



Dear friends,

Welcome to our June Newsletter from www.bestdoggietips.com.

Contents

Recipe – Healthy Muffins	Page 2
Canine Emotions	Page 3
Overweight Dogs – Your Risk	Page 6
Dogs Finding Dogs	Page 7
Dental Disease Prevention	Page 8
Fun Stuff – Dog Dictionary	Page 10
The Weird & The Wonderful	Page 12

We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

How come a dog can't hear his name, but can hear a corn chip fall on the carpet from two rooms away? – *Anon*

Recipe - Healthy Muffins

Be careful where you leave these – they're good enough to eat!

Ingredients

1½ cups oat flour
1 cup rolled oats
1 cup oat bran
2 tsp baking soda
1 tsp cinnamon
1 egg lightly beaten
¼ cup honey
3 tbs vegetable oil
¾ cup milk
1 carrot, grated
1 zucchini, grated

To Make

Preheat oven to moderately hot - 190°C or 375°F. Line muffin tins with foil or paper muffin forms.

Mix the dry ingredients together – oat flour, oats, oat bran, baking soda and cinnamon. Slowly add the milk and mix well to combine.

In a separate bowl, mix the egg, honey and oil. Now add the grated carrot and zucchini and mix well.

Now combine the honey mixture with the batter. Stir thoroughly to combine. Spoon into muffin tins and bake for 15 - 20 minutes. Test the centre with a skewer to ensure they are set. Allow to cool.

These muffins freeze well

[Back to Contents List](#)

Canine Emotions

For centuries, humans have imagined they are the only animals with morals. But humans are not alone in the moral arena a new breed of behaviour experts say. Look underfoot....

Natural historian Jake Page says scientists are finally acknowledging what pet owners have told their canines all along: "Good dog".

Dogs are full of natural goodness and have rich emotional lives, says groundbreaking animal behaviourist Marc Bekoff, professor emeritus of the University of Colorado.

"We're not trying to elevate animals", Bekoff said. "We're not trying to reduce humans. We're not saying we're better or worse or the same. We're saying we're not alone in having a nuanced moral system".

Page, the Lyons-based author of "[Do Dogs Laugh?](#)" says biology no longer dismisses dogs and other animals as "furry automatons" driven by instinct and food.

"People like Bekoff have figured out how to measure these things", Page said. "It's a whole new ballgame for studying dog personalities and emotions".

Bekoff, co-author of the newly released "[Wild Justice: The Moral Lives of Animals](#)" spent thousands of hours observing coyotes, wolves and dogs in the field. He analysed videotapes frame by frame. The work convinced him these animals possess empathy and compassion, the emotions upon which moral sense is built.

While much the same can be said of monkeys, wolves, elephants, dolphins, whales and other social animals, dogs are special cases — they share in human lives.

"Dogs know they are dependent. They learn to read us" Bekoff said. "Dogs develop this great sense of trust. We're tightly linked, and there is something spiritual about that unity".

This intimacy and mutual influence prompted Harvard University to open a Canine Cognition Lab, where researchers attempt to gain insight into the psychology of both humans and dogs.

As late as the early 2000s, Bekoff found behaviour experts still believed emotions, and certainly morality, were uniquely human traits. He is witnessing the turning tide. "The amount of scepticism has dramatically dropped" Bekoff said.

Bekoff said he is nearly mobbed at lectures by students, researchers and theologians eager to know what dogs feel, and whether dogs make moral decisions. "I'm convinced many animals can distinguish right from wrong" Bekoff said.

Bekoff says looking for the roots of morality in animals is a difficult scientific undertaking. It begins with looking for emotions central to morality, such as empathy — understanding of another's situation, feelings and motives.

In humans, emotions are centred in specific brain structures and are affected by chemicals called neurotransmitters. Mammals possess the same brain structures, affected by the same chemicals, as humans.

"Dogs apparently laugh" Page said. The same brain structures show the same activity in laughing humans and in dogs who are enjoying themselves. A dog's laugh is a rhythmic pant.

Play is necessary for healthy brain development in animals and is seen in many mammalian, and some avian, species, Bekoff said. Play hones cognitive skills and later helps in hunting and mating. And play would not be possible without cooperation and trust.

To prevent any misunderstanding, a dog will signal to another dog that the imminent jostling, nipping and chasing are "just play" rather than aggression, he said. The game is initiated with the "play bow". A dog, wolf or coyote will crouch on its forelimbs while keeping its rear upright. Any hard-biting cheats find themselves excluded from games.

