



The Pit Bull Lover Gazette

March Issue

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Editors Corner: New Additions to the Gazette



Date:

From: Jason Mann - Senior Editor In order to make the Gazette more reader friendly I have decided to include an Adobe PDF version of the Gazette you can download and read on your PC or MAC.

This way you can download it, print it, and take it with you to your favorite chair or pass it on to friends if you would like.

In order to view the PDF version of the Gazette you will need to obtain Adobe Acrobat Reader. The application is free to the public so you don't have to worry about buying anything extra.

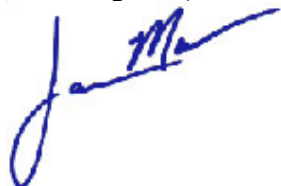
To download the free reader visit [the Adobe Download page by clicking here.](#)

[Click here to download the March issue](#) to your PC or Mac.

I would like to also apologize for the delay getting this months issue out and I appreciate your patience in the matter.

Enjoy the rest of this months issue!

Best Regards,



Jason Mann - Senior Editor and Publisher

Project Pit Bull™

Dog Aggression in the American Pit Bull Terrier

Before we begin I would like to say that dog aggression is a completely different trait than human aggression. Human aggression in the American Pit Bull Terrier **should NOT be tolerated and should be dealt with immediately.** I do not tolerate people mean Pit Bulls. I do not make excuses for them and I **will put dogs to sleep that show this behavior.**

One of the largest problems we face as American Pit Bull Terrier fanciers is people making excuses for their dogs behavior. Things like, "oh, she won't bite, she just doesn't like to be touched there." Or "She bit that guy because she's afraid of men." Or other excuses or as I call them, lies to mask the truth. Excuses and denial cause great damage to our breed.

There are far too many great dogs out there dying because people make excuses for their unsound, incorrect, potentially dangerous dogs.

Now that I've gotten that off my chest. Let's continue...

Dog Aggression in the American Pit Bull Terrier

Dealing with a truly dog aggressive dog can be a nightmare. You feel like you can't take them out anywhere because they start flipping out and acting the fool when other dogs are around. You also start to feel guilty because the dog isn't getting enough exercise or attention.

Stress levels increase, the house is unbalanced and you finally hit the end of your rope and seek out help.

True dog aggression is dangerous.

Dog aggression is acceptable in the American Pit Bull Terrier because that's what it was refined to do. Fight other's of their kind. While dog aggression is an acceptable trait in the breed, super dog aggression is not.

What I call super dog aggression is dog aggression that is so intense the dog views other dogs as food. This is **unnatural**. Even in the American Pit Bull Terrier.

When a Pit Bull starts to see other dogs as a food source training or modifying the behavior is all but impossible. The only hope is if the dog is young enough. However, in these extreme cases, I always recommend the dog be put to sleep.

Why?

Because there are few people that can safely manage this type of dog and the behavior is **unnatural for the breed**.

Thankfully these hard core examples are not that common within the breed. Let me explain how a normal dog aggression can turn into super dog aggression. If you have a dog that shows any dog aggression this information will help you learn more about how to work with your dog.

Dog aggression is a management issue. Once the dog shows dog aggression from that moment on, you will be their manager.

In short, you can not train or modify the behavior completely out of the dog. What you can do is make sure that in every situation your dog is set up to succeed at **not showing dog aggression**. This will help reduce the problem from occurring.

I for one do not expect my dogs or any Pit Bull to like all dogs. It's unrealistic. It's like asking people to like everyone they encounter regardless of what that person does to them.

On the other hand, I do expect my dogs to behave in every situation. If my dogs don't like another dog I don't push them to make friends. But I don't avoid allowing them to **try and make friends** either.

Let me explain.

If you have a dog that is aggressive with other dogs your first instinct is to avoid other dogs. This is the **wrong way of thinking**. You are telling your dog that their aggressive behavior is the right choice. Because they are showing aggression you are allowing them to win the game by avoiding the situation.

