

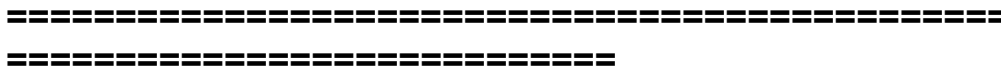


The Scoop

**Official Newsletter of the Certification Council
for Professional Dog Trainers**

*"The CCPDT exists to be the industry leader in defining and
maintaining competency in the dog training and behavior
profession."*

September/October 2015



In this issue

[President's Letter](#)
[Apology](#)
[Exam News](#)
[Barks From the Board](#)
["P" is for "Professional"](#)
[Committee Call](#)
[Study Hall](#)
[Training Trivia Contest](#)
[Industry News](#)



Chew on this!

Dear

Certificant,

A lot to chew on in this issue, starting with the ethics question of misrepresenting your well-trained, well-behaved dog as a Service Dog because, well, our society is so anti-dog and there are times, you may think, when you have a legitimate need to take your dog somewhere that dogs aren't allowed.

Fifteen states have laws prohibiting the false representation of a Service Dog, with more likely to come, as abuse of the ADA Service Dog provisions is rampant. Against the law or not, it's simply wrong, no matter how you try to justify it. And unethical. Rather than circumventing the rules, how about we work to get laws

passed allowing *greater* access for dogs who *are* well-behaved and well-trained?

On another note, I always love Jolanta Benal's study analysis articles (now officially named "Study Hall"), but this issue's topic - assessment protocols for shelter dogs - is especially near and dear to my heart. I am compelled to offer several general comments as companion to Jolanta's excellent article, *Behavior Evaluations in the Presence of an Attachment Figure*. Here are my random thoughts:

I do love that we are taking a harder scientific look at assessment procedures, but I go back to several things I've always said:

1. Resource guarding isn't a reason, alone, for a dog to die (it's manageable and modifiable), so using an assessment that identifies its presence doesn't need to mean that dogs die.
2. Assessments identify behaviors that are **in** a dog's repertoire. That doesn't necessarily mean the dog will do those behaviors in a different/less stressful environment, but it does mean the dog is capable of doing them.
3. Just because a behavior **doesn't** appear in an assessment doesn't mean that it's **not** in the dog's behavioral repertoire.
4. I'm not convinced any of the studies that have looked at assessments have yet looked for the right things, or in the right way. I still like Kelly Bollen's study, conducted at Massachusetts SPCA for her Master's thesis, which

essentially said “borderline” dogs don’t need to die, let’s lighten up a little.

Finally, given the number of abuse cases in this issue’s “Industry News,” one can’t help but ponder the need for mandatory licensing and oversight of some type for pet-care professionals. Your thoughts?

As always, if you have news of any kind you’d like to share with your fellow certificant, please send it to us at: Writeon@ccpdt.org.

Warm Woofs and Happy Training,

Pat Miller, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA
Scoop Editor



(and Bonnie)

Certificants Bark Back



We love hearing from you! Send your reader comments to: WriteOn@ccpdt.org

President's Letter - September 2015 Ethics and the Professional Dog Trainer

**by Bradley Phifer, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KSA
President, CCPDT**

Recently, there was a blog post circulating the Internet where a professional dog trainer, and CCPDT certificant, wrote a sensational headline: *Me and My Fake Service Dog*. The initial blog post understandably upset both

service dog trainers and non-service dog trainers alike. After receiving formal complaints about the blog post from certificant we conducted an internal inquiry and the matter has been addressed.

Like many others I was initially upset when I read the blog post. After re-reading it several times I realized that the intention was not to demonstrate how to thwart the system, but to educate the public on what role a service dog plays. As I read through the emails coming into our office and the subsequent social media comments criticizing the trainer for their behavior I was taken aback.

Falsifying your dog as a service dog is not ethical. It's also illegal in Florida. Verbally attacking or threatening a colleague because you disagree with their blog post is also unethical and violates the CCPDT Code of Ethics in the same manner that one would do so by using a fake service dog.

As colleagues, and professionals, I would hope we would give each other the benefit of the doubt. Ask questions rather than make accusations or assumptions. The social media comments go against the very principles that many of you subscribe to on a daily basis when assisting clients with undesired dog behavior.

What benefit did the public criticism serve in the end?

In other news... the CCPDT would like to congratulate Jenna Webb on a new job opportunity that she recently accepted; her last day at CCPDT was August 21. Although we will miss her excellent administrative and

organizational skills, we are excited for her new professional future. We thank her for her years of service to the CCPDT.

During the interim period before a new administrator can be hired we will have temporary staff from Professional Testing Corporation assigned to us. Please be patient as the new staff learns about CCPDT and its procedures. Joan Campbell will continue to be our Executive Director and under her leadership we are anticipating a smooth transition.

If you have any questions about the staff changes, please feel free to contact me at bphifer@ccpdt.org.

Regards

Bradley Phifer, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KSA
President, CCPDT
bphifer@ccpdt.org



Apology

by Anna Jane Grossman, CPDT-KA

In late June I wrote a blog post that I intended as an explanation, meant for my dog training clients, about the difference among Emotional Support Animals, Therapy Dogs, and Service Dogs*.

As a dog trainer, I find myself explaining these designations almost on a daily basis. No, I tell my clients, neither Therapy Dogs nor Emotional Support Animals can go into restaurants, and there is no Service Dog test your puppy can take. Service Dogs, I explain, are to be used by people with disabilities, and an embroidered vest does not a Service Dog make. This is usually a newsflash. A lot of them have never heard of the [Americans With Disabilities Act](#).

A couple friends read what I wrote and suggested that I weave in my personal experiences. So I did. And then I crafted a headline which, as a former *New York Post* reporter, I knew would get attention: "Me and My Fake Service Dog."

