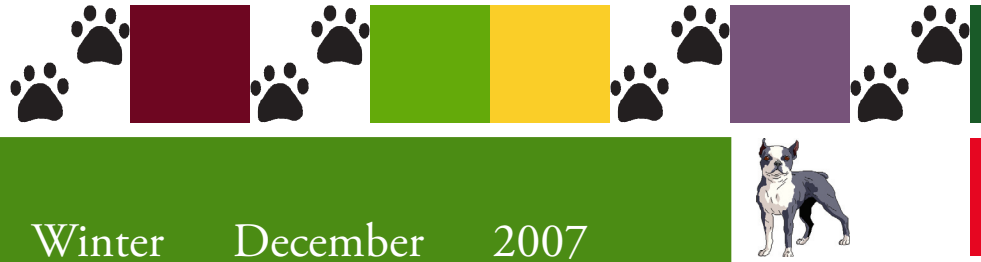
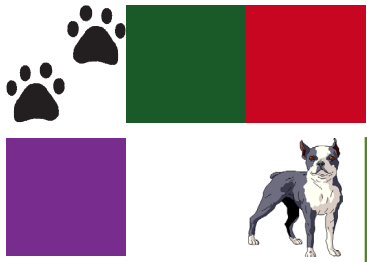


Welcome to our December MWBTR Newsletter!



Winter December 2007

The B.T. Barker

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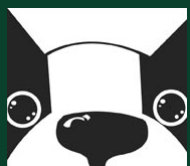
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Merry Christmas to all!



Letter From The President

It's that time of year again; Time for baking and decorating, Family time and lots of joy and laughter. Time to stop and be thankful for all you have: love and family and if you are lucky you have a roof over your head and are staying warm. Time to remember that not every living thing has it so good.

The shelters are filling up faster than they can adopt out. I hear the pleas daily from shelters that get 3 out and 5 in. As Christmas draws near, if these dogs and cats are not adopted, they will probably meet their end so the shelters do not have to pay overtime to workers to go and feed and clean. The states that Midwest Boston Terrier Rescue works with are all states that have financial issues so that means the first to go are the pets.

A lot of us have brought in fosters that have become so distressed that they are near impossible. Some of us have found out after a few days of settling down that the new foster is actually a great animal. Please remember that these poor animals have been through a traumatic experience. They do handle the stress differently than we do. They do not

need a bunch of humans handling them and coddling them. They need to be left alone to de-stress. If your family starts over handling or doing some sort of temp testing, someone is likely to get bit or snapped at or growled at. Put your new foster in a quiet room or basement in a nice clean crate with a blanket, and leave the dog alone! Give him/her time to decompress, realize he/she is safe and can calm down. Then slowly (as in days) get to know your foster and let him/her see he/she can trust you then you can slowly start to introduce him/her to other humans and animals, one at a time. Do not set this dog up for failure by asking him/her to handle too much too fast. It could cost the dog his or her life.

Also during the holidays be careful with your decorations. Icicles from Christmas trees can cause death if ingested and some of the holiday plants are also toxic to pets. If there will be lots of activity in your home during the holiday, please put your fosters away in quiet places. Don't ask your guests and family to take chances with a dog you really know little about. It is harder to adopt out a dog that

has bitten. If there is too much activity he may become stressed out and bite a strange person he hardly knows. This is especially true of children they do not know. If you cannot watch your foster dog with your guests every minute and have it all under control, crate your foster dog away from the family activities. That will be the best Holiday present you can give your foster dog: Safety.

Many dogs get surrendered to shelters or put down during the holidays for this very reason.

I would like to take this time to say thank you all for all you do and please have a safe and happy and warm Holiday season.

Gwen Eder
President
Midwest Boston Terrier Rescue

Non-violence leads to the highest ethics, which is the goal of all evolution. Until we stop harming all other living beings, we are still savages. ~Thomas A. Edison





Editor's Note

It's that time of year again... Blinking lights, shiny ornaments, and snow angels. It's also the time where many things can be a danger to our dogs. We are all caught up in the hustle and bustle of shopping, decorating, and entertaining and we sometimes forget how curious our dogs can really be. Some of the items on the list you might already know and may simply serve as a reminder that we need to be aware of what can hurt our dog/s.

1. Poinsettias are almost a staple in everyone's holiday decorating, but they are poisonous to our pets. Keep your plants put up high out of reach and this may even mean off the table if your dog has been known to check out other things up there.
2. Tinsel on your tree is pretty but dogs are too curious for their own good and usually can't re-

sist the shine. Either pass all together, or be ready to be on tinsel duty all month and make sure your dog is not left alone with the tree (this is a good tip to remember whether you have tinsel or not - many things can pose a danger to our pets that are hanging on our trees like metal hooks, bows, and glass ornaments).

