

FEBRUARY 2024



The Many Ways to Make Valentine's Day Special for Your Dog

President's Message By Pam Miller

You know, flowers, chocolates, a movie or dinner is a traditional way, on Valentine's Day, to express love to those close to you. But how about your dog? How can you make his, her or their day special? Not by giving them chocolates! So, here are some other ideas that I like.



Nonni and Jazzy Miller

My dogs LOVE to go for walks. So I like the idea of taking them on a special walk to a new place. If I only walk around my "neighborhood," a new place to walk would be at Club Lake or even Four Island Lake or the Nature Trail or, if I am adventurous, I can walk on a horse trail, like down Little Valley or Oak Water Canyon.

Another idea is to do something different together. I like piling my dogs into the car and going for a ride. Maybe we end up at a friend's house where we can all play on the agility equipment she has in her backyard, or at the dog park where the dog

equipment is. In the Spring I can take them to an Agility Playday or a Nose training class offered by Tailwaggers. If my dogs don't like sports, maybe they would like a trick training class and learn to roll over, sit pretty or "give me five." Tricks like that are fun to teach and build confidence and trust between you and your dog(s).

This is my favorite. I love to cuddle up with my dogs and watch a program that has to do with loveable animals. Most of the time we all end up sleeping on the couch, but that's OK. I read that cuddling has mental and physical health benefits for both you and your dog, as it eases stress and helps regulate blood pressure.

Although I can't give my dogs chocolate, I can give them presents! I can finally buy them that new stainless steel food bowl that I am told is better for their health to eat from. I can buy an enrichment toy, like a kong to fill with food, or a snuffle mat to find treats in, or a flirt pole to play with. Also, I love to look around at the pet stores for new sweaters or collars or accessories. Some accessories, like doggie coats and tie dye scarfs are for sale at the Tailwaggers meetings!

I think you get the picture, there are many ways to show your dog(s) how special they are, not only on Valentine's day, but all during the coming year.

We hope to see you at our monthly meetings where you can hear various speakers share with us how we can make our dogs lives better and enjoy their company more.

Join us TUESDAY, February 13, at 6:00 in the Equestrian Center Lounge to hear the plans for the coming year's speakers and events.

Tailwaggers Happy'ngs

General Meetings - New Day - Tuesdays

General meetings are now on the second **Tuesday** of every month, unless notified differently. We meet in the Equestrian Center lounge at 6:00 for refreshments and 6:30 for the meeting.

February 13th

Get Acquainted and Planning Meeting

Agility Division

Agility Coaching/Workshops:

April 13 & 27

Contact Gary Hill, 480-216-8488, for more information.

Dog Park Division

We gave back to the community a new tree, in place of the one that died at the dog park and refurbished the dog park signs that were in dire need of a new coat of varnish. Many thanks to John Corona for the great job he did on refurbishing the signs!



Thanks to Doug Van Dyke for this photo!

Therapy Dog Division

Happy Hounds and Friends Reading Program & Special Needs Resource Fair

For information about the Therapy Dog Program contact Mary Thompson at 661-972-0731 or Lauren Jaimes at 818-636-9443.

Contents

President's Message	1
• Tailwaggers Happy'ngs	2
• Project Hope Flyer	3
• Putting Beds Together	4
• Membership Drawing	
• A Word About Holiday Puppies	5
• In Memory of Wally	6
• Alpha Wofe Concept	6
• Are there Dog Years??	6
• A Day with TW at the City Shelter	7
• Snip Bus Winner's Dog Portrait	7
• Treasurer Report	8
• Featured Article:	9
• Reinforced Behaviors?	
• Mission Statement / Ads	13
• Membership Forms	13

Training Division Events

NEW TRAININGS!

The dates for the next series of classes will be announced in the spring. For more information, or to sign up for up-coming trainings, text/call Molly Mackin at 818-512-9836.

NOSEWORK SERIES

Rebecca Barocas, Competitor and Trainer in Nosework for over 10 years.

Rebecca will be doing more classes for Tailwaggers in the spring. She is teaching Nosework classes now in Tehachapi and other locations. Contact Rebecca at 661-435-1194 to sign up or for more information.

K9 Fitness Division

WalkAbouts & HikeAbouts

Walkabouts and HikeAbouts on the Nature Trail and beyond will resume officially in the spring. It's a wonderful way to connect and meet new TW friends while socializing and exercising our dogs.

