



Susquehanna Trail Dog Training Club

May 2021



Old Friends

by Connie Cuff

It will be nice to return to our training classes after so much time apart. It will be good for the dogs and us as well.

Now that this pandemic has brought us out of quarantine our dogs will have less time with us, but we have learned more about them and us as well. We both can be sad, stubborn, secure, supportive and seemingly wise. Acknowledging these emotions is an important step, for it is difficult to exploit a creature that you believe experiences life as you do.

Much has been written about the human/animal bond. When discussing this, we speak of our dogs and their unconditional affection, but this bond works both ways. We can see how emotion from both parties seals the bond between us and our dogs that we freely refer to them as our best friends. This echoes loud and clear during our time of being cloistered during this pandemic.

Dogs are as unique as we are. As with our own species, each dog possesses a unique spirit and a unique set of behaviors, likes and dislikes. As our group of dogs in the Club, we see all of our dogs with different emotions - some fear loud noise, some have different food choices, favorite games and toys, etc. Wouldn't this world be a crazy place if we all expressed the same emotions.

Animals haven't changed, but our awareness of them has. We who live with dogs see the look of the eye, the tilt of the head, the wag of the tail, even the smile (Yes Zoe, that is you). Dogs are always listening to us, but our canine companions are primarily visual learners and they learn body prompts quite easily. That is how our dogs communicate with each other. Does your dog learn better with a visual or verbal cue?

Whoever said that humans are the only species capable of emotion has never lived with a dog. Simply looking at the world through a dog's eyes, you'll see that we share the same experiences, same sensations, and yes the same emotions. Nothing could be more true after going through this pandemic together.

Till next time,

Connie



Notes and Notices



Classes will begin at the Shikellamy State Park Marina on Tuesday, May 4. Advanced at 6pm, Beginners at 7pm. A Star Puppy Class for pre-registered dogs will start on May 18 at 6pm with 6 puppies. Anyone who needs help working on ATD Certification can have training at 7pm. Since there is a change in wearing of masks outdoors for those that are vaccinated, we will have you use your own discretion at class if you wish to wear them.

We welcome new members:

Ann Gilfert with Finn; Lisa Williams; Elaine Walz with Willow; Nora Rompolski; Teresa Swineford with Ellie; Beverly Sees with Jasper; Carol Zimmerman with Grizzly; Wyatt Reitz with Chloe; Jean Swartz with Ava

I wish to thank Kelly for all the visits she orchestrated at Bucknell University. The students couldn't have been more appreciative and I know our dogs echoed the feelings.

We also had a nice visit at Buffalo Valley with the help of Myra.

Our sympathies to Arris Moser with the loss of her beloved Ryley at the age of 17 1/2 yrs. She truly exemplified what it is to be a Therapy Dog and gave many years to this service.

There is an event at Southern Columbia High School on Saturday, May 15 . Kelly has posted a sign-up sheet for those that would like to attend. It is a Mental Health Walk and we will have a station for people to visit or you could also do the walk as well.