

# Paws for Danes



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Thanks to the following people for their generous donations in Q4.

- V. Louise Feddema
- Janet Hofmann-Berg
- Erin Wall (in memory of Sophie)
- Kallie Honeywood (in memory of Dexter)
- Patricia Sepich
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- Katrina Ondracek
- We would also like to thank our Office Depot, Amazon Smile, and Fred Meyer Community Rewards members for supporting Dane Outreach when they shop.

If we have inadvertently left any donors off of the list or have misrepresented any information, our sincerest apologies. Please let us know and we will correct the information in the next newsletter.



## Pet Insurance: A Waste of Money or a Necessary Evil?

Written by: Edie Lind & Georgia Hymmen

Here are a couple of the best links to help you sort through companies and their policies:

- A Vet's Guide to Pet Insurance: <http://www.pet-insurance-university.com/index.html>

This is an excellent site that explains what to look for in a policy, including details that most people don't consider until it is too late. It also has a link for Comparison charts, each of which summarizes key points for most major companies in a table format.

Be sure to verify with each company you consider that the table is still current as policies change regularly. Also check if a policy varies by state – some have special policies for Washington only, or are not available in Washington. You can check that on each company's web site. Finally, the vet/author offers Reviews that are as helpful, I think, as the Guide and the Comparison charts.

Compare each (and other companies) carefully, to see exactly what is covered! Some don't cover basic "office visit" charges, (usually at least \$50 just to walk in), but that may be offset, depending on the deductible you choose, and how it is applied. To compare all these details, go to the "Pet Insurance University" link – the vet/author did all the work for you. Your head may still spin as you try to compare the charts, but at least all the information is there for you to work with.

- Toolkit: <http://www.petinsuranceguideus.com/pet-insurance-toolkit.html>

And a few hints on using the comparison charts and what to look for:

- The companies that offer the best coverage for the most conditions (especially hereditary and/or genetic) are the better companies (Embrace and Trupanion are among them). They can be a bit more expensive, but your pet is more likely to be covered, and you'll likely get more money back on each claim.
- Intact dogs: Trupanion is rare in that it offers a "Breeding Rider" as usually breeding issues (pregnancy, whelping, prostate cancer, etc.) are not covered, so that can be helpful. But they also, in their regular policies, do not cover intact dogs for some things, (including car accidents) unless you notify the company, when you apply, that your pet is intact.
- "Actual" vs "Scheduled" costs: VPI is the oldest company, and usually comes up cheapest. But the premiums are cheap because the reimbursement is based on "scheduled benefits" (what VPI describes as the "usual and customary cost" of a procedure), not on what your bill actually is. And frequently those "scheduled" costs are considerably less than the actual cost, and you pay the difference. (VPI was recently purchased by "Nationwide" and so now also offers other policies that appear to offer better coverage and "actual" cost reimbursement – for a higher premium.) Again – compare all terms carefully!
- Alternative Therapies: Hydrotherapy, acupuncture, and other "alternative" and "holistic" treatments are no longer unusual; however, insurance coverage does not always apply. Embrace covers them. Trupanion offers a rider for coverage.
- Age: Because premiums increase with a dog's age, they can get expensive. (Embrace used to offer a wonderful inexpensive "accident only" policy for purebred dogs over 7, that included coverage for torsion surgery. Unfortunately, the age limit was recently raised from 7 to 14, making it impractical for Dane coverage.) So buying while your pet is young can save you money in premiums for years. It will also help avoid "pre-existing conditions" that may arise over time and then be excluded when you do go to buy coverage.
- Pre-existing conditions: These are not as clear and obvious as you might think! Watch for a few insurance companies that consider a serious condition (cancer, for example) that starts in one year to be an excluded "pre-existing condition" when your policy renews the following year! Only a couple companies do this, and after numerous complaints, they modified that clause by offering an extended coverage rider:

For an extra charge they will cover such conditions in the following policy years. This type of "gotcha" is the kind of thing that the "comparison web sites" mentioned earlier can help flag for you.

Other ways to save:

- An unusual "lost pet emergency care" policy is offered by 24-hour Pet Watch. It offers \$3,000 of coverage for only \$24/year – IF your pet is microchipped, and treated, while lost. So if your pet is lost and hit by a car and a Good Samaritan brings him/her to the vet for emergency treatment, a chip scan is supposed to notify the vet of the coverage. That would ensure treatment would proceed while they try to locate you.
- The other alternative to regular insurance is a discount program: "Pet Assure" ([www.petassure.com](http://www.petassure.com)) is not an insurance company, but is a very cheap alternative, especially for multiple pets. For a very low annual premium (about \$150 a year, to cover up to four pets) you can save 25% on all bills. But coverage is limited to vets who participate in this plan. (You can save even more if you snag this coverage for 60-75% off, when it goes on sale at one of the voucher sale websites, like Living Social.)

