



Official Newsletter ~ Dog Scouts of America

The Dog Scout Scoop

Published for DSA's responsible dog-loving members and for the friends of dogs everywhere



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Escape from the Cabin in the Woods!!!

Do you have what it takes to escape?? Come to Dog Scout Camp for the annual All Troop Retreat October 20-22 and find out!

This year's event will be a weekend packed with urban legend based games with clues throughout camp, that may or may not help you escape in the end! Based off the hugely growing popular escape rooms, teams will need to work together during Sunday morning's "lock in" to see if they have what it takes to work together, piece together their clues, and escape before it's too late!

The All Troop retreat is welcome to all Dog Scout members. You don't need to come with troop members! The weekend is free, just pay for lodging and sign up for a meal to serve. Private rooms, group rooms, and cabins available.

If interested, please email bensonjulie@earthlink.net to reserve your spot. A \$25 deposit is required to hold your spot/room. The deposit will be used toward your camp tab or if ordering a shirt (design in progress), your \$25 will go toward covering the initial cost of ordering shirts.

This one is going to fill up fast so sign up NOW before all the spots are gone!!

Deadline

for the next newsletter is

July 15th

Please e-mail your news, articles, and pictures to thescoop@dogscouts.org

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Attitude of Gratitude

We received a nice donation from Andrea Premo in Goldy Reid's name. Fay and Goldie helped her with some training, and they wanted to make a donation to DSA in appreciation.

Lonníe Olson and Joanne Weber made donations to DSA in memory of DSA member Deb Schmitz, who recently succumbed to cancer.

Also, thanks goes to Kat Vogtman for donating some items to the Michigan camp. Since Indy's sled-pulling days are over (with two cruciate ligament surgeries), she has donated her kick sled, ganglines, skijoring belt, weight pull harness, some auction items, a fit ball, some panhandling baskets, some towels and dog toys. Thanks, Kat and Indi! We'll put them to good use.



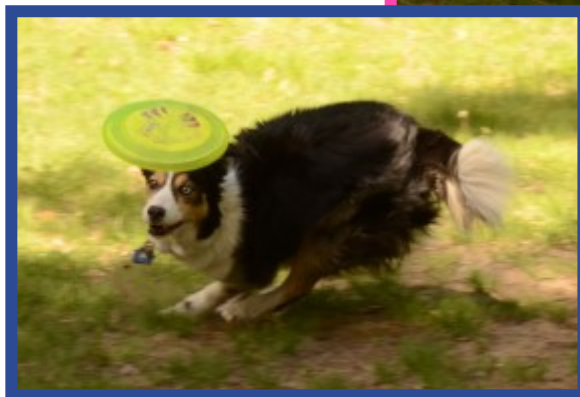
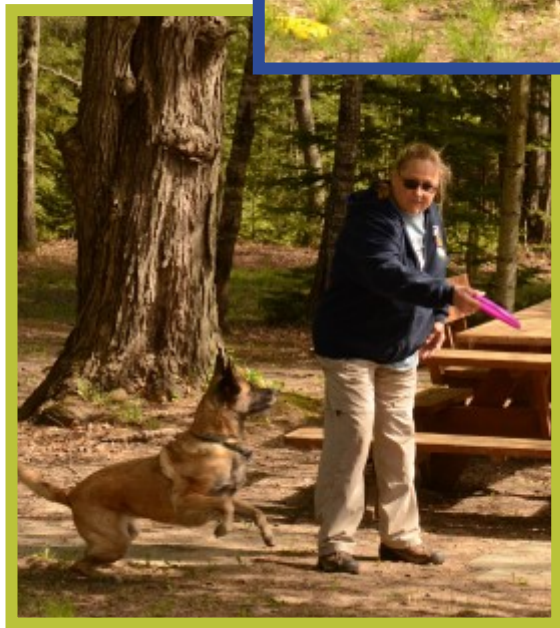
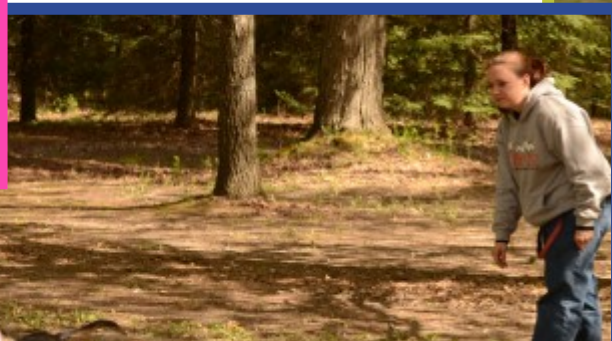
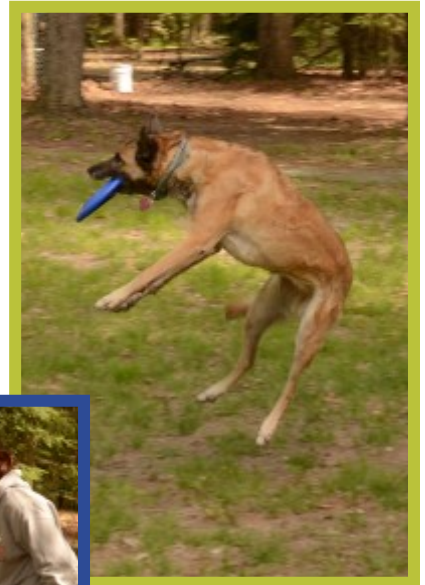
2017 Leadership Retreat

