

# IACP

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE PROFESSIONALS

The Canine Professional Journal



**Volume 20**  
**Issue 4**  
**FALL 2019**





# The Canine Professional Journal *is the official journal of the...*

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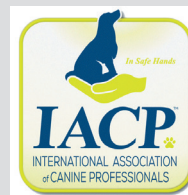
## International Association of Canine Professionals

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The International Association of Canine Professionals is dedicated to the education, development, and support of dog training professionals world-wide. 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** — intended for those who support the goals, positions, and mission of the IACP, but are not canine industry professionals. This membership applies to everyone who loves dogs and wishes to support the IACP's mission to insure the betterment of dogs worldwide. See website for membership restrictions.

### Annual Fees:

Professional \$125.00; Associate \$100.00; Affiliate \$65.00

An additional \$30 fee applies for initial processing costs of Professional and Associate members only.

### Benefits:

All IACP members receive an electronic copy of The Canine Professional 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.

### International Association of Canine Professionals

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# IN THIS ISSUE...

|                                               |                         |       |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| President's Letter.....                       | Melanie Benware .....   | 4     |
| Adding Value to Canine Programs.....          | Dr. Erica Boling .....  | 6     |
| Decoding the Chatter .....                    | Mary Mazzeri .....      | 9     |
| Conference Photos.....                        |                         | 12-14 |
| The Ancestral Canine Human Relationship ..... | Valerie Ann Erwin.....  | 15    |
| What Was I Thinking? .....                    | Angela Leuck .....      | 19    |
| Critical Thinking .....                       | Mailey McLaughlin ..... | 23    |

The IACP is proud to announce that Members

**Chelsea Cutler, Kara Godebu, Ryan Gwilliam, & Kathryn Tedesco**

*have successfully completed their Certified Dog Trainer examinations and can now add the designation IACP-CDT to their names.*

and Member

**Lora Bacharach**

*has successfully completed her Dog Trainer Foundation Examination and is now able to add the designation IACP-DTFE to her name.*

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*The Board of the IACP*



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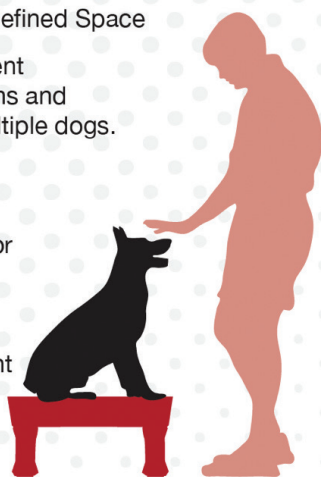
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## Want to be published? Here's your chance!

The Canine Professional Journal 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.

**PHOTO submissions are welcome, too!**

Cover submissions should be vertical/portrait orientation.

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# President's Letter

## by Melanie Benware

A little over a week has passed since I returned home from the IACP Conference in Colorado Springs and I am still reflecting back on the experience. Each time I attend conference, I find myself more appreciative of this organization, the Board, the home office staff, and our members.

It has been a rough couple of months for the organization. The sudden loss of our Executive Director and Co-Founder, Martin Deeley, has been a blow to us in multiple ways. I have yet to be able to put into words what Martin has meant to the IACP and the dog world as a whole. I am so overwhelmed by the magnitude of his impact that I do not feel I could do it justice. But I do know this: The Board of Directors and I will do our best to continue to move this organization forward and leave a lasting legacy for Martin and our other founders.

I want to take this time to say thank you to Brian Bergford and Jason Vasconi. They have served this organization well and I can not thank them enough for everything they have done. Although their time on the Board is coming to an end, I know they will continue to do great work for the dog world as well as for the IACP.

I would like to welcome our new directors that will start their terms in January, 2020: Julie Hart, Jason Cohen, and Glenn Cooke. All three of these members have already shown amazing support and dedication to the IACP and I am confident their enthusiasm and skills will help us do tremendous things.

I will be starting my sixth year serving this great

organization, and I am thrilled with everything we have accomplished in the last five years. I have no doubt that this is just a glimpse of the amazing things we will be doing in the future.

A huge part of the success of this organization is due to the work of the members of our committees. Thank you to all the volunteers who work tirelessly to promote the growth of the IACP, create new offerings to our membership, help fight legislative issues around the world, educate the public, and so much more. We would not be able to accomplish so much without the members of the Education/Certification Committee, European Committee, Legislative Committee, Service Dog Committee, Member Hall of Fame Committee, and Therapy Dog Committee.

A large part of our success is continuing to be open minded and push the envelope of what people think of the IACP. In years past, we have been known as the “ecollar” association, and the supposition was that we would support any and all ecollar users. This is something that has never been true, but we were not doing enough to dispute that perception. As a membership, we know that we have trainers and canine professionals

from all over the spectrum of dog training, using all manner of tools humanely and effectively. I think the speaker line up at this conference went a long way to show the diversity of our membership and how open minded we are.

