



THE LABRADOR CONNECTION

MARCH 2010 ELECTRONIC EDITION

The NLRC was organized in 1996 with the idea of creating a national club that would preserve and promote the Labrador Retriever. Everyone in the Labrador community is welcome...from pet owners to old timers.

We are a National Lab Club formed by the members, for the members, working together for the preservation, betterment and service to the Labrador Retriever.

Letter from our Committee Chair by Gail Cayce-Adams

Dog Breeders, a dying breed? Dog owners as well as dog breeders are being subjected to more and more proposed legislation to limit their rights. This movement is being fueled by a small, but outspoken contingent of our population that feel they know what is best for our animals. Legislation ranging from Dangerous Dog legislation to Breed specific legislation (BSL), Pet Limit Legislation to Pet Hording legislation, Mandatory Spay and Neuter legislation to intact animal fees are making their way across the country.

Many breeders may not have had personal experience with this problem yet, so they may not feel like they have to get involved or they may not understand how big the problem has gotten. I can speak from the experiences that I have seen or heard about in my state of Pennsylvania. For quite a few years, Pennsylvania has been trying to fight its reputation as the "puppy mill of the East" by passing new restrictions on dog breeding. I don't want to belittle the fact that there were problems in PA. There were some large kennels that did not take care of the dogs as they should. The biggest complaint that I have heard about these kennels since I have lived in PA is the fact that they would often keep the dogs in small crate sized cages without trays so the dogs were forced to stand on wire. This allowed the feces and urine to fall through the crate floor. I am assuming this practice was used in a misguided attempt by people who owned hundreds of dogs to keep their cages clean. To see this in practice is very sad and I do not believe it should have ever been allowed. However, to correct the problem, I think a modification of the state dog law which banned the use of wire bottom cages completely as well as the use of crates as permanent enclosures by increasing the required pen size would have done the job.

Instead, the state attempted to pass an entirely new dog law which called for all sorts of new requirements which had no basis in good animal husbandry practices. This new proposed legislation really had all of us worked up. For once, everyone was in agreement. This needed to be defeated. So we all started writing letters. Most of us wrote many letters. We contacted our state representatives, the governor, the bureau of dog law enforcement and anyone else that would listen. There was a huge outcry from the entire dog fancy. It was a very strange thing to see actually. The proposed law went too far for anyone in the fancy to support it. Responsible breeders as we like to call ourselves, as well as backyard breeders and even puppy mills were united together to defeat this bill...and it worked! The bill was struck down. But, unfortunately, that is not the end of the story.

The following year, another bill was introduced. This one drew a huge dividing line in the sand between what we consider to be a "puppy mill" and what we consider to be a responsible breeder. If you stayed below a certain number of puppies sold per year, the new law would have little or no effect on you, but if you went above that magic number you were then a "commercial" breeder and you would feel the full effects of the new law. This law was voted on and passed with no problem at all. Most of the "responsible" breeders didn't feel that the law would affect them so they didn't get so fired up this time and chose to sit out for this fight. I have to say that I was guilty of this line of thinking so I can't point fingers at anyone else. I was just too busy to get around to writing yet another letter.

But now we have to live with the new law. For the most part, it has not had much effect on me because I don't breed that often, but I live with the knowledge that this is probably just the beginning of what is to come. I am quite sure that the animal rights crew is quite pleased with the victory and it is only a matter of time before they push to make the new law apply to all breeders in PA. They employed ... Continued pg 11

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FOLLOW THE MONEY!

By: Rebecca Montgomery Bailey, Vice President, NLRC

Good Day to you fabulous NLRC Members!

Just a quick note to report the Business Meeting decisions of your Board on 2/10/2010.

You donated:

- \$2,000.00 to Dr. Dodds for the Rabies Challenge Fund
- \$1,000.00 to SAOVA to negate anti-pet legislation
- \$2,500.00 to CHIC for Grant 15 (TVD)

The AKC Canine Health Foundation is looking for sponsors for the grant. The minimum contribution to be considered a "sponsor" is \$2,500.00 At that level, a club is listed as a sponsor on their website and all other publications where the grant is listed, and you are entitled (once they received a signed Confidential Information Agreement) to receive progress report updates.

The NLRC is proudly placing an ad for our Club in the 35th Annual Potomac Specialty catalog.

Thank you for your membership and your continued support through your dues to allow us to serve the Labrador Retriever.

Respectfully,

**Rebecca Montgomery Bailey
Vice President, National Labrador Retriever Club**



Why You Can't Trust Vet's Advice on Feeding Dogs

by: **Sandra Scarr, PhD. Aloha Labradors**

To earn a DVM degree in the US, students complete four years of training at one of 27 accredited veterinary schools. The four-year curriculum focuses on treatment of illnesses in large farm and small pet animals and some exotic species. Courses are organized around diseases and their treatments. Little attention is given to normal development or healthy feeding, topics of great importance to pet owners. Why?

