



# Fetching Facts & Noseworthy Notes

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## Upcoming Classes

### Puppy Class:

Monday Nov 5 – Dec 10  
Wednesday Nov 10 – Dec 15

### Doggy Manners:

Monday Nov 5 – Dec 10  
Wednesday Nov 10 – Dec 15



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## “I Ain’t Afraid of No Ghost...”

Many people enjoy the spooky and scary aspects of the upcoming Halloween holiday! Haunted houses, zombies, ghosts and ghouls are considered part of the “fun” of this time of year. And while you may enjoy getting “spooked” or startled, not everyone – human or canine – agrees!

As people, we are able to choose not to participate in a night of scary movies or haunted hayrides. But for our dogs, it is our job to keep them safe and happy. Fear is not a good feeling; the heart races, the eyes go wide, breath becomes shallow and safe haven is sought with a stress filled mind. Since our dogs cannot “tell us” when they are afraid, whether it’s Halloween or any other interaction, it is essential for us to know the signs of fear and stress in our canine companions.

Once we recognize our dog is stressed or afraid, we must eliminate or remove the cause of the stress. Sometimes this will be a one-time occurrence; other situations will require a training protocol to help your dog cope with future interactions without fear or stress. Knowing what specific situations cause your dog fear creates an opportunity to teach him how to feel safe instead of threatened.



So, what are the signs of stress and fear?

- 🐾 Cowering
- 🐾 Furrowed brow, ears to the side
- 🐾 Pacing
- 🐾 Moving away
- 🐾 Refusal to eat
- 🐾 Lip licking
- 🐾 Panting
- 🐾 Hyper-vigilant
- 🐾 Yawning when not tired
- 🐾 Moving in slow motion



If you see your dog doing any of these behaviors, assess the current situation. What is going on around your dog when he is showing these signs? Note everything, even things your dog is normally familiar with, to ensure you have a detailed description of the situation. Also, remove your dog from the situation; taking him far enough away that he is able to relax.

Some scenarios may be very rare; others may be something he has to deal with on a frequent basis. In either case, there are several training options to help your dog be successful. To ensure success and the proper approach to addressing fear, contact a positive trainer. Punishing or ignoring a dog for being afraid will NOT resolve the issue! Just as a person afraid of spiders will not be “cured” by being locked in a closet full of spiders! There are positive ways to change your dog’s view from “scary scary!” to “I’m happy and confident!”

## Q's Views...



I totally love people! All shapes, sizes and kinds of people make me wiggle wag with joy! The problem is, sometimes I can be intimidating to little people because I am 85 lbs of big black Labrador. Since big black waggy dogs can be frightening to little people, the rule on Trick or Treat day is that I stay with my brother Kirby and get to have a Kong in our bedroom. I would love to greet all the kids, but I would feel really sad if some were afraid of me.

Even if your dog loves kids, not all kids love dogs! The safest bet is to keep him in a safe room or behind a baby gate until Trick or Treats are over.

## Angel Koda's Komments...



Since I am now an angel dog, I am going to give it to you humans straight: most dogs do NOT like to be dressed up in silly costumes!! If your dog looks "put upon" when you jam him into a costume, then he is *not* happy. He does not think he looks funny or cute. Take the time to read your dog's body language and facial expressions – those two things will tell you whether or not you have a "costume dog!"

If the costume makes your dog stressed, use a festive collar or bandana instead! Last year, my brothers and I sported festive fall bandanas for the holiday! We were totally adorable, too, I must say!

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## A HAPPY TAILS TALE....

This month's tale is dedicated to Max and his Mom, Angela. When I met Max last spring, he was nervous, uncertain and fearful. Lucky for Max, he was adopted by Angela and her family; who believed in Max and not giving up!

Max was a bit uncertain, but he began to adjust and trust his new family. However, he was still afraid of other dogs. I started working with Max around Kirby – a dog I knew would be calm and focused on his handler. We worked at a pace Max was comfortable with; gradually getting him closer to Kirby. We used two rewards for calm behavior from Max: distance and food. Max was far enough away from Kirby so he would calmly acknowledge Kirby's presence. He would look back to his Mom and receive a treat for being calm. Then, we would walk a distance away so Max did not feel pressured to continue to move toward Kirby.

Over a few months, with continued practice and training, Max was able to walk up to Kirby and greet in a calm manner. He was also able to walk past Kirby on a sidewalk and walk side by side with Kirby. Kirby was calm around Max, helping Max not feel stressed about being around another dog. Kirby's demeanor allowed Max to address his fear at his own pace.

A fearful dog can learn to overcome his fears. It takes time and patience; and using a professional trainer, familiar with the process, is the best way to achieve success.

## Kirb's Blurb!



Halloween is the holiday I just do not get. Loud silly kids dressed in funny costumes ringing the doorbell? Dogs dressed in weird costumes? Not to mention all that poisonous candy lying around! A dog's nightmare for certain!

I say go ahead and enjoy your ghouls, ghosts, tricks and treats, but allow your dog hang out someplace safe and quiet until you are done with your festivities. If you assume your dog is Ok, check for signs of stress: furrowed brows, lip licking, yawning, looking away, low tail, shaking as if wet. Please be aware of these signs plus the look in your dog's eyes.

For me personally, a quiet room with a stuffed Kong is the best kind of Halloween party!