

chronicle

The APDT Chronicle of the Dog

Winter 2021

The Association of Professional Dog Trainers

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After another year of the pandemic and a virtual conference, plans are in motion to meet in-person at Daytona Beach, Florida, Oct. 19-21

Last year at this time we were reflecting on the changes brought about globally due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It forced APDT to go to a virtual conference for the first time, and we had fully hoped to be in Riverside, California, for our 28th annual Educational Conference and Trade Show. But early in 2021, it became evident the pandemic wasn't over yet, so APDT joined forces with our sister organization to the north, the Canadian Association of Professional Dog Trainers and the APDT/CAPDT virtual conference went off smoothly Sept. 29-30.

Setting our sights for 2022, we are again planning our 29th annual Educational Conference and Trade Show Oct. 19-21 to be in-person at Daytona Beach, Florida. More information about keynote speakers, sessions and workshop will be revealed for the SPRING 2022 issue.

So, what's first up for 2022? It's APDT's National Train Your Dog Month. For more on that important social media event, check out page 16. Use your social media to promote the need to train dogs using responsible trainers who use LIMA as their foundation for training methods. Reach out to your local media to offer your insight on the importance of getting that Christmas or pandemic puppy trained to keep it from spending Valentine's Day at a shelter due to unwanted puppy behaviors.

But back to this final *Chronicle of the Dog* for 2021: Association News begins on page 10, with an introduction to the APDT Board's new chair, Fanna Easter, and a farewell to the 2020 chair Khara Schuetzner, who transitions off the board after being appointed to the board for 2016 and then appointed as an officer in 2017. We also welcome one new board member, Heather Mishefske, elected to a 3-year term in September. Also, be sure to check out the APDT Foundation News that gives important dates and details about proposals for posters and grants.

For our regular columnists, Veronica Boutelle's Business End of the Leash addresses how the pandemic brought out the best in trainers who set aside competition to help other trainers survive the worst of the pandemic; Dr. Melissa Bain writes in her Veterinarian Perspective that sometimes research will prove a hypothesis wrong, but that doesn't dismiss the data gleaned from that research; Animal Behavior College President Steve Appelbaum explains in his column the new classes being offered due to the pandemic, and

what discounts are available to APDT members; David Pearsall, of Business Insurers of the Carolinas, offers insight as to why some dog training businesses might need to add the optional dishonesty bond to a liability insurance policy, and Jamie McKay's Ask A Trainer column has trainers providing their tips on how to encourage less diligent pet owners to work with their pets at home so they don't slow down others in a class. Thanks again to Jennifer Berg from CAPDT, who asked several trainers to provide their top training books. So if you want to know what those go-to books are for veteran trainers like Pat Miller, Grisha Stewart and Lisa Waggoner, please check out Editor's Review that begins on page 51.

Our features begin on page 34 with Irith Bloom and Kristina Spaulding, Ph.D., taking a deep dive into a study about the probable causes of aggression in dogs and what factors might predict aggressive behavior. Then on page 40, author Skye Anderson, a long-time dog trainer, recounts recent experiences of canine empathy from two different dogs not trained for such work. And that experience, she says, has made her a better trainer.

A recent APDT survey revealed more than 50 percent of those 813 APDT members who responded were not certified in pet CPR and first aid. Beth Bowers, a certified professional dog trainer and certified master pet CPR and first aid instructor, offers reasons why trainers and their staff should get that certification and have it renewed annually. She retells a particularly painful experience when her beloved 12-year-old CPR demonstration dog Burt, collapsed during a potty break, forcing her to administer CPR for 30 minutes while a vet team tried to revive him. That story begins on page 42.

As we head into the holiday season, we hope you can take a moment to savor these features, columns, and articles. Be safe as you travel to visit family and friends, and all of us here at APDT headquarters look forward to seeing everyone in person at our 29th annual conference Oct. 19-21 at Daytona Beach, Florida!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Devon Hubbard Sorlie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Devon Hubbard Sorlie,
Editor

chronicle

The APDT *Chronicle of the Dog*



2020 Dog Writers Association of America "Best Annual, Special Interest, or Other Topic" Magazine
2019, 2018 Dog Writers Association of America "Best Annual, Special Interest, or Other Topic" Magazine
2017 Best Club Publication, Maxwell Medallion Winner as awarded by the Dog Writers Association of America

The APDT *Chronicle of the Dog* is published by the Association of Professional Dog Trainers
2365 Harrodsburg Road, Suite A325, Lexington, KY 40504
1-800-PET-DOGS | www.APDT.com

EDITORIAL

Executive Editor
Devon Hubbard Sorlie
editor@apdt.com

Managing Editor
Mandy Roberts
mandy.roberts@apdt.com

Senior Designer/Production
Chris Guzicki
chris.guzicki@theaiedge.com

Advertising
Nita Briscoe
nita.briscoe@apdt.com

FOUNDER

Ian Dunbar, Ph.D, BVetMed, MRCVS

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Exhibitor Relations Manager/Sales
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Nita Briscoe

Events Manager
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Member Services Coordinator
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The APDT *Chronicle of the Dog* is a quarterly educational publication for the APDT's members. Articles that support the APDT's mission of enhancing the human-dog relationship and advocating dog-friendly training are encouraged. Letters or articles that do not support the Mission Statement and/or Code of Ethics of the APDT may not be printed at the discretion of the editor. The opinions expressed by contributing authors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Association of Professional Dog Trainers.

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FOR AGGRESSION

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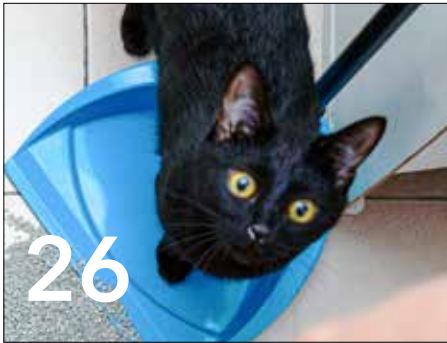
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Despite a challenging year, APDT continued to take on important initiatives, work with alliances on licensing



This year has been a busy and challenging year for many in the pet industry, it has been no exception for APDT. Early this year the board decided to cancel our in-person conference that was slated to take place in Riverside, California. With that decision the board and staff kicked into full gear preparing for the Virtual Conference which was a huge success this past September.

The board took on some important initiatives this year with creating the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, Implementing the LIMA Assertion at the time of renewal of membership and the Alliance between APDT, CAPDT and CCPDT. We implemented an Ethics Committee to review trainers conduct and to create standards for our social media platforms. The board recently revisited and is in the process of revising our Strategic Plan and Book of Knowledge for 2022.

The year has brought challenges for many of us through the pandemic with staffing, increased business, overcrowding in our rescues and shelters and health concerns. Several news and publication outlets reached out to our marketing staff to discuss the increase that trainers were seeing from the pandemic as well as the challenges that trainers, shelters and rescues have experienced over the past year.

As we worked through the year, I am hopeful that members saw an increase in business and were able to maintain a work-home balance. I know I personally struggled to maintain it myself and found that networking with fellow trainers in our region was helpful. During the year several of our members posted on the social media platforms new challenges and behaviors they have not experienced in the past and I am happy to say that our members came forward and provided ideas and suggestions to fellow trainers.

As my term ends as the Chair, I encourage our membership to become involved in a committee by volunteering and to be the voice to the Board of Directors on behalf of our members. Our volunteers are critical to the success of the organization. Our volunteers bring ideas to the committees and assist the board with an understanding of what our membership needs and the direction the organization takes on initiatives. During the past year we have sent out to our members surveys on topics including LIMA, Licensing, Diversity and Inclusion. The surveys allow our members to share their voice and provide the board with direction. In 2022, please complete the surveys and share your voice and concerns on the direction that your organization is taking.

I look forward to seeing you in Daytona Beach, Florida, for our live conference in 2022. Stay safe and may 2022 bring you growth and new opportunities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Forrest Patrick'.

Mark Forrest Patrick, CDT, VA, CMT
Chair



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Rapidly changing environment for dog trainers increases the need for volunteers



During 2021, we had more than 50 members of the Association who volunteered to work on the APDT committees, task forces and teams. These members helped the Board and staff meet the goals of the 2021

strategic plan and helped to elevate the profession. With such a rapidly changing environment in and outside of the dog training and behavior community, the need for volunteers has never been greater.

The APDT Board and staff have been working on providing more information, direction and tools to the volunteers serving on the committees and task forces, along with those who have been appointed chair/co-chair/vice-chair of each group. We understand the importance of providing goal-driven initiatives and tangible tasks to each group to work on. We also value and respect your time serving as a volunteer.

I've asked volunteers over the year why they volunteered for a committee, task force or team. Following are some of their responses:

- "I wanted to get involved being new to the organization, so I could meet some fellow trainers."
- "Dog training has been in my blood since I can remember. I knew that I had skills that the committee could use."
- "I was hesitant at first because of a bad experience volunteering for another organization. I don't feel like my time was wasted with APDT and I know that I contributed to the outcomes of the committee."
- "My voice was heard, and I felt respected by the group."
- "I learned a lot about the APDT by working on the committee. I really enjoy our group and look forward to volunteering again in the new year."

- "I always wanted to volunteer with APDT, but never had the time. I took the plunge in 2021 and my time on the committee was time well spent."
- "It was very rewarding to see a project be completed from start to finish. I didn't feel any burden or pressure working with the staff, chair and Board liaison, and actually, we made a great team!"

For 2022, we are looking for volunteers from the APDT membership for the following groups:

- Conference Committee
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Team
- Education Committee
- Ethics Committee
- Finance Committee
- Marketing Committee
- Membership Task Force

You can go to <https://apdt.com/about/committees/> to view the 2022 charters for each group and a link to the online form to volunteer. I hope that you will consider a volunteer opportunity in 2022 with APDT!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David M. Feldner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Feldner, CAE
Executive Director



Fanna Easter



Khara Schuetzner with K9 Wyatt, left, and K9 Blitzkrieg

Fanna Easter Becomes 2022 APDT Chair in January, Khara Schuetzner transitions off board after serving six years

Fanna Easter, CPDT-KA, KPA CTP, CSAT, CDBC, will become the chair of APDT’s Board of Directors beginning Jan. 1. She was elected to the board in 2017 for her first 3-year term that began Jan. 1, 2018, and served as secretary/treasurer and then vice-chair. She is the owner of Positive Pooch Behavior in Dallas, Texas. Besides Fanna as chair, the 2022 APDT Board will consist of officers Benjamin Bennink, vice-chair; Heidi Meinzer, secretary/treasurer, and Mark Forrest Patrick, immediate past chair, as well as directors Sandy Modell, Inga From, and newly-elected Heather Mishefske.

“Members, we hear you loud and clear, major industry changes are happening now. First, I’m beyond thrilled to serve as your chair in 2022 and I embrace change,” Fanna said. “Your board has been working really hard and can’t wait to announce our 2022 legislation initiatives, new LIMA-compliant vendor standards, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) team goal outcomes and so much more. In 2022, we want to continue listening to our members and making major changes within our industry. We

want to offer plenty of opportunities for members to help with these milestones, such as rolling up your sleeves with legislation throughout the U.S. and within your state. Buckle up, we need all hands on deck to make a major difference in 2022 within our industry. It’s time!”

Meet Your New Chair

While Fanna Easter may be new to the position as APDT chair, she certainly isn’t when it comes to dog training. She has been instructing group classes and behavior consultation for more than 30 years. Fanna owns Positive Pooch Behavior, in Dallas, Texas, which specializes in separation anxiety and offers virtual consultations across the US. Fanna teaches reactive dog group classes and offers private consultations with the only veterinarian who specializes in behavior in the North Texas area. Fanna is a Certified Separation Anxiety Trainer, CPDT- KA since 2003, Certified Dog Behavior Consultant, Fear-Free Certified Animal Trainer, Karen Pryor Academy Graduate and Purdue University dog behavior course graduate.

"Khara's time on the APDT was during a critical time of change for our industry. She provided the leadership we needed when our organization was forced to scrap its plans for an in-person conference and hold our first virtual conference during the pandemic." – Mark Forrest Patrick, APDT Chair

Prior to starting her own business, Fanna was Petco's national dog training expert. She and her team developed, launched, and lead a brand new positive reinforcement training program for more than 1,500 Petco stores. She created and executed positive training seminars, materials and online training for more than 2,000 Petco dog trainers. In 2021 Fanna partnered with Petco again to create a separation anxiety course that provides a safe place for dogs and their guardians to learn updated information and new self-settling skills until LIMA-compliant SA experts, which have long waiting lists, have an opening for them.

Fanna has authored several articles for Vice News, Dogs Naturally, Animal Wellness, APDT's *Chronicle of the Dog* and numerous online magazines and blogs. She was chair of the committee that updated the C.L.A.S.S. curriculum and current chair of the Legislation Task Force. Legislation, regulation and creating standards has become her passion.

When not working with clients and their dogs, Fanna volunteers at The Bridge, the only Dallas homeless shelter that allows dogs to accompany their displaced pet guardians. Fanna and her co-workers offer group classes and one-on-one training to ensure dogs learn polite manners and can continue to accompany their displaced pet guardians into permanent housing.

While Fanna lives in Dallas, she is originally from Lafayette, Louisiana, and proud to be Cajun. She shares her home with two Miniature Bull Terriers, Miss Stella Mae and Eli Joseph, and her darling hubby, Rick.

Farewell to Khara Schuetzner

In January, the current immediate past chair, **Khara Schuetzner, CPDT-KSA, CNWI**, transitions off the APDT Board having served since her appointment in 2015 that began Jan. 1, 2016. She moved through the officer ranks as secretary/treasurer, vice-chair, and then chair in 2020 during a turbulent time as the world grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic and APDT held its first-ever virtual conference. Under Khara's leadership, the APDT Board established an Ethics Committee, Ethics Complaint Form and Ethics Procedures. They also formed an alliance with IAABC and CPDT regarding a Code of Ethics for trainers and having new or renewing members attest to being Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) compliant to have a profile on APDT's online trainer search.

"Khara's time on the APDT was during a critical time of change for our industry. She provided the leadership we needed when our organization was forced to scrap its plans for an in-person conference and hold our first virtual conference during the pandemic," said Mark Forrest Patrick, APDT's chair and who will take her position as immediate past chair in January. "We wish her well as she continues to train with her dogs in competitions and nose work, and I know she will always be there for APDT."

Khara earned her bachelor's degree in zoology from the University of Oklahoma and completed an internship working as a biologist at Disney World in Orlando, Florida. In graduate school, she worked on a Master of Science degree in aquaculture and fisheries from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and then a Master of Arts degree in teaching after moving to Chicago. She started volunteering with the Anti-Cruelty Society, graduating from its School of Dog Training. After a stint in Argentina, Khara moved back to Oklahoma to care for her family and started The Doggie Spot, which was the first training facility in Shawnee, Oklahoma. She was the first CPDT-KSA and Canine Nose Work Instructor in that state.

Khara is a certified AKC CGC Evaluator and an American Red Cross Pet CPR instructor. She is a member of the Animal Behavior Society, International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants, and American Chemical Society. She competes in obedience, herding, nose work, and dock diving with K9 Blitzkrieg and K9 Wyatt. She also judges nose work for NACSW, AKC, UKC, and USCSS. Khara's household includes nine dogs, three cats, a horse named Freya, sheep, chickens and a very patient husband, Gabriel.

"It was an honor to serve the members over the years. Thank you to everyone who volunteers and participates in the APDT activities," Khara said about her time on the board. "Being on the APDT board brought new experiences, such as collaborating with other organizations, keeping our businesses afloat during a pandemic, and changing the way we reach our membership. For those of you who never thought about serving this association, I would encourage you to join a task force or committee. For those of you who have issues, be the change by taking up positions. I encourage all of us to keep up the communication and educate others. Be open-minded and empathic to those who are different from us. My goals as I leave the board are to continue to support the organization and attend conferences. My personal goals are to take some time to do something new with my own dogs."

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Heather Mishefske Elected to APDT Board of Directors for 3-Year Term

Heather Mishefske was elected for a 3-year term to the 2022 APDT Board of Directors during its annual election in

September. Sandy Modell, who joined the board in 2019, was re-elected for her second 3-year term. The 2022 APDT Board, beginning Jan. 1, will be officers Fanna Easter, chair; Benjamin Bennink, vice-chair; Heidi Meinzer, secretary-treasurer, and Mark Forrest Patrick, immediate past chair, along with directors Sandy Modell, Inga From, and Heather Mishefske.

"I look forward to working with Heather when she joins the APDT Board of Directors in January," said APDT Chair Mark Forrest Patrick, who will cede that position to Fanna Easter as he takes the immediate past chair position on the board. "She brings a great deal of experience as a dog trainer and as a business manager."

Heather Mishefske, CPDT-KA, CBCC-KA, AKC Canine Good Citizen Evaluator

So just who is Heather Mishefske? She's an animal lover and education advocate who once had a cow named "Dinner" growing up. However, if meat is on the menu at Heather's house, it's for the dogs since she has been feeding them a raw diet for nearly 20 years. Her husband is a vegan, and Heather herself rarely eats meat, strongly hinting "Dinner" might be the reason behind that choice.

