

IACP

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE PROFESSIONALS

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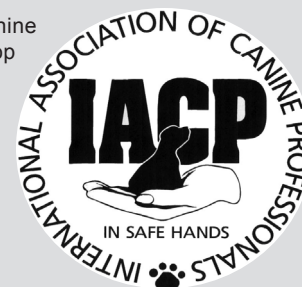
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The International Association of Canine Professionals is an organization established to maintain the highest standards of professional and business practice among canine professionals. Its aim is to provide support and representation for all professional 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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Cover: Maddie, owned by Bri Trial and Lee Benton, takes 2nd Place in Catch-It at The Canine Ranch's Fall Dive In. Photo by Maggie Fan.

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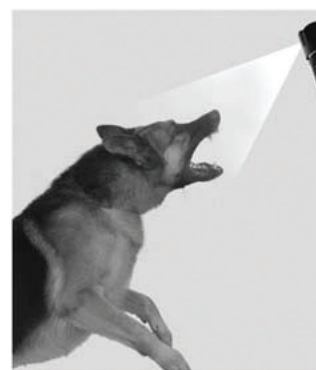
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President's Letter

by Chad Mackin

I just returned home from our fall board meeting in Clermont Florida, and as usual I have to give a ton of thanks to our tremendous board of directors and volunteers. We have so many people working to help IACP achieve our potential.

Every director put a lot of effort and energy into ensuring that the meeting was productive and helpful. I am always amazed by the way this group of directors works together and am honored to serve with them. We should have some pretty exciting things to announce later in the year!

As always though, it's the volunteers that drive the organization and we have many many members who are quietly working behind the scenes supporting the projects that allow us to grow. Without our volunteers, IACP is dead in the water. I hope each of you will consider offering some of your talents towards the betterment of IACP.

One of the most exciting parts of the board meeting was the discussion regarding our upcoming conference April 19-22 in Orlando, Florida.

Seems like the IACP Conference 2011 just closed. It's hard to believe it's been 5 months already, but it has. The 2012 Conference will be here before you know it, and let me tell you, this is going to be a good one!

Denise Collins and her volunteers have been

working their tails off to top last year's San Diego Conference and it looks like they are going to do that, and then some! Conference 2012 is looking amazing. The venue is fantastic and I am very excited about the speakers.

Dr. Jean Dodds, DVM, will be there, and I am really looking forward to hearing what she has to say.

Also, IACP's own Executive Director, Martin Deeley, will be presenting. If you've not had a chance to see Martin do his thing, it's a thing of beauty not to be missed.

Also on the program are Debby Kaye, Vernon "Max" Frayser, Jenifer Funk, Laura Potts & Robin Hawn. I'll also be offering a presentation on my Pack to Basics socialization program.

We are also hoping to add a few other surprises that you won't want to miss!

I am perhaps most excited about the deal we've worked with SeaWorld to get our members in for a special behind the scenes tour of the park, included with conference registration!

I am looking forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,

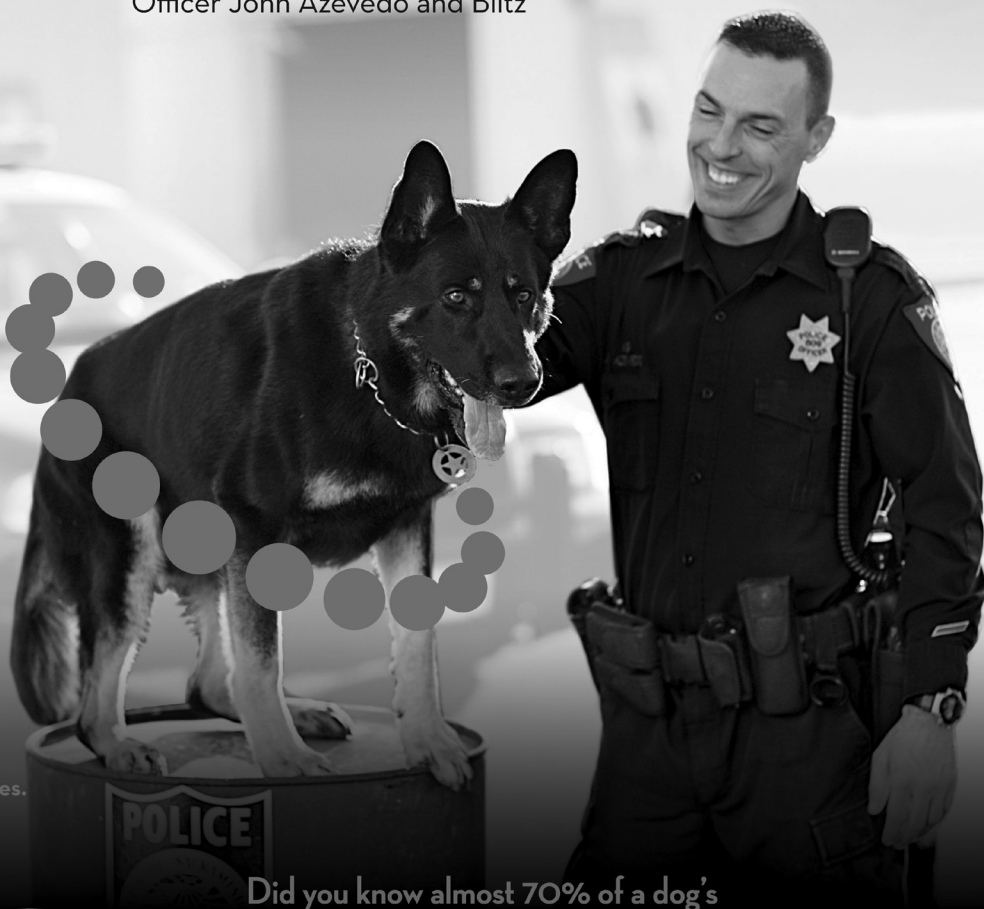
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American Medical Aviators Train to Rescue Canine Soldiers

