

# FLORIDA LUPINE NEWS

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to Veterinarians,  
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## **Animal Abuse & Human Abuse: Partners in Crime PETA Fact Sheet: Companion Animals**

Violent acts toward animals have long been recognized as indicators of a dangerous psychopathy that does not confine itself to animals. "Anyone who has accustomed himself to regard the life of any living creature as worthless is in danger of arriving also at the idea of worthless human lives," wrote humanitarian Dr. Albert Schweitzer. "Murderers ... very often start out by killing and torturing animals as kids," according to Robert K. Ressler, who developed profiles of serial killers for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Studies have now convinced sociologists, lawmakers, and the courts that acts of cruelty toward animals deserve our attention. They can be the first sign of a violent pathology that includes human victims.

A Long Road of Violence Animal abuse is not just the result of a minor personality flaw in the abuser, but a symptom of a deep mental disturbance. Research in psychology and criminology shows that people who commit acts of cruelty against animals don't stop there; many of them move on to their fellow humans.

The FBI has found that a history of cruelty to animals is one of the traits that regularly appear in its computer records of serial rapists and murderers, and the standard diagnostic and treatment manual for psychiatric and emotional disorders lists cruelty to animals as a diagnostic criterion for conduct disorders.<sup>1</sup> Studies have shown that violent and aggressive criminals are more likely to have abused animals as children than criminals considered non-aggressive.<sup>2</sup> A survey of psychiatric patients who had repeatedly tortured dogs and cats found that all of

them had high levels of aggression toward people as well, including one patient who had murdered a boy.<sup>3</sup> To researchers, a fascination with cruelty to animals is a red flag in the lives of serial rapists and killers.<sup>4</sup> Says Robert Ressler, founder of the FBI's behavioral sciences unit, "These are the kids who never learned it's wrong to poke out a puppy's eyes."<sup>5</sup>

### **Notorious Killers**

History is replete with notorious examples: Patrick Sherrill, who killed 14 coworkers at a post office and then shot himself, had a history of stealing local pets and allowing his own dog to attack and mutilate them.<sup>6</sup> Earl Kenneth Shriner, who raped, stabbed, and mutilated a 7-year-old boy, had been widely known in his neighborhood as the man who put firecrackers in dogs' rectums and strung up cats.<sup>7</sup> Brenda Spencer, who opened fire at a San Diego school, killing two children and injuring nine others, had repeatedly abused cats and dogs, often by setting their tails on fire.<sup>8</sup> Albert DeSalvo, the "Boston Strangler" who killed 13 women, trapped dogs and cats in orange crates and shot arrows through the boxes in his youth.<sup>9</sup> Carroll Edward Cole, executed for five of the 35 murders of which he was accused, said his first act of violence as a child was to strangle a puppy.<sup>10</sup> In 1987, three Missouri high school students were charged with the beating death of a classmate. They had histories of repeated acts of animal mutilation starting several years earlier. One confessed that he had killed so many cats he'd lost count.<sup>11</sup> Two brothers who murdered their parents had previously told classmates that they

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## Florida Lupine Association, Inc.

A Non-Profit Organization  
Dedicated to Being Florida's  
Responsible Voice for Wolfdogs.

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*(Anonymous letters & breeder advertisements will not be printed.)*



### Contributions, Dues, and Questions about Florida Lupine are to be directed to

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*(If sending snail mail, please allow 2-3 weeks for a reply.)*

## FLA Acknowledgements

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- ? Barbara Speer-Skeoch for all of her efforts in setting up the catered meal from Sonny's Bar BQ.
- ? Dr. Tom Belcoure, Director of Alachua Department of Health and on the Florida Rabies Compendium Committee, for accepting FLA's invitation to provide a speech explaining the wolfdog and rabies controversy.
- ? Dr. Tom Kazo, wildlife biologist specializing in wild canids, for accepting FLA's invitation to speak at the Rendezvous on his work and drug-dog and cancer detection training.
- ? Cynthia Watkins and Carol Sorvillo of the *SeaCrest Wildlife Preserve & Education Center* and FLA Members, for accepting FLA's invitation to provide a presentation on how to network with schools and educators and how to make wolfdog presentations schools, fairs, festivals, etc.
- ? Vicki Achen and Juan Echagarrua for agreeing to provide information at the FLA Rendezvous on proper and fun containment for our animals.
- ? Jody Haynes and Kim Miles for agreeing to bring last year's presentation poster on wolf and dog genetics and taxonomy and on wolf range distribution.
- ? And a very big thank you to the directors of the 1999-2001 term: Al Mitchell, President; Beth Palmer, Vice President & Secretary; Mayo Wetterberg, Treasurer; Jody Haynes, Webmaster; and Kim Miles, Editor. Thank you for a term well done and full of accomplishments! Hoorah!!

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#### Deadlines for Submission:

Spring NL: March 15      Fall NL: Sept. 15  
Summer NL: June 15      Winter NL: Dec. 15



## From the Desk of the Secretary

By Beth Palmer

Between 12-15-2000 and 3-15-2001, four (4) general wolfdog info packets were mailed out (either by member referrals or by those surfing onto the FLA website); ten (10) Florida Lupine info packet were mailed to professional associations requesting information from FLA; and one (1) wolfdog and FLA info packet was mailed to a veterinarian requesting information.

We have purged the County Animal Controls (ACs) no longer interested in receiving the Florida Lupine newsletter, and we are happy to report that at least one third of the County ACs in Florida have contacted us and are glad to receive our newsletter. We are still working on the City AC database—a rather overwhelming endeavor that we hope to have completed soon.

