



# The Dog Guardian

Published by Responsible Dog Owners of Canada

Volume 13, Issue 1

Fall 2011

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## Dog Attack on Vet Goes to Court *by Dr. Lianna Titcombe*



Several months ago, I wrote about a severe dog attack that I suffered while at work. I received such an outpouring of support from the community that I thought I should write a follow up article. I was particularly moved by the Humane Society employee who called to thank me for taking a stand on their behalf.

On March 11, I was attacked by a large dog that I was examining for a routine health check when he suddenly turned and bit my face,

right hand and leg. Although un-neutered and weighing more than me, he initially appeared quite friendly and gave me no cause for concern. However, once the attack began, the owner was unable to stop him from biting me repeatedly, and two assistants needed to drag me out of the room. I owe a lot to those two women who put themselves in harm's way to save me. One had just found out that day that she was pregnant, after trying for two long years to conceive.

I returned to work three days after the attack, although in a limited capacity as I couldn't use my right hand. But I felt it necessary to "get back on the horse" (as it were) right away so that I wouldn't become more and more fearful of dogs. I also wanted to reassure the staff that I was going to be okay because the incident was very traumatizing for everyone involved. They said they hadn't heard screams like that in the worst of horror movies and to this day they remain on edge, immediately bursting into the examination room if they hear anything out of the ordinary.

The dog in question was quarantined in his own home for ten days to ensure that he did not have rabies, and is now required to wear a muzzle when in public.

The owner was fined \$600 for permitting his dog to bite a person. He contested the fine and so I was summoned to appear in court as a witness in his trial. After two and a half hours of testimony, the justice of the peace determined that he was guilty and required to pay the fine but not until he had accused me lying, falsifying photographic evidence, and intentionally teasing and tormenting his dog in order to provoke an attack so that I might reap some sort of financial reward from him. I understand he was trying to win his case, but *seriously?*

I have come to realize that this attack really means more than the incident itself. It speaks to the responsibility of dog owners, the rights of animal health care workers, and the safety of the general public. It's not okay for a dog to bite anyone if unprovoked, even someone who has chosen a career working with animals. That would be akin to saying it is okay to

shoot a police officer; after all, they've chosen a dangerous career. But we all know how we feel when a police officer gets shot.

I did have one concerned pet owner call me to say that she felt I was giving large dogs a bad name. Don't get me wrong, I love big dogs. My last 3 dogs have all been big but even though they were rescued dogs with uncertain histories, not one of them would so much as raise a lip to anyone -- ever.

As for me, through physical and occupational therapy I have gradually regained full function of my hand. While it will always be scarred, stiff, and sore, it works. The emotional trauma won't be as easy to fix. It's not like I can just cross to the other side of the street when I see a big dog, I work with them every day. And now every day, I suffer fear and anxiety at work. Thus, I decided to start seeing a trauma therapist to recover from what he calls "a life-threatening injury". It's a long process but it's getting better. With every gentle, loving dog that I see, it gets better.

### Ottawa, Ontario, June 12, 2011

Sabrina Serrette    Michel Bourassa    Carolyn Baeta  
& Emma                    & Dylan Thomas    & Jazz

### Winnipeg, Manitoba, August 20, 2011

Jill Gillespie & Bentley

The next Canadian Canine Good Citizen™ Tests are scheduled at Forever Friends Dog Training, 17 Grenfell Crescent, Unit 1, Ottawa, Ontario on the following dates:

**October 16\*    December 4**

\*The CCGC™ Test scheduled for October 16, 2011 will be offered free to rescue dogs that are awaiting adoption. Any rescue interested in testing one or more of their rescue dogs should contact RDOC at [ccgc@responsibledogowners.ca](mailto:ccgc@responsibledogowners.ca) to reserve a time. All dogs must have a vaccination certificate or titer test results indicating appropriate levels of antibodies. If the dog is successful, a certificate will be issued when the dog is adopted and the owner provides proof of licensing.

Responsible Dog Owners of Canada has CCGC™ Evaluators in Ontario, Alberta, Manitoba and British Columbia. A list of CCGC™ Evaluators is available at <http://www.responsibledogowners.ca/ccgct.html>.

# Congratulations!

## Canadian Canine Good Citizen™ Prep Course and Tests (Ottawa, Ontario)

Forever Friends Dog Training regularly schedules Canadian Canine Good Citizen™ Preparation Courses. For more information contact Forever Friends at 613.727.4335.

RDOC is recruiting new evaluators in all provinces and encourages those interested to contact us at [ccgc@responsibledogowners.ca](mailto:ccgc@responsibledogowners.ca).

A list of all CCGC™ Tests scheduled across Canada is posted on the RDOC website at <http://www.responsibledogowners.ca/ccgct.html>.