Heather's journey in becoming a dog training professional is similar to many others: it all started with a dog. In Heather's case, it was an English Springer Spaniel named Bandi and a 4-H project. By the time she went to college, Heather decided to earn her degree in dietetics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In the meantime, she trained and competed in dog sports with her Flat-Coated Retrievers. But the sudden death of Larkin, her 3-year-old Flat-Coated Retriever to autoimmune kidney disease in 2005 led to her decision to leave the healthcare field that December and pursue her first love of working with dogs. Just weeks later, Heather opened emBARK, aka "Midwest Wisconsin's hippest hang out for hounds" in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The business, which has grown in the past 15 years from a single proprietor (Heather) to employing 26 dog care professionals, offers daycare, training classes, grooming, massage, and behavior consulting.

It didn't take long before Heather racked up dog training credentials: CPDT-KA, CBCC-KA, AKC Canine Good Citizen Evaluator, Living and Learning with Animals Applied Behavior

Analysis course certificate of completion, and is a certified level II Canine Sports Massage provider. She is a member of APDT (premium professional), IAABC, Upper Midwest Flat Coated Retriever Club vice president, and has served as a Learning Theory and Behavior guest lecturer at University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire and presented a lecture on body language to the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. The staffers at emBARK have begun Fear-Free certification for 2021. "These are all incredibly important to me, as it shows that I am invested in my own education, and that align with the gold standards of LIMA training standards in my field. [Dog training] is dynamic and ever-changing and seeking out new information is critical."

After years of being an APDT member, joining in 2014, Heather decided to further her involvement as a member of the Board of Directors to help further the profession of dog training. "Uniting our missions, creating legal guidelines and putting parameters in place to provide gold standards of care in teaching dogs and their humans is something that I have an extreme interest in," Heather wrote on her candidacy questionnaire. "Being a board member helps me contribute on a much larger scale and collaborate with other like-minded colleagues. Utilizing my experience as a business owner and my 20-plus years as a dog trainer helps me to see the future of dog training and the ways that we need to solidify."

Heather added there is no better time than now to further the excellence in the profession of dog training. "We are fortunate to live in a time when peer-reviewed literature is available to us, research is being done in behavior and learning, and resources are readily available to all of us to further our understanding of canine learning. Using the resources we have available will allow us to propel dog teaching into an era where everyone is able to practice the gold standards of care based on the evidence that we have to support this." She adds education has been a strong focus for her employees, co-workers and colleagues. "Our staff are all heavily involved in continuing education at my facility. The staff share amongst themselves and seek out such opportunities"

It is Heather's strong advocacy for certifications and licensing in the dog training industry where she feels her skills and knowledge around the science of behavior and learning will help APDT as it navigates legislative efforts to establish licensing standards for dog trainers.

Heather believes education and outreach will support APDT's mission in bringing new and existing trainers to the organization and will be paramount in unifying dog training. "Personal connections in the dog training world are the most important to cultivate relationships with APDT," she explained. "I have an odd gift to always remember people and their dogs, and this is a personal touch that is always helpful in upholding relationships."



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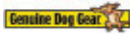


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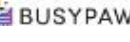





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APDT sets sights for 2022 in-person conference at Daytona Beach, Florida

For the second year in a row, the Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT) went virtual with its signature event, collaborating with the Canadian Association of Professional Dog Trainers (CAPDT) for the 28th annual Education and Trade Show held Sept. 29-30 from the comfort of your couch or recliner. Attendees watched from 12 countries around the world: United States, Canada, Australia, Brazil, Germany, Israel, Japan, Mexico, The Netherlands, Russia, Singapore, United Kingdom.

In 2020, when the global pandemic struck hard and fast, APDT was forced to make a quick decision in June, after months into the planning process for its Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky conference scheduled Oct. 21-24. For 2021, however, as pandemic cases continued to surge, the APDT Board of Directors decided earlier to go virtual, as well as welcoming the partnership with APDT's sister organization in Canada. The joint APDT/CAPDT two-day conference was held Sept. 29-30, which featured two keynote speakers, animal behaviorists Susan Friedman, Ph.D., and Ken Ramirez, along with 21 session speakers for 23 session titles that covered nearly all aspects of training: Animal Learning, Human Learning, Canine Behavior, Health and Nutrition, and Business. Dr. Friedman, a psychology professor at Utah State University who has pioneered the application of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to captive and companion animals, spoke about "How Animals Learn: An Introduction to Behavior Analysis and Training." Ken has been the executive vice-president for Karen Pryor Clicker Training since October 2014. He spoke about the "Evolution of the

Modern Trainer: A Personal Perspective," using his own career path to highlight what has changed in the almost five decades he has been in the business.

According to APDT Chair Mark Forrest Patrick, the virtual conference was a success with its sessions, keynote speakers, and the platform upon which it was offered, thanks to lessons learned from the first virtual conference in 2020. "I enjoyed popping in sessions and reading the interactions between the speakers and those watching from their homes. Our trade show was quite spirited between our conference attendees and the booths with our new competition this year. But I am looking forward to meeting in-person Oct. 19-21 at Daytona Beach, Florida in 2022."

Those who signed up for the full virtual conference on-demand to watch at their leisure may earn 29 CEUs that are accepted by CCPDT, KSA, CBCC-KA, IAABC, KPA, and NADOI. For those who only attended the virtual conference "live," as many as 11 CEUs may be earned for the two days.

Other highlights of the conference included recognizing Ken Ramirez for the 2021 APDT Lifetime Achievement Award, Erica Marshall for the 2021 Member of the Year Award, and former APDT Chair Robin Bennett for the 2021 Chair Award. On the Trade Show side, the Gamification winners were Dena Dickerson, first place for the grand prize valued at \$800, Michael Kuhn, second place with a prize pack valued at \$755, and Michelle del Carpio in third place with a prize pack valued at \$745.

After two years of virtual conferences, APDT is hopeful for an in-person event for its 29th annual conference set for Oct. 19-21 at Daytona Beach, Florida. Keep checking APDT.com for more information about keynote speakers, sessions, workshops and registration.



Fire Up Those Thumbs!

Use Social Media Networks to Promote National Train Your Dog Month

APDT's National Train Your Dog Month (NTYDM) is just around the corner in January, so plan your social media releases that stress the importance of canine training among pet professionals, as well as families with four-legged members.

Education is APDT's core mission, and NTYDM is our version of a public service announcement that enables canine professionals to better service their clientele and help more pets and people live better, happier lives together. So how do you get that message across? By checking out APDT's social media outlets to like and share the daily posts:

Facebook - https://business.facebook.com/AssociationofProfessionalDogTrainers.US/?ref=your_pages

LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/1455954/admin/>

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/APDT>

Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/apdt_official/



For suggestions on how to do that, visit our NTYDM site (<https://apdt.com/about/train-dog-month/>) and click on the button. Also, for those who got them, don't forget to wear your APDT National Train Your Dog Month T-shirts. If you didn't get a T-shirt specific to NTYDM, then wear any APDT clothing items you might have.

Encourage your clients or potential clients to visit the APDT site to see the free resources for pet lovers, like tips on kids and pets interacting; considerations for multi-pet homes; understanding training methods and busting dominance myths; plus how to find the right trainer for you and your pet's needs. Thanks to our members who helped create these insightful references. Those resources on our website may be found at apdt.com/petowners.

Encourage shelters and other animal organizations to also promote NTYDM. Dogs with just the basic training are less likely to be turned into shelters, and with a little knowledge, their owners can find out what they are doing to cause reactive behaviors in their animals. It's a win-win for us all!

APDT Foundation gearing up for 2022 posters and grant applications

By Lisa McCluskey, APDT Foundation secretary/treasurer



APDT Foundation Background

The mission of the APDT Foundation is to provide funding for applied scientific research on dog training and behavior and to further increase the knowledge base of the dog training profession. The corporation is organized for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

APDT Foundation 2021 Speaker Sponsorship

Did you get to see the APDT Foundation-sponsored speaker this year at the virtual 2021 APDT/CAPDT Educational Conference and Trade Show? If not, learn more about animal behavior consultant and author Kim Brophrey as she shares her sessions, “Ethological Contributions to Behavior Problems in Dogs” (Parts 1 & 2) in the on-demand conference recorded proceedings. If you attended the conference, they are available on-demand. If you did not attend the conference, you may purchase them at: tinyurl.com/apdtdemand

APDT Foundation: 2021 Poster Session & Beyond

The Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT) and the APDT Foundation (apdtfoundation.org) hosted the submissions for poster presentation proposals from the academic (faculty, students, researchers) and professional (dog trainers, shelter staff, veterinary staff, etc.) communities for the APDT/CAPDT Virtual Conference Sept. 29-30, 2021.

We were so excited to have had four posters this year. Our research session generally highlights topics relevant to dog behavior/training and includes preliminary results, completed studies, summaries of relevant published personal research, and/or position papers. This year was no exception, and we proudly announced the following results below at the APDT Foundation virtual booth:

- **1st Place: Veronica Leifer/Sophie Baum**, “Memory for Learned Tricks: Do Dogs (Canis Familiaris) Remember A Learned Behavior Better After An Overnight Sleep?”
- **2nd Place: Jordan Smith**, “Factors that Influence Cognitive Performance in Puppies”
- **3rd Place: Rebecca (Becky) Jones**, “Are Dogs That Participate in Dog Sports In Better Shape?”
- **4th Place: Anamarie Johnson**, “To Cue or Command? A Qualitative Analysis of Word Use and Choice by United States Dog Trainers”

Congratulations to everyone for making such exciting contributions to our industry during 2021. The presenter for each poster received free registration for the full virtual conference.

Additionally, the top three academic poster winners received monetary awards. We were incredibly grateful for the time they took to share their work with the dog training community via the poster judging session, virtual presentation, and Q&A time for our conference participants.

Please consider preparing a poster for our upcoming conference in Daytona Beach, Florida Oct. 19-21, 2022. Watch for information on the APDT Foundation website (<https://apdtfoundation.org/research-poster-presentations/>) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ApdtFoundation>) re: our 2022 poster program!

APDT Foundation 2022 Grant Information

The APDT Foundation will support undergraduate, graduate, and faculty academic research in a field related to applied behavior, including behavior analysis, ethology, and cognition. Preference will be given to proposals that (1) contain research questions that will have practical application for professional dog trainers and behavior consultants, (2) include collaboration with the dog training and behavior community, specifically companion dog trainers who work with dog owners, and/or (3) proposals that create canine science outreach and education opportunities.

The APDT Foundation will make up to five (5) grants annually of \$1500 each. All proposals will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

1. Research design
2. Expected outcomes
3. Practical application for dog trainers and behavior consultants
4. Schedule and time scale
5. Clearly defined use of funds/budget
6. Plan for dissemination
7. Evaluation
8. Qualifications of Principal Investigator and team

Upon publication of this research, the APDT Foundation will distribute the results of these studies via the APDT Foundation website, and to the dog training community through APDT’s magazine, Chronicle of the Dog. The APDT Foundation will also present the research to APDT for possible invitation of the researchers to attend the APDT annual educational conferences to present in poster or lecture format.

Schedule and Deadlines

- Deadline for submissions – April 20, 2022
- Grant award notification – May 20, 2022
- First Progress report due – December 7, 2022
- Final Progress report due – June 1, 2023

Please read the conditions of eligibility on our website (<https://apdtfoundation.org/grants/>). Proposals will be accepted in electronic form only at: grants@apdtfoundation.org. For more information about this Request for Proposal contact info@apdtfoundation.org.

Foundation Auction

The Foundation Board would like to thank everyone for their generosity and support of the 2021 virtual auction. Each one of you are an integral part of helping us fulfill our mission. Thank you for all that you do and have done throughout the years. And a huge thank you to those who donated:

- Detection Training Session with Don Blair
- CCPDT Certification Exam Registration
- The Modern Dog Trainer Program
- Fenzi Dog Sports Academy Gift Certificates
- Michael Shikashio
- Susan Friedman Behavior Works Course
- Animal Behavior College (ABC)
- Dog Biz University Online Courses
- Dog Boredom Buster Basket
- CATCH Canine Trainers Academy Full Length Core Skills Course
- Sleepypod Safe Traveler Package
- \$250 Petco Gift Card
- ABC Choice of Short-Term Programs
- KONG Medium, Large & XL Dog Toy Baskets
- Dog Evaluation Course by the Dog Gurus
- Fear Free Animal Trainer Certification Program Registration
- \$125 ProVetLogic Gift Certificate
- ILLIS Animal Behaviour Advanced Animal Training Online Course (March 2022)
- PetSafe Dog Toys Gift Basket
- WINPRO Supplements for Dogs
- Stacy Barnett Scentsabilities Nosework
- Jacy Kelly Canine Copilots
- Casey Jo Ailes 10 Cards – Dachshund on the Phone Greeting Card Gift Set
- Associations International
- Natalka Tuczewycz Thread City Weight Pull & Jennifer Brown K9 Sniff Works
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The APDT is proud to be an industry-leading association for trainers to network with each other, provide educational opportunities, and grow professionally within the dog training and behavior profession. We salute your commitment to strengthening the professional dog training industry and honor your commitment towards furthering your education through continuing education.

Interested in joining the world's leading professional dog association as we build better trainers through education?

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Better Together

Pandemic brought out the best in trainers who helped others survive tough times

By Veronica Boutelle, M.A., CTC

I've been writing the business column for the *Chronicle of the Dog* for 15-plus years. I believe my first article ran in 2005. I've covered a lot of ground in that time on a lot of subjects—marketing, charging what you're worth, setting and enforcing strong policies, learning how to sell your services with confidence and sincerity, creating effective services and packaging them for success, and on and on. But one key to success I haven't written nearly enough about is dog professionals playing nicely together.

I wrote an article on this topic that ran in these pages in 2013. I shared then a phenomenon we've continued to see borne out repeatedly: The most successful trainers we work with at dogbiz are those who tend to view fellow like-minded trainers as colleagues and allies rather than enemies or competitors.

These trainers are happier, too. They spend far less time worrying about what others are doing, leaving more energy for their own businesses. And there's no point fretting anyway, because there's no point trying to be the only trainer on the block (or on the internet these days)—it will never happen, and it's not good for dogs. Training is not a volume game. Training businesses are inherently limited in the number of people and dogs each can see and help each week. If there are other competent trainers in your area, rejoice. Go after your share of clients, but be glad other trainers are around to help those you can't.

Eight years later, as I write these words in late 2021, I'm struck anew by just how much better we are together. One silver lining in the pandemic was trainers reaching out and leaning on one another in unprecedented ways. In our THRIVE! group coaching program, Better Together has become a mantra, as R+ trainers revel in learning together, sharing their best ideas, pushing each other forward, and celebrating each other's successes. Trainers in this program have found themselves to be smarter together, bolder together, more confident, more creative, and more engaged in their businesses.

Colleagues, Not Competitors

If you're like so many trainers whose work is made harder by isolation, I urge you to embrace fellow trainers as colleagues rather than competitors. There are many ways to band together with other dog pros. Here are just a few ideas to explore:

Marketing partnerships. Marketing partnerships allow two or more businesses serving the same general area or audience to pool money, time, and talent to make a bigger marketing splash. Most dog business owners face several marketing challenges. Where will the time come from? What should I do to market my business? What if I don't have all the skill sets I need? Most trainers feel uncertain and anxious about marketing. And when it comes to money-based marketing like advertising, most don't have budgets big enough to make their efforts worthwhile. Banding with colleagues can take a lot of pressure off. Why should several businesses struggle with these things on their own? Why not share resources and get more from the process?

The most successful trainers we work with at dogbiz are those who tend to view fellow like-minded trainers as colleagues and allies rather than enemies or competitors.

Members of a marketing partnership market their businesses together around a shared concept. In this case, for example, a group of positive reinforcement-based trainers banding together to market that concept and, in the process, themselves. This is a particularly powerful approach in areas where force-based trainers have the upper hand in marketing, dominate the veterinarians' attention, etc. Depending on geography, the partner businesses may all serve the same area, or they might be spread out a bit, serving a collection of contiguous counties or towns. As more trainers move their work online, the potential for partnerships becomes even larger.

The term "partnership" is used loosely here — the relationship is not a legal entity. Each member is a separate business owner; they don't own a business together. But a marketing partnership should operate under an agreement that governs what each member is obligated to contribute, be that funds or time or particular tasks, and at what amount and frequency. There should also be a clear process for making joint decisions about marketing directions, projects, and the use of any funds.

WE CAN DO THIS.

Referral networks. This is marketing partnership lite. Rather than marketing together, members of a referral network pledge to send each other business. A network may apply certain rules, such as a positive training-only policy or a requirement for active participation in the network. Online it could be a shared website, or dedicated pages on each participating trainers' site.

Once the network is in place, members meet on a regular basis (typically monthly) to get to know each other, learn about each member's services, exchange marketing materials to share with clients, and share ideas about how to give effective referrals.

Local associations. National associations such as the Association of Professional Dog Trainers play a critical role for individual trainers and the industry. But I'm often surprised by how many dog pros don't know about local associations operating in their own area. I've come across many a local trainers' group, pet sitters' group, dog walkers' group. These small collections of dog pros support one another in many ways.

