



# DOG TRACKS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ~ MAY 2025



## Health tips by Doc Tailwagger

### FOXTAILS

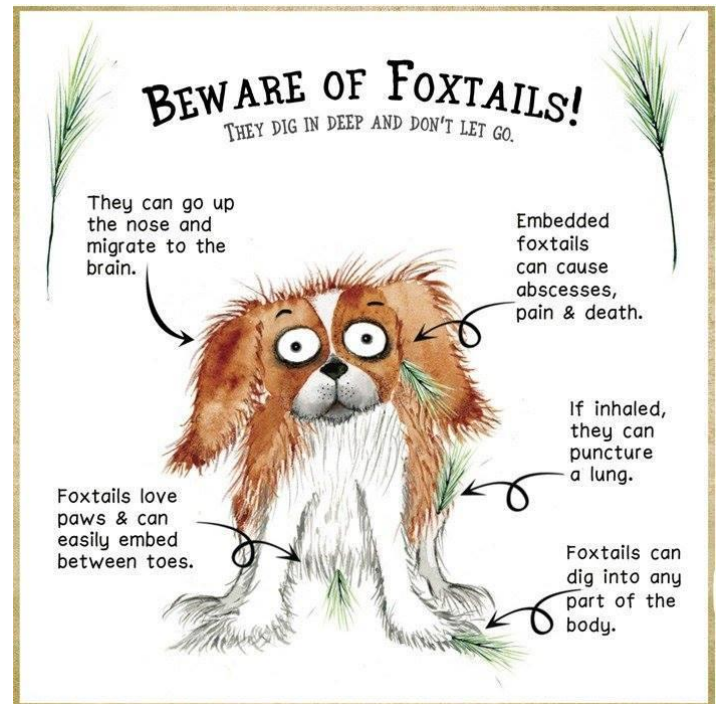
This is from the Calaveras Humane Society Facebook page.

*We'll be blunt: Foxtails suck. And foxtail season is just beginning here in Northern California.*

*If your pet has mingled with foxtails, make sure to do a thorough inspection afterward: Brush her coat, feel every part of the body with your hands, and look closely at ears, nose, eyes, underbelly, between toe pads, and underneath the collar. Also check inside the mouth and around the lips.*

**BE AWARE OF THESE EMBEDDED FOXTAIL SYMPTOMS** in your dogs and cats: Continuous sneezing, pawing at and licking an infected area, violent shaking of head, frequently tilting head to the side, scratching at an ear incessantly, sores or abscesses, swelling, discharge, coughing, and limping.

*Seek veterinary help if your pet displays one or more of these. If you wait, the consequences can be deadly; there have been pets killed by foxtails working into their bloodstream, brain, or other vital areas.*



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With various other things sprinkled here and there like dog cookie crumbs!

## April Tracking Test

By Billy Anderson

The SJDTC TD and TDX tests were held yesterday at Camanche Hills Hunting Preserve (CHHP) in Lone. I will send out a summary of the test tonight, but I could not wait to send this photo. The photo shows the love between human and dog, and the sheer beauty of CHHP.

This is Colton Meyer and his dog "Zepher". They had just completed and passed a TDX track, earning their TDX title. It was a special moment captured by club member Anita Aborn (Anita was also a TDX track layer).

Colton has been laying tracks for many clubs (including ours) for many years. He also takes photos at many tracking events and makes them available to participants, at no charge. He is a wonderful guy. I can safely say everyone was thrilled when he and Zepher passed the test.



A thank you note from Rita Crawford

Thank you, San Joaquin DTC, for holding such a great TD/TDX tracking test yesterday. The site was spectacular, and the weather was gorgeous. It was so fun to see so many of my

tracking buddies attend this event – either entered, working or spectating.

**Mary Palumbo**/Test Chair and **Billy Anderson**/Test Secretary for officiating a well-run combined test.

**Julie Scopazzi** for the breakfast goodies and the most darling red, insulated, reusable lunch bags containing the perfect sandwich and sides.

**Martha Ho** for sending an award photo, waiting for us when we arrived back home.

**Naomi Kennicutt** for being the perfect tracklayer for my dog (a sheltie person in a previous life); and taking the time to interact with him at the end of our track and back at HQ. You were the best “jackpot” reward!

**Meg Azevedo** and **Bob Rollins** for judging our passing TD track. I know how much thought and effort is put into each and every track, especially for a combined TD/TDX test that filled, along with the incredible cover to bushwack through during plot day. While I did not have the opportunity to judge with either of you this field season, it was an honor to test under you both and be on the other side of the clipboard.

Thank you to all the crew that helped during the test. Congratulations on a successful test with TD and TDX passes. Great memories to treasure, for sure.

