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## Dog of the Month



**Thor**  
**AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy**

## Welcome to Luvk9s' June/July Newsletter

Hope everybody had a fun and safe Fourth of July Holiday weekend!

This month's dog of the month is Thor, one of Luvk9's first AKC S.T.A.R. puppies. Luvk9s will be offering puppy classes this summer for pups under the age of 6 months on Friday mornings, starting July 30, 8:30 AM for six weeks. See our website for more information. One of the articles in this newsletter addresses the importance of PUPPY SOCIALIZATION, so if you or somebody you know has a new puppy, be sure to check it out!

In addition to some fun articles – the SUMMER TRAVEL TIPS article has several interesting websites to look at – we also are including some articles on summer pet safety.

Our pet behavior article is about anthropomorphism, which is assigning human emotions to dogs! The article also references several excellent books, if you would like to learn more about this topic!

Enjoy the summer, and stay cool!

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## Anthropomorphism

### What is it, and what does it have to do with training dogs?

Anthropomorphism is the process of assigning human traits, emotions and motivations to animals. Most of us (myself included!) tend to treat our dogs as if they are little people in furry coats. While this usually is not harmful, in some cases we are doing a disservice to our dogs by accusing them of emotions they are probably not capable of. As a result, we often overlook what the real issue is, and don't address problems correctly.

Dogs and humans share similar brain structures and chemistry, and most experts believe that dogs are capable of the basic primitive emotions such as fear, anger and happiness. But are dogs capable of feeling jealousy, guilt or revenge?

Patricia McConnell discusses these concepts in her book "For the Love of Dog: Understanding Emotion in You and Your Best Friend". While she feels dogs may be capable of feeling jealousy, she thinks that revenge and guilt are more complicated because that "implies an understanding of some moral code....the head-down, guilty look that our dogs give us when we come home and find they had an accident on

## Dog Quote of the Month

**"My goal in life is to be as good a person as my dog already things I am."**

**Anonymous**

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the carpet may seem like guilt to us, but it's appeasement – like waving a white flag. That's not the same as guilt". She goes on to say "I think we have to be very careful about assigning moral attributes to certain behaviors. Saying "he knows better" is not a useful concept".

So...what does this all mean for the average dog owner? If your dog had an accident in the house after you left for work, it's probably not because the dog plotted to mess on your favorite rug to get back at you for leaving. In all likelihood, the dog may not be truly housebroken, something might have frightened the dog and the dog had an accident due to stress, perhaps the dogs eating or drinking schedule was "off" for some reason that morning, or perhaps you were in a hurry leaving the house and simply did not give your dog enough time to do his business. Understanding that your dog wasn't trying to get even with you can help you to figure out what the real issue might have been. If the dog is NOT fully housebroken, perhaps you need to go back to crate training. Maybe you need to get up 15 minutes earlier, so you have enough time in the morning to potty your dog before leaving the house for work. Perhaps the noisy garbage truck was outside which made your dog to nervous to go.

If your dog tears up the cushions from your couch while you are gone, he probably did not do it as revenge to get back at you for leaving him home alone. Perhaps the dog has not learned to stay home alone and was anxious at being left. Perhaps something unexpected terrified him (thunderstorm), and he became anxious. Maybe the dog is too young to be given the run of the house and needs to be safely crated. Perhaps the dog is teething, and did not have appropriate toys to chew on. Perhaps the dog did not get his exercise that morning and was simply bored. Understanding that your dog is not revengeful can help you to determine what the real problem might be and come up with a course of action.

