



FEATURES

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What's the Name of the Game?

*Using Games in the Classroom to Build
Reliable Behaviors, Increase Owner
Participation and Create BIG FUN!*
By Lauren Fox, CPDT-KA

In my final installment of "What's the Name of the Game?" I want to share some of my all-time favorite games. These games require multiple skills from both the dogs and their humans. The games outlined below are some of the most entertaining and laugh-out-loud times that we have had in our Fun 'n' Games classes. As always, feel free to change the rules and be creative to fit the needs of your particular group of students.

Let the games begin!

Hotdog Alley – This game is the best around for proofing both loose leash walking and "leave it" in motion. Be prepared to lose a lot of hotdogs!

Supplies Needed: Hotdogs (lots of them) frozen and cut in half, fishing line/thin string to string through hotdogs before freezing, agility/obedience jumps or two chairs and a broom (or whatever you can improvise to hang the hotdogs on).

- Prepare your hotdogs! We have found it's easier to string the hotdogs before freezing them. Fishing line works great, and other strings do to, just make sure the dog doesn't eat the string! String the hot dogs close to the top where they will be attached to the bar/pole, so if a dog does grab the hotdog, it pulls loose and the string stays on

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* 2013 Conference *
* 1-3 November *
* Waipuna Conference Centre *
* Auckland *
* Mark the date in your diary now! *

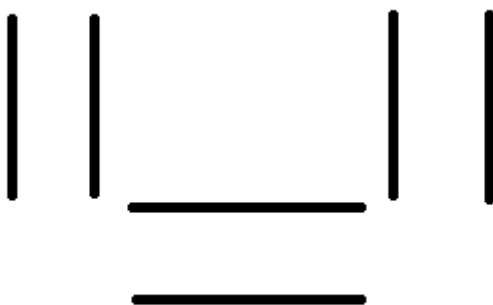
Conference Issue

All conference details at your fingertips!

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the pole/jump bar.

- Create an “alley” with hotdogs strung up on both sides. We usually have it shaped like a U with hotdogs strung on both sides (see diagram).
 - You must have a neutral judge and a score keeper to write down penalties.
 - This is a timed event. The time starts when the dog/handler team enters the alley and ends when they exit.
 - One dog is in the alley at a time.
 - Leashes must stay loose the whole time as the team navigates through the alley. A one-second penalty is added for every tight leash and a five-second penalty is added for any leash tugs/pulls/grabs on leash (you can decide the criteria ahead of time).
 - A one-second penalty is added for each repeated “leave it” cue. A three-second penalty is added for every hotdog pulled off, and a five-second penalty is added for every hotdog consumed.
 - The handler may not have treats under the dog’s nose to lure him through the alley.
 - The dog/handler team with the best time, including any additional penalties, is the winner!
- We create variations to this game, like changing it to the slowest time (going slowly through the alley can be harder) or making it a straight alley and practicing waits and recalls through the alley. Once this is set up, we try to get as many games out of it as possible. Be creative!

Diagram:



Dinner Party – We always play this game during the last meeting of the Fun ‘n’ Games class. It’s a nice social meal time to spend with the friends that you’ve made in class, and a good time to plan what class they are going to take next!

Supplies Needed: Table/chairs to accommodate the number of humans in the class, an additional

table to hold the food, plates/napkins/plasticware, cups, food (we usually assign each person to bring part of a course, at least three courses should be present), several volunteers/trainers/assistants to play the roles of party host, servers and judge. You can make this as simple or as fancy as you wish!

- Each handler/dog team starts with 100 points.
 - Have each handler/dog team loose leash walk from the host station to where they are told to sit. Once they get to their spot, the handler cues the dog to do a down stay, while the team waits for all of the other “couples” to be seated.
 - First course: dogs are release from the down stay and cued to sit stay as the “waitress” serves the drinks and the first course.
 - Second course: each handler, one at a time, leaves the table with his or her plate and goes to the food table to serve him or herself the second course. On the way back, within reach of the dog, the handler “accidentally” drops a piece of food and cues the dog to leave it (salad does NOT count!).
 - Third course: each team, one at a time, loose leash walks to the food table until the dog is nose level (or close enough if it’s a little dog) to the edge of the table, and serves him or herself the last course. The handler can cue the dog to do a sit stay or just a leave it.
 - Teams receive penalties for breaking stays, not leaving food, tight leash, pulling on the leash, paws on either table, noses on either table or mad-dogging other dogs under the table. You can decide the amount for each penalty depending on the group and skill levels.
- The team with the most points remaining (sometimes this is the team with the least NEGATIVE points) is the winner!

Copy Cat – This is a team game! It is awesome to see how creative the teams can be!

Supplies: A white board or sheet of paper and a marker/pen, a coin. Additional objects may be used if the teams think to do so.

- Divide your class into two teams. I make them come up with a team name as well.
- Flip a coin to see which team goes first; the winner (we’ll call them team A) goes first.
- Team A chooses one of their players to demonstrate a trick, a behavior or a behavior chain.
- Team B must find someone on their team who can get their dog to perform that same behavior.
- If team B is successful, they get to choose a

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trick that team A must perform.

- If a team cannot meet the challenge, they receive a letter "C" on the board or paper (like in the basketball game of HORSE).
- Each person/dog must have a turn being the challenge team, and each person/team must take a turn trying to meet the challenge. It cannot be the same dog on each team every time.
- The teams take turns demonstrating tricks/ behaviors/behavior chains and challenging the opposing team, until one team fails to meet the challenge three times and has spelled the word CAT.

The other team is the winner!

I hope you have enjoyed this series of games as much as I've enjoyed sharing them! Please feel free to send me pictures and stories of you and your students playing. I love to see dogs and people having a good time while learning and bonding with their dogs.

Remember to have fun and PLAY ON!

Lauren Fox, CPDT-KA, has been the Executive Director of All Breed Rescue & Training in Colorado Springs, CO since 1998. She presented on "Outdoor Adventure: Leaving Tracks All Over The Country" and "The Spice of Life: Keeping Clients Coming Back" at the 2010 APDT conference in Louisville, KY. She is happy to be contacted at fox711711@msn.com.