I want to thank all the attendees that behaved professionally, even when they may not have agreed with what a presenter had to say. Some of these speakers may have thought they were walking into the lion's





den, but instead they found a group of canine professionals who were friendly, willing to listen and learn, and most importantly, put the welfare of dogs at the forefront of their training. I truly believe that this is what Martin and all our founders envisioned when they got together 20 years ago to form this organization. My heartfelt appreciation goes out to every person who has been involved these last 20 years to bring this all to life.

Now is not the time to be complacent. We need to take this momentum and use it to launch this organization onto the world stage and become the canine organization that the public, lawmakers and professionals go to for guidance and education. I look forward to continuing to serve as the President of the IACP and thank you all for trusting me to help lead us into that future.

Respectfully,

*Melanie Benware*

Melanie Benware, President  
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# 10 Ways to Add Value to Your Canine Programs

by Erica C. Boling, PhD

We all suffer from our own insecurities at some point in time as canine business owners. When mentoring and coaching other canine professionals, many of these insecurities begin showing up when trainers begin comparing themselves to others and when there is a dip in sales or income. When I offer suggestions to revisit their programs and possibly even raise their prices, I frequently hear, "I can't do that because there's no way people will pay that price! Other trainers are already charging less than I am!"

This is where I immediately stop the conversation and propose a shift in thinking. Instead of comparing our programs to others, why not think of ways to make our programs different? Instead of lowering prices to make a program more appealing to a client, why not add more value to the program so that our pricing looks like an amazing offer with tremendous value?

I'm always trying to come up with innovative and creative ways to add value to my programs. Since much of my work is done online, many of my ideas are grounded in technology and social media. The good news is, however, that even brick and mortar canine businesses can use online and digital strategies to add more value to their current face-to-face programs!

Below are just a few of the many ways that I've seen canine professionals successfully do this:

1. **Photo or Video Stories** - Document your clients' progress as they work with you. Collect photos and/or videos from the first day you meet them and throughout their programs. Celebrate with your clients by presenting them with a book or video that documents the progress they have made over time.
2. **Video Submissions & Critiques** - In addition to meeting face-to-face, give your clients an opportunity to submit videos to you for

feedback and critique. This could be videos of them practicing their "homework" with their dogs at home. It could also be them submitting videos to get feedback from their canine work and/or competitions.

3. **Online Live Q&As** - Offer weekly or monthly Facebook Live Q&A shows. Do live webinars with special guest speakers. Bring in new "hot topics" to discuss or simply offer extra support through live, online sessions.

4. **Video Resource Library** - Start documenting everything that you and your clients are doing with video. Create short video tutorials to illustrate things that you are teaching. Even those "bloopers" videos can provide great teachable moments! Offer clients access to your virtual video library.

5. **Digital Workbooks** - Get all those handouts, notes and worksheets together to create digital workbooks for your clients. Use them as a way to help clients stay organized, document their progress, and hold them accountable between training sessions.

6. **Special Topics Online Workshops** - Give your clients opportunities to take a "deeper dive" into relevant topics by offering online webinars and workshops. Expand their knowledge and add more value beyond what you are providing through face-to-face instruction.

7. **Virtual Coaching** - Do you have clients who live far away and struggle to see you every week? Do you lose clients because their work schedule doesn't allow them to join your classes? Offer virtual coaching so that you can expand your reach and have a more flexible work schedule. Combine virtual coaching with face-to-face training to get the best of both worlds!



8. **Online Courses** - Supplement your face-to-face instruction with online courses. Tired of saying the same things over and over to your students? Tired of repeating the same basic concepts class after class? Consider putting some (or all) of this content into online courses or video tutorials.

9. **“Behind the Curtain” Insider’s VLOG** - Everybody wants to know the secrets to becoming an expert! Give your students a special insider’s view into your own areas of expertise by creating and sharing a video blog (VLOG). Do they want to know how you raise your puppies? Are they curious how you prepare for a big competition? Do they want to know how you deal with daily training challenges? Start documenting your own experiences and offer them a special “behind the curtain” insider’s view so that they can learn from you.

10. **Membership Programs** - Use ideas listed above (or create your own) to add ongoing value

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to your programs. Once you have something to offer your clients on an ongoing basis, invite them to a monthly membership program where they get access to it all!

These are just a few of the many ways you can add value to your programs. Whether providing face-to-face or online support, you can think of ways to make your programs different and unique from others. Not sure what your clients want and most value? Survey them and ask! Sometimes making a few minor tweaks to your current programs makes all the difference.

*Erica C. Boling, PhD, is a retired Associate Professor of Education from Rutgers University and the owner and founder of Northeast K9 Conditioning, LLC and Northeast K9 Conditioning Academy. Erica helps sport and working dog handlers create peak performance, canine athletes by teaching them how to integrate canine fitness into their training programs. Erica is a Certified Canine Fitness Trainer (CCFT), Certified Canine Massage Provider, member of the United States Federation of Sleddog Sports (USFSS) and a member of their USA National Team. She is also one of the founding*

*members of North Pocono Search, Rescue and Recovery. Erica has taught canine fitness to officers at the Atlantic County John "Sonny" Burke K-9 Academy in New Jersey. She also does narcotics detection with her Belgian Malinois and trains and competes in French Ring.*

Email: [info@northeastk9conditioning.com](mailto:info@northeastk9conditioning.com)

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# Decoding the Chatter

by Mary Mazzeri, IACP co-founder, CDTA PDTI

Every day, trillions of words are uttered across the globe. Satellites and wires transmit communications. Face-to-face and phone conversations stream endlessly. Here at home, the CIA, SS, Homeland Security and FBI operatives work full time searching communications scanning for key words that might give early warning to enable a timely response to possible impending threats. In a human world, words have much meaning.

