

PARENT'S CORNER



MARILYN SUTTLE

Guiding reluctant children

Learning something new isn't always easy. Tying shoes, zipping a coat, memorizing spelling words, and reading in front of the class are all challenging the first time you do them.

When kids avoid, or even refuse to try difficult tasks, what can you do? Some skillful guidance can go a long way in helping reluctant children put forth the effort and believe in their ability to succeed.

Sometimes kids become so afraid of failing that they stop trying. They develop an, "I can't," attitude. If your child gives up, you can help by taking the focus off of trying and put the focus on "acting like," or "pretending like," she can do it. Say something like, "Melissa, pretend like you already know how to color inside the lines."

Acting or pretending takes the pressure off children and helps them get started again. It makes the task feel more playful and less intimidating.

Showing respect for their struggle is another way to encourage reluctant kids - "It isn't easy to get long socks all the way on your feet." "Pushing the button through the button hole can be tricky." These comments show kids that struggling does not mean failing. Be careful not to say, "Learning to tell time is hard for you."

Adding the "for you" is an insult. The child thinks, "Why is it only hard for me. What's wrong with me?" Instead of showing respect for a child's struggle, parents sometimes make a common mistake. They say, "It's easy. Let me show you." Telling reluctant kids that something is easy, might sound like a good idea, but it usually backfires. Hearing, "It's easy," makes them avoid trying even more.

When your kids can't figure out how to do something, are they willing to try your suggestions? You can increase the odds by starting with the phrase, "Sometimes it helps..." Notice how encouraging the following suggestions become: "Sometimes it helps to write each spelling word 10 times." "Sometimes it helps to point your bowling ball right down the center of the lane when you let go." When kids hear this phrase, they are encouraged to try. If they succeed they feel good about themselves, and if they fail, it's ok because it only helps "sometimes."

Sometimes it helps to ask kids the following question, "Would you like to know how some kids do that?" By giving children a couple of examples of how "some kids" handle new situations, they feel more comfortable choosing an approach for themselves.

Even when a child is willing to try something new, it can be hard to sit back and watch them struggle. Parents can do most jobs faster and more efficiently than kids can, but we don't need the practice, they do. By showing faith in kids abilities and giving them opportunities to practice, they can soon become competent at doing many things.

A mom in one of my corporate parenting workshops complained that her four-year-old son never did anything for himself. She and her husband had to dress him, pick up his toys, and even wash his hands for him. During our weekly session, we talked about the benefits of believing in a child's capabilities.

At the following week's session, that same mom enthusiastically shared a success story with the class. Her family went up north to stay in a cabin for the weekend. When they got to the cabin door, her son said, "Mommy open the door." Mom said, "Would you like to unlock the door yourself?" With great pride the boy unlocked the door all by himself.

Throughout the day, both mom and dad allowed their son to do many things for himself, complimenting his capabilities. The boy grew right before their eyes. He was happy and eager to participate in family activities and try new things.

Please see SUTTLE, C6

Going to the

dogs



Watch 'em pose, romp and retrieve at annual Detroit Kennel Club show

BY AMY HOOVER
SPECIAL WRITER

When you think of highly trained athletes, images of Olympians, boxers and football players usually come to mind.

But what about athletes with well-groomed coifs chasing tennis balls? If you don't think this qualifies as an

athlete, don't tell the dog owners and breeders participating in the Detroit Kennel Club Dog Show.

No matter the breed, owners and breeders spend endless hours training their four-legged stars. And according to most of these devotees, it's well worth the time spent.

"I have thirteen Weimaraners going down to the show including my American Canadian UKC Grand Champion known as Bet. She's an extremely smart and devoted companion."

More information: (248) DKC-SHOW or www.detroitkennelclub.com

ion. If you have a good-natured dog, I think it's the dog who enjoys going to the shows more," said Karen Mayo, a Weimaraner breeder from Livonia.

The annual Detroit Kennel Club Dog (DKC) Show was first held in 1916 at the old Detroit Armory. For the past several years, including this one, the DKC show has called Cobo Center home. This year's show is from 9 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, March 16-17. The DKC is expecting 2,000 dogs and 35,000



Dogs on display: An educational component of the dog show, called "benching" enables consumers to learn about different breeds one-on-one. These St. Bernard's relax "on the bench" between show activities. At top, Sister, an Alaskan Malamute, practices the tire jump in preparation for the AKC Agility Trials.

40,000 spectators to attend each day. Erik Bergshagen, DKC president says there's a major driving force that brings in the spectators. "Mainly, it's a love of animals that brings people down. Also, they come to see different breeds they've never seen before."

The shows are called "benched shows" which offers visitors a chance to meet with owners and breeders of different dogs to learn about the animals and to ask questions. When the dogs aren't in the judging rings, they are required to be displayed on a bench. The DKC Dog Shows are one of only six benched shows left in the country.

