

IACP

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE PROFESSIONALS

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International Association of Canine Professionals

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The International Association of Canine Professionals is an organization established to maintain the highest standards of professional and business practice among canine professionals. Its aim is to provide support and representation for all professional occupations involved with any aspect of canine management, health, training and husbandry.

The International Association of Canine Professionals' commitment is to develop professional recognition, communication, education, understanding and cooperation across the wide diversity of canine expertise and knowledge.

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ASSOCIATE MEMBER — Less than five years experience as a canine professional but practicing as a professional. Can use the IACP name and logo on business materials. May not vote.

AFFILIATE MEMBER — An active interest in a career as a canine professional but lacking the experience to be an Associate or Professional member, i.e., apprentices, students of canine professions, trainees, volunteers, part-time, and devotees of canine related occupations. Cannot use the IACP name or logo for business purposes and may not vote.

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Cover: Whirling Dervish McLaughlin enjoys a dip in her pool. Photo: Evelyn Albertson

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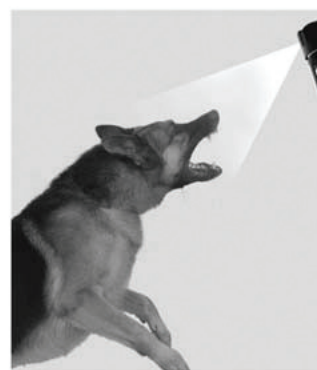
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President's Letter

by Marc Goldberg

Running an association is a bit like herding cats. Sometimes goals and interests are common, and sometimes they compete and collide. All directors and officers are simultaneously running their own business, and time is short and precious. Yet all of us have dedicated our resources to IACP as have our members. Members support IACP with dues and by banding together to say, yes, this group is a worthwhile effort.

Soon you'll receive information about our upcoming elections. We have two forms of director elections. Some directors are elected directly from the membership. Others are elected by the board of sitting directors. This is a representative form of governance designed to allow for change, but also to allow for continuity as well.

A couple of years ago, Obama ran for the U.S. presidency on the platform of "change." Only two years later, the Tea Party is running on a change platform as well. The viewpoints of these two forces are vastly different on the one hand. On the other hand, each sought change from the status quo.

I would like to invite you to become more involved in the running of IACP. Officer positions such as president, vice president, secretary, treasurer need not be held by directors, but can be held by members. My term as president expires in September and we'll be electing a new president at that time. Director positions will need to be filled as well for member elected directors and possibly for director elected positions as well.

We do hear regularly from the membership

that they want change. Issues I have heard mentioned include:

- Revamping the bylaws. (We hope to have that off to legal for revamping within the next few weeks.)
- Quicker posting of board minutes. (We now meet every two weeks and of this writing, all minutes are posted other than from the meeting held a few days ago.)
- Re-writing of director and volunteer agreements. (Those were changed from complex documents to simple ones and are posted on the IACP site.)
- Updating of the IACP web site. (It is now in the process of being redesigned. We'll either be finishing it with our volunteer assistance, or by contracting an economical design firm to complete it.)
- Formation of a membership committee to study our membership forms, requirements to join and member services. (Committee chartered and being formed at this time.)

It is also natural for people to want new leadership from time to time. As a part of your governing team I, too, believe it is time for new leadership. That is why we are looking for people who want

to learn how to replace us as officers, committee members or directors.

Please contact me directly or through the IACP office to make your voice heard, to become part of the process of change.



Helping Hands: Denise Collins

by Sarah Wilson

Helping Hands is a profile of IACP volunteers—the people who make IACP possible and often work tirelessly for all our benefit. *Helping Hands* will appear in each issue. This issue's profile is devoted to Denise Collins

I met Denise Collins at the 2010 IACP Conference. She was calm, efficient and organized, and I was immediately impressed and knew I wanted to interview her for "Helping Hands."

How long have you been "in dogs"?

After a short stint of training my first dog, a German Shepherd Dog, at 14, I have been actively training for 15 years. A pro for the last eight years, I have been self employed for four years doing mostly in-home along with board & train.

What volunteer task(s) you have done for IACP?

