

Newfie News



December 2023

VOLUME 5

ISSUE 4

Is Your Newfoundland Afraid of the Dark?

The days are getting shorter and darkness consumes our day, culminating on December 21, the Winter Solstice and shortest day of the year with just 9 hours and 4 minutes of daylight in New England. Darkness can trigger all sorts of fears in humans, but could your Newf be afraid of the dark as well?

Dogs do not perceive darkness in the same way as humans and have night vision that is far superior than humans (but still not quite as sharp as their feline counterparts). Humans and animals have photoreceptors in their eyes called rods and cones. Cones help with daytime vision and seeing colors while rods are in charge of night vision, shades of gray, and tracking movement. And dogs have more than twice the number of rods than humans.

In addition, dogs have a membrane in the back of the eye called a tapetum lucidum, which helps reflect any light – say, from a streetlight or the moon - and allows for better night vision. It acts like a mirror and is not found in humans. Having larger pupils also enables dogs' eyes to let in more light than humans'. For these reasons, it's not common for dogs to be afraid of the dark, but it is possible that darkness can cause dogs anxiety for a number of reasons. And if there is no light source at all, there is no light to reflect, which will impair your Newf's night vision.



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Why is Your Newf Afraid of the Dark?

Night sounds and smells– There is a whole world that emerges when the sun goes down and your dog's heightened sense of hearing, smell, and movement may be alerting them to hidden threats and dangers. Your dog's natural instincts make them more aware of predators.

Past trauma– If you adopted your Newf as an older dog, you may not be aware of their past, which can include a traumatic event that happened, such as being alone for long periods of time in a dark space. Fireworks – which always happen in the dark- can also be traumatic to many dogs as well as thunderstorms, which can take place at night. Noises from the TV, which

continued on page 5

What's Inside

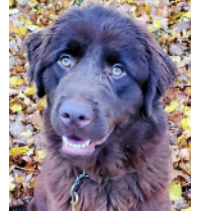
Who's at TNP?
Available Dogs Update
Page 2

Recently Adopted
Pages 2, 3 4 & 8

Expert Excerpts
Page 3

Who's at TNP?

Delaney, aka Laney, is a 1-year-old female who was surrendered due to family hardship. She is recovering from her spay surgery on November 30 and will be ready for her new home once healed. She would do well with older kids, traditional fencing, and an older male Newf "big brother" would be ideal. Watch for updates in future newsletters and the TNP Facebook page.



One-year-old **Sophie** arrived at TNP on November 20. Sophie has Subaortic Stenosis (SAS), a congenital heart defect causing a resistance as blood is being pumped from the left heart to the body. SAS can cause heart enlargement, predisposing her to congestive heart failure or sudden death. While there is no cure for SAS, Sophie is on a beta blocker and could live for a short time or many years. There was an outpouring of interest and support for Sophie nationwide and she will be going to a home in New England after further testing and spay surgery while she is at TNP. Stay tuned for updates in future newsletters and the TNP Facebook page.

Three-year-old **Goliath** was surrendered due to family hardship. He is healing from neuter surgery in his home. Goliath is good with children, other dogs, and loves to ride in the car. Watch for updates in future newsletters and the TNP Facebook page.

TNP is also working on keeping two 10-year-old Newfoundlands in their home with vet, grooming, and food help.

Interested in adopting from TNP?

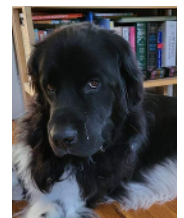
All dogs are placed only in APPROVED homes. Email Nancy for an application: nancy@thatnewfoundlandplace.org. Home checks are also required (virtual or in person). Keep in mind that TNP places dogs in homes that are in the best interest of the dog, but welcomes applicants to express interest in dogs through TNP Facebook posts.

Recently Adopted



Phyllis, now Mia, arrived at TNP on November 11 after being picked up as a stray and not claimed by her owner. She is 3 to 4 years old and has been spayed and vetted. She has some arthritis in her elbows but has shown no signs of it stopping her. Phyllis is in her new home in Connecticut with Bill, Deb, and Jaxon Martin. Stay tuned for updates in future newsletters and the TNP Facebook page.

