



A LETTER from the PRESIDENT

Leonard Schollen

Finally, Spring is near which will bring with it many days of fun, frolic and all the dangers associated with it. When walking your hounds be ever vigilant for all those hibernators that haven't been around for a while. Racoons, bear, rabbits all are curious to your hound and can lead to trouble very quickly.



Our first PetSmart meet and greet was held last weekend, March 12th, at Port Coquitlam. It was a huge success with 9 hounds and 1 Iggy in attendance and many potential adopters asking for applications. Cabbie was the main attraction after she figured out how the automatic door opener worked, when customers approached the building she would run up and open the door for them. We look forward to working with the kind folks at PetSmart all across the Province. If there is a store in your area, please contact us to find out how to set up a meet and greet, it takes only a couple of hours once a month and well worth the effort for the hounds' sake.



Our next dog haul is set for June 2nd and we are anticipating bringing up 24-30 hounds providing all works out. We have arranged for half that number to stay in an experienced kennel in Washington State and imported on an as needed basis.

Yours truly,

Len Schollen
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Rainbow Bridge		Dogs We Have Said Goodbye To	
	Chemar Maverick (Maverick)	Maverick was the first St. John's Ambulance approved therapy dog on Vancouver Island.	
		Well done, Maverick. You will be missed.	
Happy Tails		Welcome to Our New Dogs	
	Duron June Bug (Colt)	Fuzzy's Cy Young (Hamilton)	
	RTR Rocket Man (Rocket)	Rollin Fire (Aya)	
	G's Jude (Stella)	Pat C Pownzer (Pixel)	
	Windy Star (Star)	Houston Starlet (Charlotte)	
	Braska Damien (Ollie)		

CANINE CALLING CARDS

Maureen Nelms

When you're walking your dog, do you spend more time walking or more time waiting while your dog reads the "daily news" and then leaves his own calling card?

Are your walks more of a stroll from tree to tree? Smart strides out, slow, stop at stump, sniff, sniff, snort, sidestep, squirt, and stroll on? Swing over, snuffle, snuffle, squat, stride on? I could write a country line dance here. Step forward, stop. Step side, stop, step behind, step side, stop. Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle, stop, slide step, slide step, stop. See what I mean?

Canine behaviourists tell us that a dog's sniffing and marking behaviour is really communication between dogs. The sniffing dog "reads" the messages left by other dogs that have passed by and then "marks" the area with urine, feces or scratches on the ground to let any dogs coming by later know that they were there. Apparently they can tell the health, sex, and status of other dogs just by the signs they leave behind.

I wonder though, do the dogs tell the truth? When my greyhound, Boone, a thunder phobic wimp, lifts his leg high on a tree, is he saying, "I'm a wuss" or does he lie? Is his message to the other dogs fact or a work of fiction? Boone has graduated from the canine journalism school. Unfortunately, he was his own teacher and you know what they say about that.

It took Boone two years to learn to lift his leg. Does he tell the other dogs that? He is very particular about how he leaves messages with his feet. He scratches with one front foot, then the other, then both back feet, then all four feet together, actually propelling himself off the ground in his enthusiasm. Sometimes he goes through the entire macho dance two or three times for emphasis. He does not look like a dog that is leaving a message saying, "I'm big but gentle and easily frightened." He looks like he's saying, "I'm huge, and ferocious, and I'm alpha and you better watch out for me."



Do dogs have a sense of honesty? Can they tell the difference between truth and fiction just using their incredible sense of smell? And how exactly can the animal behaviourists determine what dogs can tell from sniffing?

I wish I knew what kind of messages Boone was leaving but I don't. About the only thing I do know, is that I spend way too much time holding the end of a leash.

Note: Boone was owned by Maureen Nelms and went to the bridge in 2000.

A GARDEN TO DIE FOR

Mariann Martens



ANGELS TRUMPET

Safety in the Greyt Outdoors

My love for the outdoors began while growing up on a farm in southern Manitoba. I have landscaped, pruned, gardened, planted, harvested, canned, pickled and preserved for most of my life. While I don't hold any formal degrees in horticulture I love plants, flowers, shrubs and trees. I find yard work therapeutic and a great way to burn calories, develop muscle tone and flexibility, and decompress mentally.



SITE FOREMAN - KAIRO

In the winter of 2014 Joe and I decided to re-landscape our entire yard. Our lot size here in Lethbridge, AB is 65' x 125'. If you add a 1200 sq ft bungalow and a large garage it may not seem like a lot of yard area left, but we had to deconstruct and reconstruct most of the original yard. This was the same spring we adopted Kairo, our first greyhound. We knew right away that we would foster more and eventually adopt another, so as part of my landscaping plan I wanted to create a dog-friendly back yard, while still establishing the "forest" look I love so much and adding a small edible garden area. Between what I already knew and the information I found online I soon realized that we inherited many toxic plants with the purchase of our present home. We eliminated them all (and watch for sprouts as they can be difficult to kill) and continue to replace them with "safe" plants. Keep in mind that any and all plants can be bothersome for our pets if they are consumed in large amounts.

