

## **Who we are**

**Heather Hatt**, Manager Lynne Glennon Sanctuary for Senior Dogs and Puppy Mill Survivors, Director of Project Home Life, Resident Care Taker. Employed at DVGRR since 2006.

**Lisa Jagielski**, Intake/ Boarding/ Volunteer Manager, Trainer. Completed Kutztown University's Canine Training and Management Course. Volunteer with DVGRR since 2012, employed with DVGRR since 2016. Adopted Lillie, one of the NC20's from a hoarding case in rural NC in 2012.

**Delaware Valley Golden Retriever Rescue**, Since 1993, DVGRR has successfully placed over 5,200 Golden Retrievers, Labrador Retrievers, Goldendoodles and Labradoodles into new homes throughout Pennsylvania, surrounding states, and beyond. DVGRR started as a foster home based rescue but in 2000 became a kennel facility. Our campus location houses our kennel, Buddy's Animal Rescue Clinic (BARK Hospital), The Lynne Glennon Sanctuary for Senior Golden Retrievers and Puppy Mill Survivors, Pap's Place Retail store, The Thomas and Marian Ludwig Adoption & Activity Center and all administrative services.

## **DVGRR's Project Home Life Program**

- Hundreds- thousands of individual Puppy Mill dogs. 148 of 349 dogs in 2018 were from Puppy Mills.
- Several bigger hoarding cases or puppy mill seizure dogs.
- South Korean meat farm dogs.
- Street dogs from Puerto Rico.

Started in a small room off the kennel. Then moved to an apartment a short walk away.

Now dogs live in group living in a house converted for them.

In 2019 we are expanding the program to the main kennel since we no longer have enough room at the Sanctuary for all the dogs who need it.

## **How to create your own Home Life room**

Where can you put it?

- Quiet area, low-traffic
- Large closet, kitchen, multi-purpose room, shed

What you may need

- Crate
- Dog beds
- Runners/rugs
- Small TV, ipod, radio
- Seating for staff/volunteers
- Cleaning supplies

## Training equipment

- Leashes, harnesses
- Thundershirts, lavender spray, essential oil diffuser, pheromone diffuser/spray
- Variety of toys, food puzzles
- Hula hoop, platform, balance discs, mini stairs

## **Basic Body Language**

Your body placement can determine a dog's reaction.

It is best to:

- Sit or crouch
- Sit sideways or at a right angle to the dog
- Do not stare
- Give the dog space, do not corner
- Use slow movements
- Talk gently
- Do not immediately reach toward the dog
- Use high value food but do not keep offering if dog refuses to eat

## **Working with Food**

- High Value Food vs. Biscuits
- Start working with high value food right away. Toss in kennels and walk away.
- Fearful dogs eat better at first when people are not watching.
- Pick foods that are easy and convenient – things people can donate!

## **Walking Through Gates and Doorways & On Leash**

- Teach to "follow"
- Get dog to follow other dogs
- Allow dog to drag a leash; use a long leash
- Do not stand in doorway, instead lead dogs where you want to go
- Alternatively, get out of the way. Stand to the side or out of sight.
- Do not drag dog on leash, but you can gently pull and release to get started.
- Drop or toss food through doorway. Use treat/retreat.

For shelters/rescues/fosters without fenced areas, walking dogs on leash:

- Make certain dog is SECURE!
- Martingale style collars
- Front clip harnesses
- Other secure harnesses
- Use two leashes, slip leads

-Do not use flexi leashes

-Start on very short walks in the building

-Go for short walks outside next to a barrier (building wall, fence line)

-Too much open space can be scary, they want something to cling to

-Walk with another dog or two

Leash walking puppy mill dogs or other types of skittish dogs is one of the most difficult challenges!

### **Mentor Dogs-** (Helper Dogs or Social Facilitators)

- Dogs are inherently social.
- Dogs understand canine body language better than human body language.
- We have found mentor dogs to be the most helpful tool working with fearful dogs.

### **Most important qualities of a good mentor dog**

- Friendly with other dogs but not too pushy.
- Friendly and interactive with people.
- Good at reading other dog's body language.
- Clear with their own body language.
- Adaptable, reliable.

### **Other factors**

- Age- should have enough energy to be interactive.
- Gender- more of an issue with unneutered dogs.
- Size- too big could be overwhelming, too small could be a problem too.
- Good leash manners.

### **What do Mentor dogs do?**

- Provide comfort.
- Show the fearful dog people are good.
- Lead scared dogs through doorways or past scary things.
- Play with scared dogs.
- Teach scared dogs how to live with people.

Mentor dogs should be used in the shelter or rescue setting and these "crisis" dogs ideally should go to an adoptive home with another dog. While that dog may not be the "perfect" mentor they will help the crisis dog. Be sure they get to meet before the dog goes home with them.

## **Video of Bo**

Three year old breeder from what most of the general public would consider a good breeder. She has a website with all 5 star reviews, supposedly she has champions in her bloodline. She did not provide any paperwork or health records to us. Bo was shut down, anxious, fearful of people until his little friend, Honey Bee comes into the room.