APDTNZ Advertising Policy

- APDTA will not advertise training services or courses.
- All material in the newsletter must be in line with the APDTNZ Vision and Mission Statements and the Code of Ethics
- Placement of material in the newsletter is at the discretion of the Editor and the Committee
- No paid advertising is accepted
- Members may place merchandise ads free of charge in the newsletter, but must include a discount for members
- Events may be advertised in a maximum of 5 lines
- Positioning of ads is at the discretion of the Editor and Committee
- The publication of any advertising material does not constitute the endorsement of the APDTA for the event of merchandise.

LIBRARY BORROWING RULES

- Only Financial Members of APDTNZ may borrow from the APDTNZ library.
- There is no borrowing fee but to cover postage and packaging within New Zealand there is a charge of \$8.00 or \$13.00, depending on size, this includes the cost for returning the books. The Librarian will advise you which charge applies to your choice of books. This charge is payable with your request. Should any item be damaged or lost, the member will be required to pay replacement costs.
- Only 2 books or a total of 4 disks may be borrowed at a time with a maximum borrowing time of **one month**.
- There is a late fee of \$5 per week per item for overdue items. Please include the fee when you return overdue items.
- Please ensure that items are returned in the courier bag provided and covered with bubble wrap. Do not use sticky tape on the bubble wrap so it can easily be re-used.
- To borrow items please contact the librarian with your request at librarian@apdt.org.nz
- When you receive confirmation that your choice of books is available, you can send a cheque, **made out to APDTNZ** to:
APDTNZ Treasurer,
37 Turoa Road,
Wanganui 4500
Or direct deposit to 03-1503-0398799-00
account name: APDTNZ Inc, please provide your name and the word "library" as a reference.
- Only when payment is received will the books be sent out.
- When ordering please identify all items by author and title, and provide the librarian with your name and full address including postcode.
- Please do not ask the librarian to make a selection for you.
- The list of items available to be borrowed is on the APDTNZ website www.apdt.org.nz or can be posted if you send a stamped self-addressed envelope to the librarian. Or it can be emailed to you. Contact librarian@apdt.org.nz
- Where appropriate, due to either the inability to replace, or the cost of replacing goods, (such as some books & videos) APDTNZ will use Express Post to post such items out to members. Loans from the library of such items will need to be returned by Express Post, as determined & advised by the Librarian.
- **APDT New Zealand Inc. does not necessarily agree with nor condone the information contained in library items that have been supplied on loan to members.**

APDTNZ – 2013 CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

PIA SILVANI & VERONICA BOUTELLE

FRIDAY 1ST NOVEMBER 2013 DAY 1

TIME	SPEAKER	TOPIC
8.15 – 8.45 am		Registration, collections and check in. Trade
8.45 – 9.00 am	APDTNZ Chair	Conference Opening
9.00 – 10.30 am	Veronica Boutelle	RETHINKING DOG TRAINING CLASSES
10.30 – 11.00 am		Morning Tea
11.00 – 12.30 pm	Veronica Boutelle	MAKING THE SALE
12.30 – 1.30 pm		Buffet Lunch
1.30 – 3.00 pm	Veronica Boutelle	WHO IS THE TRAINER?
3.00 – 3.30 pm		Afternoon Tea
3.30 – 5.00 pm	Veronica Boutelle	MARKETING 101 FOR DOG TRAINERS
5.00 – 5.05 pm	APDTNZ Chair	
7.00 – 9.00 pm	Clare Brown	AN OVERVIEW OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE WORLD OF DOG RESEARCH

SATURDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2013 DAY 2

8.45 – 9.00 am	APDTNZ Chair	Daily Welcome
9.00 – 10.30 am	Pia Silvani	FEAR FACTOR
10.30 – 11.00 am		Morning Tea
11.00 – 12.30 pm	Pia Silvani	FEAR FACTOR CONTINUED
12.30 – 1.30 pm		Buffet Lunch

1.30 – 3.00 pm	Pia Silvani	FIGHTING DOGS
3.00 – 3.30 pm		Afternoon Tea
3.30 – 5.00 pm	Pia Silvani	FIGHTING DOGS CONTINUED
5.00-5.05pm	APDTNZ Chair	
7.00pm start		Conference Dinner

SUNDAY 3RD NOVEMBER 2013 DAY 3

8.45 – 9.00 am	APDTNZ Chair	Daily Welcome
9.00 – 10.30 am	Pia Silvani	CHILL OUT: OVERLY AROUSED PUPPIES
10.30 – 11.00 am		Morning Tea
11.00 – 12.30 pm	Pia Silvani	DEVIL PUPPIES
12.30 – 1.30 pm		Buffet Lunch
1.30 – 3.00 pm	Veronica Boutelle	THE BEST CLASSES IN TOWN: YOURS!
3.00 – 3.30 pm		Afternoon Tea
3.30—5.00pm	Pia Silvani	PLAYTIME: WHAT IS IT REALLY ABOUT?
5.00 – 5.15 pm	APDTNZ Chair	Conference Closing

The APDTNZ reserves the right to alter the program as appropriate to accommodate unforeseen withdrawals or late changes.

Conference Attendance Prices

Registrations open on 15th July

	Early bird member before 2nd September 2013 5pm	Early bird non member before 2nd September 2013 5pm	Member after early bird	Non member after early bird
3 days 1-2-3 November	\$350	\$450	\$400	\$500
2 days 2-3 November	\$300	\$400	\$350	\$450
1 day 1 November	\$170	\$270	\$220	\$320

Conference Topics Abstracts

Rethinking Dog Training Classes **Veronica Boutelle**



Filling classes can be a challenge. So can getting students to take more than just one. This session explains the factors involved in how potential students decide whether and whose classes to take, and how to re-create class programs to more fully fit the training, financial, and emotional needs of dog guardians. We will look in detail at a number of alternative class formats, including levels, modular, open enrollment, and short topics programs, and discuss the structure, uses, limitations, and marketing of each. Learn how to get better results from your classes; how to get them filled, decrease drop outs, and increase retention from one class to the next—all while having more fun and making more money.