by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Rebecca Sanderson

Task Force Comanche

SHINDAND, Afghanistan – American combat-ready service dogs face the same danger from insurgent attacks as their partnered Soldiers – bombs, missiles, grenades and machine gun fire. A dog's injuries are treated just as seriously as a human's, possibly with evacuation by a medical helicopter crew. To prepare for the worst involving service dogs, aviators with an American medical evacuation unit stationed in northwest Afghanistan recently simulated a rescue operation involving an injured Soldier and his canine companion.

F Co. 1-126th Aviation "Chaos Dustoff," a MEDEVAC helicopter company attached to the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, conducted the exercise in April. Sgt. 1st Class Apollo, a combat stress therapy dog at Forward Operating Base Shindand, played the part of a wounded service dog. American military dogs in combat zones do everything from calm the anxious, to search-and-rescue, drug detection and bomb detection.

"We look at our dogs as partners, not just as dogs," said Ken Kelley, the training kennel master for American K-9 Detection Services. "If we go out on a mission and a dog gets hurt, it's important to us that they won't just be treated as a dog. It makes the handlers feel better when they go to work to know that if something does happen to their dog that it will be taken care of. They are more confident in their mission and it's one less thing they have to worry about."

With this in mind, F Co. arranged for special training to learn how to transport and treat military working dogs on their helicopters. On an April morning, Apollo's handler decked out the black Labrador retriever in a set of booties, goggles, ear

muffs, and a backpack just like other working dogs who travel by helicopter. Once set in position, the simulation began, with medics discovering their patients with shrapnel wounds and calling in a request for helicopter evacuation.

The helicopter soon arrived, landing nearby with the flight medics rushing off to assess the condition of the wounded. The casualties were then loaded onto the MEDEVAC aircraft, a Black Hawk helicopter, and flown to a nearby hospital, with some treatment conducted in flight. The MEDEVAC team learned how to properly calm and handle the dog, including how to ensure his safety by appropriately muzzling and restraining him for transport. They gave both patients oxygen therapy and bandaged their wounds.

Sgt. Kyle Newman, an F Co. MEDEVAC flight medic, said "Surprisingly, the medical treatment



SHINDAND, Afghanistan – A Black Hawk medical helicopter crew tends to a U.S. Army Soldier with simulated shrapnel wounds as his working dog, Sgt. 1st Class Apollo, a black Labrador retriever, stands by, having received care for simulated wounds as well. The dog and handler helped train the medics, Soldiers with F Co. 1-126th Aviation "Chaos Dustoff" medical evacuation unit, attached to the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. (Photo by U.S. Army Capt. Joshua Ferrer, F Co. 1-126th AVN)

issues are not the biggest challenges. Medics can do the same emergency treatments and give most of the same medications that they use for humans.” The challenge, Staff Sgt. James Sherman, also an F Co. flight medic, said, is that “K-9 patients have different anatomy, and they aren’t able to communicate their injuries like a human patient.”

On landing at the hospital, the patients were met by two medical teams: a veterinary team for Apollo and a human care team for his handler. Veterinary personnel are located at three posts in Regional Command West, at Farah, Herat and Shindand. NATO vets staff Farah and Herat, and Shindand is staffed by Americans.

The MEDEVAC crew expressed appreciation for getting the chance to train with a dog, especially Apollo, whose calm demeanor enabled the unit to learn important skills that will help them treat any Soldier, canine or human.

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What is Professionalism?

by Guy Kantak

Professionalism is a term that gets used a great deal, but one that can mean many things to different people. I've spent 30 years in the fire service, 20 as a supervisor, and this word is one I consider frequently. In my life experience, it seems professionals are those who share certain traits.