Six hours later I'd received so many negative responses - some of them threatening - that I took down the post. I hadn't realized how incendiary my words were (the title especially) and apparently hadn't clearly expressed how I feel, which is great respect for true Service Dogs. I am sorry what I wrote underplayed the daily struggle that too many real Service Dog owners face.

I am a huge believer in the power of good dog training, and am thrilled whenever I learn about the amazing ways in which Service Dogs help people with disabilities. The post was not meant to be about true Service Dogs and their trainers - I only hope to aspire to their level of training expertise. I wish there were more trainers doing this kind of work, which I think could only be aided by a wider understanding of Service Dog work. I also wish there were more protection for Service Dogs, and fewer obstacles for their

owners. I wasn't aiming to pen a guide to skirting the law (although I now see how it could've been read as such). Rather, I was trying to use my experiences to show how the laws' gray areas seem to be too exploitable.

I was attempting, and clearly failed, to convey that if it were easier for your average dog owner to have their (well-behaved) dogs in more places, people would be less likely to abuse laws, either willfully or because they don't have a clear understanding of the designations (Service Dog/Therapy Dog/Emotional Support Animal) or the potential negative consequences of their actions. (The idea that damage is done by the poorly-behaved segment of charlatan Service Dogs is a sentiment echoed recently by [Stanley Coren](#) in [Psychology Today](#)). The problem of phony Service Dogs might be particularly rampant here in New York City, where using public transportation with a dog can be tricky. People use the fake Service Dog title to try to get around co-op boards, or to justify bringing their dogs to work so the dog doesn't have to spend twelve hours alone in an apartment. Or so they can bring a dog into a store when running an errand rather than tying him up outside. Of course, none of these are valid justifications. But people rationalize it is a victimless crime and, as they see it, the benefit to their dog is worth their fear of the unlikely event of being called out for breaking the law.

As I wrote, I was this person. Not constantly, as so many people inferred from what I wrote. I will never do it again, but I have occasionally claimed my Yorkiepoo is a Service Dog. I've mostly done this so he can sit under the chair at an outdoor restaurant near my apartment, rather than be tied to the outer part of the partition. It's a narrow sidewalk so he ends up in the middle of the sidewalk, which I imagine annoys passersby. (A bill, currently being considered by the Governor, might soon make it possible for people to have their dogs next to them in outdoor seating areas of restaurants.) I'm not proud that I have done this - I am particularly not proud of the one time I took it all to an embarrassing extreme: I went so far as to have a heated argument with a cabby who refused to take me and my dog, who was in a bag. In a burst of

frustration, I told him he was a Service Dog. He insisted only Labs could be Service Dogs, and they were only for blind people. He didn't know what the Americans with Disabilities Act was. I argued the point, but quickly realized I'd backed myself into a really yucky corner: I was standing up for the rights of real people with disabilities, but I was an able-bodied person, and I was doing it for my own benefit. Although was I? It would've been easier to hail another cab! The cops came and told the cabbie that the law said he couldn't refuse a Service Dog.

I had dipped my toe into morally muddy waters, and it didn't feel good. Well, I guess it felt good knowing that the cabbie would probably never again deny a person with a real (non-visible) disability and a small-breed Service Dog. But lying was a terrible way to have taught that lesson. It made me feel greater empathy for people with disabilities who face discrimination, frustrated about people's ignorance of the ADA, embarrassed about my transgression, and generally annoyed that it can be hard to get around New York with a dog-for all dog owners, and for people with disabilities especially.

My days of falsely labeling my dog as Service Dog are behind me, but others will continue taking advantage of loopholes, often with badly-behaved pets. This is an insult to real Service Dogs. But the lies are hard to parse, since there is no overarching certifying/regulating bureau that issues proof that a Service Dog has received training to do a task, or that someone is a person with disabilities. (When fakers proffer Internet-purchased vests or ID cards, I imagine it probably makes it harder for real Service Dog owners, who know that demanding any kind of proof of a Service Dog designation's is unnecessary and illegal.) There is also no licensing for dog trainers. What's more, a person who legitimately has a disability might gain access to "No Dogs" places with a dog that isn't adequately trained - or trained at all. But it also gets murky since the ADA says (and I think rightfully so) that a Service Dog owner should not have to demonstrate the dog's task training.

I very much agree with the intention of the law, that people with

disabilities should not have to disclose anything about their disability in order to gain access with a Service Dog. In fact, I don't think they should have to say they're disabled at all. Why can't they keep that private if they want to? In the piece I wrote, I referred to people having to use their "disability" as a "badge" in order to justify having their dog in public. I meant this not as in "I wish I could wear that badge!" Rather, I was trying to say that it's a shame the law requires people with disabilities to have to label themselves as such to justify their dog's presence. Does someone have to prove they can't use stairs in order to justify using a ramp? If the focus of the laws were on a dog's good training rather than on an owner's disability, I think we'd see better behaved dogs in public, more anonymity for people with disabilities (should they want it), and fewer liars overall. The feedback I have received suggests this is a radical and unpopular point of view. However, it is not one that stems from me being malicious, proud or judgmental, and I regret that is how my words were received.

I wholeheartedly apologize to everyone I offended, and hope that witnessing the unbridled hate that has come my way because I admitted to taking advantage of the law will only deter others from attempting to do the same. I also hope that the fact that this has caused such a heated debate might be the start of some more serious conversations about educating people about Service Dogs and ensuring the system is used correctly.

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*For those who are still unclear, in brief:

-An Emotional Support Animal may go on most flights and, under the Fair Housing Act, may be allowed in some housing that otherwise restricts pets. Beyond this, an Emotional Support Animal has no special access to public places. Animals other than dogs may be Emotional Support Animals. To get the label of Emotional Support Animal, a doctor or therapist must write a letter saying the owner needs the animal; they generally site a diagnosis from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. (Someone with a DSM diagnosis may also have a psychiatric Service Dog if the dog has been trained to do a task to aid them in leading a more

normal

life.)

