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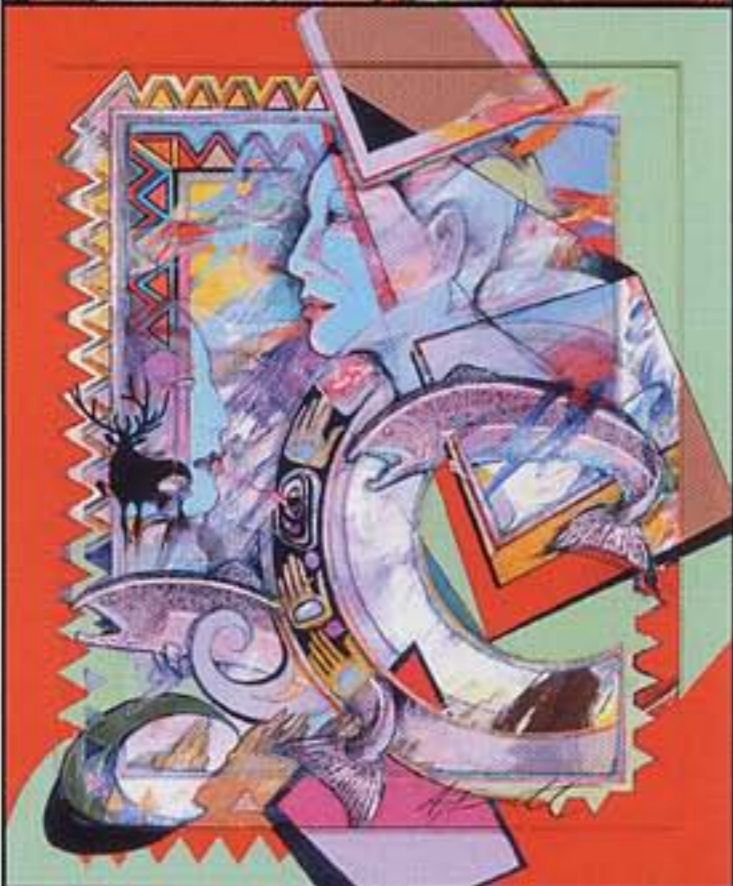
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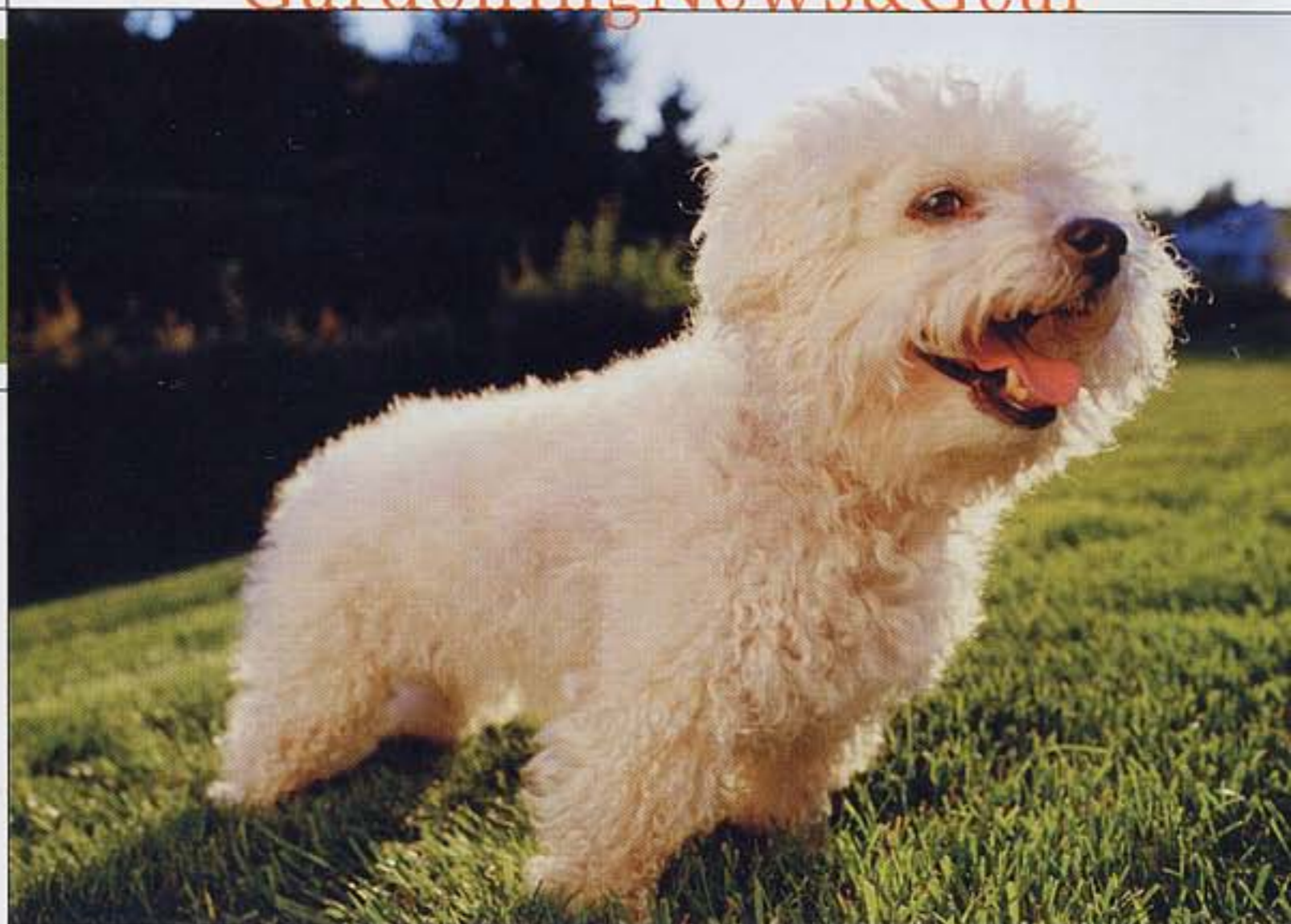
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Area

