

MARCH – Hello, GND OC Dog Training Center!

WILLOW GROVE CLASS SCHEDULE

	9 am	10 am	11 am	12 pm
Mon.				
Tues		Building rented	Rally	Run Thurs
Wed		Beginner	Intermed. I	CGC/ Therapy
Thur		Utility	Open	Run Thrus
Fri				
Sat	Beginner	Intermed. I	Intermed. II	Advanced

	7 pm	8 pm	9 pm
Mon.	Puppy	CGC/ Therapy	
Tues	Beginner	Intermed. I	Rally
Wed	Open	Utility	Run Thrus
Thur	Beginner	Novice	
Fri			

BRAGS

Andy and her Chesapeake Bay Retriever, Rio, earned their Rally Excellent title in a weekend in Delaware on Mar. 12 and 13th. Andy said about their trials on Sunday: *“Rio turned in another nice performance to earn an 88 and her rally excellent title. Praise after each station and she was very happy and upbeat. I hope this will improve our work as a team and build confidence.”* Great job, Andy and Rio!! I think a lot of handlers are seeing the value of working in Rally the same way!

Andy also saw there is a Rally Team competition – maybe we should talk about getting a team together?

KEEP TRAINING, AND SEND ME YOUR BRAGS!!

FOOD AS LURES VS. REWARDS

Connie Cleveland had a great article about using food in training, and has given me permission to reprint it for our newsletter.



Chasing Food

Hi there-

I'm hoping to start a fun and informative discussion about the food we use in training. I often hear people complain that “he only does it for the food.” Many of us have come to believe that we simply cannot train without food.

Luring Explained

A lure can be anything that has the power to attract, tempt, or entice your dog to perform a behavior. It is common for us to begin by luring our dog into the positions we desire (e.g., Sit, Down, Front, and Heel). We use food as a lure when we teach our dog a recall or to move from front into a finish position.

Chasing Food

Luring teaches a dog how to move his body to perform behaviors. If luring continues for too long, our dogs learn to *chase the food in direct pursuit of the reward* rather than responding to our command in order to earn a treat. Chasing the food quickly becomes the dog's objective.

Whenever you use food in training, ask yourself whether your dog truly understands that performing the desired behavior is what is causing you to deliver the treat. The longer you use a lure in your training, the harder it will be to stop.

Rewarding Behavior

Your goal should be for the food to become the reward that comes after a behavior is

performed; food should not entice your dog to do the behavior. (*Bold is my emphasis...Ed.*)

For example, if you hold a treat above your puppy's nose and lure him into a sit, praise him and then deliver the treat, it will appear as if he is learning to sit for a reward. However, if you lure your puppy to sit too many times or over for too long of a period, he may believe that he is being rewarded for chasing the food.

If you tell your puppy to sit, and he responds by promptly sitting, your command and his performance precedes your praise and delivery of the food. You will have rewarded what he did rather than luring him into the behavior or allowing him to chase the food.

As quickly as possible, all of the treats you give to your dog must become rewards.

I start to teach all dogs to come when called by putting them on a long line and taking them for a walk. When the dog becomes distracted, I call the dog, tug on the long line, praise the dog for coming, and then reward with a treat. Again, the reward comes after the behavior has been performed.

Luring vs. Rewarding

Are you unsure whether you are luring or rewarding?

Consider the times that your dog must move away from the treat to earn it. If you consistently feed your puppy in a crate, you have seen him run for the crate as soon as you pick up his bowl. This is a good example of moving away from a treat to earn it. Your puppy turns his back on what he wants, and runs to his crate knowing that his behavior will earn him the reward. This is an important concept and is more complex than luring. Other good examples of moving away from a treat to earn a treat would be the broad jump and go-outs.

When I teach directed jumping, I set up two jumps and block the space between them with a gate. Such a set up provides the dog with two options, he can jump to the right, and he can jump to the left. In either case, he cannot come straight to me to earn his reward. He must get up from a sit, move toward the jump, take the jump, and come to me for his reward.

Alternatively, have observed handlers throw a treat so that the dog has to get up from a sit and chase

it. I have seen this technique used on the broad jump; handlers throwing a treat over the jump for the dog to chase and then eat when he lands on the other side. These techniques bypass the opportunity to teach a dog how to move away from what he wants to get what he wants. Instead, the dog just gets to chase food. The food assumes the power of a lure and ceases to be a reward.

The next time you train, think about how you are using every treat you deliver to your dog. Make a list of each instance and note the behavior your dog performed to earn the treat.

Did he earn it for following the lure?

Was the treat in your hand while you were heeling?

Were you holding the treat in both hands as you lured him into a front?

Were you holding it over his head as guided him into a finish?

Did he move away from the treat before he earned it?

You gave a drop signal and he dropped to the ground.

You sent him to go-out and then delivered a treat after he got there.

Did you use it as a reward?

You marked a behavior with a conditioned reinforcer indicating that your dog performed the behavior correctly followed by the delivery of a treat.

Make a note of any treats you give to a disinterested or unmotivated dog. Include treats that you give to your dog unannounced without preceding it with a conditioned reinforcer.

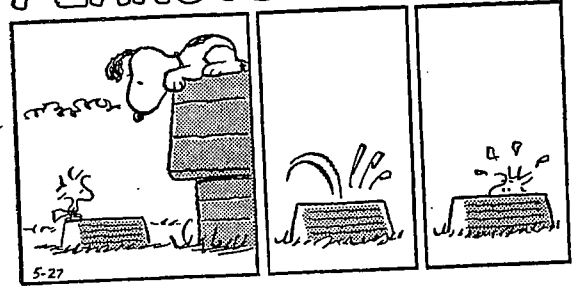
Using food in training is a good system as long as it is a reward for behavior performed correctly. It is a failing system when chasing food becomes the dog's objective.

I'm looking forward to helping you figure out how to use food effectively in your training.

****You can receive more of Connie Cleveland's training tips by signing up for her free Digital Obedience Guide, Tricks that Transition to Obedience Exercises. Go to www.dogtrainersworkshop.com— and get one for free by clicking on the banner in the middle of the home page.**

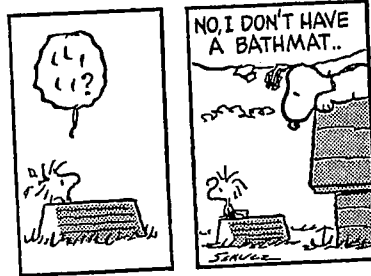
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kacosta@fsalaw.com
and home email is: kacosta66@gmail.com

Kathy Acosta, Editor



POST OFFICE BOX 42
ABINGTON, PA 19001

First Class