

The Wintergreen Post

Volume 2 Issue 3

Holiday 2003



Pet Profile – Lexa & Nicky Mintzer “The Doodle Twins”

Breed: King Charles Cavalier Spaniels
Color: Lexa – Tri; Nicky – Blenheim
Birthday: Lexa – July 2002; Nicky – Oct. 2002
Veterinarian: Easthampton Animal Hospital
Favorite Kennel Activity: Dancing for Attention!

~Owned and Loved By Ellen & Paul Mintzer~

These two started stealing hearts the first time they pranced in through our grooming shop door. Since then, they have become familiar faces in both the kennel and the grooming shop, bringing smiles to the faces of all who come in contact with them.

Their “parents” say these “doodle twins” dream of opening their own internet based company selling merchandise with their pictures on it! We’ll keep our eyes peeled!

Keeping The Holidays Safe & Happy

The holidays should be a happy time for you and your pet, not a time for an emergency visit to your veterinarian. The food and decorations that make the holidays festive for us can be dangerous for our pets. Watch for tips throughout this issue to help you become aware of the dangers and plan carefully to avoid potential hazards.

HOLIDAY TIP: Food Related Items

Holiday foods we enjoy cooking and eating can be a problem for your pet. Rich, fatty foods, like gravy or grease, can cause problems ranging from upset stomach to pancreatitis (an inflammation of the pancreas resulting in pain, vomiting and dehydration, sometimes requiring hospitalization).

Alcohol can cause serious intoxication in pets; many dogs are attracted to it. Every year hundreds of dogs die after a single bout of alcohol consumption. Clean up glasses after holiday parties. Dogs and children are often attracted by the sweet taste of drinks, especially eggnog.

Chocolate, coffee and tea all contain dangerous components called xanthines, which cause nervous system or urinary system damage and heart muscle stimulation. Chocolate is especially a problem because dogs love its flavor. Problems from ingestion range from diarrhea to seizures and death. Unsweetened baking chocolate and dark chocolate are the worst culprits, but all chocolate, fudge and other candy should be placed out of reach of your pet.

Uncooked meat, fish and poultry can contain disease-causing bacteria, such as E. Coli. These uncooked foods should not be given to your dog. For your own health, as well as your pet’s, wash utensils that have been in contact with raw meat and cook meat thoroughly.

Bones from fish, meat or poultry can also cause problems if swallowed. Even small bones can splinter causing lacerations throughout the intestinal tract. Be sure to keep bones away from your pet. Hardened, sterilized bones would be better alternatives.

Uncooked yeast dough can expand and produce gas in the digestive system, causing pain and possible rupture of the stomach or intestines.

Grapes and raisins have an unknown toxin, which can damage the kidneys.

Macadamia nuts contain an unknown toxin, which can affect the digestive and nervous systems as well as the muscles of the dog.

To be safe, put away food immediately and pet proof your garbage. Garbage contains all kinds of other hazards for your dog such as plastic wrap and bags, 6-pack beverage holders that could cause strangulation, fat trimmings, bones and pieces of ribbons or tinsel.

HOLIDAY TIP: Decorations & Wrappings

All that glitters is not gold – it could be dangerous for your pet.

Ribbons, yarn and string can cause intestinal obstruction and bunching of the intestine along the length of the string. These conditions require surgery and can be fatal. Ribbons around your dog’s neck may be cute, but they can also be dangerous.

Adhesives and glue can be toxic and are often attractive to animals.

Potpourri contains oils that can be toxic to dogs if eaten. We may not think of eating it, but some curious pets may.

Few things are more tempting to a playful dog than a game of tug. This is not a good game, however, to play with the end of a tablecloth. Try to keep items such as tablecloths, table runners, etc., from hanging too low to the floor and tempting happy dogs running by to grab an end and pull!

HOLIDAY TIP: Gifts Under the Tree

Rawhide or other edible items left under the tree can be very tempting. Rawhide should only be given to your pet when you are available to supervise. When pieces broken off are swallowed, they can become enlarged, blocking airflow and causing choking. Be sure to remove any ribbons or ties before you present gifts to your dog.

Perfumes and aftershaves contain ethanol (alcohol) and perfume also contains essential oils which can be very toxic to dogs if ingested. Batteries for toys and other gifts can be toxic and cause intestinal obstruction. Keep in a safe place until they are ready to be inserted in the gift.

HOLIDAY TIP: Christmas Trees

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how careful we must be!

Christmas trees and their decorations can create hazards for pets. Tree needles can be toxic and cause stomach irritation. Be sure your dog is not chewing on branches or eating fallen needles.

Tinsel's shininess is attractive. When eaten, it can cause blockages, which often require surgery to remove. Leave it off the tree altogether!

Place ornaments that are shiny or could be swallowed or broken high up on the tree. Resist the urge to decorate the tree with food that may tempt your pet (candy canes, popcorn, raisins, etc.)

