

RETRIEVER

magazine

RCI online newsletter – year 3 – issue 6



**What is a Nova Scotia
Duck Tolling Retriever?**

**There is plenty of positive
momentum in the FCI**

**Retrievers
and pet therapy**



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L'editoriale



There are breeders and Breeders.

In the first category we can include all of the breeders that are interested in producing and selling animals, of whatever species and breed, for exclusively economic reasons; these persons are often helped by – in the case of dogs – importers of animals from countries where they are sold at more convenient prices. We can say that yes, they are breeders, but they breed merely for commercial gain, with numbers and not quality in mind.

Breeders with a capital "B" offer much more: they undertake a much more complex task, are in need of detailed knowledge and must take on multiple responsibilities not only in relation to animals, but also in relation to their clients.

In the case of today's breeding kennel, in fact, there is also an added social-psychological component: often the dog becomes a kind of "health assistant" for particularly fragile members of our society, persons that are alone, disabled or elderly.

The Breeder must be prepared to offer his clients not only dogs that are bred in accordance with the canons of the Breeder's Ethical Code, but also to offer them valid assistance, especially if they are first time dog owners. He must help defend these people from the aggressiveness of a myriad of persons that gravitate around the dog world, ready to exploit the vulnerability of those who have just discovered the new and emotional experience of dog ownership.

For instance, the Breeder must help defend his clients against professionals without scruple that propose to perform on their puppies the "100th day" operation to guarantee that the pup will be exempt from hip dysplasia (which is, by the way, an absolute fraud from the point of view of genetic selection), just to signal one of the latest trends in Italy.

The goal of parent breed clubs is indeed to reunite the experiences of Breeders and of dog owners, distilling, coordinating and making them accessible to all those who are interested in Dogs: official events should provide the occasion to meet and positively exchange new knowledge and technical information, and not only the occasion to win a new certificate as an outlet of personal vanity by persons pathologically affected by "delusions of grandeur", those who know the absolutely best breeding methods and are touchy, impervious and hostile to any kind of dialogue, comparison or suggestion.

Sharing and exchanging ideas for the enrichment of all should be one of the principal goals of the association that brings together retriever lovers, thanks to the active collaboration of all members.

Stefania Sammaruca Roche, RCI President



WHAT IS A NOVA SCOTIA DUCK TOLLING RETRIEVER?

by Douglas W. Coldwell and James Jeffrey

The Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever, usually called the Toller, began its development in the Little River district of Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia.

The most commonly quoted account of the breed's origination is that in the year 1860 a Mr. James Allen, also of Yarmouth, obtained from the captain of a schooner, a female, liver-coloured, English Flat-Coated retriever to which Allen mated a short-coated Labrador-like retriever. Bitches from the resulting litter were bred to a brown Cocker Spaniel.

Very shortly afterward, a crossing with an Irish Setter introduced the fox red colour of the present day Toller. It is also possible that breedings with the Collie or Shetland sheepdog were introduced to produce the heavily feathered tail and the herding instincts which the Toller now possesses. Furthermore, the possibility of breeding with the Brittany Spaniel and the Golden Retriever at some time cannot be ruled out. The idea was to develop a dog that resembled the Red Fox; small, playful, and intelligent with the retrieving ability of the large retriever breeds and the hunting instincts inherent in the Sporting Dog Group.



Originally, the Toller was called the Little River Duck Dog, due to its place of origin, but through the efforts of Cyril Colwell of Halifax, the breed was officially registered with the Canadian Kennel Club in 1945 as the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever. The breed has

gained more recognition in recent years, and there are now breeders located across Canada, the United States, and several other countries around the world.

In 1995, the 50th Anniversary of the recognition of the breed by the Canadian Kennel Club, The Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever was officially recognized as Nova Scotia's Provincial dog by the Nova Scotia legislature. If the present trend continues, the Toller may well become one of the most popular dogs in Canadian history.

The Toller was not at any stage of its development influenced by breedings in any other country. The Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever is a "Truly Canadian Dog". It was developed in Canada, by Canadians, and for Canadian hunting conditions. As a breed, the Toller is nearly as old as the other popular retriever breeds, such as the Labrador, Chesapeake, and Golden. The Golden, for example, began its development only two years before the Toller. The Labrador began its development only a little earlier in the 1800s. The Toller was not as well known in the past, probably because of restrictive distribution practices of the original, and most of the subsequent breeders, who did not usually allow females to leave their kennels. The main breeders were avid duck hunters who did not want competition in the lakes or on the marshes.



Characteristics

The Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever is an exceptionally intelligent dog and very easy to train. Both the sire and dam of one of our breeding females are Obedience Trial Champions. Red, one of our champion stud dogs, the top Toller in Canada for 1970, retrieved his first duck at twelve weeks of age. The duck was a big Black, almost as large as the dog himself, but he managed to drag it across a field vigorously wagging his tail.

We use the Toller as a flushing type dog for woodcock, pheasant, and partridge, as well as a Toller and retriever

for duck hunting. We do not believe that the Toller has any rival as an all-purpose hunting dog, particularly under Canadian hunting conditions. The Toller will go after a downed duck under conditions of ice and heavy seas, with courage and determination that is not less than astonishing.



A great advantage in using a Toller as a hunting dog, particularly a retriever, is its compact size. The Toller is the smallest of all retrievers. All the other retrievers weigh more than 65 pounds, and average over 22 inches at the shoulder. Tollers average about 50 pounds (for males) and stand about 20 inches tall at the shoulder. They are more agile, stronger pound for pound, and have more determination and courage than any breed we know. Tollers are ideal apartment size hunting dogs, easily fitting into a gunning hole or duck blind. They can even be used to retrieve from a canoe without tipping it. They are not likely to get in the way or knock things over (including children) in the smallest apartment, yet they are strong and courageous enough to fight heavy seas or ice to reach a downed duck.

The Toller, of course, is not limited to being a hunting companion. These dogs have a typical Nova





Scotian personality. They are extremely gentle, friendly, faithful companions and alert watchdogs. They are even used occasionally as herding dogs for cattle or sheep. Because of their innate playful nature and tendency not to roam, they also make unsurpassed playmates for children, and although they are excellent, alert watchdogs, we have never seen a Toller that was cross or ugly.

One of the Toller's characteristics that we find quite outstanding is their innate retrieving ability. Almost any Toller pup of eight or nine weeks of age, chosen at random out of any litter, will immediately show a desire to retrieve any small object thrown for it. We have seen many Tollers that have mastered retrieving as well as the come, sit, stay, lay down, no, out, etc., commands at twelve to fourteen weeks of age. They seem to have an amazing ability to learn at a very early age, and early training improves the dog's overall adult behaviour and temperament.



What is duck tolling?

The most important and unique feature of the Toller is that it tolls ducks. What does this mean? The idea of using a dog to toll, decoy or attract ducks comes from the relationship between ducks and the Red Fox, which the Toller was bred to resemble. The idea was not new, as tolling dogs of no particular breed were used in Europe, possibly as far back as 1625, to lure waterfowl in to large nets. (The word tolling, as it is used in Nova Scotia Duck "Tolling" Retriever, means to draw or entice – from the Middle English word, Tollen. The modern English definition is, of course the stroke of a bell. – Oxford.) Interest in the idea of a Tolling dog in Nova Scotia probably came from the Acadians or the Mic-Mac Indians of the area who are believed to have had a fox-like dog which they used to catch or net ducks. How does a Tolling dog work?



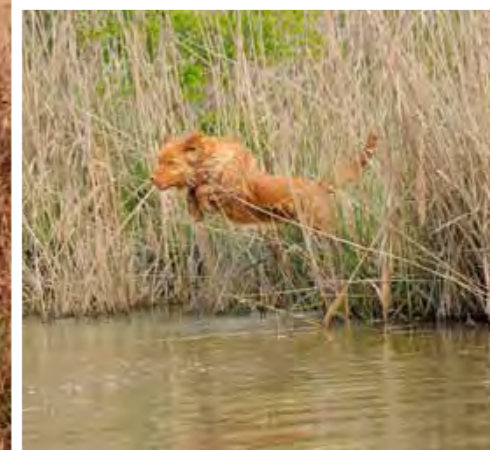
When ducks see a fox playing on the shore of a lake or other body of water, they will approach him much like a swallow approaches a crow, or a crow approaches an owl. Whether they do this to tease or drive off is not known, but they will sometimes approach from great distances off in the water, and even from the air, as long as the fox is visible. They will come with their heads erect or stretched, hissing like an old gander around the farmyard. Ducks will toll on a perfectly fine day, as well as on the most foul of days.

The logical explanation of the attraction of duck to fox (or Tolling dog) is the fact that the fox is a natural enemy of the duck, because they steal their eggs and kill young ducklings. The fox seems to be aware of this attraction and uses it to his advantage, as ducks will sometimes come close enough to be caught, providing the fox with a good meal. Sometimes two foxes will work together, one playing on the shore, the other hiding in the grass. When the ducks approach, the fox hiding in the grass will leap out and catch one of the ducks and the two foxes will share the meal. Walt Disney Productions have made a movie about the Red Fox, which includes the filming of this phenomenon.

When in action, the Tolling dog makes no sound, and unlike the fox, does not try to catch the ducks, or does not go into the water. It is simply his presence and playful movements that attract the ducks. The hunter will set up in a blind, or hide in the grass on the shore of a lake, river, or tidal marsh. If there are ducks far out in the water, out of shotgun range, the hunter will allow his Toller, which is at all times under his control, to play along the edge and by doing so, the ducks will be attracted within shooting range. The hunter does NOT, of course, shoot the ducks while they are in the water, but when they are in range, he will stand or somehow cause the ducks to fly, thus making them more vulnerable targets and lessening the chances of losing wounded or crippled ducks. When the shooting is over, the Toller then acts in his second capacity, as a retriever, and an able and courageous retriever he is. A fifty-pound Toller bitch once retrieved seven Canada geese from fairly rough seas, with her face and mouth covered with porcupine quills.

No special training required

No special training is required to teach the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever to toll ducks. The only thing required is that the dog be taught to retrieve. This can be accomplished by any of the standard procedures used to teach retrieving. However, the Toller is a natural retriever, and very little training is normally required. When the hunter wants to toll ducks, he simply places himself and his Toller where they cannot be seen by the ducks. Then the hunter will throw a "small" stick or other object for the Toller to retrieve. (Preferably not rocks. We sometimes use empty shotgun shells.) The object must be thrown in a location so that the ducks can see the dog while it is retrieving. When the dog goes to retrieve the object, he may not do so immediately, but will play with the stick, toss it up in the air, roll on it, chew it, all in full view of the ducks which are off in the water. On seeing this, the ducks will normally begin to come in towards the dog. In a short time, the dog will finally pick up the stick and bring it back to his master's hand. His master will keep him in the blind until the ducks stop their movement in his direction. At this point, he will throw the stick out again and the same process is repeated. This procedure is continued until the ducks are within shotgun range. At this point, the dog is made to stay in the blind until the shooting is over, and he is instructed to retrieve any ducks that were downed. The use of a Tolling dog obviously eliminates the necessity of always carrying about dozens of decoy ducks, which most duck hunters normally use.



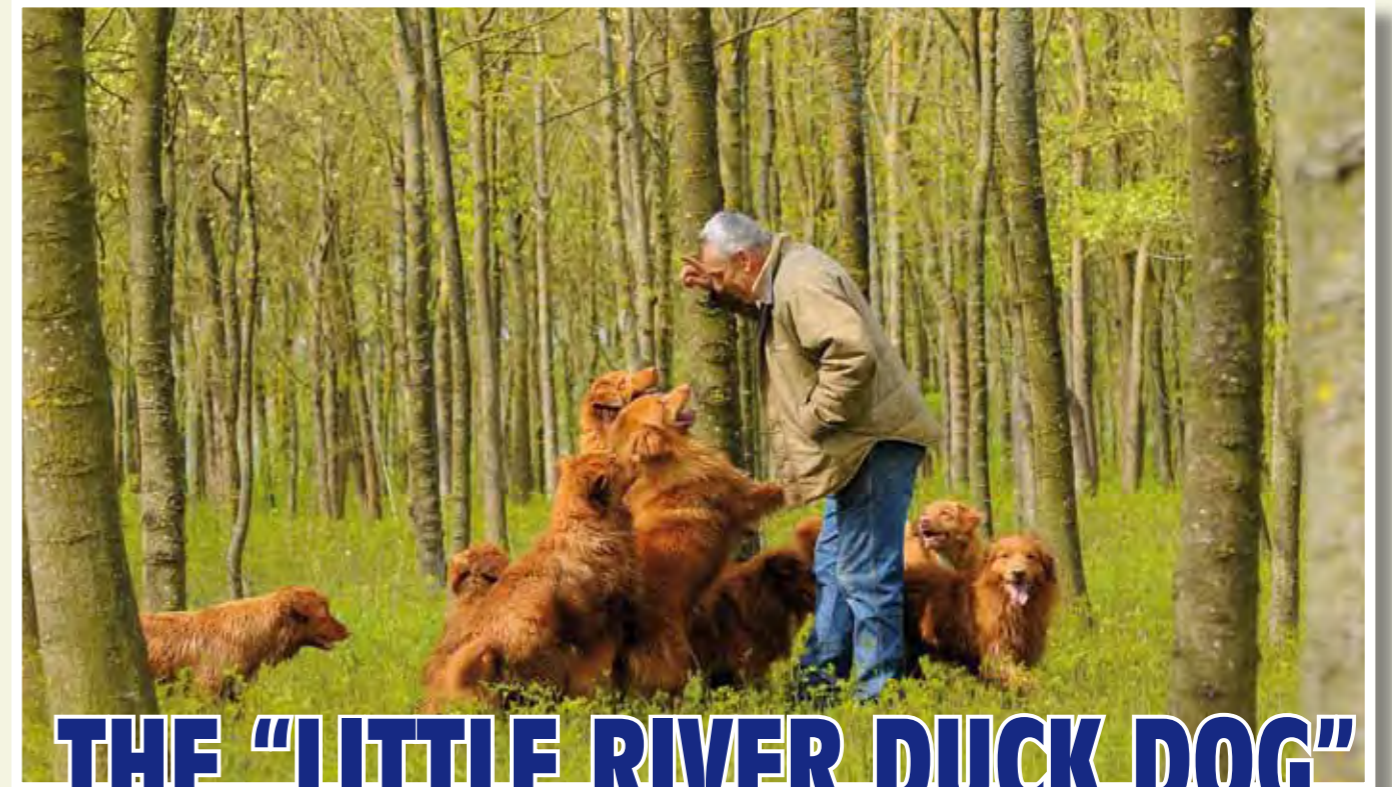
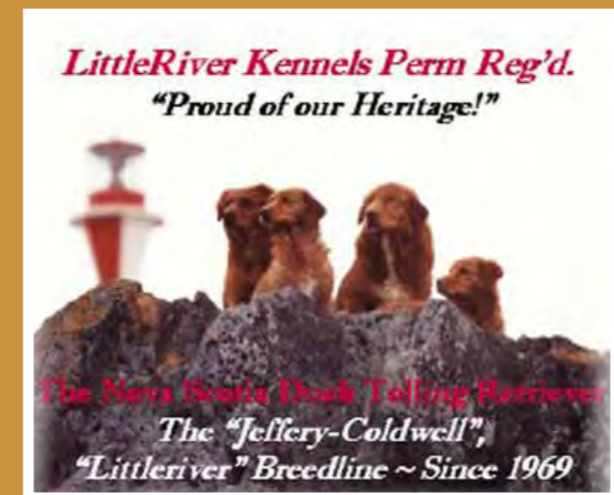
One thing to remember is that although the Toller is a natural retriever and has a naturally playful nature, it also has natural hunting instincts. In other words, it must be taught not to chase or try to catch the ducks. One method used to teach the dog to ignore the ducks is by tying a light piece of string or manila cord to his collar while the dog is being used to toll. The string must be long enough to reach from the place where the dog is tolling to the hiding hunter. In this way, when the dog becomes interested in the ducks, a simple jerk on the string will bring him under control and he will retrieve the stick or object as he is supposed to do. We have seen many experienced Tolling dogs playing and retrieving sticks with ducks only a few feet away. These dogs never attempted to catch the ducks.

Probably one of the most important features of hunting with a Tolling dog is the fact that it can be used successfully in fine weather. This is particularly significant in locations where most duck hunting is done in foul weather using decoy ducks or fly past shooting. Ducks have been known to come into a Tolling dog from over a mile away. It is a fantastic experience for a hunter to see a raft of thousands of ducks coming to his Tolling dog and into shotgun range. Geese and most species of ducks (with the exception of sea ducks like the Ider, Old Squaw, and Scooter) can be tolled with a Tolling dog. Black ducks, Mallards, Teal and Bluebills (Scuap) are easy to toll. Geese are more difficult to toll than ducks. We would encourage anyone, particularly those who use the large retriever breeds, to try using a well trained Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever for hunting. Many of you have used only one breed and because you have liked that breed, do not try another. Ask anyone who has owned a Toller, as well as other breeds of dogs, hunting and non-hunting. We believe you will find the great majority would not now have any other breed. Their Toller has captured their hearts, both as a breed and as a dog. Kind, gentle, affectionate, and alert describes the Toller as a pet. Intelligent, willing, able and determined, describes the Toller as a hunting dog. What more can you ask?



Douglas Coldwell and Jim Jeffrey

are brothers-in-law and have bred Tollers in Canada under the affix *LittleRiver* since 1969; their dogs can be found in the pedigrees of Tollers around the world. Jim was born and grew up in Yarmouth County, birthplace of the breed. The Toller has been part of his extended family for more than one hundred years, and he received his first hunting Toller and first shotgun when he was 14 years old. Douglas grew up in Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia and works along with his wife Dawn as an elementary school teacher. They sing gospel music together and have recorded a number of CD's that feature songs written by Doug. He has also written two autobiographical books - *For the Love of Tollers* tells the story of his life with the breed and can be purchased as an E-book from their site www.littlerivertollers.com/.



THE "LITTLE RIVER DUCK DOG" has come to Italy

by Mirko Garutti

HISTORY - There are many legends about the origins of the breed, but the most accredited takes place in the early 1870's in the peninsula of Nova Scotia on the Eastern coast of Canada. James Allen, in need of a helper for hunting ducks and having noted that ducks were curious about and attracted to land by anything that moved, began to select a dog that not only retrieved but also played on the shoreline when a hunter threw sticks or balls. The dog would disappear and then reappear among the water reeds, raising the curiosity of the ducks and tempting them to come within gunshot range.

The story goes that James Allen started out by crossing a liver coloured Flatcoat with a Labrador and then mated their offspring with a Spaniel, Chesapeake Bay Retriever, Collie and finally with the Dutch Koikerhundje, creating a breed that was originally known as the Little River Duck Dog until 1945, when the Canadian Kennel Club recognized the breed as the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever. The breed is simply known as the Toller in the land of its origin, and we will use this name as well.

The first Tollers arrived in Europe in 1982 thanks to the breeder Nete Wunsch in Denmark, and the breed has been officially recognized by the FCI since 1987.

General impressions

The Toller is a medium-sized dog, powerful and compact, muscular and well balanced, with a medium to heavy bone structure, extremely agile, attentive and determined.

When the dog is working and rushes ahead, he lowers

his head and stretches it forward almost level with his back, with his tail in constant movement.



Temperament

The Toller is very intelligent, easy to train and a fast learner. He is very resilient, a strong swimmer and has an instinctive desire to retrieve. He is strongly attached to members of his family and is very playful. With strangers he can be reserved, but not aggressive or overly shy.



and behind the thighs. The coat can have white markings at THE TIP OF THE TAIL, THE FEET (NOT EXTENDING ABOVE THE PASTERNS), THE CHEST, THE MUZZLE AND ON THE HEAD (BUT NOT ON THE BACK OF THE NECK). The pigment of the nose, lips and eye rims should be flesh coloured or black. A lack of white markings should not be penalized.

Head

The head should be in proportion to the size of the body. Seen from above it is slightly wedge-shaped. The skull is broad and slightly rounded, the occiput not prominent and cheeks flat.



Dimensions

The ideal height for males over 18 months is 19-20 inches (48-51 cm). For females over 18 months it is 18-19 inches (45-48 cm). With respect to the standard height can deviate within 1 inch (2.5 cm). Weight should be in proportion to height: generally 45-51 lbs (20-23 kg) for adult males and 37-43 lbs (17-20 kg) for females.

Coat

The Toller was selected for retrieving from icy waters, so he must have a double-layered water-repellent coat of medium length with a soft and dense undercoat. The outer coat may have a slight wave reaching from the withers to the croup, but otherwise is straight. Some winter coats may form a long, loose curl at the throat.

The coat should be soft and feathery at the neck, behind the ears and behind the thighs, and fringed on the upper part of the ears and on the back paws. The coat should always have a natural appearance.

Colour

Colour can be of different shades ranging from red to orange in the lighter areas on the underside of the tail

Neck

There is a moderate stop. The proportion of the skull to muzzle should be 1 to 1. The muzzle is cone-shaped with a strong but not prominent lower jaw. The nostrils are well open and of a colour that blends in with the coat or black.

Slightly arched, strong and muscular. Carried erect (when still), of medium length and without dewlap.

Body

The topline should be straight, the back short and straight, the loins strong and muscular. The chest should be deep with the breastbone extending to the elbows, with well-developed ribs neither flat or barrel shaped; the abdomen is slightly tucked up. FOREQUARTERS AND HINDQUARTERS

FORE: The forequarters should be parallel, straight and with strong bone. The shoulder should be muscular with the blade well laid back so that the withers slope into the back. The shoulder blade should be in proportion to the upper arm 1 to 1, the elbows tight-fitting (turning neither in nor out), the pasterns are strong and slightly sloping. The feet are webbed, compact, of medium size

with tight toes, rounded and well-arched, with thick pads; dewclaws may be removed.

HIND: Hindquarters are muscular, broad and square in appearance with well-balanced angulation. The proportion of thigh bone to leg bone should be 1 to 1.

Thighs are muscular, stifles well bent and hocks well let down, turning neither in nor out. Dewclaws must not be present.



Tail

The tail should follow the natural line of the croup, slightly lowered, large at the base and well fringed. In length it should reach at least the hocks; it is carried below the level of the back except when the dog is in attention, when it is carried high and curved above the back, but it should never form a ring and touch the back.



Movement

The movement of the Toller gives an impression of power, happiness and lightness, showing good reach in front and a strong driving rear. The feet should move in a straight line. At a fast pace the dog should single-track while maintaining a level topline and lowering its head until almost level with the topline and with its tail in constant movement.

Faults

Any deviation from the standard is considered a fault that is penalized according to its degree.

Disqualification

- Overshot or undershot bite above 3 mm.
- Lack of webbing on feet.
- White marks on shoulders, around ears, on back of neck, across back or flanks.
- Silvery coat, grey in coat or black areas.
- Coat of colours other than shades of red or orange.
- Excessive shyness or aggressiveness in adults.

Males should have two well-descended testicles of normal appearance.

Although today Tollers are rarely used for their original purpose (hunting), they are a working breed and their new companions should provide them with other activities.

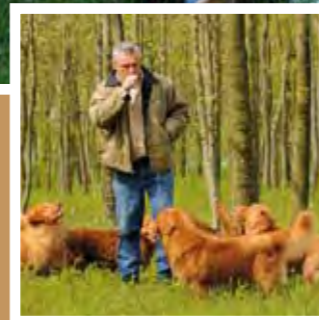
Very little is needed to make them happy: living in close contact with their families, especially if there are children to play with, walks in new and stimulating places, running in open spaces, jumping in streams, sharing the life of the family. If you do this you'll be amazed how a dog that is so lively and tireless outside can be so calm and quiet when returning home.

Tollers are not aggressive by nature but will defend with attention and energy their family and home (let's not forget that guard dog blood runs in their veins).

With other dogs they are sociable but with a tendency to dominate other dogs, often seeking submission with a penetrating stare or growls (you'll be surprised).

Their astuteness allows them to recognize dangerous dogs and to stay away from them.

The Toller is not inclined to be a troublemaker. The Toller is used for the search and rescue of missing persons and of disaster victims, gains excellent results in agility trials, obedience and in all activities requiring notable athletic ability.



Mirko Garutti

has always had a passion for dogs.

He bred German Shepherds and was among the first members of the German Shepherd Club in Italy as well as a close collaborator of its founder, Dr. Gorrieri. After the premature death of his friend and colleague, Mr. Garutti abandoned the kennel, but he maintained his love for dogs. Afterwards he dedicated himself for several years to horses, owning and breeding Paint horses, and helping found the Paint Horse Club. When he met the Nova Scotia breed his passion for dogs took over; he gradually sold all of his horses and today owns eleven Tollers.



by Gabriele Metz

Based in Frankfurt at the German headquarters of one of the world's global banks, Christofer Habig, Honorary Senator and former Chairman of the German Kennel Club (VDH), is well known for having driven change in the many roles he has performed so far. The reform of the VDH in 2006–2009, jointly developed by the VDH Board and fully supported by the club's constituency of 180-plus clubs, representing around 650,000 members, is considered one of the most comprehensive and inclusive restructurings ever executed within the FCI world.

From a young age, Habig has travelled to many parts of the world following his passion for dogs, and appreciating the diverse traditions and cultures of the FCI, KC and AKC. As a child he had a blue Deutsche Dogge, making him a true convert to, and later a renowned authority on, the complete family of Molosser breeds. Having successfully pioneered the first international journal on the Molossers, he has since judged his breeds at all key events, including all traditional breed club championship shows in most countries of origin. Border Terriers are also a favourite breed for Habig, who has had a keen interest in the terrier world since the late 70's. Habig and his wife and son also enjoy the company of two Do Khyis. Habig became a VDH/FCI judge at 21 years and since the mid 80's has been qualified to judge all breeds of FCI-Groups 1, 2 and 9.

How do you see the future of FCI?

"Definitely positive. More so than a few years ago"...

Why? Many dog people are not that optimistic.

"I can give you three reasons: when we look at a global scale, more and more people around the world are keen to have a dog, and dogs have never been as intertwined with society as they are now, in whatever role and function. Secondly, the public expects dog people to take their passion seriously. This has not always been the case, as we all know. And this is definitely good for us – as WE do exactly this! Quality, not quantity is the FCI's approach. Thirdly, the clever people within our national clubs unanimously agree

that we can achieve more if we join forces. That is to say, if we are smart and use our potential, FCI will turn into an even stronger global brand than it is now".

Does globalisation support the growth of the FCI?

"If we act wisely, it does. In the world of dogs, globalisation means better access for more and more people to a wealth of information, ideas and resources for more and more people. This gives a global organisation like the FCI the role of a grand networking platform for like-minded people across cultures and nations. This is absolutely fascinating and truly beneficial for the well-being of dogs. This will be a great opportunity for the FCI in the years to come".





common quality standards across member countries as far as e.g. breeding ethics or the judges' qualifications are concerned. It is all about common values and a pragmatic set of common rules. But we should never underestimate that a well understood diversity of approaches and concepts is the actual driver of mutual success".

"...if we are smart and use our potential, FCI will turn into an even stronger global brand than it is now."

How do you see the role of the media these days?

"As Jeremy Rifkin recently put it in his widely discussed book, we live in an 'empathetic civilization'. People accept less and less of what they regard as unfair, unsafe or unhealthy – whether in animals, or where other areas of life are concerned. And the media – as we all know – effectively air or even trigger this, not least for their own commercial benefit. This shouldn't depress us – or provoke us to non-smart responses. Here again, our confidence as dog experts is required. Do we – from one day to the next – deny what we used to believe in?"

Do you see globalisation only positively?

"To have a global umbrella organisation where dog lovers come together via their national kennel clubs can be a great lever for the common agenda dog people share – or are confronted with. Countries, of whatever "system", should allow their breed clubs to be part of a globalised exchange of ideas. Autocratic obstacles should belong to the past. Secondly, globalisation has not led to the world's most popular breeds – often British or German – overrunning other countries' national breeds. The danger was there, but I think we seem to have counteracted it. Look at the success of some previously rare breeds – it is amazing and most encouraging".



Should the FCI use globalisation to achieve more uniformity?

"People are sometimes worried that globalisation in regard to dogs will lead to more and more uniformity across countries. And there may be indeed some people who give reason for these concerns. I don't think, though, that uniformity is the idea behind the FCI. At least it's definitely not an idea which I would support. Yes, we need more efforts to comply with

Hopefully not, otherwise we would shed a devastating light on our own past. But if some countries do need a wake-up call in, let's say, welfare & health issues, because they ignored for years what other countries have achieved in this field, then one should openly address exactly this, instead of packaging a fundamental switch in concept as something which has been done since Adam and Eve. We can't let others – whether it be politicians, or the media – pretend that they are better guardians of the well-being of dogs than we are".



Don't you think the public debate on health often comes across as unfair?

"Yes, of course it does. But it often shows that we haven't done our homework. In some cases, though, we should make the point very clear. Take the brachycephal breeds, look at the English Bulldog. Simply from the judges' perspective: this breed has never been as healthy as it is now".

So what from your experience works and what doesn't, if a change in health issues is needed in a particular country?

"I don't believe in any kind of top-down re-education programmes. In democratically run kennel clubs they don't work anyway. Secondly, we should never allow the core quality breeders, who are the backbone of our sport, to be mixed with the puppy farmers. If you take money from both, you can't separate them in the public debate. If you refuse to register puppies from uncontrolled kennels, then you can act with confidence and take your own system as the role model. Thirdly, give the breed clubs the vital role they deserve. There are the experts. The generalists in central committees are the wrong people to make breed-specific decisions. Any change should always be a joint effort, based on a joint analysis of the status quo".

What about changing breed standards?

"If something is wrong or unclear, it should be made right and clear. But don't touch breed standards to change what your own people have achieved over centuries. We don't want exaggeration. This is our issue".

The FCI General Assembly in Acapulco committed itself, didn't it?

"Yes, it did. Based on the initiative from Scandinavia and Germany, the FCI General Assembly confirmed that FCI will continue to adopt the British and American standards for their national breeds. Now we see that

the FCI commitment isn't being reciprocated. We don't see any development in our direction. So I say: a clear understanding of reciprocity is needed".

Reciprocity' – a key word for you?

"Yes, absolutely. We respect other people's breed standards, so others should do the same. FCI is traditionally based on a non-colonial philosophy. We respect each other's national cultures and – being part of it – each other's national breeds. For me this is an essential pillar of the global FCI platform going forward. This is what gives FCI a competitive advantage in the modern world. We can handle diversity, and more so, FCI profits from diversity. At the same time we are working towards harmonising our quality levels across the membership. Both go hand in hand".

"We can't let others – whether it be politicians, or the media – pretend that they are better guardians of the well-being of dogs than we are."



Will your idea of 'reciprocity' affect FCI contract partners?

"Let's see. I think we should carefully examine that. I recommend we review the contracts we have to check whether we get as much as we give. This applies not only to breed standards, but also to judges. When we respect each other's awards, then we have to respect each other's judges too. We might not achieve what we need in a week's time, but we ought to put this issue on the table when we are talking to our friends outside FCI".

Has this anything to do with creating a new core spirit within FCI?

"It certainly does. FCI should continue to strengthen its sense of community. Membership should never be pure formality. Take our three FCI Section Shows in Europe, Asia and

the Americas, as well as our annual FCI World Show for example. They are a huge and often most successful representation of what we are when it comes to dogs. I agree with the many among us who want to see FCI itself being more affiliated with these four principal shows. This could apply to tangible criteria in the nomination process of country and location, as well as to the selection of judges. We have to make sure, though, that the FCI with its committees and governance can efficiently deliver. We shouldn't claim involvement if we don't add value to those nationally responsible".

More service mentality for the FCI?

"Definitely not less. It's all about making our members feel that what they get is worth the investment. Our members are our clients.

This also applies to the way we communicate. I recommend that we move towards a new mix of FCI media and tools".

More service also in other areas?

"Take our FCI Group System. Generally speaking, it is pretty strong compared to other systems, as it is scientifically sound.

But it can be impractical in smaller countries, or for smaller shows, where you have, let's say, 60 popular breeds present, but not the 250-plus different breeds we have at our top FCI events.

So we should consider having two FCI Group Systems in the future, the complete one of ten groups and a core one of five groups. In addition, it would be worth checking whether some FCI groups are too big or could be combined differently".

What does service mean in respect to judges' education and training? Do you see an additional role for the FCI here?

"We don't need more rules, but as a service of the FCI we ought to give more guidance as far as the training of Group and All Breed Judges is concerned.

The judges' commission has dealt with this matter in great depth.

The countries can learn from each other. I think in the future we should have National All-rounders. The latter should be under the jurisdiction of the FCI itself. You see, in the FCI there is plenty of positive momentum in more than one area!"

**At the request of the author, foreign language versions of this interview have been reduced. The complete German version will be published in the VDH magazine.*



We thank Mr. Christofer Habig and the Federation Cynologique Internationale for giving us the permission to publish this article, which appeared in this year's first issue of the FCI Magazine (www.fci.be/magazine.aspx).



CHOOSING A STUD DOG

by Joy Venturi Rose

Whilst there are plenty of male Labradors that may be potential mates for your bitch, choosing the right stud dog is in fact a more complicated business than it may seem. Most serious breeders spend a long time researching and deciding on the most suitable dog for their bitch.

I will assume in this article that the bitch owner has already given close consideration as to why they want to breed a litter of puppies and whether their bitch is likely to be a suitable brood with the correct good Labrador temperament. Also, that her hips and if possible elbows have been X-rayed through the BVA/KC scheme and she possesses a current BVA/KC eye pass certificate. In addition, consideration should have been given to the future of the puppies and whether they will be mainly bred for pets, workers, show animals or some combination of the three and that suitable homes are likely to be available. The possible and preferred colour of the puppies you would like to breed should also be considered.

Where possible it is always a good idea to speak to the breeder of your bitch as it is likely that the breeder will know what lines are likely to "knit well" with his/her breeding. At this point potential stud dogs may be suggested or you may be pointed in the direction of another experienced breeder who can help and advise.

The following list looks at the factors that must be taken into consideration when selecting a stud dog and they will be discussed in more detail. They are not necessarily in any order of preference although

temperament is really a number one priority.

Factors to consider in choosing the stud dog

- **Temperament.**
- **Pedigree.**
- **His conformation, strengths and weaknesses and how this compares with your bitch.**
- **Hip Scores.**
- **Elbow Scores.**
- **DNA test results.**
- **Eye Certificates.**
- **His colour and what colours are in his genetic make up.**
- **Amount of success in the show ring, shooting field or other competitive work that he may be campaigned in.**
- **How keen the owner is to give assistance with the practicalities of the mating.**
- **What puppies the dog has sired previously and how they have turned out.**
- **The stud fee payable or any other conditions attached to the mating.**
- **Whether the stud dog owner can pass on puppy enquiries to you.**
- **Have you actually seen the dog?**



Swinbrook Tan, an important working sire

Temperament

Your bitch's temperament can quite normally range from quiet to rather more boisterous but still be classed as having a good temperament. It is usually sensible to ensure that the stud dog's temperament complements your bitch. Two very quiet dogs might produce puppies that are overly dull or shy. This may be particularly important if you wish to compete with any of the puppies. Likewise, two adults on the boisterous range of normal might give rise to a proportion of the litter being rather too much for the average pet owner to handle.

Conformation and working ability

Just like temperament it is important to consider these factors. If your bitch has a conformation weakness, for example rather straight stifles, it would be silly to select a dog with the same weakness. This, and many other conformation faults are not just beauty issues. Dogs with straight stifles or other conformation faults are much more likely to suffer injury or joint problems due to the extra stresses and strains put on ligaments and cartilage. If you wish to show any of the puppies adherence to the

“show” interpretation of the breed standard is also important. Likewise, if your bitch is rather excitable in the shooting field (and you do not think this is the result of poor training) it might be better to select a steadier worker as the sire. If you wish to produce a puppy to be successful in any particular competitive area e.g. field trials, you are more likely to be successful if one or both of the parents have been successful at this level.

Pedigree

Some breeders have great success using a dog completely unrelated to their bitch (out-breeding) but who shares some physical or temperamental characteristics, which are similar to their bitch with the intention of enhancing these characteristics in the puppies (mating like to like). Of course to a greater or lesser extent all Labradors share some common ancestors as they all eventually go back to the same foundation stock, which of course differentiates the Labrador from any other breed and therefore generally ensures that the puppies look and behave like Labradors rather than any other breed. The disadvantage of this type of mating is that at the genetic level the “similar” characteristics might actually be caused by completely different genes, which may result in puppies not actually being similar, but all being very different to one another and not stamping in the positive characteristics of either parent. Unexpected faults may also arise.

An alternative method is line breeding. This is the mating of individuals that share some common ancestry and these “common” dogs possessed the



Ch Kupros Mariner, a dog that passed on both qualities for show and work

desired characteristics. This might mean that the sire and dam may be 1st 2nd or 3rd cousins or even more distantly or closely related. The advantages are that the sire and dam's positive characteristics are more likely to be the result of the same genes and these are therefore more likely to be passed on to the puppies. It is of course also possible that the sire and dam also both carry some hidden (or recessive) genes that may be responsible for some unexpected or less desirable characteristics.

In breeding actually takes place in any pure breed to a greater or lesser extent as all individuals within the breed share, at some point in their history, the same few ancestors.

However, in practice the term is generally used to describe much closer matings for example father to daughter or granddaughter. Obviously, the same advantages and disadvantages of line breeding are possible but are likely to be more intensely represented in the puppies.

Close in breeding, if practised at all, is best left to very experienced breeders who have a long standing and excellent first hand knowledge of all the dogs in the pedigree in order that recessive problems (which could be hereditary diseases) are avoided.

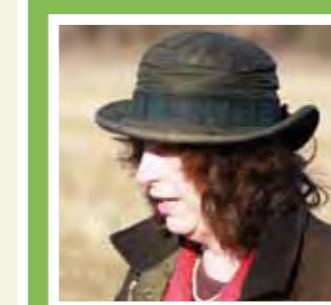
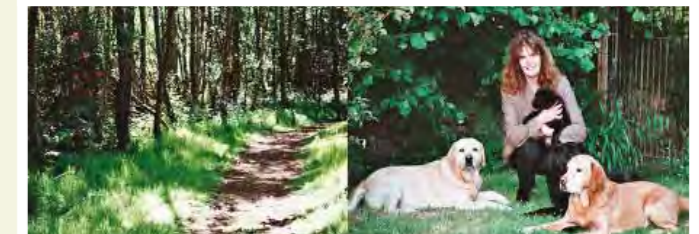
It would be fair to say that gentle line breeding is the most common type of breeding used for pedigree animals, bearing in mind that all animals within a given breed share some common ancestry.

It should therefore be obvious that the precaution of using the KC/BVA schemes as screening measures in order to reduce the risk of passing on hereditary disease is extremely important.

Where possible, speak to your bitch's breeder as he will generally help to guide you towards breed lines that, in his experience, tend to “knit” well with his stock and produce as few problems as possible.

Always bear in mind that the perfect pedigree animal has yet to be born and Labradors are no exception. Breeding is not an exact science and we can only use our best and honest judgement to try and do our best to produce good-tempered fit and healthy puppies that will grow into the same type of adults.

No absolute guarantees can be made when breeding livestock. The best we can do is to do all we can to reduce the risk of any severe problems occurring with puppies or adults. Always keep back at least the cost of one sold puppy in your savings account just in case you produce a problem and are ethically (or legally) obliged to make a refund to the purchaser. It is also strongly recommended that you sell puppies with a contract of sale to mitigate possible legal action. Ask your local breed club or the Kennel Club if they have a copy of one you can use.



Joy Venturi Rose

has bred dual purpose Labradors under the affix Leospring in Southwest England

for over 30 years. She is a Championship Show judge, a Kennel Club “B” panel Field Trial judge and serves on committees for several gundog societies and dog-related associations in the UK. She also writes weekly notes on Labradors for Dog World Newspaper.

RCI launches PACSU, an assessment of natural abilities for social assistance dogs



RETRIEVERS and PET THERAPY

by Sabrina Gasparri

Pet therapy – founded in America in the 1960’s and recognized in 2003 by the Italian Health Ministry – is the interaction between individuals with psychophysical problems (such as psychiatric illness, Down’s syndrome, anorexia, heart disease, cancer, problems associated with old age...) and an animal. This rapport, generally peaceful and without barriers, can help improve a person’s relationship with reality and the outside world.

Dogs are considered one of the most suitable animals for pet therapy because of their innately close relationship to man. The rapport between dogs and man is characterized by a spontaneous reciprocity that avoids the creation of barriers and favours communication at many levels. For the patient an encounter with a dog can be a moment of relaxation and contact with reality,

but also an occasion for physical movement and the stimulus to talk, relate to others and come out of his or her “shell”.

To be successful pet therapy activities are studied by a team that is composed of the instructor/handler of the animal, a veterinarian and medical specialists in rehabilitation. The role of the handler is to guarantee that the animal does not unintentionally cause distress to the patient or vice versa, as well as to instruct the dog, who becomes the stimulus for interaction with the patient in order to achieve pre-established objectives. The role of the professional is to give indications on how to interact with an individual patient, the objectives to reach and the particular needs of the patient.

Pet therapy can give the handler a great deal of satisfaction because he is able to give, through dogs, moments of happiness to people who are often living inside a nightmare, but it is also a very delicate type of work.



For this reason pet therapy activities must be regulated by a protocol at a national level. With this in mind the Retrievers Club Italiano has carried forward the idea of PACSU (assessment of natural abilities for social assistance dogs), proposed by Francesco Pavone and Sabrina Gasparri.

The RCI Working Section introduced PACSU to test the potential of individual retriever dogs for social assistance work, with particular regard to pet therapy and work with the disabled.

This assessment is intended to highlight the qualities of individual retrievers for the selection of breeding stock with suitable characteristics for these activities.

PACSU evaluates both the natural abilities of the dog and the ability of the dog and its handler to work as a team to carry out social assistance activities.

The assessment includes several exercises: a test of the dog’s mental stability (the assessor approaches the dog/handler team and touches the dog’s ears, paws, teeth and tail; he brushes and pets the dog; the dog should remain calm throughout); heelwork, heelwork among other people and dogs, sit/stay, down/stay, recall to command, an encounter with another dog, reaction to sudden noises, being pet by several persons, reaction to waiting for the handler, reaction to a sudden crash,

retrieval of an object, search for a hidden object. These exercises simulate real situations with disabled patients; the dog must demonstrate that he is stable and calm, and the dog/handler team should have a good rapport.

Retrievers that have passed the evaluation will be added to a list to be published on the RCI website and in the RCI yearbook.

PACSU is open to all retrievers that have undergone basic training.

The first assessment took place on the weekend of April 10 and 11 in Frascarolo, the province of Pavia, on the occasion of an all retrievers Club Show.

There were a fair number of participating dogs, and all of the exercises (those outside and inside) of the assessment were held in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere; the judges put the handlers at ease by explaining why it is useful to test the natural abilities of dogs and not only their level of training.

The assessment was passed by all of the dogs present: this underlines the predisposition of retriever breeds for this kind of work.

This first appointment is important in that it was a first step towards creating guidelines for this sector. It is an honour for us that we are the first parent breed club in Italy to believe in this kind of evaluation, and we appreciate the RCI Council’s support of the idea.





CASTELLARE DI TONDA

by Pietro Scelfo

My wife and I began our adventure with Labradors just a short while ago, when we acquired from a noted kennel in Viterbo a lovely yellow puppy of two months, that we decided right away to call Vasco... not after the bohemian signer, but being both keen on sailing, in remembrance of the most illustrious navigator and explorer that lived between the 15th and 16th centuries, Vasco De Gama.

We had often heard about the qualities of these dogs, versatile and adaptable, but we hadn't imagined that they would be so sweet and good-natured.

Guided by our growing enthusiasm and by books written by the most authoritative dog trainers on the planet, such as Graeme Sims and Jan Fennel, as well by our breeder's precious suggestions and two important books on Labradors written by Emanuela Ruggiero, we followed with diligence and care Vasco's education to strengthen and develop his natural disposition, already calm and well-balanced, thanks to the breeder's careful selection...

Until the occasion arose to take part in an absolutely unforgettable event, when, among the sweet and agreeable hills of the countryside around Florence, in a scenery of profound bucolic peace, a cure-all for our neurotic daily life, the Labrador Section of the Retriever Club Italiano organized with meticulous care from 22 to 25 April 2010 a stimulating course on education and training. To be sincere, we signed up with our 5-month old puppy without any particular enthusiasm, being what's more quite a bit ignorant about dog shows, and without anticipating the amount of satisfaction and emotion we would intensely experience.

Thanks to president Rosa Agostini and Emanuela Ruggiero, the location chosen was a stupendous country estate known as Castellare di Tonda, that in addition to offering outside and covered areas suitable for dog events also welcomed its guests with the highest level of comfort and quality.



And if I add to this the exquisite kindness and genuine hospitality of the owners Stefano and Alessandra Scotti, also present at the event with their two



much-loved dogs, I would have to say that this stay in Tuscany in one of the 12 picturesque farmhouses truly gave us unexpected days of total immersion in the atavistic and authentic feeling of days long past in the countryside, a sensation that in today's world we are increasingly less accustomed to...

To hold the training course three distinguished instructors from Great Britain were expected, but their arrival was uncertain until the last minute due to hold ups in air traffic from Northern Europe after the eruption of an Icelandic volcano, and it was possible that the course would be delayed until June.



But Mr. David Coode, Mrs. Kate Smith and Mrs. Linda Partridge were able to board their flights from London and arrived punctually at Castellare di Tonda, and proceeded to enliven the event with authority and competence all four days, succeeding with their superb English style to engage the attention and vivid interest of the participants. And all of us, whether simple dog owners or well-known breeders, accompanied by our

beloved Labradors, divided into classes based on the level of training and not always in the most auspicious weather conditions, intensely enjoyed being together "to learn while having fun together", exactly as the program brochure had promised.

After a long day of dreary grey winter weather with strong winds and incessant rain, we were forced to seek cover in the horse stables. After being subjected to humid cold mixed with fine dust raised by our dirt-covered dogs, we finally saw on the third day – April 24 – a vivid sun peak through the menacing leaden clouds to accompany our long line of people and Labradors as we made our way along a slippery and steep path in the woods, until it illuminated with an unexpected, intense

Patagonian light the wild and picturesque lake, laying at the foot of a precipice.



And it was along its clay banks, in a romantic cornice of sounds, colours and scents from other times, that we had the most intense moment of the entire course, when the dogs ventured into the "work in water"! What an interminable emotion to watch those dives into the water, both hesitating and decisive, and the dogs' joyful and uncontrollable quivering, while waiting for a command from their handlers, just as enthusiastic...What an emotion for us to see our Vasco, who had never gone into water, overcome his first natural trepidation and then start to swim towards the green dummy thrown by Mr. Coode and then return with it to the muddy bank. The fascination of being in close touch with a primordial landscape in which dogs once played a key role as mediators between man and nature!

At last a frugal meal outside of pecorino cheese, prosciutto and a good local wine and then everyone on his way, each one to his farmhouse.

At the end of this invigorating day Dr. Morlotti held a conference on genetic bone disorders, and his clear presentation and knowledge received the unanimous consent of the audience.

We have now reached the fourth day: in the morning the aforementioned English instructors relied on their long and prodigious experience to illustrate "ring training", that is the methods and techniques of presenting a Labrador at show; then, after another much approved appointment with the estate's excellent kitchen, another instructor, this time Italian, Fabio Nicodemi, concluded the course with a unique demonstration of various practices aimed at improving the mental, physical and emotional health of our dogs, the so-called "Tellington Touch for Labs", another winning appointment that captured everyone's attention and solicited questions by many of us unfamiliar with such a new discipline.

In light of the many emotions we shared day after day in this splendid area of the Florentine countryside, at this point we can only give our grateful thanks to all of the staff of the RCI Labrador Section (including the very young secretary Andrea Di Cerbo) for having organized so carefully this event, with the sincere hope



that it will be repeated in the future, and in this location, Castellare di Tonda, in communion with nature, where one could become fully immersed in the surroundings and listen to the arcane, sweet sounds of the evening like the enchanting song of sirens...



BRAD'S STORY

by Federica Luzzana

Meeting Brad has been an intense emotion, stronger than I expected. I left him about an hour ago and I still have this feeling as I return home. In these past months I did so much for him, spoke so much about him to the point that I felt that I already knew him, as if he were my own four-legged companion! But seeing him, being able to pet and cuddle him, was like touching with my own hands what I believed in from the first moment I received his request for help.

I enter his room and he is lying on his bed, I don't even have time to look at him before he starts crying and madly wagging his tail, he does all he can to make me come close!!! I move closer and bend down in front of him, he prods his nose insistently to find my arms, my hands, to make me pet him, he continues to wiggle while emitting a mixture of whimpers and barks of happiness while his big tail doesn't stop for a second!!! These whimpers of happiness seem to say to me "thank you, thank you and all those who believed in me!!" It's probably stupid to think so, but I'm convinced that he learned to express himself, to communicate with people this way, being unfortunately the only way that he has had for about the last year and a half.

Along with his beauty, his splendid character makes a big impression on me, this enormous desire to live and to fight so that he can continue to give love and recognition towards those who take care of him. Without this extraordinary force, surely he would not be here, he would have already been left to die!

Brad has always been a Labrador like all of our four-legged companions, has always given much satisfaction, even in the ring, until one sad day in June 2009 when, during his daily walk with his two-legged

friend, he was hit by a car. The diagnosis was terrible: quadriplegia, a profound and conscious perception of pain reaching to the tail, epidural haematoma between c5 and c7.

Notwithstanding the notable cost of the operation, Andrea (fictitious name), his two-legged friend, decided to have him operated to surgically remove the haematoma. The operation had positive results and the veterinarians were satisfied. Brad was able to recover feeling in three of his legs, but for his rear left leg nothing could be done.



After a convalescence period a long rehabilitation program was initiated, physically taxing for him and an economic drain on Andrea. The costs continued to rise and soon Andrea could no longer afford them, Brad was no longer able to follow rehabilitation, and only made periodic visits to the vet, who in some periods found him stable, in others worse. His muscles began to atrophy day by day, and his worsening condition was increasingly more evident.



Andrea and his vet sought help, and sent requests for any kind of help for Brad to all of their contacts. And in this way, through various channels, the letter arrived in my mailbox. No, I wasn't able to look the other way, pretend that it was nothing, and through a student I made contact with the vet.

It was a Monday at the beginning of June like many others, but for Brad it would be the last: my phone call was not very comforting, the vet told me that he had just visited Brad the previous Saturday and that he had become much worse, had completely lost muscle tone, his left front paw was being devoured by larvae. Brad could no longer live such a life, he no longer had a life, he had lost everything.....

I couldn't believe what I was hearing, I couldn't believe that Saturday, after delaying for so long the decision, it would be the end of his suffering.

I couldn't let them decide to end the life of a dog only because they didn't have the money to pay for his treatments, this was my first thought!!! I asked the vet for just a few days to see what I could do, how I could move with the collaboration of the group of people who help rescue retrievers in trouble through the page on Facebook "Retrievers in Difficoltà" and its association "Retriever Rescue Center".

We decided to ask for help on Facebook by publicizing an appeal on the Rescue Page, asking for donations and advice about specialized clinics that might be willing to help Brad.

I immediately began to receive advice about many

clinics, made a series of phone calls to find out which would be the best for him, looking for one that was not too far from his home to avoid stressing him with a long trip. Some of the clinics I spoke to asked for exorbitant fees, Brad's rehabilitation would be very long due to the fact that he had been too immobile for too long of a time.



Among these clinics there was one run by Dr. Elena Villa: Quattro zampe alle terme di Fidenza (Pr) (www.quattrozampealleterme.it), which showed from the beginning a great sensitivity to Brad's story and offered a discount in view of the sad circumstances.



About the same time I received an almost surreal phone call: a woman who saw the appeal said she knew a woman who had recently passed away, who in life had always sought to help animals and had asked that after her death part of her capital be donated to animals in need!! Her friend thought that in that moment the dog that had the greatest need was Brad!!! And in this way I began to organize the transfer of Brad

to Dr. Villa's clinic. Andrea, after signing all the forms to give up his ownership, was willing to take Brad over.

From Monday June 14, 2010 Brad started his new life, a long uphill climb followed by the guardian angel that had donated the sum for his rebirth!!! Bit by bit other donations began to arrive directly to the clinic by persons who took his story to heart, that believed in him like we had from the beginning. The extraordinary solidarity that was created around this Labrador was surprising, many gave just a few euro, some more important sums, but what counted was that everyone gave with their hearts, because they wanted to see him happy!!!!



The diagnosis when he arrived at the clinic was not rosy: persistent flaccid monoplegia on the left thorax; serious generalized thigh muscle hypotrophy; paresis of the right front leg and the two rear legs, bedsores in the trochanteric ischium, sternal and left knee regions; traumatic auto-inflicted lesions in the front left leg of moderate gravity.

But everyone cheered for him, believed that he could make it despite the enormous time period in which he had remained immobile without any therapy, if it weren't for this everything would be much easier, his muscular

and psychological recovery would be brief, but he could do it, with his enormous will to live, his interior and physical force would help him get through it!

Today Brad, thanks to the appeal we made for him, has found a new family, and he will again be followed by angels that will look after him once he arrives at home.



He still has a long way to go to before being able to walk again on three legs, he'll most likely need a cart, but with daily therapy at home and with regular cycles of physical therapy on land and in water his future is now happy, on the horizon there is much love, and only those that have met him know that this is what he wants: to be loved for what he is and for what he can give. The enormous progress he has made in these past two months and a half can be seen in Dr. Villa's clinical report: flaccid monoplegia paresis of the left front but traumatic auto-inflicted lesions healed on the same limb, almost complete recovery of all bedsores (some very small residual areas in the left trochanteric region), notable increase of voluntary movement of the right front and back legs with light thigh muscle hypotrophy, not enough functionality for him to walk autonomously, paresis in the right front and back limbs that persists but with daily improvement.

I was asked to write the story of Brad, but not being a great writer, just a simple enthusiast of this breed (maybe too much!!!) I accepted and wrote it with my heart in my hands, with the hope that his story serves as an example for many dogs like him, who ask their companions to not give up, to not let go in front of anything; this story has taught me that there are many people who have great faith and love animals, that there really are angels that protect us from above and that Facebook, used in the correct way, can accomplish great things!

I remember also that without these people's help this miracle wouldn't have happened: thanks to Chiara Mancinelli, Giusy Glenx, Erica Gardin, Mariagrazia Gini and Luisella Favaron with whom I manage the page of Rescue Retriever in Difficoltà, in collaboration with the association Retriever Rescue Center.

Thanks to this association many retrievers are now happy with their new families, but many others are still looking for love. Let's help these retrievers that are less fortunate than ours:

IW BANK cc. 110455663 (account name Retriever Rescue Center)
IBAN: IT11G0316501600000110455663
www.retrieverrescuecentre.it

Special thanks to:

- *Dr. Elena Villa for the passion and love she showed Brad during his stay, taking him on vacation with her so that he wouldn't miss his therapy.*
- *To the new family that will welcome him in mid-September, for the enormous gesture of love they have made towards a disabled dog.*



THE ROLE OF EMOTIONS

by Cinzia Stefanini

“The question is not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but Can they suffer?”
(Jeremy Bentham, Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation)

To all of us who live in close contact with our dogs it is perfectly clear and evident that animals experience emotions. Nevertheless, science has just recently started to look into the role of emotions in animals, especially with regard to animals that are not anthropoids.

EMOTIONS are mental and physiological states associated with psychophysical changes caused by internal and external influences.

In evolutionary terms their principal function is to enhance a person's reaction to situations requiring an immediate response for survival, bypassing normal cognitive and conscious processes.

Emotions also play a relational role (to communicate your own psychophysical reactions to others) as well as a regulative role (to understand your own psychophysical changes).

Any animal that feels emotion experiences an emotional stimulus that passes through three basic stages:

The first stage, in which an emotion provokes various somatic changes (changes in heartbeat, respiratory alterations...)

The second stage, during which the stimulus is simultaneously sent from the amygdala to the associative cortex, where it is elaborated in a slower but more “refined” manner

The third stage, in which, according to the particular circumstances, the most appropriate response

is emitted, depending on the individual ecology (“ecology” in this case refers to the environment in which the dog lives)

Normally an individual that feels an emotion becomes conscious of his own somatic changes. Man gives names to these psychophysical variations (fear/joy...).

Emotions simultaneously entail:

- **A physiological response**
- **A motivational response**
- **A cognitive response**
- **A communicative response**





The motivational response is oriented towards the action and modifies behavior in function of desires and goals.

The cognitive evaluation attributes meaning to the reactions of the organism to both guide and stimulate the individual to confront the event that has provoked the emotion.

Each basic emotion is characterized by a communicative pattern, composed of bodily expressions, vocalizations and postures. Such a configuration is universal and considered species-specific.

It is important to stress the social function of emotions; stressing the social dimension of emotions signifies recognizing that even basic emotions have a precise biological and genetically determined base, in specific context to the individual's ecosystem and social relations.

In light of these studies it is no longer possible to work with and teach new learning strategies to our animals without taking into consideration the active role of emotions.

Our desires, in fact, are very important to our dogs; they are what they seek on an emotional level. Dogs not only orient themselves towards what we want, the so-called "will to please", but they also feel in a very real sense what other members of the group feel and experience at a particular moment.

To teach a dog, therefore, to manage a particular situation we must help construct the instruments needed to help him handle the emotions rising from that situation. By controlling them himself the dog will learn to manage what happens. For this reason, as educators, we must accept this single challenge: to see the dog as an integral being composed of mind, body and emotions, and to consider that the whole entity is greater than the sum of its parts.

Whoever accepts this challenge and uses empathetic and reciprocal communication, as in Socrates' maieutic method, will succeed in obtaining a harmonious relationship between man and dog.



SCENT OF THE MISSING

Love & Partnership with a Search-and-Rescue Dog

by Susannah Charleson

A short excerpt reprinted with the kind permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, New York, New York (www.hmhbooks.com).

Scent of the Missing is a memoir of the experiences of Susannah, a volunteer search-and-rescue handler, and her Golden Retriever Puzzle.

The book tells the story of the challenges Susannah and Puzzle face at home and in the field as Puzzle evolves from a playful and willful puppy to a fully collaborative partner in searches for missing persons across the American Southwest. As Puzzle grows up, she and her handler learn to read the clues in the field and in each other to accomplish tasks that neither one could do without the other.

In this excerpt, Puzzle is just under two years old and is going through some final training drills before her first certification tests, a happy period in which she and Susannah are able to reach new levels of achievement and understanding in their work together.

At the end of the long corridor smudged dark with recent smoke, Puzzle stands with her nose to a door, her tail waving faintly. Six rooms, six closed doors, and behind one of those, a single volunteer victim buried in rubble. We are in the fire department burn building, and today Puzzle is telling me which closed

door to open and which others to ignore. She was given the "Find!" command yards from the building, and in she ran, smiling, her tongue out sideways. I am steps behind her, running from bright into immediate gloom. The air here is thick with soot and the dust of spent hay, and in the flashlight's beam, I can see the swirls of Puzzle's slipstream wash up against the wall like an airplane's wingtip vortices. If she were to disappear down some dark passage, for a time at least I could track her path through the dusty air. I sneeze, then sneeze again.

The airflow here is tricky. The burn building's outside windows are open to today's southerly breeze, while all its internal doors are closed. Here, the scent of a human hidden in a single room can easily slip out the bottom of one door and wash up against neighboring walls or onto the closed door opposite, sticking there in the dust and damp. "Scent traps," these are called, and scent can be deceptively strong there, misleading

the dog trying to pinpoint the source. In this exercise, Puzzle's got to know better, and she's got to show me how much she knows better.

These closed-door drills are some of the hardest, most intuitive work a dog team can do. In a damaged office building full of locked doors, a dog that can indicate the right door to kick in for rescue is a tremendous help to the firefighters who have to break through them. In past training, we've not been entirely successful. Because I didn't yet know how to read my dog, when scent was faint, I was inclined to open every door. And Puzzle was glad to let me do so, smiling there and sometimes moving idly into the empty room and sometimes not, as if uncertain how much to humor me. With closed-door drills, I had to learn to hang back, to stop doing the work and stop opening doors just as a given. When I frustrated Puzzle with our slowness, she began to make her cues bigger: a little scent there, A LOT OF SCENT HERE.

Today she has her nose to one door and stands expectant. It's clear which one she wants. Last door on the left at the end of the corridor. As I approach it, her wagging tail waves faster: oh-yeah-oh-yeah-this-one-oh-yeah. I decide to test her loyalty to that door, and at the last minute I put my hand to the latch of the door opposite, a wrong choice. Puzzle's tail stops wagging, and when I grind the latch slightly, I hear a little pffft snort out of her that could be a sneeze but sounds like disgust. She does not turn away. She sticks to the door she prefers.

I stop and turn to the door where she stands. "Is this the one you want, Puz?" I ask her. There is the briefest brow-furrow an expression of incredulity at my indecision (like a doggie Duh! – I'm not kidding), then a harder wag when I put my hand to the right door latch. She is all encouragement. When I pop open the door, Puzzle gives her two-boing hop as she bounds across the threshold toward the victim for the find. And then she turns and beams at me, giving me so thorough an atta-girl that I laugh out loud.

It is a perfect moment of joyful understanding between us. From the depths of her total dogness, Puzzle is pleased, and she knows that I am pleased, and after I help the victim from the rubble, she spins and capers down the corridor, smudging herself liberally with soot.



Susannah Charleson

works as a handler with her Golden Retriever Puzzle

for the Metro Area Rescue K9 unit in Dallas, Texas, a volunteer search-and-rescue team responding to local, state and national search and recovery cases. She is also the team's public information officer, a flight instructor and a television and radio broadcaster. She and Puzzle share their home with six other dogs, four cats and a fish.



THE DANISH KVALIFIKATIONSPROVE

by Alessandra Franchi

In March 2008 Denmark launched the new "qualifications trial". This test was designed to highlight the basic qualities of retrievers: for example, a working champion that passes this test can obtain the title DKJCh, which certifies that he not only works well but is also morphologically correct. A show champion that passes this test, on the other hand, can obtain the title DKUCh, which certifies that the dog has not only obtained the necessary results in show but has also demonstrated natural retrieving abilities.

Championship titles for work and show can also be won without this test, and in this case the titles obtained are DK(J)Ch for work and DK(U)Ch for show. By passing the Kvalifikationsprove a dog can also be admitted into working classes at shows.

THE TRIAL

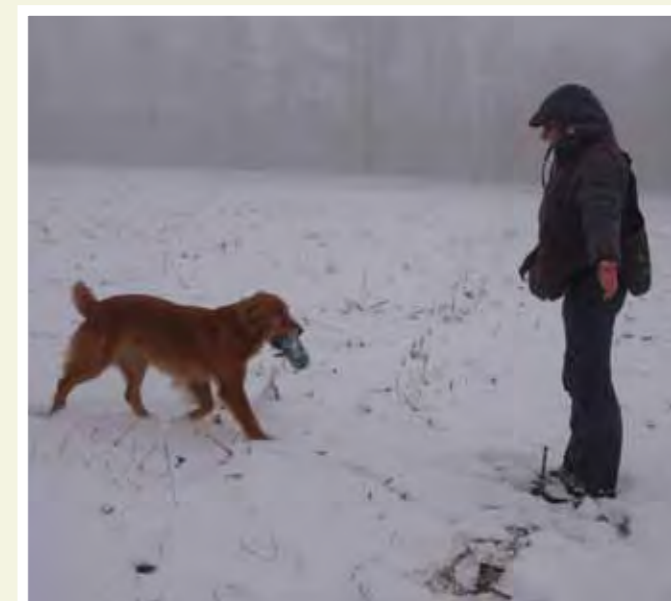
A retriever can participate in the trial once he is 12 months old. The trial consists of a conformation test and a field test, and is valid for Labradors, Golden and Flatcoated Retrievers. Curlycoated and Chesapeake Bay Retrievers are not required to participate in the conformation test.

Conformation Test

The retriever is examined by an official judge of the Danish Kennel Club, who must describe in detail the dog and verify that it is typical of the breed, even with regard to its temperament. The evaluations "excellent", "very good" and "good" are used. Usual morphological terminology is used to describe the dog in a written evaluation, a copy of which is given to the dog's owner.

Field Test

An official field trial judge of the Danish Kennel Club oversees the field test. To describe the test official terminology of field trial rules are used. The judge issues a written evaluation, a copy of which is given to the dog's owner.



Exercises

- 1 – Heelwork with lead: for about 50 meters, with a curve to the left and a curve to the right.
- 2 – Heelwork without lead: for about 50 meters, with a curve to the left and a curve to the right.
- 3 – Retrieval of winged game:
 - A) on land: - a single mark to gunshot; -a search for at least three birds.
 - B) in water: -a single mark to gunshot in water deep enough for swimming.



Eliminatory faults

- Dogs not typical with regard to conformation.
- Dogs not typical with regard to character.
- Cryptorchidism.
- Fear of gunshot.
- Hard mouth.
- Running in.
- Refusal to retrieve.
- Refusal to enter water.
- Out of control.
- Whining or barking in a disturbing manner.

The trial is official and as such is registered as an official result.



TRIAL GUIDELINES

This test must be passed by Labrador, Golden and Flatcoated Retrievers. Curly Coated and Chesapeake Bay Retrievers are only required to pass the field part of the test.

Morphology

If the dog does not pass the conformation exam the letter "D" (disqualified) will be written on the test form and he will not be able to participate in the field part of the test.

Deskvalificeret (disqualified): this evaluation will be given to dogs that are not typical of the breed, or to dogs that show one or more eliminatory faults as described in the breed standard, including serious dental faults and other faults that can be harmful to the dog's health. In a similar fashion dogs that show signs of surgery or other kinds of medical treatments to hide serious faults will be disqualified, as well as dogs that demonstrate a temperament not compatible with the breed, such as shyness to the degree that it does not allow the judge to examine teeth or testicles, or extreme aggressiveness.

The reasons behind the evaluation "D" (disqualified) should appear on the written evaluation that is given in copy to the owner. Any dog that has been disqualified two times for character faults will be banned from breeding and from participating in the official events organized by the Danish Kennel Club or the Danish Retriever Club.

KIP (cannot be judged): this evaluation is given to a dog that is impossible to judge because it jumps or moves in continuation, even if due to the inexperience of the handler; it is also given to dogs that manifest unexpected limping or have stitches or skin rashes

that obstruct the judge's examination. Motivation for KIP must be stated on the written evaluation given in copy to the owner.

Field Test

The retriever is tested for heelwork with and without lead. Especially in heelwork without lead the dog must be under control and must work in a secure and trustworthy fashion. He must never leave the side of his owner.

The dog is required to return to his owner directly after picking game, and he must be willing to retrieve every type of game and deliver it to hand.

Water: The dog must enter water spontaneously and without hesitation and retrieve winged game.

Search: Game must be placed in the search area without letting the dog see, and in a way that does not favour swapping. The dog must retrieve at least three birds from an area approximately 30m x 40m in which at least three retrieves have been placed. Game can be pigeons, ducks and other game of good quality. The area must be a typical hunting terrain and it should be possible to observe the retriever while he is working.

The dog should be tested on a single mark on land and in water. The fall area of the game should be visible and at a distance of no more than 30 meters.

Maximum priority should be given to evaluating the dog's natural abilities, and small errors should not be judged too severely. Dogs should be brought to the trial when they have already reached a level of training that allows the judge to evaluate their qualities.

The test allows access to the working class at shows.





TO READ

A Dog at Sea – A Bull Moose Dog Run Mystery by J.F. Englert, Dell Books 2009.

In this new mystery Harry, a young New York artist, and his Labrador Randolph embark on another adventure in search of Harry's lost girlfriend

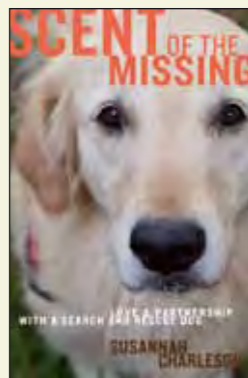


Imogene, this time aboard a cruise ship headed for the Caribbean. Randolph – a slightly overweight but super intelligent dog – leads the investigation relying on his sense of smell and sixth sense about animals and people, coming up with some ingenious ways to communicate his discoveries to his owner.

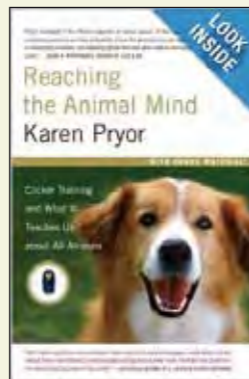
A Dog at Sea follows the success of the Bull Run Mysteries A Dog about Town and A Dog among Diplomats. In these books Randolph has emerged as one of the most popular literary characters around the world, much loved for his funny, loyal and clever personality, and his unique ability to resolve mysteries.

Scent of the Missing – Partnership with a Search and Rescue Dog by Susannah Charleson, Houghton Mifflin 2010.

Scent of the Missing is a memoir of the experiences of Susannah, a volunteer search-and-rescue handler, and her Golden Retriever Puzzle. The book tells the story of the challenges Susannah and Puzzle face at home and in the field as Puzzle evolves from a playful and wilful puppy to a fully collaborative partner in searches for missing persons across the American Southwest. As Puzzle grows up, she and her handler learn to read the clues in the field and in each other to accomplish tasks that neither one could do without the other.



Reaching the Animal Mind – Clicker Training and What it Teaches us about all Animals by Karen Pryor, Scribner Book Company 2009.

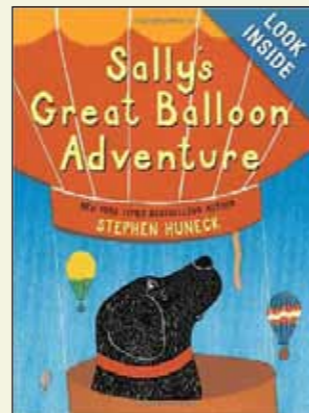


In her most recent book Karen Pryor, the animal behaviourist who invented the technique of clicker training, follows up and expands upon her popular book Don't Shoot the Dog! Karen recounts 30 years of experience in the field of operant training, from her pioneer training days with dolphins at Sea Life Park in the 1960's, to more recent experiences with dogs, horses, fish, many other animals

and even human beings. She tells us what she has learned from teaching animals and what they have taught her.

Sally's Great Balloon Adventure by Stephen Huneck, Abrams Books for Young Readers, from 3 to 6 years, 2010.

This beautifully illustrated picture book is the last in the series of adventures of the pet Labrador Sally by animal artist Stephen Huneck, who passed away last January. Stephen lived in Vermont, USA, with his wife Gwen and their three dogs, the two black Labs Sally and Molly and a Golden Retriever. Near their home, filled with Steve's animal-inspired furnishings and artwork, is Dog Chapel and Dog Mountain, where people can go to celebrate their spiritual bond with their dogs and enjoy the countryside.



His eight children's books inspired by his Lab Sally are all illustrated with vibrant and whimsical woodcut prints.

In her latest adventure, Sally winds up in a hot air balloon when following the scent of some delicious fried chicken, travels across the city and sees the world from up above, and her family embarks on some ridiculous schemes to get her back down.



Il Golden Retriever by Paola Daffunchio and Valeria Rossi, Ed. Olimpia 2010 (only in Italian).



A manual dedicated to the Golden Retriever that covers many topics, including choosing a puppy, breed history and characteristics and potential activities for you and your dog. Although originally selected as a gundog, the Golden can be trained for many disciplines - from agility to pet therapy - thanks to its intelligence and docile nature.

TO SEE

HBO has made a television film about the life of popular animal scientist and author **Temple Grandin**, entitled Temple Grandin. Directed by Mick Jackson and starring actress Claire Danes, the film tells the story of her extraordinary life in her younger years, from how she dealt with autism, fought prejudices in the scientific field and developed her unique ability to understand animals. The TV film won several Grammy awards in the US, was recently aired on Sky Cinema 1 in Italy and will hopefully be issued soon in the European DVD standard – not to be missed! (For a review of her latest book *Animals Make Us Human* see book reviews in *Retriever Magazine* no. 4).

TO BUY

Bon ton doggy bags

In response to the request of several ecological associations, the Italian Ministry of the Environment recently announced that from January 2011 plastic bags with be banned in Italy, following the lead of several other European countries. We've had a look at some of the doggy bags on the market and found that United Pets (www.unitedpets.it) is



already making eco-friendly clean up kits. "Bon ton" biodegradable doggy bags come in two different sizes (for big dogs and little dogs) and a variety of colours and design. They are sold as refillable rolls for bon ton dispensers, which include the classic bone and newer shapes like a heart and a goldfish. United Pets produces objects for many aspects of your domestic life with animals that are functional and aesthetically pleasing for their design and vivid colours. They can be found in pet shops and boutiques across Italy.

Kong dog toys

The Kong is the premier chew toy for all breeds, praised by experts like behaviourist Ian Dunbar as one of the best pastimes for young dogs: it permits your pup to spend endless hours chewing while deterring him from destroying the house! They are made of an almost un-destructible natural rubber and can be filled with kibble and snacks. Among the most popular toys are the original classic red Kong, the softer Puppy Kong, the Water Kong with a cord for retrieves and the Kong Wobbler Snackball. You can find a full range of Kong toys and snacks on the site www.zooplus.it.



LATEST NEWS

In dogs we trust

There have been many studies undertaken to show how dogs help their owners make friends with other people, but can they also help them at work? Christopher Honts and his colleagues at the Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant decided to find out if a dog in the workplace helps people collaborate more effectively, and as they reported at a meeting for Human Ethology this year, it does.

To reach this conclusion, they carried out two experiments: in the first, 12 groups of four people each were told to come up with a brief advertisement for an invented product. Only some of the groups had a dog with them in the office.



Afterwards, all of the volunteers were asked to fill out a questionnaire asking how they felt about working with their other team members. Those with a dog under the table gave a higher ranking to co-workers on measures of trust, team cohesion and intimacy than those without.



In the second experiment, 13 groups played the game "prisoner's dilemma", in which all four members of a group are charged with a crime, and each member has the choice to "snitch" on his teammates or back them up. Each decision affects the outcome of all members of the group. With a dog in the room, volunteers were 30% less likely to snitch on others.

Fish for brains

In a recent article in the AKC Gazette, author Caroline Coile explains how feeding fish to dogs even before they're born might help them become smarter, and hopefully, more trainable. Over ten



years ago scientists discovered a magic component of fish called docosaexaenoic acid (DHA), a type of omega-3 fatty acid that is vital to the development of the brain and vision of several species of mammals. They found that too little DHA could lead to signs of

decreased visual response and poorer learning. Likewise, in comparative studies of human infants fed diets with and without DHA, infants supplemented with DHA scored higher in problem-solving tests than those not supplemented.

DHA may be especially important in growing pups up to about 12 weeks, when the brain develops quickly. During that time puppies are dependent on receiving DHA from their mother when nursing and

then from food when eating on their own. Common sources are salmon, sardines and tuna, as well as eggs and chicken. Sources in commercial pet food are usually fish, fishmeal and fish oil.

In a study in 2004, researchers compared 28 genetically and environmentally similar Beagle litters that were supplemented or not supplemented with DHA, starting from the dam's diet before the pups were bred, and then throughout pregnancy, lactation and weaning. At 9 weeks, the puppies were trained in a T-maze to follow symbols in two different directions to find a treat. Results showed the highest rate of success for puppies from the high-DHA supplementation group: twice as many of these passed at least one test than those that had not received any supplemental DHA.

The author concludes that the link between nutrition and behaviour in dogs is receiving increased attention, and DHA may not only improve intelligence and trainability, but also temperament and memory.



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