Making The Sale: How To Help More Dogs **Veronica Boutelle**

You hate having to sell yourself and your services: You get nervous when it's time to talk prices. You worry that suggesting too much training will mean hearing no. You spend too much time at initial consults in case clients don't ask you back. If any of these apply, then this talk is for you. Come learn simple strategies to increase your sales confidence and help more dogs. Veronica will walk through the sales process step-by-step, sharing sample language that renders selling relaxed and

comfortable for trainer and client—no pushy sales strategies needed! She'll also discuss common pricing errors that impact sales, and how to fix them.

Who is the Trainer **Veronica Boutelle**

“Our job is to teach people to train their dogs.” It sounds so logical. But can we really teach owners to train their dogs and solve behavior problems in a few short sessions? This question lies at the heart of the many frustrations of our work—unfinished cases, poor compliance and income, trainer burnout. It's time to consider alternatives. Most dog owners don't want to become amateur trainers—they want to hire someone to fix a problem for them. And most dog owners don't have the mechanical skills, time, or commitment needed to learn and execute dog training plans to achieve their goals. Given these limitations, the logic of teaching owners to train their own dogs crumbles. This presentation will explore the limitations of our current training model and consider alternatives that are a win for trainers, dog owners, and the dogs themselves.

Marketing 101 for Dog Pros **Veronica Boutelle**

To train dogs for a living, as a club instructor or as a vetnurse you have to have clients. To get clients, you'll need a marketing plan. And if the thought of marketing sends you running for cover or gets you snoring, this session is just the trick. dog*tec, the dog industry's leading business support company, is known for innovative marketing approaches designed for dog pros, and Veronica will share 10 years of experience helping dog professionals become successful business owners. If you're uncomfortable with marketing that requires you to sell yourself to vets and other referral sources, if you're operating on a shoestring budget, if you're ready to step up your marketing game but aren't sure how to begin, don't miss this presentation.

Fear Factor **Dealing with Fearful Dogs** **Pia Silvani**

Fear is an emotion that induces a stress response
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in dogs. For most it is a fleeting and manageable evolutionary behavior. For some dogs the fear can be so consuming that the behavior is debilitating and impacts the dog's quality of life. Many fearful dogs have socially limited lives and the owners struggle to understand, manage and deal with the dog's behavior.

This lecture will look specifically at those dogs that have primarily freeze and flight responses. Those fearful dogs whose behavior may include - startling easily, freezing, shaking, backing away, bolting, screaming, shutting down, and not responding.

How can you work with a dog that is exhibiting fear, or can you? So, what can you do to help? When do you push forward and when do you back off? How do you know if you are choosing the right technique? While classical and operant counter conditioning can be extremely beneficial, problems may result if you are not a careful or aware of the triggers, do not understand the underlying problem, and more. Being a good observer is essential and ensuring that the client understands that there is no "quick fix" is critical.

Videos and case studies will be shown and discussed.



Fighting Dogs Family and Strangers Pia Silvani

These sessions will deal with dogs that live together but do not necessarily enjoy each other's company. When the joys of living with more than one dog is replaced with a 24-hour referee job, one must sit down and think whether the constant conflict between resident dogs is taking a toll on the entire family. Is the fighting affecting the quality of life of one or more dogs? Can the average pet owner begin to learn about canine

social behavior to better understand the triggers that may be causing the fights? So-called "sibling rivalry" is an on-going struggle between two or more dogs who reside together. They may range from scuffling and toxic play to serious fights. One or both may require medical attention. Is the fighting "clean" or "dirty?" Is the owner always present or absent? These are just some questions which we need to look into to help resolve the problem. Case histories with videos will be reviewed as well as a variety of behavioral protocols for each type of case.

Also discussed will be dogs that exhibit threats or aggression towards dogs outside of the home. Owning a dog aggressive dog is very disturbing to owners. It can also be a difficult problem to resolve. People are embarrassed and do not know what to do when their dog is lunging at another dog. Consequently, many of these dogs are isolated from other dogs for the rest of their lives, surrendered to shelters or euthanized.

Over the decade, we have seen an increase in the number of dog-to-dog aggression cases. Why is there an increase? Can these dogs ever be re-introduced into the canine community **and** is this what the owner really wants, or do they just want to be able to take their dog into public with some confidence that fights will not occur?

Chill Out? DEALING WITH THE OVERLY AROUSED PUPPY Pia Silvani

We are seeing more and more puppies coming into our classrooms that have little or no control over their impulses, no ability to self-regulate, and their decision-making process is typically headed in the wrong direction which may be endangering the pup or others. These pups are living a life above their threshold, or, so it appears. How can we help these puppies learn and focus when they cannot take a piece of food, look to the owner or, even worse, jump at and attack anything and everything that gets within arm's reach?

Videos will be shown of puppies in various settings. Perhaps they can't chill out? What's going on and how do we help clients deal with what they perceive to be a puppy that needs Ritalin?

Devil puppies Who are they? Pia Silvani

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"My puppy is biting and it doesn't seem to be normal puppy biting." "I can't tire my puppy out no matter how much exercise I give him." "My puppy has temper tantrums and bites us to the point of breaking skin." "We cannot cuddle or hold our puppy without him biting us." These are just a few complaints that we hear from clients whose puppies appear to be out of control.

Some puppies may exhibit similar signs of behaviors that are exhibited by ADHD children. Understanding dogs' social behavior is a crucial part of raising a good puppy and conducting a well-run puppy class. But, who is coming to class and what is being taught? Are trainers interpreting the behaviors and interactions correctly? Do they truly understand and implement proper socialization techniques? We've seen a massive increase in dog-dog aggression. Can puppy classes be contributing to this? If so, where have we gone wrong?

Or, is it becoming more difficult to find a 'good puppy?' When you get puppies into your shelter or class that appear to be over the top, aggressive, a-social, what could have gone wrong and what do you do?

If you've asked yourself these questions, this lecture is for you.

The Best Classes in Town: Yours! **Veronica Boutelle**

Teaching group classes can be daunting – choosing what materials to teach, what order to arrange them in, how best to present them; handling students and dogs with widely disparate skill and experience levels; keeping the attention of

multiple dogs and people; finding a way to impact students' daily lives with their dogs, not just their dogs' performance in the classroom; gaining student compliance; handling barking dogs and active children.