Rita Crawford and Shetland Sheepdog “Max”, new TD



## Upcoming SJDTC Events

### Mark Your Calendars

5/17/25 – Scent Work – Dream Big  
 5/21/25 – Graduation and CGC – Grape Festival  
 5/20/25 – Zoom meeting, 6:00 pm, to discuss tax status change  
 5/28/25 – In person meeting, Galt to discuss tax status change  
 6/3/25 - General Meeting 7:00 pm  
 6/25/25 – Rally Trial – Dream Big  
 7/11-7/12/25 – Rattlesnake Aversion Training Burson  
 9/11/25 – Scent Work Trial – Woodland  
 9/12/25 – Scent Work Trial – Woodland  
 9/14/25 – Scent Work Trial – Woodland

Check out the SJDTC website and watch the group chat for more details on upcoming events.



And of course, with all our activities, we need your help for all events. We cannot do a successful trial without our wonderful volunteers! So, when the call goes out, please volunteer if you are able to do so.

The more new volunteers that help, the more to spread around so the same people are not working every trial!!





## Understanding Titters

### To Titer or Not ~

Because we live in California, we cannot titer our pets for rabies – we are required to vaccinate every three years regardless. And because we have an exposure to rabies here, I am okay with this vaccination. But I do titers on my dogs for parvo and distemper and have not had to revaccinate for 5 years. Titters are recommended to be repeated every 3 years.

Since the majority of people I've spoken to have said "What? What is a titer?" when I mentioned doing this with my dogs, I wanted to share the information with everyone as to what a titer test is all about.

The following is an excerpt from following website:  
<https://www.dogsnaturallymagazine.com/titer-testing/dog>

#### The Dangers of a Little Knowledge

You are part of a growing community of people seeking to provide the best natural care to your animals. You want them to be Vital Animals, those glowing, well-balanced, fully free animals that bring you joy not only today and this week, but for many happy healthy years into the future. And, when it's time for them to shuffle off their mortal coil, Vital Animals can usually do this at home, with ease, naturally, and without ERs or euthanasia solutions in the equation.

A large part of getting this glorious outcome depends on you walking the Natural Path, and taking responsibility for the animals in your care. It's no longer in your best interests to turn that responsibility over to Dr. White Coat, as he's not on the same path, especially in the most important piece of health care you must decide: vaccinations.

Many of you have, rightly, sought to reduce or eliminate vaccinations after reading in various

places that the common practice of repeatedly vaccinating your animal throughout her life is neither useful nor safe. One alternative that's been offered to you is titer testing.

#### Titers: What, Why, and When?

Titer tests are blood tests that measure the level of antibodies your animal has made. Your dog goes in, gets a needle poked into a vein, blood is pulled into a syringe and it gets tested, usually in a lab but now perhaps, in your vet's clinic. You pay anywhere from \$40 to \$200 to get some numbers on a piece of paper.

Many view these numbers as their "get out of vaccination jail" card. But I submit misreading these numbers may get you and your animal into trouble. Let's dig in and try to avoid that.

The **What**: Numbers? I Don' Need No Steenking Numbers!

The lab report comes back with numbers indicating the amount of antibodies your animal made against those diseases tested (usually canine distemper, parvo, rabies, or feline distemper).

The idea behind titer testing is that if your dog or cat or horse has antibodies against the viruses that threaten to cause disease, you can rest easy that protection exists. That's an immunologically sound thought. But only to a point.

#### The **Why**: Assessing Immunity

The reason these titers could be of interest is that the numbers on a titer test correlate pretty well with **immunity**. Immunity is resistance to disease. It's what we'd like our animals to have, and it's what we hope is the outcome of those much-maligned things called vaccinations.

But: *Vaccination does not equal Immunization*. Did you know this? It's not common knowledge, even

among many veterinarians. It's often assumed that pumping the vaccine into your animal automatically means he's now safe from the dreaded diseases that could kill him. Not so. For example, if you vaccinate your pup at six weeks of age, or even younger, there's about a 50:50 chance that no immunity will result to distemper or parvovirus. Why? Mom's colostrum gave your pup antibodies against both, and those antibodies are preventing the vaccine from stimulating his own immunity. Mom's protection is temporary though, and we need long term protection.

Many also think that immunity "runs out" on day 364 since the last vaccine was pumped in. When those postcards come, saying, "Beau is due for his vaccinations! Please call for an appointment today!", it sets some people into a bit of a panic. The act of squirting more vaccine under Beau's skin is somehow thought to be akin to filling an empty reservoir. Nothing could be further from the truth.

A truth in immunology is this: Immunity to viruses persists for years or for the life of the animal. And another truth, from the same veterinary immunologists: *Furthermore, revaccination...fails to stimulate...(further immunity)*

The **When**: Run a Titer When it Makes Sense. Save Your Money (and your pet!) by Not Running it When it Doesn't!

It's a given that titers have limits. Any immunologist knows this. They fail to measure a significant piece of immunity, called cell mediated immunity. The most useful time to run a titer test is after your youngster has received her initial series of vaccinations. Especially if you've limited that series to just one or two vaccinations, the last being after 16 weeks of age. The odds are you've just conferred lifetime immunity to your youngster.

If you want to know how effective your vaccinations were in conferring immunity (i.e. did vaccination = immunization?), ask your vet to run a titer test a few weeks later.

