BOUVIER DES FLANDRES CLUB

GOLDEN REEF

FEBRUARY 2023

Photo - Aura (Barry Schonfeldt)

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Please note that the ideas and opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Chairman or Committee of the Club nor those of the Editor of the magazine

LETTER FROM THE CLUB COMMITTEE

Dear Members,

Welcome all to 2023 though doubtless by the time you read this, the year will not feel new anymore. We hope any of you who have set targets with your dogs for the year are still on track with the hard work that will entail from you and your Bouv (or honorary Bouv) partners.

To update you all on the plans for the year ahead, the committee has decided to tackle a disciplines show once more, so do keep the date of 16 April 2023 free to come and support us in this endeavour. All the paperwork has been submitted to KUSA and as soon as we have their approval, we will send out more details. We are putting on the same events as previously but adding obedience classes and Flyball to the mix. Please let anyone with whom you may be training know about this date so we can expand our base of competitors - remember this is for all dogs, not just Bouviers. If competition is not your thing, then Canine Good Citizen qualifications will also be on offer if you wish to just try out something non-competitive.

Another date for you to remember is the AGM which has been set for Sunday 7th May 2023. Again, details will be sent out nearer the time. Because of the introduction of the POPI Act we are also having to relook at our constitution. We have just commenced with this but it is likely that we will need to ensure we have enough participants at a General Meeting to pass the changes which will be forwarded to members for comment when ready. We do try to make everyone feel part of the Club even though we are not often physically together.

This is the last magazine to be issued before the Club year formally ends in February. Membership renewal forms should have been received by all of you by the time you receive this magazine - if you haven't had yours yet, please contact Liz Hodgson so this can be rectified. We are pleased to say that again we have been able to keep our membership fees at the same level, unchanged since 2020 thanks to the voluntary work done on the magazine by Denise Scarrott and Barry Schönfeldt and to both of whom the Club remains very grateful. Please renew your membership - subscriptions and donations are the main means by which we keep going as the only organisation in this country that has at heart the interests of the Bouvier breed as a whole.

Talking of membership, we are pleased to welcome Sonette de Jager on board. Sonette was recently delighted to receive a bitch puppy, Haly, from Mon Cher kennels in Northern Ireland (from the same breeder as Tanzo and Misty

who were imported by the late Debbie Snashall). Sonette is hoping to assist with maintaining the availability of KUSA registered Bouviers in South Africa with plans to breed Haly when the time is right. The addition of new blood to this country is a welcome development for those of us concerned about the diminishing gene pool.

Talking of breeding, Frik Bezuidenhoudt has welcomed a further ten puppies into the world and these have now gone to their new homes.

Since the last magazine, there has been limited participation by Bouviers in conformation competition but Liz Hodgson qualified for Western Cape Top Dog and Top Puppy with Amor and Julia respectively. At least the Bouviers are still visible in some show circles and, whilst there are no new KUSA disciplines qualifications to mention, Liz was very proud of Amor for obtaining his BH qualification in November. This is considered to be a temperament test but has a level of obedience required so Liz breathed a sigh of relief for a cool(ish) day in November that bolstered the chances of Amor passing his heelwork exercises with degree of enthusiasm. He did manage to pass but Liz Chamberlain, who was spectating, was forbidden from distributing her video of him as his enthusiasm was adequate but certainly not at bragging level!

Hazel Johnson in Kwa-Zulu Natal has been busy with laudable dog activities there and has set up a new NPO venture to share her love of dogs with children who otherwise would not be exposed to basic dog training and husbandry. It is modelled upon and mentored by Funda Nenja with dog and child learning together. We wish her and her team well with this new endeavour.

At the risk of repetition, please encourage any Bouvier owners you meet to join the Club and the Bouvier Fun Facebook Group - they are welcome to both and we recognise the need to make a special effort to encourage owners of all Bouviers to join us, irrespective of whether their dogs are registered or not. If anyone would like an application form for a potential new member, again please contact Liz Hodgson. We really need to share our knowledge and enthusiasm to have any influence on the way Bouviers are looked after in this country.

Again, remember that we are grateful to receive any news from our members that Denise can use to give subsequent magazines that local touch via Members' Memoirs. Don't forget our special email address photos@bouvierclub.co.za for receipt of photos for consideration for inclusion in the magazine. Remember to send them in as large a file size as you can and to let us know who (human and canine) features in the photos.

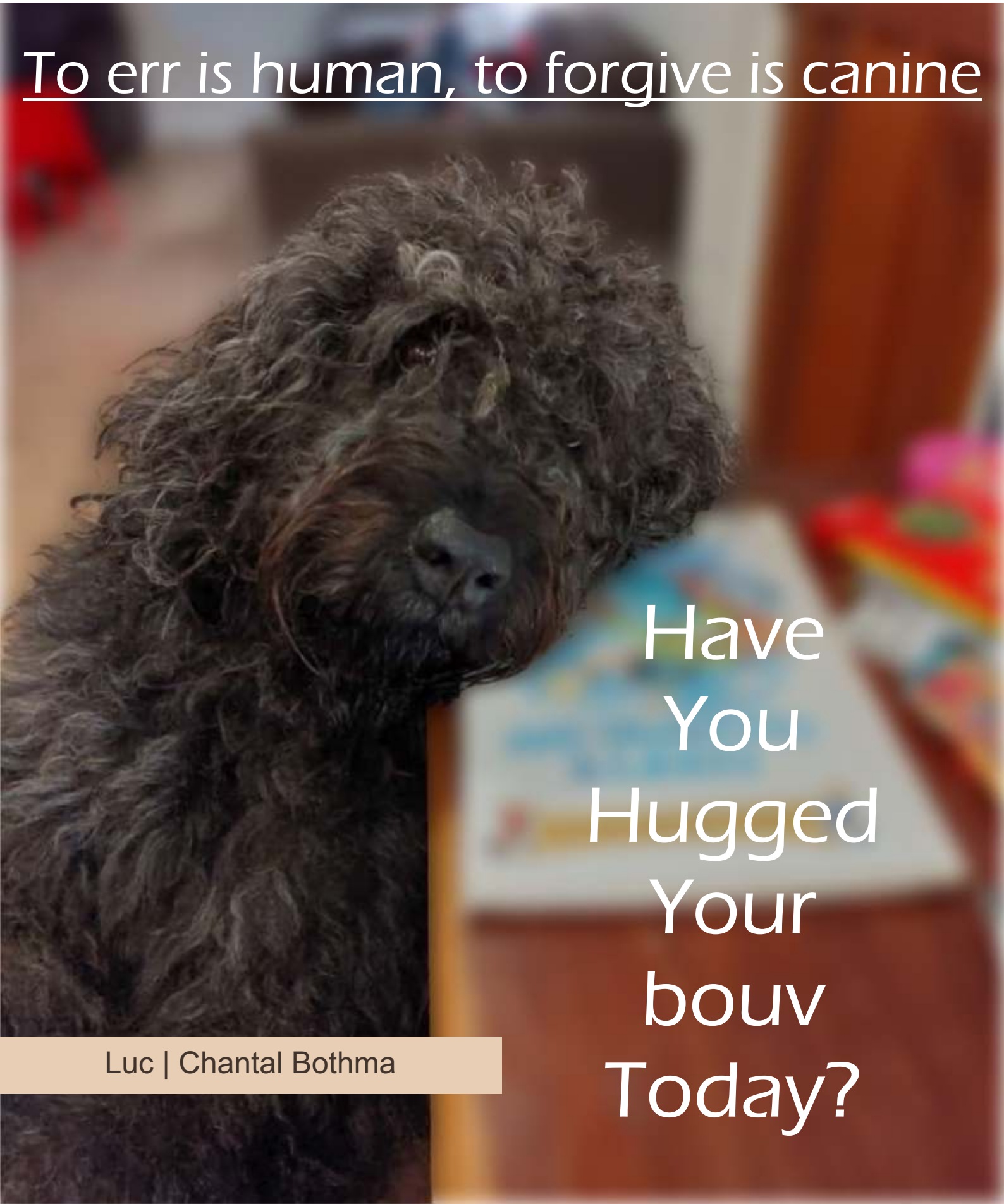
In the meantime, enjoy reading and please write to us about your Bouvs for the next magazine.

The Committee

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Who would think that walking the dog could turn out to be so dangerous, painful and expensive!
Going out for our customary walk at the park early in the morning I could not have known what lay in store.
All started out well. We greeted the folks we normally see, exchanging customary pleasantries before they and their dogs set off for their run and I went for my normal stroll as dictated by my hip. The grass is very long and Miya was on her guineafowl expedition. Unfortunately the park, like most public areas in the country, is not being well maintained and with the overgrown veld and seasonal emergence of black jacks in dense stands we tend to stick to the paths which are stony and uneven. Suffice to say that my foot caught on a small half buried rock and I performed a very inelegant swan dive, landing on my forearms and doing a face plant into the dirt (and, think, onto another rock). Miya come running over and all I could see was a steady stream of blood as I gingerly felt my mouth. I will not go into detail except to say that I had achieved a lip which the Kardashians would pay thousands for. We left the park, I brought Miya home and gave her her breakfast then headed for Casualty where the doctor said I'd need to be stitched up in theatre. Now here's the thing, the surgeon is a man who lives an inverted life. He sleeps from 06:00 to about 12:00. Then consults until 18:30 after which he starts his surgical list at various hospitals. This meant that he got to our hospital after midnight and I got into theatre at 04:30. After an anaesthetic induced sleep I was discharged and looking like the customary "shrunken head" with stitches in my lip, I made my way home where thankfully dear Fina had come in to sleep over to look after Miya. Now, after having to have my teeth seen to I am on my way to full recovery.
So after my tale of woe it is now time to get down to getting the magazine done, hard as it is to believe that the first month of 2023 is already almost done and dusted.
The weather lately has definitely not been Bouvier friendly with temperatures consistently in the 30's. After a wet December, January has been very dry up on the Highveld. The first Obedience show of 2023 as held a couple of weeks ago and Miya was entered in A. Suffice to say that it was a total bust as Miya's prime objective was to get to any bit of shade available and when in the ring this meant under the judge's table! The word "lag" took on a different meaning in her heelwork. There is a Rally show this weekend but I will not subject her to

the predicted real-feel temperature of 35° C which is expected. Roll on winter!
I want to thank Jackie Pitts for responding to my request for a piece about the relocation of her Bouvs to Scotland. Members' Memoirs was looking rather empty. We all have anecdotes about our Bouvs, past and present. We'd love to hear them!



BOUVIER DES FLANDRES HISTORY: BELGIUM'S FARM DOG, GERMANY'S ENEMY

By AKC Staff

Antwerp is the world's capital for diamonds, exquisite gems strong enough to cut glass. But the region is known for another multifaceted jewel, the Bouvier des Flandres, admired the world over for his striking appearance, tremendous strength, and courage.

"Initially we are drawn to the Bouvier by the appearance of rugged hairiness, but what keeps us with them is the character. They are hardworking, honest, blue-collar types of dogs. I consider them to be the John Wayne of the dog world," observes American Bouvier des Flandres Club (ABdFC) president and breeder-judge Nancy Eilks. "Discriminating in his protectiveness, the Bouvier may challenge a person, but will not bite unless he feels it necessary. Loyal and devoted, the Bouvier has a well-developed sense of responsibility and a lot of common sense. He can be ready for action at any time, but will lay calmly at your feet in the interim."

