

Cocker Connection

www.cockerspanielrescue.com
www.petfinder.org/shelters/VA05.html

a semi-annual publication of
Oldies But Goodies Cocker Rescue
a non-profit group serving the Mid-Atlantic region

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I write this letter to all of you, I am riding in the passenger seat of my van on a day trip out of state with my family. I am typing this article on my laptop while simultaneously trying to break up the frequent arguments between my two teenagers, make phone calls for the rescue group, check my e-mail and worrying about all the things I forgot to do before I left the house. I am also thinking ahead to all the things I need to do in my paying job tomorrow and preparing myself for the "back-to-school crazies" that are fast approaching. In other words, I am having a typical multi-tasking day that is familiar to most volunteers. So, it seems fitting that my topic for this letter is "Why Volunteer?"

Volunteering often involves giving up the little free time most of us have available; however, it is more than just the time commitment. Rescue work involves the heart and soul of a person. Fosters are often asked, how do we say goodbye to the dogs after we get so attached to them? How do volunteers handle seeing the horrors at the shelters and how do they stand to transport dogs so dirty and stinky that they will never get the smells out of their cars? What motivates volunteers to spend many, many hours on administrative work each week until they are bleary eyed at night? What about the volunteers who take time out of their all too short weekends, to spend an afternoon holding dogs at shows or working fundraisers? Why do they do it? Is it a hobby or a passion?

I asked our volunteers to tell me why they volunteer and what it means to them personally. The obvious universal answer among all our volunteers is that they all love dogs. In addition, we all find it unconscionable that millions of animals are euthanized in animal shelters in this country each year and we share the belief that we can make a difference, one dog at a time. Still, it is more than that. Dogs are truly man and woman's best friend and we each know how much our lives are improved by having dogs in our lives. Dogs ask for so little from us, but give us so much. So, it becomes a passion to do what we can to right the

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PAWS IN THE PARK: AN ANNIVERSARY BASH TO REMEMBER!

OBG celebrated its 10th anniversary with "Paws in the Park" on Sunday, September 10th. More than 60 people and 40 dogs spent a fun-filled day at Shirlington Dog Park in Arlington, Virginia.



OBG alumni and other canine friends participated in a variety of activities. The crowd cheered the dogs on in such contests as bobbing for hotdogs, the 20-yard distraction dash, best kisser, most and least obedient, and best

dressed. Those looking for a more sedate activity enjoyed walks along the shady park path which served as Memory Lane, a path of posters reflecting the names of the 2000 dogs that have been saved by OBG over the past ten years.

Afternoon activities were highlighted by the alumni parade where all attendees were able to strut their stuff with their alumni, the blessing of the animals by The Reverend Anne-Marie Jeffery, and a ceremony to honor OBG volunteers and founder, Debbie Reitz.



In its first ten years, OBG has rescued more than 2,000 dogs. With the help of its dedicated volunteers and supporters, OBG looks forward to many more years of helping homeless cockers.

**WASHINGTON DC
METRO AREA ONLY:
COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN
DESIGNATION #7292**

COME SEE Us...

Here's where we will be in the upcoming weeks. Stop by and say "hello!" We love to see our alumni. Visit our website for times, addresses and directions. **Note:** Adoption events run from 12-3pm unless otherwise noted.

- Sept 30** Petsmart adoption show, 6535 Frontier Dr., Springfield
- Oct 7** Petsmart adoption show, 3351 Jefferson Davis Hwy, Alexandria
- Oct 7** Walk for Paws, 10am-3pm, Lake Elkhorn in Columbia
- Oct 14** 11-2pm Petsmart adoption show, 510D E Market St, Leesburg
- Oct 15** Petsmart adoption show, 2601 Housley Rd, Annapolis
- Oct 21** 9am-1pm, Donut sale fundraiser at the Walmart in Columbia, 6405 Dobbin Rd
- Oct 24** 7-9pm Bertucci pizza fundraiser, 6525 Frontier Dr, Springfield
- Oct 28** Petsmart adoption show, 6535 Frontier Dr, Springfield
- Oct 28** 5th Annual Halloween Barkin' Bash, Quiet Waters Dog Park, Annapolis
- Nov 4** Petsmart adoption show, 3351 Jefferson Davis Hwy, Alexandria
- Nov 11** 11am-2pm Petsmart adoption show, 510D East Market St, Leesburg
- Nov 11** Petsmart adoption show, 12020 Cherry Hill Road, Silver Spring
- Nov 11-12** Capitol City Cocker Club All-Breed AKC Agility Trials, Cedar Run Horse Ctr, Woodbridge
- Nov 14** 7-9pm Bertucci pizza fundraiser, 11301 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda
- Nov 18** Pet Valu adoption show, 6120 Rose Hill Dr, Alexandria
- Nov 18** Petsmart adoption show, 5154 Nicholson Lane, Rockville; concurrent bake sale
- Dec 2-3** Pet photos w/Santa location TBA
- Dec 10** Petsmart adoption show, 9041 Snowden Rd, Columbia
- Dec 9-10** Pet photos w/Santa location TBA
- Dec 16** Petsmart adoption show, 5154 Nicholson Lane, Rockville
- Dec 16-17** Pet photos w/Santa location TBA

