



The Retriever

Labrador Education and Rescue Network's Newsletter

Volume 5, Number 3, August 2004

L.E.A.R.N.'s mission is to assist in the rescue of unwanted Labrador Retrievers by placing them in homes through fostering, adoption and referral. In addition, we strive to provide public education regarding Labrador Retrievers and to promote responsible ownership and the humane treatment of all dogs.

Behind the Scenes: Realities of Lab Rescue

It's never just a case of taking in cute, healthy puppies, easy to place because everyone wants a puppy. A call came in asking for immediate help from LEARN. The Will County Humane Society had identified nine puppies and a number of dogs, including labs, at the Perry County Humane Society (Southern Illinois) in need of rescue. All were slated for euthanization. LEARN agreed to help the four lab puppies but lacked space for any adults.



Transporting the pups to LEARN foster homes became a logistical challenge; no one was able to get the pups north. In the eleventh hour, a Good



Samaritan from the Will County Humane Society came through. She rented a Trailblazer and drove the puppies to Joliet on a Saturday. Other volunteers had sprung the pups that Friday to prepare for their journey. LEARN found a volunteer to meet the pups in Joliet and bring them north so that they could reach their foster homes. At 9:30 pm on a Saturday in Elkhorn, Wisconsin's Home Depot parking lot, just one look at the four black lab (*cont.*) (*continued from p. 1*) puppies made it worth all the time, traffic, and planning.

These puppies came with a difficult start. They lacked medical treatment and help from humans. It would not be as simple as merely helping a puppy with socialization and behavior; it would first require considerable time and effort to make up for a bad beginning. The pups needed de-worming, vaccinations, and in some cases, diagnoses of health issues from neglect. The foster homes would need to become, in effect, “veterinary technicians” to enable the pups to have a chance at life.



Two foster homes each took one puppy and another took two. The home with two noticed that one seemed ill. A trip to the vet revealed that the pups weren't littermates as LEARN had been told, and from their teeth, were likely 4 weeks apart in age. The trip also revealed that the ill pup had parvo.

Any dog up-to-date with vaccinations at the vet is protected against parvo as part of the distemper shot. For those without veterinary care or current vaccinations, it's a life-threatening health risk. The fostering volunteers' dogs were not at risk because they, of course, had received a parvo vaccination as part of their regular wellness visits to the vet.

Parvo, one of the worst diagnoses a pup can have, is a highly contagious and painful virus that causes the entire intestinal lining to be shed. The virus grows

in rapidly dividing cells. Young puppies are most susceptible to the horrors of parvo and some even experience sudden death should their heart muscle become infected. There's no cure. Either the dog wins or the virus wins. A vet can only hydrate with IV fluids to help the dog. Everyone considered the transported puppies fortunate in that only one puppy came down with parvo—the other eight in the Trailblazer, including the other three LEARN pups, maintained a clear bill of health. Unfortunately for the little lab with parvo, despite a determined and caring foster home and a dedicated vet who'd tend her during the midnight hours, the virus won.

Parvo's contagious nature had huge ramifications for any place where the infected puppy had been. In contaminated spaces the virus, typically spread through feces, can only be killed with bleach. Volunteers scoured the Perry County Humane Society with bleach to sterilize it, and anyone who had transported or housed the puppy was notified. The good news is this experience inspired the Perry County Humane Society to set a new protocol for puppies that includes keeping them in isolation so as not to infect the entire kennel area.

Even better news is that two of the adorable black lab puppies have found happy homes. In the course of a month, the foster homes' labors paid off in very tangible ways. For instance, Abbie nearly doubled her weight—from 14 to 22 lbs., one sign of her strengthened immune system and a reverse of her rough start. Cinder is still waiting for that perfect human companion or family, but has been harder to place due to digestive problems. While not technically ill, the puppy has abnormally high levels of bacteria in her small intestine. As she grows and gains strength, all hope that her system will fight off and process the bacteria. The foster home continues to work with a vet to find potential solutions for Cinder through diet and medical assistance.

It's seldom easy when any dog is neglected, and never easy when puppies receive no medical or other human care. Thanks to everyone who helped identify, transport, medically treat, and foster these pups 'round the clock, three special beings are commencing their new lives.