3. Many of us have our houses filled with cookies, chocolate, nuts, and other holiday treats that we can't resist. Well your dog won't be able to either! Keep these goodies put up and remind your younger guests that it is a danger to your dog if they are fed any of these.

4. With rising gas prices many of us have turned to electric heaters to help off-set some of the costs. Watch you pet because their love of snuggling up next to something warm may get the best of them and they could get burned.

Holiday Danger For Our Pets

This is also important for your safety because your pet could try to move their bed, or blanket near it which could lead to a fire.

5. If you know you have children or know that some will be visiting you to open gifts keep an eye out for toys with small parts. Dogs will think almost anything was left behind as a snack for them.
6. Ask guests to keep their beverages (beer, wine, coffee, etc.) out of your dogs reach (i.e. don't let them set it on the floor next to the couch) or your dog might be joining the party with you.
7. We salt our steps and sidewalks for our own safety but keep an eye on your pet outside so they are not eating it. It's a good idea to also keep the bag of salt put away because your dog will just think you bought them a salty snack and this could result in a trip to the emergency vet.

As I was brainstorming and writing about things that could be a danger to our dogs around the holidays the one common thing I saw was that our dog's own curiosity is the number one danger! Since there is nothing we can do to eliminate that we just need to try to eliminate the other dangers in our homes.

When entertaining, decorating, and spending time with family and friends just try to remember that your dog most likely will not be able to resist all things shining and glowing. Have your emergency vet number on hand and the number for the National Animal Poison Control Center (888-426-4435) just to be prepared.

Have pet safe and happy holidays!

- Kristin Kolenko

Letters to Santa

Dear Santa,

I've been a very, very good girl. Just ask anyone. For Christmas this year could you do something special for me? I'm getting a little older and the cold is so hard for me...so could you hold the show? I don't like getting my tiny feet cold and I HATE the little coats Mom insists I wear. Oh! And one other little thing; please tell Mom to keep my brothers, Cosmo and Coach, out of our bed. It's OUR bed and they don't belong there, and they are bed hogs. Thanks Santa! You're the best!

Love, Maggie

Dear Santa,

First, thank you for my brother Cosmo! He's the best! He really rocks to play with, I'm lucky to have him! I don't want much for Christmas, just some new stuffies and maybe some treats. Oh, no! I know what I want...hearing aids for Maggie. Poor thing is stone deaf and if I have to listen to mom whistle for her very much longer I'll be deaf too. I don't want to be deaf. I watch out the window for you all year...you don't disguise yourself as a squirtle in the summer do you? I promise not to eat your cookies this year.

Love, Coach

Raymond's Top Ten List for Stocking Stuffers by Patty Parker

1. Nut rolls made with fresh litter are always good.
2. Road kill. It's free, just have to keep an eye out for a good one. Dead birds that are especially stinky are wonderful to roll in.
3. Here's a cheap easy home made gift your BT is sure to love. The Stinky Sock Tug. Have the boys wear a couple different pairs of socks to the gym several times without washing them. Then throw them all in a pile on a damp bathroom floor, preferably in the basement bathroom that nobody really uses a lot. Leave them for about 2 weeks or so and then tie them all together making a few larger knots for me to get a good grip. This makes a wonderful tug toy, home made, from the heart.
4. Know those little "love coupon" booklets you get for your mate? Well, I'd like one too. You can include coupons like "1 free counter surfing day" and "1 day of peeing in the houseplants with no yelling." Oh, and be sure to include one for "poop in your crate and finger paint with it and the master will clean it up with a happy face."
5. Dairy Queen coupons are nice. You just have to help me rip them out of the booklet. Oh, and I might need a ride too.
6. Miniature circus props for my fleas. I figure if these little buggers ain't gonna leave, I might as well make some money on them. I can sell tickets.
7. You know that slipper I keep stealing? Just give in and hand it over.
8. My own little recliner. They sell them at Walmart. Oh, wait, that won't fit in a stocking. Well then, I'll just keep yours.
9. This one is more of a wish than a stocking stuffer. How about next time we go to the vet, we have a "no-thermometer-no-fingers" day? Huh? Yeah, that would be nice.
10. In honor of the refined gentleman who used to do the column, Barky Sparky, I want to make this last one the biggest wish of all. Barky was loved by his fosters as though he were their very own. But he still crossed the Rainbow Bridge as a foster. I'd like to have a home. I wish that for all my foster brothers and sisters in Midwest BT Rescue. I know we could fill a lot of homes with love and laughter.

