

Pets without Parents

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Delly came to our shelter with her pups. Pups are weaned now. She's been a wonderful mama but says she doesn't want to do "that" again. Delly has a wonderful temperament and will be a great companion. Age approx. 1 to 2 years of age and she is housebroken.

Maybe it's time for my breakfast...
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TOYS TOYS TOYS

Toys make the world go round. They make it bounce, roll and soar! They are objects that inspire play, enrich training & ease boredom. Toys, according to the experts (and all of my pups) are a must-have! Despite the constant jeering by some about how some pet owners "pamper" their pets, toys are not merely a luxury. Experts say that dogs need them - and need more than one kind. Softer toys that dogs can "baby" satisfy gentler instincts. Frisbees, balls and tugs are ways to share the fun, while squeaky playthings cry out for attack. Unfortunately for dogs, and their people, manufacturing of pet toys relies on the honor system; for less scrupulous companies, it's trial by error. The Food & Drug Administration doesn't regulate dog toys, and the Consumer Product Safety Commission only regulates pet toys that can be proven to put consumers (people, not dogs) at risk. So - do some research - ask around at the dog park - and pick a winner!

For The Love of Dog

There was an article last week in the USA Weekend edition about what our pets think of us. It started with a great story about Thor and his family...

Thor nibbled on his owner's ear. The pit bull worked hard to awaken Kemper Hunter and his girlfriend, Sarah Laughlin. Instantly, they understood Thor's urgency. They desperately attempted to fight the smoke to get to Shelby, their 3-month-old baby, but couldn't. The fire department arrived to find the panicked couple screaming outside their home, assuming they had lost their baby and their dog in the still-blazing fire. Just then, they all witnessed Thor pulling the bassinet out the door to safety. Baby and dog were OK. Last summer, Hunter, who lives in Bristol, Ind., told me, "I'm convinced if it wasn't for my dog, we would all be dead." The firefighters agreed.

At one time, scientists believed that dogs responded this way to save themselves, and in the process, they sometimes happened to save human lives. But in this and many other stories like it, the dog clearly risked his life. It appears as if Thor made a conscious decision to seek out and save the baby. How can this behavior be explained?

Certified applied animal behaviorist Patricia McConnell has a pretty simple explanation. "It's love," she says. Animal behavior experts once maintained that such self-sacrificing decisions are impossible for animals to make, and any suggestion they could was nothing more than anthropomorphizing — ascribing human emotions and thoughts to animals. To believe our pets react, and are motivated to risk their own lives based on love, was considered absurd and without any scientific basis in fact. "As scientists, we're taught to look for an explanation," McConnell says. "Dogs form similar social attachments (as people do), and I believe it is quite simple: A dog does totally love us," McConnell says. "People will place their own lives in jeopardy for those we love, and so will dogs." But are dogs truly capable of love? "We selected (over thousands of years) for a close bonding relationship with dogs," veterinary behaviorist Karen Overall says. "And as a result, today the neurochemistry in dogs' brains is nearly identical to ours."

It turns out people and dogs both have corresponding rising oxytocin when they're having a good time with one another. Do dogs make a conscious decision to play Lassie in real life? Animal cognition researcher Alexandra Horowitz has a special interest in anthropomorphism. She says canine valiant behavior may be explained in terms other than thoughtful conscious choices, such as a dog acting out anxiety (the dog smells smoke and is overwhelmed physically by its affects) or exhibiting attention-seeking behavior. Dogs are creatures of habit, she says, and also extremely observant. Being social, dogs tend to "tell us" whenever there's a change in the environment. It's another thing to believe that dogs are actually intent on knowingly saving our lives; not that they wouldn't, but Horowitz wonders whether they really have the capacity to think about it in those terms. Overall is on a task force studying military working dogs. She says that when dogs fail and soldiers die, the dogs behave differently. "They seem acutely aware of human deaths," she says. "Without question, they act depressed." Some cats, dogs and even parrots seem to mourn after the death of a family member. But are they mourning or responding to change? Horowitz says that in some ways her dog probably understands her better than her husband does. "When I walk in the door, the dog doesn't think, 'Wow, she's had a crummy day.' But the dog knows instantly if something is wrong," Horowitz says. "Dogs are such keen observers of cues which we are unaware we are even sending. It's not what we say, it's how we act. And probably how we smell."

