

The Whole Dog Journal™



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Rescue or Buy?

I won't ever buy a dog, but rescuing is too often too difficult for some.

BY NANCY KERNS

Some months ago, I received a note from a subscriber that was titled, “Why I’m buying my next dog at the mall.” At first, I thought it was a joke. Then I read the rest and realized that the writer was perfectly serious. He described what had happened when he, as a first-time dog owner in his 40s, decided to get a dog.

He researched dogs in general, went to dog shows, spoke to lots of people, did online research, and decided on a breed that he admired. Though a novice dog owner, he determined that the “right” thing to do was to look in shelters and breed rescues to find a dog of the breed of his choice.

Next he wrote to the contact person for a breed rescue in his part of his state. He was given an application to fill out and return; he says “it was several pages long and asked for information I don’t usually give to strangers, but what the hell. It’s been years and I’ve never heard back. Presumably, I wasn’t selected.”

In the meantime, a coworker recommended a shelter. He found a dog there that he bonded with, filled out an application, and was interviewed.

To make a long story short, it developed that the dog had some medical problems. The shelter offered to have the dog seen by the veterinarian who had performed what seemed to the owner as a botched spay surgery, he declined, and took his new dog to another vet. About \$1,000 later, she was better, and today the guy is totally in love with the dog.

Here’s the part that kills me. “Since then, I found a puppy store at the (name redacted) Mall. I am certain that anyone who visits this pet store, inspects the dogs, talks to the employees, and compares the cleanliness and vibe to a breeder or shelter, will easily

understand why I am buying my next dog at the mall. And the price is half what my shelter dog cost me. I know pet stores that sell puppies are considered to be the scum of the universe, but my experience suggests reality is more complex.”

We ended up having quite a lengthy email exchange. I congratulated him for adopting from a shelter. I deplored the fact that he never heard back from the rescue, but explained that volunteers in rescue are frequently exhausted, and that perhaps more persistence would have achieved a better result – although, maybe not. As a novice owner and new to the breed, he may not have sounded like a great candidate for adoption; to some breeders, he may not have even sounded like a good buyer. I also told him that while it may well be easier to buy a puppy mill puppy from a pet store, if *no one* bought them, the mills wouldn’t exist, and if the puppy mills didn’t exist, there would be far fewer dogs in shelters and rescues.

I’ve seen rescue groups *and* shelters who, in an effort to find the best possible homes for dogs, make the adoption process quite difficult. Do they realize that this may drive some people to pet stores and quick-buck breeders? And on the other hand, why do so many people have the expectation that they should be able to get a dog the moment they want one? *NK*

MISSION STATEMENT: WDJ’s mission is to provide dog guardians with in-depth information on effective holistic healthcare methods and successful nonviolent training. The methods we discuss will endeavor to do no harm to dogs; we do not advocate perpetrating even minor transgressions in the name of “greater good.” We intend our articles to enable readers to immediately apply training and healthcare techniques to their own dogs with visible and enjoyable success. All topics should contribute to improving the dog’s health and vitality, and deepening the canine/human bond. Above all, we wish to contribute information that will enable consumers to make kind, healthy, and informed decisions about caring for their own dogs.

CSI, DOG POO EDITION

Famous Italian tourist destination turning to DNA to identify scofflaw dog owners

Visitors to the island of Capri, a gorgeous Italian summer destination for the wealthy, are accustomed to movie star sightings, priceless views of the sparkling sea, over-the-top yachts – and stepping in dog poo? According to recent news reports, Capri’s mayor, *Ciro Lembo*, says it costs the tiny island in the Gulf of Naples around 5 million euros a year to keep the island clean. “Do you really think we will let the reputation of the island, whose beauty is coveted by the world, be compromised by bodily needs left in the streets by inattentive or arrogant dog owners?” Lembo said in an interview with *Adnkronos*, an Italian press agency.



Don’t fear too much for the shoes of the world’s super-rich – Lembo has announced a plan to get to the bottom of the problem. Starting in June, the owners of each canine resident of the island will be required to submit a blood sample from their dogs to the licensing agency; according to *La Stampa*, one of Italy’s largest daily newspapers, this represents about 1,000 dogs, or one for every six human residents of Capri. When government ecological workers locate dog feces, they will call the police, who will send a sample to a laboratory where DNA will be extracted and compared with the results of the resident dogs’ blood samples. When the culprit is identified, the dog’s owner will be fined up to 2,000 euros. (We wonder: will visitors’ dogs be required to register their DNA at the yacht harbor or helipad?)

The high-tech approach to identifying poop-scoop scofflaws has been tried in other communities around the world. A news search revealed articles about DNA analysis of dog droppings in the town of *Hernani*, Spain; a high-end condominium complex in *Baltimore*; and in *Petah Tikva*, a suburb of *Tel Aviv*. (The latter city tried a punishment-based (a fine for the owner) and a reward-based program; owners who scooped their dogs’ poop and placed it in specially marked bins on *Petah Tikva*’s streets were eligible for rewards of pet food coupons and dog toys.)

One company is ready to solve *your* community’s unscooped dog poop problem: *BioVet Pet Lab*, of *Knoxville, Tennessee*. Though the company is better known for its DNA analysis for breed identification for mixed-breed dogs and parentage verification for purebreds, in 2010 it rolled out a new service for communities that are being buried in anonymously abandoned poo. The service is known as the *PooPrints Program*, and it promises to “match the mess through DNA.”

– Nancy Kerns

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

❖ *BioVet Pet Lab*, (866) 883-7389; PooPrints.com

VETERINARY AND HUMAN MEDICAL CENTERS COLLABORATE

Combined approach offers new treatments for dogs with naturally occurring diseases

The *Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine* and *Wake Forest University’s Institute for Regenerative Medicine* in *Winston-Salem, North Carolina*, signed an agreement in January to form the *Virginia Tech/Wake Forest Center for Veterinary Regenerative Medicine (CVRM)*.

The goal is to facilitate the use of cutting-edge, regenerative (stem cell) treatments for pets and people. Clinical trials performed at the center will provide valuable information concerning the effects of stem-cell therapy. Doctors will be able to evaluate the results as a model for the treatment of similar diseases in humans.

As part of the collaboration, clients at the *Veterinary Teaching Hospital* may have the option to enter their pets into clinical trials, giving them access to cutting-edge technology unavailable elsewhere.

Current areas of interest for this research include *cardiomyopathy* and *spay-induced incontinence* in dogs, *chronic kidney disease* in cats, and *wound healing* in horses. Let’s hope they also investigate the use of regenerative stem cell therapy in the treatment of *arthritis*, where preliminary results seem promising.

There are many potential applications for collaboration between human and veterinary medicine. In March, I wrote about a *veterinary surgeon*, a *veterinary endocrinologist*, and a *neurosurgeon* at *Cedars-Sinai Medical Center* in *Los Angeles* who worked together and developed a new surgical technique for treating *pituitary tumors* that cause *Cushing’s disease* in dogs (“*New Treatment for Pituitary-Dependent Cushing’s Disease*”). In September 2009, I wrote about a treatment for *brain tumors* that was the result of two comparative oncology specialists working together, one a *veterinary surgeon* and the other the head of his university’s *Neurosurgery Gene Therapy Program* (“*New Therapy for Brain Cancer*”).

I applaud this approach to finding new treatments for pets and people. It is so much better to offer clinical trials for pets with diseases that cannot be effectively treated with today’s methodologies, rather than induce illness in laboratory animals in order to try out new treatments. I hope this center becomes a model for other veterinary schools.

– Mary Straus

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

❖ *Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine*
www.vetmed.vt.edu/news/regenmed.asp

There are many potential applications for collaboration between human and veterinary medicine.

Free to Be

“Observation Without Direction” – The power of “free-time training.”

BY CJ PUOTINEN

How well do you really know your dog? Like most trainers and competitors, Nancy Tanner of Bozeman, Montana, assumed she knew hers inside out – until some whales and their trainers taught her an important lesson. You too can adopt the simple technique she learned at a marine mammal park to improve canine interactions at all levels.

Tanner’s path of discovery began five years ago at Sea World in San Diego, California, where she took a behind-the-scenes tour.

“I chose ‘Lunch with the Orca Trainers,’ and it changed my whole approach to training,” she says. “In addition to enjoying great food, I got to watch the whales and ask questions. Sea World’s training program is impressive, but what they require from their trainers

in knowledge, observation, and applied skills is even more so. I came away realizing that I might not know my dogs as well as I thought.”

What caught Tanner’s attention was the whales’ “free-time pool.” In this large, safe, comfortable environment, whales do whatever they like. Sometimes the pool is occupied by a single whale and sometimes by two or more. Trainers are always present but

they never initiate activity. They simply watch and wait.

Occasionally the trainers add interactive objects such as beach balls, chunks of ice, or a bird kite on a tall pole. If a whale jumps for the kite the way orcas in the wild leap at low-flying birds, the trainer can acknowledge this with a whistle, but that is all. Shaping and luring are not allowed. If the whale initiates play, the trainer plays the whale’s game and does whatever that particular whale likes best, such as scratching his tongue, pouring water into his mouth, or throwing ice balls into his mouth. There are no food rewards. The free-time pool is used to build the trainer/animal bond but the two interact only if the whale wants to. The pool is never used for active training.

Tanner, who runs workshops and competes with her own dogs in agility and canine freestyle, thought for

Nancy Tanner was inspired by a marine mammal training technique to develop “Observation Without Direction.” Essentially, it’s taking a dog to a special “free” space and allowing him to do whatever he wants to do – and then using what you learn about him for a better relationship.



Story: Life is a full-immersion game; if it's fun, he's there – and he wants all of his buddies to play, too.

weeks about what free-time insights might contribute to her dog training. She started practicing what she calls “Observation Without Direction.”

“I wanted to come into my dogs’ world and learn by following their lead, not mine,” she says. “So I started to plan a free time routine by replicating, as much as possible, the whales’ free-time pool.”

This was at first a challenge because most of the areas she and her dogs visited were associated in some way with training. “I realized that my house, yard, and training field wouldn’t work for this project at all,” she says, “and what I had thought of as ‘free time’ while hiking actually involved working with my dogs the whole time.”