Here's what's useful in assessing those numbers: If there's any measurable titer to the disease in question, your goal has been reached. Your youngster has actively made immunity to those viruses you had squirted in via vaccination. It doesn't need to meet some standard of "protective" to be useful; it just has to be positive. That indicates you are more than likely now the proud owner of an immune pet, and you can confidently say "No!" to more vaccines. For how long? For life.

Falling Titers: Oh-oh or No Big Deal?

Testing yearly will eventually show titers that fall off. Does that mean immunity is gone and you've got to head in for a "topping up" of the immunity reservoir? **No!** (And stop thinking that a "reservoir" even exists. I actually hesitated writing this word, as I don't want you to think this is in any way reality).

It only means the antibody levels are waning. And why wouldn't they? It's a waste to keep making more antibodies when there's no exposure to more virus. In its wisdom, the vital force deems its work is done in this area, and stops pumping more antibodies into the blood.

But the good news is this: cellular memory is still very likely present to the bad guy you vaccinated against and, should your buddy ever be exposed to this virus again, BOOM, the antibody production factory fires up and the titer rises once again, and rather quickly at that. So, it'd be a mistake to equate a titer that's fallen with a lack of protection, and a greater one to think you need more vaccinations to re-establish protection. Immunity is still there, quietly, watchfully alert.

[In the older guys, I like to add a nice immune boost in the form of transfer factors, just to be sure their immune systems are acting out of the greatest responsive intelligence. And perhaps that's a subject for another post.]

My only recommendation, should you choose to titer before giving a vaccination, is to check out the website of Dr. Dodd's lab –

<http://www.hemopet.org/hemolife-diagnostics/titer-testing.html>

Most vets use the IDEX lab and the cost for titers is VERY high (I was quoted \$300 for testing per dog, 5 years ago!) but I ended paying less than \$100 per dog, which included a vet-tech appointment to draw the blood, lab services to spin the blood and separate the serum (which is what you mail in to the lab) and the actual testing.

May all our beloved canines (and kitties too!) have long, happy, and healthy lives!



## Dear Miss Penny Paws



Dear Miss Penny Paws,

I'm not real crazy about getting my toenails clipped. And when I do let my mom clip them, I have all these unsightly hang nails.

My mom found a solution! It is a small, battery-operated rechargeable grinder. It has a little grinding stone on the end and high or low settings. It keeps my nails short and smooth. I like it much better than the nail clippers although it took me a while to get used to it because it tickles and makes noise.

She bought it at Home Depot and it was not cheap! But I'm worth it. Now, if I could just decide on the right nail polish color.

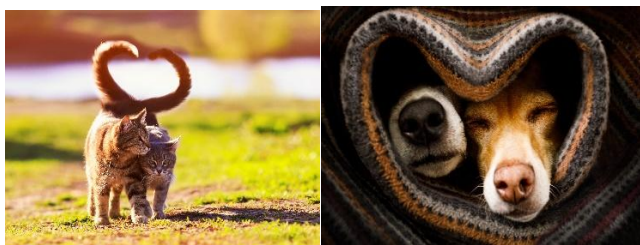
Signed,  
Foot Fetish

Dear Fetish,

It sounds like you are talking about a Dremel tool, or similar type gadget. This is a great way to keep your toes in tip top shape, but now they have special grinders made just for pets. They're great because they don't allow the nail to be ground too far down.

Of course, if you were double-jointed, you could now them short yourself! As to color, I prefer natural pink for day-to-day, and perhaps a soft peach for those special occasions.

Signed,  
Miss Penny Paws



### **For the Month of May**

**The Dream Big Training Center is asking for donations of items from those clubs and exhibitors who will be attending any events at our training center.**

**Your donated items will go to the Stockton Animal Shelter.**

All items should be new or gently used. Please, clean, used items must be in very good condition. The shelter does not have room in their dumpsters for unusable or damaged items.

Crates: hard plastic, wire, or metal - all sizes needed

Ex-pens: wire - all sizes needed

Beds: Kuranda/PVC style beds – all sizes needed

Crate pads: washable – all sized needed

Towels, blankets, sheets, fleece or fabric throws – must be washable

Toys: Kongs (Large and X-Large), chew bones, tennis balls, any dog toys & cat toys

Potty pads: animal or human

Litter boxes: medium or large, or low cardboard boxes that can be used as a litter box

Kitty litter: pine pellet, sand, non-clumping

Dog bowls: metal buckets with handle, medium or large

Kibble: any dry kibble, canned food, dog or cat treats (like milk bones)

Treats: baby food, peanut butter, canned chicken, Pupperoni. Pill pockets

Collars/leashes: 4ft-6ft leashes, slip leads, martingale, flat, fabric or nylon,

E Collars: plastic, inflatable or bite not

Shampoo: any dog or cat

Puppies/kittens: warming disks, bottles

Dog clothes: warm, costumes, and bandanas

You can also go to their website for their Amazon wish list of items.

[https://www.stocktonca.gov/services/animal\\_services/donate.php](https://www.stocktonca.gov/services/animal_services/donate.php)

Bring items to any event held at Dream Big during the month of May. Please help make this drive a success.