

Going to the dogs — canines mark school's clientele

AT RIGHT: Classes are taught by Helen Hudson, a professional groomer at Sleeta Kennels in Farmington Hills. She has 17 years of experience in training and showing dogs.



Staff photos by Randy Borst



Joanne Haltom (foreground) with her dog, Mindi, a Newfoundland, at a Birmingham Dog Obedience School class.

By Susan Steinmueller staff writer

BUILDING ON the natural desire of dogs to please their owners is the key to successful dog obedience, says Heather Armbruster Marr. "The majority of dogs have a desire to please," says Armbruster Marr, who believes there are few bad dogs — only untrained ones. "You should use that desire to please in training. It's just as easy to teach a dog good habits as it is bad habits."

Armbruster Marr and her husband, Phillip — a Birmingham couple with 17 years of experience each in dog obedience — last month opened a branch of their Birmingham Dog Obedience School on Nine Mile near Middlebelt in Farmington Hills.

The school is designed to help dog owners whatever the problem — a puppy that jumps all over visitors and chews slippers while showing no signs of comprehending the word "housebroken," or the owner who, when taking Rover for a walk, is embarrassed by being dragged through the neighborhood on a leash behind his bounding pet, to the amusement of his neighbors.

"I think probably the major problems people have are dogs that don't come when they are called, biting, and jumping up on people," she said. "People can expect to see a lot of improvement."

HOUR-LONG CLASSES are offered Wednesday nights in dog obedience and basic household training. Classes are taught by Helen Hudson, a professional groomer at Sleeta Kennels in Farmington Hills. Hudson, like the Marrs, has 17 years of experience in training and showing dogs.

A class for puppies age two to five months is seven weeks long; for dogs over five months, it is eight weeks.

While it is easier to train a puppy, older dogs will also benefit from the class, and it is not uncommon to train 4- and 5-year-old dogs, Armbruster Marr said.

Classes number about 15, and are conducted in the school's large, matted rooms. The group situations insure the dog will work under distraction, and help to socialize the dog, said Armbruster Marr. Private lessons are also offered. The only supplies needed are a leash and a collar.

CONSISTENCY AND discipline are the essence of good training. "Let your dog know what he is allowed to do, and what he is not allowed to do," Armbruster Marr said.

Thus, if Rover is not allowed on the sofa, let him know it — as many times as necessary.

"You have to remember when you're training dogs, there is a lot of repetition. Once you are finished the training, you still have to apply the exercises; you still have to work with the dog every day, or he will forget. You have to establish good habits."

But, she said, "Once your dogs know what you want, you'll have a happier dog."

Praise is an important part of the recipe for successful training, she said, letting a dog know when he is doing something correctly.

A reprimand is all that is needed to let him know that he is doing something incorrectly. Tone of voice is important — and is all that is needed. Striking a dog is never recommended, she said.

MISTAKES THAT people make include telling dogs confusing signals. For instance, she said, "You'll find a lot of people start yelling at their puppies. They say, 'Sit down.' That's two commands, 'sit' and 'down.' Puppies get very confused — they don't know what they can do, and what they can't do."

A better command, she said, is "sit stay" — one of the things the puppy should be doing without any problem after having attended the school.

Once a dog learns "down stay" — lying down instead of tearing round the house while you read a newspaper, for instance — that is when a dog becomes a real companion, she said.

Another mistake is that dog owners

is to believe that dogs have the same reasoning and emotional qualities as human beings do.

"People put human emotions onto dogs," Armbruster Marr said. "We give dogs too much credit for reasoning. They don't reason the way we do. And they have got their own type of animal emotions."

So many people are afraid to discipline their dog because they are afraid they won't like them. That's a human emotion. Dogs don't hold grudges.

The Marrs have three Dobermans — Dana, Rachel and Ava. "They are always with me — and it's a joy to have them," Armbruster Marr said.

DANA IS a prize example of dog obedience — she earned the title of top obedience dog in the United States. For three years in a row, she has won a hall of fame membership as one of the top 25 dogs in the country for points earned in shows.

The Marrs are members of AKC Obedience and Breed Clubs and actively promote the better education of dog care and training.

Says Armbruster of her profession, "It's a nice field, and a good field to be in because you get such a great feeling of accomplishment. Most of the problems can be brought under control."

short takes

If you recently opened a shop, captured an award, earned a promotion or are planning a new venture or project — and there's a Farmington-area business angle — we'd like to hear from you so we can share your news item with other Farmington Observer readers. Send items to: Short takes, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