Tanner decided to look for an area she had never used for training. “It had to have boundaries for safety,” she says, “so that I would never have to call or correct them. No other dogs could be present except my own and no other people unless they were family. There could also not be any large distractions that would reward the dogs in a big way. Small self-rewards would be fine. In addition to being safe and free from distractions, it had to be a dog-friendly environment.”

She chose a trail that has streams and trees with a steep drop on one side, a steep hill on the other, and a large meadow at the end.

“We go once or twice a week,” says Tanner. “I have no rules when we get out on this specific remote trail. The dogs can sniff, run, sit, follow, or do whatever they like. It’s up to them. I don’t bring food or toys. If they pick up a stick and initiate a game with me, I play fetch with the stick. If they play their I-am-going-to-lie-down-and-stalk-you hide-and-seek game, I will pop behind a tree and play. I initiate nothing. This free time is on their terms. We usually go for half an hour to two hours, depending on my day.”

WHAT THE DOGS DID

What did Tanner’s dogs show her, and how has Observation Without Direction changed their training?

“There is trust and relationship on both ends now,” she says. “When my



dogs and I work, they are way more engaged. Our relationship isn’t just about what I want to do and the dogs doing learned behaviors. It’s about them taking part in my interests and me taking part in theirs. It is important to note that free time is not putting a dog in the backyard and then going inside to cook dinner. The trainer is working hard by observing and being attentive and intentional. There is a simple bit of magic to watching dogs and really being observant.”

Tanner’s dogs are very different from each other, and now their differences define her approach to training.

“**Story** is an amazing dog,” she says of her six-year-old Border Collie. “Honest and balanced is the best way to describe him. He enjoys dogs, people, work, play, and eating. He is a dog’s dog. What free time showed me was that he is inventive and all about ‘the game.’ He is always thinking up new games and keeping things light and fun. If he had a motto it would be, ‘Walk lightly and carry a big stick; fetch is way more fun that way.’”

While Story has always been a willing partner, Tanner never felt that she was tapping into all of him. “He was almost too polite,” she says. “Through free time I observed that he liked to keep the party going. He was always inventing new games with either me or the other dogs. His self-reward is sharing his enthusiasm for games and including those

around him. I have never observed him playing a game by himself. He always wants to include others. This was very cool for me as I knew how I could use this in training. Lightbulb!”

Tanner turned Story’s training into a big game, and this approach has made them partners in competition and in life. “There is no leader or owner. We come at it together. Whether it is free-style, agility, hiking, or fun tricks, his

What you can do . . .

- Create a free time area where you can safely let your dogs do whatever they like.
- Watch, observe, and take notes, but don’t try to train or direct your dog’s behavior.
- Learn what really motivates and rewards your dog – it may not be what you expect.
- Look for behavior patterns and notice how they differ in training sessions or at home.
- Incorporate your discoveries into your training sessions for maximum efficiency.



pay-off is the interaction of the game. It also holds me accountable for being there 100 percent when I step out with him. There is no half way in anything we do together.”

Ocean, an eight-year-old Border Collie/Australian Shepherd, was a shy puppy. “At seven weeks,” says Tanner, “she was spooky and cautious. I worked for years building her confidence slowly but consistently through tricks, play with a purpose, agility, freestyle, and herding. Dog sports are where she shines because it is all work. Working became her safe place.

“Ocean is an amazing competition dog and loves to learn new things, but what I discovered through free time is that she did not have confidence outside of working. She did not want to explore or interact with the environment without my direction and was unsure of making choices on her own. It took her a year or two to leave me during free time, but once she started trying new things (digging, rolling in scat, ex-



Ocean: Being free to roll in scat was transformative; it gave the formerly cautious dog confidence!

ploring streams) all on her own, I saw another layer to my dog and watched her confidence grow. She is learning that choices are good, exploring can be wonderful, and if she needs to check in, I am always there.”

The first time Ocean felt comfortable enough to walk away from Tanner, she found elk scat and enjoyed herself immensely. She had never before shown any interest in scat, but after that experience, she sat taller and walked with all four paws solidly on the ground.

“This was a breakthrough for us,”

says Tanner. “To this day she rolls in elk, deer, and coyote scat with gusto, and you cannot diminish her enthusiasm afterwards. While she will always have some cautiousness, she has more balance than ever before. In agility I let her decide whether she wants me close or needs more distance. In freestyle, if she renegotiates the path, we go with it. She is amazing and one of the most fun dogs to work with!”

Franny, an 11-year-old mixed breed, had low motivation for training and was never interested in human-directed activity. “Nothing got her involved,” says Tanner. “Tricks, agility, play with a purpose, fetch, tug, none of this was of interest to her, even in small spurts. She would patiently watch me go through my motions and slowly walk away. She showed zero interest even when I tried to hand her a steak.”

OBSERVATION WITHOUT DIRECTION

Spending time with your dog is one thing. Watching for behaviors that can be incorporated into training is another.

While free time is free for the dog, it's work for the handler/trainer, requiring focus and attention to detail. Experienced trainers and competitors will notice things that novices won't, but even if a handler is not actively training a dog, or the dog is best described as a house pet, free time can be an effective tool for better understanding the dog's interests, temperament, and personality. “That adds balance to any relationship,” says Tanner, “but first and foremost I think it adds depth to a solid training program. You can use what you observe to create a better and more cohesive dog/handler team, with the relationship first and foremost in mind.”

Here are Tanner's suggestions for beginning a free-time program:

- ✓ **Always work in a safe area with no moving traffic, no other off-leash dogs, no people other than familiar family members, and no opportunity for your dog or dogs to chase wild animals or eat something dangerous.** Take time to choose a location before you start. If a remote outdoor area isn't possible, it can be a borrowed fenced yard or an indoor room or basement. The location should be large enough for freedom of movement and have no training association.
- ✓ **Observation Without Direction should be completely free from judgment.** If your dog rolls in scat, then you observe. Clothes can be cleaned and baths can be taken. You are gathering information. If you start gasping or re-directing your dogs when they stop-drop-and-roll, you are correcting and training, and it is no longer free time. Be prepared and be open.
- ✓ **In a multiple-dog household, bring all the dogs, since they are probably accustomed to being together.** Working with one dog at a time makes them easier to observe, but that becomes time-consuming. Familial dogs do fine together in free time. You just have to be on your toes as an observer.
- ✓ **If your dog wants to engage you in a game, then play, but don't start directing.** Learn to follow your dog's lead during free time.
- ✓ **Some days you will come home with great information and other days nothing, just a nice outing.** Write notes to yourself. Watching your dog for weeks or months in free time will help you see patterns in behavior, and these are what deserve your attention.

Franny: The key to capturing her interest in training was engaging her hunting instincts.

During free time, Tanner observed that Franny had stealth hunting skills, that her prey drive was alive and well, and her motivation was high. “She was focused and tenacious, so I brought this into her training. I would ask her for one small thing, maybe come to me in the house, and then say YES! and throw a meatball across the room. The reward of orienting, stalking, chasing, catching, and eating the meatball made a powerful impact on our training and relationship. I found a way to reach her through what she found highly rewarding. She is almost 12 now and still enjoys learning new things. I adore working with her.”

Seeker, a three-year-old Border Collie, has always lacked dog social skills and is more interested in people.

“In free time,” says Tanner, “I learned that Seeker is a mimic, and this caught me totally by surprise. He doesn’t just follow the lead of my other dogs, he copies what they are doing. I found this



interesting because he lacks the ability to read canine social cues, so it was almost as if he was ‘trying’ through imitating. I noticed that if Ocean rolled in something, he did it next to her. If Story runs circles, he runs circles, too.

If Franny was licking her paws, he would lick his paws, too. If Ocean marked, he would mark.

“I started bringing one of my other dogs when working with Seeker. For example, if I was chaining a complicated sequence, I would work with Ocean and then Seeker, and flip back and forth. He caught on faster this way than if I worked him by himself.”

PUTTING THE PLAN INTO ACTION

As soon as she felt confident describing Observation Without Direction and the benefits of free-time training, Nancy Tanner began sharing her insights in workshops, online forums, and seminars. It didn’t take long for the technique to change canine lives.

Katie Tracanna lives in Dennis, Massachusetts, with six dogs. One of them, a six-year-old Shepherd/Border Collie named Wiley Coyote, competes with her in musical freestyle, trains for rally competition, makes therapy dog visits, and is an enthusiastic running partner.

After she discovered Tanner’s ideas

✓ For dogs who are independent or don’t have a strong relationship

with their owners, observation should be directed toward what attracts their attention and what motivates them. Example: The moment you take off the leash, your dog runs away and stays away, and the pattern repeats over and over. This should bring up a lot of questions. Does the same pattern happen at home? In the dog park? Does the dog’s leash come off right away and she immediately gets to run, or does the dog pull her owner to the dog park and then get the leash unclipped, and does the leash get put on with a correction once the dog finally comes back?

✓ The goal in a training program would be for the leash to come off

and the dog acknowledge the owner before departing. If scent or sound pulls the dog away, or if inconsistent handling drives the dog away, those

observations can be incorporated into the training program by providing stinkier treats, squeakier toys, and play every time the leash comes off at home. Leash comes off, stinky liver treat, leash goes back on, leash comes off, boom, stinky liver treats. Leash comes off, game of tug with squeaky toy, leash goes on, game stops, leash comes off, game with tug toy, and so on.

✓ For cautious, worried dogs, free time may be overwhelming. Try

for short, successful sessions. Start with 5 to 10 minutes and then leave. Choices can overwhelm dogs who do not have confidence, so they often don’t even try. Just sit tight, or walk around the free area. Don’t say anything; just be neutral and present. It may take time for uncertain dogs to try something out, but once they do and they find that all is good, confidence can grow and the handler can learn by observing.

✓ Be careful not to “direct” an uncertain dog during free time

– that’s training! And don’t reassure him by saying things like, “You’re OK, go on, you’ll be fine” – that’s directing! Watch for a nice working tail position, slow easy wag, nice relaxed mouth, light panting, soft or “easy” eyes, sway in the body when walking around, and most important, tiny steps toward exploring on his own.

