether they're in the neck, lumbar region, or pelvic area.

"Arthritic animals benefit tremendously from regular chiropractic work," says Dr. Doolittle. She adds that it's very important to find a properly qualified practitioner.

"Ideally, you should get someone who is certified through the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association."

Dr. Sharon Doolittle is a holistic veterinarian who practices chiropractic, applied kinesiology, autonomic response testing, acupuncture and other therapies. She has lectured at the animal chiropractic school in Moline, Illinois, and is certified by the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association.

[www.holisticanimalvet.com](http://www.holisticanimalvet.com)

### CHIROPRACTIC

"Chiropractic is the science and art that uses the inherent recuperative powers of the body by dealing with the relationship between the nervous system and the spinal column and its relationship in the restoration and maintenance of health," says veterinarian Dr. Sharon Doolittle. This modality can be used to treat a wide range of disorders, including arthritis. "Chiropractic subluxations deal with two adjoining vertebrae that have lost their proper range of motion," explains Dr. Doolittle. "This involves not only the two vertebrae but also the nerves, muscles, blood vessels and the connecting tissues and ligaments surrounding the vertebrae." When an animal loses that range of motion, a downward spiral takes place, which can lead to a variety of structural, biochemical and neurological changes culminating in arthritis and other problems. "Subluxations can also lead to decreased cerebral spinal fluid flow. This means you get less nutrition to the disc which can lead to degeneration of that disc."

Chiropractic treatment helps reverse these problems by restoring the proper range of motion in the vertebrae. "I prefer to do manual adjustments, which involve short lever/high velocity thrusts in a specific vector plane," says Dr. Doolittle. "As they sit next to each other, vertebrae have very specific angles to the joints

### HOMEOPATHY

"This is a wonderful and gentle way to stimulate the body to heal itself naturally," says animal homeopath Dyanna McCain. "The main principle behind homeopathy means 'like cures like'." It works by regarding symptoms as the body's natural means to fight off disease. Unlike conventional medicine, which seeks to suppress symptoms, homeopathic remedies encourage the body to do its own healing. "It addresses the whole being, mentally, emotionally and physically," says Dyanna. "Homeopathy works great with animals."

There are many homeopathic remedies that can alleviate arthritis.

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# The Splash!

## Natural Solutions for Arthritis cont.

(Continued from page 15)

An important one is Rhus Toxicodendron. "It's used if the animal has a hard time getting up but is much better after walking for awhile. He can be chilly and there is a lot of stiffness." Another remedy that can help with arthritic conditions, as well as for sprains and other injuries, is Ruta Graveolens, while Arnica Montana is useful when the animal is in severe pain and afraid of being touched. "Byronia can help when the pain is worse if the animal is moved or jarred, and the joints are hot and swollen. And silica is a good remedy for dogs with a history of arthritis in their families. Usually the symptoms will have a tendency to get worse with age.

It's best to work with an experienced homeopath when treating your animal. "Treating the individual is our main objective, especially in arthritis," says Dyanna. "A homeopathic case is taken of the animal, which takes in all his physical, mental and emotional symptoms."

Dyanna McCain, DVet Hom, was a vet tech for over ten years before seeking a more natural approach to animal healing. She received her credentials from the British Institute of Homeopathy and is a member of The National Centre of Homeopathy. parislivery@dslextreme.com

### MASSAGE

Relaxing and soothing, massage can be very beneficial to animals with arthritis. "It can help relieve some of the pain by releasing the tension in tight muscles," says massage therapist and vet tech Theresa Gagnon. "Massage also releases endorphins

which are chemicals produced by the brain that block pain. Massage strokes should not be applied directly to a joint, but only to the soft tissue that surrounds the joint. Avoid applying any pressure to bone or bony projections. Before attempting massage on your animal, you may want to practice the strokes on yourself. This will give you a sense of the amount of pressure to apply when using massage on your pet. Remember that the area you are massaging will be sensitive and applying too much pressure may evoke a bite.

"Let your animal choose whatever position he feels comfortable in. Always keep your hands and arms soft and relaxed when applying massage strokes. Allow your hand to contour to the body part you are working on. Two strokes that can be used to massage animals are compression and effleurage. Compression is a technique that involves using the palm of the hands pressing directly but softly into the muscle and soft tissues of the animal's body. Effleurage is a gliding stroke following the flow or direction of the fur. The stroke is long with even pressure, covering the whole area of muscle."

Start slowly with massage and keep the sessions short at first, at ten to 15 minutes. "After the massage, you should encourage your pet to walk around. Walking will act like a cool down period for the muscles."

