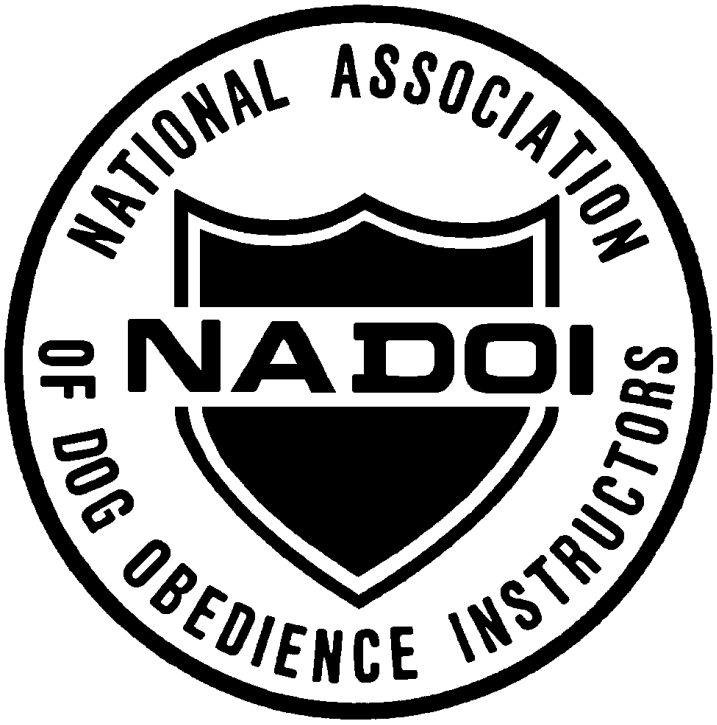
NADOI NOTES, 1971-1980;

An Anthology

Edited by Katharin Foster



NADOI NOTES, 1971-1980
An Anthology

Edited
by
Katharin Foster

The National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors
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PREFACE

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Since 1971, “NADOI Notes”, written by members of the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors (NADOI), has appeared in NADOI’s own newsletter and in several general and specialized dog publications. Obedience instructors, students, trainers, and competitors have come to rely on these monthly columns as a source of accurate, authoritative information on all aspects of obedience. Realizing the lasting value of “NADOI Notes”, NADOI has published this *Anthology*, bringing together eighty-six columns that originally appeared from 1971 through 1980. The arrangement of the *Anthology* into ten subject sections enables the reader to locate specific information or to browse at random through a variety of articles expressing a variety of viewpoints. When available, the original publication date accompanies each article.

Any anthology is the result of the work of many individuals. Without the knowledge and writing skills of the authors listed on the preceding page this *Anthology* would not exist. Joachim J. Volhard and W. Herbert Morrison, III, both contributed well-organized back files of “NADOI Notes”, thus saving untold hours in locating material to be anthologized. Charlotte Schwartz, Education and Training Committee Chairman, provided encouragement and expertise as editing progressed. And, Rosalie Miller was an accurate and patient typist. Thanks to them and to the membership of NADOI, the *Anthology* is a reality.

February, 1982

INTRODUCTION

by
Charlotte Schwartz

When I first accepted the invitation to write this Introduction, I began to think of what I would say. After all, what great words of wisdom could I possibly add to such a distinguished collection of thoughts and ideas? The purpose of an Introduction is to prepare the reader for what lies within the pages of the book. But, what does one say about so broad a subject as Dogs and Dog Training? This Anthology includes articles on Obedience, Tracking, Puppies, Behavior, Teaching Techniques, Training Methods, and ones of even more general interest such as Interviews with well-known Instructors and several on what makes a good Instructor.

Suddenly, a simple assignment loomed larger than I had anticipated. Furthermore, as I scanned the list of authors, I realized that no two were of the same opinion on many dog related subjects, and all stamp their uniqueness on their students. Granted, all love people and dogs and want to help both, but this seemed not enough to weave their written words into an *Anthology*.

Each subject is dealt with by a person who has extensive experience and encyclopedic knowledge of what he writes. The reader will find answers to many questions within these pages, but he will experience even more. His creative imagination will be stirred, and he will be challenged to yet further study. Still, this expertise was not enough to bind them all together.

What, then, was the common bond these authors shared? Let's see, I analyzed, all are successful Instructors, all have trained many dogs of their own, all have, from time to time, put down on paper their thoughts and observations on subjects pertaining to dogs and dog training. All are members of the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors.

Then, I had it! All the authors in this book condemn the needless use of harsh methods in the effective training of dogs while promoting education and understanding among dog owners and the general public. They are proud people, and they have chosen dignity of self as a paramount quality to be upheld when one living being attempts to teach another. For, if one achieves a goal and loses his dignity in the doing, what value the goal?

This then, is the invisible thread that weaves these articles into a unified source of information. The authors care about those they teach, share experiences and knowledge with those who seek it, and, by their own conduct, set high standards for those who follow in their paths.

My job was done. I had unlocked the secret of what ties us all together, and I am proud to be counted among the authors. Happy reading!

February, 1982

NADOI NOTES, 1971-1980: AN ANTHOLOGY

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I. NADOI

NADOI

J. J. Volhard, 1973

The explosive growth in recent years of the "wonderful world of dogs" has been accompanied by a growing need for standards of conduct as well as general guidelines for those associated with it. A particularly important area relates to obedience training and the instructing of obedience training classes. A member of the public who is interested in attending an obedience class with his pet has almost no way of knowing whether the instructor is qualified to teach. Worse than that, an unsuspecting pet owner may fall into the hands of an instructor whose training methods may inflict serious psychological or physical harm on the dog. Unfortunately, much of today's training is needlessly harsh and needlessly physical and not always in the best interest of the dog or owner.

The formation of the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors almost a decade ago was an effort by a group of dedicated and knowledgeable people to do their share to elevate and improve dog obedience training and instructing. First and foremost, the Association serves as a means of endorsing applicants for membership as qualified to instruct. In so doing, it assures the public that a minimum standard of experience in instructing has been met when an instructor is accepted for membership in NADOI. Membership is open to any qualified and experienced instructor who can meet certain requirements. To be eligible, the instructor must have at least 104 weeks of instructing experience. Assuming he has taught every week, this represents a minimum of two years of instructing; it must also be of a class nature with at least six students per class.

Once an applicant has satisfied the basic time requirement, his qualifications are carefully evaluated on the basis of an extensive questionnaire. The training of his own dogs is examined and he is expected to describe in detail the way in which he trained them as well as the way in which he instructs his students. He is required to list all the equipment or training aids he has used and is currently using and the precise manner in which it is used. His general knowledge and understanding of different situations is tested, such as how he would handle an aggressive dog, a shy dog or the essentially willing dog. He is expected to know that dogs are individuals and hence will not always respond in identical fashion to efforts to train them. He is also expected to know that the differences among the various breeds affect their trainability for various tasks. His methods of instruction are examined and evaluated for general soundness and effectiveness. Finally, references are contacted and their opinions as to the applicant's qualifications are reviewed. Whenever possible, the applicant's conduct of a class is observed. The entire application is then reviewed independently by three separate examiners, each of whom arrives at his own conclusions and makes his recommendation to reject or accept the applicant. The file is then forwarded to the Membership Chairman and from him it goes to the Board of Directors for final action. The entire process takes from six months to a year, sometimes longer. Since there are no paid positions in the Association, all this is done on a volunteer basis. An applicant who meets the membership requirements and subsequently joins the Association agrees to abide by its Code of Ethics and its Standards of Conduct.

In addition to its endorsing function, the Association is dedicated to furthering and improving dog obedience training and instructing. For example, since its inception the

Association has strongly supported the concept of class instructions for puppies from 2 to 5 months of age in an effort to avoid many of the problems which can crop up later. Members pledge to help others to become competent instructor and in their own way to do everything they can to improve obedience training. Local chapters, which are spread throughout the country, bear most of the burden of the Association's educational activities in the form of Chapter-sponsored weekend training seminars and related activities. The Association's monthly publication NADOI NEWS also assists in this educational effort by providing a forum for an exchange of ideas, methods, and techniques.

The Association's philosophy on training closely resembles that of the American Kennel Club. Like the AKC it condemns needlessly harsh or physical training methods and one of its goals is to work toward the elimination of such methods. It hopes to accomplish this goal by example and education and by creating a greater awareness among those already engaged in obedience activities as well as the general public that such methods are not necessary to the effective training of a dog. As a matter of fact, they may be actually harmful. While NADOI considers needlessly harsh training methods unacceptable, it does not advocate any one particular method. As long as the method used is in the best interest of the dog, the handler, and the fancy, it would be considered acceptable.

WHAT IS NADOI?

J. J. Volhard, 1971

When I was assigned the task of writing the column for the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors, I was naturally flattered but at the same time somewhat concerned how to approach the assignment. I suppose the best way to begin would be by briefly outlining what NADOI is, what it stands for and what its goal is and how it hopes to accomplish that goal. Since its birth, NADOI has grown into a truly national organization with members in over 30 states. Its members are experienced instructors who are interested in furthering and improving dog obedience in general and dog obedience instructing in particular. Improvement is the key factor -- we live in an imperfect world and I cannot think of any human endeavor that cannot stand improvement. An initial willingness to improve and to learn is essential to actual improvement and perhaps more than anything else, NADOI expects that willingness from its members; it also hopes that they in turn will pass it on to others.

I well remember that after my first few years in obedience and after having become rather confident about my new found "expertise" I was admonished by one of the old-timers that “when it comes to dogs we never cease to learn.” The longer I am in obedience, the more I have come to appreciate that observation. For NADOI the goal of improvement is two-fold: it is aimed not only at dog training itself but at obedience instructing as well. I for one always enjoy watching another instructor's class because invariably there will be one or two times when I'll say “Now why didn't I think of that?” As a part of this general idea, NADOI distributes a monthly publication which keeps its members up to date on association news and serves as a forum for exchanging ideas both old and new. In a nutshell, NADOI is an association of experienced obedience instructors; it stands for quality instructing; its goal is continued improvement of obedience training as well as instructing and it hopes to accomplish that goal by example and

education. There is one further observation which should be made: when I look at the telephone directory or the classified section of the local papers and see the many different obedience classes being offered by different organizations and individuals, I have often wondered how a member of the public who wants to enroll his dog in an obedience class can tell just where he will get quality instructions. The thought may not cross his mind but surely the classes offered will not all be of the same quality. NADOI on the other hand believes that membership in the association constitutes an assurance to the public of a minimum standard of experience and quality instructions.

II. ARTICLES OF GENERAL INTEREST

THE ACQUISITION OF A PET

E. McShane, 1975

There are many ways of acquiring a pet. We have impulse buying, pets being given away as gifts, pets being used as promotional prizes and a variety of other circumstances under which a pet finds its way into a new home. Many of these combinations work out to the mutual satisfaction of the owner and the pet -- by that I mean that the pet has found a home with a responsible person who takes care of the animal in the way in which the animal should be taken care of. We also know that many of these combinations, for whatever reason, do not work out. Perhaps there are changed circumstances, a family might move, or the person is unwilling to assume the responsibility of pet ownership and permits the animal to run at large, or the animal becomes sick and is abandoned because it is becoming a financial burden. It is in my capacity as an animal control officer that I want to air some thoughts about the acquisition of a pet.

Of paramount concern to anyone engaged in animal control is the steadily rising population of pets -- be they wanted or unwanted. I don't think that I am telling you a secret when I say that what we are facing right now in every State of the Union is a staggering overpopulation of pets. Even though animal control officers have long recognized the existence of this problem, to date we have been singularly unsuccessful in achieving any kind of solution to solve this challenge. I am, of course, cognizant of the many endeavors to deal with this problem. The principal battle cry has been "education." I think I can say without fear of successful contradiction that this approach has failed. The population of pets has continued to increase to the point where estimates of their numbers differ by the tens of millions. The time has come where we have to recognize that we must do something which will be <u>effective</u> and perhaps this something lies in the “acquisition of a pet.”

At the present time, the acquisition of a pet -- be it a dog or a cat -- is shamefully easy. A trip to some of the Humane Societies, and the answers to a few questions, will get you a dog or a cat. Following the ads in your local newspaper will invariably turn up a "pet to a good home" ad, and if you are a real big spender -- a trip to the farmers market will get you a fluffy puppy for the horrendous sum of $5.00. We could begin by establishing a license for the <u>acquisition</u> of a pet. This license, which should be imposed by the State, should be significant enough to make

the prospective acquirer think very seriously about whether he really wants this pet, be it a dog or a cat. A good starting point would be $50.00. Common sense tells us that such an approach will be far more meaningful than the extraction of promises of a loving home and perpetual care. In addition, there should be an <u>annual</u> license fee of sufficient magnitude to let the owner know that what he has represents an object of considerable value. For example, in a number of European cities this fee is in excess of $50.00 a year. By this very simple expedient, these cities have solved not only their animal control problems, but the attendant problem of overpopulation. I would also suggest that this approach be adopted on a <u>uniform</u> basis. Most current legislative proposals make a distinction between the irresponsible and the responsible pet owner, or the breeder and the non-breeder. It is my opinion that such distinctions are totally irrelevant in the context of the problem we are facing. I should add that adoption of this proposal would also alleviate the financial problems which all animal control agencies are having today -- MONEY. Such a licensing structure would not only raise the monies required for an effective

animal control program, but would also provide the necessary incentive to enforce such a program.

My second proposal relates to dogs and is as follows: anyone who violates a dog ordinance must either take the dog through obedience training or pass an obedience test such as the novice routine presently used in AKC licensed trials. A failure to do so would result in a substantial fine. The reason for such a requirement is quite obvious. Much of the concern over the dog population centers around uncontrollable and loose dogs. Such a requirement forces a dog owner who has violated a dog ordinance to go through the type of educational experience that we have been so unsuccessful in pushing over the years. Not only would it result in the dog being trained, but his owner would become more cognizant of the responsibilities of dog ownership. It is not enough to proclaim the need for an educated class of pet owners -- we must provide them with a means of obtaining this education. This idea is by no means without precedent. Witness Traffic School.

My third proposal relates to animal health and care. I believe it is gross folly not to require a health certificate from a licensed veterinarian for the issuance of a license of whatever nature. Up to now the only licensing requirement -- and this is not even Statewide -- is that of a rabies inoculation. To say that a rabies inoculation is a bare minimum is an understatement. Again, the reason for this proposal is obvious. With the increased mobility of our society and the resultant increase in exposure between animals and animals, and animals and people, you can readily see the reason for this proposal. The opportunities for the passing on of infectious diseases are limitless. One European city, for example, has banned all dog from the inner city for health reasons.

In conclusion, let me say that up to now we have been unwilling to address our problems in a realistic way. We have examples all around us of the results of our inaction. We also have examples from other countries of what can be done to solve these problems. I am not suggesting that we necessarily aim for their solutions as a way out of the "slough of despond." I am suggesting, however, that we study what others have done to extricate themselves from this quagmire. Our Yankee ingenuity will come up with a mechanism which will enable us to preserve our pets as we know them today so that they can fit into our way of life. If we are truly our pets' protectors, let us protect them by making them something worth protecting.

PRIDE OF OWNERSHIP

W. H. Morrison, 1980

It never fails that sometime during a session a student brings his dog up and asks "that" question, "What do you think of my dog?" I usually tell the student I know nothing about his particular breed and suggest he ask someone who shows his breed. Unfortunately, we are running into more and more conformation enthusiasts who have forgotten the meaning of the word tact. To prepare the unknowing student we will tell him that he may get a very frank answer that may offend him. He is told to expect all of the dog's faults to be pointed out with few of the good points mentioned. We may also suggest he take his dog to a match and see what others of his breed look like compared to his. What we never do is give a quality judgment on a

student's dog. It is our job to teach a student how to train his dog. While we may have enough knowledge to make a rough judgment, this is not done in class. Too often a student will begin treating his dog differently if he finds out that it is not a good specimen of the breed. He may become harsher and more impatient. This begins to destroy the bond between dog and owner.

This same policy holds true for medical problems. We do not give medical advice; we only suggest the student check with his veterinarian. Here again, some students do not like to be told that their dog may have some physical limitation. Unfortunately, this limitation may well affect the dog's training and unless it is recognized, the owner may become even more frustrated with the dog's lack of progress. In these situations we try to point out types of training which would not be hampered by the dog's disabilities. For example, a dog that is going blind can still track as can one that is unable to jump.

Students love their dogs and have a lot of pride wrapped up in them. We try never to render an opinion or judgment which may destroy this love. If the student begins to think poorly of his dog and we have caused this feeling, we may well lose a student and begin making life hard on that dog.

WHAT ABOUT THE MIXED-BREED DOG?

W. H. Morrison, 1980

What is the purpose of dog training class, and what can a dog club contribute to the community? The answer to the first part of this question is easy: to teach people how to train their dogs. Unfortunately, dog training groups are not really doing a whole-hearted job if they adopt a policy of accepting only purebred dogs in class. But, you say, only purebred dogs can be shown in obedience and breed competitions. Very true, but that mixed-breed dog is loved by its owner and needs to be trained. Many owners of mixed-breed dogs have been forever turned off and will want nothing to do with registered dogs because of the attitude of superiority displayed by some purebred dog owners.

We are very hypocritical if we profess the advancement of purebred dogs and then ignore those who do not have purebred dogs. Responsible pet ownership is not limited to the purebred dog owner. Legislation which restricts dog ownership does not single out the mixed-breed dogs. A purebred dog allowed to run free can sire or give birth to just as many puppies as the mixed-breed down the street. This restrictive type legislation is brought about by dogs becoming a nuisance and public danger.

If we do not allow non-purebred dogs in our classes, we are missing a golden opportunity to educate people about responsible pet ownership. If this individual finds he likes our sport and we have made him feel welcome, we may have a customer for a registered dog. What's even better is that he has had a dog to practice and improve on as a trainer. But what's more important is that if we have shown a sincere interest in him as a dog owner, we have created a type of good will that no amount of advertising can obtain.

People are funny; most love a dog for what it is to them, not what it is to you or me. If we degrade that dog, they don't stop loving that dog, but simply stay away from us. A person cannot learn if he is not listening.

DOG LEGISLATION

J. Volhard, 1972

With each passing year, dog fanciers throughout the country are confronted with more and more regulations affecting the ownership of dogs. Each new law that is passed and each new regulation that goes into effect makes it just a little more burdensome for the fancier to own a dog. For a number of years now, most municipalities have had some sort of licensing requirement, the principal purpose of which was to insure that dogs are vaccinated against rabies. Usually the licensing fee is nominal and goes to support the local humane society. The more urbanized areas, in addition to restricting the number of dogs that can be kept in residential sections, typically also have a leash law to reduce the nuisance, and possible danger, of dogs running at large. The legislation enacted in recent years, however, quite frequently has had an entirely different purpose. All too often it is aimed, among others, at reducing the dog population as a whole. Ironically, this trend is partly the result of the dog's popularity itself -- the population explosion among dogs has been staggering. The Market Research Corporation of America, in a study for the Pet Food Institute, estimates that in 1971 there were 32.6 million dogs in this country, a 34% increase over 1965. Little wonder that municipalities are becoming concerned. The waste disposal problem alone defies imagination. Another reason for more stringent legislation is the inconsiderate or irresponsible dog owner who, to the ire of his neighbor, does not exercise common courtesy in relation to his surroundings, or who, to the consternation of humane societies, simply abandons his dog when it no longer suits him. A third reason for some of this legislation is the special interest of some groups who want to garner a larger share of what they see as a potentially lucrative market -- the sale of dogs to the public.

The difficulty with much of this legislation is that all too often it fails to come to grips with the real problem -- irresponsibility and over-population -- while at the same time penalizing the sincere and responsible dog owner. Without going into the intricacies of some of these laws, let me give you one example. Several months ago I had the occasion to visit Frankfurt, Germany. While there, I was amazed by the scarcity of dogs. When I mentioned this to an acquaintance, his reply was “I should hope so, the license fee is $60 per year for the privilege of owning a dog.” Could this happen to us? I recently looked at a proposed piece of legislation for a large eastern state which contemplates an annual license fee of $10 and the tattooing of dogs before a license can be obtained. The tattooing would be done by licensed, i.e., commercial tattooers who presumably could charge anywhere from $10 to $30 for that service. Raise that license fee a little at a time and before you know it, you will be up to $60 together with the tattooing. Obviously this legislation is aimed at controlling the total number of dogs in the state. (It surely is not a revenue producing measure for it would quickly kill the goose that lays the golden eggs.) Nor is this necessarily an undesirable aim, but why do it by increasing the cost of owning a dog? Can we not separate the responsible from the irresponsible dog owner? Why not begin by enforcing the laws we already have and why not increase the fines for violations of these laws? Before making it more difficult for the responsible person to own a dog, should we not first try to

put the onus on the irresponsible person? I am sure there are many ways which could be found of dealing with the problem which would not work to the detriment of the sincere fancier.

If you have stuck with me this far, you are probably asking yourself "what has all this got to do with me? I can't do anything about all these laws and besides, there are all kinds of groups who keep up on these things and who will make sure that everything will be all right." Well, it has a great deal to do with you. You can influence legislation but I am not even going to ask you to write to your Congressmen and Senators. And those groups who keep up on these things also need your support. What I am going to ask you, however, is to think about the opportunity we, the people in obedience, as a group, have in educating others. As instructors, members of clubs, or whatever, we have the most contact with the inexperienced dog owner and are best situated to teach him the responsibilities of dog ownership. But how much time do we actually spend on proper etiquette as distinguished from the mechanics of teaching the dog certain exercises? While these areas overlap, there is much more to proper etiquette than is generally covered in a Basic Course on Dog Obedience. Consider those seemingly trifling examples of taking the dog for a walk and permitting him to relieve himself on the neighbor's lawn; or letting him run loose to the annoyance of others; or letting him rush up to children who may be frightened; or letting him bark at 3:00 a.m. in the morning, etc., all of which incidentally is covered by the typical dog ordinance and all of which will sorely try the patience of even the most ardent dog lover. If you are involved in instructing, how much time and effort do you spend on this aspect of owning a dog?

Much of the current crop of proposed legislation is the result of irresponsibility pure and simple. At present, New York City is considering enacting an ordinance -- dubbed the "scoop the poop" law -- which would require owners to clean up after their dogs. Regardless of the merits of the proposal, why is it being considered? Because too many people permit their dogs to perform on the sidewalk instead of curbing them as required by the existing ordinance. Without wanting to sound alarming, with our increasingly urbanized way of life, this legislative trend will continue and it is only a question of who will ultimately pay the price.

Part of this educational effort should also be devoted to the problem of indiscriminate, senseless, and accidental breedings. The novice seems to have the idea that breeding dogs is easy and remunerative. The breeding may be easy, but the whelping and rearing of puppies is backbreaking and rarely profitable for the novice. Then there are invariably those parents who want to breed their dog so "the children can witness the miracle of birth." I suggest that a film, the local zoo or a pair of guppies would meet this objective much more readily without unnecessarily adding to the dog population. Finally, we have the old wives' tales of what alteration does to a dog and that is just what they are -- old wives' tales.

Perhaps all this is not of proper concern for the obedience fancy. Personally, I think it is because after all is said and done, it is we who will have to bear the burden which will be imposed on dog ownership as a result of irresponsible ownership and increased population. It is for our own protection and the protection of the fancy as we know it today that all of us must think about what we can do to improve the situation, by way of example and by educating others, and act accordingly.

III. THE TRAINING PROGRAM

PRIORITIES OF A TRAINING CLUB

W. Volhard, 1975

Many obedience clubs provide an important function in serving the public and have every right to be extremely proud of their accomplishments. Others, however, do not belong in-this category -- while holding themselves out as giving qualified instruction in dog obedience training to members of the public, their only interest lies in using the fees paid by training members to pay for activities not related to training. Such a club's interest in a training member ceases once he has paid his fee and it cares next to nothing about the services it is expected to render in return for this fee.

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to come in close contact with two obedience clubs in the same general vicinity. I would like to provide you with a profile of these clubs as they were then and let you decide into which category you would place each club. First, I will list what they had in common, and second, how they differed.

Both clubs were over 15 years old and put on an annual AKC licensed obedience trial. Both were non-profit and all-volunteer in the sense that none of their members were paid for devoting their time to the club. Their training fees were identical and both enrolled approximately the same number of training members each year. And both had approximately the same number of members.

Now for the differences: Club #1 -- this club did not have any voting members, but it was governed by a board of directors which rarely changed. Its trial chairman, for instance, had held that position for over ten years. In case a vacancy on the board arose, the board filled the vacancy. The board met only infrequently and there were no membership meetings. It rented two indoor training locations for its training members and regular members five nights a week. Its instructors were a regular and steady core; new instructors were brought along gradually and there were regular instructors' meetings. Its annual trial ranked among the top ten in the Nation and was considered the best organized and run trial in the area, even though no cash prizes are awarded; the trial also paid for itself. It had two socials every year at which alcoholic beverages were paid for by the club. (Peripherally, it should be mentioned that one of these socials is an after-the trial buffet which avoids the potential problems inherent in pre-trial dinners where club member exhibitors have the opportunity of meeting and talking to the judges.) In 1972, the club took credit for over 60 titles.

Club #2 -- members of this club voted on all actions taken by its elected board of directors; members elected all officers which has had the result that the various positions change almost annually. It had monthly board of directors meetings as well as membership meetings which were devoted mostly to bickering. All its training was conducted on one day -- Sunday -- and it preferred a rent-free outside location regardless of weather conditions. Instructing was done on a "who is available" basis with little or no attention being paid to continuity or instructor qualifications. There were no instructors' meetings. In recent years, with several exceptions, its annual trials were considered disastrous, primarily due to an ever-changing parade of trial chairmen and even though the club awarded about $500 in cash prizes in addition to extremely nice trophies. The trial was subsidized each year by about $800 to $1,000. The club had four

socials every year at which alcoholic beverages are paid for by the club which included a pre-trial dinner. In 1972, it took credit for less than 20 titles.

You judge which club fulfills its obligation to the public in providing the services for which it is paid. From these two examples, it is obvious that the type of structure of a particular club is unimportant. What is important, is how the club views its functions. Surely, if it accepts money from those who come to it for help and instruction, it has the duty to provide this help and instruction in the best manner possible. It is also obvious that there is nothing inconsistent with having a training club which is also a trial giving club. The success of this combination, however, will depend on how the club arranges its priorities. Under no circumstances should the training part be anything less than co-equal to the trial giving part. As a matter of fact, to be absolutely scrupulous, the trial giving activity should really be secondary to the training activity.

Clubs sponsoring trials are important and many of us would not remain in obedience very long were it not for the chance to compete at trials. By the same token, if a club holds itself out as an organization which teaches members of the public how to make better companions of their pets, it cannot in fairness and honesty shortchange them. By taking a training member's money, the club agrees to provide him with solid instruction by qualified instructors under the best available circumstances. It is hardly honest to take his money and then skimp and save on training facilities and instruction in order to put on a trial and provide booze at dinners for club members. I am not suggesting that the use of club funds for these purposes would be inappropriate, PROVIDED the club has met its obligations to its training members. Would it not be more sensible, for example, to spend some of this money on sending instructors or potential instructors to clinics or an instructors' school at the club's expense to give them a more varied background and an opportunity to broaden their experience?

Similarly, the energies of the club should be directed toward training. Unfortunately, for some clubs the annual trial an its socials become all-important and the person who enrolled in a training class to learn how to train his dog is lost in the shuffle. Shoddy instruction, inadequate facilities and above all a “so what” attitude is the hallmark of such an organization, a picture hardly conducive to providing a good image for our sport.

PRECISION IN TRAINING

J .J. Volhard, 1972

Most people who enroll in a Basic Obedience course are in search of better communication with their dogs. Usually, their problems are mundane -- the dog pulls on the leash, jumps on people, will not come when called, etc. Some have more serious problems -- the dog fights, chases cars, or bites. Whatever the problem may be, the owner has been unable to establish an acceptable degree of control over his dog and the course is expected to bring enlightenment as well as some semblance of control. It is also, of course, expected to solve the problem that prompted enrollment in the first place. Since the owner's expectations seem to be rather low compared to the standards of an obedience buff, this inevitably results in somewhat of a quandary for the instructor: how much detail or precision in teaching standard obedience exercises is necessary, or even desirable? Is the owner not getting confused by the finer points

involved in teaching heeling such as proper footwork and the straight sit when all he wants from the dog is not to pull on the leash? What is the point of teaching the recall with the sit stay and the sit in front when all the owner wants is for his dog to come when called? Besides, this is not the way it happens anyway when the owner needs to use this exercise, namely, when the dog is off leash and taking off in the opposite direction. It would seem that the exercises taught in a Basic Obedience course are totally unrelated to the problem the owner has and any emphasis on such things as good heeling and straight sits seems misplaced.

There is, however, another way of looking at it. Assuming that the purpose of an obedience course is to teach the handler how to get control over his dog by learning how to communicate with the dog, the various obedience exercises become the means to this end. How well the dog does in these exercises can be viewed as a measure of control the owner has achieved and as a measure of how well he is communicating with his dog. Mindful as I am of the dangers of generalizations, it seems that frequently the better the dog learns these exercises the better the communication between the owner and the dog and the better the control. If precision in training is regarded in this light, it assumes a different role. This is particularly true when it is considered that the most common goal of the owner is for the dog to come when called. To reach this goal, the owner must have a considerable degree of control over the dog.

When talking to other instructors about this, most believed that heeling is a very reliable test of control -- it is a difficult exercise because it requires constant concentration by the dog and a dog that has mastered it will usually not be a control problem for his owner. Also, chances are, that in the process the owner will have learned to communicate with his dog to the point of having solved his problem. Quite important in this context, however, is precision handling, especially footwork, and insistence on precision on the part of the dog. Footwork, for example, aside from being a tool to achieve precision on the part of the dog, is a teaching aid making it that much easier for the dog to learn and in turn for the handler to get control. Each exercise, or each part of an exercise, may appear meaningless in and of itself, but, as a means to an end, they begin to add up like so many pieces of a jigsaw puzzle until the desired goal has been reached. The owner may not immediately understand why he and his dog have to go through all this rigamarole until it is explained to him and until he realizes that it works.

The Club with which I am associated used to require the owners to fill out a questionnaire at the beginning of the course. One question asked the owner to spell out what he hoped to accomplish by taking the course. At the end of the course, the instructor would review the questionnaires with those who completed the course to find out whether they have achieved their purpose. By that time, many of the owners could not even remember what their problem was because somewhere along the line it had disappeared. Not necessarily because of any conscious training toward its solution but because the owner had learned how to communicate his wishes to his dog which presumably included forbearance from whatever objectionable conduct the dog was engaging in.

Insistence on precision, both in handling and on the part of the dog, in teaching a Basic Obedience course naturally is more burdensome on the instructor. And yet, in most instances the degree of control the owner will get over his dog will depend on it.

THE DROP-OUT RATE

J. Jones, 1973

"YOU CAN'T DO THAT IN THE RING – THE JUDGE WILL DISQUALIFY YOU FOR IT. DON'T SAY ANYTHING TO YOUR DOG EXCEPT ACCEPTED COMMANDS. NEVER PRAISE EXCEPT BETWEEN EXERCISES – YOU'LL NEVER GET 195 THAT WAY. YOU SHOULD GET ANOTHER DOG – YOUR BREED WILL NEVER BE HIGH-SCORING. STUDY THE AKC RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR YOUR TEST NEXT WEEK."