✓ Study canine body language. Get at least one book, preferably with

photos or line drawings, to help you interpret canine signals. The more you observe body language in your dog, the better you’ll become at deciphering subtle signs, and clusters of body movements will speak to you like a book. This is when a free time program wtakes off for any trainer. (See Tanner’s recommended reading list in “Resources,” page 24.)



Seeker: Wants to see another dog try it first; then he'll give it a whirl. Training in a group or pair works best for him.

in an online workshop, Tracanna found a perfect free-time location at the beach. "You have to walk a ways to get to the spot," she says, "but when you do, you're surrounded by sea grass, sand, and the ocean. It's a perfect place for free time with Wiley because I can see for a mile in all directions, so I don't have to worry about anyone approaching when I want to just let him 'be.' And that's what we do when we reach this spot. Wiley makes the rules. He can engage with me, swim, run the beach, and basically do whatever he wants for as long as we're out there.

"Usually, he entertains himself for a few minutes and then starts engaging me in some sort of game, which could be chase, digging in the sand where I'm sitting, running around in a large circle, or a 'bash brothers' game where he likes to slam into me like a wrestler. We've modified these games to include in our training sessions as rewards, and they've helped build our bond because there are no limitations. It's just us being in the moment together, cueing off each other and having fun."

Wiley Coyote: Taught his human partner his favorite games, which are now his rewards when working in freestyle or rally.

In Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, retired dog judge Sue Ailsby has shared her life with Chihuahuas, Miniature Schnauzers, MinPins, Australian Cattle Dogs, Portuguese Water Dogs, and 17 generations of Giant Schnauzers. A trainer and competitor, her main interests are research, learning, teaching, bonding, and refining skills in service dog training, conformation, obedience, rally, agility, sled racing, scent hurdle racing, tracking, nose work, treibball, herding, carting, duck hunting, and tracking.

"I was taught as a child that the dog is my enemy," she says, "and both his mind and body must be mastered. When I realized that the dog should be, at worst, a junior partner, it changed everything. Having a friend doesn't mean imposing my own opinions on that friend, always doing what I want to do. If you're going to be friends, you have to honor the other person's opinions and let her choose. It's the same with dogs. Giving the dog respected downtime hugely increases the bond and the dog's desire and willingness to work for and with me."

When she first read Tanner's comments about the free-time pool, where the whales can do whatever they want and nothing is required of them, Ailsby says the idea hit her over the head like a sledgehammer.

"It's true that Scuba and Stitch, my Portuguese Water Dogs, can usually choose to interact with me, but I don't usually choose to reciprocate. My dogs know that when I'm working on the computer, they might get a momentary tug or a ball-toss out of me, but after that I give them the 'leave me alone, I'm working' hand signal. When I'm talking on the phone, I'll probably pet them, but not tug or toss. When I'm doing chores, they follow me around and get



Scuba and Stitch: It's easier to train the dogs, as well as live with them, now that they have a "voice" in the partnership.

in my way, but all I'm doing with them is getting them out of my way without kicking them in the head. When I'm lying down, they can jump on the bed, but they have to lie down.

"I realized that I have *no* trouble being 'present' when training – training makes the whole rest of the world go away – but there was *no* time when I was in the dog's world. That night Stitch and I went to the guest room in the basement to see what she would like to say to me when I'm actually listening."

Now, says Ailsby, the dogs have faith that when they speak, she will listen. "This makes all training, as well as living with the dogs, easier because the dogs no longer think or behave as if they need to 'shout' at me to have me hear them. I recommend Observation Without Direction and free-time sessions to everyone who wants better, closer relationships with their dogs." 🐾

For a recommended reading list and contact information for trainers mentioned in this article, see "Resources," on page 24.



Freelance writer CJ Puotinen lives in Montana, where she enjoys observing Chloe (her Labrador Retriever) and Seamus (her husband's Cairn Terrier) in the great outdoors. She is the author of The Encyclopedia of Natural Pet Care and other books and a frequent contributor to WDJ. See "Resources," page 24 for book purchasing information.

Special Education

Which of the “specialty” foods really offer anything different or beneficial for your dog?

BY NANCY KERNS

It's a very tempting concept – that a perfect food for every dog exists out there, somewhere. It *must* be tempting, because the pet food manufacturers keep increasing the number of products they formulate and market toward the owners of dogs of a progressively narrow description. Seriously – there are foods labeled for large breed seniors, and indoor toy puppies. There are foods that are supposedly just right for Spaniels, for goodness' sakes!

Decades ago, there was just dog food; eventually, versions of commercial foods for puppies were introduced to the market with great success – perhaps because of the introduction of commercial baby foods in the same historical period! Today we are supposed to choose among foods for dogs who are young, old, active, sedentary, fat, thin, big, and small; there are foods supposedly formulated

especially for dogs who live indoors! And this is not even mentioning the plethora of products (prescription *or* over-the-counter) that are supposed to address the problems a dog might have with his skin, coat, digestion, urinary tract, or joints.

Here's the thing: Much of what you're paying for with most – but not all! – of these foods is marketing. Some specialty foods are only marginally different from

each company's regular adult dog food; others deviate from the regular formula significantly, but without consistency across the specialty. For example, some pet food companies formulate their “senior” diets with higher protein levels than their “adult” dog foods; some formulate their senior foods with protein levels that are dramatically lower than their adult foods.

How can you tell whether your dog's specialty food is really all that special? As always, you have to look past the marketing and disregard the illustrations on the label; it's the ingredients and the guaranteed analysis of the food you need to examine. And in the long run, it's the food's actual performance in *your dog* that counts; if your dog doesn't look and feel like a million bucks, you should probably change foods.

PROTEIN AND FAT

The principal factors that are manipulated to formulate foods targeted toward the primary dog food categories – puppies,

The largest pet food companies seem to offer the largest number and variety of foods, too. Unfortunately, it takes a bit of studying to determine what (if anything) is genuinely unique about each product





adults, and seniors – are protein and fat. One thing is certain: puppies need more protein and fat in their diets than adult dogs. After that fact, things get a bit contentious.

The micronutrient (vitamin and mineral) needs of puppies, adults, and senior dogs are not *very* different, except that puppies also need more calcium and phosphorus than adult dogs.

PUPPY VS. ADULT FOOD

In this country, the commonly accepted set of nutritional standards for the production of commercial pet food are known as the AAFCO Nutrient Profiles. AAFCO is the Association of American Feed Control Officials, an advisory committee comprised of the state feed control officials (the only voting members) as well as interested representatives from the pet food industry – ingredient suppliers, manufacturers, food laboratories, and so on. Sub-committees study particular subjects of interest, such as the nutrient profiles for dogs and cats, and make suggestions for changes when new studies suggest change may be beneficial; this happens only after a great deal of data supports the change, and usually, after a lot of debate.

The AAFCO Dog Food Nutrient Profiles list minimum amounts (and a few maximum amounts) of all the nutrients that are currently known to be required by dogs; there is a column of numbers for adult dog maintenance, and one for “growth and reproduction,” that is, puppies and pregnant or nursing females.

The minimum amount of protein and fat suggested in these profiles for adult dog maintenance is 16.2 percent and 4.5 percent respectively. The minimum percentage for protein and fat for puppies (“growth and reproduction”) is 19.8 percent and 7.2 percent.

(Note: All percentages in this article are expressed “as fed.” The AAFCO Dog Food Nutrient Profiles list the numbers in what’s called the “dry matter” form, that is, with the water in the food removed. We’ve converted the numbers so they are comparable to the number on dog food labels, which are “as fed,” or including the moisture in the food.)

If the food label says it’s a puppy food, it’s for sure using the “growth and reproduction” values. If the label says it’s for adult dogs, it’s *probably* using the AAFCO values for adult dog maintenance.

Look for the AAFCO statement, somewhere in *tiny* print on the bag. It could say either something like, “Food X provides complete and balanced nutrition for maintenance of adult dogs,” in which case it’s been formulated with the “adult maintenance” values. However, it might say something like, “Food X provides complete and balanced nutrition for dogs of all life stages,” in which case, it’s using the “growth and reproduction” values.

This is why you have to look closely at the label; many foods that are labeled as for “adult” dogs are relatively low in protein and fat. Foods that are labeled as being for dogs in “all life stages” will almost always contain higher levels of protein and fat.

Puppies need a bit more protein and fat in their diets than adult dogs. But if you select a good-quality food that is labeled as complete and balanced for dogs “of all life stages” (as opposed to “adult dog maintenance”), the product must contain at least the minimum recommended levels of protein and fat for puppies.

PUPPIES SHOULDN'T HAVE "TOO MUCH"

You may have noticed that the word “maximum” hasn’t come up. The AAFCO nutrient profiles list maximum values for only calcium and phosphorus (too much can adversely affect the development of the puppy’s skeleton, with life-long consequences); and the nutrients that can cause toxicity at excessive levels, such as the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, and E; and the minerals magnesium, iron, zinc, iodine, selenium, copper.

That doesn’t mean that more of everything else is better. While top-quality dog foods tend to have higher levels of protein and/or fat than their low-cost, low-quality counterparts, puppies shouldn’t ever be fed in such a way that they become fat or experience abnormally fast growth spurts. Despite our cultural fondness for roly-poly puppies, healthy puppies are lean and grow at a consistent, slow rate. Ideally, owners weigh their puppies frequently, and decrease either the pup’s rations or his total caloric intake if he’s getting too chubby or growing too tall too fast.

SENIOR AND WEIGHT CONTROL DIETS

Poor old dogs! There is perhaps more variation in the amount of macronutrients in senior diets than in any other category of dog food. Keep in mind that there are no commonly accepted nutrient levels for anything other than adult maintenance and “growth and reproduction” –there are no AAFCO values for old dogs. Each pet food manufacturer has its own ideas about what senior dogs need. In fact, it turns out that most *people* have different ideas about what old dogs need.

