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She called back later that night. She had contacted a specialist in Columbia, South Carolina; Dr Randy Bassinger, a nationally and internationally recognized Veterinary Orthopedic Surgeon.

I may not have this part completely accurate, but the quotation is verbatim: She spoke to his wife (also a vet) after the dinner hour, at their house. Pat gave a brief history and at first was told we'd need to get a referral consult from "Dr. X". But after hearing a little more, Pat was pretty much told that we didn't need any thing from this guy, just get the dog to Columbia ASAP. and..... "amputation is not an option". Those were his words.

"Amputation is not an option!" I'm thinking of getting that printed and framed.

I collected all the x-rays and records from my local vet. Then I directed "Dr. X" to email all of Bear's records to Dr Bassinger immediately. I don't recall him being overly pleasant in my request either.

After a 14 hour drive, straight through, I arrived in Leesville, SC at midnight. Our appointment was for 9 am the next day.

Dr Bassinger informed me at around 11:30 A.M. that the surgery was a complete success. He was able to install 4 anchors in fresh virgin bone: one screw (with washer), one pin. All those holes "Dr. X" had drilled were already starting to heal up and fill in. Amazing. The post-op x-ray showed a nearly perfect alignment of the joint.

Dr Bassinger's office gave us a regimen of physical therapy, range of motion, and hot / cold pack treatments for the next 10 days following the operation. They also informed us that in order for Bear to have a chance of regaining full use of the elbow, he'd probably require extensive hydro and physical therapy.

Obviously Bear wasn't able to put full weight on the leg, and the amount of muscle mass loss due to lack of use and atrophy was frankly shocking. But he still had all 4 legs, and there was hope.

Now let me say here, that Pat Watts is my "Sister-from-another-mother." We've been pretty much best friends / extended family for many years. Naturally we met because of Boykin Spaniels. With the blessing of my wonderful wife, I stayed at Pat's home, crashing on the couch so I could be next to my dog. Pat had very generously offered to keep Bear for his follow up physical therapy and treatment. I didn't want to burden her with all the nursing that would be required at home that first week after his surgery.

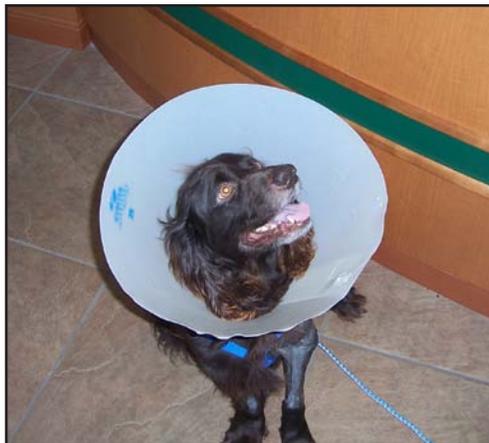
Then, of course, I had to go back off shore.

The report from South Carolina is that Bear is walking and playing almost normally. He's allowed to swim in Lake Murray to his heart's content. Looks like everything is going to be OK with my little brown dog.

The initial plan had been for Bear to undergo a minimum of 6 to 9 post surgery hydro and physical therapy sessions. However, due to his rapid recovery and excellent physical condition, that regimen was revised to one session per week for three weeks.

I am ultimately responsible for everything that I've put my little buddy through. I can blame it on the vet(s). What a painful lesson. I'll certainly continue to take advise from my local vet, however I in cases of very serious situations, I'll get as much input from people I truly trust.

Don't even ask how much all this cost..... I'll just leave it at that.