John Ross in his book "Dog Talk" relates a humorous story about his own dog and anthropomorphizing. Mr. Ross had an Irish Setter that would get into the garbage when he wasn't home. Mr. Ross complained to a trainer friend about how frustrated he was as he believed the dog knew he was being bad, because if there was a mess on the floor when he got home, the dog would act guilty and run off and hide. Mr. Ross's friend suggested an experiment. The next day, Mr. Ross put his dog outside in the yard, and dumped the trash all over the kitchen floor himself. He then let his dog back into the house. As soon as his dog saw the trash all over the floor, he started to tremble and ran off and hid. So what did this experiment prove? It proved that the dog wasn't feeling guilty (he wasn't the one who spread the trash all over the floor – Mr. Ross was). What it proved was that the dog realized trash on the floor resulted in him getting yelled at, therefore he ran off and hid. What was probably really happening is that the dog was following his instincts to "hunt", and what better place to hunt than in the trash can! Instead of getting angry at the dog for doing what comes naturally, the better solution for Mr. Ross would be to understand that the dog "really can't help it", and set the dog up for success by moving the trash can to an area where the dog cannot get to it, or making sure the trash can is secured so the contents cannot be dumped.

Temple Grandin, in her book "Animals in Translation", tells the story of a friend of hers who had a similar experience when it came to

housebreaking. Her friend had a one year old German shepherd and a three-month old Golden Retriever puppy. One day, her friend saw the puppy mess on the floor and leave the room. A moment later, the German Shepherd walked in, saw the mess, and got so anxious that she started drooling and cowering. The friend realized that if she had not just seen the puppy make the mess – she might have thought the German Shepherd had, based on how the German Shepherd was acting and might have incorrectly blamed the German Shepherd for the mess. The German Shepherd wasn't acting guilty – the German Shepherd knew that a mess on the floor was trouble, and her reaction was one of fear and appeasement, not guilt. The issue here was simply that the puppy was not fully housebroken – and the German Shepherd had learned that poop on the floor meant the human was going to get upset.

So why is all this important? It's important to realize that dogs are probably not capable of demonstrating human traits such as stubbornness, revenge or spite. Very often, taking a step back and reevaluating the situation can help you figure out the real reason your dog is acting a certain way. If your dog won't sit when asked, it's not because he is being stubborn. It could be that there is a huge distraction behind you that you are not aware of, and perhaps you need to work more on proofing your dog's sit in distracting situations. If your dog doesn't respond to an agility command you gave him, it is not that he is being stubborn or revengeful for something you might have done earlier in the day - it may be because your body language is sending conflicting messages to your dog and he simply did not understand what you were asking of him. If your dog pottied in the house, it isn't because he was mad that you left him – it could be that he is really not housebroken, that he was left at home too long, or that he wasn't given enough time to do his business before you left.

Not anthropomorphizing gives you the ability to accurately determine why your dog is behaving in a particular way so you can figure out how to change, redirect or manage the behavior you are concerned about. It's our responsibility as a dog owner and trainer to understand how the dog mind works and use it to our advantage.

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## Puppy Socialization

According to the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior, the first three months of a puppy's life is the period when sociability outweighs fear. That's why this is the primary window of opportunity for puppies to adapt to new people, animals and experiences. Improper socialization as a puppy can result in behavioral problems later in life including fear, avoidance, and/or aggression. Behavioral problems are the number one reason dogs are relinquished to shelters – and behavioral issues, not diseases, are the number one cause of death for dogs under the age of three years.

Dr. Ian Dunbar, the "guru" of puppy training, defines several developmental deadlines for puppies in his book, "Before You Get Your Puppy". These include:

- Socialization with people. The rule of thumb is that your puppy should meet 100 different people in his first 100 days.

- Learning Bite Inhibition. Not only must you teach your puppy how to bite softly (and eventually reduce and eliminate the frequency of nipping), it is also critically important that your puppy is not removed from his littermates too early (this is where most dogs learn bite inhibition). Your puppy must also be given the opportunity to continue playing/practicing bite inhibition with other dogs once he leaves the litter.

- Preventing Adolescent Problems. It is critical to continue socialization with your dog throughout adulthood.

