

Doggy Cruces

Information for the Las Cruces Dog Lover!



I CAN READ SCOUT LIKE A BOOK! THIS IS HIS "I LOVE YOU, DAD" EXPRESSION...



WHAT'S UP DOG?

Of course you and your best friend have a special connection... but how well do you read each other's emotional cues?

Page 15

REALLY GOTTA POOP, DAD!



Page 19
ACES SHOWING

Doña Ana County ACES program helps Animal Control Officers deal a winning hand to rural residents who want to improve the welfare of their pets.

Page 23
ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE

We welcome new columnist Delores Craig, DVM, who expands the universe of veterinary medicine to include alternative forms of treatment.

Page 21
FIRST SUCCESS

New rescue group Last Litter faced its first test less than 24 hours after opening its doors!

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Happy Fall-Idays!

Where did the summer go? And spring? And winter!?! Didn't we just start the Year of the Dog? Man...it seems like 2018 has flown by seven times faster than most years...

Here at *Dog'Cruces*, we welcomed autumn the same way we did last year—at the **Second Annual Dog'Cruces Pet Expo!** Oddly, I thought the second time around would be much easier, since we got all the "firsts" out of the way last year. But I was wrong. It turns out that when your first Expo is a success, even *more* vendors want to be a part of the next event! With a little extra work and some Tetris-like moves, we were able to fit everyone who wanted to join us and make the 2018 Pet Expo a huge success. You can get a taste of the fun and festivities from the photos on page 20, but being there in person was sooo much better. People are already asking if we are planning for next year!! Well, after we take a few months' break, we will start working on next year's even *biggerer* and *more better* Expo! Hope to see you and your four-legged friends there!

How well do you and your dogs understand each other? Belle Castro, a Veterinary Assistant at ASCMV, was curious enough about that question to devote her Master's Thesis to re researching how humans and canines communicate their primary and secondary emotions to each other. Belle has distilled her 400-page thesis into a 3-page summary for this issue's cover story, and we certainly appreciate her sharing her hard work with us!

Our Working Like a Dog section highlights the ACES program Animal Control and Codes Enforcement Officers have initiated in the county to help rural residents better understand and comply with property maintenance and animal welfare

issues. ACOs go door-to-door in selected communities in an effort to improve the quality of life for county residents and their companion animals. It's just another way in which our local Animal Control Officers are making a difference in more and more pets' and people's lives.

Our fall issue features the debut of a new column by Dr. Delores Craig—The Alternative View—in which she will introduce different ways of thinking about, and treating, your pets' medical issues. We look forward to learning more in the coming months about how incorporating non-traditional veterinary practices into your pets' care regimine can offer more options to ensure the comfort and wellness of all involved.

Animal advocate Kelly Barker tells the tale of Last Litter's rescue and relocation of nine newborn puppies the *first day after* the Last Litter Inn opened its doors for business! By the way, please join the *Dog'Cruces* staff and me in wishing Kelly a quick and complete recovery so she can continue doing the work she loves so much.

With the holidays fast approaching, it's the perfect time to thank the local businesses that make this magazine possible—and to encourage everybody to invest in our community by Shopping Local during this festive season!

It's also a good time to take stock of what is truly important in our lives, and I know one thing all *Dog'Cruces* are grateful for is the unconditional love of our best furry friends. The time we have with them is brief and precious, as I was reminded by our summer issue that focused on the grief of losing a pet. And this hit home—hard—when our oldest Golden Girl was diagnosed with cancer just a few weeks ago. *Lucy* was five years old when we took her in as a foster. Now, nine years later, we are on the verge of having to say goodbye. But we do so knowing that we have done everything in our power to provide a loving, healthy, safe, and happy home for all our girls—in appreciation for all they give to us.

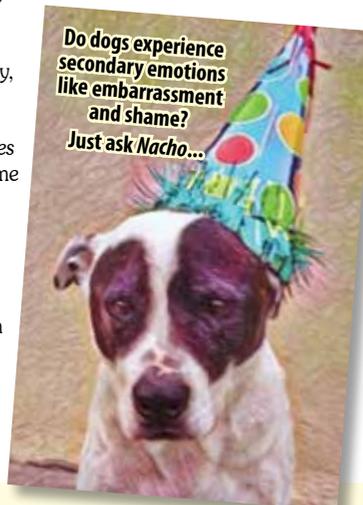
That is, after all, the right thing to do for our pets, our people, and ourselves all year long.

Vic Villalobos
Mayor of Dog'Cruces

Write to us at:

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RECURRING & ONGOING EVENTS

Fall 2018

Safe Haven Adoption Events at PetSmart

Saturday, October 27th

Saturday, November 24th

Saturday, December 22nd

Saturday, January 26th

PetSmart, 2200 E. Lohman (next to Old Navy), from 10:30am to 2:30pm. For more information, call 575-805-5338.

Radio NM Adoption Promotion at Dragonfly Patio

Every Wednesday from Wednesday, October 24th till

Wednesday, January 30th

Dragonfly, 139 N. Downtown Plaza, at 9am. For more information, call 575-805-5338.

Rudy's to the Rescue

Thursday, November 1st

Thursday, December 6th

Thursday, January 3rd

Safe Haven Information/Donation Event at Rudy's Country Store & BBQ, 1020 N. Telshor Blvd., from 4pm-7pm. For more information, call 575-805-5338.

OCTOBER

National Pit Bull Awareness Month,

Adopt-A-Shelter-Dog Month,

AND

National Animal Safety and Protection Month

Saturday, October 27th

Halloween Photo Booth

Safe Haven Thrift Store, 840 El Paseo Rd.

Have your pets' Halloween pictures taken!

Proceeds benefit Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary. For more information, call 575-805-5338.

Saturday, October 27th

10th Annual Dog Park Halloween Canine Costume Contest & Summer and Fall Canine Birthday Celebration

Las Cruces Dog Park, 430 N. Hermosa St., registration begins at 4pm and closes at 5pm (\$2 donation per dog for each contest or for the birthday gift). The Las Cruces Dog Park Coalition is sponsoring this event, and there will be two costume categories: Homemade and Store Bought. All participants get a gift and an emailed

Doggie

picture. Top three in each category will receive an additional prize. For information, check out LCDogParkers Facebook or call Susan, 760-713-3338 or Kevin, 575-520-4382.

Sunday, October 28th

National Pit Bull Awareness Day

7th Annual Pits for Peace

Downtown Plaza, from 11am to 3pm.

Family-friendly event to celebrate Pit Bull Awareness Month and the loving, peaceful nature of ALL dogs. This year's event will feature the return of the Peace Walk (starts at 1pm) around the downtown area. This is a free event, and all well-behaved, leashed dogs are welcome. There will also be

vendors, raffle prizes, dog adoptions, pizza, and a doggie Halloween costume contest. All proceeds benefit

ACTion Programs for Animals in its animal rescue efforts.

Wednesday, October 31st

Better Life's Halloween Costume Contest

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Dates



2nd prize is a six-month supply of Fromm, and 3rd prize is a \$150 Better Life gift certificate. Celebrating Hobbs' birthday with a Hot-dog BBQ and snacks on the patio. Costume contestants will march in a lighted Trick-or-Treat Parade to neighboring businesses.

NOVEMBER

Pet Cancer Awareness Month, National Senior Pet Month, Adopt a Senior Pet Month, AND Pet Diabetes Month

Saturday, November 10th & Sunday, November 11th

Customer Appreciation Weekend

Better Life Natural Pet Foods, 315 Telshor Blvd and 365 Avenida de Mesilla (Saturday only). 20% off entire store—with 30%, 40% and 50% off selected items. Raffle items, giveaways, door prizes. Manufacturer Representatives will be on hand to answer questions. Groomers will be available to answer questions and to give at-home grooming tips. Free nail trims for current customers, \$5 for new customers. Food, Fun, Prizes and Great Discounts!

Monday, November 12th

SNAP Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Clinic

2405 W. Picacho, Ste 103 (across from Peddler's Pavilion). Must pre-register due to limited availability. Please bring current tax return, SSI, SSD, SSA letter, or last 3 pay stubs, photo ID, and cash (\$40 per dog, \$30 per cat). For information, call 575-524-9265.



Saturday December 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd

Free Pictures with Santa for Kids and Pets

Horse N Hound, 991 W. Amador, from 11am-4pm.

Sunday, December 2nd
National Mutt Day!

