

**Board of Directors**

**2002-2003**

**President**

Ginny Price, C.V.T.  
pricecvt@aol.com  
727-341-3763

**President - Elect  
Newsletter Editor**

Julie Shaw, R.V.T., CPDT  
shawjk@purdue.edu  
765-494-8154

**Treasurer**

Kim Clark, BS, R.V.T.  
765-628-7033  
kimclarkbsrvt@sbcglobal.net

**Recording Secretary**

Amy Parmer, B.S., R.V.T.  
amyparmer@hotmail.com  
765-564-1170

**Corresponding Secretary**

Donna Dyer, C.V.T.  
GntleLdr@aol.com  
804-379-4702

**ACVB Liaison**

Andrew Luescher, DVM, PhD,  
DACVB  
luescher@vet.purdue.edu

**Members at Large**

Cassandra Vong, B.S., L.V.T.

**Advisory Panel**

Dr. R.K. Anderson, DVM, DACVB  
Dr. Guy Hancock, DVM, MEd  
Dr. Wayne Hunthausen, DVM  
Dr. Karen Overall, VMD, PhD,  
DACVB

## President's Message

This is my last president's message to you. It is a bittersweet time for me. I will be handing over the presidency to Julie Shaw during our annual business meeting in Denver at the AVMA conference. It is nice to think of the extra time I will have to finish my degree in psychology and work on animal behavior research at the University of South Florida, but I will miss being your president in many ways. Our society is truly fortunate to have such leading members of the veterinary behavior field involved. We are all delighted to have Julie taking over the reins as president. I have to tell you that when Julie Shaw, Donna Dyer and myself started this behavior society in September of 2001 we had no idea that in the summer of 2003 we would have such a large number of individuals involved. It has been a wild ride. I am very proud to be part of a veterinary technician society that has grown from 3 to 360 members in such a

short period of time. Our growth has been fast and furious.

It is now time for fresh blood in the cored and fresh ideas. We shall see what the future brings, but I see great things in store for technicians in general and veterinary behavior technicians in particular. This is an exciting time to be a veterinary technician. Thank you all for your help in the first few steps we have taken. We will continue to need all of you and your ideas along with your hard work in the future. I hope to see many of you in Denver at the second annual business meeting on Monday, July 21st. Look to the listserve for the details as they are finalized.

Ginny Price, CVT

**Ginny Price**

SVBT President

## Thank You to Our Sponsors For Their Outstanding Support of the Society of Veterinary Behavior Technicians

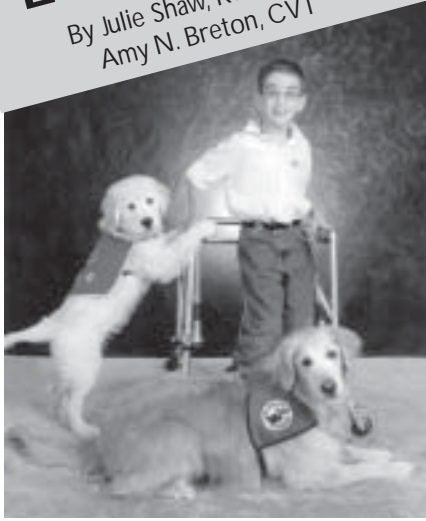


Hawaii Mega-Cor, Inc.

See page 5 for discription of our sponsors and their generous support

## Editor's Bark

By Julie Shaw, RVT, CPDT  
Amy N. Breton, CVT



"Hero", Dylan and "Faith" Shaw

I hope this summer's edition of The Behavior Perspective finds you all enjoying the much awaited warm weather and long lazy evenings.

I am thrilled to have accepted Amy N. Breton's offer to become our new newsletter editor. Amy has experience in newspaper editing and is familiar with the editing software. I did not expect her to begin the position until our fall edition but she has jumped into the deep end on this expanded-membership-drive edition. I am now able to focus on my new responsibilities beginning in July as SVBT president. Thank you Amy – and you do not know how much I mean that!

I would also like to thank my friend and boss, Dr. Andrew Luescher for his patience over the last two years. He has rarely uttered a complaint while I have spent a tremendous amount of time working on SVBT projects including editing articles for Veterinary Technician journal submitted by SVBT members, editing the website and putting together the first seven editions of The Behavior Perspective. He is a true supporter of veterinary technicians.

Many people have inquired as to how "Faith" and "Hero" are doing. "Faith" is now seven months into her remission from her lymphosarcoma. She had a very difficult time one month ago with a sterile cystitis caused by the Cytosin she was taking. Dylan and I have made the decision to remove her from some of her chemotherapeutics to increase the quality of her life. We decided that we would rather have her with us for a shorter amount of time if it meant she was more comfortable. She is now almost 100% back to her pre-cancer self and we are cherishing every moment. The only

negative about having her feel so well is that she makes it difficult to train "Hero". She tends to shove him out of the way so SHE can assist Dylan. In spite of that, "Hero's" training is making steady progress. He has learned to retrieve but has a long way to go in perfecting his "hold". He currently finds it amusing to "toss" items rather than hold them. Our telephone has taken a few serious tosses by the little rascal. He is also learning to turn on lights, how to "brace" and to tug off clothing (Dylan usually ends up being dragged across the living room floor, but hey, it is a start!). I took advantage of a few of the DOGS! Course participants' talents and had them successfully teach "Hero" to "back-up" next to a wheelchair.