So it is no wonder that we talk to our dogs—a lot. It is our effort to communicate with them, to teach them, to convey how we feel about a particular situation, to warn, to reward and even to schmooze our dogs. Some dog owners communicate more effectively with their dogs than others. Some dogs are just better at figuring out the language, but I have to say that, in general, we talk too much when it comes to training dogs.

Remember Gary Larson's classic 2-panel cartoon? The first panel was labeled "What we say to dogs," and the man was saying, "OK Ginger, I've had it! You are a bad dog. I told you to stay out of the garbage. Understand Ginger? Stay out of the garbage or else." And the second identical panel is labeled "What the dog hears," and it is, in toto: "Ginger, blah blah, blah, blah, blah, Ginger blah, blah, blah, Ginger blah, blah!" It's a classic because it is so true. Companion dogs hear streams of confusing conversations every day. Some streams of conversation are directed at them and others between the people that they live with.

The amazing thing is that eventually a lot of them actually decipher this foreign language, or at least the important parts that are relevant to their own well being. One of our jobs as dog trainers is provide an easier translation system: to create a learning environment where relevant sensory input is easier for the dog to decode.

Since body movements comprise a large part of a dog's language, I've found it most helpful to start with the dogs' own idiom. Long line work sets a wonderful basis for creating a healthy 'pack mentality' in the dog and an almost intuitive 'follow the leader' pattern. A fifteen foot long line transforms the dog's perception

of the handler. Seeing the handler 'leaving' sends a powerful message to the dog. "I am leading and you are the follower." It allows the dog to realize that the only way to know where this important person is going is to watch!

The follower learns the basis for communicating—it learns to pay attention to the leader. This exercise follows their natural order. By reversing course when the dog advances ahead of and loses focus on the handler, the line stops the dog's forward motion and turns its attention and direction back toward the handler. The initial goal is to establish the leader-follower relationship; one which causes the dog to enter the all powerful pack drive.

All the while there is no translation needed because the human isn't saying anything human—yet. Chattering human discourse serves no useful purpose at this stage; however, with judicious timing, the handler can start to identify specific responses from the dog which will help it to learn 'human speak,' and the dog begins to understand what the two-legged partner wants.

So for example, the handler is waiting for an attention response—which may be direct eye contact or just a sideways glance at the handler as the dog moves ahead. At those precise moments the handler says, "Yes!" and keeps on moving. Just that one precisely timed word. It is rather 'clickeresque' except the handler does NOT break the pack drive by offering food to the dog (which would put the dog into prey drive.) The "Yes" marker is a bridging word that keeps the dog working and helps it to identify and reinforce the attention responses. The marker is brief and specific to the behavior. The handler must anticipate the 'look' from the dog in order to 'comment' (yes) on the specific action with precise timing. This helps the dog to isolate what it did that elicited attention from the handler. There is no need to decipher from a stream of "blah, blah, blah," because it is one specific sound that occurs when the dog performs one specific action. Obviously, it will take a number of repetitions for the dog to see the common denominator, but it will be much easier for the dog to identify human language in association with behavior responses. Eventually "Yes"



becomes the word that helps a dog recognize desired behaviors (and any attempts in the right direction) as they are learning new things. It is learning one word for one action.

Another example of de-cluttering chatter: When puppies are first learning behaviors. We all know how ineffective “come on now Fido Sit, SIT, SIT!” is when yelled at an inattentive or overly excited dog that has no clue of the meaning of the word. With puppies, it is initially effective to lure the pup like a fish with a worm, get the behavior, command (name the behavior e.g. ‘Sit’) and reward with the treat just after the pup sits. As the puppy starts to offer the behaviors more consistently, the command is spoken with the lure, and ultimately shifts ahead of the lure—which can be eliminated once the puppy understands the cue. It is learning to translate from English (or human language of choice) to Doglish. It is our job to make this language learning process easier on the dog—and on the handler/owner for that matter. We are teaching the dog ‘how to learn how to learn’ one word, one moment at a time. Gradually the lure and the treat are phased out so the pup is translating the human chatter --associating an action with the ‘sound’ their human makes. Prey reward (food) is gradually replaced with Pack reward (attention, praise, petting.) and just the occasional treat.