Excellent with the very young and the very old, they instinctively know who needs a gentler touch. In the home, the Bouvier's favourite vantage point is a doorway or stair landing. There they can easily watch over all the family members.

The breed developed from Berger Picard herders and massive Matin dogs, which were often used to haul carts. These dogs were bred with British rough-coated gray hounds brought as early as the 11th century to a Flemish monastery, the Abbey of Duynen.

The dogs had many jobs — protecting the home, pulling carts, and turning butter chums — but they demonstrated particular aptitude as livestock herders. The French word bouvier means "cowherd."

Local preferences for size and colour gave rise to the Bouvier des Ardennes, Bouvier de Roulers, and Bouvier des Flandres. With a maximum height of 65cm and black coat with white hairs or dark brindled colour, the Bouvier des Flandres became the favoured variety from the Lys River to the coast.

The short-bodied, bobtailed dogs with heads shaped like a Flemish brick, cropped ears, harsher tousled coats, and the perfect guard temperament became the origin of the modern Bouvier des Flandres.

A vice president of Belgium's Club St. Hubert of the North was responsible for promoting the Bouvier des Flandres to prominence among the regional types in the early part of the 20th century. But it would be many years before a consistent type would emerge.

Efforts to write a standard stalled until the end of World War I, when many Bouviers perished and others were used as messengers and to haul wounded soldiers and supplies. Only six active breeders existed after the war. In 1922, the Club National Belge du Bouvier des Flandres adopted a standard, focussing on correct type, coat texture (but not colour), and moral qualities of the "real" Bouvier.

In a translation from an early Belgium description of the ideal Bouvier, F. E. Verbanck wrote: "A square-built dog, massive through the chest development, ennobled by a neck proudly carried, with a strong but well-chiselled head to which the trimmings render even more expression, a tail placed highly and gaily ~ carried to give accent to his fiery character, the body well-posed on four pillar like well-boned limbs but without heaviness in his gait."

World War II brought many large breeds to the brink of extinction in Europe, but it was particularly hard on the Bouvier. The story goes that Hitler had been bitten by one and then declared war on all of them. Whether true or not, German soldiers were known to shoot Bouviers on sight.

Dedicated breeders smuggled some of the dogs underground. One of them, Edmee Bowles, of Antwerp, landed in America, where she had a tremendous influence on the breed's survival and development.

These pioneers chose Bouviers for character. Though some breeders, such as Bowles, emphasized the breed's protectiveness, others believed that no single attribute should overpower but that Bouviers should react purposely as needed. Watchful and resolute, Bouviers should always display sensible judgment and a dependably appropriate temperament.

"Fanciers precisely know their breed has the essence of many breeds rolled into one: intelligence, loyalty, steadfastness, resoluteness, formidableness, spontaneity, mischievousness, and most of all, dependability," says Claire McLean, who inherited the Deewal prefix when her aunt died.

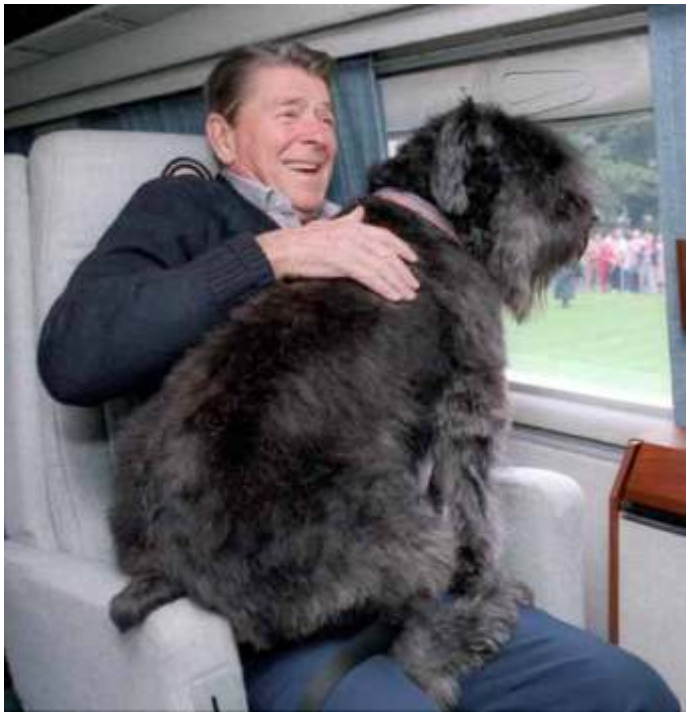
A Dog World ad in 1961 introduced Gladys May to the breed. May's third Bouvier, Banquo du Clos des Cerberes, was large and businesslike. When an earthquake demolished May's California home, Banquo pulled her son to safety without leaving a mark. As neighbourhood parents salvaged necessities, Banquo kept their children safe under a tree.

"Banquo was never trained beyond conformation training, no obedience training whatever. He acted on pure instinct," she says. "I never thought he would do what he did, protecting those strange children. His job was watching those kids to the point that he completely ignored the male dog that lived next door who was his arch-rival."

"They know who belongs and who doesn't. They know when to act and when to accept," says Loryce Heisel.

Nic (Ch. Prudhon des Preux Vuilbaards), commanded attention at the shows. Owner Lil Mees remembers Nic as easygoing, but watchful over her sons. When a visitor put an arm around one boy's shoulders, Nic pulled down the man's trousers as the man paled. Nic sired 25 champions and multiple obedience-titled dogs.

Nancy and Ronald Reagan were gifted a Bouvier puppy named Lucky at a White House ceremony on December 6, 1984 and the breed got a boost of popularity. In 2020, the breed ranked 94 of 195 breeds. True beauty is apparent when the Bouvier works in the field and obedience rings, and on agility and rally courses.“Bouviers are working dogs and, as such, quickly and enthusiastically absorb any training offered them, ” says Carl May. “He never quite loses his mischievous sparkle, and even an elderly and sedate Bouvier takes only a little coaxing to entice into a rough-and-tumble or gentle tug of war.” It is by keeping the balance of form and function, farm and home, that fanciers will maintain the multifaceted gem we know as the Bouvier des Flandres.



“Once you have owned a Bouvier it is unlikely that you will ever change breeds.”

When the earth was newly wrought, God made a wondrous creature.
He gave its form most careful thought and studied every feature.
He made it with a graceful tail with several rates of motion.
So every wag could, without fail, register emotion.
He made it with a varied bark that produces several tones.
To frighten goblins in the dark or murmur over bones.
He made a moistened nose that probes in every niche,
For soothing children, Heaven knows, it has a tongue that licks.
He made it with such soulful eyes of deepest softest brown,
That no man, neither fool nor wise, could turn its wishes down.
He made it with a coat of hair that covers every bit.
But made it soft beyond compare for when children play with it.
He made it loyal, strong and smart, to serve as best it can,
So it could always do a part as the ears and eyes of Man.
He made it minus gear or cog of His most precious blend,
And so with love, God made the dog to be a man's best friend.

MEMBER'S MEMOIRS

BouBear and Yogi

Jackie Pitts

Yogi | Neville Pitts

From sandy beaches to ice covered fields…
The story of two Bouviers travelling from Zinkwazi (KZN) to Dufftown.(Scotland)
We thought we were well organised. We researched everything possible. The "boys" - BouBear and Yogi were going to have nothing but the best experience.
They started with their vet checks in Ballito in January 2022 (we were told at this stage Bella was too old and frail to join us on the trip), had their bloods sent to Germany as this was recommended over Onderstepoort and before we knew it they were ready to go.
I spent months researching each and every Pet Travel Agent. A friend of mine who is very senior in the travel industry told me the Mafia of the travel industry are the agents moving animals and those returning human remains! On the side, if there are human remains on a flight, they will not transport animals as they evidently go wild.
So after considering flights out of Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban, we were eventually told that only Qatar and Emirates will transport dogs the size of our Bouvies because they work on height not weight and Yogi is the equivalent of a doggie Guilliver!
The next challenge was getting a crate big enough for Yogi because the airways are evidently very strict in this regard and are quick to turn the dogs away if they believe the crate is too small. There was no way that we could buy a crate off the shelf so someone had to drive all the way up to Zinkwazi to measure Yogi (they didn't believe our measurements) and he had a crate specially made.
We then decided that the shortest separation time (for them and us) was for them to fly out of Durban to Dubai on Emirates on the same flight as us. The boys would have to spend a night at the International Dog Hotel (at a cost of

US$330 each) whilst we would fly on to Glasgow and be waiting for them the next day. We were told that they would be exercised, fed and loved to prepare them for the next leg of their flight.
We flew out of Dubai with very heavy hearts knowing that we were leaving our boys behind and it would be another 24 hours or more before we would see them again.
We arrived in Glasgow, checking into the Travelodge (the cheapest accommodation we could find after spending what we were on the boys' overnight stay!)
The car we had bravely bought online was delivered and we set off to find a pet shop to buy everything we could think of that they might need.
We were up early the next morning and couldn't wait to get to the airport. ON our way, we received an SMS telling us that the flight had been delayed … so we had to have yet another cup of coffee.
When we arrived at Customs we could hear our boys barking and creating chaos. We were told that we just had to wait for the vet to check them over and they would release them to us. If only it was that straightforward….
Yogi came through first rather dazed and unsure of himself as we dashed him outside onto the grass. Then the "bomb was dropped". BouBear's microchip did not match the number written in his veterinary certificate. When they were taken to the vet as pups, the vet must have put the wrong sticker in his book - it was one digit out.
We were then told that BouBear was either going to be deported or would have to be quarantined for 5 months. We were devastated as we could hear his excited bark in the next room but they wouldn't let us see him.
It was late and being 2 hours behind South Africa there was absolutely nothing we could do other than drive away with Yogi leaving my darling bear detained by customs.
Our next challenge was to find a hotel that would take dogs so we had somewhere to stay the night and start working on a plan as to how to get BouBear released - they had given us until 5pm the next day…
We arranged for a friend to be at Ballito Vet when they opened the next morning - after all they had scanned the chip twice and not noticed the discrepancy - and put the Travel Agent on standby to do whatever was necessary to get our boy released.
Ballito Vet were amazing, as was the State Vet from KwaDukuza. Between them they managed to get the Germans to agree that this was a matter of human error and it was the same dog. All new certificates had to be issued and the Germans insisted that the staff at Glasgow airport destroy BouBear's vaccination book in front of them on Skype.
Eventually after many tears my BouBear walked out the door at 4:45pm into my arms…
Tune in to the next edition if you are interested in following with my boys on their adventure through the Highlands.

Pip

Denise Scarrott

PiP came in to my life at the age of 7 weeks and was a joy from day one. Addy Smits went with me to get her in Mpumalanga. We stopped for lunch on the way home and for the first time in her life, she was introduced to a collar and lead and she walked as if she'd been born with it. An easier dog you could not have wished for. Everything was fun for her and she started school at Paws Abilities with Louise Thompson soon after her arrival. She thrived in the learning environment and tackled everything with an infectious Bouvier enthusiasm as she progressed though the classes, quickly outgrowing her smaller class mates.

