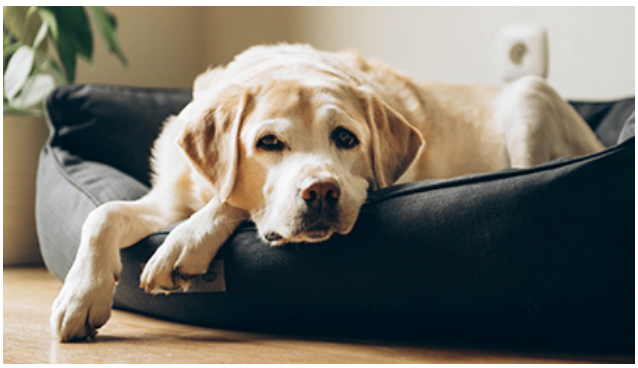
RAMAPO KENNEL CLUB

# GROWL

ESTABLISHED 1958 OCTOBER 2024

## Dog Calming Treats: Uses and Alternatives

*By Colt Dodd*



Picture two dogs. One is an active Australian Shepherd who seems to run on an endless supply of energy. The other is a timid Italian Greyhound who constantly hides under the couch in the presence of strangers, fireworks, or the front door closing too loudly. While these dogs may seem different at first, they have one thing in common: both could benefit from over-the-counter calming treats.

Many of these products rely on ingredients, such as melatonin and chamomile flower, to help anxious or high-energy dogs become more tranquil. But with so many different types, it can be difficult to choose the right one for your pet. Many of these have a generalized calming affect on dogs, so what you need them for can also depend. The best decision ultimately depends on many factors, including your dog's breed, allergies, and the reason for the calming treat.

**Different Ingredients in Dog Calming Treats Target Different Stressors**

There isn't a standardized formula for dog calming treats. Each product will have its own ingredients aimed at relieving your dog's anxiety or putting the brakes on their excitability. Yet, different ingredients have different purposes. And, while some ingredients have been tested through studies, research is not always done on the calming treats themselves.

Dogs with sensitive stomachs may become anxious in response to pain, gas, and discomfort. Here, a calming treat with ginger root could be beneficial, as the ingredient would soothe both their tummies and anxiety. An older dog who feels anxious at night may benefit from a treat with melatonin to help them sleep.

Other ingredients and their benefits include:

- L-tryptophan, a natural amino acid that promotes the production of serotonin
- L-theanine, another amino acid used to alleviate anxiety
- Valerian root, which is shown to act as a mild sedative
- Cannabidiol (CBD), which studies suggest can lower cortisol levels
- Chamomile flower, an herb commonly used to soothe upset stomachs
- Thiamine (B1), a vitamin that targets the central nervous system
- Passionflower, which can be used to soothe dogs with acute anxiety

Talk to your dog's veterinarian before administering calming treats, even if you purchased them over the counter. The term "all-natural" doesn't necessarily mean the treat is safe for your dog. Some even contain traces of harmful ingredients, like garlic, which can cause serious health complications. Your veterinarian can review the ingredients of a calming treat and explain whether it's safe.

**Considerations When Purchasing Dog Calming Treats**

You can streamline your search for the right calming supplement by considering some unique factors that apply to different kinds of treats.

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# President's Message

*Gerrie Oliver*

Many thanks to Vicky DeMarinis, CVT, Patient Services Clinical Trainer/Team Leader and her associates at Oradell Animal Hospital for a wonderful overview of Pet First Aid and CPR at our September meeting. Sixteen members and guests attended. Besides a very informative presentation, attendees got a firsthand opportunity to practice CPR techniques and, using our live Great Dane model, use a stethoscope to locate and monitor a strong heartbeat. I hope you never have to deal with a real emergency but these are things to watch for:

**How To Identify A Pet Emergency Signs & Symptoms**

- Abnormal anxiety, restlessness
- Bleeding
- Collapse or fainting episodes
- Difficulty breathing
- Drastic change in body temperature
- Excessive diarrhea and/or vomiting
- Extreme lethargy
- Loss of consciousness
- Pale gums
- Paralysis or difficulty standing
- Seizures or neurologic episodes
- Severe pain or discomfort
- Straining/inability to urinate

**Traumatic Injury**

- Blunt Force hit by a car
- Penetrating gun shot, impalement, animal bites
- Acceleration/Deceleration high rise injury
- Crushing stepped on, crushed by large object
- Environmental chemical burn, venomous snake bite

**Toxin Ingestion**

If you suspect or know your pet has ingested the following, bring your pet into your vet immediately and contact: ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at (888) 426-4435

- Xylitol sugar-free artificial sweetener
- Antifreeze
- Chocolate
- Grapes, Raisins
- Macadamia Nuts
- Mushrooms
- Rat Poison
- Houseplants Lilies, Poinsettia, others
- Human Medications aspirin, Ibuprofen, many others
- Coins

Looking ahead, the Ramapo Kennel Club's All Breed Dog Shows & Obedience Trials & Rally Trials will be held on October 12th and October 13th at the Sussex County Fairgrounds, Augusta, NJ. Food vendors will be on site both Saturday and Sunday. I'm also happy to tell you that All Pets Vet Hospital ICSB will be onsite so bring your champions and potential future champions to the shows to take advantage of the reproductive services to collect stud dogs, freeze semen samples, evaluate semen as well as selling reproductive supplements, etc.