Michael Pierce and Laura Domine welcomed **Kai** into their Arlington, Massachusetts home on October 7. "He's been a little anxious moving to a new environment but is settling in," Michael said. "He is certainly energetic and playful." Micheal noted that Kai is getting acclimated to his neighborhood as well and has already found a friend in his upstairs canine neighbor. They share a yard and Kai enjoys playing with her.



Kai is the only pet in the household, and is in fact both Michael and Laura's first dog. Michael

continued on page 3

Expert Excerpts

Diabetes in Dogs

*By Dr. Lauren Flanagan of
Pepperell (MA) Veterinary Hospital*

Many of you may know someone who has diabetes or you may suffer from diabetes yourself. A lot of people don't realize that our fluffy four-legged friends can suffer from diabetes also. Unfortunately, it is fairly common in the dog world.

A simplistic way to explain diabetes is that it is a condition where the body does not produce enough insulin, a hormone which helps regulate blood sugar levels, or the body has become resistant to the effects of insulin, so therefore the sugar rises to excessive levels in the blood. When sugar reaches a certain level in the blood it can spill over through the kidney filtration system into the urine. Sugar must draw fluid with it to be passed into the urine, causing excess fluid loss from the body. For this reason, one of the most common symptoms we see in our diabetic patients is excessive thirst and urination. Most diabetic patients are also very hungry but they will lose weight despite this increased caloric intake. Without enough insulin, or without effective insulin use, the body cannot bring the sugar into the tissues to use for energy so fat is mobilized instead, causing weight loss. When a patient is presented to us with weight loss despite increased appetite, excessive thirst and urination, and the lab work shows increased blood sugar and sugar is present in the urine, we have a confirmed diagnosis of diabetes.

Many diabetic dogs are similar to human type two diabetics, where a prolonged condition of being overweight contributes to insulin resistance. Diabetes can also develop secondary to pregnancy in female

continued on page 8

Recently Adopted - Kai continued from page 2

said they did their homework on different breeds for best fit. "We liked how gentle and good natured they are." They were also attracted to the slower pace and generally mellow personality of Newfoundlands.

They were not deterred by the drool and shedding that is common with Newfs and have not noticed it to be an issue at this point.

Michael and Laura moved to Boston from California in April and wasted no time in finding local resources for Newfoundland Rescue. "We found That Newfoundland Place as a top rescue and went to the open house the first weekend we moved in." They noticed 4-year-old Kai – who was fostered for several months by Faith Ferguson in Connecticut - on the TNP Facebook page and finally met him at the TNP Reunion in October. They visited the next weekend for a longer visit and brought him home the same day.



So far, Micheal and Laura have noticed that Kai loves being outside and running. They have taken him on hikes, and take him for walks three times a day. They plan on bringing him to a nearby lake in the

near future and remarked on Kai's affinity for bikes – he gets very excited when he sees one. Kai is also fond of hanging out in bed and on the couch. "He was super excited the first time he was allowed on the couch," Laura said.

Michael and Laura have had a private training session with Kai and intend on doing some group training at some point. They work with Kai every day on training – in small increments - and it has paid off. "He's made some progress in the last few weeks," Michael said. "He seems to be responding to it. It's been a good process for all of us."

4-year-old **Ringo, now Angus**, is doing well in his new Southern home with Emma and Michael Gilson of Senioa, Georgia. "We found

continued on page 4



Recently Adopted - Angus continued from page 3

out he's allergic to something although have not determined if it's food or environmental but are managing the allergy with medication," Emma said. "He's been itchy but he's doing great." Angus also has a limp and will be getting cruciate surgery in January.

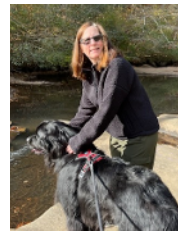


So far, the Gilsons have discovered that Angus loves to jump in a pile of leaves, loves water – and will jump in the shower if given the chance – and loves kids. He has met the Gilson's 5-month-old granddaughter and it was clear Angus will make an excellent companion for her when she is a little older. Angus has also been out on the town at an event in mid-November, where he behaved perfectly. He was quiet, despite all the other dogs barking.

