



**Hands on**  
*Paws*

Presents

# Pawfect Balance

The Wonderful World of Dogs and Canine Myofunctional Therapy

Volume 1, Issue 3 summer 2016

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**SEASON'S GREETINGS**

*Cover Photo: Christmas time in Australia. Don't forget your furry friend.*



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## From the Editor.



Hi to all my friends,

It's hard to believe that Christmas is here. It's been a busy time for me, running a business, volunteering and looking after Darbi and our household. I wouldn't want it any other way, as it is rewarding and full of personal satisfaction.

I have been asked many questions about Delta Dogs since my last e-zine, so I have an article about Delta Dogs and what they do. There is also an article on hip displaysia, what to look out for and how it affects your dog.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish my customers, readers and fur kids a very Merry Christmas and a very safe and happy festive season. I hope your stockings are full, and look forward to your patronage in 2017.

Join me on my Facebook page where I publish articles about our furry friends, their muscles, skeletal system and the wonderful world of Canine Myofunctional therapy. Remember to visit the web page [www.handsonpaws.com.au](http://www.handsonpaws.com.au) and like us on Facebook for the link. Til next time.....

# Canine Hip Dysplasia

Hip dysplasia affects millions of dogs worldwide. The dogs' hip joints degenerate, causing pain and affecting the dogs' mobility. It is one of the most common diseases affecting dogs. Untreated dogs suffer immense pain and can lose the use of their hind legs. With early diagnosis and treatment, dogs can have a full and active life.

Hip dysplasia is caused by looseness in the joint, where the ball and socket are not in their correct position causing friction. This friction over time wears the ball and socket in the joint causing the pain and degeneration, and eventually the loss of movement.

Hip dysplasia can be caused by genetic factors and some breeds such as Golden Retrievers and Labradors, German Shepherds, Great Danes and some mixed breeds, are to name a few. Obesity, rapid weight gain, poor rear muscle development, poor nutrition and injuries to the hindquarters can also cause hip dysplasia.



Atrophy of thigh muscle after a two-year evolution of hip dysplasia

Tight muscles, place pressure on joints and cartilage unevenly, this can accelerate the degenerative process. This creates discomfort and pain to the dog, with severe pain as the condition gets worse when not treated.

## Common signs of hip dysplasia include:

- Exercise intolerance.
- Bunny hopping (especially up stairs)
- Swaying gait (rear end moves back and forth in pronounced fashion)
- Stiffness/pain.
- Difficulty getting up from lying or sitting positions.
- Sitting in "frog" position (one hip splays out)
- Reluctance to run, jump, climb stairs.



A Labrador retriever standing with hind legs close together to compensate for hip dysplasia

A vet can examine a dog for hip dysplasia, by testing for laxity (A looseness of the joints) and surrounding muscles, for early signs of the disease. X-rays and blood samples can be used to detect, and see the progress of the disease. Early diagnosis will allow better options for treatment.

*(Continued on page 4)*

# Canine Hip Dysplasia / Top Dog Spots

## Canine Hip Dysplasia

*Continued from page 3*

Depending on the degree of degeneration of hip dysplasia, treatments can include weight control, pain relief, anti-inflammatory medication, nutritional supplements and canine myofunctional therapy (CMT). Canine Myofunctional Therapy is where I can assist our furry friends, once properly diagnosed and cleared by a vet. CMT assists in pain reduction and a healthier dog by:

1. Loosening muscles around the affected joints in the hip. This restores the normal length of the muscle when resting.
2. Blood circulation is increased by massage and this in turn increases the oxygen and increases nutrient levels absorbed by the body.



Hip dysplasia in a Labrador Retriever

Summing up, massage alleviates pain, by lengthening the muscle, increased blood flow, and slowing degeneration of the affected area which allows the dog a more normal level of activity. Please call me if you need further information using CMT as a treatment.

Photos in this article courtesy of Wikipedia

## Sunshine Coasts top dog spots

On the Nicklin Way between Caloundra and Molooloba near the Nicklin Way vet, lies a small dog park. This spot is ideal to give your pooch a run, if you've been out and about. This is especially handy for those visiting the Sunshine Coast and filling their days. There is a shelter, and shade trees so you and your companions can stretch their legs and the pooches can get a drink.



