



Susquehanna Trail Dog Training Club

March 2008

Old Friends

by Connie Cuff



In training our dogs we sometimes use the wrong body language that affect our dogs behavior. Even though some of us have been training for a long time, we can become slack with our commands. As stated by Alan Beck, Director of the Center for the Human-Animal Bond at Purdue University's School of Vet Medicine, "Dogs are probably the best decoder of human behaviors of any animal that has ever been tested.

You probably know to use your verbal cues consistently, but can you say the same of your physical cues? Consistent cues are not only essential to having a well-behaved dog, but essential to having a happy dog.

#1 People calling their dogs often lean forward, slap their thighs and yell "come". Dogs balk at this aggressive posturing and hang back or approach slowly. Turn your back and walk away from the dog, clap and use an excited tone of voice. Every time your dog comes to you, make it an enormous happy event. Be sure that neither you nor anyone else ever reprimands your dog for coming. Remember that dogs will repeat behaviors that make them feel good.

#2 If your dog is getting up on the "sit" command, stand in front of him and lean your body forward. Also try sitting him with his hind end near a wall.

#3 When a dog jumps on you we push the dog away with your hands and back away from him. This physical cue is actually an invitation to play and so the jumping only gets worse. Instead of backing up, "move your body in the direction of the dog". You have to move into the space your dog is trying to occupy, not back away.

#4 In greeting dogs we should stand sideways rather than head-on. Eye contact from the side make a dog feel more comfortable. If the dog is relaxed, allow him to sniff your hand and then scratch him on the chest.

We also show affection by hugging dogs (children do this all the time). While humans see hugging as a form of affection, this behavior sends a different message to a dog. Make the contact pleasurable with gentle message and rubs.

Remember each breed has its own point of view. While a Golden Retriever has no personal space, herding dogs can't comprehend this. They need lots of personal space.

Old Friends (Continued)

In training our dogs any physical abuse will only lead to aggressive behavior and gives the dog the wrong message. Our training collar, if used correctly will give the dog the correction we are looking for.

Dogs have naturally developed to understand basic human body language. By taking the time to adjust our actions to make more sense to our dogs, we can return the favor.

"There's no road map for a dog to follow into your heart. For some people, the road is just a little longer. But the road, once found, is endless and as rewarding as a raised paw, a wet nose, a kiss from the most loving of souls. A kind word passed unspoken from eyes that you can never look away from again. Nor do you want to".

- Anne Bobby "Case History" 2003

Till next time,

Connie

Minutes (February 5, 2008)

submitted by Ginny Pentz

The meeting of the STDTC was called to order by Pres., Connie Cuff, with 25 members present.

Report of the President:

When we come to class each week we keep our dogs socialized which is the most important part of training, especially when we do therapy work. From time to time all our dogs will challenge us and we must show them in a calm assertive way that we are in charge. Every dog has a unique personality and responds to different corrections.

I have asked Marjean Krech to get in touch with Ray Ramos who said he would be willing to talk to our group. He works with behavioral problems in the home like Cesar Milan. Some of our members have used his services. Since he works evenings it would be impossible for him to come to our class.

We are able to use the Donald Heeter Community Center in Lewisburg which will charge us \$25. They have a wooden gym floor so be sure you have your dogs nails trimmed. How many people here would be able to come?

I wish to thank Karen Sodrick for carding our library books. I have them here this evening if anyone would like to take some home.

Report of Secretary:

Minutes of the January are as written in the Feb. newsletter. Minutes were approved as written.

Report of Treasurer:

(Not available in Online Edition)

Minutes (Continued)

New Business:

I wish to congratulate new TDI members - Sarah Fry with Buddy,
Virginia Pentz with Sasha
Deb Weikel with Lucy
Danelle Reinsburrow with Reese,
Judy Bowersox with Autumn and Rosie
Arris f.e.n. Moser with Ryley

I have a sign up sheet for the medium prison which we will visit Feb 26th. This is for badged members only. I need a sign up for a visit for the Selinsgrove Center Feb 26th.

The Pet Platoon will be sponsoring another Pet Adoption Expo in Montgomery (RT 15) on May 10. I would like to have a table there with pass out literature and do the TDI and CGC testing.

Old Business:

Got a thank you from Nottingham Village. Paws Abilities will be at the Farm Show building, Harrisburg on March 3th and 9th. Therapy visits as in newsletter.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ginny Pentz

Fund Raiser

Sunbury Motor Company
943 North Fourth Street
Sunbury PA 17801
Phone (570)286-7746 * Fax (570)286-9389

My name is Tom Mertz, I along with my Uncle Bob (he's actually my 2nd cousin) own Sunbury Motors Co. Sunbury Motors was established in 1915 by my great grandfather J. O. Mertz. There is a brief history, but that is not the reason for this letter. I am asking for your help.