We are always looking for people to sponsor "free wolfdog info" newspaper advertisements, so if you are in a problem area, please contact me at either [info@floridalupine.org](mailto:info@floridalupine.org) or 850-539-0460 and we can discuss ad pricing and location.

FLA offers the following special info packets: (1) safe containment for wolfdogs, (2) being a responsible breeder, (3) finding an ethical breeder, (4) breed-specific legislation information, and (5) sample puppy sales contracts with spay/neuter clauses. These packets are free. If you know of anyone who would like a wolfdog info packet (individual or animal agency), please call FLA (toll free) with the name and mailing address: 1-877-860-2100 extension #192500.

## From the Virtual Desk of the Webmaster

By Jody Haynes

During this first quarter of the new millennium (that's right folks, the year 2000 did not begin the new millennium, it ended the last one!), three notable additions were made to the FLA website.

First, two new full-color PDF versions of our newsletter, *Florida Lupine News*, were added to the "Newsletters" section: Summer 2000 and Fall 2000. You can now download and/or print these newsletters using a free plugin for your web browser called Adobe Acrobat Reader. If you do not have this plugin installed on your computer, you can get it by following the appropriate link on the "Newsletters" page of our website.

The second new addition is a whole new section entitled "Wolfdog Books," in which you can now locate and purchase books on our site in affiliation with Amazon.com. FLA receives up to a 15% commission on any book sold through our website. In the future, we hope to offer FLA and wolf T-shirts, wolf CDs, and maybe even wolf movies to our items for sale. If you have any ideas for adding merchandise to our website, please contact me.

And finally, the Rendezvous 2001 information has been uploaded to the web. If you wish to invite anyone or provide someone with more information, you can direct them to the website.

Please visit our website today, at [www.floridalupine.org](http://www.floridalupine.org)...and tell a friend about it as well! As always, please feel free to send your comments, criticisms, and suggestions involving the website to me at [webmaster@floridalupine.org](mailto:webmaster@floridalupine.org).

Happy surfing!

## From the Desk of the President

By Alan Mitchell

We are now fully into 2001 with people talking about the economy, tax cuts, foreign relations and dog legislation. As I page through the multitude of postings on several lists, it is clear that since some people feel that they are powerless to affect the economy, tax cuts, or foreign relations, they attack dog ownership. Proposed legislation is springing up all over the country, as well as in Europe.

So far, things have been fairly calm in Florida this year. Only one bill is being proposed at the state level. As you probably know, the State of Florida prohibits breed-specific legislation (BSL) at the state level. This doesn't mean that a county cannot ban a breed, however. The county must first solicit the state, obtaining an exception to the law.

Miami-Dade County did this with Pit Bulls over ten years ago. Ft. Lauderdale in Broward County is now seeking to copy Miami-Dade County by obtaining its own exception, with the intent to ban pit bulls from their beaches. Considering this national trend toward legislation, it is imperative that we in the wolfdog community work diligently with our local officials, shelters, and others to halt BSL.

Education and sharing of our experiences are the critical ingredients needed to ensure that emergency issues on the local level are dealt with swiftly and fairly. Every member should be on a first name basis with their local government officials. If we are successful in our educational endeavors, we will receive the first call when there is a problem. It is much easier to resolve a problem if we are called first, rather than trying to seek out facts after we read of a problem in the newspaper. You might even be asked to help with planning issues before there is a problem.

If you haven't visited our website lately, you should. Jody has done an excellent job of expanding its educational resources and we have a first class site. Feel free to use any of the information from this public site in your local educational efforts.

FLA has applied for 501(c)3 status and this moves us into a totally different arena of non-profit organizations. Some say it improves our "credibility." It definitely will improve our "creditability" as we will be able to accept tax deductible donations from individuals and companies.

We have established the date for our annual meeting in May, and I encourage all members to mark their calendars and attend. This is a great outing for friends and families, also. We learn, we have fun, and we get to see a variety of animals. We enlarge our awareness...so why restrict this to just FLA members? Invite a friend. I look forward to seeing you all in Ocala.

Alan L. Mitchell  
President

# From the Desk of the Treasurer

By Mayo Wetterberg

Ever since last October, I have been talking about resolving our request for federal tax-exempt status from the IRS. Well early this year, we were finally assigned an IRS caseworker to review our application for tax-exempt status. We have received correspondence from the IRS and submitted some minor changes to our constitution as they requested. The changes will merely place more emphasis on education as the main FLA mission. We expect final approval any day, and hopefully before the May rendezvous.

While this is good news, the even better news is that we may now credit all donations as tax-exempt. The IRS allows organizations with pending final approval to solicit donations as if final approval was already granted. Therefore, all donations made to FLA in 2001 are legitimate tax deductions by the donors. This should make us much more attractive to anyone considering donating. To complete the tracking of donations, I will mail donation statements and a 'thank you' to each donor after the end of the calendar year 2001. I have addresses for all FLA members, but if anyone obtains a donation from outside FLA membership, please get their name and mailing address along with the amount. I can then include them when I mail out the tax record statements.

The only other bit of Treasurer news is that we have just renewed our Florida charter as a non-profit organization registered with the Department of State. That keeps our incorporation recognized, and FLA on the books in Florida as a NP organization.

I hope to see many of you in May at the rendezvous. It will be a great time to meet new members and see some of your animals as well as to see some of our older members. Last year's gathering was a tremendous success and a fun time for those who were there. As a result, we are going back to the same KOA campgrounds and should have another great time.

