

Hyde Park Living on Lisa Desatnik

So Much PETential brings pet owners and their pals in harmony



Lisa Desatnik with Sam, her family's dog

Lisa Desatnik, owner of So Much PETential, has witnessed the great ability of animals to become skilled teachers of their caregivers. She has listened to the voices of frustrated owners to those animals, sometimes at the point of complete despair; and, she has seen the destruction of homes and relationships when pet behavior goes awry.

But Lisa has also been those families' source of hope. As a pet training coach,

Lisa works individually with pets and their owners to prevent and solve pet behavior issues using the most positive, behavior-science based strategies.

"Whenever I go into a home, I always look for how I can help everyone succeed. How is the environment influencing that pet's behavior, what skills are missing that – if learned – can help solve the problem, and what can the pet's owners do to be more effective teachers," said Lisa.

"Clarity and consistency are so im-

portant when it comes to training – knowing what criteria you are looking for, and then providing reinforcement consistently and immediately following that behavior is going to help the pet understand the lesson plan. When you teach in the most positive way, you get a student who is eager to want to learn," she said.

Puppy skills, basic manners, loose leash walking, recall, reactivity and fear or shyness issues, crate training with big and small dogs are sample issues she has worked with. She has also helped clients with parrot related behaviors such as fear, stepping up or screaming.

Dr. V.J. Fairhurst, AAHA accredited Montgomery Animal Hospital, said, "A problem pet owners sometimes have is getting their dog to listen and respond to their commands. Lisa has achieved tremendous results in correcting this problem with a number of my patients. I have built my veterinary practice on an unwavering commitment to quality and service, so I'm selective about the professionals I recommend. Lisa has never let me down. Where others have failed she has succeeded."

A lifelong animal lover, Lisa has been studying the behavior science and how it applies to the success of people and their



Bear, the adorable Brenning family pet who is meeting her PETential thanks to Lisa Desatnik

animals for more than 13 years. It all began in a quest to solve her own issue when she discovered and was helped by Dr. Susan Friedman, a psychologist at Utah State University who has pioneered the use of applied behavior analysis with the care and training of animals worldwide. Since then Lisa has continued studying from Dr. Friedman and other leaders of positive training and behavior management. Lisa is now on the leadership team for Dr. Friedman's online international group teaching companion pet owners around the globe about applied behavior analysis; and has shared her knowledge locally as a pet behavior columnist for *Hyde Park Living* for over eight years.

The Brenning family in Indian Hill is one of Lisa's clients. "After ten months our puppy was still not house trained, jumped up on visitors, took off running whenever the opportunity presented itself and disliked being touched. Our training methods were clearly not working," said Jackie Brenning. "Lisa has a golden touch with animals. In thirty minutes, she had our dog calmly lying at her feet waiting for the next instruction. After just a few sessions with Lisa, our dog would come with simple signals, and walk on a loose lease in step with me versus trying to run away. Lisa has also really helped her with sensitivity issues. If we followed her house training suggestions more consistently, we would have that down as well.

"Lisa completely relies on positive reinforcement which makes the dog want to perform. I wish we started working with Lisa as soon as our puppy arrived before her bad habits developed but Lisa has done a great job helping us train her."

Hearing comments like that is Lisa's big reinforcement. "For me training is about so much more than simply problem solving. It is also about strengthening relationships and quality of life."

To learn more about Lisa Desatnik, <http://www.SoMuchPETential.com>.



Lisa and her best pet pals - Barnaby, the African Grey on her shoulder (left) and Dreyfuss on my hand