How LEARN Works

We labs want to tell you what LEARN does and how the organization works. LEARN's 100 human volunteers in Northern IL and South and Central WI work together in different ways to save as many of us labs as possible. Saving 100-150 labs each year is great, but it's only a drop in the bucket when it comes down to irresponsible breeders, humans who don't spay or neuter, people who dump us as if we were empty fast food containers, or worse.

Email and the LEARN website link the volunteers. LEARN has no physical location, only a P.O. Box. Instead of a pack leader LEARN has a **Board of Directors**. The Board oversees the organization and deals with any emergencies that come up. They handle all decisions that need to be made.

The Board supports volunteers who coordinate many different functions:

1. The **Foster Home Committee** supports the 25 foster homes for labs. They help the foster homes with health and behavior questions and make sure that all is going well for both labs and humans. LEARN covers all veterinary expenses that a foster dog incurs, and the Foster Home Committee helps keep track of veterinary needs and any other issues.
2. The **Intake Committee** decides which labs get to come into LEARN. Any human will tell you that this is a difficult job because there's only room for

a few of us at any one time. The Intake Committee deals with all those horrible messages about labs who've been dumped, turned up at shelters, and all too often, about labs who are going to a shelter tomorrow because the family is moving immediately and/or has become allergic to the dog in unison. Too many times, an older but energetic lab needs help because he or she has been dumped for being a senior. It's no fun if you're a lab, but it's never fun for LEARN either. At times, LEARN wants to help a dog, lacks space, but anticipates an opening, so boards a lab at a kennel.

3. When people apply to adopt a lab, the **Home Visit Coordinator** screens the application and works with volunteers near the potential adopter to arrange a home visit. The purpose of the home visit is, first, to provide education and information to the adopters about labs and LEARN, and second, to understand the kind of dog that will best match with the home. LEARN emphasizes the dog's fit to the family because everyone wants the adoption to succeed, especially the lab!

Families who want to adopt puppies, teens, or very young adults usually join a long waiting list. For those willing to adopt 5+ year-old the wait is much shorter. Ironically, volunteers believe that some of the best dogs ever to come to LEARN have taken the longest to adopt out and don't understand why. *(continued)*

Foster homes, the backbone of the organization, enable LEARN to exist. Without foster homes hundreds of labs would have never known a happy home. The more foster homes, the more dogs saved. LEARN always needs more foster homes and can help more labs as more homes volunteer to foster. LEARN typically accommodates a foster home's desire to foster seniors, puppies, only males (if, for example, a dominant female who won't have another girl in the house), etc. Some foster homes foster all the time while others take breaks in-between dogs. If you'd like to help, even once, please let LEARN know by calling 847-289-7387 or emailing learndogs@labadoption.org; they'll be happy to help. You'll have saved a life!

Interestingly, the biggest reason dog lovers give for not wanting to foster is fear that they'll become too attached to the foster dog. In fact, teary farewells are the norm, not the exception, when one of us is adopted. But that foster home has made a tangible difference in the world by saving a dog's life. That saved lab may have met humans on a walk who then hear about LEARN and the word gets out and more of us get foster homes and then forever homes. Fostering once then makes a difference for more lives. LEARN believes and continues to prove that there's a good home for every lab.

(continued from page 3)

