



The Forest Hound

Volume 4, Issue 2 Summer 2015

Editor's Corner

Hi everyone -

We have some neat stuff for the issue this time, so enjoy. Also - enjoy your summer that is left. Hopefully, your summer fun includes your furry friend!

We all know to watch the heat and not leave our guys in the car when it's too hot. A trick I learned this year - put your hand on the pavement and count to 5. If it's too hot for your hand, it's too hot for your pooches feet. There are the usual problems of bugs, snakes, etc. to cope with. But, oh! they do love to be outside. When it's cool in the mornings and evenings, my guys put on a regular circus. The dog yard is absolute chaos after they have slept all day in a cool place.

There is a lot of information on the internet if your plan to include your pooch in your travels this year. Where you can stay with him - dog friendly places to visit, etc. Be sure to pack a suitcase just for him - food, water from home, or distilled water for an extended trip (now is not the time for unhappy plumbing from too many water changes - works for people too), meds if required, his crate with a familiar blanket and toys, first aid kit (I do just one, suitable for people AND pooch).

One of the things I did last year was subscribe to the Whole Dog Journal (wholedogjournal.com for info). No ads, just a lot of useful information that's well worth the money and storage space to keep.

Right now, on the social media, there is a ton of comments on what not to feed your dog. I have found most of them spurious - I found one that even said that meat was bad for them! Use some common sense - there are exceptions to every rule - feed strange foods in very small quantities until you know how your dog reacts. Mine all love fruit - I pit the peaches first (too crunchy by far!) no chocolate (I eat it all) lemons (?) mine won't touch them - straight milk might be upsetting, but mine love cheese and ice cream as much as I do and it doesn't seem to bother them. They get small portions of onions and garlic, since I cook with them and they get to clean the pan. Just use your brains folks, and life will be much easier and more interesting for both your dog and you!

Hope you all have a wonderful summer. Take lots of pictures and share them with all us other Norby Nuts.

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Lumi overlooking a lake while hiking in California.

Photo by Dong Liu





Gersie checking under rocks for anything to hunt.

Photo by Beth Read

“I have seen her bound through boulder fields with amazing coordination and fearlessness and seen her run at full speed up to a log only to impossibly squeeze under it hardly slowing down.”

Norrbottenspets Off-Leash

As I began to collect my thoughts about Lumi and training her off leash, I realized that it has been one long discovery, both on our parts and on Lumi's. We were warned that Norrbottenspets were impossible off-leash, but our minds were made up. We wanted a healthy little snow dog and our lifestyles dictated that she had to be trustworthy off leash. We just had to figure out how to make it work.

Lumi has been amazing in this adventure. First, she is the athlete I most admire. I have seen her bound through boulder fields with amazing coordination and fearlessness and seen her run at full speed up to a log only to impossibly squeeze under it hardly slowing down. She doesn't hesitate to run over a log spanning a rushing river and quite happily sits at the edge of a cliff that would give more sensible creatures vertigo. I taught her the word "car" after discovering that she could find it even through fresh snow after a 2 day ski trip (You never know when that word could come in handy). I often see her ahead of us on the trail only to then come with amazement to the obstacle she passed in order to remain ahead. How she does it without hands I'll never know.

Secondly, she has been a very willing partner in this. She knows very well that we will follow the trail if there is one, and she knows that the easiest part of the snow to travel on is our ski tracks. She has learned to judge our speed and if we don't catch up to her, she will come back to see what's wrong (or more importantly to see if we have pulled out sandwiches). She has made it clear that she doesn't want to be separated from us.

And we like to think she has been rewarded with a life full of adventure. She has been around Coyote pups that were trying to make her chase them. She has chased a bear off the property of one of our friends only to have her pride (and paw) wounded the very next day by a rattlesnake. She has killed several rodents that she has found in the wilderness, and has come back to the campsite with strange fur dangling off her chin that we could only assume was rabbit, but will never really know. We have had the dubious pleasure of learning the sounds that marmots make that are alarmed that we perhaps would never have heard otherwise. She has collapsed many a night in our tent exhausted from all her adventures only to whine to be let out at daybreak to start again while we go back to sleep for a few more hours. I have to wonder how many adventures she has had that I have no clue even occurred.

