

Hi Everyone

Happy St David's Day

Hectors have had a very busy couple of months and dogs coming in and going out with a total of 12 hounds being re-homed - wow great news.

I had another late night call at 11.30pm recently to help catch a lurcher abandoned on the A5 bypass. Most people are aware Hectors have been under a lot of pressure recently to save the dogs that are being thrown out on the A5 with injuries and it would seem that Miles was indeed one of these dogs and has very much become a mascot. We can only presume these dogs have been no good at Hare coursing and this is why they are abandoned in such a way. It breaks my heart.

On a fun note I'm not sure if everyone is as daft as me but did your dogs get a pancake this year? If so don't forget to send your pictures to us as all of us at Hectors love the happy endings.

FUTURE EVENTS AND INFO

Sunday 18th March, 11:00 am, St Patrick's Day Walk, Alyn Waters Country Park, LL11 4AG

Join Fred and the hounds for a St Patrick's Day Walk following the 2 mile red trail at a leisurely pace. The paths are a mixture of good surfaces and track therefore high heels are not recommended.

Remember to wear something green to help us celebrate the day.

Alyn Waters is located 3 miles north of Wrexham, between Gwersyllt, Bradley and Llay. To reach the Visitor Centre take the A541 Wrexham to Mold Road to just outside Gwersyllt and look for brown and white signs.

If you need any more information, Fred can be contacted as follows:

07775 570963 / freddebrun@hotmail.co.uk

Good Friday, 30th March, 9 am - 2 pm Oswestry Market Collection, Oswestry

Come along and see us all at our Good Friday collection. Meet the dogs and their human companions and remember to pop a pound in our buckets.

AS RECOMMENDED BY YOU - As told by Kim Byers.

The Last Inn, Hengoed, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 7EU, Tel 01691 659 747

From May this year the Last Inn will be opening a doggy salon "Woofterz" offering services from full grooms to nail clips and even micro chipping! They are also putting a wash and go facility in the salon for customers to pop in and give their doggy a wash instead of you using your bath at home.

Woofterz will include a small dog shop offering doggy treats, gifts, cards, leads and good natural doggy foods. Whilst your pooches are having a pampering you can sit in the beer garden with a lovely beverage from the bar or even have a light snack from the restaurant. Opening times for the salon will be from 12 noon to 8 pm Monday to Friday, ideal if you are working during the day. The last Inn have a range of doggy drinks and tonics including a doggy ale Called "Bottom Sniffer" or even a "Pawsecco" all natural and "non-alcoholic".

The inn will be hosting a charity night on 1st September in aid of Hector's Greyhound Rescue, so keep an eye out for more details.

OVER TO YOU - As told by Sheila and Phillip Williams

We had never thought about having a Greyhound as a pet until we lost our Huntaway, Celt. We had him from Dogs Trust some twelve years ago and he had been a superb dog. It was always going to be difficult to replace him but we had to try. We are both retired and wanted a companion who we could enjoy walks with and we also wanted to provide a home for a rescue dog as we had with Celt. We were advised by people at our gym to have a Greyhound. Who would have thought of getting a Greyhound at our age? But we had been assured that they did not need extensive exercise and they were lovely natured dogs.

We contacted Hector's as recommended and what followed has been a great experience.

We adopted Shelly a five year old ex-racing Greyhound. She had been fostered by Pauline and Fred and had been fully domesticated with all that entails, and we offer our thanks for the work done before we had her. She soon settled into our routines and we into hers! She loves her walks, time spent on the settee, playing with her toys and her food. She is also very inquisitive, investigating cupboards and drawers when the opportunity arises. When she meets other people or dogs on her many walks she is very sociable and we are always asked about keeping a Greyhound as a pet. What can we say? She is lovely and exceeded our expectations.

We are very grateful for the support offered by Hector's and have found a new group of friends with a shared interest.

GREYHOUND HEALTH CARE - As told by Sheila Bridge

WHO RULES THE ROOST?

People often say to me about their dog, "He knows what to do, but he just won't do as I ask him". My usual reply is "It's your fault, you haven't communicated properly and now it's easier to let him have his own way". I have to say this isn't always received well, nevertheless, it is a fact.

