



# Needlenose News

Special Adventure Edition!

## Adventures in Bicycling

We've tried a lot of crazy things on account of our dogs. They've benefited (or not) from soothing hormones. Every piece of furniture we own has (and needs) a washable slipcover. Philip eats a special rabbit and potato dog food. He's seen a dermatologist. We bought the wagon to accommodate both dogs. The dogs go on vacation with us. Are we crazy? Probably. But we love our dogs (most of the time).

Now, anyone who has met Philip knows he is not your standard greyhound. He's very outgoing, for one thing. When we took him to the dermatologist, hordes of students crowded into the room, marveling at the friendly greyhound. ("Most greyhounds we see are scared and skittish," one student explained.)

Philip is also very cuddly. Grey-

hounds are reputed to be somewhat aloof, and Henry, being a good greyhound, is. Philip, on the other hand, likes to snuggle and does so at every opportunity, even when it's very, very hot. This is a mixed blessing.

His most difficult trait to live with, though, is his high energy. When we got Philip, he was 20 months old — essentially still a puppy. I thought he'd calm down when he turned three. Not so much. So then, I figured he'd calm down when he turned four. Result: Some, but not what I'd expected. Five? Sorta... I'm starting to realize that I'm dealing with a *personality* trait, not a puppy trait.

Well, okay, but it's hard to exercise him enough. We can't run as fast as he can, so a walk doesn't tire him out. And Henry gets



Philip enjoys running while Matt bikes.

tired much faster than Philip, so it can be hard to exercise them together, anyway.

Enter Matt's bicycle. He and Philip are taking short (cautious, helmeted) rides around the neighborhood. This is win-win; Philip gets to run, Matt can keep up. It only takes about ten minutes to tire Philip out. Score!

## Adventures in Two Whole Years!

Matt and I celebrated our two-year anniversary on August 6, an auspicious date on which the first thing I said to him was "OMG skunks! Did you hear the cat fight last night?" and the first thing he said to me was, "Yeah. Happy anniversary."

In my defense, it was a cat fight

of epic proportions that lasted for some five minutes and sounded like it was right in our backyard. Thankfully, the dogs slept through it.

Cementing the propitious nature of the day, when I went out to water in the morning, I found that rats had eaten another to-

mato, leaving only bits of skin in their wake.

Fortunately, we're off to (where else?) Fort Bragg for a belated (and, I hope, less beleaguered) celebration. Before we head to the beach, though, we're borrowing Matt's folk's canoe... and taking the dogs. Stay tuned!

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### Special points of interest:

- *Kim is in immediate need of stockhab.*
- *Kim's grandmothers have birthdays.*
- *Our radio habits are atypical for our demographic.*
- *Plants grow food.*
- *Kim's -12 inch haircut*
- *Chico State has dorms.*
- *Dogs need training (again).*

### Inside this issue:

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## Adventures in Veggie Stock

This winter, Matt and I discovered a useful culinary tool: homemade stock. (Technically, this is broth, as it is made from neither bones nor meat, but I've been calling it stock all winter and am sticking to my guns.)

The preparation is simple: cut up the vegetables, brown them, add water, and simmer until done. The finished stock is a lovely, deep brown and has a fabulous, rich flavor. We've used it as a base for soup, as risotto liquid, and to braise vegetables. By the end of winter, any recipe calling for broth or stock of any kind got our veggie stock.

Along the way, we discovered several side

benefits. Simmering stock for an hour or so warms up the house wonderfully when it's cold out. Also, should one forget about produce until its limp and unsuitable for consumption in its native form, it still makes fine broth. Veggie stock has thus been a useful home for all kinds of odds and ends.

As the spring rolled around, I began to worry. When it gets hot, I reasoned, we won't want to heat the house making stock. However, I further reasoned, I would still want risotto. So we started to freeze stock, making an extra batch here and there for that purpose.

This may have gotten a little out of hand. As

turnips and leeks became scarce, I started obsessively hoarding them for "just one last batch" of stock. The result?



The makings of a yummy veggie stock.

There is currently a total of 22 cups of veggie stock, neatly stacked in two-cup portions, in my freezer.

And we haven't used any yet.

## Adventures in Birthdays

It's summertime, and there are a lot of birthdays in my family. Consequently, Matt and I (and Philip and Henry) have journeyed to

Fresno several times to celebrate.

Grandma Nakahara's birthday was June 29. My mother scheduled a combination Mother's Day and birthday celebration that she didn't attend, having forgot-



ten about a conflicting party. So we partied without her (and met Auntie Nancy's new dog, Annie).

Grandma Miyasaki's birthday was July 7. (Henry shares her birthday!) We had a very nice family lunch, including homemade cake with buttercream frosting. (Buttercream is



**I'm thrilled to celebrate with my long-lived grandmothers. Don't I have good genes?**

Matt's nemesis, but apparently Auntie Ellen has no such problems.)

I'm thrilled to celebrate with my long-lived grandmothers. Don't I have good genes?

## Adventures in Radio

Matt and I were recently chosen to tell Arbitron Ratings all about the radio we listen to. We discovered this when Arbitron called. And called. And called. I finally picked up the phone, not because I intended to actually take the survey, but because I thought the caller was Matt. And before I knew it, I was signed up to participate in this radio survey. By default, so was Matt, him being a member of my household and all.

For a week, each time we heard the radio, we

had to write down a starting time, ending time, radio station, and location. Since I only listen to the radio in the car, I kept a running tally on Post-It notes. Matt kept a similar log at work.

