

SUN CITY PET CLUB NEWSLETTER

"The Scoop"

March, 2024
Volume 3, Issue 3
Membership to date:
895

Pet Club General Meeting: March 6, 2024

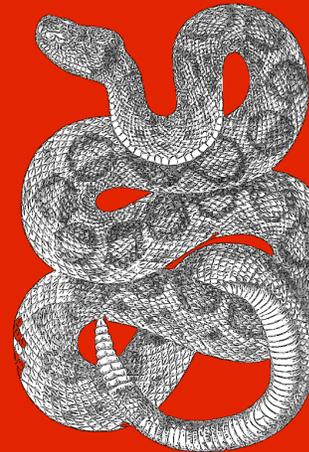
9:30 a.m.

Lone Star Room, at The Retreat

Guest Speaker: Officer Angela Jones with Animal Control

Spring Is Rattlesnake Season

**Snake Avoidance
Date Reminder**



Snake Avoidance Training is **Saturday, April 13**. Tickets for the Rattlesnake Avoidance Training go on sale starting **March 26 at 9 a.m.**

online or at the Resident Services Office at the Social Center, 2 Texas Drive. Copperhead and Water Moccasin snakes will also be available for testing. Cost is \$70 per dog per snake. This important training to help protect your pet is only available to Pet Club Members. For more information, contact Chickie Holt at

chickholt@gmail.com

Pet Club Snake Avoidance Program Information

Rattlesnakes are quite common in our community and, if bitten, there is a small window of time to get the dog to the veterinarian for treatment. Rattlesnake shots, offered by vets, do NOT make the dog immune to the venom—it just gives the dog a greater chance of survival until it gets to the vet's office. Better to avoid getting bitten in the first place.

The Sun City Pet Club engages Winter Kennels to do our Snake Avoidance Training several times per year here in Sun City. They have been doing this for many years and have successfully trained almost 1,000 Sun City dogs to avoid poisonous snakes (mostly rattlesnakes).

The training is done by putting a special collar on the dog and leading him to an area where the snake has been placed. (These snakes have had their **venom sacks surgically removed so there is no danger to handler OR dog.**) When the dog catches the distinctive smell of the snake, a brief electric shock is administered. The unpleasant sensation associated with that particular smell is imprinted in the dog's mind so they will avoid those snakes. The dog's avoidance is also a great help to handlers as the dogs can warn of a snake's proximity even if it's hidden in the grass.

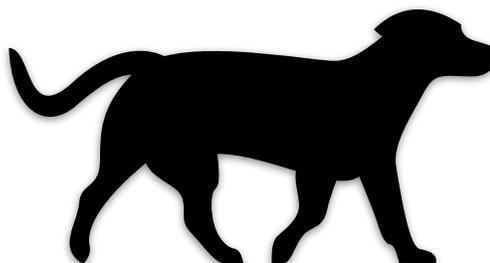
This snake avoidance can be done with **rattlesnakes, copperheads, or water moccasins**. Each snake has a unique, distinct smell, and the dogs are trained to avoid them separately, at additional cost for each type of snake. Rattlesnakes are the primary concern here in Sun City, but if the dog will be in environments where the other types of snakes can be found, additional training is recommended.

A dog's minimum age for snake avoidance training is **5 months old**.

After going through our program, your dog can be **re-tested** for a nominal fee at future snake avoidance trainings. Waiting about a year is recommended.

Questions can be directed to:

Chickie Holt
chickholt@gmail.com
303-520-5137



Animal Shelter/Organization of the Month

Service Dogs, Inc.

Help Train a Service Dog

Summary:

Service Dogs, Inc. is looking for people who can open their homes to one of our newly adopted shelter dogs in training, for 12 weeks to give them a head start on their journey from Strays to Stars. We pair each Foundation Foster with a newly adopted shelter dog who passed SDI's temperament assessment. As a Foundation Foster you will work closely with an SDI Trainer to help your foster, dog learn appropriate house manners and the basic skills needed to become an Assistance Dog. Opening your home and heart plays a pivotal role in teaching your foster dog what it means to have caring and trusting relationships with people - setting him up for future success as a working Service Dog for a person in need.