Angus shares his new home with an 11-year-old feline brother, Bandit, who is not a fan of Angus. "Angus wants to play and Bandit wants no part of it," Emma said. She thinks Bandit may be intimidated by Angus's size.

Angus is the Gilson's first purebred Newfoundland. Several years ago, they had a Newf mix, Kacey, who had many of the qualities Newfs are known for: good with kids and gentle. "We said we'd get a Newf when we get another dog," Emma said. It was a long wait as both Emma and Michael's work required quite a bit of traveling. That has diminished considerably and because they have the right property for a Newf with five acres and a creek, they felt the timing was right to expand their family.

Rescue was an obvious choice for them from the start. "We've always adopted," Emma said. When they decided the time was right for a new dog, they started looking at Newfoundland rescue groups. Emma and Michael started with Southeastern Newfoundland Club (SENC) but felt it was not a good fit. Further research led them to That Newfoundland Place. "We felt Cathy got dogs into the right home," Emma said.



On Friday, October 20, Emma and Michael rented a minivan so Angus would be comfortable on the return ride and drove up to Connecticut from Georgia in the afternoon, arriving at TNP on Saturday around noon. They made the trek back to Georgia to arrive Sunday morning after a stay Saturday night in a dog friendly hotel.

Although Angus seems to love Emma and Michael equally, Emma calls Angus "Michael's buddy," reporting that Angus "has to be near him." Still, Angus has been a source of laughter and joy for both of them right from the start. "He's comical. Every day he makes us laugh," Emma said. "He's been a really sweet boy."

Hank, now called Jake, was adopted by Deb & Pat "Sully" Sullivan of Lunenburg, Massachusetts on October 26.

Sully reports that Jake has adjusted very well so far, and is "very energetic." Jake is a bit of an escape artist and has snuck out of the house a few times so far, but Sully has been able to catch him. That behavior may explain why Jake was found as a stray by animal control in Pennsylvania before he was brought to TNP. "He's smart," Sully said of Jake. Although he has had some basic training, Sully is working on getting additional training to prevent Jake from further escapes.



Jake took no time in making himself at home, particularly on the couch and bed. "He came in and took over," Sully said. "None of our other Newfs got on the furniture." Deb added, "he's a cuddlebug. Wherever you are, he has to be."

continued on page 8

is likely to have louder sounds such as sirens and gunfire at night, can also be traumatic.

Separation anxiety– Dogs with separation anxiety can be distraught at any time but if your Newf is alone during the darkness quite often he may associate the dark with being separated or be anxious if you sleep in a separate room that he has no access to during the night. Obvious signs of separation anxiety are destructive behaviors while you are gone or pottying inside the house when you are out of the home.

Vision problems– Your dog is susceptible to any number of eye problems, just like humans, including, vision loss, cataract, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, and macular degeneration. The likelihood of problems can increase with age. Injury and heredity also play a part in vision. If you think your dog's vision may be compromised, visit your veterinarian.

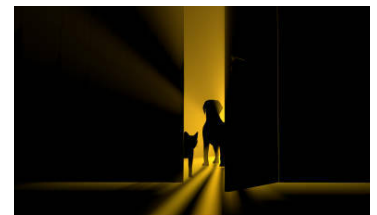
Health conditions– Some cognitive disorders can cause your dog to get disoriented, which is exacerbated in the dark. Be sure to talk to your veterinarian if you think this is a possibility.

How can you tell if your dog is afraid of the dark?

Signs of fearfulness or anxiety in dogs include barking, whimpering, drooling (more than usual), restless pacing, and potty accidents. Your dog may also avoid dark places or shadows.

Helping Dogs Overcome Their Fear of the Dark

You can help your dog realize the dark isn't a scary place by exposing your dog gradually to the darkness supplemented with lots of treats, praise, and affection. Be sure to stay close until your Newf feels more comfortable. Start slowly and let your dog go at their own pace. Remember to be patient and to stay calm. Dogs pick up on human vibes and if you are at ease, they will likely begin to feel that way too.