At the age of 7 PiP was diagnosed with arthritis which was most severe in her front legs, especially the carpal joints. When she started showing signs of discomfort at training and a reluctance to participate I took her to Blue Hills Vet for an evaluation to see if she was a candidate for Stem Cell therapy. She was and so the procedure, which was relatively new at the time, was done with great success. This was followed by sessions of swimming (not her favourite pastime) and then the underwater treadmill which she took to readily.

She was soon back enjoying school but after two years she started limping badly and it was easy to put it down to her arthritis and the expected longevity of the stem cells but when it impacted severely on her comfort and mobility I took her back to see if the procedure could be repeated.

In an inspired move Tim decided to x-ray her shoulder and not just the lower leg as we had been doing previously and to my utter devastation he saw a small lesion at the top of the humerus which turned out to be an osteosarcoma. I was given options for her treatment and after some discussion and soul searching settled on amputation of her right front leg followed by 5 bouts of chemotherapy which I was advised could buy us an extra 9-12 months.

The surgery was done and her rehabilitation started.

Dogs don't dwell on the past and she proved that dogs live in the moment when I fetched her 3 days after her operation as she happily attempted to jump into the car to go home and once home, got out of the car with little assistance and went inside and jumped onto the couch! When after a while she wanted to turn around, she sat up, rested her chin on the back of the chair for support and manoeuvred her way around. It was amazing to witness. Don't know about "'n boer maak 'n plan" but a Bouv sure does.

For the next few months I slept on the couch in the lounge with her bed beside me. I knew if I went to my room she would want to be there too. Tristan fell in with the new arrangements and shifted his sleeping place from the bedroom to the lounge as well.

Her chemo was negotiated with the same "whatever" attitude, never showing any after effects or side effects.

She was still going to school and was keen to join in whatever the other dogs were doing – she negotiated the weaving poles, went over small jumps and

was even able to go through the tunnels even though she had to crouch somewhat. She almost gave Louise a heart attack when she wanted to attempt the see-saw!
Our daily walks to the park continued unabated and when Miya joined our family 6 months into her tripawed journey, it was PiP and not Tristan who played with her with a noisy, boisterous enthusiasm that defied logic.
With the passage of time the soft brace we had been using lost its integrity and it was suggested that we look at a more rigid, custom made brace and a fibreglass prosthetic was made to measure. Like everything else she accepted it with no fuss.
This brace was used for about 18 months when, on her way out to the car for a walk at the park, she suffered a pathological fracture of her right back leg and I was forced to say goodbye to my strong-minded, brave girl. I had had an extra 2 years almost to the day with my heart on three legs.
I learnt a lot while guardian to this special girl.
In the beginning it was very hard to resist rushing to help her each time she stumbled. I quickly saw that she wanted to do things on her own, just picking herself up and carrying on. Slippery floors were difficult and I resorted to putting carpet tiles down, giving her paths which she instinctively followed when moving about the house. As a front limb amputee she was not able to negotiate ramps even with the added support of a brace. Steps presented little or no problem.
I know that with the early diagnosis of the cancer, her regular attendance at therapy was a major factor in her quality of life and well-being and believe that cannabis oil also played its part especially in preventing the spread of the cancer to her lungs for which she was x-rayed every 3 months. She also benefited from Reiki performed by Addy.
Her zest for life and complete disregard for what humans perceive to be a disability remain an inspiration to all who knew her and she is still remembered as a shining example of “play the cards that are dealt to you”.

Pip | Denise Scarrott

FRANK

Cheryl Dee Ree

(Not a member but gleaned from the Internet and too funny not to include)

Anyone want a laugh?
I mowed the lawn late tonight and then rushed to take Frank out for a run while there was still light.
I put his 30' leash on, as I do when it's getting darker and was kicking the ball around for him to chase.
He was full of beans so running like gangbusters after the balls.
I was tired, in flip flops and standing on somewhat slick grass because I used the mulch attachment so I could cut it a little shorter (slippery combo)...I didn't notice the leash was wrapped around my ankle. He took off and both my feet came out from underneath me.
I landed on my butt and then smacked my head so hard my hair clip smashed into a million pieces. My ankle was killing and I couldn't stand.
I didn't want my neighbours (who had just moved in 2 days ago) to see me, so I was quickly crawling on my hands and knees to the house getting covered in grass and killed by mosquitos. Frank was by my side suitably concerned.
However, nature called and he cut in front of me and took a gigantic, stinking poo while right at my eye level!! I was gagging, trying not to cry and trying to pick up his poo, while pushing him away because he was trying to lick my face.
Then he stepped in the crap!
So now I'm crawling, with a bag of poo, still gagging, crying now and pushing Frank off who is even more upset and wanting to jump on me...with his crap paws.
I finally got to my back porch and heard “Oh goodness, are you ok?” and there are my neighbours and their 10 or so guests, very concerned watching me from their upper balcony....sigh....

It is better to have a dog who confidently makes an error, rather than one who is afraid to make a decision - Patt.lu

Jessie & Shupa | Rod Eterman

SOCIALISATION

Okay, so this is a word that gets an awful lot of play in the training world, and it's definition has come to mean an awful lot of things. Many of which, are incredibly counter-productive, if not downright dangerous.
So let's see if we can't clarify a few things.
Socialisation ISN'T:

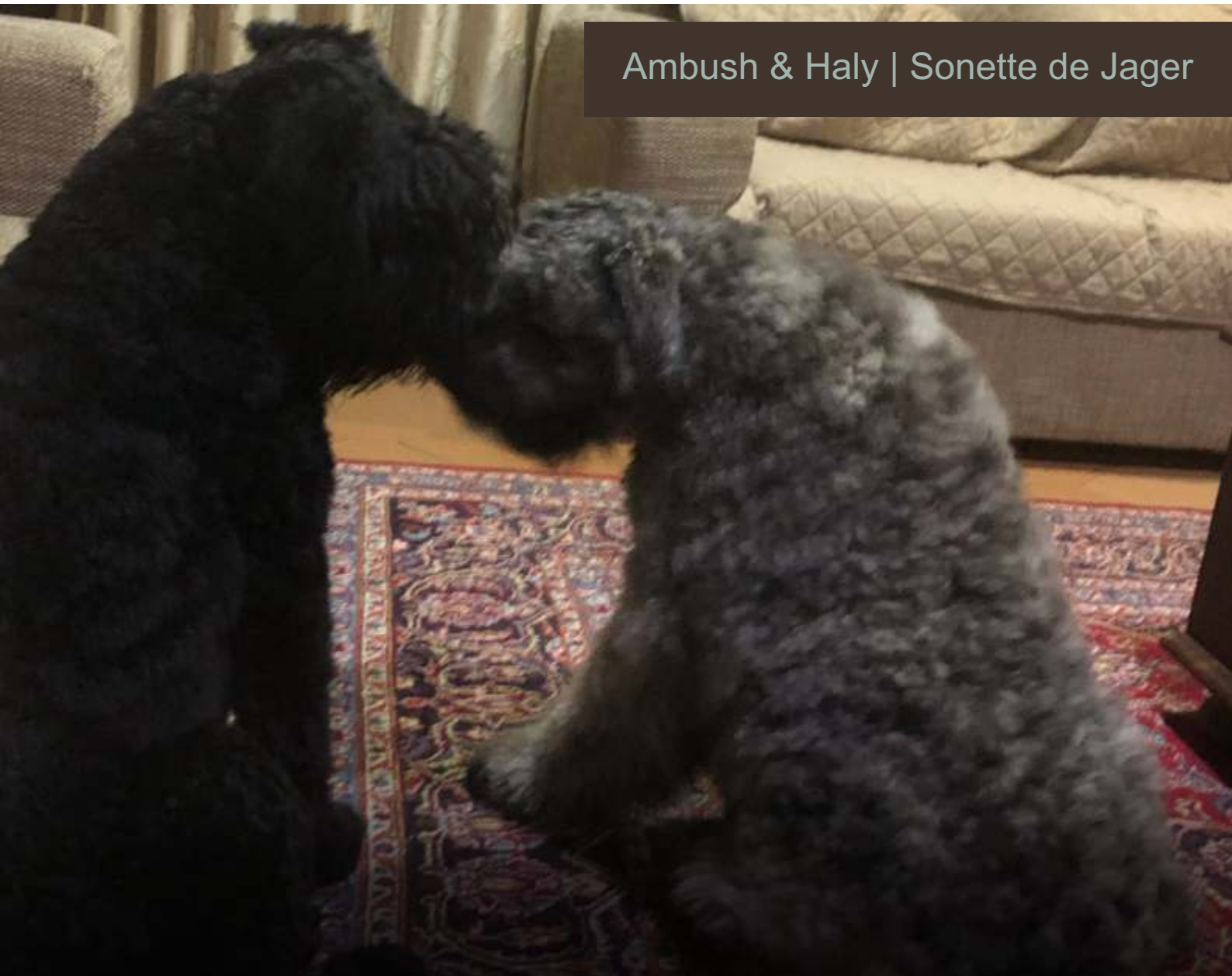
- About letting your dog freely interact with dogs at the dog park, day care, or with friends' dogs.
- About allowing your dog to meet other dogs on-leash.
- About allowing all manner of people, in all manner of mental/emotional states to interact/pet/pressure your dog.
- About exposing your dog to the sights and sounds of cars, buses, motorcycles, bikes, skateboards, joggers...and allowing them to freak out, panic, aggress, hide, bark etc.
- About exposing your dog to the sights and sounds of dogs, cats, and other animals, and allowing them to freak out, aggress, lunge, bark, growl etc.

Socialisation IS:

- About teaching your dog the proper responses to dogs. What is and isn't appropriate behaviour, and correcting the unwanted when it appears.
- About teaching your dog to walk by the barking, lunging dog(s) on walks and ignore them, completely. Redirecting if necessary to achieve this result.
- About advocating for your dog and ensuring people aren't allowed to pressure your dog, by touching, crouching down, attempting "kisses" etc. That means being a big boy or girl, and stopping others from engaging in unwanted, uninvited interactions.
- About exposing your dog to all manner of daily life "things" and ensuring a proper response. If aggression/arousal is present, it's corrected, if fear/arousal is present (and causes an overreaction/fleeing etc.) it's corrected. Ask your dog to learn to ignore and not care about these "life" distractions/concerns/temptations. Teach them to listen to the training, not the world around them.
- About teaching your dog to leave other creatures alone. The cat, the bird, the cow, the goat, the other dog, is simply none of their business. If they decide those things are their business, it's your job to correct and clarify what is and isn't their business for them.

Socialisation has become a ridiculously simplified, dumbed down, all-encompassing idea. Free interaction and exposure have been presented as a panacea, the magic gateway to a balanced dog. That's a whole lot of B.S. you've been sold, by a lot of people full of B.S.