We're compensated for our trouble in two ways. Primarily, we received cold, hard cash — about \$13, to be precise, in crisp, brand-new \$1 bills. There, is, however, a secondary, esoteric pleasure: We'll skew the ratings.

You see, we don't exactly listen to demog-

raphically typical radio. I only listen to NPR and the oldies station. Matt listens to those, plus an obscure internet radio station. Pity for Arbitron.



Matt shows off his hard-earned cash.





## Adventures in Gardening

I've never had much of a green thumb. I can (and have) successfully killed cacti. Matt and I both descend from matrilineal gardening lines, so when we bought the house we discussed, vaguely, the possibility of having a veggie garden. We even bought half a wine barrel (tall enough to protect the plants from dog urine) and potting soil to fill it. We put the barrel on the south side of the house, leveled it on bricks, and drilled drainage holes in the bottom (Matt broke his drill bit). And then it sat, empty, for two years.

I turned my gardening urges to the front yard, planting annuals and trying to get the azaleas to bloom. When the novelty wore off

(this year), neither of those things happened. Instead, my attention turned to that empty wine barrel, and visions of tomatoes danced in my head.

We went to Talini's and planted a few. Four, actually, which turns out to be two too many for a wine barrel, perhaps accounting for why we're not getting much fruit. Of course, that could also be on account of my four-legged, four-toothed friends, who have made off with the vast majority of the crop. The original tomato plants have been supplemented by another barrel on the south side, containing bell peppers (rats got one of two), basil (apparently not tasty to rodents), and an-

other tomato plant (rats got one of one, plus two of two from the original barrel.)

Our other tomatoes and squash, though not rat-ridden, aren't doing much better. I don't think I'm cut out for this gardening stuff.

Tomatoes: then



And now:



## Adventures in Very Long Hair

Up until recently, my hair was very long. It wasn't long as a fashion statement, and it



wasn't long because I was growing it out for any noble cause. It was long because I never got around to making an appointment to have it cut. For years (or something like that).

Yet when it came time to go to Chico, I decided that enough was enough. The last week of school, having lost my former stylist's phone number, I wandered into the salon and inquired after an appointment. (I found out that it's been so long since I've gotten my hair cut that the former stylist no longer works there.)

Someone managed to fit me in over the weekend, however, and off my hair came. It's back to shoulder length now, and I find it to be much more manageable.

The 12 inches or so that came off are hanging

**[My hair] was long because I never got around to making an appointment to have it cut.**

out in a plastic bag, waiting to be sent off to an appropriate charity. (I forgot before I went to Chico.) I guess I'll take care of that now.

## Adventures in Chico

For several years now, I've been considering picking up a master's degree. I didn't, however, want a standard master's in education (boring). It turns out that CSU Chico offers a master's (good) in science teaching (better) conducted mostly online, with occasional Saturday classes (best). Since Chico is only about 90 miles north of Sacramento, the program seemed a good match. . . when I felt ready.

Apparently, that time is now. After a flurry

of e-mailing, I found I could enroll in my first course this summer and officially join the program in the fall. So I did. The program started the week after I got out of school (!) and lasted two weeks (!!)

Since 180 miles round-trip was a bit too far to commute, the program put me up in the dorms each week. Thus, I got to experience the wonders of having a roommate, communal bathrooms, and noisy common areas all over again. (Joy.)

Besides earning a degree, I'm doing a lot of walking, drinking a lot of iced coffee, and reading a lot. (It beats beer pong.)



Kim in a CSU Chico dorm. Note the dorm keys on a lanyard — very collegiate.





## Needlenose News

All greyhounds, all the time.



## Adventures in Dog Training (Again)

At the beginning of July, Philip bit Henry. Again.

Sounds like the never-ending story, doesn't it? Well, it is and it isn't. The dogs are actually getting along quite well. Philip, however, likes squirrels. He likes them a lot. He likes to look at them. He likes to bark at them. He'd like to kill them, if he could reach. And he likes to do those things uninterrupted. Should he be disrupted, he'll redirect his aggression and bite the disruptor. Since Henry is convinced that the sun shines out of Philip's behind, he's always standing, well, right *behind* Philip. Thus, he always gets bitten.

Let us summarize the problems:

1. Philip has a high prey drive that is going unsatisfied (except on Henry).



**We try to tire Philip out by taking him swimming.**

2. Philip has a lot of energy and too much time on his hands.

3. Henry is always within biting range.

According to Nancy, my dog trainer, the solutions are:

1. Try to channel Philip's prey drive into something productive, like lure coursing. Nancy said that when she gave her border collie actual sheep to work, he stopped trying to herd everything else. The idea is that if you give him an outlet for his instinct, he won't have to find one himself.

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2. Give Philip more exercise. Since mental stimulation is just as exhausting as physical stimulation, we can tire Philip out through training. Matt and I have been discussing this option anyway, as we know Philip is

under-exercised. (Henry doesn't need or want any more exercise, so it's been harder to get Philip what he needs since we added Henry.) We'd like to try rally or agility. There's also dock diving.

3. Train Henry to come when called to get him out of harm's way. The magic word is "cookie," as in who-wants-a-

Walking Philip is now my responsibility, as I find training easier than Matt. The goal for now is to increase his attentiveness and to make walks a game in which he finds me something (a cat, a squirrel, a kid on roller skates) and I give him a treat. The treat interrupts his focus, allowing him to revert to being attentive. So far, that's all theory, but I have it on good authority (Nancy) that this is how she trained her whippet to stop chasing sheep.

Wish us luck. I think we need it.

