



Southern States Mastiff Fanciers

April 2006
Spring Addition



WELCOME FLORIDA !

SSMF would like to welcome the state of Florida into the fold!

Years ago when the Southern States Mastiff Fanciers club was formed the state of Florida already had their own mastiff breed club, the Sunshine States Mastiff Fanciers. At the time it seemed redundant to include the state of Florida in the geographic confines of SSMF.

The Sunshine State Mastiff Fanciers club no longer exists so with a motion presented to the board and a vote of our membership the state of Florida has now been officially included in the states that comprise the Southern States Mastiff Fanciers club.

SSMF has had strong membership from this most southern of states over the years. It would seem this is just a formality to finally include the state of Florida, it actually means much more. With the state of Florida joining SSMF, Florida will now be able to host SSMF supported entry shows as well as be a site for meetings, picnics or other club related activities.

We have the great fortune that our club include members from many other states outside of our actual geographic boundaries and we are grateful for their membership, we do not want to overlook their important participation. We welcome club members from all over the U.S.

By including the state of Florida we as a club are making a positive move forward!

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Ch Lazy'D King Rufus of Seawright

"RUFUS"

Pictured as an adolescent hanging out at the beach Rufus is owned by member Gaye Crowther



Treasurers Report

Final Quarter 2005 and Year end for 2005

For members only

In the future there will be a link that is password protected for members to access.

JUST A DOG

From time to time, people tell me, "lighten up, it's just a dog," or, "that's a lot of money for just a dog." They don't understand the distance traveled, the time spent, or the costs involved for "just a dog."

Some of my proudest moments have come about with "just a dog." Many hours have passed and my only company was "just a dog," but I did not once feel slighted.

Some of my saddest moments have been brought about by "just a dog," and in those days of darkness, the gentle touch of "just a dog" gave me comfort and reason to overcome the day.

If you, too, think it's "just a dog," then you will probably understand phrases like "just a friend," "just a sunrise," or "just a promise."

"Just a dog" brings into my life the very essence of friendship, trust, and pure unbridled joy.

"Just a dog" brings out the compassion and patience that makes me a better person.

Because of "just a dog", I will rise early, take long walks and look longingly to the future. So for me and folks like me, it's not "just a dog" but an embodiment of all the hopes and dreams of the future, the fond memories of the past, and the pure joy of the moment.

"Just a dog" brings out what's good in me and diverts my thoughts away from myself and the worries of the day.

I hope that someday they can understand that it's not "just a dog", but the thing that gives me humanity and keeps me from being "just a man or woman."
So the next time you hear the phrase "just a dog", just smile -- because they "just don't understand."

-- Author Unknown

A Few Word from the Treasurer:

In my first year as treasurer of anything, other than our family budget, I've struggled up the learning curve of real accounting, and want to thank Kelly Meyer and the other board members who have put up with my many questions about accounting procedures and the membership for your patience as I fumbled through getting myself organized.

Aside from knowing I was performing a service for the club, my greatest reward by far was the phenomenal success of our 2006 calendar fund-raising for Rescue. In the heat of tracking sales, order taking, shipping, and praying calendars would arrive at the buyers, I didn't have time to sit back and take account of just how much we were exceeding even our own expectations. In this newsletter, is my report that SSMF has raised **\$1,252.63**, all of which will be turned over to our new rescue trust, SSMR. I can't tell you how proud I am of what we have accomplished together. While Rescue is now able to receive contributions directly and from sources other than SSMF, I doubt they have received any single donation as large as the one we have made – together-- as a club. We need to make sure we don't lose sight of the fact that our primary mission continues to be helping Mastiffs in need. Any contributions we can make toward that effort are tied directly to strength of our club and the involvement of our members.