I volunteered to be the conference manager for 2010. I had no experience doing this type of work. I approach new jobs like this with the thought, "how hard could it be? It's not brain surgery." I was given a time line of items that needed to be accomplished. I didn't want to ask a lot of

questions and tried to do as much as I could on my own. After all, what good is a volunteer if they can't do most of the work on their own? It is a time-consuming endeavor to say the least. I'm glad I had the time.

What do you like about IACP?

The high level of experienced trainers to answer questions; friendliness and openness; willingness to help; being part of a respected group; the promotion of balanced training; and the group insurance coverage.

What do you want/hope for IACP in the future?

My hope is that IACP will continue to grow, and become more recognized as an organization so that it becomes the "go to" canine professionals group. We need to be professionally run, too, and members need to get more involved.

If you know a volunteer who should be profiled, please forward your suggestion to Sarah Wilson at MySmartPuppy@aol.com. All levels of participation will be featured, so whether this member has done a little or a lot—let us know.



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It's Summertime! Let's Go Swimming!

by Cyndy Douan, MHDL, CDT

Water can provide a nice respite from the heat for you and your dogs. Swimming is a great exercise for dogs, as it is non-impact, easy on joints, and often helps them stay cool in the hotter months while burning lots of energy. But it can have its hazards, too, so be prepared.

Backyard Play

A baby pool, small animal water trough, sprinkler or water hose can be great ways to provide some at-home water fun for your dog. Place the pool in a shady spot so that the water stays cool throughout the day (dogs can easily overheat in a sun-heated pool of water, especially if they've been active and are already hot). Change the water in the pool often to keep it clean and remove places for mosquitoes to breed. If you have a (human) swimming pool, make sure your dog knows how to enter and exit the pool safely on his own in case he falls in or jumps in when you are not watching him. Chlorine-treated pools can be okay for dogs to swim in, but watch for eye irritation and skin dryness, as the chlorine can strip the natural coat oils. The chlorinated water shouldn't harm your dog if he drinks it, but have fresh water available nearby. Salt-purified pools are safest for your dog. If your pool has a concrete deck, check your dog's paws regularly for signs of painful wearing or tearing on the pads.

Ponds & Streams

Fresh water swimming is usually easiest on your dog's skin and coat, and it is generally okay for your dog to also drink the water while he swims. Some still waters can contain harmful protozoa that can cause intestinal problems, or bacterium, such as the type that causes leptospirosis. Speak with your vet about where you will be swimming your dogs as your vet may recommend a leptospirosis vaccination. Check the bottom surface under the water where your dog will swim; glass and

other refuse can cut your dog, and he can become tangled in string, rope, fishing line, or fish hooks near or below the surface. Watch out for snakes and snapping turtles, and do a head-to-tail inspection on your dog after swimming. Look for any cuts or scrapes and (yuck) leeches after any fresh water swims.

Rivers & Lakes

I recommend neon-colored life jackets for dogs swimming in big open water. A dog who really loves to swim can become physically fatigued before his desire to swim runs out. Also, there is always a danger in open water that someone driving a motorized vehicle, like a boat or Jet Ski, may not notice your dog. The life vest makes the dog visible, and also allows him to rest in the water when he gets tired without the risk of drowning. Life vests also make it easier and safer to pluck a tired/panicky dog up out of the water. Strong currents and fast running water will tire your dog more quickly. Have an emergency plan in place for rescuing a dog that has become caught in a current and is drifting downriver. Some dogs love to leap or dive into water. Be aware of large rocks or other large debris under the surface of the water that a dog could accidentally land on while leaping or diving.



Docks, Marinas, Beaches, & Landings

Be certain to closely supervise your dog in these areas, as trash, debris, bait, fishhooks, and other tackle are prevalent. Dead fish can make your dog sick if he ingests them; fish bones can cause punctures within your dog's throat and digestive system, and dead fish can make for an awfully stinky outing if your dog decides to take a roll on them (bring along some dog shampoo just in case). Beware of the footing on docks, decks, and piers, and look for protruding nails and splinters. Docks, decks, piers, and sandy beaches also become very hot for your dog to walk on. If you cannot walk on these surfaces comfortably without shoes, they are uncomfortable for your dog. Wet surfaces can become very slippery and dangerous for dogs, making it easier for them to slide and accidentally fall into the water. Look for limping, reluctance to walk on the surface, and any signs of soreness. Remember to provide shade and fresh water for your dog when you are out boating or near the water. Dogs with short fur and white or light pigmented skin can be at risk for sunburn. I recommend a waterproof sunscreen which is safe for babies, applied to areas that will be sensitive to sunburn.



