



TRAINING SOLUTIONS FOR BUSY LIVES

A quarterly newsletter bringing you informative treats from the dog world, and keeping you up-to-date with our services

## [Living with Dogs]

# Recycling the Fun

By Laura Wilson

As our days grow shorter and wetter, keeping our canine buddies busy and happy indoors is challenging. Food dispensing toys provide safe physical activity, a challenging mental puzzle, and may prevent unwanted behaviors like excessive barking or destroying your favorite ottoman. While a local pet store can certainly point you to a variety of treat dispensing toys with a level of difficulty suitable for the couch potato or the brainiac, just for fun, let's follow Sonic the Schipperke on a journey through the recycle bin.

Sonic's most annoying daily task is to remove the soda bottles from the bin and bounce them across the hard wood floors. Much to his delight, the cacophony of bonks and crinkles inspired my inner crafter to produce some fun and economical toys.

Since soda bottles come in many sizes finding one to fit your dog should be a snap. Once you have emptied and rinsed the bottle, shake as much water out as you can. Remove the cap, the label, and the plastic ring since these could be choking hazards. Let the bottle sit in a dish rack for a day to dry. A little left over condensation is OK. Warning: Some water bottles are too easily punctured and should not be used for a toy. Make sure you choose a bottle with heavy plastic and always supervise your buddy with this toy. Replace the bottle if it becomes chewed or punctured exposing sharp edges.

Once the bottle is as dry as it's going to get, place kibble or other treats inside the bottle. Toss to your dog and encourage him to get the treats out. Many dogs love the sensory input they get from playing with this treat-filled bottle toy. In addition to the food, they enjoy the bottle's bouncy, bonky behavior. While it may not be music to your ears, your dog is having a good time and staying out of trouble. Once the original puzzle is solved, increase the difficulty by using different sizes and shapes of treats. Mix sizes and shapes to increase the randomness of the reward.

Experiment with different shapes and sizes of bottles. Sonic enjoys playing with both small and large bottles. I like to use Coke products as the shape of the bottle is easier for him to pick up. Larger dogs may prefer a fatter, rounder bottle. As the bottle gets squished, the puzzle becomes more challenging. So don't be too quick to toss it back to the recycle bin.

For a bonus bottle crinkle toy, slide a bottle into a sleeve of fleece cut off an old sweatshirt. If you sew, you can stitch the ends. If you don't, use strips of fleece cut from the shirt or from that old Snuggie you got last Christmas. If you save the bottle cap, a small amount of sand can be added to the bottle and the cap glued on with super glue before sliding it into the sleeve. The extra weight makes the



Sonic and a favorite bottle toy

PHOTO: HEATHER OHMART

bottle easier to toss over a distance. If you don't mind cleaning up water if the bottle breaks, you can fill the bottle about  $\frac{1}{4}$  full of water instead of sand. Water will make the toy's motions a little more erratic and unpredictable.

No soda bottles in the house? Sounds like it's time to have some friends over to watch the game. Put out those pretzels, save the bottles, and recycle the fun!

Laura Wilson, CVT, is **Call of the Wild Dog Camp's** craftswoman extraordinaire. She loves sharing her passion for crafting with other canine enthusiasts, and has been coming up with new "cool dog stuff" for campers to make since the very first camp in 2004.

## SAVE THE DATES

Call of the Wild Dog Camp  
• August 21-23, 2015

Reactive Dog Camp  
• September 11-13, 2015

Registration opens  
February 15, 2015



"A dog teaches us fidelity, perseverance, and to turn around three times before lying down." – ROBERTS BENCHLEY

## [Did You Know?]

### These Movie Dogs?

**Beasley.** The big lovable Dogue de Bordeaux behind Hooch in the 1989 movie *Turner and Hooch*. Beasley got rave reviews from his co-star Tom Hanks, who called him an "Oscar-caliber actor."

**Jed.** This dog-wolf hybrid played *White Fang* in the 1991 eponymous movie based on Jack London's book about the friendship between a Yukon gold hunter and the mixed dog-wolf he rescues from abusers.

**Hank.** Training for his famous roller-skating scene in 1995's *The Truth About Cats and Dogs* took three months for this easygoing Great Dane.

**Arokat's Echo** bar **Take Me Dancing.** Playing high-maintenance pooch Beatrice in dog show mockumentary *Best in Show* (2000) probably came naturally to this prize-winning Weimaraner.

