

Hello! Greetings from Central Utah Wag-N-Train Dog Rescue & Training, Inc. Here is our June 2003 E-Newsletter.

Keep on the lookout for Wag-N-Train's new website located at www.wag-n-train.org which will be up and running soon. Available will be a complete listing of all of our adoptable dogs, along with an on-line Adoption Application form, training information, and Wag-N-Train, Inc. news and events. In addition we will be able to receive on-line donations (which of course you can also do now through our account at www.paypal.com by using our email address of wag_n_traindogrescue@yahoo.com

The Good, The Bad and The Downright Ugly: Doing Away With The Old School.

A few weeks ago my kids and I were making our way down the road when we came upon a truck pulled over on the side of the road. I guess it caught my attention because in the back of the truck were two dogs sitting amongst a 4-wheeler and other piles of equipment filling the back of the truck. As usual I got that pit in my stomach like I usually do when I see a dog in the back of a truck. As I passed by, the driver was climbing into the back of the truck and for one reason or another my eyes were drawn to my rear view mirror where I watched in horror as the man picked up one of the dogs up over the top of his head and slammed the poor thing down into the back of the truck, where of course the dog bounced off the side of the 4-wheeler and other piles of junk. Without another thought I flipped a U-Turn and with my blood boiling I drove right back in their direction and pulled up in front of the truck. I marched up to that man [who by now had climbed back into the driver's seat] and proceeded to give him a tongue lashing that I hope he'll never forget. His wife leaned out and yelled at me that the dog was chewing on the 4-wheeler in the back of the truck and they had already "corrected" her once, [so the episode that I had witnessed was the second time they had "corrected" her] I informed them that what they had done was not a correction, but was ABUSE and if the dog had been safely contained in a crate instead of being loose in the back of the truck it would not be able to chew on their belongings in the first place. The conversation ended with them telling me to mind my own #@*&!!! business, etc. etc.

Now my whole reason in relating this story to you is thisCwhere does the line between "correction" and "abuse" lie? Those people seemed to believe that by physically assaulting the dog they were teaching it not to chew on the 4-wheeler. In reality, by the time the man had stopped his truck, got out of the driver seat and climbed into the bed of the truck, the dog had long since stopped the chewing and she was standing there, wagging her tail and happily greeting her person, who then picked her up and hurt her. In the dog's mind the chewing on the 4-wheeler was a distant memoryCwhat she was being hurt for was being in the back of the truck, wagging her tail and greeting her owner. The poor thing was probably so confused she didn't know what to do. And the owner had taught her **NOTHING** except that the next time the truck stops and he gets in the back of truck the last thing she is going to want to do is wag her tail and greet himBshe will likely cower in the farthest corner. I would too!

It's made me ponder a lot about the "old school" of dog training, which often incorporates physical force and/or corporal punishment. It wasn't so long ago that the common training method to house train your dog was to rub the dog's nose in their accident and spanked them with a rolled up newspaper, with a lot of finger pointing and a loud "NO! NO! NO!". And there are people out there still adhering to the method of stepping on the dog's back foot to teach them not to jump up. Then there is the general screaming, yelling, hitting, kicking and slapping to correct anything and everything. Not only do these methods generally **NOT WORK**, they will actually make your pet's behavior worse or it will add new behavior problems to the ones you're trying to get rid of. Not too mention that it's just plain wrong. Violence only begets more violence. Thankfully, there are wonderful training methods coming from some of the most respected Dog Trainers in the world, and the old method of forcing and/or intimidating your dog in order to train are fast becoming distant memories.

We've learned here at Wag-N-Train that many of the most common behavior problems including jumping up, excessive barking, submissive wetting, separation anxiety, and others are a result of the dog's belief that he is the "Alpha" in his pack [or family]. We as humans send mixed messages to our pets by one minute displaying the behavior of the "Alpha" and the next minute displaying behavior which sends the message to our pet that they are the

"Alpha". We in essence create many of the problems we are trying so hard to get rid of.

We've discovered two excellent books written by author Jan Fennell that we **HIGHLY** recommend: "The Dog Listener" and "The Practical Dog Listener". Jan's books are easy reading and you will be delighted by how easy it is to implement her "Amichien Bonding" techniques. We have read the books and we use Jan's techniques with our own dogs and our rescue dogs and have watched the negative behaviors dissipate. Even if you are not experiencing any [obvious] behavior problems with your dog, "The Dog Listener" will provide you with some awesome insight into improving your relationship with your dog.

And as always, if you'd like to receive one-on-one or group instruction for you and your pet, Wag-N-Train, Inc. provides low cost training sessions and the money we receive with the training goes back into the rescue to help the rescue dogs.

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