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# Today's Tabloid

PERSONAL NEWS FOR [admin@petbuzz.it](mailto:admin@petbuzz.it)

DOG NEWS

## Did Toxins in My Dog's Food Nearly Kill My Best Friend?

JUN 07, 2011 09:33A.M.

On a Sunday evening in July 2009, I was using my computer and my 5 year old Samoyed Bundy came in shaking his head (he had left my room approximately 15 mins earlier). I thought he was bringing me the ball because he wanted to play. He was also pawing at his mouth, so I thought he must have something stuck in his mouth. I had a look but couldn't see anything. I knew something was seriously wrong so I jumped in the car and raced to the nearest 24 hour vet as fast as I could with Bundy in the back, still acting strangely with his head, writes Craig W.

Luckily, the roads were empty and there was no one waiting at the vet. As we were led into the examination room, Bundy collapsed on the floor and was trembling all over. I then had to go back to the waiting room while they attended to him in the back. After a wait, I was led to the back where Bundy was in a cage and flailing about uncontrollably, which was very distressing for both him and me. I understand the vet gave him a shot of pentobarbital to knock him out. After another wait, I eventually went home but, obviously, I couldn't sleep.

The next day, when I visited him, he was lying on a bed with lots of tubes and machines attached. He was unconscious but his paws and face were still twitching. It was tearing me apart to see him like that but I stayed for a few hours and held his paw, because I didn't think he was going to make it. I don't think the vets were very optimistic either because he was developing asperatic pneumonia.

I visited him every day and stayed for a few hours but I realised that the nurses have other animals to look after and duties to perform so I didn't want to get in their way by staying longer. The vets and nurses that treated him gave him the best of care and I'm very grateful.

He remained unconscious for 3 or 4 days which, I'm told, is not usual but not unheard of either. The vets there treated him with a cocktail of drugs to try to control his twitching. They recommended sending him to a specialist centre so, after about 5 days, I drove him in the back of my car. He was still unconscious so a vet nurse sat with him, assisting with the oxygen.

The vets at the specialist centre ran a multitude of generalised tests including MRI and spinal taps but the results were inconclusive. After a day or so, he started to come around, semi conscious, but still twitching.

The next day I visited, he was finally awake and when he saw me he started to whine with all the energy his weak body could muster, he could barely move but he still wanted to lick me and it became very emotional for both of us. Within a week, he got more responsive and stronger every day and was then allowed home.

As Bundy is 5 years old, epileptic fits were a possibility but I'm told that they do not last for 3+ days and the MRI brain scan had ruled out a brain tumour.

The vets that treated him thought it was likely he had come into contact with a toxin that acted on his nervous system. I wracked my brains as to what that could be as I wanted answers. The day of the episode, we went for a walk (on lead) at about 5 pm then he was shut inside the house and had his food about 6pm. There was no access to the garden and there are no chemicals around the house.

The previous day, I had put a new tick collar on him and noticed a very strong smell coming from it. I assumed that this must be the cause of Bundy's condition somehow so I didn't put another back on him.

When he was back home, I was feeding him brand new packets of his usual dry dog food that he likes and has had for years but, before the first episode, I had bought a different brand of food just for a change and added this to his usual food in a container, one that he had never had before (not sure if I can say the brand name, for legal reasons, but possibly the biggest and most popular brand in the world and the name is something to do with a dog's heritage). Anyway, after a few weeks of feeding him brand new usual food straight out of the packet, I went back to adding some of his previous food on top. Within that week, he had a serious case of diahorrea but I thought that could just be down to the drugs he was on.

A few days later (coincidentally, again on a Sunday night and about 2 hours later in the evening than the first episode), I noticed Bundy looking at me strangely and his legs were shaking. I immediately knew what was wrong and I drove him down to the specialist centre where he was again in intensive care for a week or so.

He came home very weak but, today, over six months later he is fit and healthy apart from his legs sometimes shaking when he stands. Obviously, there appears to be some residual nerve damage.

The vets at the specialist centre ran more tests the second time but still nothing was remarkable.

The four different vets that treated him between the two veterinary clinics and both episodes suspected intoxication by organophosphates,

metaldehyde, (slug bait) or mycotoxins.

It was after this second occurrence that I realised that this new brand of dog food was the only common factor in both these cases. Perhaps it was contaminated?

I contacted the company that makes the dog food and arranged for an approximate 1kg sample to be sent off (but unfortunately I didn't have the bag and batch code). The sample I sent did have small amounts of Bundy's usual dog food mixed in (other brand). I sent it like this because this new food was added on top of his old food in a container and I wanted to know if they would even notice or just throw it away but, surprisingly, they did notice. I think, because of this, they did not run any tests.

A guy qualified in veterinary science, and who works for the dog food company, dealing with complaints of this nature, sent me a letter saying he had contacted my vet and discussed the causes of 'tremorgens' (a group of mycotoxins). These have been associated with Blue cheese, walnuts and compost as well as others and it was unlikely that their product was responsible.