I don't know about you, but I am heading back in that burning house for all of my guys, and I have stickers on all my exterior doors - so rescue people know to look for them too! Call it love or call it social bonding, but whatever you call it, it's impressive, and it works both ways. We still have a lot to learn about what dogs really think, but it's likely that dogs understand us better than we understand them.

(source: USA Weekend, What Our Pets Think of Us by Steve Dale)



Put a SPRING in your step - and attend some April activities!

- Saturday, July 16th - Putting For Paws - shotgun start @ 2:00pm, Blackhawk Gold Club, Galena OH, Individual players \$75 - come join us for some golfing fun for 18 holes with cart, skill prizes, lunch and an awesome goodie bag! This event benefits the Cozy Cat Cottage**
- Saturday, July 30th - Annual Corn Hole for Critters - 11am - 6pm @ Ten Pin Alley & Spikes5, 5499 Constitution, Hilliard 43026, enjoy cornhole and sand volleyball with Monica Day & Columbus Blue Jacket, Martin Spanhel. This event benefits Friends of the Shelter!**

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5 REASONS TO TAKE A STAND

AGAINST OHIO DOG AUCTIONS!



1. Ohio Dog Auctions Breed Misery!

Dogs brought to these auctions live in solitary confinement - they eat and relieve themselves in the same 2-by-2 foot cage for the majority of their lives!

2. Ohio Dog Auctions Are All About the Money!

Dogs sold at these auctions are forced to produce litter after litter every six months - all for the sake of profit. Mother dogs are so fearful they often eat their litters!

3. Ohio Dog Auctions Breed Corruption!

Ohio is the only state east of the Mississippi that has dog auctions. Buyers and sellers come from 15 states, many of them have repeated, long standing USDA violations or have been convicted of animal cruelty!

4. Ohio Dog Auctions Support Consumer Fraud!

Dogs sold at these auctions are often sick with genetic disorders, infections and broken bones which can cost the consumer thousands of dollars in vet bills!

5. Ohio Dog Auctions Add To Pet Overpopulation!

Dogs sold at these auctions often end up in animal shelters, pounds and animal rescues, where many will be at risk of being euthanized!

PLEASE visit www.BanOhioDogAuctions.com to learn more about how you can support the 2012 ballot campaign to end dog auctions in Ohio.

PAWS & THINK

Happy Tails...

We fostered Skyler and his brother Calvin last summer, when they were about 5 months old. Cal was the braver and more outgoing of the two, and we found him a great home. But after a few months, we just couldn't let Skyler go. They were rescued from a horrible situation in southern Ohio where a farmer was tired of feeding them (and their 4 siblings), and put them all in the same cage for easy "clean-up" when they died. Talk about a rough start to life! As expected, Skyler was afraid of everything, but wanted so much to be loved, and petted, and held. As hungry and starved as he was, he would leave his food to come see me just to get some lovin! He still has some issues (don't we all). He is hesitant and fearful of strangers - I really don't blame him. He has been, and always will be, a "work in progress", but he is worth the effort. In my mind - he has given "people" a second chance by trusting me, and I will give him as much time as he needs. As you can see, he is a sweet, loving boy - before & after. He LOVES to play with all his "peeps". I think it is important for people to know that pups like Skyler are not a lost cause - they just need a lot of love, and a lot of time. If you happen to have these things - and would consider fostering a pup, please call your local rescue group. There are so many "Skylers" out there needing someone to love & trust - give it a try!



IZZY SEZ...

