

Andover Libraries

By Ray Mitchell
Beacon staff

If you have a pet, at some time you have probably said, "How did he know that?" Animals seem to have a sixth sense about what we are saying and thinking. Our dog is up and following us around, ready for the day's activities – except on Sunday morning, when we get ready for church. Then she finds a warm spot and naps until we come home.

Scientists are puzzled by much animal behavior. One man documented many dogs that began their welcoming behavior when their master left work to come home. The trip may take minutes or even hours, but the dog is in the welcoming spot by the window or door. Irregular schedules didn't fool the dog.

A woman who was a midwife with no constant hours had a dog that went to the window to watch for her. It was so predictable that her husband was able to put the teapot on and have it ready when she walked through the door. The scientist had no explanation of how the dog knew.

Finding directions is another mystery. Tales of pets traveling miles to be with their masters abound. One experimenter put homing pigeons on a turntable on a train and sent them hundreds of miles, hoping to confuse

them. In spite of that, they all came home.

The migratory patterns of birds is equally mysterious to scientists. Attempts to disrupt their instinctual path have always failed.

We heard about animals' behavior prior to the tsunami in the Indian Ocean. Chinese scientists are using animals to predict earthquakes. Results are not perfect, but they have a better record than other, more scientific, methods.

Doctors are using dogs to predict epileptic seizures and diabetic comas. Patients develop a close relationship with their pet and then warning mechanisms are set up. One dog wakes a diabetic patient in the middle of the night if blood sugar is so low as to be dangerous. How do these animals know? We haven't a clue.

You can read about these and other interesting pet phenomena in *Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home* (a scientific study) and *More Strange Powers of Pets* (just interesting stories) available at the Bachelder Library.

Remember the Fourth of July book sale to benefit our libraries. Bring any books that you're done with to either library. Help is also needed to carry the books to Proctor on July 3. Let a librarian know if you are available.

Food, Friends, & Merriment!

By Tracy Merriman
Beacon staff

Grilling season is here and nothing could make my husband happier. He has always enjoyed grilling up steaks, chicken, and pork, and now he has started grilling fish, too.

Grilling fish is not an easy task, and most people feel safer using a grilling basket. We prefer to cook directly on a well-oiled rack. This way of grilling fish is best when using a firm fish such as salmon steaks, shark, tuna, or halibut.

For a less firm fish like flounder, you may choose to use the foil packet method. Place the fish on a large piece of foil that has been sprayed with cooking oil, add some butter, onions, lemon juice, or whatever you like best. Fold the foil and seal the top and ends. Place the packet directly on the grill.

Let us not forget the most important step in grilling – marinating and spicing! Here is where the magic begins, and the possibilities are endless. It is pretty hard to botch a marinade if you are using ingredients you enjoy. The grocery store also carries a plethora of pre-made marinades and spice combinations.

A good rule of thumb for marinating is: The longer, the better. The following recipe was submitted by my husband, James Merriman. The key to this outstanding grilled salmon is the

marinade in which it rests for the entire day. I guarantee that this will become a favorite recipe for all of you grill aficionados.

Send your favorite recipe to Cooking@AndoverBeacon.com or PO Box 149, Andover 03216. Include your name and phone number so we can print a little interview along with the featured recipe.

Grilled Salmon

Contributed by Jim Merriman

- ½ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
- ½ cup red wine
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 lbs salmon steaks (4 small steaks)
- 4 sprigs fresh parsley, for garnish
- 4 slices lemon, for garnish

In a bowl combine the soy sauce, red wine, brown sugar, ginger, and black pepper. Mix well. Place salmon steaks in a resealable plastic bag, and pour in the marinade. Marinate in refrigerator for a few hours at least. Turn bag over occasionally to keep steaks marinated thoroughly.

Spray grill rack with cooking spray, and preheat grill for medium-high heat. Cook steaks on hot grill for about five minutes per side, basting freely with extra marinade. Internal flesh should be opaque or 130° when done. Serve with parsley and lemon. Serves four.

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