### Summary:

Even though it is some work to select the best company for your pet and your budget, overall, getting pet insurance is usually an excellent move. Make it a priority in your New Year resolutions to cover your pet now! Even if you never need coverage for a huge bill, you'll have the peace of mind of knowing you can offer the best care possible. And if you do end up using it – it can save not only thousands of dollars, but the life of your pet.

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## The Fencing Issue

Written by: Georgia Hymmen

Both as a breeder and a Dane Outreach volunteer since 1974, I feel secure fencing is an absolute necessity for responsible Dane ownership. There are a variety of reasons I feel very strongly about this. Although people may disagree with my opinions, I hold fast that fencing—and fencing suitable for a Dane—is a big MUST for anyone wanting such a large breed. Whether selling puppies or placing adults, I make very few exceptions to my fencing policy and when I do, it's usually for a very old dog going into a home where the owner lives in a townhouse.

First, the amount of land you have has absolutely no bearing on whether you need a fence or not. We have 5 acres; I can stand on a corner of my property and see over 20 acres—and also know for certain there is NO WAY my Danes would stay on only their own land, or even the 20 acres. Dogs, by nature, roam, and the territory they set up becomes bigger and bigger. Often they roam on land that is not theirs, setting up territories, irritating neighbors. In some cases, a territorial dog will defend his "territory" against the property owner! An unattended, loose-roaming Dane on his own property is a liability. A loose-roaming Dane on other people's property is a lawsuit waiting to happen.

First, loose dogs are a HUGE nuisance. The people with roaming dogs don't see it that way, but the people who have the land those dogs are on do! Loose dogs dig in flower beds, get into garbage, urinate and defecate on the lawn, and cause many problems. There is also the

## It Takes a Village

Written by: Georgia Hymmen



Tish O'Keefe, Featured Volunteer

I'm pretty sure that almost everyone understands the basics of rescue—a dog needs a new home for any number of reasons; and a caring person or organization takes the dog, fosters him or her, and then places him in a hopefully forever home.

But what does it take to run a rescue organization besides dedicated and hard-working volunteers? Well, probably more than most people realize and I'd like to take the opportunity to feature on the all-important task of In-Take Coordinator in this issue. Without a qualified person manning this position, our program simply could not exist. The person volunteering for this difficult and often frustrating job needs to have a variety of skills including being highly organized, empathetic, detail oriented, good computer skills, and be able to juggle a variety of different dogs with different needs and ever-changing scenarios. Sounds like an ad for a job, doesn't it? Yet this position offers no pay, and at times, extreme frustration.

To this task, we welcome Tish O'Keefe. Tish, a Dane owner and also a rescue dog owner,

problem of harm your dog could cause to another human. Even the friendliest Dane, because of their size, can scare a person; and a friendly leap may be interpreted as an attack. Heaven forbid if the person falls down or gets a scratch during that friendly leap. Loose dogs form packs and can chase and kill livestock and even humans. (Farmers in many states legally have the right to shoot down any dog they perceive as harassing livestock and of course the same would go with people. The only difference is officials would be called in for a human attack, but a farmer alone make the decision if a dog is bothering livestock....and it could be just crossing the field.)

Dogs in a pack form a pack mentality and act differently than they would individually.

Then there is the loose roaming dog who is "guardy" and will protect the property inappropriately against people who have a right to be there, such as meter readers, delivery people, etc. Just ask any service company how many of their employees are chased and even bitten by loose dogs.

And, the issue of the dog's own safety is in question with a loose dog. They get hit by cars, are poisoned by irate neighbors, may be teased by kids...any number of tragedies can befall a dog who runs loose.

Now, if you think your dog can be boundary trained to stay on his/her own property, you are correct....but only to a degree. Boundary training rarely works when the owner is not present. For those who think it does, just ask the neighbors where the dog is during the day while you are gone!

volunteers for the Alternative Humane Society based in Whatcom County, Washington AND has a full time job with the YMCA. Tish manages to collect the information on incoming dogs, do "triage" as to what situation requires the most immediate help, and works with the Foster Home Coordinator to get the dog into a foster home. Sounds easy, right? Unfortunately, it's not, and usually each initial contact requires a big commitment of time, effort, and a number of calls and emails to various people. It's a full time job in itself, and Tish does it efficiently and with grace, and still manages to do her work at the Alternative Humane Society and her regular "day job".

