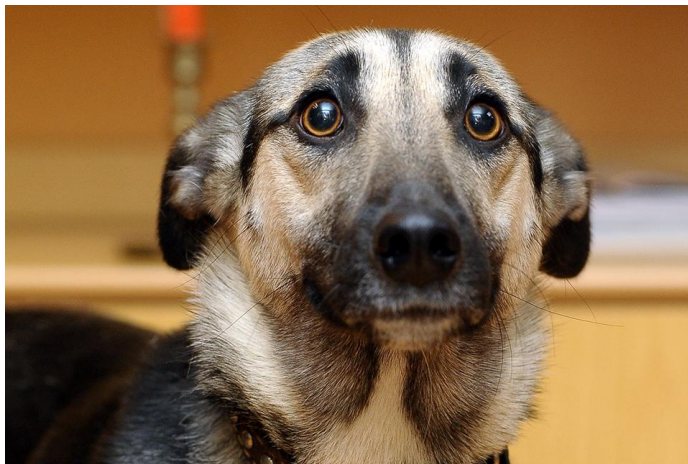




Wags and Purrs Comfort Corner

The Dangers of Choosing an Uneducated Trainer



We say it all the time - pets are family! As such, we want them in our lives as much as possible and in some situations this means they must behave a certain way for their safety and the safety of others. There is nothing wrong with wanting your pet to be trained. The issue is the method of training used!

Comfort at Home Pet Services uses positive reinforcement, force free, modern, scientific based training. Positive reinforcement means rewarding a pet for good behavior with praise, treats, pets or something the dog highly values. This teaches the pet what is expected of them, and that by giving this action, they will receive something they value. It also allows dogs to make their own decisions.

However, not all trainers use this method of training. Some trainers use aversive training techniques, either by choice or lack of knowledge.

Aversive training, or positive punishment, is just what it says - punishment. Aversive training methods include,

Health Tip for the Season

The use of prong and choke collars can cause permanent and long lasting damage to the thyroid, trachea and esophagus of our pets. If the pet pulls hard enough or is jerked back with enough force, it can even cause trachea collapse which can be potentially life threatening to your pet.

Training Tip for the Season

Comfort at Home Pet Services uses modern, scientific based, positive reinforcement training methods. These methods help pets to better understand what is expected of them rather than aversive methods which cause pets to be harmed for doing something they don't know they did wrong.

prong, shock and choke collars, dominance rolls (alpha roll), withholding food as punishment, rubbing a pet's face into their urine or feces or striking a pet. These types of methods cause both physical and mental pain to the pet and leaves a pet confused, fearful and stressed. An owner also risks breaking the trust bond they have built with their pet.

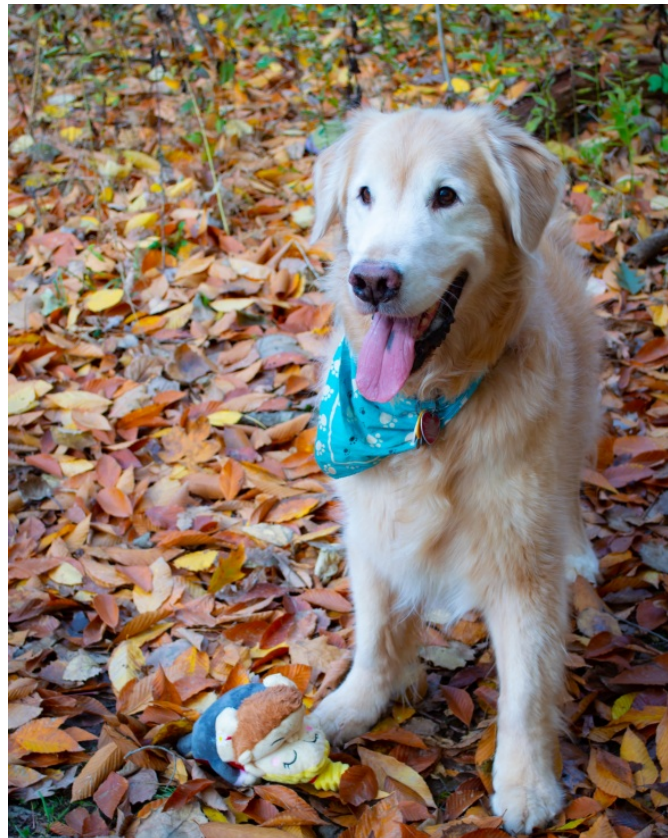
An uneducated trainer who is utilizing these types of methods can cause physical, mental and emotional harm to your pet! A pet who has been trained with choke or prong collars may start to associate walks with pain and become aggressive. This could lead a pet to become fearful and possibly even try to bite when someone attempts to put a collar on them. This puts family, friends and even your pet sitter at risk!

