



Pet pages



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Pets



BOCKER THE LABRADOODLE®



Mom and I were listening to Pet Talk on WGY hosted by our friend, Jaime Roberts, and the topic was a very important one. What kind of dog is right for your family? Your lifestyle, your activities and where you live are all things that should be considered before bringing a dog or any pet home to be part of your family. A dog or cat is a life-long commitment and if a dog, gone are the days when you don't feel like going out for a walk. Another concern is, what

happens when a certain breed becomes popular, either through a movie or by becoming First Dog to the President. It is smart to investigate the traits of the breed to see if it is right for you. There are so many dogs in rescue today and a large number are there because people haven't taken the time to really think things through and realize how having a pet will change their lives.

I was born at Doodlesville, in N.C. My folks were concerned about my dad's asthma and researched labradoodles for that reason. At that time, they did not realize that just about every breed, whether a pure-bred or mixed breed, has a rescue organization. So even if you know the breed dog you want to make part of your family, it is very possible that you can find one in a shelter. Petfinder.com is a great resource to search for pets that need to be rescued by breed, size, age and location. Most shelters list their dogs/cats on Petfinder. If you decide you want to get a dog from a breeder, just make sure you do your research.

I am a very lucky doodle and part of my life is trying to help those less fortunate than I am. So, it's Bocker to the Rescue. I work with several shelters and rescue organizations, such as the Animal Protective Foundation in Scotia and the Mohawk & Hudson River Humane Society in Menands, Animal Haven, and North Shore Animal League in NYC to name a few, lending a helping paw and making new friends. So, you never know where I may show up!

Many of these organizations have wonderful summer programs for children that teach them about pets and the responsibilities involved in having one. Also, if you are looking for a pet, they are the perfect place to start. Volunteers are also needed and some have programs where you can foster a pet while it waits for its forever home. Times are tough everywhere and these organizations need your donations to keep doing the wonderful work they do. Every donation helps, even a few dollars.

Okay, it's time to be a dog..summer's here..lots of swimming and if there is a puddle of mud, I'm the first one in it. So, then, of course, it's off to Shampoo so I can look my best all the time. Also, I will be a guest on Pet Talk again! If you have any questions for me, please e-mail me at: bocker@bocker.tv and visit Bocker's Doodleland at: <http://www.bocker.tv>.

KEEPING YOUR DOG COOL IN THE SUMMER

Summer is a time of great family fun and activity. Unfortunately, the season also brings with it some very specific hazards - sunburn, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Not only for your human family, but for your furry family members as well.

Protecting Your Dog From Sunburn...

Many people don't realize that dogs, just like humans, can be burned by the sun. .

1. If your dog is outside most of the day, keep him in the shade during those times when the sun's rays are most intense - approximately 10 am to 4 pm.
2. Apply a little sun block to your dog's most exposed areas - the tip of each ear and the nose.

If, after a day out in the sun, any portion of your dog's skin is reddened or blistered, immediately talk to your Vet.

From Heat-Related Conditions...

1. Never leave your dog in the car without the air conditioner running. Even a few minutes in the sun can send the interior temperature of a car (with windows open or closed) soaring to fatal temperatures.
2. If your dog is outside for most of the day, provide your dog with a shaded, well-ventilated resting area that will remain shaded at all times, regardless of the sun's position. Of course, the ideal place for your dog is an air conditioned place.
3. Make sure that your dog has access to cool, clean water. When traveling, make sure that you have a water dish and fresh water on hand at all times. If your dog spends all day outside, provide him with a small, shaded wading pool filled with water. Your dog can cool himself off throughout the day by jumping in and out of it. Make sure, however, that the pool is in the same, consistently shaded area as the drinking water.
4. Be careful that your dog doesn't stand on a sun-baked surface for any length of time, including truck beds, sidewalks, streets and beach sand. The heat can not only burn your dog's skin, but can also prevent your dog from expelling heat from his body. If you must walk your dog in the heat of the day, walk him on a grassy area.

Recognizing Heat Stroke

The signs of heat stroke are: an inordinate amount of panting, labored breathing, bright red gums or eye membranes, pronounced fatigue, collapse, unconsciousness and seizures. If your dog displays any of these symptoms, get him out of the heat immediately and into the shade and as soon as possible, seek veterinarian's care.

Dogs aren't the only pets that can get heatstroke - take precautions for your cat especially if your cat is an outdoors cat or you don't have air conditioning.

1. Keep him indoors in a cool interior room. Rub him down with a damp towel or wrap a cold compress under his neck. He may fight at first, but will appreciate it once he gets used to the idea. Try wrapping a plastic bag of frozen peas in a towel, and placing in in his bed for a cool spot to lie. The peas will rearrange themselves to fit his contours and he'll have a "custom spa" for cooling off.

Make sure he has several bowls of cool water available. It doesn't hurt to drop an ice cube in once in awhile, not only to cool the water, but to pique kitty's interest in drinking. Cats affected by external heat may refuse to drink water, so watch to make sure he drinks.

If you think he is suffering heat exhaustion, cool him down as quickly as possible by immersing him in cool water, and then wrapping him with wet towels. Then get him to your vet immediately. This is a serious condition.