



Miniature Schnauzer
Rescue of Houston, Inc.
www.MSRH.org

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EXCESSIVE BARKING: A COMMON BEHAVIOR PROBLEM

By Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

MSRH Mission Statement

Miniature Schnauzer Rescue of Houston, Inc. is an all volunteer, donation sponsored, non-profit organization dedicated to the overwhelming task of saving the lives of abused, abandoned or unwanted Miniature Schnauzers who, through no fault of their own, have lost their homes. Many of these dogs come to us healthy. However, some are sick, injured, or abused. They come from shelters, off the streets, from owners who, for whatever reason, can no longer care for them, and from puppy mills, where they have never felt the loving security of a home. Our goal is that they will never have to feel unwanted or unloved again.

Fact: Dogs bark.

Fact: Barking can be good.

Fact: Barking can drive us nuts.

Dogs bark. It is part of their normal and natural communication and behavior. Dogs can bark for appropriate and good reasons, such as when strangers approach our house, they hear an odd noise, or they are herding sheep. Most of us want our dogs to be "watch dogs" and alert us to anything unusual. But dogs can also bark inappropriately. In two scientific surveys of dog owners, approximately 1/3 of them reported their dogs barked excessively. To control barking in our dogs, we first need to understand why they are barking.

Types of canine vocal communication

Dogs, as well as wolves use many types of vocalizations to communicate. This communication starts very early in life. Young puppies make a mewling-like sound when they are searching for food or warmth. Louder crying sounds are heard if the puppy is hurt or frustrated. As dogs get older, they make five main classes of sounds: howls, growls, grunts, whines, and barks. Each of these classes of sounds is used in different situations.

Howling is used as a means of long-range communication in many different circumstances. Howls are more often associated with wolves, but dogs howl, too. Wolves often howl to signify territorial boundaries, locate other pack members, coordinate activities such as hunting, or attract other

wolves for mating. Dogs may howl as a reaction to certain stimuli, such as sirens.

Growling can occur in very different activities. It is used to threaten, warn, in defense, in aggression, and to show dominance. But growling is also used in play, as well. By looking at the body posture, we should be able to tell the difference. Growls during aggression are accompanied by a stare or snarl, and the growling dog often remains stationary. Play-growls occur in combination with a happy tail and a play bow to signal willingness to play. These dogs are often moving and jumping about to entice play.

Grunts in dogs are the equivalent of contented sighs in people. They can also be heard when dogs are greeting each other or people.

Whines or whimpers are short- or medium-range modes of communication. Dogs may whine when they greet each other, are showing submissiveness, are frustrated or in pain, to obtain attention, and sometimes in defense. Dogs generally whine more than wolves, perhaps because they use the whine more as an attention-seeking behavior, and are often rewarded for it. Think about it. The first sound you may hear from a new puppy is the whine at night when he finds himself alone. We often are guilty of unintentionally reinforcing this whining by giving the puppy the attention he wants.

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Barking is another mode of communication that seems to be more common in dogs than other canine species. Again, this may be the result of human encouragement. Certain breeds have been bred to bark as part of their watchdog or herding duties.

Barking is used to alert or warn others and defend territory, to seek attention or play, to identify oneself to another dog, and as a response to boredom, excitement, being startled, lonely, anxious, or teased.

Why Dogs Bark

Alert/warning barks are the type some owners encourage. They want their dog to alert them to the presence of a danger or suspicious stranger. Warning barks tend to become more rapid as the intruder approaches. Aggressive barks are low in pitch and may be combined with growls. We need to be able to distinguish warning barks from barks due to fear.

Attention-seeking barks are most often used by puppies to get you to focus your attention on them. They can become very insistent and hard to ignore, but ignore them we must.

Play/excitement barks are often short and sharp. These barks are common if the dog gets too excited with the game. Often a time-out is in order.

Self-identification barking is what you may be hearing when your dog seems to be answering other dogs he hears barking in the neighborhood. It is the way of saying "I am over here."

Bored barkers simply need an outlet for their energy and a more stimulating environment.

Lonely/anxious barking occurs if your dog is experiencing separation anxiety.

The barking can become self-reinforcing as he becomes more stimulated and anxious. Anxious barks tend to get higher in pitch as the dog becomes more upset. This type of barking can be especially annoying to your neighbors.

Startle barking occurs in response to an unfamiliar or sudden sound or movement. As with an alert/warning bark, we need to be able to control this type of barking quickly.

As you can see, there are many reasons for barking, and **most barking is a normal behavior**. There are some instances in which barking is considered pathological. This will be discussed later in the article.

Characteristics of a Barker

Studies have been done to try to determine which dogs are more likely to be barkers. Although there was no difference in the percentage of excessive barkers between males and females, there was a breed difference. Beagles, Terriers, and some herding breeds tend to bark more. That is not surprising, since this is one of the characteristics for which they were bred. Excessive barking can occur in purebred dogs, as well as mixed breeds.