Socialisation is all about teaching your dog how to behave and exist in the world...properly. People have a belief that only interactions create a well socialised dog. They don't understand that existence is almost always preferable, and more valuable than actual interaction. Yes exposure is critical, but exposure without 100% clear guidance, and corrections for poor choices, isn't socialisation, it's chaos, and it's not teaching your dog what's right, what's wrong, and that you'll keep them safe, so they don't have to.
A well socialised dog isn't fazed by the world around them. And that doesn't come from simple exposure and interactions without guidance. Ironically, that's precisely how you create anti-social dogs.
Think on that for a minute.



Ambush & Haly | Sonette de Jager

The widespread belief that a dog has to engage with other dogs to be properly socialised isn't true.
If your dog can look at other dogs without losing its mind, it's socialised

- Hyper Pup K9 Training

FIVE TIPS TO REDUCE DOG ANXIETY AT THE VET

Proud Dog Mom

Does your dog get anxious during vet visits? Between all the poking and prodding, it's easy to understand why many pets don't like the doggy doctor. But, good news: There are several things you can do to make your trip to the vet more enjoyable for your furry family member. Read on for tips to help reduce dog anxiety.

1. Choose the Right Vet

Just like finding the right doctor for ourselves can feel like a daunting task, so can choosing the perfect vet for our fur babies. Between referrals from friends/family/neighbors and reading online reviews, you'll probably be able to narrow it down to a few options. But, nothing beats a tour of the clinic to ensure the staff is friendly and supportive. If you're starting from square one, consider looking for a Fear Free vet's office.

Fear Free Certification means the office staff have undergone specific training and are committed to reducing dog anxiety and stress associated with vet visits. Fear Free vet offices are designed with pets in mind. They encourage the use of calming pheromones and aromatherapy. Many paint their walls a soothing colour, place plants in the waiting room to create barriers between pets, offer non-slip surfaces, and the list goes on. They often examine pets in a position that's most comfortable for them, which may not be on an examination table. They also shy away from forceful actions during exams and, instead, use positive reinforcement and distraction methods (treats, toys, etc.).

2. Visit the Office "Just for Fun"

It's no surprise many dogs fear the vet. After all, they associate that place with needle pokes, thermometers up their bums, and other unpleasant experiences. To help curb anxiety and shift your dog's mindset, plan short socialisation visits during not-so-busy times. You shouldn't need an appointment for this. Just stop by your vet's office for a quick walk around the waiting room and Hello to the front desk staff. While you're there, give your pup a yummy snack and plenty of verbal praise. Keep these trips short and leave if your canine companion seems anxious. If you live close to your vet's office, try stopping in once a month. Over time, your dog should get more comfortable with the vet's office.

3. Practise Exams at Home

Many dogs don't like being touched or handled during a physical examination. They can easily get confused or startled by the whole experience. So, in the comforts of your own home, try practising a few routine vet exam tactics. Look

at their teeth, touch their ears, and hold their paws. The goal is to desensitise. If you have any medical equipment (like a stethoscope) then let your pup sniff and touch it. Like with any desensitisation training, remember to reward with treats and verbal praise.

4. Exercise Before Appointments

Have you ever heard the saying, “A tired dog is a good dog”? While physical activity will not completely prevent anxiety, it may help your precious pooch feel more relaxed. Before your scheduled appointment, go for a long walk, let them run around their background, or play a game of fetch. Do whatever activity your dog enjoys and will help burn off excess energy!

5. Calm Your Own Nerves

Dogs are very in tune with our emotions. If you are feeling anxious and stressed, your dog will likely sense that and begin feeling the same way. While sometimes easier said than done, try your best to remain calm and upbeat during vet visits.

OBITUARY

BELLA

In October 2022 we said goodbye to our darling Bella. She was a warrior fighting off every illness and injury you can imagine. We loved her with all our hearts and couldn't bear to say goodbye. Eventually she couldn't stand up by herself, was battling to walk with her arthritis and her long term heart failure was getting the better of her. Bella came to us at 49 days old and left us at 12.5 years. When I look up into the night sky, I know that she is the brightest star. Love you for always and ever our baby girl-
Jackie and Neville Pitts

Grief never ends...
but it changes.
It's a passage,
not a place to stay.
Grief is not
a sign
of weakness,
nor a lack
of faith...
it is
the price
of love

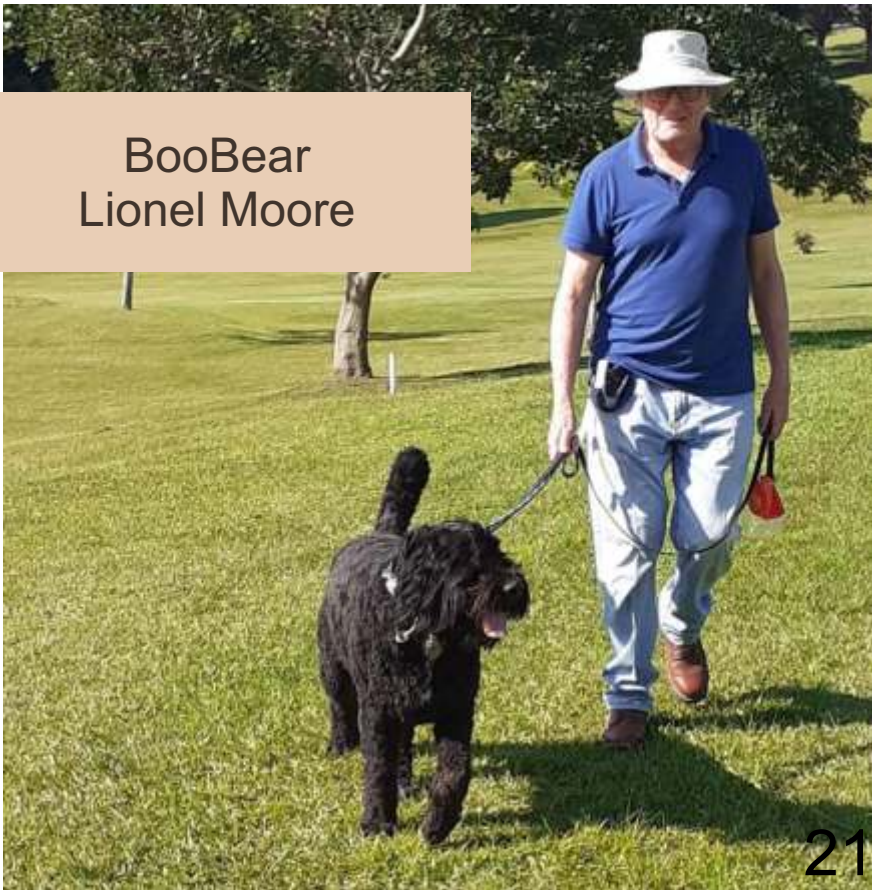
Bella | Jackie and Neville Pitts

LETTER PAGE

Dear Liz
I have just got around to finishing the November magazine, and really have to congratulate everyone who has contributed. It is a really lovely read; informative, amusing, and heart warming,-and the occasional tear jerker too!
Please thank all involved!
Love
Alison Kamffer

Dear Elizabeth
Many thanks for this (magazine) - so lovely to see a Club communicating well with its members. And you always have such interesting articles.
Regards, CLAIRE
Claire Patterson-Abrolat [clubadmin@kusa.co.za]
(The magazine is sent to KUSA as a courtesy- Ed)

Right now as I type this, my BooBear is out walking with Lionel Moore who, with his wife Laura, have had about 3 bouviers. Lionel is suffering from withdrawal and asked if he could have a bouvier fix....so off the two have gone. It is a sight to delight my soul to see tall Lionel walking once again with a Bouvier trotting at his heels. I hope I can get a photo.
Thanks for the stunning mag as always- it ALWAYS makes me stop what I am doing to read it
Thanks Liz and Denise.
You lift us as always.
Much love
Hazel Johnson



BooBear
Lionel Moore

MANY THANKS TO ALL INVOLVED ..... IT IS MUCH APPRECIATED!!!!!
Rolien van Greuning

A huge shout out and thank you to Denise Scarrott for the really wonderful magazine she produces every quarter; I just love having the hard copy to read while relaxing in bed at night. The electronic version is also fabulous with its colour and all the pictures, but I can't lie in bed and read it as I don't have a tablet.
This small magazine packs a powerful punch ????!!!
Look after yourself and take care
Betsy-Jane Scott

Haly | Sonette de Jager

MIYA'S MESSAGE

Things happen for a reason.
Our next door neighbours have gone to New Zealand. They had two dogs but didn't take them with them but they did manage to get them other homes. Both the dogs came from the SPCA and it took Bear quite a long time to settle down. I think he had been an outside dog because he was not happy inside at first and didn't seem to understand that he was allowed in. He was quite shut down. The people hadn't had dogs before and so they thought he was just "very good" but actually he was just scared to do anything! He was also very strong and pulled them when they tried to take him for walks so they didn't take him out. Someone saw his picture said they wanted him. They came to see him and liked him right away so he's gone to live with them on a big plot. The man works from home and takes Bear everywhere with him when he goes out. They are best buds. He's going to training and is having the best time so it all worked out great.
Some new neighbours have just moved in and Denise is really glad because we've been looking after the house for six months.
I think Denise has told you she had a fall. It was scary and I was glad that I was there so she could lean on me to stand up. I got a fright because when she got up she looked like The Joker! She's better now.
Boy but it has been hot since Christmas! There has not been much rain up here and even walking early in the morning is still hot and has me puffing. I managed to find a pool of water which I went into but that just made Denise mad. I guess because it was mostly black mud and rather stinky but at least it was cool.
A few weeks ago there was an Obedience show and we entered. Big mistake!
I think I have said that I am now in A Class and the judge we had was first judging the Beginners which was a big class. This meant that we only got to go into the ring after 11 o'clock and by then it was so hot I thought I would melt. We tried wetting my tummy and putting an ice towel over my back while we waited but nothing helped. Even in the shade it was awful.
In A Class we have to do Heel Work which is my absolute worst! I am supposed to walk nicely right next to Denise, turn when she turns, run when she runs, walk slowly when she does and sit when she stops. She's not allowed to talk to me much either. This is not like in the park where I can run loose and sniff where I want to and we talk all the time. I'm afraid I didn't do very well at all. I wandered along far behind her and every time we got near the judge's table I just wanted to go and lie in the shade under