Theresa Gagnon is Director of Animal Programs at the Bancroft

School of Massage Therapy in Worcester, Massachusetts. She is also a Certified Veterinary Technician and has been massaging animals for 15 years. The Bancroft School of Massage Therapy in conjunction with Janet Marlow Music has produced a DVD entitled The Pet Owner's Massage Guide for Dogs and Cats. [www.bancroftsmt.com](http://www.bancroftsmt.com)

### ACUPUNCTURE & ACUPRESSURE

These ancient healing therapies have enjoyed a renaissance and are especially helpful in dealing with joint problems causing pain and inflammation. "Acupuncture and acupressure are both modalities used to activate the body's chi," says acupressure instructor Nancy Zidonis. "In Chinese medicine, arthritis is seen as being a condition of the bone. There are specific points on the body with energetics that benefit the bone. Bladder 11 is a very key point to

work, and others include Governing Vessel 14, and Large Intestine 4, 10 and 11."

*"Massage also releases endorphins which are chemicals produced by the brain that block pain."*

On a basic level, acupuncture and acupressure work to strengthen the immune system. Because arthritis is often linked to problems with immunity, it's easy to see how these modalities can help with the condition. "If the immune system is strong and solid, things work well in the body," says Nancy.

The difference between acupuncture and acupressure is how the chi of the

(Continued on page 17)



# The Splash!

## Natural Solutions for Arthritis cont.

(Continued from page 16)

body is activated. "Acupuncture uses needles to invade the body and activate the chi, while acupressure uses the pressure of the practitioner's body, particularly the thumbs," explains Nancy. "Acupuncture should always be done by a professional as it's hard to know exactly where the points are. But if people want to stroke an animal in the area of a point, they'll be activating the energy of that point, and that can help too."

These modalities can be used not only to treat arthritis but to help prevent it. "If you start working with an animal right away, you can really impact the arthritis before it sets in and becomes chronic."

Nancy Zidonis is the co-author of *Acu-Cat: A Guide to Feline Acupressure* and *The Well-Connected Dog: A Guide to Canine Acupressure*. Along with Amy Snow, she owns Tallgrass Publishing, which offers Meridian Charts for animals, and Tallgrass Animal Acupressure, which provides training courses and a Practitioner Certification program.  
[www.animalacupressure.com](http://www.animalacupressure.com)

### TTouch

It looks deceptively simple, but it can have profound impact on an animal's health. TTouch uses light circular touches to activate cell function in the body. "Animals can find comfort from the use of TTouch while dealing with debilitating diseases like arthritis," says TTouch practitioner Cynde Van Vleet. "There is nothing magical about it. Animals are the greatest bio-feedback device ever, since they are objective and don't have an agenda. If

our intentions are clear and we pay attention to their subtle signals, they respond beautifully. "The basic TTouch technique is simple. It involves a very light touch to make a 1½II circle. Imagine a clock – place your hand at the six, with just enough pressure to push the skin clockwise around the clock, past the six again then up to nine. Do one circle and randomly move to another spot. Don't be afraid to use your intuition."

There are several TTouches that can help relieve arthritis discomfort. One is called Noah's March. "Begin at the head and make firm, long strokes covering every inch of the body. Use this stroke to begin and close your TTouch session." Others include the Raccoon Touch, the Abalone, the Lying Leopard and the Python Lift. "For the latter, place both hands on either side of the shoulders, hips or legs. Lift the skin and muscle a couple of inches with just enough pressure so your hands won't slip. Hold for a few seconds and ever so slowly release."

Cynde Van Vleet is a TTouch practitioner as well as an educator and artist. She was inspired to learn TTouch after her Australian shepherd, Korie, was diagnosed with lymphoma. [www.icpaws.com](http://www.icpaws.com)

### COMMUNICATION

Because your animal can't talk the way we can, it can be difficult to assess how he's feeling. Learning to communicate with your companion can enhance your understanding of his condition, and put you in a better position to help him cope with it. "You can just say things verbally to the animal and the correct 'pictures'

will be sent to him," says communicator Lydia Hiby. "If you're taking him to the vet or chiropractor, for example, tell him he'll feel better for going."

Communication can also be used to help with treatment. "I use communication to determine where the animal hurts, what activities might make it worse and what time of day it's worse," says communicator Lynn McKenzie. "I also use it to find out what treatment the animal might prefer and if the treatment is helping. A lot of people I work with have animals that are competing, so it helps to determine what activities the dogs are comfortable doing and wish to continue doing."

Lynn adds that it's crucial to consider the emotional aspects of dealing with arthritis.

"One of the most important things that communication can do is help the animal deal with his physical limitations and pain on an emotional level," she explains. "It can also be used to explain things like ramps, steps and other mobility aids. Emotional support is important; a lot of animals seem to need it."

