

REFLECTIONS IN NATURE

Bill Bower

Recently, the 2018 National Dog Show first place winner was Whiskey the Whippet. The Whippet is a dog breed of medium-size. They are a sighthound breed that originated in England, where they descended from greyhounds. Whippets today still strongly resemble a smaller greyhound. The Whippet was created in the late 18th Century by crossing small greyhounds with various terriers to create a breed that could course rabbits and kill small vermin.

According to genetic studies, modern day domesticated dogs originated in China, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Before man became a herder or farmer, he struck up an alliance with wild wolf-like creatures. It was originally believed the first domesticated wolves appeared in the Middle East approximately 15,000 years ago. Eventually these canines were tamed and domesticated, not only for company but to help man to survive.

It is not certain whether man approached the wolf or vice versa. Both profited when a kill was made by either wolf or man. Since wolves were very social animals, they lived in groups, with social ranks, in which some wolves claimed leadership. It was believed by some that early human hunters and gatherers actively tamed and bred wolves. Others say that probably wolves domesticated themselves, by scavenging the carcasses left by human hunters, and loitering around campfires. The animals grew tamer with each generation until becoming permanent and suitable companions, with the acceptance of man as their leader. When this occurred the behavior and appearance of wolves began to change.

Dog skeletons have been found with human bones in burial grounds in Europe. There are paintings of hunting dogs dating back to 2,000 B.C. The Metropolitan Museum in New York has a 3,500-year-old-statue of a Babylonian hunter with his dog.

Since early days of mankind, hunters and their dogs have shared a special bond. Hunting dogs were prized possessions and companions in ancient Egypt, Macedonia, Sparta, China and Rome. In 400 B.C., Xenophon, the Greek historian, wrote "Hunting with Dogs", in which he wrote, "In addition to being a companion, hunting dogs have guarded man and his home; protected his herd; carried his burden; drawn his sled and helped fight his battles."

Through the years of being domesticated, dogs have cross-bred so often with wolves and with each other, that their genes are like a completely homogenous bowl of soup. The patterns we see could have been created by 17 different narrative scenarios, and we have no way of discriminating between them. The American Kennel Club keeps the official record of all dog breeds. It is the largest registry of dog breeds that is internationally accepted. At the time of this writing, there are 339 recognized breeds of dogs, which are divided into ten groups based upon the

dog's purpose or function; its appearance and size. Britain is responsible for creating more dog breeds than nearly the rest of the world combined.

When humans first arrived in North America the dire wolf (Canis dirus) was still sharing the landscape with the smaller gray wolf (Canis lupus). The dire wolf (Canis dirus, "fearsome dog") is an extinct species of the genus Canis. It is one of the most famous prehistoric carnivores, in North America, along with its extinct competitor, the saber-toothed cat. The dire wolf's range at 10,000 B.C. extended from southern Alberta to Peru. At least 1,646 dire wolves died at the Rancho La Brea tar pits, in southern California. These pits (25,000 year accumulation of asphalt) have trapped thousands of animals, with dire wolves the most common. This suggests that although dire wolf populations were substantial at 10,000 B.C., the dire wolf had disappeared within a few thousand years. The most recent occurrences of the extinct canid are from the western United States in 7,500 B.C., well after humans crossed the Bering Strait.

Coyotes are among the most adaptable of carnivores. For example, consider the behavioral range of this versatile North American mammal, now extending its range eastward. The coyote, which has been around for at least 500,000 years, joined the dire wolf and the gray wolf at the La Brea tar pits; however, being a much smaller cousin, the coyote had to content itself with scavenged leftovers. Today, five types of social organization have been observed among coyotes. They have been seen in packs; resident pairs; solitary residents; transient nomads and in temporary aggregations. Their social flexibility of opportunism as predators, scavengers, and omnivores has allowed the coyotes to move into areas where wolves cannot survive.