Once a dog starts to learn to ‘decode’ our body and spoken language, look out, because once they’ve ‘learned how to learn’ they will start translating on their own. They will be able to pick words out of the ‘chatter’ because they start making associations on their own. I submit as evidence ‘Charlie,’ who knows what ‘ice cream’ means because of the many associations his owners have made for him. During the TV commercial Bertha says to her husband “Henry, you in the mood for some ice cream?” Henry, “Sure, sounds good to me.” Charlie barks his agreement. And Bertha gets up and goes to the freezer, grabs a couple of bowls and spoons. Charlie is right there because every once in a while Bertha puts down a small bowl for Charlie too. That’s a bit of associative reasoning. Last time I was over there Bertha was spelling i-c-e----c-r-e-a-m, but it didn’t matter, Charlie still said “Bark, bark!” (Translation: Sounds good to me!) Maybe Charlie can apply for a

job with the CIA or the FBI. Sounds like he’s learned to de-code the chatter.

*Mary Mazzeri, CDTA, PDTI, graduated Summa Cum Laude from NEIU with a BA in Education.*

*In addition to operating her own dog training business, she was the Director of Training at Car Dun Al Obedience Dog Training Club from 1972-2001, during which time she developed a ‘puppy through utility’ training curriculum, apprenticed and educated a large staff of instructors and assistants, and oversaw the schooling program of over 300 students per year from beginner students through utility competitors. Now retired from competition, Mary participated in Obedience, Tracking, Lure Trialing, Herding, NoseWorks, Earth Dog Tests, and Conformation events, earning 36 titles on 13 of her own dogs representing 7 different breeds.*

*She oversaw the training of service dogs for Support dogs of St Louis in the late 1980’s.*

*Mary helped institute the protocols for Advocate Sherman Hospital’s Animal Assisted Therapy Program and has continued to volunteer as an AAT team advisor/evaluator for over 15 years.*

*Mary has operated her Care Dog Training business for 45 yrs in Carpentersville, IL. Mary is a trainers’ mentor, having personally apprenticed dozens of other professional dog trainers who now operate their own successful dog training businesses.*

*Mary is a co-founder of the IACP and was Member of the Year 2010; Hall of Fame 2011; and an Ambassador in 2012.*

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## *In Memoriam: Martin Deeley*

The dog training world lost a true legend and dogs and trainers lost a true friend when Martin Deeley died on August 6th, 2019 at the age of 73. He was the only writer who was awarded an audience with Her Majesty the Queen when he was allowed to interview her and write about her beloved dogs. He was an outstanding presenter, commentator and writer for National and International dog events, training videos, books, and magazines worldwide. He was awarded 2 commendations from the U.S. Army for advice and assistance with military dogs in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was a commentator at Crufts, produced dozens of training videos, wrote for the leading hunting dog journals in Britain and the U.S.; authored 3 bestselling books on gundogs, bred and trained dozens of champion hunting dogs, and competed at the highest levels of the sport with distinction.

And of course he and a dedicated group of like-minded individuals formed the International Association of Canine Professionals in 1999. He is our legacy, and as we prosper as an organization, we keep his memory alive. Martin always had a smile for everyone, a great sense of humor, and was a welcoming presence to so many who consider him a mentor and friend. We will miss him forever.

"If you smile at your dog, they will know you are pleased with them." Smile on, Sir Martin.



# Annual Educational Conference, Colorado Springs

## September 8 - 11, 2019

"Instead of allowing the dog the space he needs to move naturally, we compress him into a 6-foot bubble with a standard leash...the retractable allows the bubble to expand."

~Jay Jack



"Science tells you how things are, not how they should be. "

~Dr. Roger Abrantes



"Most dog trainers are happy to learn dog training skills, but if you don't get people in the door, your work is for naught. "

~Molly Rouse



"No tool is ever going to bring out the best in a dog. That's the trainer's responsibility. The tool just makes the process easier."

~Larry Krohn



"BAT is basically mindfulness for dogs—inserting calm between stimulus and response."

~Grisha Stewart







"Who are we, and how do we want to show up in our relationship with our dog?"

~Birdy O'Sheedy

"The theory of natural selection is one of the brightest things ever conceived by the human mind. "

~Dr. Roger Abrantes



"Get your students to set goals at Lesson 1. Then you will know you are done when they say those have been met. "

~Jamie Popper







"Our unique relationship with our dogs is, in part, a result of our mutual love of play."

~Mark Hines

"What's happened since the mid-90's has taken the heart, soul, and voice out of dog training. "

~Dr. Ian Dunbar



"Building confidence in our clients is the most important component to getting them to compliance. "

~Nancy-Lynn Stoller

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**And to all who attended this year,  
thank you.**

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# The Ancestral Canine Human Relationship, Part 1

by Valerie Ann Erwin

## Why Does My Dog Follow Me to the Toilet?

### ***40,000 Years of Evolution and the Canine/Human Relationship***

We trainers all have many questions about the superpowers of dogs and how we can use them to our mutual benefit. I have observed that there are behaviors dogs exhibit that are a direct consequence of canine superpowers that are significant parts of the canine human partnership. Behaviors that have lost their significance to modern humans. I try to incorporate these behaviors and my understanding of them into my training programs and my clients and their dogs are enjoying the results.