Job Skills

Being competent in job skills is undoubtedly a component of being a professional. At the same time, I remind my fire crews that skill alone isn't enough. You can be God's gift to firefighting, but if you're late for work or don't work well with others, I'd prefer you work elsewhere. Believing a strong skill set forgives all other deficiencies is a recipe for personal stagnation and professional self-destruction.

As a canine professional, how do you grow? How can you develop your skill and knowledge base, and your network of resources? What about developing interpersonal and organizational skills? You may be a savant with dogs, but always remember that owners pay the bills, and they usually make or break final outcomes.

Integrity

In the fire service I teach my crews that integrity is being honest with others and yourself.

Firefighters with integrity know their limitations, seek to expand their skills and knowledge, and take commitments and trust seriously.

Are you honest and realistic regarding likely outcomes for dogs? Do you answer owner questions honestly, including the ability to say "I don't know"? Do you criticize other approaches or professionals, or do you refer to others who may be more helpful? Do you practice ALL you preach? Are you in business to make money or to offer help?

Interpersonal Skills

In the fire service everything we do is with others. If you can't function in a team, you're a liability. If you can't communicate clearly during stressful situations, you won't earn trust and confidence.

Working with dogs may be more solitary in nature, but every dog has an owner who wants to feel confident about the money they're paying for your services. Being able to communicate clearly, calmly, and in a friendly and respectful way earns trust. Is your language (verbal and non-verbal) instructional or judgmental? Do you help and coach, or criticize those with limited skills or knowledge? Do you talk with clients, or do you talk AT clients?

Organization

In the fire service, we've learned to work smarter due to staffing limitations. If someone can't keep their calendar squared up, handle several assignments, or map out a cohesive plan to move forward on a tactical objective.... well, maybe they should stay home.

How organized are you? Do you have clear appointment times, contact numbers, and policies? Is it easy to find information on your website? Do you fumble with equipment or supplies? Are your instructions clear, written and concise? Do your clients understand the overall plan for their dog and how it will help them reach desired goals?

Do you document sessions, problems, plans and advice?

Reliability / Punctuality

At the firehouse I have crew members that always complete assignments and others who require constant follow up. Can you guess which members I go to when things get tough? Members

who don't follow-through always make more work for others.

If you're selling services to consumers, how happy do you think they'll be if you're late or forget appointments? If you don't follow-up on emails, calls, or questions? Everyone's time is tight and the average family has 4-5 (or more) calendars they're juggling. If they need help with a dog, the last thing they want is someone who's going to make their life more complicated.

Appearance

In the fire service, what we wear is designed to provide necessary protection as we work.

Even so, we do wear uniforms with name and rank visible, and gear that is kept clean and in good repair. We may be in smoke, ash, and blood, but we clean up so not to track dirt or grime into someone's home.

You have only 1 opportunity to make an initial impression. What impression do you make? How do you introduce yourself, how are you dressed, are you clean and well-groomed? If you travel to a client's home, do you

wipe your feet and are you careful around their belongings? Is your vehicle clean? Are your demo or work dog's well groomed and fit? If you have a facility, is it clean? Are the bathrooms kept up? How do any staff members appear and behave?

Priorities

Firefighters are there to help on simple as well as challenging calls. To every taxpayer THEIR call is always important. Nothing can take our focus from this truth.

Do you show your customer that he/she is a priority? Is your cell phone turned off during sessions? Do you give clients your undivided attention? Do you arrive on time, ready to work? Are you patient and do you listen? Do you help clients with their specific problem(s) at every visit? Does your plan fit the dog and client, or do you fit

the dog and client into your plan?



Guy Kantak is a National K9 Graduate and an Associate member of the IACP. Owner of The "K9 Guy LLC," Guy provides training and behavioral assistance to Central Ohio dogs and families. Visit him online at <http://theK9guy.com>.

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Understanding Our Profession: Past is Prologue

by Sarah Wilson

Canine professionals, particularly dog trainers, often are equated with some sort of therapist. How often do clients joke with you, asking if you “train husbands or children,” or remark on how similar dog work is to people work? They are right, but most of us have no training in how to work with family dynamics or understand the human issues common to our work.

However, you don’t need to be a licensed psychologist to notice trends in clients, and in our colleagues, as well. If you aren’t a psychologist, you probably have no idea why clients or friends sometimes react the way they do. It is an area I am endlessly interested in.

Two studies I encountered on animal professionals resulted in a correlation between intense attachment to animals and higher-than average dissociative symptoms, with the animal professionals having higher levels of both than other people surveyed.

Intense attachment to animals we understand. But what are dissociative symptoms? Dissociation is, in broadest terms, what the mind does to survive trauma. One way to define trauma is an emotionally/physically overwhelming event that can not be avoided or stopped. At such moments, the mind--quite wisely--goes elsewhere. This doesn’t happen without trauma, so animal professions probably have more adult survivors of trauma than the general population.