Donation Form

Yes! I want to help the cocker spaniels financially! (OBG is tax deductible!) Your donation will enable us to save even more homeless animals. Your tax-deductible contributions will help provide veterinary care, food and a home to a defenseless animal.

\$20 \$50 \$100 \$200 Other _____

Please make checks payable to OBG. Fill out form and return to Oldies But Goodies Cocker Rescue • P.O. Box 361 • Newington, VA 22122-0361

Enclosed is my donation Please apply it to:

- Sammy's Fund for dogs with extreme medical needs
 OBG Wish List
 Charlotte Fund (for heartworm treatment of foster dogs)
 OBG kenneling fund (for dogs awaiting a foster spot)
 Donation in honor of or in memory of (circle one) a loved one: _____
 Sponsorship of a specific dog: _____

I want to volunteer. Please contact me.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Note: We are able to accept donations via credit card on our website: <www.cockerspanielrescue.com> Make a one time donation or make an automatic monthly donation to the cockers!

Thank you for helping those who are unable to help themselves

BERTUCCI'S

BRICK OVEN PIZZERIA

PIZZA PARTY FUNDRAISER:

BERTUCCI'S AND OBG

Invite you to an evening with great food, friends and prizes

Tuesday, October 24, 2006 7-9pm
6525 Frontier Drive Springfield, Va.

Tuesday, November 14, 2006 7-9pm
11301 Rockville Pike North Bethesda, Md.

For just \$16, you'll enjoy salad, rolls, non-alcoholic beverages, & assorted delicious pizzas.

(Cash bar available for alcoholic beverage purchases)

Best of all, a generous portion of the evening's proceeds go straight to the dogs in the care of OBG Cocker Spaniel Rescue!

Please RSVP to: Debbie Davenport (703) 628-2780

Hope to see you there!



A Raffle to Help OBG Cocker Spaniel Rescue

WIN A NEW YEAR'S EVE WEEKEND GETAWAY

Start off the New Year at a cozy, two story town-home nestled in the woods bordering National Forest.

Relax in front of the fire or soak in the hot tub on private back deck.

Located minutes from Timberline & Canaan Valley Ski Resorts in West Va.

December 29, 2006 - January 1, 2007

Tickets are on sale at adoption shows and through the mail:

\$5 for 2 tickets \$15 for 15 tickets
\$10 for 8 tickets \$20 for 40 tickets

For a virtual tour, visit

<http://www.canaanrealty.com/rentals.cfm?func=detail&unitid=219>

To order your tickets by mail, please make out a check to "OBG Cocker Rescue", fill out the form below and mail to: OBG New Year's Eve Weekend Getaway Raffle c/o Susan Arango, 10163 Marshall Pond Road, Burke, Va. 22015

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone # _____ E-mail Address: _____

Number of tickets: _____

We will e-mail you your ticket numbers and announce the winning ticket numbers on website. We will also call the purchaser of the winning ticket. Drawing will be held on December 2, 2006.

This generous package was donated by a thoughtful volunteer.

ANNUAL CFC DRIVE IS ON!

It's CFC time again and OBG volunteers are visiting Federal agencies to spread the word about the work we do and the lives we save. CFC stands for Combined Federal Campaign and it is a charity drive conducted by the Federal Government. The CFC is a major fundraiser for OBG. Without it, we wouldn't be able to save nearly as many dogs as we do.

OBG volunteers actually bring dogs to the CFC drives at the various agencies. This has been a fun and effective way to show Federal employees first-hand the type of dogs we rescue. The employees love to play with our dogs at these events and OBG always has a popular table with employees lining up to pet a cute cocker spaniel.

OBG is organization #7292 in the Washington metro area CFC booklet. Since we are an all-volunteer organization, virtually all of the money you pledge through the CFC goes directly to pay for the care of the dogs.

Employees who are eligible to give to OBG through the CFC are those who work in the National Capital Area. The specific definition of that area is provided on our website, but basically it includes Washington DC and its surrounding counties in Virginia and Maryland.

If you're a federal employee, please give to OBG. If you'd like to help staff an event at your agency, let us know by email at cspanielrescue1@aol.com.



OBG volunteer Jim Mich and "Winnie" spoke with interested employees at a past DOT CFC fair.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

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wrongs in a society that treats animals as disposable property instead of living beings with feelings.