Overview:

Goals: During the 12 weeks, foster families will help their foster dog with building confidence, socialization, acclimation to home environments and routines, and basic training behaviors and cues.

Responsibilities: Foundation Foster Families will house and train a SDI dog in its beginning (Foundation) behaviors. They will attend a weekly group class.

Duration: 12 weeks

Supplies: SDI will provide food, heartworm prevention, flea/tick prevention, training equipment, a crate and cover veterinary expenses. Foster families will have the option to purchase and donate the use of training and care items.

Homework: Each Foster Family commits to:

- Completing all training exercises and outings assigned to them by their SDI Trainer.
- Approximately 30 minutes of daily training with their foster dog.
- Submitting weekly training and behavior reports to their SDI Trainer.

Conclusion: At the end of the 12-week foster period, the SDI dog will return to SDI's campus for continued training. The Foundation Foster Family will have the option to continue to foster their dog on weekends during advanced stages of training at SDI's campus and be invited to meet the dog's eventual client at Team Training Graduation.



For more information about
Requirements, Training Classes,
Training, etc.,
contact Sheri Soltes at
sheri@serviedogs.org

Link: [Foundation Foster Application](#)

Georgetown Pet-Friendly Stores as of August 2023

Click on the link below to see a list of retail stores and eateries that allow dogs.

<https://www.hellogeorgetown.com/dog-friendly-establishments-in-georgetown-tx/#1651633989460-f6a17336-913b>

Always call ahead to any business you wish to take your dog to ensure their pet policy still allows dogs and if there are any restrictions.

If you know of any retail store or restaurant that is not on the list that allows dogs, please let the Club know at petclubsctx@gmail.com

Pet Club Board and Program Leaders

Board:

President: Alan Kamen,

Vice President: Liz Wommack,

Treasurer: Karen Davenport,

Secretary: Pam Sarantos,

Special Projects/Events: Ruth Olsen,

Board Member at Large: Chickie Holt

Leaders:

Dog Training: Ruth Olsen,

Snake Avoidance: Chickie Holt,

All About Cats: Karyn Beavers,

Pass It On/Recycle: Becky Patterson

Photography: Anne Marshall,

Webmaster: Jaye Turney

Membership: Verne Palmer,

Pet Emergency Evacuation: Sharon Dunning

Congratulations to our newest Canine Good Citizens

Bailey - Black Lab owned by Terri Brian

Izzy - Border Collie owned by Roger Ingram

Quigley - Australian Shepherd owned by Lynn Fetter

Brandon - Bouvier des Flanders owned by Jerry Phelps

Cali - Bernese Mountain Dog owned by Pam Hull

After 2 weeks of review, these dogs showed their talent by getting a perfect score on 10 items required to pass their CGC evaluation. Their hard work paid off! Congrats to all the dogs and their owners!

If you are interested in learning if your dog is ready to become a Canine Good Citizen, contact Ruth, Lead Dog Trainer, at dogtrainingsctx@gmail.com



Recap: Pet Club Open House

January 16, 2024

Even though we had 15-degree weather on January 16, we had a very successful Pet Club Open House with over 300 attendees who braved the cold! We served hot coffee, hot chocolate with marshmallows, and a variety of cookies. We thank Amy from the CA Events Department for setting up the coffee!! The Pet club made a donation to the CA for the coffee.

A big thank you goes out to over 20 volunteers who assisted with set-up and breakdown. Thank you to all our board members and program leaders for their support and putting all this together. It took months of planning and preparation to make it happen, Thank You!!

We heard back from almost all our pet retailers and shelters who all said they had a successful day with us. Photos from the event are below.



"Guess the Count" winner: Flo Zydwicz

Flo won the jar of treats plus a \$25 Gift Card to Mulligans.

