

PAWS 'N PROS, *from page 31*

proof your house and yard. Lift items from your floor that could result in his getting choked. (Like your favorite Italian leather shoes or small items that could lodge in his throat)!

He is going to chew - that's his job - so don't leave your precious items where he can reach them. Remove cords and plugs from his reach and supervise him in rooms where those items cannot be removed or replaced!

Inspect your yard before he does! Look for escape routes, holes in fences or ways to dig out. If your yard is not fenced research the new "electric boundaries" or use a puppy playpen or a cyclone run. These are available through pet shops, but be certain you are getting reputable help. These methods need explanation and solid advice.

Yards also can be dangerous to your pup. They sometimes house harmful critters, rattlesnakes and coyotes for example. Remove poisonous plants and any hazardous pesticides or fertilizers from his reach. Make your yard a safe place for him as you would any new baby.

Pools also are a major threat in our area. As soon as possible, weather permitting, teach him to get in and out of the pool at the same place from the steps in the shallow end. Yes, this may invite him to become a "pool pup" but it is far better than the alternative - a dead dog! Until you are certain he understands and can achieve this process do not leave him unattended near the pool.

TOYS, TOYS, TOYS AND CHEW TOYS

Invest in lots! Be careful though, some require supervision and or a human companion to play with. There are so many wonderful toys on the market. Buy a variety and rotate them. Choose from stuffed soft toys and hard rubber balls and bones and vinyl/latex squeakers, rope toys, tug toys and so on. Then play with your pup - tossing, tugging and cuddling. Often times giving him a soft cuddly toy (made for Pets) to sleep with helps to relieve some of the loneliness.

Then stock up on chews. Place them strategically around the house and offer them as an alternative to the antique chair. Let him know it's okay to chew, just be selective!!

Taking children to help choose toys for the pup is great. They again feel a part of the process and can learn from an experienced salesperson how important it is for the pup to have his own toy and not one of theirs off the floor!

(Buddy has a wicker basket at our home filled with toys and chews. He knows where to get them and helps himself when he feels like playing.)

THE RIGHT WORDS

Here's where you all must agree and then practice. Being consistent will make or break a relationship.

Choose words for general training.

For example, "Off," when you want him off your leg or couch and "Down" when you want him in a reclining position. Sit, stay, come and up are all words you'll need to be comfortable with. (Here's where role playing helps.) Learn when to use these commands and how to use them. Your tone of voice is also important. Say it like you mean it.

Keep in mind whenever you give a command it must be followed - even if "you" make the result happen. For instance, when giving the command "sit," say it once, count to five and if he's not obeying gently push his rear end into a sitting position. Once the command has been followed give lots of praise, even if you have made him obey. With this in mind do not give commands from a distance. If you ask you pup to "come," and he doesn't listen, then you take off after him and he in turn runs, all you've taught him is a game. You say come, he runs, you chase, he runs...Trainers use lunge lines for the exercise in "Come," where the pup is attached to a long line and retrievable! (A plus for training videos, books or professional trainers.)

Your puppy wants to please you and your verbal praise and physical affection are what confirms his acceptance. Give him lots!

HOUSEBREAKING

Pursue housebreaking with determination and patience. Puppies establish hab-