

MISSION EMPAWTHY NEWSLETTER

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October 2025



MISSION EMPAWTHY, LLC



Welcome!

Thank you for signing up for our newsletter. We hope you find some useful tips and tricks and learn a little something along the way!

In this issue, we introduce you to our friends at Cleveland Veterinary Rehabilitation to keep your dogs in the best shape, we share some tips to "distraction proof" your dog's training, share some fun facts, and invite you to join us at any (or all) of our upcoming events! As always, reach out to us with any questions!



Upcoming events!

- Join us for Halloween Fest on Saturday October 11, 2025 from 11AM-1PM at Classic Auto Group Park at 35300 Vine St. Eastlake, Ohio
- Meet us at Willoughby Middle School for a Trunk or Treat Event on Thursday October 16th from 6:30-8PM
- Join us for Mokoro's 2nd Birthday Party on Saturday December 13th, 2025 from 10AM-1PM at Classic Auto Group Park at 35300 Vine St. Eastlake, Ohio



Visit us at
www.missionempawthy.com
and follow us on Instagram and
Facebook!





Have you met our friends at Cleveland Veterinary Rehabilitation?

Located in a stunning, state-of-the-art facility at 28915 Chardon Road, Willoughby Hills, Ohio 44092, you will find a team of incredibly dedicated, brilliant, and compassionate veterinarians along with their phenomenal team.

Cleveland Vet Rehab (CVR) has treated multiple dogs of ours and we would recommend them to absolutely anyone looking for the canine equivalent to physical therapy for humans. They can help pets who have had surgery, suffered from an injury, or have chronic pain as it relates to the musculoskeletal and neurologic systems. They also specialize in preventing injury, providing conditioning, and even potentially avoiding surgery in some cases! This is why we love them, and Mokoro, our Labrador who is the bat dog for the Lake County Captains, does her Spring training and seasonal training with them throughout the year to keep her in tip-top shape for baseball season.

Dr. Laura Surovi and Dr. Kim Huppe offer a wide variety of services including:

- Rehabilitation Evaluation
- Acupuncture
- Chiropractic Care
- Laser Therapy
- Therapeutic Exercise
- Manual Therapy
- Gait Analysis & Lameness Detection
- Underwater Treadmill (Mokoro's fav!)
- Resistance Pool
- Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy
- Shock Wave
- Regenerative Medicine
- Home Exercise Programs
- Synovetin OA & Arthramid
- Cart & Brace Assistance
- Digital Radiology
- Musculoskeletal Ultrasound

All pets can benefit from rehabilitation; whether it's your canine athlete, your aging senior, or your pet that suffers from a chronic illness (e.g., arthritis) or your pet that has just had surgery- CVR is your best bet to help them out!

Cleveland Veterinary Rehabilitation

- Location: 28915 Chardon Road, Willoughby Hills, Ohio 44092
- Phone: 440-462-4600
- Website: Clevelandvetrehab.com



Distractions: Tales of a Baseball Bat Dog

Crack! The Lake County Captains batter just swung and hit a double. As the players round the bases, the bat dog, Mokoro, shakes with excitement. She's ready. That bat is HERS.

We look to the batboy, he gives us a thumbs up, the play is now over and it's safe to give her the cue to grab the bat. She takes off at the speed of light out of the dugout. Helmet on, jersey flapping in the wind. Number 43 is off and running. Not surprisingly, she ignores all the celebrations in the crowd, ignores the fact that the dugout has erupted in cheers, excitement, and elation, and off she goes with pure focus. Don't forget though, it's Thursday, that means it's dog night, dogs get in free tonight. The stadium is filled with people and their canine companions. Now, Mokoro has grabbed the bat, dogs are barking to cheer on their four-legged hero, but Mokoro is not phased.

She's 10 feet from the dugout now, bat in tow. Wait. A ball comes rolling in from umpire. He's inadvertently rolled it directly in front of Mokoro's path back to the dugout. She's only one year, and four months old, I hold my breath, her eyes lock on the ball, bat still in her gentle grip, her head turns, she's absolutely noticed the ball, but she's focused. Exhale.



She's runs directly to me and drops the bat in my hands. She's rewarded with a high value treat reinforcer and a quick game of tug-of-war with one of her favorite toys. Wow. That was one heck of a distraction.

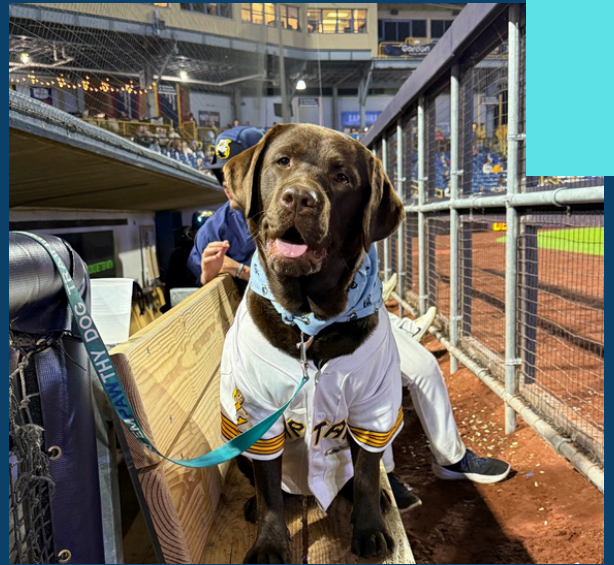
So what gives? How do we get this level of focus? Even the best trained dogs can seem like they've instantly forgotten everything the moment they see a squirrel. I'll tell you one thing, this certainly doesn't happen overnight. It's a process that requires patience, consistency, positive reinforcement and an understanding of how to set your dog up for success. As with any cue you're teaching your dog, you have to start small and work your way up. Would you really try to teach your child calculus at an amusement park? I seriously doubt it. Just because your dog can easily conduct a cue at home, doesn't mean they will be willing to do the same thing at the veterinarian's office. We have to generalize each cue we've taught our dogs to different environments, with different levels of distraction, and we even have to practice giving those cues while we're in different body positions. Perhaps you're always standing when you cue your dog.



Will they still sit if you ask them to while you're laying down? Dogs need help to understand that the cues we've taught them apply to every situation no matter how many distractions are around.

When teaching a new cue, for example, loose leash walking, begin in a very low-level distraction environment. Perhaps your start working with your dog in your quiet, unfinished basement. You reward your pup for sticking next to your left side and reinforce them with small treats at the seam of your left pant leg. Once you've got your dog at 90% for that cue in this low-level distraction environment, start to introduce a very mild distraction. Perhaps it's your dog's least favorite toy laying on the ground, or your spouse walking by while you're training. Keep practicing your cues with different mild distractions. Again, when you're at 90%, ramp up the distractions. Perhaps now you have your spouse clap or talk to your dog while you're trying to train. Repeat! Keep working until you know your dog can ignore high level distractions, then perhaps you finally take your training outside. Outdoor areas are generally going to be highly distracting environments for your dog. Keep practicing!

So next time you're at a baseball game, think about how you would prepare for all those distractions- I mean, come on, there are hotdogs there too?!



Did you know?

- Conservation Dogs can be used to scent track endangered species
 - <https://www.bbcearth.com/news/meet-the-dogs-saving-endangered-species>
- Dogs can control their right and left nostrils separately and often use each nostril for different purposes
 - <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26876141/>
- Dog's nose-prints are as unique as the human equivalent to a fingerprint
 - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/canine-corner/202109/are-dogs-nose-prints-really-unique-and-unchanging>
- Dogs sweat through their paws
 - <https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/do-dogs-sweat/>