I am excited about the future of SVBT and of The Behavior Perspective. Please continue to submit your articles, questions and book reviews. We couldn't put out a quality newsletter without such quality members. Julie Shaw, RVT

## The "Editor's Bark" is Passing the Leash to...



Amy & Serena

As I look forward to the challenge of putting together a professional and informative newsletter for the members of SVBT, I stop to ponder "what if I fail?" It's human nature to constantly question ourselves. That's what makes us human. My background is limited in behavior medicine-it is more defined in newspaper editing. For eight years I was the editor-in-chief of my high school newspaper and then my college newspaper. My ultimate goals were to maintain the integrity of the writers, challenge those who read it and push the limits of what the paper could accomplish. I hope to continue that with the SVBT newsletter.

I am currently employed as the head technician at a small animal veterinary clinic in Massachusetts. I graduated from Becker College in 1998 and passed my certification exam that same year. My two loves in my profession are emergency/disaster medicine and, you guessed it, behavior medicine. I currently hold the position of Deputy Logistics Officer for VMAT-1 (Veterinary Medical Assistance Team).

Besides veterinary medicine, my interest include, hiking, running, skiing, relaxing and spoiling my pets like mad! I run agility with my dog, "Serena" who was an adoptee from my veterinary clinic (hit-by-car-stray). I also have been adopted by my wonderful diabetic, megacolon cat, "Matte," 9 year old netherland dwarf rabbit, "George" and a very healthy parakeet, "Bluegrass." (Isn't it true that all technicians own wonderfully "medically challenged" pets?)

I hope that you will feel free to drop me an e-mail if you have any ideas for upcoming SVBT newsletters. I look forward to putting together the newsletter for all of you and hope that I am able to keep up with the high standards that Julie set before me.

Amy N. Breton, CVT

## Welcome New Members

Elissa Wilson, R.V.T.	OH	Deana Edwards, R.V.T.	OH	Cheryl Chang	HI	Jodi Yamashiro, R.V.T.	WA
Alicea Schaeffer	IN	Erin Markey	LA	Robin Hong	HI	Lisa Smith, L.V.T.	NY
Amy Gunter	NY	Erin Yamaguchi	HI	Sheri Montalbo	HI	Shannon Wright, C.V.T.	SD
Terry Kaplan, L.V.T.	NY	Kaye Durham	HI	John Kaya, D.V.M.	HI	Lisa Bach, BS, C.V.T.	WI
Jennifer Job, C.V.T.	CO	Michele Spranza	HI	Jamie Furtani, D.V.M.	HI	Joei Muffoletto	UT
Kristin Schultz	CO	Joette Verdadero	HI	Evelyn Elbert-Perez	HI	Dee Urban	OH
Elizabeth McLeod, L.V.T.	MI	Donna Chang	HI	Christina Sheehan	HI	Mary Jane Cassaro, L.V.T.	NY
Mary Shaw, R.V.T.	TN	Carol De Mello	HI	Bless Ouchi	HI	Angela Bondy, L.V.T.	OH
Joylise Hansen, C.V.T.	CO	Judi Ouchi	HI	Cathie Carel-Montano	TX	TJ Casagni	FL
Melissa Sloss	NC	Kally Botelho	HI	Mary Lee Lewis	AZ	Laurie Angell	WI
Nancy O'Shea	CO	Donna Miura	HI	Julia Reynolds, L.V.T.	MT	Susan Bac, L.V.T.	PA
Jane Weatherford, R.V.T.	IN	April Grandpre	HI	Nikki Harris	NE	Karen Viers	VA
Jennifer Peek	PA	Carol Ochiai, D.V.M.	HI	Jean Marie Cooper	NY	Stephanie Babcock	CA
Gayna Smith	TX	Lisa Nishikawa	HI	Sarah Vetter, L.V.T.	MI	Melissa Baldus	MN
Karen Marcus, BS, C.V.T.	MN	Tammy Goodreau	HI	Ginger Parker, L.V.T.	NY	Lisa Marie Fortier	MN
Shirley Thompson	PA	Maude Kato	HI	Mizti Cox, L.V.T.	AL	Dorothy Webb, CPDT	WA
Samantha Knight	GA	Dorene Nagamine, D.V.M.	HI	Sara Carlson	HI	Amber Salter, C.V.T.	OR
Laura Haselbarth, C.V.T.	PA	Margie Rodrigues	HI	Mary McGlasson	TX	Nicole Thomas, R.V.T.	WA
Brenda LaPointe	OH	Ingrid Manzione	HI	Kristina Capps, R.V.T.	NC	Jeanna Molchan, R.V.T.	SC
Holli Courtright, R.V.T.	OH	Lissa Kam, D.V.M.	HI	Jennifer Fay	VA	Rebecca Rauch	PA
Deborah Puppel, R.V.T.	OH	Darlene Espiritu	HI	James Walasinski, R.V.T.	OH	Summer-Lee Grotelueschen	HI
Nyla Potter, L.V.T.	WA	Nadine Nanbu, D.V.M.	HI	Suzanne Stoffel, L.V.T.	NY	Denise Skora, L.V.T.	NY
Melissa Campbell, L.V.T.	FL	Julie Kawamura	HI	Grettel Hermanson, L.V.T.	WA	Christina Kilby	CA
Nicole Papageorgiou, L.V.T.	WA	Lisa Donnan	HI	Jennifer Borich	CA	Bailey Baucum	TX
Melba Atkinson, L.V.T.	VA	Ele Sato	HI	Pamela Biagi	GA	Julie Gauldin	PA
Natalie Houston	WI	Douglas Swanek	HI	Eileen Hatfield	NV	Amy Fellner, C.V.T.	MN
Nancy Brandyberry, R.V.T.	OH	Travis Peters	HI	Margie Laughlin, C.V.T.	ID	Kristine Corbo, R.V.T.	NJ
Gail Domalakes, C.V.T.	PA	Sharla Toyama	HI	Sandra Holmes, BS L.V.T.	MI	Barbara Burri	NH
Judith Nahorhiak	MA	Dinah Gallagher	HI	Sue Ham, L.V.T.	MI	Ellen Adams, R.V.T.	CA
				Britt Clemm	CA	Alka Inoue, D.V.M.	Japan
				Vicky Ograin, R.V.T.	CA	Leanne Barker,	
				Gina Petruziello	OH	AHT, CPDT	Canada
				Denise Fix	NY	Wolf Zemp	Switzerland