*("Animal Abuse"—Continued from page 1)*

had decapitated a cat.<sup>12</sup> Serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer had impaled dogs' heads, frogs, and cats on sticks.<sup>13</sup>

More recently, high school killers such as 15-year-old Kip Kinkel in Springfield, Ore., and Luke Woodham, 16, in Pearl, Miss., tortured animals before embarking on shooting sprees.<sup>14</sup> Columbine High School students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, who shot and killed 12 classmates before turning their guns on themselves, bragged about mutilating animals to their friends.<sup>15</sup>

"There is a common theme to all of the shootings of recent years," says Dr. Harold S. Koplewicz, director of the Child Study Center at New York University. "You have a child who has symptoms of aggression toward his peers, an interest in fire, cruelty to animals, social isolation, and many warning signs that the school has ignored."<sup>16</sup>

Sadly, many of these criminals' childhood violence went unexamined—until it was directed toward humans. As anthropologist Margaret Mead noted, "One of the most dangerous things that can happen to a child is to kill or torture an animal and get away with it."<sup>17</sup>

## **Animal Cruelty & Family Violence**

Because domestic abuse is directed toward the powerless, animal abuse and child abuse often go hand in hand. Parents who neglect an animal's need for proper care or abuse animals may also abuse or neglect their own children. Some abusive adults who know better than to abuse a child in public have no such qualms about abusing an animal publicly.

In 88 percent of 57 New Jersey families being treated for child abuse, animals in the home had been abused.<sup>18</sup> Of 23 British families with a history of animal neglect, 83 percent had been identified by experts as having children at risk of abuse or neglect.<sup>19</sup> In one study of battered women, 57 percent of those with pets said their partners had harmed or

*(Continued on page 5)*

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\*These are the only voting categories.

(Continued from page 4)

killed the animals. One in four said that she stayed with the batterer because she feared leaving the pet behind.<sup>20</sup>

While animal abuse is an important sign of child abuse, the parent isn't always the one harming the animal. Children who abuse animals may be repeating a lesson learned at home; like their parents, they are reacting to anger or frustration with violence. Their violence is directed at the only individual in the family more vulnerable than themselves: an animal. One expert says, "Children in violent homes are characterized by ... frequently participating in pecking-order battering," in which they may maim or kill an animal. Indeed, domestic violence is the most common background for childhood cruelty to animals.<sup>21</sup>

### **Stopping the Cycle of Abuse**

There is "a consensus of belief among psychologists ... that cruelty to animals is one of the best examples of the continuity of psychological disturbances from childhood to adulthood. In short, a case for the prognostic value of childhood animal cruelty has been well documented," according to the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine.<sup>22</sup>

Schools, parents, communities, and courts who shrug off animal abuse as a "minor" crime are ignoring a time bomb. Instead, communities should be aggressively penalizing animal abusers, examining families for other signs of violence, and requiring intensive counseling for perpetrators. Communities must recognize that abuse to ANY living individual is unacceptable and endangers everyone.

In 1993, California became the first state to pass a law requiring animal control officers to report child abuse. Voluntary abuse-reporting measures are also

on the books in Ohio, Connecticut, and Washington, D.C. Similar legislation has been introduced in Florida. "Pet abuse is a warning sign of abuse to the two-legged members of the family," says the bill's sponsor, Representative Steve Effman. "We can't afford to ignore the connection any longer."<sup>23</sup>

Additionally, children should be taught to care for and respect animals in their own right. After extensive study of the links between animal abuse and human abuse, two experts concluded, "The evolution of a more gentle and benign relationship in human society might, thus, be enhanced by our promotion of a more positive and nurturing ethic between children and animals."<sup>24</sup>

### **What You Can Do:**

- ? Urge your local school and judicial systems to take cruelty to animals seriously. Laws must send a strong message that violence against any feeling creature—human or other-than-human—is unacceptable.
- ? Be aware of signs of neglect or abuse in children and animals. Take children seriously if they report animals' being neglected or mistreated. Some children won't talk about their own suffering but will talk about an animal's.
- ? Don't ignore even minor acts of cruelty to animals by children. Talk to the child and the child's parents. If necessary, call a social worker.

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# Rabies & Wolfdogs: Why Is There Still A Problem? Or do we keep counting until we get the right

Rabies is the most significant problem facing wolfdog owners and those furry friends we share our lives with. Wherever two wolfdog owners meet, it isn't long before the rabies subject comes up. We have been fighting this problem for many years, and just when it looked like we would finally see some resolution to the issue in 2000, we went "on hold" again.

Many knowledgeable veterinarians agree that any canine living in close proximity to humans should be vaccinated against rabies as a pre-caution. There is also agreement among many that the vaccine is effective on wolfdogs and does not harm them.

Why, then, have we not seen United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approval of this vaccine for wolves and wolfdogs? Is there a valid scientific reason not to approve the vaccine, or are we simply feeling the pressure of politics?

Below are extracts of documents from some of the leading organizations involved in this controversial issue. They are provided as a timeline of what it has taken to get "almost there." It has been a hard battle and we cannot let down our guard now.

## 1985

**Dr. R. L. Rissler — Assistant Director of Animal Health Programs, USDA — wrote a widely distributed letter to veterinarians to provide some clarification on hybrid animal crosses:** "All hybrid crosses between wild and domestic animals, such as wolf x dog, cat x jungle cat, buffalo x domestic

cattle, etc., are considered to be domestic animals. Thus, a wolf x dog cross is considered to be a dog and must be maintained under the dog standards..."