In order to sell as many vehicles as we do, we have to spend a lot of money each month on radio, TV, and newspaper advertising. Often it's tough to figure out what worked and what didn't. I thought if I could come up with a program where I was able to cut my advertising budget by 75% and give that saved money back to the local community and still sell the same amount of cars, everyone would win.

Here is what I am going to try. For everone who refers a customer to Sunbury Motors we will pay \$225 to your favorite charity or organization. Think of any cause or organization that your passionate about and that organization will receive \$225 for each referral that buys any new or used vehicle from us.

Just think of the impact you could have on the people or organization that you care the most about. There is no limit. If you refer them and they buy, \$225 goes to charity!

Believe me, this is a little risky. I cut way back on my normal advertising budget and hope to sell the same amount of vehicles. I want to send as much money as I can to your cause, but I need your help! If you know anyone who is thinking about buying a vehicle in the next few nonths, refer them to Sunbury Motors and we will treat them with the utmost respect and do anything we can to help with their transportation needs. We are the area's largest Ford, Lincoln, Mercury, Kia, Hyundai dealer in 6 counties. This is a real oppotunity for Sunbury Motors to infuse tens of thousands of dollars to the betterment of our community.

Here is all you have to do, write your name and phone number on the back of the cards we have enclosed. Hand them to anyone in the market for a new or used vehicle, if they purchase a vehicle from us and hand us one of the cards, I will call you to find out who to write the \$225 check to. It is that simple. I hope you can envision how huge this could be for everone. Thank you for taking the time to read through this letter. Any questions, please do not hesitate to call 570-286-7746 or email me at tommertz@sunburymotors.com.

Take Care

Tom Mertz

P.S. Examples of who could benefit: Your church, YMCA, fire department, United Way, Salvation Army, Red Cross, benefit rides, Little League, AYSO, youth organization, Kiwanis, Rotary, American Cancer Society, plus any other charitable organization.

Sherry's Corner

by Sherry Carpenter

DO DOG PARKS PROMISE TOO MUCH?

According to Steve Nelson, one of the Tudek Dog Park members who witnessed the incident, the young Maltese seemed terrified of the larger adult dogs. He rolled over submissively on his back and whimpered. They, in turn, were a “pack of just interested in the newcomer” canines. One of the owners picked up the puppy and held it protectively. The other owner disagreed with the action and placed it back on the ground in what State College’s Tudek Dog Park members call the “large dog area”. The puppy’s cry-- whether in terror or in protest sparked bully behavior and roughness injuring the little one. He died that evening. Was he the victim of irresponsible, uninformed owners? Was he the victim of dog park promises? According to the website, “the park is the “secret” to a well-socialized, eternally grateful, loving dog, healthy and happy who will not bark and annoy the neighbors and chew furniture.”

All of this is possible, of course and “believers” say that well run dog parks are community assets for dog owners and dogs alike. They help dogs and owners lead happier, more fulfilling lives in the complexity of urban living. One private Philadelphia park Dr. James Serpell, University of Pennsylvania Animal/Human Interaction Behavior Sciences, screens all dogs for temperament reactions to both other dogs and other people. He further limits the number of dogs using the Park at one time.

Dr. Melissa J. Bain feels so strongly about the need for educating clients on dog parks she spoke on this topic at a recent annual meeting of the AVMA. Bain declared, “Your clients are going to go to dog parks. Dog parks are not going to go away.” Her talk included how to handle off-leash dogs at parks and whether particular dogs should visit dog parks at all. (Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA) Sept. 15) The veterinarian stressed that parks are not puppy kindergartens, not a place to socialize a dog, not a place for aggressive dogs and not a place to take a dog without a full set of vaccinations. (The Nittany Veterinary hospital manager in the State College area says they can often fill a waiting room with coughing dogs who habitually use the dog park when one dog is not up-to-date on vaccination for the contagious disease.)

Steve and Heather Nelson, State College only take one of two dogs to Tudek Dog Park because one of their dogs is too dominant. Steve also says it is not the place to take children. “This is a park primarily for dogs he stresses.” Steve is quick to add that he finds older dog owners delight in the dog park, one of the very few in this area of Pennsylvania, because they find companionship with other dog owners and their dogs have the opportunity for both physical and mental stimulation they could not enjoy in a quiet walk. In fact, he says, he and his wife were surprised at the social benefits they have had through their use of the park. Steve has even become the webmaster for tudekdogpark.org.

