

BowWOW!

Facts, observations and musings about Our Best Friends

## **The difference between chaining and CHAINING**

Recently, I had an occasion to make an announcement at a gathering that Chain Free Beaufort (of which I am a board member) was looking to place 9 recently rescued dogs. A gentleman in the group made a face when I said "Chain Free Beaufort" and I made point to ask him later why he had that reaction.

Somewhat defensively, he explained that his dog had a 20-foot trolley, and a 12-foot hook-up and he didn't think it was right that someone could legislate how he managed his dog on his own property. He continued to explain that his dog slept in the house, played with the kids, went for a run every day and was his best hunting buddy. His dog was perfectly fine.

"Well, John," I said, "The chaining ordinance doesn't affect you." His eyes widened in disbelief. Here was a perfect example of how Chain Free Beaufort's effort to address the problem of hidden animal abuse that exists in this county has become an issue of confusion. It's time for a reality check.

If your otherwise lay-around-the housedog is hooked up to a trolley or tether while you do yard work or simply to get the dog out from underfoot while you vacuum or if you put him out to "air", the chaining ordinance does not affect you. If you take your \$1000 show dog to a competition and little Schuyler is tethered to your grooming table while you wait your turn in the ring, this ordinance doesn't affect you. If you have your old bird dog Wally tethered to your truck while you gear-up for a day of hunting, this ordinance does not affect you. Nor will it if you leash Squeakers to the parking meter while you go into a shop to get a newspaper. That any of these instances are even considered worthy of legislation is laughable.

But here's who will be affected: if you loop one end of a 3-foot, 40-lb logging chain around the neck of your 4-month old puppy and hook the other end to a rusted washing machine in your backyard, then this ordinance will affect you. If you leave that puppy chained in the sun, without shade, so it can't reach it's beer carton "shelter", food or water for days, months, weeks or years, then this ordinance will affect you. If you never take that chained dog to a veterinarian for vaccinations, heartworm medication, flea and worm treatment, then this ordinance will affect you. And finally, if you have forgotten there is a living dog in the backyard and have not noticed that the chain has grown into it's neck, if it is lying in it's own feces, if it can no longer stand up for the sake of starvation and anemia from hookworm infestation, then this ordinance will affect you. And it should.

Unfortunately, in this county animals are considered property, like ATVs, lawn furniture or the rusted washing machine. Animals have no more right to humane treatment than does your rake. There are some County councilmen who believe that a living, sentient creature has no more right to attention than does the pile of spare tires behind his garage. It's a dog. Just a dog. It's property. As stated by one of the opponents of the chaining ordinance at the Community Service and Public Safety Meeting last year, "My daddy chained dogs, my daddy's daddy chained dogs and I'm gonna chain my dog, too". Well, golly, there's something to think about right there.

Will this county continued to be mired in the thinking of three generations past, or will it consider taking a tiny step toward making Beaufort County a better place to live for not only its taxpayers but also its four-footed companions. This ordinance, the debate and the question of whether Beaufort County remains antiquated in its approach to animals is about to return to the public stage. I encourage you to pay attention, get involved, voice your opinion and come to a council meeting to see what really happens.

Note: The description of the chained puppy is real. Viewed from the street all the criteria for minimum animal care as legislated by current county law is met; the chaining ordinance will shine a light on the hidden abuse of abject neglect. For more information about Chain Free Beaufort go to [www.chainfreebeaufort.org](http://www.chainfreebeaufort.org).

**BowWOW! Is a production of Tracie Korol and wholeDog. She is a holistic behavior coach, a canine massage therapist (CMT), herbalist, and canine homeopath. Want more information? Have a question? Send a note to Tracie at [letstalk@wholedog.biz](mailto:letstalk@wholedog.biz) or visit [www.wholedog.biz](http://www.wholedog.biz).**