Fortunately, Bundy has not been fed or been near those stated substances.

When I leave the house Bundy stays inside and he is always walked on a lead, he only goes into the garden if I go into the garden and the last time I saw a slug was about 10 years ago so he has very little chance of ever coming across something I don't know about.

After a few weeks, I contacted the company's vet again for the results of the test. I understand the tests didn't show up anything abnormal. I wasn't surprised at the company's response because no company is ever going to test their own product and say something is wrong with it. He suggested that it was just one of those unexplained things, which I would have believed for the first episode but it is too coincidental for the second.

I got a bit annoyed with this guy because the way he dismissed my reasoning seemed arrogant.

He said that because they hadn't had any other complaints, there was obviously nothing wrong with the batch and he also said that was the end of the matter and there was nothing else they would do.

Not being content with this dismissal or his arrogant and patronising attitude, I contacted a more senior person at the company and spoke to a technical director and arranged for another sample to be tested (I only had a handful left). He said it would be sent to Singapore, would take about 6 weeks and would cost a bit of money.

While I was waiting for these tests to be performed, I decided to conduct my own research into probable causes (something I should have done earlier) and discovered a few scientific papers freely available on the internet about Mycotoxins affecting dogs.

Roughly speaking, Mycotoxins are a group of toxins that form as a result of mould on numerous organic sources and can be deadly and cause a number of different conditions to both humans and animals. They can be found in both cereals and dry dog food, a fact which was omitted from the letter I was sent.

Either the veterinary guy dealing with my complaint has limited knowledge of these potential killers (for someone in his position, this seems very remiss) or he was fully aware of the potential problems but decided to keep quiet so as not to open a can of worms.

I did provide an email link to all of the papers (listed below) but it would appear that neither of the people I have been in contact with has read them, as they have subsequently provided no comment.

A number of the cases reported in the papers show clinical symptoms which are nearly identical to Bundy's condition and, when biological samples from the dogs were analysed, Roquefortine and Penitrem A were detected and suspected as the probable cause.

A few weeks later, I received in the post the results of the sample testing (it had been sent to a lab in Victoria, not Singapore). Only four tests were performed: two types of mycotoxin, namely Aflatoxin B1 and Patulin, and also lead and permethrin.

I consider this test to be irrelevant and inconclusive due to the fact the very small sample size was statistically insignificant and they failed to test for any of the mycotoxins that are linked to tremors in dogs. (apparently there are over 30 known)

The dog food company's sole defence was based around the fact that they apparently hadn't received complaints of a similar nature and that their quality control is of a very high standard, and perhaps it was the other brand of dog food that caused it?

Addressing this statement, my research has indicated that detection and confirmation of mycotoxin poisoning has been grossly under diagnosed and, as far as I am aware, the specialist centre that treated Bundy did not test for this possibility. (I'm not even sure there is a commercial laboratory in Australia that tests for most of the different types).

In my case, it was only after the second episode that I realised that this brand of dog food was the only common factor that was likely to be responsible and it is possible that many dogs that have a single episode of unexplained acute toxicoses unfortunately die or have to be euthanized due to excessive trauma, poor prognosis and/or lack of financial resources so a confirmed diagnosis and connection to the dog food is not made and hence it is not reported back to the company.

While I'm confident that their quality control is of a high standard, it is unlikely that it is one hundred percent reliable and variations in the materials and process can be expected in any product.

After doing further research I discovered a Uni in the USA (Iowa State) that specialises in veterinary medicine and also test for the two

mycotoxins I'm interested in, namely Roquefortine and Penitrem A.

I spoke to a Professor of toxicology from the department and he believed that mycotoxins are not well understood and not commercially tested for because of lack of demand. I provided him with Bundy's Vet case notes and his story and he confirmed that it did indeed fit with mycotoxin poisoning.

I sent a 1kg sample of Bundy's original food to be tested at my own expense, the test came back negative so I can be fairly confident that it wasn't the other brand to blame which I believed was the case anyway because of the timing. **THIS IS WHAT THE COMPANY SHOULD HAVE TESTED FOR!**

This whole incident has caused me a great deal of stress, and some days I couldn't eat or sleep properly.

I feel that the company didn't take my claims seriously and underestimated two important factors:

1. When I think I am right, I don't give in.
2. I won't let anyone hurt my dog and get away with it.

I spent most of my college fund on Bundy's vet bills and, as he means everything in the world to me, I will do whatever it takes to protect and look after him.

I am convinced that this brand is responsible and I want them to reimburse my vet bills and make it up to Bundy somehow but I realise that posting this statement and contacting the media in other ways will effectively put an end to any chances of financial restitution. However, I will take some comfort in the hope that this might provide an explanation and quicker diagnosis to future apparent toxic poisonings.