Well we have another leadership retreat under our belts and what a good time we had. First the weather totally cooperated except for a small down pour that didn't phase us as we were inside with a wonderful presentation on Pho-dography by Martha and Fay. Rumor is they will be teaching it at camp as well.

Saturday started out with how ideas take root with our dogs. How do we change a certain behavior from getting an unwanted response to getting the response we are looking for. Great info!



Next, Fay delighted us with Frisbee fun . . . what is required for both the badge and competition.



2017 Leadership Retreat (cont.)

Cady gave us the scoop on the Therapy badges and the difference between them.

Amy did some minute to win it games that consisted of a hula hoop, Easter eggs and four colored mats!



Maia thought the game was retrieving all the cones instead of going to the mat but then gave us a great bow on the mat in the end.



2017 Leadership Retreat (cont.)



Pushing the eggs into the container, rather than picking them up . . . That still counts, right?



Brenda's dog decided after going the distance to the mat to come lay in front of her instead.

2017 Leadership Retreat (cont.)



The winner was Fay's girl, Goldy.

2017 Leadership Retreat (cont.)

Claudette and Sally gave us the low down on how to read our dog food labels and what that all means. Wow was that informative! The new K9 Nutrition badge is one that cannot be earned overnight so if you interested once its announced it will take you a while to complete all the steps.

Brenda took us all on a Parkour hike. Parkour is agility using common things you find while walking your dog. Why not make it a fun thing to do with your dog. Parkour is a National titling venue but maybe we can talk DSA into making it a badge!



2017 Leadership Retreat (cont.)



"After the group got back from the parkour walk, having our dogs jump up on everything and climb around on stuff, Brenda said there was one more requirement that we weren't able to find in the woods and that was that they have to jump into a space that is shorter than their body length, like a box. I looked around and saw the platforms sitting in the corner and fashioned a box so the dogs could practice getting into it. Kozi went first and jumped right in. Then, Fay said, 'Wait, I didn't get a picture so I told Kozi to jump in again and she decided jumping in just wasn't cool enough for parkour so she decided to LEAP onto the 3" wide sides of the platforms to show how versatile and monkey-like she is (Showoff)... I'm bending over hanging onto the platforms for fear they will flip sideways and cause her to think it was a bad idea to do this.'"

Lonnie



2017 Leadership Retreat (cont.)

Candy discussed the youth side of DSA. How to incorporate our youth, the future of DSA, into your troop. Lots of interesting discussion on how to improve and expand this area of DSA.

Finally Saturday night, Amy presented some beautiful pallets with a wood burned dog head and saying on it. We painted them in all different ways as it really showed off our individual creative side. This was a really nice project, thank you Amy for all your hard work.

Sunday morning after breakfast we played the "You don't say" game which seems to be taking the dog training world by storm. With each team member getting to be the "dog" and the other being the clicker. This definitely shows us how timing is critical, how breaking down behaviors into small segments and understanding what you are really trying to achieve is so important.

I really want to thank everyone for their time, the effort they put into their presentations, the cool giveaways and their smiles! We came away with more than knowledge this weekend. Now get out there and share it!

