



# Puppy Tails

MIALIE T. SZYMANSKI | CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

*As the moon goes to bed, the sun comes up  
And here we meet a sleepy pup,  
Who was walking through G-ville one bright sunny day,  
Then saw The Villager and decided to stay.*

Now that Doodle Dog was back on dry sand and he almost had his land paws back, the little floppy-eared puppy made his way to even drier terrain as the concrete leading through town soon stretched solid under his pattering paws. A warm breeze helped to smooth out his fur as he ambled on, but a slight whiff of chill on the same airy breeze teased of the approaching autumn and made him shiver slightly. Summer couldn't be over yet!

Doodle Dog knew his favorite humans would be going back to school soon as the big yellow bumblebee buses had started to awake from their hibernation and were testing the routes that would soon gather the children to whisk them off to the big building up the hill. The floppy-eared puppy hoped to someday get to go inside that building and see what his little two-legged friends did all day ~ and maybe he would learn something too! ~ but he also knew that there are plenty of different ways to discover something new. As he meandered by the usual shops that are some of his favorite familiar places (aside from the meadow and playground

park, of course!) each window held something interesting to explore, something unique to discover, something new to learn, something intriguing for each one of his senses, like the scents that were suddenly tempting his nose right at that moment!

Just then Doodle Dog's four paws led him past the culprit that was causing the delicious smells which had announced its arrival long before it appeared in the floppy-eared puppy's path. The wafts coming from the town bakery teased his nose just like the breeze had done moments before, scents swirling and settling in a smell-surround of sugary sweets as they twisted and twirled around him. And even more potent, now for his gaze, the amazing array of treats on display in the window case, their bright colors and soft textures just as enticing to his sight as the scents were to his nose! Today was a special day for the bakery and Doodle Dog was excited to be invited. Without a moment's pause, the floppy-eared puppy's paws followed the group of pets and their little humans stepping through the open door to inside the shop for a chance to learn something new outside that big school building down the street. Doodle Dog had heard stories about the cupcakery classroom and he couldn't wait to see it for himself!

As the crowd walked past a glass wall encasing the main bakery, through the protective screen could be seen decorating assistants dressed in aprons and wearing hair nets to tuck away loose strands. They worked swiftly and neatly, making precise designs cover the cakes and cookies. Pets weren't allowed in that part of the shop, even if they wore a "fur"net to keep their fuzzy coats from shedding all over the counters! Soon, however, Doodle Dog turned the corner to see a more fur-friendly place, images of biscuits and chewy treats adorning the walls of this space. Once inside the special "barkery" section made just for the four-legged friends, an instructor wearing a tall, droopy chef's hat gave each guest an apron. A little girl looped the floppy-eared puppy's apron behind his back ~ careful not to catch his tail in the ties!

Once everyone was ready, it was time for fun! Ingredients spread out on the table in front of them and all the students watched as the lady in the tall chef's hat showed how to mix them together. First went a cup of flour into a big bowl. It looked a bit darker than usual and Doodle Dog noticed the label said "WHOLE WHEAT" so the floppy-eared puppy wondered how that would make a cookie taste different. He didn't have long to ponder as the chef filled up the measuring cup one more time and another half with the flour and dumped

it all into the bowl, but she wasn't done with her cooking cup yet. She carefully stuffed it with peanut butter and in it went too! Once more the cup filled up, this time with clean, clear water dousing the mound making little rivers of dew run down the sides of the flour mountain. Two large spoons of gooey honey followed before she sprinkled in a tiny spoonful of baking powder and finally cracked an egg on the rim of the bowl, tossing the orange orb into the messy mixture. While she set the oven dial to the mark halfway between 300 and 400, the little chefs, two-legged and four-legged alike, mashed their own ingredients together, squishing the dough onto the counter and cutting out shapes like petite puppies or chewy bones or round balls smashed flat. Some of the little bakers didn't use the peanut butter and instead dumped in their bowls the same amount of pumpkin from a can or a mashed up version of some kind of potato that was orange instead of white and smelled really sweet!

Doodle Dog's human ~ her long brown curls pulled back in a ponytail and tied with a ribbon that resembled the ties above Doodle Dog's long fluffy tail ~ swiped a fingerful of the mixture from the inside of the bowl and held it out to the floppy-eared puppy to lick. Mmmm! She took a lick of a different finger for herself and then went to the sink to wash the rest off before coming back to her project. Doodle Dog helped her gently place the biscuits on a slippery, shiny cookie sheet and they watched as the only big human in the room carefully opened the oven and slid them inside. After the hot treats were put in to bake up nice and firm, the bakers mushed a cup of the leftover peanut butter with four cups of plain vanilla yogurt and mixed it until the tan color of the peanut butter became very very light, so light it almost disappeared in all the creamy white of the yogurt! Poured into colorful paper cups and popped into the freezer for a while, they reminded Doodle Dog of the drippy ice cream he had by the lake. So that's how they're made! Those would be great after a long play day in the sun just as long as they didn't make a mess like the other ones. Soon the cool treats would be nice and firm too and Doodle Dog imagined how yummy they would taste. Though the hot treats would only take about a half hour to bake, the frozen ones would need quite a bit longer to chill than that. But the floppy-eared puppy would have to be patient while they "cooked" and in the meantime he would just have to find something else to keep himself occupied. Maybe he would learn something else new too!