Lydia Hiby is based in Acton, California, and has been an animal communicator for nearly 20 years. She is co-author of the book *Conversations with Animals*, in which she talks about her communication experiences. [www.lydiahiby.com](http://www.lydiahiby.com)

Lynn McKenzie is an internationally renowned Animal Intuitive. She was trained in animal communication by Penelope Smith and is also a Certified Spiritual Psychotherapist and Subtle

(Continued on page 18)



# The Splash!

## Natural Solutions for Arthritis cont.

(Continued from page 17)

Energy Healer.

[www.animalenergy.com](http://www.animalenergy.com)

### MAGNETIC THERAPY

Magnetic therapy has gained a following among at least some doctors and people with animals, according to veterinarian Dr. Shawn Messonnier. In his book, *The Arthritis Solution for Dogs*, Dr. Messonnier explains. "Magnets increase blood flow to the area, bring in essential nutrients, and help relieve pain and inflammation. Magnets appear to heal the body by removing inflammation and restoring circulation. By increasing blood flow to a diseased site, increased nutrients are available for healing."

In Eastern philosophy, says Dr. Messonnier, when the energy flow or Chi is blocked, magnets can help restore the flow, which allows for healing and proper metabolism.

Dr. Shawn Messonnier is a holistic veterinarian and author. His books

include *The Natural Health Bible for Dogs and Cats*, *The Natural Vet's Guide to Preventing and Treating Cancer in Dogs* and *8 Weeks to a Healthy Dog*.

### EXERCISE

Regular activity is key to keeping joints and muscles working properly. If your animal already has arthritis, however, it's important to use some caution and not overdo things. Warm up the animal's joints first with a gentle massage or a compress made from a warm washcloth in a plastic baggie. "Walk short distances more frequently, and work up from there," says veterinarian Dr. Mark Newkirk. "This helps keep the joints in motion without overdoing it." Cut back on activity levels if your companion shows any sign of pain or lameness. It's also a good idea to avoid strenuous activities that involve jumping, such as chasing a ball or a Frisbee—an arthritic animal can injure himself by falling or coming down the wrong way on a stiff leg.

Excellent forms of exercise for arthritic dogs are swimming and water walking. Although these are aerobic activities that improve circulation and give the animal a good cardiovascular workout, they're also low impact. "They take the weight off the joints yet they're great exercise that build muscle strength," says Dr. Newkirk. Again, take things slowly; if in doubt, talk to a vet about taking your dog to a special hydrotherapy pool with an underwater treadmill. "If there isn't a facility in your area, you can take your dog to a lake and let him walk in knee-deep or hip-deep water," suggests Dr. Newkirk.

Dr. Mark Newkirk is the owner and director of Margate Animal Hospital and Alternative Care Center in Margate, New Jersey. He practices herbal therapy, homeopathy, chiropractic, nutrition and nutraceutical therapy, NAET, glandular therapy and holistic cancer therapy. [www.alternativevet.com](http://www.alternativevet.com)

## What's In Your Toolbox?



What I love most about working in water is that it is a medium where you can apply any number of tools. Whether you are a practitioner of Massage, Ttouch, Accupressure, Animal Communication, etc.—when you are holding the dog in the warmth and weightlessness of water, with full 3-dimensional access to this dog's body—the tools you apply in warm water can have profound effect. When a dog is relaxed in your arms with the nurturing support of the warm water, muscles often relax, circulation is often enhanced and these various modalities of body work and healing techniques are often enhanced. ~ Cindy Horsfall

## Did You Know That...

*Dogs with osteoporosis  
will have reduced specific gravity and will float!*



# The Splash !

## Ask The Pool Guru!

### Ask The Pool Guru

Got questions about water quality, chemistry, or equipment?

Email Karen Hunter at:  
[poolguru@caninewatertherapy.com](mailto:poolguru@caninewatertherapy.com)

**Q: I've heard that chlorinated pools can be dangerous. Is that true?**

A: The answer is "possibly". Any substance, even pure water, can be dangerous or even deadly when used improperly. Chlorine is no exception.

Chlorine is the most commonly used sanitizer for pools. When used properly it is safe, effective, and economical. Unfortunately, its popularity also means it is the most frequently *misused* chemical in the industry. This misuse can lead to unhealthful conditions.

We've all walked into a health club or public pool and choked at the smell of chlorine in the air. The likelihood is that this is an example of chlorine misuse. Chlorine doesn't have to make your eyes burn in order to work.

### About Chlorine

Chlorine kills bacteria, viruses, protozoa, and algae – all things we DON'T want in our pool. It also works to oxidize the organic matter, effectively removing it from the water.

In pure form, chlorine is a gas. Contact with your skin or eyes can cause burns, and breathing it can be



fatal. Chlorine gas was used as a weapon in WWI !

On the other side of the coin, chlorine is probably the principal sanitizer for your drinking water. Before public water supplies were sanitized, millions of people died from water-borne diseases such as cholera, typhoid, dysentery, and hepatitis.