A fascinating study was published recently in the *International Journal of Applied Research in Veterinary Medicine* demonstrating that the majority of people surveyed (84.5% of more than 1,300 respondents) believe that senior dogs have different nutritional needs than adult dogs. Further, most respondents indicated that senior dog diets should contain reduced levels of calories,

protein, fat, and sodium, and contain increased amounts of fiber. Talk about projection!

The fact is, due to any number of factors (including decreased appetite, changes in their ability to taste or smell, difficulty chewing, and/or underlying disease), many dogs *lose* weight (specifically, the nice lean muscle mass that they need for getting around) in their “golden” years. Many studies have shown that senior dogs actually have higher protein requirements than younger dogs; if you put a lean senior dog on a low-protein, low-fat diet, you are asking for severe weight loss and infirmity.

But many pet food makers seem to assume that all old dogs get fat, and frequently, there is little or no difference between a company’s “senior diets” and their “weight management” diets. That’s one of the reasons that so many senior diets contain less fat than adult foods. (Remember, each gram of fat – any kind of fat – contains about 9 calories. A gram of any kind of protein or any kind of carbohydrate contains about 4 calories.)

Following the same “fat old dog” logic, some senior dog foods also contain high levels of fiber, in an attempt to “fill up” those “fat old dog.” Unfortunately, the more (inexpensive) fiber in a formula, the less room there is for more nutritious –and equally caloric – protein. Ugh! Why would they do that? Both because it’s more profitable, and because they can; dog owners who buy the least expensive foods won’t necessarily notice that their “old” dogs are prematurely aging due to poor nutrition.

However, not all senior foods are like this; some companies formulate their products with moderate levels of protein and fat. How can you tell? You have to look at the label! Look at the amounts of protein and fat in the food; you know the minimum levels for adult dogs (16.2 and 4.5 percent, respectively). You’d want to see a protein level well above the minimum, and a fat level that is at least a bit above the minimum – more for a thin dog, or one whose coat and skin are dry.

The same goes for “weight control” di-

Seniors are perhaps most vulnerable dogs to the vagaries of “senior dog food” formulation. Some senior foods, presuming a fat and sedentary old dog, are grossly low in protein and fat and thus high in “filler” carbs. A diet like that is guaranteed to *make* a fat, listless dog!

PROTEIN AND FAT LEVELS MAY OR MAY NOT VARY AMONG FOODS; ALWAYS CHECK!

COMPANY	MARKETED FOR/VARIETY	MINIMUM %		KCAL	
		PROTEIN	FAT	PER KG	PER CUP
BLUE BUFFALO COMPANY	Large Breed Puppy, Chicken & Rice Recipe	28	12	3,553	450
	Small Breed Puppy, Chicken & Oatmeal	29	16	3,705	460
	Adult, Chicken & Brown Rice	24	14	3,670	442
	Senior, Chicken & Brown Rice	18	8	3,400	430
CANIDAE	All Life Stages Chicken, Turkey, Lamb & Fish	24	14.5	4,125	468
	“Platinum” (Seniors and Overweight)	20	8.5	3,328	330
CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE PET LOVER’S SOUL	Adult	24	14	3,593	336
	Adult Light Formula	20	6	3,088	289
	Senior	22	12	3,364	315
HILL’S SCIENCE DIET	Small & Toy Breed Puppy	27	19	3,897	384
	Small & Toy Breed Adult	20	6	3,007	296
	Small & Toy Breed Mature Adult	16	12	3,680	363
INNOVA	Puppy	28	16	3,801	454
	Adult Large Bites, Red Meat Variety	24	14	3,914	468
	Adult, Low Fat	18	7	3,340	374
	Large Breed Senior	26	10	3,516	361
ROYAL CANIN	Maxi Babydog (large breed puppies)	30	22	4,228	461
	Labrador Retriever Puppy	33	12.5	3,832	327
	Mini Indoor Puppy	27	18	4,036	363
	Maxi Aging Care	26	17	4,045	364
	Labrador Retriever (Adult)	30	11.5	3,730	292
	Mini Aging Care	27	16	3,986	378



ets. Most contain the absolute minimum of fat (and often low levels of protein, too) and lots of fiber. Again, since protein and carbs contain the same number of calories per gram, we'd rather see a chubby dog eating a diet containing a lower-fat, diet with a moderate amount of nutritious (and biologically appropriate) protein, than a lower-fat, low-protein, diet that necessarily contains a high amount of less-nutritious carbs.

As always, look also for high-quality sources of protein high on the ingredient list, such as chicken, chicken meal, pork, pork meal, etc., rather than chicken by-product meal or corn.

THE STARTING POINT

It's the most common question we receive: What should I feed my dog? What people often forget when they ask us to tell them which food they should feed their dogs is that their dogs are already eating something. How does the dog look and feel now? If he looks and feels great, you may well be doing just fine with your selections! But if he's thin and run down (or fat and lethargic); if his coat is dull and/or his skin is dry; if he's often ill (or in an ugly "mood"), take a look at the protein and fat levels in his food – and look for a food with more. More protein or more fat? Yes! How much more? Well,

it depends on how much you are already feeding him, and on the quality of the proteins and fats. (For more about recognizing the hallmarks of quality foods, please see "Choices, Choices," our review of dry dog foods, in the February 2011 issue.)

If it turns out that the food you have been feeding your dog contains close to the minimum amounts of either protein or fat, consider looking for a food that boosts those numbers by at least 5 or even 10 percent. See how he responds. If he does better, consider boosting those levels a bit with an even better product with the next bag, until he seems to attain a healthy weight and condition.

If the food is a high-quality product (it meets WDJ's dog food selection criteria, as described annually in the February issue) and contains relatively high protein and fat levels and your dog is still too-thin or suffers from any sort of skin or coat problem or low energy, I'd first schedule a visit to the vet for a checkup, and then try another high-quality food, perhaps one with different protein, fat, and carbohydrate sources.

SPECIALTY KINGS

I don't think any pet food company has taken the "specialty diet" concept farther than Royal Canin, who has developed foods for dogs of every size, age, and condition, and even a few specific breed varieties. Here's a list of its dry foods for toy and small breeds; no wonder people are confused about what to buy!

- MINI Puppy 33 (small breed puppies 2 to 10 months)
- MINI Indoor Puppy 27 (small breed indoor puppies, weaning to 10 months)
- MINI Adult 27 (small breed dogs, 10 months to 8 years)
- MINI Toy Adult Indoor 25 (indoor toy breeds – up to 6 lbs -- over 8 months)
- MINI Babydog 30 (small breed puppies, weaning to 8 weeks)
- MINI Special 30 (small breed adults with "sensitive stomachs or fussy appetites")
- MINI Weight Care 28 (small breed adult dogs, overweight)
- MINI Dental Hygiene 24 (small breed adult dogs with "oral sensitivities")
- MINI Beautycare 26 (small breed adult dogs, with "skin & coat sensitivities")
- MINI Aging Care 27 (small breed adult dogs over 8 years)
- Chihuahua Puppy 30 (Chihuahua puppies from 8 weeks to 8 months)
- Chihuahua 28 (Chihuahuas over 8 months)
- Shih Tzu 24 (Shih Tzus over 10 months)
- Yorkshire Terrier Puppy 29 (Yorkshire Terrier puppies from 8 weeks to 10 months)
- Yorkshire Terrier 28 (Yorkshire Terriers over 10 months)

That's 15 dry food products for toy and small dogs! The company also offers 7 dry varieties for medium size dogs (21 to 55 pounds) including 2 breed-specific formulas; 13 varieties for "maxi" dogs (56 to 100 pounds) including 6 breed-specific formulas; and 1 variety for giant adult dogs (more than 100 pounds).

And this doesn't even address its veterinary diets! Royal Canin offers a line of "Early Care" diets purported to prevent disease in dogs that are predisposed to certain conditions: obesity, and gastrointestinal and osteoarticular conditions; skin problems, and urinary stones. The Early Care diets are combined with the dog's age and size factors for 7 different products. Then there are what it calls the "Therapeutic Diets" – in all, some 26 dry foods that purport to address weight control; diabetes; allergies; reduced mobility; cardiac, gastrointestinal, liver, kidney, skin, and dental problems; and two foods for helping dogs who are prone to developing urinary stones: Urinary SO 14 (for dogs prone to struvite crystals) and Urinary UC 18 (for dogs prone to urate, cystine, and/or xanthine crystals). Royal Canin also lists a vegetarian formula among its therapeutic diets.

I'm not a math wizard, but I think that's 70 dry diets; I won't go into the wet foods!

NO HOLY GRAIL

Please don't forget that there is no single right and best food for your dog, or any dog. In fact, it's a good idea to change your dog's food at *least* a few times a year; no dog should be fed the same diet for months and years on end. For one thing, it's a perfect way to set up your dog for developing an allergy to the ingredients in that food; most commonly, dogs with food allergies develop those allergies after long-term, continuous exposure to the ingredients in their daily food.

Also, nobody's perfect. Personally, we don't trust any one product to provide the precise amount of every nutrient our dogs receive – every vitamin and every mineral, in the exact same, unchanging amounts and proportions – for years on end? If this was the best way to nourish an animal, why do human nutrition experts recommend a varied diet? 🐾

Next month, we'll examine the dog food diets designed for dogs of certain breeds and sizes, as well as the so-called therapeutic diets and their close counterparts, "prescription" diets.

Nancy Kerns is the Editor of WDJ. Her mixed-breed dog, Otto, eats a different kind of food at the end of every bag.

Deaf Dog? So What?

Hearing-impaired dogs can be trained just as easily and as well as any other dog; here's how.

BY CINDY RICH, KPA CTP

I was recently contacted by a friend about a darling Border Collie puppy whose photo she found on Petfinder.com – and who was deaf. This friend is crazy about Border Collies, and also knows that I have a deaf Chinese Crested. Thus, she thought of me when she saw this puppy. The person who was fostering the pup was unable to keep her much longer, and did not want to send her to the local shelter as that would almost certainly result in the puppy's euthanasia. Why? Because that shelter considers all deaf dogs as “unadoptable.”