Most approaches to these problems don't go to the root—the curriculum itself. To teach well you need a good curriculum. And a good curriculum is more than a list of behaviors to teach and games to play. This presentation will provide a comprehensive notion of what curriculum truly is, and guidelines for how to build it. Learn to prepare your clients for real-world success outside the classroom, inspire rampant word of mouth, successfully handle disparate skill and experience levels (human and canine!), create a calm and focused learning environment, and keep students coming back through graduation and into the next class.

PLAYTIME! What's it really about? **Pia Silvani**

Why are we suddenly so interested in play as if it has become a new phenomenon? Pet owners are making every effort to give their puppies and dogs exercise. But, what might be exercise to one owner and dog may be little or nothing to another. Have we become dependent upon others to supply exercise sessions for our puppies and, if so, what are they seeing and doing? Has society become lazy about taking on the responsibility to train their pups how to play, when to play and where to play?

Do those that are watching our pups understand the behavior of play as a mental state of mind and not simply a behavior?

Play can have a huge influence upon the dog's development, influence our relationship, and serve as a function to give the dog mental and physical stimulation, as well as resolve behavior problems.

This lecture will be all about using play to benefit the pup's well-being as well as dealing with behavior problems. Pia will discuss good play vs. bad play, when to interrupt and key factors in getting your pup to learn to be a polite member of society through play.

The APDTNZ Newsletter is now available in hard copy. If you would like to receive the next newsletter by post please let Shelley Turner our membership co-ordinator know by sending an e-mail to: membership@apdt.org.nz

*Registrations open from
15th July 2013
see www.apdtnz.org.nz*

Getting Your Rates Right: You're Worth It

Veronica Boutelle

Most of us are dog lovers first, trainers second, and business men and women dead last. A number of challenges arise from this reality, including a pervasive sense of guilt about charging money for what we do. This guilt is then alleviated with chronic undercharging, the result of which is an income level that keeps many trainers in perpetual hobby or part-time status, drives others back to “real jobs,” or creates long-term financial strain for those managing to train full time.

It doesn't have to be this way. Charging what you're worth—and you are worth it—is a win for you and for the dogs.

Getting Over The Guilt

Trainers hold an invaluable and specialized skill and knowledge set. If you're reading this you most likely have spent time and money attending a school for dog trainers and have used innumerable hours practicing your craft on your own and with the guidance of mentors and colleagues. You've probably attended a long list of seminars, conferences, and workshops, and have read and watched every book and DVD you could get your hands on. Many of you have studied for and taken certification exams as well. Because although you may love your work well enough to enjoy it whether or not it's paid, it's still work—highly skilled work that requires a good deal of study and practice.

Training is also work that helps people and their dogs. You have the capacity to change the lives of the clients and canines you work with. Surely this is worth paying for. And though everyone loves to get something for free, we don't generally expect free professional services. If training is to become a full-fledged profession we need to keep this in mind. Also important to remember is that people value what they pay for, and generally in our culture we value more that which costs more. During my time as Director of Behavior & Training at the San Francisco SPCA we raised our adoption rates, to the dismay of many who predicted adoption rates would fall. They didn't. What did drop off was returns. Many trainers experience a similar phenomenon when they raise their rates—not only does business not go down, it often goes up (because committed owners want the best) and so does client compliance. Clients who have paid more for a service are more likely to try to get the most from it.

There's another reason to leave the guilt behind. Financial stress and underpayment are major

components of trainer burn-out and business failure. And every talented, skilled, compassionate trainer who quits due to exhaustion or the need to take a job with a paycheck means owners and dogs who will never experience the benefit of her services. The longer you stay in the game the more dogs and people you can help. To stay in the game you need a successful business. And to have a successful business you need to charge what you're worth.

Setting Your Rate

Trainers often look at what others charge when setting their own rates. While it's important to know what the trends in your area are, you shouldn't feel compelled to do exactly what everyone else does. Here are several additional considerations:

Take into account your services—how is what you are doing different, what sort of niche are you filling, what do you offer that others don't? What are the demographics in your area—the socioeconomic levels, average incomes, kinds of work most commonly done? Factor in also your needs, both financial and psychological. What do you need to earn for your business to provide a solid, safe living? What hourly rate makes you feel professional, makes you feel you're being truly compensated for your skills?

As a final and central factor, recognize that your rates are part of your marketing plan and that rates carry subtle messages about you and your business. If, for example, part of your image is that you are the local go-to expert (whether you already are or would like to be!) having lower rates than your local colleagues will undermine that message. Again, Americans tend to equate cost with value. Pricing yourself low sends a message of not being as good as others whose rates are higher. There's often a belief that lower prices will lead to higher volume. For plastic goods this may be so, but in professional fields this approach can backfire. First of all, you'll see more bargain hunting clients rather than those looking for the best possible service for their dog, and if you've been training for any length of time, you know the difference this can mean in terms of owner compliance and commitment.

Secondly, training is not a volume field. You can only train so many hours per week, you can only accommodate a finite number of clients at a time. Given this, volume is not the key to success. Instead, you want to get the most revenue possible from your billable hours.

If you offer packages (which I do hope you do—see “Win With Packages,” another article in this category), you probably offer discounted rates for larger numbers of sessions. Keep two things in

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mind when structuring your pricing. One, the savings don't have to be large to be effective. Five to ten dollars per hour is plenty to help clients feel like they're getting a good break. And second, be sure to price yourself so that your lowest rate is what you actually want to be paid per hour. For example, if you want to make \$100 per training hour, you might set your rate at \$110 and offer discounted packages based on \$105 and \$100. If you want to make \$100 but offer discounts at \$95 and \$90, you'll be making less than you wanted.

If You Still Feel Guilty...

I may have convinced you it makes sense to charge what you're worth. Does this mean trainers should avail themselves only to the wealthy? Absolutely not. It does mean you should be able to make a living. Families of average means who take their responsibility to their animals seriously will choose a trainer based on an impression of their effectiveness and professionalism. A large part of this impression will be made by your marketing, and pricing is one part of that.