Jumping and racing

The DKC Show isn't just about good looks. There are also agility trials and flyball competitions. Agility trials have dogs go through obstacle courses and jumping over hurdles for ribbons. Flyball is a relay race with four dogs and a tennis ball to a team. Some dogs are show dogs as well as competitors in these events.

Kim O'Neil from Redford brings her laid-back Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier, Toby, to compete in flyball. They're part of a team called Pawitive Attitude that includes about twenty dogs and fifteen owners. O'Neil offers this advice to dog owners newly bit by the flyball bug: "Find a place where you can train

them and be patient. Not all dogs catch on easily. Even a dog that doesn't seem enthusiastic at first can become a flyball dog."

Whether you have a flyball dog or one competing for Best of Show, it takes patience - patience from the owner/breeder as well as patience from their families.

"My husband thinks I spend too much time doing flyball, but he understands that we're in it for the fun," O'Neil admitted.

"My brothers are very interested in the dogs and shows, but everyone else in my family thinks I'm crazy," Mayo said.

The purse for the DKC Dog Shows is the largest cash prize of all U.S. pointed shows totaling more than \$11,000 for the weekend. Best in Show each day will be awarded \$2,500. Two new class competitions have been added this year, Best Bred by Exhibitor on Saturday and Best Puppy on Sunday.

But there's more to these shows than ribbons. Spectators can view Retriever and Field Training, the Animal Planet Disaster Relief Vehicle, the Michigan State Police Canine Unit, the New Purina Dog Chow Incredible Dog Team and the American Red Cross demonstrating mouth-to-snout CPR. Leader Dogs for the Blind, the American Anti-Cruelty Society and Paws for a Cause also will be on hand.

Bergshagen advises potential dog owners to take this opportunity to educate themselves about what breeds and breeders.

"Spend a little time talking to breeders and do a little research to help find the puppy you want. Everybody wants to do something meaningful in life. Owning a dog can help fill a void and get people involved and do something better with their life than what they see," he said.

'Modern' Kessler homes are historic

BY RUTH MOEHLMAN
SPECIAL WRITER

Modern has become an historic style. The simple lines popular in homes and furnishings in the mid-20th century are part of our heritage along with Greek Revival, Federalist, Gothic Revival and Victorian.

Two modern-style homes designed by William Kessler are now in local historic districts. They are William Kessler's early designs, built when Meath and Kessler first set up their firm.

Although the houses are not yet 50 years old, they meet the Secretary of Interior Standards for historic buildings because they were designed by an award-winning architect.

Modern is an outgrowth of the International Style, which was introduced into the United States in 1928. Walter Gropius, one of the architects who originated the modern style, was teaching at Harvard when William Kessler attended.

Kessler went from Harvard to the Yamasaki firm in Detroit. Then he and Philip Meath set up their own firm. Meath attended to the business part of the firm while Kessler was the designing member.

During his career William Kessler obtained more than 131 awards for his work, has been a professor at the University of Michigan and is the senior member of his own firm. This was established after Meath

and Kessler each went their own way.

Modern represents a simplicity of lines by definition used consistently in publications to define it.

The Jack Beckwith House was designed for Jack and Faye Beckwith and their five children. Because of its flat roof, it is close to the International Style.

The current owners of the house, Jeffrey Swantek and Robert Endres are collectors of mid-20th century artifacts. Robert Endres is a designer himself, so he was well aware of the significance of his house.

The Arthur Beckwith house is another historic example of the modern style in Farmington Hills.

Jeff Swantek, who brought these outstanding houses to the attention of the Farmington Hills Historic District Commission, pointed out the unique features of the Jack Beckwith House.

A modular system divides the house into living zones, and extensive use of glass walls bring the outside right into the house. Lots of skylights are also used in the design. There is a balance in design of the bedroom wing and the garage wing, which was originally a carport.

The below-grade elevation of the house was designed to preserve a shag bark hickory grove, in which the house is situated.

The shag bark hickory is a native Michigan tree which cannot be transplanted and is therefore very special. It grows from seed.

The grid-covered entry of the house complements the grove of trees.

The Jack Beckwith family was very private, according to Jeff Swantek, while the Arthur Beckwith house has amassed numerous awards and attention from the architectural community.

The current owners of the Arthur Beckwith house, Dr. and Mrs. Emanuel Frisch, are very generous with their home, allowing architectural tours by both practicing architects and students.

Like the Jack Beckwith House, the Arthur Beckwith House is divided into bays adapted to various uses. The roof is "saw tooth" which has become the signature of Kessler's work.

It allows simple A-frame construction, but with an architect's touch.

The walls are mostly glass and the bedrooms are on one side, family space in the middle, and the entertainment sections, dining room and living room at the opposite end of the house from the bedroom.

The house was designed to meet the needs of a large family. The living and entertainment areas helped meet those needs.

The glass kitchen wall looks out on to the original gardens with a self-sustaining garden pond.

William Kessler modern houses of Farmington Hills have always been noted and admired.

Now, they're recognized as historical.