Evidence suggests that the canine human connection goes back at least 40,000 years. Recent information suggests that early humans probably cooperated, lived, hunted and revered wild canids and proto-dogs as far back as 130,000 years ago in hunter gatherer communities. We have a new understanding of the intimate nature of pre-dogs and pre-humans.

Our ancestral relationship with canines may reach farther back in time than the existence of modern humans. Pre-humans and wolves/wolf ancestors cooperated so intimately with each other that we may have, through natural selection rather than selective breeding affected each other co-evolutionarily. The intersections in our mitochondrial timelines cross at major points for both species. These cellular milestones in evolution are supported by paleo and archaeologic evidence found on multiple sites across Europe, Asia, Africa, Indonesia, Siberia, and North and South America. Our relationship with canines is so intimate that not only would dogs not be dogs as we know them, but quite possibly, humans would be something different than us without the benefit of canine influence on our own evolution.

As the two most adaptable mobile predators on the Eurasian continent, early humans and canines successfully followed the same prey and migrated simultaneously across the landscape in the search for survival against larger, better equipped predators such as cave bears, cave lions, panthers and the megafaunal wolf. The early humans were not only competing for food against these huge predators, but housing, as caves made up the predominant form of shelter for all predators on the Ice-age landscape. Paleo-archaeologists believe that both canines and humans were highly adaptive, highly social, and acutely aware of each other as potential successful collaborators for hunting mega-animals. Early humans like *Homo erectus* and *Homo Neanderthalensis*, and later, communities of *Homo sapiens*, began to thrive cooperatively with canines before the time of modern humans. The canine/human relationship is likely to have averted the extinction of humans and proto-dogs or the wolves they descended from, while every other mega-predator of the time died off due to non-adaptive habits.

The earliest evidence we have for the human canine relationship are the fossilized footprints of an 8 year old child accompanied by a canine, wolf or proto-dog, who walked, (not ran!) together thru the Cave of Chauvet, famous for its realistic Paleolithic paintings, 31,000 years ago. A child, entrusted to a wolf, 31,000 years ago. It is easy to make the leap that this kind of relationship was not uncommon and that canine-human relationships were thriving and commonplace by this point. The cave art of Europe also indicates how man and canine identified with each other. The realistic art of the Pleistocene contains an accurate record of all the large animals living along the ice sheets. Obvious by omission are humans and canines. Rarely, when they are represented, they are drawn as stick figures, lacking the realism of the other paintings. All the human footprints found



in the caves, spanning 35,000 years, are barefooted. This infers that shoes might have been forbidden. Many modern and aboriginal faiths have prohibitions against representing the sacred in art or going shod in sacred spaces. Early man may not have felt it safe to represent himself or his partner animal to his spirits.

Physically, dogs have evolved to digest carbohydrates, developed muscles in their faces that mimic human expression, acquired the ability to enjoy face to face interactions (unique between predators), developed the ability to follow human gaze and gesture, and have developed an enhanced ability to engage and cooperate with humans. Human evolution has also benefited from our participation in the canine human relationship. We have shed significant brain size to sacrifice acute hearing and smell perception, passing them to our canine partners. In exchange, we developed enhanced cognitive and problem-solving skills that facilitated the creation of complex tools, complex language, and a stationary agrarian lifestyle that gave rise to civilization and the written word.

The life of early man living in the arid arctic tundra with his canine companions may be represented in modern times by the Turkana people of semi-arid northwest Kenya. In their nomadic pastoral society, dogs mind the children, eat the feces and vomit of the children, lick cookware and serving ware clean, and consume the menses of women. In a society with limited water resources and a high risk of large animal predation, these habits make sense to the survival of both species. We modern humans have forgotten the intimacies and responsibilities we once shared in survival with our canine partners. Our relationship with our dogs has been based on cooperative super-power skill sets, ensuring mutual survival and driven by adaptability.

Our Homo-centric view of the beginning of the canine human relationship may be negated by the relationship of modern Ethiopian wolves and gelada monkey herds in Africa. These predator and prey species live in fairly unique cooperative symbiosis. The wolves' predation success on large rodents increases from 15 to 68% when they hunt among the grazing gelada monkey herds. The geladas are defensive against all other predators while allowing the wolves access to rodent species threatening the monkeys' food supply. The wolves do not predate on the gelada monkeys or their young. Other predators avoid the wolves territory, sparing the monkeys from other predatory species. The beginning of the canine human relationship and the adaptability of canines and apes to cooperative survival, quite possibly may have

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started long before the first of the homo species that give rise to modern humans.

Re-establishing our ancestral relationships with dogs has become imperative, for while our modern world and technology has gone on to replace many of our dogs' ancestral jobs, the dogs are unaware that surveillance systems and deadbolts keep us safe from the dangers they are genetically programmed to assist us with. They may happily accept food from the fridge, but that has not negated their genetic programming to hunt, kill and consume their food in a natural way.

