

The Dog Guardian

Newsletter for Responsible Dog Owners of Canada



WINTER 2018



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Highlights by Julie More

We have a couple of fun articles for you. One lists some indoor activities for your dogs, and the other is about New Year's resolutions.

Our dogs, like us, are getting older. Just like some of us, they may experience dementia. They may suffer from Canine Cognitive Dysfunction, which is the doggie version of Alzheimer's Disease. The article gives you a brief explanation of this condition.

The Kid's section talks about our new monthly Kid's edition of the 'Dog Guardian' newsletter, aimed at the 3 to 8 year old age group, and written by our famous four-legged authors, Tyler and Morgan. They want to give the kids their perspective of being responsible around dogs.

We would like to thank all our sponsors who donated to the 2nd annual 'Take your owner for a walk and support RDOC' fundraiser. We raised \$625.00. You guys are all wonderful.

Enjoy the newsletter



Board News



The board has been busy as usual. Here is a summary of events since the last newsletter, and some we are working on:

- ✦ Running the 2nd annual 'Take your owner for a walk and support RDOC' fundraiser
- ✦ Organizing the park clean-ups
- ✦ Developing a 20-minute presentation for nursery school children (2 to 4 year olds) on 'How to be safe around dogs while having fun'
- ✦ Redoing our brochure to include our new projects
- ✦ Looking at more fundraiser ideas

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our volunteers and donors for helping out with all our fundraising and educational activities. We couldn't have done any of the activities without your help.

Indoor fun with your dog by Julie More

Brrrr! It's freezing outside. Your puppy definitely needs some indoor entertainment. We briefly touched on this subject in our Fall newsletter in the 'Safety tips for winter' section <http://www.responsible-dog-owners.ca/newsletters.html>. We referred to Jen Gabbard's article '33 Simple Ways to Keep Your Dog Busy Indoors' <https://www.puppleaks.com/easy-ways-to-keep-your-dog-busy-indoors/>

The first one on the list is 'Play Find The Treats With Your Dog'. Both my dogs loved this game. It was way too easy for Nellie, my smart Australian Shepherd, so I made the game harder by getting her to sit and stay in the kitchen. I hid a cookie in one of the bedrooms. I then released her with the command, "Go find it", and she did!

The 2nd one on the list is 'Play the Shell Game With Your Dog'. Nellie did really well. Tyler, my black lab, not so good. However Tyler does very well with the 3rd activity on the list 'Teach Your Dog to Clean Up His Toys'. He is my little helper!

In the article '12 Rainy Day Entertainment Ideas To Keep Your Dog Busy' (by Melina Giakas) <https://barkpost.com/life/12-rainy-day-entertainment-ideas-for-dogs/> Melina talks about Tyler's favourite event. He loves it when I schedule a puppy play date. However, he tells me that he is an older, more mature dog, so he prefers me calling it a dog play date! Just invite a few of your dog's favourite four legged friends and the party is on. It's a good idea to make sure the dogs get along and all of them are house trained.



Here are some suggestions in the '8 Awesome Indoor Activities for Dogs and Their Humans' article: <https://www.rover.com/blog/awesome-indoor-dog-activities/>

'Brush up on your fancy tricks' – yep, a definite favourite pastime in my house. Tyler learned to roll over, back up and shake a paw, plus many other tricks during those cold winter days.

'Obstacle course' takes a little creativity on my part, but Tyler loves it. We practise at home, weaving in between chairs, under tables, over cushions, and so on.

'10 Fun Games to Play With Your Dog' by Jen Gabbard <https://www.puppyleaks.com/games/> suggests teaching your dog to chase bubbles. That's a new one to me. It looked very interesting as I read on. She says "If your dog doesn't know how to chase bubbles start by blowing a couple at a time. Point them out to them and encourage them to chase. Catch some yourself to show your dog that there's nothing to worry about, and that the whole point of the game is to get them before they touch the ground."

'Play a Game of Hide & Seek' is another good game. Get your dog to sit and stay. Go hide. Call your dog. See how long it will take him to find you.