Sunday, November 25th and Sunday, December 2nd

Pet Photos with Santa by Better Life Natural Pet Foods

Two locations, one in Picacho Hills the other in Sonoma Ranch T.B.D. Bring your pets to have their pictures taken with Santa! For more information check Better Life and DogCruces Facebook.

Wednesday, December 5th
Volunteer Day

Saturday, December 15th *Pet Pictures with Santa at Safe Haven Thrift Store*

Safe Haven Thrift Store, 840 El Paseo Rd. Proceeds benefit Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary. For information, call 575-805-5338.

DECEMBER

Cat Lover's Month

JANUARY

Monday, January 14th
Dress Up Your Pet Day

Celebrate your pet! Have fun with pet fashion, show off your pets' fashion by taking pictures and posting on social media. Remember—comfort and safety first!

For a complete calendar of events, visit

DogCruces.com

List is updated as events are announced



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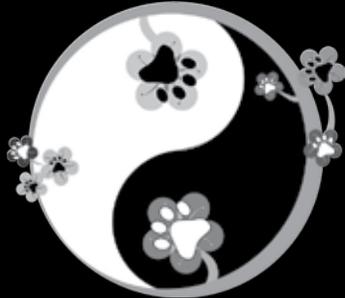
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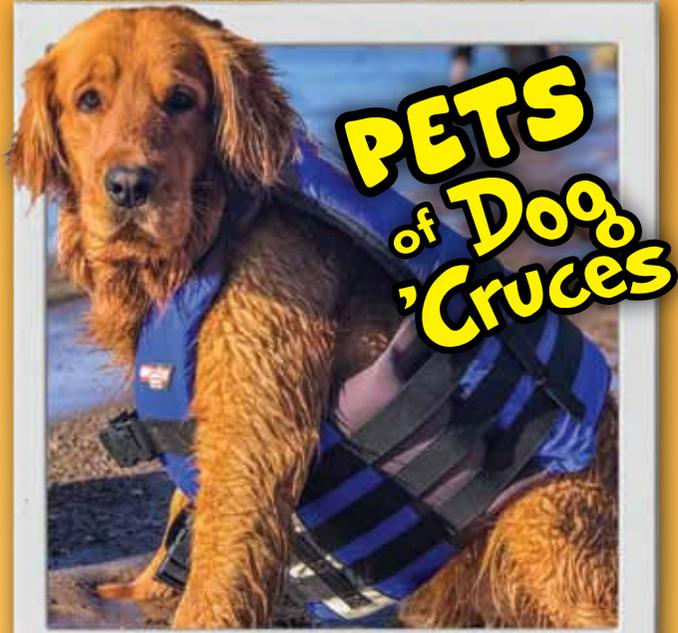
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Don't Fat-Shame Fido...

As we wind down 2018—the Year of the Dog—and look forward to 2019, some of us might already be thinking about changes we want to make in our lives for the upcoming New Year. Without a doubt the most common resolution most of us make has to do with losing weight or getting in better shape. I try to eat healthy and stay active, but I, too, find myself resolving to improve on this every year. Yet, I wonder how many of us recognize that our dogs may need a healthy dose of commitment from us as well?

A 2017 survey conducted by the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention (APOP) found that 56% of dogs were either overweight or obese. A staggering 52.2 million dogs in the United States are at risk for many of the same health problems that we are—all due to a preventable disease condition! As an animal health-care provider, I am very concerned about this. Pet obesity continues to be one of the most prevalent and growing health problems in veterinary medicine, resulting in disorders including diabetes, liver disease, pancreatitis, osteoarthritis/musculoskeletal disorders, as well as heart and lung diseases. While it may be innocent and unintentional, many of us could truly be “killing our dogs with kindness.” Every extra calorie we give our dogs may carry unintended medical consequences.

How can you tell if your dog is overweight? Well, let's be honest—most of the time, we know. But sometimes we don't—a previous year's APOP survey found that 45% of

owners felt their pet was “normal” when a veterinary examination indicated the animal was overweight. So it may be necessary to use some kind of tools to evaluate this.

One problem in evaluating our dogs is the extreme variation in body shapes and sizes. I suggest a physical examination by a veterinarian as the best assessment of your dog's body condition, but there are some quick tests you can do at home. We can all run our hands back and forth across the side of our dog's chest. Do you feel the ribs? Not prominent, but at least obvious to the touch? Does your dog have a waist—a tucked-in appearance at the back of the abdomen in front of the hind legs? Perhaps your dog has excessive rolls of skin on the neck or back? I am astounded by how often I have had owners bring their dog in for an examination because of growths along the back, only to discover that what they were feeling was an accumulation of fat in the lumbar region over the kidneys—what we would regard as “love handles” in a person.

Recently, we have been using specific musculoskeletal measurements and inputting the data into a computer program that takes into account the breed, age, sex, and weight of a dog to calculate a “fat index.” This allows us to calculate how much weight a dog needs to lose, as well as to formulate a weight loss and diet plan for that individual. I've been encouraged by the progress many of our patients have made with this approach.



The Vet's View

by
Dr. Scott Pirtle, DVM

Help Your Dog Get Fit!

So just what is causing this epidemic of pet obesity? Many of the same factors that affect us are taking a toll on our dogs. In the past, children may have come home from school and spent the afternoon playing in the yard. The family dog was usually involved, running and playing with the kids. Now video games, television, iPads and smartphones keep the family glued to a sofa, with our dogs lying at our sides. No movie or gaming session is complete without a snack or two, and our dogs are surely there to share our snacks with us. Less physical activity accompanied by more calorie intake is a guaranteed recipe for weight gain. Our dogs are no different than we are!

Weather and seasons can play roles, as well. Many of us arrive home after dark during the winter and skip going out for a walk in the cold with our dogs. Consulting with clients about their dogs' diets, I hear a recurring theme of excessive treats and too much food. Let's face it, those begging eyes can manipulate us into giving them almost anything we are eating. Next time you go to the grocery, notice just how much shelf space is devoted to doggy treats...probably almost as much as to dog food! These specially colored and shaped snacks are no different than much of the junk food we all crave when we go shopping. Most of these items are palatable because of added fat and salt. They aren't healthy for us or our dogs.

All of these factors can play a role in our dogs

being overweight, but it really comes down to this—not enough physical activity and too many unhealthy calories!

So here comes the resolution! I'm challenging all of us to commit to improving our dog's health in 2019. Just like us, regular medical check-ups are vital to monitoring your dog's overall health.

If your dog hasn't been to the veterinarian in awhile, maybe it's time for an examination and some blood tests. Your veterinarian will be happy

to help you come up with a healthier lifestyle for your dog—one that incorporates better dietary habits and more physical activity.

Quality food in healthy amounts, keeping treats to a minimum, no table food, and an increase in physical activity are a great start toward a healthier dog in 2019. And getting off the couch and picking up the leash will do wonders for our own emotional and physical health, as well.

Here's wishing you and your dog a healthy, happy Holiday Season...and beyond!



Thin		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ribs, vertebrae, hip bones easily visible - No palpable fat - Clear waist and abdominal detectable - Prominent hip and pelvic bones
Underweight		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ribs easily felt - Minimal fat covering - Waist visible when viewed from above - Clear abdominal tuck
Ideal		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ribs can be felt but not seen - Waist can be seen from above - Abdomen tucked up when viewed from the side
Overweight		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ribs can be felt but with slight fat covering - Waist barely detectable when seen from the top - Some abdominal tuck when seen from the side
Obese		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ribs not easily felt - Fat can be felt over the lower back and base of the tail - Waist barely visible if at all - No abdominal tuck, may have distended belly

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Take a Walk on the Mild Side

by
Jess Williams

I absolutely love the Las Cruces Farmer's Market. I love it for the people. I love it for the animals (mostly dogs). I love it for the live music. I love it for the food. And I love it for the stuff the vendors grow, make and sell.

Since this is *Dog'Cruces*, and since Vic is picky about content ("Don't write about your turtles again, dammit!") I thought writing about the Farmer's Market would be a lovely way to burn up 800 words. (His veins are popping out of his forehead right now.)

I like to get there fairly early, around 8:30. Some of the vendors and musicians and food trucks are still setting up at that hour, and the pavement isn't too hot for *Toby's* little paws.

Toby and I walk to the Market, mostly because *Toby* is a very prolific leg-hiker who loves to leave his mark on the world. By the time we get to the actual Market, he can hike his leg all he wants, but I rest easy knowing the well is dry; his hikes are—by that time—purely ceremonial.