General Principles for Controlling Undesirable Barking

If we want to control barking, we need a dog who can obey us and relax. The dog needs to look to her owner for behavior clues. If we can call her, have her lie down (dogs do not bark as much when lying down) and stay, we are well on the way to solving a nuisance barking problem. In addition, there are some common principles we can use in modifying barking behavior.

• First, in most cases, shouting "No" is only going to make matters worse

since the dog is thinking you are barking, too (and is probably happy you joined in).

- Be consistent. Pick a one-word command, e.g., "Enough" for the behavior you want and always use that word in the same tone of voice. Everyone in the household must use the same command and act identically.
- Be patient with your dog and yourself. Changing behavior takes a lot of time, and you need to take it slowly, one step at a time. If you become angry at your dog, the chance to correctly modify the behavior will be gone.
- Reward the dog for good behavior. Positive reinforcement is much more powerful than punishment. Physical punishment will do nothing but make your dog fearful of you and break down the bond you wish to have with her. Food treats are fine to use as a reward at first. Often picking a very special treat like small pieces of cooked chicken or hot dog will make the reward seem even better. As time goes on, you will not give the treat every time, sometimes just rewarding with a "Good Dog" and a pat on the dog's chest.
- Do not hug your dog, talk soothingly, or otherwise play into your dog's barking. Your dog may then believe there really was something of which to be alarmed, afraid, or anxious. This reinforces her behavior, and she will likely bark even more the next time.
- Control the situation. As much as possible, set up situations to use as training. Practice in short, frequent sessions, generally 5-10 minutes each.

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Excessive Barking *continued from Page 2*

- Do not be afraid to ask an expert. Animal trainers, behaviorists, and your veterinarian can give you valuable advice. Having them witness your dog's barking episodes may give them valuable clues on helping you solve the barking problem.

Next, we will look at the different types of barkers and more specific ways to modify their behavior.

Alert/Warning Barkers

Dogs that bark at mail carriers, joggers running by the house, or cyclists on the street naturally have their barking reinforced. They see the mail carrier, they bark, and the mail carrier leaves. The dog thinks, "Boy, I'm good. My barking made that person leave." In modifying the dog's behavior, we need to overcome this reinforcement.

Sometimes, by just preventing the dog from seeing the intruding mail carrier, we can solve the problem. Often, however, we need to do more. First, we must make sure we are not rewarding the dog for any type of barking. If the dog barks when she wants to eat, and we feed her, we are rewarding vocalization. If we try to ignore the barking, but eventually cave in and give attention, the dog learns that short barks will not do the trick, but excessive and extended barking will.

After the dog has alerted us to an "intruder", we need a way to signal the dog after one or two barks that she was a good dog for warning us, but now we will take control. Often the command "Enough" will accomplish that goal.

To teach "Enough", set up a situation in which your puppy will bark, but not excessively. Knock on the door, for instance. After one or two barks,

stop knocking and make a sound or distraction that will get her to switch her attention to you. If she stops barking, immediately say "Enough" and reward her with a treat and praise. If she does not stop barking, put that delicious treat right in front of her nose. When she stops barking for a second or two, say "Enough", wait a few more seconds, and if she is quiet, give her the treat and praise. Timing is critical—she must be quiet when you give her the treat or she will think she is being rewarded for continuing to bark. Be sure to say "Enough" when she is quiet, not when she is barking. Later, as she associates "Enough" with being quiet, you can use it as a command to stop barking.

Remember: Do not inadvertently reinforce barking by giving verbal or physical reassurance to a barking dog.

Fear Barkers

Some dogs may start with an alert or warning bark, but then progress to a bark that is associated with fear. One of the more common examples of this is those dogs that bark at approaching strangers.

If your dog is barking out of fear, first he must learn to be obedient, defer to you for his behavior cues, and relax. Then, you can start setting up situations in which people approach from far off, and as your dog remains relaxed, give him treats. Slowly (over days and weeks) have people approach him only to the point where he remains relaxed and you can reward him. As people come even closer, have them throw treats his way so he starts associating people with good things happening. While this controlled training is going on, it is best to not put him in situations in which you do not have control, e.g., walking down a busy street.

Do not encourage your puppy to bark at people. You may set a bad habit in motion, and he may become suspicious and even fearful of people. Chances are, he will bark at odd situations and strangers without you telling him to.

Attention-Seeking Barkers

Young puppies, as well as adults, soon learn that barking will incite attention from us. The problem is that dogs will be happy with any attention they receive, be it negative or positive. A stern "No" from you is still attention, so the puppy got what she wanted, and you reinforced the behavior. It is best to just ignore this type of barking, as hard as it may be.

Sometimes, the use of a remote correction is helpful in controlling this type of barking. Coins in an empty soda can, foghorns, or other noisemakers can be used to startle the dog while she is barking. When she is startled, she stops barking, and at that point, you can give her a substitute for barking—a toy, a walk. Just make sure she stops barking before you give the substitute or the dog will perceive it as a reward for barking.

Play/Excitement Barkers

If your dog barks excessively during play, it is best to let her calm down and slow down the game. If she continues to bark, stop playing until she has settled down.

