



www.nebraskabordercollierescue.com

Newsletter for July/August 2006

Managing Editor: *Karen Battreal*

Find archived issues of previous newsletters on the NBCR website. If you are receiving the newsletter by US mail and would prefer to have it sent by email, please send your email address to maeseck@cox.net.

Adoptions and Fostering

We have been very busy with adoptions. At this time we have over 20 applications that we are processing. We are on track to adopt a record number of Border Collies this year. It is taking about 4 weeks to process each application, which is 2 weeks longer than it used to take.

We have had several families step forward to temporarily foster the puppies that recently came in. A litter of 7 9-week old puppies came in about 4 weeks ago, while just before that, 3 12-week old puppies came in. A huge thank you to everyone who offered to foster these little guys. All of the older puppies are adopted, and 4 of the younger ones are spoken for.

As usual we are looking for foster families. If you know someone who would be a good foster have them contact Karen at maeseck@cox.net. Paula Wills is now in charge of all adoptions. Karen is in charge of intake and the foster dogs.

NBCR Recent and Future Events

We took part in a Pet Fair in May that was extremely successful. Most of our volunteers showed up and we had ALL of our foster dogs there. We were such a hit that we were invited to participate in Bandana Dog Days in Omaha. Although every rescue was limited to 4 dogs, we were allowed to bring all of ours. This is because we have some very good volunteers who keep our dogs under control at all times. Our volunteers are the best!

We will be at the Club Pet table at the Nebraska Kennel Club Dog Show at the Qwest Center in Omaha July 21, 22, 23. Unfortunately we won't be able to bring any dogs as only entered dogs can be at the show.

Rocky Mountain Border Collie Rescue News

RMBCR has adopted out 33 dogs thus far in 2006. One of their recent arrivals from New Mexico, an 8-month-old female, just had a litter, so there are 4 new Border Collie pups coming up for adoption. They are always looking for foster families throughout the Rocky Mountain Region. If you're interested, please email Colleen at bordercollierescue@earthlink.net.

RMBCR has added their own Café Press link. Buy RMBCR products by clicking on the Café Press button on their website: <http://www.rockymountainbcrescue.org>.

Fundraising

NBCR Store

If you have visited the NBCR store you have seen our new shirts. They are selling very well. Thanks to Trent for his design. Just click the NBCR STORE button on our web site:

iGive.com Shopping

If you shop on the internet, consider joining iGive.com. When you make a purchase NBCR, gets a percentage. A big Thank You to those of you who shop through iGive.com. It really helps our cause.

Featured Rescue Adoption of the Month: Nikki

Nikki adopted from Rocky Mountain Border Collie Rescue by Katy Bartlett and John Coulter of Aspen, Colorado



We found Nikki on the RMBCR web site after our other Border Collie mix passed away in January. I spent almost every night looking at the site and dreaming of our next special family member. We even cancelled our spring vacation to Hawaii to apply and make this happen.

We made the drive to the Denver area—when we first saw Nikki, she went to John first, then me, and we both knew she was for us!

This dog has had such a history. In two abused homes, where children broke her nose and beat her with sticks. Their father wanted to have her shot!! But Nikki is a survivor and her neighbor saved her life. Nikki got the last seat on the transport to Denver via the Dumb Friends League.

Nikki is a real testament to living in the moment. She doesn't seem to remember any of her abuse. She loves children, even hearing their voice a block away she wags her tail and wants to say hi! She loves everyone, and men adore her.....

Nikki goes everywhere with us—the post office, the bank, health club, into stores. At the bank, Nikki will do a little dance for the tellers to get her puppy cracker! She gets up on her back legs and goes around in a circle, and hops backwards!

On a humorous note, Nikki loves birds and squirrels so much that she will do anything to get them. Once during a walk in the woods, Nikki chased a squirrel up a tree, then proceeded to climb the tree!! She leapt up onto the trunk of the tree, holding on with all four legs, and then hoisted herself up another level to about three feet! She hung on for a few minutes, then let go and down she went. We all just stood there in amazement of our little Nikki!

If you adopted an NCBR dog that you would like to be featured, email Karen at maeseck@cox.net.

How Nikki Was Rescued

By Colleen Rippeth, Director, RMBCR

Space is always tight in rescue and there is "never any room"... but somehow we manage to make incredible saves, even when we "have no room." It's teamwork.

Around mid-March, we got a frantic email plea for help saving a little female BC. This little girl, Nikki, was enduring daily abuse from her family: the children were kicking her and hitting her with sticks and rocks, teasing her and had even reportedly broken her nose with a skillet.

A kind neighbor, Lori, was helping where she could, but when Nikki became mildly aggressive with the children, the father insisted their mother find someone to SHOOT her.

Lori had had enough. She contacted a former co-worker who had been involved with BC Rescue and he told her to contact RMBCR.

In her lengthy emotional plea, Lori detailed how dedicated this little dog was to her family, still greeting them with a happy tail even as they subjected her to horrifying, daily abuse.

We started the process of finding room where there was none. Again.