Coyotes are believed to have hybridized with gray wolves to form the red wolf population, in the southeastern United States. Approximately forty percent of the offspring between coyotes and dogs are fertile; however, the coyotes that began invading the northeast United States fifty years ago apparently have not interbred regularly with dogs. In spite of their ability to produce fertile offspring, wolves, dogs and coyotes have maintained their distinctiveness through time because each species has a preferred way of life. To understand the relationships of these family members, it could be useful to think of the wolf and coyote as siblings; the wolf as parent to the dog, and all three as second cousins to the fox and other canid species. Although the coyote could have contributed to the gene pool of the native North American dog, genetic, behavioral, and geographic evidence overwhelmingly points to only one direct ancestor, that of the wolf.

It appears to me a dog (today) has become more of a companion to man than ever before.

HEALING HINTS

Rev. Kenneth Marple, M.A.

While bad habits cost us plenty, they also have many pleasurable effects. My worst habit at the moment is my evening snack. It's gotten to the point where, although I wear a size 38, size 40 is sure more comfortable. (I like it a lot when the size 40s are labeled size 38). However, to declare war on the evening snack would be like declaring war on a giant. I really like my evening snack; it is entrenched, it has seniority, it has tenure. If I tried to furlough it, you can bet that my evenings would be ruined. I love the way food tastes! Besides, like most people, my mother comforted me with a bottle--food is still a comfort. At the end of a really bad day, I feel I deserve my snack. Still, that doesn't give the evening snack "best friend" status with me. There is also that tight belt line, indigestion in the middle of the night, and Gloria's (Mrs. Marple's) nagging about it. Besides that, I worry about how I look.

In a general sense, if a habit doesn't "pay off" in some way, it will go away. The trouble is, when we try to stop a bad habit without replacing it with something else, we leave a vacuum where it was. Stopping a bad habit is most effective when it is replaced with some desirable alternative behavior (Martin, G., Pear, J., 1983, p. 44). That's why, when I do battle with food, I always sneak up on it. I never go on a diet; instead, I institute small, permanent "lifestyle" changes. I've switched to low fat milk; I love it --some people don't. Still, there's always one percent. Gloria has cut the saturated fat out of my diet, a "second helping" is a thing of the past, dessert is a treat, I walk more and add physical activity wherever

I can. I park at the always-empty, "far-from-the-store" end of the parking lot --saving "door dings" and providing a little exercise.

I know better than to think food can be furloughed without a sound plan. Fortunately for me, I have developed a taste for many new, more wholesome foods; I can't stand sugar in my coffee or fat in my milk. Now, my newly developed tastes have come to my assistance. I still have the comfort of food; but, I've disarmed it of some of its firepower!

The reason we often fail in our attempts to stop a bad habit is that we fail to put something better in its place. Jesus taught this when he said, "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through water-less regions looking for a resting place, but not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' When it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there" (Luke 11:24-26). When we "clean house" we often leave a vacuum. A totally empty closet is just "asking to be filled!" With junk? I know that cutting out food leaves a vacuum in me! That's why I deal with it through "lifestyle" changes, rather than diets! It may not be realistic to think I can stop my evening snack altogether. However, I have a hunch that I can find something I like with, say, half the calories--right after this tin of short-bread cookies is gone. On second thought, I'll just take these cookies to choir practice coffee-time with me on Sunday. I'll get "a little help from my friends."

SISTER STREET BUREAU

I don't know if I mentioned the fact that when my grandson and I returned from our road trip to Montrose and beyond, we found my old trailer had a flat tire. Well, one out of four (after a lot of years) ain't bad. I had a hard time finding one that was worth while considering, but did after many phone calls. Most of my calls did not produce a good tire, but they would be happy to sell a set of four new ones.

The Urban Renewal down the street continues, and seeing some activity, I made a trip down to see if I could find something news worthy. As

it turned out, the folks were working for the new owner: cleaning, painting, etc. New carpeting was mentioned. I'm no contractor, but I think a new root would be a priority.

