

IACP

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE PROFESSIONALS

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International Association of Canine Professionals

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The International Association of Canine Professionals is dedicated to the education, development, and support of dog training professionals worldwide. The IACP provides a community where experienced dog trainers mentor, guide and cultivate members to their full potential. Our commitment to the highest-quality training increases our members' skills and abilities, develops professional recognition, and improves communication on training best practices. We support our members' rights to properly use and promote effective, humane training tools and methods to create success for each dog and owner, while expanding the understanding and cooperation among canine professionals and dog owners across the full spectrum of the canine industry.

In achieving these aims through education and training, the IACP works actively to reduce cruelty and abuse to canine partners.



For Those Dedicated to the Well Being of Dogs

How to Join IACP:

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

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

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

Annual Fees:

Professional \$125.00; Associate \$100.00; Affiliate \$85.00

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Benefits:

All IACP members receive our SafeHands Journal, have access to our email list, seminars, educational materials, business support materials, events and activity calendars, regional group participation, and our Certification Programs. Discounts for sponsor services are available to members.

Applications and renewals can now be paid through MasterCard, Visa and AMEX.

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Cover: Kip and Lily at Cultus Lake, OR. Photo by Sharon Jacobson.

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The IACP is proud to announce that IACP Member Kathi Savacool

has successfully completed her Certified Dog Trainer examination and
is now able to add the designation IACP-CDT to her name.

Congratulations to Kathi!

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Well done!

The Board of the IACP



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President's Letter

by Karen Laws

Regardless of where you live, it is a safe bet that you experienced at least some of Mother Nature's humor this winter. From freezing temperatures in Texas to balmy weather in Yellowknife, this has definitely been a winter to remember! If you are like me, you found some comfort in networking with the growing number of online canine professional groups. So, even though it may have been too cold to train dogs or too icy to walk or drive, we stayed connected and continued to share experiences, thoughts and ideas with other like-minded professionals on the IACP Facebook page, and other groups.

If you haven't yet joined the IACP member Facebook group, send a message to Tawni McBee at tawnimcbee@yahoo.com and ask to be part of the group. Be sure to include your IACP membership number so that she knows that you are a current member.

As Spring approaches, your Board of Directors has been hard at work to transform and grow the IACP into the largest, premier canine professional organization in the world. Our state of the art website was launched on schedule and under budget in January 2014. Go to www.canineprofessionals.com to check out the cool new features including the ability to join and renew your membership online and register for conference at the same time. More new features will continue to be added in the coming months. Contact Tyler Muto at tyler@tylermuto.com if you have any questions, ideas or accolades for the phenomenal work that has gone into this project.

The launch of the new website has also signaled a new beginning and ongoing change for the IACP. Change can be challenging, and Murphy's Law usually prevails. Your Board of Directors would like to thank you, our members, for your overwhelming support and patience during this time of transition. We appreciate your comments and suggestions to help us continue to grow and improve.

During our first face to face meeting of 2014, your Board kicked into high gear to move forward on our IACP Transition Action Plan – A few significant initiatives include:

- Relocating the IACP Home office to Lampasas Texas – the new mailing address and contact information is:

IACP Corporate Office

P.O. Box 928, Lampasas Texas, 76550

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- Recruiting a new Executive Administrative Assistant;
- Enhancing our marketing approaching and social media presence to actively promote the IACP;
- Hosting the annual conference in the Northeastern U.S. for the first time ever;
- Increasing our focus on education for canine professionals and dog owners,
- Growing our membership at an annual rate of 10% or more and
- Re-structuring our mission statement to provide a plain language message that clearly states what the IACP is about and why it is important to be a member. Check out the new mission statement at the front of this issue.

The new IACP Executive Administrative Assistant is Dana Burns. Dana brings a tremendous resume of Corporate business skills and experience to her new role. Dana can be reached by e-mail at: admin@canineprofessionals.com or by phone at: 512-564-1011. The Board would like to acknowledge and thank Sue State for her hard work and dedication to the IACP during her two years at the Florida home office. Sue quickly stepped in to the IACP administrative role following the passing of Lorraine Smith. We wish her well in her future endeavours.