## SVBT Annual Membership Drive

### Reasons to Join the Society of Veterinary Behavior Technicians

This edition of The Behavior Perspective has been expanded to correspond with our annual membership drive. All memberships become due July 15th, 2003. New members and members wishing to renew their memberships may complete a registration form on line or print a registration form from the SVBT website at [www.svbt.org](http://www.svbt.org).

As a member of the Society of Veterinary Behavior Technicians you will:

- Receive the latest information regarding updates in behavior medicine
- Have access to a network of peers in the field of behavior
- Be admitted to the "Members Only" area of the SVBT website
- Receive notification of job opportunities related to the field of animal behavior
- Increase the visibility and knowledge of technicians in the

field of behavior

- Have the opportunity to become part of active discussions on the SVBT Listserve (Professional & Student Memberships)
- Play an active role in obtaining speciality status from NAVTA
- Have opportunities to receive SVBT sponsored scholarships to continuing education events
- Receive discounts to SVBT sponsored continuing education events
- Receive discounts on books related to animal behavior (see page 4 for details)
- Increase your knowledge to assist owners strengthen the human-animal bond

**Become a Member or Renew Your Membership Online at:**  
**[www.svbt.org](http://www.svbt.org)**

### Ask The Expert

I recently attended a seminar on FLUTD and the speaker mentioned that indoor cats have a higher incidence of cystitis, which may be related partially to the stress of an "unnatural" indoor lifestyle. I try to do my best to provide my two indoor cats with "environmental enrichment"—interaction with predatory toys and providing them with places where

they can climb and scratch. However I'm beginning to have trouble with my 2 year old MN with occasional blood in the urine. Otherwise completely healthy and my vet seems to think its stress related.

Are some cats happier if they are allowed outside? My main worry is of course the health risks involved (abscesses, HBC, poisoning, tapeworms, etc.) plus the danger to local wildlife habitat. *Amanda K Jones, BS, Michigan*

*Continued on page 4*



# DOGS!



## SVBT Members Attend Course

Fifteen SVBT members took advantage of the SVBT sponsored continuing education discount for Purdue University's 5-day course, DOGS! Principles and Techniques of Behavior Modification. A record 33% of all attendees were SVBT members.

SVBT will again sponsor an essay scholarship contest for the 2004 course. Watch for details in the January 2004 edition of The Behavior Perspective.



**Back row L to R:** Julie Shaw, Leanne Barker, Deborah Puppel, Amanda Eick, Amy Breton, Kimberley Kirilenko, Marie Bosquez  
**Front row L to R:** Colleen Shigeta, Amy Gunter, Carrie Mast, Lyn Callander, Maria Victoria, Alicea Schaeffer, Jen Krack

### Member Benefit: SVBT Members to Receive Book at Discounted Rate

*Editor's note: A review of this book can be found on page 6.*

Dr. Heath is also our expert for this edition's Ask the Expert column. British behaviorist Dr. Sarah Heath, BVSc, MRCVS, has generously offered a special discount on her book, **Cat and Kitten Behaviour: An Owner's Guide** to SVBT members. Dr. Heath has made her book available to SVBT members for 45% off the publisher's price.

Currently, Dr. Heath's book is not being published in the US. The **non-discounted** price is \$22-26.00 including shipping from Great Britain. SVBT members will pay \$10 for the book and may choose a shipping rate of \$4 (approximate 8 week arrival) or \$8 (approximate 1 week arrival).

Be the only technician on your block to own this excellent behavior reference from the United Kingdom. This book may be purchased at the discounted rate online at [www.svbt.org](http://www.svbt.org) in the Members Only Pages.



For More Information on  
Purdue University's  
DOGS! Course Visit  
[www.vet.purdue.edu/  
animalbehavior](http://www.vet.purdue.edu/animalbehavior)

*Lyn Callander, CVT, SVBT 2003  
scholarship winner, desensitizing  
a puppy during the puppy class  
practicum.*

*Ask the Expert Answer, continued from page 3*

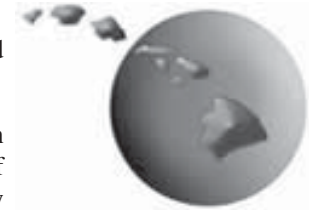
In England it is very common for cats to be allowed free access to outdoors and the risks of ill health and injury are generally considered to be outweighed by the benefits of enabling cats to express their full range of natural behaviours, including predation. However, there are reasons why some owners may opt to keep their pets indoors and it is commonly accepted that in certain circumstances, for example where owners live on busy main roads or where cats are either carriers of potential victims of infectious feline diseases such as FIV or FeLV, confinement to an indoor existence can be wholly justified. In these situations it is the owner that has to consider the balance very carefully since providing adequate mental and physical stimulation for an entirely indoor feline companion is something that takes a great deal of time, patience and imagination. In the case of the nearby road network an alternative to indoor confinement may be the use of a harness and lead to take the cat for regular exercise and in areas of high risk for FeLV or FIV the construction of outdoor pens may also be considered. At the start of your letter you refer to a possible link between the stress of an indoor existence and the onset of cystitis and certainly such a link has been hypothesised in the literature. However, we now know a great deal more about the aetiology of feline lower urinary tract disease and it is widely acknowledged that this is a multifactorial problem in which a number of factors including stress play a role. The fact that your cat is generally healthy may implicate stress as a potential factor but stress is not unique to indoor cats and those felines who have access to outdoors can also be affected by adverse events in their environment, such as conflict with other cats. Paying attention to the indoor environment and making sure that it provides variety in terms of resting places, hiding holes and climbing opportunities is obviously important but other factors such as the accessibility of water stations, the sort of diet that is being fed and the relationship between your two cats also need to be considered. In short this is not a simple condition and while it is important to consider the potential role of an indoor lifestyle it is also appropriate to investigate other contributory factors. *Expert – Dr. Sarah Heath*

