



The Fire Hydrant

Welcome to the MAY 2011 issue of The Fire Hydrant, brought to you by Mutts With Manners! We will help you have a more pawitive relationship with your dog, based on mutual trust and respect.

Greetings fellow dog lovers! Make sure to read the newsletter this month, which comes to you exclusively on our website. Please check back soon for past issues. This month, the Fire Hydrant is full of ways to get involved and help our local humane society (plus exciting news for them), shelter dog of the month, training tip of the month (“Watch Me”), and a new dog walker in town along with the suggested reading of the month! We have a new referral program! If you reFUR us to a friend, and they become a client in any way, you will get a free day of socialization with Mutts With Manners. So make sure whoever you reFUR to us informs us that you were how they found out about Mutts With Manners. Thank you all for all of your support and keeping the comments coming on the newsletter. Please let us know how you are enjoying this publication, and things you might like to see featured. What has your favorite part been? What would you like to learn more about? Send all topics to trelle@muttswithmanners.com and if you would like to unsubscribe send a reply to heather@muttswithmanners.com.

DATES TO REMEMBER

10 June 2011 (Friday)

Furry Fitness Challenge

Camp Bow Wow

Check Camp Bow Wow’s website for more information on this fun way to get back in shape with your dog. Camp Bow Wow is making this a family affair, so get your whole family involved and at the official weigh in! There will be a human and canine health expert to help answer questions about staying fit the safe way this summer. For more information visit www.campbowwowusa.com/kemah or call them at (281) 334-2267.

19 and 26 June (Sunday)- Galveston

6-7pm Socialization

7-8pm Trick class

Come join Mutts With Manners in our first Trick class, where we will work with you and your dog to get you both on your way to doing fun tricks that will surely impress all of your visitors and challenge you and your dog. We will also continue socialization during this short class. Please be sure to RSVP for

these socializations so we know to be there. Space is limited in the two week Trick class so call or email for more information. Cost for the trick class is \$75; cost for socialization is \$10 a class.

10 July 2011 (Sunday)- Galveston

5-6pm Basic Obedience

6-7pm Socialization

7-8pm Intermediate Obedience/Canine Good Citizen/Pet Therapy

Come and join us for our Basic Obedience class, Socialization, or Intermediate class. In this Intermediate class, it will be doubling as a Canine Good Citizen and Pet Therapy class. So, if you have a dog that would be perfect for visiting people in the nursing homes and/or children at the hospitals or would just like to expand on the basics, sign your dog up for this class. Some pre requisites would be sit, down, and some amount of a stay. We can work on getting these behaviors stronger, but having some basic knowledge is important.

21 August 2011 (Sunday)- Galveston

6-7pm Socialization (please RSVP for this one)

7-8pm Trick class (1:2)

28 August 2011 (Sunday)- Galveston

5-6pm Basic Obedience

6-7pm Socialization

7-8pm Trick class (2:2)

SHELTER DOG OF THE MONTH

Roscoe is a fun loving, exuberant lab mix. He is a beautiful and smart boy with a heart ready for his forever home. Mutts With Manners has worked with him several times and he is a very fast learner and yearns for the consistency a home environment would give him. He already knows how to sit, lay down, and we are working on "off" and walking nicely on a leash, which Premiers' Easy Walk Harness helps tremendously with! Roscoe is about 1.5 years old and would love to have an energetic human companion to live the rest of his life with. Roscoe is dog friendly, so if you have a dog you need to be tired out, Roscoe could be a perfect fit.

Roscoe is from the Galveston Island Humane Society, but is being fostered at Camp Bow Wow in Kemah. If you or anyone you know is looking for a companion, call Camp Bow Wow or just stop by and meet Roscoe! He is a sweet boy always with a smile on his face!

If you have training questions about Roscoe, Trelle would be more than happy to meet you there and demonstrate his intelligence.

Roscoe also comes with 2 free hours of private training if you can travel to Galveston at our location on 61st street. So if you or anyone you know adopts him then contact Trelle Dandridge at (281) 685-7601 or trelle@muttswithmanners.com to cash in on you and Roscoe's free training.