Tailwaggers Project HOPE

66 Dogs Out Alive in January!! Flights planned for every two weeks.



Want to get ahead of your 2024 spring cleaning and feel great about it? TW Project Hope has just the solution for you ...The Mt Vernon Shelter is in desperate need of

- **transport dog crates laying around your house,**
- **used clean horse saddle pads and**
- **clean bathroom mats.**

We can even pick up. Please call Molly Mackin 818-512-9816.

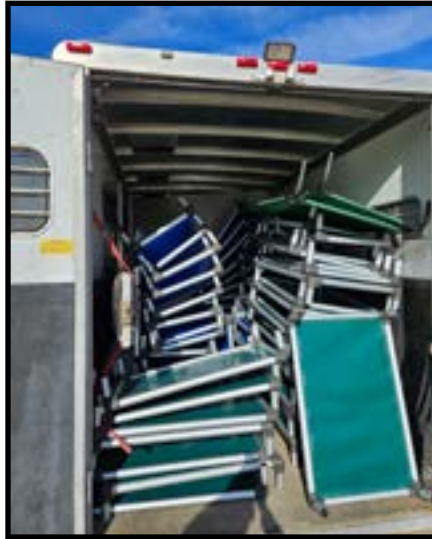


❤️ to all the people at the Bakersfield City Animal Care Center who do so much for all the Shelter Dogs!



Tailwaggers & Friends Put Beds Together

Thank you everyone who helped put the first 100 beds together! You were nothing but fantastic! Thank you to Molly and Bob for organizing the event at your house. Thank you to Melissa and Steve for trailering all the beds to the Shelter. And, continued thanks to the staff at the Mt. Vernon Shelter for providing care for the shelter dogs and working hard to get them out of the shelter and to rescues, foster homes and forever homes.



Shelter Dogs Get Beds for Christmas

Dear Tailwaggers and Friends,
Thank you for your loving donations to The City of Bakersfield Animal Care Center on Mount Vernon Ave. Your donations went towards furnishing shelter dogs with quality beds that will keep them off the cold, wet cement floors during many winters to come. When we gave them their new beds ALL the dogs jumped upon them as if to say, thank you, thank you, thank you!! The shelter needs 175 beds, and as of now, The BVS Tailwaggers Dog Club has provided them with 150 beds. Persons wishing to donate towards more beds may contact Molly Mackin.



Membership Drive

Mike was Last Year's Winner.
This Year's Winner Will BE?



Last year Mike Landsford won the drawing for early membership. His prize was a dog coat, made by Jane Tanaka, for his buddy Pappa, an twelve year old pitt bull mix.

This year, everyone who pays their

membership by the end of February, will be entered into a raffle where the prize will be a free 2025 club membership.

SO, MAIL YOUR DUES IN TODAY!!

[Get your membership form here.](#)

[Get your waiver form here.](#)

Please fill them BOTH out for insurance purposes.

HOLIDAY/NEW PUPPIES

[Dunbar Academy.com](http://DunbarAcademy.com)

A lot of families will be welcoming a new puppy into their home this holiday season and it's absolutely ESSENTIAL that these pups get the education they need to grow into happy, healthy, well-socialized and well-behaved companion dogs.

With a little preparation and planning, the holidays can be a wonderful time to bring home a puppy, with time off from work and ample opportunities for socialization. But it can also be a challenging and overwhelming time of year when families are busy and preoccupied with other activities, with chaotic schedules and lots of potential sources for stress and anxiety.

The first few days and weeks after a puppy enters their new home are so important! If you (or someone you know) is getting a puppy in the coming weeks, you should take some time to carefully consider how you will give your pup the attention, training, and socialization they desperately need to start forming the right habits right away.

In Memory of Wally



Condolences to Jane Tanaka and Greg Chick. Thank you Wally for all your video songs and for sending your parents to Tailwaggers. Those of us who knew you will miss you alot!



"Alpha Wolf" Concept

By Dr. Mech



<https://davemech.org/wolf-news-and-information/>

[Did You Know?

There's no such thing as an Alpha Dog because there's no such thing as an Alpha Wolf? David Mech, scientist and wolf researcher debunked the Alpha Dog Theory.]