Show Chairman Jeffrey Ball, Assistant Show Chairperson Kristin Pierson, together with the Obedience/Rally Chairperson, Mary Gallagher and Assistant Elaine Barone, and the Show Committee have been working hard to make

*Continued on p.4*

## Ramapo Kennel Club Officers

**President - 2024-2026**
Gerrie Oliver
olivergerrie@gmail.com

**Vice President - 2023-2025**
Jeffrey David Ball

**Treasurer - 2024-2026**
Ruth Henningsen

**Recording Secretary - 2023-2025**
Sue Chandler

**Corresponding Secretary - 2024-2026**
Tilly Grassa
tgcreative@aol.com

**Board of Directors 2024-2026**
Elaine Barone
Tim Dewar

**2024-2026**
Cindy Pierson
Krisitin Pierson

**AKC Delegate - 2023-2026**
Jeffrey David Ball

# Minutes

**Ramapo Kennel Club**
**(9/11/2024)**

**Call to Order**
The meeting of Ramapo Kennel Club was held on Wednesday, September 11 at the American Legion in Pequannock. The meeting was presided over by the President.

**Attendees**
Sixteen members and guests.

**Approval of Minutes**
Minutes of last meeting on July 15 were read and accepted. Motion to accept by Kristin Pierson, seconded by Cindy Pierson

**Officers' Reports**
*Corresponding Secretary:* Information received from the AKC about the new title application portal and a pilot program will be put in place for 3-legged dogs.

*Treasurer:* Checking account $27,780.50 as of 8/31/24. Profit for obedience classes was revised to $6,550.04. Show handling class profit was $36, an improvement over the previous year.

**Committee Reports**
*Membership:* Updated form to be placed on the web site. Denise Semashko's application to be submitted and writeup to be published in the Growl. Jack Grassa's writeup will also be published in the Growl.

*Show handling class:* Kristin Pierson reminded the us that the fee will increase to $20/class, with RKC members at $18 effective September 17, 2024.

*Obedience/KPT classes:* Classes will start September 18. 6-7 students registered in each class so far. Prices are on hold from last year ($185 per 6-week session).

*Program Committee:* Oradell Animal Hospital will be providing the September 11th meeting program. No further programs planned.

*Sunshine Committee:* $100 donation sent to St. Paul's in memory of Barbara Guile (Gerrie's sister and Kim Luikert's mother) and thank you note received. Sympathy card sent to John Swaney and get well card to Linda Hachtel.

*Point Show Committee:* Judges are set and a Zoom meeting will be scheduled for September 23rd at 7:00 PM.

**Old Business**
*Web Site Update:* The updated membership form will be added. The committee list, class dates (conformation and obedience) and new prices (conformation) have been added.

*Bark in the Borough Event:* Date is October 5 in Closter, NJ. Gerrie Oliver will be helping at this community event but more volunteers would be appreciated.

*RKC Jackets:* Some orders have been received and final order will be placed soon.

*FastCAT:* Event was a success and final profit numbers are forthcoming, estimated to be $1000-$2000. Two FastCAT events may be planned for the 2025 Labor Day Weekend if the Cocker Spaniel Club does not want the Saturday show. Thanks to Pat Crew for taking entries.

**New Business**
The AKC's "Darkness to Light Training" will need to be completed by some members. Kristin Pierson has taken the course which takes about 3 hours to complete (online) and will need to be done by those individuals working with children <18 years of age. Deadline from the AKC is 9/30/24.

**Adjournment**
Motion made by Elaine Barone, seconded by Cindy Pierson.

*Submitted by Sue Chandler*

***President's Message, From p.2***

these shows a success. Set-up at the Fairgrounds will begin on Friday afternoon. Many hands make light work so please try to come if you can. Feel free to reach out to the committee chairs if you have questions,

•Trophies/Obedience & Rally – Elaine Barone
•Trophies/Confirmation – Kim Luikert
•Decorations – Kristin Pierson & Cindy Pierson & Ruth Henningsen
•Judges Hotel & Transportation – Kristin Pierson
•Judges Hospitality – Cindy Pierson
•Ring Bags – Kristin Pierson & Cindy Pierson
•Education Table – Tim Dewar

The next meeting is on Wednesday, October 9th, at 8:00 PM (7:15 PM Board Meeting) at the American Legion Hall, 11 Oak Ave., Pequannock, NJ 07440. Refreshment will be provided by Tilly and myself. I hope I'll see you there.

