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Report on the NIH sponsored Shar-Pei Fever Syndrome Project



Dr. Linda Tintle

The unique breeding history of the domestic dog offers an unparalleled opportunity to explore the genetic basis of both diseases and other traits. Since domestication ~30,000 years ago, humans have selectively bred dogs for specific attributes, a process magnified by the strict breed standards in recent centuries. This history has created a genome structure that makes disease gene mapping particularly easy in dogs. Each breed has relatively low levels of

diversity and little recombination has occurred since the creation of the breed. Also as desirable traits have been selected for,

certain risk factors for disease have accumulated in specific breeds. Thus, by looking in high-risk breeds, one can expect to find important disease genes.

The Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard recently published the dog genome sequence and have now developed a powerful strategy and a new tool to find genetic risk factors using blood samples from a small number of dogs. The SNP chip tool can survey the genome of a dog by looking at only 26,000 spots in the genome that vary between individuals. By comparing cases and controls within a breed (using data from the SNP chip to perform genome wide association mapping), one can identify regions of the genome that look different between the groups. These regions contain disease genes. To zoom in on the actual mutation that causes the disease, several breeds displaying the same disease phenotype are used for fine-mapping. Once a disease mutation has been identified in multiple breeds, we will further study its function to elucidate affected pathways and potential targets for treatment.

In 2007, two proof of principle experiments were published showing that trait mapping is possible with only 20 dogs for monogenic traits. First, the white coat color in boxers and bull terriers was mapped and a regulatory mutation in the melanocyte specific isoform of the MITF gene was identified. Second, the mutation causing hair ridge and associated dermoid sinus in Rhodesian and Thai Ridgeback dogs was identified as a ~130 kb duplication including three fibroblast growth factors; FGF3, FGF4 and FGF19.

In a collaboration of the NIH, the Wurtsboro Veterinary Clinic, the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard and Uppsala University, we have performed a genome-wide search for the genetic risk factors for Shar-Pei Fever. We used DNA samples from 31 affected and 31

unaffected Shar-Pei from the United States of America. Our results suggest that there are two risk factors underlying Shar-Pei Fever. Each of the identified regions contains only a few genes, so we are now working to define the exact gene and mutation for each of these two regions. As described above, we typically use two breeds to define the exact region containing the mutation but since to our knowledge Shar-Pei Fever has not been described in any other breed, we cannot do that in with this disease. Instead, we recently decided to collect samples from Shar-Pei dogs in Sweden and to include them in the fine mapping hoping that they will help us zoom in on the mutation. This sample collection is now actively ongoing with 3 cases and 11 controls collected at this point.

It may seem surprising that we have found two loci based on the original studies that suggested a single recessive gene. However, the pedigrees studied are complex enough with a strong founder effect that multiple genes cannot be excluded. Thus, we were not entirely surprised to find two regions of the genome that influence Shar-Pei Fever. Also we have seen the same thing for several other diseases in breeds currently under study and we think that it will be a more general feature of dog genetics that several loci may be hiding in pedigrees where the inheritance initially looks recessive. Together the problems of a lack of a second breed and the multiple loci have provided a bigger challenge than what could have been hoped, but we want to assure the Shar-Pei community that we are continuously working on this study and that we hope to have the exact genes and mutations relatively soon.

The presence of multiple interactive mutations may explain the extreme difficulty that conscientious Shar-Pei breeders have experienced trying to breed away from this

disorder. It may also explain the widely varying degrees of severity and life- expectancy of dogs experiencing Shar-Pei fever and/or amyloidosis.

Shar-Pei Fever is an autoinflammatory syndrome (not autoimmune). The underlying genetic defects most likely involve disruption in how the messengers of inflammation are controlled, leading to chronic elevations of these mediators in the bloodstream. It is a periodic fever syndrome that is characterized by random inflammatory events with fever, sometimes with joint swelling, that usually last 24-48 hrs.

The chronic background inflammation puts the dogs at risk for developing reactive systemic amyloidosis which can lead to early death from kidney or liver failure. Not every dog with Shar-Pei Fever will develop amyloidosis but the fevers are a marker for the presence of the predisposing autoinflammatory condition.