Anthony Holcomb recently resigned from the Board. During this important transition year, the Board recognized the need to replace the vacancy for the one year remaining in Anthony's term. A full roster is needed to ensure the resources were in place to accomplish all that needs be done. The Bylaws allow the Board to select a suitable candidate, (Section 2.10:



Vacancies on the Board of Directors shall be filled by calling a mid-term election OR by the Board appointing a member to fill the vacancy for the duration of the term). Three qualified candidates were proposed by Board members and Tawni McBee was elected by majority vote. We are pleased to have Tawni return to the board. Tawni has contributed to the IACP for many years as online groups moderator, co-lead of the Certification committee, and many other behind-the-scenes tasks. This year she also took on the lead role for member retention and renewal. She has been working diligently, contacting members directly to help them with renewal. Welcome back, Tawni!

Although Martin Deeley has stepped aside as the IACP Executive Director, he will continue to contribute to the IACP as a management consultant and as head of the Sponsorship Committee. The Sponsorship team has been very successful in engaging some high profile sponsors – check out their ads in this issue. Visit their websites and purchase their products and services to let them know how much you appreciate their support. The significant Sponsorship dollars brought in

by Martin and his team enable the IACP to continue to grow and bring you better services, conferences and opportunities to grow your business.

Speaking of conference, have you registered for the 2014 annual IACP conference? Cyndi Graham and the conference committee have a smokin'-hot line-up of speakers and activities that will appeal to new, aspiring and veteran trainers and other canine professionals, as well as pet dog owners. Registrations are already pouring in, and spaces are limited. Don't delay; go to www.canineprofessionals.com and register today!

Let's hope that Mother Nature is much kinder to us this Spring than in the past winter. "April showers bring May flowers," and let's face it: showers, or even a downpour, are better than freezing ice and snow!

Happy Spring everyone!

Karen Laws,
President, IACP

e-mail: Karen@canineprofessionals.com

Message from Jack Clark, Treasurer
Re: IACP Corporate Relocation
February 21, 2014

I would like to take this opportunity to say hello to all members and to advise you of recent changes to the association. Effective March 1, 2014, the IACP Corporate office has relocated to my offices in Lampasas, Texas.

Please make a note of the following information:

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Lampasas, Texas 76550

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I would also like to introduce the new IACP Administrative Assistant, Dana Burns. Dana has recently moved to Lampasas, and I feel fortunate to have been able to hire her. Dana's prior work experience is in executive management of real estate portfolios for individual investors. Please feel free to contact Dana or me with any questions or concerns. You can reach me at 512-556-0522 or at the above number.

Even though Martin says he is retired (whatever that means) he will continue as a consultant and will be working with the Board in the area of sponsorships. I have known Martin too long to let him slip away and have all the single malt to himself (Crazy Brit).

Dana and I will continue to work with Martin to try to make the transition as smooth as possible, but please be patient with us as we learn our new roles with IACP.

Thank you for making IACP a great association. We are looking forward to a great year!

Puppy Class: Good For You and the Dog!

by Jill Kessler Miller, Grad. Cert, CPDT-KA

I have been offering a puppy play and socialization group for over six years, and it has been enormously rewarding, both professionally and personally. I would like to see it offered by more trainers, as it can really set up a dog for continued success and better learning into its adulthood.

For decades, veterinarians, in fear of disease, admonished owners to squirrel away their puppy. At approximately 4 months of age when vaccines were finished, owners would attempt to take their dogs out during the dreaded “fear phase.” Unfortunately, isolation between six and sixteen weeks often creates fearful and neurotic dogs, often dog aggressive, phobic of new sights and sounds, unaccepting of strangers and their touch.

Fortunately, science has finally caught up with what we trainers know from our experience: that socializing puppies before sixteen weeks is vital. Thankfully, the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior has issued a position statement on this, stating (among other things), “...puppies should be exposed to as many new people, animals, stimuli and environments as can be achieved safely...it should be the standard of care for puppies to receive such socialization before they are fully vaccinated.”¹

There is no “one-way” to do a puppy class. Everyone has their own demographic of owners and breeds of dogs, location and training area, ideals and goals. Here I will tell you how I do my class, but remember, my suggestions are not written in stone! Consider this article a base recipe, and you should mold it to your own needs. For instance, I personally believe that until approximately four months of age, all one really needs to work on is housebreaking and socialization. There is always plenty of time to learn obedience. Concepts can be introduced, but I’m not a stickler for on-leash obedience because many breeds mature very late, and it may be asking too much too soon, or they may still be, more or less, asleep

(especially those Mastiff-based breeds!). Thus, I don’t do any leash work. But that doesn’t preclude you from doing so.