The good news is that volunteering is not all about sacrificing and heartbreak. In fact, it is just the opposite. By and large, volunteers spoke to me about the wonderful friendships they have formed not only with other volunteers, but also with adopters. Volunteers have fun working the fundraisers and enjoy spending time with other volunteers at the adoption shows. Many volunteers told me that their volunteer work is an escape from other stressful areas of their lives and how good they feel doing their volunteer work. In fact, volunteers become addicted to the feeling of making a difference in the lives of the dogs we rescue.

There are so many volunteers who play a part in the rescue of each dog, from the person who makes the intake decision, to the transporter, the volunteers who work with the kennelled dogs until they are fostered and of course, the fosters themselves. Then there are all the "behind the scenes" volunteers who help to save each dog's life by keeping our webpage running, answering phones and e-mails and doing other work involved with the day-to-day operations of our group. It is not only the foster parents that give a piece of their heart to each dog in the group, but all the other volunteers as well. Each time a dog finds that perfect forever home, there is a wonderful joy felt by all the volunteers who helped to save that dog's life. So many volunteers told me this feeling is truly a "natural high" guaranteed to lift the spirit in a way that nothing else can compare to. Not only do we see the happy ending for the dog that has been placed, but we know we now have room to save another dog's life, so the joy is doubled.

Volunteers also told me how much they learn from the dogs we save. Dogs teach us how to love unconditionally, how size and age really do not matter, how to forgive the small things, how to overcome obstacles big and small and how to be more assertive about what we want. They help us learn how to accept change, how to let go when we want to hold on and how to grieve for those that are gone and allow ourselves to heal. Finally, they teach us how to enjoy life's journey, not just the destination.

Volunteers understand that some people have more time than others to volunteer and that no matter what you do or how much time you commit to rescue, you are making a difference in the lives of those you help to save. In the end, the wagging tails and the kisses are the best rewards. What more could anyone want?

Teresa Butler, OBG president

**COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN
DESIGNATION #7292**

WHAT IS "RESCUE"?

This year has been a difficult year for our OBG family as we have lost 15 dogs to various illnesses while they were still in foster care. In a period of two months, the OBG family said goodbye to the very young, Cupcake, and to the very old like long-term foster, Doogie. We also said goodbye to Stella, Sampson, Ginger, Christy, Bridgette, Brittany, Spencer, Winslow, Riley, Chelsea and Millie. Earlier this year, there was another dog named Spencer who passed on to the Rainbow Bridge way too early in his life. The reasons they died were varied. Little Cupcake couldn't overcome the distemper she had caught while at the shelter. Others lost their battle to diseases such as cancer, heart disease and autoimmune disorders. In some cases, age just caught up to them and they no longer had any quality of life. OBG did all we could to treat these dogs, but in the end there was nothing more we could do.

This led to a discussion at a recent Board meeting about how we were all grieving this loss of life. As we talked, we started thinking about what rescue means to each and every one of us. Does rescue always mean finding a forever home for a dog? Or is it more? In the cases of the dogs that died in foster care this year, I truly believe they were rescued even if they were not adopted. They were all loved very much by the volunteers that cared for them and they were happy to be with their foster families. The grief felt by their foster parents when they died was as strong as it would have been if their foster families had adopted them. Surely, it was better for the dogs to have their final moments surrounded by people who loved them rather than being put to sleep at a shelter while feeling scared and alone, dying before their time. So, our conclusion was that in the end, these dogs had all been rescued even if fate interceded before they were adopted.

Soon after this Board meeting, I asked the OBG volunteers to tell me what rescue means to them. I found the responses to be thoughtful, caring and inspiring. I'd like to share some of those responses with you at this time. Rescue means taking dogs that have been discarded or lost and helping them to learn to trust people again. It also means taking in dogs who have been loved very much, but whose prior families can no longer keep them due to circumstances

beyond their control. These people want to know their faithful friends will be taken care of and will not end up at animal shelters. As rescuers, it is both our duty and our honor to help those dogs as well as the dogs who have been abandoned at animal shelters.

Rescue is a belief that animals are all living beings with the right to a life, even if they are older, perhaps not in perfect health or if they have special needs such as being blind or deaf. Rescue means understanding that these animals can still be wonderful, loving, faithful companions even if they are no longer "perfect." Rescue means providing love and care for the dogs from the minute they are taken in by OBG and it means being committed to providing that love and care for as long as the dogs are part of OBG's family.

Rescue is an understanding that not all dogs have had the privilege of living in homes where they were not only cared for, but where they also received the training necessary to make them enjoyable companions to their families. Some have never been housebroken and some have never even lived indoors. Some need socialization so they are not frightened of new people and others need to learn that people no longer want to hurt them. These dogs know no better than the way they have been living, so rescue means teaching them their household manners so that they will be able to transition to forever homes.

