



Winter 2013

Helping Labs Find Their Fur-ever Homes



Gracie

# Labrador Ledger

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

## Is Your Dog Itchy?

Is your dog scratching a lot right now? Did it start recently when you turned on the heat? It could be that your dog is sensitive to dust or mold which is stirred up in the house when the heat kicks on.

When humans have an allergic reaction, we mostly sneeze and wheeze but dogs have a skin reaction and get itchy. The offending airborne particles get trapped in the dog's fur and can get absorbed by the skin - especially skin between the toes. Dogs with this type of allergy tend to itch on the front half of their bodies. Signs are face rubbing, foot licking, armpit scratching as well as scratching the neck and chest.

Depending of the severity of the itching, you may try

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**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Longaberger Basket Bingo!**



Sunday, April 6, 2014

1 to 4 p.m. (doors open at noon);  
Tylersport Fire Company, 125 Ridge  
Road, Tylersport, PA 18971. \$20 for

to treat it yourself or seek vet care. You could spend hundreds or thousands of dollars on skin and other tests. When it comes to airborne particles, you need to decide if it is worth the cost to find out what is causing your dog's allergic reaction. Chances are your dog is reacting to several outdoor and indoor particles that are impossible to avoid. Also, the dog may acquire new allergies yearly.

The goal is to make your dog comfortable as soon as possible. Try giving oatmeal baths and be sure to dry the dog thoroughly. Non-drowsy, long-acting antihistamines such as generic Claritin (twice a day) or Zyrtec (once daily) can be a big help to control the itching. EFA supplements (Omega 3 - 6 -9) can also reduce symptoms.

If your dog is scratching to the point that the skin is red or broken, there are topical treatments to consider. Organic Virgin Coconut Oil can be applied to soothe the area and it also naturally kills harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi. Vetericyn Hydrogel Spray is a non-toxic, water-based spray that kills all types of fungus (yeast), bacteria and viruses - even staph/MRSA and E.coli. It can be sprayed on open wounds and does not sting. If possible, apply topical treatments while the dog is eating or chewing a bone to give the treatment a chance to absorb before the dog tries to lick it off.

There are other things you can do to help minimize your dog's allergies. The intestinal tract is very important in the role of allergies. 70 - 80% of the body's immune system is located in the intestine so if damage has been done to the intestinal lining, it can seriously impact the body's ability to absorb nutrients and function normally (causing inflammation and allergic reactions). It makes sense that if the intestinal wall is healed, then the immune system can be restored. Once the immune system is restored, allergic reactions can be minimized. There are certain supplements that can help heal the intestinal wall such as Seacure hydrolyzed white fish (pre-digested protein) that promotes structural integrity and function of the intestinal lining. Probiotics and digestive enzymes can also help with intestinal

20 games (\$25 at door, if available). There will be door prizes as well as extra cards, grand prize Bingo sheets, special and Chinese raffle tickets, good food and our Brookline merchandise available for sale. 100% of the net proceeds from this event will benefit Brookline. We hope you will plan to join us!

## Shop Amazon. Help Brookline!

Amazon.com has launched a new program where they donate 0.5% of every item purchased on their site to a designated charity. Please tell your friends and family about this great opportunity to help our Labs! Here's how it works:  
Go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)  
Sign into your Amazon account.  
In the field that says Search, type in Brookline Labrador Retriever Rescue (or Labrador Retriever Rescue) and hit Search. When it comes up, choose it as your charity. When you shop, sign into smile.amazon.com instead of just amazon.com, and every purchase will help our Labs!

## Buy Brookline's New 2014 Calendar!



Are you trying to decide what gifts to buy this holiday season? Are you and your friends dog lovers? Have we got a solution for you? Brookline has created its very first calendar for 2014. Please click [here](#) to see a preview and place your order for this beautiful calendar.

**Keep pets safe this  
holiday season**

health.

If your dog is also itchy at other times of the year, then play detective. Examine past vet records and look for patterns and timing of flare-ups. This will help you figure out what your dog's triggers are for itching. It could be allergies related to flea bites, grass or tree pollen, food ingredients or a recurrence of symptoms related to repeated past medical treatments (steroids/antibiotics). If your dog has one allergy, chances are they will have others so be prepared that more than one issue could be causing the problem. If so, don't expect a quick fix, this will take time and dedication.

-- by Joyce Hamill, Brookline Senior Volunteer & Foster Home; [www.BecauseOfBuddy.com](http://www.BecauseOfBuddy.com) ('Because of Buddy' is dedicated to helping people whose dogs are suffering from itchy skin and paws, hot spots, fur loss, yeast issues and allergies.)