Stay well and safe,
*Gerrie*

## ANIMAL SHELTER "UNDER REVIEW" AFTER EUTHANIZING FAMILY'S MISSING DOG

After spending hours searching for his missing dog, Gunner, a Texas man was relieved to learn that his dog was alive and had been taken to an animal shelter. This was great news, though there was a catch: the shelter was closed, so he'd have to wait and pick up Gunner the next day.

But when he arrived at the shelter the next day, he was told his dog had been euthanized. According to the owner, the shelter wouldn't or couldn't give him a straight explanation for why they killed his dog. Later, the shelter posted a statement claiming they worked in consultation with a veterinarian and had found Gunner (a 12-year-old lab) geriatric, incontinent, and suffering from severe mobility issues. Because of these findings, they said they felt compelled to end Gunner's suffering and waive the standard 72-hour euthanasia policy.

Records obtained later suggest that the shelter's consulting veterinarian did not recommend euthanasia, or anything stronger than pain medication. Gunner's owners feel that the pain medication may have even been what caused their dog's incontinence.

This is an incredibly sad and infuriating story. As you can imagine, it has made waves nationally and locally, and it touches a pretty deep nerve with us. Had he been a shelter pup in need of a $7,000 lifesaving surgery, it's not hard imagining him receiving his own GoFundMe campaign. If he were a dog with a double-digit bite history, who knows – maybe he would have found himself in yet another home by year's end. Apparently, wobbly old dogs don't receive that level of effort and grace. But if Gunner had been given just the minimum, he'd be home with his family right now.

More news on this bummer of a story as it unfolds. As of now, the city has called in an outside firm to review the shelter and provide recommendations, with the results being made public in November.

*From NAIA*

## *Continued from p. 1,* Dog Calming Treats: Uses and Alternatives

**Types of Dog Calming Treats**
Many calming treats come in a chewable flavored tablet, but others come as oils. You may consider drizzling a calming oil over their dry food if your dog might spit the treat out.

You may also purchase treats that offer benefits in addition to anxiety relief. Dental sticks blended with hemp and melatonin clean your dog's teeth while also offering a short activity. Other treats offer joint health supplements, thanks to their high levels of healthy omega fatty acids.

**How Long Does the Dog Calming Treat Last?**
Depending on a treat's active ingredients, it could last anywhere from four to eight hours. You may choose a long-lasting treat for road trips or a more temporary treat for short-lived stressors, like firework displays.

**Dietary Restrictions for Dog Calming Treats**
While there are some common ingredients in many calming dog treats, each will have its own specific formula. For example, some dog calming treats are flavored with chicken, a common allergy in many breeds. Check the treat's packaging to ensure that it only contains ingredients your dog can tolerate.

**How Quickly Do Dog Calming Treats Work?**
Fast-acting treats are ideal for unexpected events that call for immediate relief, such as during loud rolling thunderstorms. Treats that take longer to "kick in" might be ideal for non-urgent situations, like before bedtime.

**What Dogs Can Benefit From Calming Treats?**
It's a common misconception that only perpetually anxious dogs can benefit from calming treats. In reality, dogs of different ages, sizes, and breeds can benefit from these products. Senior dogs, for instance, can develop symptoms similar to dementia in humans, causing them to feel anxious in situations they normally wouldn't.

High-energy dogs, such as Border Collies and Australian Cattle Dogs, are known for their endless enthusiasm for hours-long play sessions. While these working dogs should have an outlet to thrive, they can become easily bored and resort to destructive behaviors. With the correct dosage, these dogs can find a healthy balance with treats containing chamomile and melatonin.

Some new owners wonder whether they can use calming treats for puppies. The short answer is yes. However, as with adding anything new to your dog's diet, you should consult a vet first.

**What if Calming Treats Don't Work on My Dog?**
Finding the ideal dog calming treat can be a trial-and-error process. It might take several brands and ingredient combinations before you get the desired result. Before ruling out dog calming treats altogether, here are some things to consider.

First, ensure you understand the dosage instructions before offering these treats to your dog. Your dog's weight plays a major role in how quickly their body metabolizes certain substances. One treat might not equal one serving. In fact, larger dogs may need multiple treats to achieve the intended effect. Note: this isn't to say that more treats necessarily equal better results.

You may also need to readjust your expectations about dog calming treats and their effect on your pet. These products won't override inherent traits found in some breeds or cancel out reactivity stemming from traumatic events. These issues are best addressed with the assistance of an animal behavioral specialist.