# Acknowledging Our Sponsors

Mahalo (thank you) **Hawaii Mega-Cor., Inc.!**

HMC is a customer-focused Hawaii corporation that provides veterinary supplies, services and education to well over ninety-five (95) percent of the Hawaii veterinary community.

HMC left no doubt to their dedication in supplying quality education to their customers when they paid for 40 of their veterinary professionals to become SVBT members for the remainder of 2003. We thank HMC and welcome our new Hawaiian members with open arms and hope they will all continue their memberships to SVBT.



**Hawaii Mega-Cor., Inc.**



**Doskocil**, manufacturer of **Petmate®** pet products, is located in Arlington, Texas, USA. Doskocil initially pioneered the production of plastic pet carriers for the American airline industry. Today, the company is the nation's leading manufacturer and marketer of both plastic pet carriers and structural foam doghouses. The principal ingredient to Doskocil's continued success is a sincere desire to satisfy its customers. Worldwide, Doskocil stands behind its commitment to service its customers with innovative and quality pet products for safe and happy pets and Petmate® "Happier Pets By Design"! assures just that.

Our annual meeting in July at the AVMA would not be possible without the assistance of **Hill's Pet Nutrition**. They have generously assisted with the cost of our meeting which allows our members the opportunity to network with each other and with leaders in our specialty field.

We are grateful for the support provided by Hill's. Hill's has been a good friend to technicians for many years and a good friend to SVBT since its inception. Hill's tag line, "Supporting the Veterinary Technician for Over 25 Years!", is very appropriate.



Please make a special effort to let the people at Hill's know how much we appreciate their generosity.



**Novartis** has offered, for the second year, to sponsor the cost of printing our brochures. Our brochures are costly and we are grateful to Novartis for taking on this expense.

In September of 2001, the SVBT was started with 6 members. Less than two years later, our ranks have swelled to more than 360 members. Thank you, Novartis for helping us get the word out!

## New Board Members to be Inaugurated

Election results are complete and the following SVBT members will begin their terms during our annual meeting in July.

**Recording Secretary** - Amy Breton

**Corresponding Secretary** - Tara Lang

**Members at Large** (in a very close vote) - Cassandra Vong and Marcia Ritchie

**Welcome New Executive  
Board Members!!!**

## Change in Bylaws:

The following change in the SVBT bylaws will be voted on at the annual meeting:

### **Article IV Section 2:2 Nominations and Elections**

*All voting (professional) members will be mailed a ballot to be returned to the Nominating/Election Committee postmarked no later than designated by the committee for vote tabulation.*

**Voting (professional) members may choose to submit their vote online at the official SVBT website.**



## Book Review by Angela Martin, C.V.T. *Cat and Kitten Behavior: An Owner's Guide*

*Cat and Kitten Behaviour: An Owner's Guide* Harper Collins Publishers, London 2001 by Sarah Heath, BVSc, MRCVS

ggggg (4.5 paw rating)

Dr. Heath is a veterinary behaviorist who has been practicing behavior counseling in northwest England since 1992. This book is focused on owner education of feline behavior with topics including the history of the domestication of the cat, kitten development and communication, routine care, and a brief overview of some common behavior problems and their possible solutions.

The first chapter is a thorough and informative overview of the domestication of our pet cats from status as gods in ancient Egypt to the horrible persecution of the Middle Ages to the acceptance of our beloved cats in our homes today. The second chapter gives the prospective owner the tools needed to help choose the right kitten for them. Some of the more common breeds are discussed with information on their physical attributes (such as long-haired breeds requiring more grooming), basic temperament traits, and how to assess general health status. Obtaining cats from reputable breeders is the main emphasis with only a brief mention of humane welfare organizations. Keeping in mind that Europe does not have the overpopulation problem of the United States, I would like to see an "Americanized" version of this book give more consideration to our full shelters as a source of wonderful pets.

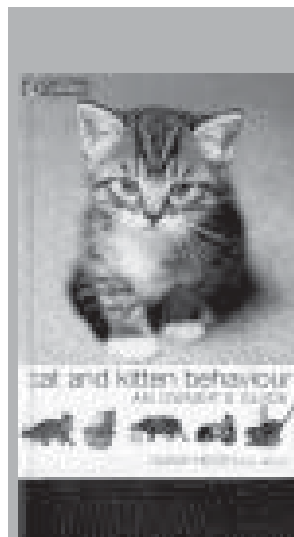
The development of kittens is covered in the third chapter. I found this chapter fantastic when it came to covering kittens up to the age of six months. Each "lifestage" description of the kitten is brief enough to hold attention, but packed with the important highlights. She stresses the importance of the "Sensitive Period of Socialization", which many owners will find enlightening! Chapter four continues on to describe the body language and methods of communication of the cat. Her descriptions were again very descriptive and understandable with normal behaviors being emphasized.

