



# DBKC NEWS!



During September, Responsible Pet Ownership Day is held across the world. The purpose of the day is to raise awareness of what is involved in being a responsible pet owner. This includes things like making sure your pet is given nutritious food, is clean, is loved, is well behaved and is capable of handling a variety of social situations.

Following this theme, this month we find out about pet nutrition and about what to say to children about animal cruelty.

We also announce the winners of last month's Summer Quiz!

*Tracy Whelan*



## ISSUE 11 / SEPTEMBER 2013

### Contents

Ask Pauline – this month's topic is about how you talk to your children about the topic of animal cruelty



Monthly Breed Focus – This month we focus on the Australian Shepherd

Vets Corner this month looks at the topic of Nutrition



\*\*\*\*\*



Funny Signs!

## Get to Know Us

This month we bring our 'Get to Know Us' section to an end as we find out about our last remaining team member, N K Brayan Philip. Brayan has been in Bahrain for 2 years and is from Mathugama in Sri Lanka, which is south west of the capital Colombo. He is married and is expecting his first child later this year, which is very exciting news.

Brayan joined Delmon Kennels recently and loves the dog swimming part of his job.

In his spare time, he likes to play cricket, and he is proud of the fact that he has started to build a house in Sri Lanka for when he returns home.

His goals for the future are that he wants to get his Bahrain driving license and complete the building of his house. These are great things to aim for and we wish him well.





## Monthly Breed Profile Australian Shepherd

In this month's edition we're finding out about the dog breed, The Australian Shepherd.

Although the name suggests this dog is from Australia, the breed as we know it today has been primarily developed in America. It is thought that it was given this name because of their association with Basque shepherders who came to America from Australia in the 1800's.

The Australian Shepherd is a medium sized dog that has strong herding and guardian instincts. They are intelligent and loyal companions and therefore make great family pets. They love to be part of busy family life. They love to play and are active dogs. They are not the kind of dog to lie around the house all day and be happy with a quick 15 minute walk! Remember they are working dogs, and therefore you need to exercise them physically and mentally and keep them occupied, as otherwise they can become bored and destructive. They make great running companions.

They are typically used as herding dogs due to their natural herding instincts and therefore have been popular on ranches and farms. So don't be surprised if they start herding your children or visitors to your home!

The Aussie can be found in four main colours; black, blue merle which is a marbling of gray and black, red which ranges from a light cinnamon to liver) and red merle and as the photos above show, they are lovely looking dogs.

Their coat is of medium length, straight to slightly wavy and very weather resistant with a good undercoat. The coat is easy to groom and look after and all they need is an occasional bath and a firm brush. They are not big shedders, so if you brush them regularly, you should have few problems.

They can suffer from some health issues and the merle coloration can carry a blind/deaf gene. Some Aussies are natural bobtails, which can bring spinal problems.

We have several customers that Australian Shepherds and we regularly see how intelligent this breed is. They are easy to train and love agility type activities. So if you have an active family and are looking for a great family pet, maybe the Australian Shepherd is the dog for you.

If you'd like to see a particular breed in a future edition, please email us at [newsletter@delmonkennels.com](mailto:newsletter@delmonkennels.com)

## Ask Pauline

This month's Ask Pauline relates to a question we received earlier this month from a mum. Her family had just adopted a rescue dog, and she wanted to explain to her children about animal cruelty and tell them some of what their dog had experienced before coming to live with them.

In order to be able to explain about cruelty, we need to understand what constitutes cruelty. Inflicting cruelty on another living thing means that there is an intention to hurt. It is different from causing hurt as a result of a genuine accident. Cruelty also suggests that the person inflicting the hurt gets some enjoyment or pleasure from doing it, or watching the suffering. It's important to remember these distinctions so that you are prepared for any questions you may get from your children.

You may be asked for an example of animal cruelty and the range of offences is very wide. It can go from denying sufficient food and water, to making an animal fight other animals. It can include hitting or beating the animal, not treating them if they are ill, over-breeding them, turning them out onto the streets, not transporting them properly, dragging them around by the neck, their tails or their legs, cutting them, throwing stones at them, conducting tests on them, or killing them.

Cruelty is often associated with violent acts and therefore a number of these topics are not suitable for very young children. What you can do though is help a child understand how to do things properly. For instance, show them the best way to pet a dog, help them understand how to look after a pet and teach them about responsible pet ownership. For example, if you see them pulling the tail of your pet, explain that this isn't acceptable and that it is similar to pulling another child's hair. It hurts!