Our pets deserve better than punishment and pain! When considering training for your pet, ask questions and make sure to learn what types of training methods your trainer uses! An educated trainer will be more than happy to answer your questions, explain their methods and how they work and how they are communicating with your pet. Whereas an uneducated trainer won't tell you how to correct the behavior without the use of pain or explain how causing pain will fix the behavior.

Pet Sitter Tip for the Season

The use of aversive training methods can cause behavioral, fear and aggression issues in pets. If your dog has ever been trained with a prong or choke collar, please notify your Professional Pet Care Specialist so we can make sure it's safe for us to walk and care for your pet.

In Memory



Cheerio

Cheerio was born December 19 2007 and crossed the rainbow bridge

unexpectedly on Wednesday, December 22, 2021.

Cheerio enjoyed a full life of leisure and service to the community. As a therapy dog, AKC Companion Dog, Advanced Canine Good Citizen and Reading Education Assistance Dog, Cheerio enjoyed spending time with the community and supporting others in their time of need. Cheerio was even chosen to visit Franklin Regional High School in Pennsylvania after the tragic stabbing that occurred at the school.

Cheerio is survived by his fur parents, Jen and Jim, and fur siblings, Rugby, Tinsley and Hudson. Cheerio was preceded in death by his fur sister Jasmine (2008-2019), who no doubt was waiting for him at the Rainbow Bridge gate upon his arrival.

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AT THE LIBRARY

Man's best friend helps put young readers at ease in new program

BY SAVANNAH BARNES
STAFF INTERN

Bailey, Cheerio, Rusty and Joy sit patiently as more than a dozen children rush into the room carrying their favorite books.

As the children enter the room, they are faced with a tough decision: Which one to share story-time with? But it only takes only a few seconds for the room to fill up with smiles, laughter and wagging tails, as the children team up with friends and family to read to one of the four dogs. There is a look of contentment on the children's faces as they turn the pages, recite familiar words and sound out new ones.

That's the reaction that program organizers were hoping for when they organized the Dogs and



PHOTO/LILLIAN DEDEMONE

JULIET MENDIK, 6, of Claridge, reads her favorite book to Cheerio, a 4-year-old golden retriever, at Penn Area Library last week. Cheerio and his owner, Jen Sybol of Penn Hills, are part of the reading program.

Story time

The sessions are held every third Wednesday of the month at 4 p.m. For details, call Penn Area Library at 724-744-4114.

Tales program at Penn Area Library.

Intended to encourage children to read aloud in a comfortable setting without fear of judgment, the monthly program has children choose a book and then a dog to read to.

Bailey, Cheerio, Rusty and Joy are therapy dogs that travel to schools and nursing homes in the area. Last week, each dog sat patiently in the library while children read to them and showed them the pictures in the books. As the youngsters sounded out words, the dogs

wagged their tails.

Vickie Kasa, owner of Bailey, said she thinks being around the dogs comforts the children. Kasa and the other dog owners talked to the children about their dogs and helped to make the kids feel comfortable as they read.