How does this impact our work? In more ways than can be covered here, but let me briefly overview two common lasting impacts:

Low Self-Esteem

As children, we believe what we are told about ourselves. So when we are told we are stupid, useless, ugly, unloveable, etc., we hear it as “truth.” It is not. If you believe negative things about yourself, but are suspicious of positive feedback, well, welcome to our club.

COMMON RESULTS: Shyness, social awkwardness, and isolation are standard leftovers of such history. Learning itself may have been made terrible, with normal trial-and-error characterized as “stupid,” “clumsy,” or proof of being “slow.” Clients with that history may speed up, stiffen (freeze), or become hectic when coached.

SUPPORT WE CAN OFFER: With clients, normalize “mistakes” as part of all learning. Share challenges you’ve had learning these skills. Hunt for positive comments to share; share those frequently. Praise before you suggest/correct. Make training fun/playful. Recap successes at the end of the session.

Fast Flare Ups

When someone has a history of actually being attacked, a strong offense can become a good defense. A big reaction to what seems like a small matter can be a flare up.

COMMON RESULTS: Your client may react abruptly to something you said or may seem to disappear emotionally. If a serious flare up starts, the survivor may now be defending the victim (dog) against an



“Chubee” Photo by Mary Jo Nieson

abuser (you may starring in that role). Those with “quick tempers” may be dealing with such fast flare ups.

WHAT CAN HELP: “Act the way you want them to act,” or, at the very least, don’t act the way they are acting. If you are having this reaction, breathe. Work to calm your body down. Cultivate a healthy distrust for such strong emotions as it is possible for past pain to twist present perspective. Wait for calm to return; it tends to.

Our profession’s population of strong, amazing survivors of past horrors is the “the elephant in the room” during some of our professional challenges. Becoming aware of it so we can better help our clients and support each other is something I would love to see us do. It would benefit the profession, the dogs and, most importantly, each other.

Sarah Wilson is a trainer, teacher, author and hands-on seminar presenter, and holds a Master’s degree in the

human-animal bond. She is the founder of My Smart Puppy, an interactive website for pet owners and professionals, has appeared on television in such shows as PBS “Nature,” and is frequently quoted on “all matters dog” in publications from “O” magazine to Forbes.

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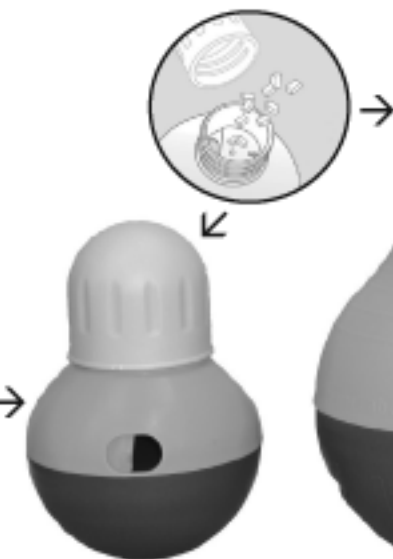
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sessions for the 2012 Annual Conference in Orlando featuring canine experts (96% voted "important/must have") and hands-on seminars (84% voted "important/must have"). This is a "magical" opportunity to increase your knowledge of training techniques, business building and marketing skills (59% interested), and many other things "dog"!



Chad Mackin



Patrick Burns
(Terrierman)



Jean Dodds, DVM



Debby Kay



Martin Deeley

Also in our 2012 Conference Line Up So Far....

Vernon "Max" Frayser - Jenifer Funk -
Laura Potts & Robin Hawn

We'll also have celebrity "speakers" (77% indicated "nice to have/important") as we celebrate the opening of our 2012 Conference and 12th Anniversary of the IACP at SeaWorld on Thursday night! There will be learning here too as we venture behind the scenes with SeaWorld's animal experts and then watch the results at one of SeaWorld's highly acclaimed shows...just to start the evening!



"My people are coming to meet your people."

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Sophie the Terrified Lab

by Gary Wilkes

Sophie is a four-year-old Labrador retriever. She was one of ten pups and lived exactly as they did. She wasn't roughly handled or neglected. She wasn't subjected to loud noises that weren't also heard by the whole litter. She was cuddled, loved and handled as much and as little as the other pups. Her first owner was a man who wished Sophie to bond solely to him. He planned to make her a hunter. For the first months in his home, he was the only one who fed her. At about a year, she went to school to be a gun-dog, and she handled everything just fine. She was trained with a remote collar and learned quickly. She wasn't traumatized by the e-Collar and will happily do everything a flushing retriever is supposed to do. She is steady to wing and shot and won't flush until told to do it. She gets the bird (or finds it if necessary) and makes a solid retrieve. In other words, she's perfect in the field. That is obviously what she was bred to do. In virtually every way she's the perfect hunter. What she isn't, is a perfect pet.