## 1994

**Dale F. Schwindaman — Plant Health Inspection Service of USDA — addressing the rabies vaccine issue upon the reclassification of dog to *Canis lupus familiaris* from its separate species status, *Canis familiaris*:** "Rabies vaccines are approved for all domestic dogs of the scientific name *Canis lupus familiaris*."

## 1995

**Robert B. Miller — Chief Staff Veterinarian, Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA — addressing the wolf v. dog and the wild v. domesticated rabies controversy:** "The U.S. Department of Agriculture has what appears to be conflicting regulations concerning the status of wolf-dog hybrids. [According to] the CFR Title 9 ... implementing the Virus-Serum-Toxin Act does not address the distinction between domesticated and wild animals. The regulations governing the licensing of rabies vaccines require that the product be shown to be effective in each species for which it is recommended. Without knowledge of the behavior of rabies vaccines in wolves, we cannot allow a manufacturer to recommend the product in that species."

**The Wolf Dog Coalition to Dr. Lonnie King, USDA:** "The Code of Federal Regulations has defined a wolfdog as domestic.... Dogs and wolfdogs are classified as *Canis*

*Lupus Familiaris*... The taxonomic issue is clear; the wolf and wolfdog should be included under the dog label without the need for additional testing."

## 1996

**The National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV) issued a Compendium of Animal Rabies Control, which states, in part:** "The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the NASPHV, and the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) strongly recommend the enactment of state laws prohibiting the importation, distribution, relocation, or keeping of wild animals and wild animals that are crossbred to domestic dogs and cats as pets... Wild mammals (as well as the offspring of wild species crossbred with domestic dogs and cats) that bite or otherwise expose people, pets, or livestock should be considered for euthanasia and rabies examination."

**Terry Medley — Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), USDA, & Administrator to Congressman Frank R. Wolf — concerned that lack of approval might deter or prohibit the vaccination of wolves and wolfdogs, clarified the reasons for the lack of approval:** "While we are certainly aware of the risks associated with the lack of a rabies vaccine specifically approved for use in wolves and wolf-hybrids, the U.S. Department of Agriculture does not directly prohibit veterinarians or individuals from vaccinating these animals. Our authority in this

(Continued from page 6)

matter is in determining whether or not to approve a vaccine for use in certain species.... It is true that the scientists present at our public meeting agreed that the rabies vaccines currently licensed for use in domestic dogs should also be effective in wolves and in wolf-hybrids. However ... when asked whether they would recommend such vaccines for use in wolves and wolf-hybrids without testing to demonstrate their safety and effectiveness, most scientists at the meeting indicated that they would not."

## 1997

**Terry L. Medley — APHIS, USDA, and Administrator to Congressman Frank R. Wolf — clarifying what the USDA and scientists would need prior to approving use of the vaccine in wolves and wolfdogs:** "We need to ensure that this vaccine meets the final criteria of the Virus-Serum-Toxin Act, that the vaccines are safe for use in wolves and wolf-hybrids.... Because the similarities between dogs and wolves create a unique situation for our Agency in terms of vaccine approval, we do not have an established standard for the number of animals that should be tested.... We have statistically determined that we would need vaccination records from 1,500 animals. In establishing this number we are attempting to strike a balance between an acceptable level of risk and a testing parameter that is attainable."

**Terry L. Medley — APHIS, USDA, and Administrator to Congressman Frank R. Wolf — addressing the problem of obtaining the data necessary for approving the use of the vaccine on wolves:** "Because there appear to be fewer than 500 wolves in the United States under

the care of a veterinarian, it may not be possible to obtain a sample of this size. Because we would like to continue working toward a resolution of this issue ... we will review data on as many wolves as are available."

## 1998

**Craig A. Reed — USDA, Acting Administrator to Congressman Wolf — offers some concession to the wolf/wolfdog controversy:** "If the studies demonstrate to our satisfaction that wolves and dogs respond to vaccines as members of the same species should, we will take the appropriate action to notify biologics manufacturers of our findings and allow wolves and wolf-hybrids to be added to the list of animals for which applicable canine biologics are approved."

## 1999

**The Federal Register (Volume 64, No. 187, Page 52247-52248) published notice of proposed changes to the Virus-Serum-Toxin Act to include wolves and wolfdogs:** This change to 9 CFR Part 101 (Viruses, Serums, Toxins, and Analogous Products; Definitions) was listed as Docket No. 99-040-1.... "SUMMARY: We are proposing to amend the Virus-Serum-Toxin Act regulations by adding a definition of the term dog to include all members of the species *Canis familiaris*, *Canis lupus*, or any dog-wolf cross. APHIS believes that dogs, wolves, and any dog-wolf cross can be safely and effectively vaccinated with canine vaccines. This action would allow canine vaccines that are recommended for use in dogs to be recommended for use in wolves and any dog-wolf cross."

## 2001

**We still await approval of the rabies vaccine for use in our**

**animals.** The NASPHV position has not changed. They have reissued a paper with the same concerns of the lack of sufficient testing. They have recommended (after the end of the public comment period) that more testing is needed before approval is granted by USDA, even though many of the scientists agree that the rabies vaccine should be as effective in wolves and wolfdogs as it is in dogs. Much of the objection is politically-based, with organizations like the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) continuing to hold that wolfdog ownership should not be encouraged and voicing its concerns that, should the vaccine be approved for wolfdogs, it might appear that the government and AVMA condone the ownership of wolfdogs as pets.