Another article from Jen, '10 Simple and Fun Indoor Games For Your Dog' <https://positively.com/contributors/10-simple-and-fun-indoor-games-for-your-dog/> talks about another of Tyler's favourite games, the 'Which Hand Game'. I hide a treat in one of my hands and hold both of my fists in front of him and ask "Which hand has the treat?" He touches one of my fists with his nose. I open my fist. If the treat is in that hand he eats it. If not, then he tries again. It's a great game.

These are some of the games to keep you and your puppy busy during those freezing winter days. There are lots more ideas on the internet. Enjoy your special time with your pup.

New Year's resolutions for dog owners by Julie More



Ok, every year I make New Year's resolutions for myself, but never before made them for my dog. I guess there is always a first time! To get some suggestions I went on the web. The article '11 New Year's Resolutions for Dog Owners' <https://simplyfordogs.com/dog-owner/11-new-years-resolutions-dog-owners/> mentions one of the things Tyler would love me to do, namely set up more doggie play dates for him. Another goal I am setting is to teach Tyler more tricks. He loves to learn. He can sit, down, back up, roll over, pick up things I drop and give them back to me. It's time to teach him 'shake a paw', 'crawl' and other fun tricks.

The article 'Top 10 New Years Resolutions for Dog Owners' <https://jetpetresort.com/blog/pet-tips/top-10-new-years-resolutions-for-dog-owners/> talks about updating your dog's ID information. Good idea. Tyler is 11 years old now, and the last time I updated his info was when he was 2 years

old. This task is certainly on my list to do. Taking your dog for regular walks, grooming him every day, and not feeding him table food are some of the other suggestions in the article.

I like number 6 in the 'Top 6 New Year's Resolutions for Dog Owners' article on http://www.thedogdaily.com/ca/happy/seasonal_happy/new_years_resolutions_dogs/index.html. It talks about helping yourself while helping your pet. In short, the author writes "While you're making resolutions that will benefit your dog, why not think about yourself too?" For example, starting a savings account for your pet so you can afford the vet bills when he gets sick. Another one is to sort through his toys and put away or give away the ones he isn't playing with any more.

The one I really like is 'Do a good deed: Consider taking in a foster dog', or if you live in Ottawa consider becoming a puppy walker for guide dogs <http://www.guidedogs.ca/puppywalking.php>. It's lots of fun. I have puppy walked 3 puppies. The guide puppy moves into your house for about 15 months. Like the guide dog website says, 'The Puppy Walkers socialize the puppies, which are mainly golden retrievers and Labrador retrievers, to as many different, everyday environments as possible.'

'10 New Year's Resolutions For Dog Owners' by Kristina Lotz <https://iheartdogs.com/10-new-years-resolutions-for-dog-owners> has great suggestions. I really like the section about dogs' body language. Kristina says "Learning your dog's body language can really help you understand your dog better and strengthen your bond – not to mention making training easier. You expect him to learn your language, shouldn't you learn his?" This knowledge also comes in very handy when you meet dogs on the street, especially if they are off leash.

Kristina's resolution of taking a picture a day of your dog is a good idea. However, in my case I am modifying that to taking a picture a week.

Here is my list of New Year's Resolutions: teaching tricks to Tyler, taking more pictures of him, and updating his ID information. Three resolutions I can manage! Let me know what your New Year's Resolutions are. Email me at morejulie@hotmail.com.

Dog Dementia by Julie More

Hmmm! I wonder if my dog has dementia? Something like Alzheimer's in people? He sure looks confused at times, as if he has forgotten what he was about to do. I decided to do some research. There are lots of articles on the internet.

One of the first articles I came across was '7 Things to Know About Canine Dementia' <https://simplyfordogs.com/canine-dementia/7-things-to-know-about-canine-dementia/> According to the article '...cognitive dysfunction in a dog could even go as far as to develop into the doggie version of Alzheimer's or dementia, called CDD (canine cognitive dysfunction).'

The article 'Dog Dementia: What Are the Symptoms and Treatment?'

<https://www.rover.com/blog/canine-cognitive-dysfunction-major-symptoms/> explains that 'In the dog's brain, the protein beta-amyloid accumulates, creating protein deposits called plaques. Some articles refer to this as cognitive dysfunction syndrome (CDS).'