If you ever see your child, or even one of their friends, behaving inappropriately with your pet, you must take action immediately. Never ignore it. Your child needs you to help them understand what is and what isn't acceptable. The same is true if you see children being cruel to wild animals.

If you have a rescue pet that is nervous around certain people or situations, then you need to explain this to your children and help them understand that they need to be patient and caring. For instance, if you have a rescue pet that was denied food for a long period of time, getting a good feeding routine in place and ensuring your children understand they need to stay away from the pet when they are eating is vital.

With older children, you are likely to get more direct questions and how detailed you go, will depend on what you believe is appropriate for your family and the specific child. It is important though to continue to reinforce that animal cruelty is wrong. Some children can have a morbid curiosity about the topic and want details, which isn't appropriate. Go with your gut instinct as to how much you tell them.

One good way to bring the discussion to an end is to talk about the number of charities and shelters that help animals that have suffered cruelty, and the laws that are in place to try and stop animal cruelty. There are many organisations around the world that are committed to this, including the RSPCA in the UK and The Humane Society. And here in Bahrain, the BSPCA and Tony the Dogfather regularly visit schools to help children understand more about pets and how to interact with them properly.

Don't forget however that you are the best role model your child will ever have so continue to show them with your words and your actions, what is and what isn't appropriate, and they will follow your example.



*What you know you know, what you don't know you ....*

*Ask Pauline!*



## News!

### Training Restarts

Summer vacations are almost over and the influx back to Bahrain is beginning. Before we know it, kids will be back at school and it will be time to restart our training activities.

On Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> September at 5.00 pm we will be holding a couple of fun training sessions to ease you back in gently, and then from Saturday the 28<sup>th</sup> September we will restart our Stage training.

A Stage 2 group will run between 9-10 am and Stage 3 between 5-6.15pm.



### Graduations

In July, just before heading off on vacations we had several people complete Stage 1 and Stage 2.

If you would like to find out more, or enrol for one of the Stage groups, please let us know.

### Update on the Oli Bowker Story

Back in our May edition we covered the story of Oli who had to return to the UK due to a serious illness and was unable to take his pets with him at that time. Earlier this year his dogs made the trip, but his cats remained in Bahrain. Well, we're delighted to say that due to the generosity of readers we have now been able to return his cats to him. We wish Oli and his mum all the best with his recovery.



### Quiz Winners!

In last month's edition we held our Summer Quiz! At the same time we ran the quiz for our Readers, we also ran it amongst the Kennel Staff, which was great fun and led to a little healthy competition! Please find below the winners. Thank you to everyone who submitted an entry. Enjoy your prizes!

#### The readers winners are:

1<sup>st</sup> Prize – Penny Erikson

2<sup>nd</sup> Prize – Kim Fuqua

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize – Catherine Manning

#### The staff winners are:

1<sup>st</sup> Prize -Sajee

2<sup>nd</sup> Prize – Cham and Tharanga

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize – Suranga





## Vets Corner

In this month's Vets Corner we're going to look at the topic of Nutrition. To ensure your pet remains healthy it's important to know what their bodies need to function correctly, so we're going to take some time to explore this important topic.

Did you know for instance that cats are pure carnivores, but that dogs are omnivores? This means that cats cannot sustain life unless they consume meat in some form. Dogs however are able to survive on plant material and don't have to eat meat. They do of course do better on a balance of both plant and meat based food, but if needed, could survive on plant life. It's also worth remembering that if they are only fed 100% meat for extended periods of time, this is not good for them either and can damage their overall health as they will miss out on all the vitamins and minerals that they need.

As with humans, the food our pets eat helps enable their bodies to function and produce the required vitamins for good health. Some of these are produced by the body itself and some are added to the pre-prepared food by manufacturers. Cats in particular need numerous chemicals which cannot be reproduced by pet owners and therefore, buying a good quality cat food is the best thing you can do for your cat.

When it comes to dogs, there are many feeding options available and as a dog owner, choosing what to feed your dog is not easy! As a rule of thumb, the higher the price of the food, the higher the quality and the cheaper the food, the cheaper the ingredients and the lower the quality.

Making the right choice in food starts with reading the list of ingredients. This isn't always as easy as it sounds! We know when reading the list of ingredients in human food that there are various additives and preservatives included, and the same is true for pet food. The key thing to remember is

that the first 3 ingredients are the most important. Ingredients must be listed according the weight of the particular ingredient in descending order.

So, looking at the top 3 will tell you what the food mostly consists of and this will tell you whether it is mostly vegetable based or meat based.