Animal behaviourist Marc Bekoff says there's a long list of observable emotional and ethical behaviour of dogs. It will seem familiar to most people who have dogs:

- Dogs have a sense of fair play. They dislike cheaters. They experience joy in play. They delight in friends. The big guys handicap themselves in games with little guys.
- Dogs get jealous when a rival gets more or better treats or treatment. They are resentful, unnerved or saddened by unfair behaviour.
- They are made anxious by suspense. They get afraid.
- They are embarrassed when they mess up or do something clumsy.
- They feel remorse or regret when they do something wrong. They seek justice. They remember the bad things done to them but sometimes choose to forgive.
- Dogs have affection and compassion for their animal and human friends and family. They defend loved ones. They grieve their losses.
- They have hope.

And Theology

A few years ago the American Academy of Religion added an Animals and Religion group.

Nancy R. Howell, professor of theology at Saint Paul School of Theology, a United Methodist seminary in Kansas City, Mo., said theological reflection on human and animal natures had been stunted by inattention to recent developments in animal-behaviour science.

"Deeper appreciation of the beauty and intensity of animal experience might generate and support a deeper and more interesting concept of God," Howell said. "Animals are getting a new hearing with theologians."

If Bekoff is right, said Jay McDaniel, a professor of religion at Hendrix College, theologians are called to develop a theology of animal minds and an ethic of animal protection.

"Animals have their own kind of spirituality, their own connection to the creator" McDaniel said.

In the 1200's, Catholic philosopher St. Thomas Aquinas wrote that animals have souls but not like the rational human soul created directly by God for each person.

"The honest answer is that we don't have a clue what kind of soul an animal has" said the Rev. Thomas Reese, senior fellow for the Woodstock Theological Center at Georgetown University.

Influential 20th-century scientist and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead recognized in 1926 that key elements of religious expression — ritual and emotion — are common to humans and animals. However, he said, two other essentials — belief and rationalization — are exclusively human activities.

Bekoff disagrees.

"Dogs are thinking animals" Bekoff said. "They seek the outcomes they want. They avoid the ones they don't. They solve problems. They have expectations. They have hopes".

Critics sceptical about some research trends in animal thinking, emotion and morality downplay the evidence as often anecdotal and anthropomorphic — attributing human motivation or characteristics to animals.

Bekoff counters that thousands of anecdotes equal data. And anthropomorphism, he said, is a misleading label for what is actually a shared evolutionary history.

Humans and dogs share most of their genes and a great deal of physiology and behaviour. Bekoff sees that shared heritage extending into the spiritual realm.

"If we have souls, our animals have souls. If we have free choice, they have it" Bekoff said. "If we can't know this for sure, let's give them the benefit of the doubt".

McDaniel lost one of his dogs about two weeks ago.

"She was dying, and as I held her in my arms I thought about what it was that I loved so much about her" McDaniel said. "It was her faith. She had faith in me".

[Back to Contents List](#)

Overweight Dogs - Your Risk

A dog owner whose border collie was found to be twice its ideal weight has been found guilty of neglect in the UK – how does your dog stack up?

The court heard five-year-old Taz was found to weigh 88lb (40kg), after the owner (Mr West) ignored orders to improve his diet. Animal welfare officers who visited the 62-year-old's flat last December said they found dog faeces in every room.

West told officers the dog was overweight because it had been given too many treats by him and his friends. He said he had been unwell with flu and unable to clean the flat or walk the dog.

During the case, magistrates heard a transcript between West and council officers in which West said: "I'll put my hands up and say I'm guilty of [the dog] being overweight, but it wasn't deliberate".

"You can be cruel with kindness".

The court heard that animal welfare officers first visited the flat last year after another resident complained. Officers advised West to clean the flat, exercise Taz, seek a vet's advice, and clip his pet's overgrown claws.

But magistrates were told West failed to improve the animal's condition and Taz became fatter.

During interviews, West told officers he was reluctant to exercise Taz outdoors after his pet had been attacked by a Rottweiler. Ex-farm worker West told officers: "I'd rather hurt myself than hurt that dog and I'd rather go without than let that dog go without".



In March, council and police officers went to the flat and Taz went into council kennels where he shed a quarter of his weight.

After the hearing, Brighton councillor Geoffrey Theobald said: "All dogs, but particularly border collies like Taz, need a good healthy diet and lots of exercise. Keeping a large dog shut indoors in a small space and overfeeding is a form of cruelty".

