

Tigger starts water therapy; leg improves

CAROL MCALICE CURRIE
STATESMAN JOURNAL

Will doggie paddle for treats.
That's Tigger's motto these days.
The Staffordshire terrier mix who had surgery last fall to correct the first of two birth-deformed front legs doesn't much care for his water rehabilitation therapy.

But he'll put weight on his recovering right leg for just about any amount of animal edible.

So that's what his rehabilitation specialist, certified veterinary technician Dave Meyer, was using Friday at Oregon State University's College of Veterinary Medicine to help Tigger develop new muscle memory on his front limb.

It worked like a charm.
With crumbling pieces of smelly treats in hand, Meyer helped Tigger achieve his personal best time of 8 minutes learning how to walk in an underwater treadmill housed in the large-animal wing of the veterinary medical school in Corvallis.

"Not bad for a dog who doesn't like baths," said his foster mom, Eve Good, as she watched Tigger first drink the water from the donated underwater treadmill and then reluctantly put his recovering paw in it. Marilyn van Dijk, a veterinary assistant, kept treats in Meyer's hands or in front of the dog at all times.

He'd forget that he had a bum leg, put his paw down and reach around for the treat.

Meyer, keeping hold on Tigger via a harness, cooed in the dog's ear: "I've got you. I've got you."

And then Tigger relaxed. He'd move his front paws forward as if on automatic pilot. Walk, walk, walk.

Meyer moved up the speed on the treadmill, and Tigger walked, walked, walked some more, as if he's been doing it his entire young life.

Except he hasn't.
Tigger has never walked or run on four legs like most canines.

He has jumped like a kangaroo on his hind two legs or inched forward on his belly. But he has never kept up with his foster parents' other dogs because his front two legs were congenitally deformed by a defect called ectrodactyly, or split hand or lobster claw.

These days, Meyer has him on the underwater treadmill and doing planks on a large plastic peanut to help develop callouses on the limb and strengthen his core to protect his other limbs. He hopes to introduce the dog to cavalletti exercises (small jumps) soon to help him further strengthen his muscles and improve his balance.

"He's been compensating his whole life, so we take this slow," Meyer said.

Tigger weighs slightly more than his optimal weight of 55 pounds, said his surgeon, Dr. Jennifer Warnock. The physical therapy sessions may help with that.
Dr. Warnock hopes to perform the



Tigger, a bull terrier mix with deformed front legs, walks on an underwater treadmill to strengthen his front paws after surgery on the front right leg to help correct its shape at the Oregon State University College of Veterinary Medicine in Corvallis on Friday, Jan. 20.



Tigger is a bull terrier mix with deformed front legs.

second repair surgery on Tigger's other front leg at the end of March. But Good and her partner, Troy Riggs, have some fundraising to do first. When the Statesman Journal first broke Tigger's story last summer and it spread across the country through the USA Today Network and The Huffington Post, more than \$17,000 was raised in a few weeks. More than \$10,000 was spent on Tig-

ger's first surgery, ICU stay, bandaging needs, and his medication. At least \$2,000 or \$3,000 still needs to be raised to pay for this next round of surgery, which will repair the second front limb and fuse one portion of the other newly fashioned leg. Dr. Warnock expects Tigger's condition to regress a bit as he recovers from the second surgery, but she's cautiously optimistic the dog could be walk-

Get involved

To help Tigger or other dogs at Savin' Juice Medical Dog Rescue, send an inquiry to: savinjuicemedicaldogrescue@gmail.com or call (971) 213-8163. The rescue desperately needs foster volunteers at this time. Or, go to the Facebook page Tigger The Dog, or <http://facebook.com/Paw.For.Tigger/> There is a link there for credit or debit card contributions via a crowd-sourcing site. Donors who wish to give by check can call Eve Good at (541) 979-3633 for an address.

ing on both front legs by summer.

Tigger may or may not need prosthetics. His X-rays currently show bone fusion, which is excellent, Warnock said. If his therapy continues to help him develop callouses where he never had them before, she believes the prognosis to be very good.

"We want to get him functioning without pain," Warnock said. "I want him jumping on the couch, something most dogs take for granted. But Tigger does not."

Now about those treats

Email: ccurrie@statesmanjournal.com or call 503-399-6746 or follow on Twitter at @CATMCurrie

Salem couple wins \$4.2 million lottery jackpot

LAUREN E HERNANDEZ
STATESMAN JOURNAL

A Salem couple turned their Christmas stocking stuffers into a jackpot.

Susan Gasperini and Chris Erion typically only purchase Oregon Lottery tickets on special occasions such as birthdays and holidays, and they only buy Scratch-it tickets.

But two weeks ago, the pair took their winnings from Christmas Scratch-its to Safeway on South Commercial Street in Salem to purchase one Megabucks

ticket.

On Wednesday, Jan. 4, Gasperini matched all six winning numbers on her quick pick ticket: 4-31-40-41-45-48. The prize: \$4.2 million.

Gasperini is the 258th person to win the Oregon Megabucks prize, according to a statement released by the Oregon Lottery.

The Safeway store will receive a 1 percent sales bonus of \$42,000 for selling the winning ticket.

In November of 2016, a fellow Salem couple made history by becoming the

biggest Megabucks winner in Salem history. The pair purchased a \$6.8 million winning ticket at a South Salem gas station. The gas station, a Shell station on Commercial Street SE, received a 1 percent selling bonus of \$68,000.