Col. Miller has retired and USDA has given his workload to another veterinarian. In a recent phone call with her, she advised me that the USDA's final decision has been made and is awaiting publication in the Federal Register. She further explained that this final decision could not be discussed until it has been released and that, once released, it would not be subject to additional public comment. She had no idea when it would appear in the Federal Register and stated that no one at USDA would be able to provide any additional information about the decision until it has been published.

In the meantime, we watch the Federal Register and wait, ensuring that our dogs do not bite or scratch, or get bitten or scratched themselves. While we wait, we also search out veterinarians who will provide the vaccine to our animals without asking too many questions about their heritage, and we hold on to the hope that, when the final decision is published, it will be favorable. We continue to wait....

# A Family of Wolves

By Cathy Curby, Wildlife Refuge Biologist

*[This is the text of a presentation given by a Refuge biologist to the public.]*

Good afternoon. My name is Cathy Curby, and I'm a wildlife biologist working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in northeast Alaska.

We commonly think of wildlife research as moose surveys or vegetation analysis, but I do a different type of science. I watch wild animals in undisturbed settings, to learn about how they spend their time, and how they interact with others. I've spent hundreds of hours watching caribou walk, wild sheep feed, and wolves sleep. During those times, I'm sometimes fortunate enough to catch an enlightening glimpse into a wild animal's life.

The story I'll share with you today is one such glimpse. It's a true story that I observed while working on a wolf project in the Arctic Refuge. Like much work of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this one was a partnership, between the Service, the National Park Service, and the University of Alaska - Fairbanks.

There were three of us that summer watching the pack of wolves. We camped along a river about two miles from the wolf den, and rotated six hour shifts, watching the animals from a small tent 3/4 of a mile from the den. We used a spotting scope on a tripod to view the wolves, and recorded our observations into notebooks.

That summer, the wolf pack included eight adults and four pups. They lived on a mountainside, where a small, deep hole on a rocky ledge served as a den for the mother and pups. The adult wolves were not easy to tell apart because all of them in this particular pack were tan-brown color except one. The mother wolf was white. A wolf of great value and importance in the pack, we referred to her as Pearl when we wrote about her in our notebooks.

This wolf pack hunted up into the mountains for Dall sheep, and down onto the river valley for caribou. They also caught ground squirrels and ptarmi-

gan (arctic birds very similar to grouse and chickens).

A week before this story occurred, Pearl had moved the pups to a new location about three quarters of a mile north of the den site. Scientists are not sure exactly why mother wolves move their pups. Some suggest the pups are moved away from the filth and fleas that have accumulated around the den, or moved to a location less accessible to predators or where they can more safely and successfully practice their hunting skills. Whatever the reason, such moves are so universally common in wolves that scientists have given the name "rendezvous site" to this new location. The word rendezvous in French means "all meet together" and that's just what happened in this case. Over the following week, as they each returned from their travels, the wolves discovered the pups were no longer at the den site. The adults searched until they found the rendezvous site, and thereafter returned there from hunts.

Now look through the spotting scope with me, and we'll begin our observations of "A family of wolves." ...

It's morning, a week after the pups were moved to the rendezvous site. Notice that the puppies are alone now. All the adult wolves are away hunting. I record into my notebook: 8:00 a.m., partly sunny with high overcast skies, little wind, and a temperature of 52 degrees Fahrenheit. I write that the pups are lying quietly among an open patch of six-foot-high willows, and I wait, along with the pups, as the minutes tick by.

Later in the morning, while scanning the surrounding mountains and river valley, I see Pearl trotting steadily back home. She's been away from her pups for a number of hours, and is heavy with milk. The pups have nothing to drink except her milk, so they wait thirsty as well as hungry when the adults are away.

What's this? Pearl passes below the willows where her puppies wait, and continues on until she arrives near the den. Surely she remembers where she left the pups? Pearl lies down on the sand and gravel of the mountain side,

and I record her actions in my notebook, and resume my watch.

In a few minutes, another wolf trots up to Pearl and lies down nearby. Because all the wolves except Pearl are brown, it's not possible to know if any one of them is male or female unless they happen to urinate, and even then I only know until they duck out of sight and I lose track of which wolf is which. Just like dogs, female wolves squat and males lift a leg. Since I don't know if this newly arrived wolf is a male or a female, I just refer to it in my notebook as the babysitter.

Pearl and the babysitter wolf lie a few feet apart from each other for about ten minutes. I don't notice any noises or body movements, but they are looking at each other. How do they communicate? Does Pearl indicate "go get the pups and bring them back to me."? She doesn't speak those words, but that's what the babysitter wolf attempts to do.

The babysitter wolf gets up, trots slowly north across a quarter mile of low, widely-spaced willows, across a quarter mile of steep, unstable, rough rocks and cobbles called a talus or scree slope, and across a quarter mile of dense, 6-foot high willows. When it reaches the pups, they greet it with wild enthusiasm.

(Ok, you're right, I don't know if it is wild enthusiasm. Scientists are careful not to assign human emotions to wild animals' actions. So let me tell you what the pups do, and you decide for yourself.)

The pups run up to the babysitter wolf, their tails wagging so much that their hips wag. Their hips wagging so much that their shoulders wag. Their shoulders wagging so much that their heads wag, and their heads wagging so much that their noses wag.