What brings you and your family joy over the holidays could be deadly for your pet. Below is a list of

holiday items to be mindful of in order to keep your pet out of harm's way:

*Chocolate, Gum, Leftovers, Alcohol Aluminum foil, Lilies, Mistletoe, Poinsettias, Christmas tree water, Decorations*

Please refer to the [Poison Control Center page](#) of the ASPCA website for a list of other common hazardous substances.



*Brookline will be closed from December 15, 2013 to January 5, 2014 so that our hard-working volunteers may enjoy the holidays with their 2 and 4-legged family members. We will not be responding to emails or phone calls during this time. We'll be back after the 5th and look forward to helping more Labs than ever in 2014!*

## Featured Lab - Gracie

### Looking for a Charming Gal?



I'm beautiful, smart and sometimes, a little naughty! Hello, I'm Gracie (formerly Tracy). I used to run free on a farm and live outside but my owner surrendered me to Brookline because I was too nice and not the guard dog they needed. Oh well, I can't help myself. Being a sweet, friendly girl is just in my nature. Brookline has welcomed me and has been taking care of me. To make a long story short, it has been an adjustment learning to live in a house and to grasp the concept that I don't need to worry about being left behind. I'm still in foster care and looking for my perfect furever family. I have made great progress recently. My foster mom has taught me that it is very unlady-like to get on the kitchen counters to sneak some food. I think I'm finally getting that message. A big help to me is that my mom is home with me much of the day and I thoroughly enjoy

following her around and waiting for belly rubs and play time. Also critical to my success is having another doggie friend or two in the home to play and hang out with and a fenced yard to run around in is an important part of that. I'm only about five years old, 55 pounds and have a decent amount of energy. Exercise and the company of at least one other similarly energetic dog gives me the tools I need to be able to roam free in the house stress-free when my mom isn't home. I've shown that I can be trusted alone now with the other dogs as company which is great because I cannot handle being crated or confined. I'm so proud of myself. Another cool thing is that I have been living with a cat for the last few weeks and we get along just fine. I love to snuggle and be with my people and I'm great in the car too. Be sure to read my foster dog blog to learn more about me and please keep me in mind if you're looking for a new companion.

To read more about my journey, go to my [blog](#) or please contact [Brookline](#) if you are interested in adopting me.

## Training Tips

### Why does my dog act like that?



Did you ever wonder why your dog jumps, barks and goes crazy or freezes and won't move. No matter what you do your dog won't listen. You can offer treats, use a firm voice or even try to force them but nothing works.

Dogs have emotions just like humans. Love, excitement, fear, anxiety, and aggression are all emotions a dog can experience. Depending on the circumstance they can go over threshold. Going over threshold is when a dog's emotion gets so strong they can't focus on anything but what triggered the emotion.

It is important to understand your dog's emotional threshold and help her stay under threshold so she can learn a more appropriate behavior. An example would be, you are taking your dog for a walk. She is walking nice on her leash. Next thing you know a dog comes running up to a fence you are passing by, your dog starts to bark, lunge, and drag you across the side walk. No matter what you do your dog is not responding to you, not even for treats. Your dog is out of control. This is going over threshold.

Knowing your dog's threshold can help you teach your excitable dog to calm, your fearful dog to find confidence, and your aggressive dog to find peace. When a dog goes over her threshold she becomes stressed and cannot think or learn. Signs that your dog has gone over threshold can be

- Barking, lunging, snarling

- Shutting down or freezing
- Jumping, mouthing, nipping
- Being distracted to the point of no connection
- Zipping around crazily as if out of control

Helping your dog stay under threshold means identifying the things that trigger your dog's emotions. Watch your dog, when she starts to show signs of stress or arousal, take action before they go over threshold. Use treats to have your dog focus on you rather than her trigger. Create a safe distance between your dog and the trigger. If this isn't working or your dog goes over threshold remove your dog from the situation immediately.

A fearful dog reacts differently. When a stranger approaches your fearful dog, they reach out to pet her and she backs away or lies down. The stranger moves closer and reaches out again to pet her. This time she growls and panics to get away. When the stranger tried to pet her, even after she told him it's not a good idea, she crossed over threshold.

So the next time you are taking your dog for a walk and she is starting to jump and bark, do not go any closer to the trigger, offer her treats to focus on you not the trigger. When the trigger is gone your dog will start to walk nice on the leash again. If you are unsure of your dog's triggers or want help changing your dog's emotional response, contact a no-force positive dog trainer in your area.