But we have had to learn too. We know that if we are stopped somewhere camping or eating, that Lumi will show up periodically to make sure we are still there. We know that if she gets on a deer trail, she can be gone for quite a while. We have learned that if the trails split and we get separated she will not return and try the other trail but will go back to where she last saw us or even back to the car. When I finally figured out how she behaved at trail forks, I developed new commands using clicks for turn left or turn right so I could direct her from a distance. It didn't actually work the way I intended; she has concluded that when she hears clicking she has gone the wrong way and should take the other trail. That works just as

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well, or does anyway when we can see which way she went. We have also learned that she can hear fear in our voices and will exactly and immediately obey every command we give her when we are afraid. She stood motionless when I yelled “stay” when the coyote pups were trying to lure her away. One vivid image I have is of Lumi standing rigid on a rock as it quite slowly flowed in a rockslide down a very sketchy canyon we had foolishly decided to descend after hiking a peak. We had triggered the rock slide, but I thought she was safer staying on that sliding rock rather than trying to navigate the smaller bouncing rocks around it. She stood still, staring at my eyes the whole time waiting for the next command, which didn’t come until the rock slide had stopped.

We now have a 3 ½ year old Nob that has good wilderness smarts, and the willingness to jump back in the car after a busy weekend in full confidence that we will be back to do it again soon. While I am so proud of her and her success at becoming a great backcountry dog I really have to wonder if I would recommend this adventure to anyone else. Even when she was a pup she would run so far away from us that other dog owners were shocked. The times that I have lost track of her for an hour or more I could count perhaps on one hand, but the times that we have lost track of her for 15 minutes or less are uncountable. I was insistent that I would not repeatedly call her while hiking because she seemed to use my calls as a way to keep track of me from a distance so that she never needed to come back to us, exactly the opposite result than

what I wanted. As a result, I lost her a few times when she got so far away that she couldn’t hear my piercing whistle. Instead I would find her again later at the car or where I had last seen her. Sometimes much later. I once spent a miserable night in a tent hoping against all odds that she was still alive and would return to the tent, only to learn late the next morning that she had gotten several miles ahead of me and was finally caught by a fisherman who saw her running up and down the trail as if lost or looking for something. 18 hours had passed between seeing her in the forest in the late afternoon and her coming down the trail on a makeshift leash made from fishing line the next day. At that point we bought a GPS collar, the best investment I have ever made.

In hindsight, I think the most important thing is that we started with her as a young pup and with large open areas that were largely free of cars and predators. She first walked off leash with us on a trail when she was 13 weeks old and we were on day two of the drive back from Northern Oregon. She was adorable in her clumsiness and showed no sign of being the confident athlete that she would become. She would soon learn that the wilderness was a permanent part of our lives, and that the city was just something we did during weekdays. She learned to trust us for our knowledge of danger, and we learned to trust her instincts. It wasn’t an understanding that we built with Lumi through a few clever training techniques, but rather a long learning process on how we could all enjoy the wilderness and at the same time keep our family intact.

Marlin Lathrop



Lumi knows that the best place to sleep after a long hike is on her human’s sleeping bag.

Photo by Dong Liu

“She would soon learn that the wilderness was a permanent part of our lives, and that the city was just something we did during weekdays.”



Kobah checking for any scents that have been left behind by other animals.

Photo by Beth Read

Short Stuff's Story



Kobah remembers to stop and eat the berries!

Photo by Beth Read

"I will get to meet the neighbor dogs, bark at the birds, and eat deer poop."

Mom says it's too hot to think, much less be creative and do her column, so you're stuck with me this time. I am always creative!

