

HERDING GROUP

eyes had to say was "Little boy in warm bed equals happy dog." —H.K.

Thanks, Holly. —*Betsy Korbonoki, 718 Radcliffe Ave., Pacific Palisades, CA 90272 ♦*



**Bouvi-  
ers  
des Flandres**

**When a Human Baby Arrives ...**

**D**ogs and children are natural companions. Then why do families return puppies or give up older dogs when a baby is born?

*Dog before baby:* Sometimes, one partner comes to the marriage with a dog. Usually the non-dog owner has made an extra effort to win the dog over—"Love me, love my dog" is not an expression without meaning. The dog now receives double attention. Then, with the birth of a newborn, that attention is shifted.

Then, someone, usually a grand-

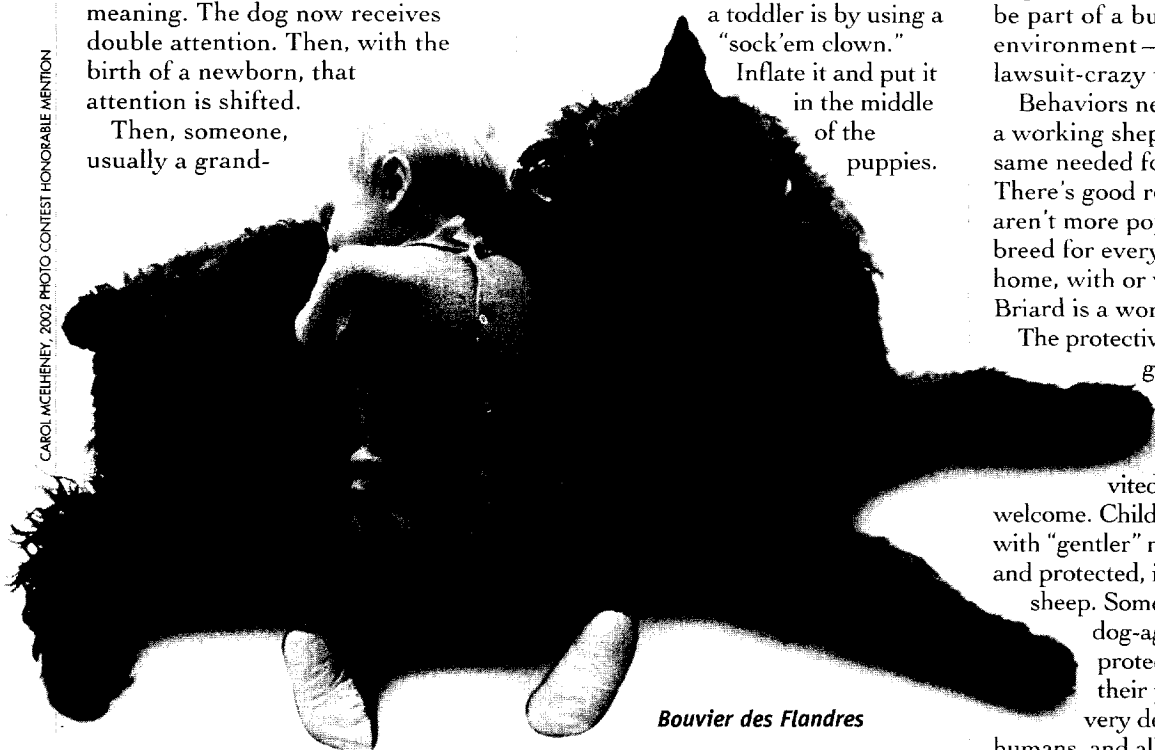
toys when the baby is present. The dog will associate the baby with only good things in life.

Install a screen door to the baby's room. You can keep the dog out when you are not in the room, without "shutting" him out.

*Dogs and toddlers:* I know of a case recently where a family returned a puppy because their toddler was jealous of both the new baby and the new puppy. Photographs showed mom holding the infant with an arm around the puppy. Where was the toddler? She wasn't in the photographs, but she should have been—sitting next to her mom with her arms around the puppy or the baby. If the new baby actually makes five, don't exclude the dog or the toddler.

One great way to socialize and acclimate a litter of puppies to the rolling gait and outstretched hands of a toddler is by using a "sock 'em clown."

Inflate it and put it in the middle of the puppies.



*Bouvier des Flandres*

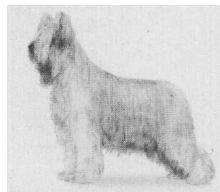
parent, pushes the dog from the baby, claiming dreaded "dog germs." So every time the baby is in the room the dog is elsewhere.

Here's some advice. Don't punish the dog by removing or ignoring him to lavish attention on the infant. Give the dog attention, conversation, special treats, and

Then squeak the clown. The rocking back and forth mimics the unsteady toddler's gait, and the puppies will no longer think it is unusual.