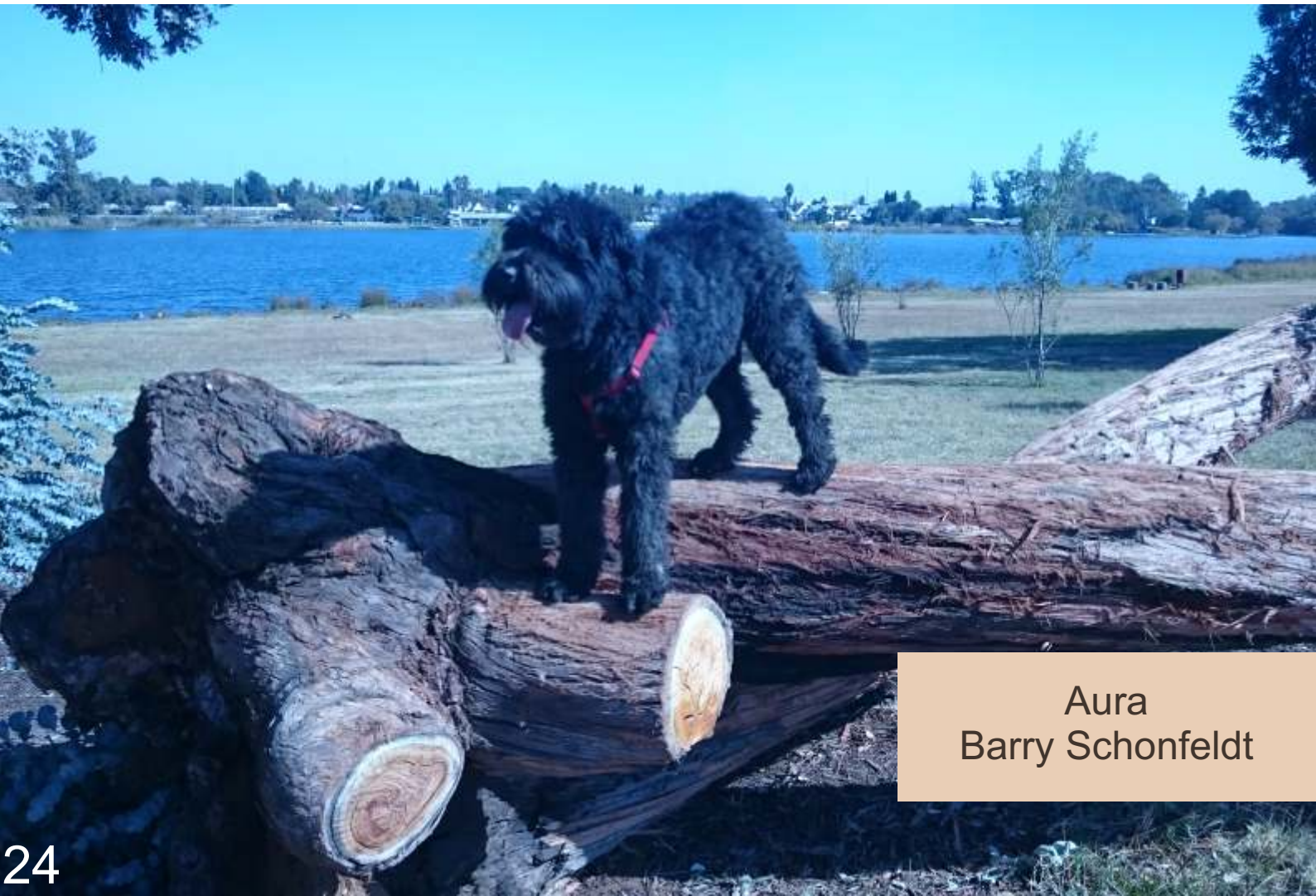
it which, of course, I was not allowed to do. I did my retrieve and scent work well and my stays were so-so although I did lie down after a while when I was supposed to be sitting. We also do a down stay for 5 minutes where Denise has to go where I can't see her. I was OK until right at the end when I stood up. I didn't go to look for her, just stood at my spot but evidently that's not allowed and I lost some more points. Don't know why we have to do this as there is NO WAY Denise would go off and leave me alone anywhere anyway.

I didn't feel too bad about not "qualifying" as Calum, my class mate at school also didn't. He's still in Beginners. His heel work is awesome but he's like the Energiser Bunny, even in the heat, and just takes off out of the ring and has everyone trying to catch him! This time he came to us because he knew we had the liver treats he likes!

I think I prefer to do RallyDog actually. At least there you get to do a bunch of different things every time. It's much more fun. There was a Rally show yesterday but we didn't go. Not after it was so hot at the last one. We're in the Excellent Class there now and it's hard to concentrate when your brain is frying! Guess we'll wait until the Autumn and winter shows.

It's a bit cooler today and they say it will rain. Paws crossed.

Every time we have a thunder storm, I think of Tristan. Poor chap was always so scared of storms and also of crackers and fireworks. He would just shake and shake, couldn't sleep and it was the only time he ever got onto the bed with us. Even if Denise held him tight and talked to him it didn't help. I like to think that the thunder is his way of saying, "It's OK. I'm fine now!"



Aura
Barry Schonfeldt

WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT FOR MY DOG?

by Dr. Kathryn Primm

Everyone thinks play is fun, but did you know that play can actually change your brain for the better? It seems to be true for people and many other animals, especially dogs. We prioritise play for our human children and we should, because research indicates that children are better adjusted and happier if they have free play. Would it not stand to reason that play might also benefit our dogs?

Dogs are not human and we know it. They cannot take many human medications and they cannot safely eat some of the foods that we love, but it seems that dogs' brains are enough like ours that they can also reap the benefits of play. Oddly, there are species that are even more different from us than dogs are that seem to benefit from play, like octopuses.

In fact, studies in rats proved that social play triggers the reward centre receptors in the brain in a chemical way that makes one feel satisfied and happy. The same receptors are triggered by certain drugs and other pleasurable experiences.

Opportunities for active and social play provide a mental and physical outlet for dogs. They are able to practice physical skills that they might need in the wild for survival, such as chasing and catching prey. Practising these skills helps your dog feel secure in his ability to survive. These types of games also get your dog moving, helping to lower the risk of obesity, which has been proven to shorten dogs' lives. Fetch games are great for dogs and even if your dog will not return with the toy, you can toss treats or bully sticks as far as you can and have your dog run to find them.

Any game that lets your dog engage in natural activities is beneficial. Chewing is entertaining for dogs. If you can find a toy or game that uses several of your dog's senses, it is even better. Puzzle toys that challenge her to think are wonderful for brain chemistry. If you can participate and toss the puzzle toy, the game is good for you both!

In our fast paced world, we find it difficult to make play a priority. It is good for your brain and body as well as your dog's brain and body. If you won't do it for yourself, do it for your dog! Go play!

Miya and Tristan |Denise Scarrott

Tanya Gomes

SNEAK THIEF

Terry Minda

Some TALL sneaky female canine stole my placek (delicious Polish bread/cake) when I let all the pups out to go potty!!! I'm not mentioning any names but she is the "only" girl dog in the house! My morning is taking care of all the critters, plus morning routine and then sitting down to relax and have my breakfast, usually a breakfast bar and a cup of tea, but this was a special breakfast, my friend Mary gave us some of her homemade placeks, so I was looking forward to enjoying breakfast! Well after the doggies get all of their treats, Miss Chena "pretends" she has to potty, then everyone ends up joining her! This morning I just bit into my placek and had a sip of tea when Chena was at the door barking to go out! As usual Larue, Gibbs and Oreo joined her! The reason Chena wants to go out is they get another little treat when they come back in! I placed my placek in a safe place, or well so I thought!, wrapped carefully in a paper towel & placed it on top of my lap top computer on a computer table! Oreo takes his time outside and I always sit near the door waiting for everyone to come in, not thinking of what is going on the family room! OK all dogs in and accounted for, I am now looking forward to enjoying my lovely breakfast! When I entered the family room the TALL black girl Bouvier has a smirky grin on her face and do I detect a crumb on her beard? A quick glance: the paper towel is still folded just as I had placed it, nothing on the top of the computer was disturbed-- my glasses, the mouse, remote control all just as I had left them but “NOOO - my delicious placek was gone!” One very happy Bouvier who shows no sign of remorse!!! All I can say she is lucky it was not the last piece of placek!!! Bouvier mantra "It’s Easier To Ask Forgiveness Than To Get Permission"!!!!

The whole gang | Cindy Schonfeldt

NATURAL WAYS TO BOOST YOUR DOG'S IMMUNE SYSTEM

by Dina Fantegrossi

Your dog's immune system is like a security guard, constantly patrolling the body for potentially harmful pathogens such as bacteria and viruses, then eliminating them before they can do harm. In order to effectively do its job, the immune system needs healthy maintenance and an occasional boost.

The following 5 methods may seem pretty simple, but when it comes to immunity, natural methods are best.

1. Healthy Diet

Just about every time we cover a canine health topic, proper diet and exercise makes the list. This is because they really are that important! Aside from feeding a well-balanced, high quality diet, consider supplementing with "super foods" proven to naturally boost immunity.

These include blueberries, broccoli, garlic, turmeric, bell peppers, spinach, yogurt and beans. Dried beans such as kidney, pinto, and red beans have more antioxidants per ½ cup than fresh berries, but use them sparingly to prevent upset stomach and excess gas

2. Exercise

Exercise releases endorphins, decreases stress, promotes circulation, and lowers blood pressure – plus dogs love it! Because the benefits of exercise are so plentiful, dogs should be encouraged to be as active as their age and physical health will allow.

3. Dietary Supplements

With so many products on the market, it can be difficult to pick and choose which supplements are beneficial to your pup. Most veterinarians recommend sticking with the tried and true basics:

Omega 3 fatty acids – like those found in high quality fish oil supplements – are essential because they temper the inflammatory response.

Curcumin, the active ingredient in turmeric, contains possible cancer-fighting properties, and also has anti-inflammatory properties.

