

# Giving thanks to our dogs, for all that they do

**CANINE CORNER**  
RAIN JORDAN & DAHLIA

Before I had a multidog household, I used to send gratitude cards to people during the holiday season. Now I look for ways to express gratitude to my dogs.

Often, training sessions with high value food rewards make them very happy. But training is as much for us as it is for them.

Here are a few ideas for expressing gratitude to and for our dogs.

Let them take you for walks. The main joy dogs get from leash walks is exploring the world via sniffing, so if dogs aren't allowed to sniff, or are punished for sniffing, they're not getting much from their walks. Tightening that leash and pulling your dog away from whatever she might be sniffing during a walk is akin to your friend or spouse grabbing your arm and pulling you away from reading your most important emails, Facebook updates, or Instagram posts.

Some dogs do not enjoy walks at all, whether due to fears, pain, or other health reasons. They shouldn't have to go on walks if walks are aversive to them. Instead, set up seek & sniff opportunities in your home or yard. You can hide aromatic foods in grass, shrubs, and leaves. Making sure first that the flora in your yard isn't dog-toxic, stick dabs of xylitol-free, sugar-free peanut butter, cream cheese, or unseasoned pates on leaves, rocks, and elsewhere. You might have to guide them to the hidden foods at first, then eventually add a "find" or "seek" cue to let them know the game is on. On the other hand, because dogs' olfactory systems are exponentially more powerful and sensitive than ours, it's important to protect them from certain other scents. Cleansers, detergents, paints, hairspray and other aerosol products, perfumes, lotions, and essential oils are just a few of the many items that overwhelm and attack your dog's sense of smell.

Play with them. Or arrange



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safe play dates with their favorite doggy pals, checking regularly to ensure all playmates are consenting to the interactions. If your dog's play skills are iffy, you can teach him to self-inhibit via a series of rewarded call-aways from and returns to play before arousal escalates. If your dog doesn't like other dogs, don't insist on dog-dog play but instead provide a securely fenced area where he can run and play safely with you.

Some people whose dogs have rock-solid recall — and are not bite risks nor surrounded by bite risks — give their dogs off leash exercise opportunities. Running

on the beach or other protected areas without the danger of vehicles or wild animals can be highly enriching. If your dog doesn't have a super-reliable recall, however, it's crucial to achieve that first. Reliable recall is best trained and maintained with aromatic, high value human food rewards for coming when called. There are very specific rules to training recall and to ensuring it is maintained permanently. A well-qualified, humane, certified trainer or behavior consultant can teach you the intricacies.

Spend time with them; both quantity and quality count. We humans might figure that our dogs

being home without us for 8 hours a day is no big deal. But our dogs live in captivity—however caring this captivity may be, they nevertheless cannot seek human companionship elsewhere when we leave. A huge portion of their short lives is spent waiting for us to come home. Because dogs are social animals, too much alone time can be detrimental. So can negatively charged human time such as when we are angry, frustrated, scared, unhappy, or pre-occupied. After all, dogs are very sensitive to human emotions, facial expressions, and stress. They can even smell a rise in stress hormones in our blood. Got no reason to be happy? Your dog is one great reason.

Last but perhaps foremost, protect your dog from the distress and heartbreak of being suddenly alone — that is, without you — permanently. If you find heart-breaking the stories and photos of dogs taken to shelters by the only family they know, imagine how those dogs must feel. There are many ways to avoid this. Suggestions can be found in my previous articles.

Devotion to our dogs equal to or greater than their reliance on us, wrapped in various packages like those outlined above, may indeed be the greatest gift. So when they come to your side at the holiday dinner table, longing for some of that novel, aromatic fare? Whether you assent to their pleadings or not, remember to respond in ways that show them your gratitude.

*Rain Jordan, CBCC-KA, KPA CTP, is a certified canine behavior and training professional. Visit her at [www.expertcanine.com](http://www.expertcanine.com).*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Homestead exemption makes sense

As a Seaside resident and a senior, I am always very concerned with the home taxes going up year after year. I lived in Nevada for 35 years where they have a homestead exemption — which protects the home equity and lowers house taxes for seniors. Washington state has a similar homestead exemption.