Tish is only one of many who make the Dane Outreach program work. Without dedicated people like her, Dane Outreach simply would not be able to assist unwanted Danes. Tish does more than just collect information; she answers questions and refers people to resources that might allow the releasing party to keep their dog. Her hard work has indeed made the difference in the lives of the dogs being released into the program.

Thank you Tish!

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## **Fire Can Kill Without Flames**

Written by: Trina Smith

A winter that didn't bring the snow brought us a deadly summer of record breaking fires here in Washington state summer of 2015. We had to evacuate. When I wrote this, we were still a level 3 evacuation and supposed to be gone, but I chose to come home as you will read on about. The highway was closed anyway in order for us to leave, and a friend opened their plowed field for us that was green and fresh cut. Not ALL was good

There are a variety of fencing options available to the Dane owner. Below is a fencing excerpt from my Puppy Booklet:

Before you put your fencing up, give careful consideration to where your Dane is going to spend the majority of his outside time. Remember that Danes can be murder on landscaping. Their attempts at pruning, transplanting, and weeding will not be appreciated by even the casual gardener! Danes can be avid diggers, tree chewers, and make the most lovely lawn into a quagmire during the wet months! Avoid problems in advance by choosing a spot that will be for your Dane and any damage he does will not cause him to be banished.

Your Dane should always be kept in a secure fenced yard unless on leash or under your direct supervision. Danes should NEVER be allowed to free roam for a number of reasons that should be quite obvious. Staking out or chaining is not an acceptable means of confinement and is not suitable for a Great Dane. In fact, it's considered quite psychologically and physiologically damaging.

Although most Danes are not jumpers, they could easily clear a fence under six feet tall. Fence construction should be sturdy and able to withstand the tests and trials a Dane may give it. The fence construction can be sturdy chain link, solid wood board, or wire. Posts should be set securely, and all fencing should go completely down to the ground. Some Danes will manage to squeeze out under a fence that has gaps on the bottom. If field fencing is used, the top should be faced

though. Our plan was set, put into motion.

I had two wonderful firemen tell me to evacuate \*now\*. We could feel the heat from the fire in the field throughout the night. The dogs were miserable there, as was I. I did not sleep, and stayed out in a chair with dogs spread about in crates on the ground, in the flatbed, on leashes, and in a horse trailer, too. I even had my mama with four babes in the truck.

As many know, we adopt deaf and/or blind (or otherwise disabled) Great Dane puppies to share in our family. I do not nor have I ever bred or raised a litter of Great Danes, they are just our beloved family pets/kids that spend their whole lives with us after we take them in. So change to them is not as simple as a "normal" dog. I also have Lhasa Apsos that I have had, shown (and retired from showing after many years) since 1982. On occasion I raise a litter or two, which happened to be right at the time of this fire!! Oh boy, talk about timing!

Sadly, while loading, my senior Dane boy named Jethro (many followers on our FB page know him and his story since he was a babe) was born deaf and blind and does not adjust to change. While loaded in a crate he stroked. I ripped the top of the crate off, hosed him down to make sure he was cool, water, etc. He barely responded and his hind end wouldn't move. He simply went into a panic and I couldn't get to him fast enough. My friend and I got him into his area in the yard (which leads to his door to his porch and room - my room) and I chose to leave him here at home, not risk trying to move him again and kill him. He knows the scent of his surroundings. I believed it was his best chance if anything to recover/survive.

with either a 2" X 4" or a hot wire to prevent them from jumping on top of the fence and dragging it down.

If you live in a residential area, you might want to consider solid board fencing so passing children are not tempted to tease the dog. If your Dane becomes protective of his fence line, you should seriously consider a chain link dog run, placed inside your fenced yard, to be used when you are not at home to prevent possible escape and tragedy.

If you choose to use a chain link dog run, several factors should be taken into consideration. The placement of the run is important. Is shade provided during the summer months? If not, you will need to place a tarp or sun screen over the top. Where is the run going to be placed in proximity to your neighbors? A barking dog, even during the day, is a nuisance and will cause problems. Also, some cities and counties have ordinances about how close you can place a dog run next to the property line. If you consider a dog run, the minimum size should be 6 to 10 feet wide and at least 25 to 30 feet long.