Just as it keeps our drinking water safe, chlorine also allows us to swim without worrying about disease and infections.

### Chlorine for Swimming

It wouldn't be feasible to try to use chlorine gas in our pools. Happily, chlorine can be combined with other elements to create compounds that are safer to handle and measure. Available chemical formulas include calcium, sodium and lithium hypochlorites, and stabilized Dichlor and

TriChlor. These may be tablets, granules, or liquids. Some are suitable for automatic feeders, others must be measured and added by hand.

Another option for sanitizing a pool is a chlorine generator. These take a tiny bit of salt in the water and electronically turn it into sodium hypochlorite. When the chlorine is finished killing the bacteria, it turns back into salt and can recirculate back through the generator to do it all again.

Which product to use will depend upon pool usage, budget, type of equipment, and type and size of the pool.

### Chlorine Use and Misuse

Here are a few things you need to know about using chlorine:

- \* It must be present in sufficient quantities. Too little chlorine actually leads to other problems.
- \* It must remain in contact with the contaminants for long enough to do the job.
- \* The amount of chlorine needed depends on how much the pool is used, not on how big the pool is.
- \* If your water pH is too high or too low, chlorine effectiveness can be greatly reduced.
- \* Chlorine is very volatile, and breaks down rapidly. Sunlight causes it to break down even faster.

*"Depending on what you buy, the bucket of sanitizer you bring home from the pool supply store may contain more than just chlorine."*

Depending on what you buy, the bucket of sanitizer you bring home from the pool supply store may contain more than just chlorine. Cyanuric acid (often called a conditioner) is often added in order to keep

the chlorine from dissipating before it has a chance to work. Since some chlorine formulas can affect pH, buffers may be included to offset this. You'll also get compounds designed for time-release, anti-caking, dust control, flocculants, or even perfumes.

### Mistake #1

The problem with this is that the chlorine is used up, but the other chemicals remain in the water. When more treatment is added, the other compounds accumulate. It doesn't take long for the other things to reach levels where they effectively reduce

*(Continued on page 20)*



# The Splash !

## Ask The Pool Guru! cont.

(Continued from page 19)

the ability for the chlorine to do its job. These "left over" materials are often the cause of red eyes, green hair, whacked-out pH, cloudy water, and the choking smell. The unwary pool owner notices these symptoms and often dumps in more chemicals that just make the problem worse!

The only way to remove these unwanted materials is to do a water change. Of course, that's expensive, time-consuming, and means lost business while the change is being done, so it's often a last resort.

So the first chlorine mistake is not understanding exactly what is being added to the pool and why. Too many pool owners rely on recommendations from a clerk in a store, who may be a minimum-wage teenager and might not know anything other than "this one costs more, so it must be better".

### Mistake #2

There is no simple formula for knowing the right amount of chlorine to add to a pool. It has nothing to do with whether the pool is 500 gallons or 50000 gallons. Basically, you need enough chlorine to kill and oxidize the contaminants that are brought in. This means you MUST measure it regularly and frequently and make adjustments to ensure the correct level is maintained.

There are instruments (called ORP monitors) that can measure this for you automatically and add the appropriate amount of sanitizer. They work by measuring the "oxygen potential" of the water. However, they are very expensive to both buy and maintain, and are probably not cost-effective for our application.

Please note that these are NOT the same as automatic feeders. The latter devices simply dispense a pre-measured dose of chemicals at regular intervals, and do not measure chlorine levels or adjust the amount.

So without an ORP system, in order to know that the correct amount of chlorine is present the water must be tested on a regular basis. Depending on the bather load, this may mean anything from twice a week to twice a day. More importantly, there are TWO chlorine levels that must be tested: Total chlorine and free chlorine.

Free chlorine measures the amount of chlorine available to kill the germs and remove organics. Think of this as the "good chlorine". There must be sufficient free chlorine in the water. If chlorine is the only sanitizer, at least 3 ppm (parts per million) is needed. If chlorine is supplementing another sanitizer such as ozone or metals, as little as 0.5 ppm is needed.

Total chlorine is a combination of the good chlorine and the "used up" chlorine. When the total chlorine exceeds the free chlorine by more than about 1 ppm, it means that action must be taken (usually a shock treatment).

It is not sufficient to measure just one thing – you must measure both and know what the acceptable levels are and how to correct them when they are out of range.

So mistake number two with chlorine is not measuring the actual chlorine levels, or not understanding what the measurements mean.

### Keeping it Safe

If you're using someone else's pool,

how do you know if it's safe to swim in?