This concept is common – and dead wrong. Many people assume that deafness somehow makes a dog untrainable, or that training a deaf dog will require an enormous amount of extra training to prevent tragedy. In reality, training any dog requires time, regardless of whether she can hear or not. Training a deaf dog requires some common sense, but not a ton of extra training. It is unfortunate that deafness often results in a death sentence for perfectly healthy dogs.

CONGENITAL DEAFNESS

Congenital deafness is deafness that a dog is born with. Dr. George M. Strain, Professor of Neuroscience at Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine, has found that congenital deafness in companion animals is most commonly inherited from a deaf parent, but may also skip generations.

Dr. Strain lists 92 dog breeds with reported congenital deafness, though he notes that individuals of any breed can have congenital deafness from a variety of causes. Breeds with white pigmen-

tion are most commonly affected, with Dalmatians, Bull Terriers, Australian Shepherds, and Australian Cattle Dogs frequently reported to be partially or completely deaf. Out of more than 5,600 Dalmatians tested for deafness, 441 (7.8%) were reported to be bilaterally deaf, and out of 442 Australian Cattle Dogs tested, 11 (2.5%) were bilaterally deaf. Dr. Strain is currently gathering data on the prevalence of congenital deafness in other breeds.

Are deaf dogs different? It's often suggested that deaf dogs are prone to biting

when startled. The truth is that *any* dog can nip or bite when startled – it's just easier to startle a deaf dog than a dog who hears your approach. It's important to desensitize your dog, hearing or deaf, to touch (for more on this, see “Stay in Touch,” WDJ Jan 2011).

It's also a good idea to choose a specific place (shoulder, hip, etc.) to lightly touch your deaf dog as a cue for “pay attention to me” – the equivalent of calling a hearing dog's name. It's best to start while your dog is awake and looking at you. Lightly touch this area and feed your dog a treat. Repeat many times. Work up to the point where you can give your dog a light touch while she is looking away and she turns her head toward you with a happy look.

I use a light touch to get my dog's attention when other methods aren't convenient. Other methods to get your deaf dog's attention might include a good stomp on the floor, a flashlight, or a remote-controlled vibration collar. Before relying on these methods to get your dog's attention, first teach your dog the meaning of them by pairing them with good things – treats, toys, and/or attention.

Another myth about deaf dogs is that you cannot call your dog back if she runs away from you into a dangerous situation. It goes without saying that you should not let a deaf dog run free in any place that you would not let a hearing dog run free. However, there may be an

Yes, deaf dogs can even learn how to perform a fast recall; contrary to popular belief, in order to respond quickly, dogs don't need to hear a loud call, or any audible signal at all! Trainer Cindy Rich uses the “pledge of allegiance” gesture (hand over her heart) to cue the recall.





Cindy uses a hand signal to cue a spin.



Juneau has been taught to accept touch.

NOT ANY MORE DIFFICULT THAN TRAINING ANY DOG

Deaf dogs are not any harder to train than hearing dogs. It just takes a little practical consideration to train without sound. As a clicker trainer, I use a conditioned reinforcer to mark correct behavior. Since a completely deaf dog cannot hear a clicker, I have found that a keychain flashlight works well. I choose a small flashlight that turns on when the button is pressed and turns off when the button is released – just like a clicker.

As a backup marker, much like using the word “yes” when I do not have a clicker on me, I use a “thumbs up” gesture. It took practice for me to remember to put the thumbs up away quickly, instead of holding it up for an extended period of time and marking more than just the behavior I want. Another practical consideration is that when you mark a behavior with a thumbs up, the dog must be looking at your hand to perceive it. Thus, you must be in your dog’s line of sight while she does the behavior. I prefer



Juneau’s heelwork is show-ring pretty.

occasion when your dog inadvertently gets away from you. Teaching your deaf dog to “check in” with you frequently, and thus being able to see your non-verbal cue, will aid in preventing disaster.

You can also use a remote-controlled vibration collar to get your dog’s attention over some distance. These devices vary in their maximum range (from as little as 100 feet to more than a mile), but many have an additional shock element, which I do not recommend. Just as a hearing dog must be trained to respond to a recall cue, a deaf dog also must be trained to respond appropriately to a collar vibration. But remember, any dog can have selective “hearing” when recalled unless the behavior is practiced and proofed.

the keychain flashlight, because the light can be perceived in the dog’s peripheral vision, thus allowing your dog to focus on what she is doing instead of watching for the thumbs up.

When I explain clicker training in my orientation seminar for basic obedience courses, I use my deaf dog as my demo dog. In my experience, deaf dogs take to “clicker training” just as well as hearing dogs. An added benefit to working with a deaf dog is that they are not distracted by background noises during training. Using my deaf dog in demonstrations highlights the fact that there is nothing magical about a clicker – it is just a convenient tool.

Some people ask if a keychain flashlight would be a good event marker for their hearing dogs. In my opinion, no; light is not quite as versatile as a clicker. It’s difficult to see in bright light, whereas the clicker is a distinct sound that can be perceived in most situations, even in a noisy room, and from a distance.

Some trainers use a “no reward marker” (NRM) during a training session when a dog is not on the right track. It would be easy to use a specific hand signal (maybe a thumbs down?) to act as a NRM.

WHAT TO USE AS CUES?

Without hearing, deaf dogs must rely on their other senses. They are quite attuned

THE QUALITY OF LIGHT

Some dogs are prone to becoming compulsive light chasers. I recommend that you *never* encourage your dog to “play” with or chase the light of a laser pointer or other focused light beam.



I do use a keychain flashlight as a reward marker for my deaf dog; I look for the type of light that produces only a weak beam, as opposed to a focused pinpoint of light. The dog perceives the flash of light from the flashlight, rather than a spot of light focused on the ground or other object. This flash can be seen in your dog’s peripheral or direct vision. If the light is used solely as a reward marker, it is unlikely that a dog would learn to compulsively chase the flashlight beam.

to body language, human and dog alike. It makes sense that the majority of cues that they are taught would be visual, including hand signals, body posture, foot position, and eye contact.

Some owners of deaf dogs use American Sign Language (ASL) hand signals as cues. This lends consistency in hand signals for deaf dogs, and is a resource for possible hand signals for us unimaginative folk. Unfortunately, few people are fluent in ASL. Also, it's inconvenient to use two hands for a cue, as one hand is needed to mark the correct behavior, deliver a treat, and possibly hold onto a leash during training.

I sometimes use letters of the ASL alphabet for behaviors ("n" for nose touch, "l" for lick) as they only require one hand and are distinct, but I made up most of the hand signals I use with my deaf dog. Her signal for "heel" is a double tap on my left leg. "Leave it" is a flat hand shaken side to side in front of her face. "Spin left" is a flick of the right hand to the right (toward her left side).

Just as you wouldn't shout when you teach a new verbal cue to a hearing dog, hand signals need not be exaggerated, just perceivable by the dog.

TO TALK OR NOT TO TALK?

I do feel that clicker training a deaf dog has made me a better trainer for hearing dogs. It highlights the fact that verbal coaching while training is unnecessary, and can actually get in the way when trying to give consistent cues.

On the other hand, when talking to our dogs our body language naturally and unconsciously changes. Talking to your dog can actually aid in keeping her attention, and in conveying praise and excitement. By talking to your dog you actively engage her. Your entire body conveys that your attention is on her, and this is something which even a deaf dog will be able to pick up.

The lesson is to talk less when training new behaviors, but to talk when you want to keep your dog's attention and as praise for a job well done.

For example, you want to keep your dog's attention while heeling. Try silently heeling with your dog, then try happily talking to your dog while heeling. Your body language changes – when you talk to the dog, you will be more animated – and your dog will notice. If talking to your deaf dog produces better results, talk away!

JUNEAU'S STORY

Juneau and I have learned a lot together. She came to me at 8 months of age as a well socialized puppy with tons of energy. If I didn't find things for her to do, she'd find her own things to do. She may only be 12 inches tall, but she still figured out how to get things off of the counter (like an entire pizza).

She taught me early on to be consistent with my hand signals, and to be careful not to casually use my hands in ways that might be construed as a hand signal. For instance, our hand signal for sit was an open hand, fingers splayed, palm toward her. On walks, she constantly looked for signals that meant she could earn a treat. I started showing her that I didn't have any treats at the moment by displaying my empty hands (fingers splayed, palms toward her). Shortly thereafter, she started turning away and finding something else to do upon giving her the "sit" cue. It took me a little time to connect the two hand signals. I retrained "sit," giving it a new hand signal, and vowed to pay closer attention to what I was "saying" to Juneau.

Juneau is very attentive during training, and strives to keep her eyes on what I am doing at all times. "Stay" is not a problem for her when I walk a short distance away, but it's a challenge for her to hold that stay if I walk behind her. Unfortunately, she hasn't learned how to turn her head 360 degrees, so she often gets up and turns around to see what I am doing back there. I plan to recruit a helper to reinforce for holding a sit or down while I walk around her.

I have found that keeping an open mind, being consistent, and adhering to positive reinforcement methods of training have built a solid connection between me and each of my dogs, including Juneau.



Juneau watches Cindy intently for cues, as each is an opportunity to earn a treat or other reward.

WHAT DOES A DEAF DOG NEED TO KNOW?

Here are five things that I believe are the most important for deaf dogs to learn:

1 Socialization – Your dog should be comfortable with novelty; new places, people, animals, etc.

2 Touch – Your dog should be comfortable being handled all over.

3 Eye contact/attention – Remember, your deaf dog must be looking at you to perceive your cues.

4 Checking in – Your dog should regularly look to you in case you might give a cue.

5 Emergency recall – In an emergency, you must be able to cue your dog to come back quickly.

Note that these things are important for all dogs – not just deaf dogs. I tend

to focus more on touch desensitization and checking in with deaf dogs than with hearing dogs, but otherwise work on the same concepts in the same amounts. If you do not have dog training experience, I would recommend finding a positive reinforcement trainer who is open to working with a deaf dog.

Deaf dogs are not more difficult to train than hearing dogs if you use common sense while training. They are very responsive to hand signals and body language and don't often startle at unexpected noises. The things that are important for hearing dogs to learn are just as important to deaf dogs. If you find yourself with an opportunity to work with a deaf dog, consider it a learning experience! 🐾

Author and trainer Cindy Rich, KPA CTP, of The Canine Connection in Chico, California, has modelled for WDJ photos for a while, but this is her first written contribution to the magazine. See page 24 for contact information.