HOLIDAY TIP: New Pets

New pets may not be the best holiday gifts. Do not consider giving an animal as a gift unless you are *absolutely sure* the person wants one. It may be better to give a gift certificate to the person can choose his or her own pet after the holidays.

If considering a new pet for your own household, remember, pets need routine and a time to bond with you. With its noise, commotion, and special hazards, the holiday season is anything but routine. Think about getting your new pet after the holidays.



Michael Conlin
Co-Owner/Operator

You may have telephoned the kennel to hear "*Wintergreen Kennels, Michael speaking, may I help you?*" The Michael you heard is Michael Patrick Conlin, Co-Owner/Operator.

In addition to answering the phone, Michael is the man who "does it all". As an accomplished electrician, he sees to it that our kennel is well lighted, comfortably warm or comfortably cool as the weather demands.

Michael (not incidentally) has been married to Judith Miller Conlin for 29 years. They graduated from Williston Northampton School together where Judith was impressed by Michael's expertise in Science Lab. A break for higher education – Judith at Oberlin, Michael at UMass, Amherst preceded their marriage here at Wintergreen Hill.

Michael has more than doubled the kennel's physical plant to provide first class accommodations for your pets. He recruits good assistants but is "hands on" to get the job done right. You may be sure of your dog's safety and comfort here at Wintergreen – thanks to Michael.

--Lew Miller

THOUGHTS FROM THE GROOMING SHOP

BABY'S STORY : Imagine yourself, a new mom, your puppies are missing and feared dead. You are alone on the streets of a tough city with a slit throat feeling weak and drained. Your saving grace, a kind and selfless act by a complete stranger, saves your life.

This horrific scene played out for real for a sweet and much abused dog named Baby. She is thought to be about two years old and a Boxer/Pitbull mix. She is currently spending her days at Spindletop Pitbull Refuge in Texas .

An incident at her savior's house put her with us. A party was thrown at her new home and with all the new faces and commotion so soon after her horrific ordeal, she became unnerved. When an attendee tried to apply a baby gate to the room she was in, she mistook him for a threat, snapped at him and caught his nose as he leaned over the baby gate.

Since her arrival here, she has made astounding progress. Best of all Baby was given, and passed a temperament test with flying colors! She is a very sweet dog who as a dominant female, needs an owner who will have the time and patience to work with her to build her confidence, heal her of the trauma she has been through and build a strong human/canine bond through which she will blossom.

The cost of boarding, the initial surgery necessary to save Baby and the cost of flying her to Texas to the animal sanctuary accumulated into a very steep bill for her saviors. Donations would be greatly appreciated. No amount is too small. She is worth trying to save and give another

chance at a great life.

Please help us help Baby!

Donations may be sent to:
Wintergreen Kennels
10 Douglas Rd. Southampton MA 01073
Please specify for "Baby Fund".

You may also send care packages to Spindletop. Visit their website www.spindletoppitbullrefuge.org for more info.

Thank You For Your Support!!!
Lisa Peloquin, Head Groomer
Wintergreen Kennels

HOLIDAY TIP - POISONOUS PLANTS

We all like making our homes more festive for the holidays. We enjoy the green foliage and colorful flowers of plants. Unfortunately, many of the plants we have in our homes during the holidays can be poisonous to pets. If ingested, holly causes upset stomachs and can be potentially fatal to both dogs and cats. Mistletoe upsets stomachs and can cause heart collapse. Poinsettias also can cause stomach upset, and hibiscus causes diarrhea. If you brighten up your home place these plants well out of your pet's reach or use imitation holiday plants.

Kitty Korner When Is A Cat Considered Fat?



Veterinarians often use a 9 point scoring system to evaluate the body condition of pets. A point value of 1 means the cat is extremely thin to the point of emaciation. A score of 9 means the pet is grossly overweight. And like Goldilocks and the three bears, a score of 5 is 'just right.' To determine body score (see chart bottom right), the following are observed:

1. Feel the cat's ribs. They should be felt quite easily. There should be a slight amount of fat over them, but each rib should be distinct. If you can see the ribs, the pet is too thin. If you can not feel them at all, the pet is very overweight.
2. Check the area near the base of the tail. There should be a slight fat covering over this area and it should feel smooth. If the bones protrude, the pet is too thin; if you can not feel any bones at all, the pet is very overweight.
3. Feel other areas on the pet's body such as the spine, shoulders, and hips. Again, you should be able to feel a small amount of fat over these areas. If these bones are easily felt or visible, the cat is too thin. If you can not feel the bones beneath the layer of fat, the animal is obviously overweight.
4. Look at your cat from above. The animal should have a definite waist behind the ribs. If the waist is extreme, or again, bony prominences are visible, the animal is too thin. If there is no waist or worse yet, the area between the ribs and hips is wider than the hips or ribs, the cat is grossly overweight.
5. Look at the cat from the side. Cats should have an abdominal tuck, i.e., the area behind the ribs should be smaller in diameter than the chest. An animal who is too thin will have a very severe abdominal tuck. Overweight animals will have no abdominal tuck.