Dr. Heath's European point of reference really came to the forefront in the fifth chapter. This chapter describes how the cat perceives his/her environment and the driving importance of hunting in the repertoire of what cats do. The topic of indoor versus outdoor cats seemed slanted toward an ideal of letting cats have free roam to the outdoors for the successful happiness of the cat. While I understand normal cat behaviors and that domestic cats are more closely linked to their wild ancestors than our domestic dogs, I have an extensive background in working in feline behavior with shelters in Chicago, Illinois. Even now that I

am in a rural area of Wisconsin, I still see many cats come in to our clinic with cat bite wounds, infectious diseases, and the sad facts of roadkill, overpopulation, and euthanasia at shelters. I feel (and this is only my opinion) that if this book were to be released in the United States, an addendum of some sort addressing the overpopulation epidemic in our country would be needed. With that said, Dr. Heath does stress that if a cat is kept indoors that play and hunting behaviors need to be expressed and this will require an owner to spend time with their cat making sure these normal energies are expressed in an appropriate manner and on an appropriate substrate.

Chapter six is about how cats learn and instruct owners how to teach some tricks to their cats using positive reinforcement. My favorite part of this chapter is that she discusses how to desensitize cats to their carriers, thus making trips to the veterinarian less stressful. The last chapter covers some commonly seen problem behaviors in cats. The normal etiologies of the behaviors and the necessity of ruling out medical conditions first are mentioned at the beginning of this section. She also states that a referral to a qualified behaviorist may be necessary. A tidbit of information that I would like to have seen included in this book is the generally-accepted litterbox protocols, such as appropriate number of boxes and the placement of boxes in various locations for separate urination and defecation processes.

I found Dr. Sarah Heath's book to be a fun, delightful, and quick read yet full of great information with many cute colored photos of our feline friends. Each section was brief and to the point thus maintaining the attention of the reader. As a brief overview of cat behavior, *Cat and Kitten Behaviour: An Owner's Guide* would be a wonderful addition to any cat owner's bookshelf.



**SVBT  
Members  
Can Purchase  
this Book at a  
discounted  
rate Online at  
[www.svbt.org](http://www.svbt.org)**



# Behavior Modification: Basic Principles Part One

By Ginny Price, C.V.T.

*Editor's Note: References for this article can be provided upon request.*

A client walks into your clinic and tells you that they think that their dog is depressed. When you ask why, they reply that they just “know” and “wouldn't it be nice to be able to read their minds”. Since we are unable to read animals' minds, we try to understand the behavior we observe and modify it based on several basic principles.

Behavior modification changes observable (overt) or unobservable (covert) behaviors in organisms. Behavior, defined as something an organism does, is lawful. Behavior conforms to scientific laws. These laws, studied and developed by Skinner, Watson, Wolpe, and Thorndike among others, are the basis for the behavioral approach or applied behavior analysis.

Basic principles of behavior are reinforcement, punishment, extinction, habituation, stimulus control, and classical conditioning (respondent conditioning). These principles explain why certain behaviors increase, while others decrease and why a behavior occurs after specific stimuli. They explain why behaviors are performed in one circumstance and not in another. In order to create a complete behavior modification plan we first must understand the basic principles of behavior modification.

Reinforcement increases behavior  
Punishment decreases behavior

**Reinforcement** increases or strengthens behaviors. There is both positive and negative reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is the addition of something the animal finds rewarding after the

behavior occurs, while negative reinforcement is the removal of something the animal finds repugnant after the behavior occurs.

**Positive Reinforcement** = Giving a person a piece of chocolate when they sit in the appropriate chair  
**Negative Reinforcement** = Pinching a person's arm until they sit in the appropriate chair  
**Negative Punishment** = Removing the box of chocolates when the person sits in the chair  
**Positive Punishment** = Physically hitting the person when they sit in the chair

**Punishment** acts to decrease or weaken behaviors. There is both positive and negative punishment. Positive punishment is the addition of something aversive after a behavior occurs, while negative punishment is the removal of something desired after a behavior occurs. Instead of thinking of positive and negative as good and bad, think of them as adding or taking away from the situation. It is important that these principles are used contingent on the behaviors we wish to change, labeled the target behavior. The reinforcement or punishment needs to be applied immediately after the target behavior. It needs to be applied after each instance of the behavior that we wish to change. If this is done the behavior will be strengthened or weakened. If this is not done the behavior may be strengthened or weakened to some degree but not as reliably.

Another consideration is establishing operations or how the environment can be manipulated to make the reinforcer or punisher more meaningful. When I am thirsty a glass of water is much more rewarding than when I have just drank,

just like when a dog is hungry the lure of food is much stronger than when he is not. These situations deal with satiation and deprivation, both of which can be used to our advantage to modify behaviors.

There are many different “schedules” that can be used when teaching or modifying behaviors. When teaching a new behavior, a **continuous reinforcement schedule** should be used. This means giving a positive or negative reinforcer after every instance of

the behavior. All other schedules are **intermittent reinforcement schedules**. There are both *ratio*, having to do with the number of behaviors performed per reinforcement, or *interval*, having to do with the time elapsed before a behavior is performed, reinforcement schedules. There are both *variable* as well as *fixed* schedules. These four aspects of the reinforcement schedule are combined to construct four different reinforcement schedules. For example, a fixed ratio is reinforcing the behavior after a specific number of behaviors, while fixed interval is reinforcing the behavior after a specific time has elapsed and the behavior is then performed. Intermittent reinforcement of the behavior is best for maintaining it over time. It helps to stave off extinction of the behavior in the course of day to day life when the behavior is commonly not reinforced after each occurrence. Whatever your choice of reinforcement schedule it is always helpful to write down which one you will be using and the steps you will be taking so that you have a guideline to follow.

