

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2009

Fido Says

Read this before you bring your dog home or to the park.

Whether you have a puppy or a child, you must have the protective knowledge. It is much better to prepare your home and yourself to avoid disasters. Pets are curious and will stick their noses almost anywhere. Ordinary household items attract our dogs. A pot of boiling water or hot fat can be a toy to tip over; electrical wiring makes for wonderful teething; toxic cleansers (bleach, laundry tablets, glass cleaners, etc.) are also deadly attractions.

Rat poison and chocolate will kill dogs. Your garbage contains unlikely but common killers: spoiled food, cans with sharp edges and assorted hazards. Antifreeze protects your car, but dogs find this poison a sweet treat. Keep all garden pesticides, fertilizers, and other potentially dangerous chemicals in pet-proof containers, and out of reach. We all love to give our canines special treats. Fine! Feed them temptations made for dogs, not cooked steak or chicken bones. They can choke on them, and if swallowed, the shards can perforate a pet's stomach or intestines.

Speaking of mouths, buy your dog chews or flosses this will stop the spread of gum disease and brush their teeth, rub their gums with a clean washcloth. This can save you hundreds in veterinary dental costs. Also, it is imperative that your dogs have preventive checkups. This includes vaccinating them for rabies, distemper, parvovirus, corona virus, and hepatitis. Inoculations for Lyme disease and bordatella are recommended in areas where ticks are prevalent. Mosquitoes can spread heartworm, a fatal disease for which dogs can be tested. I give my dogs monthly heartworm pills, beside flea and tick medication.

The park itself has hazards: raccoon droppings in the garbage. Canada geese defecate everywhere, in standing water on the grass and in the pond area called Dog Beach. Don't allow your pets to drink this fetid liquid, and wash them when you get home if they roll in goose poop. If your dog does drink the water, he may experience gas and diarrhea. Rice, chicken, and mashed potatoes may help alleviate his symptoms, but if they last more than a few days, see your vet. Lastly, watch out for police if your dog is off the leash before five AM after nine AM or before nine PM, and after one AM; they will ticket you. By Betty Dowling

Forget swine Flu

Those masked garbage looting miscreant found scampering all over the borough, are now Brooklyn's public enemy number 1. City health officials are warning residents to be wary of raccoon roundworm, a rare but extremely dangerous disease that's debilitated two borough residents in the last few months. The two victims, a teenager and an infant, were both diagnosed with baylisascariasis at the end of March, the public was not alerted to the possible health threat until this week. Published reports inferred that at least one of the children may have been from Bay Ridge.

An individual comes down with baylisascariasis, otherwise known as raccoon Roundworm *B. procyonis*, after ingesting worm eggs found in raccoon feces. The eggs hatch into larvae two to four weeks after ingestion and travel through the liver, brain, spinal cord and other organs causing a host of symptoms from nausea, enlargement of the liver, loss of muscle control and blindness, depending on the amount of worm eggs digested.

Raccoons ingest the worm eggs as they forage for food or eat rodents and other smaller animals that have already been infected. Medical professionals said that while it's common for raccoons, it's rare for humans to ingest the lethal larvae, if your dog eats the garbage, they can become infested. Many of the cases involve children, because they have no compunction about putting soiled fingers in their mouths. More people and pets could be infected, if the garbage was left to overflow.

By Betty Dowling

Future Events

June 8, FIDO Steering Committee meeting, Come to meetings help your community

June 26, FIDO The best The biggest Pupnic ,More Food , fun, dog games, the dog with the smallest paw, stupidest trick ,best trick, best kisser, biggest paw and more tricks and agility. games and fun for all. Everyone is a winner Pupnic starts at 5 P.M.. Held at the Nether mead) More Pictures taken.

July 11, FIDO Coffee Bark-Pictures taken for 2010 Calendar

July 13, FIDO Steering Committee meeting another chance to join us.

August 1, FIDO Coffee Bark -Last time pictures will be taken for 2010. This is also the last day for pictures to be received.