1. Use your nose. A properly chlorinated pool should NOT knock you over with chlorine smell. Interestingly enough, the smell could mean either too much or not enough chlorine. But if the odor is objectionable, it is a danger sign.
2. Talk to the owner or pool maintenance person. Ask about how the water is tested, how often, and what the latest test results were. If they're not willing to talk with you about this, I would take my business elsewhere.
3. You can even invest in your own test kit. For about \$10 you can buy 40 test strips that measure total chlorine, free chlorine, pH, and cyanuric acid. The strips also indicate the desired range. Note that a low cyanuric acid level is fine in indoor pools.

If the pool is yours, then I have a recommendation: Salt water chlorine generators are the greatest thing to happen to pools since heaters! They eliminate the need for all the other chemicals that can build up in the water. Although a bit expensive to purchase at the beginning, you make the money back by not having to buy chemicals. It is much easier to stabilize the chlorine levels. The water is soft, odor-free, and sanitary. My personal preference is to combine a salt water chlorinator with an ozonator for the ultimate in water quality.

If the generator is not an option, then take the time to understand the different chemical forms of chlorine

(Continued on page 21)



# The Splash !

## Ask The Pool Guru! cont.

(Continued from page 20)

and when each is appropriate for your system. For example, don't use a form intended for outdoor pools in an indoor setup. Don't depend on a feeder to maintain the proper levels of chlorine – use those test strips!

Regardless of what method you use to sanitize your pool (chlorine, bromine, metals, or ozone), regular water changes are a must.

### Two Final Thoughts

There has been some publicity about chlorine causing the formation of trihalomethanes, or THMs, which have been identified as possible carcinogens. In general, these are not

considered to be a health risk when proper levels of chlorine are maintained. However, I would recommend extra care when using chlorine shock treatments. During the shock treatment be sure to leave the cover off the pool, keep the pool house well ventilated, and ensure the chlorine has dropped to appropriate levels before use. Another alternative would be to use non-chlorine shock treatments.

Finally, some people reject the idea of salt water chlorinators because their equipment is not compatible with salt water. The water in these pools is not technically "salt water" – it is water to which a small amount of salt has been

added. In reality, the amount of sodium in these pools is no different than the sodium content of a pool sanitized with chemical chlorine or bromine.

Happy swimming!

**Karen Hunter**

**Mega-Dogs**

22609 102nd Ave SE

Woodinville, WA 98077

425 487-3078

karen@mega-dogs.com

[www.mega-dogs.com/](http://www.mega-dogs.com/)

## Only In America?

**Cindy Horsfall passes along this funny story:**

"I was at the nursery yesterday and the owner asked me what I did for a living... when I told him, he replied "Only in America" and laughed and walked away....

And I thought – oh no, my friend, this year I have had students calling me from Italy, Belgium and Singapore – and Association inquiries from as far away as Japan...

This is NOT only in America...

Move over Starbucks!



## Handy Hints

**Help get your business on the map...the Google Map!**



Google Maps offers free advertising for businesses, including the ability to create a coupon for your business. So when someone does a search for your type of business in your zip code, your business information and coupon would appear. They currently don't have a business category that our businesses would conveniently fit in (such as Services: Animal Massage or Services: Canine Hydrotherapy), but they do allow businesses to suggest new categories. Maybe if all our members suggested a new hydrotherapy category, Google would add it! To sign up, go to: [google.com/local/add](http://google.com/local/add).

*This Handy Hint was submitted by ACWT Member Cindy Hickman, LMP, SAMP of Aquadog Spa in Kent, WA*



# The Splash !

## Sink or Swim: Dog Water Toy Ratings

### Rating Canine Water Toys

Brodie Fisher has been swimming since his CCL surgery in July 2003. He loves toys therefore, he will be testing a new canine water toy each quarter. In this issue, he will be reviewing the...

#### VO-TOYS RUFF & TOUGH DOGGIE BOOMERANG



The Ruff & Tough Doggie Boomerang is made by Vo-Toys.

They state that the Doggie Boomerang is:

- \* Built to Last
- \* Tougher than the rest when put to the test
- \* Extra durable construction
- \* Heavy duty material
- \* Floats in water
- \* Easy to throw, pull and tug
- \* Squeaks

*Brodie's Rating: Brodie enjoyed this toy, however after a 20 minute swim session, the toy was already ripped (see picture below right). Brodie did not chew or tug with the toy. He simply retrieved it. Not quite as durable as the manufacturer states. This isn't a water toy that we would recommend.*



**The Vo-Toys  
Doggie Boomerang**  
[www.vo-toys.com](http://www.vo-toys.com)  
Retail price is \$8.99

Brodie rates this toy...

