

# THE DOG WIZARD

By  
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I saw the most amazing sight the other day at Freedom Park. A black Labrador was walking by his owner, sans leash. Do you see that often? No leash and there are-so many opportunities for exploration (people, kids, squirrels, and birds). But there he was, happily trotting along. I would love to get my dog, Atticus, to do something like that but I think that needs to be done by the experts.

And Charlotte has one such expert. Gretchen Hollyfield is the owner of THE DOG WIZARD and has been training dogs for over 9 years. She began THE DOG WIZARD 3 1/2 years ago with the main priority of training programs for owners and dogs that WORKED. "When owners see results, it gets them excited to do more with their dog, which allows the dog more opportunities to learn, which makes the dogs and owners happier", Hollyfield comments.

I posed a few questions to her about her company and those dogs that can be trained.

## CB: My How did you come up with the concept of dog training as you career path?

DW: We all have had dogs growing up, but I think some people are much more connected to dogs. Jake, Renee, and I definitely fall into that category. We are all the type people that want our dogs with us all the time. We vacation with our dogs, we eat lunch with our dogs, and really in other career choices....we all felt guilty about leaving our dogs. So why not choose a career that you get to take your dog with you to work everyday and meet tons of other dogs.

## CB: What kinds of things do you do with dogs?

DW: What we want to give every client we work with is the ability to control their dog in any situation or environment. When we accomplish this, our client's dogs get to do a lot more and go a lot more places. Although we like owners too, our main objective is to make the dog's life better.

## CB: What is the average complaint and how do you correct that behavior?

DW: We hear all the time, "well, my dog can do the commands, as long as there is not another dog or person around". If the commands won't work around distractions....then the commands are of no use to you. We teach owners how to make the commands work around distractions. We teach so that the commands work at their house, park, beach, or even a coffee shop.

## CB: Are you In favor of praised based rewards or treats? Why is one better over the other?

DW: The one thing you always have that every dog desires is physical praise. But we also use other things to motivate dogs such as: treats, toys, and freedom.

## CB: What is a success story of The Dog Wizard?

DW: Every dog that we work with that we improve their life is a success. We especially love giving dogs that have been confined their whole lives freedom. The freedom to run and play, and know that when the owner says that word, "Come", they have to come, so that they will let them run and play again.

## CB: What was the worst behavior you saw in a dog? Was it able to be corrected?

DW: The worst behavior I saw in a dog, was a dog that would bolt out the door so fast and play "catch me" in the middle of the road. It was amazing that he had not been hit by a car yet. We not only stopped the dog from bolting, but also achieved an off leash reliable dog in their front yard.

## CB: What is the average cost for your services? What does that include?

DW: Every program that we have is unlimited training sessions until we reach our goals. We also have group lessons that are included in any program, which we have every Saturday. Our programs range from \$525 - \$1800.

## CB: Is it ever too late to train a dog or is all hope lost after they grow out of being a puppy?

DW: It is never too late to train a dog. We work with older dogs all time.

## One of The Dog Wizard's success story is of Ginny Grisdale and her Golden Retriever, BG.

BG was born on July 16th, 2004, and she brought him home on September 11th, 2004. Mrs. Grisdale needed a dog

that would be good as well

as a watchdog. Her husband died on July 24th of that year, so it was very important to her to have a good dog that would be smiling when she got home and also be gentle and loving.

She says, "BG was barking at everything and everyone. I could not take him for a simple walk without him barking and lunging into the street. He did not like to be told what to do. BG thought he could do whatever he wanted. He managed to get 6 remote controls and chewed them until they were unusable. BG also ate 3 cell phones (and not the inexpensive ones). BG would jump on me all the time and almost knock me down. Onetime, he jumped on me as I was coming up the stairs and had his paws all the way up to

my shoulders. Also, BG would run behind my 2 year old grandson and knock him down, trying to play!"

She decided to call THE DOG WIZARD. They picked up BG and trained him away from my home for 2 weeks. Being with The Dog Wizard's expert training for two weeks, not only changed BG in every way, but "he has willingly eaten dry dog food ever since," she comments.

Mrs. Grisdale feels that "the training program has freed me of all the stress pertaining to BG. I had tried to train him before but became very stressed out."

The Dog Wizard eliminated any stress from the day they brought BG home. They showed her on the sidewalk in front of her home how to handle BG and control him (and BG was not even on a leash!).

"As I watched them show me what he had learned, I was amazed and proud of BG. I can see that BG is a happier dog because he knows what to do. BG has learned that if he sees someone coming to the door he barks, but all I need to say is "Place" and not only will he go to his "Place" and stay there, but he will also quit barking. One of the best things is BG is now gentle with my grandchildren." And for Mrs. Grisdale that has made all of the difference in the world. ■



The Dog Wizard with many satisfied customers, two & four legged.