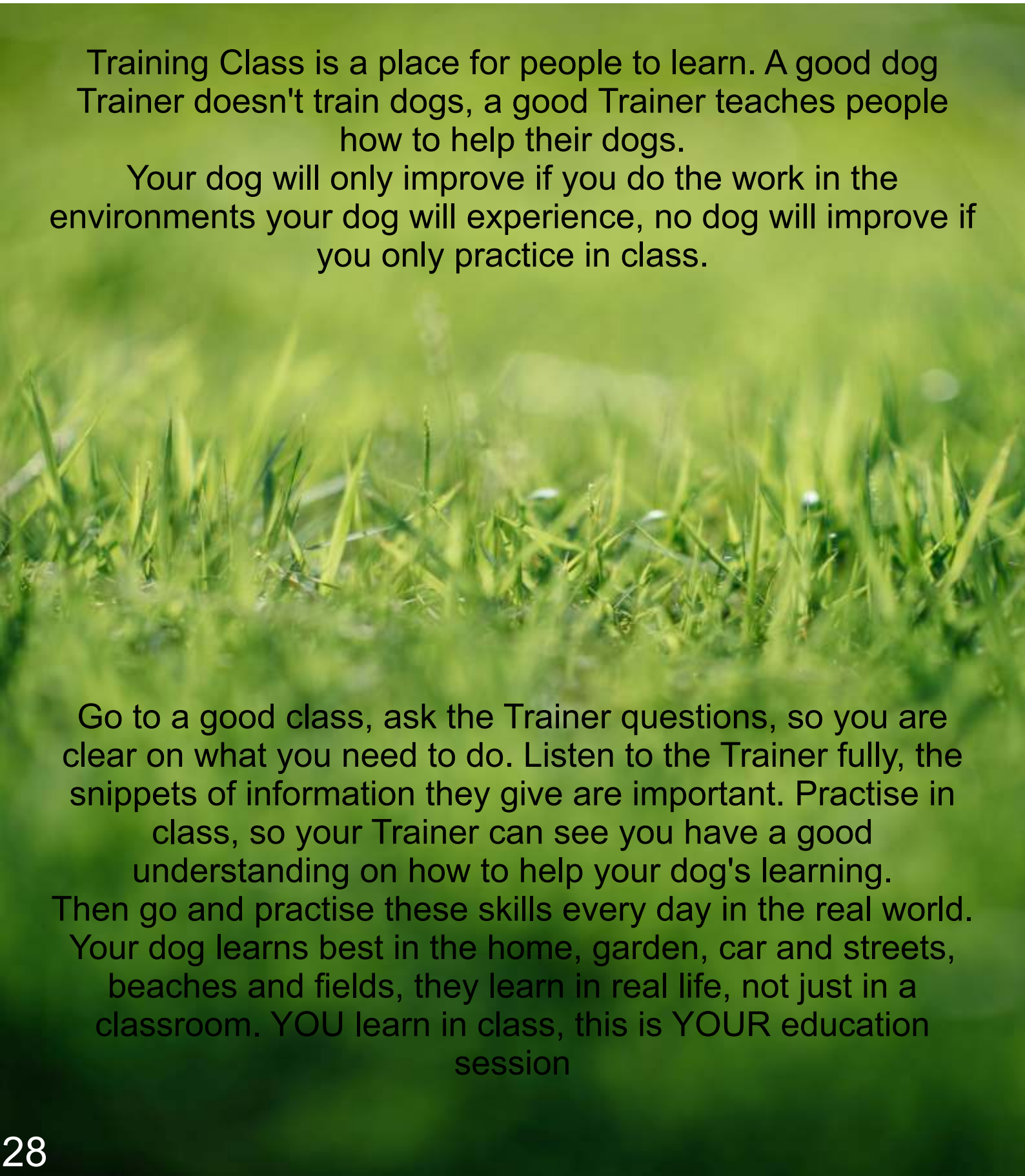
4. Promote A Healthy Gut

Scientists believe at least 70% of the immune system lives in the gut, so maintaining a healthy digestive tract is imperative! Be sure to monitor appetite and bowel movements. Ensure your pup's intestines stay free of parasites with proper prevention, routine faecal checks, and dewormers (as needed).

Probiotics are a wonderful way to maintain intestinal health and may be the most important supplement of all for immune health. Basically they pack a wallop of "helper" bacteria that kill harmful pathogens in the intestines and promote good digestion and overall health.

5. Avoid Stress

Stress is one of the most significant factors that reduces the body's ability to ward off disease. Reducing the number of stress hormones in the body promotes relaxation and healing, which improves overall health. Stress reduction for dogs can be as simple as providing plenty of exercise and a consistent schedule. Those with higher anxiety levels may benefit from natural supplements aimed at reducing stress or even doggy massage!



Training Class is a place for people to learn. A good dog Trainer doesn't train dogs, a good Trainer teaches people how to help their dogs.
Your dog will only improve if you do the work in the environments your dog will experience, no dog will improve if you only practice in class.

Go to a good class, ask the Trainer questions, so you are clear on what you need to do. Listen to the Trainer fully, the snippets of information they give are important. Practise in class, so your Trainer can see you have a good understanding on how to help your dog's learning.
Then go and practise these skills every day in the real world. Your dog learns best in the home, garden, car and streets, beaches and fields, they learn in real life, not just in a classroom. YOU learn in class, this is YOUR education session

IS THE GROUND TOO HOT FOR YOUR DOG?

Do you know what signs to look out for?

By Lisa Joyner

Dogs having difficulty with hot temperatures exhibit a combination of symptoms, but do you know the tell-tale signs that your pup has burnt his paw?
According to pet insurance company Protectivity, if you spot your dog licking or chewing their paws, they are trying to tell you they have burned themselves on the hot ground. As well as this, you may see your dogs limping or notice their pads looking darker in colour.
While their paws are made of specialised skin to absorb pressure, they are not shoes and can be susceptible to injury and overuse. If you're heading out on a walk with your dog during a heatwave, make sure to check if it's safe first by using a 'seven-second' test before stepping on the pavement with your pet.
To do this, simply hold your hand on the pavement for seven second. If it is too hot to hold it there for the full seven seconds, then it is too hot for your dog to walk on.
"Pad burns occur on dogs' paws after they walk on hot pavement, sand or asphalt. Often extremely painful for your dog, it may require immediate medical attention," the team at Rover say.
"Treat mild paw pad burns at home by flushing your dog's feet with cool water for 10-15 minutes. Try covering them with a sock to prevent licking or chewing. As the day progresses, keep a close eye on the conditions of their pads, as they can easily become infected."
What should you do if your dog has burnt his paw?
If a burn is severe, head to your local vet immediately. Some dogs will require a bandage, while others may be prescribed a dose of antibiotics to heal the wound.
According to Pet MD, dogs with burns should have their exercise restricted and wounds monitored to ensure they are not licking or chewing them. Don't forget to avoid hot pavements and rough surfaces until it has healed completely. You may want to consider dog boot paw protectors to keep them safe.

TELL ME WHEN I'M A GOOD DOG!

Let your dog know when they're doing something good- how else will they understand what to do?
This enables and encourages dogs to work out what you want and to think for themselves
Positive reinforcement creates trust, builds bonds, increases self confidence and helps dogs feel secure.
Modern science shows that force free, positive reinforcement methods are the most effective way to teach dogs what to do.
Take the focus off unwanted behaviour and reinforce the good behaviour.
Don't wait until a dog makes a mistake so you can correct it - rather keep rewarding the behaviour you want to see.
Don't put all the responsibility for a dog's behaviour on the dog. It's our responsibility to teach an alternative behaviour that we can reinforce.

Instead of shouting "NO!" show your dog what you would prefer them to do instead.

Rather than chasing or shouting at a dog for stealing something - teach a swap to reinforce that behaviour instead.

Rather than correcting a dog for jumping up on visitors-show him that keeping four paws on the floor or staying on a mat is far more rewarding.

Rather than trying to force a dog to get off the bed /couch target or lure him down and reinforce him for staying off.

Rather than shouting at a dog for not coming back when called, show him that coming back to you is rewarding and make it worth while.
Keep showing your dog that he's a "good dog" and very soon he will be!

Haly | Sonette de Jager

PEOPLE WHO TALK TO THEIR PETS ARE SMARTER THAN THOSE WHO DON'T

by Adri Sandoval

I admit it: I talk to my pets. I even have a different voice for each one. My non-animal friends think it's silly and more than a little crazy to carry on these one-sided conversations. But Nicholas Epley, professor of behavioural science at the University of Chicago, disagrees. He feels it's perfectly normal to engage in this behaviour, and it may actually indicate a higher level of social cognition.

Epley is the author of Mindwise: How We Understand What Others Think, Believe, Feel, and Want. He is considered one of the world's foremost experts on the phenomenon of anthropomorphism – the tendency to assign human thoughts, feelings or characteristics to a non-human object or being.

Anthropomorphism is common in children, who are able to amuse themselves for hours on end talking to imaginary friends and toys. It's perfectly healthy behaviour, and helps them to develop the social skills they will need later in life.

We're expected to outgrow this tendency as we age, and for the most part we do. But according to Epley, confiding relationship troubles to our dogs or begging our trusty old cars to "Please just take us one more mile" doesn't make us immature or crazy, it makes us well-adjusted human beings.

"For centuries, our willingness to recognise minds in non-humans has been seen as a kind of stupidity, a childlike tendency toward anthropomorphism and superstition that educated and clear-thinking adults have outgrown," he writes in his book. "I think this view is both mistaken and unfortunate. Recognising the mind of another human being involves the same psychological processes as recognising a mind in other animals, a god, or even a gadget. It is a reflection of our brain's greatest ability rather than a sign of our stupidity."

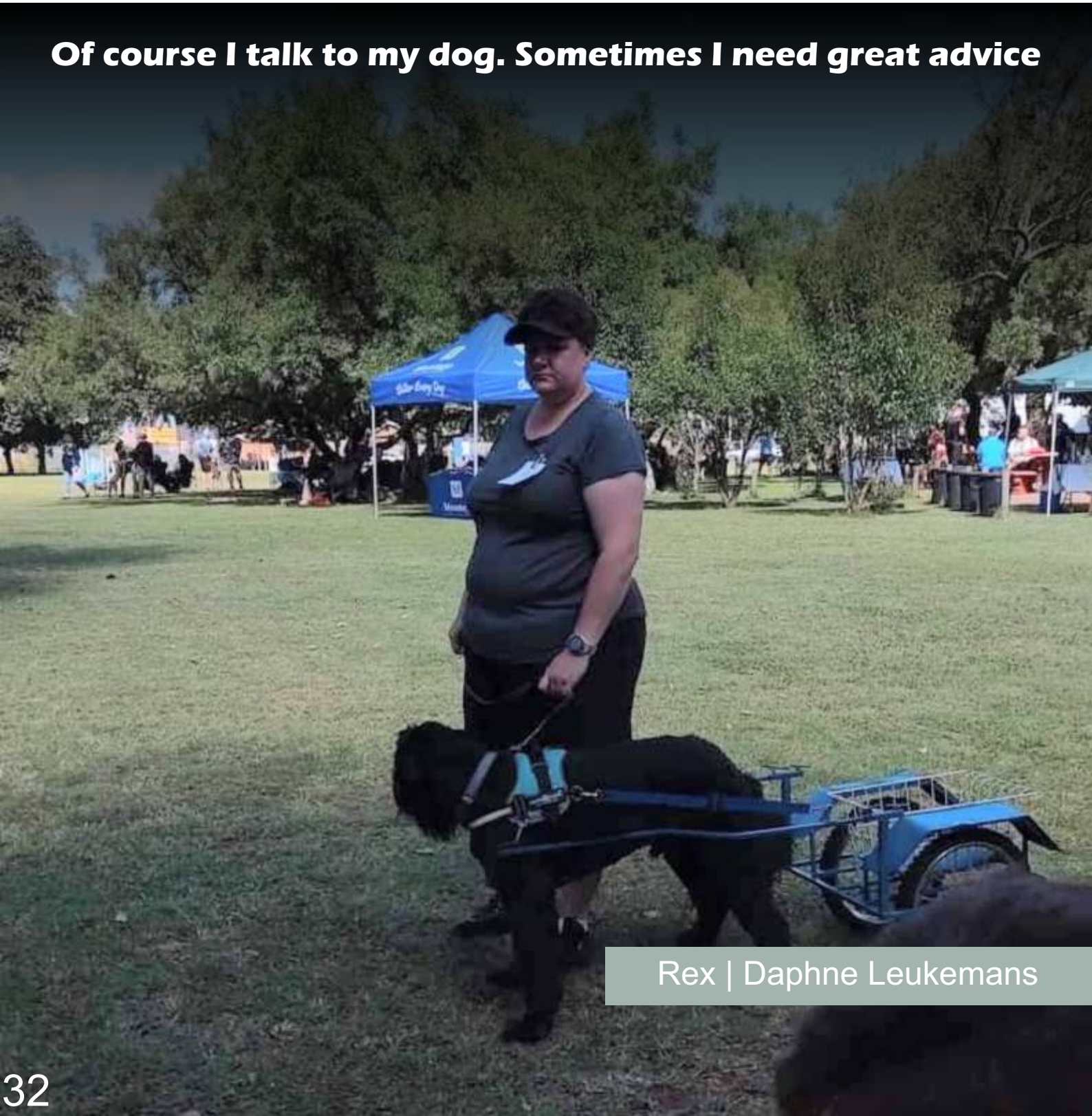
The human brain is programmed to search the faces – especially the eyes – of others for signs of their true nature, a skill that is often responsible for our very survival. How many times have you heard a person describe a "bad feeling" they got about someone who later turned out to be dangerous?