With each successful display of aggression your dog will **repeat this display, each time it will get worse** until they offer the behavior by default.

A couple of common situations...

Situation #1: Sally has Parker. Parker is a great dog with people and loves to play and romp all day long. Sally takes Parker to the dog park one day and a rude dog jumps on him. He turns and attacks the intruder and hurts him badly. The owner of the rude dog runs over and sweeps up their dog and runs away from the situation.

Sally, in shock, stands there wondering why Parker, her little angel did this.

What happened was, Parker used aggression, the other dog (and owner) fled making Parker the winner of the situation.

What happens next is, Parker has learned that aggression allows him to win. To gain the confidence to do it again. This time it will happen faster.

After a few weeks of avoiding dogs and dog parks Sally decides to give it another try. Parker is off leash running around and another approaches him. He turns and attacks the dog. This time the dog does not run, Parker gets more intense and does not recognize the

signals of the other dog (Selective breeding for dog aggression in the Pit Bull deleted this common dog understanding) and continues to attack without mercy.

He kills the other dog.

Parker has learned that he can kill other animals. That no one can stop him. That he is the king kahuna and this makes his behavior stronger. He will offer this intense dog aggression immediately in ever situation from here on out.

Sally has to learn how to manage him. She can't. He goes to the vet and is put to sleep.

Situation #2: Ralph has a great dog named, Bobo. Bobo and Ralph are out walking and a dog runs up to Bobo. He is nervous and unsure why this dog is all over him. He warns the dog with a snap to the face. The other dog goes into attack mode and Bobo defends himself.

Ralph separates the dogs quickly and removes Bobo from the scene. The other dog flees back to the streets.

Ralph, without knowing it, has actually taught Bobo that dog aggression is **not the right response** in that situation. Why? Ralph took Bobo away FIRST. This shows Bobo that he did not win but lost.

Ralph reads up on dog aggression and starts working with Bobo. He takes him everywhere. Allowing him to meet new dogs and when he sees Bobo getting nervous or "cornered" he removes Bobo from the situation. He stops the aggression before it happens and by removing Bobo he is showing him that he is submissive to the other dogs and that he lost the encounter.

Bobo is manageable. Parker is not. The difference is education and interaction. If you avoid other dogs, your dog will not get better. If you worry your head off about your dog, your dog will sense this and not get better. If you educate yourself and approach it slowly, you can help your dog learn to control where and when they should be using their Pit Bull skills.

We do not want to let them use their skills. By setting them up to have good experiences we can change their default behavior to normal dog greetings **until they prove to use otherwise.**

If you have a dog with dog aggression you should start with setting up situations with a dog that you know is outstanding with other dogs and has great doggy manners. This will help your dog learn what is and what isn't acceptable in dogdom.

As always, if you have any questions feel free to email. I also cover dog aggression in [The Pit Bull Training Handbook](#) and in the [Private Pit Bull Forum](#) in greater detail.

Pit Bull Training Tip of the Month: Leadership Rules and Exercises

In the [Pit Bull Lovers forum](#) I have written about these rules and exerices quite a bit. I decided to make this information available in the newsletter for two reasons...

1. Everyone who shares their life with a Pit Bull should know and use them.
2. My motto as a dog trainer/pit bull lover is, "Share my knowledge and do no harm."

Without sharing this information I am doing a disservice to the Pit Bull community. Therefore, here we go...

Why Are These Rules Important?

In order to live a healthy, balanced, and happy life with your dog you must understand that dogs are creatures of habit, structure, and consistency.

Day in and day out they **expect** consistency in their lifestyle.

This is one reason why when people move their dogs start showing behavior problems. They move is causing them to become nervous, fearful, aggressive, or a host of other unwanted behaviors because their routine is being upset in a huge way.

Your dog expects routine and consistency in their life. Their instincts and genetics demand it.