Some associations actively market themselves, thereby helping to elevate the marketing of each member business. Some provide opportunities to share service, marketing, and training advice. Some associations use dues to bring in continuing education or professional development speakers. And some members simply find support in being able to get together monthly with colleagues to trade stories and talk with people who understand what it's like to be a dog trainer.

Welcome newbies. Whether it's an experienced trainer moving into your area or a budding behavior geek looking for a new career, embrace newcomers. Make a colleague of the experienced trainer. You may have things to learn from each other, and mutual support to enjoy. You may make a new friend. There may be joint marketing or service opportunities that help take your business to a new level. And take new trainers under your wing. They're going to pursue their businesses regardless; better they learn from a professional, so their clients are well cared for. And who's going to get the referrals for cases that are over their heads or outside their niches? Their mentor — you.

If You're Alone

Some trainers still live in areas where they're the only game in town, and it can be lonely. If you have no local colleagues to reach out to, engage in the national dialogue while you wait for someone new to arrive on your scene. Myriad online discussion groups exist; check them out to find a conversation style and speed that suits you. Consider a membership program for pro trainers. Attend national conferences and weekend seminars whenever you're able. Perhaps register for a training school or certificate program; quite a few professional development programs these days accommodate remote attendance from home while still promoting strong collegial relationships among students.

When Others Won't Play Nice

If local partnerships, networks, or associations don't already exist in your area, it may be up to you to start one. In some locations that will be relatively easy. But at dogbiz we know from our work with trainers around the country and the world that in certain areas the prevailing business culture is to regard fellow trainers as competition to be warily avoided. If you're hoping to band with others in your area but find yourself getting the cold shoulder, don't give up.

Look for ways to keep the dialogue going, even if it's painfully one-sided at first. Email your competitors and other local dog businesses to share news of a speaker coming to town (and do they want to carpool?), or a cool article you found, or a national conference (anyone want to share a hotel room?), or a funny dog-related YouTube video. Extend an invitation to lunch, with no agenda attached. Just keep playing nice until, finally, you break down defenses and competitors become colleagues. You won't win everyone over. But other trainers in your community are bound to be pining for connection, too. And when you find them, you'll all do better for it.



Veronica Boutelle, M.A., CTC, is the founder of dogbiz and author of "How To Run a Dog Business". Learn more about how the dogbiz team can help you improve your conversion rate and help more dogs at www.dogbizsuccess.com.

Where is Your Continuing Education Taking You in 2022?

APDT is committed to making your professional dog training education accessible and affordable. Webinars are a great opportunity to learn new skills that support your career or keep you existing skills up-to-date. APDT's webinars are designed to suit your timetable, your aspirations and your budget, while earning the CEUs you need to maintain your competitive edge. They're available to access 24/7 on demand (1-3 hours in length) so you can watch on your own time, at your own pace. Whatever you need to improve your qualifications, you'll find it in APDT's online Learning Platform.

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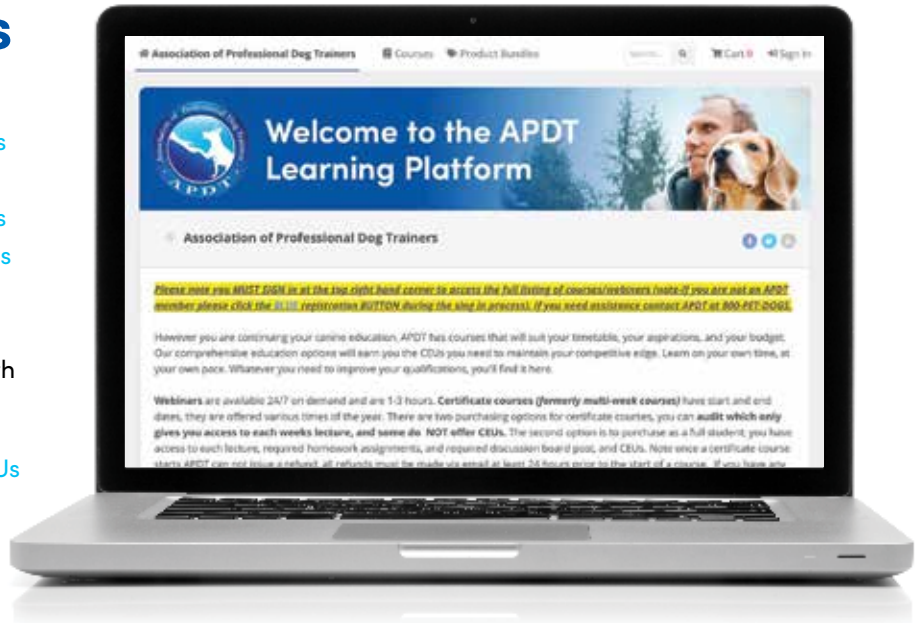
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Technology Requirements: All webinars are accessible via a mobile device; however, for best results it is recommended that you use a PC or laptop in Chrome browser with a dedicated Wi-Fi connection.

Available Webinars

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- » 2019 Conference Short Presentations [4 CEUs](#)
- » 2020 Conference Short Presentations [9 CEUs](#)
- » 2021 Conference Bonus Content [9 CEUs](#)
- » A Dog's View of the World [2 CEUs](#)
- » Accelerate Your Business with Dog Agility with Trevor Smith, CPDT-KA, and Gerry Brown [1.5 CEUs](#); [IAABC: 1 CEU](#)
- » Advanced Learning Theory (Audit Only) [5 CEUs](#)
- » Antler Shed Dogs: An intro to the newest dog sport [1 CEU](#)
- » Are You Prepared if Disaster Strikes? [3 CEUs](#)
- » Be a Better Teacher, Be a Better Trainer: Intro to teaching basics [.5 CEUs](#)
- » Beat the Clock: Shave time off work, create more margin in life [1 CEU](#)
- » Becoming a Dog Trainer: What you need to know [.5 CEUs](#)
- » Beware of the Dog (3-part series) [3.5 CEUs](#)
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Deep Dives into Research May Prove Original Hypothesis Wrong

But that doesn't mean the study results don't have valuable information

By Melissa Bain, DVM, DACVB, M.S., DACAW
Professor, Clinical Animal Behavior
University of California School of Veterinary Medicine

The past 20 months have been the most marathon-like sprint that many of us have encountered, and it's exacted a toll. I think I'm not alone in saying enough is enough, and that I need to return to what brings me joy at work. Spoiler alert – it is not emails! What gets me excited about work boils down to three things: teaching students and residents, interacting with my clients and patients, and writing. It's hard to focus on these while I'm pulled to do an online training module, wait in line for COVID-19 testing, fill out yet another survey, or submit foreign-to-me paperwork because we're short-staffed. I fully understand that these are necessary parts of my employment, but they leave me with less time to prioritize the rest.

I believe that most of us have come to terms with the current “normal,” along with the added stressors and work that come with it. So, with that in mind, I've tried to set more boundaries in order to bring back my joy, by focusing on my top three things of teaching, clinics and research, and writing. The one action that covers all three is setting aside time to read all of the new and interesting research out there. The information available to us is exploding, and it is exciting to be at a point in my career to be able to relish this, after a 20-month semi-hiatus with my reptilian brain taking over. It's even more exciting when I can share this information with students, residents, and clients.

It's important to understand that a hypothesis can be proven wrong in a study ... it's often just as important, however, to publish non-results, because that information is equally important.

My resident and I are in the early stages of her residency research project and are collaborating with an outside non-profit agency to evaluate some of their behavioral data collected over the years. And data there are! We have narrowed the focus to one scientific question, which was difficult as there is so much interesting information in their data, but that just leaves us more data for more papers in the future.

**"It's what you learn after you know it all that counts."
– John Wooden**

With this one scientific question comes a lot of background information that must be sifted through to help us formulate our exact objectives and hypotheses. One cannot conjure a hypothesis out of thin air. A hypothesis is specific, testable, and predictable, based on prior evidence. It is a prediction but involves much more than a guess. This project involves a deep dive into literature in dogs as well as other species, including humans. It's important to understand that a hypothesis can be proven wrong in a study, which with preliminary results is looking like that in our study. It's often just as important, however, to publish non-results, because that information is equally important. A recent study of mine demonstrated there were no differences in rates of upper respiratory infections or stress-related behaviors in shelter cats whether or not they had a diffuser of a feline facial pheromone or placebo in the shelter room.¹

To formulate the hypotheses for our current study, I sent my resident down the rabbit hole of Pub Med and Google Scholar. And boy is there a lot of published information on our very narrow research question! To help her from getting stuck in said rabbit holes, I set up guardrails by sending her some seminal papers from which to start, and guiding her with questions like: "How would you have done that study differently?" and "What other information would you have liked to have known?"

The deep dive into the literature isn't limited to her, as I get to do it too, hence, bringing some joy to my life. In rounds my resident jokes that my favorite phrase is "There's a paper on that." When I see how this information affects others, including clients, it solidifies my enthusiasm. I have to make sure that I share in a supportive and respectful way, not just "look what I know." A recent example is of a cat that was urinating outside of the box. I diagnosed him

with urine marking, and potentially Feline Idiopathic Cystitis (FIC), after which the owner admitted that she had the human equivalent, Interstitial Cystitis (IC). One of my colleagues has published a number of research studies on FIC, including how cats can serve as a model for treatment research for IC. Considering I just had a video call with him the day prior, I was even more up to date on the literature, and was able to discuss how treatment recommendations are similar and dissimilar between species. By being able to discuss the most current research out there in a conversational manner seemed to help the client have a deeper appreciation for her cat's problems.

Given that we never know everything, it's the constant journey to improve ourselves that drives us to study and educate ourselves, and to pass that information on to others who are open to learning. I just hope that I don't lose my glasses like Burgess Meredith did in the "Time Enough at Last" episode of the Twilight Zone!



Dr. Melissa Bain is a veterinarian and Professor of Clinical Animal Behavior and is board-certified by both the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists and the American College of Animal Welfare. She received a master's degree in Advanced Clinical Research from the UC Davis School of Medicine in 2007. She is a past president of both the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists and the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior. In 2016 she was selected as the Bustad Companion Animal Veterinarian of the Year, awarded by the American Veterinary Medical Association, and in 2019 she was selected to receive the Companion Animal Welfare Award from the World Small Animal Veterinary Association. Additionally, she is the director of Professional Student Clinical Education for the UC Davis Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital. Her responsibilities include student and resident education, clinical case management, and research.

RESEARCH

1 Effect of a synthetic feline facial pheromone product on stress scores and incidence of upper respiratory tract infection in shelter cats; Chadwin RM, Bain MJ, Kass PH. *J Amer Vet Med Assoc*, 2017, 251(4), 413-420. <https://doi.org/10.2460/javma.251.4.413>

There are reasons to consider adding an optional dishonesty bond to liability insurance policy

By David Pearsall



What is a Dishonesty Bond? Do I need this for my business? These are frequently asked questions we hear when Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT) members are applying for liability coverage or renewing their liability policy via the APDT Liability plan. This optional coverage endorsement was added to the APDT Liability Insurance plan application in late 2019 but had previously been available under a separate policy. So, for this briefing, let's look at what the APDT Dishonesty Bond is, and who it covers, to determine if this optional coverage endorsement is needed for your individual business.

A typical employee dishonesty bond (sometimes referred to as a fidelity bond) protects a business from a loss because of a theft committed by their employees; for example, if you were a distributor of pet products and discovered your employee had been stealing products from your company. Another similar type of dishonesty bond, often referred to as a business services bond, protects the clientele of the business against a theft by one of their employees; such as if you were a contractor and a member of your team were to steal personal property such as jewelry, electronics, or money from your clients while in their homes doing repair work. For a dog trainer, pet sitter, or dog walker, the exposure is very much the same.

Most trainers/APDT members understand the need for general liability insurance but may or may not understand the differences between general liability insurance and a business service dishonesty bond. First, general liability insurance protects your business against bodily injury or property damage to a third party due to your negligence, whereas a dishonesty bond protects your business or your clientele or prospective clientele against theft or dishonest acts by you (depending on policy coverage form) and your

employees or independent contractors (again depending on policy coverage form). Second, with an insurance contract, there are only two parties involved, the insurance company, and the business purchasing the coverage (you, the insured). With a bond contract, there are three parties involved, first party being your business, the second party being your customer, and the third being the bonding company. And last, what occurs when a claim is made/paid. With liability insurance, the insurance company defends and pays the loss if proven, and insurance company takes the loss. With a business service bond, the bonding company validates proof of loss, and pays/reimburses your clients for the loss, then looks to the guilty party to recoup the payment.

Many of you have likely seen the plumbing contractor or electrician with the words insured and bonded on the side of their work van. The same would apply to your business if you are entering into client's personal residences. The public wants to know that they are protected against all potential losses if you are coming into their homes and will be performing work there. By having a bond in place, you are advertising that your business is honest and reputable, and one that can be trusted.

It is important to note that all employee dishonesty bonds are not created equal. Be sure to review the definition of employee and what is required for the bond company to pay out. Under the APDT Dog Trainer Dishonesty Bond, the definition of employee includes all owners and officers, full and part time employees, independent contractors, and volunteers. And in lieu of a conviction clause that most bonds require for the insurer to pay a claim, the APDT Policy simply requires a burden of proof that could be an admission of guilt by your employee or independent contractor, or an eyewitness or video recording.

Many of you have likely seen the plumbing contractor or electrician with the words insured and bonded on the side of their work van. The same would apply to your business if you are entering into client's personal residences. The public wants to know that they are protected against all potential losses if you are coming into their homes and will be performing work there. By having a bond in place, you are advertising that your business is honest and reputable, and one that can be trusted.

Most bonding companies require a conviction clause to protect the employer and the employee against unjustified or unsubstantiated allegations of dishonesty, however, this may not always be in the business owner's best interest. Believe it or not, there have been claims over the years where the owner of the business has stolen from their clients, and also claims where spouses and family members, while working on behalf of the bonded business owner, have stolen from their clients. Other cases have involved long time employees that business owners may have a personal relationship with who have embezzled from the business. In cases like these, you may not want to see a conviction in order for the bonding company to pay out.

Now that we have addressed what it means to be bonded and what a bond is, let's determine if a bond is truly needed for your business. If you are an honest business owner, have no employees, independent contractors, or volunteers working for you, and do not train at client's personal residences, you would not ever need to add the bond coverage. If you do train at client's homes, but only do so with longtime friends and/or relatives who know and trust you, you may also be okay without a bond, as you know and the client know you to be honest, and the client would likely feel safe

inviting you into their home without this coverage, knowing that you would not steal from them.

However, if your business is one that is designed to perform training or consulting at or in client's homes, if you use employees or independent contractors in your business, or you offer pet sitting, dog walking, or other services which require entering or having keys to client's homes, I believe you should consider including the bond coverage. Consider it from your client's perspective: Do they really want someone having access to their home without this guarantee in place? Do you really feel comfortable that there is absolutely no chance any of your team would ever steal from you or your clients? What about the potential new client who does not know you and your honest reputation, do you think they feel safe handing you the key to everything they own? Sure, you and your team are honest and would never steal, but unfortunately people (for good reason) are not as trusting as they were years ago. More and more clients have security cameras or nanny cams now than ever before. Do you allow contractors in your house that are not insured and bonded when you are not at home? Having a bond in place sets your client's mind at ease and protects them if any of their property is missing when they return home. So, if you and/

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or your team members are going into clients' homes to perform training or another service, keep your customers and prospects in mind and if you have a bond in place be sure to let them know and include in all marketing that you are insured and bonded.



David Pearsall is a licensed insurance agent and co-owner of Business Insurers of the Carolinas, an insurance agency specializing in business insurance for pet related services since 1992. David and his team have managed insurance programs for many national pet services associations, including the APDT Insurance Program since 2001. A licensed agent in all 50 states, he holds both the Certified Insurance Counselor (CIC) and the Certified Workers' compensation Advisor (CWCA) designations. Contact David at DP@Business-Insurers.com or visit Business Insurers on the web at www.DogTrainerInsurance.com

Recent Liability Claims:

- During a board-and-train, a dog ingested a towel that created a blockage that required surgery. Total paid, \$5,656.
- Dog escaped the home/yard of the trainer and entered an unattended open dog transport vehicle. The door to the vehicle was closed remotely. When the dog was found it was rushed to the vet. Total paid, \$5,146.
- Scuffle occurred between two dogs during a training class. One dog suffered a quarter-size laceration that required medical attention. Total paid, \$685.

- Dog ate a rock while playing between training sessions and required surgery. Total paid, \$1,913.
- Dog's ear was torn during a play session at trainer's home. Total paid, \$1,259.
- Client fell on ice when approaching the facility outside classroom door suffering injury. Total paid, \$2,138.
- Dog exhibited signs of a bite on face during training class as face started to swell. Dog was taken to the emergency vet for treatment. Total paid, \$434.
- Dog tore dew claw while engaging in a training activity. Total paid, \$273.
- Dog was running agility course during training class and landed wrong, breaking its leg. Total paid, \$7,533.
- During training two dogs got into a fight and one was bitten near the eye. Total paid, \$436.