I also feel I have been very fair and patient with the company in question and gave them every opportunity to do the right thing but, at every stage, they have seemed intent on absolving themselves from any responsibility. I can only conclude that from the irrelevant sample tests that either the company is grossly incompetent or they deliberately tried to mislead me.

If my dog had died as a result of this, I would probably be standing outside the company's headquarters with a placard saying that their food was responsible for poisoning my dog.

My advice would be that, if your dog exhibits any acute tremors or seizure symptoms, like Bundy had, then get the vet to check for Mycotoxins (though this might be difficult in some countries) and to keep the dog food bags for future evidence if need be.

As Bundy is a Samoyed and they are not common here, perhaps he could be more genetically pre-disposed to toxins that other breeds?

If anyone has had a similar experience or can offer a different explanation, I would welcome a response.

UPDATE: 12th Feb. 2010

I decided to contact consumer affairs and they passed me onto the Pet Food Industry Association of Australia (P.F.I.A .A) and spoke to the executive manager. I provided him with Bundy's history and my concerns and he contacted the company and said he was satisfied with their response.

It was only after I explored their website that I read their Statement of Purpose

#1 "To promote the prepared pet food industry in general and the interests of the members of the association."

So this guy had a conflict of interest to do anything about it as I understand the association is funded by its members.

A few days later I contacted the company again and put a few questions to the guy I spoke to many times before (manager, veterinary services).

I asked him, how many people have to complain about a product before they admit responsibility.

Unsurprisingly he failed to specifically answer. He just reiterated what he said many times before, that no one else has complained of this problem so it is not their responsibility. Imagine if you went to the doctor with an ailment and they said, "Well no one else has complained of this so nothing I can do."

I also asked why he failed to test for Tremorgenic Mycotoxins in the samples I provided. His response was that they only had a small sample and they wanted to test for as wide range as possible? (a wide range of the toxins that don't cause tremors?)

When I pointed out that I had spoken to an expert and had the other brand properly tested for tremorgenic mycotoxins he didn't want to know and said it was irrelevant and rudely concluded our conversation.

Thanks to other forum members I can see that in other countries they have had serious problems with contamination of their dog food products with salmonella and melamine. Anyone would have to be crazy to feed their dog these companies products.

To me it is obvious that the dog food is responsible and the company has done nothing to prove otherwise.

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#### DOG NEWS

## Trial By Tape Measure: The Story of Lennox

JUN 07, 2011 09:29A.M.

Breed Specific Legislation trundles on and on, seemingly gobbling up more and more innocent canine victims with endless vigour, ferocity and ease. We wonder at a law that came into effect with ridiculously sloppy haste and we wonder where it will all end. We also wonder how many more families will be left devastated, confused and inconsolable because of the loss of their precious and much loved innocent pet dog, **writes Maria Daines**.

When legislation is designed to eradicate a certain species, in this instance, a certain type of dog, you'd imagine then, that the law must be so super-protective and of such great benefit to mankind that we simply couldn't do without it, wouldn't you? You'd expect a law that has the almost God-like power to rob innocent beings of their lives, to be entirely righteous and justified for its absolute necessity, wouldn't you? Because the fact that a law like this exists at all should surely mean it is supremely validated and irrefutably indispensable in keeping the majority of the public safe. Welcome to BSL, it doesn't work like that.

Though the banning of four types of dog is part of the British legal system, known as section one of the Dangerous Dogs Act, you will find if

you read the sad stories of those who have been affected by the breed ban, that victims of this law are in fact those who do not own dangerous dogs, and the obvious point of contention that people from all walks of life become distressed and annoyed by, is the fact that Breed Specific Legislation is based on a wholly unfair specification that outlaws the appearance of the dog rather than the behaviour of the dog or its owner, hence identification of dogs deemed to be 'of type' is flawed, haphazard and mistakes and miscarriages of justice cannot be rectified once the death penalty is carried out. If we were talking about a parking fine I would not be writing this. Innocent lives are ended, unbelievably, by the measuring of big heads and bulky bodies, curly tails and smiling jaws. Breed specific identification is a farce because it concentrates on the physical features of canines that are essentially of crossbred descent, discounting character, temperament and the environment in which the dog has been reared. Environment is of course intrinsically linked with canine behaviour but breed specific law has no use for common sense or the value of responsible ownership, nor does it value the obvious potential of education as a means to make our streets safer. BSL goes on its merry way barking up the wrong tree and killing healthy, well behaved dogs at every opportunity.



So, this broadly sweeping act of parliament that delivers the death penalty to dogs that fit its ambiguous and dubious criteria, should, in 19 years of operation, have ended dog attacks, should it not? Well, err, no, it seems dog attacks are (according to government spiel) on the increase, yet the monolithic monster that is the BSL experience, remains ominously set in stone on the Statute Book and continues to cost the taxpayer millions. Messrs Cameron and Co should look no further than the Dangerous Dogs Act in their quest to cut public spending!