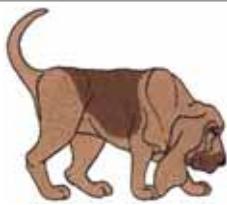
**SINK!!**



*Editor's Note: If you have tried out any of Brodie's Sink or Swim toys or have a new toy to rate, please send in your comments and/or pictures to me at [newsletter@caninewatertherapy.com](mailto:newsletter@caninewatertherapy.com).*

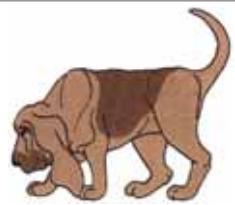


# The Splash!



## Sniff This!

~A Look at Products NEW to our Industry~



### Canine Music

Have you ever noticed how dogs respond to music? It appears that dogs feel the rhythm and harmony of music in their soul the same way that humans do. Dogs seem to relax to soft slow strains, and sometimes become agitated to loud, drum-based tunes. Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and the Rehoming Centre of the National Canine Defence League in Evesham, England studied the effects of music on dogs and found this to be true.



Guide Dogs for the Blind training facilities tested music specifically composed by Thomas Schoenberger to calm pets. They were sufficiently impressed to endorse the CD called Doggone Songs for use in stressful situations such as separation anxiety, injury recovery, storms, fireworks, travel, destructive behavior and aggression. This CD is also touted as an aid in training. Considering that music helps memory, and stress reduction helps learning, it makes sense.

Another album created specifically for dogs is called Ask the Animals: Songs to Make Dogs Happy! by Skip Haynes. Haynes created the album in conjunction with an "animal communicator," Dr. Kim Ogdent-Avrutik, who served as a sort of translator during focus groups to test out the music. Among the revelations: Some kinds of percussion (too much like gunshots) and the word "no" (not popular among many species) are not popular among dog listeners. Notable titles on the disc include "I'll Be Back," "I Love Food," and what Haynes says is the album's No. 1 hit, "Squeaky-Deakey!" Haynes says that by being in the room when the album is played for the first two or three weeks, owners can create a positive association with the music that later calms pets down while the owner is out.



Many animal behaviorists, veterinarians, kennel keepers and even pet owners now play music for their animals. Just one of several ways to deal with anxiety, the right kind of music can reduce stress, aid relaxation and alleviate depression.

Music can have an even greater beneficial effect on dogs if they associate certain tunes with a positive experience such as cuddling on the couch with their humans or enjoying a gentle massage. This can be another tool in easing your dog's stress if he suffers from separation anxiety.

So the next time your dog is stressing, try a little soft music. Whether you choose an album composed especially for dogs or one of your own favorites, it will soothe the soul with little expense and no side effects.



**DogGone Songs—2 CD Collection includes  
Music to Soothe the Animal Spirit and Traveling Tunes for You and Your Pet  
Available through [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) for \$12.98 each (plus shipping)**

**Ask the Animals: Songs to Make Dogs Happy  
Available through [www.petcds.com](http://www.petcds.com) for \$14.95 (plus shipping)**



# The Splash!

## Upcoming Training Opportunities

### The Heart of Canine Water Therapy ~ Washington State

Instructor: Cindy Horsfall, LMP, SAMP, CWP

#### *Level 1 Training*

September 22—27, 2007 (**SOLD OUT**)  
November 3—8, 2007 (**1 SPACE AVAILABLE**)

April 26—May 1, 2008

June 21—26, 2008

November 8—13, 2008

#### *Level 2 Training*

July 28—August 3, 2007 (**SOLD OUT**)  
August 2—8, 2008 (**4 SPACES AVAILABLE**)

#### *Level 3 Training*

September 21—25, 2008

Visit [www.lapawspa.com](http://www.lapawspa.com) for more information.

## Member Discounts!

MEMBER DISCOUNTS!

To get more information and your Member Discount Codes, go to the Members Area of the ACWT website.

**GET YOUR NEW SPA AT FLORIDA NORTH!!!** This is a great spa.... And Bob and Dick at Florida North are offering members at the POOL LEVEL a \$500.00 discount on their already reasonably priced SWIM SPA!!! Check out these products at [www.florianorth.com](http://www.florianorth.com). Our friends Dan and Bob at Florida North are there to help you – just give them your ACWT POOL membership # and start preparing for your new pool or spa. Email or call them at 1-800-505-SWIM (7946).

**GET YOUR POOL SUPPLIES AT A HUGE SAVINGS!!!** Call our friends Phil Miller and Jim at Amerimerc and get a 15% discount on their already low, low prices on everything you need. These guys are dog lovers and they are so excited to help the ACWT and the world of water therapy for dogs. Check out their websites at: [www.amerimerc.com](http://www.amerimerc.com). When you are ready to order, call Phil at 1-877-891-7665 with your ACWT Pool Membership # and start saving money today!!!