The type of flooring you use for your dog run is very important. Concrete and cement, although easy to clean and undiggable, are a poor choice for Danes. A growing puppy's bones cannot tolerate the hard surface, and the adult Dane may have problems with sores and calluses. A gravel surface seems to work best and can be deodorized on a weekly basis by using household bleach. Of course, it goes without saying that the run needs to be picked up at least once a day!



Jethro

I spent over an hour with him until he was breathing more comfortably, before we were forced to get going for everyone else's safety. (Our safety zone we were in was only a mile down the road so we could keep track of Jethro by coming back often.) Our family friend who also helped and went with us to evacuate came back and checked on him. He had moved a bit but was laying on his side and relaxed.

We returned very early the next morning. Jethro was in the front yard but couldn't get up well enough to walk on his own (but he did get out there on his own last night!). We put him on a blanket and pulled him into his own yard so I could get the others into their yard and unloaded. Later in the day he got up and came into my room through his door. It was a real heartwarming moment. Later, he got up on his own again and went back out. I took him a cool bowl of water since he went past his water bowls. I wanted to be sure he

If you are considering a dog run or kennel, you should decide if you want to use pre-assembled panels or have a permanent run built. I prefer the pre-assembled panels. The panels will allow you to relocate the run if desired, or take it with you if you move. When you assemble the panels of your portable dog run you may find the following suggestions helpful. First, map out the area where your dog run is going to sit. Place hog wire or field fencing on the bottom of the run area. Along the perimeter, place railroad ties. Most panels have "feet" or tabs on the bottom. Drill holes into the railroad ties and insert the "feet" into your holes. The panels can also be secured by using plumbers strapping. Place heavy, rounded gravel on the bottom of the run, several inches deep.

On top of that, place finer pea-gravel. The wire prevents the dog from digging out; and the railroad ties secure the wire and provide a bed for the gravel.

Another suggestion for your run would be a top consisting of 50% chain link and 50% solid cover. Not only will this prevent a dog from climbing and escaping, but he will also have additional protection from the elements. If you make a solid cover, be sure to allow enough slope for drainage.

As a final suggestion, always padlock and secure your gates. This will prevent an unauthorized person from letting your dog out or being stolen.

Continued in column 2...

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was hydrated. He already had mild nerve issues and by the evening he was still weak but getting around quite well. The vets were evacuating, the towns closing, the roads closed, so there was no way could I get him to a vet if I wanted to, but I knew what to do for him before asking a vet. Sometimes in these mountains and emergency situations, you have to use your best judgment, knowledge, and skills for the betterment of the dog. He would never have survived a vet's office nor a trip in the truck (besides we couldn't get there if we wanted to!).

Jethro is an awesome dog who received two tracking certificates with me before his first birthday. If nothing else came of this terrible fire experience that was still not even close to over, I can at least say, Jethro is a strong and incredible dog and God has blessed me with him to be in our family longer. I love him very much and never thought he would panic like that so I will never EVER risk such an event with him again. His life is WAY too important.

As for the fire, we stayed home in a level 3 evacuation zone for the sake of our dogs. We figured this was as good a place as any to remain safe with high winds, the fire blasted through the other end of the valley and was burning hot and black and tons more acreage. I did get some photos of the plumes but later in the evening was dreadful black! Winds died down and things were looking in our favor, but several others did not fare so well; homes have been lost, pet's lives lost, displaced wildlife. It was all very tragic.

This fire almost took my boy's life...maybe not with burns, but still...I almost lost one of my babies. Keep your pets safe.



Unbearable smoke from the fires

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Fencing, continued from column 1

### **Other Fence Types and Suggestions:**

#### **Using Hot Wire**

If your Dane is jumping up on your fence and knocking it over, try running a "hot" wire along the top of the fence. This will also work if the dog is digging under the fence. Simply run a wire along the bottom. If a hot wire is going to be a permanent part of your fencing, you would be well-advised to purchase a charger that is powered by electricity instead of batteries. It has been my experience that the battery-powered chargers do not last as long as the electric powered ones. Also be advised to avoid the "pet" electric fence charger. Most do not have enough of an impact for a Dane and don't do the job. As a caution, use a light-gauge wire. That way, if the dog becomes entangled, the wire will break.

Most Danes learn quickly and often the electric wire can be removed. However, a

really smart dog learns to tell when the fence is on or off. Apparently, electricity gives off an ozone smell the dog can detect. Using electric fencing as your only means of containment is not a good idea.

