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# DOG CITY Speak

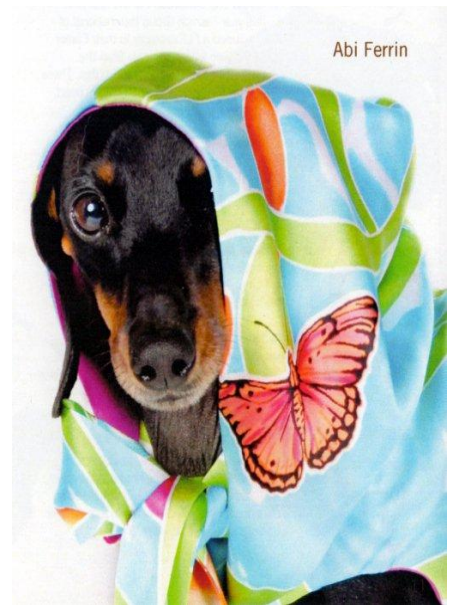
## Training Dogs and People is our Passion

Paula Weir KPA-CTP

Dog City Training Center is approaching our first anniversary this month. We've had a wonderful year, we've made some new friends (both k9 and human), and learned loads in the process.

The goal when opening our training center was to ultimately be an advocate for the dogs. I would like for each dog to be loved and *enjoyed* by the family that they have joined. I would like them to be good companions and to also have fulfilled lives themselves.

We strive to educate families in areas of training and nutrition and to make the dog's life with them as easy and rewarding as it can possibly be.



Here at DCTC, we subscribe to only *dog friendly* training methods. We use no collar corrections, no intimidation, no *positive* punishment of any kind. With a reward based training method, and "paying" the dog when they make a correct choice, we turn out dogs that are not afraid or intimidated in the training sessions. They are eager and willing to learn, know their *job*, and are more confident, satisfied dogs in the process.

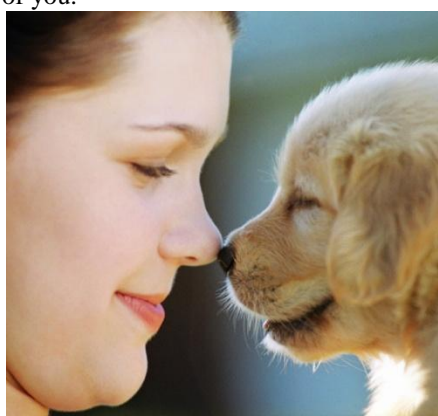
Starting year number two, we would like to continue this process, grow our *family*, continue to better educate, and provide a place for people to come and bring their dogs, learn to communicate and just have *fun* together.

If you haven't been to DCTC, we hope to see you soon.

# What Kind of Trainer Are You?

Mickey Schuffman

There is a saying, that whenever you and your dog are both awake, either you are training him, or he is training you. Even if you don't think you are technically a "dog trainer," your dog is constantly learning from you. The method you use to teach him will have a huge impact on how your dog learns, and on the relationship between the two of you.



It amazes me how much controversy there still is in the world of training. There are the "operant" people (using positive methods) and the "compulsion" people. One of the definitions of compulsion in the dictionary is: *A psychological and usually irrational force that makes somebody do something, often unwillingly.*

As many of you know, I started out as a compulsion trainer, since it was pretty much the only method being taught back then. I finally ended up quitting obedience altogether for a long time, because I wouldn't "ear pinch" my dog to get her to retrieve.

I've done my share of going back and forth between methods. Sometimes the line is rather fine between what is acceptable and what is not. Many years ago I tried using an electronic collar. I thought it could be used humanely on a low setting, as a signal to the dog. I was

wrong. I soon concluded that it wasn't a method I was interested in or could feel good about (no matter what the level) and isn't something I would ever use again.

So where is YOUR line? Is it ok to shove your dog with your foot to correct a crooked sit? How about stepping on his toes to get him to back up? Or kneeing him in the chest when he jumps up? How about squirting him with a water bottle for barking? Is giving him a no reward marker (telling him NO when he is wrong) ok? How about a leash pop? Or stringing him up off the ground for a more serious offense?