If you feel your cat is overweight, consult your veterinarian to determine if there are any other medical problems before starting the animal on a weight reduction program. Your veterinarian can also suggest various diets, how fast your pet should lose weight, etc. (Overweight cats can become severely ill if their diet is too restricted.)



Above Information from <http://www.peteducation.com/>

DON'T FORGET PETS IN NEED

There's no better time than the Holidays for giving to those less fortunate, and the needy residents at your local animal shelter are no exception. Rescue groups and shelters feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and care for those who have been abandoned. Many larger shelters also offer low-cost medical care and spay/neuter programs. To provide these valuable services, in addition to many others, most of these groups rely on volunteers and the charitable donations of local residents. The holiday season is an ideal time to help.

A Gift of Pet Supplies

Most animal shelters are always in need of pet food and supplies for the homeless animals in their care and are grateful for donations of any of these items throughout the year.

Honor a Memory

This time of year often evokes memories of those who are no longer with us, including beloved pets. Memorial donations are a meaningful way to express sympathy and honor memories, while helping animals in need.

Many animal advocate groups, including the ASPCA, offer Honor Giving programs as well. These wonderful gifts celebrate the special animals or humans in one's life. Just make a donation, and a card will be sent to that person's family acknowledging your thoughtful donation.

To find out more about national pet support programs, visit www.hsus.org, or www.asPCA.org, and to find a local shelter near you, see www.petfinder.com.

HOLIDAY TIP: Pet Gifts & Treats

When choosing a holiday gift for your special friend, be sure it is safe – no small pieces that could come off and be swallowed. Choose healthy holiday treats for you dog and give them in moderation.

With all of the festivities, do not forget to relax and spend some quality time with your pet. They will think that is the best gift of all.

Holidays are a time to be joyful & thankful. We hope all of yours are beautiful!

Visit www.peteducation.com for more info

HOLIDAY TIP: Visitors

Some pets love visitors and behave very well. Others may be fearful or aggressive. Some puppies may urinate when meeting people. Still others may be too full of holiday cheer and over-exuberant. Plan for how your dog will react to visitors.

Some suggestions:

- Place your pets in a boarding kennel for the duration of the party **HINT: Space is limited. Book your holiday reservations at *Wintergreen early!***
- If your pet is staying at home, a quiet room away from the commotion with food & water available may be more comfortable.
- Brush up on some obedience training before the holidays. Be sure to inform your guests of "house rules" that pets should obey.

2 7/8 c. whole wheat flour
1/4 c. pecans
1 c. oatmeal
1/2 c. dried fruit*
3/4 c. milk
4 tbsp. margarine
1 egg

*your choice: apricots, bananas, apples, etc.

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Combine dry ingredients and gradually add milk, margarine and egg.

Knead until dough is formed. Roll dough to 1/4" thickness and cut with cookie cutters. Place cookies on an ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake 45 minutes.

Makes 1 1/2 dozen.

COPING WITH WINTER DEPRESSION

Fewer hours of day light mean fewer opportunities for outdoor exercise during the winter months. Energetic dogs who require lots of active play can become frustrated and depressed and this can lead to a variety of problem behaviors, from barking and howling, to chewing furniture or messing in the house. Giving your pet more attention and encouraging active play whenever possible can help.

GROOMING FOR WELLNESS

Wintertime can be tough on skin and hair – not just for humans, but for pets, as well. With windows closed and heaters on, low humidity indoors can make your pet's skin dry and itchy and can cause static electricity in his coat.

Weekly home maintenance can help to keep your pet comfortable and his skin and coat healthy all winter, according to pet grooming professionals. Regular shampooing can help prevent other problems as well. To set up an appointment or to speak with a Wintergreen groomer, call 562-9478.

OTHER WINTER SAFETY TIPS

Here are some other ways to "winter-safe" your pet:

- Beware of antifreeze – it is extremely poisonous and as little as a few teaspoonfuls can kill a small dog or a cat. Unfortunately, the chemical has a sweet taste that animals like, so it's critical to keep it out of reach and clean up even small amounts that drip onto the floor or driveway.
- Don't use metal water dishes outside; your pet's tongue could stick to the frozen metal. Purchase a non-freeze water bowl or use a heavy plastic dish and check the water several times a day to be certain it is not frozen.
- Remember that cats like to sleep under the hoods of cars in the winter. To avoid injuring your pet, always bang on the hood and wait a few seconds before starting the engine so your cat will have the chance to escape.

Congratulations, Elizabeth !

At the 2003 National Convention of the ABKA (American Boarding Kennels Association) held in Charleston, S.C., Elizabeth Powers, Wintergreen Kennel's Office Manager, was appointed Region 1 Regional Director. The region covers New England , New York and Eastern Canada .

As a director, Elizabeth 's responsibilities include organizing the ABKA spring regional meetings, providing support and communication between kennels in the region, attending the national director's meetings, and writing a regular column for the industry publication "Boarderline".

The ABKA has chosen well!

For more information on the ABKA, visit <http://www.abka.com/>

Happy Holidays!