BSL by nature of its design is built to keep the public unanimously in an unfounded state of fear and the good old gutter press helps enormously with this task, news teams bash out sensational headlines of dog attack accidents including their 'standard' photographic response, which is the picture of a fighting dog unrelated to the story.

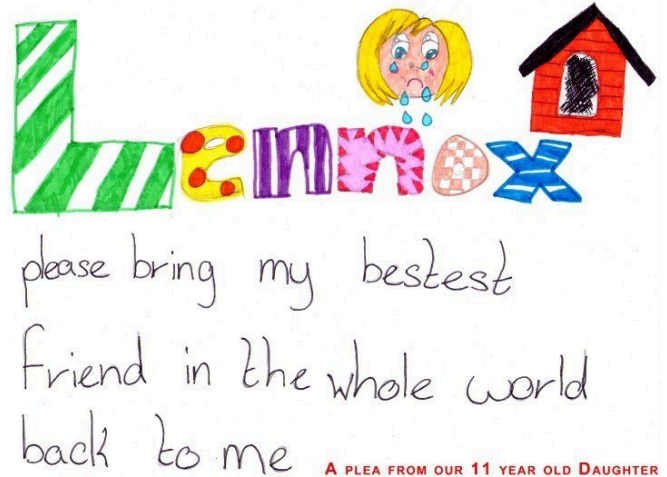
So, BSL teaches nothing, fixes nothing and blames and condemns dogs for the irresponsible behaviour of human beings. Trial by tape measure continues and apart from the occasional comment from one or two clued up politicians, MP's generally cannot be bothered to question the inherent flaws that keep this crazy piece of legislation busily doing its

worst.

Members of the public may find their MP approachable on most subjects of interest to the taxpayer – but the DDA seems to render members of parliament speechless. It is easy to ignore the great big mess of BSL because its victims are locked out of sight and cannot defend themselves. Assumption of pit bull type is not good enough reason to remove a dog from its home and prosecute its owner. Clearly the prohibitive 'catch all' agenda renders 'dangerous' dog legislation farcical because it is entrenched and based upon the ridiculous premise of guilt by association. This is why repeal is the only way forward. We cannot continue to stand idly by whilst countless innocent canines are imprisoned and/or destroyed because of what they may, or more importantly, may not look like.

Being a responsible dog owner (of a bull breed dog) quite literally becomes of no consequence and of no benefit to your dog if it is seized. It matters not that your dog has never bitten anyone when the reason for the dog's seizure and your possible prosecution (yes this is criminal law) is based upon the fact that you have what 'looks' like an illegal breed. So, you may live in fear of your beloved dog or dogs being seized but the law doesn't care how responsible or irresponsible you are, the law wants you to put your loveable bullies to sleep or they will come looking for them. Caring owners who train and socialise their dogs are not and never will be, out of the range of the all seeing eye of BSL henchmen. Those who want to see this law enforced and who often push enforcement to the nth degree, can be counted amongst the population in a range of capacities, they can be ordinary people who do not like dogs, the cheery postman, the dog warden, the county councillor and otherwise friendly neighbours. But beware the enemy within, for when it comes to BSL, everyone believes they can identify a banned dog from forty yards, and many bull breeds have arrived in BSL prison because someone with a grudge against someone else shouted 'Pit Bull!! Pit Bull!!' Yet most pit bull sightings are as believable as the Loch Ness monster! And those with true compassion for companion pets, who seek to align dog legislation with a 'deed not breed' ethic, are ignored.

One Belfast family is making vast strides ahead in a very new and sadly vital campaign which they began because of the shock confiscation of their family dog Lennox. The brutal reality of BSL recently interrupted their happy lives, and now in order to save their gentle and very much loved pet dog Lennox, the Barnes family have set out on a fight to win back his freedom and his life. Mr and Mrs Barnes have no other option but to campaign and campaign hard, because their hearts are literally broken into pieces and they are missing their boy. Lennox has been in prison, at time of writing, for 43 days, 5 hours, 2 minutes, 43 seconds and counting...



I spoke with Caroline Barnes earlier this month when Lennox had been removed from her home for only a few days. The lady I heard on the other end of the phone was quietly spoken, intelligent, compassionate, polite and friendly. Though Caroline covered her heartbreak by chattering (as dog lovers do) about all the sweet and funny things Lennox did, I knew and I could hear in her voice how brave she was trying to be, but her heart is brimming over with the pain and hurt she is experiencing since Lennox was taken without warning, leaving every member of the household in shock. Caroline's heartbreak was obvious in the sad and weighted moments of our conversation. I came off the phone feeling wretched and at a loss for what to do to help this family. My own dogs gathered around me making a furry garland of care, their noses pushing softly to comfort me as I wiped tears from my cheeks and cursed the hateful BSL.

