

IACP

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE PROFESSIONALS



Safe Hands Journal

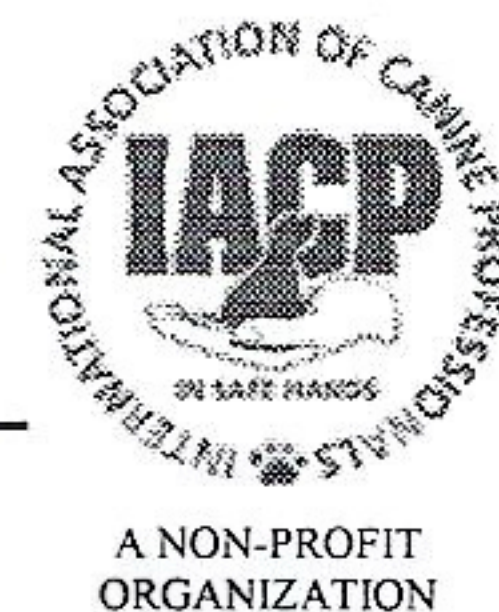


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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE PROFESSIONALS

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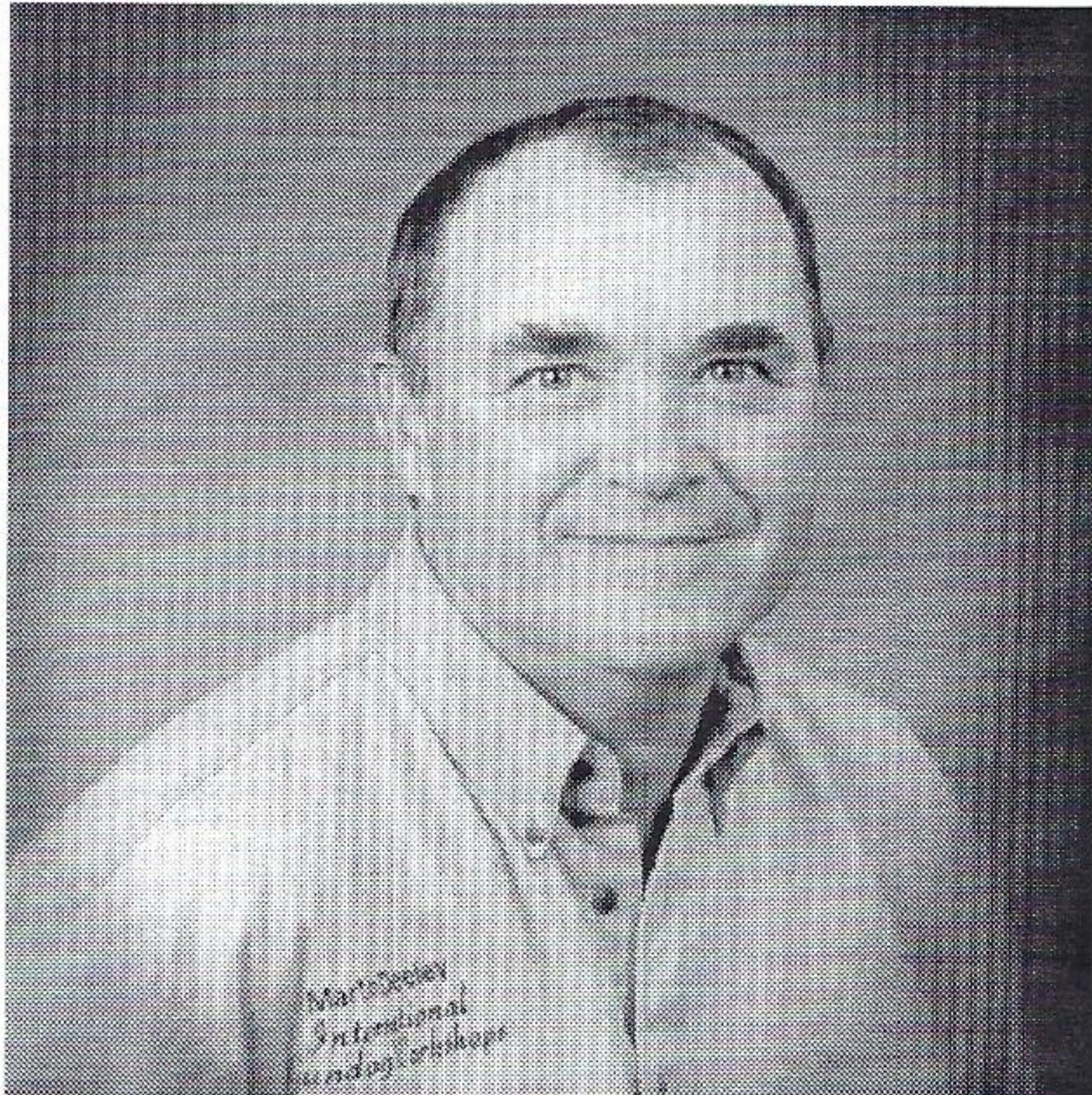
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FROM THE PRESIDENT



I hope you have all turned to your calendars, made a date and booked your places for the 2006 Annual IACP Conference in Hutto at Triple Crown. Cesar Millan—The Dog Whisperer, Wendy Volhard—a legend in dog training and Steve Fricke—Mr. Agility, will be headlining at this conference which proves to be the best yet. Personally I am excited at meeting and listening to them plus our other excellent presenters. Already bookings far exceed any we have had in past years at this time, so we know this is going to be the best yet.

Recently, together with IACP members in New Jersey we collected information on the proposed legislation to License Dog Trainers. We were informed that the reason behind the legislation was because two trainers in the area had been lobbying for it. Evidence of public criticism however was not available. Contacts were made with the Assemblymen sponsors and with a New Jersey Senator by New Jersey IACP Members and the Board of Directors and the comprehensive information we obtained was communicated to them together with our reasons for not licensing.

The stance of the Board of IACP is we support, encourage and demand high standards within our professions, and we require the experience and expertise to provide effective professional services to the public. Our policy however is that education, control, supervision and credentialing of dog trainers should be the responsibility of the dog training profession through the recognized professional organizations.

The Dog Trainer Licensing Bill is not supported by IACP. Our aim therefore was to illustrate to the Assemblymen sponsoring this bill and those that may support it, that the bill is seriously flawed based on incorrect information and is in fact unnecessary in the light of the national organizations who do provide the required controls over their members. We believe they have listened to this and although the bill has not been withdrawn at this time we believe that withdrawal is being seriously considered.

Let me take this opportunity to wish all our members and readers a very Happy Holiday and a very successful 2006. Be assured that we as an Association are always working to support and help our members be successful in their business and their chosen profession.

Martin Deeley

President IACP

Putting Joy Back in Obedience: The Broad Jump

By Marc Goldberg

In a previous issue we talked about ways to leave handler nervousness outside the obedience ring. You want to give your dog the best shot at an excellent performance. Therefore, you must ensure that the handler entering the ring is the same companion and handler who trained your dog outside the ring.

If you tense up, your voice, body language and body chemistry all change. Of course, your dog will still recognize you. Yet, you may become "different" enough to concern or worry your dog. This is particularly true for sensitive, highly bonded dogs who watch your every move. Ironically, the same sensitivity and desire to please that makes a great obedience dog works against you when your dog worries.

How do you prevent your own case of jitters in the ring, thus helping your dog avoid a case of jangling nerves? The solution begins long before you arrive at the show grounds. It starts during the training process itself. Just create a game to teach each exercise. When training resembles play, obedience trials simply become a new location to play for both you and your dog.

The Open class is where showing tends to get serious. Complex skills and precision are required to qualify. That may explain why so many dog/handler teams fail to progress beyond Novice. Using games designed to educate your dog is a motivator and elevates his mood. When you enter the ring with a motivated dog, ready to play Open ring games, your own confidence level will remain intact. Thus, neither of you is likely to suffer jittery nerves.

Our last article on this subject concentrated on Open ring exercises, including Drop on Recall and Figure 8. In this article, we'll describe games that teach and proof the Broad Jump. These games can excite pokey dogs, helping them *want* to jump. And they can cure anticipation problems for geared, motivated jumpers.

To understand why so many dogs struggle with the Broad Jump, it is critical you see this exercise from *his* point of view. Put your dog away, and set up the jump for his ultimate width. Stand at least eight feet in front of the jump, the minimum distance according to AKC regulations. Look at the Broad Jump. It's an obvious barrier. Now get down on your hands and knees. Put your eyes at your dog's eye level. Look again, and notice how this "obvious barrier" melts into the landscape. From your dog's perspective, the only sensible way to get over the Broad

Jump is to walk on it. I truly hope you will take the 30 seconds to see this exercise from your dog's perspective. It will help you understand why you must give your dog a *reason* to jump this barrier, a reason that makes sense to *him*.

I like to start the broad jump with run-bys. This meshes with the cardinal rule of the Broad Jump. *Never let your dog approach it at less than a run.* Should your dog get used to walking toward the jump, it will be harder to achieve motivated jumping.

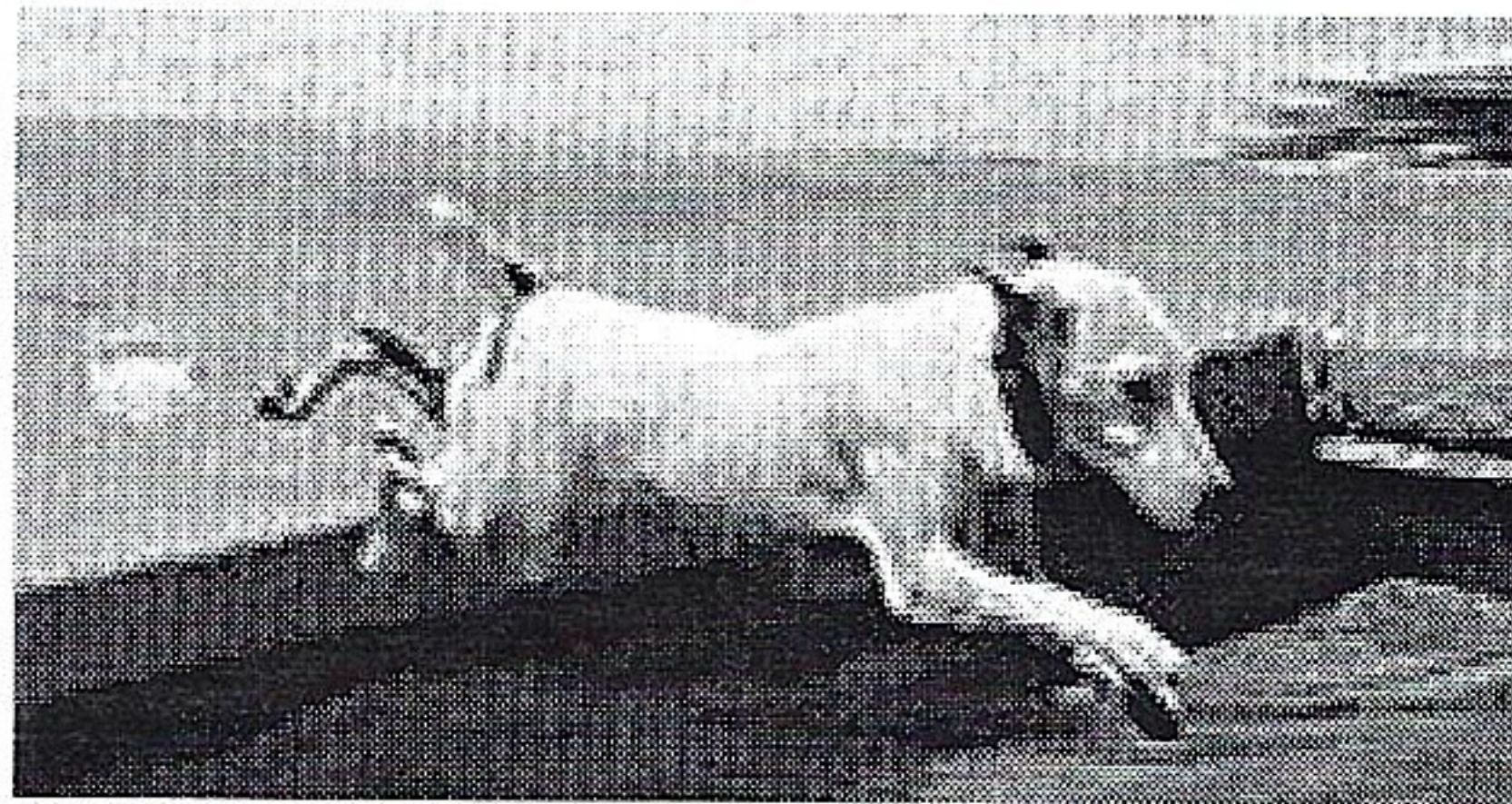
Set up the jump at half the dog's eventual width. Use enough boards so you do not leave an obvious gap between them. Attach a twenty foot leash to a flat buckle collar, and stand with the dog sitting at heel position. Position yourself at least eight feet in front of the jump. Make sure that your dog is sitting facing the *center* of the hurdle. This means that you are slightly off center to the right of the boards.

Throw most of the line behind you, between you and the dog. Hold only a handful of leash, approximately two feet from the snap, depending on the size of your dog. You do not want to give him enough leash to run around the jump. Give the over command, holding the leash tightly in your left hand, and run like heck toward the jump. As you reach the lift off point, help lift your dog over the jump with your left hand, as you leap the Broad Jump *with* your dog. Be sure he gets the center of the hurdle. You'll jump offset to the right. When you reach the other side, run at least fifteen feet straight out, praising as you go.

Most dogs enjoy the run by. It's exciting because you are going with them. It's fast moving, and they get effusive praise on the other side. If your dog should try and walk the boards on a run by, either lift sooner and higher on the leash, or attach a pinch collar and give a *slight* upward pop at lift off.

I like to do no more than three or four run bys in a training session. After only a couple of sessions, most dogs will look forward to the run by. Some of them can be hard to hold back, so you may want to use a glove to avoid leash burn. The next step is to introduce a toy or food into the run by process.

I prefer to use toys for dogs who enjoy them. The toy should



be one that will not roll away from where it lands. Do *not* use a ball. A stuffed toy or odd shaped squeaky is ideal. You can increase the pleasure by using something he loves, and use it *only* for the Broad Jump.

Hide the toy in your right hand, or in a back pocket. Do not show it to your dog. Set up for the run by as usual. You are still jumping with your dog. But just at the moment your dog lifts off, toss the toy straight out from the end of the jump, at least fifteen feet back. Relax your grip on the leash, letting it run through your left hand, so your dog can run up to play with the toy.