*Continued on page 8*

**Continuous Reinforcement** = Pop Machine, used when teaching a new behavior  
**Intermittent Reinforcement** = Slot Machine, used once a behavior has become reliable

*Continued from page 7*

Reinforcers and punishers may be conditioned as well as unconditioned. Unconditioned reinforcers and punishers are naturally reinforcing or punishing respectively. No learning has to occur for them to be affective. Frequently they supply biological needs. For most of our pets, food, water and sexual behaviors are all unconditioned reinforcers, while pain, extremes of temperature and isolation are all unconditioned punishers. Conditioned reinforcers and punishers, meaning “not natural”, must be learned. They must be associated with an unconditioned reinforcer or punisher to be effective. Some examples of conditioned reinforcers would include verbal praise, clickers, and smiles, while examples of conditioned punishers would include verbal warnings, stern looks, and gestures.

**Extinction** is used to decrease or weaken behaviors. If we wish to stop a behavior with extinction we remove whatever is reinforcing the behavior and wait for it to weaken and extinguish. To use extinction on operant behaviors you must identify the target behavior, identify the reinforcer, have control over the reinforcer, and be able to withstand the extinction burst. An **extinction burst** is when the animal may become anxious and upset because it is no longer receiving reinforcements which it did in previous situations. Over time these bursts decrease in severity and the behavior itself eventually becomes extinct. Behaviors that have been extinguished can reoccur. A common example of this is a dog that has always received scraps at the dinner table. If the owner wants to stop the dog from begging they can simply stop giving the table scraps. The dog may become agitated and act up, but eventually the behavior will become extinct when the dog realizes that begging is useless and no food is received from such a behavior.

**Habituation** is a simple type of learning where an individual learns not to respond to a stimulus that has no meaning for it in a specific situation. Basically, the animal gets use to the stimulus. An example of this is when a collar is placed on a kitten. At first the kitten may act as if the collar is painful for it. The kitten may exhibit marked

anxiety and gymnastic behaviors. As time elapses, the kitten notices the collar less and less eventually becoming completely habituated to it. A similar response can be seen with dogs and the Gentle Leader headcollar or humans wearing glasses or contact lenses.

Antecedent events indicate when behaviors are likely to be reinforced or punished. They come before the behaviors. The word “sit” said to your dog would be an antecedent event. Usually when you say “sit” he receives some sort of reinforcement for performing the behavior. The word is a signal to your dog that if he sits right now something nice is likely to happen.

Getting behaviors under **stimulus control** means communicating to the animal when the behavior is going to be reinforced which aids in the control of when the behavior occurs. Setting up a discriminative stimulus ( $S^d$ ) that denotes when the behavior will be reinforced is a significant part of stimulus control.

**Discrimination** is the ability to distinguish between cues thus identifying the proper cue that reinforcement will occur if the behavior is performed. The word “sit” in the above example is the discriminative stimulus. A dog that learns the verbal cue for sit is “sit” and that the verbal cue “down” means to lie down would illustrate discrimination learning. He does not lie down when you say “sit” as that is not reinforced.

**Generalization** is the ability to group like cues together knowing that this entire class or group of cues signal reinforcement for a specific behavior. An example of generalization would be a dog that learns that the verbal cue “sit” means to sit no matter where the dog is when the person says sit. All other aspects of the environment can be a part of the cue for sit, but the dog learns that the behavior will be reinforced after the cue “sit” has been given despite the shoes I am wearing or the squirrels that run by. Despite all the differences in the environment the verbal cue is the same and denotes that reinforcement is available if the dog sits while this cue is present.

**Classical conditioning**, also known as respondent/Pavlovian conditioning, is signal learning. This process has to do with involuntary behaviors or behaviors that are emitted by the animal after an unconditioned stimulus. Neutral stimuli linked to unconditioned stimuli (unconditioned means no learning needed to occur) will produce an unconditioned response. The conditioned stimuli becomes a signal to the animal that the unconditioned stimuli are coming. After a number of pairings the conditioned stimuli alone will produce the conditioned response (a similar or same response as the unconditioned response). All of us know the example of the cat that has been conditioned to the sound of the can opener. The fact that the cat associates the sound with food and responds by salivating is classical or respondent conditioning. The same holds true for linking the sound of a clicker to food for a dog.

These basic principles of behavior are used to modify target behaviors. All the definitions used in behavior modification are functional definitions and deal with how the specific principle affects a specific behavior in a certain circumstance. It is important to understand the definitions of the basic principles of behavior modification. Understanding the basic principles is a key to creating an appropriate behavior modification plan.

The next edition of the SVBT newsletter will discuss how to use the basic principles, defined in this article.

## Definitions for this Article on Page 10





# Annual Scientific Sessions in Behavior

## Denver, Colorado July 20 & 21, 2003

**There is no better place to be in July than  
DENVER, COLORADO**  
**Come for the Continuing Education opportunities  
and stay for some fun and relaxation in one of the  
country's most beautiful places!**

SVBT is meeting in Denver Colorado, the Mile Hi City, for our second Annual Business Meeting and Reception. It will be held in conjunction with AVMA's 140th Annual Convention. The dates for the convention are July 19th – 23rd. Starting on Saturday the 19th, we have two full days of CE in behavior planned. Our own Julie Shaw, Dr. Andrew Luescher and Dr. Karen Overall are on the program along with Drs. Kersti Seksel and Peter Neville. The talks will cover a wide range of topics including avian behavior, the rational use of psychopharmaceutical agents, holding kitten kindergarten classes, the European perspective on feline behavior and how to develop successful puppy classes.

On July 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> (Saturday and Sunday) there will be behavior lectures from 8-11:30 and 1-4:30 PM both days. These are part of the technician program and will be held at the CONVENTION CENTER.