I imagined the pain Caroline Barnes was feeling having to discuss the loss of her dog because of a law that does not take into consideration the law abiding lifestyle of its victims, canine or human. I liken those who uphold and enforce BSL to bailiffs. BSL 'bailiffs' remove living objects from those who do not owe a debt and innocent dogs are confiscated from their families for what can be months, even years. The ongoing and high profile case of family dog Bruce, a Staffordshire Bull Terrier crossbreed in Northern Ireland, reaches its 3 year mark this September and Bruce has been incarcerated for all of this time as the wheels of the legal system run in slow motion and councillors and officials deliberate and pontificate at a snails pace, leaving Bruce existing in some kind of depressed half-life. This is the fate of many muscular pit bull look-alikes. If suspected pit bull type dogs are allowed to come home they can be returned under strict conditions known as the Exemption Register, this can only be achieved via order of a court and it means the dog must live a life of restriction for the rest of his or her days. Most worried owners agree to these restrictions to spare their dog's life. This is yet another humiliating and time consuming aspect of BSL, but owners do as they are told and jump through hoops or their dog gets it. Caroline has the misfortune of living in Northern Ireland where dangerous dog legislation is currently up for debate. They claim they do not have the exemption amendment there, which would allow friendly dogs deemed of type to live, but UK barristers state they do. As things stand, if Lennox is said to fit around half the characteristics of a certain vague breed standard that

is no longer used for that breed, he will DIE.



So, what can I tell you about Lennox? I can tell you that Lennox was seized by a dog warden on Wednesday 19th May 2010, following Caroline's application to renew her dog licenses, a task she attends to annually. Belfast City Council have issued a dog licence for Lennox every year since he was a puppy, this year, after being registered for 5 years as an American Bulldog cross, he was seized under the dangerous dogs act, suspected of being of pit bull type. Until last month Lennox lived happily with the family's other dogs, an 8 year old male Yorkshire Terrier and a 3 year old female Boxer. Lennox is also insured, neutered, DNA registered, Pet Safe registered and micro chipped. The dog warden came to the Barnes home armed with a dressmakers measuring tape, yes you did read that correctly... And after measuring Lennox's head the warden decided that he should be seized, that was the last the family have seen of their dog. Lennox has an underlying medical condition that requires regular treatment from a vet. Caroline does not know whether Lennox is receiving any medication because his physical and mental condition is unknown. There is no council helpline or resources for people like the Barnes family, no updates from the dog warden or the dog control department, no canine welfare reports, no visits, no feedback, no correspondence from the authorities, no comment, no care, no way to find out a thing. This is pure heartbreak. Families who have their dog taken from them in this way just sit and wait by the phone worrying about their pet. It seems the most dreadfully cruel way to treat people and of course the dog, who finds itself in a new and frightening environment. Human prisoners, no matter how heinous their crime, are allowed a visitor from the outside world. But even the most basic human consideration is denied dog owners, before any court proceedings have taken place. This is nothing short of mental and emotional cruelty, which should have no place in a society such as ours.

Caroline's main concern is for Lennox's health, she said, 'We know Lennox so well, he will be fretting terribly being parted from us and we have not had any replies from Yolanda Elwood, Dog Control Manager at Belfast City Council, though we have written to her several times to inquire about the welfare and whereabouts of Lennox, and we would at least like to be able to visit him to see for ourselves how he is coping and let him know that we have not abandoned him. I just cannot understand

how Belfast City Council can be so heartless. We are responsible dog owners and law abiding citizens, our dog has never caused any trouble to anyone and we feel that we are being treated very badly. Our only option is to take our campaign to the highest possible level in order to save Lennox's life. People have offered us tremendous support and each day there are new messages inquiring about Lennox. We are receiving letters from as far away as America and Canada, we have also had amazing support locally from friends, family and neighbours and members of the public who want to help us bring Lennox home. Lennox now has his own campaign song and the media is contacting us to broadcast and share our story. We are so grateful and would like to pass on our sincere thanks to everyone from the bottom of our hearts, it is so touching to think that people all over the world are reaching out to be part of Lennox's campaign and we hope to highlight the injustice of BSL not only in the UK but world wide. It is a sad reflection of today's dog legislation that this could really happen to any responsible dog owner, and through our story we can show people how wrong it is for an innocent family pet to be seized, and maybe destroyed, simply because of the dog's appearance, it's not right or fair and the law must be changed to protect people like us and dogs like our Lennox who have done nothing wrong'.

What would we do if we were faced with this devastating scenario? How would we cope? Caroline and Craig Barnes and their disabled daughter Brooke had to begin 'coping' immediately and with no time to waste. This caring and respectable family launched the Save Lennox Campaign within days of Lennox being taken from their lives. If you visit Lennox's website you cannot fail to be moved by the pictures of him as a chubby, carefree pup playing in the grass, and now at 5 years old he is a very handsome, well cared for companion dog whose eyes look kind and gentle. The photographs are like the ones you see on any dog lovers' forum, but in this case the photographs are shared because Lennox's family are literally fighting for his life.