At first, some dogs are reluctant to play with the toy. They may have been corrected off distractions previously, and believe this to be a set-up. Simply give your dog permission to play with the toy by picking it up and wiggling it in his face. Let him play for a moment, then make the object disappear into a pocket. Your dog will not see this toy again until he's in mid-air once again. Don't give up. After repetition, most dogs will learn to relax and play.

It's a fact of life, however, that some dogs just don't play with toys. If he is food motivated however, we'll use that to our advantage. Do not throw food directly over the jump. Instead, stuff a white tube sock full of hotdog chunks, and tie the sock closed. It will smell good, and he may even learn to play with it. You use the stuffed sock just like the toy. Toss it at the right moment, and let your dog run out to it upon landing. Then catch up with him, open the sock and give him a piece.

This technique makes for happy, motivated run bys. There is one "but." Some dogs may begin to anticipate the jump in order to provoke the toy toss. Of course, this just won't do. There is a punishment for anticipation. It is the same punishment if he walks the boards, despite your efforts to jump him. The punishment is *withholding*. You hold the line during the entire run by, first to help guide him over (rather than around), and second, in case your dog makes a mistake. If he makes a mistake by anticipating or walking, simply clamp your grip and do not allow your dog to go to the toy or food.

Leave the toy where it fell, and lead your dog back to the starting point. Jump him again, providing more lift at the take off point. If he's successful, run him right to the toy. Voila. We have learned two lessons. One, jumping is good. Two, mistakes are not good.

Run bys must progress by stages to the point where you no longer hold such a short leash grip. Begin to let out slightly more leash as your dog understands what you want, and when he never makes mistakes on the short grip. When he is reliable on a looser leash, you're ready to quit jumping over with him. At the last second, you go around.

Here are some more details you need when using target toys for the Broad Jump. After a few sessions, it's a good idea to make the toy toss random. This means you will toss one out of every two or three jumps. Your dog must become accustomed to landing to a no-toy situation, and understand that this, too, can be normal.

If your dog still anticipates the jump, even occasionally, you must reinforce the sit. Correct for broken sits, but randomly release and simultaneously toss the toy *behind the dog, away from the jump*. This teaches him to wait, and see in which direction he'll be going. Correct anticipation mildly if you catch it before the dog jumps. If the dog has already jumped, do not correct, but clamp on the line to withhold the toy.

Run-bys are a great way to introduce the jump, and to make this silly barrier fun. Progress by leaving the dog on a sit stay. By stages, move toward your ultimate position on the side. You should still randomly toss the toy. But you can begin to run out to the toy with the dog on a random basis. You don't need to go every time. Go through this process over the course of a couple of weeks. Then you're ready to ask for a front.

To pattern a nice front, do a jump, complete with toss. On the next one, do not toss the toy. Call the dog to front. You may need to give a light leash pop to guide him at first. Just as the dog is arriving at front, before the sit, make the toy appear under your chin. Release before the sit and drop the toy.

Here are your options from this point forward. You may do first stage run bys from heel position, with random toy toss. You may do formal looking set ups, sending the dog from your position at the jump's side, with random toy toss, no fronts, and you run *as* the dog jumps. You may do the formal looking set ups without running, and randomly deliver the toy after a good front.

And most important of all...you can do occasional formal exercises. Yes, I do practice formals, but only about one in five jumps, even with a fully trained dog. Mostly, I mix it up with all of the options above. Each of them teaches the dog an important component of the Broad Jump. And with the variety of options, comes joy and a willingness to complete the formal exercise.

Train the Broad Jump with target toys. Whether you're inside or outside the ring, you'll be there to have fun.

Marc Goldberg lives in the Chicagoland area. He trains dogs so they may fully enjoy their lives and their human companions. www.ChicagoDogTrainer.com.

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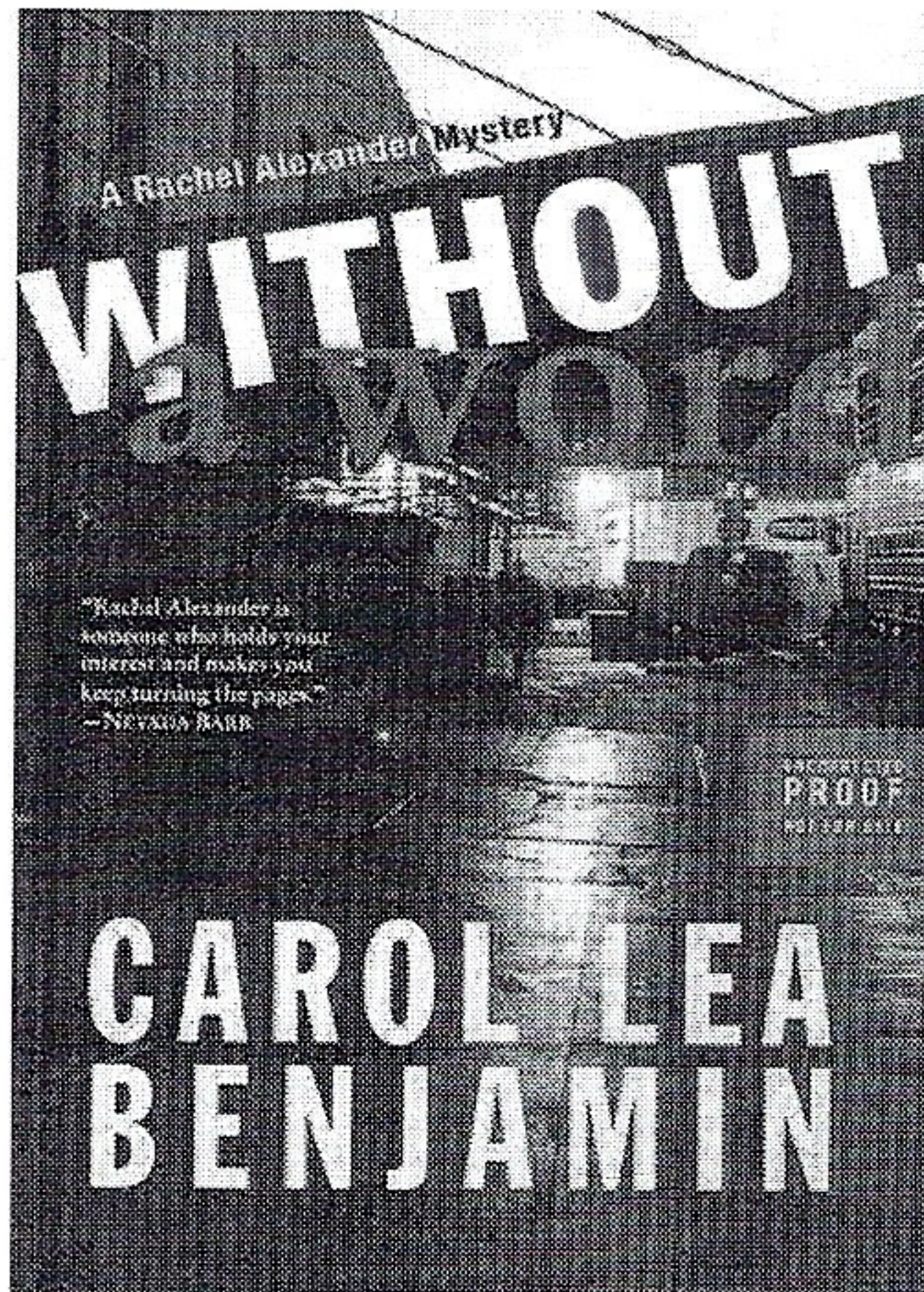
BOOK REVIEW

Without A Word

Carol Lea Benjamin

Review by: Margot Woods

Number eight in the Rachel Alexander mysteries, "Without a Word" is certainly the most emotionally compelling of the series. A young girl's descent into silence, a father who isn't, a father who is, a lost mother and the sad, complex threads that sometimes weave the pattern called life, all this and a murder, too.



Dashiell, Rachel's steadfast Pit bull steps up to the plate this time as a sort of living Rosetta Stone making silent, non-verbal communication between Rachael and Madison, the young heroine-in-distress possible. One of the things I so much enjoy about all of Benjamin's mysteries is not just the presence of dogs, but the presence of real, believable dogs. Dashiell comes across as a sort of no nonsense, very practical sort of fellow who manages to evoke just the right amount of

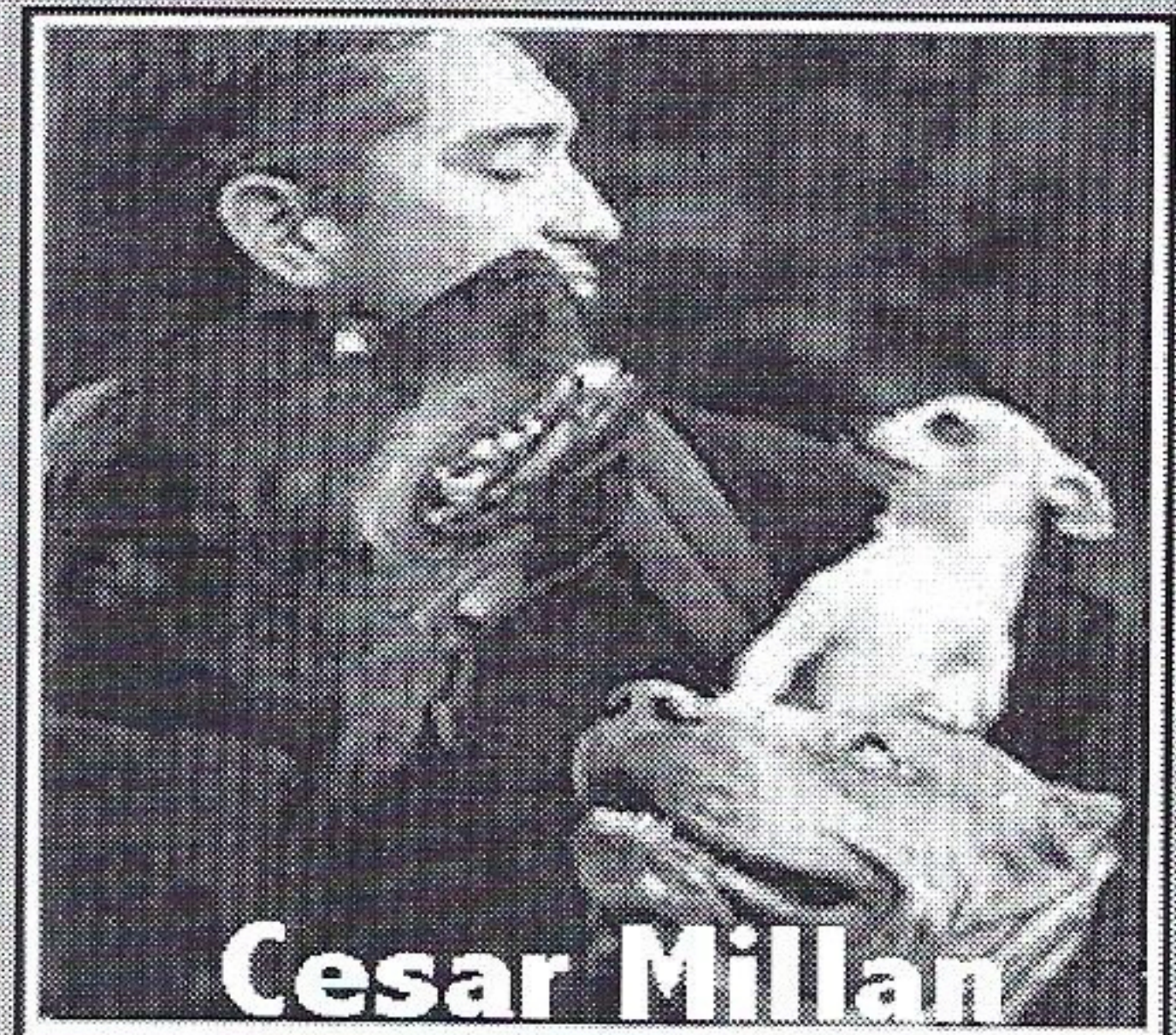
emotion from each human he must interact with while at the same time avoiding any sort of cloying cuteness. The secondary dog this time is an oh so very believable Border. Not a Lassie-want-to-be, but a real dog making the best of what life hands out and helping a human being stay connected with life, even if it is a rather tenuous sort of connection.

Being the greedy soul I am, my major complaint with this book was that it wasn't long enough. The dog trainer in me wants more dog training scenes and the girl in me cries for more about Madison. This time I wish for a sequel just to find out how all the threads of life play out. Oh yes, there really were a couple of murders, for without them "Without a Word" wouldn't qualify as a murder mystery. The final test of a good murder mystery comes down to, can you guess who did it before the end? Very frequently I manage to correctly peg the killer about half way through the book. This time I became so engrossed with main characters I totally forgot to even try and figure out who did it. Reaching the final chapter I was completely surprised to learn exactly who the murderer was and why they killed. This one is worth a second read.

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CONDITIONING DOGS

By
George K. Hobson

Keeping our dogs healthy and well exercised is a concern to all owners, whether the dog is a house pet or a working dog. Exercise is necessary for a physically healthy dog, and a mentally healthy one as well. While some of the behavioral issues I see in dogs that are pets are connected to the lack of proper physical exercise, in hunting dogs that lack of exercise can be life threatening.

I recently went on an opening day dove hunt, and did not take a dog. It was ninety degrees and no shade was available: a combination that was perilous to even a well-conditioned dog. The combination of high temperatures, humidity, and lack of frequent opportunity to cool down is a dangerous condition for working dogs, and a situation that should be considered by all owners.

A year-round conditioning program should be a part of every dog's life. Especially for the working dog, that means both exercise and acclimatization. Many owners of hunting dogs keep them in-house, and I'm one who has done so in the past. Regardless of the reason for keeping an indoor dog, the effects on the dog's ability to handle the change to outside conditions must be recognized. In my discussions with veterinarians, there has been a consensus that as few as three hours a day in an air-conditioned home can adversely affect a dog's ability to deal with as little as a ten degree higher outside temperature. While this varies with breeds, and other aspects such as cloud cover, wind, and humidity, it has been my rule-of-thumb for a number of years.