-A Therapy Dog is licensed through one or more of the various private organizations throughout the country that partner with hospitals, schools, etc. Outside of the place where the organization arranges for the dog to work, a Therapy Dog has no special access to public places.

-A Service Dog may be used by people with disabilities (physical or mental), and the dog's handler is not required to have them in a vest or show a card or present proof of either the dog's training or their own disability. The dog should be trained to perform a specific task or tasks that help the owner live more functionally. They are allowed in all public places. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, only two questions may legally be posed to a dog owner who has a Service Dog: "Is the dog a Service Animal required because of a disability?" and "What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?" In NYC, you can get a Service Dog tag when you apply for a dog license, if you have a note from a dog trainer saying that the dog has had special task training to help you live a more normal life. But the tag is not required, and a Service Animal cannot be discriminated against if they don't have one.

EXAM NEWS

CPDT-KSA Exam

The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers® (CCPDT®) is happy to announce that registration is open for the next testing session for the Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge & Skills Assessed® (CPDT-KSA®) examination. If you are a current Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed® (CPDT-KA®), we are pleased to inform you that you are eligible to take the examination to be recognized as a Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge & Skills Assessed (CPDT-KSA). But you need to hurry!

Successful completion of the skills examination changes a certificant's designation from CPDT-KA to CPDT-KSA. This certification indicates that as a trainer you have not only proven your knowledge, but you have also demonstrated the skills necessary to be successful at training dogs and coaching clients to train their dogs.

The CPDT-KSA examination is a skills based assessment. You will be assigned four training tasks that you will record (video with audio) and submit for scoring. The CCPDT chose this method to make the exam accessible to all our CPDT-KA certificants. The CPDT-KSA examination is a performance examination scoring the candidate on the process of training, not just the product (end result).

All potential exam candidates (Note: only CPDT-KA certificants may apply to take this examination) are sent an email indicating eligibility for the CPDT-KSA examination after they receive their CPDT-KA credential. That email provides a username, password, and a link to the online application form. It will arrive in advance of the first CPDT-KSA exam administration a certificant qualifies to sit for after becoming a CPDT-KA.

To complete the CPDT-KSA exam application process, follow the link provided via email from the testing company prior to the exam's application deadline (**Wednesday, September 2, 2015**). If you do not receive that link, username, or password in a timely fashion, contact the testing company (IQT Testing) for further instructions via phone at: (866-733-1114) (toll free), (727) 733-1110 and/or via email at: registrations@isoqualitytesting.com

CBCC-KA Exam

Been meaning to take the CBCC-KA (Certified Behavior Consultant Canine- Knowledge Assessed) exam? The deadline for applications for the Fall Administration is September 18 -- so better get your paperwork ready! (The Exam will be November 7 through

November 21st)

Be part of protecting clients and their dogs by setting the bar high for yourself and your profession. Take the only exam for Canine Behavior Consultants that has earned accreditation by the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) through their National Commission for Certifying Agencies.

You can download the application, the candidate handbook and the eligibility hours log here: http://ccpdt.org/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=25&Itemid=141

Questions? Email administrator@ccpdt.org or call (855) DO-CERTIFY.

To download the Candidate Handbook and learn more about the CPDT-KSA and CBCC-KA examinations, please visit the CCPDT website at: <http://www.ccpdt.org>

Barks from the Board

**by Amanda Kowalski, CPDT-KA
CCPDT Board Member**



Amanda Kowalski, CPDT-KA, and friend

I cannot think of a better audience to understand how passionate I am about what I do. My most vivid memories involve being around animals and working with others to make their lives better. Childhood memories helping stray animals in my city neighborhood always remind me of the how far I have come, and why I continue to work with people and animals.

As with many young children, I had dreamed about working with animals by becoming a veterinarian for as long as I could remember. I was lucky to have a local humane society with a Junior Volunteer program that allowed me to foster my passions as a teenager. As an undergraduate I continued down the veterinary medicine pathway until I was given the opportunity to study abroad and learn about canine behavior and training. I will always remember this experience as a pivotal point in my studies and career as it opened my eyes to many new possibilities.

One of those possibilities was sitting for the CPDT-KA exam. I made every effort to gain the knowledge and

practical skills to pass the exam. By becoming a CPDT-KA I felt that I was (and still am) making a professional and positive impact on the dogs and people I work with.

It has been five years since I became a CPDT-KA. In that time I have continued to gain so much knowledge and insight from my professional and academic endeavors, and even more from my colleagues. I am currently finishing my Master's degree in Animals and Public Policy, and am thrilled to be able to combine all of my experiences and skills to serve the CCPDT as a member of the Board of Directors.

My goal in serving the CCPDT is to continue to positively impact dog trainers, behavior consultants, dog owners, and the dogs we work with. I am really looking forward to contributing to the continued growth and development of this organization by promoting the importance of our certifications, through hard work and professionalism, to the public and other professionals working for and with animals.

As a side note I feel compelled to also mention a few of my other passions which include my two dogs: Charlie, an eight-year-old Maltese-Poodle mix and Bogart, a six-year-old Wheaton-Poodle mix, as well as my love for Latin dancing and my aspirations in pie-making.

Warm wags,

Amanda

The

Shrewsbury, Massachusetts

Kowalski,

Scholarly

CPDT-KA

Canine

“P” Is For “Professional”

A Trainer's Learning Quagmire

by James E. Akenhead, CPDT-KA
Board Member, CCPDT



If no discomfort is felt, growth may not be taking place.

Questions:

As we work with clients, one of our frustrations centers on the question of why some people have such a hard time learning the concepts we are teaching. Why does a client seem to start out gung-ho, then end up unsure, and willing to give up at the first bump in the road?