Self-Identification Barkers

This type of barking is quite instinctive and can be difficult to control, especially in a household of multiple dogs. Often there is an instigator dog and all other dogs join in. This type of barking may be controlled using a similar approach to alert/warning barks, i.e., obedience and relaxation methods

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with a substitute behavior offered, like playing with a toy.

Bored Barkers

Dogs who bark when they are bored may be similar to dogs seeking attention or those that are lonely. Dogs who are bored need something to do besides barking. We need to give them a more stimulating environment and usually a lot more exercise. A tired dog is less likely to be bored. Toys, such as Kongs and Buster Cubes, that can be filled with treats can get your dog's brain, as well as his body, working.

Lonely/Anxious Barkers

Dogs who bark when they are alone may be showing a symptom of their separation anxiety. As we mentioned, these dogs are in the midst of a vicious circle—the more lonely they are, the more they bark, the more upset they are, the more they bark, the barking gets them more upset, and they bark more—and the cycle continues.

We need to work with the dog on the underlying behavior of separation anxiety. We can do this several ways. As in alert/warning barking, we need to be able to teach the dog simple obedience and how to relax. Then, we can work on the problem of separation anxiety.

We can start out by leaving or acting like we are leaving for a short time—and before the dog starts getting nervous and barking (this may be one second at first), we come back. This way, we are not rewarding barking, but rewarding relaxation and silence. We gradually extend the time we are gone and return before the dog gets anxious. If your dog is anxious even if you leave the room, then you will need to

start by just taking several steps away from her while she remains relaxed. While going through this behavior modification, you cannot go too slow—you can go too fast.

We often need to change our habits, too. Often the dog starts getting nervous when we go through our routine of leaving. Maybe you are like me, and the last thing you do before you leave is put on your shoes and pick up your keys. Vary this and put on your shoes and pick up your keys—but do not leave. Go to the couch and read a book. If you only play the radio on weekends when you are home, turn it on during your workdays. As hard as it may be, set your alarm on weekends, get up, but stay home. Continue these changes in routine until your dog does not pay any attention to your cues anymore. It is also very important to not give your dog a lot of attention when you leave.

When you are gone, make sure your dog is comfortable—light, warmth, a radio playing, toys. If your dog is outside, a doghouse may help her feel more secure. Some indoor dogs will be more content if they can watch what is going on outside, be it traffic or chipmunks. Others may be more anxious if they can look out and do better with the drapes closed. You will need to decide what makes your dog less anxious. Make sure you give your dog a lot of exercise a half hour or so before you leave. As with boredom, tired dogs are less likely to become anxious.

If your dog happens to not only bark, but destroy things while you are gone, a crate may be necessary. Never punish your dog when you come home and

find something chewed or torn. If you do, your dog will soon associate your return with being punished. That is going to make her even more anxious. If you videotape these destructive dogs, you may see the dog is anxious when the owner leaves, but anxiety also increases just before the owner's usual time of return, when the dog becomes anxious about the owner's impending return and punishment.

Just as you should not punish your dog on your return, do not give her a lot of attention either—then your returning home will not be such a big deal to her. Instead, come in the door, say "Hello" and go about a household task. Once your dog has settled down and is quiet, then you can spend some quality time with her.

Initially, while you are working on behavior modification, it may be helpful to get a neighbor or pet sitter to come in once or several times during the day. This will help break up the long hours the dog has without you.

Finally, if the separation anxiety is severe, medications are often needed during the modification process. Medication alone will not solve the problem, but it can be a useful adjunct to the process. Consult with your veterinarian to determine which medication would be most appropriate.

Startled Barkers

We can best curb startled barking using similar techniques for alert/warning barks. Teaching "Enough" will really help in this situation. If a certain sound consistently startles your dog, record that sound. Start by playing it back very softly so your dog will remain relaxed when she hears it. If she remains

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Excessive Barking *continued from page 4*

quiet, then reward her. Over days and weeks, gradually increase the volume until she is no longer startled into barking when she hears it.

Pathologic Barking

Barking that is a simple nuisance is not the same as barking that is pathologically excessive. Most of the barking we have talked about thus far is normal barking behavior, except for that connected to separation anxiety. Barking can be abnormal or "pathologic" in situations of separation anxiety, as a result of an obsessive-compulsive disorder in which a dog barks very excessively or at inappropriate things (a leaf falling), or in dogs who become hyper-excited with the approach of people or other dogs. Dogs who become aggressive during barking episodes need to undergo behavior modification for the aggression before we attempt to modify the barking behavior.

For dogs with pathologic barking or additional behavior problems, it is highly recommended to use a team approach to the problem. The team consists of all family members, an animal behaviorist, and a veterinarian. Each family member must work with the dog in the same way, using the same commands. The animal behaviorist may be able to cue in on unique characteristics of your dog's behavior and help you set up training situations that will be most effective. Your veterinarian may be able to give you insights, as well as prescribe appropriate medications to enable the dog to be more responsive to the behavior modification.