Physical exercise programs must be orientated to the expected work. For upland dogs, the daily ground to be covered is roughly at least four times that covered by the hunter. During most hunting, the dog's line of travel will more difficult than the hunter's, and with some breeds, the ground covered will be much more than four times the amount. It's not unusual to have the dogs working in cover that is more difficult than the hunter is experiencing, and thus more physically strenuous. I certainly have sent my dogs up the sides of steep hills and down into (and back out of) valleys while I took the easier path. Their four-wheel drive made it look easy, but it nonetheless was an increased level of physical stress during any given hunt. The weekend hiker, who, while he may jog for fitness with his canine companion during the week, needs to consider similar aspects for their dog as well.

I use an ATV to accomplish some of the conditioning for dogs in my kennel. It's a good way to get a check on an individual dog's physical status as well as have a standard for evaluating a dog's level of conditioning. There are commercial rigs available for ATV conditioning of dogs, and I often



see them advertised with a mount behind the driver. In kennels with many dogs to condition, having both a front and rear rig is most convenient, but I only run a front set up because I want to watch each dog as an individual.

The conditioning of a working dog's feet are just as important as other aspects of good health, and deserve special attention. Dogs that are exercised on soft ground may not develop the toughness of pad that is required for long periods on new ground that is rocky, or even a different soil type. Concrete floors in kennels, and homes with extensive hard-surface floors, are places where the dogs' feet tend to result in wider spaces between the toes, and smooth pad surfaces. Since I tend to take a dog with me everywhere I go, I'm also concerned about requiring the dog to walk on hot surfaces in the summer. An asphalt parking lot on a ninety-degree day will have a surface temperature well above that, and it's a situation I either minimize or avoid. Recognition of the impact of the type of surface for kennel, home, and exercise will contribute to the development of a tight foot and a pad with a toughened exterior, and less chance of injury.

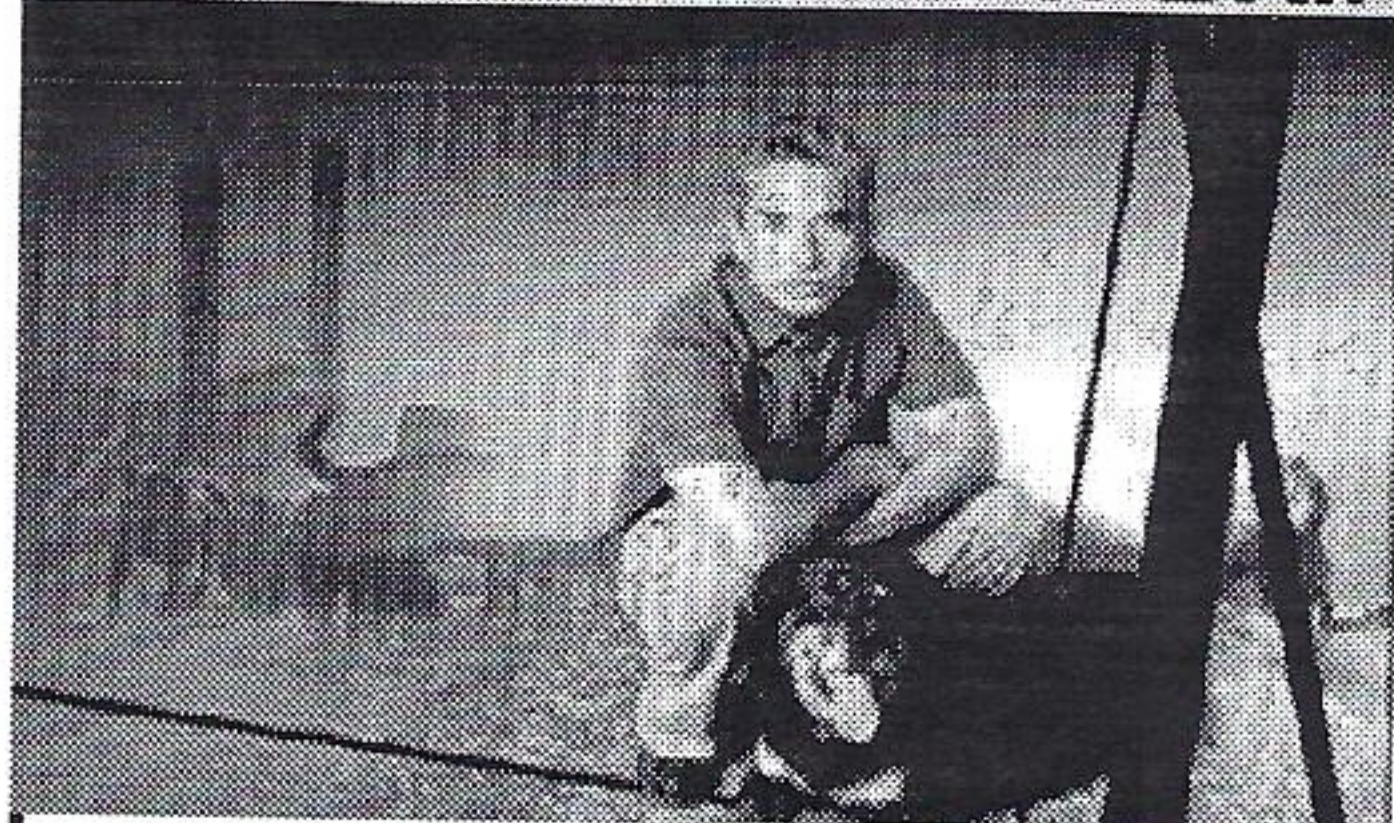
How effective is walking or jogging in exercising a dog? There is no single, clear answer for all dogs, but it is plain that all exercise is beneficial. What is adequate for a Boston Terrier is not equal to the needs of a greyhound for even moderate physical exertion. The real question is, what is the exercise goal?

As with any athlete, or would-be athletes, a thorough physical exam is a prudent prerequisite to a conditioning program. Our canine companions are subject to many of the same ailments of genetics and age as humans. Heart murmurs,

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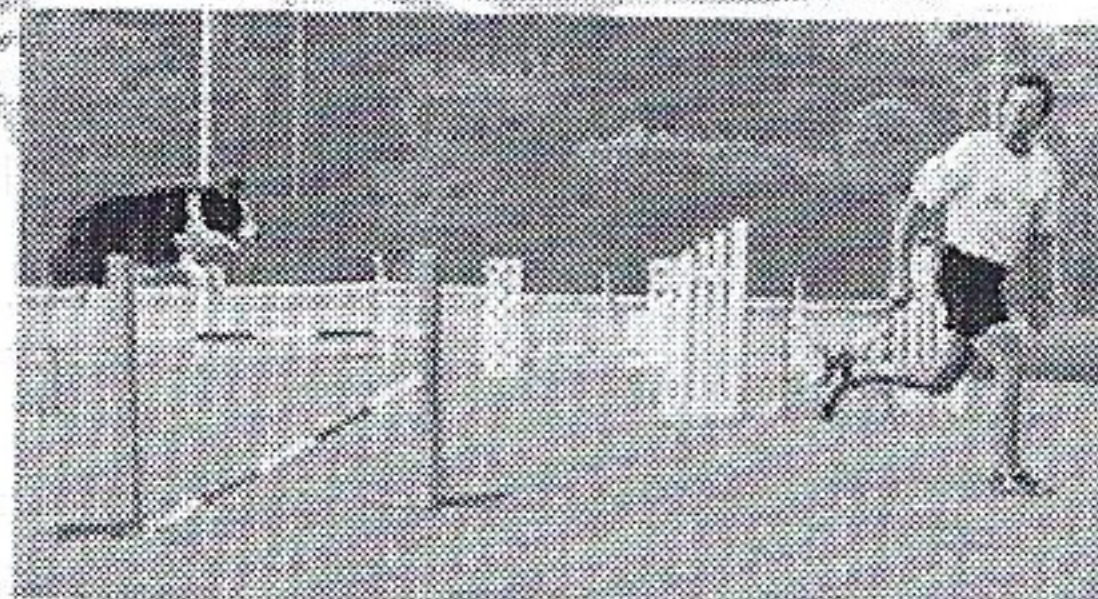
Cesar Millan "The Dog Whisperer"

Cesar Millan is a world-renowned dog behavior specialist, known for his uncanny ability to walk at large with large packs of dogs at a time. His motto is "I rehabilitate dogs... I train people". Cesar is eager to share the lifetime of wisdom he's gained living and working with dogs, including thousands of 'lost causes', that he has rehabilitated over the years. Join us as Cesar shares the behavior-changing techniques that he shares with his clients

Featuring

Steve Frick—Agility

Steve Frick has been training dogs for most of his life. He began competing in agility in 1995 and he and his dogs are consistently ranked by USDAA, AKC and other titling groups as the top competitors in their field. Steve will join us to share his knowledge of canine conditioning, jumping techniques, and motivational training methods.



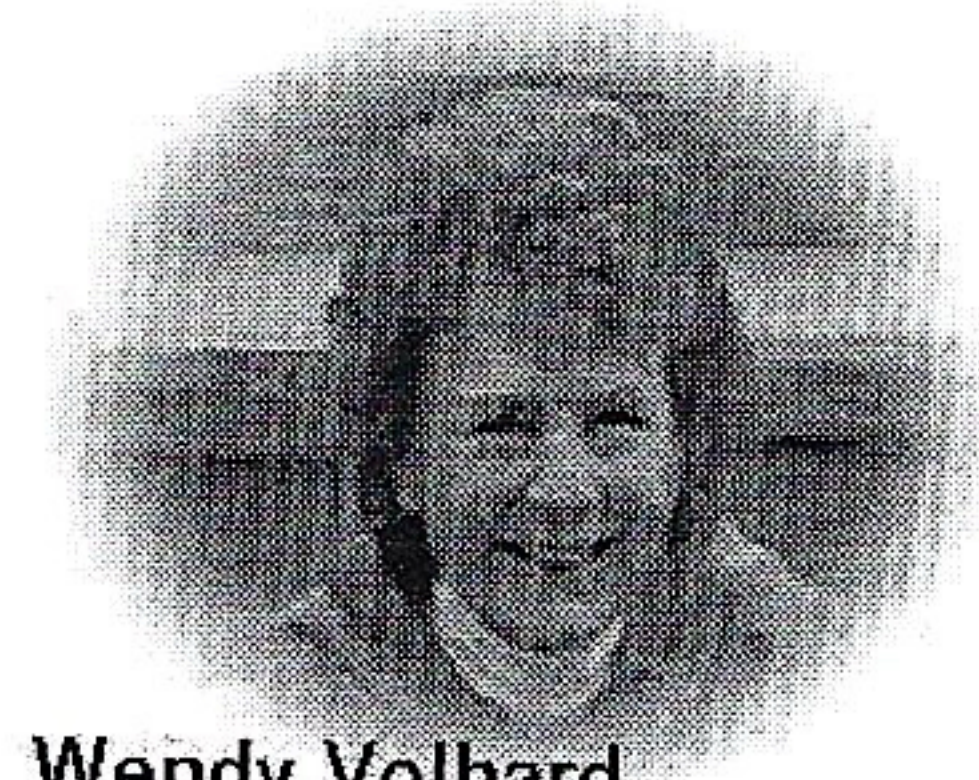
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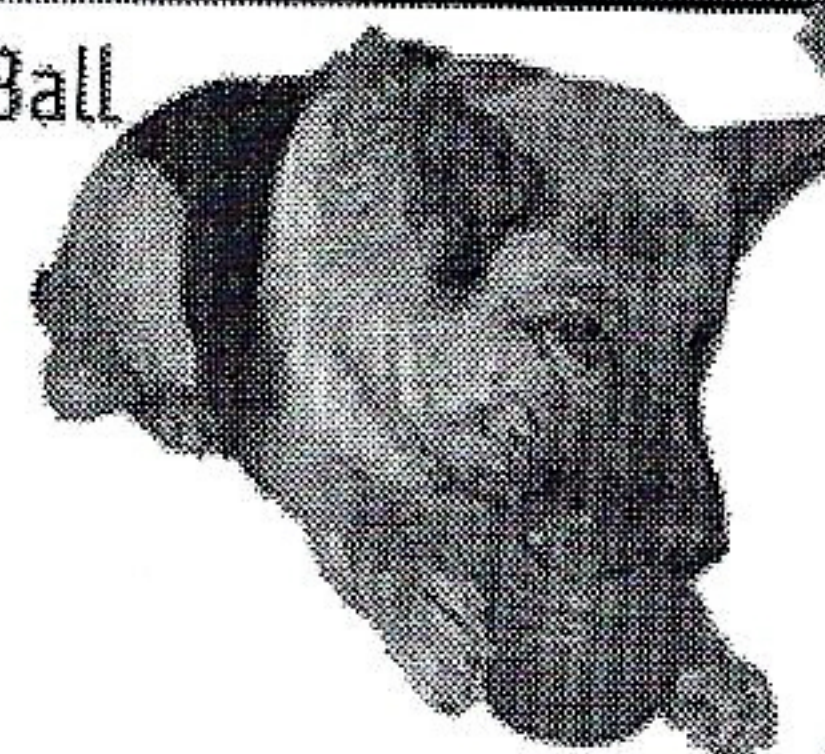


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Conditioning Dogs contd

arthritis, muscle and tendon injuries, and just plain being tired can all lead to exercise related health problems that can be avoided. Owners should have an exercise goal expressed in terms of their dog's health, and then discuss how to achieve it with a veterinarian. Discussing an anticipated exercise program can alert the owner to potential injuries, and a wellness exam can identify unknown problems that dictate health considerations.

The following are a few of the considerations for all exercise programs. Young dogs should not participate in jumping exercises until their joints are able to withstand the stress of take off

and landing. Previously unexercised older dogs need a gradual introduction to even long walks, much less accompanying their master who is on a bike or jogging. Putting a dog into harness or engaging in pulling work places strain on joints and ligaments that requires special attention to warm-up and conditioning work. Our canine companions will give their all to please us. We need to consider their ability to do so, and ensure their safety and good health with a sound exercise program.