Recent Workers Compensation:

- Employee was bitten on the arm and hands during a training session. Total paid, \$1,472.
- Dog bit trainer while attempting to place collar back on dog after it had fallen off. Total paid, \$401.
- Employee was bitten on the fingers while giving a dog a treat. Total paid, \$1,077.



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ABC adds several new programs to its curriculum

By Steven Appelbaum, president, Animal Behavior College

The world changed after COVID-19 reared its ugly head in March of 2020. This is not news as we have all had to deal with the scourge of the virus and the disruption it caused and continues to cause on our businesses and lives. I am a bit of a news junkie and had been following the story of the virus since late December 2019. The questions people had back then were not if this virus would strike here, but when and how serious it might be. By February 2020, we had a pretty good sense. However, it didn't occur to us until late February there was a real possibility that businesses would be forced to close to try to mitigate the spread.



Animal Behavior College, which is homebased in Valencia, California, had been experimenting with remote working for some time. I have worked remotely since 2016, as had some others. Starting in early March 2020, we concluded that companies were going to be shut down, and we needed to do whatever we could to ensure our staff would be able to function remotely. We were ready two days before the shutdown mandate was given, although it would take us months to iron out all the kinks in this system. Still, I am thrilled we would weather the initial pandemic storm without the loss of a single job. Many other challenges lay ahead of us, but I am proud to state that not only did we stay in business and ensure that all our hard-working staff didn't lose their jobs because of COVID, but we also continued to grow during these times.

There are silver linings in many of the events that happen to us in our lives. As more people stayed home, pet adoptions rose, greater numbers of dogs and cats found forever homes and the need for dog and cat trainers increased. Many people found it was possible to work outside of their offices and function quite effectively and, in doing so, rediscovered the joy of being able to spend more time at home with family. I am not trying to sugarcoat the horror that has been COVID, and I don't know anyone who wouldn't trade the lessons learned for being able to go back to our pre-COVID world. There isn't anyone I know who hasn't been affected by this disease, either by contracting it or had children who lost months or more of

social interaction in school. Nothing makes up for that. However, some businesses reinvented themselves or at least changed/improved the way they worked and created the space to thrive going forward.

During this period, we also launched some new programs. The first isn't a new program but rather a new focus. For about the last 25 years, I have been fascinated by cat behavior. Part of this interest was caused by the fact that about 40-to-50 percent of the dog training clients of mine also had cats and had behavioral questions about their kitties. While I could go on for hours addressing common behavior challenges in dogs like chewing or digging, I was initially stymied when asked how to stop these same clients' cats from

scratching the furniture. Can cats be trained? The answer, of course, is yes. Over time, I realized that not only can cats be trained, but it is highly advantageous for dog trainers to learn how. There are numerous reasons for this.

First, since most dog trainers are animal lovers who are passionate about helping pets and the people who love them, being able to expand your ability to help cats, as well as dogs, just feels right. It also broadens your marketability. Most dog trainers start their business by connecting with more established pet professionals like veterinarians, groomers, independent pet stores, and doggie daycare facilities in the hopes of garnering referrals. This practice is a time-honored way of starting a service business. It's how I started my first business in 1981, and some trainers had been doing this decades before I ever picked up a leash.

The challenge with this approach is that as a new trainer walking into a veterinary hospital or wherever, you are not the first and will likely be asked to stand on the end of a long line of trainers who were there before you. The hope is that you can get a few referrals, do a fabulous job and that your reputation will proceed you over time and result in more. This is an effective strategy, but I can pretty much guarantee that if you walk into one of these offices and introduce yourself not only as a dog trainer but also as a cat trainer, you will be

As more people stayed home, pet adoptions rose, greater numbers of dogs and cats found forever homes and the need for dog and cat trainers increased. Many people found it was possible to work outside of their offices and function quite effectively and, in doing so, rediscovered the joy of being able to spend more time at home with family.

asked to stand on a much shorter line. In fact, you might be the only cat trainer. This means you stand out, which increases the likelihood of referrals. Granted, they will probably be more for cats than dogs at the start, but once you get your foot in the door, the opportunities are more frequent for dog training as well.

While ABC has known all this for quite a few years, we found that starting in 2019 and escalating during COVID, more and more dog trainers have taken an interest in cat training. So, enrollments in our cat training program have grown. We have also noted an increase in the number of veterinary assistants who elect to take our cat training program. There are numerous reasons why including the fact that having a veterinary team member on staff who can answer client questions about cat behavioral challenges means the hospital can stand out by offering an added value to its clients. Cats can be trained, and with more than 40 percent of US households having one, the potential to do good and build your business is enormous.

By the way, some readers might think that they won't build their businesses using the old school method I just mentioned. Instead, they plan on building a presence through social media or online advertising to generate their business. That's fine but it doesn't change the inherent advantages you have if you broaden your knowledge and marketability by learning to train both cats and dogs. Plus, social media and online marketing campaigns are about content. There is a lot of dog training content out there. There is less cat training content which again allows those who can offer both to stand out.

All APDT members may enroll in our cat training program at our bundled rate. Contact us for details, but it's an almost 50-percent discount. This offer will be valid until March 1, 2022. Note: if you don't request the discount at the time of enrollment, we won't offer it later, and you will have to confirm your APDT membership by sharing your APDT number when we ask. <https://www.animalbehaviorcollege.com/cat-training/>

Back in 2018, several people at ABC came to me suggesting we create an aquatics management program. My first reaction upon hearing this was to say, "Fish training? Really? Is that even a thing?" This should probably give all readers a basic gauge as to my aquatics knowledge. However, after looking at the statistics regarding the number of fish kept in North America and the size of the fish hobbyist industry, I was convinced. It took us the better part of 18 months to get the program written, but the result was impressive. We called this course AMP, which is short for Aquarium Maintenance

Program. AMP took off in 2020 and has done very well in 2021. For more information about this program, visit <https://www.animalbehaviorcollege.com/aquarium-maintenance/>

Finally, I will save what some consider the most exciting program for last. In 2021 we launched our newest course: Zookeeper Assistant Program or ZAP. What can I say, Animal Behavior College loves acronyms. The ZAP program is a 10-stage course that covers a variety of topics such as species-specific husbandry, including carnivores, primates, elephants, and more. In addition, the course addresses animal housing and exhibits, animal behavior, enrichment and training, animal safety in a zoo or rescue environment, exotic animal health, nutrition, etc. This program took us more than two years to create and has been the most popular new program we have offered since we launched our veterinary assistant course back in 2008. For more information on this new program, visit <https://www.animalbehaviorcollege.com/zookeeper-assistant/>

We are hard at work on new programs, and as they come closer to completion, I will share them as well. Special thanks to all ABC graduates, students, and mentors who are reading this, and thanks to everyone for taking your time to listen.



Steven Appelbaum is the founder and president of Animal Behavior College (ABC). With 40 years of dog training and pet industry experience, he used his extensive knowledge and business acumen to create Animal Behavior College – the largest animal career school of its kind in North America and offers courses in all 50 states and in every Canadian province. ABC offers four core programs in dog obedience trainer training, cat training, pet grooming and veterinary assisting, as well as five short-term programs on an array of subjects including, pet nutrition, training shelter dogs, pet massage, pet sitting and selling and teaching private lessons. Steve is a lecturer and has been an expert consultant and expert witness on a number of dog bite cases. He has written numerous published articles and columns for magazines. Steve is the author of the book *The ABC Practical Guide to Dog Training*, is the former editor of *Off Lead Magazine*, and currently writes a column for *Pet Age*. He and his wife Shelley reside in Pasadena, California. He is a private pilot, runner, avid Basset Hound lover and devoted "pet parent" to his Basset Hound Truffles and gigantic 105-pound Labrador named Sam. He may be reached at www.animalbehaviorcollege.com



What Factors are Associated with Aggression?

Study surveys 9,000 Finnish dogs to examine probable causes for aggressive behavior

By Kristina Spaulding, Ph.D, CAAB, and Irith Bloom, CPDT-KSA, CDBC, KPA CTP, VSPDT, CBATI

In this issue, we'll be discussing a recent article by Salla Mikkola, a doctoral candidate from the University of Helsinki, and colleagues on factors associated with aggression toward people in dogs. Several studies have already been conducted examining what factors are associated with canine aggression towards people. Given how science works, however, it's important that data be gathered from multiple different populations of dogs, using a variety of methods, for us to construct a complete picture. Previous studies have indicated that dogs that are male, older, and fearful are more likely to display aggressive behavior. Some studies have also found that families with more household members, a dog being an only dog, and living in a rural area are associated with increased aggression. The size of the dogs and their spay/neuter status have shown inconsistent results, but some studies have found that small dogs and surgically sterilized dogs are more likely to show aggression.

There is another important thing to note: All of these studies are survey based and the dogs in the studies were not randomly placed into one condition or another. The researchers themselves did not randomly determine if a dog was going to be spayed or neutered. That means that we cannot say that spay/neuter or living in a rural area, for example, caused aggression. We can only say that they are associated with each other. Without a study in which different test conditions are randomly assigned and the researchers measure what happens in each condition, it's impossible to say anything about causation. In this case, it's possible that spaying or neutering increased the likelihood or severity of aggression. It's also possible that dogs that have certain characteristics are more likely to be spayed or neutered. That means we must not jump to conclusions about the directionality of the relationship – in other words, what is causing what – based on survey data.

The rates of aggression seen in these studies also vary widely. One thing that does seem clear, though, is that aggression toward strangers (out-group members) is more common than aggression toward family members (in-group members). Rates of aggression toward family members range from 3 to 16 percent, while rates of aggression toward strangers range from 5 to 45 percent.

The particular study we are looking at today was based on survey data from more than 9,000 Finnish dogs. The data was gathered between 2015 and 2018. In this study, aggression was defined as growling, biting, or snapping. The study only included dogs that had high levels of aggression (bit or snapped 'sometimes' or growled 'often') and dogs with no aggression. They limited the data in this way for statistical reasons. The statistical analysis they were using required a binary variable, in this case 'high aggression' or 'no aggression'. Therefore, it's most accurate to say that this study examined factors associated with higher levels of aggression toward people, not just any aggression or low levels of aggression.

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Table 2 Contrasts between different groups of categorical and ordinal variables in the logistic regression analysis.

From: [Aggressive behaviour is affected by demographic, environmental and behavioural factors in purebred dogs](#)

Contrast	OR	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI	P-value
Sex				
Male vs. female	1.72	1.54	1.93	< 0.0001
Dogs in the family				
Only dog vs. other dogs	1.23	1.09	1.39	0.0010
Owners dog experience				
First dog vs. not a first dog	1.21	1.06	1.37	0.0042
Body size				
Small vs. large	1.488	1.256	1.764	< 0.0001*
Small vs. medium	1.383	1.155	1.658	0.0041
Medium vs. large	1.075	0.902	1.282	0.5671
Fearfulness				
High vs. low				
High vs. low	5.181	4.525	5.917	< 0.0001*
Moderate vs. low				
Moderate vs. low	1.931	1.667	2.237	0.0011
High vs. medium				
High vs. medium	2.681	2.342	3.067	0.0011
Breed groups				
Lagotto Romagnolo, Chihuahua, German Shepherd Dog, and Miniature Schnauzer vs Golden Retriever, and Labrador Retriever	3.185	2.053	4.950	< 0.0001*

1. P-values are controlled for false discovery rate except for a priori contrasts, which were formed after the data collection, but before the analysis. A priori contrasts are marked with *.

2. Significant P-values are bolded (P-value < 0.05)

3. OR odds ratio, CI confidence limit, N = 9270.

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Scientific Reports (*Sci Rep*) ISSN 2045-2322 (online)

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They also made several hypotheses regarding breed that are not listed here.

The researchers defined early weaning as prior to seven weeks and late weaning as later than eight weeks. The categorization of rural or urban was based on land use statistics on the proportions of artificial surfaces, agricultural areas, and natural areas within a three-kilometer radius of the home.

The survey results replicated many of the findings of previous studies and supported the first five of the seven hypotheses. There was an increased likelihood of aggression in older dogs, male dogs, small dogs, highly and moderately fearful dogs, and dogs living as an only dog. The researchers did not find that urban/rural environment or the age of weaning had an impact on the likelihood of aggression, though.

Rough Collies, Miniature Poodles, and Miniature Schnauzers were the most likely to display aggressive behavior in the sample of dogs studied. Labs, Golden Retrievers, and Laponian Herders had the lowest levels of aggression. It is extremely important to remember that these studies were conducted in Finland and, as such, the breed specific findings may not generalize well to other countries, or if dogs come from different breeding lines than those common in Finland.

The researchers also assessed fearfulness to see if it was associated with aggression. Fearfulness was divided into three different categories, based on how frequently the owners indicated the dog was fearful. The categories of fear were low (never), moderate (0-40 percent of the time – yes, the paper actually says 0-40 percent, though we assume they mean 1-40 percent), and high (greater than 40 percent of the time). The authors had several hypotheses regarding which factors would relate to a higher incidence of aggression. Here are their hypotheses:

- Older dogs are more aggressive than younger dogs.
- Male dogs are more aggressive than female dogs.
- Small dogs are more aggressive than large dogs.
- Highly fearful dogs are more aggressive than non-fearful dogs.
- Dogs in single dog households are more aggressive than dogs living in multi-dog households.
- Dogs in rural areas are more aggressive than dogs in urban areas.
- Dogs that were weaned early are more aggressive than dogs that were weaned late.

When looking at scientific results, it's important to pay attention to something called "effect size." The effect size indicates how large the difference is between groups. For example, a study could find that one group is more likely to show aggression toward people. However, if that group is only 2 percent more aggressive, that isn't a huge difference. If they are 10 or 50 percent more likely to show aggression towards people, then that has a much bigger real-world impact. In this study, fearfulness had a large effect size. Highly fearful dogs were more than five times more likely to show aggression than non-fearful dogs. Also, moderately fearful

dogs were more than twice as likely to be aggressive than non-fearful dogs.

Other findings of this research included that older dogs were more likely to behave aggressively towards people than younger dogs. Possible explanations for this correlation include older dogs experiencing more pain due to age-related physical conditions. Another explanation is that an older dog has simply had more time to behave aggressively.

Another finding, with a small effect size, was the owner’s dog experience. Dogs living with owners who had had at least one dog before were a little less likely to show aggression. The researchers suggest several explanations for this. First, experienced owners may be more aware of the importance of socialization. They may also be quicker to identify problems, and therefore start behavior interventions sooner. Finally, experienced owners who had a previous dog who showed aggression may simply be picking dogs more carefully.

Another factor with a somewhat larger effect size in this research was the sex of the dog. The researchers saw much higher rates of aggression toward people in male dogs than in female dogs. Other research has been mixed on this topic, though, so the authors remind us that more research is still needed to help sort out the associations between sex and rates of aggressive behavior.

One more interesting factor was whether the dog lived alone or in a multi-dog household. While the correlation was not strong, the data from this study do suggest that dogs who live with other dogs are less likely to show aggression towards people. A similar correlation has been seen in previous research, too.

There are a couple of other things to note: Due to the nature of the data they got, the researchers were not able to examine aggressive behavior towards family members vs. aggressive behavior towards strangers separately. They also did not have any information on the health of the dog.

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Table 3 The variables and their categories used in the model selection of aggressive behaviour.

From: [Aggressive behaviour is affected by demographic, environmental and behavioural factors in purebred dogs](#)

Variable	Explanation
Aggressive behaviour	Binary (event/non-event) variable. Dogs in the high aggressive behaviour group had tried to bite or snap at least sometimes or growled at least often (event). Dogs in the low aggressive behaviour group had never shown these signs of aggressive behaviour (non-event)
Age	Numerical variable. Reported current age of the dog in years
Sex	Binary variable. Reported sex of the dog. 1: male, 2: female
Sterilisation	Binary variable. Reported status of the dog. 1: intact, 2: neutered
Fearfulness	Ordinal variable. Dogs were divided into three fearfulness groups. High group included dogs which had shown fear of strangers, dogs or novel situations at least often (40–60% of the times). Moderate group included dogs that had shown fear rarely or sometimes (0–40% of the times) or had growled or barked in these situations. Low group included dogs which had never shown fear in these situations
Urban environment score	Numerical variable. The environmental land-use around the dog’s home. The coverage of three land-use types (artificial surfaces, agricultural areas, forests and semi-natural areas) was calculated within a three-kilometre range around the homes. The coverages were simplified into one numerical variable, in which a higher value indicates a more urban environment
Body size	Ordinal variable. Dogs were divided into categories based on the average height of the breed. 1: small (≤ 35 cm), 2: medium (36–49 cm), 3: large (≥ 50 cm)

Variable	Explanation
Breed	Categorical variable. Reported breed of the dog. Border Collie, Cairn Terrier, Chihuahua (short haired and long haired), Chinese Crested Dog, Coton de Tul��ar, Finnish Laponian Dog, German Shepherd Dog, Golden Retriever, Irish Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier (labelled Wheaten Terrier), Jack Russell Terrier, Labrador Retriever, Lagotto Romagnolo, Laponian Herder, Medium size Spitz, Miniature Poodle (toy, miniature, and medium sized), Miniature Schnauzer, Pembroke Welsh Corgi, Rough Collie, Shetland Sheepdog, Smooth Collie, Spanish Water Dog, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, other
Weaning age	Ordinal variable. The reported weaning ages were divided into four categories. 1: < 7 weeks of age, 2: at 7 weeks of age, 3: at 8 weeks of age, 4: > 8 weeks of age
Family size	Ordinal variable. The size of the family in which the dog lives. 1: single, 2: couple, 3: family with one or two adults and one child, 4: family with one or two adults and two children, 5: family with three or more adults and/or three or more children
Dogs in the family	Binary variable. Describes whether there are other dogs in the family. 1: the dog is the only dog in the family, 2: the dog lives with one or more dogs
Owner’s dog experience	Binary variable. Describes owner’s experience with dogs. 1: the dog is the owner’s first dog, 2: the owner has had dogs before this dog
Daily exercise	Ordinal variable. Describes the amount of dog’s daily exercise in hours. 1: < 1 h, 2: 1–2 h, 3: 2–3 h, 4: > 3 h
Daily time spent alone	Ordinal variable. Describes the daily time that dog spends alone at home without the presence of people. 1: < 3 h, 2: 3–6 h, 3: 6–8 h, 4: > 8 h

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Scientific Reports (*Sci Rep*) ISSN 2045-2322 (online)

All in all (or “in toto,” as is often said in scientific settings), this research largely confirms findings of previous similar studies, and reminds us that aggressive behavior is a complex trait with many factors involved. The authors suggest that thoughtful breeding of less aggressive individuals could reduce the prevalence of aggressive behavior – a suggestion with which we wholeheartedly agree. That said, nothing in this study actually supports that idea – though other research (such as the Russian Fox Experiment we discussed in a previous issue) does give it some credence. They also suggest that choosing the right dogs for one’s lifestyle and having multiple dogs may reduce rates of aggressive behavior. Finally, they point out that getting regular vet checks for older dogs could help reduce pain-related aggression. We hope you are already helping your clients with that last idea.