Obviously some of these methods are pretty extreme, and some are not. Where is YOUR line?

Is occasionally hitting your dog ok? How about grabbing him by the sides of the face and shaking him? Is it ok to rub your puppy's nose in an "accident"? Or holding his mouth shut for puppy nipping? Where IS your line?

Despite the enormous amount of evidence (scientific data) out there regarding the benefits of operant conditioning, many obedience folks still cling to the old ways. I've observed several obedience classes recently, and am surprised and saddened by the number of people still using this antiquated method. I see many dogs being "corrected" for things that they clearly don't understand. Why would you punish your dog for something he hasn't yet really learned? That just doesn't make sense to me, and I think it's unfair to the dog.

Compulsion training CAN and DOES work for many dogs, but here is my question to you. Why would you want to use that method if there was a better one out there? Next time you're watching this type of obedience class, look at the dogs. How many look like they're having a good time. AND, how far are you willing to go to get a straight sit? How much is it really worth to you?

Is it honestly too much to ask for an obedience class to be fun for us AND our dogs? I think not.

So where is MY Line?

Personally, this is a question that I have given a LOT of thought to throughout my training career. I have spent the past several years learning more and more about the benefits of positive dog training and that has finally made my line crystal clear. What I do with my client's dogs is the same as my own dogs - no rough stuff. It means learning what motivates your dog, and using that as reinforcer in your training. It means using your brain instead of your brawn. It also means ending up with a dog that works happily for you, and not one that obeys out of fear.

What I am trying to get to, in my very roundabout way, is that there is a HUGE difference in dog training techniques out there. And the unsuspecting owner may unintentionally enroll in a class that uses very punitive methods, and not even think about it. I want all of you out there to **THINK ABOUT IT!! Think about what is and is not acceptable to YOU.** We each have to make our own decisions on how to BE in this world, and how to BE with our dogs.

It's your choice. Choose responsibly. Your dog is depending on you.



# When Can My Puppy Come to School?

Paula Weir KPA-CTP

If you have a new puppy or are planning to get one, I'm sure that you're hoping for a stable, well-adjusted dog. By socializing your puppy from the day that you get him, you will have a better chance at getting the dog you'd like to have. Socializing means that the puppy needs to experience new sights, sounds, children, elderly people, men with beards and/or hats, different surfaces to walk on, friendly adult dogs and other nice puppies. The primary and most important time for puppy socialization is the first three months of life. This is the period when sociability outweighs fear. If your puppy misses out on adequate socialization there is a greater chance that they will develop behavioral issues, such as fear, avoidance and aggression. It is a fact that behavioral issues are the number one cause of relinquishment to shelters and the number one cause of death for dogs under 3 years of age.

Socialization begins right from the first day of your puppy's life. The breeder, dam and littermates lay the foundation for socialization, and then you take over the responsibility when you bring your puppy home. Many puppies come through the critical socialization period veritabably unscathed and develop into nice adult dogs. Others need a bit more help along the way - we just never know which puppy we have. Obtaining the guidance of a competent puppy class instructor who conducts positive training classes can aid in the process. In a

controlled setting your puppy can meet other pups under the watchful eye of the instructor to make sure that the outcome is a positive one.

Puppy classes are also an excellent way to improve training and strengthen the bond between you and your puppy. As mentioned above, the class should always be based on positive reinforcement - no punishment is necessary in a raining environment. I have been conducting puppy classes since 2004. The optimum age that we like to see puppies in our class is 8 weeks old, although this starting age is dependent on the health of the puppy and where they came from. We do like them to be in the series of puppy vaccinations, but they won't have to wait until they complete the series before attending class. Do remember to never take your puppy to dog parks, dog superstores, or anywhere that sick dogs may frequent until your pup has had the full puppy series of vaccinations.

Welcoming your new puppy into the family is an exciting time, and well planned socialization can make your life together more rewarding.