Our back yard is a playground for all the hounds that come to visit and live. We like to relax and let them be themselves. We have a large amount of plants but not a large variety, as the number of toxic plants far outweighs the safe ones. Another option is to keep your "not so safe plants" behind a small fence or chicken wire where they are out of reach. This is ok for mildly toxic plants but I would keep the deadly nightshade and angel's trumpet far far away. Our front yard is fair game and has a few nasties but the dogs are never in the front.

Here is a small list of what we feel is safe for our pets and what we have in our back yard:

- Evergreens and spruce
- Various ninebark and dogwood shrubs
- Weeping birch and green ash trees
- Roses, lilacs, coral bells, phlox, goat's beard, bee balm, bell flowers, coneflowers, speedwell, catmint and lavender.

Few people realize how many plants are poisonous and, in some cases, deadly. Informing ourselves about the toxic potential of the plants in our yards and homes is the best way to ensure our beloved pets (and small children) are safe. While most of us do not have hundreds of plant species in our yards, it is surprising how many toxic and deadly plants are commonly found in gardens and landscapes in many Canadian provinces. There are several great websites to help identify plants and provide information on the poisons they contain, toxicity levels and which of your pets' organs are most commonly affected. You will find a list of the sites I use at the end of this article.

Here a few of the common toxic plants a lot of us have in our yards (*italics means highly toxic/deadly*)

- *Azalea/Rhododendron*
- *Angel's Trumpet*
- Baby's Breath
- *Belladonna (all varieties of Deadly Nightshade)*
- Bergenia
- Bleeding Heart
- Burning Bush (all varieties)
- *Castor Bean*
- Clematis
- Columbine
- Cotoneaster (common hedge shrub)
- Cyclamen
- Daffodil (bulb)
- *Delphinium (Larkspur)*
- *Foxglove*
- *Hydrangea*
- *Ivy (all varieties)*
- Juniper (some varieties)
- *Lilies, tulips and iris (bulbs)*
- *Lobelia (Cardinal Flower)*
- *Lupin*
- *Monkshood*
- *Morning Glory*
- *Oleander*
- *Periwinkle/Vinca*
- Sedum/Stonecrop
- Solomon's Seal
- Wisteria
- *Yew (all varieties)*



SALMON'S SEAL



FOXGLOVE



MONKSHOOD

Garden plants:

- *Onion*
- *Garlic*
- *Grapes*
- *Mushrooms*
- *Rhubarb (leaves)*

Fruit bearing trees and shrubs that are toxic to dogs: seeds and stones contain cyanide

- *Apple/crab apple (seeds only)*
- *Peach/pear/nectarine/plum/apricot (stone only)*
- *Chokecherry/Cherry*
- *Currants*



Grass: "Why does Fido eat grass" is the million dollar question. There are tons of articles written on the subject with no real answer. We know that dogs do not have the means to digest grass as they lack the enzymes to break down the grass fibers. Therefore there is little nutritional value in it for them. One veterinarian website I read said many owners noted their dogs exhibit excessive swallowing behaviour, appear to pace and be uncomfortable. They rush outside to chomp on some grass and then throw it up. The dogs that have been examined with an endoscope will have acid reflux or stomach redness and inflammation. In other cases some develop a compulsive disorder and become fixated on chewing grass. Still others seem to enjoy the occasional grassy snack without any consequences.

Mulch: Quick but important note on mulch.....watch for the source. Many mulches, especially the cheaper varieties, are made of old pallets and treated lumber. Not only do these products emit chemicals, if they are ingested by pets they can become quite sick. The cocoa-based mulches are as toxic as regular cocoa. The black colored mulch is painted. The best and safest mulch is the pure cedar mulch. Just watch that your pets don't snack on it.

SPECIAL MENTION: NIGHTSHADES – EDIBLE AND OTHERWISE

I have devoted a small section to nightshades as these plants are common everywhere, even on the sunny decks of apartments and condos. The Deadly Nightshade has a long, colorful history of use as a poison, but what many people don't realize is that the nightshade family includes common foods such as:

- Bell Peppers/Chili Peppers
- Deadly Nightshade (Belladonna)
- Eggplant
- Goji berries
- Jerusalem Cherry
- White (but not Sweet) Potato

- Tobacco
- Tomato



TOMATO

As members of the family *Solanaceae*, these unassuming plants contain nicotine and solanine, a toxic alkaloidal glycoside. Due to the high concentration of these substances in the leaves, stems and stalks, as well as the unripe green fruit (do you remember being told not to eat potatoes that have become greenish?), ingestion of these plants by pets and children can have serious consequences.

Historically, eggplant was grown as an ornamental plant. Mediterranean people previously believed eggplant would cause insanity if eaten daily for a month, and they coined the fruit the "mad apple". During an Irish famine in the 1700's high potato consumption was believed to be the cause of wide spread congestive heart failure within the population due to "potato poisoning". In the early 18th century, the tomato was used ornamentally only, termed the "love apple". It was never eaten as it was widely believed to be poisonous. Whether these are tales or truths is for each to decide.....today it has been scientifically proven that nightshades contain additive properties and are toxic in various doses, depending on who is consuming and how much. Modern research has also shown that regular consumption of nightshades contributes to joint pain, inflammation and arthritis.

The ingestion of a poisonous plant substance by your beloved greyhound (or other canines, felines, small children etc) may cause one or more of the following:

- liver and kidney damage
- high or low blood pressure
- vomiting and/or diarrhea
- disorders of the immune system
- coma, convulsions, lack of coordination, muscle twitching
- high or low blood sugar levels

- shock and heart failure
- abnormal blood clotting
- death



YEW

The lists above of both toxic and non-toxic plants are certainly not comprehensive and the information is meant to be taken in context. There are many ways to mitigate risks for your pets. This article is not suggesting everyone rip up their entire yard...it is meant to make us check what we have out there, know what our pets are doing when they are outside, and teach us how to select plants, shrubs and trees when visiting garden centres. Like anything else, common sense prevails and when in doubt check a questionable plant online or take a piece of the plant to your local garden centre for identification.



Please feel free to check out these websites. They have provided me a wealth of information:

- www.ucanr.edu/site (University of California toxic plants)
- www.aspc.org
- www.cdndogs.ca
- www.realgardeners.co.uk
- www.iheartdogs.com
- www.paleoleap.com (nightshade information)

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The big rig rolled off the ferry, clanking as it passed over the metal gangplank. The greyhound sleeping on the front seat sat up yawning and gazed out the window. Another highway stretched ahead. After turning several times, the dog sank down again, resting his head on the driver's leg.

"Not far now ol' boy," the driver said to him. "A couple more hours an' we'll stop for the night."

The dog drifted back to sleep, waking as the truck hissed to a stop on a deserted road overshadowed by huge fir trees.

"Okay buddy, out you come. Go do your business and I'll get us some supper."

The driver climbed wearily down the side of his tractor-trailer, holding the door so the greyhound could jump clear. The graceful hound leapt out, the landing jarring through his body, and trotted off into the woods through trees bigger than he'd ever seen. One ear cocked for his master's voice, he traveled along a narrow trail. What wonderful smells there were here -- some type of animal he couldn't identify, plus the familiar odor of rabbit. He wove between trees, examined bushes, investigated the underbrush, and followed scent trails through the vegetation. Eventually his empty tummy drove him back the way he'd come. His master hadn't called but the greyhound had been promised supper.

Back at the truck, the dog couldn't see his master. He also couldn't smell any supper. The door to the cab was open but there were no sounds coming from the truck. It was far too high for him to jump into without help so he lay down and waited. And waited. Still no master. Where was he? Where was supper? The greyhound began to whine. Usually this brought a swift reprimand from his person. Today silence. So the greyhound did something he rarely did -- he barked. Still nothing. He tried scrambling up the side of the truck to get into the cab but all he got was a scrape down his chest and a painful bruise on his backside when he landed in the gravel. He didn't know what to do. So he lay back down and he waited. Eventually he slept, dreaming of the past.

Running, always running. Running free on the prairie with his siblings. Feeling the joy as his muscles bunched, propelling him faster and faster, the air streaming past his face. The magic of being chased by his brothers and not being caught. The incredible wonder of his first rabbit hunt when he and the others had worked together, spreading out across the plain, legs flashing furiously as they coursed the hare. They hadn't managed a kill that time but they were all happy, tongues lolling as they smiled, panting heavily, after the rabbit had disappeared into the brush. Good times, warm sun and running. The greyhound's muscles twitched as it lay in the dirt beside the big truck. Tiny chirps burred in its throat and it slept on.

