

Pinecrest

ONE OF MIAMI'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

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Have no fear, certified trainers are here

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Some of us are lucky enough to bring home that perfect puppy, that flawless Fido. Then

there's the majority of us who lovingly look at our dogs and say "you'd be perfect only if (fill in least favorite behavior here)."

With hundreds of resources at the bookstore and thousands of websites online with training tips, how do you know what information to trust? The reality is, you don't. But there's good news dog owners! It's called the APDT. The Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) is a professional organization of individual dog trainers who are committed to becoming better trainers through education. Founded by noted veterinarian, behaviorist, and author Dr. Ian Dunbar, the APDT is the largest dog trainer association in the world. Trainers who are members stand for promoting caring relationships between dogs and people by emphasizing positive reward-based training.

In order to develop a credible barometer for the dog-owning public to choose a trainer, the APDT initiated a process to develop a standardized dog trainer examination. In conjunction with a task force of 20 nationally-known dog-training professionals and behaviorists, the APDT developed the Certification Council of Pet Dog Trainers (CCPDT). This task force worked three years to research and develop a comprehensive examination

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in conjunction with an independent testing company. The task force followed rigorous standards to ensure that the process met professional testing criteria. A critical part of this process was the establishment of the separate and independent CCPDT to manage the accreditation and recertification of the pet dog trainers. The CCPDT also pursues development of future higher-level training examinations.

The CCPDT program <www.ccpdt.org> is the first national certification for dog trainers. The CCPDT administered its first examination Sept. 28, 2001, during the APDT Annual Educational Conference in Ellenville, NY. Since then, the CCPDT administers the test twice a year in various cities throughout the U.S. and other countries. The Professional Testing Corporation of New York ensures that the test sites are professionally secured and monitored. Candidates who pass the exam earn the title Certified Pet Dog Trainer and may use the designation "CPDT" after their names. All certified trainers must earn continuing education units to maintain their designations.

We're proud to announce that one of our Paws4You volunteers, Denisa "Dee" Hoult, has earned the CPDT title. Dee now joins 1500-plus Certified Pet Dog Trainers in the United States, Canada, Austria, Ireland, Singapore, Japan, Australia and the Bahamas. Dee is the

owner of Applause Your Paws, Inc., a dog training company in Miami that focuses on education for dog owners. With an emphasis on building a stronger relationship between human and canine, Applause Your Paws' training techniques focus on teaching dog owners how to better communicate with their dogs to build trust and mutual respect. Through positive reinforcement training, Applause Your Paws, Inc. <applauseyourpaws.com> specializes in modifying many common behavioral issues including aggression and excitability.

Dee has been involved in our local animal community for eight years through her involvement with multiple animal organizations including ours. As one of our volunteers she frequently offers her expertise to those who adopt a rescued dog to ensure a smooth transition into their new relationship. Dee can always be found at our fundraising events promoting our rescue and encouraging dog owners to find a responsible and qualified trainer for their specific needs. Congratulations Dee!

If you are interested in adopting a dog, becoming a foster home or volunteering with us, please visit us at the Colonial Palms PetSmart, 13621 S. Dixie Hwy., every Sunday (except holidays) from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. or visit our website at <www.paws4you.org> for more information.

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