On Sunday evening from 5-10pm, the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists (ACVB) will hold its first scientific meeting at the Marriott City Center. There is a separate registration fee for this event. A box dinner is included in the fee.

The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) meeting on Monday the 21st runs from 8am to 4:30. A buffet lunch is included in the separate registration fee. This will be at the Marriott City Center You can register for both the ACVB and AVSAB meetings online.

**You can register for the 2003 AVSAB meeting in Denver, CO (Monday July 21, 2003) by email to Dr. Lynne Seibert (ocddoc@msn.com) or by mail to: AVSAB, c/o Dr. Lynne Seibert 15123 - 78th Avenue NE, Kenmore, WA 98028**

Include Name, Address and Phone #.

## SVBT Annual Meeting

### Denver, Colorado

### July 21, 2003

**DON'T MISS THE BEST PART** - the SVBT meeting and reception are Monday evening from 5 to 8pm at the Marriott. There will be hors d'oeuvres and beer/wine provided at no charge. At 5:00 we will start the annual business meeting. We expect it will be short. Then the reception will start! Come meet your fellow SVBT members.



All members are encouraged to come. (voting in the business meeting is restricted to professional members but all members are welcome.) The reception is a MUST!! There is NO CHARGE - free food and drinks and great networking opportunities. Representatives from companies that have sponsored us throughout the year will also be present and we encourage all of you who attend to thank them for their generosity.

**You must register early for both events.  
You may print a registration brochure from  
[www.svbt.org](http://www.svbt.org)  
under the 2003 Annual Meeting link.**

### How do I register for the AVMA Conference?

- 1) Go to <http://www.avma.org/convention/default.asp>
- 2) A check payable in U.S. funds to the AVMA or a credit card authorization must accompany the registration form (PDF).

Mail to: American Veterinary Medical Association,  
1931 North Meacham Road, Suite 100,  
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4360  
fax: 847.925.1329.

- 3) On-site registration will also be available

**Hope to See You There!**

# Continuing Education Opportunities

**August 15-16, 2003**  
**The Social Lives of Animals: Human/Non-Human Cognition, Interactions, Relationships**  
**International Society for Anthrozoology**  
**Kent State University Stark Campus, Canton, OH**  
 Contact: Dr. Penny Bernstein  
 E-mail: pbernstein@stark.kent.edu  
<http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ccab/isaz2003.html>

**August 18-20, 2003**  
**Fourth International Veterinary Behaviour Meeting**  
**Queensland, Australia (Caloundra)**  
 Contact: Doreen Culliver  
 Phone: 61 6273 8855  
 Fax: 61 6273 8899  
 E-mail: avacos@ava.com.au

**March 26-28, 2004 August 20 -22, 2003**  
**12<sup>th</sup> National Urban Animal Management Conference**  
**Queensland, Australia (Caloundra)**  
 Contact: Doreen Culliver  
 Phone: 61 6273 8855  
 Fax: 61 6273 8899  
 E-mail: avacos@ava.com.au  
 Website: [www.ava.com.au/uam](http://www.ava.com.au/uam)

**August 23-26, 2003**  
**The Central Veterinary Conference**  
**Kansas City, Mo.**  
 For more information: <http://www.vetmedpub.com/cvc/index.html>

**September 10-14, 2003**  
**Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) Annual Educational Conference and Trade Show Orlando, FL.**  
 For more information,  
 Phone: 1-800-PET-DOGS  
 Website: [www.apdt.com](http://www.apdt.com)

**September 19, 2003**  
**European Society Of Veterinary Clinical Ethology, 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress**  
**Salzburg, Austria**  
 Contact: [www.esvce.org](http://www.esvce.org)

**September 21-24, 2003**  
**International Working Dog and Breeding Conference**  
**San Antonio, TX**  
 For more information:  
 Phone: (210) 671-3991  
 Fax: (210) 671-2308  
 Email: [Mail@iwdba.org](mailto:Mail@iwdba.org)  
 Website: [www.iwdba.org](http://www.iwdba.org)

**September 27-28, 2003**  
**Advanced Canine Behavior Seminar**  
**Patrica McConnell, PhD**  
**Naperville, IL**  
 Narnia Pet Behavior Consulting and Training  
 For detailed information and to register on-line, go to <http://www.puppyworks.com/events/mcconnell/pm0903il.html>

**October 19-22, 2003**  
**World Small Animal Veterinary Association 28<sup>th</sup> World Congress**  
**Bangkok, Thailand**  
 Contact: Mr. Sarnit Karunyavanij  
 Phone: +662-960-0141  
 E-mail: [Sarnit@bkkrai.com](mailto:Sarnit@bkkrai.com)  
 Webmail: [www.wsava2003.com](http://www.wsava2003.com)

**October 21-25, 2003**  
**Dogsense**  
**Sequim, Washington**  
 Terry Ryan (24 hrs), Kathy Sdao (6 hrs)  
 30 CEUs APDT - \$600.00  
 360-683-1522 - Jenni Dix,  
[www.legacycanine.com](http://www.legacycanine.com)

**October 26-28, 2003**  
**Legacy's Instructors Course**  
**Sequim, Washington**

Terry Ryan (18 hrs)  
 (DogSense is a prerequisite)  
 18 CEUs APDT - \$360.00  
 360-683-1522 - Jenni Dix,  
[www.legacycanine.com](http://www.legacycanine.com)