Rescue also means doing our best to find loving, caring forever homes for each and every OBG dog and trying to place the right dog in the right home. It's the joy of finding the perfect match between foster dog and a forever home and the sorrow of saying goodbye to a dog that you've come to love as much as you love your own four-legged companions. Lastly, rescue sometimes means giving an animal a safe and loving place to live out whatever time remains for their life and when the time comes, allowing them to leave this earth with dignity and a promise to see them one day at the Rainbow Bridge.

So you see, even if a volunteer does not foster or has a foster that never makes it to adoption, it's the rescue itself that is most important. As part of the OBG family, volunteers all play an important role in assisting dogs, not just through adoption, but with love and support to all that come our way.

Teresa Butler

IN MEMORIAM

Foster dogs:

Spencer, Cupcake, Chelsea, Brittany, Stella, Sampson, Riley, Winslow, Doogie, Milly, Spencer, Ginger Dog, Bridgette, Christy, Gino

Adopted friends and alumni:

Dijon (aka "D") Rambo, Sarah Kahl, Trixie Lee, Penny Polk, Lucy Butler, Duchess Coleman, Princess Jennings, Delilah Gill, Agatha Kostelnick, Leiba Robinson



10TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ITEMS

We still have a few t-shirts, frisbees, and calculators left over from the Paws in the Park party.

If you are interested in getting a commemorative item, ask at an adoption event or email us at csanielprescue1@aol.com

EARS TO YOU!

OBG extends a big THANK YOU to Happy Tails Dog Spa for boarding some of our dogs that don't yet have foster homes. Happy Tails first offered space at their Tyson's Corner, VA doggy daycare and overnight boarding facility in early 2005. In the Spring of this year, when OBG was in danger of having to turn away dogs due to the lack of a place to house them, Happy Tails stepped up and offered OBG space at their new North Bethesda, MD (near White Flint) location. Without this help from Happy Tails, many dogs would have died because OBG would not have had the space to save them.

Special thanks go to Happy Tails owner, Amy Nichols, for offering space to board OBG cockers. We'd also like to thank Happy Tails' employees Joye, Kat, and Susanne who give our dogs lots of love and good care. They make sure the dogs get medications and special food as needed, bring medical and other needs to our attention, and provide temperament testing. Because of all their efforts, there are lots of wagging, happy tails among OBG's cockers!

Happy Tails has locations at 8528-F Tyco Road, Tyson's Corner, VA 22182 and 4920 Wyaconda Road, North Bethesda, MD 20852. For information on their services and additional locations, visit their website at www.happytailsdogspa.com.

—Lynne Bettinger, OBG volunteer

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: POOH

Susanne (who goes by Susan) Dennis met Pooh at Happy Tails Dog Spa in North Bethesda, Md. Pooh arrived there to board about the same time Susan started working at Happy Tails. It was love at first sight. "No other dog on this planet has that face," she said. Pooh and another OBG rescue, Sunny, soon joined Susan's family.

Pooh traveled a long way to find his forever home with Susan. The more than 10-year-old buff boy started his rescue adventure at a high-kill animal shelter in Kentucky last April. Dumped there by his owners, the staff fell for those big, brown eyes and worked hard to get him out. He was taken in by Indiana cocker rescue. Although they didn't have room for Pooh, they gave him his first treatment for heartworms and housed him until he could be transported to OBG. A wonderful rescuer brought Pooh to OBG as she was on her way to visit her granddaughter at college in North Carolina.

Today, Pooh is living the good life with Susan, her husband Michael, daughter Lea, and Lea's boyfriend, Milton. He also shares his home with three other dogs: fellow OBG alum Sunny, another cocker named Koko, and Hope the beagle. At first, Pooh wasn't sure what to expect. He left Happy Tails to go home with Susan then returned to Happy Tails the next day, but it didn't take long for him to figure out the routine. He goes to work at Happy Tails with Susan every day where he plays and lounges with the other dogs.



At home, Pooh enjoys playing with his green ball. He loves to roll on it, making happy little growling sounds all the while. When he's not playing with his ball, he likes to watch television with his mom. He barks with the dogs on the "Dog Whisperer" and barks and runs to the door when sirens sound on "Animal Cops Houston."

He also brings much joy to his family, both humans and canines. On his first day at home, he spied a "strange dog" in the full-length bedroom mirror. He tried to chase that dog and pushed the mirror with his nose, desperately trying to sniff it, all to no avail. His family laughed and laughed at his antics. Pooh has proved, too, that you can teach an old dog new tricks; he learned to give a "high five" in less than ten minutes. But Pooh is not all fun and games; he has a sensitive side, too. When the still wet Koko began to shiver after her bath, Pooh and Hope snuggled up to warm her.