Copyright George Hobson September 2005
George Hobson is a Professional Member of IACP from Missouri and specializes in training Hunting Dogs

BOOK REVIEW

"Psychoactive Herbs in Veterinary Behavior Medicine"

Stefanie Schwartz Blackwell Publishing

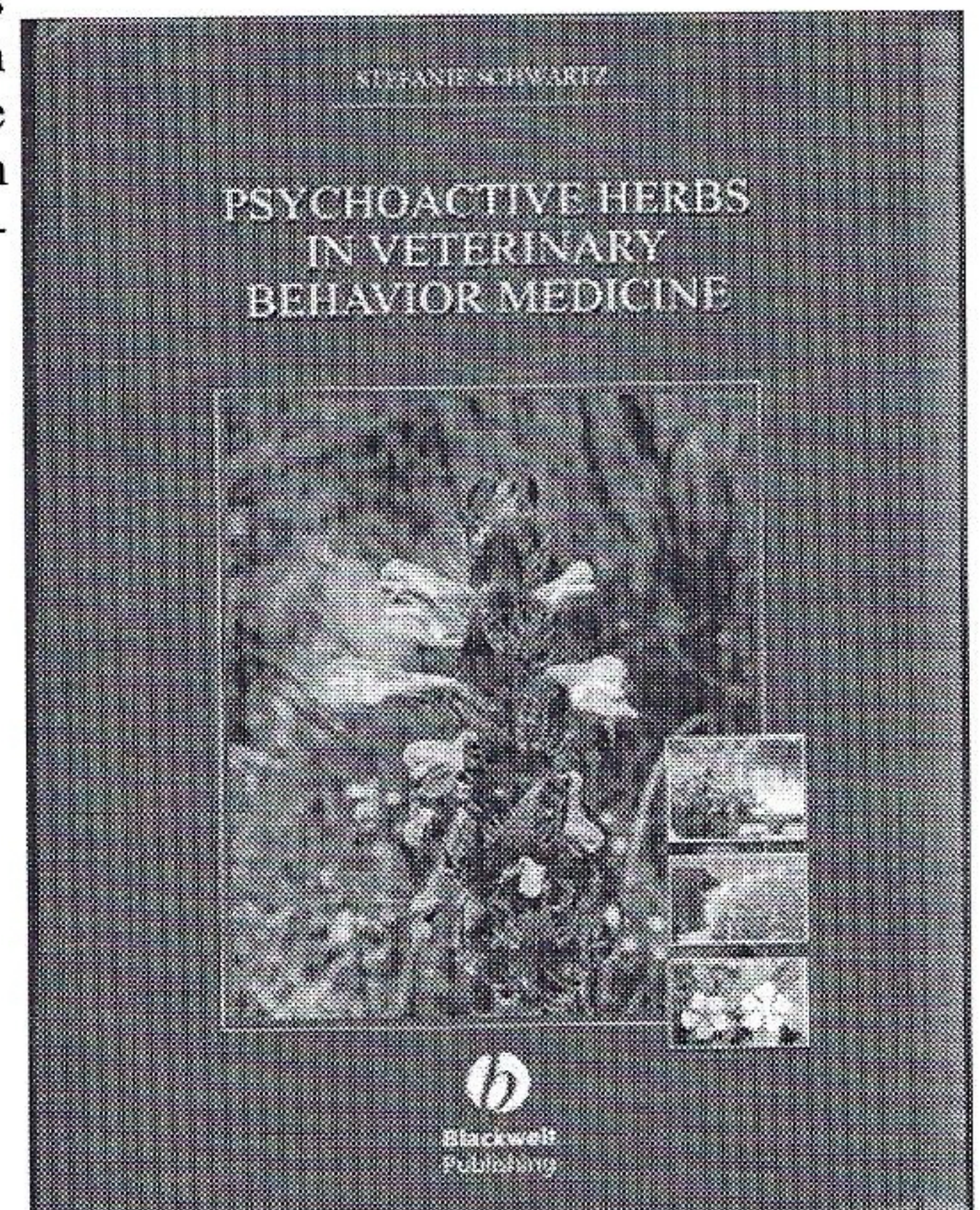
Reviewed by Julie Winkelman

As Stefanie Schwartz, DVM, MSc, writes in the preface of her new book, "This is the first book to investigate and synthesize scientific data about psychoactive herbs relevant to the specialty of veterinary behavior." While veterinary behaviorists might make up a small minority of the membership of the IACP, any member serious about working with the challenges of behavior modification can benefit from reading this book. That having been said, this is not an easy read. To get the most out of the sometimes complicated information in "Psychoactive Herbs in Veterinary Behavior Medicine" it is a good idea to have an on line medical dictionary available as you read.

The book is broken down into five main sections; Western, Native American, Ayurvedic, Oriental and Miscellaneous psychoactive herbs. The information for each herb entry is organized into:

- * A description and definition of the herb.
- * History of use – this is an interesting look at the use of the herb by many cultures throughout history.
- * A detailed description of the chemical make-up of the herb – a basic understanding of the way the brain metabolizes, synthesizes and utilizes chemicals is a definite plus in reading this section.
- * Definition of central nervous system / neurological effects – details of research done on the effects of the herb. Dr. Schwartz even rates the quality of the research.
- * Behavioral and psychological effects – a look at noted effects of the herb on behavior.
- * Other effects that are specific to the herb such as cardiovascular, antimicrobial or hormonal effects.
- * Adverse effects and drug interactions – a very balanced look at the negative side effects of an herb and case studies of drug interactions.
- * Availability – types of herbal preparations (i.e. tincture, powder, gel cap, etc.) and dosage levels of active ingredients. Clinical application in veterinarian behavior medicine – this section is the clearest, most reader-friendly section of the book.
- * References – Dr. Schwartz lists an exhaustive number of references for her writings.

This reference book has done an excellent job of researching, detailing and categorizing the herbs that might be of help in dealing with behavior modification. It helped me to further understand the herbs that I sometimes advise my clients to use with their dogs and has opened my eyes to several other possibilities to use in the future. While the book may seem tedious to read at times, I know of no better single source for this important information.



Dog Training Methods vs. Teaching Principles

Thomas A. Beitz, *Canine Behavior*

Over the years many different dog training methods have been developed to help pet owners teach their canine companion how to mind as well as teach good manners. Many of these methods could be considered "fad training methods." Although they may be helpful in some cases, they often leave the pet owner frustrated, unable to accomplish their training goals. Why don't these fad training methods work with so many dogs?

There was a theologian by the name of Dr. Martyn Lloyd Jones who once made a profound statement when he said, "...*there is nothing more likely to lead to error than to begin with the part rather than the whole.*" As a society we are rapidly becoming a people of fragmented parts, seeking the latest *new thing* that might be the magic bullet that will solve all our problems.

The dog training industry is no different. Perhaps this emphasizing "*the part rather than the whole*" may be the reason why so many behavior and obedience problems go unresolved for years. There are number of different methods that can be used to train a dog. So why are some more effective than others?

The reason that fad methods of training have their limitations is because fad methods usually only use part of a *learning model*. Learning models are proven, scientific theories that have shaped dog trainers and behaviorists thinking for over a hundred years. The two main streams of thought are referred to as Classical Con-

ditioning, developed by Dr. Pavlov and Operant Conditioning developed B. F. Skinner. Although these learning models may not be complete in themselves, they do lay the foundation (**the principles**) in which to build our **methods** of training around.



For example, if I were to ask you if you ever heard the term, "positive reinforcement," most people would respond, "of course." If we ask our dog to sit, and the dog complies with our request, we reward the dog with praise or a treat. The reward is the positive reinforcement. Reinforcement is another word that means to strengthen or to increase the likelihood of the dog repeating the behavior (sit) the next time we make the request.

Positive reinforcement is only one part of a four part learning model. Do you know what the other three parts are? Unless you have a degree in psychology, you will have a hard time answering the question. My point is that many of the contemporary training methods emphasize the part (positive reinforcement) rather than the whole learning model. This is why so many people become frustrated when attempting to train their dog. The trainer teaching the latest *fad method* is only

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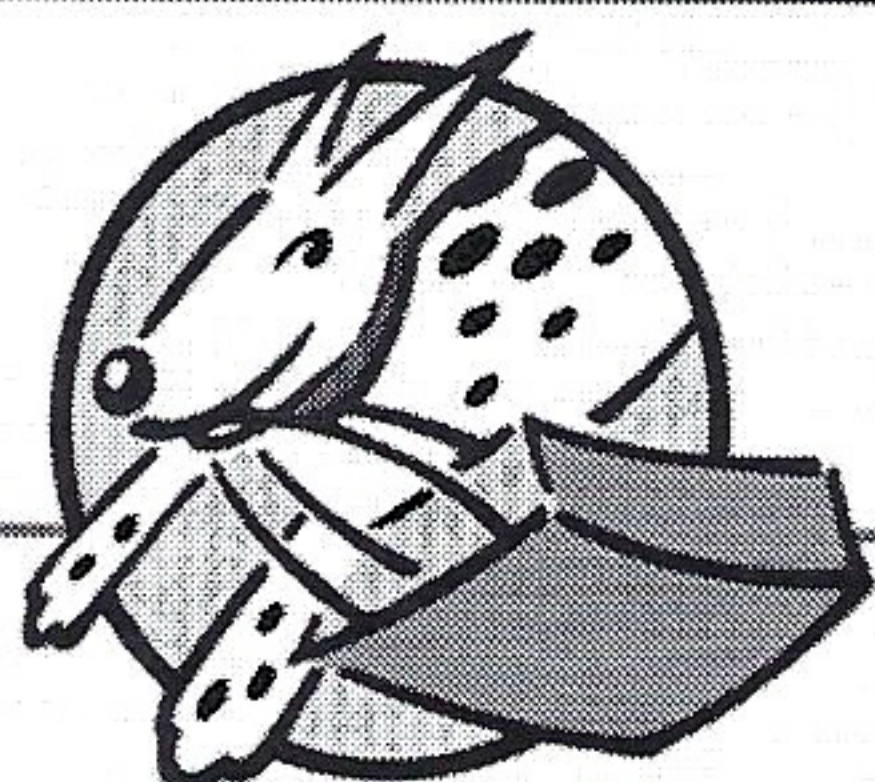
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Dog Training Methods Contd

telling you *part* of the story. Try disconnecting the negative terminal on your car battery, and see how far you get. Unless both the positive and the negative polls on your car battery are connected, you won't go too far.

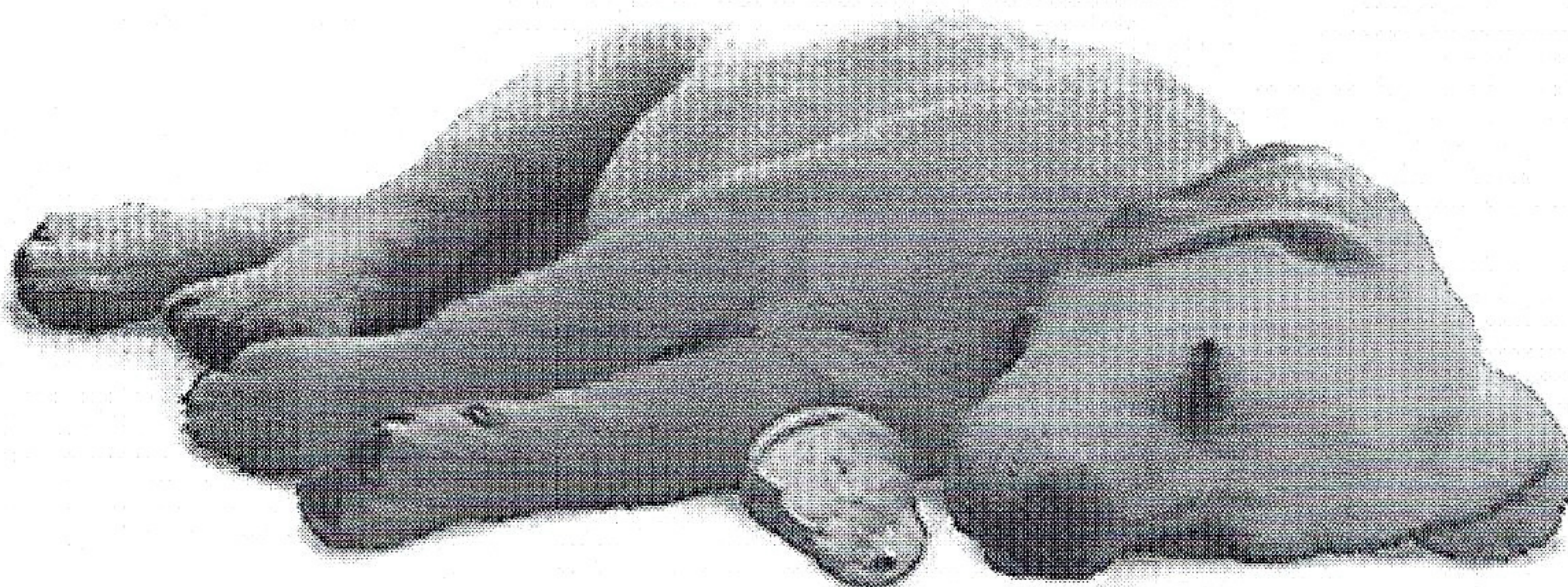
And so it is with dog training. Positive reinforcement *is the part that rewards* a dog for doing what we ask. What would happen if we rewarded what we don't want? Of course, that sounds ridiculous; however, many fad trainers that only use "positive reinforcement" would have you think that you can stop bad behavior with some clever manipulative technique based on rewards. In most cases, the pet owner is left with an unresolved behavior problem and very frustrated.

There are at least some shelters and rescue groups that advocate the purely positive paradigm of training, shunning discipline and equating it with cruelty. If we are going to see the number of dogs surrendered to shelters decrease, we need to empower the pet owner to correct bad habits safely and humanely. *Principle centered* learning models use the whole learning theory and not just the part. *Positive only* contradicts science and nature itself. How would the leader of a pack of dogs get a subor-

dinate dog in the pack to comply with a request? Offer it a treat? Think about it.

Some of the training methods used sixty years ago were heavy handed, and borderline abusive. Today, the pendulum has swung to the other extreme. Both extremes have "begun with the part rather than the whole." Let's try to recover a more *balanced approach*, rooted in scientific learning theory rather than personal preferences. The results will produce an incredibly well trained dog that is happy because he knows what is expected of him. *Fair and equitable discipline* will actually enhance the bond between you and your dog.

Tom Beitz is a Canine Behavior Specialist and Dog Trainer. He owns the Academy for Puppies and Dogs and is an Authorized Dealer for the PetSafe Underground Hidden Dog Fence Company. He can be reached at (716) 664-4844 or found on the web at www.smartdogtrainer.com.



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Use Visualization to Get Results

By Joyce Miller

When I purchased my first Airedale, my first dog as an adult, I asked a wise older woman how she trained her dogs. "I expect them to be good," she replied. I didn't have a clue what she meant.

Years later, while recovering from breast cancer, I did a lot of spiritual and intuitive work. In the course of several mind-body workshops, I learned how to use visualizations to change outcomes. This work not only changed my own life; it had a dramatic impact on my work with dogs.