Vets are often asked whether owners should feed canned, or dry food, or both. If you have a choice, a dry food is often much better than a canned food as the wet food consists of a high proportion of water, which adds no nutrition at all!

Feeding a lower quality food to your pet over a period of time can encourage the development of allergies or food intolerances. Symptoms of this can be dry, itchy skin, reddened swollen ears, compulsive licking of the paws, vomiting and diarrhea. Allergies and intolerances can be difficult to diagnose and can take months to develop. If you think your dog might have intolerances you should consult your vet and you should consider finding a better quality food.

An additional benefit of feeding high quality food is that your dog will need less of it to fulfill their nutritional needs and will pass less faeces because there is less 'waste' from the food. Less to pick up, is always good!

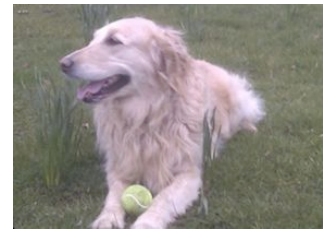
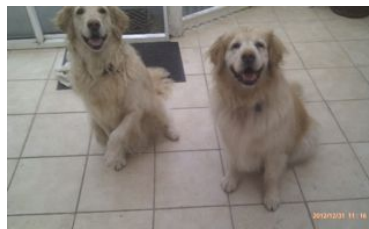
There are also other forms of diets available for dogs; the Raw Food diet being just one of them. In the November edition we plan to explain more about it and the benefits of it to your dog. If you are using the Raw Food diet with your dog, please let us know as it would be great to talk to you.

If you have any questions on this or would like to see a particular topic covered in a future edition, please write to [newsletter@delmonkennels.com](mailto:newsletter@delmonkennels.com)



## The loss of a special friend

I can remember bringing Nala, our golden retriever puppy to Delmon Boarding Kennels for play and socialisation. I know now that proper "Puppy Socialisation" does not mean letting lots of puppies play together but means letting your puppy meet socially adept mature dogs who can be role models for the puppy and from whom the puppy can learn good manners. Well, the socialisation at the Kennels was spot on as Nala has become a very well balanced and socially adept dog. However, whilst at the Kennels Nala was to meet her best friend, who also became one of the most loving and positive influences on us as a family. A golden retriever just three months older than Nala was boarding. From the instant she and Nala met they were inseparable. Her name was Kiara. Kiara was at the Kennels and was available for adoption and therefore we couldn't resist adopting her. She was such a happy, playful dog who just loved her tennis ball, especially if it was thrown into water. She loved diving headlong in to retrieve it and could do this for hours on end. When at the beach if she decided to go out a little further than normal to investigate something Nala would pace anxiously at the water's edge until Kiara came back safe and sound. I now believe that dogs can scent under water. We saw this on one occasion where Kiara found a dead starfish at the water's edge. In the interest of hygiene, I threw the starfish into the sea at a reasonable distance. The water was not very clear and must have been a couple of metres deep where it landed. However, intrepid Kiara raced in after the starfish and having completely submerged for a minute or so came back up to the surface proudly exhibiting the retrieved starfish!



What was especially memorable about Kiara was her example as the perfect companion dog. Wherever we took her she would be perfectly behaved and would only interact with people if invited first. When let off the lead in any park she would ignore other dogs and focus completely on her handler while engaging in her favourite game of fetch the tennis ball. If another dog took her ball she would sniff any other ball around but leave them be as she only played with her own ball. She would trot respectfully back to her handler and sit politely while her handler rescued her ball from the other dog. Even when other dogs bothered her she would hold her head high, tennis ball in her mouth and trot calmly back to her handler. Her claim to fame was winning the waggiest tail competition while attending a John Rogerson Ultimate Recall course, which she passed with flying colours. The final test was where she was kept in a park while her handler was escorted out of the park, out of sight behind a building and locked to a gate! The key to the lock was placed on Kiara's collar. If she did not recall to her owner then it would have been a long night spent locked to the gate! We were so proud when she passed with flying colours and freed me to write this tribute to a wonderful dog who gave many long years of joy, happiness and love to a very grateful but saddened family. Thank you Pauline for bringing Kiara into our lives. Kiara, we miss you terribly and you will always be in our hearts.

---

*What would you get if you crossed a cat and a donkey?*

*A Mewl !!*



## Feedback & Suggestions

If you have any feedback, suggestions for articles, or questions for Ask Pauline, please write to us at

[newsletter@delmonkennels.com](mailto:newsletter@delmonkennels.com)



Delmon Boarding Kennels

---