Number of pieces in the jar: 806

Flo's guess: 780



Harley's Angels



Living Grace Canine Ranch



Our Donations Program



Canine Companions



Welcome Table



Dog Trainers Wanted



Pet Club Website



Snake Avoidance Program



Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming



Pet Emergency Evacuation Program



New Toys for Sale



All About Cats



Texas Humane Heroes



Wag Heaven Pet Supplies



Greeter



Georgetown Animal Shelter



Sun City All About Animals

Dog Education Series

Open to All Sun City Residents

Presented by Ruth Olsen of the Pet Club

The purpose of this monthly series is to discuss topics that are not covered in dog training classes. **Come without your dog**, but bring questions, issues, or problems you are dealing with. Topics vary monthly depending on the attendees.

A \$5 donation for each class is suggested for up to 2 people per household to attend.

Pay at the seminar.

Q&A - For issues with dogs 1 year and older. Got a problem? Get a solution! Topics often include proper leash walking, jumping, barking, licking, crates, digging, and many more.

Puppy - Same as Q&A but focused on issues with dogs under 1 year old or someone thinking about getting a new dog of any age.

| Date | Location | Q&A | Puppy |
|----------|-------------------------|------------|-------------|
| March 14 | Mesquite Room, The Oaks | 9:30-10:30 | 10:45-11:45 |
| April 11 | Oaks Room, The Oaks | 9:30-10:30 | 10:45-11:45 |
| May 9 | Oaks Room, The Oaks | 9:30-10:30 | 10:45-11:45 |
| June 13 | Mesquite Room, The Oaks | 9:30-10:30 | 10:45-11:45 |
| July 11 | Oaks Room, The Oaks | 9:30-10:30 | 10:45-11:45 |
| Aug 8 | Mesquite Room, The Oaks | 9:30-10:30 | 10:45-11:45 |
| Sept 12 | Mesquite Room, The Oaks | 9:30-10:30 | 10:45-11:45 |
| Oct 10 | Oaks Room, The Oaks | 9:30-10:30 | 10:45-11:45 |
| Nov 14 | Mesquite Room, The Oaks | 9:30-10:30 | 10:45-11:45 |

If you need more information, contact Ruth Olsen, Pet Club Lead Dog Trainer
dogtrainingsctx@gmail.com or 512 639 1771

Cat Corner

The Rough Side of the Tongue

A cat's tongue contains numerous backward-pointing hooks that help with self grooming. These tiny barbs are also what make a cat's tongue feel like sandpaper when it licks you.

Dual Purpose

A cat uses its tail to express various types of emotion. For example, if the cat holds its tail upright and still when greeting you, this means that it is pleased to see you, and that it is feeling relaxed and comfortable. While the cat is being petted, its tail will quiver as a sign of pleasure. A wagging tail may indicate anger, but it can also be a sign that the cat is facing a dilemma--for instance, should it take the food being offered by a stranger or not? The tail also serves as an important tool for maintaining balance.

Claws

A Long Way Down

Cats are adept climbers, using their sharp claws and powerful hind legs to propel themselves upward. It is only when at the top of a tree that the cat's natural fear of heights comes flooding back, which can freeze the cat into immobility. The inwards-curving claws do not help the cat if it tries to descend head first, and the cat will have to support its weight on its less powerful front legs. Many cats will jump from a low branch instead of trying to climb down the trunk, or else shimmy down backward. Whatever technique a cat uses, the overwhelming majority of cats will eventually come down--although the process may take hours.