What can we take away from this study? As always, since this research used a questionnaire, we must be careful about making assumptions regarding causality. All this research provides is information about what factors are associated with increased rates of aggression towards people, not what factors might be playing a part in causing that aggression. That means steps such as having multiple dogs may decrease the

likelihood of aggression, but it's also possible having multiple dogs is not actually causing the observed decreased likelihood of aggression. Perhaps people are less likely to get a second dog if they already have an aggressive dog (which makes perfect sense). If that's the case, people with multiple dogs would be less likely to have an aggressive dog, but that doesn't mean that having multiple dogs is actually causing the decreased aggression.

This research was also done on a canine population in a country that most APDT members do not live in. Finland also happens to be among the most sparsely populated countries in the world, which is very different from the demographics where most APDT members live. Despite that, the sample size was quite large, so we shouldn't disregard the data just because of that.

All in all, the most important takeaway for dog professionals is probably the factor that had the largest effect size: fearfulness. While the data do not indicate that fearfulness causes aggression (since we can't infer causality, given the type of research), the association between fearfulness and aggression is so strong that we certainly cannot ignore it. This is also an association where we can have an influence since we can address fearfulness with behavior interventions. So what, you ask? Well, if nothing else, we can tell our clients that there is a research-backed association between fearfulness and aggression. That means that fearfulness may be an early warning sign of aggression down the road. If that helps encourage clients to follow through with the interventions we suggest, it could be the difference that keeps a dog in its home.

In the future, we hope to see experimental studies focusing on the effectiveness of various prevention and treatment programs for aggressive behavior. This type of research has the power to greatly improve our ability to help dogs and their families. In the meantime, we can continue to draw on the research that has been done to improve outcomes.



Kristina Spaulding, Ph.D., has been in the dog training and behavior profession since 1999. She has a doctorate degree in biopsychology—the study of the biological basis of behavior—and is a Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist. She is particularly interested in stress, neurobiology, cognition, emotion, and wellbeing and how to apply these concepts to the prevention and early intervention of behavior problems in dogs. In addition to working with behavior clients, Dr. Spaulding teaches a variety of online courses and webinars on the science of behavior through her website, www.smartdogtrainingandbehavior.com. She also regularly presents on canine behavior science at conferences and other events. In 2019, Dr. Spaulding received the Association of Professional Dog Trainers' (APDT's) Member of the Year Award. She currently serves on the IAABC Foundation Board and the Fear Free Advisory Group.



Irith Bloom, CPDT-KSA, CDBC, KPA CTP, VSPDT, CBATI, is a member of the faculty at Victoria Stilwell Dog Training Academy and DogBiz's Dog Walking Academy and speaks at conferences and seminars regularly. She has been published both online and in print. She volunteers with NESR, Annenberg PetSpace, and the LA County 2020 HPHF Coalition. Irith is the owner of The Sophisticated Dog, LLC (<https://thesophisticateddog.com>), a pet training company based in Los Angeles.

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Ranger



Mack

Trainer says two dogs recently offered calming presence during times of agitation, anxiety

By Skye Anderson, M.S., CPDT-KA, CTDI

I have been a dog trainer for a long time. I give seminars and workshops about service dogs and have trained them for years. I also evaluate dogs for therapy work. Some of us even work with therapy dogs and service dogs. We have seen them do their magic but how many of us have actually experienced first-hand what a therapy dog or service dog can do? I have had the occasion twice recently to experience the comfort of both a therapy dog and PTSD dog. Both incidents have made me a better trainer.

SO, THIS IS WHAT A THERAPY DOG DOES!

It is nearly post-pandemic now (October 2021) and a couple of months ago I was doing a refresher meet-and-greet at a dog sitting client's house since I haven't been there in nearly a year and a half. I have been their dog sitter for several years — two dogs' worth, as a matter of fact. In 2017, I even had Ranger, their current Labrador Retriever, in my puppy socialization class at eight weeks old. He had just come from a veterinarian's visit where he received shots and being at the end of the day when he was not at his most energetic, he actually fell asleep in the first class.

Anyway, as a lab for a busy family, Ranger is an almost-perfect dog and I love the guy (and the feeling is mutual). Now Ranger is nearly four. So, we were doing the meet-and-greet to review Ranger's schedule and to chat and catch up. I was telling the mom about my stressful year in local politics that is just beginning, which caused me to lose 20 pounds in two months. I was probably becoming quite animated, and even agitated, because, unbeknownst to me, Ranger came over and quietly put his head in my lap. The mom, who happens to be a minister, remarked how Ranger had behaved naturally like a therapy dog — responding to anxiety. Ranger would make an excellent partner for a human therapist. And I am so glad he gave me that physical understanding. Now I really 'get' what dogs can do for us because I received this canine present in person. And I learned that all dogs are therapy dogs: the majority are just freelancing — like Ranger.

SO, THIS IS WHAT A PSYCHIATRIC SERVICE DOG DOES!

Recently, the U.S. extricated personnel from Afghanistan, so this was still constantly in the news. Having been deployed there



Skye in Afghanistan



Mack and teen owner



Ranger and Skye

myself, I keep up with events and even give presentations about the situation when I was there, about the history of the country, and what the future may bring. Mack, another dog sitting client, is the perfect size for me – I don't have to bend down to pet him. He is a big dog, about 100 pounds, who either runs or saunters, pulls on leash (thank you, front-attach harness!) or sits down on a walk and loves to watch the little fox kit gambol around in the backyard, the twin fawns bounce across the grass like little goats, and the flock of Canada geese waddle to the pond across the street.

I don't always sleep well when I dog sit and this was my second-to-last night. I must have had another nightmare about Afghanistan because I suddenly woke up flailing and thrashing – but, at the same time, I felt a canine tongue on my face, licking me. Ah ha! Mack had heard me and come from wherever he had been sleeping in the house to stop my bizarre actions in the middle of the night. Whether he was responding to my possible PTSD and wanted me to be happy and quiet, or if he was frightened by my actions and wanted them to stop so he could get back to sleep, I may never know. Mack, after all, is not a service dog, nor trained to respond in this manner. Regardless, it was comforting to have him there

so I could pet him as I fell back to sleep. Had I been home (I am currently dogless), I probably would have remained awake in an agitated state for the rest of the night. Yet another example of experiencing the gift dogs bestow upon us, making me a better trainer. Thank you, Mack!



Skye Anderson, M.S., CPDT-KA, CTDI, has been a reward-based trainer for many years, writing about and training shelter and rescue dogs, therapy and service dogs. Her advanced degree in Avian Cytogenetics and Experimental Design (Statistics) makes her uniquely qualified to train dogs and their people. A long-time member of APDT, IAABC, and PPG, Skye also incorporates canine massage into her dog training, is an AKC CGC Evaluator and ATT Judge, and served as a Task Force Chair for APDT and on the conference committee for several years. Her work as an instructor-trainer for the Red Cross Pet First Aid program has come in handy a few times. Skye specializes in leash reactivity and puppies, is a Pets for Vets trainer, MBTI Certified Professional, and military retiree.



CRISIS CONTROL

**Fewer than half of APDT members are
trained in pet CPR, first aid**

By Beth Bowers, Certified Professional Dog Trainer, Certified Professional Pet Sitter,
and Certified Master Pet CPR and First Aid Instructor

wanted to scream, but nothing was escaping my lips. “This isn’t possible, and it can’t be happening right now. Why had I not thought this was a possibility? He helps me teach people how to save their dogs; it’s not supposed to happen to him. This isn’t real!”

These were very real thoughts and very real words that crossed my mind on that humbling night in early 2013 when my beloved dog fell to the ground in front of me. In seconds, my life with this amazing dog was flashing before my eyes. I’m a Certified Master Instructor for Pet Tech, and I teach Pet CPR and First Aid to pet owners and pet care professionals alike across the country and in my home state of Texas. He was my first partner in every class. He changed my life and taught thousands of people how to save their pets, and now I was facing doing CPR on my own CPR demonstration dog.

In the unfortunate moment that your dog collapses in front of you, you don’t have time to scream or overanalyze. You don’t have time to find a handbook or Google “Dog CPR.” You have your head, your hands, and your heart, and that’s it. You must rely on muscle memory, what you’ve heard or seen, and your connection with your pet. Ask anyone who has been in the position of the “rescuer” performing the adrenaline-pumping whirlwind procedure of CPR on a beloved pet, and they will tell you how incredibly time-altering it is.

Recently during an Association of Professional Dog Trainers member survey, the question was posed: “Are you or any member of your training team certified in pet first aid?” More than 50 percent of members said they were not trained in pet CPR and first aid!

If a pet went down in front of you, your client would most likely **not** know what to do. And it is reasonable to expect the pet professional should know what to

do. All first responders and medical personnel must keep their human CPR training current, no matter how many times they have taken it or how long they have been in their field. It is widespread for large corporations to require specific members of their teams to be trained for human CPR, but there is no requirement in the pet industry ever to have training in how to save a pet. You never think it will happen to you until it does, and then it might be too late.

I also want to ask, of those of you who were trained, are you still current? What do you remember from your class? Have you reviewed any of your materials since the class? Was it online, or did you have an opportunity to practice the technique in person, on a stuffed dog to make sure your hand placement and process were correct? Aside from CPR, what were all the pet first aid skills taught, and how thorough was your training? Programs should cover all types and positions of Canine and Feline CPR, Rescue Breathing, Bleeding and Shock Management, Choking Management, Injury Assessment, Poisoning, Snakebites, Assessing Your Pet’s Vitals, How to Put together a Pet First Aid Kit, Insect Bites and Stings, Heat and Cold Injuries, Snout-To-Tail Assessment, Emergency Muzzling for Safety, Seizures, Senior Care and Dental Care. How many emergencies could you prevent if you had more training in all the different emergency situations that your personal pets or your client’s pets could come across?

I would estimate that 60 percent of my students enrolled in my Pet Tech classes because an emergency had recently occurred and they didn’t know what to do. Sometimes those pet parents are lucky, but many have lost their pets. They do not ever want to feel that way again, so they decide to take action and learn what to do next time. Many of our students don’t know what they don’t know. They may enroll for a specific topic, or the CPR portion intrigues them. Countless students during the 15 years I have been teaching are fascinated at all of the other emergencies that we cover that are statistically more likely to happen to a pet on any given day.

In the last few years, one of our favorite Pet Tech stories was about a dog that collapsed on a grooming table from an unknown cause. The whole thing was caught on security cameras and is inspiring to watch. While several team members stood around



Burt

helplessly because they didn't know what to do, one groomer had recently been trained in a Pet Tech PetSaver class. Without thinking, she swooped in and began chest compressions and breaths and amazingly revived the dog's breathing. They rushed him to his vet's office, and the dog survived.

I taught a class many years ago at a doggy daycare, and the day after the course, they had two dogs in the playroom get their mouths caught up on each other's collars and the pressure was asphyxiating one dog. Since the staff had taken the training just the day before, they jumped in ready to help. Within moments, the dog was revived and survived unscathed. You never know what day you will need your training and skills.

I also knew a pet sitter colleague of mine who was visiting her family out of town. Her family's dog was outside with everyone as they enjoyed a summer barbecue, and the dog was suddenly stung by an insect and developed an anaphylaxis reaction to the sting and fell unconscious. Luckily, the pet sitter's company had put her through a Pet Tech Pet CPR and First Aid Training course, so she immediately knew what to do, and she saved the pet.

The hard reality is that although there are many different statistics out there, CPR is not as successful as TV medical dramas might have you believe. There is a menagerie of tools available in a hospital to save a pet's life, and even then, veterinarians estimate only 5-10 percent will survive cardiac arrest. Studies show that the sooner a bystander or pet parent safely and effectively starts chest compressions and breaths, the greater the success rate and the smaller the risk for neurological damage.

The following is a highly personal story, but I promised him that he would live on and continue teaching students in my classes and beyond. I am telling you his story so that you can learn from him. Our mission is to change and improve pets' lives through his story.



Beth Bowers with CPR demo dog Burt.

Burt's Story: Burt was unique, to say the least. Burt was utterly amazing, to say the most.

Flashback to 13 years ago: I traveled about four hours away (each way) to this small unknown Texas town with a tiny rundown county shelter after finding this intriguing and very unusual looking dog on Petfinder when I was 17 years old. While he was not my family's first dog, he was my first dog. My mother was adamant that I was not getting a dog, but my rebellious phase had a late start, so I drove to Henrietta, Texas, and got my dog. This 110-pound, 5-foot-long, 2-foot-tall Basset Hound on steroids stole my heart instantly. He was my everything and experienced all my "first's" right along with me: new apartments, new houses, new loves, new jobs. As many first dog owners in their 20s can relate, he was my only constant on that journey in my life.

He had horrible separation anxiety in the early years. He was a Basset Hound/Great Pyrenees mix and his deep Basset bark was sure to get me evicted. I could not deny he was as obsessed with me as I was with him. Luckily, since I was working in the animal field, I just took him to work with me every day. Now, as a dog trainer, I have better recommendations for separation anxiety, but I was green then.

Once my reputation and knowledge grew through the years, I started doing public demonstrations and events, and Burt began to build his reputation. At one point, he had more Facebook friends than I did. The first cue he ever learned was "sleep." And he did it so well that in 2007, I became a Certified Pet Tech Instructor so that Burt and I could start educating the public in pet CPR, first aid and care for your pets, and he could show off his unique "sleep" trick. It merged my two passions of education and my medical background as a veterinary nurse, and Burt played "unconscious" very well.



Beth Bowers using Potato as a demo dog.

One Decision Against My Gut Turned My World Upside Down

One particularly exhausting day, I had been doing overnight pet sitting for a client for a week and was on my last night, so I decided to mix all my dogs so they could all keep each other company. Something in my gut stopped me, thinking it would be too long with everyone together and no supervision. Still, I quickly dismissed the feeling and proceeded along, blaming my exhaustion for the overanalyzing.

When I arrived home the following day, one of my foster dogs had escaped her kennel. My heart dog, Burt, was in severe shock, covered with puncture wounds and blood. A fight had broken out, and I had my suspicions it was a multiple dog attack. The unknown details still haunt me to this day.

I immediately rushed him to the veterinary clinic where I worked, and they stabilized him with a very guarded prognosis. Unfortunately, within 24 hours, he fell into acute kidney failure due to the shock and trauma on his 12-year-old body. The roller-coaster of events and emotions had begun that resulted in five long days never leaving his side. I was so blessed to work for a veterinary company that let me stay with him and camp there overnight so that I could see to it that he got round-the-clock care.

He began to show improvement on the fifth day, so I left briefly to go home and shower and grab something to eat. When I got back, I was on the phone with my vet, talking about him potentially going home later that week if he continued to show improvement as he had that day. I was finally in good spirits having some newfound hope and was unhooking his IV line set so that he could get out and go potty. He was very anxious and repeatedly barking to get out of his kennel, so I hung up with her and hurried to let him get out.



Beth teaching first aid class with stuffed animals.

The Unthinkable

I held him up, supporting him as he walked to go potty, and he fell to the ground. For a split second, I thought he tripped, but then my heart stopped. My 110-pound baby dog went limp in my arms and my life as I knew it crashed right along with him. My cell battery was on 1-percent, and I made two phone calls. One call was to my vet, and one was to the veterinary nurses at 11:30 p.m. All I screamed to each of them was, “He crashed!” They were on their way... 20-30 minutes away.