Veterinary Medicine in History

Historically, veterinary medicine had an important role in the economy by keeping transport and food animals healthy. Think back to centuries before the Industrial Revolution (mid-19th century) when animals powered plows and millstones, and before trucks and automobiles (early 20th century) carried goods and people. Horses, mules, and oxen carried loads, plowed fields, and transported people from one place to another. Keeping stables of work animals healthy had enormous economic importance. Control of epidemics, vaccination, inspecting animal feed, and the like were the backbone of veterinary practice.

Cattle, sheep, chickens, and pigs fed the population, and their health was extremely important. Food animals were raised on millions of small farms where animals needed veterinary attention. Wealthy people kept packs of hunting dogs and household pets, which required veterinary care, but this was a minor part of veterinary practice before mid-20th century. Ordinary people kept cats and small dogs for rodent control, but they were not household pets and unlikely to receive veterinary care.

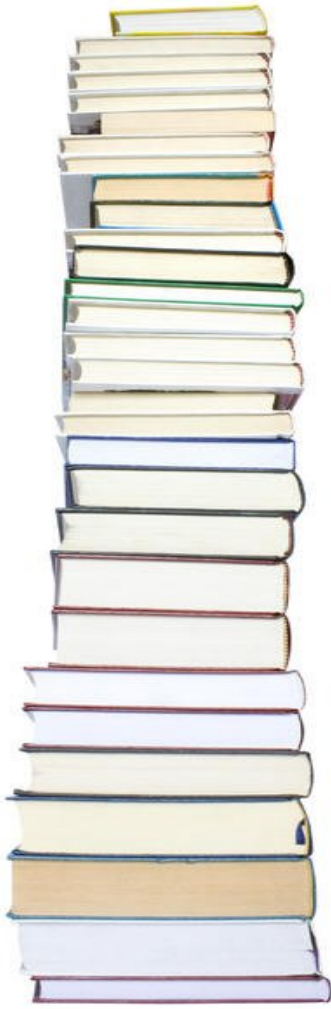
Today, engineers and mechanics keep industrial machinery and transport vehicles in shape. Food animals have been taken off farms and into feed lots and industrial sheds for intensive, mechanized feeding. Veterinarians certify what others design and operate.

Veterinary and Human Medicine Evolve

The evolution of veterinary medicine is similar to the evolution of human medicine. The big issues in human health are clean drinking water, waste disposal, and control of epidemics. Once these public health problems were resolved in developed nations, human medicine became largely the treatment of individuals' diseases and illnesses. Because people value their individual health, human medicine has continuing economic value. Veterinarians' work changed from economically vital control of epidemics and assuring the health of work and food animals to marginally useful treatment of illnesses in individual household pets. Today, fewer veterinarians are needed, and fewer earn good incomes, than in earlier times.

Contemporary veterinary curricula are similar to medical school curricula. Both focus on treatment of illnesses, not on maintenance of health. Little to no attention is given to normal species development, evolutionary biology, or optimal nutrition. The implication of this focus on illness is a lack of knowledge of how to feed and raise healthy pet animals. By failing to understand the evolution of pet animals, veterinarians are woefully ignorant about appropriate feeding. That the feeding advice they give makes animals chronically ill goes unnoticed.

In the human health system, physicians are paid to treat illnesses and conditions that require intervention. In general, other professionals advise on healthy diets, normal child development, physical training, and so forth. In veterinary medicine, veterinarians are expected to cover all matters pertaining to animal health and illnesses. ... Continued pg 17



He Just Wants to say, "Hi!" by Suzanne Clothier

Sitting quietly on the mall bench beside my husband, I was minding my own business when the man approached. I glanced up as the man sat next to me. He was a bit close for my comfort, so I edged a little closer to my husband who, busy reading a book, ignored me. Still feeling a bit uncomfortable with the strange man so close, I then turned my head slightly away from him, politely indicating I was not interested in any interaction. To my horror, the man leaned over me and began licking my neck while rudely groping me.

When I screamed and pushed him away, my trouble really began. My husband angrily threw me to the ground, yelling at me "Why did you do that? He was only trying to be friendly and say hi! What a touchy bitch you are! You're going to have to learn to behave better in public."

People all around us stared and shook their heads sadly. I heard a few murmuring that they thought my husband should do something about my behavior; some even mentioned that he shouldn't have such a violent woman out in public until I'd been trained better. As my husband dragged me to the car, I noticed that the man who had groped me had gone a bit further down the mall and was doing the same thing to other women.

This is a silly scenario, isn't it? First, anyone who knows me knows that I would never be in a mall except under considerable duress. More seriously, no rational human being would consider my response to the man's rudeness as inappropriate or vicious. By invading my personal space, the man crossed the lines of decent, civilized behavior; my response would be considered quite justified.

That my husband might punish me for responding to such rudeness by screaming and pushing the offender away is perhaps the most ridiculous aspect of this scenario. If he were to act in this way, there would be no doubt in the minds of even the most casual observers that his ego was of far greater importance than my safety or comfort, and that he was sorely lacking even rudimentary empathy for how I might be feeling in this situation.