September 5, FIDO Coffee Bark calendars will be sold for 2010

September 13, Great American Dog and Person Race 25% of collected amount to go to Hamilton House Dog Rescue details on the Fido web site.

September 14, Fido Steering Committee Meeting

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If you have an idea or a question write to

The FIDO Steering committee .

Thank you and have a nice Summer

Interview with Dr. Eric Maddon of Park Slope Veterinary Care 3/31/09

Interviewer, Writer Michele Sevik

Q: Have you treated a dog or cat for Leptospirosis?

A: We had a case of Leptospirosis here last year; not even a year ago, maybe it was 6 months ago.

Q: How did you treat the dog?

A: The dog was put on antibiotics, hospitalized for a while and treated for dehydration, and recovered.

Q: What are the most identified symptoms of Leptospirosis?

A: We really don't see a lot of it, but usually when a dog or cat does come in with Leptospirosis, they are acutely ill; a lot of them are vomiting, a lot of them are severely dehydrated, a lot of them are already in renal (kidney) failure by the time they come in, maybe they've been drinking a lot of water for a couple days prior to coming in; they're usually quite ill and they're usually jaundiced. When we an adult dog comes in with no history of kidney problems, and they're jaundiced, we run blood work on them and if it shows extremely high renal values, the first thing we think of is Leptospirosis. In fact, many vets think that any dog that comes in showing signs of renal failure should be treated for Leptospirosis right away until proven otherwise. In other words, we start treating for Leptospirosis even before we get blood work results back.

Q: Do some animals die before they can be diagnosed .

A: That is correct. Leptospirosis is not something that is routinely tested for. Many vets do not test for it unless a dog comes in with some pretty significant signs of disease. You don't start testing every dog with kidney disease for Leptospirosis even though Leptospirosis is a possible cause. Not every veterinarian thinks of Leptospirosis, so I don't doubt that there maybe some Leptospirosis cases out there that go un-diagnosed.

Q: Is Leptospirosis usually fatal?

A: It can be. It's an infection therefore the body is capable of fighting infection on it's own at times. Generally, given antibiotics, as long you catch it before it gets too bad, the dog will recover.

Q: How long before the symptoms of Leptospirosis show up?

A: It's hard to say because we don't know when these animals were infected and every dog is different as well; they can react differently depending on their immune systems and their health.

Q: Usually Leptospirosis is found in puddles of standing water in areas where rodents are common right?

A: That's right, a lot of the times when a dog comes in contact with Leptospirosis, we don't know where they got infected or how because they don't have any history of getting into a reservoir that would be consistent with a source of Leptospirosis and there's no way of even knowing if they got the Leptospirosis around here.

Q: Is Leptospirosis transmittable from animal to animal?

A: Yes, and from animal to human as well.

Q: In what way is the disease transmitted?

A. In Urine.

Q: If a person comes into contact with the urine of an infected animal or water with Leptospirosis bacteria in it, then wipes their nose or puts their fingers in their mouth, they can get the disease?

A: Yes, it's possible for you to get it that way. Leptospirosis is a reportable disease, in other words, you are required to report it to the Department of Health, the problem with reporting it has to do with proving that the dog has it. Technically, if you run a test for Leptospirosis as a single test, what it amounts to is asking the body if it has seen this organism and if the body says "yes" does that mean the body has it? No. The way you're supposed to confirm that is you're supposed to re-test the dog a certain

length of time later, and if there's a more resounding "yes" it's called an increase in titer (number of molecules of a substance in a given volume) and that means there's an active infection. If there is no increase in titer, you get the same results as you did a few weeks before, there's a good chance the dog doesn't have Leptospirosis; they might have just been exposed to it or been vaccinated against it at some point. So there's a debate as to how you can truly diagnose this disease with absolute certainty. But I think most veterinarians would say, if a dog come in with the clinical signs of Leptospirosis, and has no history of being vaccinated for Leptospirosis, and we get that "yes" on the titer, we act as if it is Leptospirosis. The Department of Health wouldn't necessarily agree with that. We report it anyway but if you can't show evidence of a rise in titer but some of these dogs don't live long enough to do a second test. Some dogs recover quickly and people don't want them tested again because it's expensive. So even in the case we had recently, we didn't have a rising titer, but the dog had the clinical signs of Leptospirosis, tested positive and responded to the antibiotics so we acted as if it was Leptospirosis. We had a case a number of years ago of a puppy who came in with it. The dog had picked it up in New Paltz, and that puppy died. It was a four month old.