It has really been hot here. She keeps the fans running, A/C going and curtains closed where the sun comes in, so we stay comfy. I get everyone up early, and we are all asleep by late morning. We get up after dinner and get active again. The heat has really been hard on Mom and Cam (they are both kind of old, you know). - Dancin has learned a new trick - when the water bowl gets empty, he slurps out of mom's ice water and she gets us more cool water in a hurry. Sometimes she puts in those little ice cubes. I make a mess playing with them.

We don't get to go anywhere much - it's too hot to leave us in the car. We are far happier upside down in front of a fan at home. Some stupid lady left her pugs in her car at the dentist a couple of weeks ago and mom said something about it. The lady got mad

at her! Poor pugs. Hope they survive the summer.

But I am supposed to be talking about summer fun. If it ever cools off, we may have some! I will get to go to the park for the Farmer's Market. There will be lots of people who will tell me how cute I am and talk to me and pet me. I love people, and I get to scratch my tummy in nice clean, cool grass as well. She says we will get to go for walks once the weather changes. I will get to meet the neighbor dogs, bark at the birds, and eat deer poop. Sounds wonnnderful.

She says we will go to dog shows then too. That's fun. I get to see all kinds of dogs (some of them are really funny looking). Everyone thinks I am so cute, so I get lots of pets and treats. Now, if I could just figure out how to disconnect that leash (mom just laughs really loud and says fat chance). What fun I could have.

Short Stuff

Lumi, overlooking the canyons in Utah.

Photo by Dong Liu





4031 Country Way
The Dalles, OR 97058

Summary of Minutes

April 21, 2015 Minutes

Reports of Committee:

Education Committee:

Tomme contacted the Seattle Kennel Club and confirmed that the Norrbottenspets will participate in the Meet the Breed ring in 2016.

Newsletter Committee:

Jacqueline suggested that the President's letter be about canine influenza. The newsletter publishing dates will be modified to seasonally instead of quarterly to better fit the schedules of the newsletter committee.

Election of New Members:

Mike Bardell and Nancy Van Allen have sent in a foreign membership application. The application has been read and will be voted upon during the special board meeting on May 1, 2015.

Unfinished Business:

Specialty/B Match:

AKC has contacted Mike Bardell in regards to the Specialty/B Match application. Tammy Wilcox will be judging. Bonnie Fleming has the ribbons and glass prizes. Tomme will be donating stuffed toys for prizes.

New Business:

There is no new business at this time.

May 1, 2015 Minutes

Election of New Members:

Mike Bardell and Nancy Van Allen's application was approved unanimously.

Unfinished Business:

Specialty/B Match:

Susan Lundebjerg moved to cancel the Specialty in Lynden, WA. Jacqueline seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Sue Vareberg moved to hold the Specialty in association with a show in Portland, OR in July. Susan seconded the motion and was approved unanimously.

May 19, 2015 Minutes

Reports of Committees:

Education Committee:

The American Norrbottenspets Association members in the Spokane, WA area will not be participating in the Spokane Kennel Club Meet the Breed. Susan is planning on participating in the Greenwich Kennel Club Meet the Breed and judges education.

Unfinished Business:

Specialty/B Match:

Tomme Trikosko suggested holding the Specialty/B Match in conjunction with the Portland Kennel Club show in July. Tomme Trikosko moved that the Specialty be held on Friday before Portland Kennel Club's shows. Sue Vareberg seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

June 16, 2015 Minutes

Reports of Committees:

Education Committee:

Approximately six people sought out Susan specifically to see the Norrbottenspets at the Greenwich Kennel Club. Susan will try to arrange a judges education with the coordinator in the Connecticut area.

Unfinished Business:

Specialty/B Match:

The deadline for the Portland Kennel Club's show was missed. Tomme suggested holding the Specialty/B Match in conjunction with the Timberland Kennel Club in Chehalis, WA in September. Tomme will be in correspondence with the Timberland Kennel Club. Susan moved that the specialty be held in conjunction with the Timberland Kennel Club and Jacqueline seconded. The motion carried unanimously.