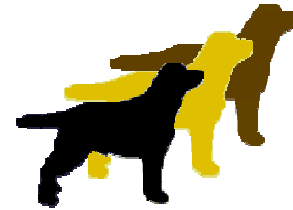
4. Because the match of the lab to the humans is critical, LEARN has a **Lab Match Committee**. These volunteers get to know a group of labs in foster, review applications and home visit reports, and then make recommendations on which labs they believe will best fit with the interested humans. LEARN also takes into account interest that humans may have in particular labs.
5. A **Fundraising Committee** raises money to cover vet expenses; adoption fees can't begin to cover them all. Many labs haven't had the benefit of good health care and need to catch up on vaccinations, may be heartworm positive from not being on a preventative, or could need surgery to replace a ligament. The Fundraising Committee plans fundraising events, sells lab-related merchandise at trade shows, and works with businesses and other organizations to find ways of bringing in revenues for LEARN. This Committee always generates and tests new ideas for ways to raise money for LEARN.
6. Speaking of funds, LEARN has a **Treasurer** on the Board who is a Chief Financial Officer deluxe. The Treasurer keeps track of all incoming revenues and makes sure that vet bills are paid. The Treasurer reimburses foster homes for vet expenses.
7. The **Voice Mail and E-mail Committee** takes turns collecting all the messages from LEARN's voicemail and email and makes sure they get to the right place. These volunteers usually have to deal with 100 messages each week, and they learn of up to 10 new labs in need daily!
8. Labs need to go places—from the shelter to their foster home. The **Transportation Coordinator** arranges rides. Often there's little notice; a lab may need "out" of a shelter in a few hours or become "toast." Even with 100 volunteers, arranging transports is a Herculean feat as people have busy schedules; an e-mail asking for transport help may receive no replies. Here's an area that many can work to make a difference, especially if fostering a lab isn't presently in the cards.
9. Key to making all this work is the Internet and the **Webmasters** who update, improve, and enhance **LEARN's website** regularly. LEARN's website keeps current information on all us labs in foster and announces when we've been adopted! Sometimes we get featured in Success Stories if our humans write to LEARN about how we've adjusted to our new home. The website has adoption and volunteer applications and information as well as information for foster homes. Special events, a library of articles on lab behavior, lab merchandise, contact information, this quarterly newsletter, and more can all be found at www.labadoption.org.
10. With all that's happening, LEARN has a **Volunteer Coordinator** who keeps track of current volunteers and their interests and email addresses as there are many different things humans can do to help. In addition to all the above tasks and functions, some visit shelters to see if there are labs in need. This often entails temperament testing and, to the extent possible, assessing health or medical needs. Others help micro-chip for I.D. or digitally photograph labs for the web.
11. *The Retriever*, the quarterly newsletter that you're now reading, strives to keep everyone up to date on LEARN and what's been happening with labs. The editor contacts all volunteers in advance of an issue to make sure important items are included and strives to balance LEARN-relevant content. *The Retriever* is sent to our mailing list, kept current by another volunteer, and posted on the website for volunteers in order to save printing and postage costs. The newsletter now sells advertisements to help defray costs.
12. What happens to LEARN alums? The **Adoption follow-Up Coordinators** keep track of us! They call our new humans to make sure we're all happy and to answer questions that may have come up.
13. How do volunteers in a virtual organization meet each other? The Board meets monthly in a central location and the entire organization meets semi-annually to discuss LEARN activities and provide training and education on lab and LEARN-related topics. Volunteers meet at trade shows, (cont.)

(Continued from page 4)

where LEARN tries to introduce more and more people to the organization. Foster labs come along for visibility, extra ear scratching, and an opportunity to meet humans who might even adopt them.

Most LEARN volunteers have their own dogs, families, and jobs; they help LEARN and labs in the midst of many other obligations. The reality of rescuing labs is harsh. Often, even with 100 volunteers, it's hard to find one available for a transport to spring a lab with a death sentence. Or, there just isn't a foster home available when a

guy/gal really needs one. As labs, we appreciate those who open their homes and hearts to foster us, fit in a transport into an overbooked schedule, and in other ways than enable us to be saved. In return, we strive to bring love, laughter, and loyalty to the humans who care for us and adopt us. We thank the many who've helped defray our medical expenses, donate supplies, and made contributions.



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Interested in helping LEARN Labs by placing an ad?
Email lfarwell@tds.net for more information.

Our Labs Need Your Help!

Many dogs desperately need our help, including expensive medical care and that drains on our finances. All donations are tax-deductible. All dogs thank you! (please detach form below at dashed line.)

I want to support the efforts of L.E.A.R.N. as they rescue homeless Labrador Retrievers and Lab mixes and place them in permanent adoptive homes.

Name: _____ Address _____

Please find my check for: ___\$10.00 ___\$25.00 ___\$50.00 ___Other Amount \$_____

Please mail to **LEARN, PO Box 164, Island Lake, IL 60042** or donate at www.labadoption.org via **PayPal**.