Still, for many trainers a business plan that prices you higher will exclude populations you wish to serve by putting your services out of their range. If this is the case, there are several ways to make yourself more widely available. You might, for example, offer regular Ask the Trainer volunteer hours to a local shelter. Though you will not be able in most cases to offer a full training plan, this triage focused on management can help to take the edge off many situations. If you prefer a more hands-on approach, try providing a shelter or rescue group pro bono case time. Just be sure to put boundaries around this work, for example specifying the number of clients you can handle at a time. It's best to do pro bono work through another agency to keep it from impacting your business. A reputation for taking on unpaid cases can make it difficult to get paid ones.

Sales Anxiety?

If you're one of the rare trainers who feels no guilt charging for your very needed and valuable services, or if I've convinced you to give up that bad habit, perhaps you suffer from sales anxiety. You know you're worth it, but how do you ask for it? How do you communicate your services and their worth to potential clients? And how do you answer that dreaded question: "What do you charge?" Not to worry—read "Making the Sale," in the next edition.

*Veronica Boutelle is the founder of dog*tec, the dog industry's leading business support company. She is the author of How To Run a Dog Business:*

*Putting Your Career Where Your Heart Is, and co-author of Minding Your Dog Business: A Practical Guide To Business Success For Dog Professionals. Veronica helps dog trainers around the world attain business success doing what they love. She'll be speaking at this year's APDT Conference in Auckland on topics ranging from marketing to sales to running successful private training and class programs. Learn more about dog*tec at www.dogtec.org, and don't miss Veronica at this year's conference.*



AGM 2013

Due to the Annual Conference being held in November this year and the constitution requiring the AGM to be held before the 31st August of each year, the APDTNZ Committee has decided after consulting with the membership to hold the AGM on Sunday 25th August 2013 at 7.30pm via phone conference call or Skype. Further correspondence will be sent to all current financial members.

Nominations for Committee will be called for early July and all current financial members will be sent nomination forms. All nominations will then be posted on the website on or before the 11th August 2013.

Teach Your Dog to Read

No, really! Dogs can be taught to recognize written words as cues.

By CJ Puotinen

This article first appeared in the Whole Dog Journal October 2006

Curling up with a good book? Maybe your dog would like to read one, too.

Don't laugh. If Bonnie Bergin, EdD, has her way, dogs all over the world will soon be reading – maybe not books and articles, but individual words or sets of words strung together.

Now president of the Bonnie Bergin Assistance Dog Institute, the world's only academic college that awards associate and master's degrees in dog studies, Dr. Bergin originated the service dog concept when she founded Canine Companions for Independence more than 30 years ago.

The dogs she worked with were so intelligent and responsive that from time to time she thought about teaching them to read. The idea stayed in the back of her mind until 2002, when she began a canine reading experiment.

Now she has written a book, *Teach Your Dog to Read: A Unique Step-by-Step Program to Expand Your Dog's Mind and Strengthen the Bond Between You*, which invites everyone to join her.

"It's an exciting project," she says, "because we're on the brink of a revolution."

Dogs who can read are the dogs of the future."

In the future that Dr. Bergin envisions, dogs and their human companions will have a means of communicating that goes far beyond what's possible now.

Dogs may, for example, combine their exceptional sense of smell with their ability to read and help medical doctors identify specific diseases, such as different types of cancer.

Service dogs working with the visually impaired will be able to recognize and look for exit signs, appropriate restroom signs, and other important markers.

Pet dogs will recognize and pay attention to signs that warn them away from furniture or kitchen counters, just as they will look for signs that invite them to relieve themselves in designated areas at highway rest stops.

Dogs participating in reading programs with children, adolescents, or adults will inspire and encourage those who are struggling to read by showing how they are learning to read themselves.

Most important, she says, will be the deepening of everyday communication between dogs and their humans. "I have been training my own dogs to go to posted signs saying water, treat, or pet me, to tell me what they want," says Dr. Bergin. "We're still in the early stages of this two-way communication, but it has incredible implications. Dogs who can read will find it much easier to share information, and the possibilities are endless. In every way, teaching your dog to read can help your dog be a smarter, better companion, and it will deepen and strengthen the bond that connects you."

How to get started

Puppies raised at the Assistance Dog Institute are introduced to the written word at just a few weeks of age. They literally grow up reading. But while puppies and younger dogs may have an easier time learning to read, it's never too late (assuming that vision problems don't interfere) to teach old dogs new words. Your first reading lesson can be this very afternoon. All you need are your dog, yourself, and a sheet of paper.

For those who would like to use Dr. Bergin's flash cards, her printed cues and cartoon stick figures can be downloaded from her website (see "Resources," page 24). But you can make your own flash cards by printing words by hand in large, dark block letters or by using your computer's largest, darkest font (avoid fonts with squiggles, serifs, or other elaborations). Print one word or cue per page in black ink on plain white paper, printed sideways ("landscape" orientation). You can laminate the cards for durability.

Begin with a cue that your dog knows well. "But don't start with sit," she suggests. "Everyone al-



ways starts every training session with sit, and it's a pattern dogs come to expect. I suggest starting with down or some other command."

Make a list of 5 or 10 cues that your dog responds to readily when you give a verbal instruction. Dr. Bergin's list includes down, sit, stand, roll (roll half-way over and expose stomach), turn (spin), shake, speak, bow, up (place paws on the edge of a table, countertop, desk, or wall), kiss, and go to bed. Save behaviors that involve a prop (such as placing paws up on a table or fetching a particular toy) until the dog is adept at reading other cues, because positioning yourself near a prop is a dead giveaway, and you want your dog to focus on the card and its word, not on your body language.

"We know that dogs can learn to read up to 20 written words," she says, "from three-letter words that represent the most basic commands, to five-letter words that call for more dramatic responses, such as shake or speak, to three-word sentences such as 'Get the shoe.'"

Start in a quiet room with no distractions. Clicker-trained dogs or dogs trained with positive reinfor-

cement, says Dr. Bergin, are most likely to offer a variety of behaviors when they're motivated to earn a reward, and motivated dogs who offer different behaviors learn quickly.

Day one lesson plan

Dr. Bergin recommends following these five steps in your first reading lesson ("down" is a perfect first word) and whenever you introduce a new word.