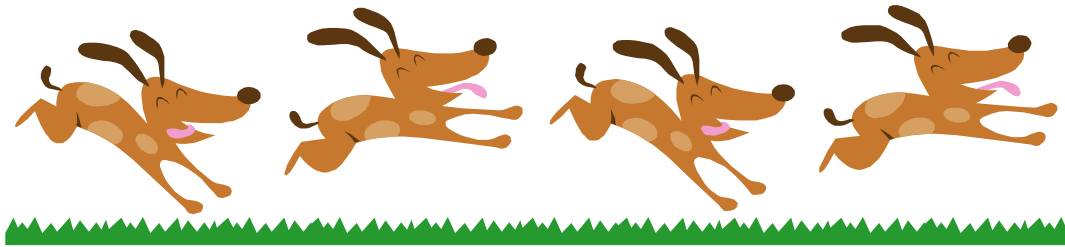
## This Month's Events

**Date: Saturday, Sept. 25**  
**7:30pm DCTC**  
**CANINE GAMES**

This will be a fun night of play with our dogs. The dogs need to be "dog friendly" and know just BASIC skills!!!! There may be a game that requires more secondary skills, but you can watch and learn. Most games, however are for dogs that know everyday skills like sit, down, stay and come.

**Date: Sunday, Sept. 26**  
**11:00am DCTC**  
**AGILITY FUN MATCH**

See our web site for details



## September/October 2010 Classes and Events

### Dog City Training Center

1700 Surveyor Blvd. #114

Carrollton, TX 75006

[www.dogcitytrainingcenter.com](http://www.dogcitytrainingcenter.com)

972-418-6434

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|---|--|
| <p><b>Canine Games</b><br/>         Saturday, September 25, 2010<br/>         7:30pm<br/>         \$10 per handler and dog<br/>         No special skills needed – sit, down, come<br/>         Come out and play with your dog!<br/>         Please RSVP to <a href="mailto:info@dogcitytrainingcenter.com">info@dogcitytrainingcenter.com</a></p> | <p><b>Agility FUN Match</b><br/>         Sunday, September 26, 2010<br/>         Starts 11am<br/>         See our web site for details<br/> <a href="http://www.dogcitytrainingcenter.com">www.dogcitytrainingcenter.com</a></p> |
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### **Tunnel Mania**

Saturday, October 2, 2010

4:30pm-5:25pm

This will be a VERY FUN and fast paced class for you and your pup. We will be teaching your dog to dash through the agility tunnels and instructing you how to 'handle' your dog through the course. After learning that tunnels are very fun places to be, you and your dog will be able to be competitive in our monthly CANINE GAMES and other outings sponsored by Dog City Training Center. We will have numbered courses and you will 'walk' the course to learn the pattern. Once you learn the pattern, you and your dog will race through the tunnels to see who WINS!!! Great exercise for the dog AND the handler as well as a fun time bonding with your dog. This class is a 4-week class and is not intended for those interested in serious agility competition. This is just for FUN!

4-week class and the cost is \$100

### **!COME! (Part A)**

This Class is the Ultimate "Call your dog once and they come running" class. If you would like a reliable Recall from your dog and it is just not there, then this is the class for you.

Monday, October 4, 2010

10am – 10:55am

5 week class – Dogs not present at first class

\$125

### **Coming Soon:**

**Treibball** – This has been described as 'herding balls'. This is not entirely accurate, but gives you an idea of what this up and coming sport is all about. Invented in Germany and just now making its way to the USA. Eight exercise balls are on the field, the dog is sent out to face the handler on the other side of the balls. When given the signal, the dog drives the balls, one by one back to the handler and puts them in a goal. This is a timed event with points taken off for handling errors, etc. This is a great sport for *all* dogs, large and small. Need not be of a herding breed.

Type in Treibball in YouTube to see the action.

1 daytime class forming

1 nighttime class forming

**For more information on any of our classes or events, please email [info@dogcitytrainingcenter.com](mailto:info@dogcitytrainingcenter.com)**