According to Epley, we are "hypersensitive to eyes because they offer a window into another person's mind." With that said, it doesn't seem so strange that gazing into the soulful, expressive eyes of our beloved pets sparks our natural desire to make social connections.

We also have a tendency to assign names to the things we love – the most common form of anthropomorphism. Humans have been doing this with the inanimate objects we depend on for over a thousand years (think ships and weapons). It is only natural to develop emotions for the non-human objects that play a role in our very survival, even though we know that they are just "things".

The subject of anthropomorphising animals is a bit more complicated. Scientists consider animals to have “gray minds” – meaning they might have conscious minds similar to our own, but we cannot prove it conclusively. We may not have the technology to read our dogs and cats’ minds, but I think those of us who have spent our lives around them can attest that their emotional consciousnesses are extremely similar to our own.

The ability to recognise animals as similar beings we can trust and interact with is a sign of social intelligence, not kooky pet-person behaviour. So the next time a friend or loved one rolls their eyes when you chat up your pets, tell them you’re just more socially developed than they are – you wouldn’t expect them to understand!



Rex | Daphne Leukemans

THERAPY STORY

Mary, a tiny wisp of a lady, (35kg. soaking wet!) was in her late 60's and hailed from Bakersfield, Ca. She and her husband, Rob, were retired and enjoying life. Without warning, Mary was struck with a very acute onset of dementia, confusion and incontinence.

The doctors in Bakersfield told Rob that it was "Alzheimers," and nothing could be done. Rob was devastated by this news; not wanting or able to accept it, he made arrangements to bring her to Cottage Hospital for a complete neurological work up.

It was subsequently discovered that she was suffering from hydrocephalus (an accumulation of fluid around the brain). Once this diagnosis was confirmed, immediate surgery was scheduled to insert a shunt.

At this point in time, Mary would not respond to anyone or anything. She would not open her eyes or communicate verbally. Sadly, she resembled a rag doll. If I lifted an arm, it would flop listlessly, a dead weight on the starched white sheets. She was a total lift to get into a chair and then had to be propped up.

We were all elated when the surgery was over and the shunt was in place and functioning. However, post operatively there was no improvement. Her doctors and family were bitterly disappointed. No one could understand why she wasn't responding. Nothing worked...medical options were exhausted. Rob became extremely depressed.

Why not try Pet Therapy?

Preparations were made and Mary was propped in a wheelchair and taken to the gym.

I brought Silk into the gym and put him up on the workout bench so that he was at Mary's eye level. Next, I pulled her wheelchair very close to Silk. Silk, being a tender 14 months old, still had a tendency to lick. He leaned forward and licked Mary's hand. She gigged! Silk licked her hand again and again. Mary let out a deep hearty laugh. Her eyes flew open and she was face to face with Silk.

With an excited voice she exclaimed, "Oh, what a beautiful dog!! What is his name?"

With this miracle unfolding, I looked into Mary's eyes (which had not been open for 4-6 weeks) and noticed that she had had some eye surgery.

"Mary," I said, "It looks like you have had some eye surgery."

"Oh yes," she said, "I had a cataract removed in September."

Mary was alert and oriented. She didn't know what day it was, but I wouldn't either if I'd been unresponsive for six weeks!!!

Unfortunately Rob was not present in the gym to witness this extraordinary event, as he had left a short time earlier to run some errands. When he returned we ushered him to the waiting room at the end of the hall.

Mary walked unassisted from her room to where Rob sat waiting. As she approached him, he burst into joyful tears. (nothing gets to me more than a crying man...there wasn't a dry eye on the whole 5th floor).
Over the next few days Mary made remarkable progress. Her doctors and family were ecstatic. On the morning of her discharge Mary said to me, "There is only one thing in the whole wide world that I would like."
I said, "Well what's that?" She answered, "To see Silk one more time."
Their reunion was joyful, tearful and unforgettable. A month later Mary and Rob walked into my office. She looked radiant and wonderful. One would never have suspected how ill she'd been or what had happened to her.
Having had this experience has given me proof and confirmation of what I've always known in my heart. There is an inexplicable bond of love between humans and animals that transcends comprehension.
Silk, mine and God's helpmate, were blessed to be a part of Mary's miracle. I don't pretend to understand it. I don't want to analyse it. I accept it with gratitude, awe and thanksgiving.

Sandra Marotto,
BSRN/ Admitting Nurse/Pet Therapy Coordinator
Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital

BouBear & Yogi | Neville Pitts

DEVIL'S CLAW FOR DOGS: A UNIQUE REMEDY FOR JOINT PAIN

by Molly Weinfurter

Most dogs love to run around and play as much as possible, but joint problems can get in the way of that joy. While senior dogs are the most at risk for joint inflammation, dogs of all ages could face mobility issues. Giving your dog joint supplements is the best way to prevent those future concerns. Canine joint supplements contain a wide range of unique ingredients, including Devil's Claw for dogs.

Devil's Claw might sound unusual, but it's a beneficial plant for humans and animals to ingest. So, if you're worried about your pup slowing down and missing out on exciting playtime, you might want to consider giving them Devil's Claw or similar ingredients. A joint supplement could be just what they need to feel like a puppy again!

What is Devil's Claw?

Devil's Claw is also known as harpagophytum, grapple plant, or wood spider. While none of its names are particularly appealing, it's an excellent ingredient for anti-inflammatory properties. It's a flowering plant native to South Africa. One of the most notable qualities is its hooks, which are curved and appear to protect the flower.

Indigenous people have used parts of this plant for medicinal purposes for a long time. They discovered that it could relieve pain and inflammation, especially related to arthritis. Most of their medicines were made from the plant's claw-like roots.

This plant wasn't introduced to Europe until the 1900s. Word of its anti-inflammatory properties grew, which is why it's now used in joint supplements worldwide. Today, it's becoming popular in pet products for similar reasons.

Why is it Called Devil's Claw?

You might be wondering why a beneficial plant has such an ominous name. The name of this plant has nothing to do with anything mysterious or sinister. Instead, it's simply named after the spooky claw-like hooks covering the fruit.

Is Devil's Claw Safe for Dogs?

Yes, Devil's Claw is safe for dogs. It's a natural and effective remedy for joint pain in humans and pets. However, like all ingredients, it could become dangerous if given in improper doses or if given to dogs with underlying conditions. Talk to your vet before starting your pup on a Devil's Claw supplement.

Devil's Claw Benefits for Dogs

Dogs take Devil's Claw mainly to reap the anti-inflammatory benefits. With less discomfort throughout your dog's body, they can enjoy life to the fullest. Here are some details about how this ingredient might make your furry friend's life better!

Reduces Inflammation

In general, this plant can reduce all types of inflammation. When your dog's body gets injured, whether it's a one-time incident or related to long-term issues, their body naturally responds by causing inflammation. Devil's Claw is made up of chemicals that can reduce or prevent swelling in your dog's body. So, if they get hurt, their body will be less likely to be sore and inflamed while taking this ingredient. This is especially beneficial for aging dogs prone to joint, back, and neck pain.

Not only can Devil's Claw prevent general joint pain, but it can also help with more severe joint issues, such as osteoarthritis and gout. The odds of an older dog developing osteoarthritis or a similar condition are high. Serious joint problems like that are caused by the wear and tear of joints over time. However, reducing the amount of inflammation in a dog's body can also reduce the damage from frequent use. Gout isn't as common as osteoarthritis, but it's still a form of arthritis. It's caused by a buildup of uric acid in your canine's bloodstream. Devil's Claw may be able to reduce that excess uric acid in addition to reducing the pain.

Benefits Digestion

While the main benefit of Devil's Claw is reducing inflammation, it may also promote healthy digestion. This plant contains flavonoids and phytosterols, which can increase bile production to help your dog digest and absorb food better. Their tummy will also benefit from less inflammation in the digestive system, which is often caused by acid reflux.

Does Your Dog Need a Joint Supplement?

All dogs can benefit from a joint supplement, even if they haven't shown signs of joint pain yet. The dogs that need it most are active dogs and breeds prone to joint pain. Yet, it can't hurt to start giving your pup a joint supplement even if they're not at high risk.

However, if your dog already has a severe joint problem, Devil's Claw might not make a significant difference. Here are some signs that your dog has a serious joint condition:

Limping Reduced mobility
Whining Weight gain
Struggling to go up/down stairs
Lethargy Aggression

If your dog is displaying any of the above symptoms, talk to your vet before moving forward with a remedy. In most cases, Devil's Claw will help, but if their symptoms are related to something more severe, they may need special treatment for their health to improve fully.

Before you start giving your dog any new supplement or medication, you should tell your vet about anything else your dog regularly takes. Then, your vet can confirm whether or not those drugs will affect the new supplement.

How to Serve Devil's Claw to Dogs

Devil's Claw can come in canine supplements, which are often in the form of capsules, powders, liquids, or chewables. It's up to you to decide which form is best for your dog.

Powder and liquid forms are easy to mix with your dog's food, but it can be difficult to hide them if your pup is picky. With pills, tablets, and capsules, you can hide them in a treat or pill pocket to ensure that your dog eats them. However, chews are often the easiest form to serve because they look and smell like treats. So, dogs will think they're eating a snack instead of a supplement.

However, when choosing any pet product, it's important to buy from a company you trust. Look closely at the packaging details and ingredient list to ensure that it seems healthy and safe for your dog. When in doubt, talk to your vet about which canine supplement has the best formula.

Dogs face joint pain more than humans realise. But that discomfort shouldn't prevent them from enjoying the fun of running around and playing with their loved ones. So, consider giving them an ingredient like Devil's Claw to help reduce their joint pain. It could be life-changing for them!

Devil's Claw Dosage for Dogs

Devil's Claw comes in many varieties for dogs. So, the dosage will vary based on the product and what your dog is using it for. Most products will have the recommended dosage listed on the packaging, so follow those doses. When in doubt, ask your vet to make sure the recommended dose is safe for your furry friend.

If the supplement is in a chew or tablet form, the dose will usually be between one and three chews. 250 mg per tablet is typical for small dogs, while larger dogs need between 500 and 1,000 mg per tablet. However, if it's in a powder or liquid form, you'll need to measure it out and mix it with your dog's food.

Here are the recommended doses for powdered Devil's Claw:

Small Dogs (20kg or less) – 1/10th teaspoon

Large Dogs (20 to 40kg) – 1/5th teaspoon

Giant Dogs (over 40kg) – 1/3rd teaspoon

These servings might seem small, but a little Devil's Claw can go a long way. Again, these are just general recommendations. The most accurate dosing will be on the container or as directed by a vet. If you're worried about how your pup will react, start with a smaller than recommended serving. Then, slowly work your way up to the dosage and watch for side effects.