Controlling Barking through Corrective Collars

There are numerous collars on the market that produce an electrical stimulation, an irritation ultrasonic sound, or a smell (offensive to the dogs, but not to us) when the dog barks. These may be used as an adjunct to behavior modification. Collars alone will not cure the problem. Unfortunately, these collars do not always produce the desired effect. For some of these hard-core barkers, the punishment for barking is not sufficient to get them to stop. They would rather bark and be punished than not bark at all. For dogs who bark when they are anxious, the collar's correction may make them even more anxious.

In some situations, these corrective collars have been found to be useful. For instance, there is a citronella collar which gives off a citrus smell when the dog barks. This can alert you to the fact that the dog was barking while you were gone, since the citrus smell still lingers in the air. In situations where you must change the barking behavior quickly or you may lose your dog (or apartment), a bark-control collar may be used while you are away from the dog. When using a bark-control collar, remember that you not only have to stop the bad behavior, you need to reward the good. Your dog cannot learn an appropriate alternative to barking if someone is not present to teach it to him.

Another type of collar that may be effective is a halter collar. This type of collar looks more like a horse halter. Brand names include Gentle Leader/Promise System Canine Head Collar and Halti Head collars. When you pull on the leash portion, a portion of the collar tightens around the dog's muzzle. By using a quick pull of the lead, saying

"Enough" when the dog is quiet, and then rewarding him, you may find the training goes faster.

Debarking

Debarking is a surgical procedure that removes the vocal cords from dogs. There are two surgical approaches, one through the mouth, and the other through an incision in the neck. Debarking will NOT result in a silent dog. A dog who has undergone the procedure will still attempt to bark and make a hoarse sound, which some people find more irritation than the bark itself. Debarking will not cure the reason for the barking—the fear, boredom, or anxiety will still be there.

Preventing Nuisance Barking in Puppies

Teaching your puppy appropriate behavior from the beginning is easier than changing behavior that has become a bad habit. Some behavior we may think of as cute in a puppy will not be cute in an adult dog. So, think ahead to avoid potential problems.

The first few nights after bringing your puppy home will be the hardest. You may want to put his crate in your bedroom. The puppy will be more secure with you near. Security builds trust. Trust will decrease the possibility of separation anxiety in the future. Just remember not to give any attention to the puppy if he is whining—that will only reward his undesirable behavior.

By starting to train your puppy in obedience and relaxation at an early age, you can greatly reduce the probability your puppy will grow into a problem barker. Nip problems in the bud and always look at why the puppy is barking. Is it fear, anxiety, attention-seeking? Use the appropriate measures to treat the un-

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Excessive Barking *continued from page 5*

derlying problem.

Remember that if for some reason you want your dog to bark on command, or in a certain situation, you must also be able to teach him to stop on command. Teach "Enough" at an early age. This was described under "Alert/Warning Barkers".

Introduce the young puppy to situations that may cause anxiety later on. Get your puppy used to walking on the sidewalk along a busy street. Expose your puppy to sounds like vacuum

cleaners, hair dryers, and other noises. Take things slow so your puppy does not become anxious while being exposed to these new things. Reward your puppy when he is quiet and relaxed.

Puppy classes are a great place for your puppy to meet new people and other dogs. He can learn to obey you even when there are numerous distractions. You also have a trainer present who can help you with any potential problems.

In short, it will be a lot more fun for everybody if your puppy learns to communicate through a way of the tail and looking to you for guidance, rather than through excessive and relentless barking.

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Free pet supply catalog: 1-800-323-4208

Featured Pet—Suni



Suni—an "inside" girl!

Hi! I'm Suni. I am a black female Mini Schnauzer. I am about 8 years old, weigh 14 lbs., with a docked tail and natural ears. My foster mom says I am a pretty girl, crate trained, house trained, and love to sleep in the big bed with my foster parents keeping one paw on at least one of them. I get along with other dogs and play well with them. I even share my food and toys! I don't like to play outside much, though. I definitely prefer being inside best—on the couch, in your lap, or just watching you going about your business. Wouldn't I fit into your home just perfectly?

Adoption Fee: \$250

GO FETCH. MAY IS FOOD DRIVE FOR HOMELESS ANIMALS MONTH

GET YOUR PHOTOS IN FOR THE 2012 CALENDAR CONTEST !!!

Entries are being accepted for the 2012 calendar contest. Keep your cameras at the ready to capture those special moments nestled in the spring wildflowers, in a summer garden, among the Halloween pumpkins, around the Christmas tree—all those wonderful times throughout the year that make each season so special!



Hurley, Lola & Sable Harrington
May 2011 Calendar Page Winners

Deadline for entries:

August 1, 2011

Winners will be announced by:

October 1, 2011

Calendars will be mailed by:

December 1, 2011

For contest info and to submit your entry, go to:

<http://www.msrh.org/category/resources/calendar-contest/>

COOKBOOK FUNDRAISER STILL NEEDS CONTRIBUTIONS!!!