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Kristin's puppies, Kensei and West taking a rest.

Heavy Hounds, Fat Cats: Pets Need To Count Calories, Too



10 year old, Acubs Morning Star

Photo submitted by Beth Wright of the Phoenix Shar-Pei Club

If you've got a fat cat or a portly pooch, your pet may be in danger.

Pets need to count their calories – at this time of the year, or any time, for that matter, experts say. Animals can suffer from obesity just as people can, and like humans, it can shorten their lives or at the very least, affect their quality of life.

It's estimated as many as 25 percent of dogs and cats that enter a pet clinic are overweight, says Dr. Alice Blue-McLendon, a veterinarian at Texas A&M University's College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences.



Photo provided by the Northern California Shar-Pei Club

The reasons for obesity in animals are the same ones that apply in humans. Number one is over eating, and the second major reason is lack of exercise. The rule of taking in more calories than you burn equals excess weight is true for pets just as in people.

“Almost all obese pets are mature animals, usually two years or older,” she says. “The majority of obesity in dogs and cats occurs from about ages 2 to 10. It's easier to get dogs to exercise than it is cats. It's harder to manage weight control on cats.”

Animals that have been neutered are more likely to be obese, Blue-McLendon explains.

Obese animals can suffer a variety of health problems. Some develop heart and liver problems, arthritis, diabetes, bladder cancer and skin disorders. Also, animals that are overweight have a higher surgical risk while undergoing anesthesia.

Animals that are obese can have a shortened life span compared to an animal whose weight is normal, she adds.

Obesity in dogs occurs in some breeds more than others. Breeds that have a genetic tendency toward obesity include Dachshunds, Labrador Retrievers, Cocker Spaniels, Beagles, Basset Hounds and some Rottweilers, she notes.

Obesity in cats is not confined to any specific breed, Blue-McLendon points out, but she adds that a significant proportion of the cat population tends to be overweight. Diabetes and hepatic lipidosis, a potentially fatal liver disease, are conditions that affect obese cats.

As with humans, controlling obesity requires no magic formula.

“The pet owner needs to decrease the amount of food given to the animal,” she points out.

“If the animal is obese, you need to take it to your veterinarian and he or she can diagnose the problem. It’s important to take the pet in every 3-4 weeks to be re-weighed to determine if it is getting closer to its optimal weight.

“Exercising your pet is also recommended, and if a dog enjoys swimming, it helps a great deal.

“Sometimes, a special diet may have to be prescribed and these are available from many pet food companies,” she says. “There are currently no medicines available that control obesity in animals, but numerous companies are working on such drugs right now. In the meantime, pet owners should be careful they don’t over feed their pets. The No.1 nutritional problem for all pets is obesity.”

Pet Talk is a service of the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, Texas A &M University.

From Texas A & M News & Information Newsletter
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<http://tamunews.tamu.edu/archives/article.php?articleid=3897&month=1&year=2007>

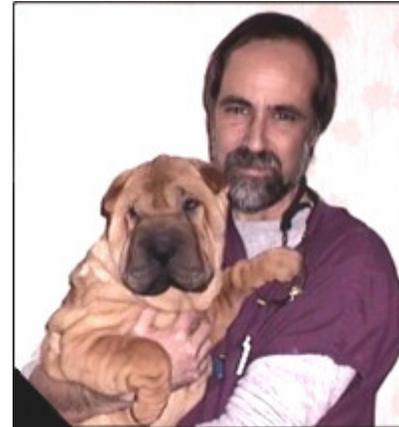


FALLEN ANGELS

Sharpe, a rescued female owned by Marchelle Heslep and Richard Scherer. She brought a lot of happiness and Love to her owners in her 10 short years.

Bear- wise ol' Shar-Pei owned by Laura Brown. Surely he is looking and watching from heaven.

Gone but never forgotten!