So what do you need to get started? A good amount of space and a lot of patience are must-haves.

I am fortunate enough to have a large backyard with grass and solid wood fencing. Being in southern California, I don’t need to worry about harsh winters, and my classes are always outside on grass. I like this because I believe in natural light and surfaces when possible. I also keep it to four pups at a time, so that there is plenty of room for wrassling, running in circles, jaw wrestling, sprinting, retreating, sniffing, going potty in privacy, taking a break in the shade, etc. As we know, dogs like to play in pairs², and this allows for easy pairing and partner switching. I also supervise very heavily, making sure that no one is being a bully or being bullied. Fewer pups also means fewer owners, who will be asking questions, lamenting puppy teeth and small bladders, and you’ll be able to give them more of your time, making for happy people who will sing your praises. They’ll also stay on with you for basic obedience, and maybe more.

I don’t discriminate or segregate by size or breed. With the exception of very small toy breeds who might happen upon a class of older, larger pups, everyone plays together and learns to adapt. I believe it’s an important part of keeping up a growing puppy’s social skills. You’ll be amazed when the small terrier or toy holds his or her own with a Leonberger or GSD!



If you have a good “facilitator” dog or two, they can be very handy. Needless to say, they must be rock-solid in temperament, with both other dogs and people. I have one big and one very small dog. That way the pups learn to play nice with the little dog (who is a toy terrier and plays very nicely, has outstanding body language, but will not stand for any sass from a youngster), and to not

be afraid of the big black dog (who is quite loving and patient). I remind owners, “no one likes the small dog who yaps at the big dogs; and no one likes the big dog who is eyeing the small dog like it’s a squirrel.” This way, pups learn to like and respect all dogs of all sizes. To this day I have some large adult dogs who lick and show their deference to my Yorkie.

What about germs? Without a doubt, good sanitation is an issue. Many people will balk at bringing their puppies out, and will ask about canine parvovirus (CPV). I inform them about the AVSAB position, and also educate them that the chances of their puppy becoming ill is very low compared to their dog becoming emotionally stunted from being isolated at home. Once again, science backs us up: A study in the American Animal Hospital Association journal noted that out of 279 puppies in four different cities in the United States, each of whom had received one vaccine, not one became ill (suspected or diagnosed) with CPV.³ Thankfully, I do not suffer from the threat of distemper or parvo where I live, mostly due to vaccine compliancy, lack of street dogs and over-all cleanliness of surrounding cities.

Having said that, I do have a cleaning regimen I follow:

I pick up all toys and wash them on a regular basis. Outside, I use a product called Wysi-Wash,⁴ which I use to spray my yard, bowls, outside equipment, etc. While it is chlorine based, it does not stain, poison or kill grass and foliage. It kills a multitude of bacteria, viruses and parasites. And it handled skunk odor in my yard! (Bonus: the company offers a discount to IACP members.) Also, I do not use herbicides or pesticides, so my yard is clean and safe for puppies.

Personally, I have found giardia to be the biggest problem. Because it is not commonly tested for when running a fecal parasite analysis, I require clients to specifically ask their vets to test for it. Giardia is highly contagious, zoonotic and people are often unaware that the cause of the cyclical diarrhea and sometimes noxious gas is this tricky little protozoa, and not because of “garbage-itis.”

Before a first class, I do a free, brief meet-and-greet so that the people and pup can meet me and my yard. This way I can get a bead on the pup’s temperament and maturity, and the pup knows that my yard and I are safe and won’t kill them. I also send every prospective puppy client a multitude of handouts covering a variety

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of topics, as well as the e-book *After You Get Your Puppy* by Dr. Ian Dunbar, available for free at his website, www.dogstardaily.com. This usually gets them off and running with positive-reinforcement strategies and concepts which I like to start all puppies off on.

So what do I do when pups get there? Let them go! Let them play! Let them roll around, bounce, and be puppies! While they're doing that, you'll be fielding questions on all the stuff people forget about in-between dogs, such as housebreaking, teething, nipping, holding, nail clipping, crating, spay/neuter, training, etc. If no one has anything in particular, I'll bring up a topic, or give a small talk on clicker/shaping with treats, brief attention work, or body handling exercises.

I watch for appropriate communication between pups, and point them out to the owners to teach them what their dogs are "saying." If a pup appears to not have good communication skills, I might step in as needed, using anything from my body to interrupt escalating play, or a gentle hand on a shoulder to stay "check yourself." Occasionally I have to break out "the long line of shame;" just clipping it onto their flat collar can really take the wind out of their sails! Usually after about 45-60 minutes, everyone is exhausted. Puppies go home and conk out, and your clients can have some time to themselves. And boy do they love you for it!