I supposed by now you have all heard the remarks made by the newly elected Lady congress person from Michigan. Maybe Lady is the wrong word. Can you imagine what would happen if one went to her country (Palestine) and said something to that effect about that country's leader? An even bigger question is who voted for her? Certainly not any of that state's "deplorables," was it?

BIG POND

Terren Smith

Hi all,
I'm back from vacation. A week in North Carolina and a week at my moms. My Christmas was good. I went to bed at 10:30 p.m. on New Years Eve. Then, I got up and it was New Years Day, 2019.

Prayer List: Neil McDonald, John Siedel, Bill Spack and all who have the flu or bug.

January Birthdays: Josh Lampan (Jan. 6), Mary Ellen Goodwin (Jan. 7), Jackie Smith (Jan. 9), Alex Smith (Jan. 11) and Dave Smith (Jan. 14).

Anniversaries: Bob & Shirley Greenough, Jr. (Jan. 10) and Dick and Jean Strobbridge (Jan. 15). Happy happy to all. It's time for all the snow

birds to be down south. Please check on your neighbor's house.

In the next few weeks, my mother-in-law should be all moved up to Big Pond. Bonnie and I eat the same things. There is not much that we don't like. Dave Sandra and Randy are picky. Black eyed peas and collards, yum! We are going to have some good eats.

Oh, I almost forgot Olivia Amos went on a school ski trip. She fell and broke her ankle in two places. She is going to the doctor's on Monday to find out what they are going to do. Well, that's about all. Have a good week.

GRANVILLE CENTER

Esther Butcher

We sure have had some strange weather this past year. I don't think it will ever quit raining.

Happy Birthday to my nephew, George W. (Billy) Johnson of Franklindale. He will celebrate his birthday on the Jan. 13. Happy Birthday Billy.

Mark, Chris, John and Elizabeth Pratt of Southport, N.C. spent a few days after Christmas with their parents, Gerald and Marjorie Pratt and Ernest and Linda School-ey of Big Flats, N.Y.

Owen and Paul Brackman were New Year's Eve guests of Gerald and Marjorie Pratt.

It was nice to see, that, apparently, the State hired a crew who worked on the

creek in the Center this past week. The creeks really took a beating on the banks with all the flooding we had this year. The government needs to let people fix the creeks on their property as they are in need of much fixing up.

It's 2:30 p.m. on Monday and it's getting dark out. I know we are going to get some bad weather later tonight. I hope it's clear by morning because I have to take my sister for her after appointment.

Monday evening the wind was vicious; blowing awful just like they said it would.

I guess that's it for this week. Enjoy the weather when you can.

The Canton Sentinel

130 Years Ago-1889

This morning's reports indicate that great damage was done by yesterday's storm. It is said that the cupola on the Minnequa House was blown off. All night long the wind blew furiously.

Supervisor John Hare has made a fine improvement in a very dangerous road in Roaring Branch, for which the traveling public will feel grateful.

Bubb & Leibe have had a lively trade in lanterns since the ghost stories were circulated in Roaring Branch.

Even the oldest inhabitant cannot remember a winter which compares with the present amount of rain. The winter of 1876 was remarkable for its warmth, but the rain fall was slight.

Over in Lawrenceville they have a very prompt way of dealing with men who neglect to support their families. One man who preferred to loaf around saloons and let his wife and family subsist on the scant charity of their neighbors was returning home, when he was seized by a party of men, who divested him of every stitch of clothing and then applied a coat of tar and feathers. He is said to be able-bodied but too lazy to work.

RALSTON NEWS

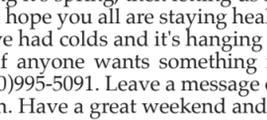
Kathy Austin

Hi all,
I think Mother Nature is playing tricks on us, making us thing it's spring, then letting us know it's still winter. I hope you all are staying healthy. I know some people who have had colds and it's hanging on for weeks.

If anyone wants something in the news, let me know at (570)995-5091. Leave a message or email me at ksacandle@aol.com. Have a great weekend and week.

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