



Newsletter

March/April 2008

THE TAR HEEL BOXER CLUB OF GREATER RALEIGH

For the betterment of our breed

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS 2007-2008

President
TONI GRENTHER
2565 Dobbersville Rd.
Mt. Olive, NC 28365
boxergal@wildblue.net

Vice President
HARRY SANDERFORD
6465 Applewhite Rd.
Wendell, NC 27591
919-366-0996
brindlefawnmamma@bellsouth.net

Treasurer
RICHARD PERSCHEL
408 Sandlewood Dr.
Durham, NC 27712
919-477-4381
persche9@aol.com

Corres. Secretary
MALENA SMITHER
1512 Arthur Minnis Rd.
Hillsborough, NC 27278
919-929-4171
c-919-880-7142
dancerdog@aol.com

Reporting Secretary
JULIE INGLE
99 Gillespie Drive
Leicester, NC 28748
828-683-5910
kenlieboxers@charter.net

DEALING WITH AGING DOGS

"Happy Dog/Happy Owner Book
Published 1984, pp 132-142

As old age catches up with our pet dogs, there is little or nothing we can do to prevent them from getting extra-sensitive to those things that never upset them in the past. The hyper-sensitivity is part of their nature. Wild dogs and wolves are acutely aware of their failing bodies. With the loss of physical prowess, diminishing eyesight or hearing comes the loss of pack status. A wolf whose teeth are no longer sharp enough to deliver the death blow to a prey Animal may not be allowed to enter the hunt, and that means being consigned to eat what little has been left by the others.

A wolf that is not part of the hunt is eventually disenfranchised and left on his own as a "lone wolf". This is a death sentence. Wolves that are wounded, sick, or dying represent a threat to pack integrity. They hinder all aspects of pack existence including defense, hunting, and migration along with the prey animals. Wolves so afflicted are in great danger: at any time the pack may tear them to pieces as survival technique. As a leader of the pack becomes too old or infirm, her is apt to be challenged by a younger member for that position. This is behavior that has been genetically programmed into the animal. It exists in various degrees deep within the genes of all dogs.

It is little wonder then that our pet dogs become moody, grouchy and hypersensitive as they get older. Dogs do not fear death (as indeed human should not) because there is no frame of reference for so abstract a concept. However, there is an innate fear that along with old age comes a direct challenge from the social structure to his rights of territory, status, and life itself. Although an older dog's grumpiness may come from pain or discomfort, more likely it stems from some change in his routine that his owner did not recognize as a change.

Nick was getting older. His family did the only thing that creates the greatest anxiety in old dogs. He was forced to live with and adjust to his replacement in the pack structure. Although it was not intentional, it was an extremely harsh change in the old dog's life even though the other dog was a young female and not a true challenge to his status. Nick would have had enough to deal with having a grandchild enter the house, but another dog was more than his nerves could take. It was an attack on his entire nervous system and created a high degree of anxiety. As stated before, anxiety creates physical stress, and if prolonged, will cause collapse and even death. What was most notable about Nick was the valiant effort to regain his position as the young, vigorous leader by asserting his sexual capacity with Adelaide. Sadly enough, it may have cost him his last bit of energy.

DIRECTORS

CORINNA BOWERS (2YRS)

BETTY PERSCHEL (2YRS)

GASPAR OTERO (1YR)

SHERRYL SHULTZ (1 YR)

NEXT MEETING

Board & General

APRIL 13, 2008

**Location: Town &
Country Animal Care
Facility—1:00pm**

BRING YOUR CHAIRS

MEMBER NEWS

We had a very good turnout for the Picnic!! The weather was great and good fellowship and GREAT food!!!! Thanks to all the members who contributed—and to Harry who handled the pig cooker!!

Harry and Susan did a great job with the Raffle—Jimmy and Mina provided a basket of goodies, Lois a lovely plate (which I coveted;) Malena provided a cooler of goodies, two bags of dog food were donated, a cap donated by Beth Downey and the grand Prize—the Sand Cast Boxer puppy!!!

It was good to see old and new friends. We had a visitor from Hungary, Alexandra Gav, who had a good time meeting and visiting with members.