I’m in a pet hospital, but I didn’t know where their crash cart was. I worked for the company, but I didn’t work in this hospital. I never asked because his crashing was never a possibility. It never crossed my mind that this would happen to me. This happens to other pet parents, not with my pets. I didn’t know where all their equipment was, and it would take me too long to find it. I know Pet CPR. I teach Pet CPR. I didn’t have time to think, just time to act. I performed CPR – 30 chest compressions with two breaths over and over and over and over...non-stop for 30 minutes. Exhausted can’t fully describe it. I was not going to give up. I performed CPR until help arrived. We attempted epinephrine injections. They finally placed a tracheal tube and filled his lungs with fresh oxygen. They all tried compressions until my vet said the fateful final words: “I’m sorry, Beth... he’s gone...” and my world went black.

Your adrenaline crashes, panic rushes your cells, shock takes over, and your body is spent. Even using your whole body instead of your arms, the strength it takes to continue compressions that long completely robs you of every ounce of energy you think you have left. You can’t scream and cry and perform CPR simultaneously, so a swell of un-vented emotions surfaced, and I don’t have much memory after they pronounced him.

I, of ALL people, should have been able to save him... I know this skill like the back of my hand. I teach this skill from

memory to hundreds of students each year. I still questioned every single move I made that evening. Did I do the compressions correctly? Did I see his chest rise and fall? Pet Tech has a favorite saying, “You do the best you can, at any given time, with the resources you have,” and that statement has grounded me again and again over the years. We suspect that he had an aneurysm or arrhythmia, but honestly, we will never know.

The only thing I do know is that no matter how long I did CPR that day, it would not have saved him. But I was not the one who had to decide when that moment was. Other trained professionals came in to help, and they made that call for me. That, in a surreal way, helped me cope a little more in my grieving process. It prevented me from being able to ask myself the most challenging question of all: “What if I had continued CPR for just a little longer?” or “Did I give up too soon?”

We only tell people to stop CPR in three situations

- 1.) The pet becomes conscious (Obviously!).
- 2.) You hand over the care of your pet to a veterinarian when you arrive at the animal hospital.
- 3.) You physically cannot do CPR any longer —You did the best you could with the resources you had and should be immensely proud of that. There is no “magic” time limit... I tell each of my students that it is a call they never want to make. CPR is effective in many emergencies, so don’t ever give up on that hope unless someone else takes over or

The critical piece that many don’t realize is that although CPR is not always successful, it is comforting to know that you did everything you could have done to save them. The alternative is watching helplessly and screaming, not knowing what would have happened had you known what to do.

Become Pet CPR and First Aid Trained

Although CPR could not bring my Burt back, CPR is successful in many situations. What if this was you? What would you have done? Do you know how to perform CPR for your pet? If you do, congratulations. If you don’t know, you should. In our PetSaver seminar, we always promote having other people around you trained properly in Pet CPR. When and if that situation arises, you have someone to rotate with during your 2-minute cycles. Between the panic, adrenaline, and the feeling of hyperventilation, there will be moments when you feel like you can’t go on. When you have someone else rotating off with you, you are more likely to continue much longer than doing it all on your own, and most importantly, the pet is receiving new strength in compressions and fresh oxygen from your breaths. If you try to do it all yourself, over time, your power fades, and your oxygen depletes the more exhausted you become. But if you are in that situation performing CPR alone, don’t worry; you will continue as long as you physically can. Fueled by your love for

that animal drives your energy even when you think you have none left.

Get Trained and Stay Current

Getting trained in Pet CPR and First Aid is, of course, the first step. Although many organizations, including Pet Tech, issue their Certificate of Training renewing every two years, I encourage pet professionals to stay current every year. Over time, you hopefully don’t have to use many of your skills, and they will fade if not reviewed and practiced regularly, just like learning a new language.

Most accurate and up-to-date information

Ensure you are being trained accurately with the most up-to-date information released by the American Veterinary Medical Association and other professional veterinary publications, medical journals, and associations. Be sure to research Pet CPR and First Aid classes in your area.

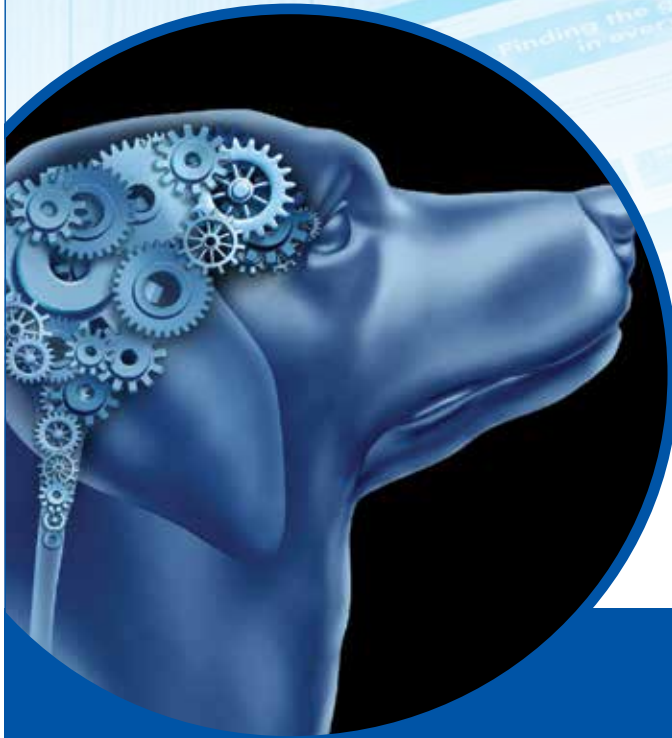
Live Hands-On Training

It is easy and convenient to take a quick webinar, but will you remember each detail when you need it most? Taking a live and interactive, hands-on class will build up your muscle memory. It is essential to learn these skills so that you leave the course having practiced hand placement and how to adjust your hands and the position of your pet for the most effective canine and feline CPR chest compressions, based on the size and shape of your pet. If you’re ready to take that next step to make sure you know what to do to try to save your pet, visit PetTech.net to find an instructor near you, or if you are joining us at APDT’s Annual Educational Conference and Trade Show in Daytona Beach Oct. 19-21, 2022, be sure to register for the Pet CPR and First Aid class offered before the conference.



***Beth Bowers** is the lead dog trainer for Power to the PawZ of Dallas, Texas. She has been in the industry for more than 20 years, including being a veterinary technician for more than 10 years. She is a Certified Professional Dog Trainer, Certified Professional Pet Sitter, and a Certified Master Pet CPR and First Aid Instructor. She and her team offer positive reinforcement, force-free dog training, pet sitting, dog walking, pet grooming and many educational programs such as Pet CPR and First Aid classes across the Dallas area along with instructor trainings across Texas.*

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Contact APDT if you have any questions at apdt@apdt.com or 800-PET-DOGS



SOLUTIONS FOR CLASSROOM CHALLENGES

Voices from the Training Community

By Jamie McKay, CPDT KSA



Ask 10 trainers a question and you'll get 10 different answers! If you have a suggestion for a topic to be covered in this series, please email jamiemckay@optonline.net.

This challenge was suggested by **Kellyn Croy** of Portland, Oregon

I have clients who don't seem to be working with their dogs between class sessions so I see little to no progress being made. I don't want to hold the rest of the class back but I'm at a bit of a loss on what to do with these client/pet teams. Any suggestions from the more experienced trainers out there?

Ellen Rassiger, CPDT KA, CDBC
www.happydogbehavior.com

I would definitely shoot a “just checking in” email over, asking how at-home training is going. I, too, am often baffled by people who come to class weekly but seem to be doing little at home, but

sometimes there is much more going on than you can possibly know and showing up for class is sometimes all they can manage. It could be they registered for the class, but then an elderly parent got sick and they're in the process of moving them into a nursing home, or their childcare fell through, or any number of personal scenarios. I would deliberately do this through email, not a phone call; if you get them on the phone, it can put them on the spot. And they might be more willing to “share” via email.

If everything is “fine,” then I'd ask follow-up questions: Are you having any challenges practicing at home? Are you trying to find “time” to practice but don't have it? I recommend two-to-three minute sessions throughout the day. Are their kids interfering? Suggest ways to get them involved. Do they have trouble remembering what you covered in class? Written handouts, more (or less!) detailed handouts, or even video might be better. Sometimes saying to someone, “I don't think you're getting as much out of the class as I'd like you to” can light a bit of a fire under them.

I would be very aware of not holding back the rest of the class, though, because of their lack of practice. If they're not practicing their recall and their dogs run around the room when it's their turn, make the exercise easier so they can have *some* success but not slow down/interrupt/take unfair amounts of time away from the group. Use a long line on the dogs before their turn. Have them do a shorter distance than the rest of the group. Make sure you've got amazing treats at the ready in case they are habitually without. This shows compassion and flexibility. But if their lack of practice is disruptive, I'd pull the dog – it's worse for your business in the long run to have the other five people have a not-great experience because you're bending over backwards for one person. At the end of the day, you can't work harder to train someone's dog than they will.

Carol Davenport
<http://indytherapydog.wordpress.com>

I have had similar experiences when working with owners wanting to train their dogs to become therapy dogs for others and when working one-on-one. I always make a point of stating something like “when we were in school if we didn't do the home-work we didn't get the good grades.” I see no reason why you can't be

frank with the owner as to why the dog is not excelling. I have a client right now who comes up with every excuse in the book for not practicing and, like you said, it shows. It can be very frustrating. However, when she sees her dog respond to training she gets very excited! And isn't that what it is all about!

Pat Miller, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA
www.peaceablepaws.com

Having been guilty of the same offense myself, I can empathize with clients over this one. And I do. I usually start by saying to the whole class that I know all too well how busy our lives are, and how challenging it can be to set aside time to do the dog training. And I tell them I face the same challenges when I take my dogs in training classes.

I like to remind them that training can be done in short bursts—it doesn't have to be a half-hour or hour-long session—and one of the reasons I always have dog treats in my pockets is so I can practice a few behaviors here and there on the fly. We practice a few sits and downs prior to going out the door to the back yard, and dinner time is the perfect time to practice "Wait" for the food bowl. Television commercials are another perfect one-to-three minutes training session, as are those frustrating times when some company's customer "service" department has put you on hold for three minutes, 15 minutes, or longer. Just put the phone on speaker, lay it down, and play/train with your dog!

Other possible times:

- Waiting with your child for the school bus
- Waiting for the air fryer to finish crisping up those onion rings
- Waiting for the 5-minute microwave dinner
- Waiting for the last few minutes of the dryer load to finish

I bet you can think of more. And guess what? Since "real life" is when we need our dogs to respond to our cues, there is huge value in routinely practicing during "real life."

If the client/team still doesn't seem to get it, then I might take them after the next class, commiserate with their challenges, and ask how else I can help. You can offer one of more private catch-up sessions if they are up for it. If they say they just don't have time to do the training, I would reiterate the above and ask them if they can suggest some "real life" times that they could slide in some on-the-fly training session. We also use "Bonus Bones" to positively reinforce our students (they buy prizes with their bones at graduation), and I would keep my eyes on this client to look for opportunities to give Bones for even the smallest signs of improvement.

Lyn Richards Pawlowski
Doglogic.com

I suggest scheduling a private training session where you can have him demonstrate what he's doing with the dog in between

class sessions. If you aren't seeing a demonstration that he is willing to do the work, then I would excuse him from class (no refund either).

Kate Powell, ABCDT, CPDT-KA, CTDI
Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Williamsburg, VA

There's always more to a situation than meets the eyes. Training should be a fun experience for the dog and person where they learn to train as playful teammates—not as a chore. There are many unknown factors or variables that would need answering to address why the person appears to be listening but not hearing and/or possible not following through and doing. I would consider what her DISC style (Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness <https://www.discprofile.com/>) is in relating to other people; especially regarding taking authoritative advice or implementation of taking action or not and adjust my instruction if possible in the group class setting to help meet the client's needs. Learning in training does not arrive based on the human Apple watch or calendar time. It's based on how the individual brain processes and how clear/consistent are the instructions it is given.

Jamie McKay, CPDT KSA
www.McKay9.com

Sometimes life takes over and even the best laid plans don't work out so I try to be understanding when students haven't found or taken the time to practice skills taught in class. However, when a student comes in week after week and it's apparent that they haven't worked with their dog I find it frustrating and sometimes disruptive to the class. When the student struggles to keep up in class for whatever the reason I try to pay close attention to them and compliment every positive interaction with their dog. If they are not up to the skill being worked on I ask them to reward their dog for attention/or break the skill down to something simpler in hopes that making even a little progress in class encourages them. I usually address the class as a whole and talk about ways to incorporate training into short bursts of everyday life. My goal is to inspire them to work with their dog at home.



Jamie McKay, CPDT KSA, gained her early experience at the Humane Society of Westchester teaching safe handling skills to volunteers to enhance the adoptability of shelter dogs. Jamie teaches group classes at Port Chester Obedience Training Club in New York. She is a Canine Good Citizen evaluator and competes in agility and rally obedience. Jamie and her husband, Stephen, CPDT KSA, own McKay9 Dog Training, LLC.

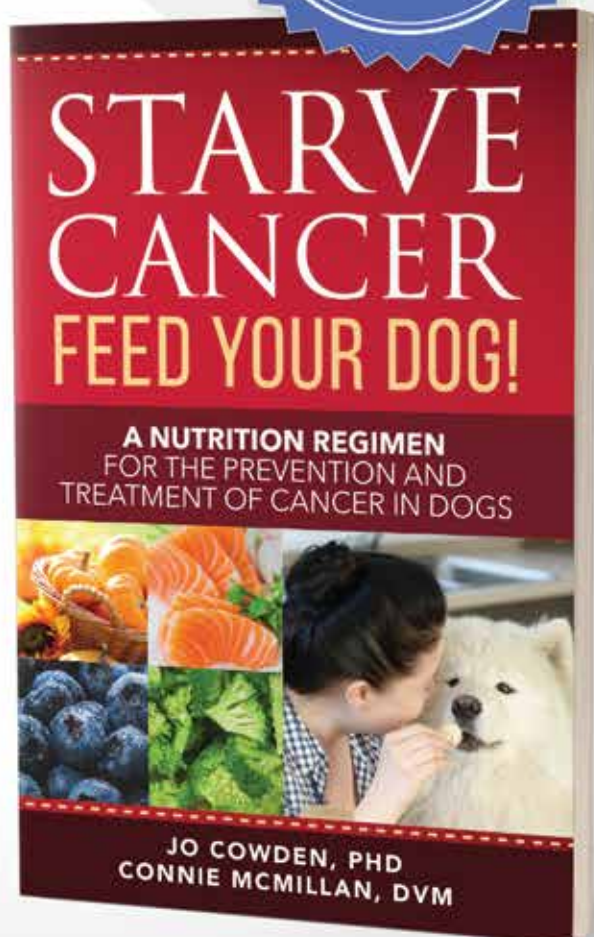
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Editor's Review

Top Trainer-Recommended Books

By Jennifer Berg, BEAD, CPDT-KA

The dog training industry is a bit of a Wild West and without regulations guiding education or professional standards of practice, it can be a challenge to find reputable dog training information and instruction. For example, libraries, stores, and online lists of “best dog training books” provide a wide range of titles that vary in approach and content — from positive and empowering to coercive and inhumane, and from science-supported to fabricated. It’s no wonder many dog caregivers and trainers are confused.

One day, after reading a social media post by a highly experienced, reputable trainer who was promoting a book written by a different trainer, this question popped into my head: What would a “Recommended Dog Training Book” list look like if it were created by a group of dog trainers?

I asked several reputable, experienced dog trainers educated in positive reinforcement dog training — professionals whose methods are supported by current, peer-reviewed science — what book they would recommend for dog caregivers and what book they would recommend for dog trainers. The question was well-received and they were happy to share their recommendations. A common response was that it was very difficult to choose just one book because there are so many good ones and a lot depends upon what information the reader is looking for (or needs to know but just doesn’t realize it yet), so I suggested they choose a title that would be helpful for a wide audience of dog caregivers and dog trainers.

I am very grateful to the dog trainers who were able to share their time and knowledge to help create this list and to those who gave me the names of more trainers I could contact. I ended up with a varied list: some names are well-known and some are not; some have decades of experience and some are relatively new to the profession. Their names are listed at the end. I hope you find the two book lists interesting and helpful. The titles are listed in alphabetical order, and some were recommended by multiple trainers. This is just a sample of the quality dog training books out there; if a title is not listed, it does not mean it is lesser than those on the list.