The one thing I didn't tell you about Sophie is that she is generally fearful when she's not in the field. At home, if a guest enters the house, she stays in the master bedroom and will not come out. She will not accept food from strangers. If there is a guest in the house she won't eat at all. She lives with another dog, but never plays or solicits affection. She doesn't solicit affection from her current owner – the original owner's sister. He passed Sophie to his sister because the dog was so maddeningly not like a Labrador retriever at home. In her current home of three years, Sophie does like a teenage niece who visits from time to time. She doesn't like men – even though a man fed her every meal for her first year. She doesn't like loud noises at

home, but has no problem with shotguns, loud trucks or any other loud noise in the field. The other thing I haven't told you about Sophie is that she's perfectly normal.

Every population of dogs contains a broad spectrum of personalities. They get this from their ancestor, the wolf. Wolves are group living animals who hunt large prey on a regular basis. If all of them were equally courageous, they might not have survived. Some wolves are plainly scaredy-cats. They aren't the ones who dive into a battle with an Elk or Moose and go for the throat. Almost all adolescent wolves behave cautiously as they learn how to hunt as a group. Some of these animals simply never develop a "killer instinct." The best you can say is they have the "harasser instinct." They leap and dart around the prey animal and nip at its flanks – never attacking head-on with brutish determination. That doesn't mean that they aren't as important to the survival of the pack as are the heavy hitters.

Anyone who has been around dogs for a long time knows that there is great diversity within any single breed and often major differences between siblings of serial litters.

The many different styles of attack and chase of any pack are impossible to stave off forever. If a prey animal beats down several of the biggest, most ferocious wolves, the lighter, less committed wolves will chase and harass it until it stands its ground and the heavy hitters can have another shot at it. The species survives specifically because there is a wide diversity of personalities within the group. Our dogs are no different.

If you've been training for a while, you know that this rings true. Many a Shi Tzu has the heart of a lion – and others have the heart of a hamster. Many poodles are considered dingbats and some of them retain the stalwart nature that made them great retrievers. Some dogs bravely

defend their territory while others cower under the bed, just like Sophie. The point is that this wide difference between brave and cowardly isn't a sign of abuse or mental defect. Both types are well within the norm for dogs.

Despite the reality that most litters have a physical runt, the concept of a genetically endowed behavioral runt doesn't seem to cross most people's minds. If a client adopts a fearful dog from a shelter or buys one from a breeder, you assume that environmental influences caused the behavior. If the breeder swears up and down that all the puppies were raised identically, most people raise their eyebrows. They assume that the pup must have been dropped on its head or teased by cruel children. Yet we also know that some dogs that lived through horrible conditions and events turn out just fine. I have never seen any consistent problems with dogs that were purchased at pet stores and undoubtedly came from puppy mills. I have seen pups from champion lines that were behavioral basket cases. The only thing that explains this is if you assume that behavior is like coat texture, eye color, height, shape and weight. Conformation judges can list scores of things that make up a good Fox Terrier that are all purely physical attributes. That doesn't preclude a Fox Terrier winning a group title that doesn't chase cats or rats or any other small, furry creature.

If the idea of inherited fearfulness still throws you a little, consider this. The art of purebred dogs includes the goal of getting behavioral traits that repeat from generation to generation. Regardless of the diligence and knowledge of the breeder, she can't guarantee that every English Pointer pup will point birds as an adult. Not every Terrier is a good ratter. No breeding program can possibly ensure that every pup will have the same behavior as its siblings and parents. That's because wolf genes are very, very slippery. Our dogs' genes are just as elastic, stretchable and unpredictable. Some Basenjis bark. Some Cockers don't. Many German Shepherds wouldn't know what to do with a sheep or cow despite the name of the breed. Anyone who has been around dogs for a long time knows that there is great diversity within any single breed and often major differences between

siblings of serial litters.

If this topic interests you further, there is a foundational book that can help you better understand the way dog behavior is passed genetically. The authors are John Scott and John Fuller and the book has had several titles since its first publication in 1965. Originally published as *Genetics and the Social Behavior of the Dog*, it has also been called *Dog Behavior: The Genetic Basis*. It's still in print and it's a fine read for anyone with a passion for dogs. Note: The authors make it very plain that their study was limited and should be taken with a grain of salt. Dog trainers have ignored that caution for about 50 years.

Sophie is real; I didn't make her up as a composite of a bunch of dogs I've seen. She is no longer a generally fearful dog. I fixed her to her owner's satisfaction and her progress has been remarkable. She now solicits affection and competes with the other dog in the family. She has bonded with the owner's new boyfriend. She will take treats from strangers and doesn't hide out in the bedroom when guests are in the house. The other day her owner reported to me that Sophie actually crawled into her lap while she was watching television. Nothing like that had ever happened before. She will always have a degree of fearfulness in her life, but the debilitating avoidance that marked her first four years is a thing of the past.

Gary Wilkes is an Honorary Professional member of IACP. He created clicker training for dogs in the mid-1980's. No, not the wussified, all-positive, pseudo-scientific dolphin stuff, the real deal...the kind of training that can stop a Cane Corso in its tracks, teach a blind, deaf dog to negotiate stairs or make a pointer steady to wing and shot. For an examples of his work, go to <http://www.clickandtreat.com/html/offleadinhibitions.HTM>.



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Canine Professionals' Biggest Fans: Occupational and Physical Therapists

by Kate Thomas

What's the difference between an animal-assisted activity, animal-assisted therapy, and animal-assisted occupational therapy?

All three evoke feelings of peace and well-being. All three have been proven to lower blood pressure, stimulate appetites and increase social interaction. The basic differences are intent, documentation, and whether or not a professional is present and directive.

Animal Assisted Activities are the hundreds of thousands of phenomenal volunteers throughout the world that bring their animals to those who could use stimulation, companionship, connection, touch, fun, laughter, release, embrace, interaction and affection.

A typical session is a man or woman with their companion dog visiting an assisted living facility, residential home, school or hospital. The visit may or may not be documented. The individuals who receive the visits will not be noted. The visits are not timed, nor are they supervised, and a therapist may encourage visits, but does not prescribe them.

Animal Assisted Therapy is a particular animal, visiting a particular named individual, for a specific period of time under the supervision of a licensed Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Psychiatric Social Worker, etc. The visits are documented. Goals have been written and progress is measured.

Animal Assisted Occupational or Physical Therapy includes all the above, plus the dog is specifically handled by an "OT Dog Handler" and works for and alongside the Occupational or Physical Therapist. The pup is written right into the rehabilitative process. The dog is

utilized as a sophisticated Occupational Therapy tool to accelerate rehabilitation. The results are nothing less than spectacular.

Witnessing the difference between OT and PT with and without dogs has made me a firm believer in the healing miracles a small, simple pooch can provide. Again and again, I have seen individuals who were totally noncompliant become enthusiastic participants when the pups are present. Everything changes. Without dogs present, some of the guys at the VA Hospital might show up late to the Rehab center, in their hospital gowns and slippers, unshaven and disheveled. They would stand around silent and grumpy. Some ask to go back to their rooms after two or three reps of a single exercise. (In reality, Occupational or Physical Therapy can be very difficult, painful or uncomfortable.) Then they'd work with the dogs when doing OT exercises. The next appointment, they would show up early, dressed, shaven, combed hair, talking and laughing with each other.

They were willing to perform more repetitions of the same exercise. They were willing to work longer on a series of different exercises. They had greater extension. And their movements were more natural and organic.

If you ask an Occupational Therapy patient to perform shoulder flexion and extension by extending his arm above his head, reaching out and bringing the hand down in a large arc, their response may be stiff, robotic and actually a little painful. The whining starts after two repetitions. He will concentrate like mad, perhaps clenching his jaw and will watch his arm as he moves it.



But if you put a ball in his hand and ask him to pitch it overhand to a dog, you can watch the non-compliance, pain, hesitation, stiffness and anxiety melt away. The pup gallump, gallumps after it, panting, grinning, tail going like mad. She gallops back, and plops it in the patient's hand. The dog crouches in a puppy bow, wagging her little tail so hard; her butt is wagging too. "Errooof!" she exclaims. The patient will pitch that ball again and again and again.

There are no complaints, no whining. Their movements are not thought out, they just happen. The patients hips become engaged and rotate slightly, their shoulders are now engaged and move with the arm, and their trunk balances the arm and tilts forward. The entire movement of throwing the ball is natural, no concerted effort. These are the results that the Therapist is looking for. The ultimate goal of OT is movements that are balanced and automatic.

The atmosphere is light, lively, affectionate and fun. The exercise that had represented pain, boredom and discomfort is now a joy.

The positive healing and psychological impact of walking a dog when you're in a walker is almost inexplicable. Most likely, the patient is recovering from a stroke or broken pelvis. Their independence has diminished.

They may not be able to drive a car or shop for groceries. They need help going to the bathroom, dressing, assistance with meals. All the tasks we take for granted they are dependent on others to assist.

But when you're walking a dog, you're somebody! You need to tell that dog, "Come on boy, this way." We use a double lead. Tie one to the walker in a slipknot so if the dog or patient goes the other way, they disengage. The handler has the other lead. The patient and Therapist set the pace. The patient doesn't even



have to look at the dog. Just feeling that energy beside them, seeing the wagging tail out of the corner of their eye.

The patient walks taller, breathes more deeply, holds her head higher, laughs and smiles more. And here's the rehabilitative miracle: patients routinely are willing to walk two to three times further with the dog.

The model that we recommend and follow ourselves is a Dog and Handler as a team, volunteering to work for an Occupational or Physical Therapist. We get paid when we are teaching OT's and PT's about Animal Assisted Therapy at colleges and such. We are remunerated if we are training Handlers and their dogs. But at the facilities and hospitals, working with patients or clients, we are volunteers.