On the website you will see a picture that 11 year old Brooke created to plead for Lennox's safe return, for at the centre of this sad story there is a bewildered little girl who cannot understand where her pet dog has gone. On the picture Brooke has written the words 'Please bring my bestest friend in the whole world back to me'. The picture has reduced grown men to tears and compelled many groups and individuals world wide to gather and galvanize support for this family in their hour of need. Indeed a law that takes disabled children's pets from them does not deserve respect. Yes the law must protect the public from dangerous or out of control dogs, Lennox is neither, yet he was taken from Brooke and her family as easily as a teacher confiscates sweets from a child in class time. How will Brooke regard the law in years to come, I wonder?

The only explanation that Mr and Mrs Barnes can give their daughter is that Lennox is caught between a rock and a hard place for he is simply not permitted to be alive whilst BSL law exists, and it is deemed that, along with many other innocent dogs like him, Lennox should become null and void, a species that must be cut out of society and exterminated because of how he looks and nothing more. If we treated human beings this way we would almost certainly find ourselves in jail. But, this is a law for dogs and it would seem we are not the nation of animal lovers that we are considered to be after all.

You can find out more about the campaign for Lennox on this website –

<http://www.savelelnox.co.uk/>

And please sign the petition here –

<http://www.petitiononline.com/sl190510/petition.html>

You can ignore the rise of Breed Specific Legislation if you wish, until the day you may wake up to find your breed of dog, your best friend, is on the banned list. Since 1991 thousands of dogs have been destroyed because the dangerous dogs act doesn't like how they look – regardless of how well behaved they might be. If even half of the UK's 10 million responsible dog owners spoke out against this uncivilised and disreputable law, we could actually repeal it and ensure BSL is replaced with educational resources that would better equip dog owners with training standards and bring irresponsible owners in line with safety measures that could save lives and ultimately help to keep the public safe.

BSL legislation does what it says on the tin, it bans breeds of dogs and types of breeds. What really needs banning is unfit law and your dog needs your voice, now!

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#### DOG NEWS

## Does Being Pet Friendly Increase The Value Of Your Home?

JUN 07, 2011 09:15A.M.

Sending Rover to the doghouse is no longer the punishment it once was because many of today's pooches of panache live lifestyles of the woof and famous. According to a recent review of properties by Move, Inc. (NASDAQ:MOVE), the leader in online real estate, man's best friend today receives more than just bones for treats as many homeowners are rewarding their dogs with custom-built doghouses, deluxe dog runs, custom "doggy-doors", pet-friendly landscaping, private patios with personal fire hydrants, and other features that add value to their master's property with many buyers.

"Pets have become important members of the family, and their needs are often high on the list of must-haves for many buyers, sometimes even higher than priorities of the two-legged members of the family," says, Eileen Healy at Prudential Rocky Mountain Realtors® in Colorado. "Calling out features or local pet-friendly amenities can make or break a buyer's interest in a particular property.

If a buyer knows a home they love already has features the family dog or pet will also love, they'll be more inclined to give that home a second look and consider it more than others on their list."

While proximity to dog parks, doggy day-care centers, or pet fashion stores are often priorities for dog owners interested in city properties, suburban properties generally have ample space for seemingly unusual pet-friendly features. For the sophisticated canines, this Victorian dog house that matches this \$10,995,000 home listed on Realtor.com in California is a must see. If country living is for you and your 'dawg' needs a warm place to chill after a long day of shepherding on the prairie, consider a heated doghouse with a deluxe dog run listed on Realtor.com at \$520,000 in Idaho. Or, for pooches in need of alone time or a quiet space, consider this secluded cottage on Realtor.com at \$524,000 in Illinois.

While spaces customized to a dog's specific needs are not uncommon according to Shari Guess, a Realtor with Buy Wise Real Estate in Texas and active member of the Great Dane Rescue of North Texas, many dog lovers do go the extra mile when it comes to creating a pet-friendly environment at home.

"We have one particularly enormous Dane named Sampson, and we couldn't find a pet door big enough. So we made our own out of a semi-truck mud flap. It's a few years old now so we'll be duplicating our efforts and replacing it soon," said Guess. "We also put in a small outdoor patio so when it's muddy Sampson and our other dogs can go outside for whatever reason and come back into the house without us having to wipe 16 muddy paws! It has a short three-foot fence, pea-gravel with fire hydrant and can be accessed via the dog door from the dog room."

As the nation heads into the Dog Days of Summer, and in honor of National Dog Day on August 26th, Move celebrates man's best friend with information, tips and guides from pet experts and top Realtors specializing in pet-friendly homes.

