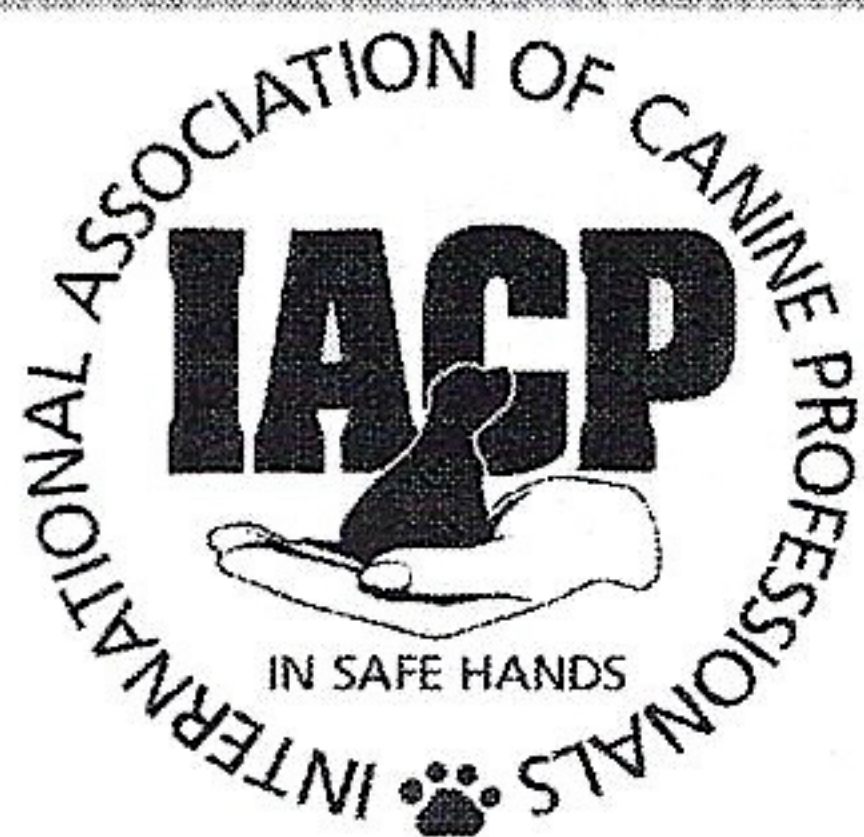




THE 2002 IACP CONFERENCE – A REAL “FAMILY” AFFAIR

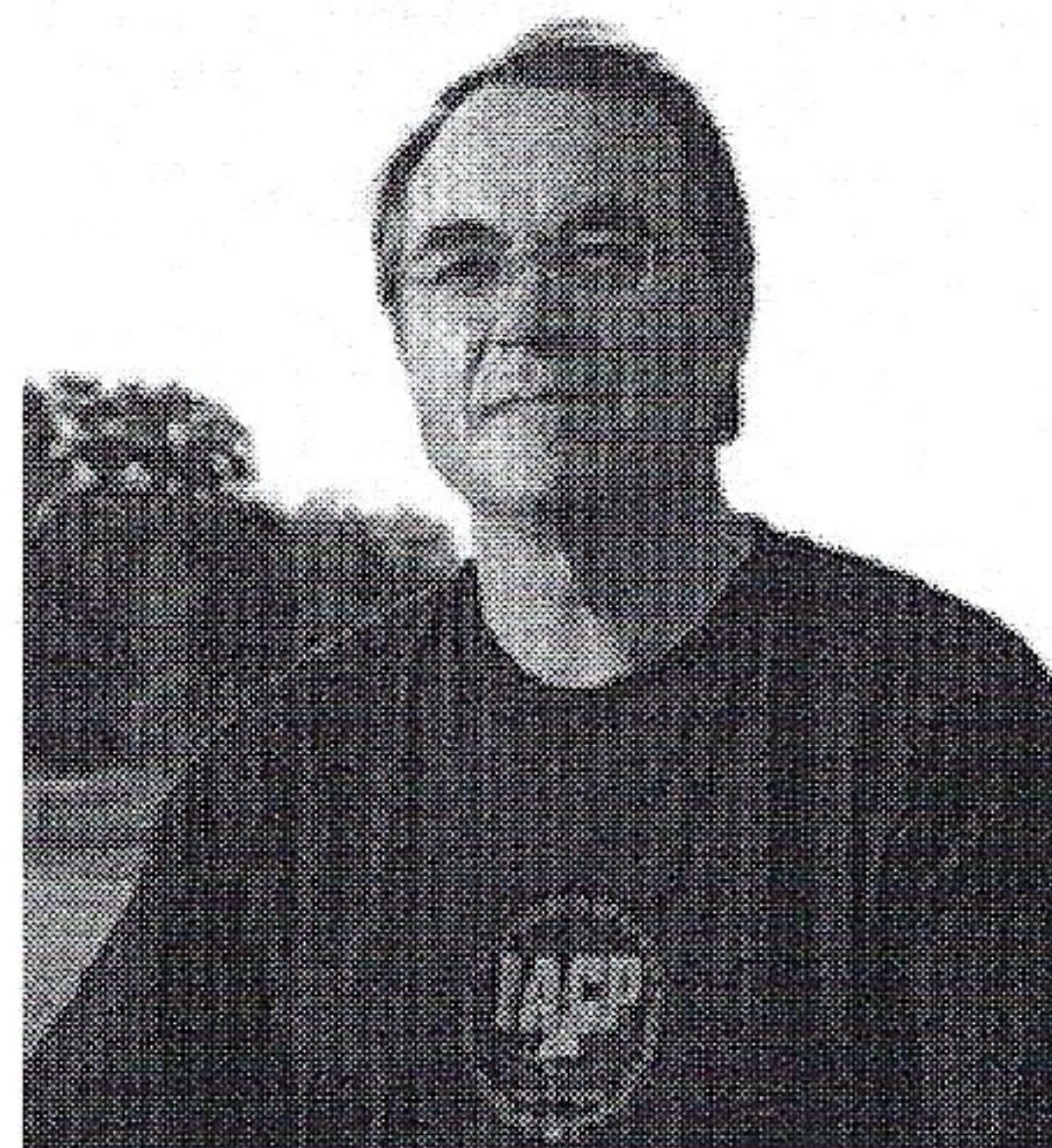
by Martin Deeley, Executive Director

This year's second International Association of Canine Professionals conference at Triple Crown Academy in Hutto, Texas, had attendees regularly referring to it as a “Family Affair.” With talks, demonstrations, and dogs a-plenty, attendees enthused at the wide range of topics and how much they gained from being there. It was the atmosphere of the conference that brought the warmest response. “I felt welcome and part of the conference the moment I arrived,” one attendee commented—and that was precisely what was intended. Friends came together again, and new attendees quickly became friends, in an atmosphere of togetherness with one common bond – the joy of dogs.

This conference, with 160 attendees on each of the three days, was aimed at providing information on a wide range of topics from training to veterinary matters to handling difficult dogs to being successful in your business. Talks and demonstrations were varied, discussing and explaining everything from e-collars to head halters to clickers. And, on the business side, topics ranged from how to deal with difficult clients to making your business more successful. The emphasis throughout was on developing a professional attitude, approach and image.