But Oregon? No homestead exemption or protection for equity, no lowering of house taxes for seniors, and only a deferment of taxes if you can't afford to pay them — which has a 6% interest lien placed on your property. As we have now voted for a \$99 million dollar school bond to move all schools to the mountain — to be distributed among 6,000 seaside residents (all of whom are not homeowners) and we watch as taxes go up and up on an annual basis. If

other towns are included in this levy, I am not aware.

My question is this: When the existing school properties are sold, does the sale price go towards credit in the school bond levying? if not, where will it go?

**Susan Romersa**  
Seaside

### Thank you from Laundry Love

The volunteers of Seaside Laundry Love want to say a heartfelt thank you to those in our community that gave so generously to Laundry Love's Annual Clothing Giveaway.

If you would have walked into Seaside Laundromat on Roosevelt last Saturday you would have been met with a real feeling of community! Because of the generosity of our community businesses such as Salon on Broadway and Les Schwabb we

were able to give over 40 bags of clothes to those who came to Laundry Love. The clothes were given by residents of Seaside in abundance! Because of the quality and quantity of the clothes helped those in need as well as 25 bags of personal hygiene items that were donated. A special thank you to the staff at SHS that donated many of the items. Truly, this community knows how to give. We are very proud to be here in this community!

**Carl and Shirley Yates,**  
and the volunteers of  
Seaside Laundry Love

### Signs are a reminder of compassion

The white signs posted around Seaside are beacons of hope and encouragement in the challenging moments of life.

They are both a timely reminder and a genuine reflection of the loving compassion that Jesus Christ has for each one of us; we do matter.

**Marjory Snyder**  
Seaside

### Feeding hungry families

The holiday season is suddenly upon us, which means it is time to celebrate with our family and friends by sharing delicious meals together. However, for some in our community it is a time of worry, as they struggle to figure out where their next meal is coming from. At the South County Community Food Bank we recognize just how difficult this time of year is for many of our neighbors.

Every month, over 30 volunteers spend a total of 350+ hours working to provide a five-day supply of nutritious food to each family who walks through the door. It's not always easy work,

but every volunteer goes home at night assured that the families they served with have a number of warm meals to look forward to.

The need for our services are always present and continue to grow each year. For more than 35 years, the South County Community Food Bank has served the hungry here in south Clatsop County and we could not do it without your support. We can use your help again this holiday season. Donations of food and money are always welcome by visiting us at 2041 N. Roosevelt Dr. in Seaside. Checks can be mailed to PO Box 602, Seaside, OR 97138. If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at 503-738-9800.

Thank you for your support this year!

**Darren Gooch**  
Board President  
South County  
Community Food Bank

## Windermere launches 'Share the Warmth' blanket drive

Seaside Signal

Real estate brokers throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington are gearing up for Windermere

Real Estate's annual Share the Warmth campaign. Now through Dec. 18, Windermere brokers in Gearhart will be collecting warm clothing and other items to benefit multiple organizations, including

the Astoria Rescue Mission's House of Hope, Warrenton Warming Center, plus local schools and churches. The nonprofits are specifically asking for coats, blankets, sweaters, sweatshirts, hats,

and gloves in all sizes. Those who want to help can stop by participating Windermere offices to drop off donations. The Windermere office in Gearhart is located at 588 Pacific Way.

## Cheri's is closed



R.J. Marx

Cheri's Cafe & Cannon Beach Cookie is closed after decades of hosting Cannon Beach residents and visitors. With all overseen by Cheri Lerma, Cheri's was the quintessential Cannon Beach hangout — where locals held sway, but well-behaved visitors were always welcome. You checked your ego at the door and settled in for the news of the day.



"Winter Cardinal," Watercolor, by Mary Ann Gantenbein.



"Winter Solstice," oil and cold wax, by Kitty Paino.

## Trail's End 'Winter Solstice' celebration

Seaside Signal

Trail's End Art Association presents "Winter Solstice," a celebration of the season.

The exhibit is on display from Dec. 7-Dec. 30.

On Saturday, Dec. 7, the association serves refreshments during the Gearhart ArtWalk from 2 to 5 p.m.

Trail's End is located at 656 A Street in Gearhart, Oregon. Winter hours are 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays.