



PAWS & EFFECT
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Paws & Effect

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More than just Obedience Training By Kathy Shumway



Training a dog is not something that is accomplished in a six or seven week class. While teaching new cues may diminish as your dog ages, reinforcing learned cues and maintaining good behaviors is an ongoing endeavor for the life of your dog. That being said, isn't it important that you, after attending a dog training class, have the skills to reinforce learned behaviors and train new ones? That's what makes our class a little different than other classes you may have attended. Because dogs learn best when having fun,

we use positive reinforcement to help you better communicate what you expect from your pet. We teach you how your pet "learns by association" and how this knowledge can be used to capture and mold desired behaviors. We focus on the importance of establishing a leadership role in your pet's life and how taking that role can affect the overall well-being of your dog. By better understanding how your pet views the world, you can avoid or curtail many of the behavioral issues that plague pet owners today.

We discuss the amazing bond that developed over 14,000 years ago between man and dogs' early ancestors and how you can enhance that bond between you and your pet. Because your dog is an expert at reading your body language, you will learn how the tone of your

voice and your overall demeanor affects your dog's ability and willingness to learn. We discuss how to capture and reinforce desired behaviors in a way that is fun for both you and your pet.

This class will also provide important information such as what to look for when selecting dog food, household "dangers" that you should be aware of if you want to keep your pet safe and the importance of exercise in your dog's daily routine.

With the information from this class and a little bit of patience, you will have the skills necessary to teach your pet a myriad of desired behaviors. This class is the beginning of a life-long communication and bonding experience between you and your pet – and isn't that's what loving a dog is all about?

What to look for when selecting a puppy

According to Brian Kilcommons and Sarah Wilson, authors of *Good Owners, Great Dogs*, puppy selection is much more an art than a science. Puppies react differently from one day to the next. However, there are four tests you can use which may help you determine the personality of a potential new family member. These tests are:

- ◆ The Cradle Test
- ◆ The Touch-Sensitivity Test
- ◆ The Sound-Sensitivity Test
- ◆ The Attraction Test

Cradle Test - Supporting the puppy well, cradle him in your arms as you would a baby. If the puppy struggles and does not stop, nips or bites you, howls or panics, you may have a puppy that does not han-

Correcting Undesirable Behaviors by Kathy Shumway



Training Classes:

Behavioral /Obedience Classes — Classes are scheduled Monday or Thursday Evenings 6:30—7:30 PM. Classes are seven weeks in length. Registration is required. Call 343-0001 to for more information or to register.

Game Night – Cancelled for the summer months. Every Tuesday evening from 6:30—7:30 PM. No registration is required, but we ask that you call 343-0001 the day of the class to let us know you are coming. Games are selected based on the number of attendees.

Puppy Kindergarten—Saturday mornings at 9:00 AM. For puppies up to 6 months of age. No registration is required.

Basic Obedience Class—Saturday morning 10:00—11:00 AM Registration is required. Please call Andrea at 439-2594

Fun with Agility—Wednesday evenings at 6:30—7:30 PM. Call 343-0001 for more information.

Our complete training schedule is located on our website:

We're on the Web!!!
www.pawsandeffectinc.com

Does your dog bark too much, jump on people when they come to visit or drag you down the street when you go for a walk? Many dogs have one or more undesirable behaviors. The process used when addressing behavior problems consists of the following four components:

- ◆ Positively reinforcing an alternate desired behavior.
- ◆ Managing the situation and setting your dog up to succeed.
- ◆ Providing appropriate consequences
- ◆ Maintaining consistency.

Over the next few editions of this newsletter, we will look at each of these components in further detail.

Positively Reinforcing an alternate desired behavior

If you want to stop a particular behavior, you must first ensure your dog is not being rewarded for that behavior. No dog is intentionally “bad”. Most behaviors that we consider undesirable, such as jumping, digging and chewing are normal behaviors for a dog. Many times, these behaviors are self-rewarding which means the dog naturally finds them pleasurable.

In addition, sometimes we inadvertently reward the behavior we are trying to correct. For example, dogs normally jump up on people to get attention. Even nega-

tive attention is attention. So if the motive behind jumping is getting attention and you scold your dog for jumping, in your dog's eyes, you are giving him the attention he is looking for—and you are rewarding the behavior you are trying to stop. So the first step in stopping an undesirable behavior is to ensure the dog is not being rewarded for that behavior.

You then need to reward an alternate desirable behavior. For example, if your dog is jumping on people when they come into your house, you need to decide what you would like your dog to do when guests arrive. Perhaps you want your dog

to sit. Perhaps you want your dog to “go to his spot” when guests arrive. Pick one alternate behavior and consistently reward that behavior.

Many times it's harder for us to break old habits than it is for our dogs. So be very cognizant of your actions and make sure you are not rewarding the behavior you are trying to extinguish. In addition, consistently reward the desired behavior and you will be amazed at the end results.



Behavioral / Obedience Class Schedule

Two Obedience / Behavioral classes left in 2007. The scheduled dates are as follows:

To sign up for a class, call 343-0001.

Day of Week	Class Start Date	Class End Date
Thursday	8/14/2008	9/25/2008
Thursday	10/9/2008	11/20/2008

Simon

Simon is a cat who was found by a wonderful woman who does a lot for the homeless animals in our area. He had been hit by a car and has a broken leg and an infection in his jaw. Some of his teeth are missing. He is young and a bit wild.

The woman is currently fostering him in her home, but he is in need of a forever home.

We will update you on Simon in this newsletter and we will try to get a picture of him when he is feeling better.

What to look for when selecting a puppy - continued

dle stressful situations well. Be wary of the puppy who stiffens and stays rigid the entire time you are holding him. The puppy that struggles or whines for a moment and then relaxes has passed the test. A puppy that can stay relaxed in a stressful situation will likely become a dog that can handle stressful situation as an adult.

Touch-Sensitivity Test - Dogs differ in their pain tolerance just as people do. If you are looking for a puppy that is joining a household with active children, you do not want one that is too sensitive to pain or discomfort - let's face it, even the best behaved toddler can sometime "hug" too hard.

To test a puppy for his sensitivity to touch, hold him and squeeze the webbing between his toes. DO NOT use your fingernail and RELEASE the paw the INSTANT you get a response.

A puppy that can take a fair amount of discomfort before withdrawing his or her paw and then forgives you immediately is likely what you are looking for. According to the authors, "the best selection is a pup that shows signs of discomfort, but does not scream or aggressively mouth - and that forgives instantly when the pressure is released." They also warn that puppies that yelp

at the slightest pressure or bite at your hand are not good choices if you have children or if the dog will require regular grooming.

Sound-Sensitivity Test - Let the puppy wander around, and when he is paying no attention to you, drop your keys on the floor near him and watch his response. Does he totally ignore the noise? Does he jump, but then go to investigate? Both of these are good responses.

A puppy that runs away and hides and does not recover in a short period of time may grow into an overly nervous or fearful dog.

The authors note that a good response to the sound-sensitivity test is critical for dogs that will live in a city environment as they will have to cope with noise and distractions on a daily basis. They also note that a natural sensitivity to sound is difficult to successfully eliminate as the dog matures.

Attraction Test - Puppies differ in their interest in us. Some puppies are extremely interested while others are not. To check out how "people-oriented" a puppy is, do the following:

Go into a quiet room with the puppy and let him wander around. Saying nothing, squat down and clap your hands. A puppy that ignores you and wanders off will likely do the same

thing as an adult. Puppies that are frightened by you may be overly nervous as adults. Puppies that come over and are happy to see you will likely grow to be people-oriented adults given a proper upbringing.

If possible, watch the actions of the entire litter of puppies and you can quickly discover the differences in their personalities. Note which puppies come up to you and which ones stay away. Also note the interactions between the puppies.

A further note

It should be noted that these tests in no way provide definitive evidence of a dog's personality as an adult. The most social, calm puppy, if raised in the wrong environment, can become fearful and aggressive. I also believe that even a fearful or nervous pup, given love and stability, can become a well-adjusted companion. It may take a little more work, and you, as the owner, must be willing to do your part. These test do, however, give you a starting point when selecting the perfect puppy for you



Studies have reported over 8 million animals are euthanized in shelters across the US. PLEASE spay and neuter.

Looking for a new member of the family? Check out petfinder.com

If you would like to make a donation in memory to Paws Across Oswego County send a picture and tell us about your much missed and loved pet and we will place it in our next newsletter



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"We have more in store for your
best friend."

Take your dog swimming... by Marjorie Wentworth

Swimming is a wonderful exercise for your dog. My male lab loves the water. He'll get excited over a mud puddle, but luckily he has short fur.

For the long coated and dense coated breeds swimming means more grooming work for you. We are seeing a lot of matted coats on our swimmers this year. Remember to brush all coats out first before they head for the pool or lake. Any time a matted coat gets wet the mats tighter and tighter to the skin. Once the mats are in place it takes longer for the coat to dry because the air can no longer get through the matted coat to the skin. Then they will start to get hot spots and skin infections.

If your dog loves to swim it is best to book your grooming appointments closer together or clip the coat down in the warmer weather. Clipping down a double coated dog can cause the guard hairs to grow back slowly. After some coats are clipped down repeatedly they can take years to grow back. A white or light colored dog clipped down short may need sun protection, they can sunburn also.

It is best to have some ear cleaner on hand to clean out your pet's ears after a swim. The cleaner will also help to dry up any water that may have gotten into the ear canal while swimming.

If swimming in the lake or a pond be sure to bring fresh water with you. There is no way to prevent them from drinking some of the lake or pond water, but they would prefer fresh cold water.

Don't forget the all important waste pick up bags. I swear my guys could go more than I would think possible when ever we go to any public place. I carry an arsenal of bags and wipes every where we go. You can be sure after a good swim they will be ready to go again.

This is also the only time you will see me use a retractable leash. To keep my dogs safe at the beach I keep them on a retractable. This way they can swim and I don't have to. Some beaches require them to remain on leash and this is a good way to keep them on one with some freedom to swim. Be sure to be far enough away from sunbathers and other swimmers, some of those corded retractable leashes can cause some real damage when wrapped around a leg.

Last but not least don't forget the towel, or towels. You'll need one for them and one for you. No matter how fast you can move they will always find a way to run right next to you to shake!



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Water Rover
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Adopting a shy dog?

Below are some tips from *The Whole Dog Journal* of what to consider if you are adopting a shy or timid dog:

◆ "Adopt a shy or timid dog only if you are ready, equipped and have time to deal with a fearful dog."

◆ "Commit yourself to systematically and thoughtfully exposing your timid dog to increasingly more challenging (yet safely controlled and rewarding) experiences."

◆ "Assiduously protect your dog from overwhelming situations where he may panic and feel compelled to bite."