The cookbook fundraiser has been underway for two months with a month to go until the deadline of JUNE 15, 2011. We still need lots and lots more:

- ==> RECIPES
- ==> PHOTOS
- ==> SPONSORSHIPS (DONATIONS)
- ==> BUSINESS ADVERTISEMENTS

RECIPES: Categories are 1) Appetizers & Beverages 2) Soups & Salads 3) Vegetables & Side Dishes 4) Main Dishes 5) Breads & Rolls 6) Desserts 7) This & That and 8) Doggie Recipes. When submitting a recipe, include your dog's name. His or her name will be included with yours as a contributor of the recipe (you don't have to have a dog to contribute a recipe, however).

PHOTOS: We prefer a portrait orientation, but landscape will work. Need to have at least 1MB or equivalent in JPEG format. Please provide your rescue/adoption story and your dog's adoption date.

SPONSORSHIPS: The total cost to produce the book is \$2,700. We are not asking any one person to donate the entire amount. We are just asking those who would like to contribute something, to donate what they can. MSRH will be grateful for any amount we receive to defray our expenses.

ADVERTISEMENTS: If you would like to purchase a page in the cookbook to advertise your business, the cost for a one-page ad is \$100, 1/2 page is \$50. For details, please contact newsletter@msrh.org.

TO SUBMIT RECIPES, PHOTOS, RESCUE/ADOPTION STORIES, OR DONATE:

[HTTP://WWW.MSRH.ORG/CATEGORY/RESOURCES/COOKBOOK](http://www.msrh.org/category/resources/cookbook)



Parker Road Animal Hospital & Pet Resort
6740 Airline Drive
Houston, Texas 77076
Tel: (713) 694-0552
www.parkerroadpetresort.com

Be sure to mention that you are associated with MSRH when you board your dog at Parker Road Pet Resort and a donation of \$1 per day per dog will be made to MSRH. Not only will your dog be treated like royalty, but MSRH will be receive a benefit, as well.

Parker Road Animal Hospital

Benefits for you & Benefits for MSRH

As an adopter you will be entitled to a set discounted rate to support you in the care of your new family member:

- 10% Off- Examinations**
Laboratory Diagnostics
X-rays/Imaging
Hospitalizations
Surgeries
- Parker Road will donate \$20.00 for each adopter's first visit back to MSRH
 - Parker Road will also donate 5% of your total dollars spent back to MSRH after your first visit

6730 Airline Drive
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Parker Road Monthly Report: Pet Partners for Schnauzer Survival & Wellness

Our special story for March was a small silver girl named Cheyanne. She was brought to PRAH after being HBC (hit by car) on March 11, 2011. Her petite frame weighed in at 10.3 pounds. She presented with significant abrasions to her inguinal area along with severe swelling to her pelvic region. Full Body radiographs were taken and they revealed a cranial proximal dislocation to the right hip along with an acetabular fracture to her left hip, leaving her without the ability to walk. She was admitted into the hospital and started on steroids and daily hydrotherapy (to reduce to swelling in the pelvis) along with high doses of pain medication to keep her comfortable until she was stable enough for surgery. On 3/16/2011 Cheyanne developed complications resulting from the trauma of being hit by the car. She developed hemolytic anemia (blood loss). She was given a blood transfusion and started on IV fluid treatment to stabilize her yet again. From this point on her healing progressed nicely. Due to the extent of her injuries, Dr. Dayton felt the surgical repair should be broken into two separate surgeries. After a week of monitoring and continued improvement, Cheyanne was scheduled for her first surgery on 3/23/2011. The dislocated hip would be repaired first. The hip was reduced and a toggle pin was placed in order to secure the reduction back into place additionally, she was spayed at that time and recovered well. The surgery was such a success that Cheyanne was standing the next day and walking the second day after surgery. She was placed into a foster home on 3/29/2011 for two additional weeks of recovery. The reports are that she is now walking on all four legs. Cheyanne is scheduled to come in this week and Dr. Dayton is hopeful that if there is enough healing we may be able to avoid a second surgery on the left hip. Keep your fingers crossed and stay tuned for more.

BE SURE TO KEEP YOUR PET CURRENT ON HEART-WORM AND FLEA PREVENTIVES! IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE REMEMBERING WHEN TO GIVE THEM EACH MONTH, SIGN UP WITH:

[HTTP://WWW.REMINDMYPET.COM](http://www.remindmypet.com)

YOU'LL RECEIVE AN E-MAIL EACH MONTH ON THE DATE YOU DESIGNATE REMINDING YOU THAT IT'S TIME TO GIVE YOUR PET'S PREVENTIVE MEDS!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT—HILDA KUSANDRI

My name is Hilda Kusandri. I live in the West Houston area. I first became acquainted with Mini Schnauzers because my sister Regina Schroeder, who is also a volunteer with MSRH, has had several Mini Schnauzers for many years. About 4 years ago, my sister wanted to adopt another Mini, and she found the MSRH website and went on to adopt Toby (previously Spencer) from MSRH.

My sister then began volunteering as a foster parent. One of the fosters was a boy named Lalo. Lalo was heartworm positive when he was rescued. My sister and her husband took care of Lalo for 3 months. When Lalo recovered and became available for adoption, I decided to adopt him in November 2008. In December of that same year, I picked up a senior girl (10 years plus at that time) named Jolie. I fostered Jolie for several months while she was undergoing heartworm treatment. When Jolie became well and had her picture posted on the website, someone else was interested in adopting her. That was when I decided that I couldn't part with her and officially adopted her in May 2009.