Changing an undesired behavior with visualization

In one mind-body workshop, we did an exercise using visualization to change a behavior we did not like into a good behavior.

First, we were asked to think of a behavior that bothered us. That was easy for me: it was bathing my dogs. Nothing could reduce me to shouting and yelling faster. It bothered me that I got so angry with these animals that I love so much.

The leader told me to see the whole event: I visualized my clumsy efforts at catching the dog, getting her into the tub. I "saw" her fighting me every step of the way, turning away from the water and the soap, and refusing to turn when I needed her to turn. I saw myself getting angrier and angrier. Finally, I visualized rinsing her off and getting covered with water as she shook herself when I finished.

Then, the trainer told me to imagine what I would like to happen: I imagined a picture of one of my dogs quietly letting me put her into the tub, standing still while I calmly wet her whole body and soaped her up. I saw her turning when I asked her to turn and standing quietly to be rinsed off.

The next morning, when I was ready to leave the house, our five month old puppy came up to me, wiggling with happiness, soaking wet. I asked my husband what had happened. He said she had peed in her crate. "Oh, and you washed her?" "No," he replied, "That is pee." I only had about 30 minutes to get to the seminar, but I picked the puppy up, put her in the tub, bathed her, and towed her off. My husband came into the dog room and asked, "Are you going to bathe her before you leave?" When I told him that I had already bathed her, he said that he hadn't heard me yelling. The puppy had behaved exactly the way I imagined in the exercise, and my clothes were dry: I didn't have to change clothes to go to the seminar.

Thinking in pictures

When you call your dog to come to you and work, she comes to you with a clear focused mind. Yes, she can be distracted by just

about anything: the sight of something moving within her range of vision, a scent of another animal, or a far-off sound. Those things happen in the moment and are as fleeting as the moment. If you can quickly regain her focus on you, she is all yours.

You can help hold your dog's attention by visualizing what you want her to do and holding that visualization in your mind while you work.

Clutter Chatter diffuses the picture in your mind.

Unfortunately, most of us come to our dogs with our minds full of many things competing for our attention and diluting our focus. It's very difficult to clear our minds of Clutter Chatter and focus on our dog when we have an important report due tomorrow; a meeting today went badly and we replay it over and over trying to figure out what went wrong; what are we going to make for supper; do we have time to pick up a prescription at the drug store; what does our child's teacher want to see us about; and then there's the news full of natural and man-made threats around the globe. Anyone who works in marketing can tell you how hard it is to break through all this mental clutter and get the attention of one person for 15 seconds a day.

If our minds are cluttered with so many other things, how can our dog clearly understand what we want him to do? In addition, we tend to remember the last time we worked with our dog and the dog did it wrong. In fact, we tend to think of all the times that the dog did it wrong, and that picture is in our mind when we pick up the lead and start a training session.

I ask my students, what do you see in your mind's eye just before your dog acts out inappropriately? Always, the answer comes back that they saw the dog doing what it did. No wonder our dog misbehaves: he thinks he is doing what we want him to do.

How can we change this picture?

1. **Relax and clear our minds.** The dogs come to us in the present moment; we must do the same. We must put aside worries about the past and the future, and we must concentrate on the moment and exactly what we want to do with the dog. I have found that my students find it easier to clear their minds using the techniques of prayer, meditation or animal communication. (see sidebar *Relax and Clear Your Mind*).

These techniques open us up to a universe in which we are

all one in spirit, enabling us to communicate mind-to-mind with others, both humans and animals. You know this is possible: Just think of how many times you have thought of a friend that you have not talked to in a long time, and within 24 hours, you hear from that friend.

2. Form a clear picture of the desired behavior: If we erase all the clutter chatter from our minds and come to our dog's training or working session with one single clear picture in our mind, a picture of what we want our dog to do, the dog will receive a clear intention of what we want him to do.

Sassy is a miniature American Eskimo Dog. The first night she came to class, we heard her before we saw her. A natural show dog, Sassy did not need to be taught how to show, but she and her owner needed to learn how to work together if they were going to succeed in the ring.

At one class, when Sassy was refusing to stand for exam on the table, I stepped back and asked the owner what she saw in her mind's eye when Sassy acted out. She said she saw Sassy squirming and moving around, refusing to stand still. I knew that the owner would never be successful with Sassy if she continued to think of her misbehaving.

I asked the owner if she meditated. No, she replied, but she prayed. Both meditation and prayer quiet the mind and eliminate the distractions of *clutter chatter* in our minds. I suggested that the owner work Sassy just five minutes a day. I also suggested that just before starting each training session, she relax and say a prayer to quiet her own mind and in the prayer, I asked her to imagine a picture of Sassy doing exactly what she wanted her to do. I told her to keep that picture in her mind all the time that she worked with Sassy, praising Sassy when she complied with the picture, ignoring her misbehavior or removing her from a distraction that she wanted. If the old pictures of Sassy misbehaving crept into her mind, I told her to imagine them crumbling into pieces and blowing away.

The owner agreed to give this approach a try. Within four days, she called to tell me how much better her work with Sassy was going. At classes, Sassy behaved like a little show dog, doing what she was supposed to do, with none of the sassing and disruptive behavior we had come to expect of her. Within four weeks, the owner called in tears to tell me that she had shown Sassy to a Best In Show at a United Kennel Club (UKC) dog show.

3. Keep that picture foremost in your mind while you are working.

Vanity is a young white German Shepherd. She is a beautiful dog who moves effortlessly around the ring. But she would



Pretty as a picture, Sassy, a small fluffy white American Eskimo Dog, turns in outstanding performances as long as her owner and she are connected mind-to-mind.

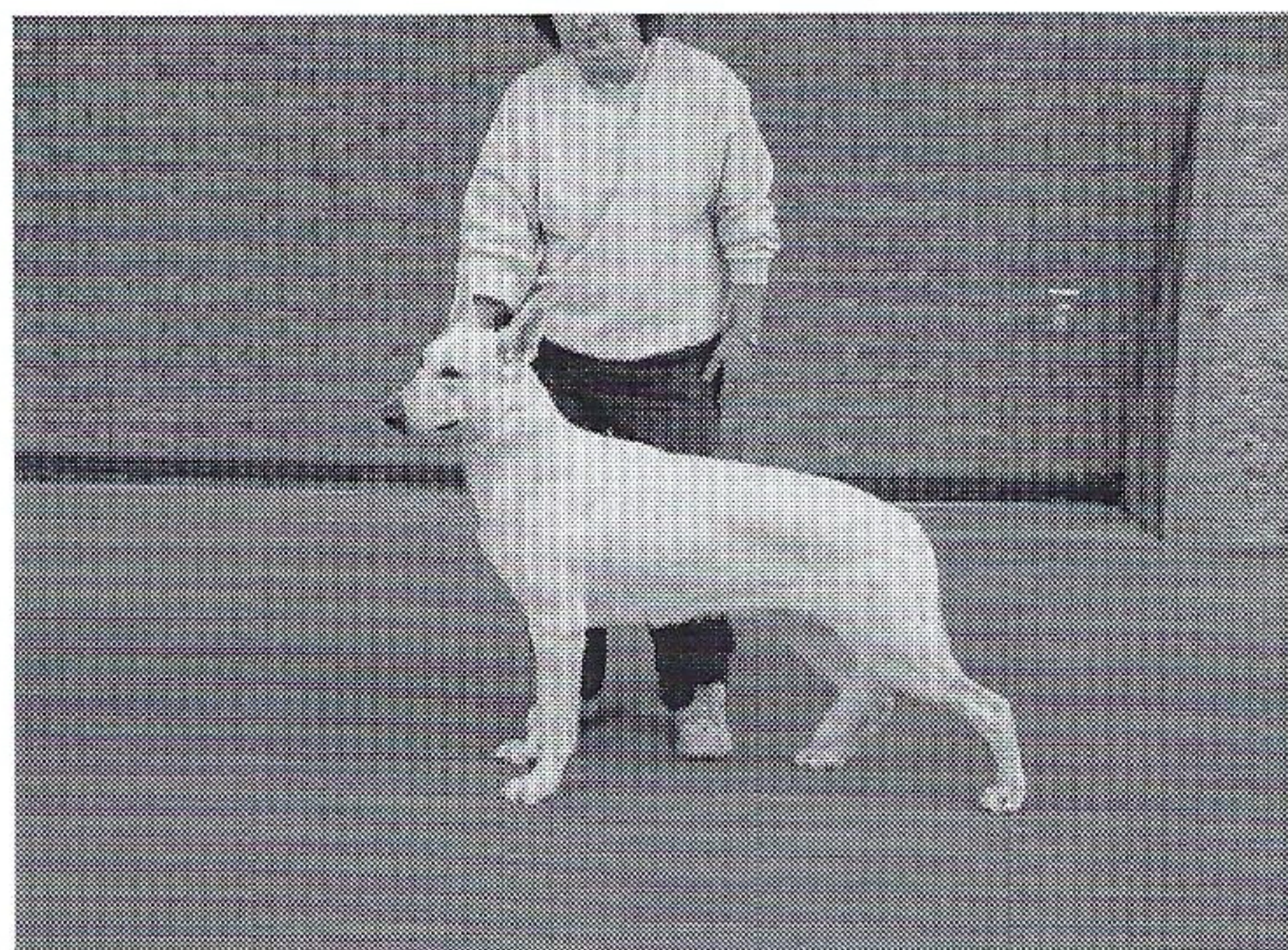
not let anyone touch her. As a judge approached, Vanity could disappear, slipping back, down to the floor, or to the side. At one time, I would have told her owner what I had been told: that if she physically kept control of the dog's head, the dog would not be able to move. But having had to work with a dog that could slip away from a judge no matter how much physical control I had of her head, I knew that we needed more in order to get Vanity under control.

I asked the owner what she saw in her mind's eye just before the judge came to her dog. The owner replied by describing Vanity's undesirable behavior. "Is that what you see in your mind?" "No, that is what she is doing."

To demonstrate what visualization is, we did the exercise in the sidebar, *See It In Your Mind's Eye*. The owner immediately understood. Then I showed her a way to hold Vanity while she visualized Vanity standing steadily for exam.

The owner stacked Vanity. I stepped back and looked at the dog. Then, acting as the judge, I walked toward her and reached out for her. She stood rock solid. I went over her and she did not flinch. Four other class members went over her, and she stood quietly for all of them. That weekend, Vanity showed very well, and two weeks later, she went Best of Breed over eight other German Shepherds and won a Group placement at a show.

Use Visualization Contd.



Vanity's owner was worried that Vanity was too shy to stand for exam. Using visualizations, Diane has Vanity self-stacking and standing rock solid for the judge to go over her.

4. Generalize the use of pictures to other aspects of your work with your dog.

This is the hard part. If we slip back into the *clutter chatter*, the dog slips back into the old behavior. Often we fail to generalize the use of visualizations to other exercises, and we send confusing messages to our dogs.

Five weeks after Vanity's success, we were in class and there were thunderstorms somewhere in North Texas. Wherever they were, we could not hear them, but Vanity heard them. She stood in place, but she was trembling like a leaf. I walked over to go over her. She stood for exam, but the trembling intensified. Her owner said, "If there is a storm, I cannot show her." I asked her why, and she said because Vanity is afraid of storms and trembles continuously. The class then talked about dogs with thunder and noise phobias. As they talked, I realized, as the owner came back repeatedly to the statement that Vanity could not show when there were such noises, that she was visualizing Vanity trembling. I asked her to change the picture in her mind.

The owner re-stacked her dog as I walked back to the middle of the ring. I turned and looked. Vanity wasn't trembling. I walked up to her and went over her and there was no trembling. I asked others to go over her. Vanity continued to stand steadily without trembling. We were all amazed. I asked the owner what had changed. She said, "I see her standing calmly and looking beautiful." Her smile widened as she realized what she had done.

Conclusion: Visualization is very powerful in helping us get behaviors. If we can focus on a picture of what we want, we will get the behavior. If we become complacent, we can easily slip out of the moment. As we get more and more experience, we will make pictures without thinking. These pictures enable us to stay in the moment and keep our focus on exactly what we want the dog to do.

The idea of a mind-to-mind connection with animals is not new. Neither is the idea of seeing mental pictures of what we want the animal to do. Penelope Smith, a pioneer in animal communication, says that the thought or image that we project is more important than the words we use. She says that dogs "get confused when people say something that is not what they are thinking."

Sidebars:

Relax and Clear Your Mind

Relaxing and clearing your mind, whether you use prayer, meditation, or animal communication, takes you to a state of mind called the alpha state. According to Jose Silva in his book *The Silva Mind Control Method*, our mind cycles through four frequencies: Beta, the conscious level in which we take care of business and daily chores; Alpha, a relaxed state in which we can consciously form intentions and solve problems; Theta, a deeper state in which most hypnotism is done; and Delta, a state of very deep sleep. Our minds slip in and out of the Alpha state throughout the day, often when we are not focused on anything.