In closing, I will offer you two pieces of advice from my own experience: 1. If outside, don't forget to wear

sunscreen and a hat; and 2. Don't wear earrings. Pups love to grab at shiny things!

Jill Kessler Miller has a B.A. from UCLA and a Graduate Certificate in Animal Policy and Advocacy. She works primarily as an expert witness in dogs in court cases, and has specialty knowledge in dog bite investigation, dog fighting and animal cruelty investigation, veterinary forensics and service dog law. Jill still enjoys training dogs and their people, working the two extremes of puppies and severe behavior issues. Jill is a Chief Tester for the American Temperament Testing Society, a conformation judge for National Independent Rottweiler Klub, has her CDT-KA, and is on the Service Dog Committee with IACP. Jill's main breed is the Rottweiler, which she has had since 1987, and has trained and titled dogs in schutzhund, obedience, agility, Nosework and conformation. Currently at home she has a Rottweiler, Nemo, who has his CNW1, NAJP and NASP, plus a TT, an older Min Pin mix, and JoJo the Yorkie who runs her life. She also co-owns a several show Rottweilers.



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References:

1 AVSAB position states, available at www.avsabonline.org

2 Ward, Bauer & Smuts, "Partner Preferences and Asymmetries in Social Play Among Domestic Dog, *Canis lupus familiaris*, littermate," *Animal Behavior* (2008), doi:10.1016/j.anbehav.2008.06.004

3 Drs. Stepita, Bain and Kass, "Frequency of CPV Infection in Vaccinated Puppies that Attended Puppy Socialization Classes," *Journal of the American Animal Hospital Association*, J Am Anim Hosp Assoc 2013; 49:95-100. DOI 10.5326/JAAHA-MS-5825

4 For more information, go to www.wysiwash.com.

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Why "Heel" Matters

by Sean O'Shea

I often get asked by clients and other folks why I recommend the "Heel" command and why it is valuable. It's a very good question. For me, it goes much, much deeper than just the aesthetic of having a dog walk next to you (although it does look good), and there's some obvious practical value of having a dog in a well-managed physical position, close to your side to keep him or her out of trouble and harm's way. But in my opinion, that's just the tip of the iceberg. There are some really valuable state-of-mind and relationship benefits as well. Let's take a look at a few.

- Dogs have to utilize a ton of impulse control and focus to keep themselves next to you on the walk in the face of many distractions and exciting triggers. This ends up being a fantastic training and state-of-mind exercise for the dog.
- The physical position of the dog indicates the mental position as well – or in other words, if the dog is working to keep himself next to me, I know he's focused on me instead of the environment, I know he's managing himself, and I also know that his intensity level is under control. (Most dogs, as soon as they get agitated or stimulated, start to move around and lose position either farther back or forward, and these are great warning signs.)
- A respectful, polite, courteous, and tuned-in state of mind isn't the state of mind that reacts to dogs and other things in the environment.
- Having your dog honor your request to walk in a certain position, at a certain pace, and ignoring distractions, is a huge positive relationship builder.
- Dogs who are paying attention, being respectful and polite, and courteously walking in a heel feel far less inspired, entitled, and empowered to bark, lunge, and disagree with things they disapprove of in their environment.

- Dogs in a heel are practicing self-control and are far less stressed and anxious, and therefore far less apt to make poor decisions around dogs, people, cars, bikes etc.
- Dogs in a heel are actually deeply connected to their owners. They therefore feel far less stress and anxiety because they are being guided/led through the world rather than being in charge of assessing and sorting out what is safe and what is dangerous constantly. (This is especially important for nervous, anxious, fearful dogs, who make up the majority of reactive cases.)
- Asking more of your dog makes you a leader. A dog with a leader is relaxed and comfortable. A dog who is a leader is stressed and anxious.
- Dogs being respectful on-leash tend to be respectful to the environment. Dogs being brats on-leash tend to be brats to the environment.
- If the dog is using 75% of their mental focus on keeping themselves in a heel position, that only leaves 25% to get into trouble with.

If you haven't worked on "Heel" with your dog yet, or are not teaching it to your clients, and you'd like to benefit from some of these juicy "Heel/Healing" results, drop me a comment and I'll connect you with a link to my video that shows how easy it is to create this very cool command.