Why can't they realize that we don't do magic? Why can't they see that really good training requires a commitment beyond just showing up and waiting for the trainer or behavior specialist to make it happen? We don't just tell the dog and it happens.

Why do I feel the need to remind my clients at each session that if they "cherry pick" just the things they feel like doing, or those that don't require a change in routine, their results will not be what they desire?

How Professionals Differ:

As a businessperson and as a dog trainer, I have always looked beyond the obvious to find the “secret ingredients” that make things work better and make me more successful.

I haven't been a shoot-from-the-hip person for a long, long time. If I found out that painting walls blue would lower aggression, I would do it. If I learned that visualizing a process prior to putting it into practice would increase my chances for success, I would do it. If I knew how to manage intuition so I could better determine a plan for a dog or his owner, I would surely do it.

Fact is, I am aware of all these things and I do use them. I also know that there are phases that we go through as we learn, whether as trainer or client.

Recognition of Stages:

For trainers *and* clients, recognition of these learning stages can help us know in advance many of the things we are likely to encounter. We can know the roadblocks that will surely surface... and we will be able to lower our own frustration as we build our plan with recognition of what may thwart our clients en route.

These stages were identified in the world of organizational studies. In that world, there is constant research seeking to find out how to create a more positive environment, as well as how to become more productive.

As you read this article, you will encounter ideas that may seem odd at first. One factor that will contribute to your

success is a willingness to stick to it when something sounds unusual or uncomfortable. When we are given new information or are taught new skills, (especially those that challenge our past thinking or well integrated practice) there may be a period when even simple new ideas go against strongly-programmed beliefs.

Personally:

This happened to me just the other night at about 3:00 am. I was watching television. I flipped through channels airing one infomercial after another, finally stumbling on a dog training show that originates in Canada. I didn't know the trainer. As I watched, it became clear that the trainer's approach was very different from mine. In cases like that I sometimes have a difficult time even watching. After all, I have 20 years' experience managing a training facility, and I have a written model that has been well-thought-out, and yields good results.

The more I watched through my sleepy daze, the more I was aware of our differences. Also, the more I watched, the more I saw the use of a simple activity that really helped people deal with dogs who pulled and lunged on leash.

Although I couldn't bring myself to accept the total context within which it was done, I did decide that the activity was going to get at least a trial run in one of our obedience programs. I watched to show to the conclusion, then watched another episode to see if any other good stuff might show up.

Nothing more showed itself by the end of the second

show, I only had the one activity to show for my effort but it looked like a really good one to me. In these few hours I had been able to move myself from a mindset that didn't consider this activity to one that watched it over and over so I could give it a try in my own program. From here, I have several more stages to go through to practice, evaluate, and decide about the activity's future in our program.

That was just a small introduction to how these learning phases impact us as trainers, behavior professionals and clients. These predictable stages are the same ones we go through when we learn to play tennis, water ski or shift an automobile's manual transmission. Understanding these learning stages can help us comprehend why new things can sometimes feel so uncomfortable for our clients as well as for us. The great thing for our clients is that when we understand how this works, we can make life easier for them.

Stage One: Blissful Ignorance

This is the easiest phase to identify... it is the starting point. As yet, we don't have reason to be uncomfortable. This is when we are excited about learning something new, seeing our dog become a star, and we're not yet aware of how to apply new information or practice new skills that look so simple when done by an expert. I am sure you remember times when a client said to you, "You make it look so easy. Can you come home with us?" That's when you know things are starting to sink in.

Here's an example of how this works: Do you remember

when you became old enough to drive a car and had to learn on a manual transmission? At first, it's all about what learning to drive can do for you (Stage One). Then comes the realization that there are three pedals on the floor and you only have two feet and two hands, and there are at least three things you might be required to use them for.

At this point you might even wonder how a human being can be expected to carry out all of these activities with only two arms and two legs. The irony here is that such thoughts surface even though, obviously, thousands of people are successful at the endeavor that is giving you trouble. Here we begin to see Stage Two.

Stage Two: I'm Uncomfortable

When we first come to grips with the fact that we don't really understand that there is a lot we don't know and there are skills we don't know how to use, we are squarely in Stage Two of new learning. Everything may make sense and seem doable but as new skills and knowledge are used, the awareness of newness and even clumsiness can cause real discomfort.

As new skills are practiced, some come along more naturally than others because they fit better with our most-used operating style and prior life experiences. Both comfort and discomfort related to learning new skills are as much a part of the natural learning process as they were the first time you learned to do math or speak a foreign language. It is in Stage Two that some give up in frustration rather than take time to practice or risk being embarrassed while working through the rough spots.

In this stage, the professional trainer must provide the support needed to keep the client engaged. This includes explaining what is happening to the client and making sure s/he doesn't think the natural frustration that accompanies new learning means that s/he is not capable. Here is where good trainers concentrate on coaching to make the process move along more smoothly. In this stage it is important to avoid being judgmental.

Stage Three: I've Got It

A third phase occurs when you can apply newly acquired concepts and skills correctly, but the application still takes concentration. To use a golf or tennis analogy, in this stage you have to keep your eye on the ball, all the while concentrating on the grip and swing you've been taught. In this phase of learning, things often feel unnatural but they still work as long as you pay close attention to the knowledge and mechanics learned. In Stage Three the skill has not yet become an integral part of your operating style. When you notice this feeling remember, even though it feels odd, it will still work just fine.

When a client is in this learning stage, it is up to the trainer or consultant to explain why it still feels uncomfortable or frustrating, and to assure the client that with time and practice it will smooth out and feel natural.

Stage Four: Smooth and Integrated

The final stage of learning is when once clumsy, difficult skills and concepts become automatic. In this stage of

learning, the skills and related concepts are so well integrated that there is no longer a need to consciously think about them. They occur naturally, as circumstances dictate.