1. Get ready.

Hold your flash card in one hand behind your back. Hold a treat, ball, toy, or other favorite reward in the other, or, if you're holding a clicker, place the reward where your dog can see it or knows it's there.

Without touching your dog or giving any cues ahead of time, have your dog stand in front of you. Then:

2. Present the card, and

3. Immediately say the cue.

"Timing is essential," says Dr. Bergin. "Your dog should get a glimpse of the word a split second before you say it. Also, if your dog is more used to hand signals than verbal commands, give the appropriate signal with one hand just as you bring the flash card out from behind your back with the other." Avoid making eye contact with your dog, as that is a distraction. Look down at the top of the card or past your dog.

4. Hold the card.

Hold the flash card still. Be sure you're holding the sign with your fingers away from its letters. Don't move. Wait for your dog to lie down.

5. Reward your dog.

As soon as your dog lies down, say "Yes!" in an enthusiastic, high-pitched voice. Dr. Bergin recommends clipping the "Yes!" so that it almost sounds like "Yesp!" as this will help you say the word faster. If you normally use a clicker to mark the end of a behavior, click as soon as the dog lies down.

While saying "Yes!" or clicking, move the card behind your back or set it on a table where your dog can't see it. Leaving the card in sight is like repeating a cue after your dog has already performed the behavior.

Reward your dog with praise, a vigorous pet, a food treat or toy, or all of these so that he feels appreciated and looks forward to doing this again.

Repeat the exercise by doing the same five steps in exactly the same way. Then repeat it again.

During the fourth run-through, if your dog has been



responding readily to the verbal cue, present the card but don't say anything or give a hand signal. Instead, just hold the card in front of you. Don't jiggle or move the card. Hold still, exactly as you did in the previous exercise.

If your dog hesitates for more than a few seconds or seems confused, go back to step 3 and say the word "down" or give your hand signal. With time and practice, you'll learn whether it's more helpful to repeat a cue or to wait and let your dog figure it out.

As soon as he lies down without any prompting from you in response to of the "down" card, celebrate! Now is the time for over-the-top treats, praise, and enthusiastic rewards.

"Dogs love, need, and crave emotion," says Dr. Bergin. "That's why I prefer the word 'Yes!' to the click of a clicker. Charged feelings, preferably positive feelings, rein- force behavior. So shower your dog with praise."

End today's practice session on a high note and continue tomorrow. Limit each day's training to six to nine exercises per flash card, no more than 15 minutes total. With young puppies, do considerably less, working in shorter sessions.

Introducing a second and third word

To determine whether your dog is ready for a new word, test her to see if she responds to the "down" flash card without a verbal prompt or hand signal three out of five times.

To introduce a new word, such as "sit," follow the same five steps as before.

Most dogs anticipate the card that they already learned, so don't be surprised if your dog lies down. If that happens, don't correct or punish her. Simply move back, encouraging your dog to follow, and repeat the sequence of actions.

Many dogs sit before lying down, so if this happens, you have a split second in which to click or say "Yes!" while she is still sitting.

As soon as your dog successfully sits, remove the card and reward her. Do the exercise two or three more times to reinforce the "sit" cue.

Now that your dog recognizes the word sit, start to mix things up. Without breaking stride or indicating in any way that something different is about to happen, show her the word down without saying anything.

"Most dogs respond correctly by lying down," says Dr. Bergin. "They get it! They can discriminate between the two words. If your dog responds this way, congratulations are in order. Give a resoundingly positive 'Yes!' and be generous with praise and high- value food treats."

If your dog doesn't recognize the difference between sit and down, practice with each card a few more times and help out with verbal cues if need-

ed. If your dog offers an incorrect behavior, either ignore the behavior or say "No" in a calm, serious, low-key voice. Saying "No" in this way tells the dog that this isn't the behavior you want, so try something else. Put a lot of emotion into your "Yes!" whenever your dog does something correctly, and keep emotion out of your "No" when she does something else. (See "Opinions About 'No Reward Markers' Vary," below.)

End on a positive note – when your dog does the behavior you asked for, with or without a verbal cue, and you make a big fuss and continue tomorrow. Limit each day's training to about six to nine exercises with each card, and with puppies, do less. "It's important to stop while you're ahead," says Dr. Bergin. "It's easy to become enthused, especially if your dog catches on fast, but if you push too hard, you'll exhaust your dog, feel disappointed, and you'll both burn out. The best thing you can do is end early, end on a high note, and let your dog's mind grapple with this new challenge while sleeping. A good night's rest can improve the next day's performance."

Continue to work in short training sessions. When your dog knows three words, start mixing them up and present them randomly. Always be sure your dog responds correctly to each word at least three out of five times before adding a new word. Use the same procedure for introducing each new word.

"Be patient," says Dr. Bergin. "Whenever you introduce a new word, your dog's overall performance will decline. Your dog knows sit, down, and stand, but when you introduce the card for bow, he forgets everything. This is when reading becomes an effort for your dog, just as it was for us when we were kids. Be patient, stick to the program, work in short sessions, review the cards, and give verbal cues as needed. Your dog will be stretching his mind in new ways, and that's hard work. Do everything you can to make the experience rewarding."

By the third word, many dogs express their frustration by barking or vocalizing. Don't correct or even acknowledge this, just ignore it.

Motivated dogs may offer every behavior they can think of in an effort to win the treat or reward. If your dog runs through her repertoire by sitting, lying down, standing up, spinning around, waving, bowing, rolling over, and so forth, don't smile or laugh. Keep a straight face and calmly ignore or say "No" to each wrong answer and give a highly enthusiastic "Yes!" for each right one.

Some dogs begin shutting down when they feel confused, becoming less physically active and offering fewer behaviors. "You have to counteract that lethargy by being a good coach," says Dr. Bergin. "Use whatever tools you have to infuse your dog with your infectious energy and enthusiasm for the upcoming exercises. Really cheer your dog on, wave favorite treats and toys, and make

the whole experience positive, upbeat, happy, and rewarding, not a boring chore.” A lack of interest at the beginning of a reading session is a bad sign, suggesting that your dog may be on the brink of burnout. If she turns her head away, walks away, or just doesn’t want to practice, take a break. “If I had to choose between burnout or stopping prematurely,” says Dr. Bergin, “I’d stop prematurely. Put the cards away for a few days or a week. Renew your dog’s enthusiasm for life and training with favorite activities. And when you resume, keep your sessions short and positive.”