DR. VIDT'S CORNER:

Health and Behavior in the Shar-Pei

Often the first sign of disease in the Shar-Pei is a change in behavior or personality. This leads us to several conclusions. First, it is very important to know what the normal behavior of a

particular dog is. While Shar-Pei possess several behaviors in common, there certainly exists wide variation among individuals. The veterinarian is usually not aware of the "normal" behavior of a specific dog and must rely on the owner to furnish that information. Second, the owner must understand that the veterinarian may want to pursue diagnostic testing in order to determine if the behavior changes are caused by an underlying physical disease problem. Third, it must be realized that dogs can have emotional or mental disease. Fourth, the behavior of a dog can vary because of age, stress, environment, interactions with other

animals and people, smells sounds, etc. Also we need to realize that behavior is not "static"-it changes over time.

There can be considerable overlap between the behavioral changes related to disease and the physical disease itself. Behaviors are categorized into eating, drinking, sleeping, elimination, play, and a nebulous category known as "personality". Changes in personality are the most highly variable and difficult to grasp. Owners know when their pet is "not acting like herself", but cannot often describe this change in specific terms. Personality includes interactions with the owner, other people, other dogs and other animals and covers areas such as aggression, dominance, territoriality, etc.

Disease can influence behavior in several ways. Diseases such as liver disease, kidney disease, diabetes mellitus, bacterial diseases resulting in septicemia such as pyometra and others are associated with the accumulation of waste products in the blood which effect the brain causing depression, slow mentality and changes in personality. Other diseases can cause generalized weakness, which can effect the dog's responses and behavior. Addison's (hypoadrenocorticism), myasthenia gravis, and hypothyroidism are examples of diseases causing weakness. Diseases resulting in fever can manifest as changes in behavior and personality. Familial Shar-Pei Fever is a prime example of this. Shar-Pei in an FSF episode show several typical behavior changes related to the fever and pain of the disease - decreased appetite, decreased activity, pain often with aggression, and personality changes which alert the owner that this dog is sick. Aggression often manifests itself in diseases characterized by pain. Examples include FSF (painful hocks), degenerative joint disease (arthritis), abscesses, some types of cancer, glaucoma, etc.

There are primary behavioral disorders in dogs now being studied. These include separation anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorders and others. These can be managed through behavior modification and drug therapy. Perhaps some forms of aggression and dominance behavior also fit into this category.

What clues tell us that a change in behavior might be caused by disease? The following are general guidelines:

- Duration of the abnormal behavior. The longer the abnormal behavior continues the greater the chance it is caused by an underlying disease process.
- Behavior changes vs. personality changes. Changes in behavior are more often associated with disease than are changes in personality.
- Behavior changes with accompanying physical changes. Behavior changes with physical changes such as weight loss, vomiting, diarrhea, etc. are more often associated with disease.
- Abrupt changes in behavior. Generally, rapid changes in behavior are associated with a disease process.

Often, specific behavior changes help to pinpoint the problem. A dog with a head tilt and constant scratching of the ear on that side probably has an ear infection. A dog that begins to strain to urinate and urinate more often probably has some type of urinary problem. Other changes in behavior are not specific enough to help us define the problem. An example is loss of appetite. Can the dog eat, but he chooses not to? Or is the dog physically unable to eat? Or is the dog not eating as much as the owner thinks he should?

Another aspect of behavior involves hormonal influences in intact animals. Almost any behavior change, which occurs during a female's heat cycle, can be normal. Most

females tend to not show extreme behavior changes, but the changes in behavior seen tend to be consistent for that individual. Males, likewise, can show behavior changes when females are in heat. Many males show decreased appetite and increased activity in the spring and fall coinciding with the heat cycles of females. Some males become irritable at these times of the year as well resulting in aggression or increased territorial behavior.

A consistent period of behavior changes occurs in geriatric dogs. These are behaviors associated with senility. The brain begins to wear out in old age just as other body systems do. Many older pets develop inattention, selective hearing, pacing, stereotypic licking behavior, "zoning out" behavior (staring at a wall for several minutes) and other abnormal behaviors. These are changes that manifest themselves without underlying disease or metabolic changes.