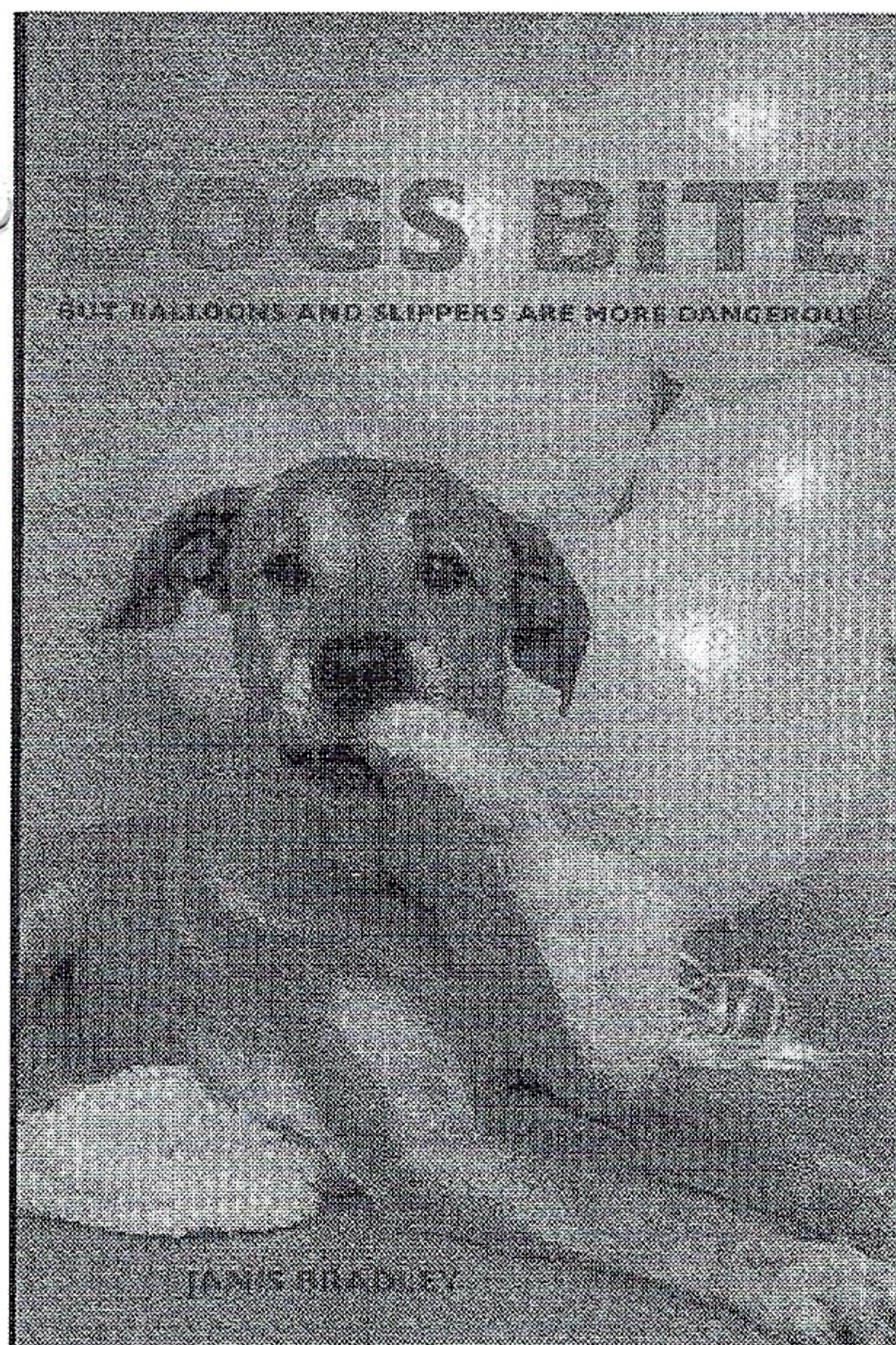
Whether you call it prayer, meditation or communicating with the animals, the steps for relaxing and clearing our minds are simple and similar.

In the beginning, you will find it easier to find a quiet place and sit or lie down, whichever you find more comfortable. If this is new to you, you will probably find it easier to use some form of entry ritual. Eventually, you will be able to click into a relaxed state without any preliminaries.

Entry rituals may include:

- bowing your head and making a petition to a supreme being;
- taking a series of deep breaths;
- breathing in positive energy and exhaling negative energy;
- counting backwards mentally saying and seeing the numeral for each number;
- scanning your body, tightening each part of your body and then relaxing it as you proceed from your head to your feet;
- listening to sounds that are near, then further and further away, then your own heartbeat and other sounds within yourself;
- and more.

All of the methods depend on being patient and letting go of distractions, thoughts, and pictures of other things. Penelope Smith, a well-know animal communicator, says that if you are going to communicate with an animal, you also need to think of the animal listening to you the same way that you sense other people listening to you in a conversation.



DOGS BITE

BUT BALLOONS & SLIPPERS ARE MORE DANGEROUS

Each year, more children die from choking on balloons than in dog attacks and more adults die from bedroom slipper related accidents. People are even five times more likely to be killed by a bolt of lightning than by a dog.

In the face of these indisputable statistics, why do dogs and dog bites cause so much hysteria? Janis Bradley explains all the potential reasons for our society's over-exaggerated fear and panic about dog attacks.

Yes, dogs bite. And yes, occasionally someone is seriously injured or dies. However, the supposed dog-threat is so tiny compared with other health hazards, such as kitchen utensils, five-gallon water buckets, cows, horses, playground equipment, swimming pools, disease, bad nutrition, cars, guns, friends, and sadly but especially, close family members.

Dogs enhance the lives of millions more people than even the most inflated estimates of dog-bite victims. When evaluating the relative pros and cons of dogs in the community, perspective and rationality are essential. Janis Bradley's book is our best defense against the anti-dog legislation which is insidiously, yet rapidly, metastasizing across the nation.

www.jamesandkenneth.com

Use Visualization contd.

During such relaxation, it is normal for your mind to wander. When this happens, just bring your attention back. Occasionally, you will fall asleep. This is also normal. As you gain more experience, you will fall asleep less often. No matter how much you increase your concentration and focus, you will always find your mind wandering to some extent. Just accept it and know that this is normal.

While you are in a deep state of relaxation, you can set goals and solve problems by visualizing the solution or outcome in a picture. When you imagine the solution or outcome, be sure to use all of your senses. Picture it. Hear it. See it. Feel it. The more detail you can put into the picture of your imagined outcome, the more success you will have. Finally, trust that you can do this.

See It In Your Mind's Eye and Then Do It (Exercise)

1. Stand up with your feet shoulder distance apart. Lift either arm and point straight ahead.
2. Without moving your feet, turn your upper body, arm and head in the direction of that arm as far as you can go. Note what you see on the wall at that point.
3. Let your eyes go further and see a different point on the wall. Note that point.
4. Come back to your starting point.
5. Close your eyes and visualize what you just did, going to the point where you stopped.
6. Then imagine your body, arm and head turning so you stop

at the further point on the wall, the one that you noted but did not reach when you actually did the exercise.

7. Open your eyes, and physically repeat the exercise, going in the same direction that you did the first time.

How far did you go the second time? On the second try, most people go effortlessly to the point further away. When asked what the exercise means, they usually say if you can picture it in your mind, you can do it.

Biography:

Joyce Miller is a retired teacher and marketing writer. She is a member of the American Dog Writers Association, the International Association of Canine Professionals, the Association of Pet Dog Trainers, and the Airedale Terrier Club of America. She teaches a six-weeks handling techniques class, and she also does in-home training for people with new puppies or older dogs that need re-training. She lives in Dallas Texas, where she and her husband breed and show Airedale Terriers.

THEY'LL SEE IT WHEN THEY BELIEVE IT

by Mailey E. McLaughlin, M.Ed.

There's no better way to rack up experience than by doing. No matter what type of canine professional you are, volunteering at an animal shelter is a great way to get your hands on lots of dogs—dogs that need your skills. The variety of breeds and mixes and personalities and temperaments you'll find in shelter dogs will be a huge asset to you, whether you are just starting out or have years of experience under your belt.

Unfortunately, many a canine pro has offered assistance to his or her local shelter and either been rebuffed outright or found that change comes extremely slowly (and often painfully) in the animal welfare industry. Though there are plenty of shelters that may seem like they don't need your talents and expertise, most do—though they may not know it yet! You can, with a few small steps, change their view and make yourself indispensable to them: they'll "see it when they believe it."

Here are some guidelines for those canine professionals who want to "give back" by volunteering some time in a shelter environment. Whether you are new to the idea, or have attempted to connect with a shelter and been rebuffed, these tips should help:

1. **Scope out some good prospects.** There are thousands of "bricks and mortar" shelters in the U.S. and abroad (not counting the myriad of rescue groups with no sheltering facilities). Though there are plenty that are subpar in policies, procedures, staff, and service, depending on where you live, finding a decent one shouldn't be difficult. Visit the ones in your area as a regular person would, and see how it makes you feel.

A decent shelter, by my standards, should have the following:

- a reputable name, and sound fiscal management (they may not be getting lots of money, but they should be marshaling resources wisely),
- an organized volunteer program with some training, and staff support of it,
- a proven adoption "track record" with qualifications for adoption that are regulated well but are not oppressive,
- policies and procedures that assist not just the animals in their care but the public, as well—without caving in to outside pressure.*

*For me, this means a shelter that does its best to reduce euthanasia to a bare minimum, but does not forbid it in



cases of poor health or poor temperament. Euthanasia is a subject for a different discussion, but in general, better shelters know that euthanasia is not the worst thing that can happen to an animal.

A bonus would be friendly, non-judgmental staff and core volunteers, and adequate facilities for the amount of animals handled. I believe these are important, but if these areas are lacking, it may not be the shelter's fault.

2. **Decide what you can actually give.** It's all well and good to have intentions, but without action, they are just words. None of us have scads of free time, but if you are determined to make a difference, and you find a facility that welcomes you, you'll make time. Be realistic—burnout is a real problem in the animal welfare industry, and it doesn't only affect paid staff. "Making a difference" is meaningless if your family and your personal affairs suffer.
3. **Get your foot in the door—congenially!** This is probably one of the hardest things to do, but it is vital to your success. Meet with the volunteer manager, attend orientation, and jump through whatever hoops each prospective volunteer goes through. Yes, you are a canine professional, and you probably have more extensive knowledge than much of the staff and volunteers, but barging in with lots of suggestions simply doesn't play well in this business. Regardless of what you see, when you actually get behind the scenes, hold your tongue for now.

Why? Because no one likes to be told what to do. You have

Cont'd page 19

They'll See It contd'

experience, but you'll get the cold shoulder if you try to make changes right away. Shelter staff are notoriously overworked, underpaid, and emotionally invested. Even supportive staff may get their noses out of joint, and you'll get nowhere. Remember—you attract more bees with honey.

4. **Once you are in, ingratiate yourself for a while.** Decent shelters know how valuable volunteers can be, strive to treat them with respect, and want them to enjoy their experience so they'll keep volunteering. They should listen to what you'd like to offer them, but they may not have a need for that right away. Be patient. Show up for your shifts with a smile and your sleeves rolled up, and say those magic words: "How can I help you best today?" No matter what the task, perform it well and happily. You'll make a great impression and you'll be laying some precious groundwork for later.

When your training period is over, you'll have earned their respect and that will serve you excellently later, and you'll be in a much more advantageous position to actually suggest some changes.

5. **Be flexible.** You may have to put up with less-than-friendly staff, subpar facilities, and unreasonable policies at first. It may take you ten shifts to realize that no matter how wonderful and helpful and willing you are, they will not be receptive to anything new, and you just can't get behind their policies, though you have tried to see everything from all sides. If that is the case, and you part ways, you have still learned some valuable lessons. Try another shelter!

No one should have to compromise their own personal ethics while volunteering. But before you take umbrage at policies or procedures, talk to someone about them. Many of the policies at the Atlanta Humane Society might seem like overkill, but when volunteers (and the public) hear the reasoning behind them, and that 132 years of refining went into them, they are much more receptive to obeying them.

6. **Treat your service like a job—it is.** Dress appropriately, show up on time, smile, assist customers, be open to suggestions on your performance, and you will soon be able to use your expertise where it is most needed. The bottom-line goal for any decent shelter should be to adopt as many adoptable animals as possible to the best possible homes (perfect homes don't exist). Everything you do while volunteering (and how you present the shelter to others when you are out in the real world) should be a means to that end.

Many people are stepping into a shelter for the first time when you see them. They probably have preconceived negative notions about shelters (they're smelly and dirty, the animals are rejects, and the staff is surly) that can be effectively squashed with good customer service. I know this is true; I see it every day at the Atlanta Humane Society. Be proud of

your service, even though you may only rarely get thanks. The best thanks of all is seeing the animals off to educated owners in caring homes, and knowing you had a part in the process.

Time is the most valuable commodity we have. We must do what we can to make the finite number of minutes we have above ground count. Volunteering for the right animal shelter will make you a better canine professional, and a better human being. Trust me—good shelters want you; show them through humble actions that you can be a benefit to them, and the whole community will be the better for it.

Mailey E. McLaughlin is a proud professional member of IACP and is the Education & Training Manager for the Atlanta Humane Society. . She can be reached at mailey@poochprofessor.com.

TEACH ME

When morning comes and we both rise
We rejoice at the sunny skies
I can't wait to go out to play
And have a happy fun-filled day

The Frisbee is my favorite toy
And rubber balls fill me with joy
The grass has odors I adore
I'll sniff and search for more and more

But while we're having so much fun
As I play catch and jump and run
Please don't forget to teach me "sit"
Or "come" when called or just "leave it"

I need to learn to "stay" and "down"
For safety at home and in town
I'm happy when I'm close to you
So "heel" 'is great for me to do

If I'm allowed to run amok
I may not see that car or truck
Or other dog that comes my way
who only wants to harm, not play

I may run far and fail know
That space between us began to grow
I could get lost, and never found
Oor end up in a frightening pound

You are my life, my one true friend
I'll love you 'til the very end
I know you feel the way I do
And that you truly love me too

You may get tired or in a rut
Or say you'll do it one day, but
Look into my eyes as they beseech thee
To take a little time to teach me