Fortunately for me, this scenario is completely imaginary. Unfortunately for many dogs, it is a very real scenario that is repeated far too often. Inevitably, as the owners who have allowed their dogs to act rudely retreat from the situation, there are comments made about "that aggressive dog" (meaning the dog whose space had been invaded) and the classic comment, usually said in hurt tones, "He only wanted to say hi!"

Years ago, a friend of mine in Texas placed a Greyhound with a supposedly knowledgeable person in the Northeast. This person gives seminars all over the world on the care and training of a certain animal, so my friend felt comfortable placing this wonderful hound with her. Less than one week later, my friend received an hysterical call in which the supposed expert was threatening to have this Greyhound put to sleep for being aggressive. Since I was the closest resource, my Texan friend asked me to see what I could do, making it clear that this was one of the best Greyhounds that she had ever rescued - he had demonstrated incredible tolerance for all other dogs and animals.

When I spoke with the new owner, I asked what was going on. Her response was sadly classic: "Well, Champ is quite aggressive. For example, he'll just be ... Continued next page



He Just Wants to say, "HI!" (cont from previous page)

laying on the dog bed and my two Golden Retrievers come over to say 'hi' and then he just attacks them. It's awful!"

My first tip off that the Greyhound was totally blameless was her comment that the Golden Retrievers were just coming over to say "hi." Generally speaking, dogs who live together don't walk over to each other to repeatedly say hello, no more than every time you walk in a room you walk over to a family member and say hello by getting right into their face.

Further questioning revealed that the body posture of the two Golden Retrievers while saying "hi" was very upright, ears forward, tails up and wagging very slowly - a confrontational stance, not a greeting. The Greyhound would often initially turn his head away, but when the two Golden Retrievers began sniffing at him and poking him, he would growl softly. Then, as they persisted, the hound would finally leap up with a roar. Despite her hysterical descriptions of the "fights," I was able to get her to define the amount of damage done by the Greyhound - **none**.

As we talked on, the picture came in more clearly: the two Golden Retrievers were quite spoiled, pushy with other dogs, and decidedly not happy with this new dog in their household. The woman cheerfully admitted that the two Golden Retrievers were not too well trained and that she sometimes had trouble controlling them around other animals, but "they were so sweet, and there isn't an aggressive bone in their bodies!" she told me.

The Greyhound, on the other hand, she viewed as a fierce, aggressive and dangerous animal who she now had muzzled at all times. I thought for a bit about trying to educate this woman about dog behavior, but decided the kindest thing to do for this hound was to just go and rescue him. So I did, and by the time I'd driven home with this incredible dog, he'd been re-named Beckett and he stayed with me for almost two years until I placed him with a friend who adores him. As for his "aggression," I never saw a hint of it in any situation.

While there are many frustrating aspects of being a dog trainer, one of the most disturbing scenarios is the situation where a dog is acting appropriately but nonetheless is punished (in the name of "training") by humans who do not understand what constitutes normal canine behavior and responses.

Sadly, normal behavior is quickly labeled "problem" behavior, and the dog is now a "problem dog." Depending on the skill and awareness of the trainer or instructor, the dog may be merely puzzled or irritated by well meaning attempts to desensitize or re-condition the behavior or actually punished quite severely using any number of horrific and senseless techniques.

In Beckett's case, a lack of understanding nearly cost him his life. Had I not intervened, his extremely uninformed owner would have had him put to sleep as aggressive. In most cases, the true problem - the rude dog and rude owner who allowed his dog to be rude - is not even noticed or addressed.

This following is an actual e-mail from a concerned owner (reprinted by permission). While I've changed details in order to protect the innocent (the dog!), it is an excellent example of an owner who has tried hard to do well with and for her dog, and of ... Continued next page

Eye witness accounts of even mundane events vary dramatically from one first person account of an event to another's.

Who speaks for the dog?



He Just Wants to say, "HI!" (cont from previous page)

instructors who mean well, too... but fail on a very deep level when it comes to understanding normal canine interactions. (Note: all bold emphasis is mine. Pay attention to these words.)

Dear Suzanne:

You don't know me, but L. is a friend of mine, and she suggested I write to you regarding the strange behavior of my dog. I have a female (spayed) golden retriever, 3 years old, named Cream. Cream comes from good lines (champion show), and is "almost" your typical golden: sweet, goofy, lovable, loves ALL people. Recently, Cream became a certified therapy dog through the Delta Society.



watchandtrain.com

*Yet Cream has one problem: she hates young, hyper dogs. **If a dog starts jumping all over Cream, Cream gets aggressive - starts to growl, shows some teeth, and if the dog doesn't take the hint after a few seconds, Cream will "attack" the dog.** Every time this has happened, it's happened very quickly, and I get Cream off the dog immediately (and "correct" her - laying her down, holding her muzzle, shaking her a bit, saying "NO!" very sternly, etc.). Cream doesn't even like young dogs to lick her - she snaps at them if they do.*