Ocean Swimming

The big caution to ocean swimming is that ingesting ocean water can cause nausea and diarrhea, and I'm talking really big yucky diarrhea (the kind you do not want to be dealing with while traveling in hotels, condos, RV's, or beach rentals). With my dogs, I avoid playing fetch in ocean water, as dogs can't avoid swallowing some water when they are retrieving and swimming with objects in their mouths. Other hazards include jellyfish, oyster beds, barnacles, coral, and other bottom surface risks that could injure your dog's legs and feet. Rip tides in the deeper surf area of the beach can also be dangerous. Playing in the surf is OK, but

discourage your dog from swimming out over his head (a longline can help). Always shampoo your dog and rinse well after a trip to ocean water. In some waters, there are organisms that can affect your dog's skin, and sand can cause chafing and abrasions when not rinsed thoroughly out of the coat and off of the foot pads. Be sure to check paw pads for sand burs and thorns that come off of vegetation growing in beach areas. Ocean water can ruin the metal parts on dog collars, so



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you may want to replace your dog's good looking everyday collar with a beach collar that you don't mind tossing after the trip.

I do not recommend allowing your dog to swim in inland coastal areas. Marshes are risky because of oyster beds, water snakes, and alligators. Dogs can also become stuck in the pluff mud that makes up the surface of most marshes and brackish water tidal inlets.

Teaching a Dog to Swim

While some dogs are natural swimmers, others are not so fond of the water. I have seen a number of dogs, with time and patience, who have learned to swim and eventually come to love the water. I start teaching swimming to these dogs by standing in waist-deep water, having someone hand me the life-jacketed dog down into the water, and guiding the dog by holding the life jacket and helping the dog move forward through the water. Never throw or push your dog into water. A novice swimmer will usually flail and flap his front legs up out of the water, which causes his head to sink. Once the dog figures out that he can swim if he leaves his front legs under the water, he is usually okay. Be careful in teaching these swimming lessons.

A novice dog will try to climb on top of another swimmer or even another swimming dog in order to try to get up out of the water, creating a great risk of drowning. This is why I like to have control of the dog by holding his life jacket, and teaching swimming lessons in water that is shallow enough for me to touch the bottom.

Have a great summer and enjoy some safe water time with your dog!

Cyndy Douan has been a professional dog trainer for the past 20 years. She is the very first member of IACP, Past President of IACP and she served on the IACP Board for 10 years. Cyndy resides near Rome, GA and owns Kingston Kennels, LLC and Georgia Dog Gym, LLC.

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Member Hall of Fame: Jay Stull

In Memoriam--March 22, 1957 - July 12, 2007

by PJ Stull

Jay Stull was raised on a farm outside St. Louis, Missouri. Like most of the local farm boys, he woke up early, took care of farm animals and then was off to school. Once he returned home, the usual farm chores were to be repeated, homework to be completed and then off to the neighboring farm for an evening of fishing. That neighboring farm was owned by Pete Litzsinger. For those of you that do not know, Pete Litzsinger was a trainer who had made a name for himself training retrievers for in the field and for hunt test. Some of these dogs went on to national hunt test championships.

In the evening, Jay would take his fishing pole and walk over to Pete's lake to fish and watch Pete train dogs. As Jay grew up, Pete started letting Jay help him with the dogs and Pete would make suggestions to Jay on how to help set up the dogs for more success. At this point, Jay was hooked on dog training. Jay's mother said Jay would bring home stray dogs and practice training them. Jay's parents never knew when a new dog would be "following him home" from school.

Throughout Jay's adult life, he continued to train dogs for all types of purposes. At one point, he owned a pet store, where he gained knowledge and experience in retail. Later on, he would take dogs that were deemed dangerous and scheduled to be put to sleep due to their aggressive nature and train them to guard businesses. Jay always helped rescue organizations with dogs they were unsure of how to handle. One of those rescue dogs became well known as Jay's sidekick. Jilly, the Belgian Malinois, seen in newspaper articles and seminars Jay attended, is now retired and living on the Stull farm.