These rules are also important to establish you, in a non-violent manner, as the leader.

The Ten Commandments of Pit Bull Ownership

Yes, they are that important, I call them Commandments for a reason. For the average Pit Bull owner these rules are **unbreakable commandments**. No exceptions.

Rule #1: Thall shall not let thy dog on thy furniture. **Ever.**

This is a biggie. Especially the bed. The bed is your's. The bed is your personal space and since we spend more than half our lives asleep, your bed is the mecca of furniture for your dog. That is where you have relations, that is where you sleep, that is where your skin cells accumalate, that is **your spot**.

Allowing your dog on the bed is like giving a nine year old the keys to your car to drive to the store.

If you are allowing your dog to sleep with you, stop. Especially if your dog is showing behavior problems like jumping, nipping, mouthing, barking at you or your family, or a host of other little things that turn into power struggles.

Rule #2: Thall shall not let thy dog free feed.

One word for this practice. Ugh.

Leaving food down for your dog can be compared to having a child with an eating disorder and allow stocking your fridge with candy bars.

You are allowing the dog to set their feeding time (giving them control of their food and you) and you are also allowing them to learn how to pick at their food. If you've been free feeding your dog and your dog is overweight, stop free feeding.

If you have been free feeding your dog and your dog is food bowl aggressive, stop free feeding.

If you have been free feeding your dog and you are experiencing behavior problems like jumping, nosing your hand for attention, growling at you while eating (red flag!), stop free feeding.

If you can't understand why your puppy isn't potty trained yet and you have been free feeding, stop free feeding. What goes in on a schedule, comes out on a schedule. :o)

Feed at least once a day (I feed one time) and make that time **after you have already eaten**.

Allow your dog to see you eat something (a cracker, a meal, doesn't matter just something) and then set their bowl down for them to eat.

I also recommend asking them to sit and wait for 30-60 seconds before allowing them to eat.

If your dog is food bowl aggressive do the above **and** put the food in the bowl using your hand (dog should NOT be around you at this time). The purpose of this is to mark their food with your scent.

Rule #3: Never allow your dog to leave through a door (any door) before you.

This goes for the car as well. My dogs are not allowed in my truck until I tell them it's okay to get in. They will sit and wait by the door until I say, "ok, let's ride." They are also required to hold a down while riding unless I have them restrained (restrain your dogs please.)

Why do I do this? Because your dog must **follow you** in order to establish yourself as a leader. If they lead you, how are you going to control them? Quick answer, you're not.

By making them wait before going in and out of doors until you have gone through you are telling them that you are the leader that they must wait and allow you to enter first. This is also a patience building exercise for those door chargers out there.

Rule #4: Never let your dog chase kids.

This one is kind of obvious. Dogs are hunters. They **chase down** their food. Kids are not the same as adults. They do not smell like us until their teen years and they do not sound like us either. They squeal, they use jerky movements, they are animated (dogs LOVE animation) and this causes a dog to chase.

Chasing kids gives the dog power over them. It shows the dog that they are in charge, after all, a leader would not run from them.

Never allow your children to run from your dog. Ever. This will stop the problem before there is a problem.

A word about motion.

Dogs use their eyes for one thing only. To spot movement. They don't hunt with their eyes nor do they use their eyes to identify things. They use their eyes to spot movement, the ears to focus on the movement and the nose zero's in where the movement is coming from and what the movement is.

A perfect example of this is watch a dog run after an animal like a squirrel or a rabbit.

When a dog chases these animals the rabbit **stops in it's tracks and freezes**. Notice the dog responds in the same manner. As soon as the animal stops, the dog stops and starts to use it's other senses (hearing and smell) to locate the animal.

Rule #5: Never allow your kids to chase your dog.

The opposite of rule #4 is never allow children to chase your dog.

Why? First off it could make your dog leary of kids. Not a good thing to teach your dog.