Chill Out!

Tactics for teaching an active dog to calm down.

BY PAT MILLER, CPDT-KA, CDBC

Boy, do I wish I had a dollar for every time I heard someone say their dog was “hyperactive” or “ADHD” – I’d be a wealthy woman. In fact, those are clinical terms referring to very specific behavioral disorders (canine and human) that are relatively uncommon in dogs. In reality, most “hyper” dogs are just under-exercised. A couple of days hiking at the Peaceable Paws farm and you’d hardly know them.

Not every dog owner has access to large tracts of acreage upon which to exercise their unruly canines, and in any case, “wild child canine syndrome” (WCCS) is more than just lack of exercise; it’s also lack of appropriate reinforcement for calm behavior – i.e., training. Unfortunately, all too often a dog loses his happy home – maybe even his life, as a result of his high-energy behavior.

We’ve seen several of these WCCS dogs at the training center in recent weeks. One private client decided to

return her Shar-Pei-mix to the rescue from whence the pup came. Despite her best intentions and efforts, the client had mobility challenges that made it impossible for her to provide the pup with the exercise and management she needed. As painful as it was for the owner, returning the pup was the right decision.

WCCS dogs often include inappropriate biting in their repertoire of undesirable behaviors. We currently have a temporary foster resident at the training center: a 13-week-old high-energy

Jack Russell Terrier who failed his assessment at the shelter for using his mouth in protest when restrained. Little Squid is a perfect example of the kind of dog who needs to learn self-control and the art of being calm.

A successful WCCS behavior modification program contains three elements: physical exercise, management, and training. While any one of these alone can make your high-energy dog easier to live with, apply all three for maximum success. Let’s look at each of these elements in greater detail.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE

Squid’s day begins with an hour of barn-play while we do chores. He delights in harassing our dogs (and our pig). He gets at least one long hike around the farm per day, preferably two, or even three. He also gets one or more sessions of ball/toy fetch in the training center, and some puppy socialization/play time when there’s a class going on. Finally, he wraps up his day with evening barn chores. Does it tire him out? No. I have yet to see him tired. But it does take the edge off, so that when I work with him to teach calm he is able to focus and participate in the training. The physical exercise sets him up for training success.

Not everyone has an 80-acre farm to play on. If you’re farm-deprived, there are other ways to provide exercise for your WCCS dog. A placid walk or three around the block won’t do it. Nor will leaving him on his own in your fenced backyard. He needs to be actively engaged.

Outings to your local well-run dog park can be a good exercise option. If you don’t have one in your area, invite compatible canines over to play in your dog’s fenced yard. If you don’t have one, invite yourself and your dog over to your dog-friend’s fenced yard for play dates.

Absent any access to a dog-friendly fenced yard, play with your dog on a long line. A 50-foot line gives him a 100-foot stretch to run back and forth and work his jollies off.

Like many young dogs of active breeds, Squid needs a lot of intense exercise in order to be capable of focus and participation in training. Walking around the block doesn’t cut it for dogs like this.



Caution: Work up to 50 feet gradually, so he learns where the end of the line is. You don't want him to blast full-speed to the end of his long line and hurt himself. Also, wear long pants. A high-speed long-line wrapped around bare legs can give you a nasty rope burn.

If none of those work for you, having him wear a pack when you walk him, or even better, pull a cart (which takes significant training), or exercising him (safely) from a bicycle may be options for using up excess energy. If outside exercise is simply out of the question, here are some indoor activities that can help take the edge off:

■ **FIND IT.** Most dogs love to use their noses. Take advantage of this natural talent by teaching yours the "Find It!" game:

1 Start with a handful of pea-sized tasty treats. Toss one to your left and say "Find it!" Then toss one to your other side and say "Find it!" Do this back and forth a half-dozen times.

2 Then have your dog sit and wait or stay, or have someone hold his leash. Walk 10 to 15 feet away and let him see you place a treat on the floor. Walk back to his side, pause, and say "Find it!" encouraging him to go get the treat. Repeat a half-dozen times.

3 Next, have your dog sit and wait or stay, or have someone hold his leash and let him see you "hide" the treat in an easy hiding place: behind a chair leg, under the coffee table, next to the plant stand. Walk back to his side, pause, and say "Find it!" encouraging him to go get the treat. Repeat a half-dozen times.

4 Again, have your dog sit and wait. This time hide several treats in easy places while he's watching. Return to his side, pause, and say "Find it!" Be sure not to help him out if he doesn't find them right away.

You can repeat the "find it" cue, and indicate the general area, but don't show him where it is; you want him to have to work to find it.

5 Hide the treats in harder and harder places so he really has to look for them: surfaces off the ground; underneath things; and in containers he can easily open.

6 Finally, put him in another room while you hide treats. Bring him back into the room and tell him to "Find it!" and enjoy watching him work his powerful nose to find the goodies. Once you've taught him this step of the game you can use it to exercise him

by hiding treats in safe places all over the house, and then telling him to "Find it!" Nose work is surprisingly tiring.

If you prefer something less challenging, just go back to Step 1 and feed your dog his entire meal by tossing pieces or kibble from one side to the other, farther and farther, with a "Find it!" each time. He'll get a bunch of exercise just chasing after his dinner!

■ **HIDE AND SEEK.** This is a fun variation of the "Find it" game. Have your dog sit and wait (or have someone hold him) while you go hide yourself in another room of the house. When you're hidden, call your dog's name and say "Find me!" Make it easy at first so he can find you quickly and succeed. Reinforce him with whatever he loves best – treats, a game of "tug," petting and praise, a tossed ball – or a combination of these. Then hide again. As he learns the game, make your hiding places harder and harder, so he has to really search. A trainer friend tells me she has hidden in bathtubs and closets, under beds, and even inside a cedar chest.

The Manners Minder enables you to dispense a treat to your dog some distance away from you.



■ **MANNERS MINDER.** If you are into higher-tech exercise, use a treat dispenser called the Manners Minder that spits out treats when you push a button on the remote control. A Maryland trainer friend, Elizabeth Adamec of Sweet Wag Dog Training, shared her exercise secret with me for her high-energy adolescent Golden Retriever, Truman. This one is especially useful if you don't feel like exercising along with your canine pal or can't, due to physical restrictions of your own:

Teach your dog to use the Manners Minder, by showing him several times that when he hears the beep, a treat falls out of the machine. You can use his own dog food, if he really likes his food.

1 Set the machine a few feet away and have your dog sit next to you. Push the button, and let him go eat the treats. Repeat several times, encouraging him, if necessary, to go get the treats when he hears the beep.

2 Put the machine across the room, and have your dog sit next to you. Push the button, and watch him run over and eat the treats. If he's not doing this with great enthusiasm, repeat Steps 1 and 2 several more times with higher value treats, until he really gets excited about the treats when he hears the beep.

3 Set the machine in the next room, and repeat the exercise several times. Call him back to you each time, so he runs to the Manners Minder when he hears the beep, eats the treat, and runs back to you to wait for the next beep. Gradually move the treat dispenser into rooms farther and farther away from you, until your dog has to run

The "find it!" game can be played indoors or outside. Nose work is surprisingly tiring for dogs.



all the way across the house, or even upstairs, when he hears the beep. Now you can sit back with the TV remote in one hand, your dog's remote in the other, and enjoy your favorite show while canine pal gets exercise and dinner, all at the same time.

There are tons of other ways to provide your dog with indoor exercise. Play tug. Teach him to bowl. Teach him to catch, then repeatedly toss him his ball 10 feet away and have him bring it back to you. Some trainers use treadmills and canine exercise wheels to exercise their dogs. (These must be carefully trained and supervised.) Get creative. Get busy. Have fun. Let the indoor games begin.

MANAGEMENT

Successful positive training, especially for high-energy dogs, relies on the appropriate use of management tools to prevent the dog from practicing – and being reinforced for – undesirable behaviors. In between his many daily exercise and training sessions, Squid is either parked in an exercise pen in the barn tack room (with plenty of bathroom breaks outside), or in an outdoor kennel off the side of the training center.

Here are examples of when to use various management tools for your wild child dog:

■ **CRATES AND PENS.** Use crates and exercise pens when you can't directly supervise his energy to consistently reinforce appropriate behaviors and prevent reinforcement for inappropriate ones. The best times for the appropriate use of crates and exercise pens include:

- When you can provide adequate exercise and social time in addition to his time in the crate or pen.
- When your dog has been properly introduced to the crate or pen and accepts it as a good place to be. Note: Dogs who suffer from isolation or separation distress or anxiety often do not crate or pen well.
- When you know you'll be home in a reasonable period of time so you don't force your dog to soil his den – no longer than one hour more than your pup's age in months, no more than an outside maximum of eight to nine hours for adult dogs.

■ **LEASHES AND TETHERS.** Leashes and tethers are useful for the “umbilical cord” technique of preventing your wild child from being reinforced for unwanted behaviors. With your dog near or attached to you, you can provide constant supervision. Also, with your dog tethered to your side, you should have many opportunities to reinforce him for appropriate behavior.

The leash can be hooked to waist belts that are designed for that purpose, or clipped to your belt or belt-loop with a carabiner. Your WCCS dog can't zoom around the house if he's glued to your side.

If inappropriate mouthing behavior is included in his high-energy repertoire, however, this may not be the best choice. Tethers are better for keeping this dog in view, with easy access for reinforcement of calm behavior, while keeping his teeth from your clothing or skin. Appropriate situations for the use of leashes and tethers include:



Make sure your dog's crate is comfortable and equip him with a nice chew or food-stuffed Kong.

- For dogs who get into trouble when they are unsupervised.
- **Leashed** when your activities don't preclude having a dog connected to you – okay for working on the computer; not okay for working out.
- **Tethered** when you want to keep your dog near but not directly connected to you, to teach good manners and/or prevent inappropriate behaviors.

