



Susquehanna Trail Dog Training Club

June 2007

Old Friends

by Connie Cuff

Pest Control



Some owners would desperately like their dogs to be less pestering but can't seem to persuade them to cooperate. Regardless of how many times they scold, correct, or attempt to satisfy their dogs' demands, the pestering dogs remain persistent.

For dogs, both negative and positive reactions are considered reinforcing. It is hard to believe that a disapproving response from an owner gives a positive reinforcement.

Dogs are animals that do not measure behavior in terms of "right" and "wrong" or "good" and "bad". Dogs determine which behavior to repeat and which to reduce based on the results of their actions. Regardless how negative an owner is, if the misbehaving dog repeats the behavior it perceives the experience to be positive. Generally, any form of attention the dog gets, the behavior was successful if the owner reacted at all.

Take, for example, you are on the phone, the dog barks and you respond with "shush" or you distract the dog with bribes, such as treats. The dog will learn that its actions lead to attention, even if it is negative. He experiences positive results as a direct consequence of its own impulsive behavior.

People who give their dog a "time out" by crating him find the dog actually never learns to quit his demanding behavior. Dogs that are confined while their owners work are more likely to demand attention when people are present.

So what is a person to do? In the presence of people, have the dog on a shortened leash and completely ignore the dog. If the dog attempts to walk away, use the lead to deliver a mild correction. By using the leash, he is receiving a negative reinforcement to a behavior rather than an owner's reaction which actually is punishment. Also, using a rattled can filled with pebbles works to distract the dog away from his owners.

If the dog decided to lie down and rest near his owners with a chew bone, at no time should you speak to the dog however difficult it should be. When dogs are allowed to experiment with pushy social behaviors and encounter unemotional negative results, they reduce these behaviors on their own without resentment of the owner.

One should wait until a dog is settled and sitting before petting or touching which helps to reinforce their quiet behavior. Sometimes it is a mistake to give positive reinforcement to a dog that is finally quiet and settled down.

Although it sounds reasonable to reward positive behavior, owners would be wise to consider their timing. If your intention is to read and pay no attention to your dog, would it make sense to give positive attention to the resigned dog?

Old Friends (Continued)

There is a risk that he will leap up and start the whole sequence again. The better choice is to provide items such as a toy or nyla bone that the dog can entertain itself during times you plan to designate as your own.

Designate periods of time each day when you pay no attention to your dog, even when it is behaving positively. Your dog will learn to enjoy being a quiet, self-contained companion.

Remember tired dogs pester and misbehave much less than "wired" ones. The quickest way to make a dog tired is to make it think, such as obedience or agility.

Expecting a dog to be near its owner but not always the center of attention is a reasonable goal once the correct reinforcements are used. Once pestering behavior is reduced, both dogs and their owners are able to develop a more mutually enjoyable, respectful relationship.

(Condensed from an article written by Peggy Moran, a behaviorist and trainer who has been working professionally with dogs since 1975.)

Using the Shaker Can

What people don't know is that the shaker can works best when the dog doesn't see anyone using it—thus leaving him to associate the noise with his activity rather than with a correction that came from a person.

Secondly, a shaker can is most effective when the sound occurs behind the dog. Simply put, it is a way to distract the dog from what he had been doing.

So if you have a dog that needs to be distracted from some undesirable behavior, if someone tells you to shake your can, smile not only at the hidden meaning, but also at the fact that you know how to do it right.

Till next time,

Connie

Breed of the Month

Boxer

submitted by Connie Cuff

The Boxer's fun-loving nature and rapport with children isn't only fun and games. Bred originally as a big-game hunting dog and family guardian, the loyal, courageous, and protective Boxer has also been used in the police work and during wartime.

The breed was developed in the 1880's around Munich, Germany, from crosses among local dogs, the English Bulldog and the Bullenheiser. The American Kennel Club registered its first member in 1904.

The AKC breed standard disqualifies all white dogs and some point to deafness in his characteristic, although critics claim that such a connection has not been proved.

The breed's name is generally accepted to come from its habit of rearing up and jabbing with its front paws during fights. Besides being energetic, Boxers are markedly devoted to their human families. They are very intelligent, although that quality, combined with their stubbornness, means that early obedience training is imperative. Combining these factors with their high-energy means they are not for everyone.

Boxers are prone to health conditions such as cardiomyopathy, cancer, leukemia and thyroid problems.

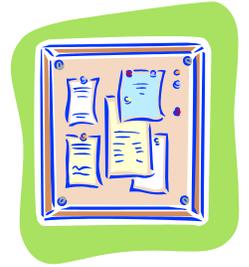
There is controversy over whether to crop the dogs' ears and is banned in Britain, Australia and Scandinavia. In the past decade, more people are opting to leave them natural and floppy.

Good looks, combined with good personality make the Boxer a challenge and "life to them just a bowl of cherries."





Notes and Notices



Our training has started at the Marina. Classes for beginners begins at 6:00pm and regular training at 7:00pm. Thanks to Mary Haas, Marjean Krech, Sarah Fry, and Ginny Pentz who have been helping me with the new students.

Our sympathies to Mary Lou and Bob Walsh for the loss of their Shih Tzu, Buddy.

We will be visiting the VA Hospital in Wilkes-Barre on July 8th at 1:45pm. All dogs must be TDI certified and you must carry your ID card. We are allowed 15 dogs so I have a sign-up sheet at class for those who are interested. It will be on a first come first serve basis, so if someone would drop out I can fill the slow with a reserve. This will be a one-time visit and for the 120 nursing home residents I'm sure it will be a worth-while trip.

Welcome new members:

Cathy and Steve Beeler with Tobey, Mix Breed

Joni Koch with Lucy, Husky Mix

Gwynne Lebo with Reggie, a Lab being trained for a blind organization in New York

Jody Reeder with Lucky, a Golden Retriever

Kathryn Remphrey with Duncan, a Labradoodle

Emily and Chris Snyder with General, a Mix Breed, and Cara, a Rottweiler

Larry and Janet Weidman with Maggie, a Cok-A-Poo

Natalie Witt with Mya, a Collie Mix, and Harley, a St. Bernard Mix

A big thank you to everyone who participated in the Nifty After 50 at the Columbia Mall and the Mt. Carmel Lions Street Fair, and who helped at the Pet Adoption Expo at Montgomery.



Trick!

Teaching your dog to do tricks is not only entertaining, it engages your dog's brain, reinforces the bond between you and gives you a better understanding of how your dog thinks. This useful trick will amuse you and your friends—it might even make your dog smile!

Teach It

Your dog can learn to identify dozens of objects by name. Lay them all out on the floor and ask your dog to indicate a specific item.

1. Start with a fun object whose name is already familiar to your dog, such as a tennis ball. Lay it in a clear area alongside two other nonenticing objects, such as a hammer and hairbrush.

2. Point toward the objects and tell your dog to “find the ball.” Praise him the moment he grabs the correct object. Use your fetch command to encourage him to bring it to you. Reward him with a treat rather than by playing with the toy, as the latter would encourage him to only select toys from the pile of objects.

3. Add a second toy whose name is known to your dog. Alternate which one you tell him to find. If he chooses incorrectly, don't scold him, but rather, don't acknowledge it one way or the other. Keep telling him to “find [the object].”

What to Expect

This fun game really keeps your dog thinking. Practice with different toys and in different locations. Dogs learn the same way we do—by repetition—so keep practicing!



Discern Object Names

Prerequisites

Helpful: Fetch

Troubleshooting

My dog is so excited, he grabs the first object he sees. Hold your dog for 10 seconds as you let the words sink in. Repeat your object name several times and let him focus on the object from afar.

Build on It

Rico, a border collie from Germany, demonstrated his knowledge of 200 object names!

Tip

Use object names frequently with your dog. He can learn hundreds of words!

Photograph: Nick Saglimbeni

Verbal Cue
Find [object name]



TRY THIS

Teach your dog to drink from a sports bottle.

Dogs generally think any water they find is drinkable, but we know better. Puddles hide toxins, and lakes and streams harbor bacteria and parasites. To protect our dogs from these dangers, we often tote along an extra bottle of water and a bowl for them. But you can dispense with the bowl if you teach your dog to drink straight from a squirty sports bottle, just like you!

Start when your dog is thirsty from moderate exercise. Squirt a little water into a shallow bowl, and let your dog drink that up. It will still want more, so when it finishes, slowly squirt water into the bowl while allowing your dog to continue drinking. Squirt more slowly than your dog drinks, so that it gets impatient and starts licking the water as it comes out of the sports bottle squirt top instead of waiting for it to collect in the bowl.

At this point, turn the bottle sideways so the stream flows across your dog's tongue rather than down its



KENT & DONNA DANNEN/BULLMASTIFF

throat. Now raise the bottle up a little, so the dog's muzzle is roughly parallel to the ground. Don't squeeze the water out too fast — your dog needs to practice learning how to lap and swallow a stream of water.

If some water goes down the wrong way, your dog will cough to clear its throat. Wait a moment or two before offering more.

Tip: Don't hold the bottle too high, or your dog will have trouble swallowing water without choking on it. A dog's natural drinking position is with its muzzle pointing down. A dog can learn to drink with its muzzle parallel, but if it's much higher than that, it will likely gag and cough as water runs down its throat faster than it can swallow.

— *September Morn*

UPCOMING TDI VISITS AND CLUB ACTIVITIES

June 7 (Thurs)	Nottingham Village Strawbridge Rd., Northumberland	6:45pm
June 9 (Sat)	SART Mock Shelter Drill Berwick H.S. (Contact Sally Grottini if you wish to attend)	10:00am-3:00pm
June 14 (Thurs)	Penn Lutheran Village Selinsgrove	6:45pm
July 8 (Sun)	VA Hospital Wilkes-Barre TDI Only, Register with Connie	1:45pm
August 18 (Sat)	Riverfest Sunbury (We will hand out dog literature and TDI/CGC information. We also will sell homemade dog biscuits. We will have therapy dogs with us.)	9:00am-2:00pm
August 25 (Sat)	Northumberland Co. Expo Sunbury (We will hand out dog literature and TDI/CGC information. We also will sell homemade dog biscuits. We will have therapy dogs with us.)	12:00pm-3:00pm
<u>Every Wednesday</u>	Riverwoods Lewisburg, PA	10:00am
<u>2nd Thursday</u>	Shamokin Hospital	2:00pm
<u>3rd Thursday</u>	Sunbury Community Hospital Mansion Nursing Home, Market St., Sunbury Sunshine Corners, Market St., Sunbury	1:00-1:30pm 1:45pm 2:15pm
<u>Last Thursday</u>	Geisinger Rehab—Health South	2:00-3:00pm

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June 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			Riverwoods (Lewisburg) 10am	Nottingham Village (Northumberland) 6:45pm		SART Drill (Berwick H.S.) 10am-3pm
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
			Riverwoods (Lewisburg) 10am	Shamokin Hospital 2pm		
				Penn Lutheran Village (Selinsgrove) 6:45pm		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
			Riverwoods (Lewisburg) 10am	Sunbury Community Hospital 1pm-1:30pm		
				Mansion Nursing Home (Sunbury) 1:45pm		
				Sunshine Corner (Market St., Sunbury) 2:15pm		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
			Riverwoods (Lewisburg) 10am	Geisinger Rehab (Health South) 2pm-3pm		