

## It's a Doggy Dog World



**BY BILL GLOVIN**

Executive Editor, Dana Foundation

When we began putting together this issue, no one had ever heard the term “coronavirus.” But now, with physical distancing, businesses closed, and humans going stir-crazy in the house, dogs may be one of the pandemic’s main beneficiaries, as they are being showered with ample amounts of attention. What better way to get a change of scenery and some exercise than leashing up your pooch for a long walk?

In fact, a [study](#) by the Human Animal Bond Research Institute and Mars Petcare in 2019 revealed that 80 percent of people reported that pets reduced their loneliness, and 75 percent agreed that pets reduced feeling of social isolation.

This second issue comes to you as we explore new ways to reimagine and deliver content. We divide our feature well in half: two long-form articles on brain research by neuroscientists and two on brain research or policy issues by science journalists. My ten-person advisory board suggests both topics and specific neuroscientist authors to address those topics, and reviews submitted articles for scientific accuracy.

I’ve found that the board can be a tough nut to crack when it comes to article suggestions. All accomplished neuroscientists (see Page 30), they take into consideration recent advances, scientific merit, replication, and the potential of the research to change lives. So, to my great surprise—at the end of a conference call last fall—I told them I had been pitched the idea for an article about a fox domestication experiment.

One of my longtime advisers, Bruce McEwen, was the first to chime in: “I’ve read about this project and it was an absolutely fascinating book,” he told the group. Seconds later, another adviser suggested that we spotlight a neuroscientist who uses fMRI to gain insights into canine cognition. “Why don’t we publish companion pieces?” another suggested. Soon, there was unanimous agreement that half our feature well should focus on canine cognition and behavior.

My own research has since found at least 25 research centers throughout the world where canine cognition and behavior are studied—many of them forming in the last five years or so. In the U.S. alone, there are research centers at Duke, Yale, Arizona State, Barnard, and the University of Kentucky—just to name a few. The more we know about dogs, the more we help people—from service dogs for the disabled, to puppy training to make pet owners lives easier, to satisfying our curiosity about the behavior and intelligence of different breeds.

Bruce, who so enthusiastically endorsed the idea to focus on dogs, will never get to read our two articles. After a brief illness, he passed away early this year at the age of 81. Bruce touched so many lives in his legendary career, and clearly had a soft spot in his heart for man’s (and woman’s) best friend. He wouldn’t be surprised to hear that dogs are helping their owners through this terrible pandemic. •



EMERGING IDEAS IN BRAIN SCIENCE

**Bill Glovin**  
Executive Editor

**Seimi Rurup**  
Assistant Editor

**Brandon Barrera**  
Editorial Assistant

**Carl Sherman**  
Copy Editor

**Carolyn Asbury, Ph.D.**  
Scientific Consultant

**Bruce Hanson**  
Art Director

**Cerebrum** is published by the Charles A. Dana Foundation, Incorporated. DANA is a federally registered trademark owned by the Foundation.

© 2020 by The Charles A. Dana Foundation, Incorporated. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in articles.

#### Letters to the Editor

*Cerebrum* magazine  
505 Fifth Avenue, 6th Floor  
New York, NY 10017

or [cerebrum@dana.org](mailto:cerebrum@dana.org)

Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret that we cannot answer each one.