Adult wolves don't have hands or backpacks with which to carry food back to the pups, so after a successful hunt, adults bring home chunks of meat in their stomachs. The pups indicate their hunger by jumping up and pulling on an adult's jowls (the upper lips along the side of a wolf's mouth) with their sharp little puppy teeth. The hungrier they are, the harder they bite and pull. If the adults have eaten recently, this jumping and pulling by the



puppies causes them to regurgitate the meat back up and onto the ground for the puppies to eat.

While I watch, the puppies throw themselves up toward the babysitter's face, all four of them pulling energetically with their sharp little teeth on the jowls of the adult wolf. When they have a free moment, they jump back and forth, up and down, race around the newly arrived wolf, and yip. After a few minutes of this, the puppies realize that the babysitter wolf has no food for them, and they calm down.

After another five minutes with the puppies, the babysitter wolf (does it remember that it has a job to do?) walks back toward the den, crossing the tall willows, picking its way across the talus slope, and crossing the short willows. When it arrives next to Pearl, it turns to look behind itself. If it were a human, I would say it was gesturing, "See, here are the puppies I was supposed to bring." But the pups are not there.

When the wolf pups were old enough to stay alone, Pearl joined the other adults in the hunt. Before she left the pups for the first time, she taught them when to follow her and when they should stay near the den: if she walked away slowly - at the speed short puppy-legs could keep up with - the pups were to accompany her; but when she walked away at an adult pace, they were to stay where they were until her return.

Being well trained, the puppies know not to follow an adult walking at a normal adult pace, so they didn't follow the babysitter wolf. They are still waiting back at the rendezvous site. The babysitter wolf lies down near Pearl.

Do the two wolves communicate again? It seems that Pearl indicates something because soon the babysitter wolf rises and walks back toward the pups, across the low willows, the talus slope, and the tall willows. When it enters the clearing where the puppies wait, they mob it again, wagging all the way up to their noses, and pulling energetically on the adult's jowls. But there is still no food for them, and soon the babysitter wolf moves off toward the den again.

This time the babysitter takes only a few steps before it stops and looks back toward the puppies. The puppies scamper up to the adult, and the babysitter wolf walks off again. Over and over, the babysitter wolf takes a few steps and then waits

for the puppies to join it. They travel in this halting manner most of the way through the tall willows. But then the babysitter wolf no longer stops to allow the puppies to catch up (did it think they would follow automatically now?). Whatever the reason, the babysitter wolf walks through the rest of the tall willows, across the talus slope, and across the low willows. When it reaches Pearl this second time, it looks behind itself (again it looks to me like it's indicating "now here are your puppies"), but there are still no puppies. The babysitter wolf lies down near Pearl.

Do the two wolves communicate again? Soon the babysitter wolf rises and walks back north. This time, when the pups see it coming, they aren't as energetic, wagging only as far forward as their hips, and jumping less forcefully around the mouth of the adult wolf. Again the babysitter wolf stays for a few minutes with the puppies, and then moves off south toward the den. But this time it tries a new technique (did Pearl somehow remind it about walking slowly, or does it realize on its own?). As the babysitter moves away from the puppies, it moves with exaggerated slowness, s-l-o-w-l-y lifting one foot, then s-l-o-w-l-y putting it down, before s-l-o-w-l-y lifting the next foot. It travels at this snail's pace across the willow clearing. The puppies watch this spectacle with what from a human I'd call "questioning glances," but they do follow the adult wolf all the way through the tall willows.

So far, so good. But when the puppies get to the talus slope, they refuse to follow the babysitter wolf out onto the sharp and unstable rocks. The babysitter wolf notices they're no longer close behind it. Itself part-way across the talus slope, it turns to face the puppies, lowers its front shoulders, raises its hindquarters, wags its tail, and jumps up and down with its front paws extended, yipping. It looks to me like the babysitter wolf is indicating "Come on. Follow me. You can do it."

But try as it may, the babysitter wolf is unable to entice any of the puppies out onto the talus slope. Finally it walks back to the puppies at the edge of the rocks.

Already the babysitter wolf has learned a great deal about how to work with young wolves. It has discovered under what circumstances they will stay when you leave, and how to have them follow when you want them to travel with you. At this new impasse the babysitter wolf pauses. It ap-

pears to me like the wolf is thinking of new actions to try, in its attempt to get the puppies home.

Now the babysitter tries pushing. It stands behind a puppy, lowers its head, and gently pushes the puppy from the rear end, nudging it forward onto the rocks. But the puppy stumbles over the rough surface, yips, and runs back off behind the other wolves. Pushing doesn't work.

The babysitter wolf pauses. Is it thinking of another method?

Next the babysitter wolf tries carrying. It turns away from the talus, picks up a puppy by the scruff of the neck, and turns back toward the rocks to carry the puppy across. When it swings the puppy across the rocks, however, the puppy's hind end hits hard against the sharp stones. The puppy yips. The babysitter wolf opens its mouth and drops the puppy, and the puppy runs off the rocks behind the other wolves. Carrying doesn't work.

It looks like the babysitter wolf has run out of ideas. It walks back to the clearing in the tall willows, followed by the puppies. It hasn't figured out how to move the young wolves over the talus slope yet, but on its walk back to the willows, it demonstrates that it has learned the proper pace to use when walking with baby wolves. The five animals lie down around the clearing, and after recording all this in my notebook, I wait to see what the babysitter wolf will do next.

I don't have to wait more than a few minutes before the babysitter wolf rises. It indicates by its slow walk (now just the right speed for young wolves) that the puppies should follow. They all walk through the tall willows, and again come to a halt at the edge of the talus slope.