- **MILLION-DOLLAR AGENCIES**
The City-Suburban Agency in Farmington Hills and the Klebba Agency in Farmington were recognized as Million Dollar Agencies by Citizens Insurance Co. of America.
The two agencies placed over \$1 million in premiums with Citizens during 1985, including automobile and homeowners policies; commercial business insurance and workers' compensation. Citizens Insurance Co. is the largest writer of property and casualty insurance among independent agents in Michigan.
- **RECEIVES AWARD**
Farmington resident and Kings Island regional group sales manager Elke Pant-Shall received the 1985 Royal of the Year award, presented to the leading new group salesperson for Kings Entertainment Co.
Kings Entertainment owns and operates Kings Island, Kings Island, Ohio; Kings Dominion, Richmond, Va., and Carowinds, Charlotte, N.C. It manages Canada's Wonderland, Toronto, Canada; and Australia's Wonderland, Sydney, Australia.
- **TV COMMERCIALS**
Geoffrey & Jeffrey of Farmington Hills have produced two television commercials for LPTV Enterprises International of Nashville. The spots are for the three-album set entitled, "Tina Turner — The Electric Lady."
"Before we took the project, we made it clear that we weren't going to produce your typical record spot," vice president Geoffrey Nelson said. "TV record spots have become a mockery of themselves."
"Since Electric Lady contains previously released tunes, the production team at Geoffrey & Jeffrey highlighted only seven songs and didn't scroll the remaining 23. We took the soft sell approach," producer Rocky Sepriano said.
Electric Lady will air on 68 stations across the country. The spots are edited into lengths of one and two minutes. Nelson, Sepriano and Brian Gabel conceptualized the spots.
- **MOVING UP**
Richard McEvilly of Farmington Hills was elected a vice president of First Federal of Michigan.
He is responsible for construction lending in First Federal's Residential Loan Administration Department.
Before joining First Federal in November, McEvilly was a vice president for real estate loans at Comerica Bank.
- **CHANGING HATS**
Dr. Larry Sell was named senior vice president of health care affairs at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan.
He had been vice president of medical affairs and medical director.
Before joining Blue Cross and Blue Shield in 1983, the Farmington Hills resident was vice president of the ambulatory care center at the Detroit Medical Center. He also practiced family medicine for 11 years at the Manistique Medical-Dental Center.
He is a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Association of Automotive Medicine, the Michigan Academy of Family Physicians, the Michigan State Medical Society, the American Medical Association, the Academy of Medical Directors and a charter member of the American Academy of Emergency Physicians.
In 1972, Sell received the National Industrial Snow Machine Safety Award for crash research.
- **NEW IN TOWN**
City Limits-Zoned for Fashion is the name of a new women's

sportswear store opening April 3 at 34635 Grand River, Farmington.
The separates and accessories store is geared to personal attention. New York and California trends will be spotlighted. There will be no charge for boxes and gift wrapping, proprietors Joyce Chersh and Rostyn Fierberg said.

- **NOW A VP**
Sandra Hermanoff of Hermanoff & Associates in Farmington Hills is the new vice president of the Counselors Academy Detroit Chapter.
The Detroit chapter is the local chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.
- **NAMED VP**
Donald Kooy of Farmington Hills was named vice president for management information systems at Providence Hospital, Southfield, with responsibility for five hospital departments.
He previously had been director of management systems.
Kooy came to Providence from Oakwood Hospital, Dearborn, where he last held the position of assistant administrator for medical staff.
He is a member of the Hospital Management Systems Society and the American Administrators Forum. He also is a nominee of the American College of Hospital Administrators.
- **SHE'S PROMOTED**
W.B. Doner & Co. promoted Diana Heindl of Farmington Hills to senior account executive.
Heindl joined Detroit-based Doner in 1984 as an assistant account executive.
Before joining Doner, Heindl was a teacher and freelance interior designer.
- **BOARD POST**
Six community leaders, including one from Farmington Hills, have accepted positions on the 25-member advisory board at Providence Hospital, Southfield.
The board advises the board of trustees and administrative staff at the 457-bed hospital.
Appointed to a three-year term was Marcia Allen of Farmington Hills, audit manager with Coopers and Lybrand. She is a certified public accountant.
Allen is a member of the National Association of Black Accountants, the Michigan Association of Certified Public Accountants and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.
She is a member of the Economic Club of Detroit and the Women's Economic Club.
She chairs the board of the Accounting Aid Society of Metropolitan Detroit. She's a board member of the Michigan Minority Technology Council.
- **EXECUTIVE VP**
Richard Fenstermacher was appointed executive vice president for Ford Motor Credit Co.'s North American Automotive Financing Operations.
The Farmington Hills resident will be responsible for directing Ford Credit's dealer financing activities in North America, where the company provides wholesale, retail and lease financing to all Ford, Lincoln-Mercury and Ford Tractor dealers through 149 branch offices.
He has been market representation manager of Lincoln-Mercury Division's general sales office in Detroit since 1983. He joined Ford Motor Co. as a statistical analyst for Ford Division in 1984 and later held several management positions.
- **HE'S APPOINTED**
National Bank of Detroit appointed James Jenner of Farmington Hills assistant loan officer in its Western Metropolitan Regional Banking Division.



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