



## Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

### "Meet the Furbies"

Peter's adoration for his dog is evident from the smile on his face as he extolls, "One day, my wife, Marilyn, and I saw two women sitting outside a coffee shop who both had the cutest 'Havanese' dogs. The ladies told us about the breed's wonderful qualities and that they are loving pets.

Once home, we researched the breed which was created for human companionship and cuddles. Have you seen Havanese puppies? In three words: Cute! Cute! Cute! They look like handle-less fluffy dancing mops, fuzzy slippers that won't sit still, or irresistible-fuzzy wind-up toys full of bounce, energy and affection.

We learned of a three-week-old litter of little 'furbies' and went to investigate with a plan in mind. We wanted to see if any of the puppies would choose us for their family, not the usual way around of the human choosing. In the 'puppy nursery' we sat down on chairs beside the bundle of sleeping fluffies. One fat, half-awake puppy crawled out of the pack, wobbled over to us and plopped himself onto my wife's foot. He sat there looking up at us as comfortable and at home as he pleased. We had just been adopted! I picked up our new furry family member. He was featherweight and easily fit into the palm of my hand.

We returned to visit the puppy when he was six-weeks-old. We surmised that he would be preoccupied playing with his siblings and not pay us any attention. Boy, were we wrong! As soon as we entered and sat down, darned if that little happy-faced-fluffy guy did not run over and sit on my wife's foot again! He then came over to me. It was magical! This puppy knew we 'were his' and obviously loved us, so we waited patiently until he was a healthy nine weeks before bringing him home. You might say, we had



Photo by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

**The cute factor wins every time! Peter and Marilyn learned firsthand that living with their two-year-old Havanese, Angel, who has an adorable-bossy pup has its advantages and disadvantages.**

the first 'pick of the litter'...or errrr, the puppy picked us first!

Havanese originate from Havana, Cuba, so we thought a Spanish name would be appropriate. I typed 'Spanish boy names' into the search engine and read the names, in alphabetical order, to Marilyn. She stopped me at 'Angel' declaring the name fit because 'he is a blessing and joy to our family'.

We had excitedly prepared for Angel's arrival by buying him his own bed. The first night we gently placed him into it, but his stay lasted only a few minutes. He made such a racket! Our mistake was giving in, picking him up, and placing him at the end of our bed. He has slept there ever since! But now he has boldly migrated north and is sleeping between us - on our pillows! He stretches full out on the bed and growls when we try to make room for us! I guess we missed reading the 'Havanese small print' that

said they can be stubborn and manipulative. Yup. We missed that! He knew exactly what he was doing and had 'our number' from the start!

We treat Angel like a family member and take him with us to as many places as we can. He is so bonded to us. OK — we admit it — so are we to him. He makes us happy.

Angel follows us from room to room and telepathically knows when we are going out - even before we go for our coats. We have resorted to spelling out our intentions or using sign language to not alert him.

Yes, yes, yes, we admit it! Angel runs the house. Probably just like Queen Victoria's, Charles Dickens' and Barbara Walter's Havanese did. Before Marilyn and I leave for a cup of coffee we have to check with Angel if he wants to go. He usually opts to sit with us in front of the coffee shop on warm days and in the car in the

winter. We never leave him tied up outside - he is too valuable. It would be like testing fate by leaving a big-diamond ring on the sidewalk.

Havanese have three kinds of hair; cotton curly, cotton, and silky that require frequent and extensive grooming. Unlucky for Angel - he has the one that easily mats. After about 45 minutes of us grooming him, he shows his displeasure by growling and crawling up onto our shoulder - which makes further grooming impossible.

Havanese are little guard dogs. We live in an apartment and Angel hears EVERYTHING - he alerts us by barking! I may have to invent itty-bitty ear muffs to 'muffle' his hearing for our neighbor's sake!

Angel 'owns' a 'small shop' of stuffed animals that he knows by name; Snowflake, Owl, Teddy, and Santa (white bear with red hat) etc. and runs for the one we name.

Angel's name suits him perfectly because he is a messenger of love; giving and teaching it."

### TIPS

Marilyn adds, "We place puppy pee pads outside on our apartment's patio for Angel. He is potty-trained from the first day of his arrival. He scratches the patio's glass door or 'rings' the Christmas bells on it for us to 'let him outside'."

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## Think location when choosing houseplants

BY KYM POKORNY  
OSU Extension Service

Gardeners hear it often enough: right plant, right place.