The Rule of 7's

By Pat Schaap

By the time a puppy is seven weeks old he/she should have:

- Been on 7 different types of surfaces: carpet, concrete, wood, vinyl, grass, dirt, gravel, wood chips, sand
- Played with 7 different types of objects: big balls, small balls, soft fabric toys, fuzzy toys, squeaky toys, paper or cardboard items, metal items, sticks or hose pieces
- Been in 7 different locations: front yard, back yard, basement, kitchen, car, garage, laundry room, bathroom
- Met and played with 7 new people: include children and older adults, someone walking with a cane or stick, someone in a wheelchair or walker
- Been exposed to 7 challenges: climb on a box, climb off a box, go through a tunnel, climb steps, go down steps, climb over obstacles, play hide and seek, in and out of a doorway with a step up or down, run around a fence
- Eaten from 7 different containers: metal, plastic, cardboard, paper, china, pie plate, frying pan
- Eaten in 7 different locations: crate, yard, kitchen, basement, laundry room, living room, bathroom



What a Stud By Karen Lowry

Our male Boykin Spaniel, Bean, is a very handsome dog. Compact, broad-chested, sleek and sturdy, masculine, big head. He reminds me of a football player I used to date. He's not stupid by any means, but he definitely has more brawn than brains. He has such a gentle spirit he doesn't know his own strength. Oh and might I add that when our female Boykin Spaniel is in season, his brains are definitely in his—you know.

A while back we were approached by a family whose female Boykin is from the same litter as our female. They wanted Bean to sire their dog's puppies. We took Bean over to their house for a get-acquainted visit and things looked promising. So when their vet said the time was right, they brought their adorable little Cocoa over to spend a couple of days with Bean.

Our female is also named Cocoa. She is older than Bean and she thinks she is the top dog at our house so the two have never actually mated. But Bean courts her anyway. He never seems to give up hope.

When the guest Cocoa arrived the entertainment began. It was fun to see the Cocoa sisters together. Of course they had a striking resemblance. The same ear and head shape and the same little cowlick on the top of their heads. But our Cocoa seemed huge compared to her more petite sister. The girls seemed to get along right from the start. And

Bean was thrilled beyond measure to have a new girl in his yard.

Little Cocoa was horrified when her family left her with two bigger dogs in a strange place. But with the spunkiness of a true Boykin, she refused to cower. She was polite to let Bean do his doggie handshake (get-acquainted sniff) but when he lingered she wrinkled up her nose and snarled like a fighting dog.

For the next two hours it was like being a fly-on-the-wall watching a teenaged girl on a date with letch. Every time he got fresh she slapped his face and he would back off for a moment then he'd come right back. If he turned away for more than a few seconds she would go lie down in front of him.

Our Cocoa seemed oblivious to the commotion. In fact at one point she pretended to nap and would occasionally open one eye to glance disgustedly at the two noisemakers disturbing her slumber. One thing did bother her and that was for us to call the other dog by her name. So with all the snarling the littlest Cocoa was doing we nicknamed her Cujo and that seemed to work for everybody.

Little Cocoa/Cujo's family had wisely brought her bed and we put it in the corner of our den. At bedtime our dogs settled into their usual sleeping spots then little Cocoa/Cujo went to her bed, turned her back on all of us, threw a

condescending look over her shoulder, tucked her head under her paw, and went to sleep.

Early the next morning the dance of the dogs started again with Bean tirelessly pursuing his crush like a clumsy adolescent with a bit of a Forrest Gump innocence about him. Cocoa/Cujo fiercely defended her honor, snarling and snapping to prove she wasn't easy. But she was a tease. If Bean ever for a moment seemed to lose interest, she nibbled at his ears to get him stirred up again.

Little Cocoa/Cujo stayed with us for two days. Her cycle came and went—along with my husband's plans for spending the money he had hoped to make using Bean as a stud dog. Poor Bean never was able to score.

I decided that dog breeding is a lot more complicated than letting nature take its course. From now on, I think I'll leave the breeding to the experts.

Meanwhile, Bean is just as handsome as ever. When he snuggles up next to me my heart melts. He adores our Cocoa and he maintains hope that some day she will succumb to his charms because just like any bumbling adolescent boy, he still believes in his heart that he's a stud.

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Spotlight on . . .



Hollow Creek's "Spencer" at 9 wks. enjoying his first swim!



Owner Joaquin Diaz of Apollo Beach, Florida



Chesagrove Farms "Rex" pictured here at 4 1/2 yrs.