### Canadian Canine Good Citizen™ Graduates

Responsible Dog Owners of Canada is pleased to congratulate recent Canadian Canine Good Citizen™ graduates as follows:



#### Princeton, B.C., May 20, 2011

Merilee Walden    Carla Gabat &    Roy Larson &  
& Sadie                    Banjo                    Bella

#### Camp Dogwould, Ontario, June 3, 2011

B.M. De Jong & Indy	Shirley Burke & Piper	Brandi Sanderson & Chelsey
Jim Albers and Maggie & Sheba	Rachelle Vaillancourt & Ben	Karen Quade & Dewey
Florence Conway & Kiska	Sue Purcell & JJ	

## Rescuing Winnie

*by Kit Watson, Richmond, ON (June 2011)*

As a first time owner of a rescued puppy mill dog, I would like to share Winnie's story about her past traumatic experiences, every day challenges and accomplishments.

Earlier this year my husband and I adopted a golden retriever from a rescue organization that had obtained the dog from a puppy mill. Although both of us were aware of the horror stories of puppy mill dogs, nothing could prepare us for how to handle, take care of her and what to expect in the months to come. We only wanted what was best for her by giving her a second lease on life so she could grow up to be a happy normal dog with people who would love and take care of her for the rest of her life. Here in Winnie's words is her story.

*"Hello, my name is Winnie. I am a golden retriever whose life began in a puppy mill in the Province of Quebec, Canada. My life, if you can call it that, was hell. For almost two years, I lived in a filthy, unhealthy, confined environment suffering from both the cold and the heat. I was sick, scared, lonely and hungry for both food and affection. I had just enough food and water to survive. The people at the puppy mill were not concerned about my needs, only how many puppies I could produce. Fortunately, for me, I was considered a poor mother and deemed not profitable.*



*Bytown Association for Rescued Kanines came to my aid and placed me in a temporary foster home until they could find me my forever home. It was quite an adjustment adapting to my new surroundings. I not only had more freedom than before, but people actually cared about my welfare.*

*In the beginning, I was wary until I felt that I could trust that these people would not hurt or abuse me. At first, all I did was hide under the table -- my safe spot. My foster family had to feed me there as I had completely shut down and would not come out.*

*They also had to gently drag me out from my safe spot and carry me outside to do my business. They worked very hard with me to gain my trust and build my confidence. They gave me lots of tender loving care, catered to my every whim and worked on my fear issues. They also had other dogs I could play with and I was able to learn from them.*

*Going to the vet was another challenge which was very traumatic. On my visits, I had to be carried to the car, into the waiting room and into the examination room. When I jumped into the car on my own, my foster mom thought I had made great progress.*

*After two months with my foster family, my comfort level had improved considerably but my stay had come to an end; I found a forever home. It was a bitter sweet turn of events. I would always have fond memories of my time with my foster family but I was embarking on a new life.*

*My new parents were so excited but I was afraid. There were more changes and more challenges. A new family and home in a small town with more noises than I was accustomed to. The daily traffic and train was a major concern for me. I missed my big backyard and my canine friends. And, I shared my smaller home with a cat. Yikes!!!!*

*Initially, I was very shy and nervous but my new owners were patient. They knew lots of people with friendly, sociable dogs and they set up play dates for me.*

*My new owners are a loving and very caring, retired couple who adore me (big smile). They spend a lot of time helping me overcome my fears and become more confident. They are going to great lengths to educate themselves on how to care for and nurture me. We have attended obedience class and I have my own consultant on behaviour and Tellington Touch.*

*Cheryl Smith of Forever Friends Dog Training School has been great at providing my owners with techniques to help me overcome fear issues. I am learning to walk on a loose leash without pulling and basic commands such as sit, down, come & stay. I am even learning to do all of these while staying focused on the job at hand, especially when there are distractions such as other dogs. I am also learning doggie etiquette when meeting other dogs.*



*Dian McTaggart, my Tellington Touch Practitioner, has explained to my owners that T-Touch focuses on co-operation, communication and connection with your pet in a compassionate way that deepens mutual*

*trust and strengthens the human/animal bond. It can also reduce stress and allows me to feel more comfortable with being handled and touched all over.*

*My diet is much improved too. I now eat a premium dry kibble mixed with a variety of vegetables, and I get a probiotic to help with my digestion. The best part are the treats. It took some time but I don't think I will ever be hungry again.*

*I love my new family. I am a very lucky girl."*

It is very rewarding to realize that the time we spent rehabilitating our shy, fearful, puppy mill dog has been returned tenfold. Our little girl has turned the corner and formed a bond with us. For this reason, we would not hesitate to rescue another puppy mill dog again.



### **RDOC Fundraising Campaign**

This year we are excited to use Regal Gifts for a fundraising campaign. Regal offers more than a thousand products with hundreds being priced under \$20. There is something for everyone either for themselves or as a gift.