*Now, **Cream only displays this aggressive behavior with young, hyper dogs.** Cream has regular dog pals that she plays with almost daily - they wrestle, play bite, and run around together. Some of the dogs she plays with are older, some are the same age, some are even younger, the youngest now being about 9 months old. She plays with both sexes, but she does seem to prefer males. (Cream was spayed at 10 months.)*



Dogtraininglab.com

Cream is in good health. She's on a raw foods diet, had titer testing this year instead of vaccinations, had a full blood panel and thyroid check and both were fine, has been CERFed and her eyes are fine. She does have some mild hip dysplasia, but it doesn't bother her, and she shows no symptoms. She's been very well socialized since she's been a pup, and I bring her everywhere I can (shopping malls, parks, sometimes to campus).

Cream's been through lots of obedience classes, beginning when she was a pup at 4 months old in puppy kindergarten. For the past several months she's been going through a basic obedience class with young dogs - I've been trying to recondition her behavior towards young dogs. I've been food rewarding her when she shows no aggressive behavior to a pup.

*It's been going okay, but two weeks ago, a young mastiff puppy got away from her owner, and came charging at Cream. **She crashed into Cream (and it was just because she was over excited - she wasn't being aggressive)** and Cream came up growling and snarling. Then last weekend, a black lab pup did the same thing, and Cream had the same reaction. Throughout the class, Cream won't even look at the puppies - has her back turned toward them the entire time.*

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Havehappydogs.com

He Just Wants to say, "Hi!" (cont from previous page)

I've got the dog trainers of the class stumped, as they don't really know what to do. Cream's normally such a sweet dog, good with commands, great with people. Cream's also wonderful with children, and has an endless supply of patience with kids - they can pull on her ears, hug her tightly, pull on her tail - and Cream loves it. Cream's fine with dogs who are calm, even friendly towards them, with her tail wagging, and she might even try to get them to play.

Cream has had some bad experiences with dogs. A pit bull jumped out of a car when we were on a walk, and attacked Cream (Cream was about 7 months old). She's had dogs run out of houses and attack her, and dogs who were supposedly tied up, get loose and attack her.

So, do you have any suggestions or theories for us? Well, I'd really appreciate any thoughts you have on our situation.
Lee Anne

Lee Anne tried to be as thorough as possible in presenting Cream's case to me. Her concern was evident, and based on what she presented, she was an owner who spent a lot of time working with and training her dog. From my point of view, the picture she painted was a clear one - Cream was a perfectly normal dog who, from time to time, was forced by rude dogs to draw a line and inform them precisely how rude they had been.

Unfortunately for Cream, her appropriate response to rudeness was misread as aggression, and she was punished. I cannot even begin to fully comprehend the confusion that must flood a dog who has acted appropriately but is punished nonetheless.

If a dog starts jumping all over Cream, Cream gets aggressive - starts to growl, shows some teeth, and if the dog doesn't take the hint after a few seconds, Cream will 'attack' the dog."

There is clear evidence here that Cream never did "suddenly attack" anyone. In a normal progression of warning signs, Cream gave the offending dog a chance to back off. It is only when warning signs were ignored that Cream had to escalate to the threat of violence. That is all her "attacks" on any dog were - threats, not actual attacks with the intent to do harm. Dog who mean to do harm do so with breathtaking speed, and intervention is generally not possible. Though noisy and scary, most "fights" are a series of threats with fully inhibited biting employed by the combatants.

When I had a phone consultation with Lee Anne, one of my first questions was about Cream's "attacks" on other dogs. I wanted to know how much damage she did to the other dog during these "attacks." In his lectures on aggression, Dr. Ian Dunbar urges trainers to always look at what he calls the Fight-Bite Ratio: how many altercations has your dog been involved in, and how many times has another dog been seriously hurt by your dog?

He is careful to define "seriously hurt" as needing veterinary attention. Continued next page



He Just Wants to say, "HI!" (cont from previous page)

An accidental puncture or two on the muzzle, head or ear is not a serious injury, merely a by-product of powerful teeth flashing at speed as the dog tries to make his point in a very noisy, dramatic way. The majority of dog-to-dog altercations do not result in serious injury, though they are extremely frightening to witness. Even if the number of fights is quite high, if the number of bites inflicted in those fights is low or zero, then you know that the dog inhibiting his bite - a good sign even though there may be problems that cause the fights and which need resolution.

For all of Cream's "attacks" on other dogs, there had only been one small puncture inflicted on the head, a typical site for an accidental, unintended punch of a tooth. As I suspected from her owner's description, Cream had been well socialized with both people and other dogs and had learned to inhibit her bite; thus, her "attacks" - while alarming to all involved - did not result in any damage to the offending dog.

"...two weeks ago, a young mastiff puppy got away from her owner, and came charging at Cream. She crashed into Cream (and it was just because she was over excited - she wasn't being aggressive) and Cream came up growling and snarling. Then last weekend, a black lab pup did the same thing, and Cream had the same reaction."