Jay became one of the ten founders of IACP. Jay believed in the mission statement of IACP and worked very hard at trying to keep IACP on task fulfilling the mission statement and living by the bylaws. Jay believed in high professional standards and work ethics.

Jay spent many years on the Board Of Directors of IACP and even after resigning from the board, spent many hours a day on the phone or writing emails to help further support IACP's mission statement.

Shortly after the formation of IACP, Jay moved home to help take care of his aging parents and to run the Stull Farm. With the help of his wife, Jay started a boarding, grooming and training center on the farm called The Dawg Trainer. Jay trained many dogs to title in the sports of obedience and field trails. Jay handled some of those dogs himself at field trails but what he enjoyed the most was teaching the dog's owners to handle and title their own dogs. The clients enjoyed the education presented with intelligence, patience and laughter.

In August of 2006, Jay co-founded CPAC (Canine Political Action Corps) to help work on legislation affecting the business of dog trainers and dog groomers. This organization worked hard to ensure individuals working in the fields of training and grooming had someone to protect their livelihood. Pulling from his past experience working on legislation for businesses in the state of Florida, Jay traveled from state to state when legislation was introduced. Jay met with legislators and helped to educate them in how to reach the results they were looking for when writing the legislation and to also safeguard other trainers and groomers.

Jay became a well-rounded and highly respected dog trainer. Throughout the years, people came from all over to spend some time learning from Jay. Jay always had time for someone with an open and willing mind to help expand their knowledge of dogs and dog training. Jay believed in high professional standards and was willing to help anyone to reach those standards. Every person that crossed the threshold of The Dawg Trainer was met with a smile and the feeling that there was plenty of time to be spent working through any problems they felt they had.

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2010 Conference

By Martin Deeley

Even though I have been working with dogs since “raw diet” was a normal meal and a leash was a piece of straw bailing twine, I always come away from the IACP conference with nuggets of wisdom that change my life and perspective on dogs and their training. Sometimes changing our mindset is difficult—old habits die hard, and the warnings of the old gurus linger in the mind. (“Don’t play tug” is a particular one.) We tell our clients that we need them to change so they can help their dogs, but who tells us to change so we can help all dogs and clients? This conference helped us to create change.

Without a good business model, we cannot stay in the profession we love. Larry Genkin set the theme and provided the conference with the first taste of motivation.

Dr. Temple Grandin is certainly amazing. She is unafraid to talk of her autism, share her thoughts, and relate to everyone in the room, which included members of the general public who had come just to see and meet her. She explained, analyzed, amused, intrigued, and at the end left us in awe of her ability to communicate and stimulate our minds. The faces of the audience throughout showed admiration and affection. If Temple can achieve, we can.

Joel Silverman was a delight. His humor, skill and knowledge left no doubt we all wanted to see and hear more. An infectious smile and down to earth enthusiastic approach once more had the time going by too quickly and questions of “can you come back next year” were on the lips of all.

Peter Willmott came all the way from Down Under to share his insights, and Sue Sternberg was as entertaining as ever with some eye-opening video

of dogs being dogs. Aimee Sadler continued to illuminate why she is so successful with her shelter dog training programs, and she is not afraid to put herself “out there” and share this important work. (On a personal level, I am honored that Aimee has considered me a mentor—now I am learning from her.)

I doubt anyone will forget the great presentation by Bonnie Brown-Cali and her work with Paws for a Cause. Thom Somes showed why he is number one in Pet First Aid for professionals—he combines information, humor and an enthusiasm to teach.

Kong’s own Mark Hines was my favorite, though—because like me, he loves retrieving and playing toy games with dogs. My only criticism was that I wanted more than the time he had available.

Marc Goldberg, Mary Mazzeri and John Wade treated us on the final day to “breakout sessions” showing a wealth of knowledge on the use of equipment.

Of course, Triple Crown continues to provide a fantastic venue for our conference, and we simply cannot thank them, and our other sponsors, enough.

The success of this conference was in no small way due to the work of Conference Manager Denise Collins and to all her amazing helpers. Without them and their hard work, I would not have been able to learn as much as I did. It is already paying off in the additional Dollars coming into my business and the common ‘Scents’ I gained.