It's like jumping into your car, starting it, putting it in gear, letting out the clutch, pushing the gas pedal, turning on the turn signal and rolling down the road, all without a conscious awareness of what is happening. It is also the stage where shifting from one gear to another is instantly known and executed without a hitch.

Stage Five: Refinement

Much like when a seasoned athlete must learn new plays, some of these learning stages will recur when a skill refinement is added. It might be like the small adjustment you must make when switching from a four-speed to a five-speed manual transmission in your car. You experience a few minor grinds, but no big problem.

If you are good at the fundamentals that underlie new refinements, those refinements are accomplished more smoothly and with less frustration. That is why it is so important to work through the first four stages of learning required skills and attaining needed knowledge as you go along. That knowledge and those skills form the foundation for all that comes later.

If you build a house, your foundation may only be seen and discussed early on. Even though it might not even be seen after its construction, it holds the building together and allows for the addition of additional levels. In my

model for training, that foundation is basic obedience and management. Those skills are the foundation blocks for the future.

Once while sitting through a seminar presented by Dr. Ian Dunbar, I heard him say it is often dogs with the best obedience that win in protection dog competition. This happens because many competitors spend their time on the other elements and their obedience score doesn't carry them to the victory stand. I have personally seen this in Agility competition where a dog may be a great athlete but has missed out on the fundamentals and communications needed to apply the skills to the course without missing a jump, a turn, or a handler's direction.

When you see your client struggling, remember that there was a time where you were where he or she is right now. Neither we nor our clients were born with our knowledge and skills. Most of us had to work hard to get where we are now.

What we do as trainers is not "magic". To continue to be at the top of our game we must also keep learning and dealing with the discomfort and frustration just like our clients. The difference is our clients have us to help them understand that it is often not a lack of ability on their part that slows them down but rather the predictable stages of learning that we all go through.

In this context, it's good to consider that if no discomfort is ever felt, growth may not be taking place.

In future issues of The Scoop we will address other topics that can help

you evaluate your professionalism.

Committee Call

**by Amanda Kowalski, CPDT-KA
Chair, CCPDT Legislative Committee**



In 2013, the CCPDT started a Legislative Committee to identify, track, monitor and become involved with legislative efforts across the country that impact the dog training and behavior profession. It is my pleasure to be able to chair this committee while I serve as a member of the Board of Directors.

As I am certain you are all aware, informing legislation can be an ambitious venture. It requires research and data collection to help define and document a problem, campaigning, and speaking with elected officials. It also involves identifying allies, sponsors, and opponents, knowing our opponents' objections and who the legislation will impact, educating the public, and drafting potential bills or amendments. This is certainly not an exhaustive list, but it helps paint a picture of what to expect.

As stated in the Legislative Committee charter, "The goal of these activities is to support, promote, and help develop legislation that will have a positive impact on both the dog-owning public and dog training and behavior profession."

In order to effectively position ourselves to influence any relevant legislation, it is vital that we are both proactive and appropriately reactive. Such a task will require utilizing the efforts of interested certificants to help research and

gather information, track and report on relevant legislation, develop and maintain relationships with legislators, and when appropriate, develop and support legislation relevant to the dog training and behavior profession.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Legislative Committee please feel free to email me, Amanda Kowalski, at akowalski@ccpdt.org. Ideally, we would like to have at least one certificant per state assist with tracking relevant legislation. Even if you do not volunteer (which I hope you do!), one way to stay in the loop about relevant legislation is setting up “Google Alerts” with applicable search terms such as “dog laws (your state),” or “dog trainer legislation.” I look forward to working with all who volunteer on this important and impactful committee.

Amanda Kowalski, CPDT-KA
Chair, Legislative Committee
akowalski@ccpdt.org

STUDY HALL

Presence of an Attachment Person During Shelter Assessments



by Jolanta Benal, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA

How good are the behavior evaluations we use for shelter dogs? Especially, how well do they predict that a dog will behave aggressively in an adoptive home - or predict that a dog *won't* behave aggressively? It's questionable. For instance, [one study](#), by E'Lise Christensen [Bell] and colleagues found that territorial aggression, dog-dog aggression, and predatory behavior might not be reliably elicited by the evaluation procedure used, a variation on Sue Sternberg's protocol.

The "food bowl test" using a fake hand is perhaps the most controversial segment of behavior evaluations. The science writer [Linda Case](#), discussing [a study by Amy Marder and colleagues](#), points out that while 78 percent of dogs who showed no aggression on the fake-hand test also showed no aggression in their adoptive home, only 55 percent of dogs *whodid* show aggression on the test also showed aggression at home. Case argues that we may be euthanizing many dogs who would do well in an adoptive home.

The authors of [“Timing and Presence of an Attachment Person Affect Sensitivity of Aggression Tests in Shelter Dogs”](#) (A. Kis, B. Klausz, E. Persa, A. Miklósi, and M. Gácsi, *Veterinary Record* 174 [2014], 196-200) cite the Christensen study as evidence that behavior evaluations produce many false negatives - that is, that they don't elicit aggressive behavior from dogs who later behave aggressively in the home. The researchers tested two hypotheses about how to make behavior tests more sensitive, so there are fewer false negatives.

The first hypothesis Kis and colleagues tested had to do with the timing of behavior evaluations. Other researchers have found [higher levels](#) of the stress hormone cortisol among shelter dogs than pet dogs at home, and have also found that the [shelter dogs' cortisol levels declined](#) as the dogs spent more time at the shelter.

Kis's team hypothesized that the higher initial cortisol levels correlate with “timidity” and behavioral suppression, and that as a result dogs will be more likely to respond with aggression (rather than avoidance) later in a shelter stay, as cortisol (and presumably stress) decline.