Many behaviors are caused by emotional problems. These can be due to changes in environment, routine, pack order, loss of another dog or family member, etc. In this category we place obsessive-compulsive disorders, separation anxiety, overly aggressive behaviors, destructive chewing, inappropriate elimination and others. Here we get into the "genetic vs. environment" controversy - are emotional problems inherited or related to early social interactions? I do believe we see some lines where temperament is a problem so I feel genetics does play a significant role in behavior.

In conclusion, there are not really specific changes in behavior, which serve as a marker for specific diseases. Changes in behavior tell us a problem exists and then it's up to the veterinarian and the owner to begin to piece the puzzle together. Very often this involves preliminary diagnostics such as blood work, radiographs, urinalysis, etc. The real challenge often involves some

detective work to determine what changes in the dog's environment may have contributed to the problem.

<http://www.drjwv.com/faq/?view=33&name=Behavior%20and%20Disease>



The oldest reliable age recorded for a dog is 29 years, 5 months for a Queensland 'heeler' called Bluey in Victoria, Australia. The average dog lives to around 15 years of age.



How to Properly Socialize a Puppy

by Alice Fix

The best dog that you can have is a dog that is well socialized. What exactly does that mean? American Heritage Dictionary defines it as follows:

- 1.** To place under government or group ownership or control.
- 2.** To make fit for companionship with others; make sociable.
- 3.** To convert or adapt to the needs of society.

Most people want a dog that is under control, is a good companion, and can adapt to new situations easily. Some dogs naturally adapt to new situations and others not so much. But there are things that you can do to help puppies become well adjusted so that they can be great companions.

This training and socialization should start at the breeder's home. Anyone that has a litter of puppies should be having different people coming over to handle and play with the puppies. They should include men, women, and children. Puppies can sometimes be fearful to things that they have never seen before, and that is

why it is to the puppy's advantage to see and meet all kinds of people and have good experiences with them. Each time that a puppy meets a new person, they register in their brain whether it was a good experience or not. The more positive experiences puppies have with people makes it easier for them to decide that most people are good and a lot of fun. New people can help puppies to have a good experience with them by offering the puppy a treat whenever the puppy comes to them or lets the person touch them.

Puppies also need to have experience being on a lot of different surfaces. As they are developing and growing, they should have had the experience of walking on carpet, concrete, grass, tile or whatever different flooring surfaces that are in and around the breeder's home. The pads on a puppy's foot are sensitive and they can easily recognize when their feet are touching a surface that feels different than anything that they have been on before. They soon learn that just because something feels different on their feet doesn't mean that it is something to worry about. This helps to build their confidence in having different experiences and knowing that everything is going to be okay regardless of the surface on the floor. Some people take this kind of training a step further, and lay out things on the floor for the puppies to walk on. The kinds of things they put on the floor can be as simple as a plastic garbage bag to a piece of plastic fencing. They then encourage the puppies to walk on whatever is put on the floor by offering treats etc to get them to walk on it. You can lead a puppy across the plastic fencing etc. by putting the treat in front of the puppy's mouth, but not letting him have the treat until he steps on the obstacle. This does two things at once. It helps build your trust with the puppy so that he knows he can trust what you ask him to do and nothing bad will happen. It also teaches them

that just because something feels different or looks different doesn't mean that it is bad.

Puppies need to experience a lot of different noises as well. You can run the vacuum near the puppies. First time they hear it, they will most likely take off running, but over time they will realize that there is nothing to fear from that noise, and accept it as a part of daily activity.

It is also a good idea to take them outside so they can hear cars going by. This must be done in a safe environment, so that they puppy doesn't get startled and run into the traffic. You can do this by setting up a puppy pen in the front yard, or wait until the puppies are leash broken and take them on a leash.



Naomi, Fluffy and Griffin

My sons were on the football team, so I took the puppies one at a time several different times over to the school when the team was walking out for practice or coming back from the practice field. The cleats on their shoes made a distinctive noise on the pavement, and the puppies learned not to fear it. As a bonus, on occasion

some of the players would even come over to pet the puppies.