The concept of the alpha wolf is well ingrained in the popular wolf literature, at least partly because of my book "The Wolf, Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species," written in 1968, published in 1970, republished in paperback in 1981 and in print until 2022. Although most of the book's info is still accurate, much is outdated. We have learned more about wolves in the last 40 years than in all of previous history.

One of the outdated pieces of information is the concept of the alpha wolf. "Alpha" implies competing with others and becoming top dog by winning a contest or battle. However, most wolves who lead packs achieved their position simply by mating and producing pups, which then became their pack. In other words they are merely breeders, or parents, and that's all we call them today, the "breeding male," "breeding female," or "male parent," "female parent," or "adult male," or "adult female." In the rare packs that include more than one breeding animal, the "dominant breeder" can be called that, and any breeding daughter can be called a "subordinate breeder."

Are "Dog Years" Really A Thing?

**News from Everything Dog -
Denisemazzola.com - January 2024**

At some point you may have heard that one human year is the equivalent of seven dog years. This adage has been thrown about for decades, but is there any truth to it? The short answer – not really.

Researchers at the University of California explored this question by creating a formula that more accurately compared aging in dogs and humans. This formula was based on pattern changes of methyl groups – small molecules made of one carbon and three hydrogen atoms. These are part of an organism's 'epigenetic clock' and provide clues about the age of our genes. By matching and then comparing these patterns, scientists were able to more accurately discern physiological age differences between us and our canine friends.

Aging in dogs was found to be a lot more complex than the 1:7 ratio we're all familiar with. Dogs age much faster when young, with the first year of a dog's life being closer to 30 equivalent years of a human. That's a lot of growth! By four years, dogs are on par with a human in their 50s. This aging then tends to slow down as they reach seven years.

While this model may provide a more accurate picture, there still isn't a perfect formula for the aging rates of dogs. The size of a dog seems to have a big impact, with smaller dogs tending to enjoy a longer lifespan. There isn't much consensus as to why, but all that rapid early growth is considered physiologically demanding, especially for the giants of the dog world. Certain breeds also live longer lives than others, with fewer health issues along the way. Then of course there's lifestyle – access to veterinary care, weight, and diet all play an important role.

We can all agree that the answer to how long dogs live for is "Not long enough." Sharing our lives with dogs is a source of enormous friendship, humor, and pleasure. So, give your dog an extra fuss today. Head outside with them and enjoy every single second of it.

Rescue Division

**A Day With the Tailwaggers
At the City Shelter on Mt.
Vernon Ave.**



Jeannie James



Holly Bennett



Pam Miller



Molly Mackin



Mary Thompson

*All dogs shown
may still be
available for
adoption or
foster.*

**Snip Bus Raffle Drawing
Winners Picture**



Pamela Wildermuth's drawing of Mary Thompson's dogs, Bubba and Dolly. Thanks Pam, this is terrific.

**Special Help for Project HOPE
from Anonymous Donors!**

- \$7,000 for 50 Beds!
- \$ 300 in honor of Sandy Jones, Laura Merrill, and Pam Miller for all their help finding my lost dog..
- \$1,000 each from two more anonymous donors.
- Anonymous \$100 gift in honor of Molly Mackin's horse, Spirit.

More Special Help

Special Help from • Daryl Gilreath, for donating Tie-Dye Scarves and • Carol Young for selling scarves and cookies for Tailwaggers.



Cindy Marble



Holly Bennett

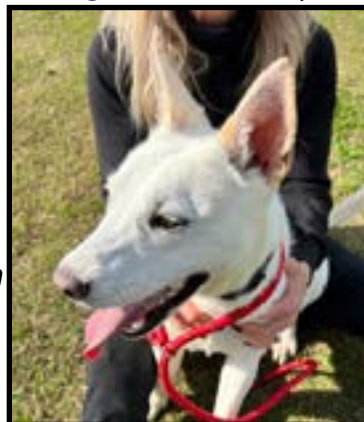
Huck is a Tailwaggers and shelter favorite who is in desperate need to find his forever home. We need to put eyes on him to save his life. Huck Jr is young, but calm. He knows sit and lays down at your feet and is easy on the

leash. He doesn't bark in the kennel at his litter mates. He has been at the shelter for a month and is more than ready to be adopted with a family snuggling at your feet.