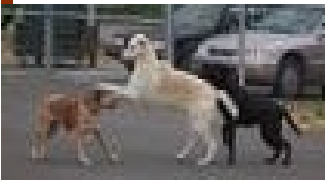
Hidden in this section of Lee Anne's letter is an important notion: that puppies aren't acting rudely, they're just "over-excited." It never fails to amaze me how willing humans are to excuse and rationalize a dog's rude behavior instead of teaching them good manners. Part of developing appropriate social behavior is learning that no matter how excited you may be, there are other folks in the world and certain basic rules of politeness still apply no matter how excited you may be.

During an off-lead play session at our camp, two adolescent dogs began to roughhouse at top speed, resulting in one of them crashing hard into an older dog who'd been minding his own business. With a loud roar, he chased the offender for a few steps to make his point: "Watch where the heck you're going!"

A few minutes later, with the game still going strong, we watched as that same youngster found himself headed once again on a collision course with the older dog. It seemed another crash and altercation were inevitable. To the surprise of many who were watching, the youngster used all of his skills to avoid the crash, neatly swerving past the older dog who made no comment. The puppy had learned that no matter how excited he might be by the game, he still had an obligation to be polite.

We would look with a raised eyebrow at a mother who allowed a child to simply carom around a room bouncing off people and did nothing to calm the child, and who told those her child had shoved and pushed that, "He's just over excited." Just as parents bear some responsibility for their children's actions, dog owners have a responsibility to help their puppies act in an appropriate way - not to excuse rudeness.

Sometimes, this requires that we not allow a young dog (or a dog of any age) to escalate to such a high level of excitement and arousal. As a rule of thumb, the... Continued next page



He Just Wants to say, "HI!" (cont from previous page)

the more excited and emotional a dog becomes, the less capable they are of thinking clearly and acting appropriately. (This is also true of all other animals, including people.) Wise handlers know that when emotions are running high, a cool down period is a good choice to avoid problems. Sometimes, helping a young dog learn what is appropriate requires the assistance of a normal, well socialized dog who can make his or her point without leaving anything but a clear message imprinted upon the puppy.

Normal dogs, like normal people, are often incredibly tolerant of the antics of youngsters. The tolerance level is highly individual and dependent upon the dog's experience with puppies. Dogs without much experience with puppies may not be nearly as tolerant as dogs who have seen a lot of puppies come and go.

Tolerance levels are also highly dependent upon the youngster's age; there are different expectations for what constitutes appropriate behavior at any given age. What we might find acceptable behavior in a 3 year old child would be frowned upon in an 8 year old. Dogs also have a timetable in their heads - puppies under 16 weeks of age can usually take appalling liberties with an adult dog. As Dunbar notes, there appears to be a "puppy license" of sorts, possession of which entitles you to be an utter pest without much repercussion. Past the age of 4 ½ months, the "puppy license" expires as hormone levels shift and psychological changes occur. At this point, adult dogs begin to gradually insist on more controlled, respectful interactions from youngsters.

"I've got the dog trainers of the class stumped, as they don't really know what to do. Cream's normally such a sweet dog, good with commands, great with people. Cream's also wonderful with children, and has an endless supply of patience with kids - they can pull on her ears, hug her tightly, pull on her tail - and Cream loves it. Cream's fine with dogs who are calm, even friendly towards them, with her tail wagging, and she might even try to get them to play."

Let's change this a little to read:

"Margaret is fine with people who are calm and well behaved, and interacts with them appropriately. She's also endlessly patient with and kind to children, even bratty ones. But when loud, obnoxious teenagers begin shoving her around, she's really weird - she starts telling them to leave her alone. What can we do with Margaret? Her behavior has us stumped."

Make any sense? Of course not. One of the most incredible aspects of the Cream consultation was the complete focus on Cream as the problem. Not once had the owner or instructors looked past Cream herself to find the source of her problem, although they had at least recognized "hyper, young dogs" as the trigger. While they were perfectly willing to excuse the inappropriate behavior of the rude dogs, they were also willing to classify appropriate behavior as a problem.

I found it very depressing that Lee Anne, in posting a request for help on a Golden Retriever e-mail list, got this response consistently from the many "experts" on-line: "This is not normal Golden behavior. This is a serious problem."

As if being a Golden, or *any other breed*, somehow removes portions of the normal canine behavioral repertoire! No matter what the breed ...

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He Just Wants to say, "HI!" (cont from previous page)

no matter how much genetic manipulation may have muted or inhibited certain behaviors, a dog is a dog. And the basics of dog-to-dog communications remain the same: a growl means back off in any breed's language, a tail held high and stiffly is a warning, rolling over on your back is an apology, etc.

Cream was not acting aggressively; she was displaying **normal canine behavior** in response to considerable rudeness. She had never so much as uttered a sound toward rude dogs until they invaded her space and made contact with her. And even the most angelic of Golden Retrievers are quite capable of growls, snarls, snaps, bites and other communications in the face of such rudeness.

