

Entertainment Outlook

Dogs and owners often see eye to eye

A fascinating footnote to the current pit bull controversy is a Vancouver man's demand that those who wish to buy pit bulls be required to undergo psychological testing first.

Apparently, the man made this plea after a neighbor's pit bull terrier terminated with extreme prejudice (as the CIA would put it) his poodle.

Now, this fellow isn't the first to suggest a few of those who own pit bulls do so because they like the image of owning a canine Rambo — the old "Never mind the dog, beware of owner" syndrome.

Since I don't know any pit bull owners, I really can't comment. Still, I suspect most of us would try to stay on the safe side.

neighbor's Pomeranian. The man eventually ran away from home and, at last report, was employed part-time as a security officer at a Harley-Davidson dealership.

At the other end of the spectrum are the owners of Pekes.

Under an apparently-harmless veneer, many Pekinese owners have a truly nasty streak. They are, however, notably sharp-witted, and this combination makes them excellent loan officers. Others flourish in law.

The psychological profiles of owners of other breeds are, in general, more mixed.

Spaniel owners, for instance, are outgoing and friendly. However, they are often self-centred, and tend to try to get their way by acting cute — they are often employed as waiters at trendy restaurants, or as TV weatherpersons.

Chihuahua owners would have more friends if they kept quieter, but are surprisingly loyal and honorable. Indeed, Chihuahua owners can be startlingly fierce if roused to anger — totally futile, but fierce.

The typical Chihuahua owner has high goals but lacks the wherewithal to achieve them. Many Chihuahua owners start small businesses which go bankrupt.

The owners of Irish Setters are terribly well-meaning — and often very attractive — but tend to be lamentably high-strung and neurotic. They cannot always be trusted on rugs, and spend much of their time in group-therapy sessions.

And, of course, there are the owners of St. Bernards, who are brave and loyal and would amount to something were it not for the drinking problem.

Significantly the study found two common denominators.

Dog owners — of whatever breed — will respond best when treated kindly but firmly.

And all will react quite badly if told they would really be much happier if they got fixed.



Weir's View

By Ian Weir

In conversation with a pit bull owner, we'd try to avoid the topic of his mother entirely, or else restrict ourselves to very complimentary comments.

In any case, what's really interesting is this suggestion that dog owners choose their pets for deep-seated psychological reasons. It's a little-known fact — reported only in the more arcane academic journals — that psychological tests have indeed been done on dog owners, with remarkable results.

For instance, a study conducted by the Institute of the Sillier Social Sciences in Little Rock, Arkansas, shows that Collie owners are among the more stable members of society.

People who own Collies tend to be gentle and intelligent. They are good with children, and truly excellent with sheep.

The only drawback is that they, like other long-haired dog owners, are smelly when it rains.

The study is similarly complimentary about the owners of Labrador Retrievers. These, too, tend to be kind and sensitive people, although they often become overweight and slow-moving as they approach middle age.

Lab owners make excellent husbands if they can be persuaded not to beg at the table, and tend to gravitate toward civil service careers.

The verdict on German Shepherd owners isn't quite so reassuring. These people all score highly on intelligence and loyalty, but some are more sociable than others.

On the positive side, the study cites a Shepherd owner beloved in his community for his 40 years of service as a school-crossing guard.

On the negative side is the Shepherd owner who couldn't be restrained from leaping over the back fence and attacking his

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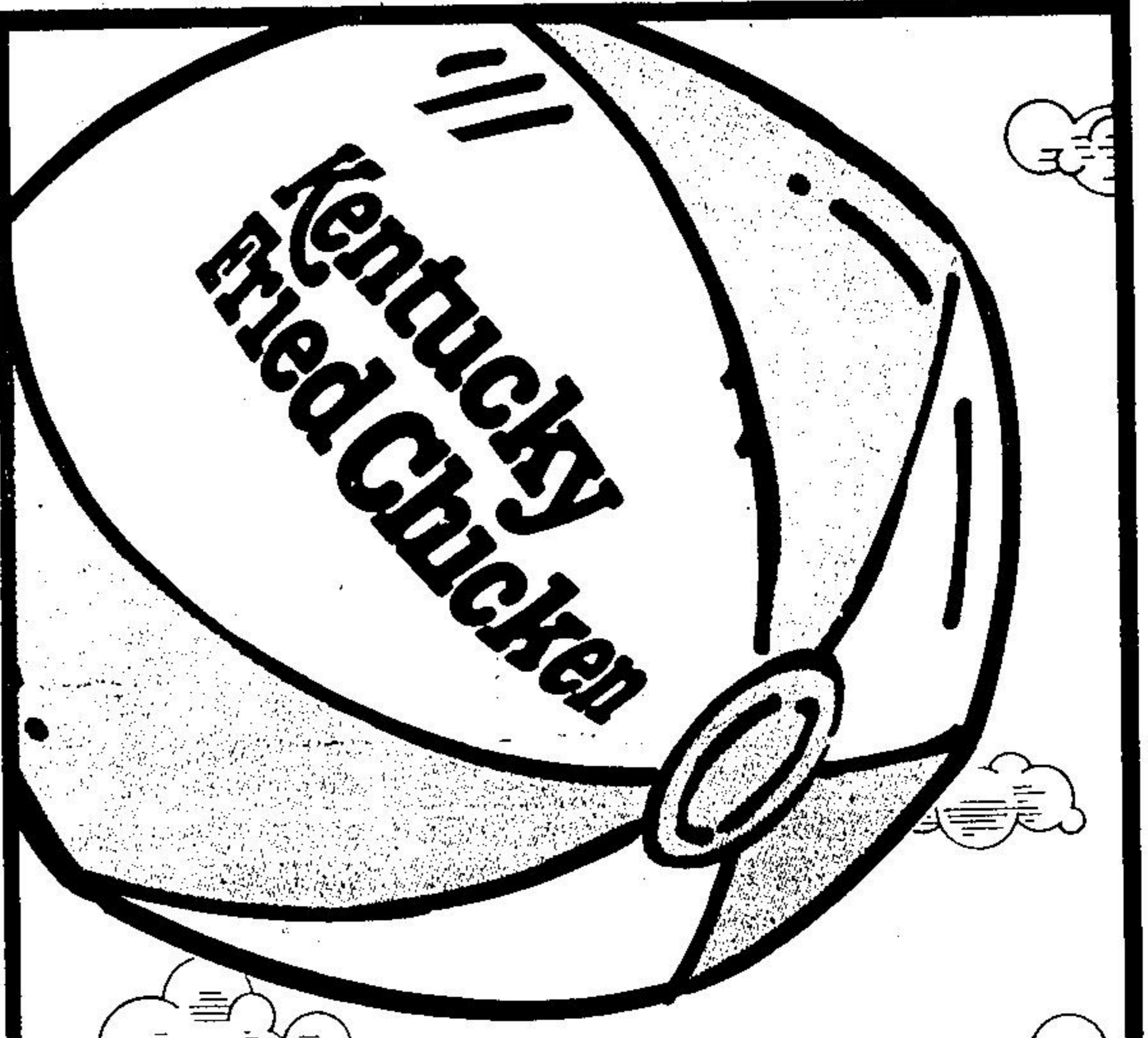
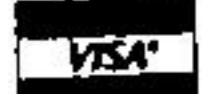
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