So – cut down on those treats, feed your dog healthy food in portions suitable for it's size, and get out there and exercise your dog. If walking isn't an option for you or your pet for whatever reason, throw a ball around in the back yard, play chasings – just get moving!

[Back to Contents List](#)

Dogs Finding Dogs

Dogs Finding Dogs, whose slogan is “our noses know where your dog goes” currently has about 6 teams operating in the United States in Maryland, DC, northern Virginia, and southern Pennsylvania. Dogs Finding Dogs is a group of highly trained handlers and dogs that can track and find a lost pet. The dogs are certified in tracking and Canine Good Citizenship, and are experienced in searching for people and objects as well as pets.



"Our dogs have gone thru extensive training for tracking on multiple surfaces such as streets, fields, and buildings. Dogs Finding Dogs is also able to track successfully day or night, rain, snow, sleet, wind.

All of our dogs have been certified as "Canine Good Citizens" with the AKC CGC program. All dogs that you will see that come to help you are 100% friendly and are not dog or people aggressive. Our dog teams also compete in tracking for Schutzhund and AKC.

Dogs on our team have helped aid the police in tracking persons in connection with a crime. They also have successfully tracked lost pets with full recovery of the animal. Some of our dogs have been honoured by the MD State Governor with Governors Citations."

(To the left is a photo of Heidi! She is a 2 year old German Shepherd / Labrador mix. She has her AKC CGC and has been awarded a Governors Citation for her services to the public with tracking.)

Dogs Finding Dogs goal is to reunite you with your pet as soon as possible. They advise you on what steps to take and when. And Dogs Finding Dogs offers more than just tracking teams - the website also has a Helpful Tips page for finding a lost pet.

Their website www.dogsfindingdogs.com has many successful tracking stories such as the one about Kasey, a Sheltie who was missing for 21 days, roaming farmlands in Pennsylvania. Enoch, a 17-year-old Himalayan cat, was missing for 3 days. Mabel, the team dog, picked up his scent immediately and found him relaxing under a bush 2 doors away.

The teams are “ready to go on very short notice” but the sooner you call, the better. You will need to have a favourite toy, blanket or brush that they can use to pre-scent the dogs with to ensure that they are tracking the correct scent path. The group charges a fee to locate the pet, but they donate 10% back to local rescues and shelters.

[Back to Contents List](#)

Dental Disease Prevention

Dental disease in dogs is one of the most common conditions vets see today in their practices. It is tempting to think that because animals survive in the wild without brushing their teeth that we don't need to do anything special as owners. But think how different soft tinned or packaged foods are from those foods our dogs would eat in the wild!

We all know how painful a toothache is for us and how it can hurt to eat. Unfortunately, your dog cannot tell you it's in pain, however there are signs you can look out for.

- Your dog may be reluctant to eat
- They may walk over to their food bowl looking hungry, but then not eat anything
- Your dog may drool from the mouth
- Or your dog may start getting bad breath

If you notice any of these signs, it may be time for a visit to the Vet.

The best way to look after your dog's teeth is with prevention.

If your dog is young, you should introduce them to a toothbrush (yes – you can buy special toothbrushes and paste just for dogs!). Even if your dog is a little older, you could still give it a try, but if your dog refuses to let you brush it's teeth, there are still other steps you can take.

When brushing the teeth there are some common sense things to do to make the process go smoother. Try to make the whole process fun, and don't ever let on that you are doing something good for your pet. With your pet near you or on your lap, maybe while watching TV, let your pet get used to your finger near its mouth. Dipping your finger into a food or liquid your pet has acquired a taste for helps start the process smoothly. When it is comfortable with your finger, use a soft gauze to massage the gums and gently rub the teeth. A cotton tipped applicator can also be used.

Eventually, introduce a soft bristled toothbrush. A rubber finger brush is even easier to use than a toothbrush. **You should not use your personal toothpaste to brush your pet's teeth because the taste can upset their stomachs.** Toothpastes are available that are specially made to be palatable to animals. If you consider daily tooth brushing a chance to enhance your bond with your pet, you and your pet will find it more enjoyable.

In some cases brushing is just not feasible. In these situations you can use sprays, gels and chew toys to control the buildup of bacteria.

There are also special dog biscuits (or kibble) that is designed to prevent tooth disease in dogs. These are quite often abrasive and have a special shape which helps to clean your dog's teeth as they eat them. Some also contain ingredients that reduce plaque and tartar. They can be expensive though.

Another alternative is dental chews (special dog treats that work the same way as the dog biscuits or kibble).

And raw meaty bones are also effective.