Sean O'Shea is a member of IACP and the owner of The Good Dog Training and Rehabilitation. Learn more about him at thegooddog.net.

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Want to be published? Here's your chance!

The SafeHands editor is looking for submissions relating to all aspects of professional canine care. Articles should be of interest to a diverse membership of canine pros and should range from 800 to 1,500 words. Articles are subject to editing. See page 2 for details.

PHOTO Submissions welcome, too!



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A Rewarding Experience

by Martin Deeley

In order for a human to be able to train a dog, the dog has got to want to learn and be trained. Some dogs have a natural learning drive and high intellectual ability, others may be willing but have no aptitude for certain tasks, and some will have the ability but no willingness--no desire to learn or to please. A few will have neither. There are varying degrees of all this willingness and aptitude and that is what makes training a dog so interesting and challenging. Everyone is different, requiring slightly differing approaches, attitude and technique. So the trainer has to understand and read each individual dog's strengths and limitations, whether they are training for obedience, agility, Frisbee, hunting, or just as a family pet.

All dogs can be motivated and encouraged to learn in some way, but whether they learn at the pace you feel is acceptable for what you are teaching, or they learn correctly, is another matter. What gives a dog the desire to learn and to work for you? What makes it learn quicker and retain that learning? If we consider why a particular dog wants to work, play or learn, then there are a variety of reasons.

As a trainer, one has to know the dog he or she is working with, the dog's individual motivation and the general breed character. Even within breeds, differing bloodlines can dictate degrees of willingness and ability to train. Any dog will work and learn from experience to obtain the basics in life--food, water, air, shelter. It will protect itself from danger and being hurt. Then its emotional needs have to be met: belonging, pleasure, enjoyment, exercise and fulfillment of natural abilities. It will learn how to obtain these needs by itself, through working with the owner or even experimenting with

actions to get the response it wants from its trainer or owner. I also believe some dogs, once they have their basic, safety and emotional needs met, try for greater achievement and more recognition for their efforts. They seem to be able to focus on their training and put all their energy into jumping higher, running faster, finding hidden objects quicker, getting the undivided attention of the audience at a show and are ultimately rewarded for their efforts by recognition from us (clapping, applause, whistles, whooping, praise, etc.)

In training we train through repetition, but with these clever "high fliers" we have to recognize their abilities and balance the repetitive training with a variety of increasingly challenging games, exercises and problems, to stimulate their intelligence and their motivational demands.

If we consider, therefore, what the individual dog we are training wants from life and what motivates it, we can then comprehend what will be a reward for doing the work we are going to do. If we study the basic and natural instincts of the dog and then add to it the challenge that many dogs need, we often find one of the real reward forces to utilize is retrieving.

Although food is a basic requirement of life and definitely a reward, I am often left wondering whether we are underestimating the intelligence of many dogs.

Children will often do small chores, even homework, for the bribe of candies, but as they get older and grow in their needs from life, then even candy may not be an inducement to do their homework. For puppies, food may be the ideal introduction to minor controls and it is an easy way to get required responses, but in the long run does it create the bond required



between handler and dog? Does it provide leadership for the handler? Does it generate respect for the handler from the dog or for the dog from the handler? Does it create affection and a loving relationship? Reward (and the occasional reprimand) has to be in a form which does all these things. It also has to create and enhance a partnership where handler and dog are linked mentally through confidence, trust and understanding. I have found that food, if given, should be a small additional reward, not the main reward nor part of the main reward.

Reward for the dog, like us, comes from two emotions. Firstly, reward comes from the feeling of doing a job well and enjoying it--this is an **INTRINSIC REWARD**. Secondly, it comes from an **EXTRINSIC REWARD**, something completely independent of the task--food, ball, toy, or tugger given in addition afterwards, as "payment" for doing the job asked. Actions and learning which are enjoyable to the dog and the dog obviously wants, or is seemingly compelled to do because of its natural instincts, are easily rewarded and need only be further reinforced through recognition in the form of praise. Work and training routines that need encouragement and which may be slightly more

tedious or boring to the dog are often better rewarded at the end with something which is enjoyable, such as food or a fun retrieve. However, should routines be boring? Or as trainers can we make the majority of them far more enjoyable by using extrinsic rewards as an integral part of the training exercise? The reward then becomes the exercise and the training session, which when additionally reinforced through praise and recognition of a job well done, develops the dog's mind much quicker. The bond between trainer and dog also grows stronger at an increased rate.

