



SHELTIE WISE

The monthly newsletter of the Shetland Sheepdog Club of No. NJ

February 2010

Club website: www.sscnj.org

Pat Marchello, editor --jetsong@comcast.net



Meeting Notice Friday, March 5th

The next club meeting will be held on Friday, March 5th, **7:30 pm at The Zion Lutheran Church**, 215 Elm Ave. Rahway NJ.

Our evening will start with a presentation from the **Canine Explosives Detection Division GSS Security Services**.

Our speaker, Rob Trumble worked as a police officer for the New Jersey Transit Police for over 20 years. He has worked as a dog handler for the past 5 years.

Leo is a 4 year old yellow lab and is a former seeing eye dog trainee. Leo never finished the seeing eye program due to his hyper personality which made him an excellent candidate for explosives training. Leo has been imprinted with every explosive known to man to date; both commercial and improvised (Home made). Commercial would include: C4, Semtex, Dynamite and home made would include: T.A.T.P. which was used in the bombing of the London train stations and ammonium nitrate which was used in the Oklahoma bombing.

To learn more, please visit their website

[Click here: Canine Explosives Detection Division :: GSS Security Services](#)

Please note that the business meeting will follow the presentation. We hope that everyone will try to attend. Guests are invited. Please note that there will be a fee of \$3 per guest.

Club notes



Our Officers for 2009-2010

President: Donna Colletti
Vice President: Lisa Stoddard
Treasurer: Ursula Dudek
Corresponding Secretary: Sylvette Hartroth
Recording Secretary: Connie Deetz
Board members: (1) Cathy Miller
(2) Aneita Frey

Refreshments

March – Sylvette
April – Lisa and Cathy
May – MaryE and Steve
June – Nikki
September – Tina
October – Larry Deetz

Upcoming events

May 16 – 2nd Annual Sheltie Make-over day



Brag

From Donna Colletti -- This is from Pinnacle Trilite Express new mom.

Well, we all should be proud of our little boy. He is amazing! For only being here since November 30, and never doing rally, Rascal really, really



listened. We didn't go off until after 3:00 pm on Thursday, and after 4:00 pm the next day. We were second from last to go

off for the day. That meant he really hung in there! Just curled up with me and waited.

On Thursday we took second place with a score of 94 out of the 100 and Thursday, we took a 1st place with a score of 98! Way to go Rascal. Am I a little excited or what. What was funny were the amount of people who thought he was going into the breed ring! He does strut his stuff beautifully.

ASSA Sheltie Rescue

In an email, Dorothy Christiansen reported that total number of shelties taken in for 2009 was 2844. As large as that number is, it is actually down 54 dogs from 2008. The past two years really showed how the economy affected pet ownership and small, commercial breeders.

PETA Protesters To Face Charges

This is NOT a joke--this is already in the works!

PERMISSION TO CROSS POST

The two women who disrupted the last night of the Westminster Kennel Club dog show by jumping into the ring to protest purebred dogs on behalf of PeTA were removed by police and booked with charges of criminal trespass.

In a new development today (Thursday) it was learned on good authority that both women will also be facing federal charges under the AETA (Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act).

A big 'Thank You' to the Board and membership of the Westminster Kennel Club for not only putting on a wonderful event that showcases dogs--purebred and not--to the American public, but also for standing up for the rights of the pet owning public.

Debarking (Bark Softening) Myths and Facts

Animal rights groups attack life-saving debarking procedure

By Charlotte McGowan

There is a move around the country by animal rights interests to outlaw the practice of debarking dogs. So much misinformation about this procedure abounds that it is truly time to set the record straight. As a dog breeder since the late 50's, I can tell you that debarking in the hands of a well trained veterinarian is a very useful tool for breeders and owners and it saves lives. I have had many dogs debarked over the years and the usefulness of this procedure should not be ignored. I know friends who have used debarking for decades with no ill effects on the dogs. Rescue groups for noisy breeds have used this procedure to save the lives of dogs that might otherwise be euthanized.

Q: What is debarking?