Brenda Katz



Plan on joining us for



2018's Leadership Retreat



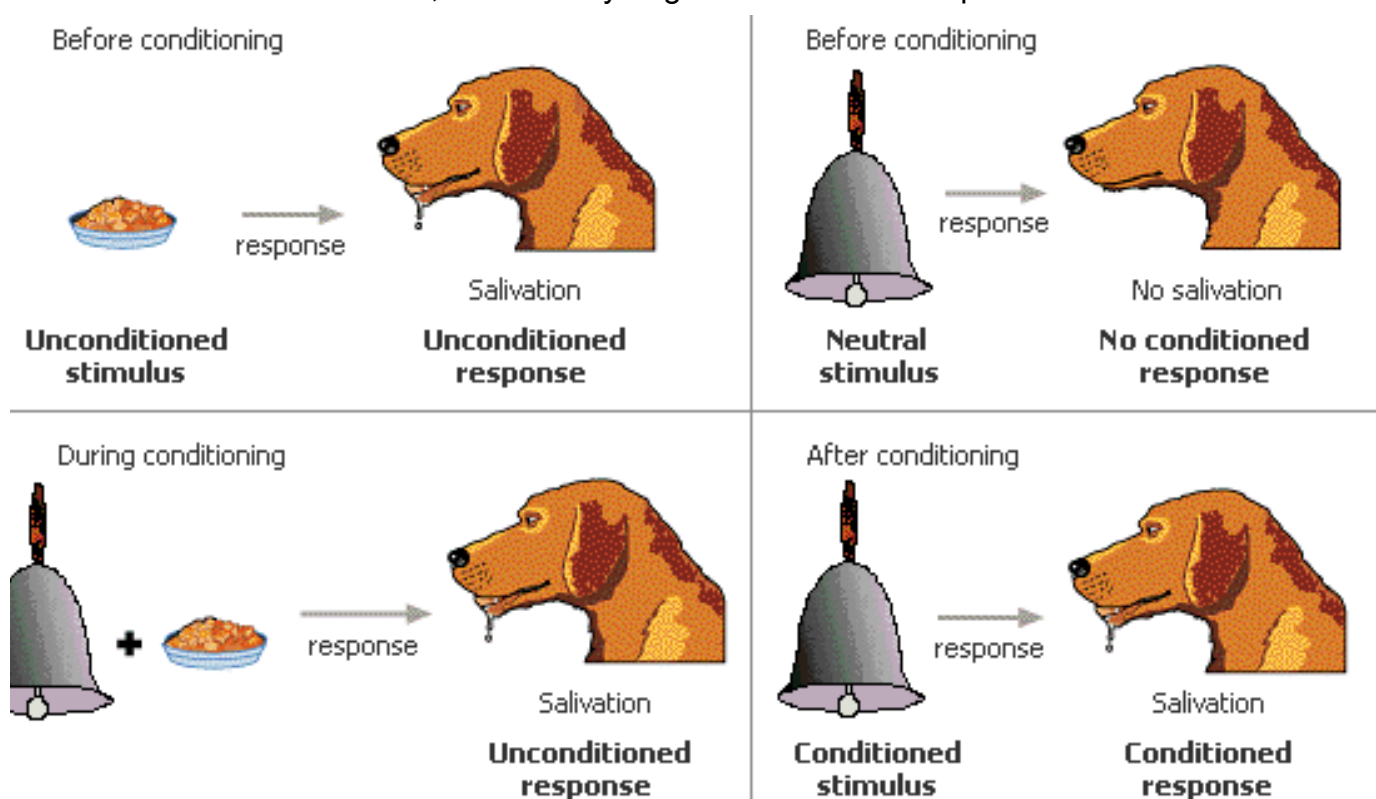
Training Tools—Remember Classical!

By Lonnie Olson

I recently had to do a presentation for the Dog Scouts Leader Retreat, and as per usual, I used something based on observations in my own life to get people thinking.

I noticed an undesirable behavior in my younger dog each time I petted her. As soon as I would caress her head, she would turn and look over her shoulder for the older dog with that “you can’t have my bone” stare that I like to call “stink-eye.” She was resource-guarding my attention. I realized that I always try to give equal time and equal pets to my two dogs, so as soon as one asks for pets, I pet the other, too. Caper doesn’t like to share, and I realized that my petting her was predicting me petting Kozi, and she didn’t like it. And, worse, I sort of “taught” her to do this with our friend, Classical Conditioning.

I thought about it for a second, and realized it was just like Pavlov’s Dog. If you take an unconditioned stimulus that produces an unconditioned response, then add a neutral stimulus and pair it with the unconditioned stimulus, after while you get a conditioned response to the new stimulus.



So, the unconditioned stimulus (Kozi coming closer for pets) created the unconditioned response (jealousy on Caper’s part). Then, my pairing of petting Caper first (conditioned stimulus) was creating the conditioned response of her expecting Kozi to show up and horn in on her cuddles, producing the “stink-eye” response (conditioned response).