The feedback both verbal and written following this conference reflected my own feelings. “Revitalized” was a word I heard many times. I certainly came back revitalized!

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Snout-To-Tail Success Stories

By Thom Some, "The Pet Safety Guy™"

Earlier this year, I was invited to speak on a large Pet Care Professional monthly teleconference. My presentation was "Using the Snout-To-Tail (S2T) Assessment on Clients' Pets." Pet Tech has been promoting the Snout-To-Tail Assessment since 1997. In that time, I have heard some great success stories from Pet Care Professionals and students.

To wit:

One of our PetSaver students was very intent and enjoyed the class, but apparently she didn't go home and do a S2T assessment right away. When she did finally do one on her dog 2 weeks later, she found huge mammary tumors. She admitted that she had never with "intent and purpose" gone from snout-to-tail on her pet. Her vet diagnosed mammary cancer, but after surgery the dog was doing fine. The vet did say that if she would have let that go another few months, the outcome would not have been as good.

When I tell this story in the classroom, some students wonder how she couldn't notice the mammary tumors in the first place. The reason is that she would come home from work, make her dog dinner, have dinner herself, her dog would sit on her lap and she would pet it. But she never really put her hands on her dog, from Snout-To-Tail, with deliberate intent and purpose, like we teach.

Another favorite story of mine is when I spoke at the King Charles Cavalier Group in San Diego. I did a 1-hour presentation with a demonstration of the S2T, based on my book,



Knowing Your Pet's Health, A Guide For Optimal Wellness From Snout-To-Tail.

I was supposed to get one-and-a-half hours to talk, but it became clear I wouldn't have that long. Well, those of you that have seen me present (4 times now in Hutto) know I can talk fast. That night, I gave what I jokingly call my "Evelyn Woods" presentation. I did the whole presentation in one hour with a demonstration of the Snout-To-Tail Assessment. At the end of the evening, this nice couple

purchased a copy of the book. That night, with only my quick demonstration and the book as guidance, they did the S2T and found a nerve sheath tumor. They took their dog to their vet and the vet did surgery. The good news is that the dog had a full recovery with no disability.

The vet was amazed, as she had never had anyone find a nerve sheath tumor. Usually, the first sign of a nerve sheath tumor is permanent disability.

The last story goes back to 2001, when the first version of my book came out and appeared in "Dear Abby." We recommend that Pet Care

If you know what is "normal" for your pet, then you will be able to more quickly recognize when your pet is presenting to you "not normal."

~Thom Some,
"The Pet Safety Guy™"



Professionals use the S2T on your initial client interview and then every time you visit the pet, filling out a copy of our S2T Worksheet.

One of the pet sitters put our recommendation to work. She took our book with her on her client interview. She said she was giving them the Knowing Your Pet's Health book because she felt it contained great information in caring for pets. She proceeded to do a S2T assessment on their cat including the vitals (heart rate, breathing rate, temperature, mucous membrane color and capillary refill time). First, they were amazed that she could touch their cat all over.

Second, she found that the cat was dehydrated. They told her that no way could the cat be dehydrated, as she was drinking more water than ever (evidence of a problem).

**"There
is no part of the
pet that you should not be
able to touch; otherwise, who
is training whom?"**

This is when her professionalism really stepped in. She told them that she was uncomfortable taking care of their cat without it getting a check up from their vet. The owners then got very indignant with her, telling her she is the third pet sitter they've interviewed and none of the others had any problem with watching their cat. This pet sitter stood her ground and said without a check up, she would not be able to take them on as a client. The owners still would not budge. This pet sitter was more concerned about the well being of the cat than getting another client, so she offered to take the cat to her vet, and if the cat received a clean

bill of health, she would pay for it. The owners, thinking they were going to get a free exam, agreed.

Sure enough, the pet sitter's vet found the cat was in the early stages of diabetes. The owners paid the vet



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bill and hired this pet sitter. The great part about this story is that the pet sitter told us that these clients now consider her the "best pet sitter EVER!" and have referred several friends and family to her.

I do believe that every Pet Care Professional (and every pet owner) should be trained in the skills and techniques of pet CPR, first aid & care. However, I think everyone who puts their hand on fur, in the course of their day, should know how to do, at a minimum, Pet Tech's Snout-To-Tail Assessment and do so, three-to-five times a week. This simple skill that can take only a few minutes can literally add hundreds-of-thousands of minutes to your pet's life. So why would you not invest in the life of your pet?