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Light up collars, leashes, and harnesses as well as clip on lights, flashlights, motion detecting lights, and nightlights can provide enough light to reduce your dog's fear of dark spaces. As a bonus, they can also improve visibility for you on nighttime walks and illuminate you and your dog for oncoming vehicles.

Schedule playtime and cuddle time before bed to help your dog exert some energy and feel reassured by you. You can also increase exercise during the day to tire out your Newf.

If your dog has survived trauma, it's critical to help them feel safe and secure. Positive reinforcement will go a long way. A professional can also help you support your dog through their fears if you aren't experiencing much success on your own.

If you deduce that your dog's fear of the dark is related to separation anxiety, leave some lights on where your dog spends the most time when you are not home at night. You can also set timers for the lights or use your smart phone to turn the lights on when it gets dark out. Crate training can give your dog a safe space to go. Working with a dog trainer or behaviorist and your vet can also help reduce separation anxiety. Calming products such as beds, sprays, and chews might also help. Be sure to discuss the best products for your dog with your vet.

If you believe vision or another health problem is contributing to your dog's fear, consult your veterinarian to determine the extent of the health issues and your dog's needs. Then you can support your Newf by providing as much light as possible, such as light strips in darker areas of the house so there is a constant stream of light near their line of site. You can also keep lights on in areas where they sleep or a nightlight if they snooze with you in the bedroom.

continued on page 6

Is Your Newfoundland Afraid of the Dark? continued from page 5

Tried all these tips and your dog is still fearful of the dark? Working with a behavioral specialist can help you determine why your pet is scared of the dark and come up with a plan for you and your Newf. Most fears and anxieties that dogs experience can be addressed by proper training, attention, or medications, making the dark a lot less scary.

Sources/more information:

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Books for Newfoundland Lovers

It's holiday gift giving season and if you are wondering what to get a Newfoundland lover on your list, perhaps they would enjoy reading about their favorite breed. There are a number of books about Newfoundland to choose from. The following list -in alphabetical order - is not exhaustive and includes both fiction and non-fiction books with stories about Newfoundland dogs. Not included are books on owning, raising, and training a Newfoundland.

Alaskan Catch – Sue Pethick

All Dogs Go to Heaven: What My Dogs Taught Me About God and Life – Suzanne Elizabeth Anderson

Bilbo the Lifeguard Dog: A True Story of Friendship and Heroism – Steven Jamieson

Bound for the Western Sea – The Canine Account of the Lewis & Clark Expedition – Laura Lee Yates

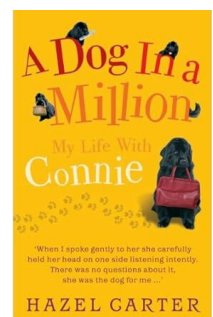
Chasing Stanley – Deirdre Martin

A Dog for Christmas – Linda Byler

Dog Heroes: True Stories of Canine Courage – Ben Holt

Dog of Discovery – A Newfoundland's Adventures with Lewis & Clark – Laurence Pringle

A Dog in a Million: My Life with Connie – Hazel Carter



continued on page 7

Newfoundland Books continued from page 6

The Dog that Saved My Life: Incredible True Stories of Canine Loyalty Beyond All Bounds (Heroes) – Isabelle George

Elsa Was Born a Dog, I Was Born a Human...Things Have Changed – Rhoda Lerman

For the Love of Puppies: Memoirs of a Breeder's Husband – Dan Montague

Free Days With George: Learning Life's Little Lessons from One Very Big Dog – Colin Campbell

Gentle Giants: A Book of Newfoundlands – Bruce Weber

Great Balls of Fur: Life With Newfoundlands and Other Critters – Nita Jager

Heroic Companion, A Brief History of the Newfoundland Dog – Patrick Pickett

In the Company of Newfies – A Shared Life - Rhoda Lerman

Life Among the Giants: Living with Newfoundland Dogs – William Ball

Lifeguard Dogs (Dog Heroes) – Natalie Lunis

Loyal Hearts: Histories of American Civil War Canines – Michael Zuccherro

New-found-friends – Rachael Hale

Newfies to the Rescue: Tales of the Newfoundland Dog – Dr. Carrie Wachsmann

The Newfoundland Dog: True Stories of Courage, Loyalty, and Friendship – Robert C Parsons