Gardening News & Gear

IN SEASON



✿ **It's a dog's lawn** My dearly departed schipperke trampled tender sweet peas and peed on bleeding hearts until they looked like cooked mustard greens. Today, my gluttonous pug enjoys the occasional "Mediterranean salad"—ripe cherry tomatoes off the vine followed by olive-like fruits from laurel bushes. Had I properly trained my dogs, of course, I wouldn't have these problems. Instead, I used massive amounts of chicken wire until the garden resembled a prison yard. Eventually, I tired of that look and sought the advice of professionals.

For smaller dogs, Barbara Stock, co-owner of Stock & Hill Landscapes Inc. (425.487.1664), recommends wrought-iron fence barriers, low rock walls or small shrubs, tightly spaced. Consider the breed, too. Jack Russells, for instance, are diggers, so barriers should extend a foot or more beneath the ground. For repeat offenders, dog trainer and animal behaviorist Colleen Paige (206.377.0187; universitydog.com) recommends a sand-box. "Bury treats or toys in the sand so they'll remember to dig there," she says. Other breeds, such as collies, are herders, and need to maintain a path on

the yard's perimeter. Stock says to follow their lead and pave a path with gravel or bark. Adapt to your dog's habits. "One woman's dog ate only a certain kind of grass," she laughs, "so she planted a patch of it."

Plant choices, too, are important. Tom Barrett, owner of Environmental Construction Inc. (425.803.9881), suggests using hardy plants that stand up to being trampled. Ground covers such as small-leaved ivy or vinca may prove hardier than grass. For perennials, bulbs and vegetables, use pots or bench-height raised gardens. Think vertically. Rather than flower beds, plant flowering shrubs and vines.

As for the brown polka dots, Paige says tall fescue grass is more resistant to urine, but spraying any grass immediately after the deed works best. Better yet, train your dog to go in a specific area. Finally, Marie Emery, a professional dog sitter and co-owner of Fetch (1411 34th Ave.; 206.720.1961), recommends Green-um Treats, a daily food supplement that neutralizes urine's pH so it won't stain the grass. Sounds good to me: Whatever it takes to keep my grass greener. —Kathy Schultz