I also take the puppies over to the elementary school when it was time for school to let out for the day. Kids make lots of noise when they are dismissed for the day. We start out at a distance, and work our way up closer to all the activity. You must use caution to be sure that your puppy doesn't get away from you, because that could be a disaster, but as long as your puppy is safely in tow, it is a great experience for them. There are cars starting up and moving, and kids running around everywhere. Plus many of the kids like puppies and will come to pet the puppy. The puppy soon learns that it is lots of fun and there is nothing to be worried or frightened about. This helps to build a history of good experiences in your puppy's mind, and can help them to readily accept new things and experiences.

It is also a good idea to put puppies up on a table. When dogs have to go to the vet's office, they have to get on the vet's table. It is a good idea to get them used to that early in life, and to build good experiences with being up on something like a vet's table. It will make vet visits easier on your dog and easier on the vet. Just as a side note, vet's tables are stainless steel and very slippery. Some vets have rubber mats over the stainless steel table and others do not. I also take a bath mat with me when I go to the vet's. I place it on the table before I put my dog up on the table. It gives my dog more traction on the table, and also is something that they are familiar with in unfamiliar surroundings.

Hopefully the breeder of your puppy has done at least some of these things. If not, once you have your new puppy, you can begin doing these things right away. The younger they are to have different experiences, the shorter the learning process is.

If your puppy is fearful, you can take them for trips to pet stores. I advise you to use caution when taking your puppy to a pet store. All dogs are allowed there, and there is no training requirement for dogs to enter the store. If there are other dogs there, cautiously let your puppy meet the new dogs, but be prepared to grab your puppy to protect it. One bad experience will take time to relearn with new good experiences.

Another good place to take your puppy is to a training class. You can just go with your puppy to visit, but an even better idea is to sign up for a puppy kindergarten class. These classes are especially designed to help train a new puppy to be a good companion. Usually they teach some basic commands like sit, stay, come, etc, but they are also a good way to socialize your puppy with other puppies of different breeds.

In my opinion, socializing your puppy is the best thing that you can do to help your puppy grow into a well rounded good companion. I have seen it happen all too often that a breeder just leaves their puppies in the kennel and hasn't done any work to socialize them. They sell a puppy that is six months old, and fearful of everything. It is terrified to be in your house and terrified of you and your family. Since this kind of dog doesn't have a history of good experiences, you must do a lot of work to try and correct this kind of problem. Sometimes you can correct this problem with lots of work and dedication, and other times it might be too late.

If you have any questions about whether or not the puppy that you are looking to buy has been properly socialized, ask the breeder the following questions:

1. Has this dog ever been inside a house?
2. Where was this puppy raised?
3. Has this dog ever been around kids?

4. How does this dog get along with men?
Women?
5. How does this dog travel in the car?
6. How does this dog get along with other dogs?
7. What steps have you taken to socialize this puppy?

It has been my experience that you will pay the same amount of money for a dog that is properly socialized as you will for one that is not. It might be worth your money to invest in a dog from a breeder that has invested their time in helping to insure that you get a well adjusted dog by doing the proper socialization before it leaves to go to its new home. After meeting the puppy, if there is a question in your mind as to how well the puppy was socialized, you might want to try looking elsewhere for the new companion for your family.



JOKE CORNER

Two guys were walking their dogs--one had a German Shepherd and the other had a Chihuahua. The man with the Shepherd suggested going into a bar for a drink. The other man says, "They're not going to let dogs into the bar." And the first guy says, "No? Watch this." So he puts on some dark glasses, act like the German Shepherd is his seeing-eye dog, walks into the bar and orders a drink. And no one says anything. So the second guy takes out some dark glasses, slips them on, and walks his Chihuahua into the bar. The bartender says, "Sorry--we don't allow dogs in here." And the man says, "It's okay, it's my seeing-eye dog." The bartender laughs and says, "This Chihuahua is your seeing-eye dog?" And the guy says, "They gave me a chihuahua?"



