

How to train your dog for a day at the beach

At last, it's safe to sport your favorite pair of shorts! Your dog's excited too, and sans his winter onesie, he's bounded from the car wearing nothing but his walking harness. He's ankle deep in sand when you note his eyes locked on to the ocean, and for a moment you panic. It's not the water you fear, it's the whirl of rubber and its metal tonnage. As you grab the leash, a car horn sounds in the distance, and a woman's voice, screaming her dog's name.

Those who live in Clatsop County and wish to enjoy beach fun with their dogs have choices, but also challenges. Gearhart and Warrenton residents must share their entire beach strand, 24/7/365, with automobiles. Luckily, modern dog training offers survival skills to help protect your dog.

"Touch" and "loose leash" behaviors can be trained quickly and built on over time. To prepare for training, cut one cup of unseasoned, unheated turkey hot dogs and hard cheese into pea-sized cubes and place in a non-breakable bowl. Find a private, quiet room in your home, with no other animals in or near the space.

CANINE CORNER
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& DAHLIA



Sit on the floor, in a chair, or on a bed. Place the bowl of food near your hand but out of your dog's reach and view. Have the scent of food on the palm of the hand with which you will be training — that is helpful for the first several touches. Here are the steps for teaching touch:

1. Gently place and hold your open palm in front of dog's nose, about one inch away.
2. Wait until dog touches palm with nose, then immediately say yes! and retract your hand.
3. Immediately after saying yes, take one tiny piece of food from bowl and deliver to dog's mouth from your hand, then retract hand. Once dog has eaten it, repeat the first three steps three times. Repeat three more times, but now placing your palm 3 inches farther from dog's nose.
4. Once your dog is comfortably



RAIN JORDAN

Rain Jordan of Elevate demonstrates the "Touch" method with a formerly feral dog.

executing the touch behavior, add the word "touch" as you present your palm. As your dog gains confidence with touch, continue increasing the distance of your palm several inches at a time, always adding the word "touch" as well. Eventually, this Touch palm cue will become a short-distance recall

behavior.

The steps for teaching "loose leash" are as follows:

1. Dog is on walking harness and leash; your leash end is against your stomach with one hand; food is in or accessible by your other hand.
2. Walking a slow or normal pace, for every one to two steps

your dog does not pull on the leash, say Yes!, then deliver one tiny piece of food as you walk. Repeat as many times as needed depending on your dog. (If the dog begins checking in with you — looking back at you — while walking, that's a plus! Reinforce that with a yes! and delivery of food.)

3. Increase goal to three or four steps with leash slack, then five or six, etc. Your dream goal: An entire walk with the leash remaining slack. Rule: No punishments or "corrections" as these can negate learning, trust, and confidence.

How do these skills help your car-beach challenge? Touch-recall increases off and on-lead, visual, and voice guidance while Loose Leash training creates a habit and mindset that reduces the risk of your dog yanking the leash away and ending up in front of a car. Teaching, combining, and positively reinforcing these good behaviors will keep your dog safer and provide you with greater peace of mind.

Rain Jordan of Elevate Dog Training & Behavior is a certified professional dog trainer and behavior specialist in Gearhart.

Plastic pollution, a world problem

Hope and change for our environment

By Katherine Lacaze
For Seaside Signal

It's not new information all the world's continents are connected by water; as a result, however, all civilizations across the globe also share responsibility in curbing the "mammoth problem" of plastic pollution threatening the environment.

"This issue is way bigger than us in the United States," Charlie Plybon, Oregon policy manager with the Surfrider Foundation, said during a Listening to the Land lecture at Seaside Public Library on May 16.

Plybon's presentation, "Plastic Pollution: Acting locally to curb a new world order in ocean pollution," was the final lecture of the 2018 Listening to the Land series, presented by the Necanicum Watershed Council in partnership with the library.

While the current trends related to plastic pollution are worrisome, Plybon's lecture was not about doom and gloom, but rather "a hope-and-change kind of presentation," said Chrissy Smith, coordinator of the Friends of Cape Falcon Marine Reserve, a north coast-based volunteer organization.

The scope of the problem

Plybon, who has a degree in marine biology and is a member of the Oregon Ocean Policy Advisory Council, shared important statistics, giving listeners a glimpse of the magnitude of the plastic pollution problem.

According to a 2016 report called "The New Plastics Economy," by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and the World Economic Forum, if plastic pollution continues being generated and entering the environment at its current rate, it may outweigh the total mass of fish in the world's ocean by 2050. Such a presence of plastic has the power to change entire ecosystems and species, Plybon said.

Additionally, multiple studies suggest there are more than 2.25 trillion particles



SURFRIDER FOUNDATION

Plastic pollution was the topic of the Necanicum Watershed Council's May Listening to the Land lecture.

of plastic currently floating in the ocean, and fish off the west coast ingest more than 12,000 tons of plastic per year. Humans also ingest plastic microfibers, which were found in 83 percent of tap water samples collected from at least a dozen countries on five continents, according to a study commissioned by data journalism outlet Orb. For the United States, 94 percent of water samples were contaminated by plastic.