The team first tested dogs a day or two after the dogs arrived at the shelter. For the tester's safety, the dogs were tethered. With a view to minimizing stress to the dogs, the researchers kept the “evaluation” to three steps, lasting a total of about three minutes:

1. friendly approach and greeting
2. giving the dog a bone, then petting the dog with an

artificial hand and finally removing the bone

3. threatening approach (staring into the dog's eyes and leaning into her); this step was done by a second experimenter

Dogs were tested again two weeks later. Most of the 95 dogs tested in the first round had been adopted, removed from the shelter by rescue groups, or reclaimed by their owners, and only 25 remained. The authors say they "took a random sample of 25 subjects from the adopted population" to compare with the retested dogs, but it's not clear what they mean by "took" - no mention is made of actual retesting of adopted dogs.

The only changes in aggression came during the part of the test that involved taking away a bone. Fifteen of the 25 dogs didn't aggress at either the first or the second test, 5 who hadn't growled the first time did growl the second, 2 showed the same degree of aggression (snarling or biting), and 3 escalated their aggressive behavior (going from snarling to biting, for example).

The researchers describe these results as suggesting that the dogs "showed more aggression ... on the second occasion." I don't find the results at all persuasive for the proposition that the timing of the test accounts for any changes in the dogs' behavior. These are small variations in a small sample; they could be the result of chance - or, to put it another way, of plain old behavioral fluctuation.

On the other hand, of course, the results don't rule out the possibility that dogs become more likely to aggress as they spend more time in a shelter. Repeated experiments with

larger samples of dogs could clarify this point.

However, cortisol isn't a clear measure of distress, as the researcher Jessica Hekman, DVM, MS, [has explained](#). So even if dogs become likelier to aggress the longer they remain in a shelter, it may not be because *diminished distress* makes their behavior less inhibited. For instance, dogs confined in a noisy environment with limited exercise, play, and human attention might become more irritable, even if their cortisol levels decline. If the behavioral deterioration is owing to the inadequacy of shelter life, that argues for working hard to shorten dogs' shelter stays, not for delaying our behavior evaluations.

Kis and colleagues tested a second hypothesis, as well. In previous studies, dogs have apparently used human attachment figures (i.e., their owners) as a "secure base," much as children use their parents. For instance, dogs may be more likely to [play with a stranger](#) if their owner is present. Their [heart rates may increase significantly less](#) if a threatening stranger approaches with the owner present rather than in the owner's absence. Given this evidence, Kis's team hypothesized that dogs would also be more likely to aggress in the presence of a human attachment figure.

The team gave 50 adult dogs the same three-part behavior test as the shelter dogs. Over a span of 1 to 3 weeks, every dog was tested twice, once with the owner present and once without. (The order of these two conditions was random.)

Only 2 dogs responded aggressively to the friendly

greeting, and they did so whether or not the owner was present. In the bone-guarding step, 8 dogs showed no aggression when their owner was absent, but growled, snarled, “attacked,” or bit in the owner’s presence; one growled in the owner’s absence and bit when the owner was present; and one bit under both conditions. Finally, 32 dogs responded nonaggressively to the threatening approach whether or not the owner was present; 5 growled regardless; 12 growled only when the owner was present; and one growled in the owner’s absence and snarled in the owner’s presence.

These results all lean in the same direction (no dogs behaved *less* aggressively in their owner’s presence) and probably aren’t a matter of chance. Kis and colleagues cite studies showing that shelter dogs become attached to people even after only a few handling sessions, and they suggest that shelter behavior evaluations may be more sensitive if dogs are evaluated in the presence of someone to whom they’ve formed such an attachment.

This article leaves me skeptical. First, as I mentioned earlier, if shelter dogs do behave more aggressively the longer they remain in the shelter, that may or may not be because they are more “at home” (less stressed). Without more evidence, a finding that behavior deteriorates with longer shelter stays isn’t an argument for delaying assessments; it’s an argument for assessing promptly (perhaps a day or two after arrival, enough time for the shelter’s novelty to wear off?) and moving dogs into more congenial conditions as soon as possible. It’s appropriate to re-assess long-staying dogs, of course.

Second, Kis and colleagues argue that behavior evaluations are insufficiently sensitive, but the study they cite - and it is just one study! - focused on territorial aggression and dog-dog aggression as well as predation, not on food bowl guarding. Do we know that these behaviors all travel in tandem?

Third, consider the study by Amy Marder that Linda Case has discussed; in that study, only 55 percent of dogs who guarded food during the shelter evaluation also guarded food later in their adoptive home. This suggests not that behavior evaluations are failing to pick up enough food-related aggression, but rather that they're picking up too much - they may be too sensitive. (If, as the Christensen study suggests, evaluations often miss territorial and dog-dog aggression, we should probably focus more on how to identify those.)

Fourth, although the pet dogs in this study aggressed more in their owners' presence, most went from no reaction to growling, or from growling to snarling. Is such a change large enough to be important? We also don't know whether the dogs' owners knew the purpose of this study before they agreed to take part; if they did, might people be more or less inclined to sign up depending on how they predicted (on the basis of experience?) their dogs would react? Are the results here the same as we'd get from a truly random sample of pet dogs?

Finally, will a bond formed over a few interactions during a shelter stay have behavioral effects like those that result from the (presumably deeper) bond with an owner? It might seem easy to test - run the pet-dog study as Kis's

team did, but with shelter dogs and their caretakers. But surely, few shelters have the resources to provide dogs with, say, daily one-on-one time with a human. So even if it takes only a few such interactions to form some sort of bond, how do we disentangle the effects of that bond from the effects of remaining in the shelter long enough to form it?

In short, although this research presents interesting hypotheses, they're not explored with clarity and I would not draw even a tentative conclusion from the results.

Training Trivia!!!

Each issue we will ask a trivia question about the world of dog training. The answer will not be found in this newsletter, but rather somewhere out there in the real world. You might already know the answer, or you might have to go looking for it.