Some of the behaviours mentioned are pacing, disorientation, incontinency of both bladder and bowel, withdrawal, barking for no reason, not responding to your voice, changes in appetite and/or sleeping patterns.

"What can I do to help my dog?" you ask. In the article 'Understanding Dog Dementia — Signs, Treatments and How to Stave It Off' by Jackie Brown <https://www.dogster.com/dog-health-care/understanding-dog-dementia> the author explains about medication, food supplements etc. that your vet can recommend.

Jackie also talks about exercise. Interestingly, it has the same effect as in us humans. It increases blood circulation, which brings more oxygen and glucose to the brain. Make the walk interesting. Go to different places like dog parks, forests, neighbourhoods, etc. She says "On your walks, allow your dog to stop and sniff all the various smells he comes across — smelling new, interesting scents can be as stimulating to the brain as the exercise itself. Fight the urge to yank on the leash to hurry your dog along. Let him linger and enjoy this olfactory exercise."

In the article 'Dementia and Senility in Dogs Canine Cognitive Dysfunction' by Jenna Stregowski, RVT <https://www.thesprucepets.com/dementia-in-dogs-1117412> Jenna points out that "keeping your dog active and mentally stimulated is believed to help keep its mind sharp. You can do this by teaching fun tricks, playing games, exercising, and participating in various activities together."

I found Mike Clark's suggestions in his article '8 Ways To Help A Dog With Dementia' <https://www.google.com/amp/s/dogtime.com/dog-health/62825-8-ways-help-dog-dementia/amp> very helpful. He suggests daily routines, medications prescribed by your vet, trying food supplements, reducing anxiety, puzzle toys, keeping a consistent environment, short and simple play and training sessions, and of course walks.

There is a lot more information on the web about dog dementia. I didn't realize how common this condition is until I started my research.



Kid's section

Welcome to our monthly Kid's edition of the Dog Guardian newsletter. It is aimed at the 3 to 8 year old age group. We would like to introduce you to our two famous four-legged authors. They are the Dog Guardian newsletter co-editors' dogs - Tyler (Julie's pup) and Morgan (Jill's pup). These 2 decided the Kid's newsletter needed articles written by dogs. They want to give the kids their perspective of being responsible around dogs 😊

Click here to [view the June, July, August and September newsletters](#)



Here is a short description of what each newsletter contains:

June: Teddy Bear Picnic; Colouring Contest (don't make loud noises around dogs); Dogs' Den storybook (dogs love to play, but don't like to be teased or chased); Games (unscramble word game); Tricks ('shake hands' trick)

July: Dogs' Den storybook (the right way to meet a dog, and the wrong way); Colouring Contest (not every dog that wags its tail is friendly); Quiz (5 questions about Dogs' Den storybook)

August: Dogs with jobs (guide dogs); Teach your dog a trick – 'crawl'; Dogs' Den storybook (dog school, don't disturb your dog when he is eating); Colouring Contest (the vet); Quiz – 5 questions about this newsletter

September: Goodbye Nellie; Dogs with jobs (mobility assistance service dogs); Indoor activities for your pup and you ('hide a treat' game); Teach your dog a trick ('which hand?'); Dogs' Den storybook (dogs like going for walks); Colouring Contest (stay calm); Quiz (5 questions about this newsletter)



Just a friendly reminder to visit the latest edition of the **Kids Activity Page** on our website at www.responsibleogowners.ca/kidspage/activitypage-main.html

Canadian Canine Good Citizen (CCGC) test program

Our next CCGC testing will be held on **Sunday, January 6, 2019** at 1pm at TAG Dog Training & Education Centre, 17 Grenfell Crescent, Unit 1, Ottawa, Ontario. (Phone number: 613-695-0824). Cost is \$35 per dog.

All dogs, six months old or over, are welcome to participate in the test. Testing is recommended every three years. Dogs must have received appropriate vaccinations (or titer). For more information or to register please call 613.868.2201 (leave a message), or email morejulie@hotmail.com

You can see a detailed description of the program by going to our website:
<http://www.responsibleowners.ca/ccgct-info.html>

The article in our [Summer newsletter](#) describes the program, why you should participate, and what you and your pup will get out of the program.

