

walked their Borzoi down Lake Shore Boulevard for hours just to get the dogs to relieve themselves. That picture is not the idea of fun at a dog show. An unintended benefit of a little trick I learned to keep the whelping box clean resulted in a huge time-saver.

In order to keep the whelping area clean and smelling fresh, we started making an area outside the whelping box a giant kitty-litter. As soon as the puppies are on their feet and crawling, we extend the whelping box with an area right outside that is full of pine and cedar shavings. The area is about four feet by four feet. We use shavings that are pet approved. Puppies will try to get out of the box to relieve themselves when they can. The shavings absorb the urine and make it easy to pick up the feces. You have to be diligent and clean the area daily.

As the puppies become more active and coordinated, we start moving the shavings box farther away from the whelping box. We keep it just about the maximum distance that a puppy can run when waking up and still hit the shavings in time. As time progresses, we continue to move the shavings box farther away. By 4 to 5 weeks, you have a mad dash of puppies running to get to the shavings box as soon as they wake or finish feeding.

Once the puppies are weaned, and before they are moved outside, we put Vari-Kennels in place of the whelping box. Early morning is a tangle of legs and puppies in the Vari-Kennel, followed by a horse race to the shavings box. Eventually to help them get the idea when they are moved outdoors, we sprinkle pine shavings at the end of the puppy runs. The pattern is quickly repeated outside as they run from their

kennel to the find the pine shavings in their run. Before you know it, they are house-trained.

The unintended consequence is that all of our dogs have no problem later in life going on sawdust. Also, sleeping in a Vari-Kennel is a no-brainer. On a trip to Westminster, we were dreading

the idea of just where these discreet dogs of ours were going to “go” while we stayed at a hotel across from Madison Square Garden in New York City. Well, we found out that in the basement of the Pennsylvania Hotel there was an indoor ex-pen area. The dogs we had entered at the show (now older adults) were from one of the first litters we had used the pine-shavings technique with. Fretting over the whole issue, we reluctantly headed down the service elevator to the over-crowded but beautifully decorated pine-shavings haven for the hotel’s four-legged guests. *Voilà!*

Success! One smell of the pine shavings, and it was home sweet home. Nothing sticks with a dog like fond memories from puppyhood. The best part was that we now had an extra hour to find a great restaurant for dinner. —Jon Titus Steele, Hemlock, Mich.; auroral@tm.net ♦



Borzoi



A Very Early Training Technique

The Borzoi by nature is usually a discreet breed. When given the chance they will go to the farthest point of their runs to relieve themselves. While at home this clean habit is appreciated, when traveling it can mean a chore of endless walking just to find that right spot. I remember watching from my 12th-floor room in a downtown Chicago hotel as friends