A: This is a minor surgical procedure to reduce tissue in the vocal chords. Some vets use a biopsy punch to remove a small amount of tissue. . Other surgeons use a laser for the same purpose. The vocal chords are not removed! The goal of the surgery is to lower the volume of the dog's bark and the ability of the bark to carry over a wide area. This procedure is sometimes referred to as devocalization but it does not remove the dog's voice. It is more accurately called bark-softening. The actual procedure is quick and recovery is also quick.

Q: Does debarking remove the dog's ability to bark?

A: No. Debarked dogs continue to bark. What debarking does is to lower the volume of the bark so that it does not carry for miles around.

Q: Is it true debarked dogs cannot communicate any longer?

A: No. This is a prominent myth. Debarked dogs continue to bark, whine and vocalize in all the ways dogs do.

Q: Is the surgery always successful?

A: Sometimes scar tissue forms and heavy barkers will become louder than when first debarked. The skill of the veterinarian is also a factor. Some vets do not know how to perform the surgery so it is necessary to find a vet who knows how to do the procedure.

Q: Is this a "cruel and barbaric procedure?"

A: No. People with little or no experience raising naturally noisy and talkative breeds may tell you this. People with breeds like Shetland Sheepdogs

(Shelties) can tell you that this procedure is simple and that it saves lives of dogs that might otherwise be dumped in the pound for their barking. Debarking is a more simple procedure than removing the uterus in spaying or removing testicles in neutering. Many dogs that are herding dogs, working dogs or small dogs can bark a lot. Many mixed breed dogs can also be heavy barkers. In modern society with heavily built up neighborhoods sometimes any barking can cause problems between neighbors.

Q: Do dogs suffer emotionally from debarking?

A: It is a huge myth to suggest dogs are emotionally disturbed by debarking. Debarked dogs can bark. Even if reduced sound comes out of their mouths, they don't seem to notice that their bark is softer. Debarked dogs that are not being constantly disciplined for barking, in fact, tend to be much happier dogs!

Q: Is it true that only criminals and drug dealers debark dogs?

A: This is the biggest myth about debarking! The majority of people who debark dogs are responsible dog owners at the end of their rope with dogs whose bark is so piercing that they can be heard for miles around. To be breed specific, Sheltie, Collie and other herding breed owners are the people most apt to do this. Herding breeds, by nature can be very vocal in their work. They also are joyful in their barking. They bark at squirrels, strangers, in play. They bark just to bark. Sheltie and Collie breeders are not criminals and drug dealers!

Q: Is it true you can train any dog not to bark?

A: I defy some of the so-called new wave of dog behaviorists to train a group of Shelties not to bark! Shelties in numbers larger than one love to do group barking. It is part of who they are. This can be true of any group of dogs.

Q: Isn't debarking a hazardous procedure?

A: Any procedure that requires anesthesia, whether it is a dental cleaning, spay, or debarking has intrinsic risks. The key to success is good veterinary skill in all these procedures.

Q: Animal rights activists have said that dogs can be debarked by shoving a pipe down their throats. Is that possible?

A. This is an oversized myth. If someone shoves a pipe down a dog's throat they might kill the dog. This urban legend has continued in the media.

Q: Do people debark just to avoid training their dogs?

A: The majority of people who debark have run out of options and are trying to be good neighbors. We are not talking about people who are irresponsible and leave their dogs out all night or ignore chronic barking. We are talking about people who are faced

with having to move or having to give up the dog. It is a procedure of last resort. A piercing bark, even on limited occasions, can be enough to cause a war in built up residential neighborhoods. Animal rights interests have painted debarking as a cruel quick fix when in fact it is something no owner does lightly.

Q: Is excessive barking due to bad breeding?

A: Here's another myth. Shelties kept birds of prey away from lambs on remote Shetland. They also kept livestock out of the crofters meager gardens and protected fish drying on the beach from eagles and other raptors. Barking is a useful tool for this work. It also helps let the owner know where the dog is. Unfortunately, in modern life, neighbors are not impressed when dogs bark.

Q: Do breeders debark dogs to hide them so they don't have to license them?