Does this sound like your Beginners Training Class? What's wrong with it? Perhaps nothing, but if you are having a high drop-out rate, this could be part of the problem. Remember, this is a beginners class and most of these people did not join class with the idea of showing their dogs – they just want to know how to have a well trained dog at home and show talk about high scores and the rule book may scare them right out the door. Over the years we have tried all sorts of ways to encourage people to continue with their training, and not be a "drop-out", with varying degrees of success. Right now it seems that our percentage rate of continuing on is greater than ever before and I would like to share some of our ideas with you. I won't guarantee that you won't lose some handlers, but it has improved our class and you may want to give them a try.

First of all, we keep our classes small enough so that each dog and handler receives personal attention and they never feel just like one in a crowd. The first night we all sit down (in our class, on the floor so we are closer to our dogs) and have a gab session in addition to our first lesson. The instructor explains what obedience is all about – communication and better understanding between dog and handler. This makes for a well-trained, happier dog and certainly a happier handler and family. Then, we have a trained dog and handler go through some of the exercises and explain the purpose and practical meaning of each exercise. We then ask each class member to study the background of his particular breed and be prepared on the second week to tell the rest of the class its origin, what it was used for, how he thinks it will do in obedience in comparison to other dogs, what exercise he feels will be the easiest and what he thinks will be more difficult for his type of dog. Handlers must understand that there is no ironclad rule for any breed or individual dog and that their dogs are not machines. We hope this encourages them to think and understand their dogs and not be discouraged when they have problems. We impress upon them that all breeds can be trained and that theirs is not more stupid nor intelligent than any other, but it may require different handling and a change of method at times to get the desired effect. Our class members have taken great interest in this part of their homework.

In our class you will frequently hear the word "WHY?" Whenever a dog has a noticeable reaction (be it good or bad) to a certain command or signal, we ask the handler and sometimes the class as a whole "Why?" There is a reason: before anyone can be a good handler, he must understand why his dog does as it does. Was it something the handler did; was it an outside distraction; was it an inherited trait, etc. etc. How does this encourage the beginning handler? It makes the handler study his dog, learn how it thinks and why it behaves as it does. Thus . . . understanding and communication, which is what it is all about. If a class member finds that he

cannot continue the training course, we ask that he call and tell us. If it is a case of discouragement or lack of interest, then we must do what we can to change the picture and hopefully rescue the "would be drop-outs" before it is too late. You may be the most brilliant instructor in the world, but the people who drop out because they are discouraged you have not helped at all.

On our last class night we have Graduation exercises. It is made clear that graduation does NOT determine whether or not a dog can receive a diploma and proceed to the next class because this is determined by weekly progress. Graduation is a FUN night where the class can observe each other and often laugh WITH each other (not AT each other) and not a night to be taken seriously! In short, this is their introduction to Obedience Trials. Awards are given for the best working dogs and the AKC rule book is now given to each member. Now is the time to mention advanced classes and upcoming matches or obedience trials where they may want to go as an observer.

Speaking of advanced classes – here is where we use another bit of inducement to continue. As a dog advances to another class or in some cases repeats a class, the price is reduced. For instance, if the original price is $15.00, the fee is reduced to $10.00 for the second time around and then $5.00 for the third time and remains at $5.00 for each time thereafter. Remember that those of us who have been in obedience longer and know what training can really mean to dog and handler, may feel that $15.00 several times a year is not too much, but for the newcomer, this is a sizable amount and he usually feels that one course is enough for him. He thinks he can continue to practice at home and need not spend the money. But who doesn't love a bargain? After all, this is a reduction in price for a full course. This way we have more handlers and dogs continue their training.

These are just some ideas that some might want to try, but we must use our imagination to make obedience training interesting to dog and handler. All in all, the instructor is the real key to success in any training class.

BASIC COURSE GRADUATION

J. J. Volhard, 1973

Whether a Basic Course should be capped off by graduation exercises will depend on what is meant by "graduation" and how it is approached. As always, there is a middle ground between two extremes. When I started in dog training I was exposed to the one extreme, probably the least desirable one. The graduation at the Club with which I started consisted of the Novice routine, but without the heel free and stand for examination. Scoring was done on the basis of 100, with a passing grade being 80, provided at least one-half the point value of each exercise was obtained. Almost from the very first session, we were told that the main object of the course was to teach us these exercises so that we could pass graduation; we were also informed that we would only get a diploma if we passed. I remember thinking at the time that this was a rather arbitrary approach as well as being somewhat resentful of the fact that to pass or fail, and thus the diploma, depended on such technicalities. Moreover, my idea of training consisted of teaching the dog to come when called, not to pull on the leash and not to jump on people. That

was all I wanted to accomplish and all I was willing to work for. It mattered little to me if the dog sat in front and then went to heel, provided he came when I called. Similarly, I couldn't care less if he heeled properly and sat when I stopped, provided he did not pull.

Even though I considered the whole routine somewhat silly and only peripherally related to what I wanted, I went along. But I was one of few that did – out of the twenty people who started the course, only five made it as far as graduation and only one passed. Could it be that somewhere along the line the other people had been frightened away by the prospect of the graduation or had become discouraged by not being able to learn and advance at the prescribed rate of progress?

My prior misgivings notwithstanding, I stuck with obedience and subsequently, after a number of years, assumed a policy-making position in the Club. One of my very first decisions was to change the graduation exercises. First, I felt that its goal was unrealistically high as demonstrated by the extremely, if not ridiculously, low passing percentage. It was, therefore, changed to being entirely on lead. Second and probably even more important, the pass or fail was eliminated and the obtaining of the diploma was made dependent on class attendance and overall progress instead of the previously adhered to one-shot, hit or miss proposition. Moreover, the direction of the Basic Course was changed. Instead of concentrating on the mechanics of teaching specific exercises, greater emphasis was placed on teaching owners how to communicate with their pets. Specifically, more effort was spent on trying to insure that the owners were successful in what THEY wanted to achieve, with less attention being given to what someone else thought they should achieve. After all, this is the primary purpose of dog obedience – to teach the owner how to live more comfortably with his pet. By all means, insist on precision on the part of the handler and the dog in the teaching of the various exercises because ultimately this will determine how much control the handler has over his dog; but at the same time be sure that the owner's goal is not neglected. Naturally, this approach requires a greater flexibility on the part of the instructor and is perhaps a little more demanding. On the other hand, this is why the owner is in class in the first place.

The effect of this change in direction was extremely rewarding. The drop-out rate was significantly reduced and the completion rate went up to seventy five percent. Even more important, however, is the fact that it produced greater owner satisfaction with the results. In addition, having been successful or seeing signs of-success, more owners than had previously been the case decided to continue in their training.

Graduation should be the highlight of any Basic Course – the participants should be able to enjoy themselves and show off to each other as well as the instructor what they have accomplished. By all means make it competitive, but at an appropriate level and in the right spirit; care must be taken that the advantages of bringing out the competitive spirit do not become outweighed by the disadvantages. If the prospect of the graduation has the effect of causing people to drop out and become discouraged, it should be reexamined, particularly to see whether what is sought to be accomplished is too difficult for a majority of the owners. It should also be examined to see whether the competitive aspect is being injudiciously applied. Many of us like to compete, but only in an area in which we think we know what we are doing and feel we have a chance. Nobody likes to be a loser and if we think we are going to be a loser, we drop out. It may be well to remember, as has been observed before, that the object is to help people

achieve their goal whenever possible and if they drop out because they become discouraged they probably will not achieve that goal. You may be most brilliant instructor in the world, but your drop-outs probably have been helped little, if any. Not infrequently a high drop-out rate is caused by a tendency among some who instruct a Basic Course to make the Novice exercises of paramount importance and to see how many owners they can "whip into shape" to begin competing as soon as is feasible after completion of the course. Often this is done by concentrating on one or two owners who are really catching on BUT invariably at the expense of the rest of the class. The Basic Course is not the place to prepare for Novice competition, even though the foundation is laid for those who want to go on. If the majority of the class does not progress satisfactorily, the instructor is probably going too fast or is not getting his message across. I realize that of necessity any Basic Course is based on, and in some way has as its objective, the Novice exercises. But in teaching a Basic Course, these exercises should be viewed as a means to an end, the end being the owner's goal of solving whatever problem made him enroll in the class, and not as an end in themselves.

SHOW AND TELL

W. H. Morrison

According to someone whose name I have forgotten, a picture is worth a thousand words. If this is indeed the case, why not take advantage of this approach in training classes? To be specific, use slides to make particular points and to supplement various topics of discussion.

Many groups are now including information and talks on dog care as a part of puppy and basic obedience classes. Slides can illustrate what can happen to a dog's intestine from a heavy burden of hookworm or to a heart from heart-worm. Sources for these slides are many and varied. Many of the pharmaceutical companies have illustrations of the damage from worm infestations as well as pictures of worm eggs than can be made into slides. Veterinary Colleges may be able to prepare slide sets for a small charge, particularly if they are going to be used for educational purposes.

Slides can be made quite easily with inexpensive accessories for most 35 mm cameras. Close-up diopter lenses can be purchases which allow the photographing of tables, graphs or pictures in books. Booklets on copying are available in most camera shops and the personnel are usually very helpful in suggesting inexpensive ways of copying.

Many of the tables, charts, and diagrams one would incorporate into a program of canine health discussions can be prepared for copying by anyone who can type or has a modest amount of artistic talent. If you want to reproduce already published material, it is best to get the permission of the author or company to comply with copyright laws.

If you already have prepared talks on various topics, you might consider purchasing a tape recorder which can be connected to a slide projector and will automatically change slides as the recorded talk is presented. This system has many advantages: a talk can be recorded and subsequently presented by anyone; if the talk is to be presented several times, it avoids the

possibility of forgetting to mention some of the material; and it is also possible to get more volume from the recorder than by voice.

Another use of visual aids is in teaching new exercises to instructors as well as students. Slides can be prepared to cover all points on an exercise which students can use as an introduction and instructors can use as a review. Important aspects of an exercise can be made clear on slides, and you don't have to worry about a dog's cooperation or lack of it.

If your group is active in community education, talks supplemented with slides can be prepared to develop quite professional and educational presentations. One does not have to be a good speaker to present a program using this approach.

The costs of a good projector and synchronizing tape recorder is not excessive. Most clubs will have a member with a camera, and the accessories for copying are inexpensive. Give some thought to including these as an addition to your training equipment.

CONSIDER DEVELOPING A WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH LOCAL VETS

W. Herbert Morrison, III

Local veterinarians can be of great help to a dog Obedience training curriculum by providing information or guidance in establishing a dog health care program. The veterinarians benefit, too, by having some clients who can recognize early warning signals and provide essential information to aid in diagnosing. If there is an exchange of information in setting up such a program, there can be additional benefits to the training organization through referrals from a vet who understands the goals and methods of the training program and who has confidence in the people instructing. In addition, if the vet does not have the time and/or background to deal with canine behavior problems, he can advise the client to seek assistance from the training organization.

Incorporating discussions on health care into an Obedience training program is a logical step. Many of the people who own dogs have only vague concepts of the dog as a living organism, limited usually to knowing it needs shots and can have worms. No veterinarian and few breeders have the time to sit down with each new dog owner to impart this knowledge beyond simple nutritional requirements; the Obedience instructor, however, can reach those owners already assembled for instruction. There are several ways to add the health care aspect to a session of training classes. One way is to reserve 15 minutes or so each week to cover a particular topic. Another way is to add an extra lesson that would be devoted to the general topic of the dog's health.

In our own classes we've found presenting a brief discussion on a different topic each week to work successfully. The lectures cover canine diseases, external parasites, internal parasites, nutrition, reproduction, behavior, grooming, and the correct way to take the dog's temperature. The sole purpose is to have the owners become aware of various ailments affecting dogs and their early symptoms. No attempt is made to suggest that the owner undertakes treatment

himself, rather the importance of veterinary attention is stressed. Preventative measures, particularly with regard to parasites, are outlined.

Initially a handout was drafted for each topic to be covered. These were compiled using several of the dog care books on the market. Each of the handouts was given to several veterinarians who checked them over for accuracy and saw to it that information on treatment and prevention conformed to local practices. At the present time a slide presentation and many of the pamphlets now available from some of the veterinary pharmaceutical houses are supplementing these handouts.

For those not inclined to compose, having a veterinarian speak to the class might be the better approach. Another possibility is to ask a vet about educational materials advertised by the major manufacturers and contacting them about distributing the literature in the classes. Most of the pamphlets that we have seen are excellent, but it is still suggested that the local vets review the material that is used.

Since many, probably even most, veterinarians do not actively participate in the sport of training and exhibiting dogs, it is likely that they have as foggy a notion of what goes on in training classes as their clients have about canine medicine. While asking the vet for his help, take the time to explain the class set-up, training philosophy, and the ways the organization promotes responsible dog ownership. Groups that offer KPT classes should make the vets aware of the benefits of early training. Many vets may themselves not be familiar with the work of Scott and Fuller, Pfaffenberger, Fox and Campbell much less realize the influence they have had on training concepts and approaches to problem behavior.

It will probably be easiest to begin working with one's own veterinarian, but each vet in the community should eventually be contacted. If your area has an association of veterinarians, it might be easier to ask to be able to present a program at one of -its meetings. Try to avoid playing favorites and give each vet an opportunity to cooperate with your group in establishing well-rounded training programs.

A sound mind in a sound body is applicable to our dogs, too. Developing a working relationship between the training instructor and the veterinarian is a step in the right direction toward reaching and maintaining this goal.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION: NECESSARY EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY

W. Herbert Morrison, III

Many training organizations recognize that owners can be "trained" along with their dogs to become better citizens in the community. However, there are many more dog owners than those who bring their pets into training classes. As the number of dogs and dog owners increases so does the number that can be regarded as irresponsible and so does the number of non-owners who feel that something must be done. A community education program is becoming an

essential activity of a training organization to reach as many dog owners as possible and to remind the public that responsible dog ownership does exist.

The programs and the material can be as varied as your imagination and talents permit. They can range from a lecture discussion with an obedience demonstration to specially prepared slide sets or movies. The program can be presented to individual groups or reach the community as a whole through radio, newspapers and television features.

Each program should be tailored to the particular group. A class of third graders would have different interests than an adult civic club. A talk to kids should be very basic involving the need to see that the dog has adequate food and water, to realize a dog can get hurt if allowed to run free, and to approach a dog properly before petting. If a demonstration is given, try to include jumping since it is exciting to watch. Other exercises can be given a twist to make them more interesting. I've used scent discrimination after telling the kids that the dog can add (or subtract) and then asking the dog to find the article with the number that equals 2 + 3. After the performance, the trick is explained. If the dog fails to get the correct article, I say something like, "He must not be doing his homework". Always allow some time for questions. With youngsters this generally means telling stories about their own pets. Don't discourage the tales, it makes the kids feel a part of the program and still provides opportunities to make additional points.

With adults it is possible to speak more directly about the fallacies of permitting a dog to roam or breeding "for its health". It is also an opportunity to dispel mistaken notions about delaying training until the dog is at least six months old or that training breaks a dog's spirit. A demonstration might include using dogs at different levels of training, an approach that can provide an opportunity to involve some of the students in your classes.

Whatever the audience, the program should be entertaining. Try to inform without preaching, avoid recommending specific vets, dog foods, etc., and making decisions for questioners. Above all, do not use these occasions to advertise your classes, puppies that may be for sale, or anything else that may be construed as self-promoting; this goes double when speaking to children.

Don't be hesitant just because of not knowing what to say after you've said hello. Begin with a school; kids are a great audience. Start your programs with a presentation that is mostly demonstration (to be perfectly honest, with the elementary graders the big attraction is the dog, not you). Several question and answer sessions will provide the material for a lecture. Be sure that the dog you take is extremely stable because all the kids will want to pet him at the same time.

Once the decision has been made to embark on a community relations program, the initiative will have to be taken by the trainer to publicize this service. Contact radio and television stations that feature interview or question-answer program that are locally produced. Check with the Chamber of Commerce for a listing of area associations and send letters to those that seem suitable. If at all possible, try to get information on your availability along with a brief outline of the presentation(s) to the schools during the pre-planning session since many teachers like to correlate programs with subject matter. However, it is never too late to approach the

schools since some states require a specified amount of time each week be devoted to humane treatment and care of animals. After several presentations, program chairmen from various organizations will begin to contact you, but it is still advisable to remind schools and associations routinely each year of your willingness to come and speak.

Long held beliefs and habits are not discarded easily so the effects of a community education program will not be immediately obvious. But any question of whether such a program is worthwhile will be answered by the first batch of thank-you notes from the school children.

HOW ANTIQUATED IS YOUR TRAINING PROGRAM?

R. R. Oharek, 1972

How antiquated is your training program? Are you really trying to understand the dogs you work with? Are you a bit of an ogre? Take a good honest look and you may be surprised at what you find. I discovered that I was complacent, standing still, and unfair to my dogs!

I was blessed with a wonderful set of parents whose vocation was the raising, selling, boarding, training and showing of dogs. My earliest companions had long wet tongues and wagging tails, and I learned to pant long before I uttered my first word. My father had a tremendous understanding of dogs and I never saw one that didn't both love and respect him. Consequently, as a very young child, I was introduced to obedience, which became and remains my most consuming interest. For a few years, my social life took precedence, but I have been actively training for well over twenty years. For most of those years my training remained static. I could feel that I was improving – learning more about handling personalities (dog and human) – but my methods did not change! They were good, they were proven, they worked for Dad and they were working for me. Let me interject that my methods were never brutal. (I am painfully compassionate toward animals and have a kennel full of permanent, non-paying residents, because they were homeless.) Our methods were man-oriented though, and left little room for consideration of the dog's point of view. In other words, we commanded, demanded, reprimanded, and ultimately the dog obeyed because he had learned who was "boss." There was little thought of real teamwork or companionship in producing a "Companion Dog."

Two years ago I attended a five-day Instructor's School. Actually, I considered myself a pretty good instructor and my students were placing most of the time; I wasn't convinced that I really needed the school but it was good for the "record." By the end of my first day I had begun to question my ability to conduct a class. For the entire week, I was always on the wrong foot, hopelessly tangled up in six feet of leash and wondering how I'd managed to live so long, while being so stupid. I went home, unscrambled my thoughts, picked up my shattered ego, read my notes and became a much better handler and instructor than in the days B.C. (before the clinic) – but not nearly as good as I'd thought myself to be. I had honestly considered myself an honest and patient trainer, until that day at the clinic when my dog defied my <u>order</u> to drop. She cowered and turned her head away from me. I stood alone on the floor with all eyes watching. My next command was severe (to put it mildly and my face "could have stopped a clock." I was embarrassed, but had to laugh at the description of me. When I tried again, still smiling, my dog

dropped on the spot. Suddenly, failing an exercise was not so important, but failing my dog was. I had just never stopped to think about it before. Right then and there my dog and I learned that the most important word in our mutual vocabulary was NOT "no", it was "g-o-o-o-od." All those years I had not learned a thing about real communication – I had been a dictator. Upon my return to classes, we began to try to think from the dog's viewpoint and to teach from his level. I still hang on to some of the old methods, but some ideas that I was not ready to accept two years ago, seemed right to me this time and have now been put into our program. The change in methods is gradual – but there is a decided change in attitude. Most of all, I have learned to backtrack in my training, instead of bellowing at a dog that simply does not understand.

Thank God for the people who go to bat for our dogs and make us realize what a mutually rewarding experience obedience training can and should be. Each of us should periodically examine our own training programs to be sure we are not guilty of standing still. After all, this is what NADOI is all about – improved methods of training and methods that keep the best interest of the dog, the handler, and the fancy in mind.

TRAINING PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

W. H. Morrison

A necessity with any training organization is the continual evaluation of its training program. This type of appraisal has many facets: whether the students are meeting the goals set by the organization; whether the students feel the program is meeting their needs; and whether the individual instructors are effectively teaching the exercises to the students.

When evaluating the program as a whole, the results of several different sessions should be considered. If, in general, the dogs were weak on a particular exercise, then the chances are that the approach to that exercise needs to be changed. If big dogs seem to perform better than small dogs, perhaps the methods used favor the larger size dogs.

Questionnaires filled out by the students at the end of the session can be used to gain insight to their impression of the classes. Questions regarding the ability of the student to keep up with the lessons, the amount of individual attention received, enjoyment of the classes and the clarity of the material presented can be asked. These answers, along with comments and suggestions by the students, can provide information for an evaluation of the overall program as well as individual instructors.

If the students of a particular instructor show the same weaknesses, although most other students in the program do not, then there is the possibility that the instructor is having difficulty teaching one or more of the exercises. It is important that discussions about and among staff members be kept objective. At all times, the staff should keep in mind that the purpose of any evaluation is to improve everyone's performance and the impact of the program as a whole. Keep in mind also, especially where new instructors are concerned, that teaching skills take time to fully develop and there are not many substitutes for experience.

New approaches to teaching an exercise should be allowed a session or two for evaluation before a decision is made regarding it's effectiveness. It will take a little time for the instructors to feel comfortable with something new and to gain confidence that the change is for the better. Initially, there will be some uncertainty about how quickly results will be seen or what the middle stages of training will be like. Too often a new approach or technique will be discarded because immediate and wondrous results are expected overnight and the staff is not given an opportunity to fully develop their presentation of the material.

Evaluations are necessary to keep a training program fresh and to take maximum advantage of the new techniques and approaches that are encountered in training publications, seminars and clinics. It is too easy to become so involved in just getting through a session that the time is not taken to determine how effectively the program is working or where individual instructors might need improvement. It is also possible to become so set in a routine that the presentations become hum-drum to the disadvantage of the students.

Persons who would like to test a new method before trying it in a class should consider getting a dog from a humane society shelter or a pound. Try the new approach over an eight to ten week session as if you were a student yourself. Besides providing an experimental subject, it will be a return to reality if it has been a while since working with a totally untrained dog or one whose early environment was not geared to preparing the dog for training. The experience should renew appreciation for the task ahead of many of the training class students. It will also help the humane society to place an older dog if it has been trained.

The perfect training program or instructor, like the perfect breed specimen, does not exist. However, with continual evaluation and continued education, constant improvement can be achieved to offer the community the best training program possible.

IV. THE INSTRUCTOR

BECOMING AN OBEDIENCE INSTRUCTOR

C. Schwartz, 1974

So, you want to be an obedience instructor. Great! I think you'll find it one of the most rewarding things you can do. To watch a feeling of harmony emerge between a dog and his owner and know that you helped create it is a good feeling. And what's more, it's lasting. Being an obedience instructor is a little like being a kindergarten teacher. The teacher teaches the children and their children and their children's children. And with each generation she renews her feeling of having contributed something worthwhile to someone.

An obedience instructor teaches an owner and his dog. Frequently, a few years later, the owner returns with another dog. More often than not, the second one does better than the first because the owner remembered the basic lessons and taught them at home long before coming to class. And when the owner and his second companion graduate, the instructor once again experiences that feeling of meaningfulness. As for you, my friend, I think you'll make a good instructor. You like people and you have a way with animals. You present a nice appearance and your vocabulary is above average. You have the time and physical stamina as well. You are patient, kind, determined, and understanding. You are always eager to learn. But most of all you *want* to help people and their dogs.

Don't worry that you might not be able to distinguish between a Shih Tzu and a Lhasa Apso. (The owner will proudly inform you as soon as you show interest!) Or that you can't remember whether a Boston Terrier belongs in the Terrier or Toy Group. (You might suggest you and the owner look it up together…then you'll *both* learn something.) These things are incidental to the job. As time goes by you'll find yourself playing the role of settler of family arguments re the dog, veterinarian, dog behaviorist, adviser to puppy purchasers, etc. And then there's always the caller who just found out he's being transferred to Europe and wants you to ship his dog for him and get around the European quarantine! To all these and more you cannot turn a deaf ear. You must listen...in fact, you'll become quite good at it! And then, you must objectively recommend a solution in the most tactful manner you can muster. If you're smart you'll let the dog owner make the final decision. In most cases, you'll find that all he really wanted in the first place was just someone to talk it over with.

Some questions then. One day, in a beginner's class perhaps, what will you do when two owners get careless and there is a dog fight? What will you tell the little old lady who brings a huge, lunging dog to class and can't handle it? How will you deal with the handicapped owner who's determined to train his dog? Will you be overly sympathetic or tough? And what about the owner who stubbornly refuses to give a proper correction to an over-indulged dog? The shy dog and the quiet little woman...how will you handle them? In your Novice, Open and Utility classes how will you deal with handlers bent on high scores at the expense of their dogs? Can you teach them the difference between Dog Obedience as a Sport and the Sport of Scoring High? Can you take it when a know-it-all student begins to tell *you* how to run your class? On the other

hand, can you learn from your students and be gracious about it? Are you willing to share your knowledge and experience? What's more, are you willing to admit that there *are* other ways of teaching a particular exercise?

These comments are not meant to offer advice or answer questions, but to stimulate your imagination. To set your wheels turning. To show you how important it is for you to anticipate. Be alert. Be ready for the unknown, the unexpected. For surely, one day it will happen. And when it does, I know you'll handle the situation with common sense, because you're the kind who can keep his cool. As you know, working with animals, whether it be canidae or homo sapiens, requires a person who can cope. Like I said, I think you'll make a good instructor. And, like good wine, you will improve with age. In the end, you'll leave behind a legacy of owners and dogs who enjoy living together and show it.

THE MAKING OF AN INSTRUCTOR

J. R. Kenner, 1974

Acquiring additional instructors to meet the demands of a growing clientele is most rewarding but can present many problems. I needed an instructor with sound personal development. Knowing that I was capable of supplying the technical training, my instructor would be required to supply the ability to communicate and cooperate. He would have to be interested, display enthusiasm and emotional stability, have pride in his appearance, and a take charge attitude or leadership quality.

It was not long before I found the individual I was looking for. Having studied his personal growth over a two-year span, I was pleased with what I had observed. Within two years his dog had acquired his C.D., C.D.X., and U.D. titles. His excellent training had produced some fantastic scores, representing both regular and non-regular classes. He was asked to judge matches and was well liked by judges, exhibitors and spectators. I do not intend to imply that superior handlers make good instructors – nothing could be further from the truth – it just happened that way. Even more remarkable, this handler remained modest through it all. I decided to approach him with a plan. Would he be willing to serve an apprenticeship under my tutelage?

The first year he was to attend as many classes as possible, observing personalities in handlers and temperaments in dogs. He spent from 6 to 10 hours per week assisting those who had missed lessons or were having difficulties and was required to handle any and all dogs. As a result, the handlers gained confidence in his judgment, knowing he was interested in their welfare. When he ran into a problem for which he did not know the answer, he admitted it and then we would discuss it. He visited the classes of other instructors in and out of the area; he disapproved of some methods; and he reserved judgment until he saw the end product.

His first Novice class at the school was somewhat disappointing to both of us. It wasn't a bad class and to some it would have been a good class. I have had many like it

myself. The attitude of the handlers was frustrating. They simply were not interested in self improvement and this produced a lack of confidence in their instructor. His first Open class, on the other hand, was all I could have hoped for and I attribute this to the following: fewer but more capable handlers who shared their instructor's interest in perfection. Although I enjoy teaching Open classes, I felt it wise to turn Open instructing over to my apprentice. Not only did it bring recognition sooner than expected, but it kept me on my toes. If my Novice handlers were not ready for the Open class, he would let me know about it. In return, if the Utility handlers were not prepared, I would let him know.

To date he has been in obedience five years. He has assisted and trained approximately 156 weeks. When he qualifies for membership in the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors I shall insist that he apply, knowing that he has a lot to offer, but at the same time a lot to learn, as I do. Then I can spend more time with my other apprentice, but that is another story.

As you may have gathered, I take my instructing seriously. I believe that a handler who enrolls in an obedience class is entitled to sound instruction by an experienced instructor. Experience, however, does not come overnight; it takes a willingness to learn, patience and perseverance. In addition, I believe that a potential instructor should first work under the guidance and direct supervision of an experienced trainer. In my school there is no room for self-appointed experts and instant instructors.

A COLLEGE COURSE FOR INSTRUCTORS

J. J. Volhard, 1974

In Richmond, Virginia, sixteen dog owners with their dogs are going to college to learn dog obedience instructing techniques for college credit. It all started when the J. Sargeant Reymonds Community College in Richmond employed Mrs. Olive S. Point to teach a course called "Instructor Training for Dog Obedience." This course is specifically designed to train instructors to teach dog obedience and to my knowledge is the only one of its kind.

Mrs. Point, secretary of the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors, Inc., and secretary of the Virginia Federation of Dog Clubs and Breeders, Inc., is a firm advocate of teaching dogs at an early age, because she has learned from her seven years of instructing puppy training classes that two to four month old puppies learn easily, including many facets of advanced work. She also believes that many "problem dogs" are caused by sincere but unqualified instructors who cannot recognize incipient problems and remedy them BEFORE they become troublesome. This conviction has been repeatedly borne out in the instructor training seminars Mrs. Point has been conducting for obedience clubs in the United States and other countries.

After weeks of careful review by the college, Mr. William Hudson, Director of Continuing Education, Downtown Campus, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College

helped institute a two credit hour course for “Dog Obedience Instructor Training." The first course, which lasts ten weeks, teaches the students the fundamentals of basic dog training techniques as a foundation of experience for potential instructors. Classes meet every Thursday evening and all students bring their dog to class. The course is open to owners of pure bred and mixed breed dogs. Even those students with Companion Dog, Companion Dog Excellent and Utility Dog titles on their dogs are taking their dogs back to the basic exercises as they learn the "how " and "why" of the elementary obedience work from an instructing point of view.

Those enrolled in the first course include two students who are currently teaching obedience training classes on a regular basis and several others serving as assistant instructors, all of whom realized that there is more required for obedience instructing than can be learned by training one's own dog. The curriculum covers an in-depth study of dog psychology, a review of the well-known philosophies of training, and a study of all exercises required for American Kennel Club obedience titles in addition to actually training a dog in these exercises. Weekly reading assignments, research and written homework projects, as well as a final examination, are part of the program.

Second and third quarter programs continue the study of dog psychology, training techniques, and focus on methods of teaching obedience exercises including practice teaching sessions in the classroom. Students will visit various training classes to observe and evaluate teaching techniques used in actual class situations. An apprentice program in actual class instruction is part of the third quarter program. A companion college credit course in small animal care, instructed by a veterinarian, is recommended to the students. Other courses in the college curriculum such as human relations, business management, public relations and advertising, are supplements to the program to provide the instructor a background for conducting dog training classes in a professional, business-like manner.

The increase in dog training activities in the past few years has made it more difficult for the public to know where to go for qualified instruction. As one way to provide the public with information on instructors, the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors was formed a decade ago. NADOI endorses as obedience instructors those persons who apply for membership and meet the minimum requirements established by the organization's board of directors. NADOI also encourages its members to teach other people to become instructors, but until now, there has not been a formal program for this purpose. J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College in Richmond is providing one way to quality obedience instruction by offering AGRI 176 – "Instructor Training for Dog Obedience."