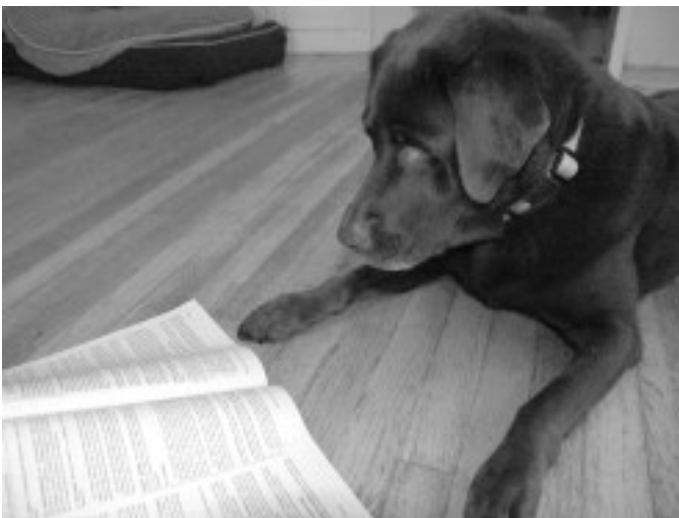
In her book, Dr. Bergin provides detailed step-by-step lesson plans, training tips, and advice for preventing and solving problems. One chapter helps volunteers train their dogs for work with children in schools and libraries.

She also describes how learning to read will help dogs conceptualize, understand new ideas, make new connections, communicate more effectively, and enhance their relationships with humans.

Understanding reading

After her first reading experiment with dogs being trained at her Assistance Dog Institute, Dr. Bergin spent the summer of 2003 studying the history of human reading. She learned that humans began their written communication by drawing pictures, which eventually became stick figures, which were eventually turned on their sides, which is how they became phonemes (symbolic sounds) and letters of alphabets.

“Our dogs were already recognizing words made



of letters,” she says, “so I moved on to cartoon stick figures, which I created on my computer. I was amazed at how quickly the dogs made the connection between their word command flash cards and the stick figures that illustrated those commands. I could show them a stick figure and they all did the corresponding behavior without be-

ing taught.”

Dr. Bergin then brought a Stanford University researcher to the Institute to help her explore the canine mind with regard to reading. “I learned that printed words are hard for dogs to understand because they are abstract shapes that have to be identified and responded to, while stick figures might be easier to decipher but understanding them involves a higher level of recognition.”

What amazed Dr. Bergin the most was the ability of reading dogs to conceptualize, to make connections between seemingly unrelated ideas. “I know that there are people who still believe dogs can’t think,” she says, “despite all kinds of scientific evidence to the contrary. Well, up to this point I knew dogs could think, but I didn’t think they thought very much. I would hear stories from people who got assistance dogs from me about how brilliant their dogs were, and I’d always take those stories with a grain of salt. I tended to dismiss them as anecdotal reports, nothing based on objective science, and I didn’t pay much attention. Now I realize that the reports were probably quite accurate, not the exaggerated claims I had assumed them to be, and I wish I could turn the clock back and hear them all again. I would pay much more attention. . . Dr Bergin also learned that people who don’t read cannot conceptualize the way people who read can. “This helps explain why people who can’t read are so often stuck and unable to change their lives. It’s because they can’t imagine anything different. Learning to read unlocks all kinds of possibilities for them. I’m convinced that the same will be true for dogs and that dogs who can read will demonstrate degrees of intelligence, problem solving ability, and talent that we can’t begin to imagine. “The possibilities for reading dogs are endless,” she says. “We just need to keep exploring them. Reading dogs are revolutionaries – and by teaching them to be literate beings, we can participate in their revolution. When you teach a dog to read, you’re not just teaching him a cute trick to show your friends. You’re developing his mind and helping him become a better problem solver. My hope is that these simple training techniques will transform your expectations about what your dog can learn and do at home, and that it will change the way that veterinarians, dog trainers, and breeders approach dog training forever.”

CJ Puotinen and her Labrador Retriever, Chloe, are members of the Hudson Valley Humane Society Visiting Pet Program (HudsonValleyVisitingPets.com), which is a R.E.A.D. Program affiliate. They live in New York.

Opinions About 'No Reward Markers' Vary

In this article, Dr. Bergin describes using the word "no" in a specific way: as a "no reward marker" or NRM. This is a unique and neutral signal that lets the dog know that the behavior he is exhibiting is not the desired one, so he should try something else to find the desired behavior, for which he will be rewarded. Dr. Bergin recommends keeping any emotion out of your voice when using "no" in this way, so the dog is not discouraged, but merely understands that he should try something else. The word is offered as information, not as punishment. "A firm "No" should not sound threatening, angry, frustrated, or disappointed," says Dr. Bergin. "Use it to inform, redirect, and guide."

However, the success of the word "no" as an NRM may hinge on more than just the owner's scrupulousness at saying "no" in a neutral way. Unfortunately, many dog owners use the word "No!" to stop their dogs from doing anything the owner doesn't like – chasing a cat, sniffing a countertop (preparatory to jumping up and snatching some food, perhaps), barking at someone through the living room window. That's why some dogs develop an unconscious negative association with the word; it becomes a precursor to being punished, or is experienced by the dog as punishment itself. When these dogs hear "no," even in a neutral tone, they may just give up, thinking anything they do next will be wrong.

If your dog "gets" the concept of the neutral NRM, and keeps trying various behaviors when you mark his incorrect attempts with the word "no," you're doing a good job, just as Dr. Bergin describes! However, if he "shuts down" or stops offering different behaviors when you use the word, try saying it more brightly and cheerfully. Or, better yet, try a different NRM, one without any negative associations for the dog. Some trainers use a word like "Oops!" which naturally comes out of most people's mouths cheerfully. Other suggestions include "not!", "try again!" (or just, "again!"), "next!", or "cold!" (from the children's game where a person tries to find a hidden object and is told "warmer" or colder" based on his movements as he searches).

INTERESTED IN READING?