Tudek Park is part of a 30 acre site cared for by Centre Region Parks Maintenance. Over \$20,000 in fencing was purchased through “Friends of Tudek Dog Park. (Funding is raised through dog washes, selling T shirts and mugs.) Rules are clearly posted and there is a double entry for safety. Rules include: no treats or food (human or dog), no alcoholic beverages, no strollers, bicycles and children’s toys, no female dogs in season, owners must carry a leash. Dogs must also have a clearly visible dog and rabies tag. Dogs are not allowed to dig, bark and must be under owner control. The owner is 100% responsible for the actions of his dog and the recall is emphasized as an exercise to demonstrate control to both dog and other owners.

Successful dog parks appear to have followed the same path to what some see as an “off leash heaven”. First, they form an organization of dog owners and apply for a 501(c)3 nonprofit status. Second in importance is a source of private funding. Fund raisers such as dog washes, T shirt sales etc. are possible along with support from dog related businesses. Dog organizations may “book” or rent the park for a day or part of a day for activities for their members.

Finding the right site for a dog park can be a real challenge. Land is in short supply in most populated areas. The

ideal dog park has been described as consisting of one or more acres surrounded by a 4 to 6 foot fence, shade and water, adequate drainage to preserve soil quality and promote cleanliness, adequate parking close to the site, double-gated entry, benches and water stations and plastic pick-up bags with covered receptacles. And, successful dog park groups say have rules in place and in writing before going before municipalities and commissions. Finally, each person using the park must sign a document in which the owner agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the sponsoring organization in the event of any legal claims. As an extra precaution many parks recommend signs spelling the rules for use and stress that owners do so at their own risk. (Dog Fancy, 9/03: How To Lobby for a Dog Park. Also: Dog Park Etiquette.)

The Old Man and the Dog

submitted by Barb Minnick

“Watch out! You nearly broad sided that car!” My father yelled at me.
“Can’t you do anything right?”

Those words hurt worse than blows. I turned my head toward the elderly man in the seat beside me, daring me to challenge him. A lump rose in my throat as I averted my eyes I wasn’t prepared for another battle.

“I saw the car, Dad. Please don’t yell at me when I’m driving.” My voice was measured and steady, sounding far calmer than I really felt.

Dad glared at me, then turned away and settled back. At home I left Dad in front of the television and went outside to collect my thoughts. Dark, heavy clouds hung in the air with a promise of rain. The rumble of distant thunder seemed to echo my inner turmoil.



What could I do about him?

Dad had been a lumberjack in Washington and Oregon. He had enjoyed being outdoors and had reveled in pitting his strength against the forces of nature. He had entered grueling lumberjack competitions, and had placed often. The shelves in his house were filled with trophies that attested to his prowess.

The years marched on relentlessly. The first time he couldn’t lift a heavy log, he joked about it; but later that same day I saw him outside alone, straining to lift it. He became irritable whenever anyone teased him about his advancing age, or when he couldn’t do something he had done as a younger man.

Four days after his sixty-seventh birthday, he had a heart attack. An ambulance sped him to the hospital while a paramedic administered CPR to keep blood and oxygen flowing. At the hospital, Dad was rushed into an operating room. He was lucky; he survived.

But something inside Dad died. His zest for life was gone. He obstinately refused to follow doctor’s orders. Suggestions and offers of help were turned aside with sarcasm and insults. The number of visitors thinned, then finally stopped altogether. Dad was left alone.

The Old Man and the Dog (Continued)

My husband, Dick, and I asked Dad to come live with us on our small farm. We hoped the fresh air and rustic atmosphere would help him adjust. Within a week after he moved in, I regretted the invitation. It seemed nothing was satisfactory. He criticized everything I did. I became frustrated and moody. Soon I was taking my pent-up anger out on Dick. We began to bicker and argue. Alarmed, Dick sought out our pastor and explained the situation. The clergyman set up weekly counseling appointments for us. At the close of each session he prayed, asking God to soothe Dad's troubled mind. But the months wore on and God was silent. Something had to be done and it was up to me to do it.

The next day I sat down with the phone book and methodically called each of the mental health clinics listed in the Yellow Pages. I explained my problem to each of the sympathetic voices that answered. In vain. Just when I was giving up hope, one of the voices suddenly exclaimed, "I just read something that might help you! Let me go get the article." I listened as he read. The article described a remarkable study done at a nursing home. All of the patients were under treatment for chronic depression. Yet their attitudes had improved dramatically when they were given responsibility for a dog.