This is **Casper**. He is very smart and will make a terrific trick dog! He will do any trick for a treat. He can't stay at the shelter much longer.

Call Molly 818-512-9836 if you are interested in either dog.

Please share ...sharing saves.



Treasurers' Year End Report Year to Date Financial Report - Jan to Dec 2023 By Jeannie Alvarado

Checking Account Beginning Balance \$9,231.91

INCOME

Membership	2,200.00
Ad Income	450.00
Donations & Refunds	95.00
Club Items Sold	10.00
Agility	835.00
Bakesale Fundraiser	637.00
Wine event Fundraiser	3,122.50
SNIP Fundraiser	5,275.00
Project HOPE	7572.69
Total	\$20,215.19

EXPENSES

Insurance	500.00
Newsletters	1800.00
Administration	130.65
Office Supply	296.62
Computer Software	49.95
Meeting Cost	584.44
Flyers/Printing	619.05
Community Donation	99.48
Agility Equipment	952.77
SNIP 8860.00	
Maintenance Dog Park	732.00
Wine Event Fundraiser	2225.88
Project Hope - Shelter	6444.48
Total	\$23,295.32

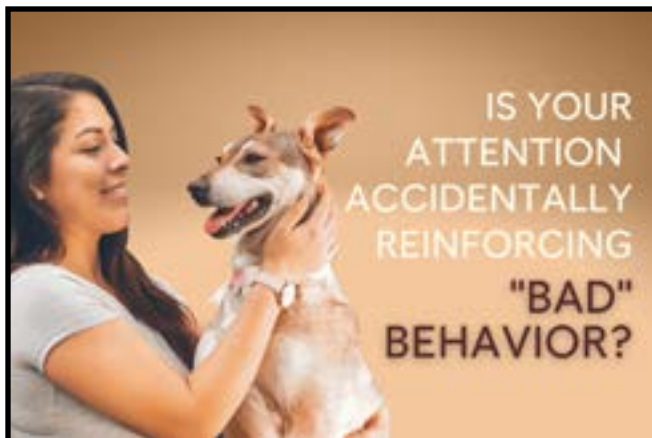
Ending Balance
As of Dec 31, 23 **\$6,151.78**

Feature Article



Is Your Attention Accidentally Reinforcing Your Dog's "Bad" Behaviors?

- Pupford.Com



While we often think of food as a dog's strongest reinforcement, your attention (eye contact, petting/scratches, talking, etc) can be almost as strong as a reinforcer for your pup!

Dogs have been domesticated for thousands of years to instinctively look for and work for our attention.

But, your attention can sometimes accidentally reinforce "bad" behaviors you do not want your dog to do...

In this article, we'll discuss how attention can be a reinforcer, why dogs care about our attention, and of course, how to more intentionally use your attention to improve good pup manners!

Here's some of what we will cover:

- Why do dogs care about our attention?
- Your dog decides their reinforcers.
- Unintentional attention reinforcement interrupt & redirect to the "right" behavior.

Let's get right to it!

WHY DO DOGS CARE ABOUT OUR ATTENTION?



Before we talk about unintentional attention reinforcement, it's important to understand why dogs care about our attention.

Let's take a very quick dive into the history of dogs.

EVOLUTIONARY

In the original days of domestication, dogs' growth and survival were improved with our attention. (Of course, our survival and growth also benefitted from dogs in those early days, but that's a topic for a different day.)

Food scraps thrown their way, a warm place to stay out of the elements, and general companionship. Dogs learned that being around us humans was advantageous for their species!

If someone was constantly providing you with food and other important means, wouldn't you want to keep an eye on their next move?

Related Reading: [7 Signs Your Dog Needs More Attention](#)

Continued...

DEPENDENCE & COMPANIONSHIP



Fast forward to today and you'll see 5lb Chihuahuas wearing sweaters and designer shoes posing for an Instagram post. While that feels like a long stretch from their ancient ancestors, our dogs' need for our attention is higher than ever!

Think for a moment. How would your dog fare without you?! Would they be able to find food? Would they know how to find shelter in the cold weather? Would they be able to fend off predators?

While I know this is extreme, it paints the picture of just how dependent dogs are on us humans. And we made it that way!

We've bred dogs that enjoy our companionship (pretty much every breed).