The old model had the Therapist using his or her own dog. We discourage this, as the Therapist's first and last allegiance is the safety and well being of the patient. Even if you as a Therapist have the perfect dog for therapy, we recommend you teach a friend how to handle the pup and let your friend and your dog work for you as a team. This model is safer, simpler and better for all involved.

The Occupational Therapy community has embraced us. Occupational Therapy College

Students and Professional Therapy organizations have been exceptionally enthusiastic about learning how to utilize a Dog and Handler team. We could not have hoped for a better response. We are mobbed whenever we attend professional conventions or are teaching. We have a good foothold in the OT community.

Now our mission is to connect Canine Professionals with their most enthusiastic professional fan base, Occupational and Physical Therapists. Many understand the strong connection between working with nature and the healing/rehabilitation process. They are enthusiastically embracing Animal Assisted Occupational and Physical Therapy.

Kate Thomas lives in Ann Arbor Michigan with her three Occupational and Physical Therapy dogs. She is currently interviewing puppies in search of the next generation of OT/PT pups. It takes three to four years for the dog to reach

their full potential. Two years obedience, and every other kind of training you can think of, then one to two years on the job. Now you've got a Therapy Dog Star. If you'd like to learn more about Kate's work, you can email her at OTandPTpups@gmail.com

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An Intimate Dance: The Training Relationship

by Mary Mazzeri

"Dancing with the Stars" has become a popular TV program. When two people move in graceful synchrony there is a stunning, fluid oneness that reveals practiced, disciplined communication. The great ones stand out because of the ballet of balance between trust and respect, the discipline between bodies and minds. It is a beautiful partnership.

We've seen outstanding examples of this in the canine world with such handlers as Carolyn Scott and her partner Rookie, the dancing Golden. "Carolyn & Rookie exemplified the bond that can be achieved through a positive working relationship between dog and handler. They were truly the Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire of the Canine Freestyle World." (taken from: <http://gottadance.landofpuregold.com/>)

Dog trainers and Obedience instructors are called upon to be "dance" coaches for their clients/students. Whether we train dogs for others or assist them in learning to train their own dogs, the most successful dog trainers are those who are able to teach the dog owner how to dance with their dog. The successful owners are the ones that learn how to observe their partners, be attentive to each other and to anticipate one another's body language.

Most dog owners don't "get" dogs in the way that we do. It is our job to teach them how to "do" the relationship the best that they are able. When they start, they are tripping over each other's feet, so to speak.

Where to start? Hopefully the dog and owner have some degree of mutual love and respect. This is sometimes not the case, however, so with students with difficult relationships with their dogs,

we need to first establish or redeem their rapport. It may be that they have a dog from a shelter that has trust issues. Others may be dealing with dogs that have been largely left to their own agendas until the behavior becomes intolerable. This dog may become unsocial, chaotic and/or out of control. Still others may have been overindulgent with their dogs, creating a demanding tyrant or even producing dominance and aggression issues in dogs so inclined. Then there is having to teach some owners how to deal with the basic over-exuberant dog.

Although the approach may require different dance steps or tempos for the different problems, and different dogs, the actual foundation is similar for all of them. The basic rhythm of the relationship must be built by teaching some kind of predictable,

consistent, reasonable expectations that a dog can understand, learn and participate in. Consistent patterns create a sense of security and increases confidence in a dog. Results build confidence in the owner.

A basic program of "nothing in life is free" can be initiated with all types of dogs. The cadence may vary, but the objective of creating orderly expectation and a trust relationship with the dogs

is essentially the same for all dogs that are out of balance. By having the owner/handler controlling everything that the dog considers of value --food, water, bed, toys, use of time, use of space, etc.--that owner can balance pack-prey-defense drives. That owner becomes more important to the distrustful, disconnected, insecure, independent, or rambunctious dog.

Pack drive is about relationship. Pack drive causes a dog to "care" about what their owner/handler

**"Keeping
a dog balanced
between fight and
flight creates
emotional
equilibrium."**

thinks about them, how they feel and interact with them. The dog seeks approval because approval signals acceptance into the pack. The human relational signals are 1). Attention: indicated visually by human eye contact; 2). Appreciation: signaled verbally through voice modulation; and 3). Affection: shown tactilely through touch, pats, stroking/petting etc. A handler with good communication and relational skills can solicit loyalty and responsiveness in his dog by providing understandable feedback and rewards that appeal to a dog. In this relationship, life flows like a dance and the dog knows what to expect. This type of rapport creates a sense of stability, predictability and security for the dog.

