



OH, BABY!: Dartmouth now offers one of the most generous parenting policies for graduate students of any institution. It provides up to 12 weeks at full stipend for a birth or adoption, and up to an extra year to finish a degree.

regularly as a counselor. Even so, Runge says she pushed herself harder when she was at camp because “you’re surrounded by other kids [with arthritis] who are doing things.” Runge, who is now 28 and in remission from juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, also enjoyed the camaraderie she found at camp. “You can complain about being on meds, about doctors,” she says, “and they understand.”

And when campers are feeling stiff or physically exhausted, “they don’t need to explain that to anyone,” says Kerin, because the counselors and the other campers understand.

“It is such a community of love and respect and acceptance,” says Andrea (Dubois) Carroll, who has juvenile rheumatoid arthritis and attended Camp Dartmouth-Hitchcock for 10 years. Now 27, she too returns to camp each year as a counselor. In 2005, she even raced back from her honeymoon to be there. “It is such a huge part of my life,” she adds. Going to camp each year “recharged” her, she says, and “gave me confidence.”

First: While camps for children with special needs have become increasingly popular in recent years, Camp Dartmouth-Hitchcock was one of the first for children with chronic rheumatologic conditions. And, according to Carroll, who is admittedly biased, it’s among the best. “Camp is awesome!” she says. “It’s absolutely wonderful.”

A **WEB EXCLUSIVE** about the camp is at dartmed.dartmouth.edu/summer06/html/vs_camp_dh_we.php.

JENNIFER DURGIN

While resident is at work, she finds it’s a dog-eat-TreatStik world

Most dogs would be perfectly content to spend their days home alone gnawing on whatever’s handy—chair legs or sofa cushions, for example. But most dog owners would prefer that their pets confine themselves to chewing on things not quite so valuable—dog toys, for example. The problem is, most dog toys get boring pretty quickly.

Dr. Tabitha Washington, a DHMC resident in anesthesiology, had just such a problem with Remy, her Chesapeake Bay retriever. Remy spent a lot of time alone while Washington and her fiancé, Michael Jones, were at work. Conventional dog toys bored Remy, so she did the kinds of things dogs do when they’re bored.

Washington applied some creative thinking to the problem. What sort of toy would keep Remy engaged all day—busy enough not to be tempted by chair legs? Something that dispensed treats would be good. Something that made getting treats fun would be even better. Something that made getting treats an all-day job would be just about perfect.

Thus the TreatStik was born. Washington sketched her concept—a short piece of hollow, indestructible* PVC pipe, perfectly sized to fit a dog’s mouth, with a hole in the end just large enough to dispense one small treat at a time as the toy is rolled around. Jones constructed a model out of parts from the hardware store, then they enlisted a rapid-prototype machine at Dartmouth’s Thayer School of Engineering to extrude the first TreatStik.

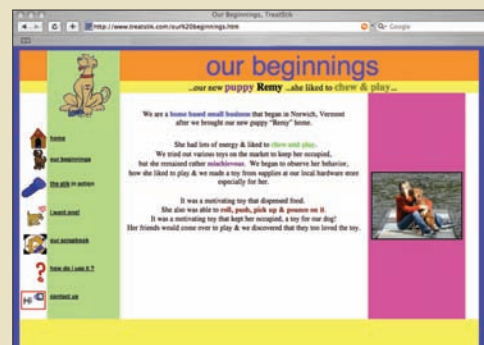
The concept proved workable, so Washington and Jones found a manufacturer in California; designed product labels, a website, and advertising; and recruited Washington’s mother as their distribution agent.

The early product-development phase was, Washington admits, a busy time. “In the beginning, I’d stay up late at the hospital, and then come home and stay up even later” working on the website. But things are now a “little more balanced,” she says. While Washington com-

pletes a fellowship in pain management next year, she plans to also develop some more products, including treats specially designed to go in the TreatStik.

That will be welcome news to Brady, Washington and Jones’s new “very hyper” puppy—a Weimaraner-Lab mix—as well as to the roughly 10,000 dogs who are currently enjoying Washington’s invention. M.M.

* The TreatStik was field-tested by DARTMOUTH MEDICINE’s reporter on Pippin, an Australian shepherd who belongs to Inger Imset, the office manager for Dartmouth-Hitchcock’s Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. If Pippin couldn’t bend, break, destroy, or get bored with the toy, there’s not a dog out there who can.



Anesthesiology resident Tabitha Washington (pictured in the bottom panel with Remy) developed this website to market a dog toy she invented. She came up with it to keep Remy from chewing up the house while she was at work.