



Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

Oregon Dog has a Canadian green card!

"My dog, Bella, and I live in a twelfth-floor apartment. Our neighbors' dog, Angel, told Bella the good news about appearing in your Oregon newspaper column," said Helle. "Bella excitedly wagged her tail in appreciation because she was born in Oregon, even though I adopted her in Vancouver, Canada!"

Three years ago, my friend, who volunteers for a dog rescue group, drove to Oregon and brought nine Dachshunds up from a kill shelter. I helped her bathe them and for fun we named one Bella because it rhymes with my Scandinavian name, Helle."

"I was saved from a cruel and evil breeder I call Cruella d' Evil," said Bella, "and taken to a shelter. Then I was driven to a new life in a new country. I was scared but after a warm bath, a nice lady, Helle, adopted me."

I had Puppy-Post-Elevated-Traumatic Stress (P-PETS) from my previous existence and the loss of all my puppies. I am glad that Helle is my loving Mummy and this is my forever home. At Cruella d' Evil's smelly house I never got to go outside. At Mummy's home she showed me that the world is big, pretty - and wet! Mummy makes me wear a bright-red raincoat because it rains 130 inches a year in Vancouver! I don't like the rain or the coat!"

"Bella hates rain and her cute-hooded rain coat," said Helle. "Once outside, after she goes potty, she indicates that she is ready to return home by walking BACKWARDS in front of me!"

Her rescue vet 'thought' that 3-4 year old Bella was spayed. My vet also 'thought' she was spayed. The next day, at our first dog obedience class, the only male dog kept sniffing Bella. Oh! Oh! My 'spayed dog' was diving head first into a two-week heat cycle. Lovely. Dogs have a 'mild' period, which was an eye opener as my carpets and furniture are white. Bella and I quickly learned about doggy diapers. After her heat, she was 'officially' spayed.

Bella must have the teeth of a Pit Bull because she is a marathon squeaky-toy destroyer. I have spent a fortune on dog toys that last two minutes in her 'care'. She tears them up, de-stuffing them in one go. Because Bella is part Terrier, I call her 'Bella The TEAR-ier!' Three months ago, I bought a small, sturdy human-baby squeaky-



Photo by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

At first glance there does not seem to be a similarity between Helle's dog, Bella, and Santa's famous reindeer, but they both have a noteworthy story!

rabbit toy that is thankfully still with us. A dog chew stick lasts other dogs three days, but Bella 'kills' it in five minutes and a lamb bone is gone in under an hour.

Her 'bad dog' behavior is so well known that her Shitzu friend, Dish, guards her toys and won't let Bella near them. On puppy-play dates, Dish is so worried that she grabs each toy in her mouth from her toy box, jumps onto the sofa beside us and lines them up on the top so Bella can't reach them.

Bella sleeps in a little dog bed on my bed, but with her P-PETS she has nightmares from her previous life, so I often wake up with her cuddled in the crook of my arm."

"Last year at 4:30 a.m. we had a fire in our 20-story building," said Bella. "Screaming fire alarms woke us up! Mummy quickly attached my leash, with its pink-flashing-LED lights, to my collar. It was black and smokey in our hallway. The EXIT door, 10 feet from our apartment, was too hot to open. We had to walk 70 feet past it, through the dark, toxic air, to the other EXIT door to escape. I felt like Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer leading people down the stairs!"

In the lobby, I was glad to see my friend, An-

gel, but she looked different! The dangerous smoke had turned her snow-white fur dark gray! The soot was so bad that her parents could not wash it out! She had to go to the dog groomer for a special \$60 bath, where she won a treat and a colorful bandana."

"I am grateful for Bella's 'presents' in my life," added Helle. "She came at a good time, because shortly thereafter I was diagnosed with a health problem. She is a wonderful emotionally grounding friend and I love her to bits."

Belle thoughtfully adds, "Because I was born in the United States and I hold a Canadian dog-license, I must have doggy-duo-citizenship!"

TIPS

"When Bella arrived," said Helle, "she had a bad case of car sickness. I found a helpful homeopathic remedy and took her on two minute car rides to help her adjust from her P-PETS. I also bought a pet-booster seat for my Honda Civic surmising that its low bucket seats that prevented her from seeing out the windows, aggravated the car sickness. Now she hops into her little car seat and enjoys her rides gazing out the windows."

