

K C DOG SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



November / December 2011

2011 is winding down, and K C Dog School is in the final four weeks of training for the year. Looking back, it has been an interesting year.

Further on in this newsletter I would like to tell you about three cases that occurred this year which I found most interesting.

The regular handlers might have noticed that K C Dog School didn't have a Winter drive this year. For the past few years, during the winter month of July, I have asked for donations of dog food, blankets and jackets which I have then distributed to different animal charities.

This year, I had an idea in the back of my mind for something different. Other people involved with dogs are doing their shoebox drive which will go to animal charities, so my idea is to do something for the residents of Forest Farm. They see us every Saturday and Tuesday during the year and I would like to give a little happiness to them from K C Dog School handlers and dogs, this year. You will read about this also further down.

So, with that, it is time to say - thank you for coming to train at K C Dog School, we have loved having you with us.

All the trainers and helpers and myself, wish you a very Happy Christmas, Happy Hannukah, and Happy Holidays. Please drive safely if you are going away, and make sure your dogs/pets are in kennels or in safe hands.

We look forward to seeing those handlers and dogs that will be returning to train in 2012.

CLOSING DATES FOR 2011

The final training days for 2011 are:

Saturday 26th November

Tuesday 29th November

I will send out the starting dates in the January newsletter when I have finalised them with the school calendar.

FOREST FARM CHRISTMAS PARTY

Forest Farm will be holding their annual Christmas party on Saturday 26th November.

I thought that it would be nice if this year, we, the handlers of K C Dog School, gave a small present to each resident of Forest Farm.

I approached Charlotte, the manager of FF and she thought that it would be a lovely idea, so this is what I suggest:

I would like to give each resident a little present and some sweets wrapped in Christmas paper. We have two dogs that do carting so they could wear something Christmassy and have the presents in their cart. They would go around giving out the presents to each resident.

Charlotte said that the residents LOVE toiletries - apparently when they do go shopping they always come back with toiletries!

I would like to have a facecloth and a nice bar of soap, plus some sweets in every present.

This is a big undertaking as there are:

Males - 60

Females - 52

SO, I AM APPEALING TO ASK YOU TO DONATE:-

1 x facecloth

1 x bar of soap (a nice brand like Palmolive or Lux)

1 x packet of sweets

Charlotte has said - NO MARSHMALLOWS

PLEASE, as they are too messy for the residents.

(When I went shopping today I bought a facecloth for R12,99; and a bar of Palmolive soap for R6,99. A packet of mixed sweets could bring it up to R25 to R30.)

If you are willing to take part in this Christmas presents for FF residents, please could you add these items to your trolley the next time you go shopping. I would like you to bring them as soon as possible to training. The cut off date for collecting them is Saturday 19th November and Tuesday 23rd November. This will give me time to see if there are enough gifts, and to buy more if necessary and then wrap them before the Saturday party.

I look forward to your kindness.

CASE 1

Earlier this year, I had a dog in a class that didn't like the other owner's and their dogs anywhere near her. She didn't show open aggression, but was very sneaky with her nips. Whenever she could, she would give a nip to the handler, particularly when she was going to lie on her blanket. It was nothing to break skin, but a genuine nip that was sore.

This dog was handled by a young boy, and he wasn't aware of what was happening (and the parent sitting watching also didn't notice this). One Saturday, I wanted to use a dog to demonstrate something and took this dog. She immediately, started nipping at me and showing more open aggression. I stood still and waited whilst she twirled around trying to nip me more. I gave a quick tug on the lead, and of course gave my UH UH growl and she then stopped and calmed down. Afterwards, I explained to the parent what had happened and that I wouldn't let a dog nip me without some consequences. At no time did I hit this dog, or hurt it. The dog twirled around on his own trying to nip me and I just gave a tug and growl. Sadly, the parent, child and dog never returned to complete the course.

CASE 2

A couple of months after this incident, a puppy arrived at my puppy kindergarten class - another case of nervous aggression. The minute she walked in, she flew at the other puppies, growling and trying to jump on top of them. I took this puppy and gave a quick tug and did the UH UH growl and put the puppy in a calm position. For the rest of the lesson she was quiet, and didn't attempt to look or go near another puppy. I explained the situation to the family, and they accepted what I had done.

They came back the following week and once again the puppy was quiet and didn't make contact with any of the other puppies. On lesson 4 we had a break through. During play, she went up to another puppy, gave a play bow and they suddenly started playing together. She then continued to play nicely with the other puppies. From that day, she now plays with all the other dogs on the "play field" at "big school".

The difference here was the acceptance of the owners of the second dog that there was a problem and they were prepared to sort it out. I'm sure that the owner's of the first dog were not happy with my tug and growl and didn't return for that reason.

All dogs need to understand the correct way to behave in, and away from their home. The second dog is a happy dog, but could have been a nervous aggressive dog for the rest of her life. Thank you to the owners for believing in what I do.