A fascinating talk by veterinary behaviorist Dr. Soraya Juarbe-Diaz explained how drugs could be used for behavior modification. Using video footage, she showed dogs that could be helped, as well as examples of those where drugs would not be of benefit. This was quite an eye opener for many who are wary of drugs for dogs in behavior work.

Speakers Brian Kilcommons, Sarah Wilson, Sue Sternberg, Gary Wilkes, Soraya Juarbe-Diaz, Steve Appelbaum, Sarah Hodgson and Bob Warren created a dynamic



Martin Deeley, Executive Director

(Photo from IACP Website)

environment from beginning to end. In between sessions, the Schutzhund, Agility, Tracking and obedience demonstrations from Triple Crown were exemplary.

As Sue Sternberg commented afterwards in a letter to IACP – “I had a great time. The facility was absolutely dreamy. The Schutzhund demo was outstanding, the food great, and the participants as great to talk with as to hang out with. I really enjoyed myself.”

In the words of another speaker, Sarah Hodgson – “There was so much positive energy!” She was right, and it was energy that came from an atmosphere of friendship and togetherness.

This was the feeling throughout the conference—a feeling of involvement in a friendly atmosphere where participants talked and worked with other participants to learn more and enjoy the experience.

(continued on page 5, col. 2; related story, “Double Whammy,” page 3.)



IACP NEWSLETTER

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PETSAFE SPONSORS SAFEHANDS

Platinum Corporate member PetSafe, manufacturers of electronic training equipment have once more shown their support for the International Association of canine Professionals by agreeing to sponsor the Quarterly official journal, Safehands.

Willie Wallace of PetSafe, who attended this years Annual Conference told Martin Deeley, Executive Director that he was excited and motivated by the Association and the direction it was taking to bring together all professionals. The open-minded approach and broad based training that IACP encourage among their members is what is attracting many manufacturers.

"We want to see you grow and succeed as an organization, and want to help as much as we possibly can." Willie told IACP. Through sponsorship, membership, invaluable advice and encouragement PetSafe will be doing exactly this.

Editor's Note: PetSafe's sponsorship will make a tremendous difference to the newsletter. We would like to thank Martin for his heroic efforts in assembling and typesetting the entire previous issue himself—a job that, we hope he will never have to undertake again. The present issue remains in Martin's format for the sake of consistency throughout a single volume. Look for developments in design and new features in future, as our new sponsorship permits us to give more attention to what matters most to you: the information you need as a canine professional

C. C. H.

How to Join IACP

PROFESSIONAL MEMBER - At least 5 years experience as a canine professional. Can vote on IACP issues and use the IACP name and logo on business materials.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER - Less than 5 years experience as a canine professional but practicing as a professional. Can use the IACP name and logo on business materials.

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, student, trainees, part-time, and devotees of canine-related occupations. Receive benefits but cannot use the IACP name or logo for business purposes.

Annual Fees: (Matched Funding)

Professional \$75.00 Associate \$50.00 Affiliate \$35.00
Newsletter Subscription- Non-members \$25.00

An additional \$25 fee applies for initial processing costs, but does not apply to Affiliate Memberships or Newsletter Subscriptions.

Other Benefits:

All IACP members receive our newsletter and have access to our email list, seminars, educational materials, business support materials, events and activities calendars, regional-group participation, and our Certification Program for Dog Trainers. Discounts for all services are available to all members.

To Apply: Contact the IACP through our web site, email, address, phone or fax to request an application, our Mission Statement and our Code of Conduct.

APPLICATIONS AND RENEWALS CAN NOW BE PAID THROUGH MASTERCARD, VISA, AMEX

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DOUBLE "WHAMMY" FOR IACP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For the second time in just over a month, International Association of Canine Professionals Executive Director Martin Deeley has received a special award for his work.

In February, at the Dog Writers Association of America's annual banquet, Martin was presented with the DWAA "Off-Lead" special award for the best dog training article of 2001. This article was entitled "Training Just an Ordinary Hunting Dog." Martin was especially delighted with this award as this was judged against all categories of training articles by a group of judges from all areas of the dog world. "For a hunting dog article to be selected makes it special for me," Martin, a hunting dog trainer for over 25 years, told SafeHands.

"Sometimes we are considered tough, hard trainers who coerce and force dogs to obey. There is a balanced and more understanding approach these days to enable us to bring out a good dog which will hunt and be the happy companion we all dream of. There is no such thing as an ordinary hunting dog. They are all special."

Martin, an Englishman who now lives in Florida, and as we know is Executive Director and co-founder of IACP added, "I have written and trained dogs for many years in England and this is the first award I have received for my work, it is an honor to receive it in America. I love America and the American people, they have made me so welcome and the IACP deserves recognition for motivating me to write more and help others."

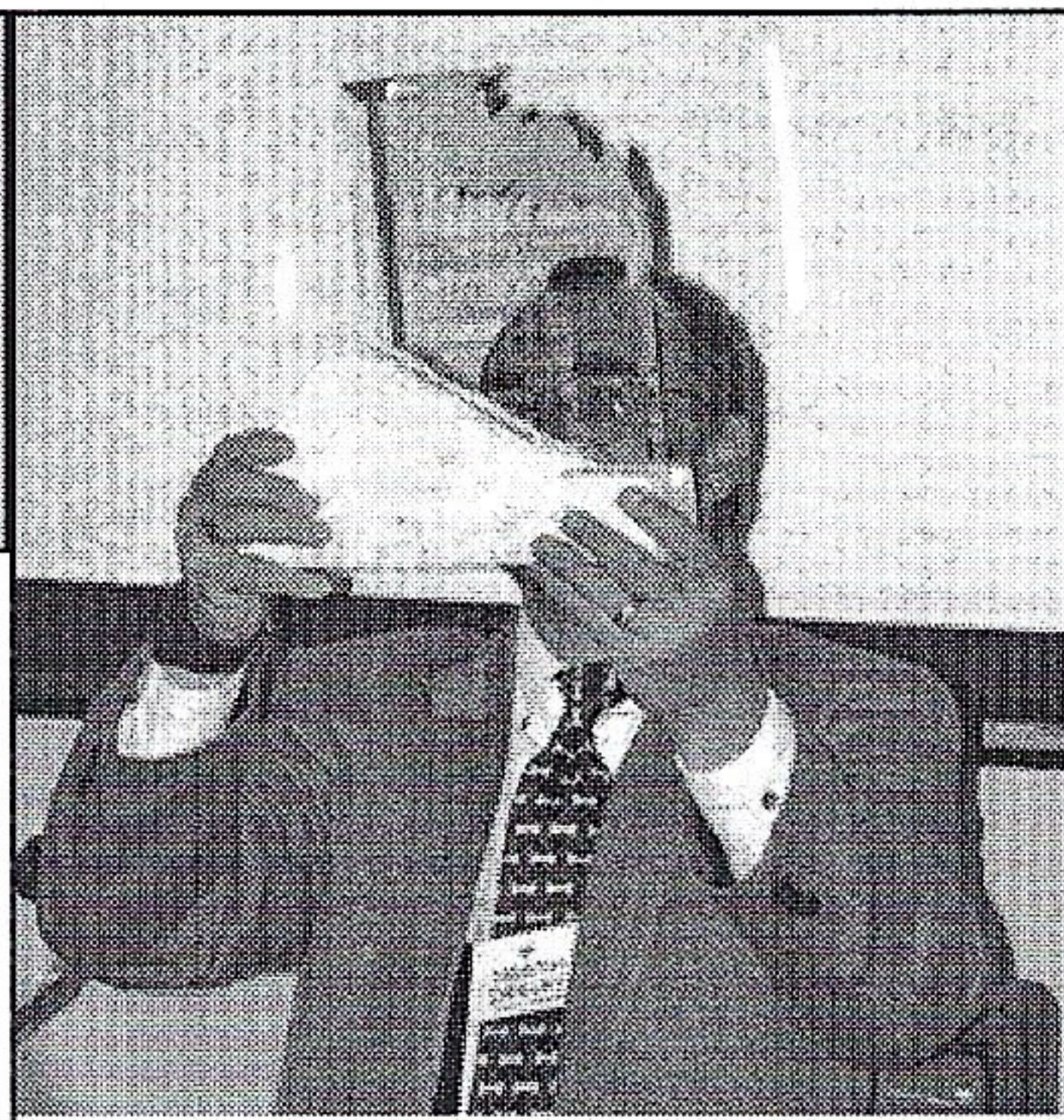
Martin's second award was just as surprising to him as the first. Without his knowledge, the IACP Board of Directors voted him Member of the Year and presented him with a glass engraved trophy at the 2002 Conference. Jay Stull, Vice President, told a delighted audience that no one had done more to