We normally arrive at the north end and make our way south on one side or another, chatting up certain favorite vendors along the way and maybe snagging a libation or a breakfast snack, as well. Regardless of which side we start on, we always stop for a chat at the Great Conversation circle of chairs, where Randy Harris holds court, mostly with old hippies like me and Alice and Daphne and Peter.

No matter where we walk or stop, no one makes immediate eye contact with me. *Toby* gets all the initial attention. Lots of strangers ogle him and ask for some *Toby* time. Friends and acquaintances spot him and love on him, and then their eyes eventually follow the leash upward to where I reside. I'm cool with it.

I can't imagine that there might somewhere be a more animal-friendly farmer's market on the planet. Our lovely market is a perpetual tangle of leashes and hikes and butt sniffs. Occasionally, a bark or a yip may be heard, but rarely a snarl. It's really two social events. One is taking place from the knees down, and the other takes place at human eye level.

For the past few weeks, there's been a guy there with an African Grey parrot named *Phineas*. *Phineas* is an extremely social bird who performs an impressive array of tricks for the passers-by. And of course, he can make nearly any noise he's ever heard. Even *Toby* cocks his head a bit when *Phineas* meows.

By the time we get to the middle of the market—where *Phineas* usually performs—I start to worry about pavement heat on *Toby's* tootsies, so I pick him up and either carry him or put him in the pouch I bought some years ago for a trip to Las Vegas. (Fremont Street is not nearly as critter-friendly as the Las Cruces Farmer's Market, just so you know.)

When *Toby's* in his carrier, I look like a tallish, tailless kangaroo with a furry joey poking his head out of my pouch. Maternal instincts start kicking in all around me, with women and girls unable to help themselves from being drawn to my dogjoey's furry little noggin. We have to stop more frequently to allow for compulsory ear skritchng.

I warn them all about not touching him near his collar, where his microchip resides. Those who fail to heed the warning get a good look at his choppers, along with a guttural little growl that sends a pretty clear and instant message about the credibility of my collar warnings.

Many of the vendors set out bowls of water for the passing dogs. *Toby* is generally a snob about these bowls, and so if he's acting thirsty, I have to buy a glass of water or tea or something, and then hold ice cubes in my hand, which he licks until they're gone. I always feel a little foolish, but he stays hydrated, and I'm patronizing the market, so it's all good.

When Toby's in his carrier, I look like a tallish, tailless kangaroo with a furry joey poking his head out of my pouch.

Once we make it all the way to the south end, we cross the street to the other side and meander back, looking in all the booths on that side and dealing with all of *Toby's* magnetism. It's very good for his ego.

A complete round trip of the Market takes a couple of hours at a leisurely ramble. And sometimes, standing there back at the north end around 10:30 a.m., it occurs to me that the Little Toad place will open at 11. They sell cold beverages there that are—to me—as attractive as the vendor-side water bowls are *not* to *Toby*. So I sometimes wander back down that direction, and *Toby* and I watch people and pooches doing what we've just done.

One of the things I see while sipping a cold one out there on the sidewalk is something that gives me hope for humanity: Very few people are looking at their phones.

The Las Cruces Farmer's Market is a place where people and critters actually interact. It's amazing! You should go. Look for us—I'll be at the top end of *Toby's* leash.



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OUR FURRY FRIENDS MAY NOT BE ACCOMPLISHED CONVERSATIONALISTS, BUT THEY ARE VERY ADEPT AT READING OUR VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL EMOTIONAL CUES. CAN WE BE SURE WE'RE DOING THE SAME, OR MIGHT WE BE MISSING THE POINT?



AN WORDS

The movie *Alpha* treated dog lovers to a fictionalized story, based on scientific theories and evidence, about how the bond between ancient mankind and the wolf developed.

The canine-human relationship is the longest standing domestic animal-human connection, but there are still unanswered questions about the domestication of the dog. Among the scientific community, it is widely accepted that the Old-World Eurasian Gray Wolf is the ancestor of the dog. There are no written documents pinpointing when domestication of dogs occurred, but Zooarchaeologists have used archaeological evidence and carbon dating of skeletal remains to conclude that domestication began approximately 33,000 years ago.

Professor Ádám Miklósi, of Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary is the co-founder and head of Family Dog Project, the largest dog research group in the world. He theorizes that humans and domesticated dogs have evolved together. According to the Family Dog Project website, “We hypothesised that dogs have evolved to survive in the anthropogenic (human-influenced) environment, and our investigations aim at revealing the contribution of humans and dogs to this long-standing partnership. Thus we are not solely interested in the mental abilities of dogs but in all aspects of human and dog behaviour that have strengthened this bond, and may even expand it further.”

During the past century, research has recognized the mutually beneficial relationship that exists between humans and dogs. In 1962, Child Psychologist Dr. Boris Levinson was one of the first to scientifically document his sessions and report benefits experienced by his patients resulting from a dog being present. In 1980, Dr. Erika Friedmann, professor and researcher at the School of Nursing at the University of Maryland, conducted one of the first studies that reported qualitative data on the survival rate of heart disease patients after one year. In this study, Dr. Friedman found that more than 80% of patients who owned a companion animal had a higher rate of survival than those who did not.

In 1991, the International Society for Anthrozoology (ISAZ) was developed for researchers and scholars who study human-animal interactions. During the past 25 years, qualitative-based, peer-reviewed research has been published touting the positive effects dogs have on humans' well-being and mental health.

TALK TO ME, DOG

Humans and dogs have a cooperative relationship that requires a good set of skills to communicate with each other. In the past, canines had traditional jobs such as hunting, tracking, herding, and guarding that required the dogs to understand humans' visual and verbal cues. In turn, the handlers also needed to understand the dogs' communication cues and signals. While some of the traditional roles of the dog have shifted, communication between handler and dog is still very important. While most dogs today can be classified as companion animals, many still perform vital jobs for their handlers and communities—for example: guide dogs for the blind, wheelchair assistance dogs, psychiatric service dogs, search and rescue dogs, and detection dogs (narcotics or explosives), while filling other roles in the military and law enforcement. Good communication between partners in these relationships is crucial to their success.

Dogs are unique in their ability to interpret human body language, and researchers are in the process of studying this canine skill. Dr. Brian Hare is a professor of evolutionary anthropology at Duke University and co-founder of Dognition (Dognition.com) a game-based assessment of doggie personalities designed to help humans better understand their canine companions' personalities and “cognitive styles.” Dr. Hare recreated social experiments in which, originally, chimpanzees were tested for their ability to recognize and comprehend human point gestures and social cues to find hidden food—but Dr. Hare used dogs instead. He found that dogs performed *better* than the chimpanzees, our closest relatives, using non-verbal communications. This implies that dogs are very in tune with human body language and are able to interpret non-verbal information they are given.

Scientific research has validated that dogs do have the ability to interpret non-verbal cues from humans. However, humans are not very good at accurately interpreting the body language of their own dogs. Dogs use their entire bodies to send signals and cues to humans to communicate different messages. Body language is a secondary source of communication for most humans when interacting with other humans, so they are less attuned to their animals' non-verbal cues. Because humans use vocal cues as their primary source of communication, they are better at picking up the vocal cues their dogs give them than body language cues. Dr. Csaba Molnár, associate researcher at Eötvös Loránd University, conducted studies in which people listened to pre-recorded dog barks, and he found that people *can* distinguish between the different types of barks.

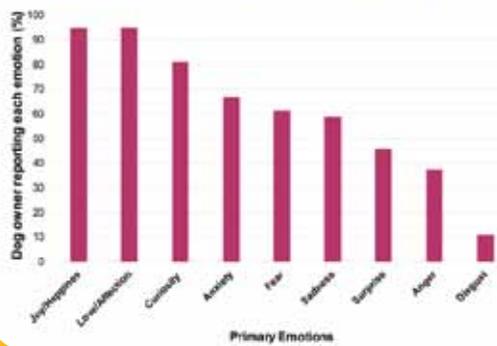
ANTHROPOMORPHISM

Anthropomorphism is the tendency of humans to ascribe familiar human characteristics to animals or objects (think about every Disney movie ever made). We project human characteristics onto our dogs to help us describe what we see in them when we are trying to interpret messages the dog is sending. Humans anthropomorphize their dogs on a regular basis, and there

**[DR. BRIAN HARE]
FOUND THAT DOGS
PERFORMED BETTER
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OUR CLOSEST RELATIVES,
USING NON-VERBAL
COMMUNICATIONS.**

BY CHRISTABEL CASTRO

Primary Emotions in Dogs as Observed by Owners



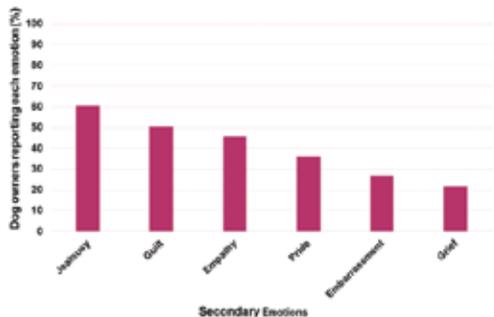
are several reasons why:

- 1) Owners understand human body language and apply their experience to the dog.
- 2) Dogs are genuinely viewed as family members, so it is normal to use human behavior as a basis for interpreting the dog's behavior within a family setting.
- 3) Owners do not have full knowledge of canine behavior, so they just use what they do know—human behavior.