**November 1-2, 2003**  
**Veterinary Psychopharmacology: Drug selection and patient monitoring**  
**University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine**  
 Because of the increasing numbers of technicians who are assisting veterinarians who see behavior problems, the course has been opened to veterinary technicians. Of particular interest to technicians will be coverage of side-effects and long-term monitoring of patients on psychoactive drugs. This information should help the technician who is responsible for call-backs and reporting the patients' response to the veterinarian in charge of the case.  
 Further information is available at:  
<http://www.gactr.uga.edu/conferences/2003/Nov/01/psychopharm.phtml>

**November 7-9, 2003 ClickerExpo**  
**Central: Chicago,**  
**January 23-25, 2004 ClickerExpo**  
**West: Berkeley CA,**  
**March 26-28, 2004 ClickerExpo East:**  
**West Chester, PA**  
*Rethink what is possible...*

**ClickerExpo**  
 Join leading clicker trainers Karen Pryor, Steve White, Melissa Alexander and Kathy Sdao, and more from the worlds of veterinary medicine, rescue and shelter, zoos, marine mammals, and behavioral research for three days of intensive hands-on workshops to discover the many ways in which clicker training is changing the way we teach and learn. Visit [www.clickertraining.com](http://www.clickertraining.com) for more information and to register.

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT!!

SVBT members will receive a \$25 discount on registration fees at all three ClickerExpos, with no expiry date. Earlybird registrants are entitled to an additional discount (for a total of \$50) up to the cutoff date for each location.

To receive this special discount you must visit [www.svbt.org](http://www.svbt.org) and click on the Member's Only page Continuing Education link to receive the registration discount code.

Visit [www.clickerexpo.com](http://www.clickerexpo.com) for seminar content and information.

Become a SVBT member today to receive this excellent benefit!

## Behavior Modification: Basis Principles Part One

(Continued from page 8)

### Definitions:

**Classical Conditioning:** see respondent conditioning

**Continuous Reinforcement Schedule:** a positive or negative reinforcer is given after every instance of the behavior

**Discrimination:** the ability to distinguish between cues

**Extinction:** decreases or weakens behaviors

**Generalization:** the ability to group like cues together

**Habituation:** where an individual learns not

to respond to a stimulus that has no meaning for it in a specific situation

**Intermittent Reinforcement Schedules:** a positive or negative reinforcer is given after a varying amount of time or quantity. There are both *ratio* (number) or *interval* (time) intermittent reinforcement schedules, which can be *variable* or *fixed*.

**Punishment:** decreases or weakens behaviors  
**Reinforcement:** increases or strengthens behaviors

**Respondent Conditioning:** involuntary behaviors or behaviors that are emitted by the animal after an unconditioned stimulus has been conditioned (classical/Pavlovian conditioning)

**Stimulus Control:** communicating to the animal when the behavior is going to be reinforced

# The Society of Veterinary Behavior Technicians (SVBT)

## Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  CVT  RVT  LVT  DVM  Other

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer Address \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you attend a Veterinary Technology School?  Yes  No School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year Graduated \_\_\_\_\_

State License number or certification number (required for professional membership) \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a membership renewal?  Yes  No If yes, please indicate your SVBT membership number \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to serve on a SVBT committee?  Yes  No How did you hear about SVBT? \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe special areas of interest: \_\_\_\_\_

Does your current position include work in animal behavior? Please tell us a little about what your job entails. (We hope to feature members in upcoming newsletters.) \_\_\_\_\_

What books, seminars, journals, etc. would you recommend to fellow behavior technicians interested in learning more about animal behavior? (We include a section of recommended reading in The Behavior Perspective). \_\_\_\_\_

What would you like to gain from being a member of SVBT? \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate the importance to you of being recognized as a specialty field (Veterinary Technician Specialist-Animal Behavior)

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 neutral 6 7 8 9 10 very important

### Membership Levels (all membership levels include a subscription to The Behavior Perspective):

- Professional Membership \$35.00/year:** Open to any veterinary technician who has graduated from an AVMA approved and accredited college or school of veterinary technology or any currently credentialed veterinary technician. Annual membership fee includes listserv access and discounts for SVBT sponsored CE events. Professional Members have voting rights and may serve on SVBT's board of directors.
- Student Membership \$10.00/year:** Open to those students currently enrolled in an AVMA accredited program for veterinary technicians. Student Membership fee includes listserv access (coming soon) and may include discounts for SVBT sponsored CE events. Student Members may not vote or serve on the board of directors.
- Subscription Membership \$35.00/year:** Open to persons who do not fit into any of the above membership criteria. A Subscription membership does not include listserv access but may include discounts for SVBT sponsored CE events. Subscription Members may not vote or serve on the board of directors.
- International Memberships (memberships outside the US):** Add \$10.00 to the above appropriate membership level (US funds only)

Send Your Completed Membership Application and Tax-Deductible Membership Dues to:

SVBT  
C/O Kimberly Clark, BS, RVT  
227 Holiday Lane  
Greentown, IN 46936

Membership Applications can also be completed online at [www.svbt.org](http://www.svbt.org)  
Applications are welcome anytime during the calendar year, but membership expires every July 15<sup>th</sup>.





**Editor:**

Julie K. Shaw, R.V.T.  
Purdue University  
Lynn Hall of Veterinary Medicine  
625 Harrison Street  
West Lafayette, Indiana 47907-2026  
Phone: 765-494-8154  
Email: shawjk@purdue.edu

Membership  
Information:  
[www.svbt.org](http://www.svbt.org)

**Special Expanded Edition!**

**Interested in behavior but not sure  
where to begin?**

**Experienced in behavior and looking for  
the newest information?**

**Become a Member of the Society of  
Veterinary Behavior Technicians Today!**

**Time to Renew  
Your Membership -  
Don't Miss the  
Next Edition of  
The Behavior  
Perspective!  
Renew online at:  
[www.svbt.org](http://www.svbt.org)**