Finally, know that some conditions go beyond the scope of over-the-counter treats and supplements. A veterinarian may advise you on whether prescription medications could help your dog thrive. These could include antidepressants or benzodiazepines, such as diazepam (Valium).

**Alternatives to Dog Calming Treats**
Dog calming treats are a great resource for owners looking to relieve anxiety, discourage destructive behaviors, or soothe an aging dog. However, these treats aren't intended to be all-encompassing solutions. They're tools that, in combination with other targeted efforts, can promote your dog's quality of life.

For example, you could:

- Drizzle a CBD oil over your dog's breakfast the morning of a long car ride. In transit, you also attempt to create a positive association with the experience using praise and other high-value treats.
- Leave behind toys and interactive games for a dog who struggles with separation anxiety, in addition to administering a calming treat.
- Try participating in an activity, like agility or freestyle, to meet the needs of a high-energy breed.

There are even some alternatives to calming treats themselves. One such alternative is a soothing collar. These products release pheromones that trigger the same comforting response a puppy would feel from its mother. Anxiety vests or apparel are another alternative to calming treats. Generally designed as a vest or wrap, these items provide gentle, constant pressure over the dog's body, like a long hug.

**Talk to Your Vet Before Administering Dog Calming Treats**
As dog lovers, we want to take as few risks with our dogs' health as possible. Whether you're aiming to soothe an anxious dog or prevent reactivity, a veterinarian can offer insight into what options you have for meeting that goal.

Unlike testing for human supplements, there is no standard testing for pet supplements on things like calming treats or behavioral supplements. In many cases, that can mean a range in quality between different brands of calming treats.

By working closely with a veterinary professional, you can rest assured that you're providing the safest and most effective method for your dog's condition.

# CONFORMATION HANDLING CLASS

Ramapo Kennel Club show handling classes,
VFW Post #8096,
69 Carey Ave., Butler, NJ.
$20 per dog
RKC members are $18
6 Class package is $112 (saving of $8)

**FMI:**
Kristin Pierson: *piersonkn@hotmail.com*

Show handling classes are on Tuesdays at 7PM at the VFW, 69 Carey Ave., Butler, NJ

**Sept. 17**
**Oct. 1, 15, 29**
**Nov. 19**
**Dec. 3**

# OBEDIENCE TRAINING CLASSES

Ramapo Kennel Club obedience classes, are on Wednesdays at the VFW Post #8096, 69 Carey Ave., Butler, NJ.

KPT/Beginner - $165.00
Shelter adoption/rescue - $150.00
RKC members $130.00
Drop ins $30.00 ($25.00 members)

**FOR CLASS INFORMATION CONTACT:**
Ruth Hennigsen 973-697-9456
*snodogruth@gmail.com*
Elaine Barone 973-492-1876
*elaineb.bowow@juno.com*

**PUPPY KINDERGARTEN - 6:30**
**BEGINNER OBEDIENCE - 7:30**

**Sept. 18, 25**

**Oct. 2, 16, 23, 30**

SUE CHANDLER

# Brags, etc.

*Left, Kristin Pierson's 'Claire' won BoB at the Pocono Mountain Kennel Club show under John Constantine-Amodei. Right, Claire and Tessa.*

*Left, Mary Gallagher's 'Alicia Keys' earned her CDSP (Companion Dog Sports Program) Obedience Open title with a second place finish. In the second trial, she placed first in the CDSP Utility A class. Right, 'Batman' earned his CDSP Obedience Novice title placing second.*

*Lisa Brooks' Standard Poodle, Bram got his novice agility title! he also finished GCHB about the same time!*
*He is now: GCHB CH Kava Hard to Believe CD RM RAE NA CGCA TKN*
*Photo to come next month.*

# Dates to remember:

**All membership meetings are held at**
**American Legion Post 450**
**11 Oak Ave.**
**Pequannock, NJ 07440 at 8:00 PM**
**(unless otherwise noted)**

| | |
|---|---|
| **October 5** | **Bark in the Borough,** 11 AM - 4 PM, Closter Commons, 570 Piermont Rd., Closter, NJ 07624 |
| **October 9** | **RKC Member Meeting** at 8PM, board meeting at 7:15PM. |
| **October 12 and 13** | **Ramapo KC 78th & 79th All-Breed Dog Shows & Obedience Trials & Rally Trials,** Sussex County Farm and Horse Showgrounds, 37 Plains Rd, Augusta, NJ 07826 |

**HAPPY HALLOWEEN!!**

*Submitted by Sue Chandler*

## Got Stuff?

Send your stories, news, brags, suggestions, comments and photos to Tilly Grassa, *tgcreative@aol.com*. Remember the *Growl* comes out about a week before each monthly meeting. Submissions are due two weeks before the meeting. The *Growl* is by and for the members so I need your help to make it eresting.

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