AS YOU TEACH, SO ARE YOU TAUGHT

S. Myles, 1980

Obedience instructors rely upon authorities in the field for information, ideas and solutions. Books and articles written by such individuals are invaluable aids, as are

seminars and workshops presented by them. Yet an ideal source for new information frequently remains untapped. Students, both canine and human, continually offer a fertile opportunity for increasing the instructor's general knowledge.

Although the instructor is more skilled at "reading" the dog, assessing temperament and specific training methods required, the owner is a source of other valuable information. Because the owner is closely associated with the dog, she can give observations otherwise unavailable to the instructor. By considering the owner's observations of the dog's behavior problems or idiosyncrasies, the instructor is able to form more accurate conclusions of the best way to handle a particular problem.

Inexperience or lack of technical expertise does not preclude helpful and accurate insights. An instructor may be tempted to dismiss a student's input because "He's only a beginner", or "What does she know? She's never trained a class!" It is exactly this fresh outlook that may provide a new thoughts about a particular type of dog. Sometimes an instructor may drift into a mental rut, and an unaccustomed outlook may provide surprising results.

Most instructors train with a certain method or approach. While this does give form and structure, there will always be dogs that are not receptive to the specific methods used. Instead of struggling to force the dog to learn with methods that are contrary to the dog's physical and/or mental make-up, the instructor needs to adapt the training to the dog. For example, the instructor that uses only praise to reward good behavior, and has a dog in class that is not motivated with praise, needs to explore other reward systems. By forcing the dog into a rigid system, the instructor is not only ineffective, but depriving herself of an opportunity to utilize the dog as a teacher. When confronted with a dog that does not fit into the usual system, the instructor who views the dog as a source for the development of a new technique will greatly enhance her abilities.

If an instructor limits herself to knowledge that pertains only to obedience training and trial work, she denies herself limitless information. Talking with a person who competes in field trials with a retriever or stock dog trials with an Australian Shepherd gives a new perspective on methods and ideas. Reading about Guide Dog training methods, or the use of sentry dogs in the Army will broaden the instructor's views. People who participate in activities other than obedience trials are excellent sources for more knowledge and a deeper understanding of people and dogs.

Instructors need to realize that each new handler and dog we meet are potential teachers. As we teach them our skills and attitudes, they can in turn teach us. The most effective and progressive teacher is one who views all sources as possible teachers, and welcomes information from them.

JUDGING HELPS IN INSTRUCTING

J. R. Kenner, 1975

An area of importance, but referred to seldom in improving training programs, is understanding the requirements of the exercise being taught. The performance of an instructor's handlers, especially those that desire to exhibit, is dependent on the instructor's knowledge of the various requirements and their pitfalls. It wasn't long ago when we exhibited our own dogs and were dependent on our instructor's knowledge. I was indeed fortunate that my instructor was also a competent judge. When handed a score card from his ring, believe me, you earned it and isn't that as it should be? To be sure, he was unpopular with those that sought scores over 195 and Hi-of-Day. I often wondered why he performed such a thankless job. Older and wiser now, I too perform this thankless job and find the benefits more than compensate the effort.

In reading the AKC Rules and Regulations before each judging assignment, I marvel at my forgotten knowledge or that taken for granted. In judging I verify the need of better handler preparation and understanding of these rules. I experience the heartache that poor handling produces and the genuine pleasure in witnessing a fine working dog and handler. I feel disgust and shame for any display of poor sportsmanship and the pride of others accepting defeat graciously, knowing they will have better days. I find in selecting the better handler and dog and those following in proper order, it is necessary to be consistent, using all the guidelines noted in the AKC Rules booklet. I comprehend the importance of the heel pattern and the value of positions taken by the judge in relation to the exhibitors for all exercises. Yet, with all my judging preparation, there are times when I am still in doubt. On these occasions, I refer to the AKC Booklet for the authority to make my decision. After scores are read and trophies awarded, I have the opportunity to renew old friendships, acquire new ones and support my handlers who are exhibiting. The experience of learning was again present this day and hopefully, I will share my findings with many training classes to come. If you have judged, continue to do so and bear in mind, what gives your scores respect is your knowledge and enforcement of the AKC Rules involved.

Do not confuse judging with training. Our responsibility as instructors is to demand an unsurpassable degree of effort based on each individual's ability, rather than the ideal handler. Many times I have heard judges express grave concern over the apparent disregard of instructors to prepare their handlers for the requirements of the ring. This is true to some extent, but the instructor's attention lies with 100% of his class, not the 5% that will exhibit. I would not encourage the average handler out of a novice class to exhibit his dog without advanced work. My interest is not in how fast the handler can exhibit, but how much can he improve in order to show his dog in a manner that brings credit to himself and the breed he exhibits. I make it a point to invite handlers who continually find fault and express dissatisfaction with their judges, to judge my class graduations. Many decline this invitation, stating they are not qualified to judge, and as a result keep future opinions to themselves. The few who accept my challenge find it to be a difficult and revealing experience. Judges with little or no experience are no detriment to my graduating classes, in that all handlers achieving qualifying scores win awards.

Handlers provided the opportunity to judge should become better handlers and certainly more tolerant and understanding of their judges to come.

Most handlers enjoy exhibiting at practice matches under new judges, especially those that train, as it presents an opportunity to seek advice and hopefully solutions. Many dog clubs provide a clinic ring at their matches for the purpose of giving handlers the chance to work on a particular problem with a qualified instructor. However, entering practice matches, be it as judge or handler, is of little value unless you apply the knowledge gained for future matches and shows. In closing may I add, be sure to keep records of dates, places, assignments and the club sponsoring AKC sanctioned matches and licenses trials in which you had an active role. Who knows, some day you may wish to apply to the American Kennel Club for judging approval and this information will be most helpful.

ARE EXPERIENCED INSTRUCTORS TOO HELPFUL?

R. Menchen, 1975

One day I heard a man tell our Training Director that he would be glad to help in advanced training, then he added, "But spare me from beginners. I know too much." My reaction was, "Wow, what a swellhead!" Now, I understand his problem. It is probably a problem many instructors have. I have trained and shown my own dogs for years, and I would certainly not be much of a handler if I didn't admit that I have a headfull of helps and short cuts that grew out of my own experiences. But these are based on my ability and my knowledge. I want to share them, but how can you throw all these things at a novice who hasn't learned to handle a lead adroitly?

I am the utility instructor for our club and work with these very advanced people month after month. Every two years I ask for a beginners novice class, to keep my hand in, and frankly, to refresh my spirit. That's where the problem rears up. I have to refrain from being too helpful, and it is a struggle. How can you tell a person with a six-month old Old English Sheepdog that has never been on lead, that "the fingers teach, the wrist corrects." It takes two hands and arms to hold the dog. It takes dog-attention to teach an animal, but a novice has to be able to first get dog-attention, which is like a snake biting its tail. We do try the dog-attention caper by insisting that our students practice on an inanimate object at home the first week, and the second week we permit them to make the attention correction twice. A week's practice leaves much to be desired in proficiency, but it's better than nothing.

I am well aware that a puppy that plays at retrieving a toy dumbbell and metal jar rings all his young life will not find the open retrieve a stumbling block. I would love to pass this information along to my beginners, but they have enough trouble without starting to play games. We tell them that dogs should not sniff on the Figure 8 so the novice starts saying "No sniff" indiscriminately. I could scream, "Cut that out! – He'll think it's wrong to use his nose when you begin scent discrimination." I know that a handler should always use clear, precise signals, even in novice, and that standing a dog

without posing him is the best help you can give yourself in preparing for future utility work. But there isn't time in a twelve week course to explain all this to people whose comment would be "What's utility?"

In the past, I made the mistake of trying to pass along everything twenty years training has taught me. All I did was completely muddle the poor class. Now, I take a good grip on my well-intentioned instincts and stick strictly to novice training on the novice level. Green people just can't handle too much information at one time. I cannot give them a sense of timing, of authority and confidence. I have to wait until that develops. I have to be patient until they can walk in a straight line and manage six feet of lead without getting tangled before I can even expect the dogs to know what they are supposed to do. I believe it is very important for an instructor to realize that what you know and can do personally will not always be useful to beginning novices. To be of service to these people you have to meet them on a novice level and wait until they understand and can handle the basics before your specialized knowledge will help.

There is another danger. It is easy to take too much for granted. Things that are second nature to utility students are pure Greek to novices. You have to be extremely careful that you don't overlook details that need explaining. I have always found that a beginners novice class is the most satisfying to teach. But, it isn't easy to keep quiet and let each one build his own pyramid of experience. It is difficult not to give too much. For the novice's sake – DON'T!

TRAINING VS. INSTRUCTING

W. H. Morrison

As trainers many of us have a far greater understanding of the dog and the approaches and techniques for teaching him various exercises than does the average person. Because of our knowledge and experience, we are often able to train a dog quickly. We have learned to recognize when we are pushing too hard and when to reinforce or correct. Our training may take place in a distraction free area so that the dog's attention is on learning. We may be very successful in achieving our goals of high scores and earned titles. These successes may tend to reinforce our own commitment to the particular training methods we used.

However as instructors, the training methods and techniques we present must be those the average person can handle. Not only will the student lack the background knowledge of canine behavior, he will lack the ability to read his dog and apply those messages to his training. Introducing green students to methods that require some degree of expertise can have disappointing results, even though those methods may be easier for the dog to learn. The techniques used in class must be those the student can understand and use successfully.

This is why it is important for instructors to continue to study the methods they prefer as trainers as well as the methods of others. Studying involves understanding the

method, knowing how to explain to the student the way he should handle his dog and what signals the need for reinforcement or correction and indicates progress.

What it all boils down to is this: an instructor must understand what he wants to accomplish, how he wants to do it, and, the hardest part, be able to explain it all to the student who knows relatively little about dogs. It is easy to take the dog and have him work for you, but it is a challenge to explain to the student how to do it himself.

THE INSTRUCTOR AS A HUMANE EDUCATOR

W. Myles, 1980

For most dog owners, the obedience instructor is the only professional source from where they may develop a humane awareness of dogs. Veterinarians seen for yearly vaccinations have no time to enlighten the owner, and groomers as well as pet shop owners rarely offer information about humane ethics. The instructor, interacting with owners on a regular basis, is one of the few that can help the public develop feelings of compassion toward dogs, an understanding of the dog as a sentient creature with natural rights, and encourage handlers to view themselves as responsible guardians for their dogs.

Because the instructor is helping the owner achieve control s/he did not have prior to class, and the dog's behavior reflects improvement, the instructor quickly builds credibility with the handler. It is essential that the instructor utilize this credibility as well as the prolonged exposure to influence the handler.

A powerful, influential tool is how the instructor physically handles the dog. Greeting a dog with a moment of affectionate patting and praise indicates a sincere interest in the dog. When teaching the down, the instructor that pauses to soothe a dog with gentle stroking and calm words demonstrates consideration for the dog's feelings. The instructor who is unselfconsciously delighted to be with a dog creates a positive image for handlers to emulate.

When presenting new exercises, the instructor can highlight them with a few remarks regarding the dog's right to humane training practices. If handlers are to respect and care for a dog, the instructor must actively cultivate this by stressing non-abusive methods. Inexperienced handlers readily absorb attitudes, and it is imperative the instructor point out and practice methods that consistently avoid force as the foundation for training.

Handlers need to be aware of the staggering dimensions of the pet overpopulation problem. As handlers practice a long stay, the instructor can briefly outline the lack of homes to absorb animals, the fate of abandoned animals and the euthanasia rate in the local shelter. Such information is readily available, and hearing that 250 dogs are destroyed on a daily basis helps the handler understand the dramatic problems caused

from indiscriminate breeding. By making it apparent the instructor finds mass euthanasia sickening, the handler will be greatly influenced.

The instructor who cares about dogs must be willing to educate those that s/he comes in contact with beyond the teaching of command-responses. Since the instructor's input may be the only educated view the handler will ever have, it is important that advice is always in the best interest of the dog. A dog cannot speak for its own welfare. Therefore, the instructor must always be willing to do so, even when it conflicts with the handler's beliefs.

The plight of domestic dogs will only become more grave if the public is not properly educated. We cannot legislate kindness nor enforce compassion. To understand and enjoy a living creature is a deeply satisfying experience, and for many a pet dog is the only link to the natural world. The obedience instructor, through example, training methods, thoughts and challenges, can help the handler become more humane, and ultimately more human.

INSTRUCTOR MOTIVATION

S. Myles, 1980

A frequently discussed topic among instructors is student motivation. Articles and interpretations of this subject are printed, portions of seminars devoted to it, and suggestions are continually being given. Yet far more important than student motivation is instructor motivation. Before we can address ourselves toward motivating the student, we must be able to understand how to motivate ourselves.

Many do not realize that motivated students are the product of a motivated instructor. Enthused instructors are role models for their students. Class instructors may be the only persons involved in obedience the student is exposed to, and it is from the instructor that attitudes and interests are adopted. No matter what methods are employed or gimmicks used, a jaded instructor inspires no one and discourages many. No matter how cleverly disguised with innovative training techniques, assistants, and an ideal training area, a bored instructor quickly loses the interest and enthusiasm of the class. Yet a fresh, eager instructor who trains in a less than ideal spot with standard techniques will be able to inspire and motivate the students because of a zestful approach.

It is crucial that the instructor view each class as a new experience. Keep in mind that although you may have taught the sit-stay 167 times, this is the first time your class will learn it. They are ready for a new experience and will view it as such. If the instructor is open for new problems that require new solutions to arise, the potential for teaching by rote can be better avoided.

One way to keep the teaching experience new is to alter your teaching method slightly every so often. For example, when teaching the sit-stay, sometimes I introduce the hand signal the first time the class learns it, and other times I wait until next week. If

you are flexible enough to try something a little different, you can better avoid teaching by rote. Even altering a small detail such as the example given can change the class approach enough so that you are teaching wholeheartedly.

It is beneficial to expand your knowledge of teaching methods by watching other teachers that are not obedience instructors. It is refreshing to sit in on a riding lesson, tennis class, or an American history lecture. How important concepts are explained, analogies drawn and examples used are visible aspects of teaching whether it is the recall or an algebraic equation being taught. One tennis instructor I watched quieted her class instantly by saying, "All those who are listening raise your rackets." This works well for me by substituting the word leash for racket. It is a minor point, but the inclusion of even this small change helped me avoid the rut of saying the same thing at the same time.

It is imperative that instructors realize that student motivation is secondary to instructing motivation. Motivated students are the product of motivated instructors, and bored instructors cannot turn out motivated students. While it is indeed important that we search for various ways to vary our classes and provide interesting experiences, we must strive to keep instructor motivation at the top of our priority list.

SUCCESS DEPENDS ON PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

J. R. Kenner

Perhaps the most revealing factor concerning the ultimate success or failure of dog obedience instructors is their continued personal growth. To be sure, this growth is a state of the art called development. Surprisingly, but true, technical abilities play a comparatively minor role in the overall training program, yet they continue to be given top priority over one's own personal development. Being yourself and improving that self's conduct and character rather than attempting to impersonate successful competitors is the key to success.

Technical abilities remain ineffective without communication and cooperation. Motivation and spirit depend on attitude and enthusiasm. Cleanliness and neatness are indicative of personal respect. Mental and emotional equilibrium with direction produces leadership. Disposition, moral strength, appearance, and emotion truly command the attention of the general public and our canine pals.

Reputation, good or bad, is the value accorded by the community, and believe me, that value is determined not by those evaluating your technical expertise, but by the impression your profession has made on the community. It is not required, nor is it expected, that you excel in technical knowledge; however, it is mandatory that your overall impression is pleasing and producing. If you are blessed with common sense, a genuine concern for your fellow man, a love and respect for dogs along with the desire to improve, you will in my opinion undoubtedly succeed.

"BE PREPARED"

J. J. Volhard, 1973

A favorite motto in the obedience fancy is "try to avoid putting yourself in a position where you can get bitten." In short, be prepared. It is a good motto in more ways than one, which makes it all the more surprising how often it is ignored. I am not thinking now of an instructor getting bitten by a dog but by a person – in the form of a lawsuit for injuries or damages incurred during a class either by the dog or the handler. Just recently another instance came to my attention in which an instructor was sued for $25,000 for injuries sustained by a handler during a class. It seems that two dogs began to have a go at it and one of the handlers was pulled to the floor and fractured her wrist. Naturally, nothing happened to either dog. The injured handler did, however, decide to sue the owner of the other dog as well as the instructor for $25,000. Needless to say, the instructor at first couldn't believe it and was under the impression that he could not be sued. For some reason this is a very prevalent impression among instructors. Unfortunately it is not correct – you can ALWAYS get sued. Whether the suit will be successful is another question and would depend on the individual circumstances involved. Even if the suit is unsuccessful, however, it may entail the hiring of a lawyer which can be expensive. It so happened that the instructor involved was employed by a Recreation Department of a city for the purpose of conducting its training program. In that particular state, as in most, an employee of a city or other governmental unit generally cannot be successfully sued for acts occurring during the performance of his duties. The correct party to sue would be the city itself and the case against the instructor was dismissed.

But what about the instructor who belongs to a club or training school? He probably would not fare as well even if, for example, the club were incorporated and nonprofit. (The fact that a club or school is incorporated does not protect the instructor against liability in such instances.) Whether a suit would be successful would depend on the law of the state where the claim arose and the specific circumstances involved. There are, however, two ways in which an instructor can protect himself. The first, and probably the best way is insurance. Unfortunately, it is difficult to get, though by no means impossible, and expensive, usually between $150 and $200 a year. It is also not a realistic alternative for an instructor associated with a club. On the other hand, for an instructor conducting his own school it is well worth the cost in relation to the risk involved in not having it, particularly since it generally also covers the costs involved in being sued.

The second way is a release. The club with which I am associated uses this method. Following is a draft form of such a release which can be readily adapted to most situations.

WAIVER, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND

AGREEMENT TO HOLD HARMLESS

I understand that attendance of a dog obedience training class is not without risk to myself, members of my family or guests who may attend, or my dog, because some of the dogs to which I will be exposed may be difficult to control and may be the cause of injury even when handled with the greatest amount of care.

I hereby waive and release the Club, its employees, officers, members and agents from any and all liability of any nature, for injury or damage which I or my dog may suffer, including specifically, but without limitation, any injury or damage resulting from the action of any dog, and I expressly assume the risk of such damage or injury while attending any training session or other function of the Club, or while on the training grounds or the surrounding area thereto.

In consideration of and as inducement to the acceptance of my application for training membership by this Club, I hereby agree to indemnify and hold harmless this Club, its employees, officers, members and agents from any and all claims, or claims by any member of my family or any other person accompanying me to any training session or function of the Club, or while on the grounds or the surrounding area thereto as a result of any action by any dog, including my own.

Signature_____

(In case of a minor a parent or legal guardian must sign.)

While such a release affords considerable protection for the instructor in case a suit is brought against him, it does not, of course, preclude the filing of a suit in the first place. The best protection would be insurance and the use of a release. How far instructors should go in trying to protect themselves would depend on how seriously they view the risk of being sued, either successfully or unsuccessfully. Personally, I feel that some form of release is the absolute minimum. In a club type situation insurance is probably unrealistic so a release becomes an absolute must. In any event, it is a good idea to consult a lawyer to find out precisely what your situation is. I would not advise anyone to use the above release without first having conferred with a lawyer to determine whether in your jurisdiction it provides the protection you want and need. If you are a member of a club there may be a lawyer in the group who can advise the club what the status of its instructors is and what should be done to protect them. It is certainly not a matter to be treated lightly since any number of things can happen during training class which can occasion a lawsuit. And it surely is better to be prepared than sorry.

NEW APPROACHES AND TECHNIQUES IN DOG TRAINING AND EVALUATING THEIR EFFECTIVENESS: PART I

O. S. Point, 1973

On January 15, 1973, Chapter 3, of the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors conducted a one-day seminar in Manassas, Virginia, on the Basic Course. Following is the first part of a condensed version of one of the presentations entitled NEW APPROACHES AND TECHNIQUES IN DOG TRAINING AND EVALUATING THEIR EFFECTIVENESS.

When I finished high school (more years ago than I care to remember), I was impressed, as any recent high school graduate, that I was really educated. I am sure I was more knowledgeable than an infant, but I soon realized that I was ignorant when compared to older people who had more experience than I. Then, during my first office job, I noticed with interest a little sign the President of the company had on his desk. It said SO LONG AS YOU ARE GREEN, YOU GROW: WHEN YOU GET RIPE, YOU GET ROTTEN. This little axiom is particularly appropriate for obedience instructors. We have all met the instructor who thinks he knows it all. But the older, more experienced instructor realizes that the MORE ONE LEARNS, THE MORE THERE IS TO LEARN. By meeting today, all of us are saying that we are still green and want to grow. We want to learn more about dog training and we want to share experiences in our hobby.

I work for a company with an engineering department and for every successful development there have been many experiments in designs and techniques on the way to success. And success in our company, as in any business, is the sale of a good product or service. In dog training, we have some people who might be called chief engineers. These are the Pearsalls, the Stricklands, the Koehlers, the Saunders, etc. We could say that every instructor is an engineer working out the details of programs outlined by the chief engineers, for success or failure. Perhaps my exposure to a research and development organization for 13 years has sharpened my mind to the scientific approaches which must be used to develop new and superior products. But what is a "scientific approach?" Perhaps the dictionary can help which defines science as: "(1) Any department of knowledge in which the results of investigation have been logically arranged; (2) Knowledge of facts . . . gained and verified by exact observation, organized experiment and orderly thinking; (3) An orderly presentation of facts, reasonings, doctrines, and beliefs concerning some subject or group of subjects; (4) Expertness, skill, or proficiency resulting from knowledge." With this definition in mind, let me say that all obedience instructors are scientists, that is, all instructors *should* be scientists. An instructor who is not using a scientific approach to training is getting rotten in his training. Everything is a changing process and we must keep up to date – sometimes if only to know WHAT NOT TO DO. How could the problem be eliminated or avoided? These questions kept haunting me. No instructor has successfully passed on to me his secret of getting dogs off lead. I have had to devise my own system for those dogs that are aware of the lead being removed. I had a dog which had this problem, and I used every gimmick in the book: the fishing line, the drop lead, the lead without the snap in it, etc., but these were tried as solutions to a problem that had been in existence for a long time. How could I have

avoided the problem in the first place? That was what I wanted to know as an instructor. I decided that I should try never to let the dog or owner become dependent on the lead. From the first session, the lead was put over the owner's shoulders and he was told that the object was to keep his left hand off the lead as much as possible. By encouraging the handler to walk fast and praise his dog when the dog was in the correct heel position, I found that I was able to start some of the dogs with off-lead work after 5 weeks. The object was to reduce if not eliminate the OWNERS' and the DOGS' dependence on the lead from the very start. For too many the lead is like Linus' blanket which later on may be difficult to abandon.

Of course, I was anxious to evaluate the success of this method. Only 2 of the 5 dogs on which I had tried this continued into the Novice Class where I could determine if the early off-lead work paid off. One of the 2 dogs had to drop out of the class for personal reasons. This left me with only one dog on which to base an opinion. This was a Westie, 2 years old, and thought to be a problem dog by his owner. After 16 weeks of training, this dog and handler entered a trial and earned a leg on the CD with a credible score. To be sure, this cannot be considered a scientific conclusion; it did, however, encourage me to try the technique in another class. Dogs from this class are now training in Novice classes and I will be watching their progress to determine the success of using the earlier offlead work as a foundation for their training.

NEW APPROACHES AND TECHNIQUES IN DOG TRAINING AND EVALUATING THEIR EFFECTIVENESS, PART II

O. S. Point, 1973

There is another serious problem I have observed in my teaching of obedience. I encountered it when I first started training my own dog 12 years ago. This problem is the use of the word "correction." It has an undesirable connotation – it implies punishment because a mistake has been made. Try it in your office as I did. Ask a person who does not train a dog what he thinks when he hears the word correction. He will tell you that it means to punish for a mistake that has been made. Personally I dislike the word. When my first instructor used it in talking to me about training my dog, it implied to me that I or my dog had made a mistake – done something wrong – even if we did not know what it was. I believe my feelings are like the average person's – he does not want to make a mistake, and he wants to learn how to do things correctly. As I went on in my training and read books on training, I learned that the word correction was supposed to mean "show your dog how to do that exercise correctly", but, and the big BUT is – does the beginner understand what he is to do when the instructor says "correct your dog?''

Over the years I have found many beginners resentful when they were told to correct their dogs, because they believed that their dogs had done nothing wrong, and not understanding exactly what the instructor wanted them to do. I have even had trainees tell me when they trained under this method of instruction that they did not believe the instructor was talking to them particularly. They felt that "correct your dog" meant everybody else in the class because they knew their dog had not done anything wrong!

Because I failed to reach many of the people in the classes that I taught with the use of the word correction, I began a serious program to find a way to avoid this word and its connotations of punishment. Following the words given to me at an Instructors Clinic – that of showing the dog what he is to do before any correction is applied – I began to think that perhaps this was the answer to get the message across to beginners. I believe teaching is best done when we keep repeating what is to be done rather than calling attention to what the handler interprets as errors, that is, use a positive approach rather than one that appears negative even though as instructors we know that it does not necessarily have to be negative.

When I started operating my own training college, I made a conscious effort to avoid the use of the word correction in my first beginner class. While in fact the trainees were performing what we know as corrections, they were expressed as follows:

"Show your dog how to sit straight."

"Make your dog sit straight."

"Bring the dog in closer to you – he is heeling wide."

"Make the dog wait to be called."

"Make the dog heel with you. Don't let him forge."

You will note that all of these phrases are giving reinforcing and repetitive instructions to the handler. If he has forgotten what he is supposed to be doing, my instructions remind him. I believe an instructor's job is that of teaching people. As he teaches, he must review constantly to see that instructions are being followed. When I keep repeating the instructions, I am helping the person who has not yet gotten it, and the others in the class receive reinforcing information to remind them of the proper way to perform the exercises. People seem to accept suggestions made this way a little better and do not seem to resent the directions from the instructor as much. They feel that they are being taught how to train their dogs. In fact, the handlers welcome the attention of being told how to do the exercises correctly as opposed to being made to feel stupid when the instructor constantly tells them to correct their dog. After all, dog training has to be an approach to the people who will do the training. By the same token, I do not like to see an instructor who is afraid to tell his trainees they have done something wrong for fear he will hurt their feelings. People must be told when they are not training correctly. That is why they are in class. But, we can make them feel better by using a positive approach rather than the negative approach connoting correction or punishment. One person recently told me she appreciated how I kept after her to do the exercises properly.

There is one other training aspect which I had to rethink. I have observed that teaching the right and left turns can be a traumatic experience for the handler and the dog. They invariably seem to get in each other's way no matter how hard we tried to avoid this situation. There is a lot to remember about footwork, lead handling, commands, praise, etc. Unless all of these things are timed correctly, problems can result. The handler stumbles over his feet, he stumbles over the dog, the dog gets ahead of the handler and is

out of control altogether. Any one of these conditions could make for a serious accident. Taking a page from the book on the Figure Eight – an exercise designed to show that the dog can do the heeling under all conditions – I decided that the introduction of the right and left circles before the right and left turns might help. I have tried it and it was a decided improvement. The trainees are instructed to make rather large circles to the right or left as commanded by the instructor. The main object is for them to learn how to control the dog and a large circle permits them to concentrate and work on this. As they get their dogs under control, they are told to make the circles smaller and smaller. After about two weeks of circles, they can then go into the formal right and left turns without the problems I used to encounter.

Let me conclude by saying that I am not so conceited as to believe that I have thought of revolutionary new approaches or new techniques in dog training. What I am telling you about are new approaches or new techniques that I have developed for the purpose of improving my instructing ability and the resulting training of dogs in my classes. Seminars such as this one give us the opportunity to get together in order to exchange ideas and share experiences so all of us can learn from each other.

A STUDENT HANDBOOK

J. J. Volhard, 1975

A great new aid for instructors is the twelve page pamphlet entitled "Teaching You to Train Your Dog . . . A Student Handbook." Designed as a supplement to a class orientation, it highlights the many details about attending a class instructors expect their students to remember. The information is presented in a well-organized and easy to understand fashion. The language is kept general to avoid interfering with, or contradicting, different approaches to training. For example, the student is advised that the "equipment used in training a dog is a training collar and a leash" and that the "instructor will show you the collar and leash you will use and how to put the training collar on correctly." The type of collar or leash is not specified, since both can vary from training organization to training organization.

More specifically, the pamphlet addresses itself to the type of clothes most suited for training, the importance of class attendance and punctuality, the student's responsibility for his dog, the role of the instructor, when to feed the dog while he is in training, what to do about training and class when the dog is sick, the necessity to practice, and the need for persistence, patience, and praise. In short, it contains the information covered by the do's and don'ts which every training organization has. Some of these handout sheets which I have seen overdo it on the don'ts, which has the tendency to discourage students. The pamphlet uses don'ts very sparingly and most of its admonitions are presented in a positive form. It even manages to have a touch of humor.

Perhaps the pamphlet's chief virtue is that it is inviting to read. The text is broken up with cartoon-type illustrations and no single page is so full of print that it overwhelms the reader. It is also printed which should make its impact more effective. I have often

wondered how much attention students pay to faded ditto sheets or barely legible copies of handout sheets crammed full of text. I suspect that many cannot bring themselves to read it, much less keep it as a reference.

The pamphlet is suitable for use by any training organization, be it a club, a school, or what-have-you. The purpose of obedience training is explained in the language of the AKC Obedience Regulations. The back page has been left blank and can be imprinted with the emblem of the training organization using it, or any other desired information. It also deals with the student's responsibility for his dog at home, not just in class. The student is told that he is expected to be a good dog neighbor and a responsible dog owner. A very important point, especially since communities are becoming increasingly anxious about irresponsible dog owners. The student is told that he is expected to know the whereabouts of his dog 24 hours a day. In the same context, the pamphlet invites the student's attention to the over-population of dogs, just in case he is contemplating breeding his dog.

"A Few Important Hints" and "I Am A Dog" are the concluding sections, both of which are extremely well done. "Teaching you to Train your Dog – A Student Handbook" was prepared by the editorial staff of OFF-LEAD, the National Dog Training Monthly, in conjunction with the Canine Board of Education and the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors and is an exciting addition to the repertoire of the instructor.

A NEW CHALLENGE

W. H. Morrison

Over the past ten years canine behavior has been investigated and the practical findings made available in an easily understood manner. Now those principles of canine behavior and communication are being combined with another research area, that of operant conditioning and reinforcement scheduling, to produce a more effective training approach.

To effectively combine these two areas into an effective training program, it is also necessary that the handler possess the insight and knowledge that comes from observing and understanding his dog in order to be able to read the dog and to know what types of positive reinforcement are most appealing to the dog. In addition, the particular exercise and the steps in teaching it must be thoroughly understood so that the slightest responses on the dog's part that build the foundation for subsequent steps can be reinforced when they occur. This approach can be applied to all exercises and, if carried out correctly, can increase the reliability of the dog.