You will find that rewards and their intensity will vary from dog to dog. I have trained dogs which do not want conventional praise with voice or hands. Their reward is the hunting or retrieving of bumpers or balls which they get during the training exercises itself. You only have to watch dogs playing ball or Frisbee, either as just a game or in competition, or watch amazed at the work of sniffer dogs to understand that their main reward is the retrieve.

Think through a training exercise or game before hand so you can run it to help the dog succeed. With structured fun training, you keep the fun and reward built-in (intrinsic). If you keep the training within the dog's abil-

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ity, do what that individual dog really enjoys and can succeed at, and then increase the complexity gradually, the dog will learn intelligently and happily. Nothing succeeds like success.

In small steps, show the dog what you want it to do and when it succeeds let it know how pleased you are with what it achieved. SMILE! Laughter from you can be one of the biggest rewards for many dogs.

In training dogs with genetically inherited working backgrounds such as sheep dogs, hunting dogs, working dogs, and even terriers, all of which have been bred for their natural ability and instincts, the extrinsic reward process easily becomes an integral part of the training exercises. Recognition through praise reinforces the dogs pleasure at doing the job well and strengthens the learning process. Many dogs enjoy retrieving, chasing, or just carrying an object. Some as puppies may have to be encouraged, but once the habit and pleasure of the action is imparted, the problem may be to stop them. With creative training exercises, any of these rewards can be built into a training program and depending upon the dog, the trainer will

probably find one that works better than another. Once one reward is found to work, the others can be made enjoyable simply by chaining the rewards.

A good example of this is the training of drug detection or "sniffer" dogs. The training starts with encouraging the dog to be a keen retriever. Gradually, the retrieve object is made more and more difficult to find until finally it is hidden. The dog now enjoys the hunting because it knows it will result in the ultimate reward: the find and retrieve. I trained two of my dogs to do this for fun in the house, a Jack Russell and a miniature poodle, and recently a client's dog which is a Polish Lowland Sheepdog. Using a ball, we get them interested in retrieving and then in small stages we begin to hide it and encourage them to "find it." The Polish Lowland Sheepdog, Huntley, lives in a very large house. Guests are invited to hide the ball, while Huntley waits. He is then told to "find it" and off he goes, checking out every nook and cranny. If he has problems we can step in and help by giving hand signals. The occasional "Find it" keeps him going for up to half an hour or more and rarely does he fail. The way he sits and waits for the ball to be hidden and when hunting, constantly keeps

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checking back with the owner, is a delight to watch. Rarely do I go to the house without Huntley disappearing, only to reappear with a ball that he wants me to play retrieve with or hide. If I ignore him he just lies down with it and waits, or follows me around carrying it patiently waiting in case I decide that I want a small game. Huntley is no retrieving breed and as a puppy he was most energetic and at times unpleasant. But now he is the perfect gentleman. There is no doubt in my mind and of his owner that the rewarding games using retrieving have helped channel his herding instincts in another direction that is acceptable behavior for a household dog.

Rewards and the response to them is relative to the experiences the dog has of being rewarded. A dog which constantly gets a ball thrown may not see it as a reward, may even get bored with the exercise or so excited by it all that control and training becomes impossible. Another client of ours had a Fox Terrier, Duke, who was an obsessive tail chaser. He did it, his owner told us, for no real reason, but it was more likely when the doorbell or telephone rang. The vet had tried drugs but it still continued. It was felt that the tail might

have to be totally removed due to chronic infection, if the behavior could not be extinguished. During our consultation we asked the client what games he played with Duke. The answer was "Ball." So we asked him to show us. We went outside where immediately the little Fox Terrier started barking and jumping up at a tennis ball which was jammed in the fence about five feet above the ground. The owner encouraged the excitement even more with "Do you want to play ball?" After several jumps Duke would stop and spin, and then growl and bite at his tail. The owner naturally laughed at this ridiculous ritual and immediately took the ball out of the fence and threw it for the dog. The dog raced after it picked it and then went away to some grass, put the ball down and started sniffing totally ignoring the owner and us. When asked how often they played this game we were told, "Whenever Duke wants to!" We then discussed and went through the whole procedure of controlled retrieving, explaining how to make it fun for both of them. This way, the owner would be taking charge and controlling the game, rather than Duke (who was being rewarded for all the wrong actions). Within two weeks, using structured retrieving as part of his "rehabilitation" program, the dog was no longer

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tail chasing and both Duke and his owner were going through positive and pleasant transitions.