A: No. Many breeders own more than one dog and good breeders who want to be good neighbors sometimes debark a really loud dog. Being a good neighbor is part of being responsible.

Q: Anti debarking legislation is being put forth around the country as part of anti dog fighting bills. Isn't this a good idea?

A: Criminals pay not attention to laws. They are not going to license their dogs in the first place, let alone report any that may be debarked. The people impacted by anti debarking laws are responsible owners, especially people with talkative dogs. Animal rights interests want to outlaw any procedures they deem unnecessary. Responsible and compassionate veterinarians should understand that debarking can save lives by keeping dogs out of shelters and in homes. While some dogs, especially when they are the only dog in a home, can be trained to reduce their barking, others cannot be trained to the point where neighbors will not be annoyed.

Q: Do you debark ALL your dogs?

A: No. Some dogs are less noisy than others. I last debarked a dog ten years ago. This was a dedicated squirrel chaser with a high pitched voice. The squirrels are always going to be out there. I wish I could train the squirrels to move to another neighborhood but that's just about as hard as training a sheltie not to bark.

Charlotte McGowan is the author of The Shetland Sheepdog in America and is an honorary Life Member of the American Shetland Sheepdog Association. She has bred dogs for over 50 years. She has been an AKC dog show judge for over 30 years.

Please Mom (or Dad), Don't Go!

Pet Column for the week of April 7, 2008

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Ashley Mitek
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That's what dogs with separation anxiety are saying when they notice their owners grabbing car keys and heading for the door after giving them a kiss good bye (and maybe a lipstick imprint on their forehead). This behavior disorder, which is often confused with other behavior problems linked with too little exercise or under socialization, is one of the biggest problems behaviorists see today.

Linda Case is an adjunct assistant professor who teaches companion animal behavior and training at the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine in Urbana, Ill. She also owns Autumn Gold Dog Training Center, in Mahomet, Ill., and has authored several books including one coming out this summer entitled "Dogs and Cats: Understanding and Training Our Two Best Friends." She says, "the most obvious feature of separation anxiety is that stress-related behaviors are shown only when the caretaker is not present."

Dogs with separation anxiety are very attached to their owners, and upon their departure become extremely stressed. They may begin to bark, pace, vomit, or salivate excessively. Michael, the owner of Freya, a one-year-old Malamute cross with mild separation anxiety, recounts another sign of separation anxiety: destructive chewing. "It wasn't that great to come home to a couch that had been ripped to shreds, but I guess that's why cushions have two sides," he says.

Case explains that dogs with separation anxiety notice our "pre-departure cues," such as grabbing a purse or putting on shoes. At this point, the animal becomes anxious and upset.

It is important not to confuse the disorder with similar behavior signs. Young puppies notoriously chew on items when left alone, just as teenagers stereotypically get into trouble on Friday nights. These behaviors are a rite of passage and with proper training are generally outgrown. The key to diagnosing separation anxiety is noticing that when the owner leaves, the anxiety-related behavior ensues immediately upon isolation.

The goal of treating separation anxiety is to, "reduce the level of anxiety and improve the dog's level of security and confidence when isolated," says Case. It is important to

remember that separation anxiety is not just an inconvenience for an owner (having to flip the couch cushion over to the unchewed side), but it is a welfare issue for the animal.

Case recommends desensitizing your dog to departure, which means not habitually performing the same activities before leaving. The other more important and timely task is to teach the animal to sit-stay and then leave it alone for a few minutes and reinforce calm behavior. Once the dog can sit contently for a few minutes, increase the time it is left alone while you are out of view until a reward is given. Any type of punishment only increases anxiety levels and makes the problem worse.

"Dogs that experience a regular and consistent level of exercise, training, and attention tend to have lower anxiety levels," notes Case. This should come as no surprise. We humans need a certain level of exercise, socialization, and food to be healthy, and so do our pets.

For more detailed help on diagnosing and treating separation anxiety contact your local veterinarian.

*Please see the following website for more articles.
<http://vetmed.illinois.edu/petcolumnns>*