First, we emailed the RMBCR group of volunteers about the situation, pleading for a foster home. We pursued avenues to get transport arranged in the event we can take this girl. Nikki was in New Mexico and even if we could squeeze her in, we'd have to work fast to keep her from being shot.

JoJo and Steve of Noah's Bark (in Hudson, CO) replied quickly: "we'll take her"—how wonderful were they to take Nikki in? They already had five of our rescue dogs at Noah's Bark, but this was simply too horrifying not to say "yes"—we are so thankful to Noah's Bark.

Next step: getting Nikki out of NM. How to do that...? We posted to a Yahoo list that covers southern CO and northern NM, and we received several responses to help Nikki.

Within 24 hours, Nikki was set to travel out of NM on a transfer already scheduled to a Denver area shelter the next day. Joe was on call to meet the transport, and after a total of less than 72 hours, Nikki was safe at Noah's Bark and awaiting adoption to her new, loving forever family. Nikki had a destiny, and things were falling into place for her; this had been almost too easy.

But then, there are no coincidences... this was Nikki's path and we were simply there to help her along.

In April, Katy Bartlett and John Coulter of Aspen, CO sent their application to adopt. They were drawn to Nikki, even though they were looking at several rescues and shelters for a new dog. Nikki is so happy in her new home—she lives like a princess!

Pet Safety: Fear of Thunder (and Other Noises)

While a good "kraack" or "boom" may have been good while Batman was taking down the Joker, such startling sounds are no joke for your dog. Firecrackers, thunder, and other loud, out-of-nowhere sounds often leave dogs frightened and wanting to flee to a safer place. These types of fears may develop even though your dog has had no traumatic experiences associated with the sound. The good news is that many fear-related problems can be successfully resolved. If left untreated, however, your dog's fearful behavior will probably get worse.

The most common behavior problems associated with fear of loud noises are destruction and escaping. When your dog becomes frightened, she tries to reduce her fear. She may try to escape to a place where the sounds of thunder or firecrackers are less intense. If she feels less afraid by leaving the yard or going into a certain room or area of the house, then the escape or destructive behavior is reinforced because it successfully lessens her fear. For some dogs, just the activity or physical exertion associated with one of these behaviors may be an outlet for their anxiety.

Unfortunately, escape and/or destructive behavior can be a problem for you and could also result in physical injury to your dog. Your dog may also begin to associate a particular startling noise with other things in her environment, and she may grow afraid of these other things because she associates them with the loud noise that frightens her. For example, dogs who are afraid of thunder may later become afraid of the wind, dark clouds, and flashes of light that often precede the sound of thunder. Dogs who do not like the sound of firecrackers may become fearful of the children who have the firecrackers or may become afraid to go in the backyard, if that's where they usually hear the noise.

What You Can Do to Help

Create a Safe Place

Try to create a safe place for your dog to go to when she hears the noises that frighten her. But remember, this must be a safe location from her perspective, not yours. Notice where she goes, or tries to go, when she's frightened, and if at all possible, give her access to that place. If she's trying to get inside the house, consider installing a dog door. If she's trying to get under your bed, give her access to your bedroom.

You can also create a "hidey-hole" that is dark, small, and shielded from the frightening sound as much as possible. Encourage her to go there when you're home and the thunder or other noise occurs. Consider using a fan or radio near the spot to help block out the sound. Feed her in that location and help your dog associate that spot with other "good things" happening to her there. She must be able to come and go from this location freely. Confining her in the "hidey-hole" when she doesn't want to be there will only cause more problems. The "safe place" approach may work with some dogs, but not all. Some dogs are motivated to move and be active when frightened and "hiding out" won't help them feel less fearful.

Distract Your Dog

This method works best when your dog is just beginning to get anxious. Encourage her to engage in any activity that captures her attention and distracts her from behaving fearfully. Start when she first alerts you to the noise and is not yet showing a lot of fearful behavior, but is only watchful. Immediately try to interest her in doing something that she really enjoys. Get out the tennis ball and play fetch (in an escape-proof area), or practice some commands that she knows. Reward her with praise and treats for paying attention to the game or the commands.

As the storm or other noise builds, you may not be able to keep her attention on the activity, but it might delay the start of the fearful behavior for longer and longer each time you do it. If you can't keep her attention and she begins acting fearfully, stop the process. If you continue, you may inadvertently reinforce her fearful behavior.

Behavior Modification

Behavior modification techniques are often successful in reducing fears and phobias. The appropriate techniques are called "counter-conditioning" and "desensitization." These techniques condition or teach your dog to respond in non-fearful ways to sounds and other stimuli that have previously frightened her. These techniques must be implemented very gradually. Begin by exposing your dog to an intensity level of noise that doesn't frighten her and pairing the noise with something pleasant, like a treat or a fun game.

Gradually increase the volume as you continue to offer her something pleasant. Through this process, she'll come to associate "good things" with the previously feared sound.