Whether it's building a pooch palace or installing a bone-shaped pool, Move offers advice on how to celebrate your canine and improve the value pet-loving buyers will give your property as they search for their next home. Interesting topics available now for pet lovers and home enthusiasts to explore on the Move Network include:

- Properties for sale with fantastic pet-friendly features: As more people consider themselves "pet parents," Move showcases homes for sale perfect for adapting their lifestyles to their furry family members.
- Dogs go green: Have you ever thought about your dog's carbon "paw print"? Find easy ways to go green with your dog, including using environmentally-friendly dog products like biodegradable toys.
- Celebrity and presidential dog homes: Celebrities love to shower their dogs with love, affection... and doghouses. Heard about Paris Hilton's two-story kennel mansion built for Tinkerbell? Or what about Drew Barrymore naming her dog 'Flossie' in her property trust valued at \$3 million?
- Realtor tips on benefits of pet-friendly homes: Realtors share experiences in working with pet owners in the market for a home and explain that Fido plays a larger role in finding a home than one might think.
- How-to build a doghouse: Want to build an abode for Fido on a

budget?

Here are steps required, tools needed, and instructions for building a doghouse for under \$75.00.

– Moving tips for your pet: Moving can be stressful for pets, so prepare a room for your pooch while you're packing everything up, ensuring hazardous materials are tucked away. Find a vet near your new home and

a list of pet friendly hotels in case you need to stay at one while getting settled into the new place.

– Streets named after famous dogs: Wondering how some streets were named? The famous dog Nipper in the RCA Victrola ads lived in Bristol, England, and visitors there will find a small road named "Nipper Alley."

– Landscaping tips to create a pet-haven in the yard: Is your garden going to the dogs? Man's best friend can be a gardener's worst headache until you learn how to peacefully coexist with your canine companions.

– The Top 10 Dog Parks in the U.S.: If you love to play at the park with your dog, you'll love Dog Fancy's list of top 10 dog parks. The Jackass Acres K-9 Korral in New River, AZ topped the list this year; it is completely green, and recycles dog waste to create other usable materials.

– Pet friendly hotels: Traveling with your dog has never been easier, as hotels across the country are increasingly offering pet-friendly rooms and activities. According to [www.BringFido.com](http://www.BringFido.com), some of the most popular cities for pet travel include Myrtle Beach, SC and Santa Barbara, CA.

– Pet friendly apartments: Finding an apartment that allows dogs is not always easy. Check out the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in your area, you'll probably find a list of local pet-friendly landlords.

In addition to offering expert advice on pet-friendly properties, Move, Inc., has partnered with top breeders at Breeders USA in California to provide facts and statistics relative to top breeds by city, and the most popular breeds in America.

"We're pleased Move is helping homeowners identify ways to transform a home into a pet-friendly environment because it's a great way to maintain a pet's health and vitality," said Daniel Hect, Master Dog Trainer and owner of BreedersUSA.com in California. "By identifying the needs of your pet while you're searching for your next home, whether it's with an outdoor play area or "doggy-doors," the property is not only enhanced esthetically, but the upgrades can also become a viable marketing feature when selling or buying a home."

As part of the campaign, Move, Inc is pawing to get a glimpse into the most luxurious doggy dwellings by asking pet owners to submit their favorite photo of their pets' home on the Realtor.com Facebook Fan Page and be entered to win \$250 gift certificate for Petco. Visit [Move.com](http://Move.com), [Realtor.com/blogs](http://Realtor.com/blogs) or join [facebook.com/realtor.com](http://facebook.com/realtor.com) for additional details on the Dog Days of Summer campaign!

DOG NEWS

## Disaster Planning for Dog Owners

JUN 07, 2011 09:11A.M.

Summertime is prime time for natural disasters like hurricanes, wildfires and tornadoes, and United Animal Nations (UAN) is encouraging all pet owners to make disaster plans that include their animals.

"When animals are left behind during disasters, they can get injured, lost, become sick, starve and pose public safety risks," said UAN President and CEO Nicole Forsyth. "United States households have more than 171 million dogs and cats alone, so it is vital that pet owners make provisions for these members of the family."

UAN has provided emergency animal sheltering and disaster relief services for thousands of animals since 1987. UAN offers the following disaster planning advice for pet owners:

1. Identify evacuation locations. If a disaster forces you from your home, bring your animals with you. It is the safest choice for you and your pets. Identify pet-friendly hotels, boarding kennels and loved ones outside of your immediate area that could accommodate your pets. Most human evacuation shelters do not allow animals.
2. Identify pets with tags and permanent microchips. A microchip, a tiny tracking device, is the single best way to reunite lost pets with their families. Veterinarians and many animal control agencies offer the service. Update your microchip information if you move, get a new phone number or change emergency contacts.
3. Start a buddy system. If disaster strikes while you are not home, your animals could be stranded behind disaster lines. Exchange keys and disaster plans with a trusted neighbor who can remove your animals in case of an evacuation. Make sure your buddy is familiar with your pets.
4. Assemble a disaster kit for each pet. A disaster kit contains food, water, medication and other supplies you may not be able to get if roads and business are closed. Assemble one for each animal in your household and keep it near an exit so you can easily grab it if forced to leave.
5. Take photos of you with your pets. If you are separated from your pets, photographs can prove ownership if you must reclaim them from a shelter. Keep copies in your wallet and your disaster kit.