Enormous Thanks!

The following people generously donated money, supplies, time, or services to help our rescued Labs. Without your help, these Labs wouldn't be alive today and enriching the lives of many humans. Than

Nick Aiello, Scrub a Dub	Steven & Lisa Gilbert	Kimberly A. Molley
James Patla & Kate Barrett	Donna Godlewski	Mike Nelson of A&E Hand
Gretchen Bartlett, WKTI	Dr. James Hardekopf, Wind	Tools
Robin Bone	Lake Animal Hospital	Susan Piccne
George R. Bratschi	Lee Hill, Oakwood Studios	Linda Rosen
Cara Christy	K. Hruby	Janessa Sidders of Blockbuster
Chet Cusick	Jeff & Julie Janikowski	Inc.
Dogwise, Karen-Customer	Daria Javid	Betsy Tekampe
Service Representative	Helen Koblitz	Lori Whitney
Marie Eichinger	Gail Kufahl	World Reach, Inc.
Kathy & Charles Feeney	Louise Mavros	
Howard Friedman	Gretchen & Andy Moffit	

2nd Annual Laps for Labs—October 2nd

Plans are taking shape for the 2nd Annual Laps for Labs, Saturday, October 2nd at the Kettle Moraine, WI State Park, Southern Unit, near Eagle, WI. Please see our website for more details, registration information, and directions. If you have a dog, he or she will have a blast and if you don't, please come help out and enjoy all the dogs!

Last years dog walk was a huge success thanks to a great group of volunteers. This year we want to make it even bigger and better. In

addition to the laps with your dog (who doesn't have to be a lab!), we'll have nail trimming, ear cleaning, micro-chipping, great merchandise for sale, thank you gifts, photos with your dog, and more!

LEARN still needs volunteers for many functions, such as registration confirmations, assemble of thanks you bags, bandana production, recruitment of business sponsors, etc., as well as for activities during the big day. Please contact LEARN if you'd like to help out.

LABMED's Online Auction Set for November

LABMED is that super organization where rescue groups (like LEARN) can turn when they have a dog with emergency medical needs but lack the funds. LABMED's biggest fund-raiser, an annual online auction, is set for **November 5th – 11th**, 2004. Please consider making a donation to LABMED's auction—anything that is dog or Lab-related goes over well as do handmade items such as quilts, cross-stitch, art, jewelry. Other popular items include gift

certificates and baskets of goodies. All the info you'll need can be found on the following two web pages:

<http://www.labmed.org/auction.html>

http://www.labmed.org/auction_donor.html

LABMED and LEARN thank you for any donations you can make. Also, this auction is great fun for a great cause so mark your calendars now to go online and bid in November!

Ain't Misbehavin'

"Ain't Misbehavin'" is written by a 5 year old lab, Cousteau, who has used positive reinforcement methods to train some very difficult humans and has successfully lead them to earn his CGC and FM titles. He will be taking them through competition obedience classes this fall. You can send questions to Cousteau at behavior@labadoption.net.



Dear Cousteau,

My vet says I'm fat. My humans and I know that I need more exercise, but walking on a leash is no fun! My humans are so slow that I must constantly pull them. That hurts my neck and their arms, so we just don't go. Any suggestions?

~Fat in Fox Lake

Dear Fat,

Walking humans can be a very tedious activity. Humans and dogs don't share the same ideas about what's interesting. My humans constantly walk by prime marking areas and never stop to sniff who's been by. And forget about investigating trash cans! One of the easiest ways for humans to say pulling won't work is to stop when we pull. Sometimes it's not enough just to stop – walk in a different direction instead. When humans are unpredictable, they're more interesting so dogs pay closer attention to them. It may look strange to the neighbors to see us stop, turn in the other direction, and turn a few circles, but the more the humans make us do this to prevent pulling, the sooner we dogs learn to pay attention to them.