Regal has designed a website for RDOC that is safe and secure, see [www.rdoc.shopregal.ca](http://www.rdoc.shopregal.ca). All of the details for ordering are on the homepage. If a catalogue is preferred, e-mail Julie at [morejulie@hotmail.com](mailto:morejulie@hotmail.com) or call 613.868.2201.

You can start placing your orders immediately but orders must be placed by December 31st, 2011.

After placing your order through the web store, the products are delivered directly to you. In stock items generally arrive within 7-10 business days. To ensure your order is delivered quickly, enter your address (not PO Box) or include your phone number when asked during the order process. For speedy delivery, both are recommended.

Regal has a low shipping rate -- only \$5 per order under \$124.99 or 4% of the order total if your order is \$125 or more, plus tax. Responsible Dog Owners of Canada will receive 30% on every order.

Product exchanges are done directly through Regal's Exchange Centre, see [www.regal.ca/exchangecentre](http://www.regal.ca/exchangecentre). Refunds can be requested through the Centre as well, as long as our campaign is open. After the campaign closes you will only be able to receive an exchange.

***We thank you for your continued support!!***

## **Pet First Aid Course November 26 & 27, 2011 (Ottawa, ON)**

**Would you know  
what to do?**



A certified pet first aid course could mean the difference between life and death!

You are at home or on vacation and your pet suddenly exhibits signs of illness or injury. An emergency can happen any time or any place. Your veterinarian is not available or hours away. Would you know what to do?

First aid is the primary step in any emergency situation for people and pets alike and having first aid knowledge could mean the difference between life and death.

Responsible Dog Owners of Canada will host an internationally recognized Pet First Aid Course on November 26 & 27, 2011, instructed by Dawn O'Leary, a certified pet first aid instructor with Walks 'N' Wags. The course will be held at Forever Friends Dog Training School, 17 Grenfell Crescent, Unit 1, Ottawa, ON.

The course will cover important topics such as immediate steps to take in an emergency, how to handle bleeding wounds and bone injuries, how to perform Artificial Respiration and CPR and what to do for poisoning and heat/cold injuries. Other subjects in the course include how to recognize signs of numerous illnesses and parasites, with an emphasis on methods of preventing illness and injury for both dogs and cats.

The price per student is \$225, which includes all course materials, exam, certificate, beverages and snacks and a lunch on Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup>. As only 16 students will be accepted for this course, pet owners are encouraged to register early. If you are interested in registering for this comprehensive pet first aid course, please contact Responsible Dog Owners at [inquires@responsibledogowners.ca](mailto:inquires@responsibledogowners.ca) or call 613.258.6886.

# Thor

*is looking for his forever home!*



Thor is a handsome 2 year old Boxer mix. He is an active dog with high energy. He has obtained basic obedience skills and some special skills training.

He enjoys learning and is very capable. He has an amazing nose and has participated in many scenting activities.

Thor embraces physical affection and does enjoy his quiet time. He bonds well with his humans and is an excellent household companion. He is crate-trained and travels well in a vehicle.

Thor requires a knowledgeable owner who has an understanding of canine behaviour. He can become overly aroused and reactive to other dogs and therefore should be in an only dog household.

At this time, Thor should not partake in off-leash play with other dogs and should not attend off-leash dog parks.

Thor enjoys the company of children but must be supervised due to his size, agility and excitement levels.

Forever Friends Dog Training School will donate a Basic Training program to Thor's adoptive owners in order to ensure the use of proper training techniques and encourage bonding in a familiar environment.

Thor is an amazing dog and has been well loved. Although Thor was a participant in the Courageous Companions Program, it has been determined that he will not be a suitable service animal. He has, however, developed many useful training skills and will make a fantastic companion for an active individual with a willingness to continue training and time to invest in their partnership.

For more information on Thor please contact Forever Friends Dog Training School at 613.727.4335.

For more photos of Thor and information on the Courageous Companions Program, please visit [www.asist.ca](http://www.asist.ca)

**Rainbow Bridge**

We wish to extend our sincere and deepest sympathy to Kim and Mike Robertson in the loss of their beloved Taz and to Marg and Doug Schuler for the loss of their boy, Teddy.

## **Responsible Dog Owners of Canada (RDOC)**

Responsible Dog Owners of Canada is a registered non profit organization that promotes responsible dog ownership through education and support, cultivates respect for the rights and privileges of members of the dog-owning and non dog-owning communities, fosters recognition of the contribution that canines make through companionship, service/assistance and therapy and aspires to assemble a strong network of responsible dog owners to ensure the restoration and preservation of a dog-friendly society.

**Responsibility Respect Recognition**

613.258.6886, e-mail: [inquires@responsibledogowners.ca](mailto:inquires@responsibledogowners.ca)

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