Dogs are pack animals and a pack has leaders and a pecking order. When we bring dogs into our home we humans become the pack, but who is the leader? Well of course, we like to think we are, but are we really?

When a dog is adopted into a family however big or small the family may be it is treated like a small child, cuddled and cared for, fed and kept warm, basically it doesn't have to fend for itself. Logically then it doesn't need the responsibility of being a pack leader as it puts too much pressure on the dog which leads to behavioural problems. However, if we don't SHOW him that we are in charge, he will feel it's his job to lead and protect his pack.

Dogs communicate to each other through body language, so the best way for us to "talk" to them is by using the same method. Yes, dogs understand words that are constantly repeated, sit, lie down, walkies, dinner time etc. They understand because these sounds have good consequences for them, food, treats etc.

In order for us to reinforce our position as pack leader we need to cut back on verbal commands and communicate more by body language. In the human world, some of the greatest leaders have been "silent" and inspirational, eg Gandhi and Mandela. A leader has to instil confidence, which is achieved by staying calm, being consistent, and not shouting.

Think about the times when you return to the house from work or shopping, how are you greeted by the dog(s)? Tail wagging, leaping are a craving for attention? The best way to greet them is to ignore this behaviour. No speaking, no touching, no eye contact. This doesn't "hurt their feelings" it reinforces the fact that the leader has returned. The dog will soon lose interest because he's being ignored and go to lie down. When all is quiet for five minutes you can call him and reward with a cuddle and maybe a treat. He has now learnt two important lessons. That you are the leader and cuddles are not on tap, they are earned by good behaviour. This ritual should be repeated every time you return, reinforcement is crucial to the dogs' understanding. By consistently remaining silent, the dog will accept your leadership and you can get into the house without being leapt on and the shopping knocked out of your hands.

Apart from food the highlight of the day is when the pack goes hunting ie walkies. For Sighthounds this is especially exciting as instincts both natural and taught come into play. If preparation for the walk is hectic stay calm and remember actions speak louder than words. Stand still, look straight ahead and wait until peace is restored, then carry on. If excitement builds up again, stop and wait, the dogs will soon realise that you are in charge and within a few days getting coats,

collars and leads on will be a quiet orderly exercise. Mine queue up waiting to be dressed.

When you open the door to set off on the walk, it MUST be you who goes first, you are the leader. If there is a stampede, stop and wait until all is calm, then set off again, stopping and starting as necessary. Walking our dogs should be a pleasurable quality time spent together. All too often I see humans being taken for a walk by their dogs, from tiny Yorkie's to Great Danes. This is not enjoyable.

Ideally we should be able to walk in a relaxed manner, arms by our sides, with the dogs trotting to heel on loose leads. Remember that you are in control, so walk tall. If they start pulling and do not respond to slight pressure on the lead, go into the stop and wait routine. If it is really bad, about turn and head for home. This is something the dog is not expecting and next time you stop and wait you may get a better response. A word of caution here, if you revert back to continually using the dog's name to get his attention, he will ignore you, he knows his name, but is busy trying to do his own thing, it also means he doesn't regard you as his leader.

In the next newsletter we will look at reinforcement of leadership through food and greeting visitors.

LILLY & GYPSY BY TERRY GREENWOOD

Thank you Terry for sharing this beautiful poem with us all

Lilly and Gypsy two wonderful dogs
Both brindle greyhounds we had in the past
Both taken early to sit on Gods lap
I knew special love like that couldn't last

Lilly would run like the wind on the beach
Not very far and always in reach
Gypsy so different would play with a ball
The other dogs she would play with them all

Lilly was soft and would lie on the bed
She would cuddle up close and snuggle her head
She loved to dig holes in the garden outside
Looking for mice that she couldn't abide

Gypsy would play with her toys every day
Her best one a rat so smelly and grey
She would bring it to me and throw it about

And think she was clever when the stuffing came out

My life is much richer from living with hounds

They give so much love unconditional, unbound

The Greyhound is proud, loving and kind

If you are getting a dog please keep them in mind.

Best Wishes

Hayley and the team at Hector's Greyhound Rescue