



# The Group with the Scoop

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## dog bites – CHILDREN AT GREATER RISK

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Dogs are one of the most popular pets in America. They provide us with companionship, loyalty and protection; however, sometimes they don't live up to their reputation as man's best friend.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 4.7 million people are bitten by dogs each year, with 800,000 of those bites requiring medical attention. Of those injured, around 16 die each year.

Children ages 5 to 9 are at greatest risk for suffering dog bite-related injuries, with boys having a significantly higher injury rate than girls.

The good news, according to many experts, is that bites can be reduced through public education. The CDC lists the following tips to teach children basic safety around dogs and to help prevent dog bites:

- Do not approach an unfamiliar dog
- Do not run from a dog and scream
- Remain motionless (e.g., "be still like a tree") when approached by an unfamiliar dog
- If knocked over by a dog, roll into a ball and lie still (e.g., "be still like a log")

### Angry Dog



- Do not play with a dog unless supervised by an adult
- Immediately report stray dogs or dogs displaying unusual behavior to an adult
- Avoid direct eye contact with a dog
- Do not disturb a dog that is sleeping, eating, or caring for puppies
- Do not pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff you first
- If bitten, immediately report the bite to an adult

While West Virginia law makes owners responsible for injuries caused by dogs running at large, prevention is always the best medicine. Should you or your family need legal advice, we encourage you to call the personal injury specialists at The Miley Legal Group. ■



Fighting like a Tiger for you!

# citizen spotlight

LATRICE WEATHERSPOON –  
AUTHOR OF *MOMMY'S FIRST YEAR*

**What made you decide to write a children's book?** Two weeks after my daughter's first birthday, I became inspired to write about my experience as a first time mother, and how my daughter behaved the first year.

**What/Who inspires you to write?** I love writing. As a child I was always writing short stories and knew I wanted to be an author.

**Do you ever get writer's block and if so, how do you correct it?** I still struggle with it. Distractions make it challenging to focus on my writing.

**Who is/are the most memorable individual(s) in your life that have contributed to your success?** My daughter, my mother, and my grandparents.

**What has been the most memorable time of your life and why?** At age 15, I wrote a novel and sent it to get published; it was rejected. I remember thinking it was a great book that I would read, which actually made me question my writing capability.

**What is the best piece of advice you have ever received?** A customer at Starbucks told me to publish online with Lulu Publishing Company. Lulu publishes your work for free. The customer also told me, don't give up and as challenging as it has been, I haven't yet.

**What are some goals you are working toward?** Re-editing *Mommy's First Year*, publish another children's book along with two novels. I also want to pick up column and write columns. I never stop setting goals.

**Based upon your experience, if someone wanted to write their own book, what advice would you offer them?** Don't give up, ask lots of questions, write down the answers, do plenty of research, and beware of publishing scams.

**When people look back on your life, how do you want to be remembered?** I want them to think this girl is always smiling, hard working, creative, and maybe even inspirational.

**Should someone want to request a copy of your book, *Mommy's First Year*, how do they do that?** Contact me at 304-692-7705, Email me at [tricy32@gmail.com](mailto:tricy32@gmail.com) or on Lulu Publishing website. *Mommy's First Year* put in the search box. ■



Latrice Weatherspoon

# hummingbirds –

## ONE OF NATURE'S WONDERS

Unique and Beautiful.

If you blink, you just might miss them.

Hummingbirds – one of the smallest and quickest birds in the world – also are among the most unique.



It starts with their wings, which are designed differently than any other bird. Hummingbirds' wings are built for maximum speed and agility and produce lift from both sides, enabling the birds to hover, fly backwards, fly sideways, and even fly upside down for short periods of time. And those wings move pretty fast – hummingbirds can beat their wings from 60-200 times *per second*.

But the quirky facts don't end with the wings of hummingbirds. Consider:

- Their hearts beat about 250 times a minute at rest and around 1,260 times per minute when flying.
- A hummingbird's body temperature drops from 105°F when they are awake to 70°F when sleeping.
- The brain of a hummingbird is around 4.2 percent of its overall body weight, the highest ratio of any bird species.
- Hummingbird bones are porous, and in some cases even hollow, keeping the bird incredibly light.
- Hummingbirds have almost no sense of smell.
- The feet of hummingbirds are poorly developed and weak and are used for perching but not walking.
- Their long tongues are shaped like a "W", and hairs on the end of the tongue help them become efficient collectors of nectar, which they can lap up at 13 licks per second.