promote and guide the IACP through the difficult early years. "If it was not for you, I doubt there would be an IACP," Jay concluded as over 160 attendees applauded.

Martin told SafeHands, "In life, you always strive to do something that will make you pleased with your efforts and with yourself. I rarely get a feeling of total satisfaction and always think I could do better and achieve more. However, the IACP is something I am very proud of."

"With the IACP I believe we have the foundation of a great Association. Members want to work together; they have open minds and want to learn and share. Members work hard for this organization to succeed and for themselves to be recognized as professionals. They want the best for dogs and their owners. What more can we ask for? That is why IACP came about, born of a need to create understanding, learning, professionalism and the ability to communicate freely between each other without fear of re-crimination."

"Our love of dogs is of the highest,



Martin carefully inspects the engraved glass trophy he received as Member of the Year

and our dedication to their welfare, health and training should never be in question. Dogs are in our blood and they are why we will succeed as an Association."

"This was a big surprise and an honor for me to receive this award from Directors I admire so much. Without their support I could not have achieved enough to win this trophy and certainly without the work and encouragement of my wife Pat, it may never have been.

This is a shared trophy – shared with Pat, all the IACP Directors, and the members who have given me the support and friendship to make it happen."

Create a Client Reference Book

Cyndy Douan, MHDL, Kingston Kennels, Kingston, GA
(IACP #1000)

A client reference book is an excellent tool for promoting your business. Ask your clients to write a letter about their experience with your services, and ask that they include with it a cute picture of their dog. Buy a three ring binder notebook and sheet protectors.

Arrange the notebook by placing the letters and pictures in the sheet protectors, and organizing them into the notebook. Design a cover for your notebook that includes your business name and perhaps pictures of yourself and your own dogs. You can keep the book at the reception desk of your office, or if you conduct business on the road, you can have it with you to show off to potential clients.

Everyone loves to look at the pictures, and an accumulation of letters that praise your skills and expertise are sure to help convince potential clients to use your services.



Why Does My Dog Do That?

by Roger Hild

Just the other evening, a friend and I were talking about some worrisome behaviors we had observed in a just-completed training class. It was my friend's opinion that many of the owners had no idea what was going on with their dogs and were quite taken by surprise when the dog suddenly acted out. Even after the event, there was usually no realization on the owner's part of any precipitating events, and only a vague discomfort at the possibility of the pattern being repeated.

In addition to many owners being ineffective in training the family dog, I believe they are also losing the ability to read the dog's intentions. This inability to accurately read the dogs and intervene appropriately is alarming. Are owners who are trying to understand and effectively modify their dogs' behavior being thwarted by a campaign of misinformation?

Dogs are pretty honest and straightforward. Much of their behavior is predictable by the student who watches closely. With a bit of study, it soon becomes evident that, usually, many indicators and clues precede an incident. There are also certain contexts in which incidents are far more likely to occur. So how have we managed to get so out of touch with what is really going on?

To answer this question, I see human emotionalism and sentimentality as being largely responsible. Over a period of years we have gradually been conditioned to view our animals not as they are but rather in an unrealistic, idealized manner. There is a movement afoot that suggests that all behavior is emotionally based—the emotion most often referred to is fear—and it is further suggested that all we need do is engage the animal

in such a way as to avoid all negative emotions and promote only good feelings. Viewing our dog through an emotional smoke screen clouds our vision and prevents us from seeing the dog as he is. It also prevents us from correctly reading his intentions.

I think there is an agenda behind this push: to consider emotion above reason when it comes to our animals. If we were to stick to facts, it is possible to support your point of view in a thoughtful, logical manner. If you don't have the facts on your side, the only alternative is to engage in an emotion-based argument; it is very hard to dispute feelings, or even to prove the feeling being claimed as genuine. In the case of our dogs, it is used to promote an always-be-kind approach. The problem is that there is no agreement as to what "kind" is. Further, it is argued, one should not correct a dog who is in the throes of emotional distress. A variation of this argument holds that any type of aversive or correction will cause emotional distress—fear. Thus, effective training methods have been dampened down by use of emotional argument. At no time in history have dogs had it better as far as being treated "nice." But, overall, this has in no way improved behavior.

There are huge numbers of bratty dogs who are just plain rude or nasty, and who have never known anything but "nice." This is reaching such alarming proportions that banning dogs is being seriously considered in some communities; truly, such dogs are being killed with kindness.

Any aberrant behavior which a dog engages in is now not likely to be dealt with in any direct manner but is more likely to be explained away using emotional terms. These days the vogue term being used, in the push to replace action with understanding, is fear. To listen to some so-called experts, one would think that fear is the central theme of many problem dogs' lives. We hear of fear-based behaviors, such as aggression, and it's very interesting that there seems to have been a sharp rise in the incidence of fear problems and issues since the push toward always-be-kind began.

I don't for a minute doubt that dogs experience fear, but very few of them live in fear—and those who do are quite likely to have some genetic component contributing to their instability. It is worth noting

that, in the wild, many an animal who has had to flee for his life from a predator may be found a short time later living his life as he always does. The animal remains vigilant, but the fear has passed. This pattern can be repeated many times, and still the animal does not adopt a constant fearful state. None of our dogs have experienced the sorts of traumas that their wild cousins have. If there is a fearful state in some of our dogs, it stems from poor leadership—from owners unable to take charge or know what they are doing.

