



Tall Tales from the Editor

Monster Boy or The truth about puppy love

Our almost one-year-old border collie/McNab puppy, Barney McGee, has more energy than a nuclear power plant, a thermonuclear bomb and a nuke dump/storage site 10,000 years after its burial.

Yep, he's amped up like all those energy drinks wish they could do for you. McGee is our "Wild Child." Didn't the Doors have a song by that name? Some might call him a "Problem Child." AC/DC had a great song with that title. I refer to him as "Monster Boy"!

Where do I begin? Well, let's start with the cow herd of leather shoe inserts he's destroyed. Lucky for us, he leaves the actual shoes alone. Then there's the overturned kitchen chairs from Monster Boy's game of chase with Chloe, our long-haired Calico "attack" kitty. Or the way McGee drives our elderly border collie/McNab "Utah" completely nuts with his endless herding and biting at his heels. Old Utah is just no match for the high octane speed of his tormenter Monster Boy!

Did I mention how McGee likes to wake me in the morning? Not with a little woof or whimper or a scratch at the door. Nooooo. Monster Boy loves to pounce on my head. I awake from a dream state that might have featured a large number of centerfold girls with an "Ahhhh, what the _____?" I wonder if my bride Sioux actually trained him to do this pouncing trick. You know, her way of a payback for something I might do in the future. Like maybe muffing a wedding anniversary or _____, you fill in the blank. I notice that Sioux always has a smile on her face after my morning awakening.

There was a morning in early May when Sioux and I looked out our living room window and I said "Holy moly, it snowed last night!" Not exactly. The "snow" was several rather large, no, make that super-sized, trash bags that had been filled with shredded paper (gardening material). Monster Boy had torn the trash bags to microscopic images of themselves and scattered the shredded paper contents across our front yard, complete with fake snowdrifts.

McGee loves to play with one-gallon plastic plant containers. His game is to take the containers in his mouth and toss them up into the air, maybe catch them, maybe not. He will pick up the container in his mouth, shake the container hard enough that I don't know why he doesn't dislocate his neck, and then proceed to run around the house biting away on his prey. Oh, did I tell you that Monster Boy prefers these containers to have plants in them? His preference is blooming tulips or lilies.

It's not like McGee doesn't have toys. He keeps his toys strung out from one end of our house to the other. He has so many toys thrown around that when new folks come by to visit us they comment, "We didn't know you had children." We'll say, "Well, not the two-legged kind anyway. These are chew toys for our puppy, McGee."

But Monster Boy would prefer to chew up our plastic or metal flashlights, our DVD controller or old Utah's sheepskin blanket. Then there were the covers from Sioux's library books on CDs that he ate. Apparently Monster Boy doesn't care for the taste of CDs though. That saved us some money.

To help us with puppy training Sioux enrolled McGee and me in doggie school. Due to attention deficit, McGee and I both wound up in detention after each of our first three classes. Our fabulous instructor, Cary Voorhees would say, "Here, J.D., let me show you how to do this again." Boy, was I glad she had patience. McGee and I did graduate and received a pink scarf for our diploma that McGee proudly wears to parties. I can now give McGee four commands with hand signals. That is, if I can get his attention. Too many deer, too many ants, too many birds, etc., to distract him.

There are two other commands that McGee does almost 100% of the time. He'll sit by his full food dish and wait till I release him to eat. He also goes to his kennel for a nap on command, just like I do at Sioux's command. McGee doesn't much like gas-station attendants, even when they offer him a cookie. Monster Boy has a bad habit of lunging at them. So now they offer the cookies to me and I give them to Monster Boy and, no, we don't share them. McGee does seem to love all other people though. Just ask anyone who comes to our house or has gone on hikes with him. I can't get him to stop jumping up on people, it's not because we haven't tried to break this habit. He just

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thinks everyone is a new toy for him to play with. I know, I know, you say, "JD, use an electric cattle prod to train him with." But heck, what if he turns out like me? I can't wait to do something that causes "Upper Management" (my bride) to use the prod on me.

Just yesterday Monster Boy ate eight hard-boiled eggs, shell and all, right off the counter. The upside is that there was no mess, not a trace of egg to be found in the kitchen. As you can see, I could start a reality TV show or a soap opera. We could call it "So, there is Karma" or "The Truth about Puppy Love!" or maybe something way out there like "Why the Snow is Yellow" by Bite Me Productions. My therapist advised me not to go there.

Don't get me wrong. I dearly love our Mr. Barney McGee. The majority of the time he's a very, very good boy, just like me—an angel. I wouldn't trade him for a billion dollars, although I might apply for some of the government's stimulus package money. I'm sure I would qualify under some sort of welfare heading such as dog-sled training for southern Oregon, or gas-station attendant terrorist alert, or how to remove paw prints from your forehead. My Barney McGee is just a little different from any other dog I've ever had, and each of those dogs were different from each other. That's what makes my life with dogs interesting.

Just like my human friends, my dogs have different personalities. But unlike my human friends, I've never had my dogs betray me.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Opinion Pieces and Letters to the Editor represent the opinion of the author, not that of the *Applegater* or the Applegate Valley Community Newspaper. We are a community-based newspaper that receives diverse opinions on different topics. Letters should be no longer than 450 words, and may be edited for grammar and length. Opinion Pieces should be no longer than 600 words. All Letters and Opinion Pieces must be signed, with a full street address or P.O. Box and phone number. Individual Letters may or may not be published in consecutive issues.

Address Opinion Pieces and Letters to the Editor to:

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Dear Editor:

Yesterday I filled up at a local gas station that has changed its policy to limit gas purchases to fifty dollars on credit cards used at the pump. I figured that my purchase would be less, so I used my card at the pump. I was wrong. As the purchase rolled past \$48.50, I heard the pump stop, and, because I was outside by the tank, I also heard the gurgling into the car's gas tank stop. The charges nevertheless continued to roll up to the fifty dollar limit.

Because I had run into this before, I knew the answer I would get: "The gas is still (silently—no splashing) flowing from the hose." About a year ago, in Nevada, I tested this premise by pulling out the nozzle carefully, without turning it off, after I heard the pump shut off, but while the purchase price was still advancing. Yep! No gas was coming out but I was charged more than another dollar.

Maybe I'm missing something, but this little gimmick of having the pump run to a set price cutoff seems to allow these stations to make a little extra without actually giving you the gas. Today, I try to avoid these stations. Next time you are at a station where there is a fixed cutoff amount, check for yourself.

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JACKSON COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

PETS OF THE MONTH



Button - #K0891
a lap cat with a short
tail & Tabby/Tortie fur.



Kacie - #K1232
a 5-month-old wire-
haired Terrier mix girl.



Ozzie - #K0798
a laid-back 7-year-
old with long fur.



Lovebirds!
2 peach-faced birds
with green bodies.



Pandora - #K0792
a very loving and gentle
grey and white girl.



Ginger - #0758
a mellow 5-year-old
Viszla/Hound mix.

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