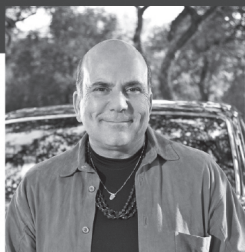


If you have a story about using the S2T, I want to hear it. Send me your story at PetSafetyGuy@PetTech.net

Thom Somes, "The Pet Safety Guy™" is a nationally renowned speaker, author and professional trainer. He is the founder and President of Pet Tech, Inc., the first international training center dedicated to Pet CPR, First Aid & Care for dogs and cats. Pet Tech's programs are the official Pet CPR, First Aid & Care Training for the International Association of

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My friend Joe Vitale, the leading authority on the Law of Attraction, and I are partnering to co-author the book, *Paws of Attraction*. This book will educate and convey the message that pets come into our lives to teach us life lessons, to put us on a path of self-discovery, to help think and feel outside of ourselves and to be more in tune with the vibrations of the Universe. Pets are an asset that can help us to cope, thrive and succeed in this high-tech, low-touch world. We are looking for first-person, inspirational stories on how pets have helped you to learn or discover Love, Healing, Happiness, Prosperity, Giving, Perseverance, Spirit, Inspiration, Loyalty, Trust and Loss, to name only a few.

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Exercising Self Control – it's more than a metaphor. by Janeen McMurtrie

Self control is the measure of an animal's ability to control its emotions and desires, the ability to override impulse to obtain a delayed reward. Self control is important in social interactions because it allows animals to alter their behavior to follow rules, maintain social bonds and cooperate with others.

The strength model of self control¹ states that:

- Self control is a limited resource. As you use it, you deplete your resources.
- When your stockpile of self control is depleted, your ability to exercise it decreases.
- Self control can be restored by rest, nutrition and positive emotions.
- Like a muscle, if you use it regularly and well, your self control gets stronger over time.
- Other high level mental functions use the same set of resources that self control relies on.

So what does this have to do with dog training? Everything! Exercising self control is the basis of good social behavior, and most problem dog behavior is rooted in a lack of it.

How do you help a dog learn to exercise his self control? First, remember that it's a limited resource. If it's late in the day and the dog is tired, stressed out, or has already had a lot of mental exercise, give him a break. He's operating on a short fuse. Don't tempt fate by lighting it.

Second, make sure he gets regular mental exercise. Letting a dog do whatever he wants whenever he wants allows his self control to atrophy. It turns him into a mental couch potato. To keep a dog's self control strong, you need to work with him every day.

Third, give your dog plenty of rest and good nutrition. A weak, tired, thirsty or hungry dog is a stressed dog – and stress depletes vital mental resources. If your home is loud and chaotic, give the dog a quiet place to rest and recuperate. Feed him the right amount of good quality food. Make sure he has plenty of clean, fresh water.

Fourth, remember that other mental functions draw on the same reserves needed for self-control. This is one of the many reasons why it's important to maintain a consistent set of rules and boundaries. Once following these rules becomes a habit, they draw far less on his reserves.

These other mental functions are also important because they give us opportunities to cross-train a dog's powers of self control. Studies have shown that when human beings make efforts to control themselves in one part of their lives—even simple ones like maintaining good posture, using proper grammar or using a non-dominant hand to do simple exercises—their ability to exercise self-control in difficult situations increases in a measureable way.

It isn't unusual for clients to tell me that they don't want to bother teaching their dog those pointlessly complicated, time-consuming formal obedience exercises. They just want Fifi to quit attacking the mailman. But research shows that this kind of work is important. Training Fifi to sit and heel accurately, come to a straight front, wait to be released at the door, navigate obstacles and other seemingly unrelated tasks helps her build up the self control resources she needs to resist the lure of the mailman's oh-so-tempting ankles.

**"Think of
'NILIF' as a self
control savings
account."**

Research also shows that the mental processes involved in making choices use the same resources as those that control our powers of self-control.² Physical exercise has also been documented to improve high level mental processes like those involved in exercising self-control.³

This points to one of the great, and I think previously unrecognized, strengths of the “Nothing in Life is Free” or NILIF programs – because when we implement them properly, we take away many of the dog’s opportunities to make choices, leaving more resources available for executing self control. Think of NILIF as a self control savings account.