I thought to myself, “I need to fix this.” If the conditioned stimulus was the act of petting Caper first, then I wondered if simply petting Kozi first would turn it around. By petting Kozi first, it would become the predictor of me petting Caper, and in theory, Caper would see this as a good thing, because my petting Kozi would bring pets to Caper.

Classical conditioning is a very interesting tool in our training toolbox. We often only think of using operant conditioning, but whether intentional or not, classical conditioning goes on all the time. It’s basically just a thing or event that is paired with another event to create an association in your mind that produces an emotional response.

Training Tools—Remember Classical! (cont.)

Some examples:

Does your dog start leaping up and down when he or she sees you pick up the car keys?

Does your dog move closer when he or she hears you scraping the bottom of the yogurt cup?

Does your dog seem to know when it's time for you or your spouse to arrive home from work?

Everything we do is meaningful to our dogs. Our lives are an ever streaming “story” of coded clues that tell our dogs what may happen next. Because our dogs pay close attention, they are able to pick out a pattern. We call this pattern a chain of events.

Recently, Caper has developed the annoying habit of squealing with excitement and high-pitched barking in anticipation of going outside first thing in the morning. Of course, the going out is just another link in the chain . . . they come inside and then immediately get their breakfast, which is what I think she's really looking forward to with such frenzy. But the thing that sets the chain of events in motion seems to be me putting my pants on. That seems to be the last thing I do before getting up out of the chair and opening the door. The whole “pants on” thing really sends her into orbit with the screaming. I may get up and let them out without putting on a bra, combing my hair or even putting on a pair of shoes. Those acts do not bring on the screeching. Caper's studies have shown her that usually the last thing I do before opening that door is to put my pants on. I've experimented with not putting my pants on, and there was no screaming.

I also serendipitously found something to negate the screaming. It isn't yelling shut up, or threatening her. It's picking up the cell phone. That's right, I have inadvertently taught my dog (through classical conditioning) that Mommy looking at the cell phone seems to predict endless time of her playing a video game or texting, and completely ignoring her dogs. It's as if she says, “Oh, this is going to take a while.” Even if I just pick up the phone to quickly check the day's weather, and not play a video game, she associates the presence of the cell phone in my hand with my eyes on the screen with “Game Over—Mommy is going to be incommunicado for a while.” So she puts her excitement on hold until she sees some sign that the “pants on” chain of events will resume.

A Police Officer friend related a story to me about how his Police K-9 in the back of the squad car can tell when he may be about to get a chance to apprehend a bad guy the moment the radio call comes into the squad car. The message predicts a sudden acceleration of the squad car, which predicts the sirens coming on as they get closer, and the squad car making sudden turns and then screeching to a halt. The handler gets the dog's leash, and maybe the bullet proof canine vest out, but by then, it was no mystery to the dog what was going to happen next. He's been screaming his head off with anticipation since the call came in. This dog has learned to anticipate engaging in his favorite activity based on a long chain of events leading up to the final reward.

By the way, I recently watched a Nature special that found the answer to what clue magically tips off the dog to the fact that someone he or she loves returns home everyday at 5:30. It is the lack of scent of the loved one in the home that tells the dog the owner is soon to return. Over the day, the scent diminishes to a certain point (which coincides with 5:30 on our clocks), and the dog realizes that this is about the time the owner usually shows up, so they start pacing or staring out the window in anticipation.

Since I've started using the “pet Kozi first” system, I don't see the stink-eye with Caper. So, let's not forget about the importance of classical conditioning in our training toolboxes. We can use it to introduce a new emotional response of the dog to certain stimuli.



Here's Sally



DSA President, Lonnie Olson, commissioned a quilt to be made by Vice President, Sally Hoyle. Sally finished the quilt, and brought it to the leader retreat, where we had enough people to hold it up for a photo. Lonnie had 21 years of camp shirts to give up for the quilt. It came out very nice.



Sally Hoyle and Claudette Smith went to the Michigan camp, to help Lonnie with clean-up week. Thanks to their hard work, a lot of cleaning, straightening, and set-up took place to get the camp ready for leader retreat and the summer camps.

Badge Bulletin & Title Tales

Kelly Ford—Troop Leader, CRN Secretary and Trails Titling Program Coordinator

Its finally Spring here in New England and the ticks are out in numbers like I've never seen before. I've posted about this before but its worth bringing up again.