Marlaina Junior-Quick

The Monks of New Skete

Maryna Ozuna

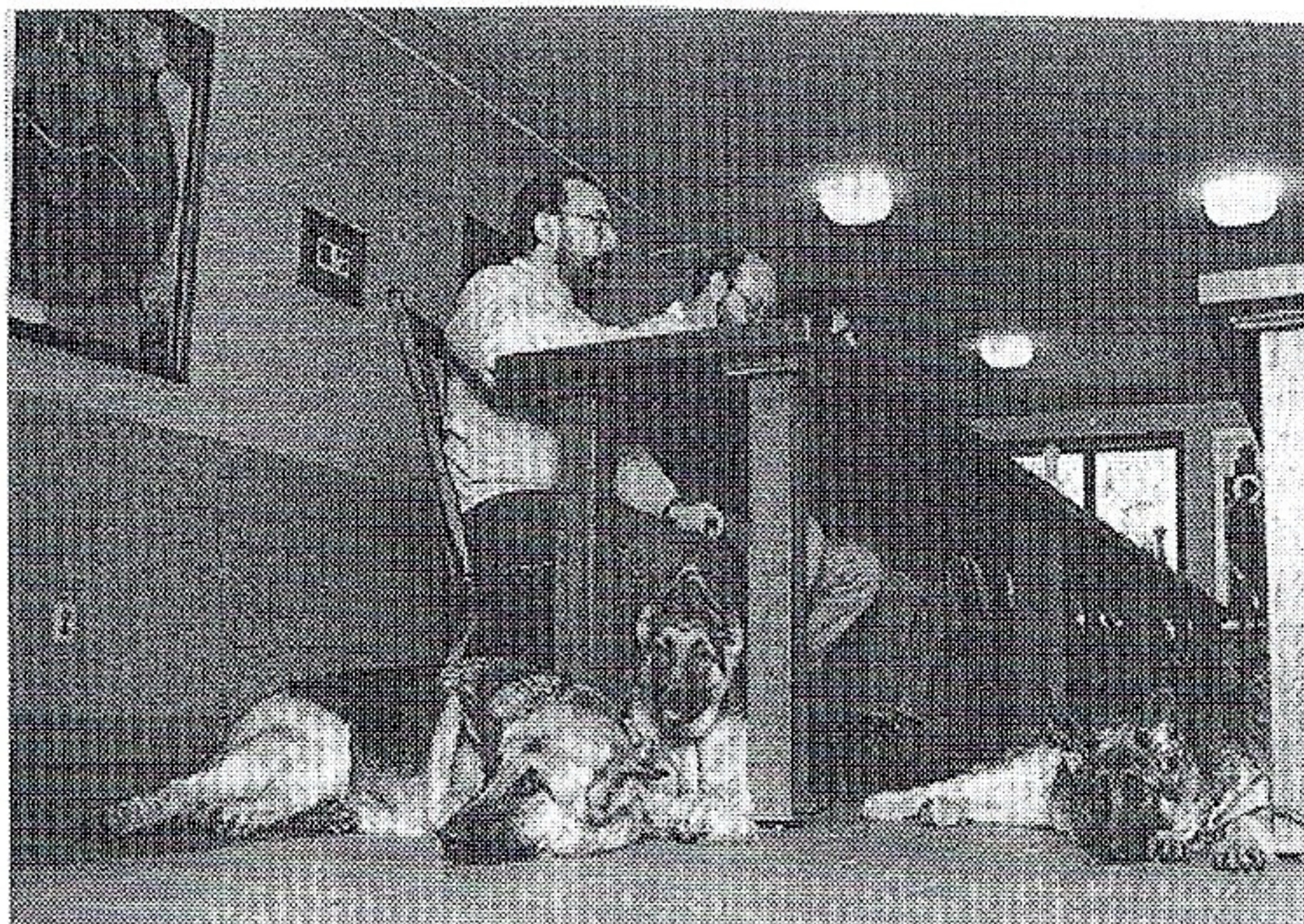
For many years, after first spotting the picture of the monks on the cover of How to Be Your Dog's Best Friend, I was fascinated with the whimsical notion of dogs in church, accompanied by their monastic handlers. This, to me, had all the beloved idiosyncrasy of a British murder mystery set in a quaint but eccentric small town. - my idea of wonderful. That the monks in question seemed to know dogs, really know dogs, was intriguing to me. That they apparently walked their walk, all day long, incorporating their dogs into all aspects of a community, in this case, a religious community, was even more intriguing. That the dogs in question were German Shepherds was, for me, the icing on the cake. I had always loved them, even though it would not be until many years later that I would first own one. I wonder, in retrospect, how much those subliminal impressions influenced and informed my later decisions.

Oddly, since I ran across the books when I was living out west, the Monastery was in upstate New York, state, where I had grown up. I kept thinking, maybe some day, ... when I'm home, ... I'll see how far away they are, and go visit. But, as vague fancies do, this one went to the back of the burner, where it stayed for many years, obviously on low simmer, amidst the strangely divergent turns and twists of my life. As my fiftieth 50th birthday approached, and the world of dog had once again come to the forefront of my life, this vague fancy resurfaced. I wondered if the monastery even allowed visitors. I went to their websites, and while amused by the irony of a monastery with a website, was pleased to see that the answer to the visitor question was "yes." Allowing my whimsy free flight, I picked up the phone, and the adventure was born.

If you have ever entertained any notions of visiting - go. If you are frazzled and can't remember quite why you are doing what you are doing - go. If you would like to spend time in exquisite beauty tempered with humor, laughter, wit and insight - go. If you would like to stretch your soul and give it new wings - go. If you would like a chance to just step back and look at the world through another prism - go. And if you would like the opportunity to be in a whole community where dog is honored - go. Live your dreams now, you never know what tomorrow will bring.

The Monastery of New Skete sits about an hour and a half northeast of Albany, New York, in the lush rolling agricultural country of Washington County, just outside the picturesque village of Cambridge. New Skete itself sits on top of a mountain. Walking

dogs there, which I did a fair amount of, involves going down, and then, of course, coming back up, steeply. Fortunately, the bear who crossed the road ahead of me, did so while I was in the car, not with the dogs. While New Skete is a community dedicated to the art and science of living with dog, it is also a liturgical community of the Eastern Orthodox faith. As my mother is Ukrainian, with her earliest traditions from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, this was also for me, (unbeknownst to me when I went), a return to my cultural and spiritual roots.



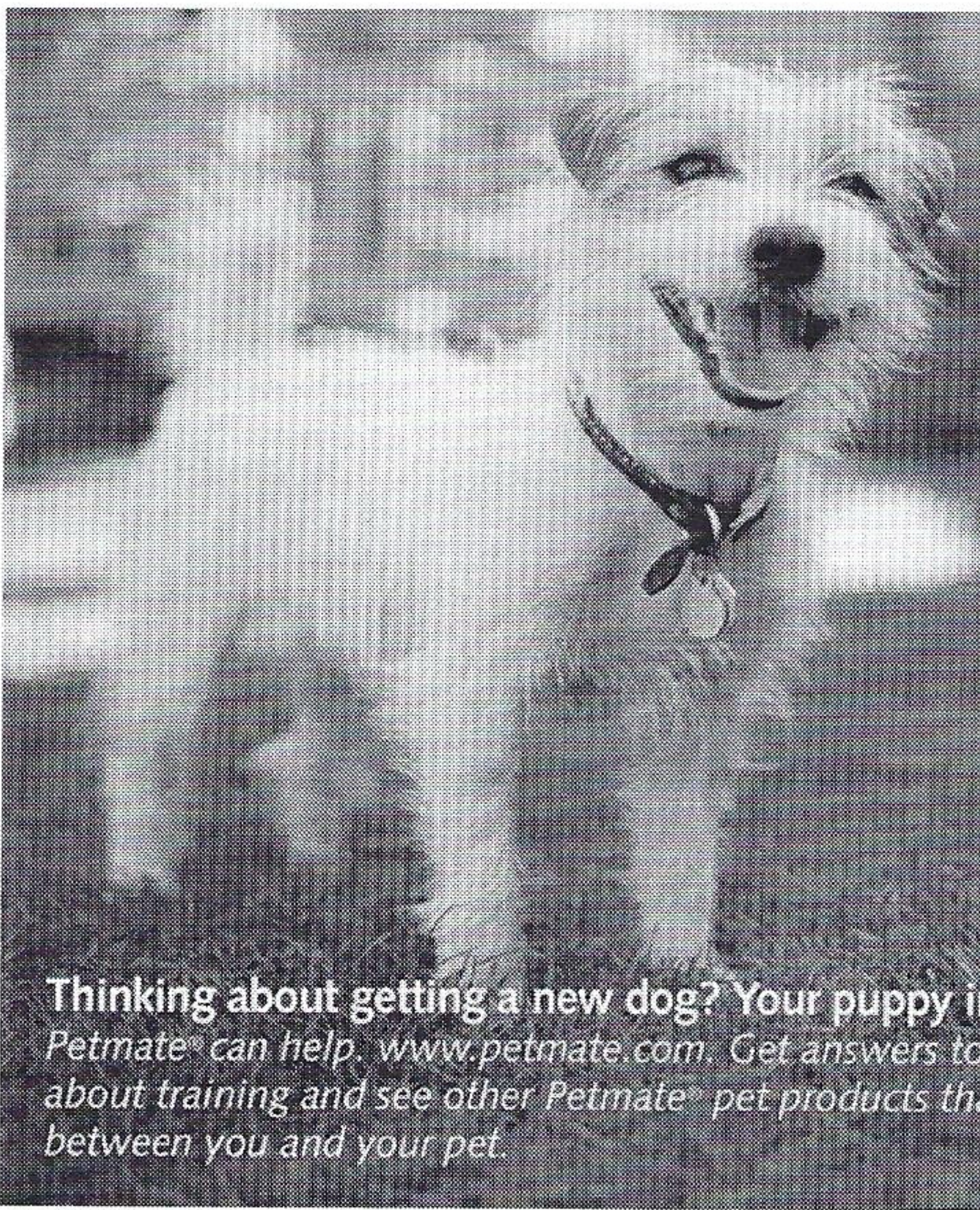
I wasn't quite sure what to expect, and was extremely nervous about committing some heinous faux pas. I'm not particularly reverent, substantially cynical, and more likely to see the humor in a situation than its solemnity. I figured I'd have to mind my P's and Q's and conduct myself in a straight-laced manner that would be more in accordance with my mother's childhood admonishments than my own itinerant nature. I needn't have worried. My first dinner at the Monastery was conducted

in snort milk through your nose hilarity - so much for stereotypes. The rest of my time there continued much in the same vein, juxtaposed with moments of sublime church beauty, the likes of which I have rarely known.

The Monks - Brothers Elias, Peter, John, David, Christopher, Marc, Ambrose, Luke and Stavros - are an extremely bright, witty, insightful, and powerful clan of men who have chosen to live in community and dedicate their lives to living their faith on a daily basis. Picture a Tibetan monastery in times of yore. All services are conducted in song, very roughly put, like Gregorian chants, but sung in English. Part of the community's commitment to the public is in bridging the gap between their ancient traditions and the modern world, so that while the chants are organized musically in traditional eastern cadences and tones, most of the words are in English to make the body of the sentiment understandable during the services. For me, it was like being given an insight into a hidden world.

The beauty of the Monks' music is part and parcel of what infuses their work with the dogs. Taken by itself, it is like the haunting beauty of a loon's call at dusk. It cuts through to the core of your soul and takes no prisoners. It demolishes pretence and leaves humility and joy in its wake. (Visitors are in

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**Sit.
Stay.
Kennel...
Fetch?
Roll over, please?
Okay, now what?**

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Monks -Cont'd

no way obligated to attend any services, I merely chose to do so, not having any idea what would unfold.) What makes it doubly haunting is that in a very, short time, the Monks become real, textured people with a twinkle in their eye, or a pithy comment ranging from obscure theology to modern events. Nor is their wit and wisdom something they put on and take off with their robes (which were, for the time I was there, only worn during services.). Who they are, is what they are, all day long. - kindly, dedicated, very human and very real. So when you see your friends don their robes, smile and greet friends and parishioners, and then burst forth into an a cappella song that truly, as cliché as it sounds, sounds like angels, as the lights come up in the church and everything glows golden yellow, the sheer intimacy of the moment they are sharing with you, knocks you to your knees. You receive the gift of being taken into someone else's spirituality for a moment, whether it is even remotely your faith or not. This has nothing to do with outreach or conversion, it is about being allowed a window, an intimate window on a private, magical world that is clearly evident on the Monk's faces as they sing.....

....And then you come out, and it's time for meals... -- and Dogs....! Dogs are implicit and explicit in the community. Implicit in the founding corporate papers of the community and in the spiritual teachings of the eastern orthodox church which does not make the more restrictive distinctions between man and animal that have evolved in more western Judeo-Christian traditions, and in this particular community's spiritual credo. The Monks of New Skete feel they are merely following in a

long line of tradition of monks and the natural world. As they say in How to Be Your Dog's Best Friend,

"Traditionally, monks have had a profound reverancereverence for nature and the animal world because they manifested something essential about the mystery of God. This insight came from working intimately with nature, caring for it and learning its secrets, not just reading about it. Genuine monastic living means living a life without division, looking for God in the soil of each and every moment of daily life, not merely when praying and worshipping. Living in close association with our dogs helps us avoid a temptation that is always present in contemplative life - the temptation to live narcissistically in the dreamy world of ideas."

The dogs are explicit in the many signs of them on the property from the kennels, the gift shop, and dogs in training, to Br. Luke bicycling down the mountain with two shepherds galloping alongside, to Brother Chris's dog lying on the floor nearby during dinner, to a petite nun from the sister community (the Nuns of New Skete) with a giant shepherd strolling at her side, to the pups being socialized up and down the stairs to the chapel.

The Monks have cut back substantially on their breeding program for the time being. There were just six puppies when I was there, all of whom I got a chance to handle and socialize. They have lost a number of their ranks (human)

Monks contd.

through death, and leading a monastic life of this ilk does not seem to be super high on a lot of folks' most wanted careers. The Monks who are left are getting older. Two of them have health issues, so quite exactly what the future holds is unclear. How they will handle their commitment to the world of dog as the community ages has been very much a subject of discussion for the community this year.

Amongst the many treasures of the community, both the intangible ones of what it has meant to live in a religious community shared with dog for their whole adult lives and the tangible ones of the dogs, the books, and the videos, is a collection of years of videos of movement analysis of their puppy litters, many of which were filmed in conjunction with a well known expert in the German Shepherd world, Helen (Scootie) Sherlock, that I hope they will consider preserving for all of our education. Not only were the pups filmed using traditional movement protocols, moving the dogs straight out, back, and side to side, they also walked them up and down hills, up and down stairs, and even invented a plexiglass bridge they put the pups on and filmed from underneath. As a movement addict, needless to say, I have begged for a chance to review these tapes.

The prescribed three days was far too short; , and yet it was time

to let them rekindle their energy in private, and for me to try and absorb the extraordinary experiences I had been privileged to share. Another visitor, quoting a French writer, said that the monks were "the lungs of humanity," that their songs, like Tibetan bells and other sacred symbols, secular and religious, hold a vision of peace, of divinity within humanity for all humanity. It made me believe that the work we do, sometimes so painstaking, often frustrating, of easing the communication foibles between people and dogs, including ourselves and our critters, is part and parcel of the Monks' songs, and a larger vision of what the world could be like.

If you would like to visit the Monks, be patient. They currently have only one telephone line to the top of the mountain, which services their mail order business, their computers, and their phones. Attempts to incorporate cell phones, or satellite have, so far, been stymied by the mountain. You will get through and they will get back to you..

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Maryna Ozuna is a Professional Member of IACP. She is a Trainer and Kinaesthetics specialist from Arizona and is much sought after for her Kinaesthetics workshops

SAFEHANDS E-LIST

Letter of the Quarter.

This is a new regular feature. Each issue a letter from SafeHands E-List will be selected for its content and interest and published here in the SafeHands Journal.

The phenomenon that you are describing when you describe a large, ungainly puppy that seems to lack or be permanently disconnected from a brain is what I call a low proprioceptive quotient.

Proprioception is the body's ability to perceive where it is in space. There are receptors in each of the joints and down the long bones, and is a system they are still barely beginning to study and understand.