A brief history

How did this happen? Plybon shared insight into a cultural shift that transpired around the mid-21st century. In 1955, Life Magazine ran an article called "Throwaway Living" that celebrated the convenience of single-use products and disposable items. The consumerism mindset that began proliferating at the time can be summed up in a quote attributed to Victor Lebow, an economist and retail analyst: "Our enormously productive economy demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfaction and our ego satisfaction in consumption."

"We need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced and discarded at an ever-increasing rate," Lebow wrote.

Such a system is not sustainable, however. Humans cannot exist on a finite plant with linear system, Plybon said.

"Everything goes one way and into the trash," he said. "That's just not the way we can live. Eventually we will

run out."

Solutions such as recycling, incinerating, or converting microfibers into synthetic fleece are not sufficient, or even effective, in keeping plastic out of the environment. Also, China, the world's largest importer and recycler of plastic, has implemented increasing restrictions on foreign waste in the past couple years; most plastic items — save thin-necked plastic soda and water bottles — are no longer recyclable in the current system.

"Your 'recycling' isn't being recycled," Plybon said.

Solutions in the system

Most importantly, people need to consider the entire life cycle of the items they consume, and ask themselves.

"Be aware of what you're buying, and be aware of where it's going to go," Plybon said. "If it's single-use and it's plastic, it doesn't make sense for it to be around forever after you used it once."

In addition to consuming less in general, individuals can switch to alternatives and embrace a Bring Your Own culture, using reusable mugs, water bottles, to-go containers, straws, zip lock bags, jars, and more. Buying in bulk is not only affordable but also allows people to avoid the wasteful packaging that often accompanies single-serve food products.

The next step is finding community solutions, such

as setting zero-plastic waste goals at schools or workplaces; conducting educational events to raise awareness; holding outdoor cleanups; implementing local plastic-reduction policies; creating bans on plastic bags or polystyrene; or putting together a municipal plastics solution committee. Advocates can engage large-scale suppliers to ensure nonplastic alternatives are accessible and affordable for restaurants and other businesses.

The Surfrider Foundation recently launched its Ocean Friendly Restaurants certification program in Oregon, giving restaurants a way to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability. To participate in the program, restaurants must follow four criteria: No using expanded polystyrene (also known as Styrofoam); following proper recycling practices; using reusable tableware for onsite dining and only providing disposable utensils for takeout food upon request; and no offering plastic bags for takeout orders. Additionally, restaurants must choose a minimum of three other criteria from a set of six.

Finally, individuals need to take their concerns about plastic pollution directly to the companies producing the items — the first point of the linear system. The world's largest corporations make more money than most countries, and that depends on consumerism and constant buying. Engaging irresponsible companies through letter-writing campaigns, phone calls, or strikes, and supporting companies with responsible practices can lead to tangible results, Plybon said.

"We are the ones that can be empowered," he added. "If we want to change the system we're in now, we have to be advocating at a higher level."

The Listening to the Land speaker series offered January through May, with presentations held the third Wednesday of every month at the library. The program, which is free and open to the public, is finished for 2018 and will resume in January 2019.



SUE CODY

Jeanne Nasby, Marion Blake and Jack Bland play bridge at the Astoria Senior Center.

Socializing through games and movement improves health

By Susan Cody
For EO Media Group

Did you know that socializing and playing games can keep you healthier longer?

In the comfortable lobby of the Astoria Senior Center a few people are relaxing and talking. About 20 bridge players are in another room gearing up for an afternoon of cards. In the cafeteria, another 18 people gather to play pinocle.

Similar to the Bob Chisholm Center in Seaside, activities abound for residents to get out and do something. Whether it is line dancing, music, yoga, exercise classes, free movies, cards, board games, education or a musical jam session, there are ways to engage and meet like-minded people.

The Astoria Senior Center is a great place to socialize, says Larry Miller, the center's director. The new space is designed for many activities that don't interfere with each other, such as playing pool, using computers or eating lunch.

"Everybody enjoys it," Miller says. "It is welcoming and friendly, and you can get lots of snacks and coffee. The coffee's always on."

The benefits of playing games

"Researchers have discovered that mentally challenging games such as bridge are well suited for older people because the games offer intellectual and social stimulation on a routine basis," AARP reports. "A study in 2000 at the University of California, Berkeley, found strong evidence that an area in the brain used in playing bridge stimulates the immune system."

Paul Buckman of Astoria, says he was mourning after his wife died. He tried group counseling, then took some bridge lessons. He found bridge was much more helpful than counseling.

"You sit down at the bridge table and everything else just melts away," says Sue Kroning a Seaside bridge instructor.

Buckman says, "It's a fascinating game. It keeps me away from TV and napping on the couch."

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