## [Tips & Tools] Sibling Rivalry



All dogs squabble occasionally. Dogs who live together mostly get into scraps over stuff they both want: Food, bones, toys, human attention, and sleeping spots. Like us, they have individual preferences and moods, and might be having a grumpy day or a headache. If the fights don't result in injuries (i.e. you're not at the vet's following each fight having one or both dogs sutured), you have a number of options. Fights often happen as a result of a particular situation and if you can uncover the triggers through a little detective work, you can prevent most altercations.

**Trigger:** Who is this new dog in my house?

**Remedy:** Supervise your new dog closely for several days, especially when he interacts with your other dog. Praise your dogs for polite behavior.

**Trigger:** My sister is too close while I eat!

**Remedy:** Feed your dogs in separate bowls at opposite ends of a room, or in separate rooms.

**Trigger:** That is MY nylabone/stuffed monkey/tennis ball/etc.

**Remedy:** Carefully manage access to objects your dogs might fight about: Bones, toys, beds, etc.

**Trigger:** When mom is not around, I find my sibling hard to take...

**Remedy:** Keep your dogs in separate rooms whenever you are not available to supervise.

### When to get help.

When is it time to call for professional help? If the dogs seem stressed in each other's presence (won't eat, pant, avoid each other). If the fights happen more often or get more serious. If you can't break up the fight with noise. If the fights cause injury to either dog.



## [A World of Dogs] The Expectations Game



In our ongoing adventure of companionship with dogs nothing trips us up quite as much as our own unrealistic expectations. Dogs who don't do as they are told? We think them willfully disobedient, stubborn, or, worst of all, slow on the uptake. We overestimate their attention span and level of emotional control. We think they should know instinctively how to navigate big groups of dogs playing together. We expect them to quickly grasp concepts that we think are important and logical for them, such as going to the bathroom outside (except when it's OK not to, like at daycare), or walking slowly on leash in a straight line, even when a perfectly good squirrel shoots across their path. Unless advised otherwise, we may even expect angelic behavior after completing a single 6-week training class. Our high and often naïve expectations are often disappointed, causing us grief and worry, so why are they so hard to shake?

Blame culture, for one thing. Books, movies, and TV shows portray dogs as highly intelligent (in a human sort of way), capable of complex planning, and morally superior to many humans in their loyalty and trustworthiness. Blame us, for another. Try as we might, we have a hard time not ascribing human qualities to animals in general and dogs in particular. Often without realizing it, we judge them by our own ability to learn through observation and insight, internalize values, move mentally into the future, and think abstractly.

Two things are important here. The first is that we examine our expectations of dogs, and teach them, with patience and persistence, how to live in our world in ways that are compatible with how they learn best. Second, it is important that we celebrate dogs, not as honorary humans, but just as they are: great learners, with olfactory abilities, capable of discriminating fine differences in their environment, and with a rich emotional life. In other words, marvelous creatures with whom we are lucky to share life and learning.

## [Dogs in Action]

### Arson Dogs



For more than 12,000 years, dogs have worked alongside humans. They have herded our livestock, hunted with us, and pulled us across otherwise impassable frozen expanses. Most modern dogs are companions, of course, but those who do work have ever more extraordinary job descriptions. Accelerant-detection is one example. Arson dogs work with fire investigative units to sniff out minuscule amounts of anything from lamp oil to lighter fluid (they can detect more than 60 different ignitable petroleum-based hydrocarbons) in scenes flooded with water or covered in snow or mud. They use their 200 million scent receptors (compared to our 5 million) to help investigators accurately assess the flammable products present at a fire scene and increase the chances of collecting a positive sample.

This can help rule arson in – or out. With billions of dollars in property and hundreds of lives lost every year as a result of intentionally set fires, arson dogs can play an important role in bringing arsonists to justice.

What makes a good arson dog? At the top of the list is a high level of energy. Dogs that might be considered the problem child in other settings are often prime candidates – guide dog training “dropouts,” for example. Other key characteristics are curiosity, high trainability, an excellent nose, and an easygoing demeanor.