When you have a large, uncoordinated pup, they literally have a low proprioceptive ability. Low proprioception means impaired learning. The more you can get that dog/horse/human out on uneven ground, scrambling, boulders, arroyos, ditches, logs, plowed field, harvested field --- anything, anything UNEVEN, the more you will stimulate those receptors and increase brain function. Think of each of the legs on the dog as adjustable like a cane. The more they have to adjust each leg individually, the more proprioception goes up, the more brain capacity to think and learn goes up.

Low proprioceptive quotient is also why a perfectly good pup who suddenly goes through a growth spurt, like your GSD's,

hounds at certain points in their growth, danes, mastiffs, all the dogs that go from compact, cute, to gangly all over the place often go through a learning regression in which it's as if everything you taught them went out the window.....what's happening is that the circuits have changed their physical relationship one to another and it takes the brain awhile to reorganize --- "information coming in from knee, information coming in from knee".

In horses, while they are going through various growing spurts, we simply assume you will have to teach everything all over again. People don't assume that in the dog world, but I find it to be very true depending on the growth curve of the dog. Slow and gradual not so much of an impact -- gangly, almost always a temporary impact on learning. Drop back and punt, let the dog figure out where it's body is, and the brain will turn back on.

*Maryna Ozuna
IACP Professional # 1372*

*To join the SafeHands E- List contact George Cockrell at
larjk9@aol.com*

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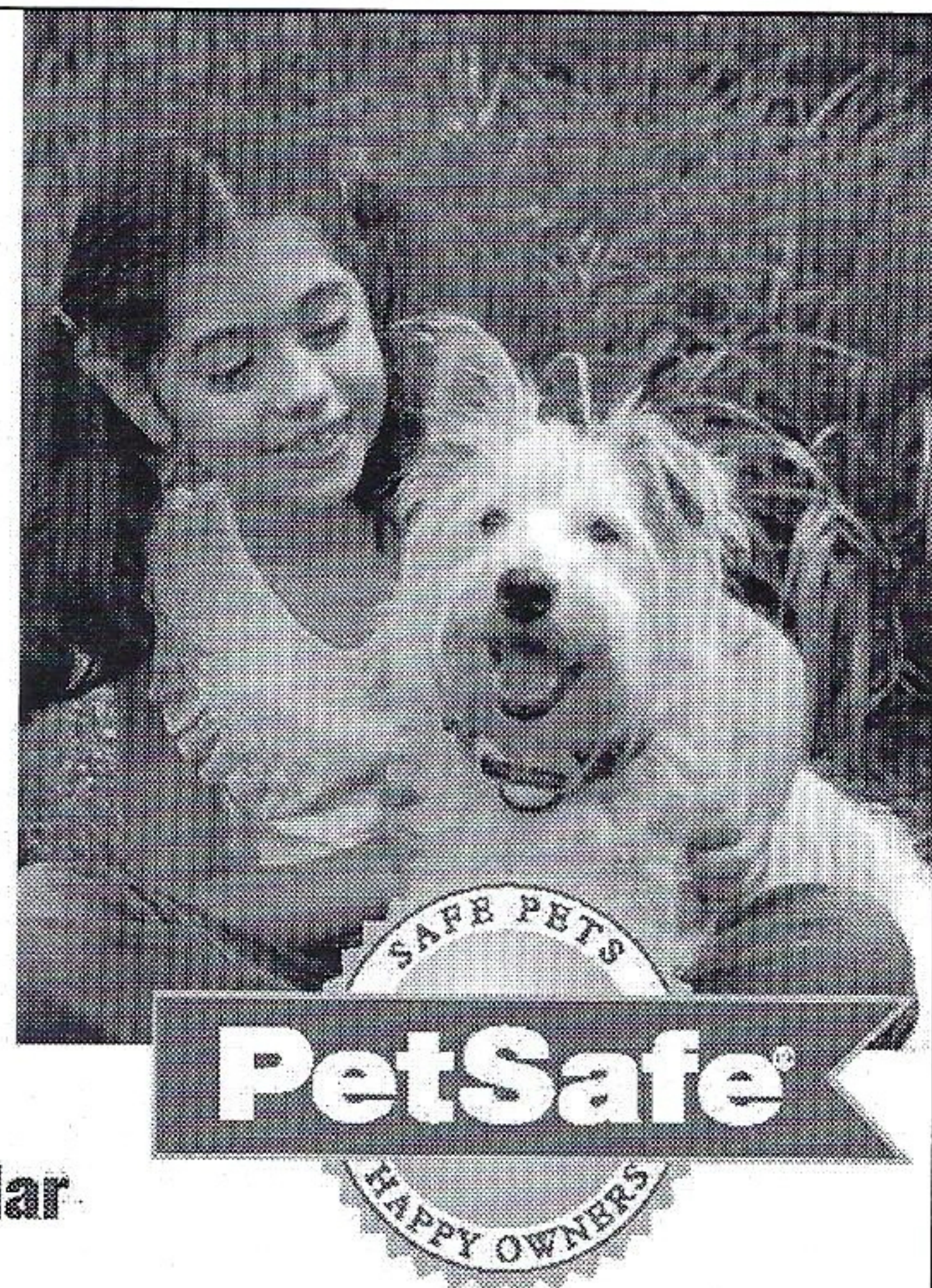
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The PetSafe Comfort Fit Collar is designed pet-friendly for your peace of mind. This collar is made of soft, waterproof material that is easy to clean but is also durable enough to stand the test of time.

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PetSafe takes pride in their extensive knowledge of pet training and behavior. When you call PetSafe with a question, their professionally trained customer service department gives you an informed answer — not just an educated guess. They provide professional training advice to over 110,000 pet owners each month. PetSafe invests millions of dollars in research and development and has a 20,000 square foot training and behavior facility.

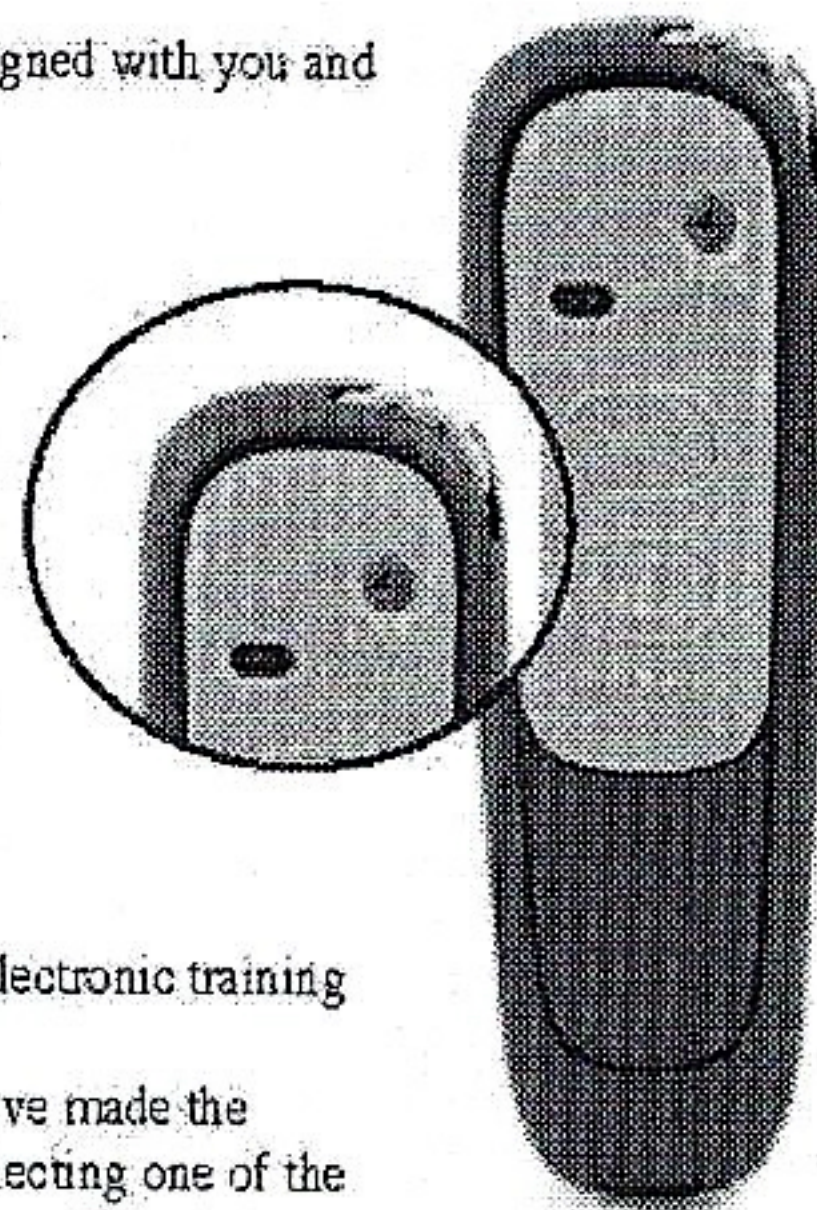
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Longer lasting batteries

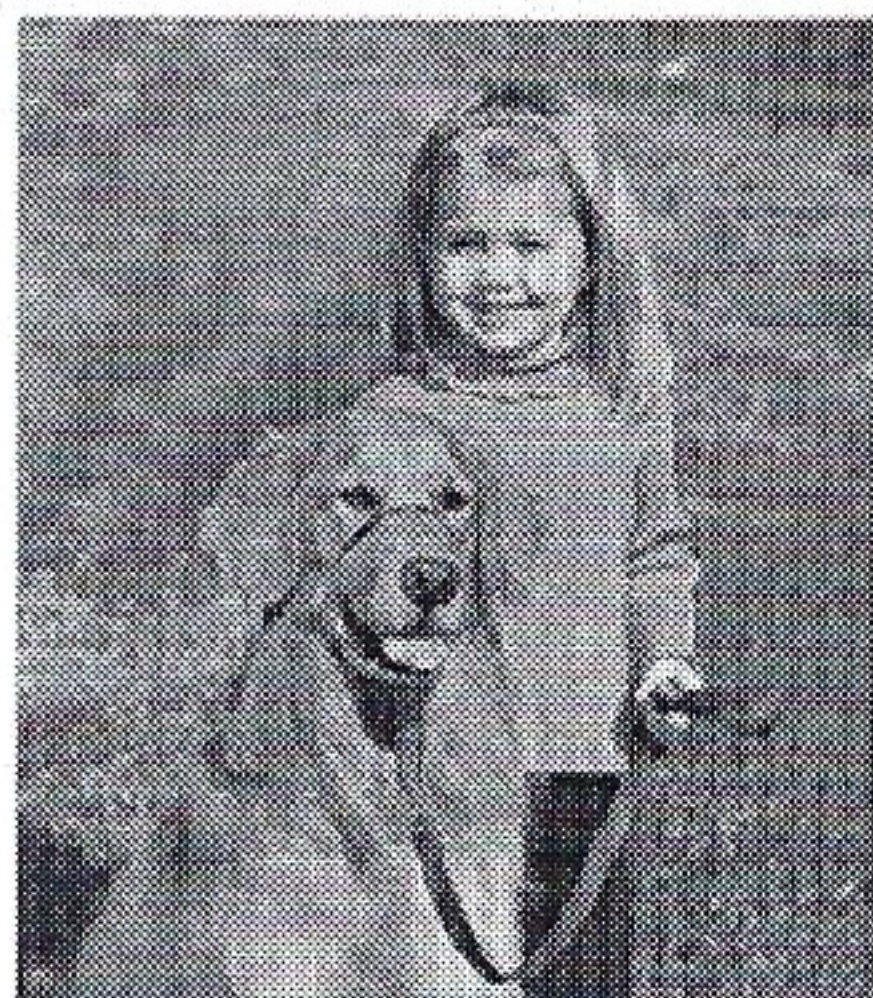
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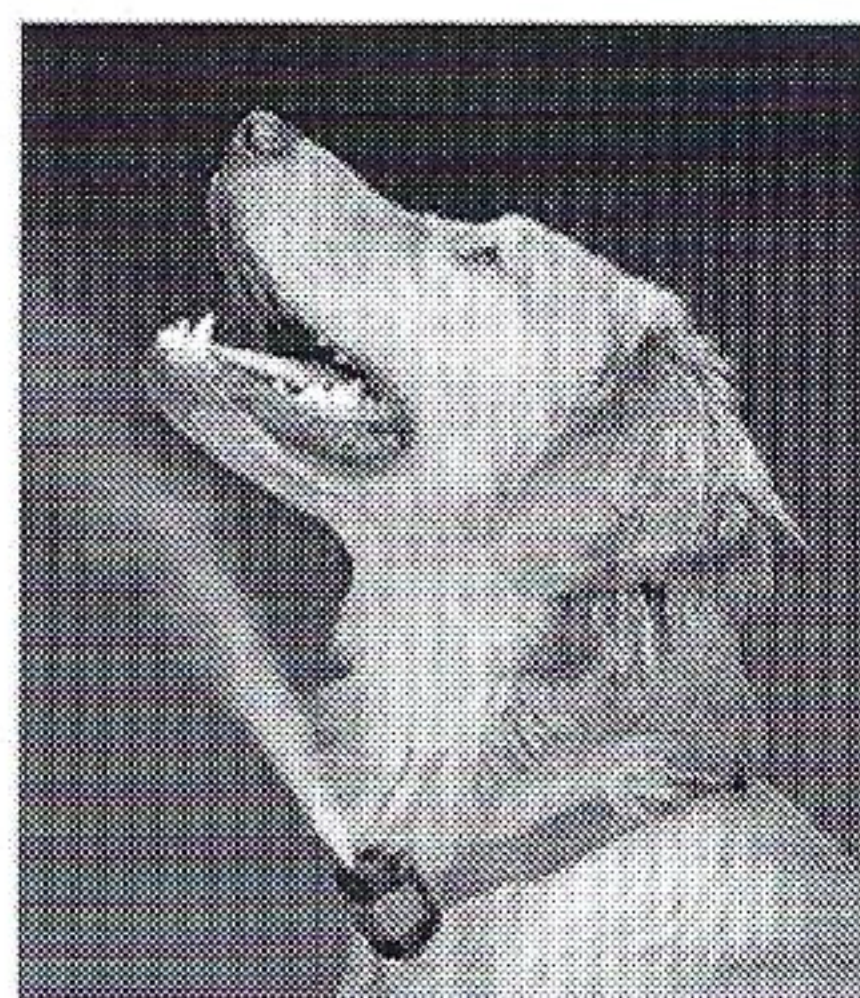
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