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A dog pack can be likened to the human family or, in its broadest sense, a national entity. If you are a member of the family or a nonrelated friend of the family, or a citizen of a country, you have various rights and privileges relative to your position in that structure. As long as you do not overstep your position or take that to which you are not entitled, you may live your life in relative peace and harmony. But if you enter the territory of another pack, or attempt to join a strange pack without an invitation, or enter a country illegally, you become vulnerable to attack either by the pack leaders or by the law-enforcement officials of the offended nation. In large cities, teenage gang warfare is caused by just such a social reality.

When a pack or a herd of animals becomes too populated for a territory to sustain, natural controls go into effect. Food obviously diminishes, so that hunger and sickness begin to thin out the density of population. Certain behavioral traits come into play that also achieve the desired goal. Some members of a pack or herd will break away, form a new group structure, and then emigrate in search of establishing another territory. Competition for the food and even the territory itself may take place within the social structure. This competition is in the form of a physical confrontation, with the winners remaining and the losers being sent off to wander and possibly die. The losers of such competitions are mostly juveniles, subordinates, the sick, and the old.

The next time you look down into the face of your aging dog, try to understand that some part of his or her brain has a coded message to be on guard and watch for changing signs in the environment. The answer to all your aging dog's emotional problems lies within the word "reassurance". Do not change your older dog's routine at all, if possible. Give him/her as much attention and affection as in the past. If possible, give even more of yourself than before. Never leave the dog with strangers. Do not introduce another animal into the household as long as your pet is still living with you. Avoid overnight stays unless you take your dog with you. Try to avoid the dog overnight at an animal hospital unless it is absolutely necessary. Dietary changes should be accomplished very gradually. Increase the number of times you groom your dog. This is a loving activity that not only serves as an opportunity to examine the animal for physical changes, but allows you to physically express your feelings.

Reassurance soothes the aging dog and abates those primeval fears which cause so much irrational and unnecessary emotion. Talk to your dog in a gentle, loving tone of voice. Walk with him at a pace that makes sense for his body not yours. Carry him upstairs, if necessary. Brush him gently every day. Do not subject an old dog to the rigors of very young children. Avoid loud noises. Be firm but not harsh. Communicate with him in some manner whenever something different is about to happen. Of course, your dog cannot understand what you say in terms of words. But you'd be surprised how much is understood by the loving tone of your voice.

Meditation is a viable option for those who are interested in the therapeutic effects of this Eastern technique of relaxation and spiritual attainment. Members of all religions are now experimenting with meditation, and many physicians are also recommending it. Meditation for pets (PM) is easily practiced and offers an opportunity for reassurance—perhaps the best opportunity—that he is wanted, that life is good and that you still love him.

Remove yourself and the dog to a part of the apartment or house where you will not be disturbed for thirty minutes. Advise other members of the household that you do not want any noise or interference. Ask them to take our calls or answer the door. If you and the dog are alone, take the receiver off the hook.

Once the room is quiet, get on the floor so you're on the dog's level. If the animal is nervous or fidgety use a leash and collar. Seat yourself against a wall or piece of furniture and induce your dog to lie down next to you. Small dogs can even be placed in your lap. Flatten both of your
Cont.

Hands and lay them over our dog's heart, which is found in the front of the torso, slightly behind the legs. Try to get a sense of him breathing pattern and allow your hands to rise and drop with his expanding and contracting chest movements. This should be very pleasant for the animal. Few, if any, will resist.

Once your dog is calm, establish a visual rapport. Eye-to-eye contact is fine, but not as a direct stare. For some dogs, this is regarded as a challenge or an invitation to play. Maintain as much silence as possible except when the dog needs to be told that everything is fine. Align our breathing rate to the dog's and breathe together. Pet him slowly as you breathe in unison, keeping one hand over the dog's heart. You may look away or close your eyes and say soothing, loving things to him. You may even whisper his name.

Whatever you choose to do, be certain that it does not distract your dog and get him on his feet. If he gets up, reposition him and start over. Make him and yourself as comfortable as possible. For those who are experienced with meditation, do not be upset if you do not achieve the desired state of relaxation you are used to. You will know if you are succeeding.

Keep track of time and break off the first session at fifteen minutes. Gradually extend the sessions until the dog is meditating for thirty minutes a day. Morning sessions are probably best if the dog must endure an entire day of nerve-wracking activities such as children and other distractions. Afternoons are also excellent for meditation. The time is not nearly so important as the level of relaxation and emotional well-being that is achieved. Communication of your love and assurance of his safety can be accomplished through this wonderful lifesaving activity.

