

RMB Newsletter Vol 7:2 Raw Meaty Bones Diet & Campaign May 2007

Dear Name,

How are things in your part of the world? I hope your 2007 goes well.

The Raw Meaty Bones Diet & Campaign commenced in December 1991 and is now much helped by hardworking folks at www.ukrmb.co.uk , www.usrmb.net and www.aussiermb.org.au

From the outset the RMB Campaign was about helping individual pets and pet owners whilst doing the utmost to combat the system controlled by the junk pet-food industry/veterinary/faux animal welfare alliance. Explaining that to pet owners is relatively easy and there's a mass of information at www.rawmeatybones.com .

Complications arise when people contact me who mistakenly believe that 'barf' (vomit) recipes or 'prey model' menus are somehow akin to a Raw Meaty Bones Diet.

This edition of the RMB Newsletter provides some background on how the original RMB Diet and Campaign was usurped and corrupted leading to the creation of 'barf' which subsequently mutated to become 'prey model' and why neither ideology serves the interests of pets, pet owners or the wider community.

Best wishes,

Tom Lonsdale

Raw Meaty Bones Diet & Campaign

Three principles built on firm foundations

In the 1860s when Jack Spratt and his sidekick Charles Cruft hit on their scheme to turn wheat and beef blood into dog biscuits they set in train a disgraceful and escalating chain of events.

Nowadays we have a junk pet-food controlled culture where pet dogs: modified wolves, cats: modified desert predators and ferrets: modified polecats, are deemed a necessary adornment of every modern household. ‘Never mind the biology, never mind the science’, the ads seem to say. ‘Get a pet carnivore and your life will be enhanced. Naturally you will want to feed it the convenient, complete and balanced ration we’ve provided in the brightly coloured packet.’

As a young person exposed to the junk pet-food culture I didn’t think much about it; nor at the vet school; nor during the first 15 years of veterinary practice. As far as I was aware, junk pet food was the norm and the litany of diseases — whether minor, major, acute or chronic — affecting my patients were an inevitable fact of life.

Insulated and unaware of alternative views, I had never heard of Sir Frank Colyer the President of the British Dental Association who, in 1947, described the dental diseases affecting carnivores fed a processed diet. <http://www.ukrmb.co.uk/images/ColyerStudy.pdf> Neither was I aware of Juliette de Bairacli Levy who recommended more natural feeding in her 1950 book *The Complete Herbal Handbook for the Dog and Cat*.

Gradually in the late 1980s things began to change. The epidemic of periodontal disease was in full tilt. Dogs, cats and ferrets fed junk food were almost certain to be suffering from the disease. Gradually the Raw Meaty Bones Lobby of concerned veterinarians, Breck Muir, Alan Bennet and I woke up to the problems. In 1991 we commenced our campaign for better pet health and an end to the veterinary and junk pet-food scam whereby our pets were condemned to lifelong diet induced ill health. http://www.rawmeatybones.com/No_3128.html, <http://www.ukrmb.co.uk/images/AVANews.pdf>

The RMB Lobby was founded on the need to:

- a.) Actively ‘unlearn’ the pet-food industry/veterinary dogma and indoctrination.
- b.) Actively stop doing harm — stop feeding junk food.

Upon these firm foundations we erected the three principles of our campaign.

- i.) The chemical ingredients of a diet, the nutrients, should be as close to a diet of wild animals as is reasonable in a modern world.
- ii.) The physical form of the food should be as close as possible to the tough chewy diet of wild animals and thus ensure optimum dental health. Dental examination and treatment should be initiated at the outset and not left to chance.
- iii.) Every effort should be expended to combat the junk pet-food industry/veterinary/faux animal welfare alliance and thus bring about the necessary change in the junk pet-food dominated culture.

Billinghurst's barf (vomit) influence

Dr Ian Billinghurst, who had previously been promoting the de Bairacli Levy and Pitcairn recipes, saw the importance of the RMB Diet and Campaign and applied to join the RMB Lobby Group. Ever keen to spread the word we welcomed Billinghurst and shared with him our findings. For a time he was a signatory to our campaigning efforts. But we were in for the first of a series of shocks.

In 1993 Billinghurst published a book, *Give Your Dog a Bone*, in which he advised against feeding junk cooked food and made much use of RMB Lobby information — a good thing. Otherwise, the book was founded on fallacies, for instance:

- ‘Because dogs are omnivores, vegetables, particularly green leafy vegetables should form a substantial part of the diet.’
- ‘Cereals are useful to feed in winter’

Billinghurst told pet owners that, over a two to three week period, dogs should be fed:

<quote>‘10 bone meals combined with 4 green leafy vegetable meals, 1 starchy meal, 1 grain and legume meal, 1 purely meat meal, 2 milk meals and 1 or 2 offal meals.’<end quote>

Ironically, at the front of his book, Billinghurst wrote thanking: ‘Dr Tom Lonsdale for sharing your vision and having the courage to continue pushing for honesty, integrity and truth in our profession, in the face of strong opposition.’