On another topic, I hope all of you know that SSMF now has a private discussion forum on YahooGroups. In today's world of worldwide web and e-mail, there is simply no more efficient (or cost effective) way for members who are so geographically dispersed to communicate with each other. (The handful of members who are not yet internet-active will, of course, continue to get hard copy mail but they will miss up-to-the-minute discussions and exchange of ideas.) About 26 of our 85+ members have joined the Yahoo list. While this is a good start, I would like to invite those members who have not yet subscribed to give our list a try. Since the group is private, joining the list can only be accomplished by replying to an invitation to join. I sent a first invitation to every member with e-mail just over a month ago. For those of you who didn't respond but would now like to take a look at what our group offers, send me an e-mail (Karably@bellsouth.net) and let me know you would like to be re-invited. I do apologize to those couple of list members who keep getting "bounced" – something I haven't yet figured out how to rectify. If anyone is familiar with YahooGroups and can tell me how to fix this problem, I would sure appreciate hearing from you.

I guess that's all the rambling I'll subject you to. I hope you're satisfied with how I am doing at my new job as treasurer and that my newsletter reports are clear and something close to what a treasurer's report should look like.

Remember...

OUR STRENGTH AND ABILITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
LIES IN OUR UNITY

Respectfully submitted, Karen Karably



Quest and his buddy Peanut out for
a run
WEEEEEEEE!!!!!!

Obedience News: Focus on Rally

My Dog Just Finished Their Championship....Now What?

By Nicki Camera



There are over 200 mastiffs who earn their Championship titles each year. Yet- only a handful of mastiffs earn any of the other 25 plus titles offered by AKC that are open to any breed of dog each year. AKC offers titles in Agility, Tracking, Obedience, and Rally that any mastiff can earn with training.. Additionally, other registries like UKC, and ASCA offer titles in these disciplines as well. The MCOA offers titles for Draft Work and Versatility. There are so many things we can do with our working breed after the Championship is earned besides retiring them or breeding them that can strengthen the bond we have with our dogs and give them purpose as a "Working Breed".

I want to outline in this article the AKC and MCOA titles that the mastiff is eligible to earn. Perhaps you might find one that will send you down the path of owning a Working Representative of the breed.

Rally

Rally is the newest AKC titling sport. Rally was designed to be an introduction to Obedience and is not as formal as obedience. Handlers are allowed verbal communication with their dogs while performing the exercises. The Rally exercises are an excellent stepping stone to working towards an AKC Obedience title and are a big confidence builder for both dog and handler. Rally offers four different titles, and each one builds on the foundation of the previous level. Rally competitors are very supportive and many different breeds compete successfully in Rally. Rally is a sport in which the dog and handler complete a course that has been designed by the rally judge. The judge tells the handler to begin, and the dog and handler proceed at their own pace through a course of designated stations (10 - 20, depending on the level). Each of these stations has a sign providing instructions regarding the next skill that is to be performed. Scoring is not as strict as traditional obedience. A dog and handler team must compete and qualify three times to earn a title at each level.

AKC Rally Titles:

RN: Rally Novice, All exercises are preformed on lead

RA: Rally Advanced: 17-20 stations, all exercises are preformed off lead and includes one jump

RE: Rally Excellent: Handlers are not allowed to pat their legs or clap their hands to encourage the dog. Verbal encouragement, multiple commands, and/or inaudible signals using one or both arms and hands are allowed;

RAE: Rally Advanced Excellent: In order to receive the RAE title, a dog must qualify ten (10) times in both the Rally Advanced B Class and the Rally Excellent B Class at the same trial. The RAE title will appear at the end of the dog's name



Priceville , AL
Saturday November 12, 2005 Supported Entry Show

Supported Entry - Priceville, AL

The SSMF supported entry in Priceville, AL in November, 2005 was a huge success with 45 entries.

After Best In Show, SSMF hosted a dinner with a record attendance. Dolly Moore, Susan Wheeler, Tami and Steve Merritt worked extremely hard putting together a feast fit for a king. SSMR held a silent auction and raised \$1300.00 plus for rescue. Thanks to Jennifer Bowers and Dolly Moore for getting this organized.

Dr. Bill Newman was a special guest who monitored a lively discussion about the various traits, structure, and what judges look for when judging.