Second, if the dog turns and the kids run from it, it has learned that confronting them results in retreat. Your dog has now learned to turn the tables and treat the kids with confrontation. Again, not a good thing to teach your dog.

Finally and the most important reason is, this teaches your dog that your kids are not leaders but littermates. Littermates chase each other and they turn the tables on each other and it's a game. However they are not going to be living with each other forever and

eventually the chasing turns into a serious game of pack placement.

Never give your dog power over your people. **Ever.**

Rule #6: Thall shall not play tug of war

About 4 1/2 years ago I would have not included this into my rules. Now, I have dealt with enough Pit Bulls that are down right rude and crude and the only thing that I see wrong is their people play tug with them.

Some experts will tell you it's okay as long as you win. I am not an expert, but I will tell you this, don't do it.

Spring poles? This is not tug of war with you. This is tug of war with a toy and a structure. You are not playing with the dog the dog is playing by itself.

Remember the last part of rule #5. **Never give your dog power over you or your people.**

Tug of war gives your dog power. How? It teaches your dog to match strength with strength. It tells the dog it is stronger than you and it can impose it's will using this power.

If you've ever had a hard puller shake the tug toy you know that within a second the dog can strip you of the toy.

What have you shown the dog? You have shown the dog that if it uses **aggression** it will win.

I don't know about you, but I don't want to teach my dog that aggression is an acceptable drive to use on me or anyone else for that matter.

It's easier to play fetch or use a spring pole and incorporate training into both.

Rule #7: Thall shall not let thy dog hide under things

As with Rule #1 allowing your dog to claim the territory under objects like chairs and stools and what not can also lead to problems.

If your dog is under your chair, move them out from under it and give them a proper bed to lay in that is out away from their hiding spot.

But Jason, my dog isn't aggressive or they aren't afraid, or (fill in excuse here).

My answer to that is, it's just a matter of time before they start to show you something. Odds are they do, you just miss it.

Rule #8: Thall shall not lavish attention on thy dog for no reason

Okay, I'm going to get some hate mail over rules 1, 7 and 8 for sure. I mean who am I to say that you shouldn't give you dog loads of pampering and attention right?

Well, I'm a guy with a fearful dog that has gotten loads of attention and was made worse when lavished and pampered. Now that I have thrown her out into the world she is not so fearful or pushy. I'm talking about my dog Honey by the way.

I'm also a guy that has seen dogs bite their owners for NOT lavishing attention on them (most are not Pit Bulls by the way).

I have seen Pit Bulls bark, whine, snap, growl, and jump on their owners to get the attention they have been giving so many times before for free.

So yeah, I think I have some new info for those Pit Bull pampering owners.

Stop it.

Wanna know a little secret of mine? My dogs are ignored until I want to show them attention. Oh, you are horrible Jason! Shame!

My dogs LOVE me. Why? Because when I do pay attention to them it's on my terms and my terms are usually fun terms.

The rest of the day the rest and be dogs.

When I say their names, they respond **quickly**.

I'm not tooting my own horn. I'm showing you why lavishing your dog without work is a road map to bad behavior.

Think it about it this way.

We send our kids to school daily. They are expected to **earn good grades**. In return they get things. They can stay out with friends longer, they can borrow the car, they can sleep over with a friend on Friday night, etc...

If they don't get good grades what do we do?

Ground them.

Why should your dog be able to avoid this situation? Your dog is an animal. Not a kid. Your dog is a dog.

They must **earn the right to be given praise by showing good behavior**.

For the record, my dogs get plenty of pampering. But on my terms. They have the best medicine, the best exercise, the best training, the best diet, and they are very well taken care of. All you have to do is look at them. They are not unhappy in their home.

But they have earned the right to go places, to get great food, to get love and pampering by showing me they can behave.

If you pamper your dog for free your dog owns you. You are the slave to the dog and that is not something you want to teach your pooch.