So why focus so much on fear and past trauma? Having worked for over 27 years in the human mental health field, I speak from experience when I say that it is a human failing to cling tenaciously to past traumas. Rather than help victims of some trauma work through their feelings and then move forward with their lives, some alleged experts allow—even encourage—prolonged focus on the past to the point that it becomes crippling. In this process, where the victimization becomes permanent, there can be no getting on with life for the troubled individuals unless and until they let go of the victim status.

There is sometimes an attempt to apply the same past-trauma dynamics to animals. However, most animals have neither the time nor the inclination to engage in this type of narcissistic, poor-me excuse for not getting on with their life. If we try to keep them in the victim role, we run the risk of creating emotional cripples and, in the process, perpetuating problem behavior.

How does all this relate to how we read our dogs? If we allow ourselves to buy into the subtleties of viewing dogs in the manner I have described, we will not be able to see them as they are and will likely misread many of the signals they send us. We might do some very dangerous and foolish things because we haven't read the situation correctly, such as:

-- See the dog stare or make hard and direct eye contact and assume he only wants to say "Hi" or to play.

(continued on page 5)



-- See the dog menacing or intimidating another and assume, "He must be frightened."

-- Not recognize when the dog is taking an opportunity to move up the status ladder.

-- Assume all dogs want to play and therefore not watch closely enough when around other dogs. If you thought there was a good chance your dog would get into a fight with a new dog, maybe you'd watch a lot more closely.

-- Not really accept the dog's need for strong, competent leadership. This point is always under attack in some way, shape, or form by the always-be-nice folks. They know that if they can hide this fact, they can eliminate the idea of being the master or owner.

-- Not recognize the appropriate points at which a leader should intervene in a clear and definite way.

-- Invade a dog's personal space causing him to feel cornered. People often assume that because they are approaching a dog who is tied or on a stay, they can approach so long as they are coming to pet the dog and show affection. They miss every signal that he sends that say, "I don't want you here, I don't want to be touched by you—leave me alone."

Some time ago the notion of calming signals was put forward. These signals are only a small part of the dog's repertoire of signals and messages he might wish to convey. Again, if we only see a dog as wanting to promote peace and goodwill through his use of "Everybody be calm, relax and be happy" signals, we will not

look for the other messages he may be sending. Dogs also send warning signals, help-me-out-here signals, stay-away signals, alarm signals, "I'm gonna' kick your butt" signals—it's a long list.

Dogs will be in trouble until we learn to take off the rose-colored glasses and truly see the animals as they are. Only then will we be able to communicate effectively and repair the widening rift that has been developing between man and dog.

Roger Hild, author of the books "Perfect Pals" and "K-9 Timed Event Challenge," has been training dogs for 19 years and is a founding member of CAPPDT, the "Canadian cousin of APDT." He owns and operates Tsuro Dog Training, Port Hope, Ontario. Visit him at <<http://www3.sympatico.ca/tsuro>>.

Conference (from page one)

A fun competition run by George Cockrell and Margot Woods had participants wanting more.

The comments from exhibitors, too, were full of praise. One told an organizer, "I have never been to any conference or exhibition where the atmosphere has been so friendly and the organizers so helpful. We will be back." Exhibitors shared the talks with the participants, gave talks, and were part of the "family" of professionals. Platinum Sponsorship and Corporate Membership Trophies were presented to Triple Crown Academy, Tri-tronics, Kong, PetSafe, Premier Pet Products and Get Smart Design Co. Gold sponsorship and a membership trophy went to Sporn, and Silver Sponsorship and Corporate membership to Gimborn. Amerapets then came forward and announced they would be a Silver sponsor and Corporate Member also.

Three Honorary Members were announced: Bash Dibra, Brian Kilcommons and Gary Wilkes. These three men have given so much to the dog world and been of great support to the IACP. The awards were given in recognition of their contribution and dedication to dogs.

It would not be an understatement to say that the conference was full of emotion—an emotion created by the joy of working with dogs and seeing dogs work. There was almost disbelief that such a large group of people from all

sectors of the dog world and all disciplines could talk together, work together and create understanding between each other. Everyone left as believers that this is happening within IACP.

Martin Deeley, Executive Director, summed it up when he explained, "To be accepted as professionals we have to act, think, be and show the world we are professional. This weekend you have all been professional – and we are proud of you."

Dogs' Questions for God

Dear God,

How come people love to smell flowers, but seldom smell one another? Where are their priorities?

Dear God,

When we get to Heaven, can we sit on your couch? Or is it the same old story?

Dear God,

Excuse me, but why are there cars named after the jaguar, the cougar, the mustang, the colt, the stingray, and the rabbit? How often do you see a cougar riding around? We dogs love a nice ride! I know every breed cannot have its own model, but it would be easy to rename the Chrysler Eagle the Chrysler Beagle!

Dear God,

If a dog barks in the forest and no human hears him, is he still a bad dog?

Dear God,

Is it true that in Heaven, dining room tables have on-ramps?

Dear God,

When we get to the Pearly Gates, do we have to shake hands to get in?

Dear God,

If we come back as humans, is that good or bad?

Dear God,

Are there mailmen in Heaven? If there are, will I have to apologize?

Dear God,

May I have my testicles back?
—Excerpted from an e-mail sent to members of several to dog lists



Some Charities Have Terrorist Ties

by Soso Whaley

I must applaud Bill O'Reilly and Fox News for having the courage to take on the charities that raised millions of dollars for the victims of 9-11 and then tried to take some of that money to stash for a "rainy day." Mr. O'Reilly has managed to shine a spotlight on standard operating procedures for a lot of charities here in the U.S. and the people who run the charities look like deer caught in the headlights.

You think your money is going to help the little puppies or kittens in a picture? Think again. Your money may be used in an attempt to legislate puppy and kitten breeding out of existence. Think your money is going to conservation efforts in other countries? Nope, your money is used to pay a six-figure salary to some higher-up in the charity. Think your money is going to an anti-fur campaign? Unfortunately, some of your money could be going to pay the legal bills of people who have blown up laboratories, harassed people, sent letter bombs and worse.

Of course you can insure that your charity dollars are doing the most good by asking for financial information about a particular charity, but most people don't bother to do that. They're easy prey for those who would use fraudulent methods to obtain cash for personal agendas, not to "help" others. Are we now willing to go the extra mile to investigate in depth where the money goes when it is given to any particular charity? Are we willing to demand that these charities and their promoters become accountable for their actions? This is the perfect time to take a closer look at the non-profit status we bestow on some people whose motives may not ultimately be "charitable." I guarantee, one of the most shocking things you will find is plenty of financial links between charities and terrorist groups which operate on American soil and in other countries. Just as the United States and other countries are cooperating to strangle the bin Laden organization by shutting off financial resources, it is equally important that these same countries work towards shutting down the

financial resources of all groups that are engaged in terrorist activities of any type. I know that we Americans have a high tolerance for diversity but there are some lines that should never be crossed and that includes harassment, letter bombs, anthrax hoaxes, and fire bombing property.