The emotional problems of dogs are best understood through the spectrum of animal behavior as it is determined by nature and circumvented by domestication. We have taken dogs and cats out of the natural habitat where their behavior makes sense, increased their population beyond the natural inclination, and demanded of them an adaptation to complex human society. In the humanization of Fido, we have given our pets all of the emotionalism that goes along with the comforts and distortions of modern times. As we attempt to soothe our own inner turmoil, so must we help our four-legged alter egos, our mammalian cousins who have been pressed into service. The answer for them does not lie in primal scream therapy or Zen jogging. Pet owners must behave as responsible adults and help their friends with a truer understanding of animal behavior and their own role in creating the emotional problems of their pets. Thus equipped, we may look forward to a new kind of happiness where dogs and people are given the freedom to be themselves.

NEXT MEETING ON APRIL 13, 2008

BOARD AND GENERAL MEETING

1PM

TOWN & COUNTRY ANIMAL CARE FACILITY IN APEX

(Regular meeting site)

BRING YOUR CHAIRS!!

Member News (cont.)

Harry called and reported on the Picnic/Raffle results!! The club made \$484.00 on the raffle items. The breakdown on expenses for the picnic were as follows;

Pig & fixings = 290.00
Tip = 10.00
Sweeps gift = 32.00
Total expenses 332.00

Total sales = 484.00
Net profit = 152.00

The picnic was a great success in spite of it being Easter Weekend. The turnout would have been much more, we think had it not been that weekend. Next year might be different. In spite of that, we had 92 Boxer entries!

Many thanks to Lois who orchestrated the food!!

Harry and Susan did a great job getting the pig delivered and the raffle and trophies together!! Many thanks to the supporters of the club!!!



**NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICE
THBC ANNUAL ELECTIONS
MAY 18, 2008**

**PRESIDENT: TONI GRENTHER (2ND TERM)
VICE-PRESIDENT: HARRY SANDERFORD
TREASURER: RICHARD PERSCHEL
CORRES. SEC.: MALENA SMITHER
RECORDING SEC.: CORRINA BOWERS**

**BOARD MEMBERS:
JUDY HENDLEY (1 YR.)
CHAD BOWERS (1 YR.)
LOIS BUCHANAN (2 YRS.)
DAVID BROWN (2 YRS.)**

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE:
BETTY PERSCHEL, CHAIR
HARRY SANDERFORD
JUDY HENDLEY**

**NON-ELECTED POSITIONS
WEBSITE MANAGER: CHAD BOWERS
SOCIAL CHAIR: LOIS BUCHANAN
SHOW CHAIR: SUSAN SANDERFORD
NEWSLETTER: MALENA SMITHER/CORRINA BOWERS**

NEWS FROM AKC

For those of you who did get this via your e-mail:

AKC RULE CHANGE ALLOWS OWNERS TO RENAME THEIR DOGS

New York, NY – The American Kennel Club is pleased to announce a registration rule change that now allows owners of AKC registered dogs to change the official name of their pet. Dogs are eligible if they were born in the U.S.; have never been bred, or have not won any awards at an AKC event.

The new regulations reads:

“The name of a dog registered with The American Kennel Club will be allowed to be changed provided the dog was whelped in the United States and in cases where the breeder (s) first individually registered the dog, their written consent would be required. A dog name containing a Registered Kennel Name cannot be changed without the written consent of the owner (s) of that Registered Kennel Name.

However, no change in the name will be recorded by the American Kennel Club after the dog has produced or sired and AKC registered litter or received an award at an AKC licensed or member event.

Any name change must comply with all AKC requirements.”

The service fee for a name change is \$25. The Dog Name Change Authorization form is located online at <http://www.akc.org/pdfs/ADCGO1.pdf>

The completed form can be faxed to the AKC at: 919-816-4261 or mailed to the address on the application.

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REMEMBER OUR NEXT MEETING!!!!

**APRIL 13TH - 1PM
TOWN & COUNTRY ANIMAL CARE FACILITY**

BRING CHAIRS!!!

BE THERE OR BE SQUARE☺))

Have a very Happy Boxer Day