Veterinarian speaks out on PETA & Westminister by Dr. Libbye Miller

"Adorable mixed breeds" get cancer, epilepsy, allergies, heart disease, and orthopedic problems just like purebreds. I see it every day in my veterinary practice but mixed breed dogs aren't tracked like the purebreds so they have a reputation as "healthier" that is actually undeserved in many cases."

It is so sad that a lot of folks, including young veterinarians these days, buy into the "hybrid vigor" baloney. The vet schools have been infiltrated by the Animal Rights Extremists, who views, wise up and start supporting are teaching them this junk science in order to push their agenda.

All animals have a certain amount of genetic load, which is to say there is absolutely no animal without some genetic problem of some sort of another. Know anyone who wears glasses? Has allergies? Thyroid problems? Weak knees? Flat feet? A skin condition? Arthritis? A gap between their front teeth? These are all genetic imperfections.

No human is genetically "clean." Neither is any individual of any species on earth. So this idea that dogs should They contribute blood, cell samples, not be bred because they might have a etc. from their own animals to help genetic problem, and that breeders are somehow "evil" for breeding them, is ridiculous. Every single individual of every single species has at least a few genetic conditions.

To use PeTA's logic, all breeding of all kinds (including having human babies) should half immediately. And to be honest, Ingrid Newkirk (the woman who founded PeTA) does believe exactly that. She thinks that humans should become extinct, along with dogs, cats, etc. This ridiculous scenario is precisely what she would like to see happen.

So folks, if that is what you want... if you agree with Ingrid Newkirk's whacky views, send your hard earned money to PeTA. They will help to ensure you are not able to own a dog or cat or hamster or any other pet in

the future. They will see to it that you can't eat meat or fish or eggs or any type of animal-based nutrition. They will work to shut down places like Sea World, the zoos, etc. so you cannot observe the many wonderful animals on the Earth.

Eventually, once they accomplish these things, they may turn their efforts to making it illegal for humans to procreate.

If you don't agree with their extremist those who truly do love, care for and enjoy interaction with other species here on our little blue planet.

The fanciers of the breeds, those you see exhibiting their dogs at Westminster and other dog shows, work very hard to eliminate serious genetic conditions. They screen their breeding stock with every available test. They research pedigrees before breeding into other lines, to check for similar clearances in those animals. They contribute money to research organizations to further the work being done to track down genetic problems. with DNA and genome studies. They have made great progress so far, and they continue to work hard at it. Are there unethical breeders? Certainly, there are. Just as in any group of humans, you will find the good and the bad. United States VP Elect Joe Biden, for example, managed to find a not so good one when he got his new German Shepherd puppy. I don't know who did his research for him. but they obviously didn't do their homework if they were looking for a responsible breeder. Joe has the right to get his dog from whomever he wishes, but if he was trying to set an example of purchasing from a responsible hobby breeder he went off the track this time. That's too bad, but it was his choice. Unfortunately, breeders like that may be a lot easier to find because of their high volume and high profile. If you are looking for a nice

family pet from a breeder who will be there for you forever, you need to do due diligence. You won't get that from a pet store. You won't get that from the guy selling dogs out of his pickup truck in the WalMart parking lot. You won't get that support from a highvolume breeder, either. Yes, it takes a little more time and effort to find someone who really cares and does all the work to breed the healthiest, happiest puppies possible and then stands behind those puppies. This is a living being that will be part of your family, hopefully, for many years. Isn't it worth a bit of effort to find a breeder who will be there for you and that puppy forever?

And guess what? Shows like Westminster are a very valuable resource for finding breeders who do care and who use the best possible practices, as well as for learning more about the various breeds.

Bravo to USA Network for broadcasting the Westminster Kennel Club show all these years. May they enjoy continued success through the ongoing inclusion of such programs. I will be eagerly watching this year's

> Dr. Libbye Miller Elizabethtown, KY (Thank you Dr. Miller for your permission to crosspost.)