EMOTIONS IN DOGS

Emotions are a universal human language shared through verbal cues, facial expressions, and body gestures. It is also believed that animals can have and display emotions. Dr. Paul Morris, professor and researcher in the Department of Psychology at University of Portsmouth, has written extensively about canine emotions in peer-reviewed articles. Dr. Morris investigated whether people believe animals have emotions, and—perhaps not surprisingly—he determined most people do believe this.

Secondary Emotions in Dogs as Observed by Owners



Many studies have been conducted by researchers testing how well dog owners can recognize emotions in their dogs and the degree to which they are confident in their recognition. For example, Dr. KJ Kerswell and colleagues, University of Melbourne, have conducted studies to determine if puppy owners can recognize emotions in their puppies. The researchers concluded that 89% of the participants can fully understand their pups' emotions. In another study, Dr. Kerswell investigated dog owners' confidence in their ability to recognize emotions in their dogs. Fully 94% of dog owners had a high degree of confidence in their own abilities. Overall, these studies do not document the types of body language, vocalization, and movements the puppy owners relied on to determine the specific emotions expressed.

MASTER THESIS STUDY

Previous studies have determined that dog owners believe they can accurately identify emotions in their dogs. Some studies have found that people believe animals, including dogs, have a broad range of both primary and secondary emotions. However, these studies did not collect data about the types of body language, vocalization, and movements dog owners observed when determining the emotions they thought their dogs were experiencing. Researchers simply accepted that dog owners were correct when identifying emotions in their dogs.

My research study, conducted in 2016 for my master's thesis, provides better insight about whether dog owners can accurately identify emotions in their dogs based on body language, vocalization, and movement. I hypothesized that dog owners will report they are able to interpret different emotions in their dogs and correctly identify dog body language, vocalization, and movement for each emotion. The main objectives of the research were: to determine which primary and secondary emotions dog owners believe their dogs have, and whether the emotions the dog owner identified were accurate based on vocalization and/or body language exhibited by the dog.

There are two classifications of emotions—primary and secondary. Primary emotions are those which a person or animal expresses as a direct reaction to stimuli. These primary emotions are: disgust, anger, anxiety, sadness, surprise, affection, joy, curiosity, and fear. Secondary

emotions are the self-conscious responses humans feel after initially experiencing a primary emotion. The secondary emotions are: embarrassment, shame, guilt, empathy, pride, and jealousy. As an example, if a person is surprised (primary emotion) and screams when a dog jumps onto her lap, she may then become embarrassed (secondary emotion) by her response.

I posted an online research survey, available for a period of 31 days in April/May, 2016. The survey targeted previous and current dog owners and consisted of 72 questions. Participants were directed to think of one dog, living or deceased, as they answered this series of 72 questions. The study inquired about the nine primary emotions and six secondary emotions listed above. With assistance from a dog trainer/behavior consultant certified by the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers, I developed canine body language, vocalization, and movement criteria for each primary emotion.

This is the first study to explore dog owners' ability to interpret different emotions in their dogs and whether they can correctly identify dog body language, vocalization, and movements for each primary emotion.

Six hundred and fifty-one surveys had been completed by the end of the open survey period. The percentage of dog owners reporting their dog expressed each primary emotion is in Figure 1. The most-often identified primary emotions observed by dog owners are joy/happiness and love/affection. The least-observed primary emotion reported by dog owners was disgust.

The percentage of dog owners who reported each secondary emotion their dog expressed is in Figure 2. Jealousy was the most-reported secondary emotion. Grief was the least-reported secondary emotion. Overall, primary emotions are more frequently observed than secondary emotions by dog owners.

Secondary emotions reflect self-conscious awareness, these emotions attributed to the dog by the owner. Jealousy was the most frequent emotion observed, with dog owners reporting the dog "pushes against animal/person," "gets in-between owner and animal/person/object," "seeks physical contact of owner/person/animal," and "seeks to be near owner/person/animals," behaviors that are used to indicate this emotion. Dogs are known to be resource guarders and this behavior may be misinterpreted for jealousy by the owner.

Curiosity
Surprise
Disgust
ANXIETY
SADNESS

Empathy
PRIDE
EMBARRASSMENT

Joy Affection ADNESS FEAR

The main objective of this study was to determine if dog owners were able to use canine body language, vocalizations, and movements to correctly identify their dogs' primary emotions. My study indicates that pet owners are less adept at recognizing the full range of emotional responses their dogs demonstrated than they believe themselves to be. Dog owners may think they are interpreting their dog's emotions correctly; however, they could be guessing which emotion their dog displays at any given time. The data supports the hypothesis that dog owners can interpret emotions in their dogs. However, the behaviors for each primary emotion that were reported did not match the expected dog behaviors based on the criteria. Joy/happiness was the top primary emotion identified; yet dog owners selected only "tail fast wag" as a body language and "bounces/jumps" as a movement (Table 1). For the primary emotion joy/happiness, there were nine body languages, one vocalization, and six body movements that few participants recognized as indicators of joy.

In previous studies, such as Dr. Morris', the primary emotion anger was one of the most frequently observed by dog owners. However, in my study, anger was the second-least reported primary emotion. The inability of dog owners to identify behaviors, vocalizations, and movements for the primary emotion anger are provocative (Table 2). "Body tense/stiff muscles on back and neck" and "Hair stand on end on back and/or neck" were the only two of the seven body language criteria selected by dog owners. The three movements selected for anger were fewer than 20% of the options. In the vocalization section, "growls/grumbles" was the most reported indicator for anger. While it might be a shame not to recognize the non-verbal cues their dogs display for, say, curiosity or disgust, being unable to identify non-verbal cues for anger in dogs could have dire consequences for their owners.

RESEARCH STUDY LIMITATIONS

Limitations identified in this study include the fact that different dog breeds have different physical characteristics and do not communicate in the same matter. For example, the Basenji breed is known for its unique vocalization. Basenji do not bark but "yodel" as their form of vocal communication. Also, the Basenji has a tightly curled tail that could be a challenge to read when the dog is trying to display fear or anxiety. On a straight-tailed dog, a low and tucked-in tail is the indicator for fear or anxiety.

Another limitation of the research survey was having not provided follow-up questions about secondary emotions. Since secondary emotions result from self-conscious awareness of primary emotions, more specific questions about why owners believed their dogs were expressing secondary emotions are needed to help clarify their answers.

FUTURE DIRECTION

As mentioned in the previous section, each dog breed communicates differently. Future research should examine how non-verbal communication differs from breed to breed. It is obvious that different breeds have different physical characteristics, as well as behavioral characteristics. For example, not all ears are the same in size, shape, and length. Some dogs do not have full length, loose tails.

Another possible research direction to further explore dogs' emotions and non-verbal communication, is examining whether communication skills are influenced by a dog's owner. Puppies learn social skills from their mothers as they learn to interact with other dogs and humans. When the pup is old enough to leave its mother, does the puppy learn new social skills from its owner? Certain behaviors—both wanted and unwanted—are enforced by the owner. Does the owner's influence affect or alter the puppy's communication skills?

USING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO STRENGTHEN THE HUMAN-DOG BOND

Despite the fact that humans and dogs have been together for over 33,000 years, our understanding of canine behavior is still incomplete. A greater degree of understanding on our part can affect the strength of the bond we have with our dogs. As individuals—and as a species—humans need to take more responsibility and make greater efforts to understand our dogs' behavior. As scientific research continues, it will help unlock some of the mysteries of the canine mind and provide dog owners better ways in which to communicate with our non-verbal best friend—the dog.