By Tammy Gagne
Amazing Cat Facts and Trivia

Article submitted by Karyn Beavers

Shelters and Organizations the Pet Club

Supports

Williamson County Regional
Animal Shelter

wcras@wilco.org pets.wilco.org

Georgetown Animal Shelter

animalsvc@georgetown.org

pets.georgetown.org

Living Grace Canine Ranch

karen@livinggracecanineranch.org

Harley's Angels

harleysangelssanctuary@yahoo.com

Texas Humane Heroes

info@txhh.org

All Things Wild

allthingswildrehab@gmail.com

Austin Siamese Rescue

loveasiamese@gmail.com

R.O.C.K.

karah@rockride.org

Pet Partners

petpartners.org

Canine Companions (Service Dogs)

canine.org

Service Dogs, Inc. Sheri Soltes

sheri@servicedogs.org

Pet Club Policy Reminder: Re-Homing Pets

We have been receiving many calls for assistance in re-homing pets from people who are fostering a pet, helping a friend, neighbor, or family member, and people outside of Sun City and even **out of state!**

The Pet Club Board decided several years ago to limit re-homing assistance to **ONLY** Pet Club Members and their **personal pets**.

We do not advertise pets up for adoption from shelters, sanctuaries or from anyone, including members, who are fostering a pet.

While we would like to help everyone, our primary responsibility is to serve our members and their personal pets. We cannot put the burden of re-homing pets from everyone on Pet Club members, who almost all have a pet already.

If you are approached by a non-member needing to re-home a pet, kindly suggest they post on social media sites, the bulletin boards at Texas Drive and Cowan Creek, or contact the local animal shelters listed at left.

NEW! Pet Club Refund Policy

Effective March 1, 2024

There are NO refunds for any tickets purchased for events or dog training classes after the time of purchase.

All Dog Training Class:

If you purchased a ticket from the "ticket" system online or at the Member Services Office and you wish to cancel for any reason, there are NO refunds. If you want to re-sell your ticket, contact the Lead Dog Trainer. After the ticket sales ends, you will be provided with a wait list. It will be up to you to contact someone on the list to give or re-sell the ticket. Tickets can not be sold to anyone who is not on the list. Seller must notify the Lead Dog Trainer of the person who received the ticket or if you choose not to sell your ticket.

All Events:

If you purchased a ticket from the "ticket" system online or at the Member Services Office and wish to cancel for any reason, there are NO refunds. You can sell your ticket to any Pet Club Member. Seller must notify the Special Projects Leader of the person who purchased the ticket.

If you wish to not re-sell any ticket you purchased, it can become a donation to the Pet Club.

Ruth Olsen, Lead Dog Trainer/Special Projects Leader
dogtrainingsctx@gmail.com

Sun City Lost Pet Alert System

Sign up to receive the
Lost Pet Alert to help get a
lost pet home safely!!

Instructions To Receive Lost Pet Alerts

1. Sign on to your [SC Website/Resident Page](#)
2. On the left, Click on [My Preferences](#)
3. Scroll down to [EMAIL PREFERENCES](#)
4. Check box for [NRO Lost Pet Alerts](#)
5. Click on [SAVE DATA](#)

To Report a Lost or Found Pet

Click on the Lost Pet Icon on the SC Resident Home page.

Follow the instructions to fill out the Form for either a Lost Pet or a Found Pet.



Ways to Stress Out Your Dog - Don't do it!!!

Punish him for behaving like a dog — Your canine companion is a creature of opportunity, and when you give him opportunities to "misbehave" by leaving tantalizing items within his reach, he'll take advantage. Translation: don't leave food or scraps where he can smell or see them. Don't leave him in the bedroom alone with your slippers or socks. Make sure the opportunities you provide your dog are ones at which he can succeed.

Tell her "no" over and over — If your dog is doing something she shouldn't be doing, telling her "no" will probably cause her to stop the behavior temporarily. But saying no to a dog without offering an alternative turns your "no" into merely an interruption, not a request or demand. Same goes for shaking a can or other noises to 'interrupt' their action. Unless you show your dog what you want her to do instead of what she's doing, chances are she'll be right back to doing it sooner or later.

Give her a variety of verbal commands for a single behavior — Many pet owners assume their dog or cat knows English, and therefore knows that "drop it" and "leave it" mean the same thing, or that "get it" and "bring it to me" are the same.