If one is successful using this approach with his own dog, the problem now becomes one of teaching this method in a class situation. Many students, and some instructors, want an ABC-type approach requiring little of the insight and knowledge referred to above. This new approach is much more sophisticated than the traditional ones

used in many classes. It will require the instructor to be knowledgeable in the areas mentioned, to be able to get its fundamentals across to the students, and to put in additional time outside of class for his own continuing education and preparation.

The comment has been made at more than one clinic or seminar that there are plenty of dog psychologists around, but none that have trained dogs. This may well be the case, but the time has come for those of us who are trainers to take advantage of the basic findings of the canine behaviorists, animal psychologists, and the use of successful reinforcement schedules in the applied area of training companion, competition, and working dogs. We have just begun to scratch the surface of the dog's capability to be trained for the service of man, and many of the potential uses for such trained dogs will not be things the dog can be forced to do; he must work because he wants to. The field is open to development by those looking for a challenge.

POINTS TO PONDER:
OLD METHODS CAN WORK TODAY

J. J. Volhard, 1974

It is interesting to see how long various ideas and approaches to training have been around. Many of them appear painfully obvious and yet need to be repeated almost *ad nauseam* to be remembered and applied. Colonel Konrad Mosf'W'TT7Faining Dogs" (Popular Dogs, 1954) was originally published in 1910 and I want to quote a few sentences from the introductory part, The Theory of Training, to demonstrate this point.

> "Individual dogs differ widely both physically and psychologically. For that reason methods of treatment must also vary, not only as between dogs of different breeds, but also between those of the same breed."

No one would argue with that observation, at least not successfully and it is one of the very first tenets an instructor is supposed to know which makes it all the more surprising how frequently it is seemingly ignored. In many training classes, all exercises are approached in identical fashion for all dogs. The instructor will explain the exercise to be learned and how it is to be taught. Only in the event a problem arises is an effort made to approach the exercise in a perhaps slightly different manner thereby giving explicit recognition to the fact that individual dogs differ. By that time, however, the damage may already have been done; it would have been preferable to apply different methods of treatment in the beginning so that the occurrence of the problem could have been avoided.

> "When the dog first starts to learn, only a mild form of compulsion should ever be employed, so as to avoid intimidation and to accustom him, so to speak, to whatever routine behavior it is desired to impose upon him. If then, as training proceeds, stricter compulsion becomes necessary, the dog is already familiar with the routine and can thus much more readily evade the stricter compulsion than would be the case had it been applied at the outset.

> When strict compulsion is being used it may not be possible wholly to avoid intimidation. It should, however, be transitory, for strict compulsion must be relaxed or stopped altogether as soon as the object the trainer has in view is achieved

Another good point frequently ignored. In many training classes the dogs are introduced to exercises like heeling and the recall, for example, by means of strict compulsion in the form of a sharp jerk, without regard to the fact that this should be avoided when the dog first starts to learn an exercise. As the author suggests, compulsion in the beginning may actually confuse the dog which in turn means that the training will take that much longer. And yet there are still quite a few people who are convinced that the only way to teach an exercise is by means of a sharp jerk, that is, a form of strict compulsion.

"Erroneous application of compulsion is a deeply rooted evil in training."

If this statement proves anything it is how little things change because it is as true today as it was in 1910. Then as now, much of the training was needlessly harsh and needlessly physical. Some progress has been made over the course of the past 60 years, but not nearly enough and we still have a long way to go. In the words of Colonel Most, "good training needs a kind heart as well as a cool and well-informed head."

UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS NEEDED

J. R. Kenner, 1976

For the majority of instructors it is easy to step forward and make the necessary corrections on the handler's dog to demonstrate the procedure involved and the instructor's ability. While this may be an excellent technique for those handlers having similar abilities to anticipate and react with the required agility and force, it provides little consolation for those lacking these talents.

For the handler who possesses a minor or major physical or mental problem, the instructor's technique must change. To be aware of these problems the instructor should handicap himself similarly in order to understand the utter frustration the handler experiences. Now, ask yourself this question... "Is being an adept handler and training the dog the answer?" Unfortunately many instructors feel that it is and in so doing, miss out on an opportunity to acquire new knowledge that could hopefully ease future training problems.

Many instructors use the excuse that with 'x' number of dogs it is not possible to satisfy the needs of all handlers in a class. However, I would remind those instructors that if you accepted their money, you indeed obligated yourself to this task. Time should be taken either before or after class to attempt to satisfy their needs. Granted it won't be easy and maybe you will fail but even in failing knowledge is gained.

For the handicapped, preparation is of paramount importance. Improvement to the slightest degree is a giant step forward. How fast the dog learns is not important nor is perfection the goal either. Control of the dog is what it is all about. For instance, take the handler who cannot bring himself to relax the leash... Simply remove the leash from his grasp, tuck it under his belt or over his shoulder. Use your imagination. Try, try, and try again. The answer will be found. In the beginning, establish goals that would seem ridiculous... "Let's see if we can go maybe four steps this time." Slowly but surely you're on your way.

As an instructor, be interested in the handler's problem because the dog's problem is relevant to the proficiency of the handler. Yet, we continually hear requests... "How do you get a dog to stop this or do that"...without knowing the handler's ability.

I have heard knowledgeable instructors state, "You can't make a handler out of introverts." I do not share their opinion nor do I believe in the word "can't." It is more like I "won't" in this instance. *Desire* plays a vital role on the part of both instructor and handler. Should the handler lack desire it is up to the instructor to instill new desire in that handler. No, it doesn't always work, but that shouldn't stop you from trying.

The welfare of the dog is dependent on the instructor's involvement with its handler. The ability of the handler to improve is based on that handler's skill to improve, not the instructor's. What good is the ability to relate if you fail to understand the problem? Understanding need not be a sympathetic or tolerant attitude. It should be the comprehension of what efforts are required to solve the problems.

KEEPING YOUR PERSPECTIVE IN A BASIC CLASS

W. H. Morrison

As we become more involved in the dog game, more and more of our time and interest is taken up with the various aspects of dogs. Our friends tend to be narrowed to those with whom we can share our enthusiasm over our wins and discuss our problems in training. It is all too easy to forget when teaching an obedience class that most of the people in the beginning levels are not as interested in or as knowledgeable about dogs as we may be. While all the students are obviously interested in their own dogs, and interested in having a trained pet, most have no interest in going to trials or joining the club. All too often these students may be ignored as we devote our attention to the few who are more inclined to get caught up in the dog game. To quote from the Obedience Regulations: "The purpose of obedience trials is to demonstrate the usefulness of the purebred dog as a companion of man, not merely the dog's ability to perform specified routines in the obedience ring." We should not lose sight of the fact that even if we are training eventually for trials, we should first be teaching the owner to train his dog to be a better companion.

It is important that we keep our perspective about dogs when working with those not so involved in our sport because it is possible that our zeal may actually alienate

rather than inspire a similar interest in others. For example, too much emphasis on training for a high score can be discouraging and meaningless for the owner struggling just to gain control over his dog. “That will cost you points”, may be appropriate in a trial preparation class, but in the beginning can wipe out any feeling of accomplishment the owner might have had over training his dog simply to perform the exercise. What are helpful and important hints to the advanced student can be nagging and nitpicking to the person whose interests are not in the ring.

The apparent formation of cliques of exhibitors chattering about the recent trials and matches entered can leave the newcomer feeling very left out since he has nothing to contribute and probably can’t even understand the jargon and terms. The student whose dog is not purebred or not an AKC breed will quickly realize that he doesn’t even have a chance of becoming one of the group. It is important that each student feel welcomed.

Remember that each student in the class deserves your attention, assistance and cooperation in accomplishing *his* goal. Those students with the potential and interest should, of course, be encouraged to exhibit, but not at the expense of slighting even one other student.

THE ART OF COMMUNICATION

W. H. Morrison

Sometimes it’s the way you say something that makes it a little clearer to someone. One thing that makes a good instructor is knowing how to communicate with people. We can explain how to teach an exercise, but if we use terms that someone not associated with dogs is unable to understand, we get nowhere. In addition, the way we phrase something can often influence a person’s receptiveness to what we are trying to explain. For example, much of the basic behavioral work was done with animals. This information was then used to explain why people do what they do and, especially in conditioning, principles now used with children were developed using animals. However, it is much more tactful to say that training a dog is much like training children than saying training a child is just like training a dog. If we use the latter example, some people object to our suggesting that their children are not much better than animals. Although I might add that some parents do ask us if we can do the same thing with children.

It also helps to have some idea of the handler’s other areas of interest in order to try to develop a common ground of communication. Someone with a background in psychology could understand and relate to a technical explanation of conditioning while a service station owner may not.

Find out what other animals the owner has worked with. It has been our observation that those who have worked with horses generally do a better job with their dogs. Whether it is simply having worked with another animal or a horse in particular we don’t know.

Another area of communication is learning to anticipate what types of questions will come up and when. Paying attention to this can help you prepare a class presentation so that you create and anticipate your students' questions, then follow them with an answer.

As you prepare for a class, put yourself in the students' place. This means you must ask yourself this question, "If I knew nothing about dog training would this be clear?" If the answer is no, back up and make it simpler, clearer, or use terms that are not a part of the dog training jargon.

An obedience class instructor must not only know how to communicate with dogs, but more importantly, with people. The dog, usually is the easier of the two to work with, while the owner, who appears to speak our language, presents the real challenge.

THAT GUT FEELING: COMMUNICATION

J. R. Kenner

There is, and I am quite sure my fellow instructors will agree, an intangible mystic beyond comprehension, existing at times between instructor and dog. It is impossible to justify this feeling as compensation for one's efforts based on experience. It has little in common with sight, touch, taste, smell, hearing or intellect. It's an unknown understanding sense of judgement. You know, without knowing why, the limits allowed when handling certain dogs.

Communication is a two way street, encompassing a giving and receiving of information. The rewards offered are based on the ability to learn through reason, but, how is one to reason that "gut feeling?" I would guess, at best, the gut feeling is a conscious recognition or impression that conveys deeply felt convictions of pending results. To be sure, a phenomenal form of communication.

I doubt seriously if this form of communication exists in instructors who provide lip service only for they are enamored by the sound of their own voices and oblivious to all other needs. Then there are those overbearing intimidators who delight in demonstrating their technical prowess, taking the dog far beyond his ability to reason by using an overwhelming concentration of undue force. Naturally, the insensitive instructor would also be unaware of this sensation.

The concerned instructor's emotions, stemming from intuition of this nature, are unparalleled for their unique arousing of physical sensation and mental awareness. Further awareness of these particular premonitions may be attributed to risks or dangers involved, or the instructor realizing the ramifications of failure. This could very well be the reason some instructors refuse to handle problem dogs. However, I have always felt instructors who fail to handle problem dogs within their classes are short-changing themselves of needed knowledge and thus failing themselves.

Let's face it, dog response influenced by a threatening environment activates instinctive behavior. If the instructor fails to understand the dog's unalterable capacity to react in a given manner, severe consequences may be in order for both parties. The so called "gut feeling" when handling, or about to handle, certain dogs is an awareness to tread lightly for the time being. Be grateful for this talent – respect it and the dogs you handle will respect you.

MOTIVATING STUDENTS

W. H. Morrison

Keeping the students motivated is another challenge that faces the obedience instructor. I'm sure most will agree that the goal of a trained dog or the investment of the training fee is not sufficient motivation for some students to keep working through the entire session. We have found several things that appear to have been successful in improving overall attendance and final results of training.

A good beginning is a sincere interest in the dog, handler, and their progress. It is all too possible to settle into a routine when teaching so that our spiel remains the same session after session and the students are not thought of as individuals, but rather collectively as "the class." If each handler believes that the instructor is interested and doing his best to help him, he is more likely to try harder himself. This expression of interest, or lack of it, may be apparent to the prospective student from his first phone call inquiring about your classes.

Another and possibly more important way of increasing student motivation is allowing some visible success in training from the very first night by providing an outline or other description of realistic accomplishment for the week's training. This can be accomplished by designing a program such that each step the dog is taught leads to success. If the handler can see the improvement, he is more likely to keep up. Having to wait the entire eight or ten week session to compare his results with the ultimate goal, may be too long for a feeling of satisfactory accomplishment.

As instructors we tell our students to praise their dogs; we should also follow our own advice by praising the handlers for the progress they make however small it may be. This requires the instructor to pay attention to each student and remember from week to week how each is doing.

Socialize with the students. When possible extend invitations to go out for a snack after class. Not only will this help the students to feel a part of the group, but informal conversations may provide the instructor with more information and insight than the formal class allows.

Student motivation is a tough subject with no clear cut guidelines. Each person is different and must be handled individually, but a genuine interest in the student along

with a program designed to provide success will go a long way toward lowering the drop-out rate and improving the final results of training.

ACCOMPLISHMENT FEEDBACK

O. S. Point, 1975

The original obedience event promoted by Mrs. Whitehouse Walker was to disprove comments that "bench dogs were beautiful, but dumb." One assumes that the dogs were competing to prove themselves worthy of the titles as Champions of Record. The participants in the early obedience classes were interested in making their dogs better companions in their communities and the winning of a trophy seems to have been a secondary motive. Times have changed and it sometimes looks that what started out as a friendly leisure activity has turned into a fiercely competitive drama with attendant trappings of animosity, envy, poor sportsmanship and, worst of all, cheating.

As instructors we have a responsibility not only to our students – the potential exhibitor – but to the sport as a whole. We must recognize the human qualities and needs which are at work in obedience activities and plan ways to meet these needs. These requirements relate to the human element, not the dog. As society becomes more urbanized and gets farther away from communion with nature, people tend to look for some tie with nature. The domesticated pet is one such link. As occupations become more fragmented in their functions and people no longer see the final results of their labors, there is an increasing need to experience "accomplishment feedback", or the sense of accomplishment that brings an inner feeling of satisfaction.

Dog obedience training and competition provide a way to experience accomplishment feedback. From the time a puppy is acquired, to the completion of his U.D.T., the handler is personally responsible for each success and failure. The instructor guides the handler and can provide the opportunity for success. To the handler, success brings accomplishment feedback which need not necessarily reflect itself in the scores he gets. No team of dog and handler is alike and the potential of each will be different. It matters little if a team scores high or low, so long as the instructor has shown a sincere interest in all his students and prepared each to the best of his ability. Teams which in all likelihood will just squeak by are entitled to the same encouragement and tutelage as those with the potential to make the instructor look like a genius: they have the same right to accomplishment feedback. Once that title has been awarded, the scores become fading memories.

Trial giving clubs should also understand exhibitors needs. Exhibitors need clubs to put on trials, but clubs also need exhibitors to attend these trials. The exhibitor makes the trial possible. He is willing to incur the expense of traveling, has paid his entry fee, and is entitled to understanding and courtesy. Every dog entering the ring should have the opportunity to earn a qualifying score. This means adequate rings, grounds in good condition and good planning and organization. What we often see instead is a needless commercialization of trials by excessive offerings of trophies and cash prizes.

Accomplishment feedback does not hinge upon receipt of a trophy. Particularly cash prizes are of dubious taste and completely unnecessary. The club which for years has held by far the largest trial in the East has never offered cash prizes. With the expense of attending a trial becoming more and more formidable, savings could be effected by cutting back on trophies and lowering the entry fees.

Judges too must understand their part. Let the chips fall where they may, but treat every exhibitor alike and stick to the Obedience Regulations. Favoritism is particularly misplaced in the obedience ring and every exhibitor is entitled to be judged fairly in accordance with the requirements spelled out in the Regulations. I know some judges who seem to delight in inventing ways to disqualify exhibitors thereby defeating the entire purpose of the Obedience Regulations. It is difficult enough to prepare exhibitors for a trial, let along having to worry about non-existing "requirements."

If everyone does their part, there is accomplishment feedback every step along the way – for the instructor, for those putting on the trial, for the judge, and for the exhibitor. Accomplishment feedback – try it, you will like it.

PERSONAL SUCCESS

S. Myles, 1980

In the obedience world, success is often looked upon as achieving clearly defined, measurable goals. The American Kennel Club criterion are usually the yardstick with which we measure success. We say the handler with the consistently high scoring dog is successful, as is the one with an Obedience Trial Champion. While these outward displays of success are commendable, they are only one element of success. Participation in obedience activities and classes, whether or not they lead to titles and awards, can lead to a feeling of personal success. Increased self-confidence, pride in their abilities to train a dog, and a better self-image are aspects of personal success that instructors can facilitate for their handlers.

Using a handler's name helps him to feel that his presence in class is valuable. Referring to someone by name is an acknowledgement of their individuality and significance. When greeting a handler by name as he arrives for class, the instructor helps him to feel unique, not just one of the many handlers in Wednesday night class. During the few minutes before class is when a remark such as ''Fluffy got a haircut!'' tells the handler he and his dog are important enough to be noticed and commented upon.

The first five minutes of actual class time are an ideal opportunity for the instructor to build positive self-images in the class. At this time, comments can point out improvements in a dog's behavior, better handling habits from the owner, or the general improvement since the first week. A good habit for instructors to develop is that of making the first comment to a specific handler complimentary. A remark like "Good! You remembered to keep your hand on the snap when you sat Fluffy" helps the handler

feel good about his efforts. Even if the handler did nothing else right when he sat the dog, pointing out the one good element helps the handler anticipate class with happiness.

Through the use of touch the instructor can convey concern and support. A timely pat on the back or an arm around the shoulder can help the handler feel he is not ignored. When an instructor takes a handler's hand and helps make a leash correction, it may just be the simple physical touch that silently says "I care" that helps the handler succeed.

To help a handler attain self-confidence, the instructor can ask him to demonstrate an exercise he and his dog perform especially well. By illustrating to the class the correct handling techniques used, the willing attitude of the dog, or perhaps the evident rapport between dog and handler, the instructor can help a shy handler feel more assured.

Occasionally handlers become upset when they encounter resistance from the dog or are unable to perform a certain exercise. Instructors can assist them in overcoming discouragement by reminding them of earlier progress. By discussing specific skills they have developed, the instructor can help handlers realize that there truly are abilities they have acquired. For many, this is the first time they have trained a dog, and it is important that they feel good about the effort as well as the result.

The majority of people who attend training classes will never exhibit their dogs in trials or earn degrees. To help these handlers feel positive about their experience in class and training a dog is a critical aspect of obedience instruction. Helping other people achieve more self-confidence and pride in themselves and their dogs as they accomplish personal success is a worthy part of obedience training.

HOW DO WE KNOW THE DOG KNOWS IT?

W. H. Morrison, 1980

One of the phrases often heard in dog training classes and clinics as well as seen in books and articles is, "When the dog knows the exercise, we can then correct him for not doing it correctly." This is all well and good, but how do we know when the dog knows it? This question is seldom addressed and leads to many novice students not making rapid progress in the fundamental exercises.

The student needs some objective way of evaluating his dog's progress. In some cases it might be the dog's repeating the correct response several times on the first command with no help. In others it may be that the exercise, even the sit, needs to be broken down further into smaller pieces so that the dog can be rewarded and more easily evaluated.

Dogs differ in ease of condition. Handlers differ in their ability to train their dogs. For this reason we can not say practice for one week and the dog should have it.

In setting up a training program or class, try to break exercises down into small steps which when put together give the final product. Set up a way that each student can

judge his own progress so that he and his dog can move to the next step without guess work. If the students have difficulty knowing what they are supposed to do, how can we expect them to evaluate their dogs' actions?

CONSISTENCY AND RELIABILITY

W. H. Morrison, 1979

All instructors stress the importance of being consistent when training a dog. This is emphasized in class, but the instructor has no way of being on top of his students when they are not in class. Many of the problems which arise are those we are not really conscious of having created. For example, a student wants his dog to be under control especially at home. He has had success teaching the down with a gentle, but firm, approach. The dog becomes reliable and all of a sudden he hears this command in a loud, angry voice as he jumps up to greet his owner, or, as guests come in the house, gets up on the couch. The down is being used as a form of punishment. No wonder the dog begins to dislike the down and hesitates on the drop on recall. If the dog does view the down as punishment, the drop on recall can be especially difficult. The dog's response to punishment, an assertion of dominance, is to show deference (respect) for the leader (owner). In order to do so he tries to get closer to his owner and as a result creeps.

Another example is the stay. How many times have we gone from one room to another and told our dog to "Stay" as we open the door only to close it behind us and go on about our work? When we do return, is the dog praised for having stayed or corrected for having moved? Students are taught that "Stay" means don't move, yet at home "Stay" is used to momentarily keep our dogs out of our way. We have found it useful to substitute "Wait" in these situ-at ions.

While they may seem minor, the interaction between handler and dog in non-training situations needs to be examined if the handler is having problems with reliability and consistency. It may well be that our dogs are learning what they don't need to do faster than what we want them to do.

THE "DROP-IN" CLASS

J. J. Kenner, 1974

I once read, "Experience isn't what happens to a man, it's what a man does with what happens to him." Hence the following –

On Friday, in June of 1972, I was asked to hold a brush-up class, making comments on how my handlers who were between classes might improve their scores at an AKC Trial they were attending on Sunday. The results at the Trial were better than these handlers had hoped for. The word spread and the following Friday eight handlers were

standing in my front yard waiting to be analyzed, criticized and encouraged. I was shocked, as there were no matches or Trials for that weekend, yet delighted to work them.

In the following weeks I moved the "Drop-In" class to Monday nights to accommodate the majority of handlers and charged them one dollar for 1½ to 2 hour workouts. For tax purposes, I had them sign a dated sheet indicating handler and that they had paid.

Handlers from other trainers came and were most welcome. I made no attempt to change their training methods, unless they were between classes and only then upon request. However, I made it plain to all that I would not tolerate dog abuse for any reason. Through previous experiences I have found it necessary to remove all open and utility jumps from the training area. Inexperienced handlers are always attracted to the jumps and if not personally told to refrain, will attempt to put their dogs over them in a most disagreeable manner.

Instructing a Drop-In class is not easy, not a job for just lip service. Never knowing who is coming, how many are coming, or what type of instruction is needed until class time makes it similar to a weekly training clinic. I start each weekly class by dividing the handlers into groups of about equal ability. Workouts are devoid of excessive routine. Therefore, handlers learn to correct the first time, as there may not be a second chance. Brisk heeling followed by a brief rest, allows each group the opportunity to evaluate others faults and attributes. The mental picture or goal I urge in training is, "If an individual was looking out a window and could only view you from the waist up, it should be difficult for him to tell that your dog is with you." The words that best describe this scene are, a confident attitude and a natural mannerism.

Many times a drill down is held in which corrections and praise are permitted. Those who fail to correct or praise properly are excused until the next brief workout. At other times we have drill downs in which I select the first handler or dog in error. This handler then places his dog on a down stay in an out of the way area and proceeds to look for the next critic. This promotes fellowship among the handlers and gives them an added incentive to know the AKC Obedience rules and regulations.

If the dogs and handlers are tired from a strenuous workout, we sometimes do an individual heeling pattern for variety. Everyone relaxes with their dogs beside them while one handler is put through his paces. Then each resting handler gets a chance to comment on the performance. Compliments as well as criticisms are in order. Many times handlers benefit from hearing the same thing their trainer has been telling them. Coming from a different source, sometimes makes it more impressive.

Each and every week, I present a challenge to all handlers attending this class. Examples: While heeling your dog off leash, without changing your stride or mannerism, give him a verbal command to "sit" in a natural voice and keep walking. Only those interested would try and as usual they were the better handlers. After all handlers had attempted the exercise (some at times successful) I then would demonstrate how to train to accomplish this exercise. My evaluation of such challenges is that they produce

handlers who better understand their dogs, and dogs that are programmed to a word or signal and not to an exercise.

Perhaps there are trainers who feel that they would not want to demonstrate their knowledge, or for that matter a lack of it, in handling a drop-in class. The measure of value in holding this class is not monetary. It is being able to share your knowledge with others and to build upon this knowledge by benefiting from your own and others' mistakes.

To this date some 2,000 handler's signatures (of which many are the same) have proved that there is a definite need and demand for this type of instruction.

TEACHING PROPER TIMING

W. H. Morrison

Proper timing of praise and correction is one of the most difficult skills to teach in obedience training classes. However, if the student can be provided with some key movements by the dog that signal the need for praise or corrections, this aspect of teaching is made easier and the training improved.

Praise is not applied at the same times for moving and non-moving exercises. When an exercise requires motion, the dog must at some point make a decision to actually move; this is the time praise should be applied. If the dog does not move, he should be encouraged to do so, but not corrected. A correction implies something being done wrong, and, in this case, a decision has not yet been made.

The movements the students are to look for are reasonably obvious once they are pointed out. When teaching the sit, the dog should be praised at the first downward motion of his hips since this is the first visual indication that the dog has decided to sit. Initially, the dog may not actually complete the sit, but the first downward motion is still rewarded with praise. The praise should be moderate so the dog is not distracted and gradually delayed so finally the dog is sitting and is being praised for having done so.

When beginning heeling, any forward motion is praised as well as a change of direction as the handler changes direction. Lagging or forging are handled differently. A lagging dog is encouraged both with the lead and voice to stay near by and is praised for being close to the handler. Forging should be corrected as soon as it occurs as indicated by the forward motion away from the handler.

With the sit-stay, a correction is needed when the dog's head drops and the shoulders move slightly forward. These movements must occur before the dog can stand, and are our cue that the dog has decided to get up.

If the recall is taught using a come-fore, any movement of the head toward the handler is praised. If taught from a sit, dropping of the head and forward movement of the shoulders are praised as the indication of a correct decision to move. If the dog's attention

is lost, a change of voice or slight tug on the lead is used to distract the dog away from his outside interest. As his attention is regained, the dog is praised.

While these are obvious indications to most instructors, they are not to the novice handler. Demonstrating these movements helps the handlers feel more confident about what they are looking for and in the long run improves the dog's performance.

Once the dog has learned the proper response as indicated by consistent correct action, praise is used to reward the completed exercise. Thus we also praise at different times depending on whether the dog is learning or has learned the response we want. Praising the dog for learning each part of an exercise then putting the parts together and praising the dog for successfully completing the final product is the same approach used to teach more advanced exercises.

OFF-LEAD HEELING AND THE RECALL

J. J. Volhard, 1975

Teaching off lead heeling during the first session of a beginners course is one way in which some instructors are able to reduce the length of time it takes to teach their students how to train their dogs. By no means a new idea, except perhaps in a class situation, its merit has been documented by animal behavior scientists and it makes sense. The students in a beginner class want to learn how to control their dogs, including off lead. The sooner it is begun, the better, and teaching off lead control from the beginning has a number of advantages. The dog immediately learns that he is to assume some of the responsibility for the training. He quickly learns that in order to do the exercise properly he must pay attention for there is no lead to tip him off that his handler has changed direction or has stopped. It also avoids the creation of lead dependence, both on the part of the dog and the handler, a common impediment to off lead work.

The first time it is attempted, it is done on an individual basis and the handler is instructed to walk for only 5 or 6 steps with the dog being off lead. During the course, turns are introduced and the length of time the dog is off lead is gradually increased. At the end of the course, the dogs are expected to have acquired a passing familiarity with the exercise. Most will not be perfect, but they can be controlled off lead. There will also be one or two in every class who will be unsuccessful, but there is no need to hold back the rest of the class just because one or two need extra help.

Perhaps the principal virtue of this approach is that if the handler has not taken the loose-lead requirement seriously, the dog's reaction when off lead will demonstrate its importance to him without the need for any further explanation from the instructor. Once the handlers have been taught the technique for teaching this exercise, they are admonished to practice away from distractions so that the handler becomes the dog's center of attention and the dog can concentrate on learning the exercise. Distractions are introduced after the dog has become accustomed to the exercise and clearly understands the commands.

A similar technique is used to teach the recall. Many trainers have long maintained that a dog should be taught the recall off lead because he learns it more easily and more quickly when he is off lead than when he is on lead. When the dog is on lead, he can only go to the end of the lead, hence it is not particularly difficult to get him to come. Moreover, the dog knows that he is on lead and knows that there is no place to go. The trick, however, is to teach the dog to come when he is off lead. When teaching this exercise off lead, there will again be one or two dogs which will need help, but the rest of the class will have no difficulty. Instruction in a class should be geared to what the majority can accomplish and the one or two who are unable to progress satisfactorily should not be permitted to hold back the rest of the class. Instead, they should receive extra attention after class whenever possible or warranted.

INSTRUCTING THE "DOWN"

J. J. Volhard, 1974

I remember one incident when, after I had told the class to down their dogs, a fellow got into a tremendous wrestling match with his Dobe which concluded with the dog standing triumphantly over the prone handler. After two more tries produced the same result, I asked the handler whether this was the dog's usual response. Apparently it was and the only reason the handler had enrolled in the class, was to teach this exercise to the dog. So I took the dog and, not being very athletic or having the inclination to get into a wrestling match with a strange dog, I showed the dog a biscuit. The response was perfect – with a little downward pressure on the collar, the dog followed that biscuit right to the floor and subsequently learned to respond to the command without any further aids.

At what point the instructor should intercede in a situation like this can be a difficult judgment. His job is to teach the handler how to do it and not necessarily show the handler that he, the instructor, can do it. I have seen many instances in which the handlers were unable to do an exercise successfully during the session in which it was taught, but had managed to teach it to the dog by the time the next class came around. It is a matter of conjecture whether intervention by the instructor always materially furthers the *handler's* efforts. In some instances it is better to let the handler practice on his home ground without the distractions attendant in a class situation. The down is a good example and is an exercise which can very easily become a problem if the instructor is not alert to potential difficulties such as voice, circumstances, and approach. Taught correctly it should be an exercise like any other and one which the dog performs with the same degree of willingness and joy that we expect from him in other areas.

From an instructor's point of view, there are several ways in which to facilitate the teaching of this exercise. It helps considerably if the dogs are relaxed. For this reason, many instructors do not teach this exercise until the third or fourth session of a basic course. By that time, the dogs have gotten used to each other and usually respond more readily than they might during the first session.

If the dog is relaxed, he can be taught to go down with a minimum amount of effort. This aspect is of particular importance when working with one of the toy breeds who do much better on a table when learning this exercise; it also saves the handler's back. Naturally, some dogs will take longer to relax than others and the instructor must take this into consideration. Similarly, a dog who is insecure might be reluctant to lie down and thereby assume his most vulnerable position, especially if his insecurity stems from the presence of other dogs. After all, one of them might jump him.

The way in which the exercise is approached is also important. Of all the different approaches that exist, the one I like best is the no-approach approach, because it is simple, quick and effective, and requires very little explaining. It goes like this: the instructor asks the handlers in the class to show him how they get their dogs into the down position. Since most handlers have worked on this exercise with their dogs at home long before they ever came to class, nine out of ten have no difficulty with it and only need a few pointers on how to get a quick response to the command. There is always that one, however, who needs help.