**INNOVATIVE HEALTH ALTERNATIVES** for the Water (and Air!) are now yours at [www.ewater.com](http://www.ewater.com). Fred Van Liew has graciously offered discounts to ALL of our MEMBERS of up to 25% on his product line. We put an Etower in all of our pools and they are AMAZING!!! Upon joining, you will have access to the Members Only area where you will find information on how to get your Member discount.

**AN EXTENSIVE LINE OF FUN THINGS!** Can be found at "All PETS GO TO HEAVEN" .... and they are offering every member of the ACWT a 10% discount! Thank you Teri (an ACWT Member)!!! Go to [www.allpetsgotoheaven.com](http://www.allpetsgotoheaven.com) and enjoy shopping!!!!

#### **FULL SERVICE BAKERY & UNIQUE RETAIL STORE!**

Happy Dog Healthy Dog (an ACWT Member) is offering a 10% discount to ACWT Members in their online retail store. Shop for wonderful bakery items, dog food, supplements, books, clothing for you and your dog, gift baskets of wonderful spa items and much more. Visit [www.happydoghealthydog.com](http://www.happydoghealthydog.com) today!

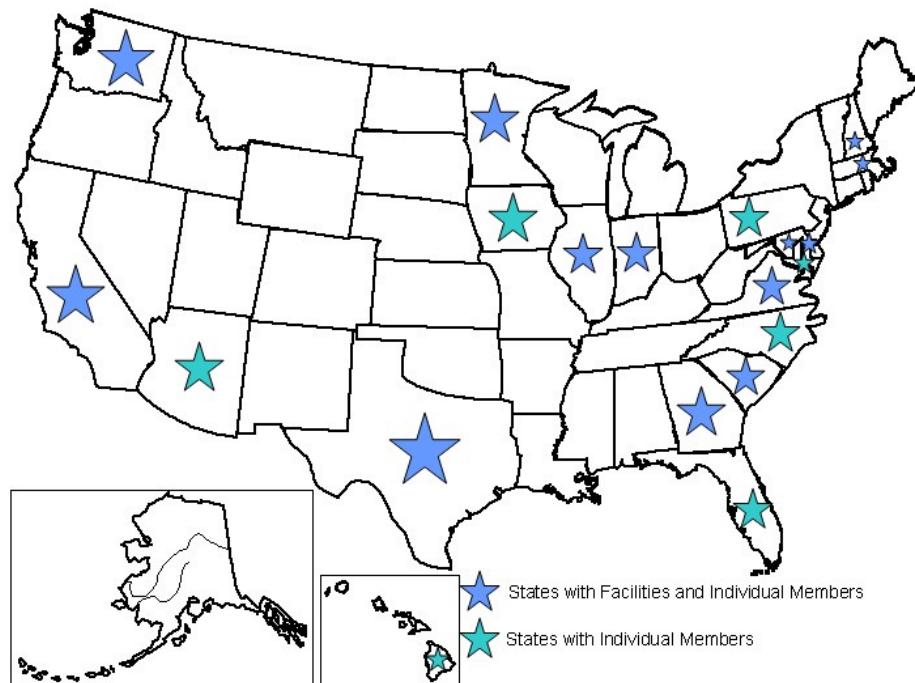
**PET SUPPORT SUIT** The AST Support Suit™ is a heavy-duty, durable support harness for dogs. They deliberately over-build their harnesses to provide long-lasting support, control and comfort. AST Support Suits: Built to hold your dog up, and hold up to your dog. Eric and Victoria of Animal Suspension Technology (an ACWT Member) are offering ACWT Members of all levels a 10% discount on their Pet Support Suit. For more information, visit [www.petsupportsuit.com](http://www.petsupportsuit.com).

**K-9 KOZY POOL WRAPS** K-9 Kozy Pool Wraps are light-weight & absorbent with easy open & close Velcro. They allow normal movement and easy to put on and take off. They come in assorted bright playful colors your dog will love! Great for: The ride home after a swim, after grooming, after a day at the beach and as a warm-me-up for cool nights and chilly mornings. Alison White of The Total Dog Spa (an ACWT Member) is offering a 20% discount to ACWT members of all levels.



# The Splash!

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### POOLS & TREADMILLS—UNITED STATES

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#### DELEWARE

**Happy Dog Healthy Dog**  
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#### GEORGIA

**Healthy People Healthy Pets**  
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**Sit, Stay, Swim**  
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**Joshica's Planet Canine LLC**  
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**AquaDog, Inc.**  
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**Pampered Paw Swim Spa LLC**  
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**SplashDog Spa**  
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# The Splash!

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# The Splash!