Rule #9: Thall Shall Walk thy dog as often as possible

I asked a lady who emailed me about her Pit Bull who was jumping and chewing on things how many times a weeks she walks her dog.

Her response was, "About once a week. Sometimes twice."

I then asked, how far to you walk her? Do you know?

Her response was, "About three blocks or so. I'm not sure. It's not that far though, I get tired fast."

Can you spot the reason (A) this dog is jumping and chewing and (B) why this lady should **not have a Pit Bull**?

Walking your dog is a bonding experience. It is how you form the strongest relationship possible with your pal.

Try this on for size. Don't walk your dog for two days.

Write down their behavior pattern. Spot jumps, spot chews, spot whines, etc...

Now, walk your dog for 2 days in a row.

Write down their behavior pattern.

Almost without fail two things will happen immediately.

1. Spot will seek you out more and want to be near you.
2. Spot will show better behavior because he is tired.

I notice that my dogs listen better and seek my company out more intensely after our walks. They **love it** when I put a hat on. They know were heading out for an adventure.

Not only does a walk give your dog exercise, the walk also helps you understand your dog better and in turn, your dog learns about you as well.

Lead the walk, lead the dog, earn their trust.

Rule #10: Thall shall never, ever, under any circumstances hit their dog or yell at their dog or scold their dog.

Ever. Period. End of story.

I am amazed by the amount of people who hit their pals. Even a small short slap on the nose damages your relationship.

I am not a push over by any stretch of the imagination. My dogs have rules. They **must obey them** or they are punished.

However, their punishment does not include being hit or scolded with a harsh loud voice.

Let me share some facts with you.

Hit your dog and your dog will eventually bite you, run from you, and completely fear you. Why do this to your pal?

Yelling at your dog does nothing. Your dog has incredible hearing. They hear you. Yelling does not make them suddenly better in the behavior department. It does nothing to get your message across because they are already misbehaving.

Scolding your dog by pointing, giving them that "I know you did it" talk does nothing. They don't know what they did. They live in the moment. A dog does not care, think about, or have thoughts about the pee it took 10 minutes ago. It is natural for them to do that. Do you think about the pee you took 15 minutes before? Nope. It's something we do.

Your dog does **not know they did something wrong**.

This is one of my pet peeves (no pun intended). If your dog takes a pee on the floor while you were out in your car getting something they do not know what you are upset over when you notice it.

I repeat, **they do not know what you are upset about when you notice it.**

Dogs are masters at reading our body language. They react to that and not the accident they had in the house.

Think about it. When you see your dog doing something you don't like, do you honestly think they say to themselves, "Oh, she busted me, I knew I should have held it. I'm in for it now I will run!"

Not by a long shot. They read your body language and reconize that you are upset. And from previous experience they know you are about to scold them.

I have heard every excuse on earth and then some for not following one or all of these rules.

There is only one excuse for not following the above rules.

Laziness.

When I consult with people and when I take on a dog training client the first thing I share with them is this list. Everyone has a problem with this list. Everyone.

Understand that this is not to make your dog suffer or punish them. This is to enrich your relationship through consistency, rules, and fair treatment.

We expect this of people in our lives and I for one think we should expect it of our canine companions.

Pit Bull Health Tip of The Month: To Feed Raw or Not to Feed Raw...That is the Question

Quick answer. If you have the time to properly learn how to prepare a raw diet, do so. If you don't, don't.

Long answer...

Feeding a raw diet is not easy. It takes planning, understanding, and balance. Lots of people think that feeding raw is tossing some hamburger into a bowl and letting their dog(s) eat it. It's not that simple.

Raw diets are well planned based on the dog.

I have three dogs at the present. None of them eat the same type of raw diet. Honey gets more fish, Angel gets more beef and Patch (the new edition it seems) eats both.

Patch gets more essential oils in his food than Angel or Honey because he has skin problems. Honey gets more fish to help with her eyes and coat, not to mention she loves seafood. Angel gets more beef with no veggies and a bit of oil to help keep her coat from drying out.