DOG FACTS

Staring directly into the eyes of a strange dog may be interpreted as a challenge and may actually encourage the dog to bite you.

People with more than one dog shouldn't try to treat them all as equals. Because pack position is important to a dog, this only encourages jealousy games.

Dogs become loyal not because you feed them, but because of the companionship you give them.



Photo by Bob Watson

Photo of club members from the Christmas Party
Back row: Jere Evans, Richard Scherer, Louise Watson, John & Cindy Wright, Alice Fix, Kay Rosenberger **Second Row:** Marchelle Heslep, Kim Sanger, Elsa Douglas, Joan Franson **Front Row:** The cute Wright kids.



[Man in India Marries Dog As Atonement.](http://jwalkblog.com/index.php?/weblog/posts/man_marries_dog/)

Just another day in the land of the superstitious:

A man in southern India married a female dog in a traditional Hindu ceremony as an attempt to atone for stoning two other dogs to death - an act he believes cursed him - a newspaper reported Tuesday.

P. Selvakumar married the sari-draped former stray named Selvi, chosen by family members and then bathed and clothed for the ceremony Sunday at a Hindu temple in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, the Hindustan Times newspaper said.

Selvakumar, 33, told the paper he had been suffering since he stoned two dogs to death and hung their bodies from a tree 15 years ago. "After that my legs and hands got paralyzed and I lost hearing in one ear," he said in the report.

The paper said an astrologer had told Selvakumar the wedding was the only way he could cure the maladies.

The dog did not immediately return our calls.

http://jwalkblog.com/index.php?/weblog/posts/man_marries_dog/



For the first time since 2001, the OFA will be increasing its fees on some of its tests. The OFA now accepts credit cards for all application payments, and there is a space at the bottom of each application for that information. Starting January 1, 2008, fees will increase for the OFA Hip and OFA Elbow databases. The table below shows the current fees along with the new fees.

Applications Received: before 12/31/07 after 1/1/08

Animals Over 24 Months

Hip dysplasia database only.....	\$30.00....	\$35.00
Hips plus elbows (together).....	\$35.00....	\$40.00
Elbow dysplasia database only	\$25.00....	\$35.00
Litter of 3 or more.....	\$75.00....	\$90.00
submitted together		

Kennel Rate—Individuals submitted as a group, owned/co-owned by same person.

Minimum of 5 individuals. . \$15 per study...\$15 per study

Animals Under 24 Months

Preliminary hip evaluation.....	\$25.00.....	\$30.00
Preliminary elbow evaluation.....	\$25.00.....	\$30.00
Preliminary hips plus elbows.....	\$30.00.....	\$35.00
submitted together		
Litter of 3 or more.....	\$45.00.....	\$60.00

Consultation

Other radiographic studies.....	\$25.00.....	\$30.00
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For now, fees on all other OFA tests remain unchanged.

The Old Man and the Dog

by Catherine Moore



"Watch out! You nearly broad sided that car!" My father yelled at me. "Can't you do anything right?"

Those words hurt worse than blows. I turned my head toward the elderly man in the seat beside me, daring me to challenge him. A lump rose in my throat as I averted my eyes. I wasn't prepared for another battle.

"I saw the car, Dad. Please don't yell at me when I'm driving." My voice was measured and steady, sounding far calmer than I really felt.

Dad glared at me, then turned away and settled back. At home I left Dad in front of the television and went outside to collect my thoughts. Dark, heavy clouds hung in the air with a promise of rain. The rumble of distant thunder seemed to echo my inner turmoil.

What could I do about him?

Dad had been a lumberjack in Washington and Oregon. He had enjoyed being outdoors and had reveled in pitting his strength against the forces of nature. He had entered grueling lumberjack competitions, and had placed often. The shelves in his house were filled with trophies that attested to his prowess.

The years marched on relentlessly. The first time he couldn't lift a heavy log, he joked about it; but later that same day I saw him outside alone, straining to lift it. He became irritable whenever anyone teased him about his advancing age, or when he couldn't do something he had done as a younger man.