CASE 3

A handler arrived one Saturday to see if he would like to train with us. He had not been happy with another training school so came to K C Dog School. I needed to assess what the dog knew, so that I would be able to put them into the correct class level. As I was giving a class, I asked one of my assistants to take him aside and see what the dog could do. I kept an eye on him, and noticed that he was not being very co-operative. After the assessment I got a very firm "I did not come to your training to be with this person, I came to train with you!" I was not happy with his treatment of my assistant, but put him a one of my classes and he came for the next weeks going up to lesson 8.

Like I usually do, I discussed the intermediate course with the class and was greeted with "why can't you take the class." I explained that I can't take every single class on a Saturday, it is just not possible! The following Saturday, he arrived to do the first lesson of the intermediate course and I could see by his body language that his whole attitude was going to be confrontational. He was not willing to be open to new information or ways of training. I kept my eye on the class and he refused to do anything that Staci asked, and kept saying "I don't do that." He gave snide remarks to the handlers next to him, rolled his eyes and mimicked her all the time. Staci was extremely polite and went out of her way to try everything possible to appease him, but eventually, he said "I'm not enjoying this" and marched off the field. He stood around near the entrance as I'm sure he thought that I would go after him, but I didn't, firstly, because I wouldn't leave my class, and secondly, as I was appalled by his behaviour.

I started K C Dog School in 1996 all on my own, and over the years have built it to what it is today. There is no way, that I can do everything, and so I have trained assistants to help me. All these assistants have themselves trained a dog at K C Dog School and then shown an interest in helping and training. I am extremely grateful for all their help over the years. So, I will not tolerate anyone being disrespectful to my assistants. In many cases it is because of their age, as well as being female.

Staci is my senior assistant trainer who takes charge when I am not around (and can quote me verbatim!) Carri and Margie do my secretarial work and are there to give private lessons to people who arrive late, miss a class, have a nervous dog that needs special encouragement and generally to help where necessary.

THANK YOU Staci, Carri and Margie for all that you do for K C Dog School. I really appreciate it.

THUNDERSHIRTS

Thundershirts have been successful in helping:
Any noise anxiety
Separation anxiety
Barking problems
Car and travel anxiety
Reactivity
General fearfulness
Excitability

I received this email after the first storm hit Gauteng:
“Dear Kathy,

Last night was a great try for the Thundershirt and it was miraculous. When we first got the shirt, we tried it on Skye and praised him for wearing it etc but until last night we hadn't had a storm during which to try it.

As the thunder and lightning raged around at about 2am, Skye jumped on and off our bed, panting, worried, not sure whether to snuggle or not - a Huge Nuisance. After about half an hour of this, trying to calm him etc we got up, got out the Thundershirt and put it on him. Wow! Immediately, and I mean immediately, he lay down beside the bed (on the non-window side!) and went to sleep absolutely quietly, no hard breathing or any sign of anxiety. Once the storm had abated, he went back to his own bed and was perfectly happy until morning when we removed the shirt.

Thanks so much for alerting us to this clothing item for Skye, it will make summer very much more pleasant for us who love storms and the drama, and we can have a happy dog too.”

I keep stock if anyone wants to get one. Just contact me: kcdogs@global.co.za

CREATION

On the first day of creation, God created the dog
On the second day, God created man to serve the dog
On the third day, God created all the animals of the earth to serve as potential food for the dog
On the fourth day, God created honest toil so that man could labour for the good of the dog
On the fifth day, God created the tennis ball so that the dog might or might not retrieve it
On the sixth day, God created veterinary science to keep the dog healthy and the man broke
On the seventh day, God tried to rest, but he had to walk the dog.

KNOW YOUR PLACE

“Last night I was sitting on the sofa watching TV when I heard my wife's voice from the kitchen asking “What would you like for dinner, my darling, chicken, beef or lamb?”
I said: “Thank you, I'll have chicken.”
She replied:” You're having soup, I was talking to the dog.”

CRUSADER POLICES DOG POO CAPITAL

PRAGUE: A new superhero has emerged in the Czech Republic - to wage war on dog owners who don't clear up their pet's mess.

The caped crusader - complete with tights, helmet and a mask to protect his secret identity - patrols the parks of Prague.

The self-styled superhero - who also soaks inconsiderate smokers with buckets of water - was spurred into action after the city was dubbed the dog poo capital of Europe.

“I am SuperVaclav, and I have decided to take action against the indifference and hypocrisy in society,” he said on his website.

One video for his campaign - posted on YouTube and his own website - shows him snatching up a handful of dog poo from the ground and pelting the dog's owner with it.

GOODBYE

At the end of training this year, we say goodbye to Carri as she moves forward in her career as a Chiropractor.

I would like to thank her for all the many Saturdays that she has worked at K C Dog School.

Everyone at K C Dogs School wish her good luck as she moves forward as a doctor.

2012

I have some new plans for next year which I am finalising, and look forward to telling you in the January newsletter.

That brings me to the end of the November / December newsletter. Take care of you, your family and animals over the holiday season.

See you in 2012.

Regards

Kathy