I only have to watch owners and their children playing fetch in the park to realize how much others and their dogs enjoy retrieving. Therefore, why not take the opportunity to get the dog learning from it? It is not difficult to use the retrieve and all the rewards it provides to have a dog heeling, watching you, sitting and waiting, coming when called, being comfortable around people and other dogs, even ignoring them and focusing only on you. Retrieving and all the activities involved can be so much fun for both dog and owner. It does not have to be regimented, only controlled so that the dog learns from you.

I love to see dogs that come out wanting to be with me, asking "what fun thing are WE going to do," and wanting to work together. They are responsive and their minds become blotting paper for learning, soaking

up what I want to teach them. Make your training sessions short, productive and fun. You, the trainer, must be the instigator and provider of fun training, and retrieving can be the answer.

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How to Pick a Treadmill for your Dog

By Barry Ravegum

There are many reasons to buy a treadmill manufactured specifically for pets rather than for people. Providing a proper size dog treadmill can enhance the life of the dog and the owner. Treadmills used in conjunction with proper socialization and obedience training help overcome health and behavior problems brought on by lack of exercise. Most importantly, dogs require a longer running surface than the human treadmills commonly seen in stores and fitness centers.

The length of the running surface is important. If the surface is too short for the dog's natural stride at a trot, the dog will condition themselves to a shortened gait. Dogs will adapt to the shortened stride while running around the yard or worse, in the show ring for conformation, which of course, would be detrimental for the owner, kennel or breeder trying to establish a solid reputation in the ring. Worse, a shortened gait could lead to musculoskeletal problems.

When determining the correct size pet treadmill, the first step is to measure your dog from the tip of the nose to the base of the tail where it meets the body. Then, add, at a minimum, one third onto that length. This measurement is the minimum length of the running surface your dog will require. A dog owner can go to the www.gopetusa.com website, insert the numbers into the calculator and find the correct size specifically

for his or her dog. Remember, it is always best to round up instead of down when picking out the optimal length of the treadmill. When a dog walks or trots on a treadmill they are just like humans on a treadmill. There is a natural tendency to move forward and back as they run, so any extra space is good.

If you live in a multi-dog household, make sure the treadmill fits the largest dog in the home. Small dogs can use longer treadmills, but big dogs cannot use smaller treadmills.

The use of a pet treadmill does not mean a dog owner is being lazy. The truth is that dogs need more exercise than most people realize and are able to give them daily. A dog's behavior improves with exercise, much as a person feels better the more physical activity they partake in, too. A pet treadmill is a great way to supplement outdoor activity for your dog.

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Critical Thinking

by Mailey McLaughlin, M.Ed., CDT, Editor

A recent thread on one of the dog training groups to which I belong on Facebook started an interesting conversation about how to “fight back” against the unfair practices of those who oppose balanced training. It’s been a long feud for many of us, as “positive only” training has acquired converts and new-on-the-scene trainers very quickly. The “positive only” movement seems to attract new trainers and converts from “old-school” traditional training quite easily, while on the flip side, those who come to the side of balance, appreciating the subtleties of having a full toolbox and the joys of learning new ways to use those tools to best help our clients, sometimes seem to take longer to get here. Perhaps it takes one experiencing the extremes, and not finding success or fulfillment, before one can appreciate the subtleties of using all four quadrants of the operant conditioning model to truly effect change.

That’s how it happened for me. I started my training career in a more traditional way, and found it to be too harsh for some of the dogs I was seeing. Somehow, after doing lots of reading of materials current at that time, I became lured (tee hee) by the promise of “hands-off” training as being better and more humane, and ended up moving so far in that direction that I became a bit obsessed. After a year or so of falling class graduation numbers, a sour taste in my mouth from the zealotry I was reading on the internet, and a general feeling that I was letting down many of my human and canine students, I realized that there had to be a way to merge more traditional training with R+-focused work. That search (I literally typed “balanced dog training” into the search engine) led me to the IACP, and one month later to my first conference, and the rest is history.

The lament that “positive only” trainers are poisoning the public against us, and that we need to “fight back” to maintain our sanity and our credibility in our profession, is understandable. The idea that those of us with full toolboxes and knowledge about correct application of all four quadrants of the O.C. model should not take vilification lying down is not a new concept—and I do not disagree with the idea itself. But in the spirit of professionalism, I posit that there are better ways than stooping to lies and misinformation to let the public know that

effective training uses tools and methods that work for each dog and handler; in essence, that we should fit the training to the dog, not the dog to the training.