Free to a Good Home... not so good. C'mon man - giving any pet away is not a good idea. Think about it - people tend not to value what they don't pay for. If you charge a nominal fee of \$35-\$45 or more for an animal, the new owner is more likely to take their commitment to the pet seriously. **A free pet is a disposable pet!** Paying a fee for a pet shows good faith on the part of the new owner and demonstrates their willingness to properly care for the animal. These animals may also be abandoned, neglected, abused, or worse. How can it get worse? Many groups get these "free" animals, and sell them to groups that use them for product testing. So, rethink that "Free to a Good Home" sign, and while you're at it... spay/neuter your pet so you don't have to reuse the sign! Just a thought!

Keep Cool With a Splash of Fun

On a blistering hot day, owning a pool definitely has its advantages as a refuge from the heat. It also holds the potential for a family tragedy all year round if you are not careful.

Pool safety issues for pets are almost synonymous with those for children, and they go far beyond just careful supervision. With pets and kids, you can never assume that you can watch them all the time. It only takes a few minutes of distraction for either one to fly out the door and into the pool. With that said, pools can be great fun for your pet. Here are just a few of the issues you should consider:

- Although many dogs love the water, don't assume they can swim naturally. Never throw a dog into the pool; he may panic and not be able to climb the slick sides to get out of the pool.
- Even excellent swimmers will gradually lose their ability as they age and become weaker. In addition, senior dogs are more prone to slipping and falling into a pool.
- Heat and sunlight are more intense around a

pool. Your dog cannot keep as cool as you, so watch for signs of overheating. Don't let your dog drink from the pool; the chlorine will make him sick.



- In the same vein, you should be aware that chlorinated water may irritate your dog's eyes & skin. When the two of you are finished playing in the pool, hose your dog down with fresh water to get the chlorine out.

If you take your dog to the beach, watch for signs of overheating and sun exposure carefully; the sand gets very hot, the sun is more intense and dogs perspire through the pads on their feet. During summer the water warms up as well, spurring the growth of "sea lice," which are microscopic organisms that can cause severe itching. If you see red bumps and your dog is scratching a lot, contact your vet.

Safety first - have fun - and keep cool!
(source: petplace.com)

How to Pet a Cat (From the Cat)

With all of the animal rescues I have done in my life, there have been a handful of cats that I just couldn't say no to. Mostly, I guess, because they acted like dogs. Now, not being a traditional "cat person", I don't always understand them. Phoebe, the current dog-cat in my home - confuses me, almost as much as she makes me laugh. Sometimes, she is all about being loved on - purring and rubbing up against my hand. Other times - not so much. So - this is what I have learned so far... most cats like to be stroked on their forehead, between the ears. They also like to be skritch under the chin and along the throat. If they trust you a lot, they'll roll over onto their back for stomach-skritch. Always pet a cat in the direction of its fur, and be aware that the spot just above the tail is sensitive - some cats love being scratched there, others hate it. If your cat suddenly nips you while you are petting her, she is telling you that she is done. Some cats can handle a lot more "together time" than others. Whenever I walk through a room where Phoebe is in arm's reach - I pet her - she seems to enjoy the acknowledgement, and gives me a little "wha'sup" head bop in return. I frequently pick her up, carry her for a bit, and give her a few rubs. She is getting used to it - and lets me hold her a little longer each time.



She is getting better all the time - we both are. It takes a while for cats to trust - especially if they are from the "mean streets" like Phoebe. The important thing is to listen to what they are trying to say... no matter how fussy your cat may be, you can usually tell if they are ready to be stroked, skritch, or picked up. I guess maybe I am becoming a cat person... or at the very least a cat-dog person.



"Surround yourself only with people who are going to lift you higher."

- Anonymous

ROCCO'S RANTS...



Who knew that cats were such wonderful gardeners?! I did! However, if you are not so thrilled with your cat helping with the gardening INDOORS... here are some tips to discourage the hobby. Go to your local craft store and buy a few pieces of the plastic needlepoint mesh. Cut it to fit the pot, with a slit and an opening for the plant. Place it on top of the dirt. Or, dampen a cotton ball with oil of clove, then bury the cotton ball just below the surface. To stop him from chewing on houseplants, you can buy Bitter Apple from your local pet store and spray it on the leaves.

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