Judging by the amount of time most dogs spend in the down position, we must assume that it is their favorite. Somehow, however, when it comes to teaching them to down, particularly in a class situation, they often act as though they absolutely resent it. The reasons for this are manifold, but the foremost probably relates to how the dog has been introduced to the command and/or exercise. All too often the impression is left on the dog that down is a punishment. Many handlers inadvertently create this impression because they have difficulty in controlling their voice when giving the down command. While they can call the dog to come in the most angelic and inviting tones, the down command, no matter how hard they try, comes out like a threat. Some handlers are also convinced that only a threatening or harsh tone of voice will get the dog to respond. If the dog was taught in a quiet, but firm manner, he will respond to commands given that way and harsh or loud commands are not only unnecessary (as well as portraying a poor image of the sport) but may actually be counterproductive. I happened to observe an example of this at a recent trial. Overt practicing at ringside is not permitted; but this particular handler apparently had to reassure himself that his dog indeed knew the drop on recall. So he very surreptitiously lined himself and his dog up and practiced the exercise in a whisper – the dog did it perfectly. The pressure of competition, however, must have been too much – in the ring he bellowed the command at the dog so loudly that he literally frightened the dog out of his wits, causing the dog to fail.

THE IMAGE DOG

S. Myles, 1979

In an obedience training class, a variety of people are brought together because of a common interest in their pets. The individuals in class may have widely divergent political, personal and social beliefs, and each handler has a unique concept of him or herself. While most relate to their dogs as loved pets, some handlers with a negative view

of themselves will use the dog as a tool to bolster their flagging self-images. The instructor needs to recognize and understand the special functions of the "image dog."

The image dog may be of a large breed with a reputation for aggressive behavior. Common image dogs are Dobermans or Shepherds, and the handler takes pride in controlling a potentially dangerous animal. The handler may have a non-cooperative attitude, insisting upon teaching an exercise his way regardless of instruction. These handlers are usually reluctant to curb aggression in their dogs since it is aggression that they seek in an image dog. The handler's non-cooperative behavior is not a denial of the instructor's competence but a symptom of a need to display their own abilities.

An unusual dog may be an image dog. Owning a special dog gives the handler status and notability. Other people are likely to make indirect contact with the owner by commenting upon her dog. The owner is able to interact with others on a non-threatening level by using the dog as a buffer.

Often a handler that does not fit within the narrow confines of social physical acceptability will find acceptability from an image dog. Minor physical impairments, disfiguring scars or marks may make it difficult for that handler to feel comfortable in a society that places physical beauty at a premium. Handlers who happen to be taller, shorter, or wider than "normal" may feel more self-confident with a well-mannered dog that competes in trials or had earned titles.

Handlers with image dogs need to be assured they are respected on their own merits, not merely because of the attributes of their dogs. By concentrating remarks on the handler's skill, an instructor can aid in giving the handler self-confidence. For example, the instructor can direct his or her attention toward the handler and not the dog by saying, "I liked the way you sat Bozo straight", not "Bozo sat straight."

Physical impairments should be dealt with in matter of fact fashion, not with embarrassed avoidance or dramatic heroics. If the handler is hard of hearing, simply face or stand near her when speaking. Should standard handling techniques need to be changed to fit the physical needs of a handler, the direct statement, "Let's see if this will work better for you and Spot", lends support, interest and concern without embarrassment. Nicknaming a handler because of a physical variance is unfair as well as unkind. While many handlers will appear to be "good sports", they may be hurt and humiliated by these nicknames.

Instructors must realize that the image dog is playing a critical role in the life of its handler. These dogs are non-judgmental therapists, supplying unconditional acceptance for a person who may have experienced only unreasonable non-acceptance. Denied human companionship, a handler may find in his dog a wellspring of comradeship that satisfied a craving for support. The image dog is providing a key to establishing greater understanding and self-awareness for its handler and deserves recognition as such.

CAN THE THROW-CAN

J. J. Volhard, 1973

Last summer some Newfie breeder friends from the Mid-West visited us to take a look at our Landseers. While their main interest lies with conformation, before long the subject turned to obedience and their own experiences.

They had taken one of their almost champion Newfies to obedience class in the hopes of getting him ready for Novice work. Everything was going smoothly until midway through the course, when it came down to practicing the out-of-sight stays. The Newf, who apparently had not been previously acquainted with this exercise, broke. So the instructor, in an effort to teach the dog the exercise, rolled a coffee can in front of the dog whereupon the dog broke again. As a next step, the instructor, when the dog broke again, threw the can at the dog at which point the dog, in justified resentment, went into the nearest corner, sat down and growled at anyone trying to approach him until his owner came to get him. Our friends in turn left the course never to return again.

When I first heard this story I thought our friends were trying to put me on, but they insisted it was true. Assuming this story is correct, and I have no reason to doubt its accuracy (except that from a training point of view it defies credulity) it typifies why so many breed people are turned off by obedience – many have tried it and methods like these have had adverse reactions on their dogs. It also typifies much of what is wrong with obedience today. Personally I was rather intrigued by this method of teaching the dog the stays because I had never heard of it and I have considerable difficulty in visualizing its effectiveness. It would seem to me that the last thing one would want to do when teaching the dog this exercise is to distract him with a moving object, or, for that matter, throwing something at the dog. I am familiar with the technique of rolling an object in front of the dog, once he has learned the exercise, to test for steadiness. I do not think, however, that I would expect a dog to stay when something is thrown at him. Perhaps this technique has worked with some dogs for this particular instructor, but it obviously will set you back with others, if not work serious harm in which case it's use demonstrates insensitivity on the part of the instructor to gear his techniques to a level of acceptability of ALL dogs. If we go on the assumption, as I think we must, that all obedience exercises are designed so they can be taught to any dog of sound body and mind by means of sensible methods, the use of methods which can inflict damage on *some* dogs is clearly inappropriate. There is also a distinction between what may be justified in some instances and not in others which must be kept in mind. Obedience training for competition is a sport and as such never justifies methods which may do damage to *any* dog as distinguished from those instances in which it is a question of curing a dog from a particular behavior problem in order to save him from being put down. Methods which may be justified in the latter instance may be quite objectionable in the former.

Another explanation of this particular instructor's rather curious approach to teaching the stays may be that he simply has not done his homework and is unaware that there are other and much more effective methods with which this exercise can be taught.

More important, there are methods which are not as potentially counterproductive and which do not have the built-in roadblocks to success. Such inexperience on the part of an instructor is, of course, not exactly confidence-instilling. Is it any wonder that so many people get turned off by obedience under these circumstances?

A third explanation could be that the instructor here simply blew his cool and in utter frustration about this dog threw a coffee can at him. Again, however, such an outburst would not present obedience training in its best light. Whatever the reason for this particular approach may be, it seems to me that there are better ways and ways which do not louse up any dog. A competent instructor should be able to approach most dogs with a method that will not inflict any damage on the dog and a method that will not bring discredit to the sport.

V. TRAINING TECHNIQUES

PSYCHIC COMMUNICATION

S. Myles

Obedience enthusiasts are aware of the crucial role communication plays in the relationship between dog and handler. We emphasize the significance of body language, tone of voice and our general response to the dog. Yet the important area of psychic communication remains a mysterious dimension of training and instructing that begs to be explored. It is imperative that handlers and instructors become familiar with this influential phenomenon.

Of course, some may say that psychic communication belongs inside show tents and fortune telling booths, and has no place in the world of "sit, stay, and come." It is difficult for them to think that anything but verbal commands and body gestures are responsible for the transference of information between dog and handler.

Nevertheless, this subject warrants closer inspection as properly developed psychic communication can be an invaluable asset in training. The definition of psychic communication is communication that comes from the mind, without physical or verbal components. In the realm of obedience, psychic communication merely means information is being transferred without benefit of hand or verbal commands. Psychic communication, while having no commonalities with witchcraft, Satanism or idolatry, is similar to ESP.

Many of us have read of the amazing trailing feats of animals who have found their owners after they have moved thousands of miles away, often to areas the animals have never been. Tales of owners suddenly thinking of their pets and rushing home to find them in life threatening situations have been documented, as have accounts of animals showing great distress when their masters are in danger miles, or even continents, away. These communications occurred through psychic means, using the capacities of the mind, as no verbal communications were possible.

As obedience enthusiasts, we can take advantage of our dogs' psychic potential by developing our own. For example, as we teach the sit, by thinking "sit" as we say the word and physically sit the dog, we are reinforcing vocal and body cues with our thoughts. As we call the dog and think the word "come", again all communications, body voice and thought, agree and therefore strengthen one another.

Moreover, when communications are not in agreement we experience difficulties. If the handler gives the verbal and hand signal for down while thinking, "My dog has such a problem on this exercise s/he'll never do it", you can be sure the dog won't. The dog is receiving signals that clash, and the strongest may be the negative thoughts preventing success.

I illustrate this point in my classes by nodding my head as I say, "No, I don't think I'd like to go with you", or shaking my head in a negative fashion as I say, "Yes, I'd like

to go with you." The non-verbal cues do not agree with each other, and this clash causes confusion and misunderstanding. By saying one thing and thinking another, we confuse our dogs in the same manner.

In addition to thinking the command, it helps to visualize the command. For example, as we say and think the word "sit", visualizing the dog sitting strengthens psychic communication. When sending the dog over the high jump, visualizing the dog returning and sitting straight in front will help insure a successful retrieve. If we give the command "take it" as we think, "Oh no, s/he failed this exercise at the last show", your chances of failing it again have just improved. As an artist sees a completed canvas and the composer a completed symphony, we must visualize the completed exercise performed successfully.

Psychic communication can be a help or a hindrance in training, understanding and caring for our dogs. People and dogs do respond to psychic communication, and it is important we carefully include these abilities in our training program. Instead of relying on mere voice and body commands, developing dog and handler teams' psychic partnerships can result in stronger bonds of companionship and understanding, the highest goals of obedience training.

[Note: For additional reading on this subject, What the Animals Tell Me, by Beatrice Lyedecker, published by Harper & Row.]

WHAT'S IN A NAME

W. H. Morrison

Dog attention is something that is strived for and is a necessity in dog training classes. We encourage students to precede certain commands with the dog's name to be sure they have their dog's attention. Unfortunately, we often run into dog-handler teams where this is not achieved; he calls his dog's name, and it is as if he were talking to the wall.

One reason for this lack of interest by the dog in his name could be from the owner's over use of the name. If we suspect this to be the case, we encourage the owner to find a pet name to use around the house in conversations pertaining to the dog and to use the call name only when it is associated with a command. In addition running chatter directed to the dog is to be reduced. It has been our experience that if a dog constantly hears his name with no special attention being required, the dog simply considers it a part of the background noise of his everyday life.

By using the name only with commands and being consistent, the dog soon learns that when his name is used, he is going to be asked to do something and is expecting to do something. Initially when this approach is started, we have the owner ready to reinforce the command since the dog has learned to ignore his name.

We have found regardless of the level of training that using the name only in training or when asking the dog to do something along with reducing the amount of attention directed toward the dog in everyday life has produced a more attentive dog in just a few days. As we reach the level of attention desired, the dog's name can be used more in daily life, but reduced if backsliding occurs.

While there are many reasons which can account for a lack of dog attention, this approach has helped eliminate one of them.

TEMPER, TEMPER!

H. O'Donohoe, 1973

One of the most important rules in obedience and the hardest to follow is: NEVER LOSE YOUR TEMPER! Your dog can spot it immediately if you really mean business or if you have lost control of yourself. The former, he respects. The latter will cause utter confusion. The dog will most likely balk the next time you begin the exercise you were working on when you lost your temper. After all, our dogs look to us for leadership. I learned the hard way that it means rebuilding your dog's confidence in you all over again. You say, "But he makes me so mad!" – "He knows what I want." – "He is deliberately disobeying." – "It is so hard for me not to lose my cool." So who said obedience was easy? If you aren't feeling well, or you just had an argument with your spouse, or a calling down by your boss, DON'T TAKE IT OUT ON YOUR DOG! It isn't his fault. Put your training off until you are in control of yourself.

Think of the damage you could do by striking your dog with the dumbbell or forcing it against his teeth or using the lead in a fury and possibly causing an eye injury. I certainly hope no one would kick their dog while in a fit of anger. The physical danger is certainly a good enough reason not to lose your temper, but it is only one side of it. Do you realize how much you will have regressed in your training? And yet the worst part of all is the destruction of the bond between you and your dog. You have been working as mutual friends and as a team. To suddenly turn on your dog will not only cause confusion but mistrust as well. This doesn't mean that I don't believe in a hard correction or punishment when it is needed. Just be sure you are in command of your emotions when you apply either one, and only apply it when needed.

Correction and punishment are not the same thing. Punishment is given in serious matters where the possibility of danger must be averted. It must be given at the time the grievance is being committed and not hours after you come home and find out the dog attacked the neighbor's cat or tore up some furniture. One good hard punishment is usually most effective. Don't keep nagging your dog all through the next day about "what a bad boy you've been." You can't expect the dog to remember why you are angry hours after his misdeed took place. You are dealing with an animal and he doesn't have a human memory that works exactly like ours. Correction can be given in various degrees as the situation demands. I think many of us are guilty of forgetting that correction should always be followed by immediate praise. Correcting a dog doesn't mean hitting him. This

is a punishment. A correction means just that – TO CORRECT. The dictionary says correction means the act of changing something to make it right. The handler has the responsibility of showing the right way to do something and the obligation to praise the dog for being in the right position. If you start a new job or a new creative project that you never did before, or are unsure of, don't you feel encouraged when your foreman or instructor says, "That's right." – "Now you've got it." We all need encouragement for an undertaking or a boost in a difficult one. Our dogs are the same. PRAISE TAKES THE STING OUT OF CORRECTION.

I've heard all this before, you say? WELL, WHAT DID YOU DO ABOUT IT? ? ? What do you as a handler do with the bits of information your instructor has given you? Do you just take everything on blind faith, try the suggestion for a while and then ask for another solution if the first one doesn't work out? Do you expect your instructor or an expert's training book to answer all your questions? Your instructor comes to class well prepared to pass along the best proven training methods to you. An instructor is pleased when a student tries to follow his advice. But that is only half of what he is trying to accomplish with you. When an instructor can stimulate a pupil to think on his or her own and question the "whys" of his methods, he knows you are beginning to grow in your training process. Think about why you are using a certain method with your dog. There may be a fresh approach that you may have that will get the same idea across a little easier. After all, who knows your dog better than you.

A good instructor realizes that he or she can learn from a novice handler as well as an experienced trainer. Everyone has some good ideas. This is one of the fascinating facets of obedience work. There is always something to be learned. How about you? What do you think? When a handler tells me about something he or she has tried at home with their dog and did I mind that they tried it, I am tickled to death that he or she did some thinking on their own. We discuss the merits or disadvantages of their method. This encourages the handler to think a little farther. We as instructors should think about building new personnel for our club's training staff and be on the lookout for new, possible talent. Not every good handler can become an effective instructor, but we should always be ready to help those who have instructing possibilities. Don't be afraid of a little competition. The new upcoming talent helps keep the established instructors on their toes. This is healthy for the sport. To continue to learn and grow presents a great challenge. I'm willing. How about you?

Handlers, what do you think about your club's training staff? Do they just do an adequate job or are they always on the lookout for training helps? Do they have regular instructors meetings where problems can be tossed out and discussed? Are they overworked? If you aren't satisfied, why don't you offer some of your time? Most instructors find that they spend so much time trying to help others solve their training problems that they have very little time or patience left for their own dogs. Anyone who devotes their time and energy to helping others deserves a break. Obedience is a sport that should satisfy all the participants. Let's all work together to bring satisfaction to all those connected with the obedience world.

BOREDOM

W. H. Morrison

Boredom can be a very real problem in trying to get a good performance from a dog or in reducing the time needed to teach an exercise. There are many facets to this problem and many situations that can contribute to boredom. A dog can become bored with the routine – same time, same place, same sequence of exercises. He may no longer find the positive reinforcement that is used interesting or rewarding. He may simply be bored with training, as opposed to learning. He may have a bored handler. As trainers, we are in command of the training procedure, and it is our responsibility to create an atmosphere that does not lead to boredom or else accept the consequences of deterioration in performance.

In August I attended a NADOI Chapter 1 meeting in Winter Park, Florida, and heard an excellent presentation, "Better Understanding of Animals Through Conditioning Properties" given by Dave Butcher, Director of Animal Behavior at Sea World. While his involvement in training has been primarily with dolphin and killer whales, the principles he discussed were applicable to the training of dogs. His approach to training is to first create the proper attitude toward training after which the development of a particular behavior response is easy. All of his techniques are inducive, for as Dave says, there is no way to force a 2-ton killer whale to do something if he doesn't want to do it. One of the factors in attitude conditioning is maintaining mental alertness in the animal, that is, not allowing the animal to become bored either with his training or his environment.

Making it interesting is relatively simple, but will require a little conscious effort. First to consider is the positive reinforcement used in training. If it is the same time and again, a piece of food or a "Goood", it will soon lose its effectiveness. If the reinforcement was arbitrarily chosen, it may have lacked appeal to the dog from the start. An alternative is to observe our dog and notice what he enjoys, noting any degrees of preference. You may find that a scratch on the tummy does not equal a pat on the head or that a salted peanut is more of a treat than some semi-moist dog food. Then use as many of the "good things" as are practical as reinforcements and, at the same time, vary during a session the frequency with which any particular reinforcement is used. This will help keep the dog interested and motivated to see what will happen next.

Secondly, vary the exercises and the sequence in which they are practiced. Always try to follow an exercise that may be difficult for the dog with one in which he is reliable. This way we are not constantly putting the dog under stress and assuring he will succeed every other time. Try varying your training sites so your dog can have a change of scene as well as the opportunity to work and learn in them. At the very least try to change your orientation within your yard; the heeling pattern doesn't always have to be from the drive to the shrub to the house and back to the drive!

In general try to keep your dog's environment interesting. If he doesn't need to use his mental faculties during the day, he may find it difficult to bring them out of retirement for the training session. If you are at home with your dog much of the time, your own comings and goings, as well as those of visitors, may be enough to keep the dog alert as

he tries to keep up with what is going on. If your dog or dogs are kenneled, try having different toys for him, or if there are several compatible dogs, vary who is in the run next to or with whom. Recognizing and coping with these relatively minor changes will go a long way toward keeping your dog's mind active.

Most importantly, keep your dog challenged with new tasks to learn. You don't have to limit yourself to title requirements. Tricks, exercises like those "Summer Olympics" (Off-Lead, September 1977), scent hurdle or drill team work can add variety and are great for demonstrations. If your dog knows 25 to 30 exercises and you practice 4 to 6 a day, he is not going to be bored by the same old routine. Devising and implementing all this variety will help keep the trainer from being bored too. This latter point is especially important with trainers who have put several titles on several dogs; increasing the number of exercises you can teach will help keep your training skills sharp.

PROBLEM SOLVING

W. H. Morrison, 1980

Regardless of how hard we try to teach each exercise correctly, mistakes will happen, and the dog may develop some peculiar habit which will lose points or cause him to NQ. By the time we get in the ring, the dog has undergone many hours of training, and this bad habit has become well entrenched. The dog does this possibly without really being aware of his error. We see the same situation in tennis or golf when we have developed a fault in a serve or drive. It has become a habit and something that has to be concentrated upon in order to correct.

When trying to correct these problems, we must remember that the dog has been doing this for a long time and will not be doing it correctly after only one or two training sessions. If the dog has a poor sit-front or finish, design an exercise which will isolate the problem and begin correcting it. Reward the position you want and ignore those that don't measure up. Make your reward meaningful to the dog so that many repetitions can be done before the dog tires. Initially, you may have to accept a somewhat less than perfect performance, but gradually increase your standards.

Finally, don't combine your problem area with the total exercise until you are getting a steady performance from the dog. This may mean several days of doing nothing but your improving exercises if you are having problems with a sit-front. You may find that the dog will do fine on these, but when combined with a recall, he does poorly. An alternative is to break the exercise off with praise before he must sit-front. This could have the added advantage of speeding up recalls and retrieves.

Problems are neither created nor solved over night. If we keep this in mind when we try to solve and correct them, our success is much more certain.

REINFORCEMENT SCHEDULES

W. H. Morrison

Reinforcement schedules can make or break any training procedure. If the correct ones are used and at the proper time, the dog learns rapidly and maintains performance. If the incorrect one is used, your dog will only get bored, and his performance can deteriorate.

While there are many reinforcement schedules, we will look at only the most important for us in training dogs. The two broad areas are the interval and ratio schedules. A fixed interval schedule is based on time, and the animal is rewarded after a certain period of time after having been correct. In a variable interval schedule, the dog is rewarded after varying periods of time. In training this is not applicable in most situations except possibly the stay exercises where the reward to the dog initially would come after fixed intervals of time and later at varying intervals to build reliability.

The most important for us to consider is the fixed and variable ratio schedules. These are based on a reward coming after a fixed or varying number of correct responses. If our purpose is to teach a dog a given response, for example, sitting, he is rewarded every time he sits. While this is the quickest way to teach a dog a behavior when the reward is withdrawn a dog trained this way rapidly becomes unreliable or, that is, the response extinguishes rapidly. Since we cannot always reward the dog each and every time he does as we ask, we must use a reward schedule which maintains reliability. This schedule is a variable ratio schedule. The dog is rewarded, for example, after every third, fifth, or ninth time. Since we are using no regular pattern, the dog does not know whether or not he will be rewarded for obeying. However, since he is rewarded sometimes his behavior extinguishes slowly when the reward is withdrawn.

How then do we switch from a fixed interval of rewarding the dog every time to a variable reward schedule? First we must establish when the dog has "learned" the behavior we are after. This is really up to the individual. Let's say we are going to say the dog has learned to sit when he does it four times in a row, being rewarded each time. We now skip one, but reward the next two. The dog probably thinks you just forgot that time, but still responds. Next you might reward on the second, fourth and fifth response. By gradually extending the number of responses the dog must do before rewarding and varying that number, we gradually get away from a reward for each correct response.

I have purposefully avoided mentioning the type of reward since this is up to the owner. Each dog is different and what is a meaningful reward to one dog may not work for another. Therefore, each handler must find out what really turns his dog on.

FOOD IN TRAINING

W. H. Morrison

Whenever the topic of the use of food in training is brought up, there generally seems to be some resistance to the idea. Many feel that food will not produce a reliable dog or will produce a dog that only performs for food.

Let's review for a moment what we are actually doing when we train a dog. Simply stated, we are teaching the dog a conditioned response. The speed at which this response is learned (conditioned) depends on two things:

The strength of the reinforcement used and the interval of time after a correct response that the reinforcement is received. For some dogs praise is sufficient, for others the lack of discomfort is used, and for still others, food is highly motivating. All of these can be misused and can become ineffective.

For teaching most of the open and utility exercises we use food along with praise. Whenever food is used it always follows praise, with praise being given even when food is not. Each of the exercises is broken down into simple reinforceable steps which build on each other to produce the final, complete exercise. When learning a new step, the dog receives food for every response. If, after progressing, we must back up to a previously covered step, he does not get the food every time he does it correctly, but every other or every third time. In this way, we are not constantly feeding the dog for a correct response, but only when something new is learned. Since praise always precedes the food, praise becomes more meaningful to the dog.

For many years food has been used as a motivating force in the study of conditioning. Laboratory subjects can be cut back to 80% normal intake of food or water in order to increase drive for food or water which in turn makes these stronger reinforcers. For a working dog this practice could produce some unwanted side effects. A dog must be physically at his best in order to work well, if food and water are reduced by 20%, he may not be physically at his best and his performance may deteriorate.

One of the main arguments against food is that it can not be used in the ring. It is quite true that food can not be used in the ring, but by the same token we can not use a lead in Open and Utility; we can not praise during any of the exercises; we can not use a tab on the collar, a chute, or a jumping stick! These are all techniques which can be used to teach the dog particular exercises. When we begin training to develop reliability, we repeat the exercise over and over to condition the dog to respond a certain way regardless of the surroundings. If the dog's performance begins to deteriorate, we can use these techniques to motivate the dog or overcome a problem. Food can be used in the same way. However, if we must rely on the lead, praise, food, etc., in order to control the dog or have him respond correctly, then the way in which the technique was applied is the problem, not the technique itself.

This article is not intended to convince anyone to use food or to suggest that it is the only way to train a dog. It is intended to point out that food can be used as another tool to train a dog, and, as with any tool, care and understanding must be used in its application.

KEEP ADVICE IN CONTEXT

W. H. Morrison

When beginning to train a dog, particularly a puppy, there are a couple of things which are usually mentioned. One is that if you don't introduce retrieving at around twelve weeks of age, you will have a rough time teaching it later. The other is that a puppy raised with its dam or another dominant littermate will be difficult to train. Both of these are based on information in *The New Knowledge of Dog Behavior* by Pfaffenberger. The information on which these two statements are based apply to guide dogs and has been extended, possible incorrectly, to dogs we train in obedience.

Let's look at both statements in somewhat more detail. In dogs as with children there are optimum periods of time during maturation when a task if introduced will be easy to teach. If this task is introduced before or after this optimum time, the learning procedure *may* be more difficult.

Retrieving is one of these tasks. If introduced early in a play format, later more formalized training is much easier. What also plays an important part in all later training is motivation. If properly motivated, a dog can be quite easily trained regardless of age.

The second statement deals with independence and self-reliance. Pfaffenberger found that if littermates were raised together one would be dominant while the other subordinant. This fits in well with the development of a dominance heirarchy as does the same observation with a dam and pup, the puppy being subordinant. In both cases the subordinant dog was a poor candidate for being a guide dog because it would have difficulty in decision situations and in being forceful when guiding a blind handler. This has been extended to obedience training by saying these same dogs will not make good obedience dogs. This is not the case. Obedience training established the dog as a follower, looking to the handler (pack leader) for direction. In fact, with this in mind, the subordinant dog would be easier to train because he has been brought up as a follower.

Some dogs do, however, act too submissively during training as a result of being dominated by other dogs. This can be overcome by providing the subordinant dog with plenty of individual attention and using a training approach which emphasizes success and minimizes punishment or corrections for mistakes. Here the dog is trying, and to correct will reduce his desire to even attempt a new task. This is because when interacting with canine pack members, he is dominated for taking any initiative on his own. Therefore, he remains passive around dogs so as not to get jumped. When training, this should be avoided and success always rewarded.

THE SEMINAR SYNDROME

W. H. Morrison

In the past few years there has been an increase in the number of seminars and clinics where one can learn new or different approaches to training a dog. The individuals presenting these seminars are knowledgeable, entertaining, and, above all, successful. It is little wonder after attending a weekend clinic, that one is all fired up to try out some of this newly acquired knowledge on old Rover. Unfortunately Rover may not have been taking notes, and probably gives his owner a ‘‘What’s going on here?!’’ look. In some cases the new approach may work, in most others it may initially be a flop. After fifteen minutes of frustration, Rover is back sleeping by the fire, and the owner begins to wonder if the seminar speaker knew what he was talking about after all. This sequence is what I call the Seminar Snydrome.

Let’s examine what has happened. The person giving the seminar or clinic is demonstrating methods with which he is thoroughly familiar and techniques with which he is comfortable. His timing, required to achieve success, is excellent, and he understands the limitations of the approach. Unfortunately, time schedules often make it difficult to give proper emphasis to ground work and the time required to establish this foundation. In many cases a trained dog is used for demonstrations, so the dog is already familiar with the techniques and timing employed. He may also be familiar with the personality of the trainer. With all these factors in favor of the speaker, the dog responds predictably. A similar amount of success may also be achieved with a dog from the audience if the dog is not one of extremes in temperament. However, in many cases, success at the hands of the speaker may be short-lived in the hands of the owner.

On returning home and attempting to try out what was just learned, the owner asks the dog to face an attitude he has never seen before. Possibly the owner’s entire attitude toward training has changed; an instant response may now be expected just as it was witnessed at the clinic. In addition, a lack of familiarity with the technique and timing needed for success may produce uncertainty in the handler which is transferred to the dog. The net result is all too often a confused dog and frustrated handler.

Much of the Seminar Syndrome can be avoided by remembering that a clinic or seminar is a learning experience where material is presented from which we can pick and choose to suit our own individual training style. New approaches should be incorporated in such a way that they are natural to the person actually doing the training and not as an imitation of the speaker.

A dog needs a consistent leader figure; inconsistencies tend to reduce the dog’s trust in the owner. Thus any drastic change in the training approach should be carried out as gradually as possible so the dog can adjust.

The next time you attend a weekend clinic or seminar and come back home all fired up over new ideas – sit back and cool it for a week. Think about the material that was presented and decide how you can adjust that approach so that it is more a part of you. Study the timing needed, then pull out Rover and see if he doesn’t react a little better.

WHEN IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE

W. H. Morrison

Many clubs, as well as individuals, regularly change training methods and approaches for reasons ranging from improving trial performance to being more humane to the dog. However, when a sudden change in approach is made, often the results are not always what we had hoped for. One reason for this can be a lack of consistency from what the dog has been used to.

The dog is a pack animal and as such is either a leader or a follower. Upon entering the human pack, the same is true. If the dog is a follower, he looks for consistency and direction from the owner as a positive, leader figure. If he is a leader, he will resist any effort by the owner to overtake his position as pack leader. In both cases, the dog is looking for a consistent behavior from the owner. The follower looks for leadership, and the leader looks for a passive follower response from the owner.

While suggesting a slow change from one training method to another, there will occur situations when an abrupt change is needed particularly when working with a dog who views himself as pack leader in order to establish the owner in this position. This is a dog that has usually gotten his way and received little, if any, discipline. This dog is often brought to class because the owners have had it with him.

During training the dog becomes adjusted to a certain consistency and attitude on the part of the handler toward training. Each training approach and exercise is based on a foundation upon which one builds to achieve the final product. If the approach is changed and the foundation work for that procedure has not been reviewed, the dog is faced with an unfamiliar approach and probably a change in attitude from the handler as well. The result is usually regression and disgust with the new approach.

Some dogs, as well as some handlers, adjust to the change with no problems at all. However, it is best if the entire approach is evaluated with the foundation work well understood so that the dogs can be worked into the new approach with a minimum of difficulty. The handler should gradually increase the amount of positive or negative reinforcement to be used so that the dog is not faced with a sudden change. Above all the handler should understand what each step involves in a new training procedure, the goals for that step, and the behaviors that indicate the dog is learning so they can be properly rewarded.

TIMING

W. H. Morrison

Sometimes we hear that someone is a "natural" with a dog. He seems to do everything right so easily. We assume this lucky person understands animals and has been around them a long time. This may be true but most often this "natural" trainer has

developed a sense of timing which is another of those intangibles so necessary to good training.

Timing is as hard to explain as it is to understand. It is the art of making a correction and giving praise at exactly the right second. That split second is actually when the thought comes into the dog's mind and is a split second before his body reacts. It takes a very good and knowledgeable trainer who can read his dog quickly and well to have this perfect timing. Most of us have to settle for second best, if we can't have perfect timing. If we can't have perfection, we strive for good timing. Timing is something beginner handlers have difficulty with because they have not yet learned to read their dogs.

Almost anyone can develop good timing by concentrating on the practice sessions. Keep attention riveted on the dog so the voice or leash can prevent a mistake and permit praise. Please don't interpret this as stringing up the dog on a tight lead. It means watching every movement of the dog on a loose lead and the split second you see him begin to move away from heel position or hesitate before an automatic sit, you can correct and praise simultaneously. Apply this to everything he learns to do.