Submitted by: Sharon Messersmith, Owner and Dog Trainer,  
Canine Valley Training Facility, LLC, Reading Pa.; [www.caninevalleytraining.com](http://www.caninevalleytraining.com)

## You Can Help Brookline

Brookline is always looking for new ways to raise money to help our Labs! If you have a creative fundraising idea, or even an event you think we should attend, please contact us at [info@brooklinelabrescue.org](mailto:info@brooklinelabrescue.org).

Brookline depends entirely on donations and fundraisers to operate. If you would like to help, please consider making a donation today. There are also free ways that you can help Brookline; click here to find out.

### *Check your Mailbox!*

You should have received our annual fund appeal letter featuring heartwarming stories about Bella, who had jaw surgery to remove a large tumor and several young pups who were very ill with parvovirus. If you did not receive our letter, you can still read it and donate by going to the home page of our website. Please consider helping us save more Labs by donating as much as you can.

*Thank you!*



# Handsome Sampson!

*~ a Success Story*

My beautiful boy, my blocky headed bundle of pure joy, my dog who wakes me up each morning with a huge sloppy kiss and a wildly wagging happy tail, is a dog nobody wanted. Sampson was surrendered by his family. They were moving and had to leave him behind. Sadly, due to a lack of Brookline foster homes, Sampson was taken to a kennel where he was boarded. He remained at the kennel for almost 2 months in hopes that his forever home would come along. But he waited and he waited and no one was interested. Was it because he was a black lab mixed with Rottweiler? Was it his extra large size? His unusual markings? Who knows? So he remained at the kennel and received no applications. A group of wonderful Brookline volunteers would visit Sampson a few times a week to play with him and get to know him better. They would report back what a great dog Sampson was and how much he needed and deserved a loving home. During that time I was dealing with the decline of my elderly lab, and although I felt so badly for Sampson, I knew I couldn't foster him at the time. I kept thinking to myself that he'd get adopted soon. But he didn't. After my lab passed away I wasn't ready for another dog. As a matter of fact I was adamant about not adding another dog to my family and certainly not such a large dog. Then one day I attended a Brookline adoption event and met Sampson for the first time. In person I thought he was so handsome! A gentle giant! I watched his interaction with people and other dogs and couldn't understand why no applications came in for this sweet dog. After some coaxing from another volunteer I agreed to bring Sampson home with me to foster. After fostering him for 2 weeks the dog that nobody wanted became the dog I wanted! We were a perfect match! Sampson found his forever home and both he, and my family, couldn't be happier!

*Submitted by: Pat Hayes, Brookline Volunteer and Adopter*

**Upcoming Events, Foster Dog Blog and More Available  
Labs...**

Brookline participates in a variety of events in many geographic areas. Our volunteers are always ready to explain who we are and what we do. At many events, we



**Bandannas!**

have some really great merchandise to sell - including our popular tug toys, bandannas and treat bags that are all hand made with love by several of our volunteers. Click [here](#) to check out our t-shirts. If you are an approved adopter and are interested in a particular dog, ask your volunteer if that dog will be present at the event. Most of our foster dogs put in guest appearances at our table. Be sure to check our web site often to see where we'll be next!



**Tug Toys!**

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[Check out Sassafrass!](#)

Click on the photos of the **Available Labs** pictured throughout this newsletter and you will see their detailed write-ups. Read about our other available Labs by clicking [here](#).

Also, check out our [Foster Dog Blog](#) where you can read about some of our dogs in foster care waiting for their forever homes.

Find us on **Facebook** 

### Meet our Board of Directors

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Newsletter Editor: Joyce Hamill

Brookline Labrador Retriever Rescue

[www.brooklinelabrescue.org](http://www.brooklinelabrescue.org)

Brookline Labrador Retriever Rescue (BLRR), founded in 1997, is a nonprofit all-volunteer organization that specializes in placing Labs and Lab mixes. We place an average of 100 dogs per year in their forever homes. BLRR maintains a regularly updated list of available Labs being given up by their owners (but

still living at home) and dogs pulled from shelters and puppy mills who are placed in foster care with our volunteers. We evaluate both the dog and the prospective adopting home to help ensure a good fit for everyone. All dogs are vet checked and their shots updated before they are adopted. BLRR serves areas of Pennsylvania and New Jersey depending on the number and availability of our volunteers. Please visit our website at [www.brooklinelabrescue.org](http://www.brooklinelabrescue.org) for links to other rescues serving locations beyond our coverage areas and for more information about adoption.