The **Bonnie Bergin Assistance Dog Institute**, in conjunction with the Assistance Dog United Campaign, offers an annual **\$1,000 award** for the most innovative use of the ability of dogs to read. To enter, submit a written description of the innovation with practical proof of its application in the form of a DVD or VHS video to:

Innovations in Dogs' Reading c/o Assistance Dog Institute
1215 Sebastopol Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95407

Dogs Help Promote Reading Skills in Others

Not only can dogs learn to read, they can actually help kids learn to read. Since 1999, registered therapy dogs have been visiting schools, libraries, and other facilities as Reading Education Assistance Dogs® or R.E.A.D.® Program participants. Founded by Intermountain Therapy Animals in Salt Lake City, Utah, the R.E.A.D. program is dedicated to improving the literacy skills of children of all ages by providing them an opportunity to read aloud to a dog in a setting that is supportive and nonjudgmental. After all, the presence of dogs helps lower blood pressure and relieve anxiety – and dogs never correct your pronunciation.

In a pilot study conducted at a Utah elementary school in 2000- 2001, children in grades 2 through 6 significantly improved their reading scores. In addition, teachers reported that the participants experienced decreased absenteeism, improved self confidence and self esteem, a sense of pride in their accomplishments, increased participation in field trips, clubs, and other extracurricular activities, improved hygiene, kinder and more respectful interactions with animals, better grades, and increased use of the school's library.

R.E.A.D. program volunteers work throughout the U.S. and in parts of Canada. The program is open to registered therapy dogs and other therapy animals. For information, visit therpyanimals.org/read/index.php.

CONFERENCE TRADE SHOW

APDTNZ's Annual Conference Trade Show provides a great opportunity for businesses to promote their products and services to a network of influential dog trainers, club instructors, vet nurses, shelter workers and others in the pet care industry.

APDTNZ invites potential stallholders* to be part of this year's Conference Trade Show. For further information how your business might be best represented at our conference, please contact Margarette Marshall at, treasurer@apdt.org.nz

***All products and services must comply with the Code of Ethics: <http://www.apdt.org.nz/ethics.html>**

APDT Australia

Annual Conference 2013

Registration now open!

This year the 2013 annual APDT Australia Conference will be held in Melbourne, Victoria, at the beautiful Bayview Eden Hotel. It is the perfect opportunity to learn something new and network with other APDT members.

Location:

Bayview Eden Hotel, Melbourne, Victoria

Dates:

Friday 8th - Sunday November 10th

Speakers:

Veronica Boutelle, Dr Katrina Gregory, Deb Millikan, Pia Silvani and Dr Debbie Calnon

FOUNDING STATEMENT

The aim of the APDTNZ is to give credibility to affiliated members and confidence to the public for all dog related issues by encouraging and supporting the continuing education of members.

Deadline for contributions to be included in
Issue 17, July/Aug/Sept 2013
1st August 2013

APDT NZ Vision statement:

All dogs are effectively trained through dog-friendly techniques and therefore are lifelong companions in a relationship based on mutual respect and trust.

APDT NZ Mission statement:

To promote human-dog relationships of understanding and trust by offering education in canine behaviour and effective, up to date, dog friendly training methods and skills.

As a member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers New Zealand I will:

- Make the long term welfare of the dog of primary importance bearing in mind the needs of society.
- Employ only humane, dog-friendly techniques in the training of dogs and I shall develop and apply training programs in line with the APDTNZ's mission of advocating dog-friendly training. Refer to Appendix 1 (Source APDT UK Code of Ethics).
- Please also refer to Appendix 2 AVSAB Position Statement: http://www.avsabonline.org/avsabonline/images/stories/Position_Statements/Combined_Punishment_Statements.pdf and Appendix 3 Delta Professional Standards for Dog Trainers <http://www.deltasociety.org/Document.Doc?id=374>
- Promote conscientious dog ownership and incorporate what it means to be a socially responsible dog owner into training programs.
- Promote a nurturing human/canine relationship between owner and dog.
- Treat all dogs and clients with respect, taking into account their physical and emotional well-being and respecting clients' wishes regarding the training of their dogs.
- Continue professional development by reading relevant material, attending conferences, workshops and seminars, and pursuing other education opportunities in order to provide a service based upon sound scientific principles and current best practice.
- Be honest and trustworthy in my dealings with clients.
- Refrain from giving guarantees regarding the outcome of training, because there is no sure way to guarantee the cooperation and performance of all parties involved and because the knowledge of animal behaviour is incomplete. This should not be confused with a desire to guarantee client satisfaction with professional services.
- Represent accurately the source of any information and disseminate to clients and members of the public.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of clients.
- Be respectful of colleagues and other professionals and not falsely condemn the character of their professional acts.
- Not advertise myself as a member of the APDTNZ Inc or use the logo of the APDTNZ without prior approval of the Association.
- Not represent myself as a spokesperson for APDTNZ Inc without prior approval of the Association.
- Refer any and all suspected medical problems to a veterinarian before beginning or continuing a relationship. The relationship between dog trainers and vets must be cooperative for the benefit of dogs and their people.
- Perform services to the best of my ability within the guidelines of this code of ethics.

Appendix 1

There can never be a definitive list of equipment and techniques that the APDTNZ does not endorse. The following list gives examples of some of the equipment and training methods which are covered by the Code of Ethics not to be used as training tools in a dog training class:

- Pet corrector – emits a hiss of cold air
 - Dog stop – emits a high pitched sound
 - Remote controlled spray collars
 - Automatically triggered spray collars
 - Antibark collar – emits spray directed onto dog's skin (including new product jet master)
 - Training discs
 - Liquid sprays
 - Loud noises – inc. rattle cans/bottles/chains/keys
 - Throw stick/chain
 - Strong smelling substances – inc. smelling salts/bite back
 - Any electronic training collar
 - Any check/choke chains, prong or spike collar
- Punitive methods not to be used in a dog training class:
- Pinching – ears/feet/toes
 - Hitting
 - Biting (of dog)
 - Alpha roll
 - Any manhandling that causes pain or discomfort.

Alteration

This code may be altered by the committee of the Association provided that the proposed alteration is notified to all members and their comments requested and duly considered by the committee.