

Basset Griffon Vendéen (Petit)

27 / 3 / 2020

THE SIMPLE THINGS IN LIFE can thrill you at the moment. Yesterday I found four small potatoes and some sad looking carrots at the bottom of the fridge. As my on-line delivery last week had been practically devoid of vegetables, this was probably the highlight of my day. But, no, in the evening I discovered a bottle of handwash, two bars of Wrights coal tar soap and two tubes of toothpaste at the back of the bathroom cupboard. Treasure! Although there are no delivery slots within the next three weeks, I for one have no intentions of queuing outside a supermarket where self-distancing is problematical. I have had two dog food deliveries this week, so at least the PBGVs won't go hungry.

It has been a sobering time with having to cancel or postpone all our club events, including the latest – the day planned at the Kennel Club which should have taken place on 11 June. Having postponed the day at the Animal Health Trust previously, it was a shock to learn that they are in financial difficulties and tragically, without an urgent input of funds, they are likely to close permanently. The AHT houses the UK's largest canine genome bank which holds the entire genomes of 89 dogs from 77 different breeds, including ours. This resource is hugely important to dog health. Without it, the process to develop DNA tests to tackle cruel inherited diseases slows causing a massive impact on the health of generations of dogs. Ways are being looked into of preserving the various breed clubs' DNA samples, testing services and research work carried out. At the moment the AHT needs considerable sums if the charity is to continue. However, they are not asking for a donation. They feel it would be disingenuous if they took donations from smaller clubs and societies etc now as the funds raised would probably still be insufficient to save the charity. Needless to say, with PBGVs worldwide having benefited since 2015 from the DNA test for Primary Open Angle Glaucoma and we are seeing a decline in cases of POAG, this is of incalculable importance to our breed so we must hope there is a solution.

Cancelling or postponing all our club events has, in itself, been a rather time consuming job. Notifying the KC, the judges, venue, sponsors, vet, refunding entry fees – also halting production of rosettes. At the moment none of us knows how long we face this disruption to our lives so any thoughts of rescheduling various events like our AGM or possibly our open show must stay on the back burner. At the moment fingers are crossed that our October championship show doesn't fall foul of prolonged restrictions to our normal way of living. However, if we come out the other side by the autumn, pencil Saturday 28 November into your rather empty diaries as, by then, hopefully we will be able to hold a club event at Weedon Bec Village Hall in Northants.

A reminder that the ballot for judges closes next week on 28 March so, if you haven't yet cast your votes yet, do so soon.

With the largest back garden down my road, while I worry about where I am going to put my grass cuttings as the local council is stopping garden refuse bin collections (suggestions to me please), I am sure your PBGVs are all enjoying having more company in the house and loving the extra attention. You may need to cut back on food if exercise has been reduced - but a daily walk is still allowed and time to practise your grooming skills! Take care all of you.

LINDA SKERRITT, 01375 673922, monkhams@outlook.com