I recently learned about a Bach flower remedy, Star of Bethlehem, for pet relief from the emotional symptoms from 'fears of abandonment and starvation'. It apparently 'restores mental, emotional, and physical calmness after shock following: accidents, traumatic events, grief, cruelty and starvation.' The only thing not mentioned in the book, 'Bach Flower Remedies for Animals' is Bella's name because it is made for her!"

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Mulch is your friend

Tips for stopping weeds, conserving water

BY SUSTAINABLE COTTAGE GROVE
For the Sentinel

Mulch is one of the most valuable allies of the edible landscaper or gardener. Mulch suppresses weeds, conserves soil moisture (and reduces water bills), improves soil fertility, and reduces the effects of very cold and very hot temperatures on soil and plants.

Strictly speaking, mulch is any material laid down atop soil. Permanent mulches such as plastic have occasional uses, but natural mulches provide many more benefits to most edible landscapes.

A wide variety of materials can be used as mulch: grass clippings, leaves, straw, kitchen scraps, cut or pulled plant materials, sawdust, bark or wood chips, cardboard, newspaper, and gravel. Mulch choices depend on what is available, budgetary constraints, the goals of the mulch, and appearance. Bark mulch and pea gravel look sharp, but can be expensive; kitchen scraps and cut or pulled plants are free, but won't look as manicured.

Whatever the mulch, consider its source. Use straw instead of hay to reduce weed seeds, dispose of troublesome weeds off-site, avoid materials from plants that were diseased, and avoid grass clippings or leaves that were treated with chemical pesticides.

Animal manures and other composts can be used as mulch, but they also act as fertilizers, introducing nitrogen and/or other nutrients that may or may not be wanted or needed.

Mulch can be applied in rings around individual plants, or as a sheet over a large area (with plants "poking through"). The thickness of mulch depends on the material, commonly ranging from 3-4 inches for denser materials like gravel and bark mulch to 8-12 inches for fluffier materials that will compact over time, such as leaves or grass clippings.

When should mulch be applied? Sheet mulches like bark and gravel are semi-permanent. Many guidelines call for mulch rings to be constructed in the spring, so that the ground is kept warmer in the beginning of the growing season, and so that sunny summer heat doesn't dry out the soil. A year-round or "permanent" mulch provides these same benefits, and also nourishes the soil without interruption and protects root systems from freezing temperatures in the winter. Before the fall rains start, pull mulch several inches away from the base of tree trunks to avoid rotting the bark. If an extended freeze is coming, pile the mulch a foot thick around the trunk, and then pull it back when temperatures rise again.

Extend the life of mulch by watering beneath it during the summer, whether with a drip system or manually with a hose. Watering from above by sprinkling will cause the mulch to decompose more quickly, and, depending on the thickness of the mulch, may not wet the root system of the plant effectively. If the mulch tends to bind together in an impermeable mat, break it up occasionally to ensure that air and water can pass through.

Contact us with questions or ideas at SustainableCottageGrove@gmail.com.

Kimwood Corporation recognizes outstanding employees

Cottage Grove-based Kimwood corporation wishes to recognize James Fraiseur, Jessy Wolfe and Mick Sebastian for being selected as outstanding Kimwood Employees during 2014. Each calendar quarter Kimwood employees select a working peer for their outstanding effort expended in the preceding quarter.

Fraiseur is a long-term employee, having worked at Kimwood for 31 years following

in his dad's footsteps (Andy Fraiseur). Currently James is a journeyman lead machinist who was nominated by his peers during the first and third quarters of 2014.

Wolfe is new to Kimwood having been hired in early 2014 as Kimwood's Office and Compliance Administrator. Compliance duties are far reaching and instrumental in keeping Kimwood employees, visitors and customers safe from work-place

and environmental hazards plus assuring that Kimwood complies with the many regulatory filings and inspections.

Sebastian is also a long-term employee working in his 15th year at Kimwood. He is currently the Fabrication and Machine Shop Supervisor overseeing all aspects of these departments.

For each recognition the employee selected was awarded a \$250 gift certificate.

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