■ **BABY GATES AND DOORS.** Baby gates and doors prevent your dog's access to vulnerable areas when he's in wild child mode. A baby gate across the nursery door keeps him safely on the other side while you're changing diapers, but still lets him be part of the “baby experience.” Not to worry if the older kids left their stuffed toys strewn across the bedroom floor; just close the bedroom door when your dog is in a “grab toy and run” mood. The most appropriate uses of baby gates and doors include:

- To prevent your dog's temporary access to areas during activities you don't want him to participate in.
- To prevent your dog's access to areas when you can't supervise closely enough, to prevent inappropriate behaviors such as counter surfing or getting on forbidden furniture.

TRAINING

The final element of your WCCS behavior modification program is training. The more training you do the easier it is to communicate with your dog. The better he understands you, the more easily he can follow your instructions and requests. With a high-energy dog, in ad-

Squid has learned a modicum of calm behavior, and now offers a calm sit or down when he wants something, such as the opportunity to go outside. This is quite a contrast to his previous behavior of frustrated jumping and mouthing.



dition to basic good manners training, invest a lot of training time in impulse-control behaviors.

■ **CLICK FOR CALM.** Start by simply clicking your dog for calm behavior, beginning with clicks and treats for any pause in the action. One challenge with a high-energy dog is that the instant you try to praise or reward, he's bouncing off the walls again. With the clicker, an instant of calm elicits a "click" during the calm behavior. Even if the delivery of the treat causes excitement, your dog still understands it was calm that caused the click-and-treat to happen. An added advantage of the clicker: when they hear the click, most dogs pause in anticipation of the coming morsel, drawing out the brief period of relatively calm behavior even longer.

The goal of clicker training is to get your dog to understand that he can make the click happen by offering certain behaviors – in this case, calm. At first you won't get long, leisurely stretches of calm behavior to click. Begin by giving your dog a click and treat just because all four feet are on the floor at the same instant. Be quick! You want him to understand the behavior he got rewarded for was pausing with all four feet on the floor, so the click needs to happen the instant all four feet are down. If you click late, you may reinforce him for bouncing around – the exact opposite of what you want!

If your timing is good and you click for four-on-the-floor several times in a row he'll start to stand still deliberately to make the clicker go off. This is one of the most exciting moments in dog training –when your dog realizes he can control the clicker. Your clicker is now a powerful tool; you can reinforce any behavior you want, any time it happens, and your dog will quickly start repeating that behavior for you.

How does "pausing briefly on all four feet" translate into calm? Very gradually. You will "shape" the pause into longer periods of stillness, by extending the time, in milliseconds at first, that he stands still before you click and treat. As he gets better at being calm for longer periods, be sure to reinforce randomly – sometimes for shorter pauses, sometimes longer. Do the same thing with "sit" and "down." Down is my favorite calm position: the very act of lying down evokes relaxation.

Do several short training sessions every day. You'll have the most success

MORE STEPS TO A CALM DOG

Every behavior and training professional has seen her share of WCCS dogs. Some have developed their own programs to help humans help their dogs. Here are a few:

❖ **DR. KAREN OVERALL'S PROTOCOL FOR RELAXATION**

Veterinary behaviorist Dr. Overall says, "This program is the foundation for all other behavior modification programs. Its purpose is to teach the dog to sit and stay while relaxing in a variety of circumstances."

dogscouts.org/Protocol_for_relaxation

❖ **TRAINER SEPTEMBER MORN'S "GO WILD AND FREEZE," AS DESCRIBED BY TRAINER/ BEHAVIOR PROFESSIONAL JOLANTA BENAL**

"Start by dancing around and acting excited till your dog gets going, too. After a minute or so, all of a sudden stop moving. Ask your dog to sit, or down, or do another behavior she knows well. The moment she does it, start dancing around again; when your dog joins in, stop, ask for that sit or down again, and reward her by re-starting the party. Mix things up by varying what behaviors you ask for and how long you wait before re-starting the game. If your dog is super-excitabile and likely to mouth you or ricochet off you, start with a pale-vanilla version of 'going wild' – your dog's introduction to this game can be 'Take a Single Step and Freeze.' You can also retreat behind a baby gate if need be." Trainer Jolanta Benal's "Quick and Dirty Tips" podcast can be heard at dogtrainer.quickanddirtytips.com/play-games-bad-weather.aspx.

❖ **LINDA TELLINGTON JONES' TTOUCH**

"The Tellington TTouch is a specialized approach to the care and training of our animal companions. Developed by internationally recognized animal expert, Linda Tellington-Jones, PhD (Hon), this method based on cooperation and respect offers a positive approach to training, can improve performance and health, and presents solutions to common behavioral and physical problems." ttouch.com/whatisTTouch.shtm; (866)488-6824.



Sandi Thompson, CPDT-KA, of BRAVO!PUP in Berkeley, California, demonstrates "go wild and freeze" – a great game for teaching a dog self-control.



if you practice "clicking for calm" right after one of your dog's exercise sessions when he's tired anyway. When he understands that "calm" is a very rewardable behavior, it will work even when he has more energy.

When your dog will remain still for several seconds at a time, add the verbal cue of your choice, like "Chill out," that will eventually cue him into calmness. Over time you can phase out the click and treat for calm behavior and use other rewards such as calm praise, a gentle massage, or an invitation to lie quietly next to you on the sofa.

■ **"Sit" as default behavior.** "Sit" is one of the first behaviors we teach. Even after the dog knows it well we reinforce "sit" so heavily that it becomes his "default behavior" – what he does when he doesn't know what else to do. Teach your dog to sit by holding a treat at the end of his nose and moving it slowly back a few inches, clicking and treating when his bottom touches ground.

Alternatively, shape it by clicking and treating for slightly lowered hind end until touchdown, and/or click for offered sits. Then shape longer sits. If he already knows sit, start reinforcing it every time

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he does it until he sits for anything and nothing. When you have installed “sit” as his default, things like the “Wait” exercises (below) and “Go wild and freeze” (See “More Steps to a Calm Dog,” page 19) happen very easily.

■ **WAIT.** “Wait” is especially useful for dogs who are short on impulse control. I teach it using food bowls and doorways. “Wait” then easily generalizes to other situations.

● **Wait for food:** With your dog sitting at your side, tell him to “Wait.” Hold his bowl (with food in it, topped with tasty treats) chest-high, then move it toward the floor 4 to 6 inches. If your dog stays sitting, click and feed him a treat from the bowl as you raise it back up to your chest. If your dog gets up, say “Oops!” and ask him to sit again. If he gets up several times in a row, you’re asking for too much too soon; lower the bowl in smaller increments.

If he remains sitting, lower the bowl 4 to 6 inches again, and click and treat for his continued sitting. Repeat several times until he consistently remains sitting as you lower the bowl. Gradually move the bowl closer to the floor with succeeding repetitions until you can place it on the floor without your dog getting up. Finally, place the bowl on the floor and tell him to eat. After he’s had a few bites, lift the bowl up and try again. Repeat these steps until you can easily place the bowl on the floor and he doesn’t move until you give him permission.

Caution: If your dog guards resources such as his food bowl, consult with a qualified positive behavior professional before trying this exercise.

● **Wait at the door:** With your dog sitting at your side, tell him to “wait.” Reach for the doorknob. If he doesn’t move, click and treat. Repeat this step several times. Then jiggle the doorknob. Click and reward him for not moving. Repeat this step several times. Slowly open the door a crack. Again, click and treat if he doesn’t move, and repeat. Gradually open the door farther, an inch or two at a time. Do several repetitions at each step, with clicks and treats each time.

Eventually you’ll walk all the way through the door, stop, and face your dog, without having him move. Wait

What you can do . . .

- Understand that your dog is not being “bad” – he can’t help his high-energy behavior.
- Make a serious commitment to exercise, manage, and train your high-energy dog so he stays with you forever.
- If you’re convinced his energy goes beyond normal and he really is one of those rare hyperactive, ADHD dogs, consult a qualified positive behavior professional.



a few seconds, click, then return and give him a tasty treat. Of course, occasionally you’ll actually give him permission to go out the door!

Squid does a variation of “Wait at the door” in his pen and kennel. With the dog on the inside and human on the outside, I reach for the latch. If he jumps up, I pull my hand away. If he sits, I continue with the gate-opening process. Each time he jumps up, the process stops. If he exercises self-control the gate opens and he earns his freedom.

A HAPPY FUTURE

Using a combination of exercise, training, and management, I am wildly optimistic that I can help Squid chill out, pass his shelter assessment, and find his forever home. If, after reading all this you still think your dog suffers from clinical hyperactivity or ADHD, then it’s time to visit a qualified behavior professional for help. More likely though, using the same combination of exercise, training, and management, perhaps with a sprinkling of additional tools from “More Steps to a Calm Dog” (page 19), you can ensure your own dog’s calm and happy future in your family. 🐾

Pat Miller, CPDT-KA, CDBC, is WDJ’s Training Editor. She lives in Fairplay, Maryland, site of her Peaceable Paws training center. Pat is also author of many books on positive training, including her newest, Do Over Dogs: Give Your Dog a Second Chance at a First-Class Life. See page 24 for more info.

Diet Upgrade

Five things to do to improve your dog's commercial diet.

BY MARY STRAUS



Whole Dog Journal readers have learned how to identify the best commercial foods when they shop for their dogs. But whether you feed dry kibble or canned food, even the best commercial diets can be improved with the addition of appropriate fresh foods.

Keep the following things in mind when adding fresh foods to your dog's diet. Decrease the amount of commercial food your dog gets, so that you don't increase the total number of calories you feed your dog, which can lead to unhealthy weight gain. Limit the amount of fresh food you add to about 25 percent of total calories consumed; if you want to feed more than that, you need to be careful to feed an appropriate variety of foods in order to keep the diet complete and balanced.

Here are some of the best foods you can add to your dog's diet:

1 EGGS: Few foods can beat the nutritional impact of eggs, with their combination of high-quality protein and fat along with a wide variety of vitamins and minerals. Eggs are inexpensive and easy to feed, too. Egg whites are more easily digested when cooked, while yolks retain more of their nutritional value if fed raw. Most dogs have no trouble with bacteria in raw eggs, but it's fine to feed soft-cooked, hard-cooked, or scrambled eggs.