My experience has been that it is owners of breeds considered non-aggressive that cause the most problems in dog-to-dog interactions simply by being unaware that their dog is rude. To the owners of non-aggressive breeds, there doesn't appear to be any thought that rudeness can take many forms. Anyone can recognize that a dog lunging and snarling is being rude. Far too few folks recognize that simply getting into another's dog space - however sweetly and quietly - is just as rude in the world of dogs. Owners of rude dogs do not perceive their dogs' actions as rude; they see only "friendliness," as if the behavior for greeting people is the same as greeting another dog - it's not! Thus the classic line, "He's only trying to say 'hi!'"

A good friend of mine was a case in point. Her Sheltie was a quiet, retiring little fellow who had never displayed any aggressive behavior towards another living being. Yet repeatedly, this dog triggered impressive displays from other dogs, usually those of the German persuasion, when he wandered into their space. Inevitably, my friend would be horrified by "those aggressive dogs" and retreat with her Sheltie, never suspecting that she and her dog were the problem.

Though charming and sweet, her Sheltie was extremely rude and invasive; the responses he got from other dogs were largely quite well deserved, though inevitably the Germans were blamed. In each and every class this woman attended with her Sheltie, owners of dogs who did not tolerate such rudeness had to watch her and her dog constantly. And in each and every class, she was completely unaware how many potential problems had been averted by alert handlers who simply moved their dogs out of her dog's rudeness zone.

There were three basic factors at work: the Sheltie's lack of dog/dog socialization which resulted in his being completely ignorant about what constituted polite behavior toward other dogs; my friend's misconception that her "friendly, non-aggressive" dog could never precipitate a problem; and her giving her dog the freedom to invade the space of other dogs without any thought or understanding of how that might be perceived by the dogs who were minding their own business.

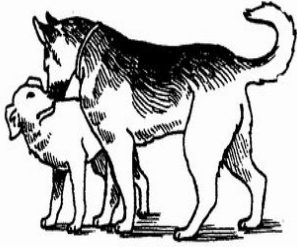
She became a much sadder and wiser handler the day she unthinkingly walked her Sheltie into my pack of German Shepherds who were playing happily in their own yard. She made a few seriously bad assumptions.

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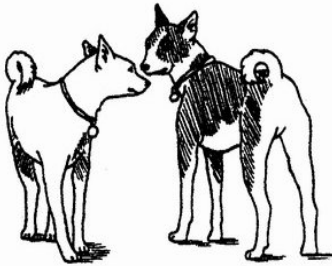
He Just Wants to say, "HI!" (cont from previous page)

First, she assumed that because they were *my* dogs, these six German Shepherds were somehow exempt from the nasty realities of pack behavior. No matter how well trained or socialized an individual dog may be, when that individual becomes a member of a *pack* (and six is decidedly a pack), the rules change considerably. Pack behavior is complex, often unpleasant but a very real part of dog behavior.



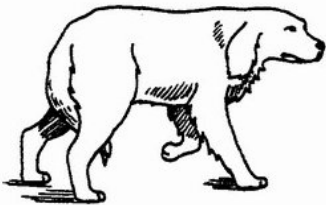
Her second assumption was that because each of my dogs had met her dog in the house on an individual basis, they would be fine with him as a group out in the yard. In the house under my supervision is a very different scenario than playing in the yard without my supervision.

Her third assumption was that somehow her dog would be able to cope with a group situation when he'd consistently had problems dealing with my Shepherds one on one.



My dogs, very revved up since they'd been in the house for hours and now playing hard, were surprised to see her and her dog come up from the direction of the barn - they'd last seen her and her dog in the house. They charged at her, and instead of laying down and crying "uncle" which was the correct response, the Sheltie tried to run, found himself at the end of the lead and accidentally pulled up into a very upright position (read "challenging posture" in dog language).

I can only guess, but knowing my dogs, I believe that his lack of normal behavior coupled with his previous displays of rudeness made this unintentional challenge the last straw. Fortunately for all involved, my dogs had no intention of hurting him - just teaching him some basic manners. He walked away from it all with only one small wound (later made much worse when he ripped his stitches out!). His owner was bitten when she made her final bad decision for that day - she instinctively reached into the swirling pack to rescue her dog and was bitten on the hand.



She learned a lot about dog behavior that day. Although I'd have preferred some other way to educate her about what constitutes rude behavior, she was finally open to hearing how rude she had allowed her dog to be. It was a complete shock to her. She viewed her dog as a completely non-aggressive animal. Every time she had heard me speak about dog-to-dog rudeness, she had assumed that only aggressive, boisterous, loud dogs were rude. She became a much more aware and careful handler only after my pack drilled home the lesson.



Just as my friend unrealistically expected my dogs to be *exempt* from the ugly realities of pack behavior, Cream's owner and her instructors were unrealistically holding Cream to higher standard of tolerance than they would expect from themselves. After all, she is a Golden. Does that mean she or any other typically low-aggression breed should tolerate rude dogs making physical contact?