Take a moment to visit our partners: Galveston Island Humane Society www.galvestonhumane.org (409) 740-1919 and Camp Bow Wow www.campbowwow.com/kemah (281) 334-2267.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that fostering can be an extremely rewarding experience for you and your family? Fostering allows a dog or puppy from a shelter or rescue to live in a home environment and get some of those house training and potty training skills under their belt before they go to their forever homes. This increases their adoptability significantly! There are many ways to foster. You can apply to become a foster family through any of our local rescue groups, from Labradors to German Shepherds. There are also a lot of dogs to foster or adopt right here on the island at The Galveston Island Humane Society. If you ever find yourself with a spot open in your heart and home to help a dog or puppy get the socialization and obedience desperately needed, do not hesitate to call Mutts With Manners. We can point you in the right direction and can even help you with the training side of things.

One of the great things about fostering at Galveston Island Humane Society is that it can be very flexible. You can do it over the weekends or during the week. Whenever you have time.

Maybe your home is too small, or already full, but you still would like to help? What about volunteering, or donations? There are several dogs at the shelter right now who would be wonderful candidates for adoption, except they have heartworms. If they could raise enough money to get the treatment done now, the dogs would be adopted a lot quicker.

Did You Know, Extra

Speaking of Galveston Island Humane Society, did you know they made it into the top 50 shelters in America to win \$100,000 dollars? We are trying to raise awareness for the shelter, everything they are doing, and why people should consider adopting from a shelter rather than elsewhere. Go to their website (www.galvestonhumane.org) and find out what the next steps to win the challenge are, and friend them on Facebook. Look up “galvestonislandhumanesociety” and become a fan today! This is very exciting for our small little shelter, and we want to support them in our community!

TRAINING TIP OF THE MONTH

Watch Me

By Trelle Dandridge

Mutts With Manners

www.muttswithmanners.com

“Watch me” can be a very powerful behavior for you and your dog to know.

Picture this, you are walking and you are having a nice leisurely walk with your pup. The world is perfect and alright with you and your dog’s realm... then, off in the distance... you see it. It always gets your dog worked up, lunging, barking and at the very least whining their heads off and acting like a basket case. Your perfect world comes crashing down, so much for a relaxing walk.

No matter if this “it” in the distance was an irresistible doggy friend, a cat, or a neighborhood kid that teases your dog relentlessly and your dog loathes, what is going happening on your side of the leash? You see the “it” and your mind races and anticipates what is about to happen, your heart starts pounding, the leash tightens up around your hand and inadvertently your dog’s neck, your palms get sweaty, and before you can say “leave it”, “don’t”, or even “no” your dog has spotted the “it” in the distance and immediately starts syncing with your tense energy.

What if we could practice a skill that you and your dog could use and could call on to be there, with and without the “it”, with and without food, and with and without your unstable energy you are undoubtedly transmitting down the leash to your dog?

“Watch me” can be that behavior. Below is a training plan for you and your dog to master and use in ANY situation. It is especially helpful for the leash reactive dog, and can become an automatic behavior your dog elicits when the cue is presented...the other dog, or the “it”. The cue goes from your hand signal or verbal cue to the “it”. Very cool when it starts to happen. With the steps below, make sure you start in a quiet place in your house you and your dog are used to being calm and relaxed in. Once you and your dog have mastered “watch me” here, start training the behavior in a more distracting environment, such as in your house with the kids reading in the room, then the kids playing quietly, then in the kitchen. At this point, start varying the places and levels of distraction in the house. Next, move the behavior to the backyard when dogs usually aren’t barking through the fence at you guys. There could be some regression here, just work on getting your “watch me” solid here without distractions. Then with your kids there, then with them playing quietly, then with the neighbor’s dog in the distance, etc. Next level of difficulty might be the front yard, then a play ground or the vet clinic. When you start places like this, try to do it on slow days and when all children are at school. Again, make sure the level of difficulty is raised slowly to set up total success. Another point to make is don’t use “watch me” on a walk until you have it down solid in all other distracting environments. You may even ask friends to go for walks so you can “accidentally encounter” them on a walk. Starting with dogs your canine is already friendly with can help with progressing through levels of difficulty.

Go slow, be patient and reward, reward, reward in the beginning. And the first time you use this and your dog pulls it off, JACKPOT him and sing a song and dance a dance for him. If your dog prefers to tug or squeak a toy, give them that.