Christabel Castro, M.S.,
Veterinary Surgical Assistant
Animal Service Center of the
Mesilla Valley
ccastro@las-cruces.org

Table 1. Owner's observation of their dog's body language, vocalization, and movement for the primary emotion of Joy/Happiness (N=619)

Body language	%
Tail fast wag	65.9
Body relaxed/At ease	46.5
Play bow (front paws down and hind end up)	42.3
Exposes belly	35.8
Eye contact	26.5
Tail high and erect ("flagpole")	25.0
Ears up and erect	24.1
Head up (above shoulders)	23.3
Corner of lips pulled back ("smile")	18.1
Relaxed muzzle	15.4
Vocalization	
Barks with high pitch/yip	21.5
Movement	
Bounces/jumps	53.8
Runs towards	38.9
Licking animal/object/person	38.3
Seeks physical contact of owner/person/animal	37.3
Seek to be near owner/person/animal	36.0
Spins in circle	27.5
Pushes against animal/person	19.4

MASTER THESIS SUMMARIZED

Castro C, Fassenko G, Hout MC, Wilson C. 2017. Canines and Emotions: **Dog Owners' Perception of Primary and Secondary Emotions Based on Dog (Canis lupus familiaris) Body Language and Vocalization.**

Las Cruces, NM: New Mexico State University.

Printed Version of Master Thesis can be found at New Mexico State University Branson Library, Special Collections- Non-Circulating; SF 1999.C3493 2017

RECOMMEND READINGS:

Decoding Your Dog

Debra F. Horowitz, DVM, DACVB and John Ciribassi, DVM, DACV
Boston New York: Mariner Books Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Inside of a Dog

Alexandra Horowitz
New York, NY: Scribner

Being a Dog: Following the Dog into a World of Smell

Alexandra Horowitz
New York, NY: Scribner

The Genius of Dogs: How Dogs are Smarter Than You Think

Brain Hare and Vanessa Woods
New York, NY: Plume

Citizen Canine

David Grimm
New York, NY: Public Affairs

Table 2. Owner's observation of their dog's body language, vocalization, and movement for the primary emotion of Anger (N=243)

Body language	%
Body tense/Stiff muscles on body and legs	48.6
Hair stands on end on back and/or neck	47.7
Stares	23.5
Tail stiff	16.9
Tail high and erect ("flagpole")	13.6
Ears up and erect	12.4
Body upright/Confident stance	9.1
Vocalization	
Growls/Grumbles	65.8
Monotone bark	1.7
Movement	
Lunges	16.1
Runs towards	9.1
Bites (Breaks skin)	6.2

Assessment Guilt Shame Jealousy

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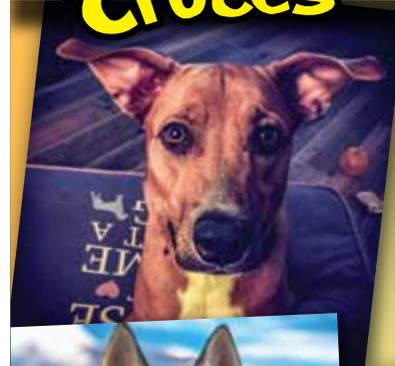
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PETS of Dog 'Cruces



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Dog 'Cruces 🐾 Fall 2018

Workin' Like a Dog



ACOs come up ACES in rural Doña Ana County

The Doña Ana County Animal Control and Codes department has been conducting Animal Control Environmental Surveys (ACES) in more than 26 rural communities throughout Doña Ana County. The ACES program was started in 2013 in order to reach county residents and address the need for educational outreach and follow-up in these rural areas.

A workshop is held at the beginning of the county's fiscal year to select the communities to participate during the coming year. Key people who have a stake in the program are invited to attend the workshop and provide input.

The purpose of ACES is to improve conditions in individual communities by providing education and resources to their residents. Doña Ana County Animal Control and Codes Officers go door-to-door in the participating communities to educate residents about disposing of solid waste, their responsibilities regarding inoperable vehicles, open burning rules, and animal-welfare issues.

The Animal Control Officers (ACOs) look for things like vaccination records, proper housing for pets, an elevated structure that provides shade and, of course, clean water. If the pet owner is not able to provide some of these things, the ACO will issue a warning and give them time to come into compliance. After some time, the ACO will visit the home again to make sure the owners have complied with the requirements of the law. If they have not, a citation can be issued and—depending on the severity of the infraction—their pet can be removed from the property.

During one ACES, the ACOs came upon a dog that was severely covered with ticks, as well as being malnourished and in need of immediate care. After educating the owner and enforcing the local ordinance, the dog was taken to a veterinarian for treatment. This dog might never have gotten help if the officer had not been there during the ACES.

On any given day, Doña Ana County Animal Control Officers respond to animal control related issues and complaints such

as stray animals, sick or injured animals, vicious and/or dangerous animals, animals in custody, care and maintenance of animals, nuisance animals, deceased animals, cruelty to animals and public safety issues involving animals (such as a bat in a house or a bite from an animal).

In May of 2018, the Animal Control Department responded to 344 unrestrained dogs. Out of the 344, they returned 122 dogs in the field back to their owners. They impounded 129 animals and provided care and maintenance home checks for 70 animals. The ACOs responded to four animal cruelty cases and 59 reports of vicious and/or dangerous animals. They picked up 37 sick or injured animals and 41 dead animals. Officers responded to eight nuisance calls, and 41 incidents of dog-bite. They also picked up and relocated 13 snakes and prepared seven specimens for rabies submissions and, finally, responded to 242 miscellaneous-type calls.

In addition to all of this, Animal Control Officers completed 896 calls for service and handed out 185 educational outreach materials while issuing 98 warnings and 17 citations. With such a large number of calls coming in county-wide, the ACES allows staff to concentrate on one community at a time so they can provide more thorough and personalized education for pet owners.

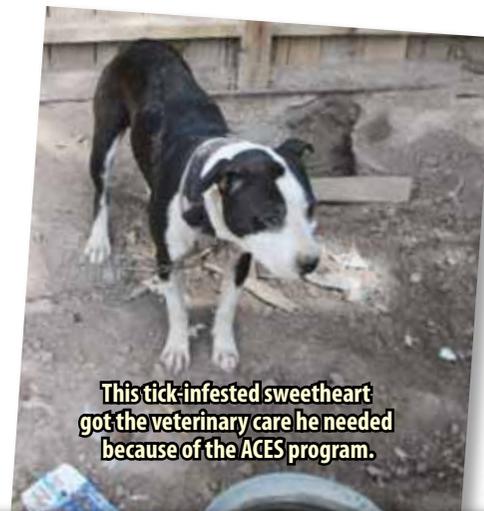
In conjunction with each ACES project, a cleanup day is offered to the community on a Saturday. A trash container and a tire shredder are placed in a public space so that residents of that community can dispose of their solid waste free of charge.

These events bring out many residents who utilize the services brought in by South Central Solid Waste Authority. In addition, the ACES

initiative is enhanced by cooperating agencies that offer low-cost spay/neuter information, microchips and low-cost vaccinations.

There is always a line at each event for families needing their pets vaccinated, and Doña Ana County is lucky to have two mobile veterinarians who can provide this service to the rural communities. Action Programs for Animals (APA), has attended the past four events offering low-cost microchips. If more pets had been microchipped in Doña Ana County, the ACOs would have been able to return to their owners some of those 129 animals they picked up during May 2018 instead of impounding them at the ASCMV.

Education is the key to each successful ACES project, and the Doña Ana Animal Control and Codes Department strives to make sure we accomplish this by reaching out to rural pet owners on a consistent basis.



This tick-infested sweetheart got the veterinary care he needed because of the ACES program.



An ACES microchip event in Anthony draws pet owners from around the area.



Dog Cruces

Information for the Las Cruces Dog Lover!

PET EXPO

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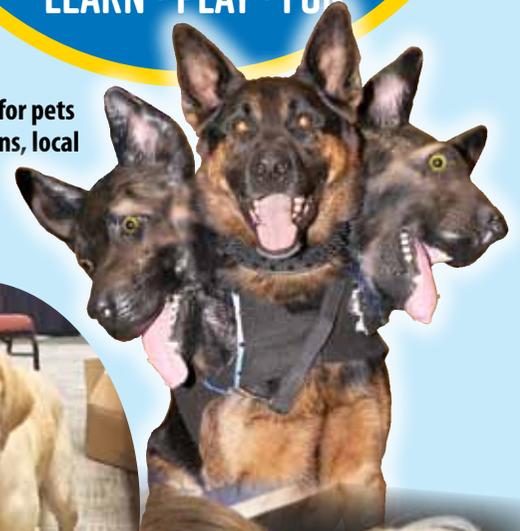
Oops...we did it again!!