[Back to Contents List](#)

Fun Stuff - Doggie Dictionary

Leash: A strap that attaches to your collar, enabling you to lead your owner where you want him or her to go. Make sure that you are waiting patiently with leash in mouth when your owner comes home from work. This immediately makes your owner feel guilty and the walk is lengthened by a good 10 minutes.

Dog Bed: Any soft, clean surface, such as a white bedspread, newly upholstered couch or the dry cleaning that was just picked up.

Drool: What you do when your owners have food and you don't. To do this properly, sit as close as you can, look sad and let the drool fall to the floor or better yet on their laps.

Sniff: A social custom to use when you greet other dogs or those people that sometimes smell like dogs.

Garbage Can: A container your neighbours put out weekly to test your ingenuity. Stand on your hind legs and push the lid off with your nose. If you do it right, you are rewarded with food wrappers to shred, beef bones to consume, mouldy crusts of bread and sometimes even an old Nike.

Bicycles: Two-wheeled exercise machines, invented for dogs to control body fat. To get maximum aerobic benefit, you must hide behind a bush and dash out, bark loudly and run alongside for a few yards. The rider swerves and falls into the bushes, and you prance away.

Thunder: A signal the world is coming to an end. Humans remain amazingly calm during thunderstorms, so it is necessary to warn them of the danger by trembling, panting, rolling your eyes wildly and following at their heels.

Wastebasket: A dog toy filled with paper, envelopes and old candy wrappers. When you get bored, turn over the basket and strew the papers all over the house. This is particularly fun to do when there are guests for dinner and you prance around with the contents of that very special bathroom wastepaper basket!

Sofas: Are to dogs like napkins are to people. After eating it is polite to run up and down the front of the sofa and wipe your whiskers clean. If there are people sitting on the couch just include them as a handy wipe.

Bath: A process owners use to clean you, drench the floor, walls and themselves. You can help by shaking vigorously and frequently.

Lean: Every good dog's response to the command "sit", especially if your owner is dressed for an evening out. Incredibly effective before black-tie events.

Love: A feeling of intense affection, given freely and without restriction, shared by you and your owner. Show it by wagging your tail

[Back to Contents List](#)

The Weird & the Wonderful

Small Dogs Scare off Cougar in Oregon

A feisty Chihuahua from Oregon has proved that sometimes, size doesn't matter. The 10-pound dog scared off a neighbourhood cougar with a heartfelt growl.

Meet Rosie and Chiquita. They could be the best barkers in the entire city of Philomath. They bark at the door, the gate, even the grass if it moves too quickly. They run out into the yard and they bark.

Each bark has a different tone. Some are playful, some defensive - but on Monday night, Rosie's bark was one of panic.

"It sounded like she was in a lot of pain," said Lindsay Wingert, the dogs' owner.

Immediately, Chiquita went through the doggie door to investigate, as Lindsay opened the blinds, trying to see what was wrong.

Pinning poor Rosie to the ground was a five foot long, 100 pound cougar. Rosie was about to become a cat snack.

"I'm like oh my gosh. I had no idea what to do".

As the cougar let out it's best guttural growl - and as Lindsay grabbed the phone for help - little Chiquita went to work.

With all one foot three inches flexed for battle, her 10 pound frame let out it's best attack dog imitation...and believe it or not...the cougar let little Rosie go.

"I can't even imagine what it would have been like to see my dog get seriously injured" said a relieved and thankful Wingert. Thanks to her tenacious pup, she won't have to.

Animal Odd Couple: Orangutan and Dog Are Best Buds

In the pantheon of animal odd couples, these two belong up there with Kermit and Miss Piggy.



Suryia the orangutan and Roscoe the Bluetick Coonhound met in a sanctuary for endangered animals two years ago, in South Carolina, according to the U.K.'s Daily Mail.

Roscoe was an underfed stray, but Surya quickly took him under his wing.

Dr. Bhagavan Antle, founder of The Institute of Greatly Endangered and Rare Species (TIGERS) in Myrtle Beach, told the Daily Mail that Roscoe followed him and Surya through the park's gate one day.

"As soon as he saw Roscoe, Surya ran over to him and they started playing" Antle said "It was unusual because dogs are usually scared of primates; but they took to each other straight away".

After a few unsuccessful phone calls to find an owner, Antle said they decided to let Roscoe stay.

Now the pair have a ball frolicking around the park. "They will spend a few hours each day together rolling around, swimming" Antle said. "Surya will take Roscoe for walks around the enclosure and even feeds him some of his monkey biscuits".

[Back to Contents List](#)