Dogs have superpowers and we only need to build functional, fair relationships to access them. Every google response to "why does my dog follow me to the toilet?" references separation anxiety, vulnerable dogs, Velcro dogs, guarding behavior and boredom, and the worst, secretly saying, "I love you." This prevailing notion of seeing our dogs as weak and needy does both the dog and the human a disservice. Humans who consistently rely on seeing a dog's behavior from a human behavior perspective will probably fail to experience their dog's superpowers.

So, why does my dog follow me to the toilet?

Dogs can ascertain mega-gigs of information from the smell of urine and feces. A natural dog will almost always inspect anything that comes out of another dog. It provides them the information they need to decipher the health, age, sex, maturity, sexual availability, strength, and membership of the pack. Our dogs have about 30 seconds to gather all of that information about their human pack members before we flush the data cube. They need to be there fast and present or they might miss the opportunity to have this passive conversation with us. Why our dogs follow us

to the toilet is why so many of them are natural alerters to all things awry in human health. If dogs didn't have the desire to follow us to the bathroom to gather our well-being info, they probably wouldn't have the drive or desire to make good service dogs.

I have found my most successful training outcomes have been in recreating activities natural to the dogs' perspective and fulfilling to the humans. This includes reminding people that our evolutionary success is based on our adaptability. Both humans and dogs are semi domesticated in varying amounts and the best relationships work when we remember not to neglect or negate that part of our natures when dealing with dogs and their owners. We honor our dogs by remembering where we've come from, as we plan our future relationships with rewarding goals for our canine partners.

## COMING UP NEXT ISSUE: PART 2:

### Lets Go Hunting!: Integrating the Canine Human Relationship Into Training Programs

*Valerie Ann Erwin has been teaching, training and mentoring for most of her professional life. Her degree in Medical Technology was granted with a minor in Evolutionary Biology. She also worked as an archaeologist for 10 years after earning a BS in Art History with minors in Anthropology and Medieval History. She has an AS in Engineering. After 40 years experience training and competing successfully in Equestrian 3-Day Eventing, she started training personal service dogs and therapy dogs in the 1990s. She currently instructs at the Canine/Human Relationship Institute and is certified in the NePoPo method of obedience as a Gold School Graduate with Bart and Michael Bellon. Valerie has been an avid hobby wildlife rehabber and conservationist since childhood. She is a Professional member of the IACP, and a 3 year member of the IACP Therapy Dog Committee. She owns New Paltz Dog Training and Canine Adventures in New Paltz, NY.*

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# What Was I Thinking?

by Angela Leuck

All my life I've owned dogs. But what I knew when I was younger is way different than what I know now. It's not that I've had tons of dogs; only 12 of my own to be exact. But I've experienced what life has thrown at me for the past 50 years. There was Brandy, the poodle, Caesar, the Doberman, Tasha, then Madison, both mini Schnauzers, Symphony & Miles (Weimaraners), Gemma, Mara & Axel, all Olde English Bulldogges, and let's not forget my fosters and foster failures Charlie the Weimeraner, Thor the cattle dog mix and my 13-year-old Chihuahua, Ellie Bee.

Gemma, my gentle, kind girl, and I became a registered therapy team the summer of 2013. I was 44. However, a few weeks later she was diagnosed with lymphosarcoma, and our family made the choice to try chemotherapy. She weathered through the treatments without batting an eye.

Meanwhile, we visited libraries for children to read to her, rehab facilities visiting folks recovering from surgery and Morningside House senior home in downtown Leesburg, Virginia. They loved having her there. She enjoyed her visits and I loved connecting people with my girl.

Eight months later she succumbed to the disease, but my desire to connect, guide and help people with their canines did not falter.

A local business hired me to help with their day school obedience program. What started as part time grew to a full-time-plus job after a year. I was hungry for more knowledge and more experiences. However, my path did not align with my employer and I respectfully gave a month's notice and left to start my own business.

I was 46 and starting my own business.

What was I thinking?

The only experience I had with dogs was my own, and the canines that I worked with the past 1 ½ years.

I plunged forward and business blossomed quickly--almost too quickly. Between consults and booking board and trains, two sons in school with sports and various musical activities, a husband, and a farm and a house to take care of, I no longer had any time on my hands.

By the end of summer, a herniated disk followed by spinal fusion surgery in January of 2016 made me physically come to a screeching halt. I realized with the physical slow down, which trickled to a mental slow down, that I had layered far too much on my plate. I had become a hot anxious mess trying to juggle it all.

I couldn't control my injury. I couldn't help my mom who had recently been diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder. I really couldn't control my dogs because my lack of movement to walk with them and engage with them was basically nonexistent. I couldn't control my clients and how they lived life with their dogs. The uncertainty in my mind that came with the start-up of a new business was doubly increased because of my immobility and inability to work. I felt almost shut down and completely frustrated. Again, it made me question what was I thinking?

So slow down I did. The physical halt allowed my brain and soul to take pause.

With all of these challenges racing through my head, I knew I wanted more for myself. I knew I wanted peace of mind. I knew I wanted to take responsibility first and foremost for myself. I knew that I did not want to carry the weight of other people's choices because those are not mine to carry.