Sometimes a distraction or reinforcement in that fatal split second is better than a correction. In fact, a reinforcement of the command is a distraction, which is a break in the dog's train of thought. For example, during a long sit a trainer who is concentrating on his dog may notice a blank look coming into the animal's eyes and the body begin to relax. This is the time a second command, "stay", quickly given can bring the dog back to the reality of the movement. Every time you can distract a dog from thinking a mistake, you help him learn.

Good timing is about as hard to learn as riding a bicycle or ice skating. Once you have a firm grip on it you never really lose it. It should become second nature – something you never have to think about. If you drive a car these days and want to stay alive, your eyes, mind and body must function together. If you see an oncoming car way over the yellow line, you can't wait to think out your move, you do it. That's timing! If you see your dog begin to get up from a long down and wait until he is in sitting position before you correct, that isn't.

Timing is hard to develop and it takes concentration and practice. However, when you can distract or correct and praise when the dog is beginning to err, you may suddenly realize you didn't even think about it. You just did it naturally. That's timing.

HEELING, PART I

J. J. Volhard, 1974

I recently had the occasion to address a group of obedience buffs and, as is customary, following the prepared portion of the program there was a question and answer session. After the audience had worked me over pretty well I decided that turn-

about is fair, play and I asked them a few questions. First I asked them to tell me what they, individually, considered to be their principal difficulty in training. As one might suspect, many different aspects were raised. Curiously enough, heeling was not mentioned and yet when we look at the score sheets after a trial, of those dogs qualifying, most will have lost more points on heeling than all the other exercises combined. Viewed in this light it is fair to assume that most everybody's "problem" is heeling and perhaps quite understandably so because it requires the most continuous and sustained attention on the part of the dog. Not so with most of the other exercises during which a dog's attention may wander momentarily without the sufferance of a penalty. Aside from these rather obvious observations, specifically where are points lost in heeling? Generally, most of them are lost because of lagging. I am fully aware of the shortcomings of generalizations, including this one, and yet they serve to demonstrate a point. Loss of points during heeling is understandable. What is not understandable is that they are lost due to lagging. The natural instinct of most dogs is to lead which, when they are on leash, translates itself into pulling. In a beginners class, for example, during the first few sessions most dogs actually physically pull, the euphemism for which is "forging." And yet, by the time we get through with them, that is by the time they get into competition, most dogs will lose most of their points because of lagging.

Once I had posed this elaborate question to the audience I received a number of answers to explain this, some of them extremely perceptive. The consensus seemed to be that when we begin training a dog perhaps we are over-reacting to his forging and overemphasizing the correction. (Correction here meaning the quick snap on the lead.) While this would be a perfectly satisfactory explanation in isolated instances, it does not sufficiently explain the widespread occurrence of lagging. If we are willing to accept the assumption that most dogs start out forging and wind up losing points due to lagging, it raises a more fundamental question as to our entire approach to training. I say this because lagging does not appear to be confined to any one particular method of training or "school of thought" but is pretty much a universal problem. Could it be something in our training that induces it?

Several months ago I referred to Colonel Most's "Training Dogs" written in 1910 and specifically the observation that "when the dog first starts to learn, only a mild form of compulsion should ever be employed, so as to avoid intimidation and to accustom him, so to speak, to whatever routine behavior it is desired to impose upon him." The traditional method of teaching a dog to heel places primary reliance on the use of the correction, a strict form of compulsion rather than a "mild form of compulsion".

Unfortunately, I do not have the answer and perhaps even my underlying assumptions are incorrect. Lagging, however, is commonplace and to me, at least, its existence is incongruous in light of the way in which a dog starts out. I also do not believe that it stems from inept handling or "stupid" dogs for these same inept handlers can teach their "stupid" dogs the various other exercises and yet will continuously be penalized heavily for lagging. Nor does any particular breed or size of dog have a monopoly on lagging. I would be interested in anything you might have to contribute, as I am sure everyone else involved in training would be.

HEELING, PART II

J. J. Volhard, 1974

In a recent column I raised the question of why is lagging such a commonplace problem when most dogs start out in their training by forging. Well, it seems that I opened the floodgates and I want to share with you some of the comments I received. I also want to take this opportunity to thank those who have written.

An obedience judge wrote that "I have finally decided that a lot of this problem is actually in the dog's temperament and personality. He either *wants* to stick next to you like glue or he doesn't, no matter how hard you train towards perfection in heeling." This observation is based on 10 years of judging and working with four dogs of the same breed but with varying aptitudes for heeling. Another comment came from an instructor: "Every book on training advocates a particular approach to training which no doubt has been successful for *that* author *and* his dogs. This does not mean that it will be successful for you and your dog. Training is a highly individual endeavor and to be successful you must sift through many approaches until you find one that works best for you and your dog and often you have to invent your own. When an instructor describes a general approach it is fallacious to insist that only strict adherence to this approach will insure success. The very opposite may be the case. Heeling is generally taught by means of the correction and this may work for the experienced handler and instructor. As you so succinctly have pointed out, however, more often than not this is unsuccessful more often than we like to admit. The answer lies in emphasizing the team aspect of handler and dog and to settle on a training approach of maximum benefit for the team. Of equal importance is to be on the alert for an adverse reaction to a particular approach." Another instructor commented that "there is a very simple and obvious explanation for poor heeling. Most handlers start out in a basic course. A basic course teaches control and not heeling. While the two are not necessarily incompatible, it is the exception rather than the rule which will produce a good heeler."

One handler related her own experience with her dog:

"I was dissatisfied with the automatic sit and I was instructed to increase the severity of the collar correction. Having done this three or four times I noticed that the dog began to lag and stop about a foot behind me. So I discontinued the collar correction and instead used the tuck-under technique to show the dog that I wanted him to sit quickly and straight when I stopped. I have had no difficulties since then."

What is most interesting about the comments I have received is that they generally blamed the collar correction in varying degrees as being the cause of lagging, especially when used together with the about-turn. More specifically, either the ineffective or the unnecessary correction. It seems that some handlers get into the habit of correcting almost subconsciously without any specific reason or objective. Coupled with ineffectiveness, such corrections will actually be counterproductive in many cases. Some dogs will shrug them off and learn to ignore them and others become resentful and stubborn.

One writer suggested that the lagging problem could be avoided by eliminating the correction altogether. While it is no doubt possible to train some dogs to heel without the use of the correction, it is questionable whether it would be practical as an overall approach. My personal observation is that handlers do not make enough of an effort to get the dog's attention focused on them and more often than not this lack of attention is the cause of poor heeling. A good definition of heeling is position and attention. Without attention it is unlikely that the dog will maintain position.

A CAUSE FOR LAGGING

J. J. Volhard, 1975

Lagging is an intriguing phenomenon, particularly when it is considered that most dogs start out in training by forging. By the time they get into the ring, however, many of these dogs will be heavily penalized for lagging. About a year ago, I mentioned this incongruity in a column and since that time have had the chance to discuss it with trainers and instructors, as well as having received a flood of correspondence.

Many causes are assigned to lagging. Pulling a dog along instead of heeling him on a loose lead, practicing ring routine without enough variation and encouragement, not walking quickly enough or with sufficient animation are some of the more frequently mentioned causes. Perhaps the most serious cause, however, is confusing the dog as to what is being taught. To illustrate this point, let us take a look at what might happen to a handler and dog in a typical training class.

The handler will be instructed that in order to teach the dog to heel he must maintain a loose lead and every time the dog deviates from heel position he is to bring the dog back to heel position by means of a jerk on the leash. He is also told that right turns and about-turns, combined with a jerk if the dog moves ahead, are particularly effective in teaching the dog to heel. As the training progresses, other exercises are added such as standing and downing the dog while heeling, and the come-fore. Turns are being perfected and the dog is started off lead. By the time he is ready for Novice his only serious problem, all of a sudden, is lagging. What has happened in the preceding 20 or 30 weeks to produce this result? My theory is that the dog has never been taught to "heel."

Let us take a second look at how the dog started out and the purpose of the instructions the handler receives in the beginning. The intent of the turns is to bring the dog under control and teach him to pay attention. Once this goal has been achieved, the dog must be taught to heel which is best accomplished by doing just that. Practice should focus on keeping the dog at heel position and any other aspect of heeling, such as the sit or turns, should be de-emphasized while the dog is learning to heel and even once he "knows" it. Turns can be particularly troublesome. Since they are effective control-getting maneuvers, they inherently have the tendency to slow the dog down. For the forger, this works well, but for the potential lagger, turns will aggravate the problem and for this reason are best kept to an absolute minimum. Turns are an inhibiting influence and once they have achieved their purpose, should be practiced sparingly! For example,

when the handler is practicing footwork, he should do it without the dog and only test for results with the dog.

Equally treacherous are other maneuvers which break the free flow of heeling such as standing or downing the dog while heeling. According to Konrad Most's "Training Dogs" (Popular Dogs, 1954), interruptions in heeling have the tendency to cause apprehension about heel position. In short, they cause lagging and this innocuous observation may well be the real key to lagging. My own personal observations suggest that it is. The exercises such as downing and standing the dog from the heel position and the come-fore can just as effectively be taught from the stationary position, thereby avoiding the possibility of slowing down the dog's heeling. It is much easier to prevent the creation of a lagger than to cure lagging once it has become a habit.

THE DOWN

W. H. Morrison

One of the reasons given for the difficulty some people have with teaching the down is that it is a subordinate posture which many dogs do not like or that it is a position from which it is difficult for the dog to defend himself. These may be partly true; however, there are also some other reasons.

Let's first consider those approaches where the dog is physically placed in the down position. When teaching this exercise, the lead can be forced down such that the only way the tension can be released is by the dog's going down. Other methods involve pushing down on the shoulders or pushing the dog over. In all of these methods the dog's first response, which is the response first associated with the word "down", is to resist the downward force by bracing himself and trying to maintain his balance as he is pushed. The dog is resisting when in fact we want him to relax. Also with these methods, we have given a tactile stimulus along with an auditory stimulus. Since the tactile stimulus affects the dog immediately and is stronger than the auditory stimulus, it will be the one he responds to.

With the methods of teaching the down where we move the dog's feet out from under him or we cradle him to the down position, we are still interposing a tactile stimulus along with the auditory one. In addition we are asserting dominance by physically putting our body over the dog's.

In the latter case the dog may resist the down by trying to move out from under our body thereby moving out of a position of subordinance.

In all of the above methods the dog is physically placed (forced) down. These are examples of classical conditioning where the dog has no choice but to down.

A second approach is to produce the desired result of downing by employing an avoidance response (some might consider this a survival response). This is done by using a sudden,. rapid movement of the arm, lead, or a stick towards the dog's head or back

along with the command "down." The dog's response is to lower his body to avoid the possible blow. At this point the dog is praised for that response. This is an example of an instinctual response, and according to Konrad Most actions based on an instinctual response are the easiest to teach because they are a natural response for the dog.

A third approach eliminates the initial resistance to the down because of a tactile stimulus, employs a natural movement of the dog as in the second approach, but does not employ an avoidance response.

A dog's perception of motion is about ten times better than ours, and we employ this in teaching the down. With the dog sitting, the left hand is on the dog's shoulders simply for control. The right hand is held 6 to 10 inches over the dog's head and brought down rapidly to a point 6 to 12 inches in front of his feet as we give the command "down." The objective is to get the dog's attention on the hand; in some cases a toy, keys, or food can be used to maintain this attention. This brings the dog's attention and whole action down. Those movements that the dog initiates that may lead to the down are reinforced. Our experience has been that 80% of our students have their dogs downing the first night of class using this approach and without having to place the dog in the down position.

AN APPROACH TO SCENT DISCRIMINATION

W. H. Morrison

The following procedure for teaching scent discrimination was developed from principles introduced at a tracking and search workshop conducted by Glen R. Johnson. The approach is totally non-physical (inducive) in nature. No corrections are given if the dog makes a mistake. No aids are used so that the dog is left no alternative but to be correct, such as tying down unscented articles. Food is used as a physical reward and is always preceded by praise. The dog does not advance to the next step until he had been correct 3 times in a row. When the dog is correct 3 times, but not in a row, take a 5 minute break before repeating that step. Once the dog has been correct three times in a row, he no longer gets food for each/correct response since we are considering this step as having been learned. When this step is returned to, and you will, the dog will get a food reward every other or every third time.

In order to begin, the dog must be able to retrieve on command. The dog is allowed to retrieve the metal article in play sessions for two days. Nothing formal is used and the dog gets food for every other retrieve. It must be emphasized that praise *always* comes before the dog receives the food. We begin with the metal article since it has less masking scent of its own as compared to leather, and distinguishing by odor is what we are trying to teach at this point. The easier we can make it for the dog, the better.

To begin the actual learning sequence, the dog does 3 placement retrieves with the same metal article. That is, with the dog watching, we place the article about 15 feet in front of the dog. Since there is only one article out there that has our scent on it, the dog

will be correct and is praised and receives a food reward for the retrieve. If the dog should drop the article, don't worry about it now, but review the hold with the dog at another session. The dog is still rewarded.

After 3 retrieves the dog watches while the "scented" article is placed about 6 inches in front of a "clean" article. The dog is then given the appropriate command. As the dog checks both articles and shows an interest in the scented article, he is encouraged to pick it up. As he brings the correct article in, he is praised and given a food reward. In this step, the dog has two choices, one correct and one incorrect. However, if he is incorrect the first time, the next time he can not help but be correct since there is only one article, the second article remaining. Therefore, if the dog brings back the wrong article, it is simply taken from him and he is sent again. Don't correct or admonish the dog for his mistake. We do not want to call attention to his incorrect choice. As he brings the correct article in, praise and reward. Our dogs are not stupid and learn quickly what response results in praise and a food reward. When the dog does return with the wrong article, a new "clean" article, one that the dog has not mouthed, is used.

After the dog has made a correct choice, the scented article is placed to either the right or left of the clean article for the next retrieve. Move to the next step, 2 unscented, 1 scented, when the dog has been correct 3 times in a row.

Since the dog can be wrong 2 times in a row here, it is important to back up to one scented and one unscented article if the dog is wrong two times in a row. When the dog is correct 3 times in a row with the scented article in 3 different positions, move to four, then 5.

The same procedure is used for leather. When the dog is solid on both leather and metal, begin with one leather, one metal with the leather article being scented. After three correct responses, a clean leather and scented metal article are used. Next add a clean leather and clean metal articles. The third scented article may be either metal or leather. After three correct responses on both leather and metal, add two more clean articles.

On occasions where the dog is obviously not using his nose after a week or so, food is rubbed on the hand prior to scenting the article. Once the dog begins using his nose, this procedure is discontinued.

We have found this to be an effective, reliable way to teach this exercise and eliminates many of the problems associated with this exercise and lays a foundation for further scent work tasks.

TEACHING THE GO-OUT

W. H. Morrison

"Oh well, just another article on the go-out", you might be saying to yourself as you start reading. Well, maybe so, but keep reading; you may find it interesting. This method

of teaching the go-out is set up to take 11 days, but can be done in a week if your training sessions are scheduled properly.

The exercise is broken down into two parts, the turn and sit and leaving the handler. The turn and sit should be mastered at a distance of 50 feet before starting on having the dog go away from the handler. What we are after is a quick sit with no creeping. To do this we reward the dog for a quick sit and go behind him to praise. To begin, stand your dog and take one step directly behind him. Call his name as he turns to face you and tell him to sit. As he sits, praise him and possibly give him a food reward. Repeat two more times and then double your distance to two paces. Repeat 3 more sits and double your distance again to four paces. Continue until your dog will turn and sit at 50 feet. If at any time he begins to creep, reduce your distance or take a step or two towards your dog as you give the command and signal to sit. Remember to reward the performance you want. If you reward sloppy work, this is how he will work.

When your dog is reliable on the turn and sit, you can begin the go-out. We like to use a ring set up with mats and jumps so that the dog has a guide to help encourage straight go-outs. However, a sidewalk, driveway or yard will do fine. We will be using paper and food as targets and rewards. Initially, both are left so that the dog can see what to go to. Then only food is left on the mat. Gradually no food is left on the mat, but the dog is rewarded with food as you go to him to praise. Finally food is given in an irregular pattern, then only praise.

To begin, take your dog to one of the mats and let him watch as you put down the paper and food. If he tries to get the food, let him; don't correct since this is what you want him to do anyway. A correction for this might reduce his eagerness to go after it. If he does get it, simply put down some more and take him to the other end of the mat, turn and immediately send him. As he races down the mat walk down behind him until you are about half-way there, *after* he has his tidbit call his name and command to sit. Then go to him and praise. Repeat the same procedure at the other end. By working the dog in both directions you will save both you and your dog needless steps. Another step saver is once you don't need paper, as you send your dog and he's on his way, drop some food behind you. After going to him and praising, send him in the other direction. This also helps to break your dog from going only if he sees you go out there and put something down.

Our schedule calls for nine go-outs per day broken into three sets. These should be done rapidly, keeping the dog's spirits high.

EFFECTS OF MEDICATION IN TRAINING

W. H. Morrison, 1980

Occasionally during training, a dog may suddenly stop progressing or seem to have forgotten what he has been doing well. One possible reason for this could be the results of medications. While this is a remote possibility, it should be checked out.

One of the most obvious and widely reported is the effects of Styrid-Caricide on the dog's scenting ability. Many have reported that a well trained dog had suddenly begun having difficulty with scent work after having been started on this heartworm preventative. It usually occurs within a day or two of starting the medication, with the dog recovering his abilities within two weeks. If he is immediately taken off, his abilities are back to par in a couple of days. Dogs which are kept on heartworm preventative year round do not have this problem since their system never has to go through a period of adjustment.

Some owners have reported that similar problems have been encountered when the dog has been taken off Styrid-Caricide after having been on it for some time; however, this has not been heard as frequently as the problems associated with starting the medication.

With this in mind, good advice may be to begin tracking scent discrimination about three weeks after starting heartworm preventative or wait until the dog has learned what is expected, then start medication followed by a few weeks to let him adjust, then review.

Scenting ability can also be affected by injectable or oral doses of corticosteroids such as cortisone. Again, the dog's scenting ability is reduced while on these medications, but unlike when on heartworm preventative, the dog does not seem to adjust if kept on the medication. However, once the medication is no longer given, the dog adjusts and is back to normal in a few days. Check with your veterinarian to see if your dog's problem can be treated with a topical medication if your dog is to be using his nose. This may only be feasible with treatment of skin conditions.

Ovaban is another medication that can produce noticeable effects in training. Ovaban is used to abort or postpone estrus. It has also been used in much lower dosages to control aggression in spayed bitches. It has the effect of raising the threshold for aggression thus calming the dog. What would be noticeable in training would be reduced animation, possible "could care less" attitude toward training, and lack of dog attention.

While these and other drugs can cause problems in training, not all problems should be attributed to drug use. It is, however, a possibility that should be checked out by the instructor when all other approaches have been unsuccessful. If you are not sure how a particular drug may affect the dog, check with a veterinarian or pharmacist.

VI. PUPPY TRAINING

THE IMPORTANCE OF PUPPY TRAINING

J.J. Volhard, 1974

Since its inception the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors has been a strong and active supporter of the concept of puppy training. This article will seek to explore some of the elements of Puppy Kindergarten by focusing on the need for puppy training, who benefits from it, when learning starts, the importance of socialization, the contents of a puppy class, and what its impact on the dog's development can be expected to be.

What is Kindergarten Puppy Training? First of all it is, or should be the most important part of dog obedience training. The first few months of a puppy's life sets the pattern for future development, just as the first several years are so significant in the future development of a child. Things learned by a puppy will never be forgotten although perhaps changed or hopefully improved upon by his human family.

By the time most dogs are enrolled in obedience school at what is considered the customary age, 6 months to a year, chances are they are there for a specific reason. This is usually some sort of behavior problem and the owner has been unable to cope with it and has come to the school for help. Quite often strong corrective measures must be taken to remedy the situation. Regardless of the type of problem involved we should ask ourselves: could it have been avoided altogether, and, if so, how? In many, if not most instances, the answer would be "yes, it could have been avoided with Puppy Kindergarten."

A puppy starts learning at 3 weeks of age and continues learning every day of his life, but just what he learns is influenced by his environment – be it good or bad. So in puppy training it is up to the handler to guide him along the path of good behavior, hopefully eliminating situations that will cause bad habits, thus making training positive instead of negative. From ages 3-8 weeks, training is done at home. "Training" may seem like a strong word here so "guiding" or "conditioning" may be more appropriate at this age. Handle the puppy, acquaint him with a light collar and lead, and set up a housebreaking routine. No – I did not say you can housebreak a 3 week old puppy, but a pattern can be started now that will allow the puppy to follow his natural desire for cleanliness.

At 8 weeks of age he is old enough to enter a Kindergarten Puppy Training class for dogs from 2-5 months old.

Here the pups are trained and, more importantly, conditioned for further training at home and in the ring, be it breed or obedience. Space does not allow me to list all that is taught in this class, but the pups are exposed to the same work that is required in the obedience ring, only "geared down" to puppy level. Like any other beginner class, it is designed to teach the owner how to live more comfortably with his dog. It is principally geared to what the dog will eventually be expected to do – walk on leash without pulling,

come when called, encounters with other dogs, playing with the children, not jumping up on people, etc. They are conditioned to respond to the commands but are certainly not forced to perform with the exactness that is expected of more mature dogs. If done properly, the pup will never resent this work, he will look forward to it and will simply consider it as a part of everyday living. Having started at an early age, he will have less corrections coming his way and fewer bad habits to break. For the new owner, the puppy class is a very easy way to find out the correct way to raise his puppy and how to avoid problems which, as the puppy grows older, become more difficult to remedy, sometimes reaching the incorrigible stage.

A very necessary part of KPT is introducing the puppy to all the sights and sounds he will be encountering as he grows up. Just to mention a few – whistles, stairs, bicycles, electric clippers, crates and of course other dogs and strange people. To see these little pups playing, retrieving, and racing to their handlers when called, is a beautiful sight. The "stays" can be taught, but only for seconds and not minutes.

KPT is the most important of all obedience training and just because the words "kindergarten" and "puppy" are used, there is nothing childish about it. Each owner is taught the importance of good grooming and is shown how to use the comb, brush and nail clippers. Educating the handler is certainly as important, if not more so, as the education of the dog.

Why? Why? Why? This is a word we hear most often in KPT. When the instructor notices that a pup has a certain reaction to a situation, it is a good time to stop and ask WHY? and often the handler himself finds that he is responsible for the pup's response – be it favorable or unfavorable. The handler must know the reason for everything that he is told to do. The instructor explains why they are to handle a dog a certain way and very often demonstrates with one of the pups. If the owner does the exercises just because he is told, without really knowing why, he and his dog will never receive the full benefits of obedience training. Every dog speaks a language using not only his voice, but his tail, ears, eyes and facial expressions. Each handler must learn how to read his dog and thus set up a means of communication, since communication is really what it is all about.

An experienced handler must beware of pushing too fast with his puppy. Since he has trained before, he knows what is eventually to be accomplished and too often tries to find short cuts and expects too much of his dog. True, he has the benefit of previous experience and if he will take advantage of this and not misuse it, he will accomplish wonders.

Some trainers favor more disciplined obedience training right from the beginning and do away with the socializing part of it. The dictionary definition of socialize is "to render social: to bring about the mutual participation of teacher and pupil" – what more could we ask than this. Allowing pups to play together, be handled by strangers, and becoming accustomed to new sights and sounds will certainly help to "render them social" and also "brings about the mutual participation of teacher (handler) and pupil (dog)."

Does this all mean that every puppy needs puppy kindergarten to grow into a well-adjusted dog? Most people get along fine with their dogs without any benefit of formal training and are perfectly happy with them. There are those who own several dogs and perhaps have had previous experience in obedience, and their dogs are fortunate that they have other dogs to socialize with and an experienced owner to guide them from the very beginning. But in large part KPT is aimed at the person who has just brought home his first puppy and who has very little knowledge of how to cope with that cute little rascal. They have no other dogs at home and are completely in the dark as where to begin with feeding, housebreaking, grooming, lead-breaking and all the other things that so many people take for granted. The pup is often treated like a spoiled child and acts as one, even forgetting that he is a dog. In order to develop to his full potential, he must have a chance to play, argue and communicate with other canines.

The difficulty is that often we cannot tell until a dog is an adult, which ones should have gone to puppy class and which ones not, including of course those owned by the experienced person. Perhaps the optimum solution would be for all dogs, whether they seem to need it or not, to attend puppy class – it surely will not do them any harm, all will benefit, and for some of them it will be crucial.

KINDERGARTEN PUPPY TRAINING: A REVIEW

W. H. Morrison

Over the past few years, the idea and the incorporation of special classes for puppies has become quite popular. It never ceases to amaze me just how much these little tykes can be taught and how important it is to develop the proper attitude toward training at an early age. Occasionally the purpose and goals of KPT are lost and need to be reviewed.

We have found that puppies 4 to 5 months old are much like the adults in the way they can be handled in class. They are still like puppies in that they have a short attention span, but it is longer than the younger puppies. Because of the combination of relatively few bad habits and the longer attention span, the results of obedience classes are seen more rapidly than with their younger or older counterparts.

For the purpose of this article, I will deal mainly with the younger, 8 to 14 week old puppies in reviewing what we can and cannot expect in their response to training classes.

Young puppies have not yet developed an attitude toward training. If training classes are based on positive reward and lessons are taught in short, simple steps, learning is thought of as fun. By simple steps we mean breaking the sit, stand, down, etc., into several steps and rewarding each step.

Heeling can be introduced using several off-lead techniques that help imprint in the puppies' minds that we humans are the leaders. The result is that we begin at an early age teaching the dog to look to us for guidance, but not to become totally reliant upon us.

Later, more precise heeling is easier to teach, and when lead corrections are needed, they need not be as harsh. Since we are not using a lead, we are learning how to control our puppy using voice and body language, a means of communication natural to the dog. In class the pup should be near, but not necessarily exactly at, heel position.

Puppies rarely perform in class as well as they work at home. The reason is simple: more distractions in the form of people, sounds, and other dogs. For this reason we do not demand the puppy do perfectly in class, but emphasize control and consistency. Since there is going to be some loss of attention in class, we have socialization periods where the dogs play with each other and the handlers, but in a controlled fashion.

Unwanted behavior is more easily controlled at this age before it becomes a conditioned response and an unwanted part of life. Owners can learn how to optimize opportunities to help their puppy learn. A puppy can be taught at an early age, for example, to use his nose by hiding a favorite toy in progressively more difficult places.

A dog is a product of what we have taught him to be. His attitude toward training and learning are those we have instilled in him. This is especially true for a puppy.

VII. TRACKING

TRACKING

E. Tinetti, 1973

The beauty and grace of the dog silhouetted on the slopes or against the sky on a track. He may be seeking a quarry, searching for a lost child, or perhaps his master. Oh! The thrill of participating in a useful sport wherein the dog follows his natural instincts and the handler takes only the minor role.

So many books and articles have been published, some good and others mediocre on tracking, that I am not going to contribute to the training angle. I am taking for granted the handler starting his dog has become knowledgeable by reading good literature on the subject or attending tracking clinics.

My first thought is that we do not teach a dog to track; he could really write a good book on the subject if this were physically possible. We can only teach him to concentrate on a specific scent. I had an excellent example of this many years ago in the early 1940's. We were at Virginia Beach during the height of the summer. We left our 2 cross breed dogs with out daughter and we sauntered down the beach, barefoot, wading in the surf and walking in the sand. We went about a mile and were sitting in a tavern about an hour when who should come in? Yes, they had tracked us down. I thought this was an amazing feat at the time, and now I really marvel.

I have seen Diana's Liza struggle through snow deeper than her height to obtain her "T". I recall a night when a party of 5 was hopelessly lost in a forest and a great tracker returned them to safety. This same dog located his mate in the garden with toxic poisoning too ill to respond when called.

I have been experimenting with my dogs and assisting others requesting assistance for quite a few years. I had annual tracking parties at one time. I hoped to create a spark of interest in our area in the sport. I cannot recall a single "T" title directly related to my efforts. I also conducted a tracking session for a club about a year ago. There were 13 eager handlers and dogs participating. All got a good start and three of the dogs were outstanding (one was able to take a strange scent for 100 yards with a turn). I was very enthused and had high hopes for some new trackers. This is one year later and not one dog has continued to get certification.

This is no exception and I have determined it takes a certain type person to meet the requirements needed for tracking. I have concluded we are stressing the wrong end of the lead. I suggest each prospective handler take a long hard look at work involved, and evaluate the wisdom of choice. I have listed a few questions if answered honestly will save you and your instructor time and effort.

Why are there so few tracking dogs? It takes a single-minded, dedicated person with determination and perseverance to work in all weather and terrain. One must have stamina to run or walk rapidly, if necessary, a minimum of 1/4 mile. He should be

knowledgeable in determining the reasons for success or failure of a track, not blaming the dog if the track was poorly laid. He must be able to read the dog, observing all indications of communications the dog imparts.

Does the handler guard against using obedience commands with exception of "Stay", "Wait", "Easy" and refrain from calling him by name? Does he refrain from using that ugly word "no"? This command will discourage the best of trackers.

Does the handler have access to a large field? Is there a friend or neighbor you can rely on to train in laying a good track, when you reach this stage? Many people are just not interested in working alone with their dog.

Please do not get the impression that I am negative on this great sport. On the contrary, I have enjoyed getting three 'Ts" and work with the two Shepherd dogs I now have. I would appreciate seeing the people that start in this sport derive the pleasure out of it that I have. Happy Tracking!

KINDERGARTEN PUPPY TRACKING

E. Conrad, M.D., 1974

Back in 1966 I was waiting for my 3-month old puppy to grow up enough for tracking when I received devastating news: my only two reliable track layers were leaving town! Something had to be done. Why not start the pup out on their "stranger" tracks? ''Self'' tracks could come later when she'd learned to stay. It worked, and saved a lot of trouble. Tracking interest has burgeoned here since then but we've continued to work with the puppies. There is one great big problem, though: *puppy pushing is pure poison*! We start the pups as early as 8 weeks. Plant a flag, put a harness on the pup, get a long line (the pup won't need it, but the handler might as well start learning how to untangle the thing!), send a "track layer" out 5-6 feet to wave a glove. Handler holds pup and talks excitedly. Glove may be baited with a tidbit (if handler doesn't think it's sinful) or a squeaky toy. Cheer the pup out to the glove, make much over his "track", play with him. Gradually lengthen the distance, bring the track layer back before the pup starts, make the drop less obvious, then divert the pup so that he sees neither the track layer nor the glove. At first the pup will probably try to locate the glove by vision or by air-scenting it. While you're trying to get him eager to get the glove, this does not matter. But he must eventually learn that ground scent is reliable; air scent and vision very fickle. So as soon as he seems to understand that he's to find the glove, make a track *with* the wind and hide the glove in the grass. When he starts to sniff the ground, praise to the skies.

Encourage him to pull – no one has told him not to pull on his collar yet! Practice letting the lead out smoothly; hold it in both hands near the harness, letting the rest trail behind you. With a small breed of pup you can let it slip through your fingers; with a larger one let it out hand over hand *without jerking.* Find out how hard your puppy will pull without any dampening of enthusiasm. Keep the pup quite close to the track where

you know there is ground scent by giving him only 6-10 feet of lead for now and staying on the track yourself. If he wanders off, stop him smoothly *without jerking*. If he forgets why he is there, take him by the harness and point to the track with your arm perpendicular to the ground – don't point ahead! – and say "track" when his nose wanders, "good" when he points it to the track. Then make your tracks and your sessions shorter!