Terrorist groups like Animal Liberation Front and Earth Liberation Front (ALF and ELF, who proudly declare their intention to commit mayhem and destruction) hide behind "freedom of speech" laws and say their cause is so important that it merits drastic action to accomplish their righteous goals. Fortunately there are groups that keep tabs on the ties between certain charitable organizations and terrorist groups. For instance National Animal Interest Alliance, www.naiaonline.org, tracks animal rights and environmental terrorist activities, legislative battles and how money is funneled to terrorist groups, among other things.

The ironic part is that we have been at war with terrorism for years; we've just been ignoring it. Sure you've read about it: extremist environmentalists firebomb a ski lodge in Colorado, anti-abortion fanatics perpetrate an anthrax hoax directed at abortion clinics, animal rights activists destroy a statue in front of a Ronald McDonald House. The problem ... we have never demanded that these things be stopped. There are people out there who are negatively affected by these terrorist acts, and they need our support. This is no longer a case of the bully on the block but a serious issue which now affects our very freedoms. We "look the other way" because society has turned some of these groups into politically correct monsters which are now running amuck through our legislature and our country.

Our home-grown terrorists live on sheer hatred, hatred of those who use animals, hatred of those who develop the land, hatred of those who believe in freedom of choice. Their hatred knows such depth that some are willing to commit the most heinous acts in order to make a point and garner attention.

The majority of us understand that it's not right to hate people because of color, religion or the way they look, or because of what they eat, wear or do. It is very important that we stop supporting those charities that condone and support any type of hatred expressed through terrorist activities.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that all charities support terrorist groups—but it is a fact that some of your charity dollars may be used to support questionable and even illegal activities. It is up to all of us to become better educated and stop throwing dollars at so called charitable organizations which support terrorist activities in any way. Until the federal government steps in to address this blatant misuse of money by non-profit organizations the simple act of educating yourself about charities and where the money goes is a big step in the right direction to help in the War Against Terrorism.

(Reprinted with the author's permission)

You Know You're Owned by Your Dogs When. . .

- ▶ You have a mental list of people you'd like to spay or neuter.
- ▶ You stopped at a house with a "Free Puppies" sign in the yard to have an Educational "Chat," and your kids had to post your bail.
- ▶ Your checks have messages on them like "Subtract Two Testicles For Every Four Feet."
- ▶ You have a bumper sticker that reads "My Basset Hound Is Smarter Than Your Graduate Student."
- ▶ You have phone calls forwarded to PetsMart.
- ▶ You absentmindedly pat people on the head or scratch them behind their ears.
- ▶ You and your vet are on a first name basis and he genuflects when you enter the waiting room.

(continued on page 10)

Animal-Assisted Crisis Response

Although the healing and therapeutic power of animals has been utilized for hundreds of years, the first documented case of an animal assisting at the scene of a crisis happened fairly recently, in May 1998, in Springfield, Oregon.

A shooting spree by a Thurston High School student had left 25 people injured and 4 dead. Survivors and witnesses struggled to cope with their horror and shock. The National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) were called in and two registered Delta Society Pet Partners, Sandi Arrington and her dog, Garth and Cindy Ehlers and her dog, Bear were asked to respond and work with the NOVA team. Mental Health Counselors and NOVA teams watched in amazement as "Bear," a Keeshond, worked her way through the crowd to help some of the students who were withdrawn and not responding to the traditional methods of the human counselors.

Bear's owner and handler, applied animal behaviorist Cindy Ehlers, came away from the Thurston High School crisis with the realization that animals can also bring hope, and help in the emotional rescue, recovery and on-going support in large scale, critical incidents or disasters, and are a beneficial resource in the healing process. With new insight and a powerful conviction she was determined to bring awareness to others.

Ms. Ehlers founded HOPE Pets Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA), Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) and Animal Assisted Crisis Response (AACR) in September 1998, just months after the Thurston High School tragedy. In order to ensure safe and effective animal assisted therapy in crisis and disaster situations. Cindy knew that animal assisted therapy (AAT) teams needed to have special training for crisis response. HOPE Pets held its first formal training program for Animal-Assisted Crisis Response during July of 2000. That first course was designed to prepare teams to assist at crisis and disaster scenes—with the emphasis on the animal part of the team.

The second formal AACR training was held in June of 2001. Emotional Trauma

components were added to training, and the dogs were taught to work and perform specific tasks during these higher levels of stress. The need to separate animal assisted activities and animal assisted therapy from animal assisted crisis response became apparent and Hope Animal Assisted Crisis Response (AACR) was formed.

In September 2001, Josiah Whitaker and canine team mate Hoss, Pat Dickinson and canine team mate Kate, Pat and Bill Gartman and canine team mate Uno and Cindy Ehlers and canine team mate Tikva were called by the American Red Cross to assist in New York City, immediately following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers. The teams' response as well as many AAT Teams received praise and international recognition. The magnitude and depth of this disaster were hard on both animal and handler. The human part of the teams suffered a tremendous emotional drain. Cindy Ehlers and the other three teams agreed that the handlers would benefit from better crisis-intervention and critical incident stress-management skills. The training program was again modified to include two new instructors: a mental-health counselor specializing in grief counseling and a National HOPE AACR team with NOVA training. These experts teach the crisis-intervention and stress-management curriculum. An AACR instructor, dog trainer and applied animal behaviorist teach the rest of the course.

The newly revised training course was held in January 2002. Most of the materials for the crisis-intervention and stress-management skills were provided by Lois Abrams, Ph.D., who taught the crisis-intervention and stress-management skills.

HOPE Crisis Response offers a canine handler team that is both trained and certified to offer emotional trauma response for individuals involved in a disaster or crisis.

Editor's note: Cindy Ehlers, founder of the program, is an IACP member. The article is excerpted from the AACR manual, by permission.



Kate and Tikva at Ground Zero

More on Animal Assisted Crisis Response:

► The story of Kate and Tikva also appears on the Red Cross website at <http://www.redcross.org/news/ds/0109wtc/011002dogs.html>

► Hope Animal Assisted Crisis Response has its own website, <http://www.hopeaacr.org/>

► The mission of Hope AACR is "To give hope and provide help through safe and effective animal assisted emotional rescue, recovery and on-going support to individuals and responders who have been affected by crisis and disaster."

► HOPE AACR "offers training courses and workshops around the U.S. These 40 hour 4 day workshops are designed to inform, teach and prepare registered Animal Assisted Activities and Animal Assisted Therapy (AAA/AAT) teams how to assist in providing emotional and psychological support and comfort during and/or after a crisis or disaster. Qualifying teams are then evaluated and certified for Animal Assisted Crisis Response." For further information on the workshops, visit the organization's website.



In Defense of Club Trainers

by Caroline C. Hunt

Here in Charleston, SC, a popular bumper sticker reads "Support Tourism—It Supports You." The purpose behind this slogan: to counteract a dislike of tourists on the part of those who live in the city. It's a dislike founded on the often sloppy habits and appearance of tourists, on their noise, on their neglect of the rights of residents. And yes, it is also founded, in many cases, on snobbery.

For "tourists," read club trainers. For "residents," read professionals. Isn't that how a lot of canine business people see the amateurs who flit around the boundaries of the trade—sloppy, ignorant, and, with any luck, temporary?

