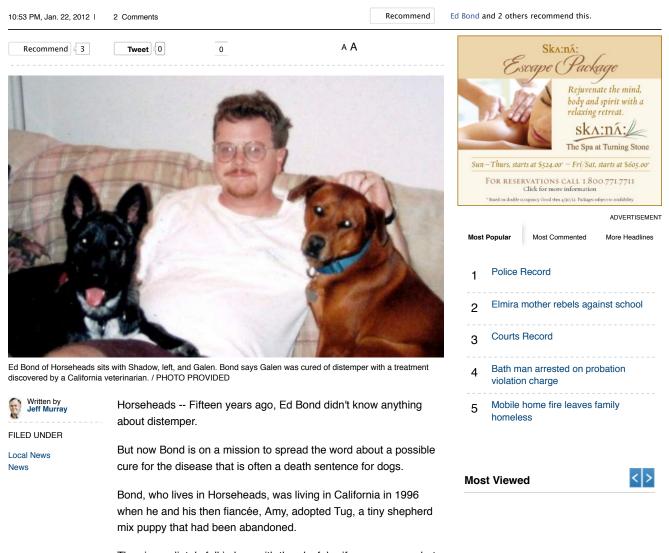


Area man says vet has cure for distemper

Others say disease is incurable for dogs



They immediately fell in love with the playful -- if mangy -- pup, but they had to say a tearful goodbye only a month later when Tug succumbed to canine distemper, a virus that affects domestic dogs, wild canines and other animals.

For more information

» To learn more about canine distemper, go to

"Tug came down with seizures. The vet said

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bakerinstitute.vet.cornell.edu/lanimalhealth /page.php?id=1088.

» For more information about Kind Hearts In Action, contact Ed Bond at ed.bond.new.york@gmail.com, or go to www.kindheartsinaction.com.

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there was no treatment that would be effective," Bond said. "Then we rescued another puppy, Selkie, but she very quickly went into seizures and we had to euthanize her."

The next dog they took in, Shadow, was healthy, but when they adopted a fourth dog, Galen, he started to show some familiar symptoms.

Bond was resigned to another heartbreaking loss, until Galen suddenly recovered after a trip to an obscure veterinarian.

Dr. Alson Sears, a veterinarian in Lancaster, Calif, had discovered how to use Newcastle Disease vaccine as a treatment for canine distemper in 1969, Bond said.

But Sears had difficulty gaining acceptance of his cure in the mainstream veterinary community, and that skepticism remains.

"There is no known specific treatment for Canine Distemper Virus (CDV)," said Dr. Brian Collins, a veterinarian with the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine.

"It is possible that (Sears') treatment worked because the serum actually had antibodies to CDV from the donor dog. I am not opposed to alternative therapies, but this is one that I would probably be unlikely to try without some scientific support."

Distemper is also not common in this part of the country, Collins said.

Spurred by testimonials from dog owners and veterinarians who have tried Sears' treatment, Bond became canine distemper project director for Kind Hearts In Action, a not-for-profit group aimed at advancing the cause.

"If a dog can be treated by the serum within six days of showing symptoms, we have a 90 percent chance of saving its life," Bond said.

"That's what we want to put to the test. I've not had anybody here report distemper, but eventually it's going to happen here. I would feel terrible if (distemper) happened here, and I couldn't save these dogs."

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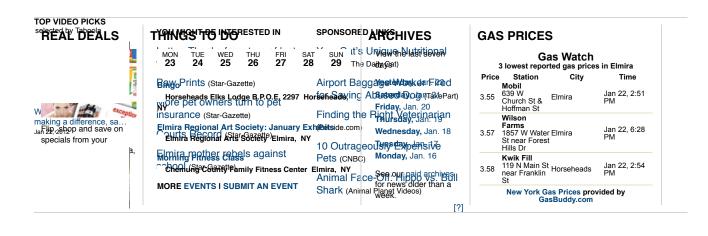
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