### **Radio/Invisible Fences**

I am opposed to the use of invisible fences as the primary means of confinement for the dog for the following reasons:

- Stray dogs and other animals can come into your yard and could bring in disease or start fights.
- The dog has no protection from a human coming into the yard with the purpose of attempting to steal, tease, or harm the dog.
- A protective dog will defend his "territory" and an unsuspecting stranger could easily walk into your yard since there is no fence barrier.
- If the incentive is great enough, the dog will not honor the fence. The "incentive" could be something fearful (thunderstorm) or exciting (female in season or something running by a dog with a high prey drive). Once out, the dog will refuse to go back in.
- The collars can and do fail or fall off.
- The power supply system to the fence can fail.
- The collars can malfunction, shocking the dog inappropriately.
- Many Danes simply will not honor them. Dane Outreach has had many Danes released into our program for the simple reason they could not be contained by invisible fences and the owners, due to restrictions, could not or would not build a fence or pen.

- Ask any animal control agency how many loose dogs they pick up who are wearing those collars!

However, I feel that invisible fences are a great method of secondary confinement. Perhaps for use in the front yard while you are gardening, or maybe you want to keep your dog away from a particular portion of your fenced yard.

Can't fence your whole property and don't want to do a run? Then just consider building a pen for the dog. One can be done fairly inexpensively with field fencing and round poles. If you face the top and bottom with electric fencing, you can probably get by with a 4-5 foot fence.

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## Upcoming Dane Outreach Events

**2016 Dane Outreach Fun and Education Day**  
Paws-Abilities Total Dog Center, 7338 26th Street  
E., Fife, WA  
February 21st, 2016; 11:00 am to 2:30 pm  
<http://pawsabilities.com/>

Come and join us! From games and training, to educational presentations, and great raffle prizes, our Great Dane Fun Day will have something to offer for anyone with an interest in Great Danes.

### Featured Topics and Events:

- Guest Speakers Brian A. Maran, DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVIM (Cardiology) will speak on cardiac issues, and Michael A. Harkey, PhD, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center will be discussing his bloat study with updates and tests now available.
- Raffle: Great prizes for you and/or your Dane.
- Meet & Greet: Not sure if a Dane is right for you? Come by and meet some!
- Education: Various brochures and information on many topics.
- Fostering for Dane Outreach: Could you provide a temporary home for a Great Dane awaiting their forever home?
- Core Training: Fun exercise for you and your Dane
- Question & Answer Time: Got a problem? Ask us for help! (e.g., Need to be shown how to do a Nail Trim?)
- Photo Booth: Could your Dane be a calendar model?
- Canine Chiropractic Services: David J. Powell, DC, CAC, IVCA will be offering his services at \$45 per dog.
- Dog Supply "Garage Sale": Come and see the gently used items available for sale.
- Trupanion Insurance: Heather Pike, Territory Partner Support Coordinator will be able to answer your questions and provide information.

- Agility/Rally Demo: More fun exercises to do with your Dane!

### **2016 Seattle Kennel Club Dog Shows' Breed and Education Booth**

Century Link Field's Event Center, Seattle, WA  
March 12th - 13th, 2016

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## **How You Can Help**

### **Office Depot Shoppers**

Do you shop at Office Depot? Do you participate in their Rewards program? If you don't, and would like a very easy way to help Dane Outreach, then perhaps you'd like to "donate" your points earned with purchases there. Also, you can recycle your used ink cartridges there to earn points. Simply give the cashiers the Dane Outreach Rewards number at checkout. The number is the Dane Outreach voice mail phone number, 206-654-5111. Thanks for your help, and please pass this on!

### **Fred Meyer Shoppers**

If you shop at Fred Meyer and have a Rewards card, you can link your card to Dane Outreach. You will still get points for your Rebate and for the gas discount. Go to <http://www.daneoutreach.org/help/> to find out how.

### **Amazon.com Shoppers**

If you are shopping on Amazon.com, please use the smile.amazon.com site. A portion of your eligible purchases are donated to Dane Outreach. Go to <http://www.daneoutreach.org/help/> to find out how.



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For more information about events, volunteer opportunities, donations, adoptions, or to release a Great Dane.

Phone: 206-654-5111 Email: [admin@daneoutreach.org](mailto:admin@daneoutreach.org) Website: [daneoutreach.org](http://daneoutreach.org)

To submit articles or pictures for a future Dane Outreach publication: [adoptions@daneoutreach.org](mailto:adoptions@daneoutreach.org)

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