



# Puppy Tails

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*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.*

With the sun barely over the horizon and the birds quietly singing in the new morning, Doodle Dog wasted no time bounding out the office door and down the sidewalk. He'd been hearing stories of parrots and their pirates on the great big, wide open seas searching for treasure and he wondered if, just maybe, there was some treasure to be found in his little town too!

Doodle Dog made his way to the boardwalk and put his paws up against the railing. If I were treasure, where would I be? He thought. Doodle Dog carefully peered over into the water way down below and something shiny caught his eye. Doodle Dog remembered the tales of the pirates' treasure chests overflowing with gleaming gold coins and sparkly jewels. Could that glint be a clue to treasure down below? Looking for another moment, Doodle Dog saw the object jump out of the swift stream, flip in the air, and dive back in, sunlight reflecting off the slippery scales of the fish's back. The floppy-eared puppy watched the long, skinny fish as it swam around a few mossy rocks and disappeared over a slight dip in the water's curvy path. No gold coins or sparkly jewels down there!

Unlike the pirates in the storybooks, Doodle Dog didn't have a map with a big red "X" to mark the spot or a special compass to lead him in the right direction, but what he DID have was curiosity and his nose to sniff out the way and that was good enough for him! He continued along, not taking any road in particular or any trail already carved out, but instead letting his paws make their own tracks where there had been none.

As he walked past the outskirts of the forest, Doodle Dog saw a squirrel gathering acorns into a pile, from time to time carrying some back to the nearest tree and tucking them safely into a small hole. Next along his path was the soft grass of the meadow, pleasantly cool under his paws. As the green blades swished around him, Doodle Dog noticed a tiny field mouse nibbling some cheese,

quietly enjoying an afternoon treat. Sparrows flew peacefully around the floppy-eared puppy, carrying twigs and bits of browned grass from the meadow. Landing gently in the tippy-top branches of a tree – the very same one now packed with acorns for the squirrel – the little brown birds tucked their cargo into the walls of their nests to keep their babies safe from the wind. What other precious materials could be found in this sweet meadow? Was it possible those slick, shiny pebbles in the dirt were actually diamonds in disguise? Was that cool, dewy grass really a rug of emeralds?

Doodle Dog nosed around a bit but didn't find anything out of the ordinary. He pondered this idea as he passed the meadow, wondering if he was on the right track after all. Ignoring the visitor, a fluffy kitty cat prowling in the tall grass a few feet away did not seem to mind that Doodle Dog was near and instead found a perfect, extra-sunny spot and promptly plopped down, turning his four paws and furry belly up to the warmth. Ahhhhh, Doodle Dog thought as he watched the cat enjoying the sunshine. That looked comfy!

He had gone past the forest and through the meadow, up this sidewalk and down where there was no sidewalk, and yet the floppy-eared puppy had not found any chests full of gold or piles of gems of untold legends. He'd even paused to dig in a few spots here

or there wondering if, just maybe, something was somewhere!

It looked as though perhaps the tales would stay in the storybooks as curious Doodle Dog turned to go home. He was about halfway through town as he saw from a distance another little dog trying to carry a giant chewy bone down the street. The bone was much bigger than the little dog and, although one end was clamped tightly in his mouth, the other end dragged on the ground as he tried to pull it along. Doodle Dog quickly ran over and picked up the heavy end to help the little dog carry the bone. Working together, they were able to make it to the next street and up the steps of an old-fashioned porch where the little dog lived. Since the job was done, Doodle Dog turned to leave for home, but he saw, out of the corner of his eye, the little dog nudging the chewy bone toward him and wagging his tail. The two new friends spent the afternoon sharing a snack and watching the people and animals walk by on the street. Doodle Dog may not have found gold coins or colorful jewels or piles of pirates' bounty, but he was pretty sure at the end of the day he'd found his treasure!



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Popular Mexican cuisine can be enjoyed at breakfast, lunch and dinner.

For those who want to celebrate their love of Mexican cuisine with a fiesta for family and friends, consider the following recipe for "Beef and Chipotle Burritos" from the Better Homes and Gardens "New Cook Book" (Meredith Books).

### Beef and Chipotle Burritos

Makes 6 burritos

- 1-1/2 pounds boneless beef round steak, cut 3/4-inch thick
- 1-14.5 ounce can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1/3 cup chopped onion
- 1 to 2 canned chipotle peppers in adobo sauce, chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, crushed
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 6 9- to 10-inch tomato-flavored or plain flour tortillas, warmed
- 3/4 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese (3 ounces)
- 1 recipe Pico de Gallo Salsa (see below)

Shredded jicama or radishes (optional)

Dairy sour cream (optional)

1. Trim fat from meat. Cut meat into six pieces. In a 3 1/2- or 4-quart slow cooker place meat, undrained tomatoes, onion, chipotle pepper, oregano, cumin and garlic.

2. Cover and cook on low-heat setting for 8 to 10 hours or on high-heat setting for 4 to 5 hours. Remove meat from slow cooker. Using two forks, pull meat apart into shreds. Place shredded meat in a large bowl. Stir in enough cooking liquid to reach desired consistency. Divide meat among warm tortillas, spooning it just below the centers. Top with cheese, Pico de Gallo Salsa, and, if desired, jicama and sour cream. Roll up tortillas.

**Pico de Gallo Salsa:** In a small bowl, combine 1 cup finely chopped tomatoes; 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion; 2 tablespoons snipped fresh cilantro; 1 fresh serrano chile pepper, seeded and finely chopped; and dash of sugar. Cover and chill for several hours.

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2. THE HISTORY OF THE MONTH OF AUGUST - The worst performing month for the S&P 500 since 1990 has been August. The stock index has suffered an average loss of 0.7% (total return) during August over the last 21 years. However 4 of the last 5 Augusts have produced a positive total return gain. The best performing month since 1990 has been December, gaining an average of +2.1% (source: BTN Research).

3. AT THIS POINT - The S&P 500 is up +3.9% YTD (total return) as of 7/31/11, a "January-July" performance better than 6 of the last 7 calendar years, only bested by an +11.0% YTD gain in 2009 (source: BTN Research).

4. LAST FIVE MONTHS - The "August-December" total return performance for the S&P 500 in 2010 was a gain of +15.2%, besting the index's gain of +14.0% from 2009. Those results were the 2 best "August-December" returns for the stock index since 1996 when a gain of +16.9% took place (source: BTN Research)

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