

THE PLAYFUL POOCH PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Risë VanFleet, Ph.D., Director

January 2010



www.playfulpooch.org

We hope that your new year is off to a great start! We anticipate lots of exciting events this year, as the field of Animal Assisted Play Therapy continues to grow. In this newsletter we are including some information about training, events in the field, and plans for the coming year.

TRAINING PROGRAMS

The Canine-Assisted Play Therapy training program continues to sell out far in advance, attesting to the strong interest in this field. The April program here in Pennsylvania has sold out, so we have just added another offering in **Pennsylvania on August 23-25, 2010**. The training is limited to 10-12 people, so if you're interested, you can find further information at www.playfulpooch.org. You may also register online there as well.

We held our first training in the UK in November, and we included a brief equine component as well, thanks to Tracie Faa-Thompson and her horses, Sailor and Buster. Incorporating unanimous group suggestions, this training has been extended to 4 days and will be offered again with the combined canine and equine segments in **Berwick-upon-Tweed, England on November 2-5, 2010**. Information and registration for this training are also available at www.playfulpooch.org.



A working Border Collie meets puppet during UK training program

FACEBOOK & YAHOO GROUPS

The Playful Pooch Program is now on Facebook! Visit us and become a fan! Some photos are already posted, and we plan to add more. A special Yahoo Group has been formed for "graduates" of our CAPT training programs for participants to continue to share ideas, experiences, and resources.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

Division 17 of the American Psychological Association has established a subsection on Animal-Human Interactions. Dr. Risë VanFleet and Dr. Aubrey Fine are co-chairing the special interest section on AAT. Visit the website for this at www.apa-ahi.org.

VIDEO LINKS

Recently we've discovered some excellent videos that may be of interest. The first one below shows how a Service Dog in Training became a Surfing Dog working with children and teens with physical disabilities. It's a touching video that shows the value of letting animals be who they are rather than who we might want them to be:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGODurRfVv4>

The next 6 links are for a wonderful program that aired in the UK in early January. Each segment is about 10 minutes long. They show fascinating studies that reveal much more than known before about who and what dogs are all about. We highly recommend taking an hour to watch the total program!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBCp74FNQYA>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kc0nKE2UkC8>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rFftIckw14>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYV9rbERLC4>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4efKgf33KfW>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX-krkDe4b8>



THE PLAYFUL POOCH PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Risë VanFleet, Ph.D., Director

January 2010

GIRL SCOUT PROGRAM

AWARDS

We're pleased to announce that Dr. VanFleet's book (2008), *Play Therapy with Kids & Canines*, won the award in early 2009 for best book and all media on therapy and service dogs. The *Sit. Speak. Act. Canine Service Award* was sponsored by the Planet Dog Foundation and judged a winner in the annual Dog Writers Association of America competition. Her article, *What's This Dog Doing in My Playroom* (posted on the website) was a finalist in a magazine article category. This year, Dr. VanFleet's 2-part article, *Engaging Owners Fully in Dog Training: Attitudes and Skills That Work* (also posted on the website), has been nominated as a finalist, with the awards banquet to be held in February. Dr. VanFleet was invited to be a regular contributor to the *Chronicle of the Dog*, a publication of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (www.apdt.com).



a Catahoula Leopard Dog offers the classic invitation to play: the play bow

DOG TRAINING INFORMATION

There's no substitute for good socialization and training of dogs. It helps people and their companion animals live much more happily with each other. For those involving their dogs in therapy work, it is a must. It is vital that the training methods are positive, for the sake of the clients, the therapists, and the dogs! Choke-and-drag methods are a thing of the past, and they have no place in therapy work because of the horrible message they give.

If you enjoy television, the best training-related programs are (1) *Barking Mad*, (2) *It's Me or the Dog*, and (3) *SuperFetch*, all on Animal Planet. We will have more information on the Playful Pooch website about this in the near future. If you're looking for a positive, force-free trainer near you, check out the Trainer Search at www.apdt.com!

During the past year, we participated in a very special program with 15 Junior Girl Scouts. They earned their Bronze Award by helping to train and socialize dogs at a local rescue. We provided some of the dog training. It was a terrific learning experience for everyone, and by the end, the girls had some impressive dog handling skills! A short article about this program can be found at www.playfulpooch.org, under Resources.



practicing loose leash walking

PLANS

In the coming year, we hope to send a few more newsletters, add a bibliography of relevant books to the website, and begin adding more short articles. All of Dr. VanFleet's articles from the past two years are posted in the Resource section and available for downloading. Topics range from CAPT to dog training. If there are features you would like to see, or if you have questions you'd like to have answered about Animal Assisted Play Therapy or positive dog training, please send an email through the Playful Pooch site. We will try to accommodate requests relevant to the mission of our organization.