In short, do a lot of research before starting your dog on a raw diet. Get information from you vet about the pro's and con's. Most vets will immediately tell you to feed dry commercial food because, well, it's easier for them to do that. Not to mention most commercial pet food companys back Vets with samples and other goodies they make money off of.

Talk to breeders, rescues, experts on the BARF (Bones and Raw Food) diet, experts in the pet care industry like doggy day cares etc...

Arm yourself with as much knowledge as you can find **before creating a raw diet plan** for your dog.

Subscriber Questions

Do you think that some Pit Bull's that are bred to have a huge head are more responsible for killing someone in a random attack, in a case

involving rabies for instance, or some other disease.

This question is from Jeff. Jeff is writing a paper on Pit bulls for school and asked me this question.

I do not believe a Pit Bull that is bred for head size is any more dangerous than a normal sized example of the breed.

I do however believe these dogs are more likely to develop health and behavior issues that could lead to such an attack.

When you breed for head size, coat color, size of body, or anything other than temperament you will find yourself with a bad apple.

There are some lucky dogs that come out fine. On the whole though, when you isolate something like head size and you leave temperament out of the picture you will find that breeders breed dogs that should not be bred.

On that note, a dog that has a massive head is incorrect for the breed anyway so this in of itself regardless of temperament is incorrect breeding.

I would also think that a massive head would give more jaw strength to the dog. In a case of a dog with a normal sized head attacking vs. a case with a dog having a massive head it would be likely that the damage would be increased with the larger head.

I would like to point out that with the larger head comes a larger structure. I have yet to see a 25 inch head on a dog standing 17 inches at the withers. That would be a top heavy dog to say the least. Your question would also have to address this as well.

Larger head leads to increased overall body size which would increase the weight of the dog greatly. A large dog with a powerful bite of any breed is going to inflict more damage that a dog that is smaller in both head size and over all body size.

Don't let size full you though. The Bully breeds are renowned for packing a huge punch in a small package. One of the "hardest hitting" protection dogs ever was a female Pit Bull that weighed in at a whopping 38 lbs. She would easily knock the decoy to the ground with each bite.

Resources:

Where to find the items and products mentioned in this months issue

Harnesses: As always we have [custom made harnesses for Pit Bulls located in our shop.](#)

Collars: Black 1 1/2 inch nylon buckle collars are also [in our shop.](#)

Leashes: We are adding some sharp high quality braided leather leashes to the shop here at PitBullLovers.com. You can pre-order yours by sending **\$25.00** to webmater@pitbulllovers.com through [PayPal.com.](#)

Let me know if you want black or brown. These are top notch 6 foot leather leashes that are braided. I love these for training and every day walking.

Shirts and Gear: Visit the [Pit Bull Lovers Gear Shop](#) for a wide selection of shirts for both you and your canine pals.

NEWS FLASH! - Order your copy of [The Pit Bull Training Handbook](#) and I will donate 50% of the proceeds to a rescue of your choice or mine. When you order simply let me know which rescue you want to donate to by emailing me.

There are thousands of dogs in need of our help. Why not help them while you help yourself become a better friend to your Pit Bull by securing your copy today.

If you have any cool resources you would like to see made available in the Pit Bull Lover Gazette send me an email to Jason@PitBullLovers.com and I'll be happy to consider them for addition.

Legal Stuff

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That concludes the legal talk.

Best Regards,



Jason Mann

Senior editor - The Pit Bull Lover Gazette

Proud Doggy Dad - Angel and Honey. Two of the wildest dogs I've ever had the pleasure of sharing space with.

P.P.S. Do you like The Pit Bull Lover Gazette? Why not pass it on to a friend? You may copy this in it's entirety as long as you don't change anything. Or have them send a blank email to PitBullLovers@getresponse.com

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