The babysitter wolf walks a few steps out onto the rocks, while the puppies huddle together on the soil nearby. As it did before, the babysitter turns to face the puppies, lowers its front shoulders, raises its hindquarters, wags its tail, and jumps up and down with its front paws extended, yipping. It jumps and yips over and over again, progressively adding more bounce to the jumps and more volume

to the yips. It jumps and yips for a minute and more.

Finally, one pup steps out onto the rocks of the talus slope. The adult wolf becomes even more energetic and noisy, and it backs slowly away from the puppies while still jumping and yipping. The puppy takes another tentative step, doesn't have any major problems, and continues very slowly picking its way across the sharp, unbalanced stones toward the babysitter wolf. Now a second puppy moves out onto the talus slope. It misses its footing, stumbling between two rocks, but it picks itself up and slowly continues forward. The babysitter wolf moves backward toward the den, still with great energy. A third puppy follows the other two out onto the rocks. By now there is a string of wolves across the talus slope - the babysitter moving backwards with jumps and yips, and three tiny pups spread out and slowly picking their way across the steep slope.

When the babysitter wolf arrives at the end of the talus slope, it continues moving backwards, and leads the pups easily across the low willows. As soon as the young wolves see their mother lying on the gravel, they race past the babysitter wolf, lie down with their mother, and nurse. The babysitter wolf follows behind, then lies down close to Pearl and the feeding pups.

I am bouncing up and down with excitement. The babysitter wolf tried repeatedly, learned new skills as it progressed, and finally succeeded in getting three of the pups back to their mother.

But one puppy never found the courage to follow the others across the talus slope. It has returned by itself to the tall willows, where it lies very quietly in an unobtrusive shadow. This puppy has never been alone before. It's always been at least with its brothers and sisters. I write in my notebook that it looks scared and lonely.

Can wolves count? Do Pearl and the babysitter wolf know that there's a pup missing? Will Pearl go get the final pup, now that the babysitter wolf has brought most of her puppies to her?

Somehow, the adult wolves are communicating again. The babysitter wolf appears to know that it should go and bring back the final pup, because the babysitter wolf rises, crosses the low willows, the talus slope, and the tall willows, and finds the missing pup in the willow clearing.

When the babysitter wolf arrives, the single puppy races over to it, wagging from tail to nose, and jumps all over the babysitter wolf. After a few minutes with the pup, the babysitter wolf walks slowly back to the talus slope, followed by the puppy. The babysitter wolf walks a few steps out onto the rocks, while the puppy waits on the soil nearby. As it did before, the babysitter turns to face the puppy, lowers its front shoulders, raises its hindquarters, wags its tail, and jumps up and down with its front paws extended, yipping. It jumps and yips over and over again, progressively adding more bounce to the jumps, and more volume to the yips. It jumps and yips for a minute and more. But never does the puppy try walking on the talus rocks.

Head drooping, the babysitter wolf gives up and walks back to the willows with the puppy. Both wolves lie down, a little ways apart. They remain lying for fifteen minutes. This is by far the longest the babysitter wolf has stayed at the willows during the attempt to get the puppies home. Has the wolf given up? Is it thinking of additional things to try, to get the puppy back to Pearl? Is it hoping Pearl will come and get her puppy herself?

What would you do, if you were the babysitter wolf?

Oh look, the babysitter wolf is up, slowly walking through the willows and sniffing the ground. The adult seems to be walking around aimlessly. The puppy, still lying down, watches it. Scattered among the willows are a few pieces of bone and horn that wolves brought to the rendezvous site over the past week. The babysitter wolf picks up one end of a caribou leg bone in its teeth. The wolf shakes the bone, turns its body left and right, and growls softly. It looks to me like a dog playing tug-a-war with a bone.

It looks like that to the puppy, too, who bounds over, grabs the other end of the bone, and tries to pull and shake it away from the adult wolf. The two wolves play this way for a number of minutes, growling and shaking the bone. The adult, being larger, moves backward pulling the puppy left, right, uphill and downhill around the clearing and through the willows.

It slowly becomes clear to me, even though the wolves are moving in all four directions, and appear to be moving randomly, that the babysitter wolf is ever so slowly moving more toward the south (toward the talus slope) than in any other direction.

Sometimes while they are playing, the puppy lets go of the bone, bounces backward and then leaps forward to grab the bone again. When the two wolves are half way to the talus slope, the babysitter wolf changes the game. Now, it moves mostly just south. But more significantly, when the puppy leaps up for the bone, the babysitter wolf lifts its head at the last minute, moving the bone just out of reach of the puppy. The younger wolf stares up at the bone and leaps again. Again, the babysitter wolf moves the bone up and away at the very last second. The puppy is unable to get the bone. It knows it had it earlier. Surely it can get it again?

All the while, the babysitter wolf is very slowly backing toward the talus. The puppy leaps again and again, with eyes only on the bone. The babysitter wolf shakes the bone close in front of the puppy's nose, growling softly, but each time the puppy leaps, the babysitter moves the bone just high enough so the puppy can't quite reach it.

The puppy looks and acts completely mesmerized by the bone. It doesn't notice when the babysitter wolf very slowly moves out onto the talus slope. It's focus is completely upward, toward the bone it can't quite catch. In this way, the babysitter leads the puppy across the rough stones, then through the low willows, the puppy always watching and leaping toward the bone. When the puppy is close enough to notice Pearl, it abandons the bone, races over to lie next to its mother, and begins energetically nursing. The babysitter wolf wags its tail and lies down nearby.

