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Ask the VMD

Leon Riegel Dr. Maas Tim Trayer Edgar Sheaffer

No barking, dog
A reader asks:
Is there any reason why my six-month old Irish Setter mixed puppy doesn't bark?
Do dogs have to learn how to bark from other canine friends?
J. Traverso, Lancaster

Dr. Maas comments:
Without further information about the puppy's general health and the environment it has been raised in, it is difficult to ascertain whether there is an organic, physical, or psychological problem in the dog.
Barking is partly innate, but also partly learned. That is, if a puppy is in a setting where there is little stimuli, it can respond with either extreme barking or excessive vocalization.
If it is kept with humans or other animals, particularly puppies of similar age (as in a litter where others are barking but it is not), then the likelihood of a true physical problem increases.
The owner should first decide whether the puppy is indeed attempting to bark but unsuccessfully producing sounds. If this is the case, two areas may need to be investigated.
The first is inherited deafness, possible in any purebred dog but more prevalent in Dalmations, English Setters and merle Australian Shepherds. There is no therapy for this condition.
The second situation is primarily a degeneration of the nerve supplying the muscles of the larynx or voicebox, associated with trauma. The diagnosis is confirmed by vocalization of the vocal cords under anesthesia and requires surgical correction. But the outcome depends on the cause in any one animal.
This degeneration is most uncommon in the dog. More cases are seen in horses and humans. Along with a weak or absent bark, dogs suffering from this condition experience difficulty with respirations and a subsequent reduction in exercise tolerance.
In this particular case, if no other physical signs are present and the puppy is not totally isolated from human contact for long periods, growth and time will probably result in normal vocalization later.

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Game Commission to propose antlerless license drawing

HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania Game Commission is studying a proposal which would require all county treasurers to conduct public drawings to select recipients of antlerless deer licenses in 1981.

The proposal would result in uniform issuance of antlerless deer licenses in each county and insure fair and equitable distribution.

Requiring an impartial, random, public drawing will relieve county treasurers of unnecessary and — in many instances — unjustified criticism of the distribution process.

Under The Game Law, county treasurers act as agents of the commission for the distribution of antlerless licenses. The Game Commission establishes distribution guidelines, and determines the number of antlerless licenses to be sold in each county.

The Game Law provides that antlerless licenses "shall be issued without restriction or regard to the county residence of the Pennsylvania applicant."

The Game Commission has long advocated public drawings to select antlerless license recipients, and the proposal to require county drawings is in line with the agency's desire to have the intent and spirit of The Game Law followed.

Some county treasurers have conducted drawings for years, and this method of distributing licenses has gained in popularity to the point where, in 1980, nineteen county treasurers had adopted the procedure.

Hunters applying for antlerless deer licenses would follow a procedure similar to the one used in 1980.

County treasurers, under the Game Commission's proposal, would be able to accept applications for antlerless deer licenses beginning Monday, October 5. All applications received until the time of the drawing on October 7 would be included.

Each county treasurer would notify the news media in his or her respective county no later than October 1 of the time and location of the drawing.

Applicants would be permitted (as in the past) to submit up to three applications in a single envelope. This provision continues to permit several members of a family or close friends to hunt together if their envelope is selected.

No person would be permitted to submit more than one application.

Under the proposal, all antlerless license applications would be mailed to the county treasurer. All permits would be mailed by county treasurers to successful hunters after October 14.

If antlerless deer licenses remain available after completion of the drawing, they will be issued on a first-come-first-served basis.

Under the proposal, no drawings would be conducted by the Game Commission.

The Game Commission will study the proposal, and then vote on the plan at the agency meeting in April. If the proposal is approved at that time, final adoption could not come until the June meeting of the Game Commission.

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Lancaster to hold two estate meetings

LANCASTER — Two meetings on estate planning and farm transfers will be held in Lancaster during the coming month.

The first meeting will be held Thursday February 26, 7:30 p.m. at the Farm and Home Center.

That session will focus on estate planning, wills, and taxes. An update and review of laws governing estates for farm families will be given.

Three first-line speakers will talk at that meeting. They include M. Elvin Byler, Lancaster attorney; Roland Freund, area farm management specialist for Penn State; and Fred Hughes, head of the farm management department at Penn State.

The second meeting will focus on farm transfer arrangements. It will be held at the Farm and Home Center Thursday, March 12, at 7:30 p.m.

Participants in that session will review parent agreements, partnerships, contracts, changes in the corporate law, installment sales, and tax advantages to be realized by a well-planned estate program.

Speakers at that meeting will include Roland Freund and Fred Hughes.

For further information on either of these meetings, contact County Agent Jay Irwin at the Farm and Home Center, or call 717/394-6851.

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For Tickets Contact
William Garges - 215-343-6253 or
Connie Anderson - 609-267-5605