In less than six months, Pooh has gone from a sick, unwanted older dog to a loved and loving member of his new family. Pooh gives a big high five to his new life and all the people who made it possible.

—Lynne Bettinger

Do you have one of our "Oldies But Goodies" (ages 8 and up) living in YOUR home? Send us your stories: Senior Spotlight, OBG Cocker Connection, PO Box 361, Newington, VA 22122

ORDER THE 2007 OBG COCKER CALENDAR RIGHT AWAY!!!

The competition for pictures of "The Sweetest Things" for our 2007 calendar has concluded and did we get some GREAT entries! We changed our layout this year to get more pictures in! We think you'll love it! We are taking orders for the calendars now. Cost is \$10.50 per calendar. All proceeds from calendar sales go directly back to taking care of OBG dogs. To order, complete the form below and mail to the address shown. We'll begin shipping orders in late October. THANK YOU!!!!

2007 OBG COCKER CALENDAR ORDER FORM

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

Quantity of 2007 OBG Cocker calendar(s) to be ordered _____

Cost of each calendar \$10.50

Subtotal _____

Shipping (\$2.00 for your first calendar, FREE for additional calendars) \$ 2.00

Christmas Plan option (cost is \$2.50 per calendar. See description below) _____

Total due (please submit check with order payable to Oldies But Goodies Cocker Rescue) _____

mail form to:
OBG Cocker Rescue
P.O. Box 361
Newington, VA 22122-0361

Holiday Plan Option: Would you like to order calendars as holiday gifts and have us mail them directly to the recipient? We'll start shipping holiday order calendars the first week of December with a holiday card acknowledging your gift. Calendars will be shipped in an envelope with a holiday motif. We'll send you a card advising that the gift has been shipped. Complete the area below and OBG will take care of the rest.

Gift Recipient's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

LYMES DISEASE-ARE YOU OR YOUR PET AT RISK?

Lymes Disease (LD) is becoming a more frequently diagnosed problem in both pets and humans. This article will give you information on what the disease is, how it is treated and, most importantly, what you can do to minimize the risk to you and your furry family members.

What is Lymes disease? LD is caused by *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which is a microscopic bacterium that appears in coiled or corkscrew shapes under the microscope. LD can be a devastating disease, causing a fever, headache, skin rash (called Erythema Migrans) and arthritis. The skin rash usually occurs within 3-30 days of the bite and gradually expands over the following days. The rash can get up to 12 inches wide. Left untreated, the infection can spread to joints, the heart and nervous system. Even more devastating is the fatal form of kidney disease (called *Glomerulonephritis*) that can result from LD. The most endemic areas for LD are the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions of the U.S. LD got its name in 1975 when the first cases were identified in Lyme, Connecticut.

Who is at risk? Both you and your pet can get LD. Although it is diagnosed far less frequently in cats, they are still susceptible to the disease as well as dogs, skunks, birds and other small animals. Twelve states within the US account for 95% of the LD cases reported in 2002. These states include; Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin. The only states where LD was not reported to be present in 2002 were Hawaii, Montana and Oklahoma.

How is LD transmitted? The bacterium normally lives in animals such as mice, squirrels, voles and some other small animals. These animals are immune to the effects of the bacteria and otherwise live healthy lives. LD is transmitted from one of these animals by way of a vector (meaning it is carried from one host to another via a carrier). In the northeastern and north central US states the vector is the Black-legged tick (aka "deer tick"). In the Pacific coastal states of the US, the tick species is the Western black-legged tick. These ticks have a two year life span and three feeding stages: larvae, nymph, and adult. During the adult stage of the tick's life, the tick is no bigger than the head of a pin. It is the nymph stage that is most dangerous for transmission of LD, as this is the time where the tick is most active and feeds more frequently.

A tick will feed on an animal that has the bacteria, and the tick will become



infected. Then the tick will drop off and pick another animal (perhaps you or your pet) to feed on next. It is during this process that the bacteria leaves the host and infects the next victim. There have been no cases of LD being transmitted through a blood transfusion and there is no evidence LD can be spread person-to-person, infected animal to animal, or animal to person. You can't get LD from eating venison or squirrel meat.



What are the symptoms in your dog? The first noticeable symptom is usually the rash, which can be hard to detect in a dog covered in fur. Other things to look for include: limping (75% of the time the limp is seen in a front leg), joint-pain, arthritic-type symptoms, a high fever, lethargy, and swollen lymph nodes. In just 2-3 days the pain in joints of the animal can become so severe the animal cannot even walk.