Let me suggest that this view, though understandable, is not entirely accurate. Club trainers are as varied a group as are professionals. Club trainers are your allies in their enterprise of educating the general public. Even more important to you, perhaps, is the fact that club trainers can bring you business—lots of it.

The roles of the club trainer and the professional are complementary, rather than adversarial. The strengths of one match the shortfalls of the other, sometimes in unexpected ways. Let's look at a few examples of this balance.

1. Experience.

As a full-time professional, Jake runs three or four overlapping classes per week, year-round except for a two-week vacation. If he has an average of twelve students per class, he will have taught 180 to 240 students per year, reaching the 1000-student mark in four to five years. Annie, a club trainer, is lead instructor for one class in each of three to four structured sessions. She too has twelve students per class. At the end of the same year, she has taught only 36 to 48 students. At this rate, by the time she reaches 1000 total students she will probably be too old to teach effectively.

But wait—it's not that simple. Annie may have other experience that helps to make her more effective than you might expect. By definition, most club trainers do something else most of the time. In

one club where I instruct, the teaching staff has over the last few years included a radiologist, a college professor, a vet tech, a service dog trainer, occupational/physical therapists, several experienced breeders, a machine shop foreman, a nurse, and two professional groomers.

All these people deal extensively with the public in either a business or a teaching capacity. For instance, as a college professor I teach from 150 to 200 students, on average, per year. (English is a labor-intensive subject that requires small classes—some of my colleagues teach double that number.) On becoming a lead instructor several years ago, I had the advantage of having taught well over 4,000 students. And college students, much like beginning handlers, are a varied lot: young or "mature," smart or not so smart, committed or indifferent.

This kind of background—the non-canine professional experience that the club trainer brings to the class from the start—can make a big difference. Having juggled a cantankerous retiree, a shy young newlywed, and an array of in-betweens in a graduate course is a big help when confronted by a dog class of extremes. In our last session, one end of the row was anchored by a former war dog handler from the Vietnam era—the other, by a pastor who had never before owned a dog. They literally didn't speak,

or understand, the same language. Luckily my assistant and I were used to this kind of discrepancy, thanks to our "day jobs," and the class went well.

2. Different breeds, Tempers, Activities

Iris, a longtime professional, has taught dogs from every group category and has put obedience titles on Vizslas, German Shepherd Dogs, Dobermans, and even a Basset Hound and a Pekingese. Very few club instructors have as extensive a knowledge of different breeds. Harold, for instance, a club trainer who has titled Golden Retrievers and taught an average mix of dogs, is not at his best around the big herding and working breeds.

What happens here? If Harold belongs to a well run club, the dogs are shuffled around to be with an appropriate instructor. In my club, that means that I may get German Shepherd Dogs—and some other "pushy" dogs—as transfers. If that isn't possible because of scheduling, sometimes a different instructor will come in to "assist," meaning to work with those particular dogs; our training director recently helped me with a Bernese Mountain Dog and a Newfoundland.

As with breeds, so it is with different temperaments. Iris, with her years of professional experience, can handle them all. This is less common among amateurs. Some club instructors, like me, are better

IACP Exam and Certificate for Dog Trainers



Finally, there's a practical, hands-on way to assess your training skills. The new Basic Dog Training Skills Examination and Certificate consists of a videotaped series of training sessions, a selection of your recorded training journals, and several letters of recommendation. The results, not the method, will be scored by three IACP evaluators.

For more information, visit IACP's website at www.dogpro.org, or write to the address below.

Cyndy Douan
P. O. Box 1511
Rome, GA 30162-1511

AKC's Rally Program Moving Forward At Fast Pace

Anticipating January 2003 as the target date for three new official AKC titles in the area of Rally, the American Kennel Club is busy putting its new Rally Program in place.

In Rally, the handler and dog team move continuously through a course and perform exercises indicated by a sign at each station. After the judge's "forward" command, the team is on its own to complete the entire sequence correctly. Communication from the handler to the dog is encouraged and is not penalized.

Rally is an activity that has been around for a few years as an informal event. The AKC will add three AKC titles for Rally including Rally Novice (RN), Rally Advanced (RA), and Rally Excellent (RE).

Rally is intended to be the bridge between the Canine Good Citizens award and the Novice A Obedience title. Rally Novice classes are all performed on leash. In the advanced Rally classes, off-leash work and jumps are introduced.

The proposed requirements for Rally judges include being an approved, regis-

tered CGC evaluator, have at least a CDX, and have some experience teaching and/or judging Rally.

Rally has a lot to offer beginners in obedience--three new official titles, one title that is done on leash, all of which can be done without the precision required in obedience and all of which allow handler to communicate with the dog. And, it is fun!

For more information, contact the AKC at obedience@akc.org

Club Trainers (continued from page 8)

with outgoing, assertive dogs—others, like Harold, with the more submissive ones. With time and good club support, club instructors can expand their range of expertise. Meanwhile, some of the club's students will be referred elsewhere—to you, the professional.

Dogs and their handlers differ in the activities they want to pursue almost as much as in their breeds and temperament. An obedience-oriented club will "refer out" clients who want agility, and vice versa.

A common example is that of the owner who wants to do therapy. As a member of two clubs involved in this activity, I spend a great deal of time talking to prospective handlers. As professionals may not be aware, non-profit clubs normally have in their constitution or bylaws a stipulation that *no member may profit from the club's activities*.

This means that, when I am at the hospital or a nursing facility in my volunteer capacity, I have to be careful how I answer a question like "How do I get my dog to behave like yours so I can do this?" If no club in the area is currently holding lessons, I can't offer to take the person on privately (as I might under other circumstances). Guess what? A local professional, chosen for compatibility with both the handler and the dog, gets the referral for a class in basic manners; then, at the CGC level, the handler and dog come to one of the two local clubs that do therapy workshops.

3. Ethical Issues

I believe it is unethical for trainers to sabotage one another, whether they are professionals or amateurs. It is all too common to hear club trainers belittle professionals as "harsh" or "old fashioned" (many amateurs are somewhat uncritical followers of theory), when in reality they have little experience of the more difficult training challenges faced by the full-time trainer. One also hears some professionals downplay the usefulness of clubs in general ("a bunch of little old ladies"), failing to notice the considerable level of talent and knowledge some of these trainers may have.

Unless you have specific knowledge that a club or its trainers are currently practicing methods that you believe are harmful (or extremely ineffective)—don't say anything about them that you wouldn't say about a professional colleague. Remember that clubs, like individual trainers, evolve; reputations from ten years ago may not be relevant today.

It's not ethical, as explained earlier, for club trainers to profit from their activities. It is legitimate, though, for you to trade services with them just as you would with another professional. This interchange will often involve their non-dog skills. As an experienced editor, I have reviewed and helped to redesign instructional and promotional materials for two trainers in this area. In return, both have offered me free drop-ins at their classes. And, of course, both are among the trainers I recommend to people asking my advice!

Similarly, I have (when asked) offered critiques of the "people handling skills" of other trainers.

4. Meeting Club Trainers

Clubs meet regularly, usually once a month. Guest speakers are often welcome. If you know a member of the club, find out what topics interest club members; for instance, many club trainers are uncomfortable with aggression and would like to know more about dealing with aggressive dogs. After listening to what you have to say, perhaps some of these members will refer aggression cases to you!