Four days after his sixty-seventh birthday, he had a heart attack. An ambulance sped him to the hospital while a paramedic administered CPR to keep blood and oxygen flowing. At the hospital, Dad was rushed into an operating room. He was lucky; he survived.

But something inside Dad died. His zest for life was gone. He obstinately refused to follow doctor's orders. Suggestions and offers of help were turned aside with sarcasm and insults. The number of visitors thinned, then finally stopped altogether. Dad was left alone.

My husband, Dick, and I asked Dad to come live with us on our small farm. We hoped the fresh air and rustic atmosphere would help him adjust. Within a week after he moved in, I regretted the invitation. It seemed nothing was satisfactory. He criticized everything I did. I became frustrated and moody. Soon I was taking my pent-up anger out on Dick. We began to bicker and argue. Alarmed, Dick sought out our pastor and explained the situation. The clergyman set up weekly counseling appointments for us. At the close of each session he prayed, asking God to soothe Dad's troubled mind. But the months wore on and God was silent. Something had to be done and it was up to me to do it.

The next day I sat down with the phone book and methodically called each of the mental health clinics listed in the Yellow Pages. I explained my problem to each of the sympathetic voices that answered. In vain. Just when I was giving up hope, one of the voices suddenly exclaimed, "I just read something that might help you! Let me go get the article." I listened as she read. The article described a remarkable study done at a nursing home. All of the patients were under treatment for chronic depression. Yet their attitudes had improved dramatically when they were given responsibility for a dog.

I drove to the animal shelter that afternoon. After I filled out a questionnaire, a uniformed officer led me to the kennels. The odor of disinfectant stung my nostrils as I moved down the row of pens. Each contained five to seven dogs. Long-haired dogs, curly-haired dogs, black dogs, spotted dogs—all jumped up, trying to reach me. I studied each one but rejected one after the other for various reasons—too big, too small, too much hair. As I neared the last pen a dog in the shadows of the far corner struggled to his feet, walked to the front of the run and sat down. It was a pointer, one of the dog world's aristocrats. But this was a caricature of the breed. Years had etched his face and muzzle with shades of gray. His hipbones jutted out in lopsided triangles. But it was his eyes that caught and held my attention. Calm and clear, they beheld me unwaveringly.

I pointed to the dog. "Can you tell me about him?" The officer looked, then shook his head in puzzlement.

"He's a funny one. Appeared out of nowhere and sat in front of the gate. We brought him in, figuring someone would be right down to claim him. That was two weeks ago and we've heard nothing. His time is up tomorrow." He gestured helplessly.

As the words sank in I turned to the man in horror. "You Mean you're going to kill him?"

"Ma'am," he said gently, "that's our policy. We don't have room for every unclaimed dog."

I looked at the pointer again. The calm brown eyes awaited my decision. "I'll take him," I said.

I drove home with the dog on the front seat beside me. When I reached the house I honked the horn twice. I was helping my prize out of the car when Dad shuffled onto the front porch.

"Ta-da! Look what I got for you, Dad!" I said excitedly.

Dad looked, then wrinkled his face in disgust. "If I had wanted a dog I would have gotten one. And I would have picked out a better specimen than that bag of bones. Keep it! I don't want it" Dad waved his arm scornfully and turned back toward the house.

Anger rose inside me. It squeezed together my throat muscles and pounded into my temples.

"You'd better get used to him, Dad. He's staying!" Dad ignored me. "Did you hear me, Dad?" I screamed. At those words Dad whirled angrily, his hands clenched at his sides, his eyes narrowed and blazing with hate.

We stood glaring at each other like duelists, when suddenly the pointer pulled free from my grasp. He wobbled toward my dad and sat down in front of him. Then slowly, carefully, he raised his paw.

Dad's lower jaw trembled as he stared at the uplifted paw. Confusion replaced the anger in his eyes. The pointer waited patiently. Then Dad was on his knees hugging the animal.

It was the beginning of a warm and intimate friendship. Dad named the pointer Cheyenne. Together he and

Cheyenne explored the community. They spent long hours walking down dusty lanes. They spent reflective moments on the banks of streams, angling for tasty trout. They even started to attend Sunday services together, Dad sitting in a pew and Cheyenne lying quietly at his feet.