So I went from having no pets to having two within 6 months. Now I cannot imagine my life without them. Lalo and Jolie bring so much joy to me. They also bring joy and companionship to each other. It's such a pleasure watching them play together.

In addition to adopting from MSRH, I have also fostered 7 Minis: Lucy Lulu, Dawson, Chotzy, Tiki, Zak, Portia, and Vera who went on to their forever homes. Because I work full time and generally have a hectic schedule, I haven't been able to foster as much. I believe in MSRH's mission and continue supporting it. My employer has a charity matching program, and MSRH is one of the charity organizations in that program.



Hilda with Lalo (left) and Jolie

Dogs are forever in the moment. They are a tidal wave of feelings, and every feeling is some variant of love.

Cynthia Heimel

A SPECIAL ADOPTION STORY

"LUKA & MELISSA"

Last month, Susanne Ramos was featured in our Volunteer Spotlight. In her bio, she talked about her daughter Melissa, age 9. One of the reasons she wanted to foster for MSRH (there were several) was to have Melissa learn through example and experience the value of giving back.

Their first foster, Emma, really bonded with Melissa as was explained in Susanne's story, and after Emma was adopted, the Ramos family began fostering Luka. Obviously, the same thing happened with him. But, Melissa—like her mother—is an amazing little girl to be able to give so much of herself and yet let go so gracefully. It takes a great deal of inner strength, even for an adult, to be able to do that.

When Luka was adopted in April, his new adoptive Dad wrote the following:

"As for how he's settling in, Luka is doing amazingly well . . . He is getting along with our young dog Darla (a bit under 1 year old, Maltese/Poodle mix stray we took in) like they came from the same litter. They are perfect playmates, they wrestle and chase each other and have a great time. This is working perfectly with our older Schnauzer, Romy, who is about 13, and all three dogs are pretty happy so far—Darla and Luka play and nap, and Romy can join in when she wants to; otherwise, she is free to go do her own thing . . . I wanted to say, Susanne's daughter was very good with Luka, and she took great care of him. We could tell it was difficult for her to let him go, but she handled it very bravely. . ."



Melissa Ramos with Luka on adoption day

A Word About The Healthy Paws Foundation

For those who may not know, MSRH is part of a foundation grant program that has helped grow our MSRH community. The Healthy Paws Foundation (HPF) has been instrumental in helping to create our Facebook page and to improve the style and content of our official monthly e-mail communication. HPF also contributes to the MSRH medical fund to help us with our veterinary bills.

What you also may not know, Healthy Paws is a pet insurance company. They have a blog on their website where they promote adoptions for homeless pets. In February, they featured our own foster, Foxy, and MSRH. To read about Foxy in the Healthy Paws blog, go to:

<http://www.healthypawsinsurance.com>, then click on the tab "All About Pets", then on right side of page under "Archives", click on "February".

Stay tuned for more on Healthy Paws Insurance offerings and discounts in June issue.



Foxy

healthypaws
PET INSURANCE

BOOK OF THE MONTH

"The Bond: Our Kinship with Animals, Our Call to Defend Them"

By Wayne Pacelle

A fascinating exploration of humanity's external bond with animals and an urgent call to answer the needs of millions of at risk creatures.

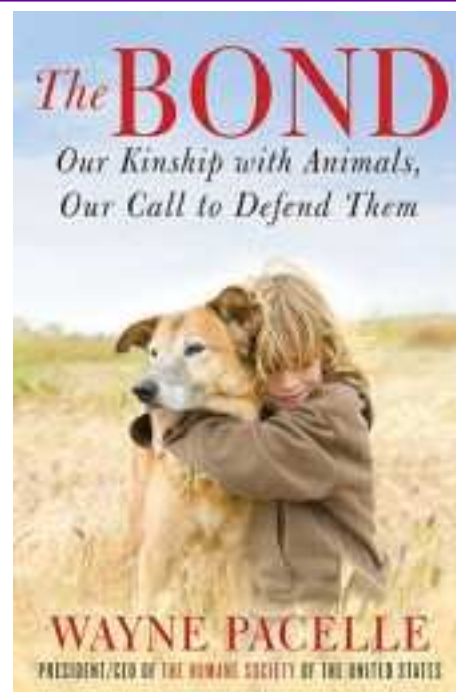
A landmark work, *"The Bond"* is the passionate, insightful, and comprehensive examination of our special connection to all creatures, written by one of America's most important champions of animal welfare. Wayne Pacelle, the president of the Humane Society of the United States, unveils the deep links of the human-animal bond, as well as the conflicting impulses that have led us to betray this bond through widespread and systemic cruelty to animals.