Breed clubs are also a good source of referrals. Many of them, like our local GSD club, have modest training programs of their own and would welcome ideas, assistance, and—again—a trainer to whom they could refer with confidence. Owners of GSDs, Rotties, and Dobermans are always happy to hear of trainers who understand their breed and might, if needed, provide a temperament evaluation in a difficult situation. Owners of sporting breeds are eager to hear from trainers who specialize in field work. Almost any dog club wants to hear about trick classes, and many are interested in tracking.

Just remember that amateurs, no matter how experienced, can easily be intimidated by professionals. If you approach these new contacts as a chance to make new allies, that's almost certainly what will happen—and the greater community of dog owners will benefit from it.



On Target with Telephone Skills

by Cyndy Douan, MHDL,

Kingston Kennels, Kingston, GA (IACP #1000)

First impressions are lasting impressions, and our contacts with new potential clients most often happen over the phone. Savvy telephone skills can guarantee that your business will grow in profits and make your job easier in many ways. Always remember that every phone call could result in another deposit in your bank account. So why not start brushing up those skills? You'll be glad you did!

Answer the phone with a warm, cheerful greeting. Smiling when you answer the phone will actually help you sound more positive to the caller. If you need to, put a mirror in front of the phone so that you can watch yourself smile happily when you answer the phone.

Identify yourself or your business when you answer the phone. If you are set up so that you are receiving calls from home, assure callers at once that they have called the right place and the right person.

Create a telephone log where you can write down the caller's name, request, and phone number. I use a legal pad and write down the right half of the page, then down the left half and turn to a new sheet when the page is full. This way I can have a running log of all of my calls and travel with the legal pad in my appointment book, and all of my phone messages and notes are in one place. I also check off calls as I return them, write notes in the margins about how to follow up with a call ("send brochure," "book reservation," "send a registration form") and I draw a line through the follow-up action when I have completed it.

Approach a caller as if you know that this caller is going to do business with you. Ask "How can I help you?" or "What can I do for you today?"

When the caller gives you his/her name, write it down and be sure to use that name during the call. Respectful communication includes addressing the caller with titles such as Mr. or Mrs., especially if that is how the caller identifies himself or herself. Use niceties such as "thank you" and "you're welcome," or regional expressions that communicate respect for the caller such as "yes sir" and "yes ma'am."

Focus your attention on the caller and listen to what the caller says intently. Avoid talking with other people around you while you are on the phone, and wait until you are off the phone to answer questions people ask you while you are trying to talk on the phone. Go into a room by yourself so that you can concentrate. Turn down the volume on the television or radio. These tactics will help the callers understand that they are most important to you at that moment and that their questions and their needs are important to you.

If there are common questions or concerns regularly posed by callers, take some time to compose written answers and keep them with your phone log. This tactic is especially useful when dealing with issues that may be likely to test your patience with callers or trigger your "hot buttons." Composing answers to difficult questions reduces your stress and allows you to give a caller the best and most professionally delivered answers possible.

Always return calls as soon as possible. The longer you wait to return a call, the less likely you are to get that caller's business. In this profession, callers often give their business to the first person who returns their call.

On your answering machine, be sure to leave a recording that lets callers know that a call is important to you and indicate when they should expect to hear from you. "Within 24 hours or by the next business day" is often satisfactory. Callers are pleasantly surprised when you return their call sooner than that!

Remember the principles of good time management when taking phone calls. An informational phone call should take no more than 5 to 10 minutes. Practice various ways for getting off the phone gracefully. An informational call can easily turn into a counseling session; if you offer this service that is your choice, but by setting an appointment for the caller to meet with you, you are turning a free service into an appointment for which you can charge. Your time spent on the phone then starts to turn into a profit rather than a loss.

Your goal for every call is to have set up the next contact with the caller. You have either successfully set an appointment with the caller, or have obtained their address so that you can send them some type of information about your business in the mail. If you cannot help, you should do your best to refer that caller to someone you think can help. This requires that you spend some time developing a referral list of other canine professionals. Not only will doing this create word of mouth referrals from a caller you barely know, but when you begin to refer other professionals, you will begin to receive referrals from them as well!

And finally, buy yourself a headset telephone. There are headset phones on the market now which have rechargeable batteries and operate remotely. Not only do they leave your hands free, but also will prevent neck strain suffered from cradling old style phones between your ear and shoulder. Worth every penny!

You Know You're Owned by Your Dogs When. . .

(Part Two)

- ▶ You've forwarded more warnings about the dangers of chocolate, onions and mistletoe than the National Centers for Disease Control has issued about anthrax and smallpox.
- ▶ You wear white year 'round, not because you are flaunting a fashion law or belong to a religious sect, but because you have a Dalmatian, Great Pyrenees, or Samoyed at home.
- ▶ Vacuum cleaners in your household don't just die, they go out with more smoke and noise than the Taliban.
- ▶ By the time you investigate different flea control products, their advantages and potential risks, natural versus chemical methods, and study the life cycle of the flea, any fleas have died of old age.

(continued on page 11)



IACP BOOK NOOK REVIEW #1:
Think Dog! An Owner's Guide to
Canine Psychology
by John Fisher

Reviewed by Margot Woods.

If you were to tell me you could only buy one book on canine psychology, then I would have to say this is not the book for your library. However, if you were looking for an additional dog book for inclusion in a growing canine library, then I would say "Think Dog!" is a book you might want to at least consider.

This thin little book, with a scant 176 pages, attempts to be many things and cover many topics, to the detriment of all. One of the more annoying aspects of the book was its sales pitch, geared toward special training gimmicks designed by the author. While I have no objection to reading books that are intended to introduce a new product and then instruct in that product's specific uses, I do have a problem with not being told in advance that there is going to be a sales pitch. Had I wanted to learn about specially tuned "Dog Training Discs" or "Col-leashes," I would have looked for a book on that topic.

This book glides over such things as where dogs come from, how a dog's mind develops and how a dog learns. There is a tip of the hat toward the art of positive reinforcement and the art of negative

reinforcement with a quick glance at dog foods and then a teasingly small taste of Bach Flower Remedies. These topics and more were all residing in this one thin little book.

While the case histories were an interesting read, there was no follow-up—so the reader is left to wonder how each case actually turned out. Was the Rottie who threaten the author still alive and well a year after the interview? Did the woman nursing both Boxer and child manage to get both of them weaned and the situation defused so it was safe for the husband to be at home? I found the case histories raised more questions for me than they answered.

I have no doubt that Mr. Fisher had a wealth of dog knowledge and was very good at what he did when it came to solving individual dog/human problems. It may well be that some of his other books are of more substance; however, I am not reviewing those books. As far as this book is concerned, I found it to be lacking in the sort of substance I would hope to find in a good reference book. Buy it because you are a book collector and just can't ever have

enough books. Buy it because it has some amusing case histories that can help to serve as a warning of the sort of things you will run into as a dog trainer. But don't buy it if it is going to be the only book on behavior, training, feeding or even Bach Flower Remedies in your library.

