

Dr. Oakley says....

“I’m in training, and I don’t like it!”

Dr. Oakley has started dog obedience classes and everyone is happy about it except for him! Mrs. Z is taking him to John Gagnon’s Dog House for classes which is mostly full of four to five month old dogs. She thought that Oakley would be a shoe in since he is around 4 years old and is already calm and easy going. She initially wondered if she was in the right class because all the other dogs were so young and full of energy....she shouldn’t have worried!

We did not recognize how stubborn Oakley is! He is gentle, sweet...and independent. All he wants to do in class is play with others. He’s even refusing hot dogs as bribes! We need for Oakley to be attentive and responsive to us as we’d like to take him with us on off-lead adventures in the woods. If we cannot increase his recall ability, he will have to stay leashed.

We even entertained the idea that perhaps, he just isn’t very smart or is hearing impaired and couldn’t figure out what it was that we wanted from him. That also appears incorrect. It appears that he hears me just fine; it’s his will that isn’t bending at all. Admittedly, bratwurst is beginning to get us over the hump! With the bratwurst addition, we are hopeful that Dr. O and Mrs. Z will work through his training issues and he will earn the privileges of being in the woods with them off lead. It’s a beautiful time of year to enjoy the local trails.

Leo is a naughty cat. As many of you know, our beloved and sometimes mischievous office cat, Leonardo, disappeared for 10 days last month. Leo is a very large cat and being a former stray, appears to have been in a scrap of two in his life and could handle those things. However, about 3 nights after he was gone, the Zickmann family heard a pack of coyotes nearby that were very excited. Cat catching excited, they worried? Night after night, day after day, the office staff and the Z family patrolled the neighborhood looking and calling for him, yet there was only silence.

One evening, ten nights after he left, our good neighbor called to say that they thought he was in their front yard. We went out and called, and he answered. He seemed a bit out of sorts, scared and uncertain about where he was, but when we opened the door to the clinic, he raced in and seemed to know he was home! He paced awkwardly until we filled his food dish and he dove in. He had lost 3 pounds but appeared to be in good health. Our best guess is that he was stuck and unnoticed in someone’s barn or out-building and spent some hungry days waiting for a door to open.

What to do about Leo? Training! We are in for lots of training around here. Again, we called John Gagnon’s and asked if they could help us train our cat on the Pet Stop invisible fence. We, are few weeks later, we are still working on it and Leo isn’t quite as fond of going outside as he was before. But, we feel safer! Special thanks to Laurel at the office for keeping up the Leo's training outside on a lunge line. Since the office is right on Trumbull Highway, the underground fence ensures Leo’s safety from road and coyote dangers!

We will keep you posted about how our training is going. Neither Dr. O nor Leo is happy about the situation, but it is for their own good and for ours too! Losing a pet is always terrible but losing one that you could have prevented is worse!

Be safe,
Dr. O