Visit <http://www.uan.org/disastertips> for more information, including tips for specific species.

DOG NEWS

## Repeal Breed Specific Legislation Say Vets

JUN 07, 2011 08:57A.M.

Overwhelming support for deed not breed in dangerous dogs consultation

The government has published the results of the Defra consultation on dangerous dogs revealing overwhelming support for an overhaul of the failed Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

The consultation closed in June and the British Veterinary Association (BVA) and British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) submitted a joint response based on sound scientific evidence and expert veterinary opinion. The response called for an end to breed-specific legislation that targets dogs based on the way they look rather than their actions.

The BVA and BSAVA are delighted with the summary of the 4,250 responses published today that reveals:

- 88% of respondents do not believe that current legislation is effective in protecting the public;
- 71% believe that breed-specific legislation should be repealed;
- 84% are in favour of all dogs being microchipped.

Commenting, Harvey Locke, President of the BVA, said:

“There is enormous support amongst experts in dog health and welfare for an end to the failed breed-specific legislation.

“The Coalition Government’s programme promised to take action on dangerous dogs and Ministers must now take on board the strong views from this consultation to implement changes.

“The problems caused by dangerous dogs impact on public safety and animal welfare and maintaining the status quo is not an option.”

Grant Petrie, President of BSAVA, added:

“The problem of dangerous dogs will not be solved until the government accepts that the Dangerous Dogs Act has failed. This view is supported by the thousands of responses to the consultation.

“The support for repeal of the Act and for compulsory microchipping of dogs are clear and we look forward to hearing Defra’s plans in the New Year.”

DOG NEWS

## Can a Puppy Survive Parvovirus?

JUN 07, 2011 08:48A.M.

Jack Russell puppy beats the odds to survive deadly parvovirus, following treatment by vets at Gillingham’s PDSA PetAid hospital.

Canine parvovirus is a very serious health concern and one that often results in a fatal outcome for the dog. Read the story of how one plucky pup was able to beat the deadly disease.

One-year-old Princess is the newest member of the Clarke family and loves spending her time playing with her owner’s four children, especially three-year-old Lacey, who has a special bond with the playful puppy. Princess’ owner and Lacey’s mum, Mary (26), says: “When we adopted Princess, Lacey named her and they have been inseparable ever since, which made nearly losing her a few months ago so upsetting.”

Tragedy struck when Princess was just eight-months-old. A few days after being walked in the local park, where she was playing with other dogs, Princess began showing worrying symptoms.

Mary explains: “She was vomiting, refusing food and became very withdrawn, hiding away from us, when normally she is a happy, sociable puppy. I knew I needed to get her some help and rushed her to the PDSA PetAid hospital in Gillingham.”

On arrival at the hospital, Princess was seen by the Senior Vet, who advised Mary that her family’s beloved dog was suffering from parvovirus – a contagious and potentially deadly virus, which is spread by contact with other infected dogs.

Mary recalls: “I had to leave Princess in hospital for four nights, while the PDSA vets and nurses battled to save her life. I had never heard of parvovirus before, so I picked up a leaflet from PDSA to read more about it. When I realised the severity of the illness, I was distraught. I knew Princess might die and I dreaded having to explain to Lacey and my other children what had happened.”

After four days in isolation at PDSA, Princess began to show signs of improvement and was eventually able to return home with Mary, she said: “I was over the moon when Princess came home, despite her being so skinny and weak from the ordeal, she soon perked up when she was reunited with Lacey.”

With lots of love and attention Princess has recovered well from her ordeal. She had to take daily antibiotics to prevent any further infection in her weakened state as well as other medications to help her recover, which PDSA vets taught Mary to administer at home. She has also been vaccinated to protect her against other preventable diseases.

Mary says: “I didn’t think anything like this could ever happen to us, but

with hindsight, I wish I had vaccinated Princess when we first brought her home. It would have prevented her from catching parvovirus. We are so grateful for the treatment PDSA gave Princess and in future I will keep her up-to-date with all vaccinations. We have learnt the hard way how important it is.”

Unfortunately Princess's story is not uncommon. PDSA's Animal Wellbeing Report recently revealed that there are 1.5 million dogs in the UK that have never been vaccinated, leaving them vulnerable to life-threatening diseases such as parvovirus.

Senior Veterinary Surgeon, Elaine Pendlebury, explains “Canine parvovirus is a highly infectious disease that can lead to death. It can affect dogs of any age and symptoms include vomiting, diarrhoea, mucus or blood in the faeces, tiredness and loss of appetite. If your dog starts to vomit or develops diarrhoea then it is crucial to contact your local veterinary practice as soon as possible.”

For free pet health advice owners can visit [www.pdsa.org.uk](http://www.pdsa.org.uk)

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