Although nominally a member of the RMB Lobby Group, Dr Billinghamurst was more a passenger rather than a driver. In 1997, at the height of the RMB Lobby battle with veterinary and pet-food industry forces he resigned abruptly giving the reasons:

<quote>‘Worldwide my credibility is rising. . . I am here to educate whoever will listen. Pet owners, vets and even pet food companies - if they are interested. It is not necessary; in fact it is counterproductive for me to participate in the politics of this debate.

If I am to be of use I need to be seen as outside the political arena. Someone who has the respect of the profession, whilst retaining strong views and unequivocal beliefs - supported of course by good evidence. My aim is to make a positive difference in this debate, and continue to make a living.’<end quote>

In the same year, 1997, pet owners who had swallowed the Billinghamurst misinformation began to refer to themselves as Born Again Raw Feeders, hence the acronym BARF, ‘vomit’ in American slang.

BARF/vomit/puke was to become a widespread and malignant influence, helped along by a series of websites and discussion lists established by Jane Anderson (formerly Jane Johnson) and others. Here Jane Anderson explains her purpose for the websites:

<quote>‘Welcome to the BARF (Bones and Raw Food) Web Ring. This ring was put together on the 15th February, 1999, specifically to link BARF sites together, and to allow BARF surfers a good link path to similar sites. If you would like to join the ring, please fill in the table below.

The criteria for joining the webring is that you feed your dog or cat a diet of bones and raw food, and that you talk about it on your page. This sort of diet is explained in books written by Billinghamurst, de Levy, Pitcairn, and the like. You must not feed your dog or cat any commercial dog foods.

If you do feed your dog/cat a BARF diet mixed with commercial foods, please feel free to join the ring, once you have switched completely over to a BARF diet.’<end quote>

As at November 2001 this is what Jane Anderson had to say about her main BARF discussion list:

<quote>‘This is a list for dog and cat lovers who either already feed BARF, or want to learn more about the BARF diet. BARF - Bones and Raw Food. The

BARF list is a community and we treasure the non-flaming approach on the list. We have lots of great discussions, share our stories, and develop great relationships between ourselves. Topics for discussion include (but not limited to) diet, breeding, whelping, puppies, aged dogs, your stories, etc. This will be appropriate for those who have read Billinghamurst, Pitcairn, Levy, Shulze, or those who just want to know the facts. We also aim to find and discuss reports that have been done giving empirical evidence on the goodness of BARF particularly when compared with commercial animal foods. The list archives are well worth looking at to learn more. You'll find the discussion informative, and we pride ourselves on our learning environment and friendliness.' <end quote>

With amazing religiosity the barfers proclaimed the superiority of their 'omnivore' diet for dogs which by this time often meant a ground concoction of minced meat, vegetables and bottled supplements. Dogs denied proper teeth cleaning were supposed to gain benefit from the occasional inclusion of 'recreational bones' meaning large beef leg bones devoid of meat and tendon.

Erasing the barf stains

However, in December 2001, or thereabouts, Billinghamurst pulled a swift one on the barfers that soon had them in a state of open warfare. Apparently without notification he registered the trademark 'BARF' and used it to promote his newly established 'barf in a bag' line of processed products. The barf banner, cherished by Jane Anderson and fellow barfers, was no longer theirs to wave.

Five months earlier, in August 2001, *Raw Meaty Bones: Promote Health* first appeared. In 389 pages the essential foundations, history and three defining principles of the Raw Meaty Bones Diet and Campaign were clearly articulated — and as a by-product the book exploded the absurd 'omnivore' barf/vomit fiction.

As a new author I was invited onto the BARF list as a guest speaker. Jane Anderson advised members on 1 December 2001:

<quote> 'I can't stress enough how important it is that you educate yourself further by ensuring you have read [Dr Lonsdale's] book. I finished reading it on Friday, and will start reading it again later today.' <quote>

Four days later on 5 December 2001, and newly attuned to the RMB Diet and Campaign information, Jane Anderson registered the name 'RMB Lobby' on Yahoo Groups.

<quote>'Let's feed raw now!

The RMB Lobby Group is for people who want to work together to help our vets, vet schools, and general public be better educated about the most appropriate diet for our domestic animals.'<end quote>

Previously and for ten years 'RMB Lobby' had been the distinguishing name of a dedicated band of veterinarians, but now at a stroke belonged to Jane Anderson. Theoretically, at least, Anderson could have used her influence to galvanise fellow barfers into action. That, unfortunately, remains a forlorn hope. The Yahoo RMB Lobby Group is an empty shell. <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/RMBLobby/>

Dietary advice dispensed on the various Anderson owned BARF lists also underwent change – to reflect the carnivore diet advice contained in Raw Meaty Bones: <http://www.rawmeatybones.com/diet/exp-diet-guide.pdf>

The following month, January 2002, Anderson launched her CARD list.