More Letters to Santa

Dear Santa,

For Christmas, I'd really like my own room. I have to share a room with two foster brothers. One poops in his crate a lot and it really stinks. It's enough to gag a maggot. The other foster brother pees all over because he can't hold his bladder for more than a half hour. When mom leaves and crates us all, I have stink in stereo. It comes at me from both sides and quite frankly, I'm more refined than this. I am a gentleman and I should not have to put up with "Poop machine" and "Pee Diddly." So my own room would be nice. With a soft doggie bed and a fireplace.

Your good little doggie friend,

Smudge

PS. Can you throw in a stinky dead bird?

Dear Santa

More than anything I would like a home for Christmas with my own family., My dad went into an old folks home and his family brought me to a shelter that was going to kill me. I was so sad I sat in a corner for 3 days shivering before some people came to see if I was savable. They brought me home and I was soooo very happy to ride in a car. As much as I am grateful, I am sad that I cannot live in the house all the time, I have to stay in the Kennel because there are so many family dogs here and I am not a family dog. I do get to go in every day and play and get petted. But I want my own family that will take me for rides and ice cream and let me lay in a sun beam on the floor all day. I am only 7 and I am still young I like to play and go for walks. Please send me a family that will love me and take me for rides a lot. Thanks, Santa!

Love, Chester in Michigan

Dear Santa

This year, I have not been so good. I am trying. I am really really trying. For some reason, the cat yells when I am within 100 ft of him. Ok, well, maybe I am within 1inch of him, but come on! He cries and yells as IF I am going to maul him! He is fluffy and soft and really really wants me to play with him, I just know it.

Another thing. I prefer that my family speak to me in French. They don't seem to want to make the effort to even learn French. So, until they will accept that I am an individual, I will continue to ignore them and their commands. You might want to put French lessons on THEIR Santa list.

Among the usual NylaBones, Milk Bone Gravy Biscuits, wadded Kleenex in the trash, loose Lego pieces, mittens, children's Wrestling Guys, pens, shoes and socks that I normally find attractive and fun... could you please, please consider bringing me new a soccer ball? With all the foam

now chewed off, it just does not have the same 'bounce' that is used to. I know your a very busy guy. There are many others with more pressing needs. I have food, love, a family that tolerates me, brothers to play with and lots of exercise. I am thankful that I was adopted from Midwest.

Hope to see you slide down that chimney Dec. 25th!!

Love, Pugsley R. Marchek

PS that "R" does NOT stand for Rotten.

Dear Santa,

I would like a cat or a rabbit to chase and probably catch if that would be okay. My mom makes me quit chasing the rabbits in the yard, something about them getting hurt. Isn't that what they are for? To chase?

Abby

Dear Santa,

I try to be good but it's so hard! Could you give me credit for trying? I don't mean to mark all the time, it's just a guy thing...I have no control over "it". Anyway, I'd really like some new stuffies for Christmas. I'll even share them with Coach and Maggie. But do I have to share them with my cousin Stella? She always visits and gets the best ones and de-stuffs them. I don't want to share with her. And could you please ask Maggie to quit calling the family bed hers and Mom's? She doesn't share very well and I curl up tight and tiny, so I don't take up much room. You're the best, Santa!

Love, Cosmo

Dear Santa,

Is there anything you can do about making this new dog go away?

I want him to find a home for Christmas. He is bugging me and taking up my moms time that should belong to me!!

Rambo

Dear Santa,

I hope I'm not too late for you to get this. I am hoping for my forever home for Christmas. I have been waiting for you, Santa, to come get me and take me to my forever home. I am sending you a picture so you can show my prospective forever parents I am all dressed and ready to go!

Thank you, Santa.

Love, Gracie



what a sweetie!

Remembering a Friend, Lacey

I saw her tired sweet face on Petfinder and knew that she was meant to be with me. So after being approved by MWBTR as a "forever home", I and a friend took the ferry across the lake and drove to Big Rapids to meet "Lacey".

Her foster parents told the story of how she had been abandoned in the middle of winter in a garbage dumpster. Found cold, tired and ill the 13+ year old dog was placed in a shelter with little hope of survival and less of adoption. That's

when MWBTR stepped in to give this old girl a chance. Placed with Debbie and David Szot she received the medical care she required as well as the loving attention to blossom into a special senior girl.

Lacey came home with me that day and stayed for almost 4 years. Despite overcoming a hard and difficult past, she was a very special loving dog with much to give. Working as a therapy dog at an HIV hospice, she instinctively knew which residents

needed her attention the most.