All photos this page from
Buzzle.com

Read the remainder of the article in the next NLRC Newsletter – to be continued with "the fool factor"!!

Dog Breeders, a dying breed? continued from pg 1



a brilliant divide and conquer strategy to get the legislation passed and it worked beautifully. Even though the law has not had a lot of effect on my kennel, I have seen the effects of it elsewhere. Many large kennels that could not come into compliance with the strict new laws voluntarily closed. Many others have been ordered to shut down. One unfortunate result has been that the state's shelters are now reporting record numbers of dogs being surrendered as kennels are closing their doors. There have been even more troubling reports of kennel owners deciding to close and then proceeding to destroy their dogs. I have also seen some breeders who now fall into the "commercial kennel" classification struggle to meet the strict new requirements. It has been a very sad thing to watch unfold. I am filled with guilt when I think of how I did not find the time to write a letter to support my fellow breeders. I know many people look down their noses at people that produce more than a couple of litters per year, but the animal rights groups know it also and that is exactly how they will defeat us. We need to stop looking down our noses at people we don't entirely agree with and join forces to confront this problem.

As the saying goes, if I had a nickel for every time I had heard a breeder utter the term "back yard breeder" in disgust, I would be a very rich woman. What really makes someone a backyard breeder? I believe the term really applies most often to someone who is just starting out and Continued pg 18

Please feel
free to forward
our
newsletter to
interested
family and
friends

NLRC Membership -- Open Enrollment

Membership in the National Labrador Retriever Club, Inc. is open to all Labrador enthusiasts; however, to join you must be in good standing with the American Kennel Club, Inc. and should consider the guidelines set forth in the [NLRC Code of Ethics](#) when engaged in any activities involving the breeding, exhibiting and selling of Labrador Retrievers.

Two types of annual individual memberships are offered:

Full (voting member)	\$30
Associate (non-voting)	\$20

Click the below links for NLRC Membership forms:

[NLRC Membership Application Form \(that can be printed and mailed in with your membership fee\)](#)

Or to both apply and pay online

[NLRC Membership Application](#)

Are you listed in our [NLRC Breeders Directory](#)?

NLRC Members with full membership rights can apply to participate on the NLRC website Breeder Directory by completing the applicable section on the PDF membership application and submitting a \$10 fee.

Any questions? Contact our Membership Chair:

Deb Arnold 262-849-0962
twin_cedars@prodigy.net



Support TVD Research!

Visit the [National Labrador Retriever Club Website](#) for more info!



UKC BISS/BIMBS GRCH ENTERPRISE'S GREAT ADVENTURE

Steve & Christina Trojak's ([StormyCLabradors](#)) UKC BISS/BIMBS GRCH ENTERPRISE's GREAT ADVENTURE, "CURTIS" finished 2009 as the #1 Labrador Retriever in the United Kennel Club (UKC).



UKC CH STORMY C's SUPERBAD – "McLOVIN"

Steve & Christina Trojak's ([StormyCLabradors](#)) UKC CH STORMY C's SUPERBAD – "McLovin" went Best in Specialty Show at the United Labrador Retriever Association (UKC) specialty in Whitesboro, NJ on January 23, 2010 at 10 months old. McLovin is co-owned with Claudia Vaigl of Von Hausman Labradors.

GARDEN STATE KENNEL CLUB
BEST PUPPY IN SHOW
JANUARY 23, 2010



VON HAUSMAN's TAKEN BY STORM – "JEZEBEL"

Steve & Christina Trojak's ([StormyCLabradors](#)) VON HAUSMAN's TAKEN BY STORM – "JEZEBEL" Who at 14 weeks old was expertly handled by our Junior Handler, Amber to take Best Puppy in Show at the Garden State Kennel Club (UKC) show January 23, 2010. Jezebel also went Best Novice Puppy at the United Labrador Retriever Association Specialty show. Jezebel is co-owned with Claudia Vaigl of Von Hausman Labradors and is sired by our boy, Enterprise's Great Adventure.



BAZURTOS SABRINA – “SABRINA”

Katy Bazurtos' ([Bazurto Kennels](#)) BAZURTOS SABRINA – “SABRINA”

Was Winners Bitch and Best of Winners on Saturday, February 6th, 2010 at the Sun Maid Kennel Club Show in Fresno, CA

Why You Can't Trust Vet's Advice on Feeding Dogs (cont. from pg 3)

Today, they are paid largely to treat illnesses and conditions that require intervention. Thus, there is a huge gap in promoting healthy animal care that veterinarians are not educated to fill, and no other professionals fill.

Veterinary School Curricula

Let's look at one vet school's 4-year curriculum. In their trimester system, vet students take 15 credits per term or 45 credits per year. Over 4 years, they take 180 course credits to earn the DVM degree. Nine credits in the third and fourth years are electives, chosen from a list of optional courses, which allow vet students to "specialize" on diseases of and treatments for large or small animals, marine animals, or exotic birds.