Are you interested in hosting a Canadian Canine Good Citizen Test? The article in our [Fall newsletter](#) talks about the benefits of putting on the event, who can put it on, how to host it, and more.

Park Clean-Up



Thank you very much for helping out with the park clean-up this Fall. Your dogs are thanking you too. They love to walk, run, jump etc. in clean parks. We will be posting our Spring clean-up schedule in our next newsletter.



'Take your owner for a walk and support RDOC' fundraiser



The fundraiser was a big success. We raised \$625.00. What an achievement!

Thank you everybody for all your support.

(Photo by Ivan Harris)



Here are some of the projects the funds will be used for:

1. Continuing with the projects we started last year:

- ✦ Handing out more 'Fido, Friend or Foe?' activity books
- ✦ Working on the 'Dogs and Kids' safety project (booklet for 5 to 8 year olds) on 'How to be safe around dogs while having fun'
- ✦ Publishing a monthly newsletter for children (3 to 8 year olds), the 'Kid's Edition' of 'The Dog Guardian'

2. New projects

- ✦ Developing a 20-minute presentation for nursery school children (2 to 4 year olds) on 'How to be safe around dogs while having fun'
- ✦ Redoing our brochure to include our new projects

Membership

Please consider joining RDOC.

We would love to have you as a member, and our membership fees are very reasonable:

Seniors and Students \$10 (volunteers get 50% discount)

Adults and Family \$20 (volunteers get 50% discount)

Not-for-Profit Organizations \$35

Corporations and Businesses \$50

To join RDOC or to renew your membership, please email: inquiries@responsibledogowners.ca

or go to our website at: www.responsibledogowners.ca/membership.html

Why not purchase a gift certificate!

It's a great birthday gift, Father's Day gift, welcome new puppy gift, a welcome to a newly moved-in family in the neighbourhood gift, and much more.



	
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Winter fun

In the fall newsletter we talked about Winter sports for you and your dogs. Thank you Shelly Korobanik of Pooch Partners, (www.poochpartners.ca) for these 2 articles about kicksledding and skijoring.

'Don't be a prisoner of winter!' by Shelly Korobanik



Winter is here, and instead of bunkering down inside, why not escape to the great outdoors and enjoy everything this amazing season has to offer by trying kicksledding!

Originating in Scandinavian countries, kicksledding, like skijoring, is slowly being discovered in North America and is a perfect winter activity for our Canadian winters! For non-skiers looking for a way to maintain their fitness level, or an alternate mode of transport to go ice fishing, or just wanting to go exploring on winter trails, kicksledding is a viable option to consider; and for those looking for a way to exercise their pooch kicksledding is the perfect alternative to skijoring!

A kicksled is a small sled consisting of a chair mounted on a pair of flexible metal runners (for use on ice or packed snow) upon which skis can be attached (for use on soft snow). You propel the sled forward by standing on one runner and kicking back on the ground with the other foot. The kicksled is steered using a handlebar attached to the top of the chair back. The chair can be used to carry a person or luggage, and if you have a dog, you can harness them up to pull you and your kicksled! Kicksleds are also lightweight and fold nearly flat for easy transport.

Alone on level ground, a kicksledder can attain speeds up to 15 km/h to 20 km/h, and faster speeds if travelling downhill or propelled forward by a harnessed dog! Kicksleds come in 4 sizes to accommodate all sizes and ages of individuals, and learning to kicksled is relatively easy as it is similar to using a scooter. As with skijoring, it is not a smart idea to just hook up your dog and go out – both you and your pooch need some minimal training before heading out on a kicksled!

Training for people is pretty simple. Initially just take the kicksled out on your own and get a feel for how to steer and stop it. Steering is relatively easy using the handlebar, however there are no brakes on a kicksled, so learning how to brake is key before you hook up your dog. The more comfortable you are controlling the sled on your own, the better your experience will be with your dog!

If your dog is already involved in canicross or skijoring, the transition to kicksledding will be very easy. If, on the other hand, your pooch has never experienced either of those sports, and has not been involved in weight pulling, there is training required before you hook them up to the kicksled.