How is LD treated? Treatment for a positive test is most often a three week course of antibiotics (such as Tetracycline, Doxycycline, or Amoxicillin). People and pets that have been treated for LD are discouraged from donating blood for 6 months after completion of medication. Over 90% of dogs treated within one week of obvious symptoms will respond well to treatment. The earlier you begin treatment the more successful you and your pet will be against developing life long complications or relapses.

What can you do to prevent LD? Although nothing is 100% effective, you can greatly reduce your chances of becoming infected. There are inexpensive treatments that you can purchase from your veterinarian which repel both fleas and ticks. We strongly encourage all dog owners to discuss these alternatives with their vets. In addition, humans can use insect repellent when outdoors in areas where ticks may be lurking. You can also decrease your chances of being bitten by an infected tick by reducing the environment where ticks thrive. Mow your grass frequently and be cautious where you and your dog walk. If you are in a wooded or tall grass area, look for ticks when you get back home and remove ticks from both people and pets promptly. If your dog will be frequently exposed to wooded areas or other areas where ticks thrive, you may want to discuss the Lymes vaccination with your veterinarian. Most importantly, get your pets tested annually. Most vets can perform a dual heartworm/LD test, so no extra blood sample is needed.

By being aware and careful, you can reduce your chances of getting this ever spreading disease. If you or your pet test positive, get treated. The sooner you receive treatment, the better.

Kimberly Kidwell, OBG Board member

COCKER ANGEL, JOAN CHRISTY

Joan Christy—aka "Happy Tails Mom"—is a jack of many trades with OBG. Not only does Joan attend adoption events, but she is always there to help with a necessary transport. In fact, she has spent so much time at Happy Tails, transporting for OBG, that this is how she got her nickname.

She first got involved with OBG by transporting "Charlie Boy" from Hybla to a vet in Woodbridge, and from there her role has increased. Joan also helps by letting her alumni, Frisby, participate in the kissing booth fundraising events. Although she has only been a volunteer for a little over a year, she has become invaluable in helping to place dogs in their forever homes. She even has taken on doing homechecks.

Joan feels she gets back as much as she receives, in talking to potential adopters at events, to learning more about the breed, and dogs in general. OBG was able to help Joan become familiar with the DC area and meet fellow dog lovers after she moved here in 2003.

"I try to make a difference to each dog I come in contact with" is Joan's motto, giving each dog she transports or holds at an adoption event unconditional love. While Joan may feel she is getting more than she receives, the love and attention she gives to the group and dogs cannot be measured.

Joan and her dog Frisby recently had their picture in the Washington Post, while Frisby was "manning" the kissing booth, proud mama holding tight. It's still not certain who enjoyed the event more; Joan or Frisby.

Kimberly Kidwell, OBG Board member

SUPPORT OBG — COMMISSION A PORTRAIT



One of our long-time supporters (and creator of the beautiful sketch depicted here) has offered to support OBG with her artwork.

For a \$50 donation to Oldies But Goodies, Christine Walters of Chesapeake, VA will generate pen and ink drawings of cockers (or other pets) from photographs.

For more information, or to commission a portrait, contact Christine directly at 757-482-9967.

DO YOU GET OUR MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER?

SUBSCRIBE ON OUR WEBSITE

TAILWAGGER TIDBITS

Hopefully everyone has worked hard to master the tricks from our last issue. If you haven't, you'll need to refresh your memory and brush up on your skills as well as those of your pooch before you start to learn these crowd pleasin' favorites!

Last issue we learned "Give Your Paw" or "Shake" and "High Five." Now we're going to learn "Wave" and everyone is encouraged to work on an old basic, the "Down, Stay" in preparation for what we'll learn in upcoming tidbits articles.

"Wave" is relatively easy to teach your pooch provided that you've obtained some proficiency with "High Five." Teaching wave requires little more than putting your dog in a basic sit position and warming him/her up with a few quick high fives. Once they've refreshed their memory of how to raise their paw up high, begin the motion with your hand lowered and as you raise your hand up to resemble a waving motion, tell your pooch to "WAVE." It's important to remember that you need to show your dog your hand but try not to allow him/her to actually touch it as in the high five move. You want your wave to be a simple, fluid up and down motion in hopes that your pooch will mirror or mimic your hand motions.

When you begin, you will likely find that your pooch tries to scoot toward you to actually touch your hand as in the high five. If this is the case, you want to be sure to reward and praise him/her as soon as any motion similar to a wave is achieved! Be sure to provide tasty treats and lots of praise when attempting this new trick and remember that it will take practice, practice, and more practice to become proficient.

As your pooch begins to freely raise his/her paw for the wave command, you'll need to increase the level of difficulty by creating some distance between you and your furry friend. As you do, remember that doing so may cause some confusion for your pooch so be patient! If he/she begins to make a lot of mistakes, close the gap to re-enforce the basics of the trick.