The *Second* Annual Dog'Cruces Pet Expo was even bigger and better than the first! All the people, pets, products, demonstrations, and activities that made our inaugural Expo so awesome were back again—along with Calista Animal Hospital's K-9 Caravan Dog Walk around the NMSU horseshoe to kick things off on Saturday, and a Pet Blessing performed by Father Alex Urena from St. Albert the Great Newman Center.

Demos, seminars, costume contests, Horse 'N' Hound's carnival for pets and people, poochie cones and sundaes from Caliche's, adoptions, local businesses, services, and artisans, TREATS GALORE, and dogs, dogs, dogs, dogs —

SOOOO MUCH STUFF TO SEE AND DO!!

We are already looking ahead to next year... hope to see you at the Convention Center in September 2019 for Pet Expo III.





ROOM at the INN

Last Litter's first rescue saved nine tiny lives

Would you crawl under a trailer to save a litter of puppies? How about, in the desert, in the middle of summer, with creepy crawlies and slithering snakes in there? That's just what one skinny 10-year-old boy wearing cowboy boots did when asked to save lives.

Last Litter Inn opened its doors on August 14, 2018. The Inn was opened as a safe solution for dog owners who have an unplanned litter that would normally be surrendered to our overburdened municipal shelter. Once accepted into the program, the new puppies check into the Inn where they are cared for and socialized to get ready for new homes and new lives in other states. If Mama Dog is still providing care, then she checks in too! After her puppies leave, Mom gets spayed and either goes back to her original family or on to a new forever home.

Myrtle, a gorgeous Carolina Coonhound, was scheduled to be spayed when her family noticed she had gained weight. When it was confirmed she was pregnant, her family registered her in the Last Litter program. On the morning of August 12th, we received a frantic call from *Myrtle's* family. The dog looked noticeably thinner. She had given birth overnight—but where were her puppies? And how many were there?

The Last Litter advance team headed to the home, and *Myrtle* eventually led them to a hole under a neighbor's trailer. The whimpering of hours-old puppies could be heard. There wasn't a lot of clearance—only 17 inches—for an adult to crawl into. Armed with a pillowcase, the previously-mentioned 10-year-old boy crawled underneath the trailer. The onlookers held their collective breath as they waited anxiously for the boy to emerge from the hole. After what seemed

like hours, he crawled back out with a pillowcase full of puppies!

There were nine living tails, but one of them had been seriously injured by a razor wire that had nearly removed her

head! Urgent vet care was needed to tend to the gaping neck wound, and Dr. Susan Biaz of the Animal Services Center of the Mesilla Valley performed an intricate suture operation to stitch the wound closed. The puppy patient would require extensive cleaning by the Last Litter Inn's team to avoid infection. Mother *Myrtle* and her brood received a priority check-in on August 15. Their suite was waiting.

The Last Litter Inn has been in operation for almost six weeks now. In addition to *Myrtle* and her litter, we have had nine moms and 120 puppies come through the doors. The Inn's overhead has been paid from donations, and all the work is done by volunteers. Permanent funding is awaiting approval from the ASCMV Board of Directors. We estimate volunteers worked 1,000 hours during the Inn's first 35 days.

Time has flown, and *Myrtle's* healthy, happy pups are ready to find forever homes! On September 19, they, along with others from the Last Litter Inn, boarded the Puppy Van to travel to our rescue partner—Colorado Puppy Rescue. They were just the latest of 945 other puppies that have gone before them in the last 10 months. Approximately 90% of all the furry travelers from our area have found their forever homes through Colorado Puppy Rescue. In the coming month, *Myrtle* will be spayed and microchipped and returned to her family with an additional 10 or more healthy pounds on her long frame.

Myrtle's family says "Last Litter has been a blessing to me and my family, and I can see the great things they are doing for our community. They took in *Myrtle* and cared for her better than I could have, and I so appreciate that we were able to visit her and the babies. Knowing that *Myrtle* is getting fixed and the puppies were healthy and finding their forever homes is a big relief, and I am forever grateful for this amazing program. *Myrtle* will be coming home soon, and we will have a big welcome for her." —LG

Last Litter is a pilot program to benefit the pets of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County. Our mission is to ensure that moms and puppies come to Last Litter rather than be abandoned at our overcrowded shelter. Finding innovative solutions for saving lives while curbing unplanned pregnancies through spay/neuter programs are significant and practical steps our community is taking to control our pet population. Last Litter is one of these innovative solutions.

You can support our mission by volunteering or donating goods and/or funds. If you have a litter of puppies and want to ensure they have the best chance at a great life—don't delay! We take moms and puppies from newborn up to 15 lbs. and four months of age. We transfer the puppies to our rescue partner and spay the mother so she can continue to live with your family. Some conditions apply, and space is limited. Visit LastLitter.org or find us on Facebook at Last Litter.

Kelly Barker is Director of Uncaged Paws, Inc. and Tails from the Shelter.



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The Alternative View

by Delores T. Craig, DVM

Is It All Quackery?

Veterinary medicine has drastically changed since I graduated thirty-five years ago. Back then there were no in-house blood machines, no ultrasounds, no endoscopies—only the x-ray machine. Specialists could be found *only* at veterinary colleges. We asked our questions, completed our physical exam, then made our diagnosis—essentially a “best guess”—and treated accordingly. In 2018, clinicians still make their best guesses, but we have a few more tools to help us. Unfortunately, even with all our new tools and machines, for many patients we are unable to establish a definitive diagnosis. Additionally, despite having a diagnosis, we have patients that do not respond to our best conventional treatments.

Alternative medicine encompasses a wide range of therapies not regarded as “standard” by the medical profession—therapies like acupuncture, homeopathy, special diets and dietary supplements, reiki, herbal preparations, and magnet therapy. The most common criticism is that these treatments are not based on “concrete science.” I find this ironic since many of our current standard practices were theory long before they were established by “concrete science.” Girolamo Fracastoro first proposed the concept of germs in 1546, but only after the work of Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch in the late 1880s (when microbes were proven to exist) did the conventional medical world embrace germ theory. Before this, since germs could not be seen, they did not exist. There are many examples of concepts and theories existing long before science could confirm them: electrons, black holes, and even our genomic DNA.

The Internet offers a wealth of information—sometimes too much. As a veterinarian, the internet can be my friend and my foe. My goal is to help you sift through the information.

My first topic: the general concepts of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and acupuncture. The ancient Chinese were philosophical, had strong associations with nature—and they observed and cataloged their findings. One of the primary concepts of this philosophy is that **all things within the world can be categorized into two opposite energies: Yin and Yang.** Yin energy is cold, dark, restorative, and downward in movement. Yang energy is warm, light, energizing, upward in movement. The ancient scholars extended these same observations to the body, its organs, and the body’s response to the environment. Yin energy helps to keep you cool, allows you to rest. The Yin organs produce the body substances that sustain life. Yang energy warms your body, helps you to move and remain engaged with the world. The

Yin nourishes Yang, and Yang supports Yin in a continuous circle of life.

The second concept involves the substances that circulate within the body: Qi and Blood. Blood is the same in Traditional Chinese Medicine and modern medicine. Qi is foreign to modern medicine. Simply stated, Qi is the force that moves the Blood through the body. In modern medicine, we assume blood is circulated through the body by the beating heart. In TCM, the force that gives the heart the ability to beat and the power that moves the Blood is Qi. Disease occurs when there is a pathology in the production or movement of Qi or Blood. There are many types of Qi within the body. One of the more important is your body’s Defensive Qi. In response to disease, your body’s Defensive Qi prevents the pathogens from the outside world from invading into the body. Modern science calls this our immune system.

In TCM, a healthy body will always be able to balance between the two opposite poles of energy. A healthy body adapts to the changes in the environment and within itself. Disease manifests when the body becomes unbalanced and can no longer adjust.

Modern medicine works from the inside out. It uses laboratory tests of the patient’s body to reconcile with the patient’s symptoms to establish a diagnosis. Traditional Chinese Medicine works from the outside in. Observations of the patient’s body and symptoms are pieced together to determine what organ systems are out of balance. It is what modern medicine used to be before all our machines. When treating disease, modern medicine isolates the broken part and focuses its treatment on fixing the defective part. Similarly, TCM determines the broken part—but therapy is not only focused on fixing the broken part, because that alone does not prevent the body from going back out of balance. TCM attempts to determine *why* the body part went out of balance. Treatment is not only focused on returning the body to a balanced state (fixing the broken part) but addressing the forces that pushed the body to remain out of balance.