I realized I could only control ME and how I handled situations. I realized I could roll with the punches. I slowed down. I stopped trying to have the neatest house, the perfect heel with my dogs by my side, my children appropriately dressed just so. I let all of that stuff go.

Then the lightbulb moment came. I wanted to build the relationship with myself first, and THEN I could build relationships with other humans and animals. I realized how much I truly enjoy helping others with their dogs.

I pause a lot now. If I feel frustration or anxiety is rising within, I take a deep long series of breaths.

With the money I earn I continue to invest back into my education and experiences and awareness.

So what are the lessons I've learned from having to spend months in bed, being humbled and taking a hard look at myself and watching the world continue to go on around me?

Slow down. Everything doesn't have to or need to happen right this moment.

I can't control everything. Especially not nature, and definitely not my clients.

Listen...not just with your ears, but all of your senses, heart and soul.

Stop judging. Each and everyone of us are making our own choices and we live with those choices. Who am I to judge what choice you make? And as for myself, I don't have to have my dog at a perfect heel, and if they make a mistake or I make a mistake... so what. I've chosen to learn from those mistakes. I used to worry about what other people thought, but not anymore.

Boundaries are lifesavers. I am able to make them now and stick to them. I can also choose to change them.





Choices are mine to make for my journey and I realize that everyone else makes their choices for their own journey.

I will never stop learning! I don't know it all and I know I never will. I am humbled by this realization.

After all this, I realized I am a confident Canine Relationship Coach, female business owner, wife and mother. I know what I want to do in life and I know what my limits are. Even though I don't have years upon years of working with hundreds and thousands of dogs, I have life experience that is valuable and helps me guide and have empathy for the dog owners and clients.

I am committed to physically and spiritually caring for myself, my family, and to the dogs and people that own them. I have learned I can give clients the information to succeed, but only they can choose to use the information and knowledge to create their own successes.

At the ripe age of 50, I want to add more notches of experience on my belt as I go beyond. And to those incredible, unique individuals that have and will continue to be part of my journey thus far (you know who you are), I am so very honored to be connected with you.

Angela Leuck runs her business, Anything's Pawsbull, LLC as a Canine Relationship Coach out of her home in Lovettsville Virginia. She is a Professional member of the IACP and a Team Member with the Canine Human Relationship Institute in Blue Ridge, Texas. Her focus is bridging the gap between the human and canine mind to foster a mutually trusting and respectful relationship."

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**The earliest drawings of wolves are in caves in southern Europe and date from 20,000 B.C.**

*"We have doomed the wolf not for what it is, but for what we deliberately and mistakenly perceive it to be--the mythologized epitome of a savage ruthless killer--which is, in reality, no more than a reflected image of ourselves."*

- Farley Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf*

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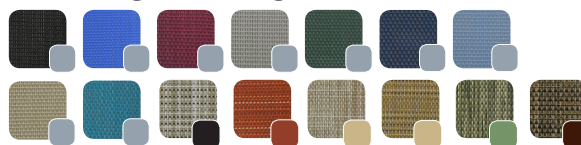
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# Critical Thinking

by Mailey McLaughlin, M.Ed., CDTA/PDTI, Editor

You may not have noticed, but this issue of your *Safehands Journal* comes wholly from a female perspective. All of the articles in this issue, and the cover photo, were submitted by women. This wasn't my plan; it just organically evolved and I thought it was interesting to point out. I always try to include multiple perspectives in this publication, but what ends up on the page is often determined by what has been submitted, and what will fit. It just so happens that both of those criteria could be met by women at this time.

When I started out working with people and their pets 37 years ago in veterinary medicine, that industry was definitely more male-dominated than it is now. That all changed in 2007, when women began to outnumber men in graduating classes. The trend has spiked steadily upward since then. In pet dog and competition/sports training, the trend of "more women in the field than men" has also been spiking upward as well. One could argue several reasons for these spikes, some of which are patently sexist; I have my own beliefs about why female trainers outnumber men in the field, but the truth is that we don't really have any hard evidence and so speculation will always be a bit biased.

My point here is not to belabor the issue or make anyone's blood pressure spike. The trends are observable and quantifiable that there are more females working as pet dog trainers than there are males. Whether this is a positive or a negative for the industry might well depend upon your perspective, but men and women each have strengths and weaknesses that contribute to success in this field, and many examples exist of both genders having found lasting success and longevity when one takes into account the multiple variables of money, accolades, titles, authorship, followers, and the like.

But a larger point is this: regardless of the numbers of each gender being represented as the *supply* side of training, women far outnumber men as *consumers* of dog training.

So it stands to reason that marketing dog training to women, who are the main consumers of it, is a good business model in these current times. One would surmise that women marketing to other women would

make good business sense and be relatively easier, but maybe the trainer's gender isn't as important as the way the trainer sells his or her services. Women trainers may have an advantage here, but all of us could stand to sharpen up our marketing skills to make sure we are being as productive as possible, and serving as many potential customers properly (and inoffensively—more on that in a minute).

