

TODAY'S RECIPES

SHANTI MINT CHUTNEY P. 26 • WORLD WAR II OATMEAL FRITTERS P. 26



STAFF PHOTO BY PATRICK WHITTEMORE

Would you like a squeaky toy with that?

PET OWNERS SERVE UP HOME-COOKED MEALS



STAFF PHOTO ABOVE BY NANCY LANE, RIGHT BY ANGELA ROWLINGS

By TENLEY WOODMAN

No one turns up their nose at dinner when Dorri Poppe is cooking. The 42-year-old Saugus resident's menu is all about freshness — lean meats and homegrown vegetables — all eagerly lapped up by her Bernese mountain dogs Chester, 7, and Cricket, 18 months. "Homemade dog food 101 is like baby food 101: The dog gets what you get," said

Poppe, a breeder who has cooked for dogs for 15 years. Veterinarians at Angell Animal Medical Center in Jamaica Plain say home-cooked diets are gaining popularity. "The big benefit for pet owners, they know exactly what they are putting in the food. For some people they need that kind of comfort. It's also a bonding experience. Their pets are part of the family," Dr. Jackie Parr said. Riding the trend, Indi-

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ana veterinarian Dr. Cathy Alinovi and pet food safety advocate Susan Thixton released "Dinner PAWSible: A Cookbook of Healthy Dog & Cat Meals" (\$24.95). "I spend a lot of time talking to my clients about nutrition. Eighty percent of what they bring their pets to me for I can fix with nutrition, but they feel lost. Now they have lots of options," Alinovi said.

Poppe stocks up on chicken from Costco and spends several hours a week deboning as many as 24 whole birds for Chester and Cricket. A blend of Swiss chard, kale, cranberries and squash round out the typical 1½- to 2-lb. serving each dog gets twice a day. Duck necks, canned mackerel with skin and bones, cottage cheese and raw eggs also are menu regulars.

It sets Poppe back \$90 to \$150 a week.

Bob Molloy, 56, co-owner of doggie specialty store



CHOW HOUNDS: Serving up homemade meals for their dogs are, clockwise from above, Bob Molloy, Dorri Poppe and Ernesto Morales.

Bob Molloy

Chef for Norwegian elkhounds Becky, 14, and brothers Manny and Cosmo, 4

- Time: 20 minutes
- Lasts: 3-4 days
- Serving size: 1 c. in the morning; 1 c. at night
- Cost: Less than \$10

THE BARKIN' BOB

- 2-3 lbs. chopped chicken (or beef/pork)
- 1 lb. bags each of frozen vegetables (such as chopped spinach, butternut squash, green beans)
- 2-3 c. quick oats
- ¼ c. olive oil (only if using chicken; beef/pork have enough natural fats)
- ½ t. coarse sea salt
- 1 T. yogurt or cottage cheese (full-fat, if low-fat is used, add a probiotic digestive enhancer)

In a large pot, bring 1 quart of water to a boil. Add chopped chicken and cook for about 2-3 minutes until cooked through. Add frozen vegetables and cook for another couple of minutes. Add quick oats. Turn off heat, mix together. Add olive oil if necessary. Add salt for electrolytes. Add ¼ c. olive oil if necessary, and salt for electrolytes. Serve with yogurt or cottage cheese.

Dorri Poppe

Chef for Bernese mountain dogs Chester, 7, and Cricket, 18 months

- Prep time: 2-3 hours
- Lasts: A week
- Serving size: A week's batch yields enough for 1½ to 2 lb. servings twice a day
- Cost: \$1.50-\$2.50 a pound; \$90-\$150 a week

THE FARM DOG DIET, FROM 'DINNER PAWSIBLE'

- 5 lbs. protein: raw meaty bones or cooked meat and organs without bones or cooked fish — can include cottage cheese or eggs
- ¾ lb. green vegetables
- ¼ lb. dog-safe fruit
- ¼ lb. sweet potato/pumpkin/squash

Combine and serve.



are seeing too many dogs with human diseases like diabetes."

Belmont resident Joice Himawan, 49, said serving a raw, home-prepared diet for her cats Pinky and Pixel is not just better for them but her wallet as well. She spends \$3.50 a week to make Pinky and Pixel's concoction of raw ground chicken, grains and

vegetables using a recipe from "The New Natural Cat" by Anitra Frazier.

"My cats probably eat better than I do," she said. "We have the choice of eating well or not, but our pets don't, so I kind of feel an obligation to them to feed them the best."

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Home-cooked meals aren't just for lucky pooches — check out our Fork Lift food blog at bostonherald.com for a healthy recipe just for cats.

Ernesto Morales

Chef for Siberian huskies Tunda Linda, 11, Tala Nieves, 7, and J-Sun, 5

- Time: 1 hour
- Lasts: 3-4 days
- Serving size: 1 c. twice a day
- Cost: Approximately \$15

GRAIN-FREE HUSKY DIET

- For broth: 1 lb. carrots, ½ lb. celery
- For the meal: 2½ to 3 lbs. chicken from the butcher, deboned, 2 apples, mashed

Put chicken and veggies in large pot and cover with water. Simmer until chicken is cooked through. Each dog gets 1 lb. of chicken, with apple and broth.



Bark Place in the South End, has sworn by home-cooked food for nearly 20 years.

"I want to feed my dogs good-quality food. They are my family, that is how I treat them," said Molloy, who breeds Norwegian elkhounds. "One of the few things you control with a dog is what you feed them."

But it's not just show dogs receiving the royal treatment.

Ernesto Morales, 32, of Dorchester made the switch

six years ago. He said health was an incentive to feeding his three Siberian huskies a diet of raw and home-cooked meals. It costs him about \$15 to put together a week's work of meals, made from vegetables and selected meats from the local butcher.

"When I rescued my dogs they were overweight. People in the (Boston Snow Dogs) group compliment how good they look. My 11-year-old has lost so much weight and has the energy of a puppy," he said. "We