

Bichon Bits & Bytes

July 2014 Bichon FurKids Rescue



Me and My Very Own New Brother

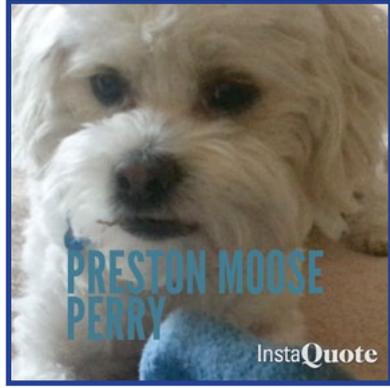
Hello Everyone!

My name is B.A. Perry and I am one year, seven months and five days old which officially makes me a big boy, not a puppy. When I grow up I want to be a K9 dog! My mom said I can be whatever I want as long as I "apply" myself.



Last fall, I decided I also wanted to become a big brother. I started by leaving subtle hints to my parents. First, a shoe went missing - then I ate my Dad's flip flops. Personally I think I improved upon them. Needless to say, they got the hint. They searched high and low...

Then I had a chance to meet a FurKid named Preston. The first time I met him, we ran up to each other immediately. I said "hi" and he said "hi" right back. I asked if he wanted to play and he said "sure" and we started running around his foster parents' backyard. It was awesome! We just clicked! We played and played. I was so tired but I wanted to keep playing.



My parents (being the very smart people that they are) knew - they just knew- that Preston was the one for our family! And I knew he was going to be the best younger brother I could ever ask for.

Every morning we walk at the park near our house, we chase ducks and turtles. (Mom does tells us "no" and "leave it", but it's just so much fun chasing them that we somehow can't help ourselves!)

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Bichon FurKids Rescue
 Phone: 858-408-1937
 Fax: 760-966-1702
www.BichonFurKids.org
www.facebook.com/bichonfurkids
info@bichonfurkids.org
 6965 El Camino Real,
 #105-425,
 La Costa, CA 92009
 Tax ID: 20-3652098
 Marti Colwell, President



Me and My Very Own New Brother

(Continued from Front Page)

We meet every couple of weeks with my trainer Jake from Pawtopia for lessons. Jake says we are super awesome! We always get straight A's!

My brother and I like to take naps together, play around the house together and play with all our friends at the park. Preston used to be scared of the car but now that I'm with him he's just fine - and doing much better with car rides.

I'm so happy we found him!!

That's the story of me, B.A., and my little brother Preston. Oh! And Preston wants you to know that he wants to be an official firehouse dog when he grows up! (He wanted to make sure I let you know!)



Hope you enjoyed our story.

Love,

B.A. Perry

PS. I attached a picture of my brother and me.



PPS. I also attached a picture of us sleeping together.



I think I'll keep him!

Holiday Fireworks

And Your FurKids



Keeping Them Safe and Sane

The 4th of July is a time of celebration. It's all about food, family, fun -- and fireworks. As much fun as the 4th can be for us humans, it can be a dangerous and frightening time for our dogs.

July 4th in the U.S. is also one of the hottest times of the year, even here in California. While many celebrations are held outdoors, we humans have the benefit of going in and out of the house as needed. We can also cool ourselves with sweat. Sometimes we can even take a dip in a nearby pool. Unfortunately, our dogs do not have it so easy. Because they can only cool themselves through their mouths and feet, they are more prone to heat stroke. If your dog is outside for the party all day, and you get caught up in the festivities, you may easily forget that your dog might be too hot. Practice summer safety: Always keep plenty of fresh, cool water available and be sure there are shady spots for your dog. When in doubt, let her go back in the house.

Fireworks and furkids generally do not mix. If your dog does experience fear and anxiety from the noise, it is essential to know how to deal with it. The truth is, even the bravest dogs can become terrified by the sound of fireworks. If you plan to go somewhere to see fireworks,



do your furkid a favor and leave him or her at home. If you can hear fireworks near your home, keep him indoors for the evening, with a safe place to curl up, like a crate or plush dog bed with blankets.

Many dogs also 'go missing' during holidays and celebrations. Don't let your dog become one of them. Each year hundreds of dogs end up being brought in to local shelters. Many of them are never claimed. And each year BFK rescues dogs who have run away or escaped to get away from fireworks.

Know where your furkid is at all times, please! It may be easy for your dog to slip through an open gate or door because a guest left it unlatched. New people and strange noises can frighten some dogs into running away to hide. Be sure to keep a close watch on your dog to make sure she does not wander off or run away. And ALWAYS keep a collar

Continued on next page...