We've bred dogs that love working with us (Shepherds & Retrievers).

We've bred dogs that love protecting us (Dobermans & the like).

Essentially, we've helped shape dogs to want our companionship and attention. They look to us for food, protection, and even love.

And that alone makes your attention a massive reinforcer for your pup.

YOUR DOG DECIDES THEIR REINFORCERS



Before we continue, we need to define reinforcers.

A reinforcer is something delivered after a behavior that causes the future rate of that behavior to maintain or increase.

While you could in theory make a pages-long list of dog reinforcers, here are a few:

- Attention (even just looking at our pups)
- Treats or food
- Verbal praise
- Petting/belly rubs
- Fetch
- Tug
- The list goes on!

And while some dogs don't care as much about attention from humans as others, almost all of those reinforcers come from us... We throw the ball. We give the treats. We rub the bellies. We give the praise.

Of course, there are reinforcers that we don't provide (barking can be one), but most of them rely on human interaction!

What's wildly important to remember is that YOUR dog decides THEIR reinforcers.

I have two Labs and they are alike in SO many ways. But, their choice of reinforcers varies greatly.

Continued...



Sunny would do nearly anything for a neck scratch...

Scout doesn't really care for it.

Scout would do nearly anything for just one more throw of a ball...

Sunny likes fetch, but it's not a

considerable reinforcer for her.

They grew up in the same household under the same structure, but what they care about isn't the same. And that should be expected! Like us humans, dogs are individuals. Each one has certain things that make them tick, bother them, or even make them excited.

So, lean into that! And above all, figure out what your dog really really wants as a reinforcer.

PS- I did a podcast/article about how using fetch improved my dog's recall ten-fold, [check it out here!](#)

Now that we've talked about reinforcers and why attention is important to our dogs, let's get to the heart of the article!

UNINTENTIONAL ATTENTION REINFORCEMENT



Let's revisit our definition from above.

A reinforcer is something delivered after a behavior that causes the future rate of that behavior to maintain or increase.

But what if that reinforcer is delivered, albeit unintentionally, after a non-desirable behavior occurs? Unfortunately, the laws of learning still apply!

Let's look at a few examples.

And let me say, these are extremely common so do NOT feel bad if you do these. My goal is to get you thinking about when/how this may occur in your home. Being aware of dog training "mistakes" is the first step in fixing them!

If your dog jumps up and you put your hands on them to try to push them down, a reinforcement was just applied. Your dog wanted your attention (that's why they're jumping, in most cases) and you gave it to them by touching them.

So, that jumping is likely to be repeated and/or increase in frequency.

If your dog sits begging at the table and you say "oh buddy, you're so cute but not today", a small reinforcement was just applied. Your dog wanted your attention (ultimately to get food) and you gave it to them by speaking to and engaging with them.

So, that begging for food is likely to continue (and then certainly will if you give in and provide the table scraps).

If your dog demand barks and you come up to them and try to engage with them to figure out what they want, a reinforcement was just applied. Your dog wanted you to pay attention to them, and you did it!

So, that demand barking is likely to be repeated and/or increase in frequency.

See the pattern? Even when you may not think you are reinforcing a behavior, you just might be... With your attention!

This is something we much too often do unintentionally, but being aware of and thinking about it can help make it happen less often!

So, what's the alternative?

INTERRUPT & REDIRECT TO THE "RIGHT" BEHAVIOR



While ignoring can be the right thing to do, sometimes it's not plausible. In many cases, you will need to interrupt the behavior and redirect to the desired behavior, then reinforce that behavior.

For example, let's look at jumping. Here's what you can try.

You walk in the door and your pup starts to jump up on you. Instead of putting your hands down to push off your dog or saying 'off, off, off'... Try turning your back. Attention is removed.

Then, quickly redirect your dog to what you do want them to do! Let's say it's settling on their place/mat (this is a great alternative behavior for hyper door greetings).

You guide them to their place, and when they're there and starting to settle... REWARD like crazy!

This redirection and reward for the right behavior must be immediate, AND the reward should be very very high value. So it might not be a normal treat but you may think along the lines of a bully stick, frozen Kong, or tasty piece of jerky (my "jackpot" reward when practicing this is Salmon Jerky, my dogs go nuts for it).