Humans should remember that dogs are generally responsive to sounds. Talk to your dogs, especially using high-pitched sounds like "pup pup pup", clap your hands, or pat your leg. This gets your dog's attention long enough to reward them for not pulling. If a human always hugely rewards a dog for walking next to him or her, the dog learns that being next to the human is the best place to be, regardless of what else is going on. (Bringing the dog's meals on walks enables you to reward often without concern of feeding too many treats.)

Something else humans can do is teach the dog to look at them on command. If a dog is looking at his human, he probably won't pull on the leash. I love to look at my humans because whenever I do, I get

food or toys or a really happy "What a good boy!" and an ear rub. It never fails, I look at my human and I get good attention. It's great!

Learning to walk with humans on a leash can take time. The list of tools below can help humans walk their dogs. The tools can help the dog learn and then be phased out, or the dog can use it forever. It's up to the humans to decide what will work best.

- Gentle Leader (www.premier.com) – The Gentle Leader works on the same principle as a horse halter. If the human has control of the animal's head, then the human has control of the animal. This tool takes some conditioning to get the dog used to wearing it. Another option, the Halti, also works on the "halter principle."
- Sense-ation harness (www.softouchconcepts.com) This special harness gives humans the advantage of physics – the dog loses his ability to pull strongly because the leash is attached in a place that makes a poor pivot point. This alternative helps dogs who refuse a head halter. The Hightower harness is another option (www.waynehightower.com/).
- Walking harness (two of our favorites are found at www.premier.com and www.lupinepet.com) – Both harnesses have a loop on the back and at the chest. For dogs that pull hard even with the harness, clipping the leash on the chest loop works in a similar way to the Sense-ation and Hightower harnesses. My humans use this method with me.
- Choke or prong collar – My human lacks experience with these collars so can't recommend them. If you choose to use a metal training collar, please be sure that you know how to use it properly or you can easily injure your dog. Find a trainer familiar and comfortable with using these tools and ask for a lesson on proper fit and use of the collar.

Congrats to Labbies who found their new families!

April Adoptions (2nd half):

Raider--*Mitzi Heytow*
Chloe--*Jim Patla & Kate Barrett*
Berger--*Gary & Debbie Eichorst*
Cubbie--*Michael & Cathy Pierce*

May Adoptions:

Simba--*Tammy & Justin Johnson*
A.J.--*Ken & Carol Kurth*
Puppy--*Kara & Byran Linak*
Duncan--*Dirk & Heather Thome*
Leah--*Paul & Karen Muffler*
Daisy--*Brian & Pat Alvara*
Raven--*Melissa & Biran Hum*
Abbey--*Annette & Dale Schuh*
Cassius--*Rachel Heilzer*
Sherman--*Stephanie & Brett Freimuth*
Ms. T--*Sheila & Jerry Maher*
Cletus--*Debbie & Alan Link*
Klump--*Heidi & Heath Fossen*
Puppy--*Jayne & Michael Leiterman*
Jaws--*Tim Emmet & Molly McAllen*
Puppy--*Peter & Tricia Broderick*

Cocoa--*Connie & Lonnie Poffenberger*
Midnight--*Wendy Cooper & Greg Erickson*
Copper--*Kathy & Charles Feeney*
Casey--*Rudy & Beth Beck*
Bailey--*Susan & John Stefani*
Ryley--*Mitzi Heytow*

June Adoptions:

Spencer--*Doug & Milda Fritsch*
Chase--*Jeremie & Karen Gotz*
Buddy--*Lisa & Mike Wolfe*
Maggie--*Diane & Bob Genaze*
Bubba--*Sue & Mike Roberts*
Victor--*Larry & Liz Sternberg*
Jessie--*Pluta family*
Riley--*Toby & Carroll Bronson*
Pepper--*Rita & Jerome Borowski*
Bissell--*Matthew Gammons & Julie Foster*
Sam--*Nancy Burton*
McDuff--*Marnie Schulenburg*

Luke--*Sandy Angell & Larry McDowell*

July Adoptions:

Sparky--*Kristine & Daniel Paprocki*
Chewie--*Dana & Steve McClelland*
Shadow--*Ewing family*
Jessie--*Bill & Mimi Lampert*
Jack/Buddy--*Jenny & Dan Bailey*
Ruby--*Rollie Stolenberg*
Libby Lu--*Becky Brumder*
Harley--*Kathy Karas & Gerald May*
Lincoln--*Kelly & Cheryl Zeller*
Sugar--*Jim & Jessie Dushek*
Minnie--*Marilynn and Eric Goezler*
Franklin--*Aaron & Elizabeth Rendon*
Licorice--*Conant family*
Abbie--*Sarah & Jim Roscoe*
Jack--*James & Tracy Downing*
Molly--*Shankey family*
Casey--*Hodges family*

1st half of August Adoptions:

Goldie--*Jim & Stacey Hess*
Oz--*Sue and David Travis*

Pesticides Dangers and Dogs

As human health risks from pesticides gain more scrutiny, animals also have their lives at risk. Our dogs, for example, frequently contact treated carpets, floors, and lawns. Dogs absorb substances through the pads on their feet. Their noses are on the ground in the chemicals. Dogs have faster metabolisms and shorter life spans so negative effects happen more quickly than in humans.

LEARN rescues many labs with allergies or other sensitivities hard to identify. Many experience notable improvement with a diet free from additives, chemicals, and sub-par ingredients found in many commercial dog foods. Others continue to have difficulties. Are these cases linked to exposure to pesticide poisoning? **Contrary to popular myth, delayed effects of exposure** (not acute or immediate poisoning) **pose the greatest health risks** because the exposure isn't sufficient to induce vomiting to purge the system. **This delay can make diagnosis difficult**

at best. We may never know how much pesticides harm our animals. It's never "black and white."

What we do know¹:

1. Leukemia is 6 times more likely in children where herbicides were used for lawn care (National Cancer Institute study)
2. More children with brain tumors and other cancers were exposed to insecticides than children without cancer
3. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers 95% of pesticides used on residential lawns probable carcinogens
4. 1,500 lawn care products contain 2,4-D (used in Agent Orange)

¹ See Prescriptions for a Healthy House, p. 11, for information about the studies on pesticides.

e-mail: learnnewsletter@yahoo.com

5. Pesticides are tied to the rise in breast cancer
6. Pesticides can cause infertility, birth defects, learning disorders, neurological disorders, allergies, and multiple chemical sensitivities, among other disorders of the immune systems.

When walking your dogs, avoid any lawns with no weeds or that emit that unmistakable odor of commercial lawn fertilizers, weed killers, etc. Unfortunately, pesticides can travel from where they've been applied; their residues appear in rain, snow, food, water, wildlife, newborn babies and the Arctic ice pack. After we walk our dogs, we likely track these residues into the house. In fact, the highest household pesticide residues are in carpet dust. While the facts above understate the issue for humans, we know little about how our dogs are affected. But we do know that half of all dogs die from cancer.

What are Pesticides Anyway?

Pesticides, synthetic chemicals made from petroleum, kill certain plants and animals. Insecticides kill certain insects; herbicides, weeds; and fungicides, mold or fungus. Originally offshoots of the nerve gas used during World War I, pesticides consist of active ingredients that kill the target and inert ingredients that deliver the active ingredient to the target.

Many assume that pesticides purchased at a garden store as well as those used by lawn/pest control companies are "safe" if instructions are followed; otherwise, the government would not allow these unsafe products on the market. Those assumptions are wrong. **It's a federal violation to state/suggest that pesticide use is safe when used as directed.** Even if overwhelming evidence indicates a pesticide causes negative health effects to humans, and the EPA decides to ban a pesticide, it takes years and many compromises. Hundreds of active ingredients are registered with the EPA, but very few—less than a dozen—have actually been tested for safety.

In the case of the ban on chlorpyrifos, the active ingredient in Dursban and Lorsban, which caused 17,000 cases for Poison Control Centers between 1991 and 1996, home and garden sales of it were allowed to continue through December, 2001; existing retail stock was sold; use continued on food crops (except tomatoes), golf courses, and mosquito and fire

ant control; use continues for new home pretreatment until the end of 2005; exports are unrestricted.

Don't assume that inert ingredients—because they are called "inert"—are safe; warning labels only refer to the active ingredient(s). When a list of 1,400 of the 2,000 ingredients used as inert ingredients was obtained from the EPA, they included Chicago sludge, asbestos, and some banned chemicals (e.g., DDT).