- Please check yourself and your dogs for ticks after every walk.
- Carefully pull out each tick with tweezers. Make sure you grab the head of the tick and pull the mouth parts out.
- After you pull them out you can drown them in rubbing alcohol or suffocate them in packing tape. (Using packing tape will let you save the tick for later testing.)

I would like to congratulate everyone who has earned a recent Trails Title.

TrailDog (TD)

Noel Miller
Cash Fitch
Kobe Schmidt
Kyoki Schmidt

TrailDog Excellent (TDX)

Noel Miller

Utility TrailDog (UT)

Noel Miller
Monroe Kelly

Utility TrailDog 500 (UT500)

Monroe Kelly

Pack Dog (PD)

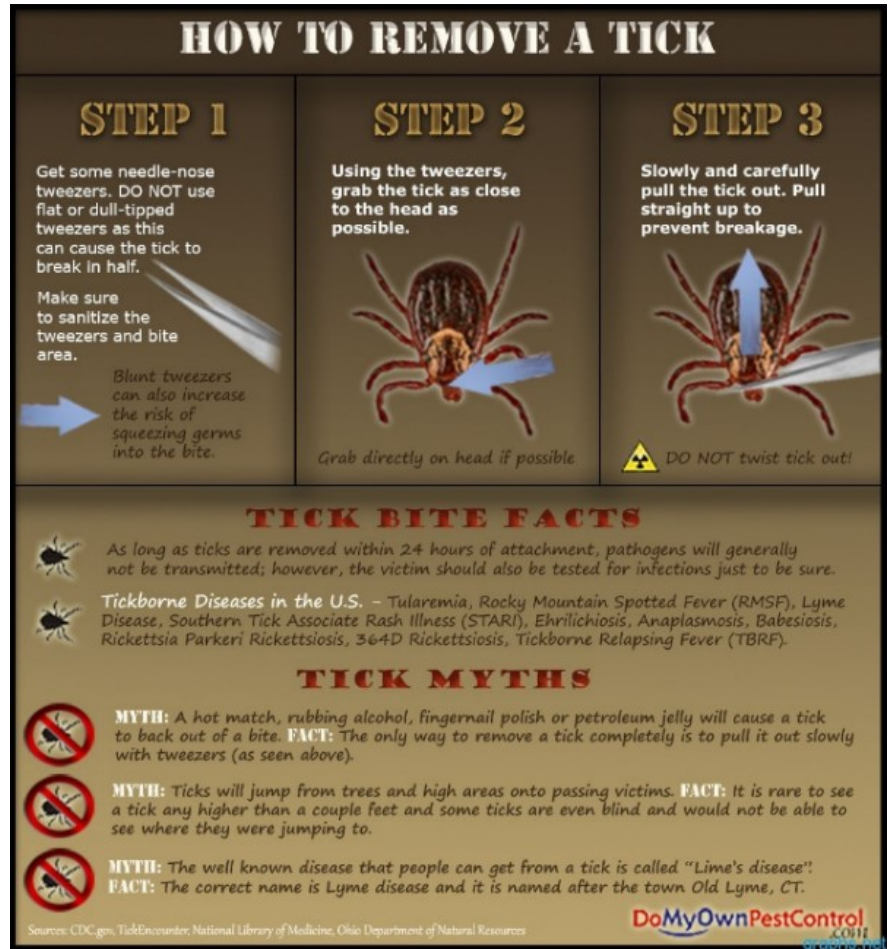
Jib Almann

Pack Dog Excellent (PDX)

Taika Almann
Jib Almann

Utility PackDog (UP)

Taika Almann



Contact Dog Scouts of America

Learning new things that we may be more helpful

Website: Dogscouts.org
Facebook: facebook.com/DogScouts
Yahoo Discussion List:
pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/DSA_TalkList

Dog Scouts of America (DSA) was established in 1995. It is a non-profit organization with people dedicated to enriching their dog's lives and the lives of others with dogs. Founder Lonnie Olson has made it her life's ambition to experience as many dog sports and skills as possible with her dogs.

If you believe that dogs really enjoy learning new things and spending time with their owners, you're our kind of dog person. Dogs were not meant to be "furniture." Working dogs want to work. Without having an acceptable activity in which to use up all of the energy that comes "built-in" with a dog, our canine companions often get into trouble.

By better understanding how your dog thinks, how he learns, and what drives his behavior, and by participating in a variety of dog sports and activities, you will become a more responsible dog owner.

We hope to prevent misunderstandings, communication failures, and behavioral problems which often lead to dogs being given up as a "lost cause."

See Part B for
Scout Scoop &
Troop Talk

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