



## Farm Dogs on Holiday

**Have you given your farm dog (or dogs) some love recently?**

*Cherie Langlois*

Wednesday, September 30, 2009

Courtesy Cherie Langlois

Brett Langlois and Pippin take a break during play on a sand dune. Have you given your farm dog (or dogs) some love recently?

How about a break from the farm?

This month has been designated AKC Responsible Dog Ownership Days by the American Kennel Club, and I just finished surfing over to read and sign their AKC Responsible Dog Owner Pet Promise (like to join me? [Click here](#)).

As a former zoo keeper and veterinary assistant, I've always prided myself on being a pretty responsible pet owner.

Our two dogs, Pippin and Daisy, get a good diet, exercise, veterinary care and loads of love. They're fixed, and we don't let them roam.

Still, one item on the Pet Promise list gave me a guilty twinge: "I will socialize my dog via exposure to new people, places and other dogs."

Of course, this kind of socialization is critical during puppyhood to turn out a well-adjusted family pet, and we tried to make sure Pippin experienced many different people, dogs and places as a pup (Daisy came to live with us as an adult).

But in recent years, it seems like we've taken the easy way out and allowed both dogs to become farm-bodies.

Sure, they love it here: sniffing through pastures for rodents, treeing squirrels, stealing bread from chickens, lazing in the sun. But just like with us, I think it's good for them to escape from the farm every so often.

Courtesy Cherie Langlois Daisy does the dunes -- a happy farm dog on holiday. Not long ago, for instance, we took the dogs with us on a camping trip to the Oregon Coast. Don't ask me how, but we managed to stuff two adults, one teen, a large Coonhound mix, a Terri-Poo, AND our camping gear into our petite Nissan Versa.

Six hours later, we extricated ourselves, thrilled to hear the roar of the ocean again, breathe in the salty sea air, and see the Umpqua River Lighthouse gleaming white against the sky. The dogs were ecstatic.

We visited Grandpa and Grandma, walked around wooded lakes, and climbed a giant sand dune to find a surreal, lonely desert of undulating dunes stretching to the ocean, a place where the dogs could run, dig and roll to their hearts' content.

How huge and exciting that world must have seemed to them after so much time spent within the boundaries of our five-acre farm!

So I've promised my farm dogs more off-farm excursions in the future. After all, they're part of the family.

I'd love to hear about what you do to enrich your faithful friend's life :)

~ Cherie