The *concepts* of Traditional Chinese are no different from Western Medicine; the *terminology* is. If you had told me thirty-five years ago I would be advocating the use of alternative medicine such as acupuncture and Chinese herbs for my patients, I would have emphatically said: “I would never do that.” A perfect example of “Never say never.”

Delores T. Craig, DVM, is an instructor and President-elect of the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society (IVAS).



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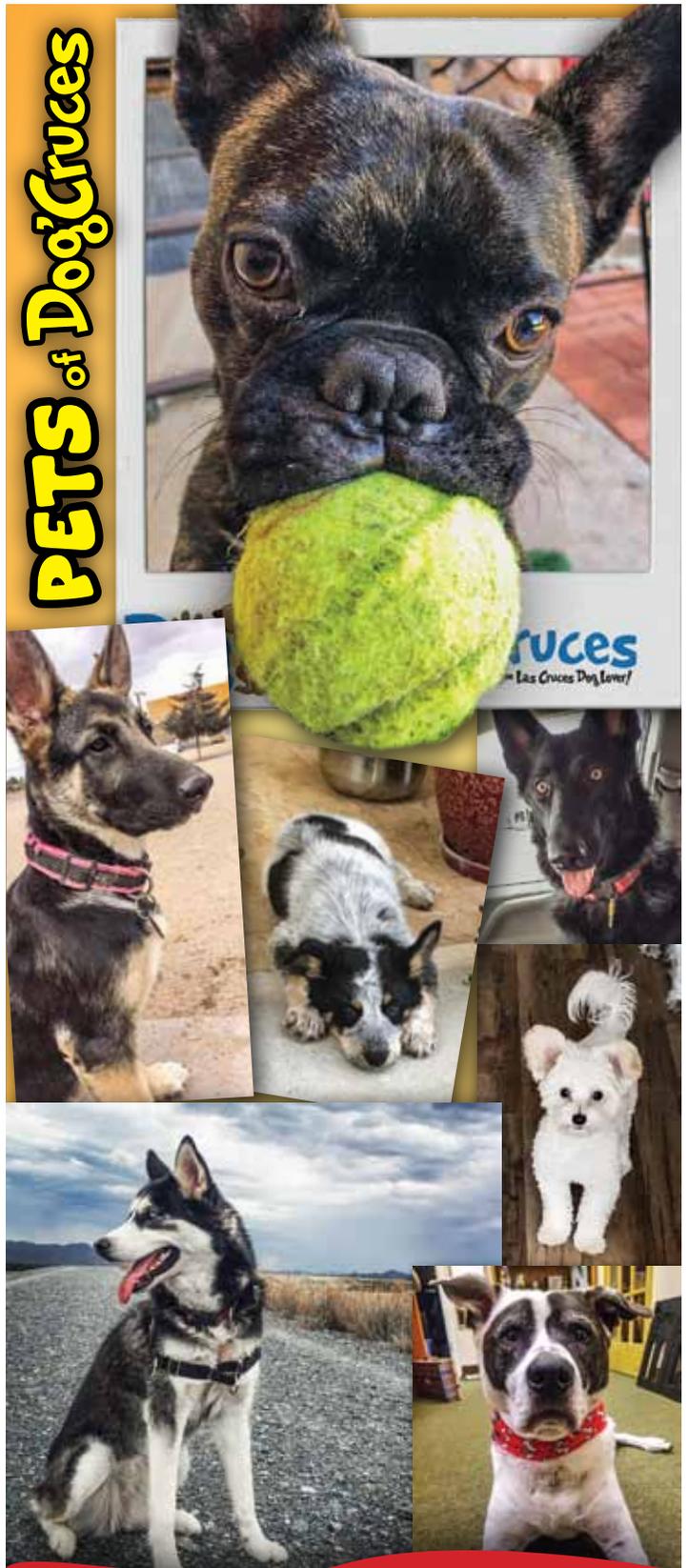


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Penny for your
Thoughts

by **Jennifer Woods**

The Basket of Misfit Toys

Just inside the doorway to our production room is a deceptively attractive doggie toy basket. It is made of sturdy burlap with substantial rope handles for easy transport, and it is emblazoned with words all dogs—and humans—should embrace: “Live Like Someone Left the Gate Open.” I won this item at a silent auction a few years ago, and when brand new it was brimming with bags of treats and the infinite promise of oh-so-many new toys. Now it is filled only with sadness and shame.

I don’t know how long new toys last in your home or office, but we don’t track their lifespans in terms of weeks, or days, or even hours. We need a stopwatch. Our four canine co-workers (and occasional guests) are very efficient when it comes to dismantling the gifts of love we present to them, and we try not to take it personally.

But it is never a free-for-all (well, until *Scout* arrives). In fact, the routine is organized, and there is a precise pecking order when an unassuming new toy arrives at the slaughterhouse. *Nacho* draws first blood. Always. Every toy belongs to him until and unless he tires of it or another dog touches it. This other dog is inevitably *Summer*, who is silent and sneaky and relentless in her quest to invade *Nacho*’s territory and take his toys. If I attempt to return the stolen goods, I am rebuffed and shunned by a Pit Bull who has higher standards of office conduct than I do. And *Summer* gets her prize, which she proceeds to tear into pieces.

So what about *Penny*—the world’s most submissive living creature? Perhaps not surprisingly, *Penny* gets only dismembered parts. And even then, when *Summer* notices her sister playing with them, my Golden Doofus feels the need to take them away once again. There’s a life lesson in there somewhere, I’m just not quite sure what it is.

Scout visits only occasionally, but arrives with the destructive force of a natural disaster. Or the

Tasmanian Devil. The *Scoutnado* whirls his way to the basket at full speed and stuffs more toys into his enormous mouth than seems possible—six, eight, a dozen—before running away again. He leaves a trail of those that somehow escape his clutches—all soaked to the core with their own tears. Or slobber. I guess it could be slobber.

Every night I try to restore a little order to the chaos. I roam the halls picking up the remains of that day’s orgy of destruction—a severed arm here, a googly eye there, puffs of fluff that, I could argue, are the actual souls of formerly-stuffed animals. And I return them to the basket of debris under the table in our office, even though they are filthy, and slimy, and unrecognizable.

Because they are loved.

Years ago, I never bought toys for my dogs. It just didn’t occur to me that they needed—or wanted—playthings. They were *dogs*, for crying out loud, not *children*. But one day I came home from the vet with a small promotional plush toy, courtesy of Heartguard, and I realized the error of my ways.

My stoic, non-nonsense alpha dog, *Luna*, locked eyes on that toy and fell in love. She took it from me and pranced through the house and around the backyard, so delighted, so proud, so protective. She dropped it beside her food bowl when eating, then gathered it up again immediately upon finishing. She took it with her when she jumped the wall and made her rounds in the neighborhood (another story for another time), she slept with it, of course—and she made me ashamed that I had deprived her of such simple joy for so long.

So, although I mock the Basket of Misfit Toys—chock full of such tragedy and woe—I also cherish it. My dogs love the basket’s horrific contents, and I love my girls. There is all kinds of beauty in that.



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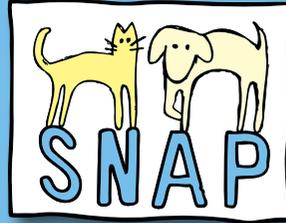
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Beg Fu Yung

3 Eggs

1 C Spinach (finely chopped)

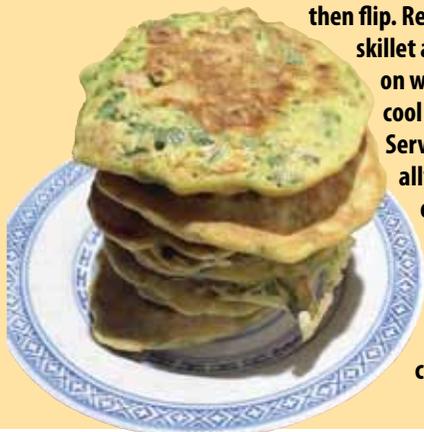
½ C Brown Rice Flour

¼ C Diced Ham (or cooked ground turkey)

2 Tbsp Parsley (finely chopped)

½ C Shredded Carrots

Whisk together all ingredients thoroughly. Allow mixture to sit while preheating skillet to medium-high heat. Scoop ¼ C of the mixture into hot skillet to form pancakes. Cook individual pancakes until bubbly throughout and then flip. Remove from skillet and place on wire rack to cool completely. Serve individually or on top of regular kibble. Refrigerate leftovers in airtight container.