Another piece of advice: When a toddler wants to help walk the dog, the parent can use two leads. The parent holds the lead that controls the dog, and the toddler holds a

shorter leash attached to parent's lead down by the bolt. —*Jeannette Nieder, R.D. 1, Box 251, Greenfield, NH 05047 ♦*



**Briards**

**A Delicate Balance**

**B**riards remain very close to their roots as herding and guardian dogs. The traits that make them excellent pastoral dogs also make them wonderful family pets. These same traits can also lead to behavioral problems, including inappropriate interactions with children when placed in the wrong home. The breed requires intensive socialization to be part of a busy family and a busy environment—especially in these lawsuit-crazy times.

Behaviors needed and tolerated in a working shepherd dog aren't the same needed for a "good citizen." There's good reason why Briards aren't more popular—they are not a breed for everyone. *But* in the right home, with or without children, the Briard is a wonderful companion.

The protectiveness required to guard the flock is transferred to the Briard's family and property.

Intruders or uninvited guests are not made welcome. Children or even adults with "gentler" natures are guarded and protected, in absent of a flock of sheep. Some Briards thought to be dog-aggressive are actually protecting the space around their person. Briards have very deep bonds with

humans, and allowing or encouraging this guardiness must be avoided. Even exceptionally well-socialized, well-trained dogs have been known to prevent parents from spanking their children, to refuse to allow strangers to approach a child, and to misinterpret some types of play between children as too rough. Fences are not required to keep a child in a safe area when its Briard is around.

CAROL MCELHENY, 2002 PHOTO CONTEST HONORABLE MENTION

A Briard must understand its place in the pecking order of a family. Dominance issues are frequent problems with herding breeds. The dog rarely sees a child as someone in charge—they readily read social interactions between parent and child and even between spouses. Children are treated like sheep that need to be controlled, protected, and treated like another puppy. Play can include inappropriate games such as tug o' war, chasing, biting, wrestling, and rough herding of the child. Children must be taught to avoid all such types of play, puppies must be supervised and trained, and the two species must be separated at times for the protection of both the puppy and the child. In the right hands, Briards can be trained to accept all members of the family as leaders, not as pack members or sheep.

A breeder who refuses to sell a Briard to a home with children is going to lose some very good homes for their puppies. As in all puppy placements, a breeder should carefully interview prospective buyers, check their references, visit the home if possible, and make sure the new owners have the time, energy, skills, resources, and attitude to raise an independent, active, intelligent puppy. Meeting the children is often the deciding factor—if you don't like the way they have been raised, you're probably won't like how the puppy will be raised.

Briards and kids in the right home are a great combination. There are many second- and third-generation Briarders now who have spent their entire lives with the breed. Several teens have had successful Junior Showmanship careers with Briards, even earning the trip to Westminster. Parents have wonderful stories and pictures of their Briards loving, protecting, and guiding their



COURTESY DONNA L. DOBSON

#### Canaan Dog

children through life. Like any breed, Briards should be in the right home with the right people, and breeders must do all they can to choose these homes for their puppies. —*Kathryn Lanam, 49905 Taylor Road, Negley, OH 44441; OHIOBRIARD@aol.com* ♦



#### Canaan Dogs

##### The Perfect Combination

In a column I wrote for the June 1999 *AKC GAZETTE*, I concluded with this thought: "Yes, the Canaan Dog is good with kids, given intelligent evaluation by the breeder and proper socialization, training, and understanding by the owner." Thus it was, and thus it is with nearly every breed inclusive of the Canaan Dog. Not every combination is perfect, dependent upon the individual dog and the individual child.

But now I want to tell you of a special child and a special Canaan Dog. First I will speak of the dog.

She was the best brood bitch I have had the pleasure of breeding and showing in my 27 years in the breed. Her call name was DeeDee, and she whelped five times for a total of 30 pups, each which was mothered more than many of today's children. She once had one tiny mouse of a pup with five other normal-sized babies. She would simply place her front leg over the five to keep them from nursing while the little one, which my grandchildren named Little Dude, got his fill. There was never a need to supplement any of the Little Dudes in DeeDee's litter. She could handle the situation.

In her 15-plus years of life, she never knew a stranger. She was selected best Veteran Bitch in the first AKC national specialty of the Canaan Dog Club of America.

The child in question was my grandson who arrived in our household at age 5 and lived with us until he was 9. He was and is a special boy, beautiful of feature, intellectually bright, but a victim of attention-deficit and hyperactivity disorder, and prone to attacks of rage and uncontrollable activity.

When this little boy was at his wit's end, he would crawl onto DeeDee's bed and lie beside her. This lady's gentle kisses, her softness and extreme caring, seemed to merge into him and put an end to his stress and anxiety. As his hand caressed her soft coat he seemed to receive a sense of belonging, which often a child cannot acknowledge. His love for the Canaan Dogs with their soft eyes, wagging tails, and an eager welcome continues today as he approaches manhood.

Recently I received an e-mail from a puppy buyer whose 4-year-old daughter was suffering from the flu. The female puppy, now a year old, would not leave her side, but cuddled