It's a fundamental rule of gardening, said Heather Stoven, a horticulturist with Oregon State University's Extension Service, and one that applies to houseplants just as much as outdoor ones.

"Make sure you buy for location," she said. "That will help solve many problems that can come down the road."

In Stoven's office, a tropical-looking anthurium thrives in a south-facing spot with bright but indirect light, where it gets very warm in summer. Across the room, a peace lily looks just fine in a cooler, darker spot. Both are where they do best.

If they weren't, problems could range from burned or yellowed foliage, dropped leaves and death. Environmental stress sets a plant up for aggravation from pests and diseases. Keep it healthy with appropriate light exposure, watering schedule and temperature, Stoven said, and insects and pathogens are less likely to attack.

Figuring out what is what when it comes to lighting can give a person fits. Usually, you can rely on directional clues. A window facing south receives the most intense sun; west and east exposures rank in the middle and a north-facing window is considered low light.

Be cautious not to put plants too close to or touching a window, where temperature variations and cold drafts can damage leaves. Heating vents and fireplaces should be avoided, too.

In winter, Stoven recommends plants be watered lightly only when the potting mix is dry. Check by sticking your finger into the soil up to the second knuckle. Or pick the pot up; if it's light, the plant needs water. Be sure to use containers with drain holes in the bottom, otherwise water will settle at the bottom and cause root rot. Over-watering kills more plants than under-watering, she noted.

"There's very little to do once a plant gets root rot," Stoven said. "Unless it's a well-beloved plant, it could be better to put up the white flag."

Plants can do without fertilizer from November through March when the plant isn't actively growing, she said. In other times of the year, feed in

moderation with a slow-release fertilizer in granules, tablets or stakes, which will last two or three months, or a liquid version every other week or according to directions.

If you notice burning on the tips of leaves or a white crust on top of the potting soil, you're most likely fertilizing too much.

Indoor plants can get pests and diseases just like any other plant, Stoven said. The dreaded three are aphids, mealy bugs and mites. Aphids are most familiar with their little green bodies and usually congregate on the undersides of leaves. The white wax covering their body and egg sacs that give them a cottony appearance distinguish mealy bugs. Mites, of course, will be quite small and are often hard to see with the naked eye, but speckles left from their feeding can give the plant a bronzed or yellow look. In the worst-case scenario, you'll see webbing on leaves.

If pests invade, snipping off infested stems and leaves can help control the spread of insects. Then wash plants off with a spray of water. Be sure to spray undersides of leaves as well. Stoven doesn't recommend using most chemicals for indoor plants, but said horticultural oils or soaps are a good option if you follow the directions. You can also target pests directly with a wipe of alcohol on a cotton swab and then rinse with water.

But prevention is always the soundest policy.

"The best thing to do to manage any pest," she said, "is not to bring them into your home in the first place. Check plants carefully when you buy them. And, if you take them outside during the growing season, when you bring them back in, check again."

Stoven suggests these houseplants for use in different lighting situations:

Low light: pothos\*, snake plant, lucky bamboo;

Low to medium light: peace lily\*, dracaena\*;

Medium light: weeping fig or ficus, African violet, Boston fern, dumb cane\*;

Bright, indirect light: anthurium\*, spider plant, palm;

Bright light: schefflera, rubber tree, succulents, cacti.

## Chinook, steelhead seasons set on Columbia, tributaries

Fishery managers from Oregon and Washington set spring Chinook salmon and smelt seasons for the Columbia River and some of its tributaries last Wednesday during a joint state hearing in Vancouver.

The Columbia River spring Chinook season is based on a forecast of 232,500 returning upriver spring Chinook, compared to an actual return of

242,600 last year. The forecast provides for a fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam running through Friday, April 10 with an expected kept catch of about 11,500 spring Chinook prior to a run update. The season for the lower Columbia below the I-5 Bridge opened Jan. 1 under permanent rules. The regulations adopted last week will take effect March 1.

On the Willamette River, the spring Chinook forecast is 55,400 fish. This is slightly more than last year's actual return of 51,800 and will allow for a full Chinook retention season as described under permanent regulations.

The Willamette River remains open to retention of adipose fin-clipped adult Chinook salmon and adipose fin-clipped

steelhead seven days a week.

The bag limit on the Willamette below Willamette Falls is two adipose fin-clipped adult salmon or steelhead in combination. Above the falls, two adipose fin-clipped adult salmon and an additional three adipose fin-clipped steelhead may be retained in the daily bag limit.

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