Among these electives is a one-credit, one trimester course on small animal nutrition. This course is taught by a pet food company representative at no charge to the veterinary college. Needless to say, the course focuses on commercial pet foods for "healthy" pets and commercial prescription diets for sick pets.

At another veterinary school, the instructor of the small animal nutrition course was formerly employed by Purina pet foods. The major text book in the course is co-authored by three veterinarians employed by Iams Company. Course handouts are pet food company brochures for various regular and prescription kibbles and canned foods. The three guest lecturers in the course come from Iams and Nestle-Purina companies. Shall we guess how much information these veterinary students receive about canine evolution and raw-meaty-bones?

In addition to blind-spots in the veterinary curriculum, generous donations from pet food companies contribute enormously to vet students' indoctrination. From the moment they enter vet school, perhaps with a pet-food scholarship, vet students receive free pet food to sell to raise money for student activities, research support, summer internships, white lab coats, backpacks, tee shirts, jackets, medical equipment, free lunches, dinner seminars, awards, travel to professional meetings, and so forth -- all sponsored by one or more pet food companies.

In several vet schools for which I have complete financial data, student support from pet food companies totals more than \$100,000 a year. Over four years, veterinary students learn to be very grateful to Hill's, Iams, Purina, and Pedigree. Vet schools often receive more than half-a-million dollars annually from pet food sponsors, which insures their loyalty to commercial pet foods.

Vet students are not exposed to information about the evolution of carnivorous dogs or to species-appropriate diets for carnivorous pets. They are taught nutrient analyses of commercial pet foods and about digestive illnesses, not about how to keep carnivorous dogs healthy or how to make sick dogs well by feeding an appropriate diet. A few alternative or holistic vets have better ideas about healthy dog diets, but few seem to grasp the evolutionary basis of appropriate feeding advice. Dogs do not need cooked grains or minced vegetables in their diets.

Your vet is unlikely to know that dogs are a sub-species of gray wolf, with a wolf digestive system. Wolves and dogs need to eat whole prey – ... Continued next page



Green Tripe

Why you can't trust Vet's Advice on Feeding Dogs con't from pg 17

muscle meats, organs, and softer bones. Unfortunately, most vets are ill-prepared to advise you on dogs' diet and health, because their education omitted those topics or handed them over to commercial pet food companies.

Vets also profit from selling commercial pet foods, which often contribute 25 to 40% of their revenue. From the time vets enter school to establishing their practices, pet food companies are there to support them and to gain their lifelong loyalty.

You know better how to feed your dogs. Think about good nutrition for yourself and your children -- fresh foods are best, and a variety of foods is important. You wouldn't feed them processed cereal at every meal, even if it claimed to be "100% complete and balanced". How absurd for a cereal to claim to be the only food you and your children need to eat, day after day, year after year! It's no different for dogs. They need a variety of raw meats and meaty bones to thrive. This is just good, old-fashioned common sense!

reader discussion is invited, email Sandra Scarr, PhD [email: SandraScar@aol.com](mailto:SandraScar@aol.com)

Dog Breeders, a Dying Breed? con't from page 12

may not know all the best ways to go about their new hobby. What does it accomplish if one takes an arrogant attitude with these people and refuses to deal with them? They will still breed, and probably not with the best results. As a community, we should really do our best to help guide these people. We should explain to them what genetic tests are standard for our breed, why we sell puppies on limited registration, etc. I always take the time to reply to these people, politely and I

almost always get a very positive response from them. Almost always, they actually listen. They want to do the right thing. The problem is often that no one has taken the time to explain to them what the right thing is. So please, the next time a newbie comes your way, think about how you may be able to influence them and make them a better breeder. Be a mentor to them. It will only benefit our won-

derful breed. And the next time you hear about a law that is being proposed that you don't think will affect you, think again. It may just be the beginning of what is to come. So stand together with your fellow dog breeders, big and small, and help win the battle that we all face. And finally, support the organizations that fight on our behalf such as the National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA) and the Sportsmen's and Animal Owner's Voting Alliance (SAOVA) Submitted by: Gail Cayce-Adams

Fax those letters!
Then Snail Mail them
to your Congressman!





National Labrador Retriever Club, Inc.

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The National Labrador Retriever Club, Inc. exists for the protection and betterment of the breed, to encourage education of the general public who may want to add a Labrador to their family and to meet a social responsibility to its members, the general public, and the Labrador world in particular. To this end, we adopted a [Code of Ethics](#) to serve as a guide.

Our Newsletter, The Labrador Connection, is published by the club periodically when sufficient material is received. The Labrador Connection's newest electronic issue is emailed to members when it is published and all issues may be viewed online at any time.

Visit our website online at www.NationalLabradorRetrieverClub.com



The National Labrador Retriever Club, Inc. Membership list is viewable online from our website [MEMBERS](#) link. The NLRC membership list is intended for viewing by fellow NLRC members only. To access the membership list, please enter the user name: *nlrc* and then the password: *in08doNATE2tvd*
Once the login window is displayed, enter the password *overview* to view the membership list.