

## Airedales and Digging

Airedales are diggers. Terriers. We have enough space that we don't really try to stop the behavior. We regard some mischief as just part of being a dog. Consequently, we have had extensive caves and caverns dug in our large runs and yards. We have holes that were barely 10 inches across at the opening, that had three Airedales come out of them! We have had cave collapses, that fully reconfigured the yard. We have had dogs "disappear", gone searching the neighborhood for them, only to have them crawl out of their hideout in the yard when dinner time came along.

A few years ago, there was a particularly wet spring and we were a little too busy to keep up with the grass in the kennel runs and it got away from us. We are talking thigh high jungle.... with holes! I had an employee from the clinic come out and help me catch up. Freddie is a great guy and willing to help with anything. But this was a test! It is hard to mow ground that rough, especially when the grass is that long. He was struggling and sweating and bumping along, but he was sticking with it. I was watching from another run as he trudged along, only to see him disappear from site! There one second, gone the next. Mower was there, no Freddie! I rushed over to check on him to find him barely sticking out of a hole, dirty and spitting. He hadn't seen the small entrance to the large cave, and zoom, he was gone! I helped him out and he was ok. I decided not to mention that I had been trying to discourage digging in that particular hole and had been putting poop in it for some time.....

Our son, Will, has had some ferrets for some years. But the smell associated with ferrets eventually drove them out of the house and into the barn. The barn is on one side of our kennel building and dog runs are along the catercorner side. Those ferrets were there no time before the dogs knew they were there. All our dogs can open gates, so we have latches on all of them. The exception is gates that require two hands to open. Chip managed to figure out how to open a two step, two handed latch to a gate in order to get in the barn and investigate the "new" ferrets. Chi-chi had a barn wall and a corner of a large building between her and the ferrets. It didn't matter, she knew they were there. She doesn't tend to be a big digger, but this was for cause. She tunneled about ten yards, under the concrete slab of the kennel building and into the barn, popping up next to the ferret cage. The other dogs knew something was up and let me know. I found her with her head sticking out, (Deja vu, just like Freddie!) right by the cage.