Top Trainer-Recommended Books for Dog Caregivers (in alphabetical order)

- ***Abimsa Dog Training: A Practical, Force-Free Guide to Problem Solving and Training*** by Grisha Stewart. “This book is meant for anybody with a dog, especially a puppy or new rescue. It’s got all sorts of specific exercises to solve problems.”
- ***Before and After Getting Your Puppy*** by Ian Dunbar. “A great book to help owners lay the right foundation for success and prevent, rather than fix, behavior issues.”
- ***Being a Dog: Following the Dog Into a World of Smell*** by Alexandra Horowitz. “A playful yet interesting read and encourages readers to sniff the world through their dogs nose.”
- ***Do No Harm Dog Training and Behavior Handbook*** by Linda Michaels. “For the average pet parent. It includes easy-to-

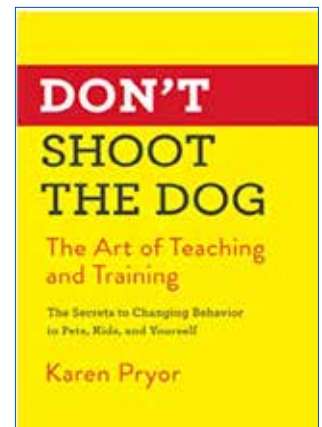
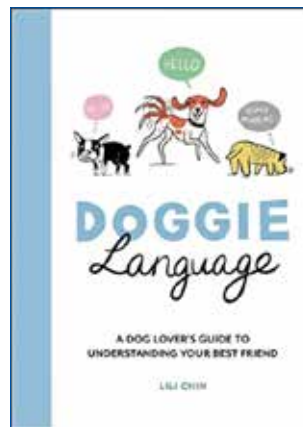
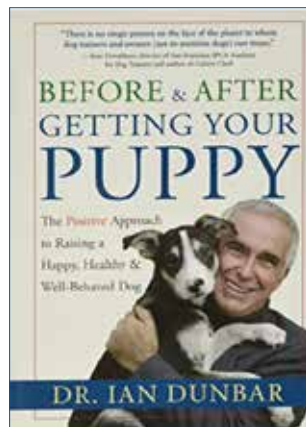
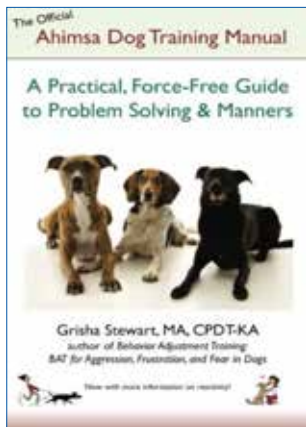
understand and easy-to-apply foundational principles, basic skills and problem solving for the more difficult problems as well.”

- ***Doggie Language: A Dog Lover’s Guide to Understanding Your Best Friend*** by Lili Chin. “A must-have for learning how to read dogs.”

“Perhaps the book of 2020, Lili Chin’s masterpiece is informative and spot on as well as beautiful. The drawings are exquisite.”
“A pocket-sized illustrated book about dog body language. Perfect for parents teaching their children about dog body language.”

- ***Don’t Shoot the Dog: The Art of Teaching and Training*** by Karen Pryor. “This is a book that all dog owners should have on their shelves. It’s not a step-by-step guide to teaching behaviors. It’s a thorough and easy to understand overview of the science of modern training and what makes it so effective.”

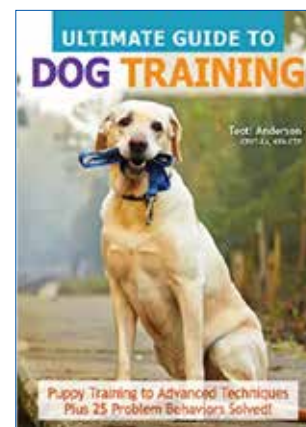
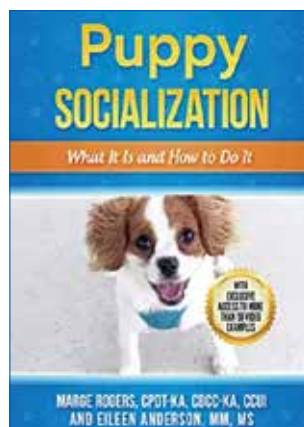
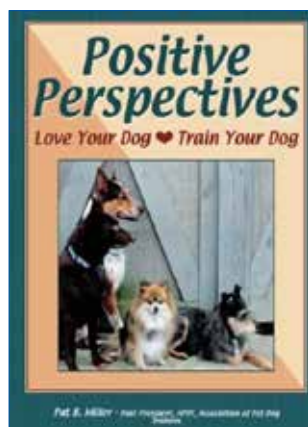




- **Family Friendly Dog Training: A Six Week Program for You and Your Dog** by Patricia McConnell and Aimee Moore. “If the owner has a nice, normal dog from a reputable source, then [it] is a great resource.”
- **Hunting Together: Harnessing Predatory Chasing in Family Dogs through Motivation-Based Training** by Simone Muller. “Predation is one of the places positive trainers need more education on, and this is the missing link.”
- **Living with Kids and Dogs...Without Losing Your Mind** by Colleen Pelar. “It involves the kids and has specific things that kids can do to be a part of the training in a proactive, positive way. It’s not complex, and has a quick summary page for those parents that don’t have the time to read the whole book, though it’s really not that long to begin with.”
- **Maran Illustrated Dog Training** by Marangraphics Development Group. “Simple and practical and the pictures are priceless.”
- **The Other End of the Leash: Why We Do What We Do Around Dogs** by Patricia McConnell.
 “I don’t think people just need to know how to train their dog, but people need to understand their dog. And this book can really help with that. This was the first book I read as a confused dog owner reading [dog training books by] the Monks of New Skete and Cesar Milan, that actually helped me build a better relationship with my dog and ultimately led me down a path of dog training. My goal is always a happy and healthy dog that I have a relationship with, not a robot that does everything I tell it to do. So a book that describes how to teach things isn’t going to help me achieve that. I need to know what drives and what motivates my dog. And for the average dog owner some books are just too technical and the language too scientific; this book is clear and precise and easy to understand for even the most novice dog handler.”
- **Positive Perspectives: Love Your Dog, Train Your Dog** by Pat Miller. “[Miller] makes a wealth of science and training techniques very accessible for those without behavior education

and experience. She’s also a brilliant apologist for fear-free force-free training techniques.”

- **Positive Perspectives 2: Know Your Dog, Train Your Dog** by Pat Miller. “This is an excellent resource for dog owners that helps them understand their dog’s communication, gets them started on basic skills training and helps them prevent/solve common behavior problems. A well-rounded and easy to read book that all dog owners should have on their bookshelf for reference.”
- “I place it first on a recommended reading list for my students, both in class and private consultations.”
- **The Power of Positive Dog Training** by Pat Miller. “It advocates for positive-reinforcement-based dog training, covers basic good manners training and more, and is written in a style accessible for non-professional dog lovers.”
- **Puppy Primer** by Brenda Scidmore and Patricia McConnell. “It’s a short, easy read that’s easy to understand for average dog owners.”
- **Puppy Socialization: What It Is and How to Do It** by Marge Rogers and Eileen Anderson. “A must-have for anyone with a new puppy or planning to add a new puppy to their home. Thankfully, the general public seems to understand socialization is needed for a new pup, yet [the general public] doesn’t understand the full extent of what socializing a puppy really means. Most think it’s merely getting the puppy out in public, yet there are many important components [for] doing it right to ensure the puppy’s comfort. With photos (print book) and videos (e-book) Rogers and Anderson educate owners to understand how to set their puppies up for a lifetime of emotional comfort while educating the puppy parent every step of the way.”
- **Puppy Start Right: Foundation Training for The Companion Dog** by Kenneth Martin and Debbie Martin.
 “This book has everything from how to socialize your puppy effectively, training exercises, how to manage common puppy behavior issues as well as training solutions....[A] go-to for all



puppy parents, and the information is relevant for adult dog owners as well.”

- **Training Levels: Steps to Success** by Sue Ailsby. “Simple, straightforward training and easy to follow writing style.... Training is about effective communication and Ailsby is a master at communicating with dogs and people in ways both can understand. She breaks down the finished product (behavior) into small, achievable steps — lays a foundation for behavior and builds on the successes laid in that foundation....If you only buy one dog training book it should be this one.”

- **The Ultimate Guide to Dog Training: Puppy Training to Advanced Techniques** by Teoti Anderson. “This book covers all the basics with a solid foundation of how to get started and avoid issues while training. All using positive methods!”

- **The Whole Dog Journal Handbook of Dog & Puppy Care and Training** edited by Nancy Kearns. “It is well researched with contributions by well-known and well-respected experts in their fields. The book is full of sensible, science-based, force free training and care advice. It is well written and has clear helpful pictures.”

Top Trainer-Recommended Books for Dog Trainers (in alphabetical order)

- **Animal Training: Successful Animal Management Through Positive Reinforcement** by Ken Ramirez. “Ken Ramirez consistently applies a relatable way of teaching training concepts that are easy to understand and then puts them into practice. The ease in which he uses analogies and metaphors coupled with citations from colleagues makes his book a must-have for professional trainers and animal caregivers.”

- **Coaching People to Train Their Dogs** by Terry Ryan. “This book is a super book for new and experienced trainers. The training is force-free and it covers all you can think of needing as a trainer including setting up your business, people skills and class organization. It is well-organized and well-written with good photos and illustrations. I have recommended this book for many years.”

“This book is a must-read for any dog trainer or aspiring dog trainer. From learning theory to lesson planning, how to run a training business and more. The people skills section and classroom management ideas are very beneficial.”

- **Control Unleashed: Reactive To Relaxed** by Leslie McDevitt. “It puts so much emphasis on creating a dialogue with the dog and provides simple pattern games that are easy to teach clients.”

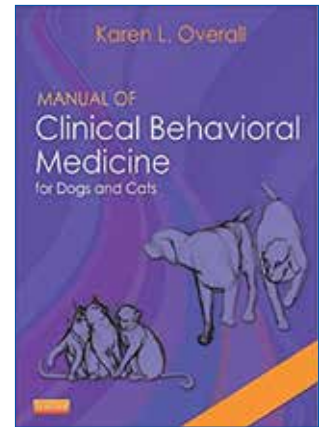
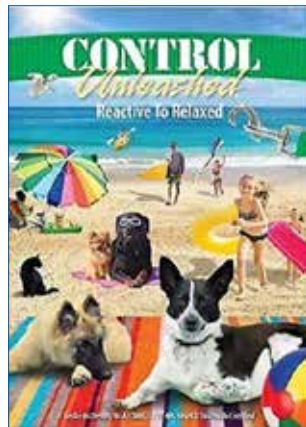
- **The Culture Clash** by Jean Donaldson. “As for trainers, my favorites are more about a general perspective about dogs and our lives with them rather than specific training techniques.”

“Every trainer, groomer, etc., will develop techniques for training that synthesize the techniques of their various mentors, but [Donaldson] provides a perspective that allows us to, to use her word, ‘unpack’ dog behavior and think logically about what we’re doing. [Donaldson] at once de-anthropomorphizes dogs and celebrates them for being exactly what they are, and forces readers to leave their own baggage out of training. The Culture Clash isn’t an instruction manual as many dog training books attempt to be; it’s an essay arguing for clarity of thought and clarity of communication - two things of which she herself is absolutely the master.”

“This one is a classic and one of the first dog training books I read. It had such a strong impact that built the foundation of my work: always considering things from the dog’s perspective and using humane, science-based training methods.”

- **Dog Sense: How the New Science of Dog Behavior Can Make You a Better Friend to Your Pet** by John Bradshaw. “[Bradshaw] does a beautiful job exploring the evolution of dogs from wolves and earlier canine ancestors, as well as critiquing out of date theories of behavior and punishment/dominance-based training techniques. Training professionals are well served being informed about these topics.”

- **Domestic Dog Cognition and Behavior: The Scientific Study of Canis Familiaris** edited by Alexandra Horowitz. “Horowitz has compiled a wealth of dog cognition and behavior studies from leading researchers from around the world. Any trainer



wishing to enhance their knowledge of the science of cognition and behavior will enjoy having this on their bookshelf. It's a hefty price, but worth it."

- **Excel-Erated Learning: Explaining in Plain English How Dogs Learn and How Best to Teach Them** by Dr. Pamela Reid. "If you don't understand your learning theory, you really aren't ready to train dogs. And Pam boils complex theory down into easy-to-understand bites."

- **How Dogs Learn** by Mary Burch and Jon Bailey. "[The authors] teach key learning and behavior modification principles."

- **Jagdverhalten** by Anja Fiedler. "The title translates to "predatory behavior" and as the title says, it's about predation and how to deal with it in a force-free and science-based way. It's the most comprehensive book on this topic on the market right now and it's an absolute must for any dog owner whose dog loves to hunt or any trainer who deals with client's dogs that love to hunt."

- **Manual of Clinical Behavioral Medicine for Dogs and Cats** by Dr. Karen Overall. "This was the book that I bought when I felt like I finally made it as a dog trainer and I needed to expand my understanding of behavior and ultimately medication, as well. The book is worth the price for the protocols alone, but the information in it, while at times dry, is worth the book's weight in gold. I can't even say how often I refer back to the book or look stuff up and the number of times I refer back to the protocols or demonstrate the protocols to help my clients. There are a ton of books on the market, but none that I refer back to as often as this one."

- **Oh Behave! Dogs from Pavlov to Premack to Pinker** by Jean Donaldson. "I love anything by Jean Donaldson."

- **People Training Skills for Pet Professionals: Your Essential Guide To Engaging, Educating and Empowering Your Human Clients** by Niki Tudge. "I won the book at the PPG Educational Summit in 2016 and I'm so glad that I did. A lot of valuable ways to communicate to our learners on both ends of the leash!"

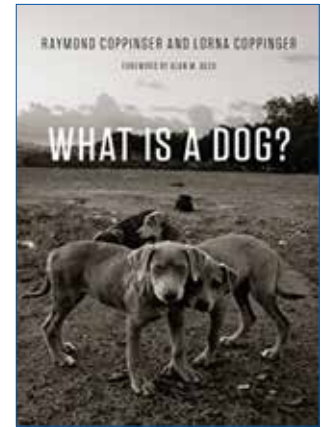
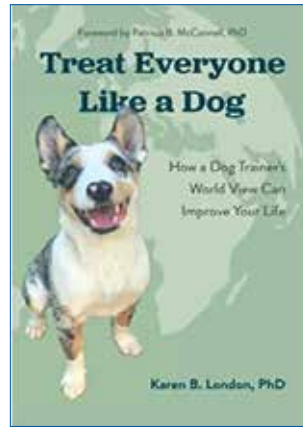
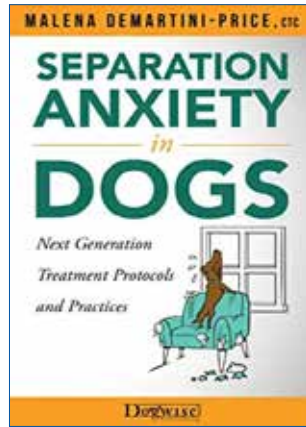
- **Positive Perspectives 2: Know Your Dog, Train Your Dog** by Pat Miller. "I learned a great deal from [Miller's] book about the application of advanced concepts to dog training"

- **Separation Anxiety in Dogs: The Next Generation Treatment Protocols and Practices** by Melena DeMartini-Price. "A practical guide for how to assist a client who has a dog with mild isolation distress. It does not make you a CSAT, but it will help a large number of dogs who will be experiencing difficulty with their humans returning to work after two years of COVID."

- **Training Levels** by Sue Ailsby. "The size of the two volumes is intimidating, but if a trainer is looking for detailed, clear instructions for how to break down a behavior into smaller steps, Ailsby's book is the manual. Even trainers who are happy with the way they train a behavior may find some good nuggets in this book. It's always great to learn a better way of training something, and Ailsby's decades of achievement in all areas of dog training — from competitive dog sports to service dog training — makes this book a reliable resource. It is especially good for crossover trainers or those who are stuck trying to move away from coercion and the use of aversive methods and equipment. Ailsby crossed over many decades ago during her search for excellence in dog training."

- **Treat Everyone Like a Dog: How a Dog Trainer's World View Can Improve Your Life** by Karen B. London, Ph.D. "London is a favorite author of mine. Her collaboration with Dr. Patricia McConnell over the years drew me into her narrative. Her new book showcases her relatable examples for the everyday pet owner. She provides a closer look into behavior science and why positive reinforcement is beneficial for both dogs and their humans." "This book offers practical ways for dog trainers to take all the skills and knowledge they already have from teaching dogs how to behave and apply it to influencing the behavior of people."

- **Wag: The Science of Making Your Dog Happy** by Zazie Todd. "There's so much of 'it depends' in this one.... and so many great books out there now! (Unlike 20 years ago...) If I have to pick just one I would probably go with this one, just published last year."



• **What Is A Dog?** by Raymond Coppinger and Lorna Coppinger. “If we are going to be effective trainers, it is important to understand the history, evolution, genetic predisposition, and behavioral tendencies of the dogs we work with. Coppingers’ research into free-ranging populations of street dogs is brilliantly presented here and provides important insight into our domestic dog’s most recent ancestor, the free-ranging wild dogs around the world.”

“[This book] had a profound impact on how I viewed the dog, which then improved my training and working with owners. We learn lots about what reinforcement is, what consequences are, but often we overlook that there is a dog sitting there that has its own genetic history that made them what they are today. And that sometimes no matter how much training we do, there are limitations.”

