

Northwoods Humane Society – Deanna Persson, President

Do you get bored at times? So do you pets. My husband, Mike, is the primary play pal with our current dogs. They are little guys with lots of energy. We have balls everywhere and they squeak when you step on them. We also have big donut toys that you notice when you sit down or pull the covers back on the bed. Chip and Lola love to play and so does Mike

You can get your dog's creativity going with something as simple and easy as hiding treats in the house or back yard. Kongs and other toys like them are wonderful because you can stuff them with food and hide them just about anywhere. In the summer you can freeze a stuffed Kong, making the experience refreshingly chilly and a new challenge. When you first start hiding treats, don't make them too difficult to find. But once the dog starts to understand you can start increasing the challenge.

Cats can also join in the treat hunting fun, especially if they are indoor kitties. When you hide treats for kitties remember that cats love heights, so take advantage of different levels. You can also try feeding your cat his dry food in a treat ball, made for kitties to roll around to make food fall out of the hole. Try sticking little pieces of dry food between the ropes on her scratching post as a special challenge which will also encourage her to scratch there. You can also toss pieces of dry food across the floor a piece at a time to chase and catch.

My dogs Chip and Lola have new game – it was designed by error. I dropped a bag of frozen peas on the floor. They went everywhere and the dogs found them all – one at a time. So now I scoop out a half cup at a time and pour them around the kitchen and they clean them up.

I have a supply of medium sized gravy flavored dog bones and occasionally give each of them one. They do not like them. But what they do like is hiding them in the couch cushions, under blankets, in the coat closet etc. All of a sudden, both of them will be quiet and investigating their stashes and bring them out, toss them around and hide them again.

Chip also likes to get crisp carrots out of his water bowl.

These little dogs have so much energy. Chip loves to learn and is very trainable. I decided that Mike and I would take on the job of teaching him how to do an agility run. I had wanted to take the classes offered by Timberlawn Pet Care Center. However, I am not an outdoor girl and heat makes me sick and running is a challenge. The indoor approach seemed doable. Well, I am ashamed to report that the agility set is still in the box, in the garage. We will see what summer brings.

Don't forget about the joys of a bird feeder! Our cat, Belle, keeps an eye on what is going on at the feeder. But we all know that a bird feeder may often be a squirrel feeder. Both Chip and Lola monitor the feeder and let their voices be heard when a squirrel is violating the territory. The squirrels are not impressed with their verbal warnings and often come up to the window.

But always remember, no hang on the door, turn on the motor, leave on the floor toy is as exciting and interesting for your cat or dog as interactive play with you - his favorite person.

Dates to Save:

Food Drive through February 20<sup>th</sup> at Marketplace, Hayward Feed and Seed, Armstrong Insurance and the NHS Shelter – just leave food at one of these locations.