Pacelle begins by exploring the biological and historical underpinnings of the human-animal bond and reveals our newfound understanding of animals, including their remarkable emotional and cognitive capacities. In the book's second section, Pacelle shows how the bond has been disastrously broken. He takes readers to a slaughter plant shuttered for inhumane practices, as well as the enormous egg factory farms of California. We visit Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary in Kansas to speak to NFL star Michael Vick, then serving his sentence for dogfighting. Pacelle paints a portrait of New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and highlights the heroic actions of residents and volunteers to reunite pets with their owners. Pacelle's narrative also leads the reader to remote locations in which conflicts over the killing of wildlife continue to play out—from the fields outside of Yellowstone National Park where bison are slaughtered with the encouragement of federal authorities, to the ice floes of Atlantic Canada where seal nurseries turn into killing fields.

In its final section, *"The Bond"* takes on the arguments of opponents and critics of animal protection and spotlights the groups and industries standing in the way of progress—from the National Rifle Association and agribusiness organizations like the American Farm Bureau, to surprising adversaries like the American Veterinary Medical Association and the American Kennel Club. Ultimately, Pacelle points the way to a new, humane economy—one not built on extraction, suffering, and killing, but on the celebration, stewardship, and care of animals.

An eye-opening must read, *"The Bond"* reminds us that animals are at the center of our lives, they are not just a backdrop. How we treat them is one of the great themes of the human story.

"The Bond" may be purchased at <http://www.amazon.com> for \$15.97 (hardcover) or \$12.99 (Kindle). As of this writing, it has received 26 reviews with 19 of them 5-star.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



During his 17 years with the Humane Society of the United States, including 7 years as President and CEO, Wayne Pacelle has played a leading role in making HSUS, the nation's largest animal protection charity, into a dynamic public force and voice for animals. Taking a special interest in law reform, he has been the leading strategist in getting animal protection laws enacted by direct action of the electorate, designing winning campaigns in a dozen states for ballot initiatives that outlawed cockfighting, factory farming practices, bear baiting, and a host of other inhumane practices. He has become the voice and face of the humane movement in this country.

Dear Sophie: Announcement—Change in frequency of this column.

Dear Readers:

I have been giving this some thought for quite some time, and I have finally arrived at a decision. Although I know that this column has been popular among my readers, it has been increasingly difficult to come up with topics that can be properly addressed in this format on a monthly basis.

So, in order to be able to continue giving you a quality, worthwhile column, I have decided that the column will not necessarily appear on a regular

monthly schedule as it has always been done in the past. Instead, it will appear when there is actually a topic of importance that can be best presented in this way.

Of course, readers are always welcome to send in questions or problems for me to answer or solve. I am always open to suggestions, too. Just send them to my attention (Dear Sophie) at:

newsletter@msrh.org

The response to your question or problem will appear in the next upcoming newsletter.

Thanks to all of you for reading my column. I am honored that you enjoy it. Stay tuned for more.

Sincerely,
Sophie



JIM'S LEMONADE STAND



Jim offering up some of his awesome product!

Lemonade Day Houston

Lemonade Day is part of a nation-wide event that teaches kids the skills they need to be successful in the future. Youth learn to set goals, develop a business plan, establish a budget, seek investors, provide customer service, and give back to the community. Lemonade Day is the perfect opportunity for a community to show kids they care and train the next generation of entrepreneurs. It began in Houston in 2007 and has grown to 28 cities in just 4 years. The goal is to be in 100 cities by 2013.

Jim is the grandson of Laura and Dennis Virgadamo, MSRH adopters, foster parents, and volunteers. He is 6-1/2 years old. He lost his dog not long ago and has a big heart for rescue. He wanted to participate in Lemonade Day Houston, so he asked if he could put up his stand in front of his grandparents' house. Since he has wanted to foster a dog, but cannot at this time, his grandmother suggested that he might want to donate the proceeds of his lemonade sales to MSRH. He agreed.

Jim did the official interview with the Lemonade Day staffers all by himself, helped paint the signs, squeeze the lemons and make the lemonade, pass out the flyers, and everything else required to prepare for the event. On the big day, May 1, 2011, he greeted all of the people and did almost all of the selling and serving himself. Martha Sarrack commented on Facebook, "The strawberry lemonade was the bomb." And, Donna Papparazzo said, "He did a fantastic job!"

Proceeds for MSRH amounted to **\$243!** Thank you, Jim, for a job well done! Lots of Schnauzer kisses, tail wags, and hugs to you!

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Thursday—Sunday
July 21—24, 2011**

34TH ANNUAL RELIANT PARK WORLD SERIES OF DOG SHOWS

Chairs: Paula Tolbert and Sherry Eitel
Where: Reliant Park, One Reliant Center, 8400 Kirby Drive, Houston, Texas 77054
Hours: 10:00AM to 5:00PM each day, except Sunday (short day)
Tel: Paula (281) 358-2874; Sherry (713) 298-4999
E-mail: pjtolbert@yahoo.com or sherry@eitel.com

Volunteers are needed to assist with set up Thursday morning, 7/21, or pack up Sunday afternoon, 7/24, or to man the booth each day of the event. Attention foster families: We would love to have you bring your foster Mini to the booth, including the seniors, for a few hours. If you are interested in volunteering or bringing your foster, please contact either Paula or Sherry, so they can work out the schedule. As always, there will be no on site adoptions.