Here an example of how to do this:

- Make a tape with firecracker noises on it.
- Play the tape at such a low volume that your dog doesn't respond fearfully. While the tape is playing, feed her dinner, give her a treat, or play her favorite game.
- In your next session, play the tape a little louder while you feed her or play her favorite game.
- Continue increasing the volume through many sessions over a period of several weeks or months. If she displays fearful behavior at any time while the tape is playing, STOP. Begin your next session at a lower volume, one that doesn't produce anxiety, and proceed more slowly.

If these techniques aren't used correctly, they won't be successful and can even make the problem worse. For some fears, it can be difficult to recreate the fear stimulus. For example, thunder is accompanied by lightning, rain, and changes in barometric pressure; your dog's fearful response may be to the combination of these things and not just the thunder. You may need professional assistance to create and implement this kind of behavior modification program.

Consult Your Veterinarian

Medication may be available which can help reduce your dog's anxiety levels for short time periods. Your veterinarian is the only person who is qualified and licensed to prescribe medication for your dog. Don't attempt to give your dog any over-the-counter or prescription medication without consulting your veterinarian. Animals don't respond to drugs the same way people do, and a medication that may be safe for humans could be fatal to your dog. Drug therapy alone won't reduce fears and phobias permanently, but in extreme cases, behavior modification and medication used together might be the best approach.

What Not to Do

- Do not attempt to reassure your dog when she is afraid. This may only reinforce her fearful behavior. If you pet, soothe, or give treats to her when she's behaving fearfully, she may interpret this as a reward for her fearful behavior. Instead, try to behave normally, as if you don't notice her fearfulness.
- Do not put your dog in a crate to prevent her from being destructive during a thunderstorm. She'll still be fearful when she's in the crate and is likely to injure herself, perhaps even severely, while attempting to get out of the crate.
- Do not punish your dog for being afraid. Punishment will only make her more fearful.
- Do not try to force your dog to experience or be close to the sound that frightens her. For example, making her stay close to a group of children who are lighting firecrackers will only make her more afraid, and could cause her to become aggressive in an attempt to escape from the situation.

These approaches will fail because they won't decrease your dog's fear. Merely trying to prevent her from escaping or being destructive won't work, either. If your dog is still afraid, she'll continue to show that fear in whatever way she can--whether by digging, jumping, climbing, chewing, barking, or howling. Finally, know that formal training won't make your dog less afraid of thunder or other noises, although it could help boost her general confidence.

Consult an Animal-Behavior Specialist

If your dog has severe fears and phobias and you're unable to achieve success with the techniques we've outlined here, you should consult with an animal-behavior specialist and your veterinarian.

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Taking Care of Business: March Business Meeting Report

(May minutes are unavailable)

March 4, 2006 - NBCR Meeting

Attendees: Jessica N., Phil and Faith H., Pam F., Paul M., Paula W., Tammy H., Cindy and Mike N., Scott & Cindy H., Missi H., Karen B..... and lots of rescue dogs!!!!

Treasurer's Report: As of February 27, approximately \$1925.00 in bank account; \$2015.00 in two CD's

Upcoming Activities

BDOC Agility Trial - NE Humane Society

- May 5 (3pm-6pm), May 6 and 7
- They need help setting up, runners, scribes, anything! They will pay \$50 per person for a full day, \$25 per person for a half day. This money would go to our rescue group. There was a message posted on yahoogroups from Karen with more info. We need to know ASAP if you are willing to help.

Pet Fair

- About 134th & industrial Rd (L Street)
- May 20, 11am-3pm
- We can sell our T-shirts, bumper stickers, window clings, bracelets and totes. We will be doing this activity INSTEAD of PETCO in the month of May.

Horse Expo

- Lancaster Event Center, Lincoln
- March 10-12, 9am-9pm
- All shifts are covered. **Karen: See if Julie Shuriger can help Margaret for the Sunday morning shift **

Butter Braids

- Orders and money must be in to Karen March 18!
- We are having a CONTEST! The person who sells the MOST Butter Braids will receive a \$20 gift certificate! SO GET SELLING!!

Tote Bags

- Faith Hutchinson has been B I Z Y! She has made a BUNCH of these very beautiful and fun tote bags for us to sell at our table when we do events. THANK YOU FAITH!
- We will also be adding the totes to our NBCR store! \$10/small tote - \$12/big tote

Gift Certificates

- REMINDER for Missi - Talk to Jiffy Lube about Gift certificates

Agility Training

- Our next class starts August 3, 2006, you and your foster dog can attend at CLUB PET for FREE! Class starts at 6:45 pm - the first 10 minutes you can work on basic obedience techniques with your foster dog, then a short break; the last 40 minutes you can work on agility! What an awesome program for the rescue dogs! Karen will be the trainer, so take this GREAT opportunity to work on any manner issues your foster may have!
- Call Paula at 339-2356 to let us know you'll be there!
- Personal dogs are welcome also - \$75.00 for an eight week session.
- These classes are limited to 10 dogs.

Our next meeting will be July 30 at Club Pet. Noon, potluck as usual. Everyone is invited to attend. We turn all the dogs loose in the play area for a great time.

Rainbow Bridge

Presley Loved by RMBCR and volunteers



Thanks to Hilary Lane for editing and producing this newsletter
www.rockymountainbcrescue.org