So, science shows us that a combination of regular physical and mental exercise and consistent practice of self-discipline combined with rest and good nutrition can help make you – and your dog



– more cooperative, less reactive and better able to resist temptation. And based on my experience – it works.

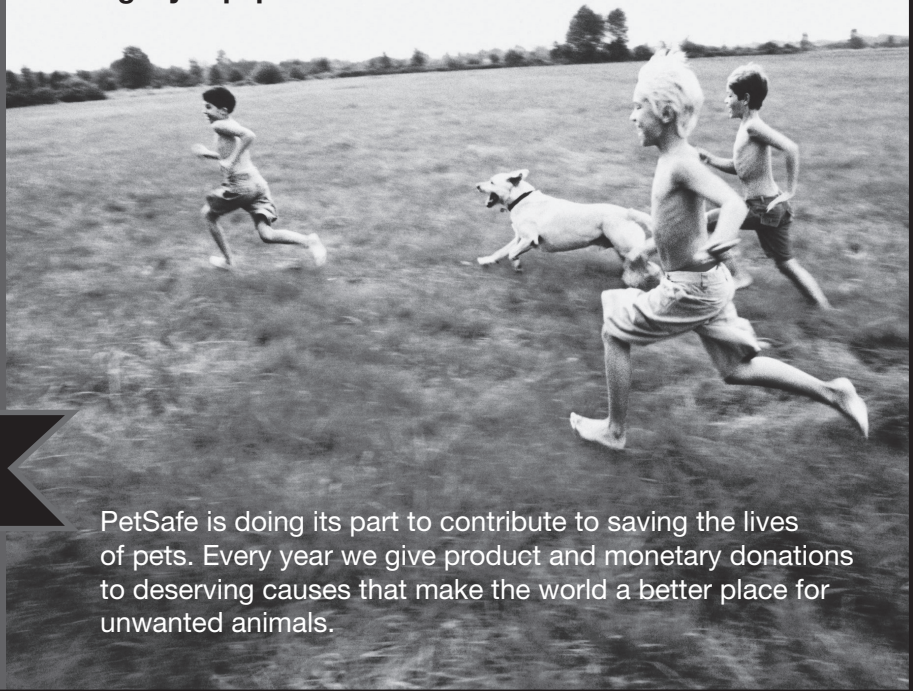
Last fall foster dog Charlie arrived at our place. The first time I met Charlie, he shrank back and gave me the evil eye. The first time he met my husband, he threw a tantrum. The first time I tried

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to leash him up and take him out of his kennel, he tried to bite me. Charlie snarked and snarled at any dog that came near him and he went ballistic if you tried to groom him. He also had stunningly creative eliminatory habits.

I put Charlie on a strict NILIF program. The boy worked to earn every crumb of food he ate, every bit of a walk, every toss of a ball and every iota of attention he got. He had to navigate mental and physical obstacles in structured exercises every day. He ate high quality dog food and there was always clean water in his kennel. He got plenty of rest and exercise and I made sure I didn't overtax his resources.

Today Charlie lives in the house. He runs loose with our dogs, our chickens and our guests. He cheerfully lets us brush him, trim his nails, clean his ears and brush his teeth. He's gone from being a horrid little dog to being a very likable pet, and I didn't need a magic wand or behavior modifying drugs to get him there.

Increasing a dog's ability to exercise self-control is the key to solving many behavior problems.

Current research supports the old-fashioned idea that a combination of NILIF, obedience training and proper rest, nutrition and physical exercise is the key to improving a dog's ability to use this vital resource.

Janeen McMurtrie is the owner of Smart Dogs Training Center in Red Wing, MN and is a Professional member of IACP. Read more from Janeen at <http://smartdogs.wordpress.com>

1 Baumeister, Roy F., Vohs, Kathleen D., and Tice, Dianne M. (2007), "The Strength Model of Self Control", *Current Directions in Psychological Science*.