Q: Can Leptospirosis re-occur in the same animal?

A: Actually, probably not. You wouldn't expect it to because having had it, and recovered from it, their immune system has learned how to defeat it so it's like having a pretty darn strong vaccination to the disease. Generally, I think the antibody response of the body would probably preclude the likelihood of getting it again.

Q: Do you recommend vaccination against Leptospirosis?

A: You don't see Leptospirosis around here often enough to justify taking steps to prevent a disease that's so rare. I've been practicing for 14 years and I've only seen 2 or 3 cases. The other problem is that the vaccine is only really good for about 6 months so having people come in twice a year for a vaccine against a disease they'll probably never see I think is a bit of a stretch so vets do not, at least around here do not usually vaccinate against it. Another problem with the vaccine is that it doesn't cover all the strains of the Leptospirosis bacteria. There are quite a few of them and the vaccine only covers about a dozen. The dogs we have diagnosed with Leptospirosis are diagnosed with more than one strain at any given time. So if you get a vaccination, maybe you'll stop some of the strains.

Q: So, are we worrying about Leptospirosis too much?

A: Well, compared to something like Lyme's Disease, where I see 10 - 15 new cases each year--compared to 1 or 2 cases of Leptospirosis in 14 years--Leptospirosis is really very rare in this area. We see a lot more cases of Lyme Disease than Leptospirosis yet everybody is talking about Leptospirosis because it's interesting--it's the mysterious disease that the vets don't talk about, that we ignore--well there's a reason why: there just isn't a lot of it around here. I called Animal Kind last year because they're the highest volume clinic in the area, I spoke with a doctor there and told him we had 2 dogs come in the same week (blood tests came back one was positive) , I thought might have Leptospirosis and asked him to find out if there might be something up, if this was something we should be concerned about. He said they hadn't seen a single case of Leptospirosis. I would hope that if a veterinarian in the area did have a case of Leptospirosis they would do as I did and start calling other local vets.

Steering Committee Of FIDO In Prospect Park



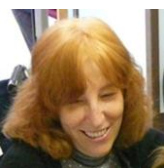
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ly buildings in Park Slope



Denise Mortillaro



Denali, Therapy Dog of Prospect Park

Write about your special dog, and why he or she is your hero your hero. Send a picture, I will put one or two stories in each issue. The next issue will deal with Service Dogs. Send all ideas and stories to fidobrooklyn.org, care of your steering committee. Share your experiences. Go to Fidobrooklyn.org for more information.