I just re-read a book by Cal Newport entitled *So Good They Can’t Ignore You*, and that phrase is my solution to the problem that “positive only” trainers are bashing us and our methods: become so good at effective training that your work speaks for itself—and leave the “dirty” tactics to those who are consumed by ideology. (Of course, if one’s reputation is being individually targeted simply for the tools he or she uses, and someone has made it personal, this bullying should not be ignored, and the authorities should be called—but I’m talking about generalized slamming of certain tools and the trainers who defend them.)

Newport’s book interested me in several ways, and mainly for its premise, which actually addresses the way people gravitate toward careers. His claim is that “skills trump passion in finding the work you love,” and he makes a compelling argument. But the title, attributed to comedian/actor/banjo player/author Steve Martin, did appeal to me to be instructive towards how we trainers who embrace diversity in training techniques can combat our “oppressors.” Place your efforts not in “negative campaigning,” but in creating a stellar reputation in your profession that cannot be tarnished.

“Live in such a way that if someone spoke badly of you, no one would believe it.”

~Unknown

I know this works because I have done it, and so have countless others in countless professions since the beginning of commerce itself. Is it an instantly satisfying way to “get back” at the ideologues? No. It is a quick way to “shut down” our “opponents”? No, because it takes a while to build a truly great reputation. The internet, especially, is a breeding ground for vitriol in so many forms, and tools/methods and those who employ them are consistently bashed in ever more hateful ways. And, it has extended beyond cyberspace for some trainers, who have seen their competition show up uninvited to demos, or to their place of business, trying to “educate” the public about how harmful

certain tools are to dogs. We have been maligned for our choices in many formats over the years. None of it is harmless, truly. But the bulk of it is limited to words, and words, while powerful, can always be trumped by our actions—or, in some cases, by our choice not to take action. This stance can be powerful.

The truth is that, for the majority of us, the internet is ground zero for the bulk of the bashing. That the bullying is mostly restricted to online forums and blogs has its good points, one of which is that most of our students and prospective students need and want help changing their dogs' bad behaviors, and they do not even realize that different training methodologies exist. Some who are internet-savvy have seen the one-sided arguments, and some of these may be swayed by them. But most dog owners reach out in desperation, and have no idea that this "war" about certain tools even exists. They need results in a reasonable time frame, and they need methods and tools they can use. We can help them.

This means that we have the chance to prove how effective and humane our methods and tools are, and the results are transformative. We see this in action every single day, and so do the people we are helping. Then they can see how *they* can actually put this tool and its proper use into practice, right away. That, as many of you know, is powerful—and it speaks for itself.

All the vitriol against prong collars and remote collars can sound damning on paper. But we who use these tools see the proof every single day that they not only work, but help dogs in numerous ways. The "other side" seems to think that the current science is on their side on this issue, but they often read it wrong.

(I'm a big fan of scientific inquiry, and if you look at the studies that have been done on prong collars and remote trainers, you might be surprised to find that the science is there for our "side," too. Giving dogs proper feedback on what is verboten, as well as on what is expected and appreciated, is proven to work. The key is how the information is provided, and when. Despite what the "all positive" trainers believe, regular Joe dog owners can learn how to effectively and humanely provide this information to their dogs.)

When you become the go-to person in your area for results-based training, your word-of-mouth capital will continue to grow. If you have or are willing to develop a customer-service based mindset, and present a truly friendly and professional air, your capital rises even more. Specialize in something unique (not gimmicky), and you will have more business than you can handle.

And your customers will become loyal, and they tell their friends and their groomer and their vet and their co-workers, and your reputation grows even more. Satisfied customers are true gold. They will even go to bat for you in a crisis, and when that happens, you know you have arrived.

I gave up responding to zealots on the internet years ago. I realized that while I occasionally was able to change minds, I was spending too much precious time in negativity, and time is too short as it is. Plus, having facts doesn't always matter, sadly. So I left a lot of forums and stopped reading/commenting on quite a few blogs. I reserve my arguments—thought out and calmly professional—for my style of training for situations where I detect that a seed can be planted. And then I go take a walk with my dogs.

Be so good that they can't ignore you. It really does make a difference.

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

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