One of the best ways to give your puppy the socialization he needs is to enroll him in a puppy class. A puppy class can teach your dog bite inhibition, can give him confidence in interacting with other dogs and teach him that being handled by people is a good thing. Puppy classes usually also cover basic house manners and begin teaching your puppy simple obedience commands.

For more information about the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior's position on puppy socialization, go to:

**<http://www.avsonline.org/avsonline/>**

and click on AVSA Position Statements (on the menu bar on the left).

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## Summer Travel Tips

The DogFriendly.com website lists dog-friendly hotels, resorts, campsites, beaches, parks and much more where ever you may be traveling:

**<http://www.dogfriendly.com/>**

Another fun website is the BringFido.com website. Would you like to take your dog kayaking in Key West? Or on a ghost walking tour in Charleston, South Carolina? Or how about tubing on a river in Leavenworth, Washington? Check out this website:

**<http://www.bringfido.com/>**

The PetsWelcome.com website is also a great resource for locating dog-friendly accommodations. What I like about this website is that you can search for dog-friendly hotels and motels by entering the route you will be taking!

**<http://www.petswelcome.com/>**

Always be sure to call ahead of time and confirm that the hotel, motel, campsite, etc. still allows pets.

Just a few other things to remember and keep in mind while you are traveling with your dog this summer:

Always make sure your dog is wearing a collar with a current rabies vaccination tag and identification tag. The phone number on your dogs

tag should be a phone you have immediate access to (your cell phone, not your home phone).

Be sure to have a copy of your dog's latest health records with you (showing that your dog's vaccinations are up to date). Some hotels/motels will require this information, as will boarding facilities and doggie day care facilities (if you need to use these services while you are traveling).

**IMPORTANT – BE SURE TO HAVE A PHOTO OF YOU WITH YOUR DOG TO PROVE OWNERSHIP.** If your dog loses his collar and is picked up by animal control, having a photo of you with your dog is the fastest way to prove ownership. I have a photo of me and my dog on my cell phone, which I carry with me at all times.

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## Summer Safety Tips

Never leave your dog in a closed vehicle on a hot day. The temperature inside of a car can rise to above 100 degrees in a matter of minutes. (It's against the law in Georgia!)

Avoid strenuous exercise on very hot days. You may need to shorten your dogs walk, or walk very early in the morning or very late in the evening. Dogs that are "short-faced" such as Bulldogs, Boxers, Japanese Chins and Pekingese do not pant as efficiently as "longer-faced" dogs, so be particularly cautious with these dogs in the heat.

Be aware of the temperature of surfaces your dog is walking on. Asphalt gets incredibly hot in the summer. Even sand (near the water) can heat up and burn your dog's pads.

Ticks this year are particularly bad. Be sure to check your dog for ticks whenever he has spent time outdoors, even if you are using a tick control product.

Supervise your dog around pools. Remember that not all dogs know how to swim! And even if your dog does know how to swim, make sure your dog knows how to exit the pool.

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## Heatstroke

**From the American Kennel Club Website:**

Heatstroke can be the serious and often fatal result of a dog's prolonged exposure to excessive heat. Below are the signs of heatstroke and the actions you should take if your dog is overcome.

Early Stages:

- Heavy panting.
- Rapid breathing.
- Excessive drooling.
- Bright red gums and tongue.
- Standing 4-square, posting or spreading out in an attempt to

maintain balance.

#### Advanced Stages:

- White or blue gums.
- Lethargy, unwillingness to move.
- Uncontrollable urination or defecation.
- Labored, noisy breathing.
- Shock.

If your dog begins to exhibit signs of heatstroke, you should immediately try to cool the dog down:

- Apply rubbing alcohol to the dog's paw pads.
- Apply ice packs to the groin area.
- Hose down with water.
- Allow the dog to lick ice chips or drink a small amount of water.

Check your dog's temperature regularly during this process. Once the dog's temperature has stabilized at between 100 to 102 degrees, you can stop the cool-down process.