The following SSMF members were winners at the supported entry held on Saturday November 12th:

WB - Tucson's My Secret Garden of Lazy D, owned by Cindy Furr.

BOS - Ch. Lazyd's Dixieland Tupelo Honey, owned by Jimmy and Jan Stringer.

Award of Merit - Ch Lazy'D King Rufus of Seawright, owned by Gaye D. Crowther

Minutes from Board Meeting Held in Greenville, SC

For Members Only

In the future there will be a password protected link for members to access.

Rescue Story



Max became a member of our family on Easter Sunday of 2005. We chose him from a picture and narrative emailed to us from David Greenleaf of the NC Mastiff Rescue Organization (at the time MCOA). The picture showed a beautiful fawn colored English Mastiff that was about 2 years old and friendly according to the write-up. Previously we had a large German Shepard that we lost to cancer. We prefer large dogs and were pretty much taken with Max before we were introduced, which was a good thing.

At the moment we met, Max was not looking as cute and friendly as his picture. He was 175lbs of barking, jumping, pulling, wild-eyed English Mastiff. We picked him up late in the day, a three hour drive from our home. Coming home in the car in the dark my husband and I looked at each other and wondered what had we done. Were we bringing home a new family member or the "Hound of the Baskervilles"? Truth be told, we were both a little nervous.

Well, months have gone by since Max came to live with us. He is now a certified, card carrying member of the family. He adores physical contact, and occasionally hands out kisses. Every time we think of Max's auspicious beginning with us my husband and I have a pretty good laugh. Max is the most loving dog either of us has ever known. It's a fight to the finish most nights as far as who gets the majority of the bed. No longer can one tell exactly who is snoring.

Overall Max is just a big, happy dog that still thinks he's a puppy. If he's not sleeping, he wants to play. There are toys in every room, along with hand towels (for the drool...), shoes and occasionally underwear. Max likes to move about with something in his mouth most of the time so things get relocated quite often. We call it MID or mastiff Interior Decoration. Finding one's shoes can turn into a manhunt.

We find it pretty remarkable that he can distinguish between what are and are not his toys. He only chews on his stuff and simply carries everything else around. Your slippers or socks might get a little slimed but not damaged. Max makes coming home a joy. He is always at the door, tail wagging furiously, gift in mouth.



Max is not a fetch the ball kind of guy. Soccer is his game. Initially we kept trying to find balls that he couldn't puncture but soon came to realize that it didn't matter to him.

Rescue cont. -

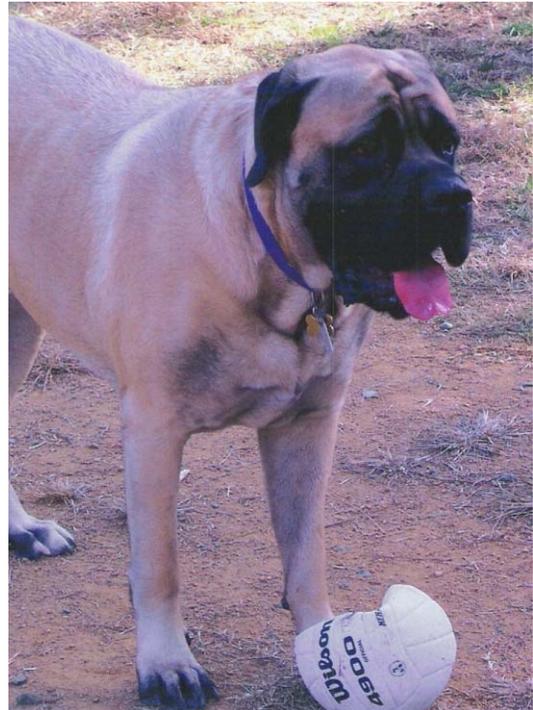
Inflated or not the game was just as exciting. He loves to go to the dog park and takes on the responsibility of official greeter for both people and dogs. It's not often that he finds dogs his size that he can really play with but he does enjoy herding and breaking things up when other dogs start playing too rough.