Running, always running. A different kind of running now that he was almost grown. Now he ran in races on a track with other dogs. Some were his brothers and sisters; some were his friends, and others he didn't know. The track was a rough oval of hard packed earth with tufts of grass sprouting here and there. He and his sibs rode in their owner's old truck, driving over dusty country roads every Saturday. He always knew when he was going to race rather than run free because he wore his racing muzzle when he was in the truck. At the track which was tucked away on one side of a farmer's canola fields, there were rough wooden bleachers filled with people who would look the dogs over while making notes on scraps of paper. Some people would run their hands over his body; some would just look at him. Occasionally he would get lucky and someone would softly stroke his head, murmuring kind words. Then he and the others would be lead away to wait for their turn to run. Before his race, someone would put a little colored jacket on him and the children would walk all the dogs back and forth in front of the bleachers. The children handed his leash to a man who shoved him into a tiny enclosure made of wood with wire in the front. He could hear the scrabbling of the other dogs' nails as the man pushed them into compartments on either side of him. Suddenly there would be silence, then a resounding crack as the door in front of him flew up. Ahead, in the center of the track, suspended from an arm off the flat-topped inside fence, was The Lure. With a lunge he would bound after it, bumping shoulders with the other dogs. The lure was different each time he raced. Sometimes it was old rags fluttering backwards as it moved away from him. Sometimes it was an empty plastic bottle bouncing crazily. Sometimes it was an animal skin. Those were the times he liked best. When the tantalizing odor of the dead animal gave his legs a little extra stretch, his body a little extra stamina. On those days he really tried hard, all his energy focused on catching that smell. He didn't hear the roar of the crowd or the grinding and squealing of the cables that pulled the lure. He didn't see the sagging barbwire strands that made up the outside fence or notice the people jumping up and down. He only saw the dangling animal skin and gave everything he had in an attempt to possess it.

With a start, the greyhound woke. The sun was rising, sending sparkling shafts through the trees. Shivering in the chill dawn air, the hound rose and looked around him. Still no sign of his master. Everything was as it had been when he had fallen asleep the previous evening. The dog stretched his stiff muscles and gave himself a shake. Lifting his nose in the air he scented the breeze, ears pricked listening intently. He was hungry and thirsty. He scanned the area watching for any movement however tiny. All he saw were birds flitting through the woods. Nothing moved down the road so he made his choice and set off into the forest. All day he jogged through rough trails between the trees, occasionally crossing meadows filled with grasses and wildflowers. He drank from murky puddles, which satisfied his thirst, but not his hunger. As the sun dropped lower in the sky the greyhound stopped to rest. He lay in the shadow of a large tree, tongue lolling. He scanned for movement but nothing caught his eye. Slowly his breathing returned to normal and he began thinking of his tummy again. A tiny rustle attracted his attention and he focused on a mound of dried leaves near his paw. A small vole appeared and instantly the greyhound had it in his mouth. On its own it was not enough to assuage his hunger so he began searching for more. For the next hour he hunted with his nose, uncovering another half dozen voles and two field mice. With his tummy reasonably full, he began looking for a place to hole up for the night. In the hollow of a giant oak he found exactly what he wanted, dried leaves and needles combining to make him a soft nest. After digging the bedding around until it suited him, he curled in a tight ball and slept.

Running, always running. Once he was fully mature, he experienced a new type of running. The farmer would take two greyhounds and two shag dogs (greyhound/borzoi crosses) out to the fields beyond the chicken pens, where the sheep and the cattle grazed. The farmer rode his horse, using binoculars to search the plains while one of his sons, travelling on foot, lead the dogs. Once they spotted a coyote the son released the dogs and the chase was on. The lithe hounds would leap after the bolting coyote. One greyhound would be the catch dog, running along immediately behind the fleeing coyote and attempting to catch it by the throat. Working together the other hounds would race up on either side of the coyote hedging it so it was unable to turn, continually cutting off its escape until the frightened predator was grabbed or tripped by the catch dog. Then the worry dogs would charge in to fight the coyote in pairs, trading positions frequently, one dog going for the throat, the other for the chest. If the hounds hadn't finished off the coyote by the time the farmer arrived, they had at least kept the wild canid pinned down so the farmer could destroy it. Occasionally the dogs received injuries from the fighting coyote, sustaining bites on their faces and shoulders. The young greyhound learned quickly, his ancient hunting instincts guiding him in the chase although coyotes were not his native prey. The thrill of the run consumed him and hunting became his favorite sport.

The hounds often carried the carcass back to the farm. The first time the young hound got the prize to carry, he was entranced. He shook it, tossed it in the air, and pounced on it. The farmer was always pleased when the hounds rid the farm of annoying coyotes and he gave them fresh bones every night after a hunt.

Tucked in the nook beneath the oak the greyhound gave a huge sigh, snuggled his nose deeper under his thigh and fell more soundly asleep.

**Sorry, I have to go change my pajamas.
I will tell you the rest of this tail next issue.**

Looking forward to seeing you then.



Volunteers are always needed.

Why not join in the fun and lend a hand?

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

QUESTION: What Goes Here ?	ANSWER: Anything You Want To Contribute	Articles or Photos of Your Hound (We need models!)	Please Send To savethehounds @Gmail.com
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Many THANKS ... to our wonderful CONTRIBUTORS:

Mariann Martens, Judy Miller, Maureen Nelms, Leonard Schollen