If you cannot get the dog cooled down and you begin to see signs of advanced heatstroke, take the dog to the veterinarian immediately.

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## Poisoning

Outdoor, home improvement and gardening activities this time of year can expose our pets to all types of poisons, such as fertilizers, insecticides, mulch, cleaning agents, compost pile ingestions, poisonous outdoor plants or mushrooms, slug or snail baits, etc.

Signs of poisoning are vomiting, diarrhea, excessive salivation, breathing difficulties, excitability, loss of consciousness and seizures.

Treatment for poisoning requires quick action. Contact your veterinarian or animal poison control center immediately. NEVER induce vomiting without checking with your veterinarian or poison control center first. If you cannot contact your veterinarian, make a note of these poison control hotline numbers:

ASPCA ANIMAL POISON CONTROL HOTLINE  
(888) 426-4435  
\$50.00 per case charge

PET POISON HOTLINE  
(800) 213 6680  
\$35.00 per case charge

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## Pet Fire Safety Tips

July 15 has been declared as "National Pet Fire Safety Day, by the American Kennel Club, ADT Security Services and the National Volunteer Fire Council.

Here are some practical tips from the National Volunteer Fire Council to keep pets safe from house fires:

**Extinguish Open Flames** - Pets are generally curious and will investigate cooking appliances, candles, or even a fire in your fireplace. Ensure your pet is not left unattended around an open flame and make sure to thoroughly extinguish any open flame before leaving your home.

**Pet Proof the Home** - Take a walk around your home and look for areas where pets might start fires inadvertently, such as the stove knobs, loose wires and other potential hazards.

**Secure Young Pets** - Especially with young puppies, keep them confined away from potential fire-starting hazards when you are away from home.

**Keep Pets Near Entrances** – When leaving pets home alone, keep them in areas or rooms near entrances where firefighters can easily find them.

**Practice Escape Routes with Pets** – Keep collars and leashes at the ready in case you have to evacuate quickly with your pet or firefighters need to rescue your pet.

**Keep Your Window Cling Information Updated** - Firefighters are familiar with pet alert window clings so keep the number of pets listed on them updated. Knowing the accurate number of pets in the house aids rescuers in finding all of your pets and provides important information so that firefighters do not put themselves or others in danger when rescuing pets.

**Consider Using Monitored Smoke Detection Services** – As an added layer of protection beyond battery-operated smoke alarms, smoke alarms connected to a monitoring center help save pets who can't escape when left home alone.

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## Summer/Fall Group Classes

Luvk9s will be offering puppy classes this summer and regular obedience classes this fall.

**For more information and to download a registration form:**

**[http://www.luvk9s.com/group\\_class\\_and\\_more.html](http://www.luvk9s.com/group_class_and_more.html)**

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## Pet Alert Window Clings



The National Volunteer Fire Council has partnered with the American Kennel Club and ADT Security Services to provide pet owners with free window clings to everyone who wants one.

<https://www.adt.com/resi/programs/pets/>

Many fire departments carry these clings as well, so contact your local fire department for more information.

For folks in Big Canoe, to go Fire Station # 3 or the POA office to get your window cling.

## Pet Oxygen Masks



House fires affect more than half a million pets each year and more than 40,000 pets die from smoke inhalation. Emergency first responders can provide oxygen to a pet, but they usually only have a human oxygen mask to use, which is difficult to fit securely over a dog or cat's face.

As part of National Pet Fire Safety Day, you may want to consider donating an oxygen mask to your local fire department. A single mask costs \$25, or a mask set which includes a small, medium and large mask can be purchased for \$65.

Big Canoeers – you will be happy to know that our fire trucks do have pet oxygen masks.

If you are interested in donating a mask to YOUR local fire department, go to:

<http://www.bark10-4.com/>

Ending with a smile...this month's YOUTUBE



**<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkPNa4DBFHI&feature=related>**

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Our website is updated regularly, so check it often: [www.luvk9s.com](http://www.luvk9s.com)