Prey drive is about eating and surviving. The desire to hunt, chase, catch and kill is evident every time we throw a tug toy, a treat, or a Frisbee to an enthusiastic canine. Using and developing this drive is a great way to provide brilliance,

enthusiasm and flash to the “dance.” A clever instructor can assist the partners in developing physical and verbal cues to develop control over the dog as well as within the dog—by teaching an “on and off,” stop and go game to a willing dog. The dog that can be taken from a state of high excitement—as in anticipating a chase—to an instant response to a “Sit!” command can learn a life-saving stop-and-go switching pattern. This is like controlling the flow of traffic with red-yellow-green traffic lights. Being able to toggle between arousal and control patterns makes for a very impressive dance step. It also provides for greater safety in real world experiences.

Defense drive is about self preservation on the one hand, and protection of self and pack on the other. Some breeds are genetically predisposed to greater flight or fight response than others to suit the purposes for which they were bred. Keeping a dog balanced between fight and flight

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creates emotional equilibrium. Part of our job as trainers is to be able to distinguish between an easily triggered flighty dog, a balanced dog, and an easily set off, hair trigger, aggressive dog. Knowing the differences will help us to determine the tempo of the dance: the speed at which a dog is guided through its triggers.

Effective dog training takes into account the temperaments of the dog and its pack and helps them to achieve a workable rhythm in their lifestyles. A balanced dog-human relationship allows bonded partners to dance smoothly and gracefully, long into the night.

Author/Trainer Mary Mazzeri of CareDogTraining.com is a "trainers' teacher," having personally mentored dozens of other successful dog trainers who now own their own dog training businesses across the USA. She instructs and communicates effectively by breaking down concepts and

exercises into understandable components for both dog and handlers. She is certified by IACP as an advanced Dog Trainer & Instructor – CDTI; serves on the Education Committee as an evaluator for Trainer Certification; and is on the L.E.A.S.H. Advisory Panel of the IACP. Mary was named "IACP Member of the Year" in 2010 and inducted into the IACP Member Hall of Fame in 2011.

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Critical Thinking

by Mailey McLaughlin, M.Ed., Editor

Shall We Dance?

Mary Mazzeri's fine article in this issue about teaching owners how to dance with their dogs got me to thinking.

I've long been fascinated by what I consider to be the dog's best trait—living in the moment—and how it relates to us hominids, who live in our heads, in our work duties, in our personal struggles, in what's happening in entertainment or politics, and in just about every other place than in the moment. Surrounded by gadgets and technology, we surrender our moments willingly, as if we have better things to do.

As canine professionals, we know dogs. We see nuances of behavior all the time. An ear tilt, muzzle scrunch, eye flash, elbow bend and freeze, or tongue flick escapes even the most devoted "average" dog owner, but we see it, and we see other dogs seeing it. We can't not see it, in fact. It's part of any good canine professional's job skill set.

We observe dogs and we see them living in the moment, and when we are doing this we, too, are in those moments. It's what psychologist/author Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls "flow": the optimal experience that occurs when we are embedded in a pleasurable activity and time flies by. When we handle dogs, on-leash or off, we are connected, dancing, working, in flow.

But when you put down the leash, does the flow stop? If so, why?

No one can stay "in flow" all the time; it wouldn't even be wise if we could, really. But I'm willing to bet that there are areas in your life that are not related to working with dogs that you enjoy, and yet you do not "embrace the moment" when you are engaged in these things. Why not?

We remember what we pay attention to. You cannot be in the moment if you are not paying attention. While there are some things you can "do on autopilot," when you allow these things to occur without engaging more fully in them, you are losing moments. You may think,

"Oh, why do I want to remember boring moments that I spend running errands, or doing housework/yardwork, or cajoling my kids to get up/do homework?"

Because you will never get those particular moments back.

"Since our office is with moments, let us husband them. Five minutes of today are worth as much to me as five minutes in the next millennium."

~R. W. Emerson

What does it mean to "husband" our moments? To me, it means to pay attention, even when something hasn't necessarily captured your attention. At this very moment, I am hearing a delicious pre-autumn breeze rustling in the leaves of my oak tree just outside my door. It's the perfect temperature outside: 69 degrees. Being involved in this missive, I could easily ignore the sound and the feeling of the welcome cool air, but I have trained myself to be attuned to just such this sound and this feeling of fall, so no matter what I am doing, when I hear it and feel it, I stop for a few minutes and savor it.



I pay attention to the "little things" whenever I can. I extract immense pleasure for "stopping to smell the roses" multiple times every single day. I sacrifice a wee bit of efficiency for this completely free pleasure, and I am not only none the worse for wear for this sacrifice, but richer for it.

I urge you to take the diligence you have for observing dog behavior and apply it to the non-dog areas of your life. Mute your smartphone and your iPod and look, listen, and feel the moments as you are in them. Pay attention to your world.

"The meaning of life is to live it."

Mailey, The Pooch Professor, is Editor of SafeHands Journal. She has worked professionally with dogs and their people for nearly 30 years, holds a Masters in Education, is a CDT, and is Behavior and Training Manager for the Atlanta Humane Society. Read more at www.carpek9.blogspot.com.



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