A large egg provides about 70 calories; this amount is fine for medium-sized and larger dogs, but smaller dogs would do better with half an egg daily, or one egg every other day, with meals reduced proportionately.

Do not include the shell when you feed eggs, as the shells contain far more calcium than your dog needs. Too much calcium can be harmful to large-breed

puppies, and also binds other minerals, making them less available to your dog.

2 YOGURT: A natural source of probiotics, yogurt is another food that is inexpensive and easy to feed. Stick to low-fat or nonfat plain yogurt, as your dog doesn't need the sugar provided in the flavored varieties.

The probiotics (beneficial bacteria) in yogurt provide benefits for all dogs, but are especially good for dogs with digestive problems. Use yogurt with live and active cultures. Varieties that contain more than just *Lactobacillus acidophilus* may provide additional benefits to the digestive tract.

Low-fat yogurt has less than 20 calories per ounce, so even small dogs can enjoy a spoonful without concern about reducing food portions.

3 SARDINES: Fish supply omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA that are good for the skin and coat. In addition, they help regulate the immune system and reduce inflammation, and so can be helpful for dogs with allergies, arthritis, and autoimmune disease. DHA is also good for brain health, which can benefit both puppies and senior dogs.

One small canned sardine provides about 25 calories and 175 mg omega-3 fatty acids, a good amount for a small dog (20 pounds or less). Give larger dogs proportionately more. Use sardines packed in water (not oil). Feed soon after opening so the fatty acids are still fresh.

Other canned fish options, especially for larger dogs, include jack mackerel and pink salmon.

4 VEGETABLES AND FRUITS: Berries, especially blueberries, are packed with antioxidants. Other good fruits to feed include bananas, apples, and melon; some dogs even like citrus. Don't feed the pits, and avoid grapes and raisins, which can cause kidney failure when eaten in large quantities.

Leafy green veggies are a much better choice than starchy foods such as grains and potatoes. Vegetables are more nutritious when fed cooked, but raw veggies, such as carrots, zucchini slices, and even frozen peas, make great low-calorie snacks. Non-starchy vegetables can also be included in your dog's meals to increase the quantity you feed without adding significant calories. Cruciferous veggies, such as broccoli, are especially nutritious, but watch out: too much can cause gas.

5 HEALTHY LEFTOVERS: I know that pet food companies and often veterinarians discourage giving leftovers to dogs, but as long as you stick to healthy foods and limit portions, there is no harm in sharing your meals with your dogs. Feed the same foods you eat yourself, such as meat and vegetables, not fatty scraps that lead to weight gain and have little nutritional value. Keep amounts small, or reduce meal size to accommodate the extra calories.

It's easy to overdo leftovers, particularly with small dogs; I learned this the hard way when my 11-pound Norwich Terrier, Ella, began gaining weight. Extra calories add up fast with our little guys, so keep portions small! 🐾

Bad news for dog owners looking for single-antigen vaccines

I have always run titers on my dogs before vaccinating and my vet provided individual doses when required. This year was different. The office manager called and said their practice could no longer provide individual vaccines, as in the past. I vaccinate only for parvo, distemper when titers are low, and rabies. I was quite upset because one of my dogs needed only distemper and my other dog's titers were good. I posed the question, "Why offer titers, if you are not able to provide individual vaccines? Big silence! Well, I know the answer. The titers are extremely expensive, \$200 for parvo and distemper, times two (for two dogs!). It's great income for the vets!

I have called all the holistic veterinarians in my area; all of them have only bundled vaccinations. I have surfed the web to find individual vaccines to purchase without luck. This is a huge dilemma and an issue I have been frustrated by for years. Vet students are not taught in school that too many vaccinations assault the dog's immune system time and time again. Veterinarians turn the other cheek. What is most disturbing and unethical is the vets will happily accept the fee for the titers, but as in my case, don't provide individual vaccinations when indicated.

I would surely appreciate any resources where I may acquire individual parvo and distemper vaccines.

Thank you for your thoughtful concern regarding this frustrating topic. I have been subscribing to WDJ for years and can't thank you enough for being the "pioneers" of healthy dog care. Your annual dry and canned food survey is invaluable, as are so many topics each month. I hope you have the resources to help me and my dogs. Until I can find individual vaccinations, I will forgo the vaccines. One of my dogs is 9 and the other 3 years.

(Name withheld by request)

We asked Dr. Jean Dodds for help on this one. A respected expert on veterinary immunology, she also is the founder of Hemopet, a non-profit blood bank and laboratory. She wrote:



DR. JEAN DODDS, DVM

There is only one source available: The Schering-Plough Galaxy-D (the old Fromm-D vaccine), available from many online veterinary supply stores. By the way, vaccine titers actually cost between \$40-60, not \$200. Those clinics quoting the much higher price typically do so because they aren't familiar with the "going rate" and assume that they're costly – as a sort of dissuasion. Here at Hemopet (hemopet.org) we charge \$42 for the paired distemper + parvo vaccine titers. See our "Test Request Form" and price list on the website.

We sent this information to our reader, and she responded:

I contacted a few online vet supply catalogs, and all of them offer parvo as an individual vaccine, but the distemper is paired with adenovirus vaccine, which I think is unnecessary.

We asked Dr. Dodds to weigh in on the distemper/adenovirus vaccine. She responded:

I wouldn't prefer this combo, especially when there have been no clinical cases of infectious canine hepatitis in North America for at least 12 years.

Now we were really curious. We called Schering-Plough and asked about the Galaxy-D – and was told that the company had discontinued its production in January. So dog owners seemed to have lost their only option for giving the distemper vaccine alone. (And ferret owners have lost their only source of distemper vaccine for ferrets; the Galaxy-D was reportedly the only effective distemper vaccine for that species.) Dr. Dodds' final comment and advice?

Darn it! I'd give a distemper/adenovirus Recombitek vaccine – provided that the distemper titer result really is low. This industry sure isn't helpful for consumers needs – but, of course, sales volume is what determines what we can get.

Letters to the editor can be sent to:

WDJ Editorial Office
1655 Robinson Street
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or emailed to WDJEditor@gmail.com



ADDENDUM

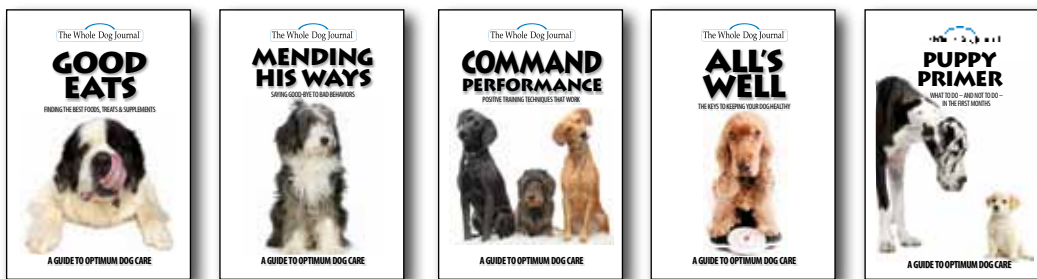
As part of the "You Gotta Try Treibball!" article in the April 2011 issue, we listed a number of trainers who offer instruction or classes in the fun new sport of treibball. Here are a more trainers for that list:

- ❖ **NANCY ALLEN**
Tails-U-Win Dog Training Center, LLC, Manchester, CT
(860) 646-5033; ailsoffice@sbcglobal.net
- ❖ **MEREDITH BIEHL, CPDT**
Cudahy Kennel Club, St. Francis, WI
(414) 769-0758; cudahykennelclub.org
- ❖ **PAUL J. EMERSON, CPDT-KA**
Family Dog Training, Hudson, MA
(508) 243 3922; family-dog-training.com
- ❖ **DIANNA L. STEARNS, MA, CPDT-KA, CDBC**
Founder, American Treibball Association
Waggin's West Dog Training and Behavior Consulting, LLC, Denver, CO
(303) 718-7705; wagginwest.com; americantreibballassociation.org



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- ❖ Cindy Rich, KPA CTP, The Canine Connection, Chico, CA. Training, puppy classes, social sessions, daycare. Force-free, fun, positive training. (530) 345-1912; thecanineconnection.com

HOLISTIC VETERINARIANS

- ❖ American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association (AHVMA)
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BOOKS

- ❖ WDJ Training Editor Pat Miller is author of **Positive Perspectives: Love Your Dog, Train Your Dog; Positive Perspectives 2: Know Your Dog, Train Your Dog; Power of Positive Dog Training; Play With Your Dog; and Do Over Dogs: Give Your Dog a Second Chance at a First Class Life.**
All available from Dogwise, (800) 776-2665 or dogwise.com

- ❖ **The Encyclopedia of Natural Pet Care and Natural Remedies for Dogs and Cats**, by WDJ contributor CJ Puotinen, are available from DogWise, (800) 776-2665 or dogwise.com. Puotinen is also author of several books about human health, including **Natural Relief from Aches and Pains**, available from your favorite bookseller.

“FREE TIME” RESOURCES (PAGE 4)

- ❖ **Trainers**
 - ◆ **Nancy Tanner**, CPDT-KA, Bozeman, MT. Observation Without Direction and “free-time” training. pawsandpeople.com; nancytanner.com.
 - ◆ **Sue Ailsby, Regina, Saskatchewan.** “Steps to Success” dog training. dragonflyllama.com.

❖ **Recommended books about canine body language**

- ◆ **Canine Body Language: A Photographic Guide Interpreting the Native Language of the Domestic Dog**, by Brenda Aloff. Dogwise Publishing, 2005. Paperback, \$40.
- ◆ **Dog Language: An Encyclopedia of Canine Behavior**, by Roger Abrantes, Alice Rasmussen, and Sarah Whitehead. Dogwise Publishing, 2001. Paperback, \$20.
- ◆ **Canine Behavior: A Photo Illustrated Handbook**, by Barbara Handelman (Author) and Monty Sloan (Photographer). Woof and Word Press, 2008. Paperback, \$50.

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