The parents of the children who attended were excited about the opportunity. Vanessa Whipkey, mother of Joseph and Carena, said that the program is "encouraging to them." "It gets them excited and out of the house — something different."

Jan Ruschak and Pat Cappeta created the Dogs and Tales program.

Ruschak, who owns a therapy dog, was inspired by her own experiences to bring a program like this

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

January Birthdays



These pets will be celebrating a birthday in the month of January!

Siena Degore
Gus Gettelman
Dottie Gettelman
Lucy Kirby
Tucker Griffith
Lily Demello

Artica Burroughs
Louie Howard
Basil Fitchwell
Butterfly Fitchwell
Livie Iredale
Max Gardonis
Phoebe Smith
Bailey Barsevich
Callie Botts
Bella Favocci
Bailey Flynn
Neiko Flynn
Truman Weber
Scout Botts
Willie G Borrasso
Dunkin Budilovsky

Happy Birthday, all! Paw-ty hard!

Healthy Homemade Treats for the Season

Ginger Snaps Dog Treats

Ingredients

- 4 cups whole wheat flour
- 1/4 cup freshly shredded ginger
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup molasses
- 1/4 cup olive oil



Directions

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

In a large bowl, combine flour, ginger, cinnamon and honey. Stir until combined.

Add water, olive oil and molasses. Knead dough until stiff.

Roll out on a floured surface to 1/4 inch thickness. Cut with cookie cutter and place on non-stick cookie sheets.

Bake for 20-25 minutes

Cheese Cookies for Cats

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup cheddar cheese
- 5 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup plain yogurt
- 3/4 cup white flour
- 1/4 cup cornmeal



Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

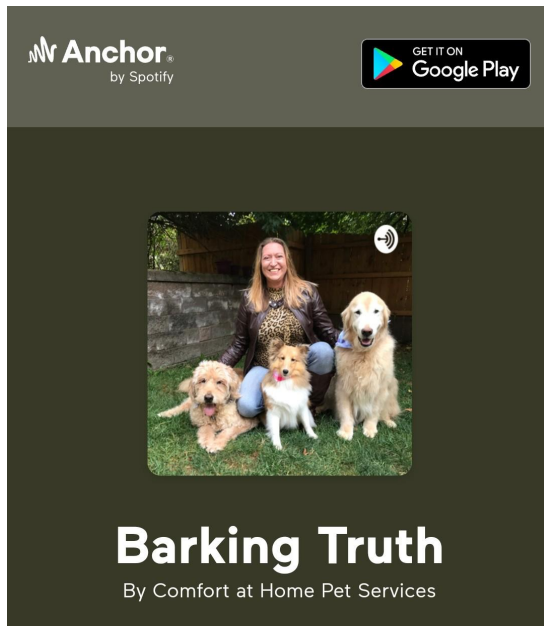
Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Add a small amount of water as needed to form dough.

Knead into a ball. Roll to ¼ inch.

Cut into small cookies using a small cutter or just cut into small squares.

Bake for 25 minutes on greased baking sheet.

Barking Truth



Clients, followers and friends have voiced their appreciation of our educational blogs and monthly newsletters and have urged us to release a pet care podcast. We are excited to announce that we have answered the call with Barking Truth, a podcast exposing the truth in the pet industry to keep all pets safe, healthy and well.

We will be releasing a new podcast every Wednesday and hope you can tune in and support pets everywhere by uncovering the truth of pet care.

Be sure to follow us on Anchor, Spotify or your favorite podcast service.



Wags and Purrs Comfort Corner strives to provide educational, informative and fun content to our readers! We love hearing your feedback on our newsletters and blogs and want to know what you, dear reader, would like to see in future newsletters and blogs. Are there topics you are interested in that we haven't covered or you would like more specific information? Please feel free to let us know. We'd love to hear from you!

Please email suggestions

to Jen@comforhomepetservices.com

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