Dad and Cheyenne were inseparable throughout the next three years. Dad's bitterness faded, and he and Cheyenne made many friends. Then late one night I was startled to feel Cheyenne's cold nose burrowing through our bed covers. He had never before come into our bedroom at night. I woke Dick, put on my robe and ran into my father's room. Dad lay in his bed, his face serene. But his spirit had left quietly sometime during the night.

Two days later my shock and grief deepened when I discovered Cheyenne lying dead beside Dad's bed. I wrapped his still form in the rag rug he had slept on. As Dick and I buried him near a favorite fishing hole, I silently thanked the dog for the help he had given me in restoring Dad's peace of mind.

The morning of Dad's funeral dawned overcast and dreary. This day looks like the way I feel, I thought, as I walked down the aisle to the pews reserved for family. I was surprised to see the many friends Dad and Cheyenne had made filling the church. The pastor began his eulogy. It was a tribute to both Dad and the dog who had changed his life. And then the pastor turned to Hebrews 13:2. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers."

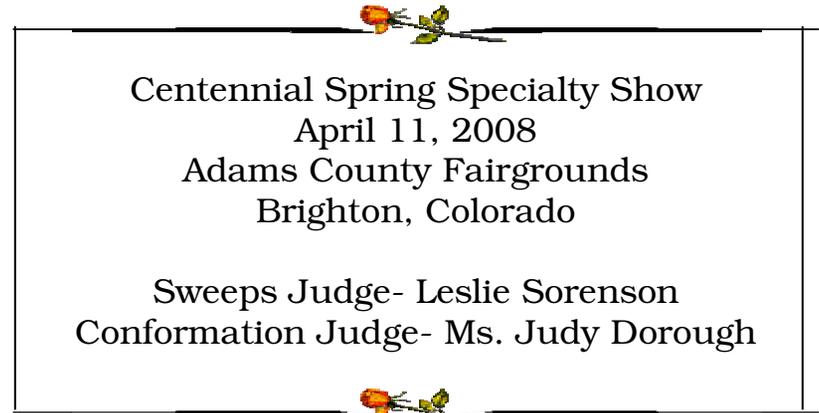
"I've often thanked God for sending that angel," he said.

For me, the past dropped into place, completing a puzzle that I had not seen before: the sympathetic voice that had just read the right article....

Cheyenne's unexpected appearance at the animal shelter....his calm acceptance and complete devotion to

my father...and the proximity of their deaths. And suddenly I understood. I knew that God had answered my prayers after all.

<http://www.gaylasgarden.com/pets/oldman.htm>



How to Clean a Keyboard

I am sure that at some point in time we have all spilled some thing sticky on our keyboards. I was recently talking to someone that manages computers for a large office, and she gave me this tip. It is not for the faint of heart.

If your keyboard has quite working because of sticky spill, just unplug it from the computer and run it through the dishwasher. First you need to shake out all the spill that you can. Then you put it in the dishwasher upside down on the top rack. Use the normal clean cycle with regular dishwasher detergent, but be sure that the drying cycle is turned off. When the dishwasher is finished, remove it and turn it upside down on a drain board and let it sit for several days until it is fully dry. It should work like new after it is dried out.

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DISCLAIMER

This newsletter is for informational purposes only, and the intent is to provide sources of possible information and help for owners of dogs. The editor/publisher does not in any way endorse or make claims as to the accuracy for any of the medical, treatments, therapies, medicines, or information, described or quoted herein. Readers are directed to consult with licensed veterinarians for all medical advice. Although every effort is made to avoid factual errors, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of any of the content of the publication.

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A note from the Editor:

We would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to contribute an article to this newsletter. The Rocky Mountain Wrinkle is a club publication, and as such requires the participation of club members through out the year. Your participation will help to make this publication meaningful and worthwhile for the membership of the club. All contributions and ideas are greatly appreciated.

Please forward your input for inclusion to the Publisher at the address listed below.

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