Train your dog to respond to simple, preferably single-word commands (sit, stay, come, down, pee, poop, etc.), and then use those words, and only those words, to communicate. Use hand signals that are consistent with the words you use. Otherwise, you'll create stress in your dog because she knows you want her to do something, but she doesn't know what by the words you're using.

Tell him "It's okay" — Many dog handlers tend to say this phrase to their pet when something decidedly not okay is about to happen. For example, you're driving your dog to the groomer, which is a place he's not fond of. You've driven him there often enough that, as always, he starts to whine when the grooming shop comes into view.

And as always, you say, "it's okay" in an effort to comfort him. The second you utter those words, he knows without a doubt where he's going, and his stress level shoots through the roof. "It's okay" becomes a verbal cue to panic. Instead, help your dog learn to relax and cope with anxiety-producing situations. Use the word "calm" to help relax your dog as you start the trip and keep the soothing music on the car radio.

Ways to Stress Out Your Dog - Don't do it!!! Continued...

Pull his leash — A dog that has been properly trained to walk on a leash doesn't typically do a lot of pulling, so if you feel the need to constantly yank the leash to redirect him, it's probably time to refresh your pet's leash manners by taking classes. It's also important to anticipate that your dog will naturally stop and sniff as often as possible and pull in the direction of someone or something interesting. Be kind and understanding - allow your furry friend a reasonable amount of time to smell and inspect his outdoor territory and pick up his pee-mail without yanking him toward your destination.

Hold him tight while you hug or kiss him — Dogs really don't get these human expressions of affection and can be confused by them, especially when the hugger or kisser is a relative stranger. Also, since dogs are typically being held (restrained) during the bear hug or smooch-fest, it increases their stress level. Dogs naturally do not like to be restrained. Imagine how you would feel if someone large and in charge grabbed hold of you and wouldn't let go. It's not a good feeling and does nothing to generate trust, right? Unless your dog is remaining contentedly still on his own while being hugged or kissed, it's best to stick to stroking and petting, which most dogs can't get enough of.

Stare at her — Most people are uncomfortable being stared at by other people, so it's easy to imagine how unsettling it might be for your dog. Dogs view staring as confrontational, sort of a "let's get ready to rumble" signal, which naturally triggers a stress response. There's no need to stare at your dog unless you're returning her gaze. If you want your dog to make eye contact with you to get her to listen, make sure you have "soft eyes" and a smile on your face and only keep the eye contact a short time.

Point or shake your finger at her — The finger pointing/shaking thing is a universal stress inducer for dogs (and many humans). That's probably because it's usually done while you're standing over your pooch in a menacing posture or while you're speaking in a tone of voice that signals your displeasure. A guilty-dog look is the result of the finger-pointing thing, but your pet isn't so much feeling guilty as uncomfortable, wary, confused, and yes... stressed.

Ways to Stress Out Your Dog - Don't do it!!! Continued...

Tell him to "get down" when he jumps up — If, like most people, you use the verbal cue "down" to ask your dog to go from a sit to a lie-down position, it's not going to work in situations where he's jumping up on you or someone else (or a piece of furniture). Train him to stop jumping on people by crossing your arms across your chest, do not speak and do not look at your dog. If you want him off the furniture, tell him what to do or where to go (i.e. bed). You'll save your dog the confusion and stress that comes from trying to understand your command, and you'll potentially save yourself or a guest from a friendly mauling.

Wake her up — Unless there's a pressing reason to awaken your four-legged family member from a nice snooze, try to avoid it. Being shaken or shouted awake is stressful for all of us.

Disrupt his regular schedule -- Dogs live by a schedule. When you change it, your dog gets confused and stressed. When the schedule is off, dogs often will act out. When company comes, or workmen arrive, make sure you keep to your dog's regular schedule, or you might find unpleasant surprises in your house.

Members Only are welcome to post personal pet-related ads on
the monthly newsletter bulletin board.

If you are looking for a pet or in need of equipment, post it here.

Email Alan Kamen at petclubstx@gmail.com to place an ad.