Last spring Lacey let me know that it was time for our journey together to end and she needed to go on alone. As she had so many times in the past, it was Lacey who comforted me at the vet's office. With dignity she slipped away and found the route to the Rainbow Bridge. I know she is waiting for me there and I look forward to being reunited with my gentle friend.

- Carol Kolls





Crate Training for the Foster Dog

by Denise Yoder

ABC Certified Dog Trainer

What is a Crate/Kennel?

The dog crate or kennel is a “den” for the dog to provide confinement for safety and security, to aid in housebreaking, to keep the dog safe during travel, and to keep the dog safe after surgery or during an illness. It is portable, and most of all it keeps all danger from getting to the dog. It serves as a valuable training tool and for behavior management.

All foster dogs that are pulled from a shelter, animal control or owner surrender should be trained to use a crate. Remember, the foster dog is new to your home and doesn't know the rules. In fact, some foster dogs have never even been in a home. So it is up to you to teach the dog in a positive manner about house rules. This requires consistency and lots of patience.

The crate [“den”] is a place for the dog to go when you are not able to supervise it. The crate provides a sanctuary for the dog to get away from kids, people who are not dog-friendly, and other dogs or animals that might be annoying the dog. If you watch the dog you will be able to read signs of stress or anxiety building in the dog. Examples of stress could be too many people around, children running and making noise, thunderstorms, fireworks, etc. If you know these are stressors for the dog, then **crate the dog**. Give it a safe place to go. Don't wait for the dog to react to something before crating it. If you do, you have failed the dog and should just hit yourself over the

head with a rolled up newspaper. :) As the dog's alpha/leader/teacher, you are responsible to set the dog up to succeed positively and keep it safe. So, when the dog is in the crate, be respectful. Keep children and other animals away from the crate when the dog is in it! **The crate should not be used as a punishment tool**, nor should the dog be kept in the crate for long periods of time. The average crate time for a dog should be no more than 6 hours. Being crated longer than this without being let out can be considered abusive. Just like humans, the dog will need to go potty [about every 4-6 hours] and need a drink of water.

Whether you work or are a stay-at-home mom/dad, it is important to set up a daily consistent crating schedule for the dog. Not only will it become automatic for the dog, but for you as well. After all, school age children go to school for structured learning [w/ recess] and for younger children you put them down for a nap during the day using a crib or playpen. This is what the crate is comparable to for your dog.

Let's get started. Be sure that the crate is big enough for the dog to stand up, turn around and lie down in. Placement of the crate is also an important part of training and behavior management. For the first 3-5 days the crate should be placed in a spare bedroom, basement [temperature controlled], laundry room or area that is not in direct view or contact with high traffic

areas of your home. This keeps the dog away from other people and pets until it can be vetted. Never put a foster dog with your personal pets until you know that it has been medically cleared and safe to be around them. Placing the dog and crate in a “private” area gives the dog a chance to absorb all the sights, sounds and smells of the house without direct contact or confrontation from other animals or people. It gives the dog time to de-stress in a positive way.

You will need to create a schedule for the dog. Let's say the dog sleeps in the crate at night. Each morning, or each time the dog is let out of the crate, take it outside to go potty. Bring it in, put back in the crate. Prepare the dog's food, and feed it in the crate. After 10-15 minutes, take the dog outside to go potty. When the dog comes in, it should be kept with you so you know where it is and what it is doing. Take him/her into the bathroom with you while getting ready for work. Or have him/her in the laundry room while doing laundry, or in the kitchen while preparing food. This way you can supervise the dog for housetraining, and keep it from getting into trouble. Otherwise, put the dog in the crate until you can supervise it. This eliminates the amount of time and energy you use to chase the dog down, and correct it for doing something bad. You can keep it from doing “negative” and reward the “positive” as the time spent with you was positive and supervised.

When you are ready to leave for work, crate the dog. If you are at home all day set a crate schedule up [crate from 8-10a.m., let dog out; crate from Noon to 2 p.m.; dog is out with you until 5 p.m., then crate while fixing dinner; let dog out at 7 p.m., then crate at 9-9:30 p.m. for the evening].

Each time the dog is out with you, take the opportunity to WORK the dog. Ask it to come [teaching recall], sit; stay; wait; down, and then reward, i.e., touch and/or small treat.

Keep the treat small [pea sized] and keep the touch soft and short. After all, the dog will need to “go to work” for you and pay the bills to get more than small pat or chin rub. :) Make the time the dog spends with you fun and rewarding while it is out with you. As Sam would say, “If you do, the dog will look at you because you are worth looking at”.

Happy Holidays &
Have Fun With Your Training!