I am stunned. Pearl had confidence that the babysitter wolf would succeed. During the two hours it took to bring her puppies home, she never intervened in any way. And I was overwhelmed by the babysitter wolf. It never gave up. It stayed focused on the task, and overcame one challenge after another. It even used a tool of sorts to distract the last puppy and lead it safely home. This glimpse into the behavior of a family of wolves taught me a great deal about how wolves interact and solve problems. It even taught me many lessons to improve my own mothering and childcare skills.

# How to Talk So Your Dog Will Listen

## AVMA Press Release

New Orleans.... Does your dog seek refuge long before the first rumble of thunder? Are jingling keys enough to send your puppy over the edge? Is your cocker spaniel using your favorite aunt as a spring board?

Now, for the important question: Are you effectively communicating with your four-legged friend? Much like children who need direction from their parents, dogs require training and understanding from their owners. They don't innately know right from wrong or what is expected of them. There's no quick fix for undesired or just plain bad behavior, say veterinary and animal behaviorists, but there are many success stories.

"Most dog-person relationships are re-affirmed by exchanging communicative signals," John Wright, PhD, said at the 136th annual convention of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) in New Orleans, July 10-14.

"Dogs, as well as people, need to learn which canine signals and behaviors are associated with dominant and subordinate roles," he said. Dr. Wright, a certified applied animal behaviorist and psychology professor at Mercer University in Macon, Ga, presented "Canine Communicative Behavior and the Development of Role- Relationships." He has also recently authored a book, *The Dog Who Would Be King: Tales and Surprising Lessons from a Pet Psychologist*.

To have a successful relationship with their pets, owners have to put themselves in their dog's paws. "Interpretation of a dog's emotional state, such as anger, fear, or excitement, is based on recognition of visual signals, or what a dog does with his ears, tail, eyes, and other parts of his body," Dr. Wright says. An owner's awareness of these signs helps determine what the dog will do next.

"In many cases, a dog's behavior can be managed through a reward-and-punishment system," said Gary Landsberg, DVM, a small animal practitioner in Ontario, Canada, and one of 20

board-certified veterinary behaviorists in North America. "Positive reinforcement can enhance a pet's trainability. If traditional punishment is too strong, a pet may fear the owner or even become aggressive. If it is too weak, the problem behavior may actually be reinforced."

Punishing a pet physically is never advocated because of the potential for injury to a pet or owner and, as Dr. Landsberg says, it could also lead to fear of the owner. Conventional correction methods involve verbal commands, leash training, or audible deterrents, such as an air horn or shake can. Today, owners have a myriad of creative products available for behavior control, from ultrasonic trainers to remote-control motion detectors and citronella spray collars to an artificial arm and hand that is used to assess a dog's response to physical handling.

A few behaviors are treatable only to a certain extent, such as in the case of territorial barking, a strong, in-bred trait that is difficult to deter and often inadvertently encouraged by owners who want a watch dog.

"There are many unrealistic expectations out there on the part of the owner," said Sharon Crowell-Davis, DVM, PhD, a board-certified veterinary behaviorist at the University of Georgia Veterinary Teaching Hospital. "Many people want a protective dog that can read fine nuances.

What they've got is a dog that goes berserk, one that barks at everyone who goes by and tries to bite the daughter's boyfriend or the bridge club member."

Behavior modification, Dr. Crowell-Davis says, can result in an obedient, controllable dog that is likely to react to a truly dangerous situation.

"All dogs can be trained, so long as they have normal functions," said Dr. Crowell-Davis. But who hasn't heard the adage, "you can't teach an old dog new tricks"? Age, in and of itself, isn't a factor in dog training, she says, citing the case of Prince, a 12-year-old dog that learned to understand hand signals as he was going deaf.

"The ability to learn is tremendous, for both animals and people," Dr. Cro-

well-Davis said. "Would you tell a 40- to 50-year-old person that there's no point in learning?"

At times, dogs have to "unlearn" their behaviors. To treat thunder phobia, Dr. Crowell-Davis commonly recommends a desensitization and counter-conditioning approach using a realistic tape recording of a thunderstorm. The owner plays with the dog or gives it treats while the recording is played at a very low level. If the dog shows any fear or anxiety, the owner's activities stop immediately. This continues for many sessions, until the dog eventually learns to remain calm while the thunderstorm tape is played loudly.

"Animal behaviorists treat the fear," Dr. Crowell-Davis said. "If we're able to stop a dog from being afraid, then we can prevent the behaviors that are a consequence of being afraid."

Another avenue in behavior modification is operant conditioning, wherein a dog is affected by the immediate consequences of his behavior. A dog that likes to jump on visitors should be told to "sit" and then be petted or given a treat. The act of jumping, according to Dr. Wright, is a sign that a dog wants to interact socially. The dog knows that jumping is an attention getter that will elicit some form of contact, even if the result is just being pushed down.

What if a dog can't bear to be separated from his owner and has an anxiety attack at the sound of jingling keys? Simple, says Dr. Crowell-Davis. The owner has to repeatedly pick up the keys and jangle them while staying at home, but pick up the keys quietly when he plans to leave.

"How a pet responds to each method or product," Dr. Landsberg said, "depends on its character makeup, previous experiences, sensitivity to the stimulus, and motivation to perform the behavior. Timing and consistency are essential in behavior management, no matter what techniques are used."

The AVMA is a professional organization of more than 62,000 veterinarians. More than 300 seminars were presented during the 136th annual convention, which is one of the largest gatherings of veterinarians in North America.

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