



Security with a snarl

By SANDY NELSON
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Debbie Lanning doesn't even worry any more if she forgets to lock her door at night.

The young Fircrest woman rests easily since she bought Adler and began training him to be her personal bodyguard about four months ago.

Adler is a 2-year-old German shepherd.

If he's in the car, I drive anywhere I want to go," Lanning said. "I can go for walks at 10 p.m."

When she works late, she brings Adler along and doesn't worry that someone could be lurking in the shadows. If someone tries to sneak up on her, he will hear. Two words, and Lanning can turn her sweet-tempered dog into a snarling set of jaws that should deter all but the most determined attacker.

Unlike a gun, "no one could ever take it (a guard dog) away from you and use it against you," Lanning said. "If they get past him to me, there's probably nothing I could have done to prevent it."

Lanning bought Adler as a pet, but trainer Ron Pace of Canyon Crest Kennels in Puyallup convinced her that Adler had what it took to be a good guard dog.

Lanning is one of the growing numbers of people who are opting for dogs to protect them or their homes and businesses, Pace said.

Another is Dianne Bell, who invested in two dogs after her Federal Way nursery was burglarized three times in two weeks this spring.

Beauregard and Miss Summer are used up during working hours and patrol Bell's seven-acre tree farm during the night. The German shepherds are trained to attack trespassers and can't be bribed with a steak or other tempting goodies.

"A gun is only good when I'm there," Bell said. "The dogs are there to protect (the nursery) when I'm not there."

The thefts have stopped and "all my friends are terrified," Bell said.

Instead of buying a dog already trained for protection, Pace recommends that people buy a dog that has potential and train it themselves so they know how to make the dog respond. People who buy trained dogs need to learn how to control the dog anyway, he said.

Otherwise, he said, "it's like giving

(them) a loaded gun when they don't know how to handle it."

People who rent attack-trained dogs to protect them while jogging are playing with fire, he said. "The people and dogs don't know each other; anything could happen."

Pace buys and resells German shepherds, Dobermans and Rottweilers — the dogs he says have the most potential as guardians. He'll sell a promising pup and train its owner for about \$1,000. Those who already have a dog pay about \$340 for the three-week class.

Both male and female dogs make good guard dogs, but females seem to be more protective of people than properly, Pace said.

For five of his seven years in the business, Pace has worked with the Pierce County Sheriff's Department and the Tacoma Police Department helping officers train their canine co-workers. For the past two years, he's put on attack-training seminars for the Washington State Canine Association.

But most of his business is private lessons, teaching people how to handle their dogs. Obedience training begins when the pup is more than 4 months old. Protective training can start at 1 year.

We teach anybody how to bring up a dog as a good family member," Pace said. "We teach them to be trusted around kids."

We use the natural instinct they have to protect, but put it under control. Instead of letting the dog turn on (attack) when he wants to, we teach him to turn when you encourage extra

"You should be able to turn him on and off so he doesn't hold a grudge," said Pace. The trainer demonstrated his confidence by waving his hands menacingly in Adler's face, only moments after the dog had been turned against him. Adler was alert, but kept his cool.

Dogs are trained to ignore everyone except their owner and to respond only to their owner's command. Dogs who guard businesses and homes are also trained to protect a confined area and to respond automatically, whether their owner is there or not, Pace said.

Another way dogs are a more effective deterrent than guns is that "a gun can't alert me in the middle of the night," Pace said.

Dianne Bell of Federal Way, above, holds 80 pounds of ferocity in rein during a training session with her dog, Beauregard. Trainer Ron Pace, right, provokes an attack from Debbie Lanning's dog Adler, and then reviews leash techniques with Bell and Beauregard.

Staff photos by
SCOTT TAKUSHI



It makes good cents to give children an allowance

How does your child pay for his or her summer activities? For some parents it's a persistent plea for another quarter, "just one more dollar," or the inevitable advance on the weekly allowance. Planning for a child's summer-time finances is in order now that school is out, says Louise Hovde, King County extension agent for Washington State University.

The free time offered by summer school vacations gives kids more opportunities, not only to earn money, but also to spend it. Rather than succumb to the pressure and dole out dollars indiscriminately, Hovde suggests that parents use the summer months as a training ground for the chil-

dren's money management skills. How to begin? If you are not currently giving your child a regular allowance, consider doing so. Children can only learn how to manage money if they have some of their own for practice. A sum given regularly allows them to make spending choices and understand that money is a limited resource — two essential lessons in simple budgeting.

At what age should allowances begin? Many experts suggest first grade as a point at which a regular weekly allowance is appropriate.

How do you decide on the size of an allowance? Rather than set an arbitrary figure, help your child

keep a record of what he or she spends for about two weeks. Then review the list together and divide it into "needs" and "extras" as well. This may also be the time to set ground rules for what the allowance is expected to cover — not only for the summer, but for the coming school year as well.

What happens the first time little Johnny blows his entire weekly sum in a few hours of video arcade bliss? Use the situation to reinforce sound principles of money management, advises Hovde. Like the rest of us, children learn from their own mistakes. Resist the temptation to cut off the allowance as punishment; instead, point out that Johnny made the choice

himself, and must now live with the consequences. You might work with him on a "better budget" for the following week's allowance — but avoid subsidizing him in the meantime.

So what if The Big Event of the Summer is day after tomorrow, and your child is busted? Offer him or her some alternatives. An occasional advance of an allowance is okay, as long as you insist on repayment.

A second alternative is offering your child a special job around the house or yard to earn the extra money needed. This should be a job unrelated to a child's ordinary household chores, those he or she is expected to do routinely. Paying

a child for routine chores or requiring chores to "earn" an allowance are practices to be avoided, according to Hovde. "Children should grow up understanding that they are expected to pitch in and help with regular household work — not because they are going to get paid, but because it is part of being a responsible family member," she says.

Finally, you might also do some creative brainstorming with your child to compile a list of potential money-making ventures for the summer months. Learning the connection between money and work is valuable — and seeing possibilities beyond the corner lemonade stand or the age-old pa-

per route can help a child see work as an activity that can be fun, as well as profitable.

If you have a mini-entrepreneur at home, don't automatically cut off the allowance when he or she starts earning their own money. Keep the regular income coming so budgeting practices can continue — and encourage extra earnings to go toward saving for a special item or event. If the item is big, such as a bicycle, consider "matching" a child's summer savings so the satisfaction of achieving the goal is not delayed. It's easy for a younger child to lose the savings incentive if a positive result can't be experienced within a few months.