

Hey, everybody! It's ME, Samson! Yes, THAT guy! The gorgeous, handsome, funny guy that rides along with Jill to keep her safe from the unknown! In the fur, I'm back again with another newsy letter. Boy, is there ever news!

You won't believe me when I tell you about the enormous and wild new members of our family. Why they are here, and how they got so big, I don't know, but....

Oh, sorry. I gotta make sure the important stuff comes first. Let me be sure the coast is clear....

Okay, it is. No big – make that HUGE – monsters about. I'll be quick.

It's summertime! People are finally healthy, safe, and ready to roll. So...when YOU are ready to roll, (and by 'roll' I mean go someplace, not literally "roll on your back," you get my meaning, right?) ahem. When you schedule yourself and family to go someplace for vacation, please be sure to check your dates carefully. Mom has been very firm on how many pets she can see...and once you are on the schedule, it's cemented! If you change it last minute, you are not guaranteed Mom can care for your fluffy family members! Oh, no! The schedule may already be full, and you will be stuck! So check your dates carefully, and the times you will be leaving or returning.

You all remember that Mom does not carry her computer with her, right? This is IMPORTANT to remember, because she does not read email until she is home late at night – and if you sent an email to tell her something that was important for today, you're too late! If it's a 'same day' change, please call or text her on her cell phone number. Kinda like if you sent me an email telling me to 'come'. I would love to show you how obedient I am, but I wouldn't get it right away! Please try to remember that. Thank you. We would hate to disappoint any fluffy buddy just because we failed to get the message in time.

NOW about those interesting creatures. Since Blossom crossed the Bridge to be with Spike and Scout, it's been really quiet here. Mostly they stayed upstairs, and I could hear them racing about, then they'd come downstairs, and we would pass a friendly 'hello' now and again. We weren't chums or anything, but we did share a mom and living space, and she fed us, so we were polite and all.

So, when these creatures came, I would hear them sort of walking around, and I thought that Mom may have gotten new kitties. Mom can't survive without kitties. Or a doggie, or Well, she needs us furry ones, and I get that. So I'm not jealous or anything.

THEN, well, after about three days, I guess they were comfy in their new digs, because they started rearranging the furniture and practicing a charge at an invisible enemy, and I think maybe they opened a window when we weren't home and brought in an army, because there isn't any way two little kitties could make that much noise!

Then I guess they sent out scouts to check out the territory. OH, MY DOG, they are HUGE! Huge, I tell you! I was shocked into frozen amazement. I was NOT terrified, no matter what Mom tells you. I was.... stunned! TWO of them, together, all black and big, round eyes that glow, and...as I stared at them, they...they stared BACK!

That simply doesn't happen, I tell you! Eventually, they must have decided I wasn't a threat, so they continued exploring the rooms, and then vanished, like spooks or something. I closed my eyes, hoping they couldn't see me, because I couldn't see them anymore, and they were just gone.

Is it even legal to have wild panthers as pets? Or even tame panthers? Should I call the society for the prevention of cruelty to Samson, or what? What should I do?

If you think I may be exaggerating, just check out Facebook. They are called Levi and Randall. They are amazing. And, unfortunately, fearless.

I digress. So sorry for that. I sometimes get barking and forget to stop! This may be because Mom neglects to leave the computer on for me, and I have to tell you everything that has happened all at once, but I'm not sure. Back to the important stuff.

I think I may have mentioned it was spring at the very beginning of this newsletter, and I'm really happy about that, but that means that warmer weather is coming, and that poses a very real threat to animals of any kind, wild panthers included. Please remember that taking us in the car with you makes us very happy – but you must not leave us in the car unattended! Even a few minutes can make us very sick from heat. It gets HOT inside a car, even with the windows open all the way down. I know you wouldn't leave them open that much with us inside because we could jump out and get run over or lost or something, and...wait. Where was I??? Oh, yes. Cars and heat. Okay, I'll try again.

Cars and warm weather are a terrible thing for us furry-bodied friends. Even if you leave the windows open a little and it is windy, it's too warm for us. We will boil. We will bake. WE WILL SUFFOCATE AND DIE! Oh, it happens too often and too needlessly! Please leave us home when the temperature gets to 70 or above!

I know many of you wouldn't think of leaving your dogs home alone, especially outside, but maybe you let them out, and you get busy with household projects that involve Mr. vacuum cleaner or laundry or last night's dishes (no judgement here!). When that happens, do you have shade trees in your yard so your friend can escape the sun? If you do, great! But if not, make sure you provide a place that your furry one can lie down on cool lawn in shade. Provide plenty of fresh drinking water, too. You don't need heatstroke to derail your day! Your poor puppy!

Oh, my. There is so much more! Let me check my notes....let's see...sunburn....oh, sunburn! SOME animals are fair-skinned and sparsely furry. If you are planning on an

outdoor activity, be sure to use an animal-approved sunscreen on the delicate parts, like top of nose or ear tips, for example. If you are going to be walking your dog, check the pavement isn't too hot for their unprotected little feet! If your bare foot (or the back of your hand) finds the pavement or asphalt too hot to stand for a mere 5 seconds, it's too hot to walk your dog. Can you imagine how guilty you're going to feel when they start whining or limping and you must carry your baby back home? And then you need to carry them outside to the lawn every time they need to pee? Be kind. Be thoughtful.

There are a ton of other useful tips to be had. Like use caution around water – pools, lakes, streams. They are fun to play in and cool on hot weather days, but could be dangerous. Consider a life vest for your dog if you are going to be nears one.

Garages. Oh my goodness, what a disaster! We personally do not have one, but if they are anything like the one I visited at a friend's house, or my mom's shed, they are accidents waiting to happen! Be sure you've picked up loose boards, make sure there is nothing on the floor we could taste and regret. Remember, just like toddlers, dogs find out about stuff by putting it in their mouth! Keep plant fertilizer, pesticides, weed killer, and last winter's antifreeze and de-icer picked up and secured. Be sure to check before you drive out that we didn't follow you into the garage – and then are stuck there all day, no water and did I mention HOT?

Whew, I'm hot just thinking about all of the dangers out there! And I didn't even MENTION fireworks! Yikes, I forgot about them. Some of us are lucky to not be bothered at all by those crazy booms, rat-a-tat-tats, and loud noises that accompany flashes of light that seem to make you humans so happy. But others of us ARE bothered by them. Funny thing is, we can be enjoying them one time – and the next we are NOT. And when we are NOT, we are not listening to our humans. We are running for our lives, terrorized and crazed. We are hoping to find someplace AWAY and some place safe. Do us a huge favor and keep us in the house. Keep us away from open doors and windows, and do what you can to minimize the noise. My auntie uses a large and noisy fan, on the floor in the room with her dog. Mom puts the TV on loud. Anything to drown out the scary. And speak to us soothingly, but don't make a big deal out of it. No self-respecting dog wants to be thought of as a baby.

I think I've given you lots to think about in this newsletter. I hope I have, anyway. Have a great late spring/early summer, and I'll try to get back to you with more friendly news and tips before it gets cold again.

Love you bunches,

Samson
with Jill and the FluffyPaw Gang