The best way to attract hummingbirds to your yard is to put up a hummingbird feeder (filled with a solution of four-parts water, one-part sugar) and plant red flowers, which they can see exceptionally well. Then, sit back and enjoy the view. ■

# easy potato-coconut candy

Baked potatoes, mashed potatoes, potatoes au gratin, and potato... candy? Here's a different sort of sweet treat for this Saint Patrick's Day (or any time, really).

You'll need:

- 1 large potato
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- pinch of salt
- 4 to 5 cups confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 5 cups sweetened coconut flakes

Makes about 4 Dozen

Directions

1. Peel the potato and boil it until it gets soft.
2. Mash the potato with the salt and butter in a large mixing bowl. THEN, let it cool completely before moving on to the next step.
3. Add the vanilla extract and 4 cups of sugar. Mix. The mixture should be stiff; if not, add more sugar and mix until it stiffens up.
4. Layout a large sheet of wax paper and sprinkle half the coconut onto it. Roll the batter over the coconut until it has all been mixed into the batter.
5. Divide the batter into small balls and roll them each in the leftover coconut.
6. Chill then serve.



Original recipe and photo from [familyfun.go.com](http://familyfun.go.com). ■



## pet peeves with Mia and Dexter



### Springtime Hazards And Your Pets.

Hi friends! Mia and Dexter here with the scoop.

We love springtime – the *smelliest* time of the year! Plus there are so many new plants and bugs in the yard. Our favorites. But with all the excitement come fresh safety concerns as well. If you like working in a garden (we sure do!), be mindful of the following risks:

**Fertilizers and Pesticides** – Grass tends to absorb whatever chemicals are dumped into the soil, and we can wind up ingesting those same toxic substances when we munch on the grass. When you buy fertilizers, purchase only products that are labeled pet-friendly, and when possible, opt out of using pesticides; even “organic” or “natural” products can be harmful.

**Hazardous Plants** – Sometimes the very plants in your garden present a danger to us, and it's not just the exotic ones that you have to worry about. The ASPCA maintains a thorough list, available on their website, of plants that are toxic to dogs, cats, and horses. A few to watch out for include aloe plants, poinsettias, hibiscuses, and even the popular rhododendron. Before you start planting, check their list and make sure

your choices are safe.

So what do you do if your pet *does* eat something poisonous? Put away that bottle of

ipecac – it's gross and, more importantly, dangerous. Always call your veterinarian or emergency helpline for instructions based on the specific substance ingested, as well as the species, breed, age, and weight of your animal. And no matter what, remain calm. You can't help us if you don't keep a level head.

So humans, this spring, as you're putting tomatoes in the ground and chasing off aphids, remember us pets. We generally have an *eat-first, ask-later* policy, so we're counting on you to know what's out there and how to keep it out of our bellies. We promise – we'll try to stay out of the flowers in return. ■



Keeping Us Safe.

It's Play Time.



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## dog bites –

### CHILDREN AT GREATER RISK



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Give this Newsletter to a friend. They will thank you for it, and so will I.

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#### Maryland Birthday Trip



Shelley is 50!



Jordin's Final High School Basketball Game

## MLG Cases of Interest

### VICIOUS DOG ATTACK

Our 87 year old client was out for her daily walk when she was attacked by a vicious Rottweiler that knocked her to the ground fracturing her hip. Due to her age and the severity of her injury our client, who was extremely active and independent before the attack, has since been confined to care facilities. The dog was so vicious that the first responders had to use a fire hose to keep the dog at bay so they could tend to our client.

### INVISIBLE CAR?

Our client was traveling north on a main highway when a tractor-trailer turned left in front of her. She was unable to stop and violently collided with the tractor-trailer. The tractor-trailer driver indicated that he **did not see our client's vehicle**. Our client was taken by ambulance to an area hospital where she was treated and

diagnosed with a head injury, neck injury, back injury and numbness radiating into her legs. She also had numbness on the right side of her face and a black eye from the airbag deployment. Her complaints did not resolve and she ultimately had surgery done to her hip. Unfortunately, she continues to experience daily pain.

### TRAFFIC JAM TO WHAM!

Our client was at a complete stop on Interstate I-79 due to road construction. All of a sudden, she was struck from behind by a heavy-duty pickup truck which was hauling a horse trailer. She was transported by ambulance from the crash site to an area hospital with neck and back injuries. She continues to treat for her ongoing injuries as physical therapy has provided little relief. Diagnostic tests are pending as her doctor wants to find out if she will require surgery.

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