Trainers Who Contributed to the List:

- **Teoti Anderson, CPDT-KA, KPA-CTP**, Co-owner of A Dog’s Best Friend, (TeotiAnderson.com)
- **Jennifer Berg, BEAD, CPDT-KA**, Owner of Oberhund Dog Services & Products (oberhund.com)
- **Jane Bowers, B.A.(Psych), CABC, CPDT-KA**, Owner of Dogs of Distinction Canine Training Inc. (DogsOfDistinction.com)
- **Eric Brad, CPDT-KA**, Canine Nation (CanineNation.ca)
- **Bethany Coles, CPDT-KA**, Owner of Fearless Fido (FearlessFido.ca)
- **Shelley Doan, CPDT-KA, CCBT-KA**, Owner of 20/20 Canine Consultants (2020CanineConsultants.com)
- **Nancy S. Fitzgerald, CPDT KSA, CBCC-KA, PMCT2, KPA CTP**, Owner of Positive Results Dog Training LLC (PositiveResultsDogTraining.com)
- **Krysta Garland, CPDT-KA, KPA CTP**, Owner of Click Play Love Inc (ClickPlayLove.ca)
- **Carmen LeBlanc MS, ACAAB, CPDT** Owner of Way to Behave! Behavior Therapy and Training (www.WayToBehave.com)

- **Karen London, Ph.D, CAAB, CPDT-KA**, @Karen.London.Dog.Behavior.
- **Linda Michaels, M.A., Psychology**, Creator of the Hierarchy of Dog Needs (DogPsychologistOnCall.com)
- **Pat Miller CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA**, Owner of Peaceable Paws LLC (PeaceablePaws.com)
- **Laura Monaco Torelli, CPDT-KA**, Owner of Animal Behavior Training Concepts (LauraMonacoTorelli.com)
- **Simone Muller**, Certified Dog Trainer and Dog Behaviour Consultant (ATN AG) (PredationSubstituteTraining.com)
- **Andrew Perkins**, Founding member of the CAPDT, Owner of Best Friends Obedience Training for Pet Dogs (BestFriendsTraining.ca)
- **Helen Prinold, M.Sc., CDBC, CPDT-KA**, Owner of Dog Friendship Inc. (dogfriendship.com)
- **Marge Rogers, CPDT-KA, CBCC-KA, CCUI**, Owner of Rewarded Behavior Continues (RewardedBehaviorContinues.com)
- **Bob Ryder, BSc (Psych), PMCT-4, CPDT-KA**, Owner of Pawsitive Transformations (PawsTrans.com)
- **Scarlett MacKenzie, CPDT-KA**, Owner of Nice Dog, Scarlett! (NiceDogScarlett.com)
- **Megan Stanley, CPDT KSA, CBCC-KA, FFTP**, Founder & President of Dogma Training & Pet Services Inc. (DogmaTraining.com)
- **Tabea Stawitz, CPDT-KA, BSc**, Owner of Gentle Paws Animal Services (GentlePaws.ca)
- **Grisha Stewart M.A., KPA CTP, CPDT-KA** (GrishaStewart.com)
- **Lisa Lyle Waggoner, CPDT-KA, CSAT, PMCT2**, Owner of Cold Nose College (ColdNoseCollege.com)
- **Michelle Wieser, KPA CTP** Owner of Wise Canine Training & Behavior (WiseCanine.ca)



Meet Your Dog: The Game-Changing Guide to Understanding Your Dog's Behavior

Written by Kim Brophey, CDBC, CPDT-KA; Foreword by Raymond Coppinger, Jason Hewitt, photographer

Published by Chronicle Books, LLC, 680 Second Street, San Francisco, California; released 2018; 256 pages. Where to purchase: Amazon, \$52.50 (hardcover), Kindle, \$9.99, Audiobook, \$7.95; Google Play \$14.95; AudiobooksNow.com \$13.59; Barnes and Noble, \$11.99 Nook, \$24.95 hardcover.

When the legendary animal behaviorist Raymond Coppinger writes in a foreword that it was your book that helped him understand his highly driven and compulsive Border Collie's behavior rather than dismiss it as "bad," well, it's a strong start to a book. And that is what Kim Brophey has as the introduction of *Meet Your Dog: The Game-Changing Guide to Understanding Your Dog's Behavior*.

As an introduction to her book, Kim explains one of her clients had come to her confused why her Wheaten Terrier had become crazed in her new mountain cabin, running along the walls relentlessly as if chasing shadows. Dexter wouldn't eat or sleep as he ran along the walls, frothing at the mouth. During a visit to the home, Kim became suspicious that the behavior was caused by not a psychotic snap, but mice in the walls. And indeed, that was the case. A visit by the exterminator solved the problem and Dexter was finally able to relax without the need for Prozac.

But as it is usually, not all cases are so easy to solve. Kim's book has but five chapters. The first four set up her program, the four Dog L.E.G.S., which is Learning, Environment, Genetics and Self. Chapter 4 (Genetics) is the meat of the book, which touches on aspects of different breeds of dogs and the key concept for each breed. For example, with the Meet Your Gun Dog section, Kim lists all the different breeds considered to be gun dogs (sporting group), their pros and cons, historical background, and all of the reasons the owner of a gun dog breed might seek professional help, such as distractibility, impulsivity, overwhelming greeting behavior, destructiveness to home, hyperactivity, sensitivity to loud noises and storms, problematic oral fixations (ball playing, sock infatuation/ consumption and lick granulomas). Kim even breaks down the differences between the spaniels and retrievers. Bred to work as companions, it is that need to be with people – all the time -- that often brings their owners in for help. Kim concludes each breed breakout with a survival key on what needs to be done to provide the right environment that encourages a partnership between the human and dog through games, training, exercise, and adventures.

Other breeds mentioned in Chapter 4:

- Natural Dog – ritualized signaling and communication
- Sight Hound – good management
- Guardian – dominance and resource guarding
- Toy Dog – oxytocin's hook
- Scent Hound – impulse control
- Terrier – the Premack Principle
- Bull Dog – arousal-aggression continuum
- Herding Dog – sudden environmental contrasts
- World Dog - choice.

The fifth and final chapter is about Self as Kim goes through the six "self" issues: Age, Sex, Health, Nutrition, Disability, and Individuality. Kim points out in her conclusion the book isn't exhaustive, but hopefully "a catalyst for a paradigm shift in our current thinking about dogs...a first step toward a new and more successful road for people and their canine companions..."

— The editor

The Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT) supports a Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) approach to behavior modification and training.

What is LIMA?

LIMA requires that trainers and behavior consultants use the “least intrusive, minimally aversive technique likely to succeed in achieving a training (or behavior change) objective with minimal risk of producing aversive side effects.” LIMA also incorporates a competence criterion, requiring that trainers and behavior consultants be adequately trained and skilled in order to ensure that the least intrusive and aversive procedure is in fact used.

To download the complete white paper outlining APDT’s position on this issue, go to <https://apdt.com/about/position-statements/>



HEALTH & NUTRITION

● GENERAL DOG HEALTH & WELLNESS

Develop a familiarity with and understanding of common, basic concepts in dog health in order to:

- Identify when a dog’s health may be suffering
- Recognize when veterinary referral is required
- Provide sound recommendations to clients

KNOWLEDGE OF:	SKILLS IN:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of annual veterinary examinations, blood work, urinalysis, and on-going check-ups as needed • Standard practices and maintenance that promote good health, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grooming - Bathing - Oral/ear/eye health - Skin/hair/fur care - Nail care • Internal and external parasite concerns and prevention • Nutritional requirements, supplements and digestive health • Physical and mental exercise and stimulation • Mobility, gait, and movement • Housing and environmental requirements • The impact of various breed, age, and developmental stage considerations and differences on health • Ability to identify potential concerns or problems relating to a dog’s health, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The above listed standard practices to promote good health - Obvious injuries, infections, or ailments - Hyper and hypothermia, dehydration, and other first-aid related concerns - Physical pain, discomfort, or stress - Emotional discomfort or stress - Core vaccinations, related disease transmission and symptoms, titers, protocols, and related controversies - The impact, role, and implications of hormones on health, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spaying/neutering • Being in-heat • Pregnancy • Nursing - Basic health terminologies - Roles and responsibilities of veterinarians and dog trainers, overlap, communication, and differentiation • Basic health and nutrition terminologies • Dog food types, diets, and rotation • Interpretation of food nutrition facts and labels • Value of a complete and balanced diet • Knowledge of AAFCO statements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention to detail • Ability to take detailed client history • Confirmation of dog’s overall physical and emotional ability to be trained • Ability to interpret veterinary records • Initial and ongoing assessment of general health maintenance, physical exercise, mental stimulation, and nutrition to promote and maintain good health • Interpreting dogs’ behaviors and needs • Explaining and interpreting medical concepts • Building customer relationship and confidence • Collaboration and communication with veterinary professionals • Demonstrating an understanding of a variety of key components of balanced nutrition, nutritional facts and value • Managing the diet of a dog with behavioral problems • Managing a dog’s diet and daily exercise • Managing a dog’s learning and behavioral challenges

● GENERAL DOG HEALTH & WELLNESS

Develop a familiarity with and understanding of common, basic concepts in dog health in order to:

- Identify when a dog’s health may be suffering
- Recognize when veterinary referral is required
- Provide sound recommendations to clients

KNOWLEDGE OF:	SKILLS IN: (repeated from previous page)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog food ingredients • Nutrition considerations pertaining to a variety of dietary needs, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Various developmental stages and ages, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy • Bottle feeding • Puppies • Juvenile • Adult • Geriatric - Various breeds including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacup/miniature • Giant • Athletes - Health concerns, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malnutrition • Obesity - Relationship between dog’s learning, behavior and nutrition - Role and responsibility of veterinarians and dog trainers and canine nutritionist - Basic health terminologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention to detail • Ability to take detailed client history • Confirmation of dog’s overall physical and emotional ability to be trained • Ability to interpret veterinary records • Initial and ongoing assessment of general health maintenance, physical exercise, mental stimulation, and nutrition to promote and maintain good health • Interpreting dogs’ behaviors and needs • Explaining and interpreting medical concepts • Building customer relationship and confidence • Collaboration and communication with veterinary professionals • Demonstrating an understanding of a variety of key components of balanced nutrition, nutritional facts and value • Managing the diet of a dog with behavioral problems • Managing a dog’s diet and daily exercise • Managing a dog’s learning and behavioral challenges

● IMPLICATIONS OF HEALTH ON LEARNING AND BEHAVIOR

Develop a familiarity with and understanding how emotional and physical health concerns can impact learning and behavior in order to:

- Know when training and behavior efforts will be impacted
- Recognize when veterinary referral is required
- Provide sound recommendations to clients

KNOWLEDGE OF:	SKILLS IN:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common, basic requirements for healthy dogs • Ability to identify potential concerns or problems relating to a dog’s physical or emotional health • Relationship between and impact of physical and emotional health and dog’s behavior and learning • Common health concerns or problems that often manifest as behavior problems • Common health concerns or problems that impact, cause, or exacerbate behavior problems • Implications of hormones on behavior, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spaying/neutering - Being in-heat - Pregnancy - Nursing • Implications of age, breed, and developmental stages on behavior, including but not related to adolescence, maturity, geriatric, and breed tendencies • Theory and practice of dog behavior and learning • Roles and responsibilities of veterinarians and dog trainers, overlap, communication, and differentiation • Relationship between environmental factors and dog’s health • Basic health terminology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention to detail • Ability to take detailed client history • Confirmation of dog’s overall physical and emotional ability to be trained • Ability to interpret veterinary records • Initial and ongoing assessment of general health maintenance, physical exercise, mental stimulation, and nutrition to promote and maintain good health • Interpreting dogs’ behaviors and needs • Explaining and interpreting medical concepts • Building customer relationship and confidence • Collaboration and communication with veterinary professionals • Managing health related concerns of a dog with behavioral problems • Managing health considerations in the prevention and/or treatment of behavioral problems • Managing a dog’s learning and behavioral challenges

● ANATOMY

Develop an understanding of dog anatomy and structure and its possible effects on behavior.

KNOWLEDGE OF:	SKILLS IN:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog anatomy, structure, and movement • Relationship between dog anatomy and dog behavior • Normal dog behavior • Dog behavior terminologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining concepts and methods • Researching • Observation skills • Analytical and critical thinking • Evaluating structure and movement

● **VETERINARY ROLE, RELATIONSHIPS AND REFERRALS**

Understand, recognize and be able to explain:

- The critical role of the veterinarian
- When and where and how veterinarians and trainers work together

KNOWLEDGE OF:	SKILLS IN:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities of veterinarians and dog trainers • Necessity of veterinary intervention to identify or rule out medical issues when dealing with behavioral problems • Basic health and nutrition terminology • Scope of practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building relationship with veterinarians • Collaboration and communication with veterinary professionals • Defining divisions of labor • Building relationship and confidence • Interpersonal communication • Explaining concepts, methods, and ideas building

● **FIRST AID**

Develop a familiarity with, understanding of, and skill in pet and human first aid in order to provide first aid in the case of an emergency.

KNOWLEDGE OF:	SKILLS IN:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental first aid procedures • First aid supplies • Importance of immediate medical care • Roles and responsibilities of veterinarians and dog trainers • Basic health and nutrition terminologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using first aid supplies • Handling an injured pet and ensuring safe transportation • Interpersonal communication

● **CLIENT HEALTH POLICIES**

Develop business policies regarding client health in order to:

- Minimize liability
- Minimize transmission of contagious or zoonotic disease to and between clients
- Minimize internal and external parasitic infection

KNOWLEDGE OF:	SKILLS IN:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infectious, contagious, and zoonotic disease transmission • Prevention of disease transmission • Key components of a sanitation protocol • Local rabies vaccination requirements • Common diseases • Require core and optional vaccinations • Writing policy documents • Policy structure and formulation • Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of a policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing policy documents • Critical thinking • Attention to detail • Record keeping • Research • Interpreting vaccination protocols and recommendations



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◀ Dog poop bags collected at a dog station in Irvine, California.

Dog poop bags: A non-negligible source of plastic pollution

It may not contribute to global warming as much as methane gas from cattle, but those ubiquitous doggie poop bags are doing their part in clogging the environment. Dog owners have the responsibility to collect dog poops, normally using dog poop bags (DPBs), and dispose them in trash bins. A study found (yes, a company called Lintbells did a study in 2019 involving 2,000 British adults about their exercise habits with their dogs) that a dog owner uses an average of 936 DPBs annually.

In my own experience with two Golden Retrievers who eat a higher-end diet, Evie and Poppy average 2-3 poops a day each, so at the high number, that would be nearly 2,200 DPBs a year (not including a higher count at Thanksgiving and Christmas). I use both the basic blue ones and a brand that claims it is compostable and biodegradable. I will say, in my back yard, I can collect more than one poop per bag, while on a walk, it is a rare occasion when I get a DPD (double poop deployment) with both dogs circling for due north at the same time, allowing for a double scoop in a single bag.

So researchers Lei Mai and Eddy Zeng from the Center for Environmental Microplastics Studies at Jinan University in Guangzhou, China, and Elaine Zeng from University High School in Irvine, California, collaborated for the general science survey study *Dog poop bags: A non-negligible source of plastic pollution*. The study was financially supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China and published in the January 2022 issue of *Environmental Pollution*.

As the abstract states: “Plastic pollution derived from the disposal of plastic bags in the environment is clearly evidenced. However, little attention has been directed towards plastic waste derived from plastic dog poop bags (DPBs), which are widely used and can never be recycled. Combining the weight of each DPB, the number of bags daily used for a dog, and the number of pet dogs around the world, we estimated the number of annual consumed and disposed DPBs at more than 415 billion, or equivalently 0.76–1.23 million tons of plastics based on various weights of different DPBs. Although plastic waste produced by DPBs only accounts for a small fraction (0.6%) of the total plastic waste generation, the extremely short life cycle of DPBs has made them a non-negligible source of plastic pollution in the environment.”

Concerns have been raised about single-use plastic bags and how they are disposed, and there is nothing more single-use than DPBs. Most are made of polyethylene, which is not a biomaterial, although a few DPBs brands tout they meet the requirements for easy biodegradation or compostability. DPBs are generally discarded in the trash and end up in landfills or incinerators. The study concentrated on the two most popular DPBs used in the United States, which were collected in various DPB stations in the City of Irvine, California, in January 2020. The chemical composition of both DPBs was confirmed as polyethylene, one of the polymer types for plastic wastes in the environment.

Annual consumption of DPBs varies with different continents: North America, Africa, Europe, South America, and Oceania. In Asia, more than 163 billion DPBs (equivalent to 0.28–0.45 million tons of plastics) are consumed annually. The number of annual DPBs consumed in North America is approximately 82 billion (0.14–0.23 million tons). The Oceania countries consume the least amount. The study concluded the usage of DPBs should also maintain an upward trend unless alternative materials are used to replace plastics for producing DPBs and/or the current consumption pattern is disrupted.

One such alternative is using paper bags, which degrade faster than plastic bags, but unless they have some waterproofing capabilities... eww. Paper DPBs also are more expensive, which may negate its environmental benefits to consumers. The study also suggests collecting more poops per bag (PPB), which might work for small dogs compared to the larger breeds. And rather than dump the, well, dumps in the trash, perhaps scatter the contents in the environment. I guess some of my neighbors are already ahead of the game based on the deposits left in front of my house. — The editor



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