The winner, to be drawn from all the correct submissions, will receive a \$25 gift certificate to DogWise. Who can't use _____ that?

Last issue's Training Trivia question was: What Hollywood dog trainer was also a character actor, appearing in films such as *Married to the Mob*, *Honeymoon in Vegas*, *Shamus*, and *The Last Dragon*, was the original Mr. Clean, and appeared on David Letterman twenty-six times for *Stupid Pet Tricks*?

The answer: [Captain Arthur Haggerty](#)

We received 47 responses, 41 of them were correct. [The](#)

random-drawing winner of the \$25 Dogwise certificate is:
Denise Ames, CPDT-KA, of Out and About Dog Training in
Elyria, Ohio
(www.OutAndAboutDogTraining.com)

Congratulations, Denise!

Here is this issue's Training Trivia question:

What British dog trainer stumped contestants on "What's My Line," was also a horse trainer, was the only female student when she attended Harper Adams Agricultural College, had a television show in the 1980's, and was known for her "No bad dogs" philosophy?

Send your answer to: Writeon@ccpdt.org, with "Training Trivia" in the subject line.

Open to CCPDT certificants only; one entry per certificant

Industry News

Electronics-Sniffing Dogs Help Solve Cyber-Crimes

August, 2014

There is a grand total of *three* dogs in the United States trained and being used to find electronic components with their noses for use in crime investigations. Bear, an electronics-sniffing Labrador Retriever, helped officers locate 16 smartphones, 10 flash drives and six laptops during an 11-hour search in July of Jared Fogle's home. Fogle, of Subway commercial fame, reportedly will plead guilty to paying minors for sex and possessing child pornography.

Jack Hubball is a chemist who discovers the chemical compounds that dogs are eventually trained to find. He identified the so-called accelerants (gasoline, diesel, kerosene, etc.) dogs should focus on to sniff out arson, and helped train dogs to find narcotics and bombs.

To fight computer crimes, Hubball tested circuit boards, flash drives and other electronics components to isolate a single common chemical in each device. Police are not disclosing the name of the chemical common to all the devices. After months of training, the dogs were able to detect the odor of the chemical in people's hands, concrete blocks, metal boxes and clothing.

The dogs have since been involved in numerous child pornography warrants, as well as other investigations where electronic documents were key evidence. After helping with the Fogle investigation, Bear's trainer received more than 30 inquiries from police who want to buy their own electronics-sniffing dogs.

<http://blogs.discovermagazine.com/d-brief/2015/08/24/electronics-sniffing-dogs/>



Rottweiler Euthanized After Suffering Injuries From Kong

Ball Toy

Chula Vista, California,

August 2015

A Chula Vista family had to euthanize their 5-year-old Rottweiler, Max, after his tongue got suctioned into a Kong ball toy during the night. Owner Jamie Stumpf discovered the ball stuck on Max's tongue at 1:00am. Despite rushing him to the veterinarian, the damage was too severe, and the decision was made to euthanize rather than amputate Max's tongue.

The Kong Company issued this statement:

“We were deeply grieved to hear the news about Maximus yesterday. Since we’ve been made aware of this loss from our KONG Friends on social media we have reached out to Maximus’ family. After learning of the incident, we have launched an extensive review. We are taking this matter very seriously and need to have a deeper understanding of the facts prior to determining our next steps. We do know that this product has been sold for over five years and up until yesterday, we have never heard of any dog experiencing this type of health issue. Toy safety is at the heart and soul of what we do and we will be determining the next steps once we have all of the facts in front of us.”

Stumpf is reportedly considering a lawsuit.

<http://ktla.com/2015/08/29/dog-dies-after-suffering-injury-from-popular-chew-toy-san-diego-area-family-says>

Petsitter Charged with Animal Cruelty

Burlingame, California, August 2015

A Burlingame pet sitter who was videoed in late July jerking a dog up by the neck then slamming it on the ground and slapping it has been charged with animal cruelty, officials announced Wednesday.

Linda Joy Levac, was videoed by a neighbor using their cellphone, hitting the cowering dog as it was pinned to the ground. She has been charged with one misdemeanor count of cruelty to an animal, according to San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe, and is out of jail after posting \$10,000 bail.

Scott Delucchi, spokesperson for the Peninsula Humane Society, said the group was given the video and that the alleged abuse occurred in the Levac’s yard on July 30. The Humane Society conducted an investigation and presented it to the District

Attorney's Office. Eleven dogs were seized from LeVac's home during the investigation.

The July video was also not the first one the organization received regarding Levac's treatment of dogs in her care. Two other videos were received in May. In one, Delucchi said, it appeared Levac was stomping on a dog.

http://www.mercurynews.com/san-mateo-county-times/ci_28709196/burlingame-woman-charged-animal-cruelty

Owner Alleges Animal Abuse at Chicago Dog Training Facility

Chicago, Illinois, August 2015

Marcy Mortensen, owner of Brazil, a deaf Great Dane puppy, claims that her puppy had to be treated for serious injuries after being mistreated at local dog training facility. Mortensen says she noticed the injuries when she went to visit Brazil at the Chicago Canine Academy during a month-long boarding and training program. Brazil was about 12 weeks old at the time.

According to one veterinarian, the puppy had "swelling" and "physical changes" to her head.

Mortensen describes Brazil as spinning in circles on the floor, and not able to locate her owner, with obvious swelling on one side of her face. She immediately took her pup to her veterinarian who reportedly found physical changes concentrating to her head: swelling and fractures to her left nasal bone, an abrasion on her jaw, her upper teeth traumatized and infected. The veterinarian's letter recommended that the owner report the trainer for suspected animal abuse.

Chicago's Animal Control is conducting an investigation investigating. Mortensen also has filed a lawsuit in small claims court asking for \$7,500 to cover court costs, medical bills and lawyer fees.