Once he is consistently doing a straight track of a length appropriate to his size, put in a turn. Most pups will figure out a 90º angle very quickly. Have the track layer plant a second flag or use a patch of vegetation as a land mark, go 3 more paces, then turn into the wind at a 90º angle, go 15-20 paces, drop the glove, and continue 20 paces before coming back to the road. Using about 10 feet of line, send the pup out. If he sniffs the flag, don't scold him as it has the track layer's scent; give him a grudging "good" and an eager "track!" When you reach the flag or landmark, stop, give the pup an extra 5-10 feet of line and let him nose around. Eventually, he'll find the track – praise him and immediately go out behind him. If you have trouble you can make your turns 150º, and then 120º, then 90º a la Strickland. Now make most of your turns *with* the wind until you're sure the pup is following ground scent, then go with him. When he seems to have mastered turns, wait for him to pull you before you make the turn yourself. Work the pup at most 10 minutes. This is usually enough for 3 very short tracks or 2 longer ones. One session a week is plenty and an over-eager handler must be forbidden to work the pup between sessions.

After each lesson, take the pup for a walk. A tolerant older dog who loves to run over all sorts of terrain and who will come when called is a great help; Junior will tag along behind him. Take the pup through all sorts of local cover, especially high weeds, entangling vetch, brambles, boggy spots. Try the woods and a bit of plow. Creeks are sometimes easier to get into than out of, aren't they? Cheer him when he successfully negotiates an obstacle, help him only if he's trapped. And that's it. The puppy is familiar with all tracking equipment and all types of cover. He knows that gloves are fine things, harnesses are meant to pull in, and tracks make 90º turns.

Now proceed with one of two courses:

1) Except for refresher once a month or so, stop tracking until the puppy is mature. *Then* start lengthening the track and aging it. Dampen down herding dog circles and sporting dog zig-zags. Stop varmint chasing and insist that dog follow the ground scent of the track layer until called off. And above all, learn how to read him.

2) Continue the weekly sessions, but keep the tracks short. Enough variation to maintain interest can usually be obtained by using different terrain and aging the tracks. If the pup loses his eagerness, take him, handler and helper to a strange field. Have the handler hide and let the helper handle the pup on the handler's track. Then go back to shorter tracks and more praise; if the puppy continues eager, ease out the length of the track; proceed from L's to U's, Z's and boxes; slowly and gently get the controls listed in (1).

And when is a dog mature enough for a full-length regulation track? Some time between 6 months and 2 years; there is no way to tell except by feeling him out.

Two of our pups have passed official AKC test before sexual maturity. But their owners aren't bragging about their precocity; they're working hard on advanced tracking along with us owners of later bloomers. We're all proud that our early-started dogs seem eager to give us the benefit of their extraordinary sense even under difficult and unpleasant conditions. It is here and only here that early training pays off. By taking advantage of the age of easy socialization you save the time and energy you might have to put into teaching the older dog to pull, to go into high cover, to get his pads damp, to go close to flapping flags, etc. etc. You have fewer problems to overcome and can concentrate on the positive aspects of tracking, or any other training. But if your aim is for a "UDT before he's a year" you'll overestimate the pup's attention span and strength and turn him off all obedience work – perhaps permanently.

SELF-CONFIDENCE THROUGH TRACKING

W. H. Morrison

Over the past few years interest in tracking has grown to the point where many tests are full even before the premium lists have been mailed. With more dogs being tracked, more opportunities to observe the behavior of tracking dogs are available. It appears that one of the additional benefits the dog gains from tracking is self-confidence. We have seen several cases where relatively shy, unsure dogs have entered the class, and an outgoing, more confident dog has graduated.

Probably the main reason for this change in character is that, in tracking, the dog is being trained to use an ability that is natural to him. If the class is conducted properly, the dog receives little, if any, pressure, and he begins succeeding from the very first day.

In order for the dog to develop some self-confidence, he must find that he can be correct in the choices and decisions he makes. In tracking he has the nose, and his using it results in a reward. Since we don't fully understand how he uses his nose, we cannot correct heavily.

Often obedience classes are recommended to help a dog gain self-confidence. However, if the approach employs too much compulsion, the lack of confidence may only be reinforced. In cases where compulsion is used, the dog may be corrected for what *he* considers to be a correct choice. If this happens too frequently, the dog learns to do only as he is told and is shown how to do. The dog may be quite relaxed when performing a standard routine, but will still be unsure when faced with a new challenge.

We have seen dogs that have completed tracking enter obedience classes and do quite well as a result of the added self-confidence gained through tracking. It should be noted, however, that the obedience classes were conducted in such a way as to keep corrections at a minimum and reward at a maximum.

The next time you start a tracking class, look to see if you have a dog that needs to develop self-confidence and encourage the owner to enroll. I think you both will be pleased with the results.

HANDLER TECHNIQUES IN TRACKING

W. H. Morrison, 1979

Tracking is a sport where the dog does what he really knows how to do and that is use his nose. Unfortunately at a tracking test the dog may use his nose on things he should not and ignore, at least some of the time, the track. Here is where good handling technique pays off. Of the dog and handler teams that fail at tracking tests about half could have passed had the handler had better technique.

Just what are we talking about? First of all, be familiar with the regulations. Legs of a track are straight and don't slowly bend. If the dog begins to move off of a straight line path he has been working, he may have reached a turn or he may have temporarily lost the scent and has found something else. If this happens, stop walking. You may end up in the land where the whistle blows. Let your dog check things out, and don't move again until he has established a new direction. That is, he is moving in a straight line with the same behavior he had when he was on the track.

There are two ways to practice this. Lay your own track so that you know the *exact* location of each leg and turn. As your dog starts, observe how he acts. Does this change when he drifts to one side or the other? Does he pull with as much determination? What does his head do as he crosses the track? Most dogs will cross over the track by a foot or so and suddenly snap their head back to check out that area and then start working the track. Laying your own track will not hurt your dog. I know of several dogs that were trained solely by the owner and the only stranger's track was for the certification and at the test that resulted in a TD.

Another approach is to have someone else lay your track and see that you, the handler, stay on the track. If experienced, they can point out what the dog is doing when on or off the track and when he reaches a turn. Using these approaches teaches you what to look for in your dog that signals what is going on.

As you become better at reading your dog, proper use of the lead will bring about an improvement in your dog's performance. Speaking of the lead, it is supposed to be attached to the harness, not wrapped around his feet and legs. Unraveling your dog from these constraints will often break his concentration and could spell the end of that test. Keeping the lead taut between you and your dog will prevent this. It requires practice. Learn how to take in that lead fast enough so that your dog does not step all in it as he circles back to you.

When you take your dog to the starting stake, be ready to go. Have your lead untangled and straight behind you. Put the harness on the dog 15 or 20 yards behind the

flag. Walk your dog up to the flag and when his nose starts working and he moves out you are ready. I have seen too many handlers that walk the dog to the flag, put him on a down and spend several minutes untangling the line and jerking the anxious dog back.

We practice handling techniques for the obedience ring to save points; practice them also in tracking to save that "T", to say nothing of your entry fee and gas money. If you can't find someone to help you, get a copy of *Tracking Dog – Theory and Method* by Glen Johnson and read it. It will be a big help in improving your technique.

LOOK BEFORE YOU FOLLOW

W. H. Morrison

One of the most difficult techniques to teach in tracking is one of the most important for the handler to be able to master. This is being able to recognize the dog's indications of loss and discovery of track. For those experienced in working a tracking dog, it is readily apparent when the dog has reached a turn or simply lost the track momentarily. The novice handler is often too busy trying to keep from getting tangled up in the lead and looking for where he thinks the track should be that he fails to watch the dog's behavior while working.

This article will describe several approaches which are designed to help the novice handler recognize these signs and react accordingly. The two easiest to recognize are the dog's pull if he has been taught to lean into the harness and his breaking off a straight line while tracking.

Since most judges and tracklayers tend to walk in straight lines when plotting and laying tracks, the dog's deviation from those lines should be noted. While these two cover most dogs, other dogs give slighter indications, thus demanding that the dog's behavior be carefully observed.

In order to familiarize handlers with the two most obvious indications, that is the loss of tension on the lead and deviation from a straight line, a technique demonstrated by Glen Johnson is used. Not only does this approach help the handler recognize indications, it also is a training procedure to develop these indications in the dog. The instructor places the lead around his waist and the handler takes the lead. Slight tension is kept on the lead as the instructor moves off in a straight line. As the instructor veers off the "track", the handler slows down and applies more tension. As the instructor moves back to the "track", tension is released and the handler moves at a normal pace. This procedure is then reversed with the handler acting the part of the dog.

The next step is to have the handlers follow behind a tracking dog and observe his behavior. A track of five or six turns is laid. Handlers follow about ten feet behind the person working the dog. As the dog exhibits the indications., they are pointed out to the students. On the last two or three turns, the student is asked to tell when the dog has reached a turn.

The final step is to have the student handle a trained dog on a one or two turn track. It is best if a very stable dog is used, one that will track regardless of who is at the end of the lead. Hopefully, the experience gained through observation will be enough to enable the student to do a fairly good job with the training dog. All the students are taught to stop whenever the dog has made a definite commitment. The handler's response at this point is determined by whether or not the dog is correct.

Once the student begins working his own dog, an instructor or experienced handler follows closely behind to comment on the handler's technique. Since he has laid the track, the assistant is in the best position to give help when it is needed. Depending on the tact (or lack of it) the instructor takes in making his comments, the student is likely not to forget what he is learning.

In final point of fact, the dog is the easier of the team to train. This is his thing and when in the field he is in command. The handler must learn what his dog is telling him and because he sometimes thinks too much, the handler is the hardest to train. The reward for both student and the instructor comes when the dog drops his head and comes up with a mouth full of glove.

HEY... THAT LOOKS LIKE A GOOD PLACE TO TRACK!

W. H. Morrison

Land or acreage and terrain suitable for tracking is not always easy to find, and when found, every attempt should be made by the trackers to have a good working relationship with the landowners.

This relationship begins with securing permission to use the property, either as an individual or as a group. Such large tracts of land are likely to be farmland or as yet undeveloped commercial parks. Farmland will usually have an owner, the farmer, with whom one can talk. Commercial property may be owned by a bank, realtor, or contractor. In either case, the land may be leased, and the lessee must also be contacted. Occasionally a community or subdivision may have set aside acreage for their own recreational purposes and the chairman of the organization should be consulted. In short, land has owners, be they individuals, businesses, community groups, or governments, and the owners should be asked permission to use the land especially if it will be used regularly or by a group.

In asking permission for land use, every facet of tracking should be explained since it is unlikely the landowner will have any knowledge of the sport. Explain that the dogs will be on lead and under control at all times to alleviate any fear that the dogs will be free to chase livestock or run through adjacent crops. Find out where vehicles may and may not be driven or parked on the land. It is not uncommon for land to be used for cutting grass for hay, and constant walking or driving may flatten the grass making cutting and pick-up by a baler difficult. Give the owner as much information as possible about the number of dogs and people involved and their schedules for using the land as

well as any matches or tests they may be planning. Ask if any special arrangements need to be made for land use such as a restriction of times, specific areas that are not to be used, or notification when the land is used. Be sure that everyone using the land is aware of and abides by any such rules!

Another factor that will need to be discussed is liability of the property owner. The entry form for an AKC event contains a release, and it is a good idea to give a copy to the owner to set his mind at ease. Offer to have a similar agreement signed for the routine use of the land if possible liability is of concern to the owner. Give the owner a list of those people who will be using the land.

A few words of caution. Remember you are a guest of the owner. Should his activities interfere with yours at any time do not become angry or complain, but if it is a continuing problem calmly discuss the situation with him. Also remember that you do not necessarily have the authority to extend permission for using the land to other individuals or groups. Should you learn that others with dogs are also using the land, explain to them that permission is necessary for its use and suggest they obtain it before continuing.

Dog training organizations should respect each other's need for tracking fields and either get together requesting permission for all, or have it understood that each group is locating fields and negotiating for its own needs. It unfortunately has happened that access to choice fields has been denied to all because a second organization began using the same property without permission, were violating the rules set up originally, or scared off the owner or manager in asking for their own permission because of "everybody" wanting its use.

Sportsmanship involves more than congratulating a winner. It also means respecting the authority, activities, and good fortune of other groups for the benefit of all involved with training dogs.

VIII. CANINE BEHAVIOR

BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

W. Herbert Morrison

Dealing with behavioral problems such as chewing, digging, barking, and biting are, and have always been, a part of dog training classes. Over the past few years, Fox, Scott and Fuller have established principles of canine behavior and Campbell has applied a systematic approach to solving these problems as opposed to simply eliminating the symptoms. These researchers have shown that the problems we see are actually symptoms of much more basic problems. All too often the approach that eliminates only the symptom works at destroying the dog-owner bond and leads to another symptom appearing later.

The system we use and which has proven to be reasonably successful is to gain as much information as possible at registration or over the phone regarding the problem (symptoms). We want to know when it appeared, the circumstances surrounding its appearance, and circumstances which trigger the unwanted behavior. A basic understanding of canine behavior is a must in order to correctly define the problem and arrive at a solution. Many times the problem revolves around the ignorance of the owner of the basic needs of the dog and how his social order fits in with ours. We have found in most cases that the dog fails to consistently view his owners as leaders. The result is that the dog is generally uncontrollable or controllable only when he wants to be. Correcting this situation involves establishing the owner as leader. This is accomplished by with-holding praise until a command is obeyed; that is, the dog must begin to earn his praise. Approaches to specific problems are beyond the scope and intent of this article, but variations on particular problems can be studied in *Problem Behavior in Dogs* by William E. Campbell and articles appearing in *Canine Practice* and in *Veterinary Medicine / Small Animal Practice* by Ben Hart and Peter J. Volmer.

Many of the problems we encounter are through our classes, and any consultation is handled as a part of the class fee. Those people who contact us by phone are usually encouraged to join the next session, but no fee for consultation is charged, only the standard class fee.

This approach can have an effect on the dedication of the owner to correct the problem. If the owner is getting “free advice”, he may be less likely to follow through with suggestions. If a fee is charged for each consultation, the owner may feel that he does not want to lose his investment.

With all problem behavior the results are dependent upon the owner working consistently with his dog. If he fails to do this, no solution will be reached. The owner must be motivated whether it is not wanting to lose his money or because he genuinely cares what happens to his dog. Some form of motivation is needed to produce a successful end, but because the instructor has no control over what the owner does on his own, no guarantee should be given that any suggested solution will work. Regardless of how you cut it, correcting problem behavior involves working with people and not dog’s.

PROBLEM DOGS IN TRAINING CLASSES

W. Herbert Morrison

Although the problem dog makes up only a small percentage of the dogs attending class, they can be on our minds constantly. We may not like to see them in class and often hope they don't show up for the second week, but these are the dogs whose owners most need the benefits of an instructor's knowledge and experience.

We faced an interesting situation with an adult male Saint Bernard named Dutch. When the owner first called to inquire about our classes, he wanted his 12 year old daughter to bring the family pet. Since we do not accept children this young in our regular program, we suggested that the owner bring the dog to class and work with the daughter during the week. This proved to be a wise decision.

The first night of class showed that Dutch did not like the company of other dogs; he was snapping, growling and lunging at any dog that came near him. Fortunately the owner was strong enough to restrain the dog, but he really had no idea of how to handle the problem. The other members of the class were very much concerned about the safety of their own dogs, and it was obvious that nothing would be accomplished until something was done about Dutch.

That night Dutch and his owner were brought to the center of the Advanced Class where the other owners had some experience and more control over their own dogs. Dutch's owner was shown how to correct the dog and what to look for that would signal the need for the correction. At the end of class the owner was told to work on what had been taught in the lesson, and we would see him next week.

After class, the other instructors and I discussed whether Dutch should remain in the classes because of the concern of the other students and the total lack of dog attention. It was decided that we could not simply drop Dutch, but he would be worked with on an individual basis outside of class for two weeks.

The procedure used to attempt to correct Dutch's behavior involved (1) the owner establishing himself as pack leader by gaining response to obedience commands, (2) using food to modify the dog's behavior, and (3) using a firm correction for unwanted behavior.

The private lessons covered the same obedience exercises that were being covered in class', and Dutch responded beautifully, actually progressing faster than the dogs in class. The problem of his reaction to other dogs was handled as follows.

Dutch's owner was given a pocket full of tidbits with the instruction to insert one in Dutch's mouth as soon as he noticed the dog I would bring out on lead. If Dutch lunged for the dog, he was to be sharply corrected. In each of the two sessions with Dutch about 10 to 12 passes were made with a second male. Initially the second dog would not get closer than about 10 feet before Dutch would charge. By the end of the second lesson

Dutch was doing a sit-stay and down-stay with the second male no more than two feet away.

Dutch was brought back to class, and by the end of the eight-week session was voted "Most Improved Dog" by the other handlers in the class.

Food was used to modify the dog's behavior from disliking the sight of a second dog to actually looking forward to it because of the pleasant experience (food) when the other dog appeared. The food reward was accompanied by praise so that later only the praise was used. This approach was successful because of the willingness of the owner to follow instructions and his desire to correct his dog's behavior.

Many of the corrective measures we now use with problem dogs are based on the solutions suggested in William E. Campbell's book *Problem Behavior in Dogs* which we have modified as needed to adapt them to class situations.

KNOW YOUR TEMPERAMENT

John R. Kenner

The physical and mental characteristic peculiarities that are displayed in the dog's reactions are referred to as its temperament. Understanding the dog's temperament is the key in producing willingness (the desire to act), response (the amount of time involved to act), and attention to duty (the required performance of the act).

Five basic temperaments are found in dogs: (1) THE FEAR BITER, (2) THE SHY DOG, (3) THE OUTGOING DOG, (4) THE AGGRESSIVE DOG, and (5) THE VICIOUS DOG. To be sure, there is an unlimited number of variations within these temperaments, as well as problems such as compulsive barking, chewing, crying, sympathy lameness, etc., that may be found within any temperament.

I would not accept *vicious dogs* in my classes for these reasons: *The vicious dog* disp1ays extremes in behavioral sensitivity. Forever unruly and dangerous, he attacks without cause, reacts without reason and therefore is a detriment to his breed, his owners and society. Do not confuse the fear biter temperament with that of *the shy dog*. This fellow is hypersensitive with neurotic, cowardly, inconsistent and anti-social behavior traits. He displays dramatic shifts in disposition, is frivolous and capable of ill-considered acts. The physical activities are either excitably energetic or low keyed to the point of retardation. Impulsive and immature, he remains unteachable. Whether the fault is mental or physical, it shall remain. For the dog's own welfare and those who would love him regardless of faults, it is the humane individual who would have him put to sleep. To those whose innermost feelings forbid such action, the responsibility would be to neuter the dog and protect society from it and it from society.

A pleasure to own and a privilege to train is the dog with the *outgoing temperament.* The percentage of dogs trained with this temperament is naturally lower than any other as it presents fewer problems. The overall attitude of the dog is

harmonious with life in general. He is accommodative, compatible, makes good adjustment to daily annoyances and has the desire to please all. Tolerance of others and acceptance of environments and rules come easily to this willing fellow. Yet, because of these trusting, stable traits many owners of such dogs are displeased, feeling their dogs offer little in protective ability. Few realize that as the dog matures and the bonds of affection grow, he would not tolerate mistreatment of his loved ones.

Never lacking of effort and having little regard for fear is the protector of all, *the aggressive dog.* Impulsive, with his belligerent, quarrelsome manner, he intimidates and challenges when and wherever possible. It's not unusual to find the dog's handler afraid to reprimand him due to his arrogant behavior. This dog, however, respects and reacts to the handler who is prepared and quick to correct *the first time*. Should the handler ignore developing problems with this fellow, he will indeed be sorry. Aggressive, yes, but flexible, controllable and capable of improving his behavior traits and well worth the effort.

The shy dog, with its loved ones at home, displays a love for life, is happy and outgoing and needs little encouragement for fun and play. To passersby of its enclosed fence, it appears aggressive and to those who taunt and tease, vicious. Away from its home environment the dog becomes timid, sensitive, flighty, unpredictable and easily upset. In training classes the dog is attentive to its owner and alert to any and all movements and sounds. Praise and encouragement are the key in overcoming the dog's lack of confidence and suspicious nature. If babied with voice or leash the dog exaggerates its sensitivities to the degree that it becomes emotionally unstable. If strong corrections are applied, neurotic tendencies appear and the dog becomes unapproachable and aggressive. The shy dog is teachable, flexible and capable of learning through exposure, provided its handler does not pressure it to extremes.

By understanding temperament, I believe 95% of the senseless harsh treatment dogs receive in obedience classes can be avoided. Successful training is possible only when a compatible relationship exists between handler and dog. The premise on which this relationship is built is knowing the dog's temperament.

BEHAVIORAL OR PHYSICAL?

J. J. Volhard

The huge dog lunged and snarled threateningly at everything that came close and his owner had a difficult time restraining him. After sizing up the situation, the instructor suggested a visit to the veterinarian *before* attempting to deal with this dog. It developed that the dog had hip dysplasia, underwent an operation and, after recuperating, returned to class to complete the course without further difficulties. Similar incidents repeat themselves daily, with varying degrees of intensity, in training classes across the country. It is difficult to estimate how often a physical problem is the underlying cause for a training difficulty and the precise form it may take. For an instructor, it is not an easy job to make the correct assessment – is a particular training difficulty behaviorally induced or

does it stem from a physical problem? Aggressiveness, when dealing with new dogs, can be especially hard to interpret. Observing the object of the dog's aggressiveness, however, will often provide a clue whether he needs discipline or help. Pain-induced aggressiveness is far more common than outright viciousness and once the pain is removed, the dog's aggressiveness will be cured.

Physical problems range from the obvious to the extremely subtle. Severe hip dysplasia can often be seen. Mats, another common cause of training difficulties, can be readily detected. Many is the time when a dog was labeled ''aggressive" even though his behavior stemmed from no more than the discomfort he felt because he was matted. Impacted anal glands can result in a reluctance to sit; arthritis and undetected fractures are not uncommon and can result in training difficulties. The incidence of eye problems is quite high and these have been observed to develop aggressiveness due to insecurity. Ear infections among certain breeds are a constant hazard and can cause all sorts of difficulties. With the increasing development of class programs for young dogs, the impact of teething cannot be overlooked, especially when teaching a puppy to retrieve. These examples are some of the more obvious physical problems which can, and often will, affect the training of the dog. In such cases it would be a mistake to view training difficulties as purely disciplinary questions and approach them accordingly. A trip to the veterinarian may prove a far simpler expedient than the blind conviction that the dog is fit as a fiddle and that a good jerk will cure whatever ails him.

With dogs which have been in training for some time, it is generally easier to detect physical problems, because the owner observes a behavior change. I have a student with an exceptionally successful dog working in Utility. After one class she remarked that the dog seemed inattentive and not as responsive as it normally is. Several days later she called – the dog was running a temperature and was placed on antibiotics to combat a low-grade infection. Not a particularly unusual example, but a telling one for that very reason. Diet, dietary supplementation, and medications are also important factors in their potential impact on the dog's behavior.

THE STARING SYNDROME

J. J. Volhard

Last month I briefly touched on Konrad Lorenz's "Man Meets Dog" with specific reference to his observations concerning the effect of staring at an animal. For those involved in obedience training these observations are perhaps among the most useful and, when applied, frequently produce immediate results. Lorenz notes that the structure of animals' eyes is such that for them, as distinguished from man, focusing or seeing clearly is a strain. As a result, animals rely almost exclusively on peripheral vision. The immediate effect of this condition is explained by Lorenz as follows: "Among themselves, animals only look at each other fixedly when they intend to take drastic measures or are afraid of each other. Consequently, they conceive a prolonged fixed gaze as being something hostile and threatening and rate it in man as the expression of extreme malevolence." He therefore advises that "anyone who wishes to win the confidence of a

shy cat, a nervous dog or any other similar being should make it a rule never to face him and stare straight at him like a hungry lion, but to look beyond him, only letting the eye rest on as if it were by accident and for a very short time. Sound advice, and particularly for the instructor who has to handle an aggressive or frightened dog.

It is also sound advice for the trainer, and the lesson to be learned from it comes up in a variety of situations. For example, a handler was overheard to complain about the recall of his dog – it was slow and the dog appeared cowed. Upon observing the handler it was pointed out to him that he was glowering at the dog while it was coming. He was told to look beyond the dog at some point on the horizon. The transformation in the dog was startling – on the very next recall he came quickly and without any signs of cowering. Similarly, many trainers have difficulty in getting their dogs to sit straight in front of them and the harder they try the worse it seems to get. Frequently this problem is caused by the handler – in his effort to get the dog to sit straight he stares at him, which in turn causes the dog to shift to avoid the stare. The same thing often happens with the automatic sit at heel – as the handler intently peers at the dog to make sure he sits straight, the dog swivels. The stays may also be affected. Recently I had occasion to observe a handler staring at his dog during the sit-stay. The dog became increasingly uncomfortable and fidgety. The harder the handler stared, the more uncomfortable the dog became until it finally broke.

Clearly not all dogs will react to a fixed stare to the same degree, but none of them appear to be completely immune to it. The most common defense mechanism against it is for the dog to turn his head. At that point it looks like he is not paying attention. Again, the harder the handler tries to hold the dog's attention by staring at him the worse it gets. It would seem, therefore, that the best way to get and hold that attentive look all of us aim for is to look as little as possible at the dog and under no circumstances to stare or glower at him.

THE ONE MAN DOG

W. Herbert Morrison

Having only one member of a family responsible for training while their dog is brought through a class is a policy adopted by many dog training groups. The rationale being that reducing the number of variables to a minimum reduces possible confusion thus making training easier. In view of the dog's nature to seek his level of dominance within the pack, it may be that we are actually encouraging one man control of the dog. Except for the highest and lowest ranking members of the pack, all others are dominant over some and subordinate to others. When the dog is placed with humans, his pack instincts are still present, only the makeup has been changed from canines to people.

Upon entering the new pack situation, the dog begins to learn quickly who will lead him and whom he will lead. For his life in his human pack to be a comfortable one for all concerned, he must learn to be a follower. Dominance, and therefore a leader figure, can be established easily by having the dog obey commands from each member of the family

and be praised for his obedience. This is most easily accomplished with a puppy while he is learning what the world has to offer and how he fits into it. It may be somewhat harder to deal with an older dog that already has his own ideas about his position within the human pack, especially if he has decided he is the leader.

After reading over text on this subject by William E. Campbell, we dropped this policy in our classes striving instead toward the goal of having the dog responsive to all members of the family. To accomplish this we suggest each member of the family help with the training by conducting part of the review each day. We still prefer that only one person be in charge of introducing new material. An alternative would be to have each member introduce and teach a separate exercise. Although timing might vary from one family member to another, the dog would still be seeing uniform timing for a particular exercise.

Fortunately, few dogs fall into the category of being strong leader types and most dogs are responsive to all family members. However, to develop a better understanding of the dog and to realize the full benefit of a well trained dog, family participation in training should be encouraged.

AGGRESSION TO SPARE AND SHARE

Earl K. Traxler

I believe aggression and shyness most often stem from insecurity in both the human person and the dog person. Let us keep in mind that although we are quite different as animals we are psychologically and comparably parallel. I prefer to accept the dog's actions in showing unwarranted aggression or unwarranted shyness as being necessary for her at the time. Even though I've been called a male chauvinist, at times justifiably, I am quite oriented towards females and enjoy using the term "her."

In working with dog behavior problems over the past 30 years the small amount of success I have had has been mostly in the area of aggression and shyness (especially shyness). It has taken me most of the time to realize I am an alien in the dog's world, and I must go to her for help and ask where *her* attitude is coming from. I have learned that what may appear to me as unwarranted action, is a necessary reaction on the part of the dog to protect her inner-self. Dogs do have an inner-self, you know.

I will, at this time, address my remarks to aggression only – that is, unwarranted aggression towards other dogs, not an uncommon situation. I have tried more systems than I can remember and some I don't care to admit to. I like to try to understand where the attitude is coming from that she and I must deal with. When I decide to modify her behavior, it then becomes my problem too. I usually have three problems – the dog, the owner and myself. As you know, the second one is the most difficult. I try to learn what the dog is saying – is it fear, fight, flight, submissiveness, or what. I would like to go into that in detail, but much of the important material must be left out in a short article. I recommend that you read, *Understanding Your Dog* by Michael W. Fox. It is a very

good, scientific work put into language for the layperson. I recommend reading it, studying it and then putting it to use. Since the problem most likely stems from insecurity, I prefer to try to use confidence and security in our new learning experience. If she felt secure, the other dog would not be a threat and she is not likely to fight anything but a threat.

I no longer approve of facing the dog with an unnecessary stress situation. She would be under stress simply by being made to "heel" up to the problem and be made to stand there, in what I call a "stalemate." I have seen this system cause more problems than any other system I have used. Why force myself into a stress situation let alone her. Instead, because she has no one to trust but me, her "pack leader", I prefer to relieve the stress for both of us. Imagine her feelings: my poor "pack leader" is under stress too. It feels good to me knowing I do not have to use any punishment at all. I start walking and talking (no heeling, no commands). I would like to add here that I do not use the command "heel" in helping the dog learn to want to be with me. I can't teach her – I can only make it available for her to learn. So we start just walking and talking with lots of confidence and no praise. I have her on my left and the other dog on my right as we walk past the problem, who is standing (or sitting depending on how I read the situation) at a right angle to us. No stress for me, no stress for her, and I say "you're OK!" as a matter of confidence, but without praise.

Next time we walk past, she is next to the problem and I am on the outside. Remember we are just walking and talking – no praise, just confidence. By now I will be feeling confident too, because there is a lot of difference between praise and confidence. Now, at the very first sign of stress from her, I suddenly make a quick right angle turn away from the problem. I use a very quick (not hard) collar correction that is well-timed to a sudden burst of praise. I would be saying, "You did a good job and I'm sorry you weren't watching me when I made a sudden turn, and I think you are just great." If the stress would not lessen after a few tries, I would let it "sink in" and come back later. I have, so far, never had to do that. I find it important to have her become alert to me (her leader) because she respects me and finds I'm good company. After we arrive at a comfortable decision for her, which may take time and patience, I would try the "head on" approach but not before. Many times with this method, I have had dogs go up to the problem and turn to me with a pleased look (not frightened or submissive) and follow me as though saying, "Hey, look what I've done – how about a little praise." And they sure get it! The "head on" is much the same. I use the same general approach, the same "accidental" correction, the same "I'm sorry you weren't ready when I made that sudden turn", the same confidence first, then switch to praise.

Of course there are exceptions and I would like to dwell more on the trainer's perception towards the dog, but that is a study in itself. I find most of us who work with dog behavior need to develop more ability in this direction. I believe it is the most important thing in being able to communicate with or work with dogs.