I drove to the animal shelter that afternoon. After I filled out a questionnaire, a uniformed officer led me to the kennels. The odor of disinfectant stung my nostrils as I moved down the row of pens. Each contained five to seven dogs. Long-haired dogs, curly-haired dogs, black dogs, spotted dogs all jumped up, trying to reach me. I studied each one but rejected one after the other for various reasons too big, too small, too much hair. As I neared the last pen a dog in the shadows of the far corner struggled to his feet, walked to the front of the run and sat down. It was a pointer, one of the dog world's aristocrats. But this was a caricature of the breed. Years had etched his face and muzzle with shades of gray. His hipbones jutted out in lopsided triangles. But it was his eyes that caught and held my attention. Calm and clear, they beheld me unwaveringly.

I pointed to the dog. "Can you tell me about him?" The officer looked, then shook his head in puzzlement.

"He's a funny one. Appeared out of nowhere and sat in front of the gate. We brought him in, figuring someone would be right down to claim him. That was two weeks ago and we've heard nothing. His time is up tomorrow." He gestured helplessly.

As the words sank in I turned to the man in horror. "You mean you're going to kill him?"

"Ma'am," he said gently, "that's our policy. We don't have room for every unclaimed dog."

I looked at the pointer again the calm brown eyes awaited my decision. "I'll take him," I said.

I drove home with the dog on the front seat beside me. When I reached the house I honked the horn twice. I was helping my prize out of the car when Dad shuffled onto the front porch.

"Ta-da! Look what I got for you, Dad!" I said excitedly.

Dad looked, and then wrinkled his face in disgust. "If I had wanted a dog I would have gotten one. And I would have picked out a better specimen than that bag of bones. Keep it! I don't want it" Dad waved his arm scornfully and turned back toward the house.

Anger rose inside me. It squeezed together my throat muscles and pounded into my temples.

The Old Man and the Dog (Continued)

“You’d better get used to him, Dad. He’s staying!” Dad ignored me. “Did you hear me, Dad?” I screamed. At those words Dad whirled angrily, his hands clenched at his sides, his eyes narrowed and blazing with hate.

We stood glaring at each other like duelists, when suddenly the pointer pulled free from my grasp. He wobbled toward my dad and sat down in front of him. Then slowly, carefully, he raised his paw.

Dad’s lower jaw trembled as he stared at the uplifted paw. Confusion replaced the anger in his eyes. The pointer waited patiently. Then Dad was on his knees hugging the animal.

It was the beginning of a warm and intimate friendship. Dad named the pointer Cheyenne. Together he and Cheyenne explored the community. They spent long hours walking down dusty lanes. They spent reflective moments on the banks of streams, angling for tasty trout. They even started to attend Sunday services together, Dad sitting in a pew and Cheyenne lying quietly at his feet.

Dad and Cheyenne were inseparable throughout the next three years. Dad’s bitterness faded, and he and Cheyenne made many friends. Then late one night I was startled to feel Cheyenne’s cold nose burrowing through our bed covers. He had never before come into our bedroom at night. I woke Dick, put on my robe and ran into my father’s room. Dad lay in his bed, his face serene. But his spirit had left quietly sometime during the night.

Two days later my shock and grief deepened when I discovered Cheyenne lying dead beside Dad’s bed. I wrapped his still form in the rag rug he had slept on. As Dick and I buried him near a favorite fishing hole, I silently thanked the dog for the help he had given me in restoring Dad’s peace of mind.

The morning of Dad’s funeral dawned overcast and dreary. This day looks like the way I feel, I thought, as I walked down the aisle to the pews reserved for family. I was surprised to see the many friends Dad and Cheyenne had made filling the church. The pastor began his eulogy. It was a tribute to both Dad and the dog who had changed his life. And then the pastor turned to Hebrews 13:2. “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers.”

“I’ve often thanked God for sending that angel,” he said.

For me, the past dropped into place, completing a puzzle that I had not seen before: the sympathetic voice that had just read the right article...

Cheyenne’s unexpected appearance at the animal shelter. . .his calm acceptance and complete devotion to my father. . .and the proximity of their deaths. And suddenly I understood. I knew that God had answered my prayers after all.

Breed of the Month

Toy Fox Terrier

submitted by Connie Cuff

Both a toy and a terrier, the Toy Fox Terrier stays true to its name. This distinctly American breed traces its ancestry back to the Smooth Fox Terrier of England, which was used for hunting vermin and small game. American fanciers crossed the tiniest of these terriers with a Chihuahua, Italian Greyhound and Manchester to get a scaled-down version of the Smooth Fox Terrier.