For Upcoming Boykin Spaniel Events go to American Kennel Club • www.akc.org United Kennel Club • www.ukcdogs.com •

Healthwise

Benefits From Feeding Raw Diet by Sharon Kauzlarich

I'd like to introduce myself, my family, and most importantly my dogs. My name is Sharon Kauzlarich and I've been asked to chair the Health and Education committee for this breed. I am so excited to have the opportunity to discuss and learn more about health issues related to Boykins. I live in Central Illinois with my husband, Dan, and daughter, Katie. We've enjoyed this breed for over twenty-five years. Currently we own two Boykins, a thirteenyear-old girl, Sassie and a young boy Strauss. In addition we have a house full of Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retrievers. We've had top show Tollers and are currently campaigning the #1 Toller bitch in the nation. We've shown AKC/ UKC champions and titled in hunt. rally, and obedience. We are looking forward to show Strauss off in the conformation ring come January. The hunting blend of Boykins and Tollers makes for a pack that can hunt over a varied terrain.

I must admit my interest in dog health-related issues was not been peeked from my Boykins. In fact, my Boykins have always been extremely healthy with our biggest healthy and active lifestyle. on-going health issues being ear infections. So when I hear about Boykin health issues I must ask myself what is the reason these problems are surfacing in this breed? My guess would be a number of factors such as environment, breeding practices, nutrition, and vaccination.

be beneficial with my dogs, please remember I am not a veterinarian or an expert. I strongly encourage all pet owners to have a good working relationship with their vet. However, I have also learned I am the ultimate decision maker on what treatments, vaccinations,

and nutrition is afforded to my dogs. If my healthcare provider is unwilling to discuss pros and cons of decisions concerning my dogs, I'm looking for a new vet.

So on to my first subject near and dear to my heart; nutrition. I'll admit right up front, I FEED RAW DIET. I suspect half of the readers are now saying "Is she crazy" and the other half is saying "I can't wait to learn more". My hope is the first half will at least listen to the benefits of this approach of feeding.

My change to raw was prompted by a number of issues not the least being the dog food recalls. However, my main reason for dropping the kibbles was my Toller, Daphanie. She developed immune-mediated hemolytic anemia at the age of three. A dog with this disease, brought on in Daphanie's case by over-vaccination, destroys the red blood cells leading, in many cases, to death of the dog. We saved Daphanie but she lived on predni-

sone and just would not thrive until

kibbles and turn to raw. Daphanie

I made the decision to scrap the

is now Pred free and enjoying a

Nutrition touches every aspect of a dog's life including disposition, coat, muscle texture, teeth, eyes, bone structure, skin, ears, energy level, reproduction, and even their poop. What your dog eats could be the most important consideration you have to make about caring for your Boykin. As known in As I discuss what I have found to the computer world, "Garbage In, Garbage Out" most certainly holds true in the canine world as well.

Feeding raw has many rewards for your Boykin but I'll only touch on a few. It can be very frightening to start the process as you may be concerned about doing more harm than good. I was luck to

find a group of dog owners/breeders that have been feeding raw for many generations and I pull from their knowledge. I felt very comfortable in their advice as many in this group are exhibiting or competing with top dogs in the show ring, agility, hunting, and obedience. These dogs are not your "Couch Potato" variety and must be in top performing shape.

Benefits my dogs have enjoyed from raw include the following:

Improved Skin and Coat Most raw fed dogs will enjoy an itch-free life. If a kibble fed dog suffers from allergies this diet should improve or eliminate the problem. Hot spots go away and their skin is healthy and dander free. After switching to raw you'll see an initial shed-off but the new coat will be thicker, healthier and shinier. Imagine this as you enter the AKC conformation world where something as simple as the feel of the coat can keep you off the winner's podium.

Stronger Bones

Your developing pups will benefit from this diet with stronger bones thus minimizing the risk of structural damage. Their growth rate will be slower and in appropriate proportionate and thus no more of those "ugly growth stages". It would be an interesting study to see if raw fed pups have better hip ratings than their kibble counterparts. I would suspect yes.

Improved Muscle Mass Protein from a raw diet builds muscle; grain from a kibble diet builds fat. Probably enough said on this subject, our nation of dogs Continued on page 5