

By Nancy Whitaker

MAN'S BEST FRIEND

Those of us who are dog lovers and have a dog for a pet should know just how smart a canine can be. I have two little house dogs, a Shi-tzu and a Dachshund.

The old wiener dog, Brownie, is close to 20 years old and so it is almost like having an old man in the house. Brownie sleeps a lot, but gets up and slowly meanders around the house. After all he is at least close to 90 in dog years.

He has always been a good eater and it seems as if his long long tummy is never full. So, as long as he eats good, we feel he is doing well.

About six years ago we bought a little Shi-tzu named Baylee. At that time old Brownie was so happy with our new puppy that he started acting like a parent. He actually acted almost motherly. Of course six years ago Brownie could get around better to "watch" little Baylee.

The two dogs became almost like brothers and now Baylee gets to take care of Brownie. Brownie doesn't hear as good as he used to, so Baylee will go wake him up for lunch and dinner.

When they go outside, Baylee will tug at Brownie to tell him it is time to come back in. So, both of these dogs have their own mannerisms and not only that, they are both schedule conscious and they "know" what time it is.

In the mornings, both dogs get doggie bacon, Milk Bones and a pepperoni when they come in after their morning trot around the back yard. They know and expect this each morning.

They both have been known to want out again, come back in and expect more bacon when they come in the second time. They think they can fool us into presenting them another treat.

Baylee is starting now to resemble my husband, Doyle. Baylee has a white beard and looks just like my “man of the house.”

If Doyle goes out to start the car or get the mail, Baylee will race around the living and dining room crying, barking, and jumping at the windows.

One night we came home from a shopping trip and I came in the house first. Doyle stayed outside to do some things and did not come in when I did.

Baylee looked at me as though he was thinking, “Where is he? Are you the only one that came home?”

On the other hand, Baylee also seems to know when it is time for me to get home from work. It appears that he has a built in time clock as he sits on the arm of the sofa at 5 p.m. and watches for my car.

My two dogs enjoy a diet of Little Caesars dog food. When it is 11 a.m., Baylee knows it's time to eat. He will pick up one of his stuffed animals, shake it, and acts like he has hunted his dinner. Then he will scratch Doyle's hand as if to say, “It is time to eat.” Sure enough it usually is.

Now, if we go someplace and miss the 11 o'clock feeding, Baylee gets upset and will not eat when we get home. Yes, I have spoiled dogs.

They eat again at 5 p.m. and as soon as the hand on the clock hits the magical number, Baylee is tugging at Brownie's blanket and telling Doyle, "It's supper time."

Baylee has always gone outside with whomever takes out the trash. It is almost like that he thinks it is his job. He will patiently walk alongside of us and wait for us to deposit our trash bag.

My dogs are not smarter than anyone else's, but I do believe our pets take on a lot of our traits and personalities.

When Brownie was a puppy he got into some well hidden mouse poison and had to be taken to the vet. He also has done flying jumps and hurt his back.

Baylee has been more fortunate in not injuring himself, but has a fear of thunder. He shakes, cries and tries to hide when it thunders. There is just something about thunder that petrifies him.

I do love my dogs. They never seem to hold a grudge, are always glad to see us and love us unconditionally. They lick our faces, wag their tails, and we can even tell when they are smiling.

Even though Brownie is old and crippled up, his quality of life is very good. He can still run with a little hop and you know if he survives, he may get in the Guinness Book of Records for the oldest dog.

A dog is perhaps not for everyone, but mine have become a part of my family and I am right proud of them. Grrrrrr!

Do you have a dog? Do they seem like a part of your family? Do you appreciate their unconditional love? Let me know and I'll give you a Penny for Your Thoughts.