More than \$11 billion has been allocated to economic development, public education, state parks and watershed enhancements since the Oregon Lottery started selling tickets on April 25, 1985.

Oregon's Game Megabucks numbers are drawn every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.

If you're lucky

» The Oregon Lottery recommends people to sign the back of their tickets for every Oregon Lottery game played to help aid in claiming any prizes.

» Winners should consult a financial planner to develop a plan for managing the earnings.

» Prize winners of more than \$50,000 should contact the Lottery office to schedule an appointment to claim their prize.

Stillborn infant highlights Oregon's homeless issue

TERRENCE PETTY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PORTLAND - A stillborn infant was found with his homeless mother at a street side bus stop during unusually cold weather. And while the infant's death was not blamed on below-freezing temperatures it has driven home just how ruthless this winter has been for Portland's homeless population, with four recent deaths attributed to exposure.

The infant was found Jan. 9 after emergency responders were called about a woman standing in the cold with a baby. The Multnomah County Medical Examiner's Office said Tuesday that the baby boy was stillborn.

The mother was unable to provide investigators with coherent information, including where she had been living, and is undergoing a mental health evaluation at a hospital, said Sgt. Pete Simpson, spokesman for the Portland Police Bureau.

"In the bigger umbrella of people who are vulnerable, it is an awful reminder of people living in the community who are sometimes hidden away that don't have shelter or medical care, or in this case, the mental capacity to seek medical care," Simpson said.

The infant's death was first reported Monday by Willamette Week, a weekly Portland newspaper, after four homeless adults died this month, which has brought snow, ice and bone-chilling temperatures to a city more accustomed to mild temperatures and rain.

The deaths occurred during the first 10 days of 2017. The first was a 68-year-old homeless man taken to a hospital on

New Year's Day. The others were a 51-year-old man found dead under a blanket at the doorway of a business, a 52-year-old woman with schizophrenia discovered in a parking garage and a 29-year-old man whose body was found in woods where he had been living.

The frigid spell that has gripped the Portland area since December is the second-coldest since 1941. The average temperature between Dec. 1 of last year and Jan. 13 of this year was 34.8 degrees, says the National Weather Service. The temperature plunged to 13 degrees last Friday and a snow storm brought a rare foot of snow to some parts of Portland.

Normal temperatures for Portland in January are in the 40s and high 30s.

"Fifteen straight days of snow, ice and wind has clobbered us and no one has suffered more than the people who live outside," Julie Sullivan-Springhetti, a spokeswoman for Multnomah County, said in an email.

The four deaths have occurred as Portland grapples with a problem of people who are chronically homeless. A single-day survey in 2015 counted nearly 1,900 people in Portland without shelter. It is unclear whether those numbers are up, down, or about the same. But Sullivan-Springhetti said the winter weather has increased usage of emergency shelters.

Transients are drawn to Portland because of its moderate weather and the city's welcoming reputation. But rapidly rising housing costs in Portland have made it even more difficult.

New mayor Ted Wheeler has set finding solutions to Portland's housing crisis as a top priority.

Oregon legislators warn of painful cuts

TRACY LOEW
STATESMAN JOURNAL

Last month, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown proposed a budget showing what the next two years will look like if lawmakers can agree on new revenue measures.

On Thursday, the Legislature's top budget-writers released a version showing what will happen if they can't.

It's grim:
Cuts in K-12 education funding will likely lead to teacher layoffs, higher class sizes and cuts in electives.

College students will see tuition hikes and reduced financial aid.

Some people will be kicked off the state's Medicaid program, and services such as dental or mental health will be reduced.

"There will be Oregonians who will directly feel the reductions on a daily basis if we must adopt a budget at this level of funding," Sen. Richard Devlin, D-Tualatin and Rep. Nancy Nathanson, D-Eugene, co-chairs of the Joint Ways and Means Committee, wrote in an introduction to the budget framework.

Oregon faces a \$1.8 billion shortfall to fund current services and new ballot measure spending during the 2017-2019 biennium.

The co-chairs blamed the deficit on choices made decades ago, including ballot measures that reduced property tax revenues and increased costs for corrections; and a failure to rein in rising pension costs.

They said they hope their \$20.6 billion budget framework won't be adopt-

ed. Instead, they want it to galvanize legislators and the public to overhaul the state's tax system.

To that end, Devlin and Nathanson will lead the full Joint Ways and Means Committee on a statewide town hall tour in February to seek input on the budget. Dates will be announced next week.

They'll release a full, revised, co-chairs recommended budget after the next economic and revenue forecast, which takes place Feb. 22.

In a statement, Senate Republicans applauded the co-chairs for taking a more realistic approach than the governor.

"The only way Oregon will get through the current budget crunch is by setting better spending priorities and demonstrating budget discipline," said Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli, of John Day.

And House Republicans pledged to work with Democrats to deliver a balanced budget.

"This legislature has an opportunity this session to finally address the structural deficits that led us to this position in the first place and to put Oregon on the path to a more stable financial future. I hope we do not let this opportunity go to waste," House Republican Caucus Budget Chairman Greg Smith, of Heppner, said.

The 2017 legislative session begins Feb. 1. Lawmakers must complete their work by July 10.

Contact Tracy Loew at tloew@statesmanjournal.com or 503-399-6779; and follow her on Twitter @Tracy_Loew