Dog of the Month

Denali, Therapy Dog of Prospect Park

Of the hundreds of dogs you will meet off-leash in Prospect Park, it's very likely that one of the first you will remember is the charming, gentle Denali. Like his human companion, Bob Ipcar, Denali doesn't have a confrontational bone in his body. He was one of the first of his breed, the Spinoni Italianos, to appear in the park, and because of his incredibly sweet nature the number of Spinoni in the Park has been growing ever since. After the death of his beloved mastiff, Yuffie, Bob continued to wake up early and walk alone to the Park during off-leash hours. It was sad. Bob's wife Jane had discovered Spinone Italianos at the Westminster Dog Show. She passed by a breeder talking about the breed and stopped to eavesdrop. The breeder claimed that Spinoni made great pets and therapy dogs. A couple of months later Bob and Jane adapted Denali. He enjoyed people and other dogs. Bob and Jane signed up for the Good Dog Foundation Training for therapy dogs. They missed doing therapy dog work at Methodist Hospital. The best experience they had was after 9/11. Bob and Jane were asked by Rachel McPherson of The Good Dog Foundation to bring their dog Yuffie to the Relief Center which was set up on the West Side of Manhattan as an information clearing house for family members and relief workers involved in 9-11. They noticed that the relief workers, firemen, and police, were particularly eager to come touch or hug their dog. Their dog was more than happy to oblige. Now Denali goes to the Physical Rehab Unit once a week and provides additional "occupational therapy" by letting willing patients brush his impressive eyebrows, shake "hands" (Denali is famous for his enormous feet and won the "largest paw award" at FIDO's yearly Pupnic last summer) or feed him biscuits. Many patients are elderly and they are often more than willing to share stories about their dogs. Denali also charms the hospital staff and brightens everyone's day. Denali is the first therapy dog to help at the Veterans Hospital near Fort Hamilton. He was the official dog for a program called "How to Meet a Dog" in which kids were treated to a concert and got up close and personal with Denali. Also, he invariably draws a crowd when he patiently accompanies Bob to a variety of street fairs in which FIDO participates. Denali also made an appearance at the Good Dog Foundation Fund Raising Dinner in Manhattan last spring. His human companions were truly proud of his good behavior around all the food!

Bob, Denali and Jane were thrilled to be honored at the Methodist Hospital Volunteer Dinner last spring, at which Borough Brooklyn President Marty Markowitz presented them with a certificate for the community and the hospital for their services.

By: Michele Sevik

Therapy Dogs provide unconditional love and understanding to the sick, disabled, and elderly. Therapy dogs are personal pets who work with their handlers. If you wish to train your dog for therapy certification, the CG program at the American Kennel Club certifies both dog and master. Both go through a ten-step evaluative process, which includes going out for a walk, coming when called, and reacting to another dog. The Delta Society also trains dogs. Very special dogs and people share their time. This is a list of organizations you may contact who would love to host you and your dog:

Schools <http://www.tdi-dog.org/OurPrograms.aspx?Page=Libraries>

Nursing Homes <http://www.tdi-dog.org/OurPrograms.aspx?Page=Libraries>

Hospitals (Children's) [http://www.tdi-dog.org/](http://www.tdi-dog.org/OurPrograms.aspx?Page=Hospitals+(Children's))

OurPrograms.aspx?Page=Hospitals+(Children's)

Hospice visits, check local hospitals

<http://www.tdi-dog.org/OurPrograms.aspx?Page=Hospice>

<http://www.tdidog.org/>

Or go to fidobrooklyn.org and look up therapy dog information



The Roving Reporter. How has your dog changed your life

Steven and Jake I would never give Jake back to animal control. Jake keeps me happy and out of depression. I lost my friend and dog of many years. I never thought I could get another dog Jake came along, we need each other.



Michele Sevik Boo Illuminates the wondrous side of life. He is 16 years old.



Help list for committees Sign up on this page, send it in(mail or email) or drop at the coffee bark

Mail committee, put on labels and stuff envelopes

X-----

Rescue committee helps with lost dogs information and special events

-X-----

Coffee Bark , helps to set up tables, cut cake ,put up sign, load cars.

-X-----

Clean up committee Helps to make sure that food is not left on tables, helps in clean up effort . Our children and dogs are in danger from Disease that Racoon's and Rats carry. Informs FIDO and park when their is a unsafe situation because of left garbage. Take pictures send to Fido. Hands out information to inform public of dangers and solutions.

X-----

You can write us at the address below or go to FIDObrooklyn.org

**FELLOWSHIP IN THE INTEREST OF DOGS AND THEIR OWNERS
FIDO MEMBERSHIP FORM**

YES, I WANT PROSPECT PARK TO BE MORE DOG FRIENDLY!

Here is my membership contribution of:

___ \$15 ___ \$25 ___ \$50 \$ ___ Other ___ Renewal

Name _____

Dog's Name(s) _____

Address _____

Apt # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

If you don't have an email address check here so we can send newsletters by postal service. _____

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