*NOTE: the following information makes generous use of, well, generalizations--about men and women. Everyone is different and so these will not apply to everyone specifically, but generally. Non-traditional genders are omitted for brevity only.*

Selling to women is often about rapport building and trust. It takes a bit longer to build, so expect this and account for it. Sincere compliments can be a great way to build rapport, but be sure to compliment actions, not looks. Everyone likes to feel like they are getting the hang of something, and they enjoy being told that they are adept at certain things--especially training their dogs. Getting more proficient at training her dog is something our client has control over, and this is important.

Women's time matters as much as men's. Most often, women are the ones juggling families and work (and the dog!). Men tend to offer (and arrive at) solutions to problems fairly quickly, but a simple statement like "what do you want to accomplish with our time today?" may often be more helpful as a sales strategy. As long as the time is used wisely, and toward a goal, your client may be fine with it taking a bit longer. And since we know that repetition helps set muscle memory, and that the basics, repeated often, are a great foundation for future success when dealing with dogs, moving away from a mindset of "let's just get this done the fastest way" will allow for incremental progress.

I think all of us struggle with feeling like we don't have enough time, but this is often more pronounced in women, especially women with children. When your customer is feeling pinched for time, quality service almost always matters more than price. Be confident in your pricing and do not discount if you don't need to, but remember that the level of service you offer is



what will truly set you apart from your competitors. If you give excellent service, people will pay the prices you set.

Women make buying decisions differently than men. It's not because we are "fickle," or "we can't make up our minds." It's because our brains work differently. We ask more questions, whereas men generally focus on their top criteria, find a match, and buy it. All done! Women tend to enjoy the hunt more, but even when we are pressed for time and cannot browse for fun, we typically spend more time to arrive at a decision and ask for clarification more often. If you want to sell to us, be prepared to answer questions honestly—and if you do not know the answer, be honest about that, as well. “I don't actually know the answer to that, but I can find out in the next day or so and get back to you” is a perfectly acceptable reply to a question. I know as a consumer that this response will make me more likely to view you favorably than if you had made up something on the spot.

I'm sure that you may be wondering about how to market successfully without being offensive to anyone's gender. This is a great question to ponder, not because people are necessarily “more easily offended these days” (this is an incorrect label, and if you believe it, you should work to change why you do), but because offending your customers is just bad business, and it is unnecessary.

It really isn't difficult to appeal to a broad range of customers if you have an awareness, some empathy, and a desire to be kind and helpful. If you use humor, be neutrally funny and include your customers in on the joke. Never make fun of someone's looks (even your own), keep race and culture out of your assumptions and observations, adjust your speech as much as possible to match their ability to understand, refrain from touching them without asking specific permission (“would you mind if I touch your hand to show you how to hold the leash?”), and avoid controversial topics like religion and politics. Stick to facts and the business at hand for best results. As you would do with a dog, find ways to reward progress and gently redirect mistakes to make the game fun for them, and if you are at a loss, compliment their dog!

I'm a big fan of seeing things from more than one angle—in work, in social situations, in politics, in life. Of course I have biases (we all do), but part of being an adult in today's world means trying harder to understand my biases and work to eradicate them when they aren't beneficial to me or others. Humans

are a labeling species, and indeed we would have gone extinct a long time ago if we didn't ascribe labels to things because we would have to relearn the world, and how it works, every morning upon awakening. This would be incredibly inefficient. So we place labels on behaviors and situations (and, unfortunately, people) as a way to make sense of the world. This works as long as we ascribe labels correctly, but since we have biases, we often tend to label things incorrectly, and we are loath to change labels once we have placed them.

Knowing this, I try really diligently not to mislabel based on my inherent biases, and when I do realize I have mislabeled, to consciously change the label so that it is correct. Because I make a conscious effort at this, I think I am probably better at it than people who 1. Don't think they have any biases and believe that they always label people, behaviors and situations properly, and/or 2. People who don't pay attention to how they label, and/or don't care if they have biases anyway.

But I'm not naturally better at this because I'm a woman. I'm better at it because I work at it. It isn't simple work, but being able to look inside oneself and make changes to achieve daily improvement never is—that's what makes it so worthwhile.

Personally, I think any competent dog trainer can sell to any gender, as long as the trainer understands how the genders may differ in their approaches to securing professional help with their dogs, and as long as the trainer understands also that gender “norms” are not, well, normal at all. Everyone is an individual and everyone desires to be treated as an individual. What matters more than treating your customer as a “typical” male or female consumer is that you understand a bit about human nature and that you are well aware that being able to market to human beings in general will make you more successful in the long run.

The more open you are to understanding how other people approach the world, the richer your world will become.

*Mailey, The Pooch Professor, is Editor of The Canine Professional Journal as well as the electronic Bulletin, and is co-Vice President of the IACP. She has worked professionally with dogs and their people for 35+ years, holds a Masters in Education, is a CDTA and PDTI through IACP, and is Behavior and Training Manager for the Atlanta Humane Society. Read more at [www.carpek9.blogspot.com](http://www.carpek9.blogspot.com).*

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