



July 2004

Welcome!

by Rosa



A word from this month's hostess...

I'm Rosa and this is our first Catchtail Tales e-posting! You may already know me, but in case you don't, here's a picture of me! Yes, I'm that cute little sheltie mix with the rose.

I've only been here for about 5 months (I'm just 7 months old!) but I've already had some great experiences here at Catchtail Gardens...and July was an especially special month with lots of visitors and LOTS of fun!!

Family Visits



Catchtailers from Berlin

I LOVE visitors, and so do Djubaya and Deb! And there have been plenty of visitors here lately! In June, Logan (10) and Bryce (8), Djubaya and Deb's nephew and niece, visited from St. Louis, Missouri (so sad we got no photo). And on August 1st, the Berliners landed!!!

Miriam, David (9) and Rebecca (7) visited for 3 whole weeks! The time went much too fast, but I enjoyed every one of the snuggles I got! I showed them some of the tricks I already know (sit, lie down, roll over, and I do a really good 'stay') and showed them around the land.

David and Rebecca got right into the spirit of things and romped around the land and helped harvest (Rebecca LOVED pulling up those baby carrots!). [check out our July harvest log at the bottom!]

Swarming!



How we got hive number five...

Bees, bees everywhere! I steered clear (I've had some prickly run-ins with those bees), but Djubaya walked right over and he says he found himself standing in the middle of a double spiral of bees!

Deb and Djubaya aren't sure why, but hive #2 was swarming! Bees do that for a variety of reasons. They hatch out a new queen bee and the old queen leaves with half the workers to build a new nest somewhere else...

Well, luckily there was an extra hive body (box for bees) on the farm and once the swarm had clustered on a branch in the big oak tree (that's how they protect the queen, who is in the center while a few scout bees seek out a new home), we could just snip off the branch and put the bees in the box! They obviously thought it was a fine new home, because they are still in there busily building up honeycomb.

More pictures...



Here's a picture of the family...I'm even in it! It also shows off the amazing flowers that have burst up around our arbor! The grapes are growing in wild tangles and it just looks SO beautiful!

David and Rebecca like my friends, the chickens, too! Here they are posing with Popcorn and Thelma, while Rapunzel is strutting in the front... The chickens are a valuable part of Catchtail Gardens since they not only produce delicious fresh organic eggs, but also provide valuable fertilizer (poop!), eat bugs and snails, and are just fun to be around!



It's not all playtime at Catchtail Gardens, though! During this family visit, Djubaya started the BIG and important project of running trenches with the tractor and laying irrigation lines underground. I know I get thirsty in the California sun (especially when I chase the frisbee as fast as I can!), and so do all our plant friends here! (they don't chase frisbees, but they produce some of the most amazing fruit and vegetables!)

The other important part of the project was putting in bamboo barriers! Because we have a lot of "running" bamboo, it is important to contain it! The liner that was put in the ground will do that. Now David and our friend Gordon are adding the finishing touches to some newly planted bamboo (can you see the bamboo barrier sticking up out of the ground?), by putting lots and lots of woodchips on top of the roots and rhizomes. Djubaya calls it mulch, and it keeps the moisture in the ground and eventually becomes good fertilizer when it breaks down, too!



Catchtail Gardens is a creative place! Rebecca, David and Deborah put their heads together to design a colorful table top, and then Rebecca and Deb painted away! What a fun transformation! This was just plain old brown wood before. No puppy paws allowed on this one... maybe next time!!

Want to get in touch?

write to: gaiabee@catchtail.com
visit our web site at: <http://www.catchtail.com>

Join our mailing list!

Harvest Log: FRUIT...

blueberries, boysenberries, apricots, peaches, nectarines, blackberries, cherries, mulberries, elderberries

VEGETABLES...

tomatoes, lemon cucumbers, pickling cucumbers, sweet peppers, yellow squash, carrots, broccoli & cauliflower (though they are a better winter crop!), onions, potatoes,...

AND sunflowers are BLOOMING!

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