## **Dog- Dog Play**

Play- activity engaged in for enjoyment and recreation, especially by children.

### **Importance of play for these crisis dogs:**

- When moving, the stress hormone, Cortisol, is lowered.
- When moving, the activity in the fear center of the brain, the Amygdala, is lowered.
- Play is one of the first behaviors to cease when a dog is hungry, threatened or under environmental stress.

### **Some “science” to back up the usefulness of play for crisis dogs.**

- Rise Van Fleet’s semi feral dog Katie, born to hoarding situation, escaped and lived in the woods for 2 months.
- Rise documented her progress in great detail.
- Every time she noted a positive change in her play style there was a positive social change.
- She found the same with many other similar dogs.

### **DVGRR’s Shy Dog Park**

- Once a month for 2 hours.
- Dogs must be approved by Heather.
- Owners must sign a waiver.
- Have some play facilitators/ mentors attend.
- Be sure no dog bullies others.
- No pressure, let them roam or participate.
- Ask for \$5 donation/ family.
- Many of our attendees have seen big social changes since coming to SDP.
- DVGRR has space, if you don’t, consider renting space from a local trainer or daycare.

## **Working Inside**

### Petting/Touching/Affection

- Sit and observe dog before petting
- Keep your face away from the dog's face!
- Do not corner a fearful dog, always give an escape route
- Sit at a right angle to the dog
- Gently pet where dog can see your hands – under chin, on chest, slowly on body
- Avoid touching paws and tail

### Read books

“Touch” (Targeting hands or other objects)

Place paws on objects; walk over, under and into things

### Scents

- Sprays/oils
- Food puzzles

### Walk in/out of crate

- Crate training can be scary
- Feed meals in crate
- Toss treats, treat/retreat
- Research different types of crates
  - Plastic
  - Wire
  - Heavy Duty
  - Soft-Sided
- Read Hard to House Train by Peggy O. Swager (available on Amazon.com)

Record progress in journals to send home with adopters.

## **Treat/ Retreat**

If you coax a fearful dog to you with a tasty treat, are they really learning to trust you or are they just feeling very lucky they survived and escaped with the treat?

Twofold rewards, food and space.

### **When it helps**

- Fear of people.
- Fear of objects.
- Fear of locations.
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## **Multiple ways to use treat/ retreat (video examples)**

- Dog gets to retreat.
- Human moves away. (Shown in the leash walking section.)
- Dog moves away from a scary object or location.

## **Volunteers**

Choosing appropriate volunteers to work with these dogs:

- Reliable
- Willing to listen/able to train
- Patient/compassionate

Have a variety of people – men, women, senior citizens

How to find and choose appropriate volunteers:

- Interview/Online volunteer app
- Handpick volunteers (do not have to accept everyone who applies)
- Start with a small group and grow slowly
- Use existing excellent volunteers
- Ask people who have adopted challenging dogs from you to volunteer

How to manage volunteers:

- Use an online sign up calendar, we use Teamup.com (free!)
- Email updates to your volunteer team, keep them posted on the dogs.
- Train them thoroughly – have printed material for them to take home and read.
- Any type of challenge with a volunteer, discuss promptly and find a solution. You are allowed to fire volunteers!

## **Finding Appropriate Adopters and Counseling Them Pre- and Post- Adoption**

Outline your requirements of adopting a shy/fearful/skittish dog.

These are our requirements:

- Physical fence required
- Older children
- Must have a mentor dog
- Patience and positive attitude toward the dog
- Someone who wants to put work/training into a dog

Be honest with adopters

For each individual dog, think about what that dog needs the most and also what their greatest fears are. For example, we always send our skittish dogs home with a special harness and seat belt attachment and warn adopters of the dog bolting through doors and how to make it safe in their home to prevent that.

Make sure to share the positive aspects of the dog and what the dog has accomplished while in your care.

Do not assume adopters know everything and do not judge them for not knowing things you think they should know. Explain and teach them about the dog and why the dog needs a certain type of home and adopter.

### **Provide post-adoption resources**

- Create private FB group
- Dog Park for special dogs
- Be available, have a contact person they can reach if they have questions
- Compile a list of positive rewards trainers in your area
- Compile a list of reading resources they can easily access (Amazon, DogWise, HSUS website)
- Create your own literature!

### **Our contact info:**

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# PHL JOURNAL CHART

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Volunteer Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ AM \_\_\_\_\_ PM \_\_\_\_\_

Did dog approach you today? \_\_\_\_\_

Did dog take a treat? If yes, what kind? \_\_\_\_\_

Did dog play with toys? If yes, which toys? \_\_\_\_\_

What did dog show fear of this session? (Circle and explain)

Being touched      Noises      Leash      Television      Toys

Being brushed      Doorway      Flooring/Rug      Human hands      Other

Explain here: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What activities or training did you work on this session? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did dog respond? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What did dog enjoy or accomplish this session? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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