1. (In a quiet environment first), have your dog sit and with a treat in your hand (holding it in the hand puppet shape) say “watch me” and move your hand from your dog's nose (making sure he can smell the food in your hand, but can't get to it) and bring the hand (in the same hand puppet position) to your cheek bone. After a half of a second release your dog from the “stay” (essentially it is a “watch-stay”) with your release word you use for a sit-stay or a down-stay. If you don't have a release word, contact Mutts With Manners and we can help you with that.

*Tips to remember with this step:

-Do not move your hand from your cheek bone until AFTER you give your release word.

-When finding a “treat” for your dog, make sure it is something YOUR dog prefers and not something you prefer for your dog. It has to be just as exciting at the dog park or on a walk in a new place as it is in your living room, so experiment and remember to subtract from your dog's normal diet if they have weight issues.

-Make sure you use the same hand and same movement when training this behavior. For example, if you walk your dog on your left, you may consider using your right hand for the cue since your left hand will be holding onto the leash.

2. Repeat the movement above saying “watch me” and increase a half second increment.

Once you get to 2 seconds, see if you can get your dog to make eye contact with you. If you need to stay interesting to your dog and keep him from looking away, you can wiggle a couple of your fingers on the hand by your cheekbone (dogs are attracted to movement), cock your head to the side a little, smile, open mouth, etc to keep your dog's attention. For the half to one and half second you can say “gooooood dog” in a soft, calm manner to let them know what they are doing is what you want.

*Remember to release your dog, and then give them the treat.

-Resist the urge to repeat yourself. Only say “watch me” one time. If you are losing your dog's attention, do something else for a while (Basic Obedience drills) then come back to it and don't ask for a “watch me” for as long. If you were asking for half of a second, just say “watch me” and move your hand from your dog's nose to your cheek bone, release them immediately and give them the reward.

-If your dog won't look at your eyes and just focuses on your cheek bone, this is okay also. It is preferable for them to look at your eyes, but for some dogs this is very uncomfortable. Using a clicker (if your dog is clicker trained) is very effective in getting eye contact.

3. Repeat the steps above until you get to 3-5 seconds.

Once you get to 3-5 seconds (no more for a “watch me”) start adding minor distractions.

For every distraction you add, go back a few seconds in the watch-stay and slowly build your time back up. Regression is normal and will happen when changing the location or level of distractions. There are many ways to train this skill, so if you are having a hard time, give us a call and we would be more than happy to help and pull out other tools in our toolbox!

When you start using this skill on the road with the dreadful “it”, make sure you are setting your dog up for success. Only ask for it when you are sure your dog will be successful (for example, when the “it” is 20 ft away your dog is fine, but when it gets 10 feet away he is sure to start dragging you after the “it”) and remember to release them a few seconds before you know they will break. Rejoice with your dog and do a quick U-turn to race off together the opposite direction and celebrate. Next time, you might ask a bit more of your dog.

PARTNERS CORNER

Fairy Tale Pet Sitting
Heather Kylan
(409) 682-4308
heather@ftpetservice.com

There is a new dog walker in town and Mutts With Manners has caught wind of her. She does it all! Walks the dogs, takes care of them while you are out of town, taxi’s them to the vet appointments if you end up not able to do it, potty breaks, and she even takes care of your fish including their light cycles!

Her experience ranges from vet tech to shelter work, but what really caught our attention is that Heather, the owner of Fairy Tale, has some training experience. So, when you take one of our classes, and work hard on leash walking and other behaviors, you can rest assured that Heather has the know how to follow through with the training when you aren’t there. That is peace of mind! As trainers, we can appreciate that! We have gotten a lot of positive feedback from clients who are already using her. Give her a call today to book your free consultation!

WHALE DONE!

We give a huge Whale Done! to Tammy for successfully managing her pack of 12 (or is it 13 now?). You amaze us Tammy...keep up the excellent job!



SUGGESTED READING OF THE MONTH

Mine by Jean Donaldson

This book is a very comprehensive guide to reducing all forms of guarding behavior. No matter how mild or extreme, whether it is location guarding, people guarding or just guarding the food dish, Jean has broken this training down into very small, easily attainable steps where all animals (people and dogs) can find success. It is a short, easy to read book that is a resource (guard it with your life!) to the person who finds themselves with a resource guarding dog. You can find it at Amazon.com for ~\$10.

Until next month, keep it pawsitive!

Trelle and Heather

www.muttswithmanners.com