How can we protect our dogs and ourselves?

1. Use non-toxic alternatives instead of pesticides—indoors and out! For non-synthetic cleaning indoors see the following page for suggestions. Also www.seventhgeneration.com provides practical information and offers an alternative product line that really works!
2. Keep you and your dog away from lawns where pesticides are used. In some areas, a low sign on the lawn's border indicates recent pesticide application. Beware of no weeds and/or a chemical odor.
3. Encourage your town or neighborhood or even a good friend to say "no" to pesticides. If more people knew the facts, more would say "no."
4. Learn more about pesticides and how to avoid use of and exposure to them. Resources include:
 - a. National Coalition Against Misuse of Pesticides: www.beyondpesticides.org
 - b. Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP) www.pesticide.org
5. Get a pesticide testing kit for soil, water, food, or surfaces. Many are available; search "pesticide testing kit" on the Internet to find the right one for you, check for recommendations on the above websites, or ask at your local hardware, home improvement, or natural foods store.

Increasingly, more documented cases describe how humans exposed to certain toxins suffer a weakened immune system, leading to a full range of serious and permanent health problems. We all can take steps to protect not only ourselves but also our animals. After all, they depend on us to keep them safe!

Sources: above listed websites and books, and *Prescriptions for a Healthy House: A Practical Guide for Architects, Builders & Homeowners*, by Baker-Laporte, Elliot, and Banta, 2nd edition, British Columbia: New Society Publishers, 2001.

Easy Alternatives to Toxic Household Cleaners

How do you feel about products that don't list all the ingredients they contain? Like nearly every large name brand cleaner? Here are some alternatives for a healthier home for you and your dog:

Name Brands and Cleaners without Harsh

Chemicals

- ▶ AFM Safe Choice Safety Clean, Superclean, and X158 Mildew Control
- ▶ Bio Shield
- ▶ Bon Ami Polishing Cleanser
- ▶ Mystical
- ▶ Seventh Generation, Ecos, and Ecover product lines

... and check other brands in your natural foods market; it's a growing category!

Common Household Products that Effectively Clean

- ▶ *Baking soda*—cleans, deodorizes, scours, and softens water
- ▶ *Borax*—cleans, deodorizes, disinfects, and softens

water; effective for soiled laundry in the washing machine and for preventing mold growth

- ▶ *Hydrogen peroxide*—effective for removing mold; use 10% food grade solution with protective gloves, not 3% solution commonly sold off the shelf. A 10% solution will bleach most types of surfaces.
- ▶ *Soap*—(not detergents) biodegrades safely and completely for many types of washing; use pure bar soap or flakes without perfume additives
- ▶ *Vodka*—dissolves alcohol-soluble finishes; use high proof product!
- ▶ *Washing soda (sodium carbonate)*—cuts grease, removes stains, disinfects, and softens water; works for deeply soiled laundry and general cleaning

Note: Be sure to test each cleaner on a small area before applying on large surface. Source: *Prescriptions for a Healthy House* by Baker-Laporte, Elliot, and Banta



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E-mail: learndogs@Labadoption.org

Meet LEARN Labs . . .

<u>When?</u>	<u>What?</u>	<u>Where?</u>
❖ September 25th	❖ SE Wisconsin 2nd Annual Pet Fair Extravaganza	❖ Burlington H. S., Burlington, WI
❖ October 2nd	❖ 2nd Annual Laps for Labs (see inside newsletter for more info!)	❖ Kettle Moraine, WI, State Park, Southern Unit
❖ October 9th	❖ Dane County Humane Society Barktoberfest -- Meet breed rescues, many adoptable dogs and other animals, pet-related vendors. Includes refreshments, kids' activities, live entertainment	❖ Dane County Humane Society, Madison, WI
❖ November 7 th 10am - 4:30 pm	❖ Wisconsin Dog Fair Meet breed rescues and adoptable dogs, watch demos, view dog-related merchandise; great for kids and adults	❖ Marriott Hotel, Greenway Blvd., (West) Madison, WI