SAVE THE DATE!
FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2011
YAPPY HOUR

Chair: Martha Sarrack
Where: Animal Tales
Hours: 6—8PM
Tel: (281) 829-3293
E-mail: minimarti65@gmail.com

Mark your calendars for this event. More details to follow as event approaches.

SAVE THE DATE!
**SATURDAY & SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22 &
 23, 2011**
PETFEST

Chair: Karen Coleman
Where: Old Town Spring
Hours: TBD
Tel: (832) 277-4904
E-mail: houstonschnauzerrescue@yahoo.com

Mark your calendars for this event. More details to follow as event approaches.

RESULTS OF EVENTS PAST:

April 7, 2011—Paws in the Park: Martha Sarrack, assisted by her daughter Maggie and their friend Paige, hosted a booth for MSRH at "Paws in the Park" put on by the Katy Parks and Recreation Dept. at Katy Dog Park. They had a dog costume contest and an Easter egg hunt for the dogs. The off-leash dog park was closed, so eggs could be hidden with dog treats in them and some other prizes. If a dog touched his nose to an egg, a human picked it up (there were lots of cheaters). At Martha's booth, she had a basket filled with plastic eggs with a dog treat inside, and it had a sticker on it advertising MSRH. She also had a jar with treats that the people had to guess how many treats were in the jar. The winner won the whole jar of 329 treats. There were approximately 50 people who came to the event. There were only a few booths: CAP, Rover Oaks, Pooper Scooper, and one other rescue group from the Katy area. MSRH was the only breed rescue group. It was a small event, but has potential. Many thanks to Martha, Maggie, and Paige for representing MSRH at this fun event!

April 16, 2011—MSRH Spring Garage Sale: Martha Sarrack hosted the annual MSRH Spring Garage Sale at her home assisted by Regina Schroeder, Crystal Cook, and Joanne Sapp. Martha reports that they brought in **\$1,200** for MSRH on the day of the sale, and she's still selling stuff! We are very grateful to Martha, Regina, Crystal, and Joanne for all the work they did on this sale, as well as all of the garage sales they have worked on over the years!

Many Thanks To Our April Transport Volunteers!

MUCH APPRECIATION GOES TO: **Carol Harrington** for picking up McArthur at LaPorte Animal Control on April 1, 2011; **Connie Seagraves** for picking up Rosie at Town Lake Animal Control on April 1, 2011; **Martha Sarrack** for picking up Jordana, Josefina, Juanita, Juliana, Julieta, & Julio, owner surrenders, on April 7, 2011; **Marilyn Malaney** for picking up Emily Shay at Harris Co. Animal Control on April 19, 2011; and **Karen Coleman** for picking up Machen at Harris Co. Animal Control on April 22, 2011.

We apologize for any transports that may have taken place during April that are not acknowledged here and are very grateful to those transporters for their efforts.

From the Editor

Dear Readers:

I have an update to the status of the Puppy Mill Cruelty Prevention Act in Missouri. Last month a bill to nullify it had passed the Missouri Senate, and it was headed for the House. Well, it passed the House. The next step was for Gov. Jay Nixon to either sign the nullification into law or veto it. What ended up happening was they came up with some unrelated agriculture tax bill that they tacked rider language onto that they are calling a "compromise" to the original legislation that accomplishes their goal of virtually nullifying it. So, the bottom line is the special interest groups and lobbyists overthrew the will of the people. All of the elected officials in the State of Missouri do not represent the voters who elected them is what this boils down to. I hope we haven't heard the end of this, because it sounds mighty crooked to me!

I thought you'd be interested in knowing that the Texas Legislature is considering the Commercial Dog and Cat Breeders Act (HB 1451) introduced by Rep. Senfronia Thomson. It has passed the Texas House and is

now before the Senate. If passed into law, this would cover all breeders who keep 11 or more breeding female dogs or cats and sell the offspring as pets. For the first time in Texas, commercial breeders would have to obtain a license and be inspected by the state's Department of Licensing and Administrative Procedures. Commercial breeders would be required to comply with certain humane standards, such as:

- Providing adequate amounts of wholesome food and clean water for dogs and cats,
- Providing confined dogs and cats with enough space to easily sit, stand, turn around and lie down in a normal manner,
- Ensuring adequate sanitation conditions within the living spaces, and
- Providing proper handling, treatment, and veterinary care.

HB 1451 is supported by the Texas Veterinary Medical Association, the Texas Animal Control Association, and many other animal welfare groups. Let's hope it is more successful that the similar legislation in Missouri, although there are those groups who



Linda with Sophie & Barkley

oppose it—mainly breeders, Texas Wildlife Association, and Responsible Pet Owners Association to name a few.

I just finished reading "The Lost Dogs" by Jim Gorant which was our Book of the Month for January. If you haven't read it yet, I highly recommend it. It is one of those books you just can't put down. It is very well written with a happy, happy ending.

Memorial Day will be here before you know it, and then summer is upon us. Another hurricane season has arrived, folks! Wish us luck!

Sincerely,
Linda

APRIL INTAKES = 29

ADOPTIONS = 27