SUBMISSIVE URINATION

W. H. Morrison

One of the objectives of a puppy class should be helping owners recognize problems associated with owning a puppy and how to correct or prevent them. If these problems are not handled correctly, they can have long term consequences.

Submissive urination is a problem most puppy owners encounter and it also appears in some older dogs. What usually happens is that when the owner arrives home the puppy runs up to greet, the owner bends over to pet his pup, the pup in turn squats and urinates sometimes actually rolling over on his back.

To correct this problem, explain the pack nature of the dog and the importance of the dominance hierarchy. Point out that while they may not like seeing their dog "cower", this is the dog's way of showing respect and acknowledging the owner as being dominant. Submissive urination is the ultimate display of respect and should not bring punishment.

All physical punishment must be eliminated especially if the owner has punished the dog for this specific behavior. This will only make the situation worse. Do not hover over the puppy. This puts the puppy in a subordinate position and may cause more urination. If the owner must get down to the dog's level, he should kneel down keeping the back straight.

In situations where submissive urination is likely to occur, the dog should be ignored. For example, when arriving home the dog should be ignored for about 5 to 10 minutes after which controlled play is in order.

Finally, the dog should be taught to sit using the traditional tuck under or an inducive, non-physical approach if the dog urinates when handled. Once the dog responds, this command should be used followed by gentle praise in situations where submissive urination is likely to occur. What we are trying to do is build the dog's self confidence and in doing so, help upgrade his position in the pack.

IX. INTERVIEWS

BARBARA WOODHOUSE

W. Volhard, 1972

While visiting my home in England last year (1971) on a quest for a Landseer Newfoundland, an almost extinct breed, I took the opportunity of telephoning Barbara Woodhouse whose book, *Dog Training My Way*, I had read and whom I hoped to be able to meet in person. As it turned out, she was just starting another course that weekend and she invited me out to observe. Before describing her setup and methods, I should note that it seems that Mrs. Woodhouse is England's foremost obedience authority – she has authored several books, made a record on dog training, trains dogs for television, and operates the largest training school in England (apparently the concept of the training club does not exist).

Administratively her basic course is set up more like what we consider a weekend clinic – it consists of four three-hour sessions compressed into two days, Saturday and Sunday – rather than an 8 to 12 session course spread out over an equal number of weeks. During this time, the customary exercises – stand, down, stay, heeling, and come – are taught. The cost of the course is about $50, rather expensive by our standards (in the Washington Metropolitan area the fee for a basic course ranges from $8.00 to $25.00). Handlers are enrolled on the basis of a personal interview with Mrs. Woodhouse at which time she also works with the dog for about 15 minutes. In addition, handlers are instructed to familiarize themselves as much as possible with the material they are going to learn by means of her record prior to attending the course. In the particular course I observed, 10 handlers participated.

On the whole, the methods used were not too terribly different from what one would expect to find here – Mrs. Woodhouse stressed the importance of praise, the fun aspect of training, the importance of timing, reinforcement, use of voice, etc. There were some things, however, that I had not seen before. One was her technique of teaching the come. In a lightly wooded area, the handlers were instructed to spread out and all the dogs were permitted to roam free and play. Then the owners were told to hide from the dogs and one by one were instructed to call their respective dogs. Should one of the dogs go to a handler who was not its owner, that person was instructed to swat the dog with the leash, the theory being that this unpleasant encounter with a stranger would cause the dog to go immediately to its owner. Since I had some questions concerning the wisdom and effectiveness of this technique, I discussed it with Mrs. Woodhouse. I told her first of all that I would not be too keen on the idea of untrained dogs running loose and mingling. What if two of them got into a fight? Second, that I had always been taught never to hit a dog with a leash for obvious reasons. Third, that I felt that this approach was not conducive to teaching the dog the stand for examination, an integral part of every basic course. Being swatted by a stranger would tend to make a dog rather suspicious the next time he was approached. Fourth, and last, that for reasons of personal safety I would be reluctant to participate in such an exercise. I am much too much of a chicken to take a swat at a strange dog who is loose and who just may decide to repay me in kind. Mrs.

Woodhouse assured me, however, that in her years of teaching there has never been an unpleasant incident and that as far as she was concerned, this method worked well.

We then talked about some other aspects of the program which I felt were being handled somewhat mechanically, such as the use of the collar and the correction. Most of the collars I thought were improperly fitted and were much too big. I had always considered a properly fitted collar to be an important element of dog training. In regard to the correction, I was astounded to see the uniformity of its application – all dogs were worked on the live ring and a very severe correction was the answer to whatever behavioral deviation beset the dog. No distinction was made between the shy, the bouncy, the aggressive or the essentially willing dog. What we take for granted in this country, i.e., that the instructor knows that no two dogs are alike, that a shy dog must be treated differently than the aggressive dog, that some dogs train easier on the dead ring than the live ring, etc., etc., etc., seemed unheard of over there, or at least it was not applied. Perhaps this sort of an approach is necessary when compressing a basic course into two days and progress must be instantaneous; there is no way to say to the handler "practice this during the week and see how far you get." At any rate, Mrs. Woodhouse did not think these points were too important. The main thing for her was that the dog did what he was told without too much thought being given to the dog's point of view.

As for her results, this is difficult to evaluate. Too many of the dogs came out of the course frightened out of their wits, as did quite a few of the handlers. Also, eight of the ten dogs attempted to bite her at some point during the course which I attributed to needlessly heavy-handed handling. No doubt the handlers had learned something about how to control a dog and perhaps the techniques they had learned, tempered by an owner's love for his dog, would enable them to work with their dogs in a meaningful and constructive way. It seemed like a hard way of doing it, though.

INTERVIEW WITH LLOYD AGUERO
PART I

J. J. Volhard, 1972

A few Saturdays ago Lloyd Aguero and I were mulling over ideas for this column at a mutual friend's house over some schnapps and beer when someone suggested "why don't you try a NADOI member profile? You can use the interview technique and bring out attitudes toward training and other interesting facets." "Great idea," I said. "Lloyd can be the interviewee and I will be the interviewer."

Lloyd Aguero has been in obedience almost 20 years, 14 of which as an instructor, and has been a member of the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors for four years. He has owned and trained two breeds, German Shepherds and Golden Retrievers. This is how it went:

Q. Lloyd, what do you consider to be the most important quality of a good obedience instructor?

A. Well, Jack, I think at the outset we must recognize that instructing involves far more than a knowledge of training, dogs. Sometimes I feel that my knowledge about obedience training is secondary to what I have to know as an instructor. Perhaps the single most important quality necessary to be a good instructor is understanding people, almost like a sociologist or a psychiatrist. You must be able to analyze a person's problem as it relates to his pet and be able to cope with it. For example, we know that owners transmit their fears and anxieties to their pets. The dog can sense these and the leash transmits them like a telephone cord. I remember the case of an owner with a German Shepherd who had to interrupt the training course in order to undergo surgery. When he came back, the dog's behavior deteriorated steadily to the point of being uncontrollable and super-aggressive toward other dogs. In talking to the owner I learned he almost did not recover from this surgery, that he had to have another operation and that he was in a state of mental turmoil about his condition because he did not know whether he was going to make it or not. In addition, the operation had physically weakened him to such an extent that he was unable to control his dog. It became a vicious circle – as his confidence lessened the more rambunctious the dog became. It was quite obvious that his anxiety was the cause of the dog's unruly behavior and that before he could control his dog I had to change the owner's frame of mind as it related to his dog. After I had explained all this to the owner, his attitude toward his dog changed and so did the control problem. Obviously, I could not allay his fears concerning his pending surgery. I could, however, explain to him the cause of his difficulties with his dog and once he knew that he was able to deal with it.

This is just one example of recognizing the fact that the so-called problem dog may not be a problem dog after all because the "problem" may be caused by something entirely other than the dog himself. Another example is the owner who subconsciously tightens up on the leash whenever another dog or person is approaching which can have the effect of making the dog aggressive and possibly a biter. The good instructor can recognize and evaluate the owner's personal weakness and will try to counter it in a positive manner. The first step, however, is to explain to the owner that it is his acts or thoughts which are responsible for the dog's problem. For these reasons, I feel that the good instructor is probably more psychiatrist than anything else.

Q. What are your views about different training methods?

A. We read a great deal about different methods and their effectiveness - - why they should be used or why they should not be used. This is a question about which I feel rather strongly because I believe that much of today's training is far too harsh and far too physical. Many of these methods are holdovers from 10 and 20 years ago coupled with a lack of desire on the instructor's part to spend his own time and money to educate himself for the purpose of improving his methods. Let me make this analogy:

If you were pregnant, would you go to an obstetrician who has not updated the methods he used 20 years ago or would you go to the one who has constantly improved himself by keeping up on the latest methods? The answer is obvious. The reason many people do not attend for example an instructor's school for a full week is because they have been around obedience for 20 years or more and believe there is nothing new to

learn. Personally, I feel that we never cease to learn better ways of teaching the public how to understand and control their pets.

To get back to your specific question, I prefer the training method that causes the dog to react in the manner desired by the least physical means and that appeals to the natural capabilities of the dog to respond to the owner' s requirements.

Q. Lloyd, you mentioned training methods that you consider too harsh and too physical. Can you be more specific?

A. I think I can. When I started in obedience with my first dog, I was taught that to train the dog to heel you make a military about turn at the same time letting the dog go to the end of the 6-foot lead and then jerk as hard as you can. I consider that method too harsh and too physical. Fortunately, by the time I started training my second dog I knew better. The curious thing is, and many people don't recognize this, that in most cases physical methods are not only not necessary but are also *not as effective* as less physical methods. My first dog was afraid of heeling and he looked it. My second dog, who had been taught to heel the proper way, loved the exercise and consequently did much better on it. The other curious thing is that many people don't realize that their training methods are too physical perhaps because they just don't know that it is possible to teach a dog by means of less forceful methods. Instructors tend to place too great a reliance on the correction without having given the dog the chance to learn *without* the use of the correction. This is what I mean by using the least physical means necessary to get the desired response.

INTERVIEW WITH LLOYD AGUERO
PART II

J. J. Volhard, 1972

Q. Lloyd, would you have any thoughts on how much force to use in training a dog?

A. This is a question which invariably comes up and to which you will not get an answer satisfactory to everyone. I feel that there is no general answer or blueprint which everybody can follow. It really depends on your attitude towards dogs and people and whether you actually like dogs or people or are in obedience in order to dominate and dictate. There is, however, a rule of thumb that I follow which is that the amount of force you use should be related to the dog you are dealing with. Let me give you a specific example. I was kneeling next to a German Shepherd getting ready to teach the dog the sit exercise when the dog lunged straight at my face ready to tear me apart. I hit him right between the eyes with my fist, knocking him out. When the dog came to I was still kneeling at its side calming it down and assuring it that I was really trying to be his friend. The dog shook himself, licked me on the cheek and the incident was forgotten. As I discovered afterwards, it was not the dog's fault at all for the owner had neglected to tell me that the dog had apparently previously been mistreated and had a violent dislike of

men, but in that instance I could not do anything else. By the same token, you would not use the same treatment on a small Sheltie that is trying to bite you. Whatever force you are using, you should ask yourself, is it absolutely necessary to get the desired response and this will always depend on the specific circumstances involved.

Q. What about this business of hitting a dog? Do you have any thoughts on that?

A. I don't want to answer a question with another question, but by "hitting a dog" do you mean with an object or with your hand or fist? I personally have never hit a dog with an object under any circumstances. When I felt a particular dog needed a severe reprimand I have relied upon the use of my hand, should that become necessary. I am trained in Judo, very agile and very quick. I realize, of course, that not everyone is endowed with these attributes. In a case where I felt that the owner could not control the dog in any other manner, I probably would not hesitate to recommend a dowel or similar object as an aid to the owner. I have never had to resort to this even though I seem to be getting most of the problem dogs in this area.

Q. Can you single out what you consider to be the biggest problem in dog training?

A. Rather than talk about a specific problem here, let me describe the type of dog which I consider the biggest problem and that is the sharp-shy dog. With the truly aggressive dog, you can't really make a mistake – you must meet force with force until the dog respects your ability and trusts your good judgment to control it. After that, you can treat him like a piece of wet Kleenex without any force whatsoever. But with the sharp-shy dog, you must convince the dog that the world at large is a nice place to live in, and you must do it without any kind of force whatsoever. You must use methods that cause the dog to want to come out of its shell, under its own volition, and without giving the appearance that you have compelled him to do so. It has to come from within the dog. You are trying to instill confidence in the dog which obviously cannot be done by force.

Q. Have you ever had a problem that you were unable to solve?

A. Here again we are dealing with a question of definition. – what do you consider an unsolvable problem? I recall three instances in which I recommended that the dog be put down and all three of them were fear biters. An autopsy on one disclosed a brain tumor. The other two were not autopsied. I don't think these dogs could have been helped, so in that sense I considered them unsolvable problems.

Q. What do you do when you feel you have a problem that you cannot solve with your experience to date?

A. One example and a rather recent one comes to mind. I train on an asphalt parking lot and I had a number of Great Danes in the class who seemed to have an inordinate amount of difficulty with the down exercise. As a matter of fact, they refused any and all efforts to get them into the down position. Fortunately, the next day there was a local dog show and I mentioned this to some Great Dane breeders and was informed that most Great Danes will not readily accept the down position on a rough surface because of the tremendous weight of the dog on their elbows with the protection of only a

very short coat. During the next class I told the owners with the Great Danes to use the grass strip adjacent to the parking lot to teach the dog the down and have had no problem since. If I have a problem that I feel I cannot solve, I get help. I also try to learn as much as possible about breed characteristics and trainability. I watch conformation handling at dog shows and talk to breed people about their breed to help me in being able to solve a training problem with which I may be confronted.

Q. In your opinion, do you feel that training classes overly emphasize title work as opposed to solving a pet's problem?

A. That happens to be another area about which I feel very strongly. I think that the primary function of the instructor is to solve the owner's problem, that is, cure whatever made him come to our class in the first place. I realize that it is easier to concentrate on those owners that are catching on quickly and look like they have the aptitude and desire to show their dogs. But this can come later. I feel that in many courses there is too much emphasis on title work at the expense of solving problems. In the Basic Course, I de-emphasize title work and concentrate on the everyday problems of the pet living with his family. That is not to say that I do not teach title work, nor do I discourage it; but the public, at least initially, does not come to me for that end purpose.

Q. Lloyd, we are going to have to wrap this up; any final comment?

A. Jack, let me conclude on this note – as an instructor you must recognize that no two dogs are alike. In teaching the owner how to train his pet you should work from the bottom up. By that I mean, try an approach that initially relies exclusively on *showing* the dog what you want him to do. Use patience and a great deal of good will and try to look at the training from the dog's point of view. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that a dog should be taught by means of a severe correction. To be sure, the severe correction has its place – when needed. But, "when needed" implies that you have honestly tried to get the desired response by means of gentle persuasion first. Give the dog a break, lest you are breaking his spirit.

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN GRIEVE, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DOG OBEDIENCE INSTRUCTORS

J. J. Volhard, 1973

Q. John, I appreciate the opportunity for this interview and I hope we can clarify some of the questions that I have received about NADOI. There still seems to be the belief that NADOI dictates training methods and advocates one particular method of training.

A. Nothing could be further from the truth. An instructor, in order to be effective, must be comfortable with and must have confidence in whatever method he is using. In fact, nobody can, or should dictate to him what method he can or cannot use. The only

thing the Association insists on is that whatever method is being used is in the best interest of the dog, the handler and the sport.

Q. There also seems to exist a great deal of confusion which is indicated by the type of inquiries I get as to the requirements for NADOI membership and more specifically what NADOI is looking for in a potential member.

A. I think I can shed some light on that. There is, of course, the minimum required experience of 104 weeks of instructing and the applicant must be able to demonstrate to three examiners and the membership chairman that he has the requisite knowledge to instruct at those levels for which he is applying, that is, KPT, Novice, Open, Utility or Tracking. Aside from this purely technical aspect, however, and perhaps of equal if not greater importance, is the applicant's attitude and approach to training. Here let me make reference to an article authored by the late Richard D'ambrisi when he was Obedience Director of the American Kennel Club and which appeared in the October 1972 issue of the *AKC Gazette*. In discussing the purpose of obedience activity he observed: "It cannot be stated too often or too strongly that physical abuse of any dog at any time should not be tolerated by any fancier... Harsh, cruel and violent training methods are unnecessary… proclaimed dog lovers, in their pursuit of instant success, embrace and practice training techniques that at best can only be described as violent. In reality such training methods can be the cause of dog abuse in the name of training." He also reminds those of us active in the sport of our responsibilities to keep our ideals high and not to engage in conduct detrimental to the best interest of the sport.

We share this philosophy and we look for it in those applying for membership. We also look for a willingness on the part of the instructor to improve his training methods and be receptive to new ideas which make it easier on the part of the dog to learn what his owner is trying to teach him. We look for a willingness to continue learning and a willingness to approach different ideas with an open mind. To us this is very important because we feel that, as in any human endeavor, there is always room for improvement and there is always room for new ideas. Nobody knows it all, but the first step toward greater knowledge is a willingness to learn. Finally, we look for an understanding attitude with the ability to teach. It matters little if the applicant is not the world's greatest handler and does not have a high scoring dog. We do not judge them by the scores they get with their own dogs but by their ability to teach. I am sure that you know as many people as I do who may or may not compete actively and who do not have very high scoring dogs, but who are excellent teachers and vice-versa, those who have high scoring dogs but for some reason are unable to pass their knowledge on to others.

Q. A number of people have remarked to me that everything about NADOI is so terribly secretive as though the Association were afraid to come out into the open.

A. If this was the case, it was because NADOI is a relatively young organization and for some people it was difficult, no matter how hard they believed in what it stands for, to stand up and be counted. I do think, however, that we have reached a turning point. We are making a conscious effort to publicize the Association, to publicize the membership requirements.

Q. John, there is a great deal of talk that NADOI is opposed to any form of correcting a dog and hence uses a rather wishy-washy, if not to say ineffective approach to training.

A. This, or course, shows a basic misunderstanding of the goals of the Association. Among the things that NADOI stands for is that you should give the dog a chance to do whatever you want it to do before you correct it, that is, look at it from the dog's point of view. I think and so does the Association that in obedience training today too great a reliance is placed upon the correction and instructors are too quick to view it as a cure-all in training a dog. We do believe that the correction has its place and should be used when needed. The key is when needed. Let me elaborate on this point. If you are faced with a dog that is aggressive toward people or other dogs, obviously you would not hesitate to use a correction, and a severe one at that, if you have to in order to train the dog to behave in a manner acceptable to you. By the same token, if you were faced with a dog that is essentially willing to do whatever you want it to, why use the correction?

Q. In the area of membership applications, there is one aspect which has troubled a number of people and that is that those who are denied membership are not informed of the reason for this decision. Would it be possible for you to comment on that?

A. It is true that in the past, applicants who were not deemed to have met the requirements for membership were not informed of the reason or reasons why they were not accepted. Personally, I consider this a serious shortcoming particularly in view of our Code of Ethics in which we pledge ourselves to help train new instructors; and yet I must admit, there are good reasons for this policy. We are, however, presently working on this in an effort to remedy the situation. I am hopeful that we can make a change along these lines. If an applicant shares our philosophy of instructing and training but does not meet the technical requirements of experience or expertise, then I think he should be informed of how he can overcome this deficiency in order to meet the membership requirements. In a situation like this, I would like to see us make concrete suggestions to the applicant of what he has to do to meet the membership requirements and have other NADOI members help him do so. Only in this way do I think can we live up to our Code of Ethics.

There is one final comment that I would like to make. As I said before, NADQI is a very young organization, but it is growing and it has tremendous potential. My greatest wish is that we can live up to this potential and that we will be able to justify the faith that many instructors have put into NADOI and that we can continue to live up to their expectations. Our goal is the continued improvement of dog obedience training and instructing. This goal, of course, we will not fully reach so long as there are people and dogs because by the very nature of things, we can always improve. Hopefully, we will always have the willingness to do so.

TOM KNOTT, TRAINER EXTRAORDINAIRE

J.J. & W. Volhard, 1974

Central New Yorkers were recently treated to a real experience: a weekend with Tom Knott, one of the country's outstanding dog personalities. The setting was a seminar sponsored by *Off-Lead* magazine, in conjunction with the Syracuse Obedience Training Club and the Canine Board of Education. While the Seminar provided the 150 plus attending with an opportunity to exchange ideas and talk about the various aspects of training, there was little doubt that everyone was there to meet Tom. Dogs to Tom are a vocation and an avocation and his credentials are impeccable: he is the President of the Association of Obedience Clubs and Judges, an obedience Judge, a member of the AKC Advisory Committee, a charter member of the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors, Training Director of Dog Owners' Training Club of Maryland, and Training Director of the Baltimore Police Department K-9 Corps. In his capacity as a trainer and instructor Tom has traveled all over the world to share his expertise and assist others with their training and is a regular instructor at the FBI Academy. Whether talking to Tom or watching him handle a dog, perhaps the most striking, if not the most important characteristic is his genuine fondness of dogs and his boundless enthusiasm for our sport. The following questions represent a composite of those asked during the seminar and concern the topics which generated the greatest amount of interest.

Q. In instructing, I find one of the most difficult jobs is motivating the handler. Is there anything in particular that you can tell us that might help?

A. There is no doubt that handler motivation is a difficult problem and often more difficult than training the dog. Aside from common sense, courtesy and civility which, of course are prerequisites, there are a number of important "don'ts". For example, don't over-demonstrate on a handler's dog. Instructors tend to get very impatient with handlers who just can't seem to get their dogs to do a particular exercise and are just itching to get their hands on the dog to show the handler that it can be done. Of course it can be done, but don't do it. First of all, you may embarrass the handler and turn him right off. Also, you are there to instruct the handler how to train his dog and not to train his dog. Besides, what good is it if the dog does it for the instructor, but not the handler? The handler has to learn to train his dog. For this reason, every one of my instructors is told to handle as little as possible and only after they have exhausted all avenues that would have enabled the handler to do it himself. Another factor affecting handler motivation is the use of a graduation or test at the end of the course to determine which dogs pass and which fail. We do not use that system because we feel it discourages handlers. I also feel that it is unrealistic to make the pass-fail decision on the basis of a two minute test. After all, these are rank *novices*. We grade our teams every session and evaluate their progress on a weekly basis. The progress they have made by the end of the course determines whether they pass or fail. Some instructors also overemphasize the showing aspect. Your beginning handler is not interested in that; all he wants is some control and he could care less about all this talk of how he should do it or he will lose points. Anyway, the good ones, the ones you think should continue, most frequently don't because it is no challenge. The ones having the hardest time are more likely to continue. You must also

remember that many handlers start to have a very negative outlook which you must change into a positive outlook before you can motivate them. Also important in handler motivation is not to nag the handler. We constantly remind the handlers not to nag their dogs. By the same token, the instructor should not nag the handler. Finally, keep in mind that a tired handler is a happy handler – work them hard so that they are tired at the end of the class and have a feeling of accomplishment.

Q. Can you give us some of your ideas on how to motivate the dog?

A. A good deal of that will depend on the particular dog. A lap dog who has been carried around day in and day out in the arms of his mistress is going to be difficult to convince that heeling is fun. Being worked represents punishment and praise means little to him since he is coddled all the time to begin with. Any overindulged pet, the one who is constantly fondled and cuddled, will be somewhat more difficult to motivate, particularly when you are relying on praise. Generally, however, heeling will present the greatest problem in motivating a dog and keeping him motivated because we don't make it exciting enough to him. In our club we have a special heeling class in which handlers are working at all levels, and those beginners who are ready for it, do about 15 minutes of fast heeling and heeling exercises designed to keep the dog interested. The instructor's imagination will determine the success of this class. When looking for answers to the question of motivation and training in general you should also keep in mind that so far we have just touched the surface in our efforts to understand animals.

Q. In instructing, what do you find most difficult to get across to the handlers?

A. How to read and understand their dogs. If a handler can read his dog, he can anticipate what his dog will do and act accordingly. If he can understand his dog, this job of training him will be that much easier. This is what we try to teach.

Q. What equipment do you recommend to your handler?

A. The only equipment our handlers are permitted to use is a nylon collar and a web lead. In both instances I prefer very light equipment for a number of reasons. First of all you are training a dog and not training some wild animal. It also is less distractive to the dog than some heavier equipment might be. For collars we use the nylon snap-around because we can get a better fit which I consider very important. For leads we use the webbed nylon; it is light, easy to handle and is not as readily used as a weapon. Many handlers are tempted to use the lead as a weapon and hit the dog with it. We want to take that weapon away from them, because we don't believe that hitting a dog with the lead has any place in training. The heavier leads also create lead dependence on the part of the dog, making it more difficult to get the dog off lead. There is one additional piece of equipment which our instructors carry and that is an instructor's lead, also called a kennel lead. It is a nylon lead sewn on to one end of a nylon collar. In case we run into a dog which is difficult to control, the instructor can flip this lead over the dog's head, sort of like a lasso, and assist in getting the dog under control. It also comes in handy should an instructor get into difficulty with a dog; another instructor can slip the instructor's lead on the dog to help out. The dog, who is now in the middle, can be prevented from lunging at,

or attacking either instructor. This, incidentally, is one reason why I don't like to see only one instructor on the floor with a class. You should always have an experienced person backing you up in case you get into a situation where you need help.

Q. In addition to the instructor's lead, what other techniques do you use when you feel you have to handle a difficult dog?

A. The answer to this question would depend on how difficult the dog seems to be and whether his difficulty stems from fear or aggression. One technique we have used very successfully is the transfer. The handler, with his dog on the left side and the instructor on his right side will go for a walk. Handler and instructor talk to each other in a normal tone of voice. As the dog gets used to this situation, the instructor takes hold of the lead and, after a few more steps, the handler drops back and the instructor handles the dog. This technique works particularly well with dogs who are afraid of strangers. While we are on this subject, there is one additional point that I want to make. As an instructor, I feel it is important to talk to the student – pick his brain. This is not always easy and sometimes a student may try to set you up. But if you can get the student talking and if you can get the full picture, you may find the key to his problem. Many times the student will tell you what's wrong, if you are willing to take the time to listen. Before you take any dog, talk to the handler and listen to what he has to say.

There is one final comment: at Dog Owner's we do community level training but we take anyone who comes to us for help because we feel that is our job. By the same token, I am very sensitive to the possibility of one of my instructors getting bitten. We are a volunteer organization and my instructors don't get paid to be bitten. It is for this reason that I feel so strongly about a sensible approach which will avoid accidents.

EILEEN MCSHANE: THE DOG WARDEN, MADISON COUNTY, NEW YORK

J.J. Volhard, 1975

For the past 15 years, Eileen McShane has been a dog warden as well as teaching obedience classes, a combination not seen very often. She runs the county shelter, is active in civic and community activities, is frequently consulted by state and local legislators and is presently forming a local humane association. The following interview brings out some of her experiences and how the dog scene looks from her vantage point.

Q. Other than being a sport and control-teaching device, can obedience training be utilized to a greater extent than it has been up to now, particularly in dealing with the loose dog problem?

A. Very definitely. I have long maintained that we should deal with the dog ordinance violator in the same way in which we deal with the traffic law violator who is sent to Traffic School – send the dog ordinance violator to Obedience School. More and more communities are passing leash laws, and those communities which are turning from

rural to urban are beginning to enforce these laws more strictly. A part of this enforcement effort could be to require an offender to attend an obedience school – not only would he learn how to control his dog, but he would also get some idea of the responsibilities involved in owning a dog. Not too long ago I was successful in saving two dogs from certain destruction by having the owners "committed" to an obedience school. One instance involved two GSD's, a five year old male and a two year old female, owned by a young woman in her early 20's who was 8½ months pregnant when a dangerous dog complaint was lodged against her. During the hearing it became evident from the testimony that the female was the more aggressive dog and partly responsible for the male's behavior – you might say, she was leading him astray. The woman became quite upset when she realized that both of these dogs might be destroyed. At this point I suggested to the judge that perhaps a temporary separation of the dogs, as well as an evaluation of the female might help. The judge agreed and I took the female to the shelter to evaluate her and keep her confined. I concluded that when confined and in familiar surroundings, the dog was not aggressive. I also felt, however, that the woman would have to learn to control these dogs and enroll in an obedience class. Fortunately the judge again agreed. Both dogs were saved and have been no problem since.

Another case I investigated involved two dogs which had attacked and mutilated a 70 year old man. By court order, both dogs were confined to the shelter for evaluation. My recommendation to the judge was that one dog be returned to the young man who owned these dogs, provided he enrolled in an obedience course. Again the judge agreed. The young man, however, apparently felt strongly resentful of having to go to obedience school; while he did enroll in a class, he missed three-fourths of the lessons and was not permitted to graduate. As a result, the judge ordered him to re-enroll or have the dog destroyed. I subsequently learned from his instructor that he finally began to take the matter seriously, did attend all the classes and finished close to the top of his class. Parenthetically, his instructor told me that this was one of the most rewarding experiences in her career and she too felt that more use should be made of obedience classes in enforcing dog ordinances.

Q. What do you feel is the greatest challenge facing instructors in the coming years?

A. To clean their own house. In response to unqualified, and frequently downright cruel methods there has arisen a clamor to license obedience instructors. So far it has primarily been aimed at protection dog trainers. As a matter of fact, a bill has been introduced before the New York State Legislature to license protection dog trainers. Proposals along these lines, however, have not stopped there, but have included obedience instructors. NADOI, in establishing criteria for qualified instructors, has made an excellent beginning and these criteria are being considered, either as a starting point or simply for adoption. Some form of legislation will be necessary and it is only a question of time. Trainers themselves want it and I have recently seen a number of articles advocating the licensing of instructors. With an organization like NADOI, I feel we have a nucleus and a blueprint to work with. The enormous growth in dog activities has brought with it the undesirable element. This element is of concern to the person seriously interested in dogs and unless we can cope with it, regulations will be imposed

on us. The only thing we can hope for is that whatever form these regulations will take, they will have been devised in good will and with the advice of those knowledgeable as well as sincere.

Q. Eileen, you have obviously been in the game for quite some time, both the pleasant as well as the not so pleasant end of it. What do you believe is the largest problem facing the fancy today?

A. I will answer that without hesitation – the number of dogs we have in this country today and how to control them. The fancy is very decidedly affected by this in that there is a direct relationship between the growing ranks of unwanted dogs and legislative efforts aimed at limiting and restricting dog ownership. More and more of these efforts are successful and each new law that is enacted makes it just a little more difficult to own a dog, or more than one dog. All this works to the detriment of the serious dog person who feels himself unjustly persecuted. On the other hand, what has he done by way of *not* breeding, educating others in the responsibilities of dog ownership, and generally trying to get this problem licked? It is not enough for the fancy to proclaim its innocence and place the entire burden on the so-called irresponsible dog owner. The "fancy", consisting of "responsible" dog owners, does a good deal of unnecessary breeding which does not improve a particular breed and which is the only reason, I am always told, why one should breed in the first place.

To my way of thinking, the fancy is confronted with a tremendous challenge and that is to reduce if not eliminate the steady growth of unwanted dogs. And believe me, this is a job for the fancy, because only there will you find those who care enough about dogs to want to insure the dog's continued existence in the manner in which we know it today.