Always remember that training your pooch should be a fun, positive experience and sessions should never end on a negative note. If you see your pooch begin to lose interest you should end your session on a successful note and try again later. Don't forget to work on the "Down, Stay" for next issue and happy training!

Sandra D. Coffman

A VIEW FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF INTAKE

Many of OBG's dogs come from "kill shelters". It would be easy to blame the shelters for not giving these wonderful dogs a better chance, but having volunteered at a shelter in Texas, I can say it's more complicated than that. I prefer the view that the shelter should be the first step for a homeless animal, not the last. Groups like OBG can play a big role in reducing euthanasia, both for cockers and the animals that will take their place in the kennel run.

As the volunteer who put all the shelter's animals on Petfinder.com, I was acutely aware of the problems inherent in a city-run shelter. I updated my list weekly, and I made a point of asking what happened to the dogs that were "gone". One day I came in to update my Petfinder list, and found that almost all the dogs on my list were "gone". The reason? The animal control officers picked up 12 dogs in one day, and they had to make room for them. A city or county shelter has to take in any animal, whether given to them, found by them, abandoned by an owner, or involved with a criminal case. The amount of time they had to keep the animals was often dictated by law, meaning that when a new dog or cat came in, the only way to make room was to euthanize an animal from the adoption area. When 12 dogs come in, they just can't build 12 new kennels. Euthanasia is the only way.

For awhile, we had a kind-hearted shelter manager who doubled up animals rather than euthanize. The result was a distemper epidemic that doomed them all anyway. I've now come to believe that rescue groups are really the only solution for reducing euthanasia in shelters.

I started calling rescue groups (on my own nickel) to help ease crowding at the shelter, but the manager was wary of letting the animals go outside of our jurisdiction, and none of these groups had volunteers in our area. Unfortunately, they rarely came through for us. Purebreds were generally more adoptable than mutts, and during slow periods, a dog might be in the adoption area for months. One of my favorite dogs, an adolescent male dalmatian, developed kennel stress and had to be put down. We lost an entire litter of puppies to parvo. I yanked a blind, elderly toy poodle from Death Row and then fostered her myself. I'd called breed rescues for these dogs and many others, but time and time again I'd get

the answer, "Sorry, we don't have enough fosters". Sometimes they even said "The need here in San Antonio/Houston/Austin/Dallas is so great we can't pull dogs from San Marcos". As I watched these tragedies unfold, I realized just being "adoptable" didn't save a purebred from euthanasia.

Even worse, many dogs were adopted merely because they were purebred. When I realized our purebreds were going to homes that weren't prepared for their special health, grooming, or temperament needs, while lovable healthy mutts were being overlooked, I doubled my effort to find breed rescue groups to help us. There was only one group that came through for some of our deserving dogs. German Shepherd rescue of Houston took several of our dogs, and I remember one case in particular where I negotiated for a "deadline": Prince was a small boy with a great temperament but a severe ear infection. The shelter manager told me they couldn't afford to give him more treatment and they wanted to end his suffering. I begged for a week to find a rescue to take him, and they agreed. It took Houston GSD rescue that entire week to find a foster home and transporter to give Prince the chance he deserved.

Now that I'm volunteering with OBG, I realize that behind the scenes there was probably a flurry of e-mails telling his story and saying his time would be up soon. I wonder now if those volunteers understood what that meant. Shelter life is unpredictable. Deadlines for a dog are fluid. If Prince had been waiting for his foster home the week the ACOs had taken in 12 dogs, none of their e-mails would have mattered. His deadline was provisional. Prince's wonderful temperament, my willingness to call on his behalf, and the rescue group's good reputation were the reasons the shelter was willing to give him an extension.

When the call goes out to OBG to rescue a dog 3 hours away, I sometimes think of Prince and the other dogs that went to Houston—and the nameless dogs that got a second chance because a kennel opened up when they needed it. My current foster, Kami, would definitely have been euthanized in San Marcos, but luckily when the call went out to OBG, we said "yes".