2 Baumeister, Roy F., Sparks, Erin A., Stillman, Tyler F. and Vohs, Kathleen D. (2007), "Free will in consumer behavior: Self-control, ego depletion, and choice", *Journal of Consumer Psychology*

3 Aamodt, Sandra and Wang, Sam (November 8, 2007), "Exercise on the Brain", *The New York Times*.



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A New Way to Teach

by Lynne Bell

Have you ever noticed how sometimes life gets in the way for students in group classes, causing a rather high drop-out rate before graduation? Are you striving to find a way to offer students a more flexible schedule?

I found the solution to these issues for my business. Years ago, I moved into an area full of commuters. Ninety percent of the population spends at least 2 hours driving home from work, and when they get there, sometimes they just don't want to leave to come to class. At the time, I was teaching 7-week traditional style classes. Students would come for 2-5 weeks and would show enthusiasm, only to have that eagerness begin to dissipate. I noticed a trend emerging--only about 50-65% of my students were graduating from class. After some research, I realized that most of the time these students were dropping out because something had happened to make them miss one class, and that made them fall behind, so they would just give up. I tried offering unlimited classes, but I was still seeing the trend continue, only to have repeat students come back at a later class. I grew determined to find a better solution.

One day I visited a "drop in"-style conformation class and I wondered if this could be adapted for a basic obedience class. This was the PERFECT fit for me!

Technically a "hybrid" between a "drop in" and "levels" classes, these have become a very popular option for my area. Students purchase as many sessions as they would like. I sell a 6-pack and a 12-pack, though they can also buy additional single sessions for a slightly increased fee. There is a time restriction on the program to keep some continuity in the training (they are allowed 10 weeks to complete 6 sessions).

Each week I teach all basic exercises (sit and down stay, come, loose leash walking & heel, stand) and I choose an additional fun "manners" exercise each week to add. Each

student is encouraged to work at their own capacity. I might say, "Let's work on our down stays" and while I might have a new student standing 4 feet away from the dog and just learning how to get them to hold still, I have other students who may drop the leash and walk out of sight. Then I tell each student what to do to improve for that coming week as well as assigning individual homework for each exercise.

There are many benefits to teaching classes this way. Students never fall behind and if they miss a class or two, they're more likely to come back. It allows for greater socialization opportunities, since different dogs and owners may show up every week. New students are in the same class with my competitive level students, something that seems to motivate them to train to a higher level than they did when they were all progressing at the same time. This has increased the number of people who want to go on and train for competition. Since I'm paid for the number of sessions, students that complete their 6-pack often go on and buy another set, which increases my bottom line, while allowing them to progress at a pace that's comfortable for them. Because there are no start or end dates, the wait time to get into a class is 6 days at the most. This has increased the number of signups. My actual teaching time has dropped significantly.

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I admit that there have been some glitches along the way. I do keep classes somewhat limited so there are usually no more than 10-12 students attending on any given night (on average), which is a manageable size for me. If I feel there are a few too many students, I simply split the class and have one half working on one thing while I teach the other half an easier version. This does require me to teach by the seat of my pants at times. If you're the type of instructor that must have a rigid syllabus, this may not work for you.

In addition, there have been occasions when I've needed to cancel a class. Because I

never have any idea of who may show up, it's hard to know who to contact. Currently I post cancellations on my website. If a student was there the week before, I will contact them. If they missed a class, then I tell them to look at the website or call before coming again. Also, if someone signs up and wants to come in a couple of weeks, I always require that they call on the day they want to start (in case I cancel and so that I remember I have a new student).

Problem solving and items an instructor might typically teach during an orientation need to be handled differently as well, since new students show up and are thrown into the mix on the first night. I try to spend a little time on the phone with new signups and am sending information via email ahead of time (including my manual). This seems to only be a slight glitch, and most people seem to do just fine.



I remember how many sessions each student has left by using punch cards to track attendance. When they purchase a 6-pack, I record the date on their card that allows them 10 weeks and I punch this card each week. If they purchase more, I simply add that to the card. Each student is then accountable for his own dog's progress, though I may make note on the card if there is a particular issue they'd like addressed.

These classes have really served my business well and the students seem to love them. Hope they can help you as well!

Lynne Bell IACP-CDT is a professional member of the IACP and has been training dogs since 1985. She currently owns Blazing Trails K9 Academy in sunny Lancaster, CA. You can find her on the web at <http://www.blazingtrailsk9.com>

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