

Pandemic Puppy

When Ontario was first shut down by the COVID-19 back in March 2020, along with having to stay home, many people started working in their homes. Almost straight away, they discovered that every single hobby that they enjoyed, was now put-off limits. With more time available, baking became a new pass-time for many people stuck in their homes, that is until there was a flour shortage.

Under Ontario's stay-at-home order, gyms and health clubs were closed. The Health Officials across the province encouraged people to follow social distancing, the prescribed precautions, and head outside for a walk for their exercise, with their dog, if they had one. The stay home order states dog-walking is still allowed. We heard one TV news story stating, "knowledge of dog-walking, allowing one to go outside, have people in desperation, going outside to walk fake, stuffed and inflated dogs". One woman in another province, was fined for breaking curfew when she was found to be walking her collared, on a leash, husband, which was a no -no. There is no better companion on a walk, than a real dog at your side. Having a dog in your life, will change it, that, we can attest to.

Since the start of the pandemic we have noticed a real increase in dogs. They seem to be everywhere. For many families, the pandemic has provided a unique opportunity for them to include a new puppy in their home, if you can find one. Apparently pandemic puppies are in high demand, hard to come by and dog breeders having long wait lists, local shelters are bare. It is said walking with a dog can make folks more approachable. It gives people a conversation starter, the perfect way to get to meet and talk with others. Have you ever stopped to talk with other people, because of the presence of a puppy or cute dog? We have. We learned that some dog walkers, now friends, have lived nearby in our area for years. One told us she met her husband while walking her dog.

Many studies have provided science-backed benefits of being a dog owner, especially through the challenges of COVID-19. Science-backed benefits, include children learn the value of taking on responsibility; for feeding, walking, training, and grooming their dogs. You may get the chance to learn new skills along with your family members. Interactions with our dogs, help address social isolation, loneliness, reduce stress, improve fitness, decrease blood pressure, and can create a tight-knit bond. Interaction with our dogs, has been shown to help aid in our mental health.

Emotional bonds with our dogs (pets) provide love, security, and it was noticed, people acted more trusting, friendly, and cooperative in the presence of a dog. Owning a pet can definitely open up your world.

Our family has had some experience with dogs, having had four lab. retrievers, and one rescue dog over the past 35 years. It has been said, “Dogs come into our lives to teach us about Love. They depart to teach us about loss”. We relate to a quote we read, -author unknown. “There is a cycle of Love & Death that shapes the lives of those who choose to travel in company of animals. It is a cycle unlike any other. To those have never lived through its turnings or walked its rocky path, our willingness to give our hearts with full knowledge that they will be broken seems incomprehensible. Only we know how small a price we pay for what we receive; our grief, no matter how powerful it may be is an insufficient measure of the joy we have been given. Our willingness to give our hearts to our dogs (pets) with full knowledge that our hearts will someday be broken, seems incomprehensible. Only we who have shared in their lives, know how small a price we pay for what we receive; our grief, no matter how powerful it may be is an insufficient measure of the joy we have been given”.

We can still remember the excitement created the first time we brought home our first family canine companion, a black female Labrador Retriever (Ebony), to meet our young daughter and son. That experience, and bringing five more dogs into our home, for us has been an extremely gratifying experience. A year after our last yellow Lab., passed, we got our first Chocolate Labrador Retriever pup, Heidi, decidedly our last dog. She is a valued family member. We can't imagine going through this pandemic without her. She has her own distinct personality, as did each of our other five canine companions. A new dog never replaces an old dog, it merely expands your heart.

“Once you have had a great dog, a life without one, is a life diminished.” - Dean Koontz. -author

Our Heidi



Connie & Terry McCoy

Wear a mask