As with canicross and skijoring, the key to enjoying kicksledding with your dog is to use proper equipment, teach them the basic commands and see it as a team sport.

A kicksled is designed to be human propelled regardless of whether you include your pooch or not, however you will notice the impact of a dog over 20 kg (45 pounds) pulling in front. Kicksledding can be done with smaller dogs as well, it just means you have to do the work to propel your kicksled forward. A properly attached bridle connects with a bungee (to protect your pooch from jerking motions of the sled when you stop and start) which hooks up to a gangline to your dog's harness. Ensuring a proper harness is critical to ensure your dog has an enjoyable and safe kicksledding experience!

Once you and your pooch are ready to hit the snow on your kicksled, remember to never overdo it - leave your dog wanting to do more! Kicksledding is a great activity that you can do on your own, or with your pooch to keep fit while enjoying the great outdoors during the winter months, plus it's a much better alternative to holding yourself (and your pooch) a prisoner indoors!

Want to get started? [Pooch Partners](#) is a retailer of Esla Kicksleds and also offers canicross training to get you and your pooch ready to be out enjoying kicksledding this winter!

Here is a link to a kicksledding video from Pooch Partners:

<https://www.facebook.com/poochpartners/videos/2044248388936203/>

'Skijoring' by Shelly Korobanik

I was so excited to learn that the local Nordic ski club had opened up additional nordic ski trails for skijoring 4 years ago, but now very disappointed that they are now looking to prohibiting dogs due to complaints from skiers that there were many dogs running loose and/or interfering with other skiers! Skijoring is not about letting your dog run loose on/off the trails while you enjoy your ski, nor is it about putting a leash on your dog and letting them run beside or in front of you. Neither of these methods being safe for skiers or canines, a loose dog shows no respect for other users of the trails.

Skijoring is a sport in which a dog (or dogs), assist a cross-country skier by running in front and pulling them. A skijoring line, at least 1.5m (8 ft) long including a bungee cord to absorb the impact of the dog's forward motion or skier's sudden stops, connects to the skier's skijoring belt (which may or may not include leg loops), and the dog(s) harness. Skijoring can be done with either classic or skate skiing techniques, however skate skiing is most commonly used. As the dog is only controlled by the skier's voice commands, appropriate training *prior to skijoring* is imperative.

To prepare a dog for skijoring they need to be taught commands to start running, stop, turn right and left, pass by distractions such as other skijorers, etc. To enjoy the skijoring experience, and for safety reasons, this training should always be done on foot, prior to strapping on any skis.

Other than small dogs (under 35 pounds), with training and proper equipment almost any breed of dog can skijor - from Huskies, Labs, Samoyed, American Bull Terriers, Staffordshire Terriers, Mastiffs,

Golden Retrievers, etc. – pretty much any breed of dog can conquer this sport as most have an innate desire to run and pull!

A link to a skijoring video from Pooch Partners:

<https://www.facebook.com/poochpartners/videos/2010598932301149/>

[Pooch Partners](#) encourages and offers all types of outdoor fitness activities for people and their pooches to do together, and would love to see skijoring grow across Canada! We offer cani-cross training year round to build the foundation for skijoring, kicksledding, scootering, etc., and also retail CanaDog's Canadian made cani-cross and skijoring equipment so that both sports are done safely for human and canine participants. When ski clubs open their trails to use for skijoring it is a privilege, so be sure to respect this by training your dog before you hit the trails. Skijoring is an amazing sport that is exhilarating and a great way to keep both you and your pooch healthy and active over the winter months!



Thank you

A big thank you goes to our committee for proofreading this newsletter. We really appreciate your help. You are the greatest. A special thank you goes to Kit Watson for the final proofreading of the newsletter.



Merry Christmas!
Happy Holidays!

Responsibility • Respect • Recognition

Contact RDOC by:

E-mail: inquiries@responsibledogowners.ca

Phone: 613-868-2201 Please leave a message

Write to us at:

RDOC, 24 Elderwood Trail,
Stittsville, ON K2S 1C9, Canada

Or visit us online at:

www.responsibledogowners.ca