Ninety-nine MORE Newfies – Pat Seawell, PhD

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The Noble Newfoundland Dog: A History in Stories, Legends and the Occasional Tall Tale – Bruce Hynes

Of Heritage and Heart – Claire Carr

Raising Rufus – A Maine Love Story – Carla Verdino-Sullwold

Sergeant Gander: A Canadian Hero – Robyn Walker

Ships' Dogs: Canine Adventures on the High Seas 1800-1897 – James Ian Montbriand

Tales of Al: The Water Rescue Dog – Lynne Cox

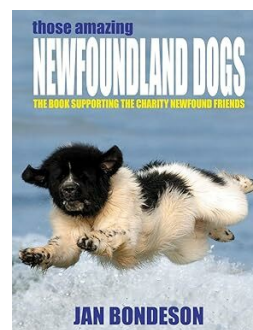
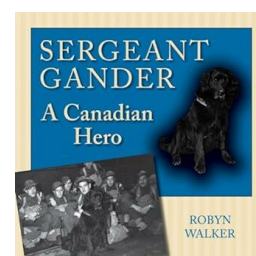
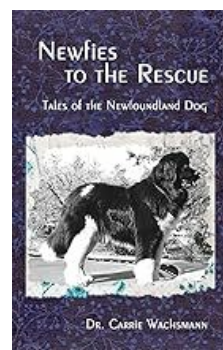
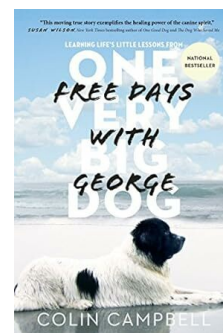
The Anne Marie – Israel J Parker

Those Amazing Newfoundland Dogs – Dr. Jan Bondeson

Tricked – Diane Bridenbaker

Victorian Heroes: The Popularization of the Newfoundland and St. Bernard in Victorian England (Dog History Series) – Amy Fernandez

Water Rescue Dogs – Frances E Ruffin



dogs, occasionally secondary to chronic pancreatic disease resulting in damage to the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin, and can be an inherited condition.

Diabetes is a condition that is managed; it cannot be cured. Diet and exercise play a critical role. High-fiber diets are beneficial because fiber helps the body utilize glucose (i.e. blood sugar), and we want to avoid a lot of processed carbohydrates which cause rapid spikes in blood sugar. We need to ensure adequate exercise which also helps the body utilize glucose. Even with diet and exercise adjustments, the mainstay of treatment is insulin injections. Most dogs require twice daily insulin injections, timed with their meals, for the remainder of their life. Most dogs accept these injections willingly and fear of giving these injections should never be a concern to a pet owner faced with a diagnosis of diabetes in their dog.

Next month: Untreated diabetes in dogs



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He really is a loving family dog."

The Sullivans also have a 7-year-old rescue Border Collie mix named Bella. She is still getting used to Jake, who has a much different personality than the Sullivan's previous Newf, Finnegan, who passed away in September at 11 years old. "All our Newfs had different personalities," Sully said. "Jake is the most gung-ho and happy." Jake and Bella are enjoying the huge fenced in backyard and spend lots of time out there.

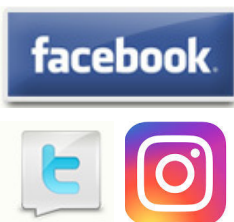


Top: Jake
Bottom: Bella

Jake also likes to take all the toys out of the basket every morning and throw them in the air. He has gotten Bella more interested in the toys since his arrival. Sully and Deb are looking forward to their granddaughters – who are 24, 18, and 12 - spending more time with Jake. The granddaughters spent a lot of time with the previous Newfs, even falling asleep on them when they were younger.

Jake is the Sullivan's fifth Newf over the past 30 years and first Newf rescue. They knew they didn't want a puppy and had good luck with rescue with Bella so they did their research, found That Newfoundland Place, and submitted an application. Deb thought it might take a while to get matched because they were specific in their request for a male that was 2 or 3 years old. They didn't have to wait long before they got the call about Jake and it turned out to be the perfect match. "We couldn't ask for a better dog," Deb said.

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