Amy Edmonds
in memory of Darla's puppies and the other purebreds that weren't rescued

DOGS ADOPTED MAR '06 THRU SEPT '06

The following dogs recently found homes ... our "brag" list:

Pugsley	Chance	Soloman	Spanky	Snoopy	Beau	Trevor	Hooper	Emmie	Willie)	Jack	Boots
Baxter	Sonny	Willy	Mindy	Lexie	Ellie Mae	Donnie	Lanny,	Midnight	Sundance	Marcus	Mike (now
Hendrix	Frisby	Toby	Bridgette	Dusty	(now Kiley)	Lizzie	Mindy	Pooh	Lady2	Brody	Cocoa)
Wilbur	Daisy	Willow	Jordana	Gianni	Gordon	Benny	Molly	Robbie	Charlie	Phoebe	Cocoa (now
Penny	Jango	Misti	Bonita	Rocky	Sammy	McDuff	Penny	Rocky 3	Misty	Bailey	Frodo)
Wynn-Dixie	Lady 2	Maggie 2	Barney	Nicky	Shelby	Muffy	Sebastian	Rufus	Alex	Freeaway	Duke2
Mickey	Maggie 4	Lennox	Jamie	Peaches	Austin	Sparky	Skipper	Steeley	Pip	Harley2	Fudgie
Copper	Shenandoah	Lindsey	Daisy	Rocky2	Evee	Brandy	Caroline (now	Sunny	Max	Jack2	Lucky (now
Scruffy	Neeco	McGruff	Pebbles	Tom	Lacie	Cubby	Sophie)	Zoe	Mookie	Jill	Luc)
Janie	Ziggy	Ritchie	Banjo	AJ	Madison	Daisy	Jazzie	Cookie	Tuxedo	Phoebe	Lucy2
							Beau	Cooper	Bernie	Wendy	Mackie
							Brody 2	Fred	Fred	Boone (now	Oreo
							Chocko	Huey (now	Ranger	Teddy)	

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Address correction requested

FLIGHT OF AN ANGEL

by Pam Thiess

*I remember the day that you came.
So unhappy, your eyes cast down in shame.
Why would someone give you up?
They'd had you since you were a pup.*

*What would your story be, sweet one?
Did your family grow tired of the doggie fun?
Or maybe you just got old and gray,
No longer moved fast, and just got in the way.*

*You were so scared, so unsure,
As the person that you loved left you at the door.
I called you by name, told you it would be all right;
I put my arms around your neck and held you so tight.*

*As time went on and I earned your trust,
Manners and training were a must.
And I know that we made quite a pair.
Another page turns in foster care.*

*Not every day was hearts and flowers, you know this much is true,
But as a team we kept on trying and saw it all the way through.
We spent much time chasing demons; consistency was the key.
But little did I realize I needed you as much as you needed me.*

*The time has come, my precious one, look how much you've grown.
There's a family who wants a dog to love for their very own.
You have to move on, as another needs your space.
I know you are ready now, the wag of your tail,
that smile on your face.*

*I took notes and pictures, right from the start.
But the best memory I have of you is etched deeply in my heart.
I will not say goodbye, as that is forever.
Our bond is special, I'll forget you never.
So spread your wings, my precious one, the world is waiting for you.
Soar high, and fly, and begin your life anew.*

A copy of Oldies But Goodies Cocker Rescue, Inc.'s financial statement is available upon request from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Division of Consumer Affairs; 1100 Bank Street, Suite 100; Richmond, VA 23219.

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JULIE: REBIRTH OF A SENIOR DOG



Julie is a senior gal who came to us last winter in horrible shape. She had been picked up as a stray in Southwestern Virginia. As her first foster, I was told she was middle-aged, but boy that did not compute. She was missing hair on her throat area, was very bedraggled, was obviously pretty deaf, her eyes were all cloudy, and she did not appear to be housebroken. She could barely move at times and the stairs were a real challenge. She limped

much of the time. She looked old and acted old.

We got her started at the vets with some of the basics, including a good look at her ears (horrible), eyes (cloudy), and urine. The eyes were a simple fix, just requiring drops for dry eye, a common condition in our senior dogs. The ears required medication, but her hearing had already been affected. And Julie was housebroken once the urinary tract infection was wiped out. She also got some baths and a grooming. Julie started perking up but she still had that persistent limp and the missing hair. At first the vet thought the limp was arthritis, but then one of our more experienced volunteers suggested a Lyme test and that ended up being the cause of the limp. Lastly, we realized she had a yeast infection in both ears and skin and started treating it.

Some things cleared up fast: the eyes only took a matter of weeks and they looked clear again. The limp disappeared with the Lyme treatment. The ears continue to challenge us, as they are probably the result of many years of neglect. But all these vet visits and treatments sure have resulted in a different and much happier dog. Julie scampers around now, running to catch up when there is dinner in the offing. Her coat has filled out, her eyes are clear, and she pulls on the leash. She is very affectionate with her foster mom, butting up against her to make sure she gets her loving. She even occasionally tosses a toy around, something I thought we would never see. And she is thoroughly enjoying life now in her current foster home with Shayne, her cocker foster buddy, and family.

Life is looking good for this middle aged to older cocker as her health has improved and she is feeling good. There is only one thing left to make it more perfect—a home she can call her own. Utter perfection would be a home with Shayne, her buddy.

Marilyn Kessinger, OBG MD/DC coordinator