The result was an intelligent, athletic, comical little dog, with erect ears, docked tail, a predominantly white body and black and/or tan markings on the head, back and rump.

Scrappy without being hyper, the Toy Fox Terrier is equally happy treeing squirrels, chasing balls, or curling up on your lap while you read a book.

With their scrappy attitude, they do not back down from anything. They are best suited for an active retiree or with a family that has a fenced yard. They are not a good choice for toddlers but fine with older children.

The UKC recognized the Toy Fox Terrier as part of the Terrier Group in 1936, but the AKC admitted them in 2003 and placed them in the Toy Group.

While protective and loyal, they are not overly aggressive. Their sunny disposition predispose them more to tireless play. Their alert character and loyalty make them outstanding watchdogs.

One of the breed's best indoor attributes is its naturally clean and tidy appearance, and the short, fine glossy coat requires little in the way of grooming.

Excellent house pet, loyal companion, athletic competitor, avid watchdog, packs a lot of attributes into one small dog.





Notes and Notices



I have mentioned at class that Ray Ramos, a dog behaviorist, would try to visit our class to help us with some of our training mistakes. I met with him recently and he said he would try to take a Tuesday off from work and visit us at the Center. When I hear from him I will E-mail or call those who do not have a computer.

There is a 3-year-old female Brittany Spaniel available for adoption. She is spayed, chipped and up-to-date on shots, trained to underground fencing. Reason for new home - owner passed away. Please call Connie.

We welcome new members:

Todd and Lisa Eroh, from Selinsgrove with their German Shepherd

Phyllis Donegan from Lewisburg with her Golden Retriever

Regina Russell from Sunbury with her Chihuahua, Einstein

Kathy Bohinsky from Mifflinburg with her Bichon Frise

I need sign ups for the Selinsgrove Center for Match

NO CLASS AT THE SELINGROVE CENTER MARCH 18TH

We have been asked again to do our usual demo at “Nifty After 50” at the Columbia Mall. It will be at 11:00am on Wed. May 7th. The people enjoy seeing the dogs and I hope I have a nice group to attend.

UPCOMING TDI VISITS AND CLUB ACTIVITIES

Mar. 3 (Mon)	Bucknell University (TDI only)	6:00 pm
Mar. 5 (Wed)	Reading (White Deer Elem.) Riverwoods	9:00 am 10:00am
Mar. 6 (Thurs)	Nottingham Village Northumberland	6:45pm
Mar. 10 (Mon)	Reading Chief Shikellamy	9:00am
Mar. 12 (Wed)	Riverwoods	10:00am
Mar. 13 (Thurs)	Northeastern Academy, Rt 61 Life Geisinger, Kulpmont Shamokin Hospital Elm Croft (formerly Out Look Pointe), Lewisburg	1:00pm 2:00pm 3:00pm 6:45pm
Mar. 18 (Tues)	NO CLASS - SELINGSGROVE CENTER	
Mar. 19 (Wed)	Reading (White Deer Elem.) Riverwoods	9:00am 10:00am
Mar. 20 (Thurs)	Sunbury Community Hospital Mansion Nursing Home Sunshine Corners	1:00pm 1:45pm 2:15pm
Mar. 24 (Mon)	Bucknell University TDI Only	6:00pm
Mar. 26 (Wed)	Riverwoods	10:00am
Mar. 27 (Thurs)	Geisinger Health South	2:00pm
Mar. 31 (Mon)	Reading Chief Shikellamy	9:00am
Apr. 2 (Wed)	Riverwoods	10:00am
Apr. 3 (Thurs)	Penn Lutheran Village Selinsgrove	6:45pm
Apr 9 (Wed)	Riverwoods	10:00am

UPCOMING TDI VISITS AND CLUB ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

April 10 (Thurs)	Northeastern Academy, Rt. 61 Life Geisinger, Kulpmont Shamokin Hospital Emmanuel Center, Danville	1:00pm 2:00pm 3:00pm 6:45pm
May 7 (Wed)	Nifty After 50 Columbia Mall, Buckhorn Demo	11:00am
May 10 (Sat)	Lions Club St. Fair 4th St & Oak St, Mt. Carmel Demo	2:00pm

NO CLASS AT THE SELINGSGROVE CENTER MARCH 18

**Newsletter coordinator: Brandon Pastuszek
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Club web site: <http://www.stdtc.org>**