Jim Morgan, owner of Chicago Canine Academy, reportedly has stated that the employee responsible for the dog's injuries no longer works at the facility.

<http://abc7chicago.com/pets/owner-alleges-animal-abuse-by-local-dog-training-facility/959829>

Massachusetts Dog Trainer Facing 29 Counts of Animal Cruelty

Webster, Massachusetts, August 2015

Beatrice Nielsen, 50, also known as Beatrice DeGruttola, was charged after animal control officials removed 21 dogs - one of which was dead - five cats and four birds from her two-bedroom house in Webster, Massachusetts.

Some animals were reportedly emaciated, malnourished and living in dirty kennels that were too small. The police department received a call from the Board of Health regarding health and sanitation issues at the home.

Nielsen reportedly denied the allegations outside court, describing herself as a canine specialist with 30 years of experience. She said the charges are the result of a personal grudge.

Neilsen was held on \$2,500 bail, and is due in court for a September 17 pre-trial hearing.

<http://foxct.com/2015/08/21/popular-dog-trainer-arrested-on-29-animal-cruelty-charges>

Two Missouri Trainers Charged With Animal Abuse

Missouri, July, 2015

St. Peters,

Anthony Dean Lambert and Zachary Labath of Sit Means Sit face animal abuse charges for using shock collars in a way that caused pain to four dogs at a St. Peters dog training facility, according to authorities.

The charges relate to July incidents at Sit Means Sit, 2901 North St. Peters Parkway, St. Peters, Missouri, according to court records. Those records state that videos of the alleged abuse were submitted to St. Charles County Animal Control officials. County officials didn't say who took the videos or submitted them.

Lampert, 45, was charged with one count of animal abuse. Labath, 24, was charged with three counts. The charges are all misdemeanors.

According to court documents, Labath knowingly used a shock collar device "to cause pain and suffering" to two Labrador Retriever mixes. He was seen misusing the shock collar by administering repeat shocks "to the point the dogs yelped in pain," the court record said. Authorities said one of the dogs was grabbed by the collar and swung around Labath's body and then slapped in the face. They also allege that Labath used a shock collar device to "unreasonably cause pain" to an Irish Setter.

Court records state that Lampert repeatedly shocked a Labrador Retriever to make it respond to commands. In an effort to get the dog to jump over a makeshift obstacle, the record states, Lampert aggressively pulled at the leash while shocking the dog. The dog tried to fight by pulling away from the leash and screaming, according to court records.

The Sit Means Sit St. Louis website lists Tony Lampert as the owner and training director and Nick Labath as a trainer.

http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/men-accused-of-animal-abuse-at-st-peters-dog-training/article_b75a493f-f71a-5727-bb39-5b7d6a540e2a.html

Congratulations NEW CPDT-KSA's!!!

Due to a glitch in the system, we missed listing new CPDT-KSA Jaqueline Laubacher in the last issue of Scoop. Congratulations, Jacqueline!!

The Humane Hierarchy

Here is the oft-referred to [Humane Hierarchy](#)(1) (from our website) to which our certificants are expected to adhere:

Application of the Humane Hierarchy

PURPOSE:

The Humane Hierarchy serves to guide certificants of the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) in their decision-making process during dog training and behavior modification. Additionally, it will assist the public in understanding the standard of care to be applied by dog training and behavior professionals when determining the order of implementation for applying training practices and methodologies.

POSITION OF THE CCPDT:

The standard of care for CCPDT certificants is that the Humane Hierarchy will be used as a guide in their decision

making process when implementing training and behavior protocols. This standard of care should be followed when the certificant is working directly with a dog, creating a training plan for the client to follow, or assisting a colleague.

HIERARCHY OF PROCEDURES FOR HUMANE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

Please utilize the following steps to modify or manage a behavior:

1. Health, nutritional, and physical factors: The certificant ensures that any indicators for possible medical, nutritional, or health factors are addressed by a licensed veterinarian. The certificant also ensures that factors in the physical environment that have a potential to impact the dog's health, nutrition and physical condition are addressed.

2. Antecedents: The certificant implements environmental management strategies to prevent the behavior from occurring.

3. Positive Reinforcement, Classical Conditioning (not listed in order of preference):

a. *Positive Reinforcement*: The certificant ensures that reinforcement is delivered for the desirable alternative behavior, and that such reinforcement is of higher value to the dog than the reinforcement the dog has received in the past for the unwanted behavior.

b. *Classical Conditioning*: The certificant changes the dog's association with an aversive stimulus while presenting the aversive stimulus at a sub-threshold

intensity.

4. Live With or Manage the Behavior, Negative Punishment, Negative Reinforcement, Extinction, Consult Another Professional (not listed in order of preference):

a. *Live With or Manage The Behavior:* Certificant elects to cease modification techniques and implement a management plan.

b. *Consult Another Professional:* At times, it may be beneficial for the certificant to consult another professional such as a dog trainer, veterinarian, or behaviorist for additional advice. Consulting with other professionals can be beneficial, particularly when a problem behavior does not resolve with the previously mentioned interventions.

c. *Negative Punishment:* The certificant withdraws a positive reinforcer when the undesirable behavior occurs to reduce the probability that the behavior will occur in the future.

d. *Extinction:* The certificant withholds reinforcement of a previously reinforced behavior with the goal of extinguishing the behavior.

e. *Negative Reinforcement:* The certificant withdraws an aversive stimulus when the desired behavior occurs in order to increase the probability that the behavior will occur in the future.

5. Positive Punishment: The certificant delivers an aversive consequence in response to the undesirable behavior in order to reduce the probability that the behavior will occur in the future.

Please direct any questions regarding this standard of care to our administrator at administrator@ccpdt.org.

(1) Adapted from *What's Wrong With This Picture? Effectiveness is Not Enough*, Susan Friedman Ph.D., *Good Bird Magazine*, Volume 4-4; Winter 2008.

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