<quote> 'CARD is a new acronym meaning - Canine/Cat Appropriate Raw Diet. This has been formerly known as BARF - Bones and Raw Food. The new acronym removes the displeasure that some felt in the alternate meaning of the term. Interestingly, for some people even the thought of having to refer to it as the "barf" diet, put them off trying it.'<end quote>

Initially Jane Anderson operated her BARF and CARD lists in parallel. However, six months later in July 2002 she closed her main Barf list and moved discussions to her new list under the name 'rawfeeding':

<quote>'Feeding a dog or cat an appropriate natural diet is now known as "raw feeding".

Some people used to call it "barf" and a small number of people still do. Now that's a term that really is "so last century" now.

On this list, we only use the term "raw feeding". It's a simple generic term, and we don't have to then spend a lot of time

explaining an acronym that most people find distasteful and some even associate with vomit.’<end quote>

Stains of a barf past were being erased.

Nowadays the ‘rawfeeding’ entry page carries the following information:

<quote>‘Let's feed raw now!’

There's an awesome amount of knowledge out there about how to successfully feed a raw diet. There are also some wonderful people who give up hour after hour of their time for free to assist people.

This list will give you access to an amazing amount of knowledge from people who own just one dog, to those who feed a raw diet to in excess of 30 dogs. There are people on this list with pet dogs (of all breeds), the tiniest dogs, to the largest! We also have a huge number of people with top show dogs, through to racing dog (professional greyhounds), lure coursing dogs, working dogs, and dogs who provide special assistance to people. Whatever your type of dog, there is sure to be someone here just like yourself.

The good news is you don't have to be a genius to work out how to feed a raw diet. You will need to do a bit of reading, and learn new ways of doing things, but in the general health of your dog or cat, it should well be worth it.

I hope you get as much fun out of being on the list as is possible. We will try to keep on topic though!

This list has been established for the discussion of raw feeding, not the politics of raw feeding. If you would like to discuss that the RMB Lobby group has been established for such discussion.

Please help us to maintain a friendly list environment, creating a free learning community of like minded people.’<end quote>

Did you notice that, unlike the 2001 BARF list introduction, there are no recommended books or sources of information? On the outside there’s no mention of ‘prey model’ jargon either. That surprise awaits those who venture inside.

Prey model jargon

In 1925 scientists introduced the term carnivore prey model as technical jargon to describe predator/prey population dynamics:

<http://www.stolaf.edu/people/mckelvey/envision.dir/lotka-volt.html>

Barfers, I suspect unwittingly, misappropriated and misused the term ‘prey model’ for some (but not all) body parts in the carcass of a dead animal. And then in a further twist used the misappropriated jargon as

their name for the Raw Meaty Bones Diet:

<http://www.rawmeatybones.com/diet/exp-diet-guide.pdf>

With the passage of time prey modellers began to differentiate ‘their’ diet from the Raw Meaty Bones original. They don’t mention table scraps; neither do they include the head, guts, gut contents nor hide of a prey animal. In their arbitrary scheme they set great store by selected menu ingredients. Their mantra became:

‘80% meat, 10% edible bone, 10% offal.’

Of course there’s not an animal on the planet that returns those sorts of figures. <http://www.thepigsite.com/stockstds/55/mlc-ready-reckoner>

<http://store.mlc.org.uk/articles/dodownload.asp?a=store.example.co.uk.22.12.2004.10.31.57.pdf&i=49707>

However, armed with their magic formula the former barfers turned prey modellers tell folks with unshakeable certainty that theirs is the only way to feed carnivorous pets. Rawfeeding (prey model) group moderators declare that there are no suitable raw diet books and instead pet owners should comb the list archives for the moderators’ own (mis)pronouncements concerning details of the pet’s bowl. Discussion aimed at combating the pet-food industry exploitation of the majority of pet owners is prohibited.

In March 2006, I attempted to draw attention to the contradictions and inadequacies of the misappropriated prey model jargon in discussions on the RawVet List. An outraged prey modeller took serious offence. Jane Anderson, the list owner, intervened and banned discussion.

<http://www.rawmeatybones.com/pdf/RawVet%20Prey%20Model%202006.pdf>

RMB Resurgence

Since the beginning in the early 1990s the Raw Meaty Bones Diet has been variously suppressed, plagiarised and misused. Thousands of vulnerable pet owners have been duped into following barf or prey model nonsense. Barf/vomit/puke merchants ride the wave of misinformation such that Billingham stars in the junk pet-food industry magazine:

<http://www.petfoodindustry-digital.com/petfoodindustry/200703/?u1=friend&pg=20>

However, there are signs things may be changing. There are increasing numbers who extol the importance of the RMB Diet and at the same time point out the inadequacies and failures of the BARF and Prey Model concepts. Perhaps more importantly, for the dogs, cats and ferrets, there are people who understand and promote the importance of *all three principles* of the Raw Meaty Bones Diet and Campaign:

<http://seureshop.rawmeatybones.com/newsletter/view.epl?id=44>

For discussion of the three RMB principles and wider issues please join:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RawMeatyBones/>

Best wishes,

Tom Lonsdale