Is this easy? Not necessarily! But, it will dramatically help improve the jumping up on guests and you. It takes time, patience, and most of all, consistency!

While these examples have been overly simplified, the principles are key.

When unwanted behaviors occur, try immediately interrupting that behavior, redirecting to the desired behavior, and rewarding the desired behavior with something of extremely high value, like treats, to your dog!

RECAP OF ATTENTION AS A REINFORCER FOR DOGS

Being aware of what reinforces our dogs is the first step to making sure we aren't "misusing" it!

Challenge yourself over the next few days to pay attention to when your attention might be reinforcing your pup's "bad" behaviors.

And when undesirable behaviors pop up, try to interrupt, redirect, and then reward the correct and desirable behavior!

If you're looking for more in-depth training techniques, be sure to sign up for [30 Day Perfect Pup with Zak George!](#) It's a 100% free (no credit card required) online video course that covers behaviors like teaching yes & no, leave it, leash walking, potty training, and more.

Mission Statement

The BVS Tailwaggers Dog Club is dedicated to responsible dog ownership/guardianship. We are a body of people who care about their dogs and want to be with like-minded responsible people who feel the same. We are committed to sharing and learning. The club will provide experiences through education, training, fun events and social activities. It is designed to improve handler skills and be an information center for owners presenting issues and subjects based on our members' needs.



The club will provide support for local rescues in Kern County.

Board Members

President Pam Miller 661-203-5725	Vice President Lucy Radike 661-904-3379	Treasurer Jeannie Alvarado 661-917-1915
Secretary Dot Ramirez 209-277-8827	Members at Large Gary Hill 480-216-8488	
Newsletter Editor/Communications Pam Miller 661-203-5725 pambvsprings@gmail.com		

Support Our Advertisers.....They Support US



NEW

Pawitively Pampered by C.K.

Caitlyn Nicotra
Mobile Pet Grooming

☎ +661-972-1813
✉ cnicotra08@gmail.com
📍 Serving Tehachapi

Sue Wonacott
Independent Insurance Agent
Represents Several Carriers

cell 661-304-4695
fax 661-821-1881
suewonacott5@gmail.com

CA Lic.# 0F42512
Making Medicare Easy

TERRY ALBERT
pet portraits and animal art
www.terryalbert.com

858-748-9863
albertsark@gmail.com

Overnight Pet Sitting

Pam Miller
661-203-5725

Will stay overnight or feed daily at your home.
What you get is... peace of mind.

pambvsprings@gmail.com

Judy Keller, CMT
661-619-1706

21030 Mission Suite A



holistic hearts
MASSAGE STUDIO



BVS  **KATHY CAREY**
PROPERTIES

Serving Tehachapi since 1987!

23820 Harringale Way
Tehachapi, Ca. 93561
kathy-carey@sbcglobal.net

Real Estate Sales & Property Management
www.bvsproperties.com dre #00986934

661-331-1514

For those members with horses:
Call for Horse Services Only



Twin Oaks
Veterinary Services

Christian Comeau, DVM
Matt Elliott, DVM

(661) 867-2554
Twinoaksvet98@gmail.com

I'm Haulin' For You!

ONE CALL, AND WE HAUL IT ALL!

- ✓ Weekly Trash Collection
- ✓ Recycle Collection*
- ✓ Real Estate Clean up/haul off
- ✓ Full Service household/junk removal
- ✓ Manure pick up/hauling

*We currently provide Recycle Collection Services on behalf of the Bear Valley Springs Veterans Association.

Call for further details



Billy Curtis 661 345-0971
billycurtis37@yahoo.com



CANINE CREEK
PET WASH & BOUTIQUE

Kellie Dudevior
Owner
Kellie@CanineCreek.com

798 Tucker Rd. Suite #5
Tehachapi, CA 93561
(661) 822-0307
CanineCreek.com

 Canine Creek Boutique



Stephanie

Hair Artist/Extensionist
TEL: 818 699 4213

Elevate your Look & Book Now!

Beth Hall
BROKER ASSOCIATE
DRE 01453499




661 699 2855
661-822-8888
beth@bethhallrealestate.com
BethHall.remax.com

 **MLS** 1001 W Tehachapi Blvd #A400
Tehachapi, CA 93561
Each Office Independently Owned and Operated