Though the park is not huge, it is a great place to stop and meet the locals, where a chat about our favourite pooches their antics and stories abound. There are also shops close by, where you can get a coffee and something to eat.

If you are a visitor to the sunny coast, check out our other issues which also have some great places where you can take your furry friend.

# Delta Therapy Dogs

## Delta Therapy Canines

Since my last e-zine where I mentioned that Darbi and I are part of a Delta Dogs therapy team, I have been asked about Delta Dogs and what they do. Delta Dogs run a variety of programs and I will briefly outline some of these.

The Delta Therapy Dogs, whom Darbi and I volunteer for, is a program bringing the joys of animal companionship to those that need it the most. An estimated 20,000 Australians in hospitals and health care facilities benefit from volunteers and their canine companions visiting each week.

There are over 1000 volunteer groups visiting 850 facilities on a regular basis, enlightening the day with pet therapy. Volunteers spend time with patients offering a chat, while the volunteer dogs, the main stars, interact with patients allowing a pat, cuddle and paw shake.

Facilities visited by Delta Therapy Dogs teams include hospitals, aged care, children's wards, dementia patients and prisons.



## Delta Classroom Canines

Classroom canines allow children to improve their confidence and reading skills, by reading to the dog who listens without comment or judgment. Children gain confidence and enjoy reading to the dogs that are attentive to the child. Weekly visits by the volunteers build a trusting relationship with the children. The volunteer and the dog listen to the children read and look forward to hearing how they have improved each week.



## Delta Dog Safe

Delta Dog Safe teaches children how to behave around dogs to reduce the incidence of dog bites. Trained volunteers present 'dog friendly' school and parent education identifying safe ways to interact with dogs. Child friendly lessons, including role play, with non-threatening toy dogs developed by animal behaviorists are used. This allows children to interact without being scared or afraid

Delta Dogs is a not for profit organisation which relies on sponsorships, community support and volunteers. To find out more about Delta Dogs, go their website: [www.deltasociety.com.au](http://www.deltasociety.com.au)

# Travelling Canines

So the Christmas holidays are here, you're going on holidays with your pooch and it's going to be great. So have the plans and contingencies been worked out?

Contingencies you ask? What contingencies. You may be surprised to find that going on holidays with your pooch may have some difficulties if you don't have that action plan. Let's look at a few possible scenarios that could come into play.....

You're at your destination, and there's this great National Park you want to explore or go for that climb to the look out at the top of the hill. You arrive at the park and WHOA! "No Dogs Allowed". This is typical of Australia's National Parks, as well as many State Parks.



When travelling it may be wise to plan some of your activities beforehand. If you find a situation where your four legged companion can't join you, you could arrange a dog sitter.

Keep in mind, that you should have a list of vets, and phone numbers in the area you're staying. In an emergency, you will be able to act quickly, and not waste any precious time aiding your furry friend.

Whilst on holidays, look around for dog parks. There are many councils that have fenced areas for your pooch to play or stretch his legs. These are great to let your dog run freely without fear of traffic or your dog going walkabout.



There are many holiday destinations that are pet friendly, from accommodation, pet friendly cafes and restaurants. Dog parks and lots of other activities where you can enjoy a short or long break with your canine companion.



I hope this gives you some ideas around planning your holiday. There's heaps of information to be found on the internet, with endless possibilities you can plan.

Please look after your mate on holidays and enjoy your time together this festive season.

# About my Business



## My Fees

Hands on Paws, provides Canine Myofunctional Therapy to the Sunshine Coast. Covering Caloundra in the south To Noosa in the north, and west to Landsborough for a standard set fee.  
*(Currently we only accept cash payment.)*

45 Minutes	\$60
60 Minutes	\$75

Outside of these areas services are provided at the standard fee, **plus** a fuel and travel expense to be negotiated at the time of booking.

## Bookings:

Please call Sarah on  
0431 948 208  
to make an appointment

*Please leave a message if  
I don't answer  
I may be treating a patient.*