## The English Cocker Spaniel

This dapper little gun dog was originally bred for flushing and retrieving small game. Don't be fooled by her melting spaniel eyes and soft, feathery coat: the Cocker is an all-terrain dog and can be a handful to live with. Exuberant, strong-willed, and energetic, she needs lots of exercise and careful training. Cockers love having a job – something scent-related, preferably, otherwise anything demanding will do: agility, obedience, flyball, etc. The well-socialized Cocker is affectionate and wants to be part of all family activities. Beware the noise, though, she's quick to alert to doorbells. (A Cocker Spaniel holds the world record for the most persistent barking: 907 times in ten minutes.) With her soulful expression, the Cocker is popular in arts and entertainment too, most famously in Disney's enduring 1955 animated classic, *Lady and the Tramp*.

To give an English Cocker Spaniel a home, search online for nearby rescues.

## [Healthy Dog]

### Essential Fatty Acids For Dogs

Good fats and oils are vital to a healthy balanced diet for your dog. Not eating enough good fats is as big a problem as consuming too much. Aim for a fat percentage of 12 to 16 percent – even for dogs that need to lose weight (unless otherwise advised by your vet). Why? Good fats, known as essential fatty acids, are necessary for normal development and function of body cells, nerves, muscles, and tissues. They help the body absorb fat-soluble vitamins like A, D, E, and K. Excessively low fat levels, by contrast, can result in dry skin, dull coat, an impaired immune system, even heart disease.

Check out the ingredient list of your dog's food for good sources of essential fats. For example fish, chicken or beef fat, flaxseed oil, canola oil, etc. For thorough information about all dog food and nutrition, check out *The Whole Dog Journal* ([whole-dog-journal.com](http://whole-dog-journal.com)).



# [Dogs in Action]

## 4 Ways To Keep Your Senior Dog Healthy



**Regular vet check-ins.** This is the gospel throughout your dog's life, but extra important in those golden years. Twice-annual examination is a good rule of thumb; more for dogs with known health issues. Between visits, look out for changes in your dog's appetite, irritability level, or trouble hearing or seeing.

**Injury prevention.** Provide ramps and stairs to give your dog easy access to furniture and beds. Consider carpeting slippery floors and stairs to give old paws solid footing.

**Age-appropriate diet.** Dietary needs change with age. Some dogs gain weight; others can't hold on to theirs. Consult your vet about adjusting your dog's diet for optimal health.

**Sleep therapy.** Consider investing in an orthopedic dog bed especially for seniors. Memory foam helps to cushion aging joints – some beds even have heat and vibration functions.



## [Welcome to the Team!]

### Meredith Haynes, BSc

Meredith began training dogs at 8 years of age in 4-H and always knew animals would be a big part of her life. After applying her undergraduate psychology training to assisting families experiencing domestic violence, her heart strings pulled her towards a career in helping dogs with behavior problems. For the last six years, she has been employed at Dog Gone Happy daycare, where she developed a special interest in canine group dynamics. She is a CCPDT certified dog trainer and is currently completing a Master's degree in Animal Behavior Counseling. Meredith is particularly interested in achieving peace and harmony in multiple-dog households, and helping dogs become less reactive on walks.

She is passionate about helping dogs gain positive social skills through gentle guidance and changing their environment to foster their success.

**Julia Provonchee**, MSc, is an Animal Behavior College certified dog trainer, and specializes in working with dog reactivity and dog bite prevention in the Portland area.

**Karolin Klinck** is currently completing studies at the Academy for Dog Trainers, and offers private and group training on the Oregon Coast. She specializes in rehabilitating reactive and fearful dogs.

**Mary Williams**, MA, is City Dog Country Dog's Office Manager. She is passionate about databases and Office Dog, Suzi.

## [Our Services]

We provide a range of services to suit the needs of dogs and their families: **Board & Train**, **Day Training**, or **Vacation Retreat Packages** jump start your dog's education and lift some of the training burden off your shoulders. **Private behavior consultations** bring an experienced trainer to your home to solve behavior problems. We offer practical help, friendly and efficient support – and new options just when think you have nothing left to try! All our services reflect our core philosophy: training can be a positive experience for dogs and people!



## [Our Amazing Team]

**Caroline Spark**, PhD, owns and operates City Dog Country Dog. She has a background in counseling and adult education, and multiple certifications in dog training and behavior consulting. Her special interests include canine psychology, behavior modification, and outdoor adventure events for dogs and people.

**Heather Ohmart**, BA, is a CCPDT certified dog trainer who runs our City Board & Train program, and specializes in raising and training puppies to be great family companions, therapy dogs, and service dogs.

# City Dog Country Dog

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City: (503) 740-4886 • Portland  
Country: (541) 547-3793 • Yachats  
info@CityDogCountryDogTraining.com

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