His other big love is walks. He fluctuates between "Sherlock Homes" mode hot ton the trail of whatever, muzzle pressed to the ground, or the "lion King" surveying the Savannah, making sure al the houses and trees are in their usual spots. He'll even do a little bewitched routine, wiggling his nose in the wind picking up all the scents he can absorb. And if that's not enough, there is always grabbing the leash and taking Mom or Dad for a run.

Max does not like to go in the water but loves the sprinkler head on the hose and can play for a long time with that. He also loves to get baths which is wonderful. The neighbors crack up at the giant sudsy best in the back yard waging battle with the garden hose.

Max had at least two families before us and as far as we know was never abused. Though he has always been good with us he did have some trouble meeting people at first. Occasionally he still does. For what little formal training we've given him, he minds very well, He's really a very smart dog. The one or two times a voice has been raised in reprimand upset him. He can't stand to have us unhappy with him.

Max is our first English Mastiff and we can't imagine being happier. English Mastiff's are a wonderful breed. This was also the first time we "rescued" a dog and it has been a great experience.



Written by F. Smetana (Max's new mom)

Rainbow Bridge

Anne Heyob had to say goodbye to Ch. Chittamwood's Kaiser of the Mountain on March 7 2006. Kaiser was nearly ten and had been suffering from Sebaceous gland adeno carcinoma

Von Himmel's Verlobung en Wien ("Vienna") crossed the Rainbow Bridge on Friday, March 24th. Vienna will be missed by all who knew her, but will live on forever in the hearts of Richard & Katie Hyman, the people who loved her from the day they met her as a puppy ready to take on the world and made her a part of their family.

HEALTH BEAT

Queen of Hearts - Are we over vaccinating?



Well, at least the Queen of my heart. This is my beloved Peaches. I am particularly pleased to feature her this newsletter because a year ago I thought I might lose her.

* Peaches apparently suffered from a rare autoimmune condition. Her condition went undiagnosed for many months as the condition progressed. Although I had this nagging sense there was something wrong my vet assured me that she was ok. After many months of different testing she was finally diagnosed with MMM (mandibular muscle myositis) by ruling out all other possibilities. After treating her with the only therapy that mainstream veterinary medicine could offer, she was riddled with infection and terribly atrophied. It seemed she was losing the battle and my vet was giving up on her as she could offer no other options. With no where left to turn, I sought out a homeopathic veterinarian 2 states away. Thank goodness it worked and Peach is now vital and healthy.

I am featuring Peach not only because she is my darling and I just can't help myself but also to plant a seed in your mind.

Shortly after Peaches was diagnosed with (MMM) I read that the veterinary community is now attributing this once believed genetic disease to a immune response to over vaccination.

Have you noticed the apparent increase in autoimmune related health conditions in our companion animals. It seems that we hear of more and more dogs with conditions such as Irritable Bowel disease, allergy, cancer, and others such as MMM. There is research that is linking these conditions to over-vaccination, not the over-vaccination of that animal alone but the cumulative effect of generations of dogs that were over-vaccinated. I am not suggesting that vaccines are not important, simply that we have quiet possibly overdone them. Some veterinarians are starting to acknowledge the possible correlation and a recommending modified vaccine schedules and titering to check the animals immune level to a particular disease (such as distemper) in lieu of the vaccine.

Remembering that not only our dogs are the Kings and Queens of our hearts but we are their caretakers and they are reliant on us to keep them healthy and safe. I would urge you to look a little further into this correlation and suggest you request a titer test when your dog comes due for their vaccinations.

Please feel free to email me and I will forward a list of published information that you can read online. felixaroonney@earthlink.net

Best Wishes, Jill

* Peaches was not diagnosed through tissue sample which is the only definitive way to diagnose MMM

<http://www.healthy.net/scr/article.asp?ID=485>,

<http://www.positivehealth.com/permit/Articles/Animals/horses.htm>

<http://cyberpet.com/cyberdog/articles/health/vaccin.htm>

<http://www.canine-health-concern.org.uk/>

<http://www.shirleys-wellness-cafe.com/petvacc.htm>