NOTE: ALWAYS consult with your veterinarian regarding ingredients, serving sizes, and special dietary requirements prior to changing your pet's diet.

Banana Bark Bars

3 Bananas (extra ripe)

1 Sweet Potato (peeled & diced)

2 C Brown Rice Flour

¼ C Coconut Oil (melted)

2 Tbsp Honey

3 Eggs

Preheat oven to 375°F. Place sweet potatoes in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Add bananas, eggs, honey, and coconut oil. Blend well. Add brown rice flour until combined thoroughly. Pour batter into greased 9x13 pan. Bake for 40 minutes or until firm. Remove from oven, let cool completely. Cut into appropriate serving-sized rectangles and serve. Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container.



Passing the Torch

Hello there friends! *Buliwyf* here for *Walter's Lunchbox*—but you all probably know and love me as *Butthead*. And for those of you who aren't familiar with *The 13th Warrior* or *Beowulf*, *Buliwyf* (pronounced 'Bull-vye') is the Viking King who defended the kingdom from the eaters of the dead. Anyhoooo...now that my big bro and trusty "Wingman," *Walter*, has crossed the Rainbow Bridge, it's my job to pick up where he left off as the new spokes-dog for *Walter's Lunchbox*. Yikes! I know I have some really big paws to fill, so please be patient with me while I figure out what I'm supposed to talk about.

I hope you all had a PAWsome summer and are now enjoying the cooler fall weather here in the LC. While summer was *Walter's* most favoritest time of year, mine has always been the opposite—so I'm really looking forward to the cool weather we have just around the corner.

This summer Mom and Dad took *Goober* (aka my baby sister, *Ginger*) and me on a week-long camping and fishing trip to Heron Lake State Park. The original plan was to go back to Rio Costilla Park where they took *Walter* and me last year. But, sadly, the park was closed due to the severe fire risks we experienced early this summer. Heron Lake State Park claims to be "nestled among the tall pines" of the Rocky Mountains, near Tierra Amarilla. We were sooo looking forward to camping in a cool retreat away from the sweltering July temperatures.

Well, in reality, it's nestled among some tall Junipers and a few scattered and scraggly pines. Temperatures, while still cooler than here in the LC, were pretty darn toasty during the daytime. The park offered a good variety of developed campsites and some primitive camping areas. Due to the lack of adequate vegetative cover, Mom opted for the developed campground with convenient vault toilets so that she wouldn't have to hike a mile to squat in privacy. Whatever! Not like it really made any difference to me!

The fishing was pretty good most days, and we were able to find a nice, secluded stretch of beach where *Goober* and I could run and splash around. I got to swim to cool off (*Goober* still hasn't mastered the art of swimming), and I saw Canadian Geese for the first time ever! They were everywhere—hiding in the tall grass along the banks, swimming in large groups in

the lake, and flying in flocks overhead! It was absolute heaven for a skilled stalking and hunting dog such as myself. Disappointingly, Mom didn't allow me to stalk and chase them. She's such a party pooper!

Dad and his bud, Mr. Jason, who joined us on this trip, caught enough trout in a couple of nights to feed us all. We did, however, discover that *Goober* does not like fish at all. It was really quite entertaining. Mom and Dad prepared and cooked one trout for each of us. They deboned and flaked it and mixed it with our kibble for dinner. While I inhaled my chow, *Goober* flat-out refused to eat the fish when it was placed in her bowl with her kibble. Even after Dad removed the fish and offered her fresh, new kibble, she refused to eat because Dad hadn't washed her bowl with soap and water! OMG! She's such a prima donna, you'd think before she was rescued she was living on the streets of Hollywood, CA and not Carrizozo, NM! But lucky for me, they kept that rejected fish and added it to my breakfast the next morning! Score!!

In the evenings we would all watch the sunset over the lake while enjoying *Yappy Hour*—when Mom and Dad would have adult beverages while Dad would read and Mom would fiddle with her camera. During this time *Goober* would nap (she's such a lazy bitch), and I would get to chase the lizards in camp!! It was a much-needed, relaxing and stress-free break from the constant chaos we have all experienced this year.

One evening during *Yappy Hour*, after a summer shower had passed through camp, there was a big, bright rainbow stretching far across the lake. We all stood and watched it in silence. After a short while, I looked back at Mom and Dad and found them clinging to each other and sobbing! Concerned, I approached them and inquired what was wrong. Before they even wiped their tears away and composed themselves to explain, I had realized it was my bro, my "Wingman," *Walter*. He was letting us know that he is OK and is watching over us.

I miss *Walter* like crazy, but I am learning to step up and be the big brother now. Mom developed these delicious recipes over the summer, and I think *Walter* would be absolutely nuts over them. I know I love them, and I hope your pups do, too!



Kat's by Kat Lacy Korner

Grain Free Foods & the FDA Warning

Did you know that overweight and obese cats outnumber felines of normal weight? Veterinarians and Cat Groomers have been witnessing this extremely unhealthy condition more and more often. Did you know that in July the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) issued a warning that grain-free pet foods might cause a condition called dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) in breeds of dogs that do not typically develop this disease? I believe these two conditions have commonality: poor quality, highly processed pet foods that use plant-based protein sources such as peas, lentils, legumes and potatoes as their main ingredients.

CVM's warning identified a lack of Taurine—an amino acid that is a building block of protein—as being at least partly responsible for the development of dilated cardiomyopathy in those atypical dog breeds. But this is not the first time a lack of Taurine has made news. You may remember back in the early '80s when many thousands of cats became ill and died because their grocery store kibble lacked Taurine. Three decades ago cat food companies started adding synthetic Taurine to their dry kibble, and the heart issues associated with their kibble diets began to fade—but that didn't mean all problems disappeared.

Wild cats like leopards, tigers, and servals are never obese. They eat raw, fresh meat and work to catch their prey. They don't eat corn, grains, potatoes or legumes. Felines are very strict carnivores and are simply not built to efficiently process plant-based proteins. But we have been feeding our companion animals processed kibble with high plant-based proteins for many years now.

Proteins derived from animal tissues have a complete amino acid profile—plants do not. Taurine is probably the most important amino acid in preventing blindness, dilated cardiomyopathy, digestive deficiencies, tooth decay, and other health issues in felines. Adding synthetic Taurine to dry kibble may prevent short term health issues, but I believe this synthetic additive (which usually comes from China) is still not the best choice for keeping your cat healthy for a longer life.

Grain-free foods have become something of a fad in recent years with large companies entering this formerly-niche market and trying to take market share from the original, high-integrity companies that produce healthy pet foods. The abundance of "Grain-Free" products on the market has done nothing but make meaningless a term that began

as healthy, but now only confuses the consumer. Just because a pet food boasts it is "grain-free" does not mean it is healthy—like labeling everything "natural." "Grain-free" has become a deceptive and misleading term.

I've seen the Taurine deficiency issues crop up many times in the past 25 years of working in the healthy pet food industry. This one certainly isn't the first and will likely not be the last. Obesity is a growing problem in companion animals, and the link between carbohydrate-rich foods causing obesity AND heart issues is not new. In our world of fast food, busy lives, and one-click ordering, it's easy to lose sight the importance of our pets' health. We may not think we have time for consistent exercise, fresh unprocessed foods, and healthy supplements for our pets.

There are three things you can do to help improve and add years to your pet's life:

- 1** If you must feed your pets kibble, make sure it has "meat-based" proteins. Add 25% fresh, unprocessed foods to the bowl each day, and add purified water on top for dogs. Use more canned and raw food for your cats.
- 2** **REDUCE** the amount you feed your pet by 25% (unless your pet is already thin and in great physical shape). This can add years to his or her life.
- 3** Exercise your animals daily, and get as much cardio as possible. Dogs evolved traveling an average of 20 miles per day. This is hard for us to replicate, but you can throw the ball, take them to day care, and go on brisk walks or runs with them. For cats, get high climbing trees and toys they can chase and pounce on.

Don't panic over the FDA's general terminology that implies all grain-free foods may be bad. This overly-broad claim has not been substantiated. Not all pet foods are created equal. Some brands can be very nutritious, while others have almost zero nutritional value. If you need advice about what foods are best for your pets, feel free to stop in and ask about our line of minimally-processed frozen, dehydrated, freeze dried, and high-quality dry foods, as well as supplements to help with your pets' skin, coat, joints and pain relief.

Who knows, while you start working on your pet's health you just might get a little healthier yourself!

Kat Lacy is owner of Better Life Natural Pet Foods.

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