Devil's Claw Side Effects for Dogs

Side effects of Devil's Claw are rare, but any ingredient can cause issues if the doses are too high. The most common side effect for both humans and animals is diarrhoea and other digestive problems. Luckily, the symptoms are usually mild.

Dogs with stomach ulcers, duodenal ulcers, or gallstones shouldn't take Devil's Claw since it could worsen their condition. If your dog shows any unusual reactions after taking Devil's Claw, you should contact your vet right away.

Are There Any Drug Interactions?

There are very few drug interactions for Devil's Claw. The biggest concern is blood-thinning medication because Devil's Claw can also thin blood. Anticoagulants, cardiac medications, and anti-arrhythmics may also interact with this ingredient.

AMAZING THINGS YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW ABOUT DOGS

Bright dog training

Some dog lovers are content to know everything about their dog. Others are eager to learn everything there is about dogs!
Whether you're interested in getting to know your pup better, or ALL dogs better, we have fun facts here that don't often come up
Puppies are born with 28 teeth but adult dogs have 42 teeth.
Actually, they're born toothless, but like human babies their teeth sit below the gumline until they come in. A full set for a puppy is only 28 teeth. As they fall out, they're replaced with 42 adult teeth. There might be fewer of them, but man those puppy teeth are sharp!
Dogs Can Smell Disease
They are being trained to sniff out lung, breast, skin, bladder, and prostate cancers. Researchers believe they are picking up scents given off by abnormal cells. They also seem to be able to smell diabetes, ovulation, and even high blood pressure! Their sense of smell is so sharp that it could be considered a superpower - or mistaken for psychic ability!
Most Diverse-Looking Mammal
A study published by the American Naturalists in 2010 found that the differences between the skulls of different breeds of dogs are more diverse than among any other mammal species..
Dogs sweat through their paw pads
Many think dog's do not sweat, only pant. This is not true. They do sweat, but only through their pads. It's what causes that "corn chip" smell you might be familiar with. It's not a very effective form of cooling your dog down - panting is much more efficient for dogs - but experts think that the purpose isn't cooling at all. They believe that the purpose of paw pads sweating is to cause them to be less likely to slip on surfaces.
Colour Changing
Many breeds change colour as they age. For example, Dalmatians are completely white at birth, but spots begin coming in around two weeks old. Over the next 5 to 6 months, more spots will appear, and then darken. Likewise, all Bedlington Terriers are born dark and lighten with age.
Free Shoulder Blades
A human's shoulder is made up of three bones - the collarbone, the shoulder blade, and the upper arm bone. These bones, with their muscles, ligaments and tendons, allow us to move our arms the way that they do. Our shoulders were designed for an upright mammal - they are meant to lift, push, and pull.

Dogs have no need to push, pull, or lift with their arms. What dogs needed in the wild was speed and range of motion to escape predators and hunt. A dog's shoulder blades are not attached to the rest of its skeleton.

Not All Dogs Bark

The Basenji is the world's only "barkless" dog. They yodel instead which may annoy your neighbours more. It's thought that these dogs were bred for silence, since barking might lead enemies to their humans' encampments.

The First Sense Dogs Develop is Touch

Their entire body is covered in nerve-endings. This explains why it's so important to handle a puppy correctly and often to get them used the sensations early. This sense will later be what sets your dog's leg off during a really great scratch!

Dogs DO See Colour

Humans have three different colour receptors in their eyes - we can see colours on a spectrum ranging from red, to blue, to green. These are the colours most humans see in a rainbow.

Dogs only have two kinds of receptors. The colours they see best are yellow, gray, and blue (which is why most agility equipment is painted in yellow and blue.

Dogs Have Fewer Tastebuds Than Humans

Dogs really do taste more with their eyes and their noses! Remember that the next time your dog is begging. Dogs have about 1,700 taste buds, compared to our 9,000. No wonder they don't mind eating garbage!

BooBear | Hazel Johnson

A dog thinks with his heart and loves with his whole body

SURVIVAL RESPONSES

Emily Dustan, See Spot Learn

There are four emotional “survival responses” to a sudden threat.
1. Freeze (Briefly alert, or hope for the best)
2. Flight (Escape)
3. Fidget (Don’t know what to do in a stressed state)
4. Fight (Defence reactivity)

The autonomic nervous system (ANS) is the control system of the body that is involuntary and regulates the following: -

- Heart rate.
- Digestion.
- Respiratory rate.
- Pupillary response.
- Urination.
- Sexual arousal.

The one part of the ANS helps the body regulate, rest, relax, and digest food. The other part of the system helps the dog flight (escape), or fight (defence) in an emergency. It is important to remember that this system is involuntary. This means that the dog has NO CONTROL over these responses in the body.

The ANS is made up of two parts of the nervous system:
1. The sympathetic nervous system
Stress and danger (Flight and fight)
2. Parasympathetic nervous system
Is the opposite (Rest and digest)

These two systems create a balancing act for the body’s well-being and survival. One activates the body processes and the other deactivates or lowers them. They create multiple forms of communication for the body and brain.

Now we need to remember that your dog has its own brain. This brain enables them to learn, and express emotions which comes out in behaviour. This brain also helps them to respond and adapt to the environment that they are in.

To understand your dog’s reactivity, you need to understand the basics of how your dog’s brain works.

A dog may not have the capability of processing higher complex emotions like humans can, however, you can’t look at a dog and tell me they don’t feel. Of course, they do! Their feelings are just not as complex as humans, but interestingly enough they do process information from all parts of the body similar to our human brains.

So, the brain is made up of soft tissue and nerve cells, and is composed of the cerebrum, cerebellum, and brainstem. These 3 areas of the brain interpret information, control all functions of the body, and respond accordingly. The brain does not only control physical responses, but chemical ones as well.

Now, let's go back to the autonomic nervous system. The Sympathetic nervous system originates in the spinal cord which is connected to the brainstem at the bottom of the dog's brain. One of its main functions is to activate the physiological changes that occur during the flight or fight response. This means that the dog's neurotransmitters in the brain send chemical messages to parts of the body to release hormones, and other chemicals to prepare the dog's body for intense action when the dog is experiencing a stressful, or overwhelming event.

The body can fluctuate between flight and fight, and rest and digest. This is because the 'thinking' part of the brain constantly sends messages to the 'emotional' part of the brain.

When the dog is feeling heightened emotions such as arousal, stress, happiness, excitement, fear, anxiety, or pain, the brain sends the body messages to react the following ways:

1. Increased heart rate and respiration,
2. Dilation of eye pupil (to see with more clarity).
3. Inhibition of the lacrimal gland (responsible for tear production and salivation).
4. Dilated airways for increased oxygen,
5. Dilated blood vessels for blood to flow to the muscles.
6. Inhibition of stomach and upper intestinal action to the point where digestion slows or stops (The body can't process food when in flight/ fight response, it needs to save its energy for survival).
7. The liver releases glucose,
8. The kidneys release adrenaline,
9. Relaxation of bladder.
10. Constriction of blood vessels in many parts of the body.
11. Auditory exclusion (loss of hearing).
12. Tunnel vision (loss of peripheral vision).
13. Shaking.

All animals (even humans) are deeply wired to protect themselves against a perceived threat and each individual has their own interpretations of what is scary and what is not.

For example: I am afraid of spiders and anything that may resemble a creepy crawly, where you may not be bothered at all by a sight of a spider. Fear begins in the brain, and then travels through the body adjusting along the way for the best defence, to run away, or defend oneself as quickly as possible. All these changes happen so fast that the individual wouldn't even be aware of them or have a chance to really process what is happening

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Adrienne's Dog Training School

When training a new, alternative behaviour, it is important that we "manage" the old one so the dog doesn't get the opportunity to rehearse it.
If your dog already finds the previous behaviour rewarding, that behaviour has a head start in value to whatever new behaviour you are training. For a new behaviour to stick it needs to be rewarded and rehearsed more than the old one. If your dog keeps getting the opportunity to rehearse the old behaviour, your new preferred behaviour will never be able to catch up.
When it comes to behaviour, what is repeated (and rewarded) will be what becomes the habit; behaviours are built like muscles - the more they are rehearsed the stronger they become. This means when training a new behaviour, or habit, we need to make sure the old behaviour can't be practised and allowed to become stronger. This is called behaviour management.
Trying to train a new behaviour without managing the old behaviour is like starting a race 10 laps behind your competitor - you are never going to catch up. Every time you reward the new behaviour, the old behaviour is still being rewarded at another time, and has a much larger reinforcement history, due to the constant repetition it has previously acquired. To actually make progress we need to stop our competitor running until we are the one who is several laps ahead!
This can be seen most clearly when we look at something like recall. To manage the behaviour of running off, we want to put our dog on a long-line (attached to the back of a harness), this means they can't rehearse and get rewarded for chasing the squirrel, bike, small child etc. The behaviour of 'running off' is already established as extremely rewarding for the dog. If it was a savings account it may have thousands of pounds of rewards in it, whereas coming to us may only have a hundred or so. To actually be able to compete with the previous behaviour, we need to make sure no more rewards (or savings) are going into that account, and plenty is going into the new behaviour we want the dog to do, until they find it to be the most rehearsed and rewarding option and will choose it on their own.
If you are ever having trouble changing your dog's behaviour, it could be they are still getting the opportunity to get rewarded for the old one. If you 'manage' that behaviour so they don't get rewarded for it, you will have a better chance in promoting the new behaviour as the better option!

Seeking is one of the primary emotional circuits of the brain. It is basically the feeling of anticipation of reward. This is the emotion we want to trigger when we call the dog. It should mean that something good is about to happen, not the end of playtime, and definitely not a reprimand.

- Shaykelly.com

LAST WAG OF THE TAIL

A Bouvier that has been taught to bite will exert up to 1,000 pounds of pressure per square inch, and it takes only about 300 or 350 to break the average human forearm. The Bouvier has to learn to throw his weight into the bite, his shoulders into it, his neck into it.

Overheard in New York:
"Wow! Your dog has gotten so big!"
"Ma'am, have you not noticed I'm dog walker. This is a Great Dane and last week I literally had a Maltese!"

After graduating from university, I took a job as a home health worker in the country. One day I asked a client for directions to my next patient's home. He told me to go down the main road until a saw a dog and a truck and then turn right at the next turn-off.
"But what if the dog and the truck aren't there?" I asked.
"You still turn right," he replied. - Reader's Digest

A pastor giving a childrens' sermon on vestments asked: "Why do you think I wear this collar?" One kid answered, "Because it kills ticks and fleas for up to 30 days."

Don't confuse your dog's needs with your own. He doesn't need a "firm hand." He needs an owner who doesn't need him to prove anything, an owner who's strong enough to be gentle and train him with intelligence, not force.

A woman lost her jewellery and submitted an insurance claim. Several weeks later, after she had cashed the cheque, she found the jewels, so she wrote to her insurance company: "I found my jewellery and I didn't think it was right to keep the money and the jewellery, so I sent the money to the SPCA."
- Carl Havenga (Farmer's Weekly)

Dog: You are my life I will do anything for you
Human: drop the ball
Dog: Nope!

Did you know dogs are capable of detecting sadness in humans. They often attempt to make their owners happy by initiating cuddling - truth inside of you

If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody else's dog around. - cowboy wisdom