Holiday Fireworks And Your FurKids (continued)

on your dog with his or her name and your current contact information. If you feel that there is any chance she could get out or become lost, keep her confined.

Desensitize Your FurKid to Fireworks

There are some things you can do in advance to desensitize your FurKid. Here are a few simple steps:

1. Find a video or recording of fireworks.
2. Play the video or recording at the lowest possible volume a few times during the day.
3. Pair the sound of the fireworks with things your dog likes, such as treats, meals, cuddle time, or a game of tug-of-war.
4. Slowly begin to raise the volume of the recording or video over the course of several days, and continue to pair the sound of fireworks with good things for your dog.
5. If at any point your dog begins to show signs of fear, turn the volume down to a point where he feels more comfortable.
6. Repeat this several times each day until your dog can hear the sounds of the fireworks at a fairly high volume without becoming fearful.

Help Ease Your Dog's Fears

If you don't have time to prepare for the fireworks, or if desensitization hasn't ended your dog's fear of fireworks completely, here are other things you can do to ease his fears.

- Don't change your behavior. Many people feel compelled to baby their dogs when the dog is showing signs of fear. We pet them more than usual, cuddle them, and talk to them in soft voices. Rather than easing a dog's fears, however, this often reinforces the dog's fearful behaviors.
- Try not to react to the fireworks yourself. If you jump or tense up when you hear fireworks because you are anticipating your dog's fear, you may make his fear worse. Your body language can tell a dog that there is a reason to be afraid.
- Drown out the sound of the fireworks. Try to turn up the radio or television and keep your

windows closed during the fireworks. If the weather permits, a fan or air conditioner (if your dog isn't afraid of those sounds) can help, too.

- Don't push your dog past his comfort zone. Allow him to hide if he feels more comfortable in his crate or under a bed. Don't pull him out or try to force him closer to the fireworks in an attempt to get him used to the sounds. This may result in an increase in fear, and a frightened dog may become aggressive if pushed past his comfort level.

Dealing with a More Severe Fear of Fireworks

In the case of a severe phobia, none of these suggestions may work to ease your dog's fear. You may want to talk to your veterinarian about medication. Your vet may be able to prescribe an anti-anxiety medication or sedative to keep your dog calm during the fireworks.

Medication may be the only answer to get through the fireworks this season however once the fireworks stop, you can begin preparing for the next one with a program of desensitization. A trainer or behaviorist may also be helpful.

Other Tools to Relieve Anxiety:

- Thundershirts (and similar products): While meant to calm dogs during storms, this vest, which fits snugly around a dog, has been proven to help with anxiety-related issue. We have seen many fearful dogs calm down instantly when enveloped in this warm blanket-like comfort. (Think about an infant wrapped tightly but comfortably in a blanket.)
- Pheromonal therapy: Adaptil is an analog of the naturally-occurring calming pheromone found in the milk of mother dogs. One format is a plug-in, which diffuses Adaptil into the room, and the other is a collar.
- Anxtiane: A chewable that contains L-Theanine, an amino acid that acts neurologically to help keep dogs calm.

The 4th of July is a
time of celebration.
Please keep it a
safe and calm time
for your FurKids.



WANTED

(Pretty Please !)

1. Blankets for FurKids

It's a fact that our FurKids love the blankets made by our Junior (and Senior) Volunteers.

We have had a lot of adoptions this year (that's the good news) however our supply of blankets is almost gone (that's the bad news.) If you, or someone you know, would like to make the no-sew blankets, our FurKids would be overjoyed! And we would be very grateful.

Please let us know if you can contribute some 'supreme blanket-makers.' It is a great summer-time project for people of all ages - and we have great easy-to-understand directions and a video we can share. And we are happy to write letters regarding community service for those children who make blankets. Please email info@bichonfurkids.org and say " I'd like to make blankets for a furkid" - and we'll be in touch. Thanks from all the FurKids!



2. Drivers for FurKids

Want to make a difference for a FurKid but can't foster? We need your help!

Every week FurKids need to be transported to groomers, vets and foster homes. We rely on our volunteer drivers to get them there, and we DO need more people who can transport our fluffs primarily throughout San Diego or Orange County (and not for great distances usually, either.)



Sometimes we have days in which to plan; other times it is more immediate, like when we find a FurKid that needs to be moved 'right away' due to a medical situation or to be exited from a shelter. If you have time and a love for bichons, we NEED you. And if you love to organize transports, we need help with that too!

Please email info@bichonfurkids.org and say " I'd like to drive a furkid" - and we'll be in touch.