As a footnote, I have used the Bach Flower Remedies and just as Mr. Fisher says, they seem to work almost like a sort of magic. And that is definitely another topic.

You Know You're Owned
by Your Dogs When. . .
(Part Three)

► You tell your children to "heel!" in a grocery store.

► You spend eleven months of the year preaching understanding of canine behavior, then you stick fake reindeer antlers on the dog and photograph him for your Christmas Card.

► Not only do family and friends think you go overboard with doggie holiday decorations, they've never seen a nativity scene where the holy family is depicted by Dobermans.

(excerpted from several e-mail lists)

IACP MEMBERSHIP CONTEST * * * March 22, 2002 to December 31, 2002

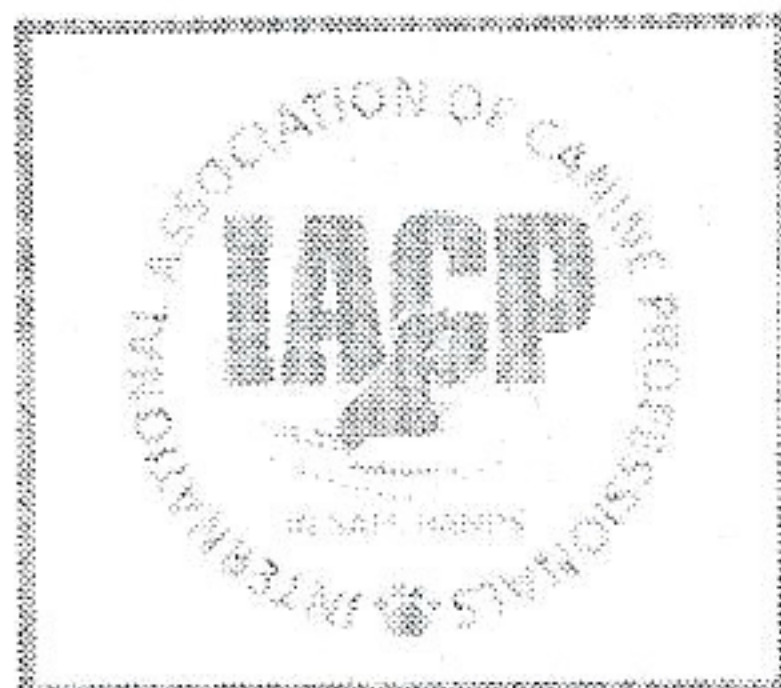
Rule 1: Prizes will be determined based upon the total number of Professional and/or Associate Level memberships referred during the contest period.

Rule 2: Membership applications MUST include the name of the referring member.

PRIZES:

- 2 to 4 Members: IACP T-Shirt and Certificate of Appreciation.
- 5 Members: Free one-year membership in IACP, Certificate of Appreciation.
- 10 Members: Free one-year membership in IACP, Certificate of Appreciation, large bag of dog food (Natural Balance)
- 15 Members: Free one-year membership in IACP, Certificate of Appreciation, Airfare to IACP conference to the value of \$250.00 (US)
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All contest winners will be recognized in SafeHands magazine.



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The INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE PROFESSIONALS is 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 co-operation across the wide diversity of canine expertise and knowledge.

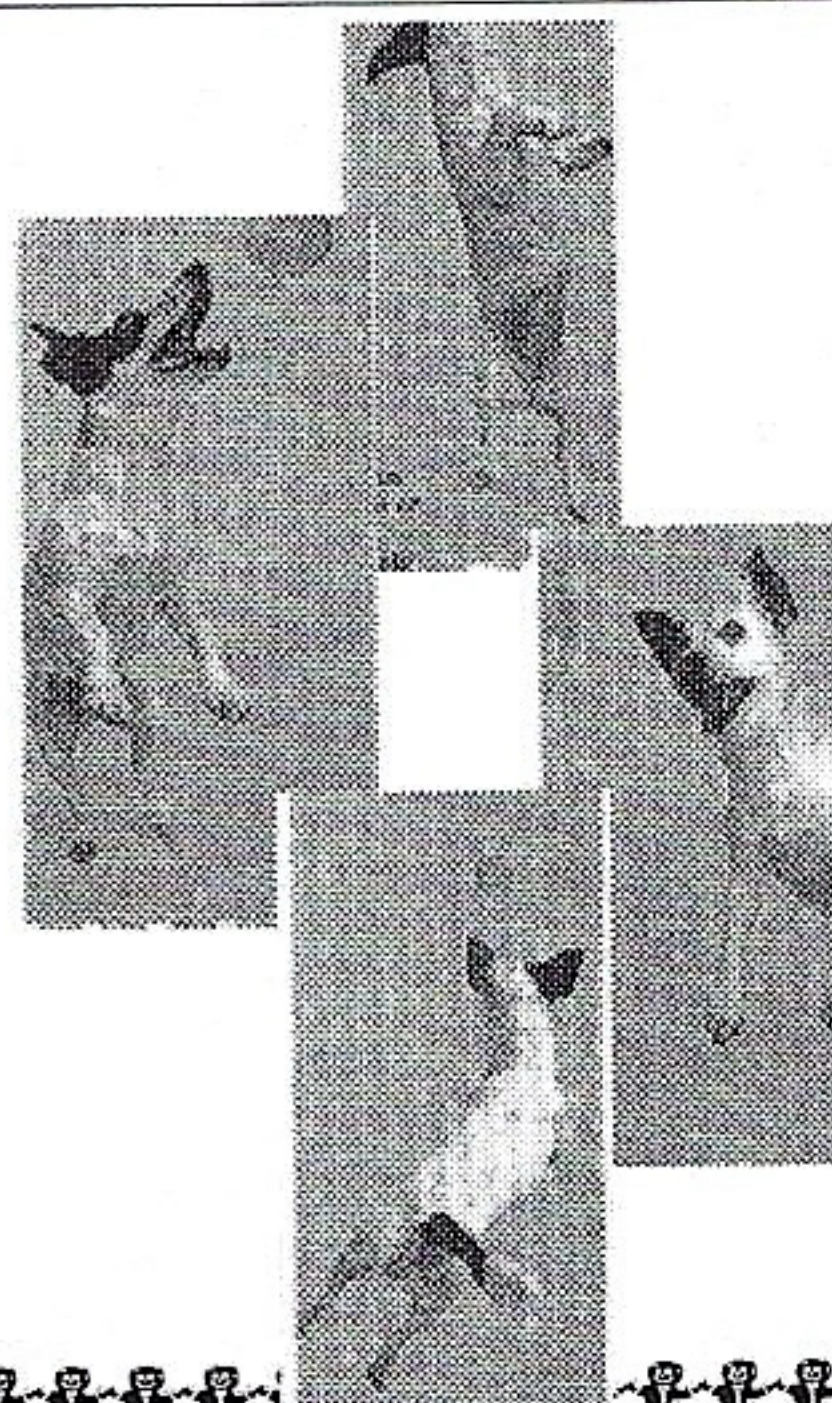
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From;

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE PROFESSIONALS

P.O. Box 560156 Montverde, FL 34756-0156



**JUMP FOR JOY AGAIN
AT THE
IACP
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
MARCH 21-23 2003**