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Edmonton

#### ONTARIO

**K9 Common Scents**  
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# The Splash !

## Member Directory cont.

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<p><b>Animal Healing Center</b>  <b>On Staff:</b> Dr. Larry Siegler  <b>Business Phone:</b> 425-885-5400  <b>Location:</b> Redmond, WA  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.animalhealingcenter.com">www.animalhealingcenter.com</a></p> <p><b>Mobile Veterinary Services</b>  <b>On Staff:</b> Dr. Tina Ellenbogen  <b>Business Phone:</b> 425-485-7387 (PETS)  <b>Location:</b> Bothell, WA  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:drtina@caninewatertherapy.com">drtina@caninewatertherapy.com</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://hometown.aol.com/drtinavet/myhomepage/profile.html">http://hometown.aol.com/drtinavet/myhomepage/profile.html</a></p> <p><b>Puget Sound Animal Hospital for Surgery, P.S.</b>  <b>On Staff:</b> Dr. Mark Engen &amp; Dr. Byron Misseggers  <b>Business Phone:</b> 425-827-5686  <b>Location:</b> Kirkland, WA</p> <p><b>Sumner Veterinary Hospital</b>  <b>On Staff:</b> Dr. Kathy Sheeran  <b>Business Phone:</b> 253-863-2258  <b>Location:</b> Sumner, WA  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:mksheeran@sumnervet.com">mksheeran@sumnervet.com</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.sumnervet.com">www.sumnervet.com</a></p>	<p><b>Dynamite Specialty Products</b>  <b>Owner:</b> Mary DeFillippo  <b>Business Phone:</b> 425-290-2255  <b>Location:</b> Snohomish, WA  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:maryfurhaven@earthlink.net">maryfurhaven@earthlink.net</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.dynamitemarketing.com">www.dynamitemarketing.com</a></p> <p><b>Gold Canyon Candle Distributor</b>  <b>Owner:</b> Amy North  <b>Location:</b> USA  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:anorth3@cox.net">anorth3@cox.net</a></p> <p><b>Joyce's Dog Obedience Services Inc.</b>  <b>Owner:</b> Joyce Biethan  <b>Business Phone:</b> 206-819-7297  <b>Location:</b> Snohomish, WA  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:joycesdogs@gmail.com">joycesdogs@gmail.com</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.joycesdogs.com">www.joycesdogs.com</a></p> <p><b>Mystic Mountain Retreat</b>  <b>Owner:</b> Cindy Hill  <b>Business Phone:</b> 360-794-6388  <b>Location:</b> Monroe, WA  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:mysticmountainretreat@hotmail.com">mysticmountainretreat@hotmail.com</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.mysticmountainretreat.com">www.mysticmountainretreat.com</a></p> <p><b>Parka's Kibble Art</b>  <b>Owner:</b> Sherry Dryja  <b>Location:</b> USA  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:parka@kibbleart.com">parka@kibbleart.com</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.kibbleart.com">www.kibbleart.com</a></p> <p><b>Pension Design &amp; Admin., Inc.</b>  <b>Owner:</b> Doris Kopp  <b>Business Phone:</b> 425-868-1230  <b>Location:</b> Redmond, WA  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:doris@pensiondesign.com">doris@pensiondesign.com</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.pensiondesign.com">www.pensiondesign.com</a></p>	<p><b>Sam's Dog Hut</b>  <b>Owner:</b> Sheila Palme  <b>Business Phone:</b> 715-262-4566  <b>Location:</b> Prescott, WI  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:samsdoghut@centurytel.net">samsdoghut@centurytel.net</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.samsdoghut.com">www.samsdoghut.com</a></p> <p><b>Synchronicity</b>  <b>Owner:</b> Charlie Comstock  <b>Business Phone:</b> 360-461-3155  <b>Location:</b> can service anyone, anywhere  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:charliecomstock@msn.com">charliecomstock@msn.com</a></p> <p><b>The Lodge at Cardiff's</b>  <b>Owner:</b> Susan Von Beck  <b>Business Phone:</b> 425-788-8449  <b>Location:</b> Duvall, WA  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:Hunterdonfarms@aol.com">Hunterdonfarms@aol.com</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.lapawspa.com/thelodge">www.lapawspa.com/thelodge</a></p>
<b>SUPPORTING BUSINESSES</b>		
<p><b>Animal Suspension Technology</b>  <b>Owner:</b> Eric and Victoria Swisher  <b>Business Phone:</b> 360-393-9891  <b>Location:</b> Bellingham, WA  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:support@petssupportsuit.com">support@petssupportsuit.com</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.petssupportsuit.com">www.petssupportsuit.com</a></p>		
<p><b>SUPPORTING FRIENDS</b></p> <p>Nicholas, Heidi &amp; John  Natasha and Pavel,  Lisa Van Horn &amp; Dugan,  Catherine Lisa Van Camp,  Jean &amp; John Horsfall,  Gretchen &amp; Gunther,  Sedalana Shepherds,  Anita Gehring,  Kathe Roat  Lisa and Honey  Leo, Kathy and Guido</p> 		

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