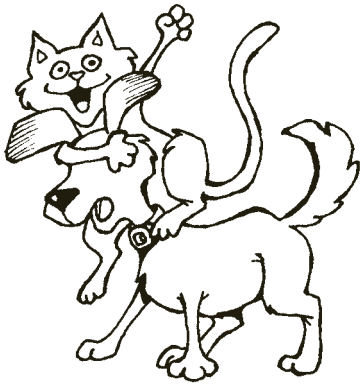


canine questions

By Sharon Harvey



If you're having a problem with your cat or dog, call the Rescue Village HelpLine at 440.338.4819, ext. 13 or send an e-mail to askthetrainer@geaugahumane.org. We'll help you solve your problem or refer you to someone who can. The most frequently asked questions will find their way into the Rescue Village Reporter's Ask the Trainer column or onto Q104's Ask the Trainer radio segment that can be heard on Sunday's Wilde & Fee Morning Show during the 8 o'clock hour.

Our Mission

To shelter and find homes for sick, injured, abused, and abandoned domestic animals that have no other alternatives

To foster compassion for all living things through education

To reduce pet overpopulation through spay/neuter programs

To prevent cruelty by advocating and enforcing animal protection laws

My dog is DRIVING me crazy—literally! Whenever I put him in the car I feel like we're taking off on Mr. Toad's Wild Ride! Any hints before I trade-in my sedan for a Hum V?!

Ahhh ... this sounds like a classic case of canine vehicular gymnastics. Your dog's anxiety could be due to a number of things. Most likely, it's either excited or nervous anticipation as your journeys usually end at a wonderful or not so wonderful destination. Here's a question for you. Do you shout at him to settle down and be quiet? If so, guess what? He thinks you're just as wound up as he is and joining him in the hysteric...

and boy, is that a silly sight for all who witness your failed attempts to harmonize! Here are some other things that could be causing your dog to act up in the car:

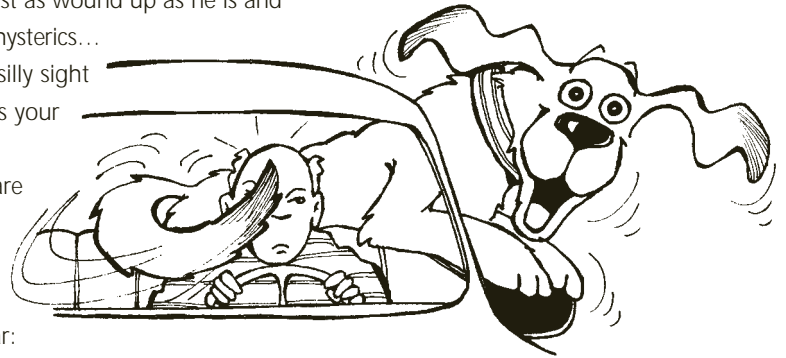
- Territorial or fear aggression—is he guarding the car from those who approach?
- Strong chase or herding instinct—does he want to get to everything you pass?
- Attention seeking behavior—is driving the only time you don't give your dog attention on demand, or did you allow him to sit on your lap when he was a precious pup, but now he has been banished to the back seat?

The good news is it's fixable. The bad news is, as with most behavioral challenges, it's going to be a gradual process.

For the dog that's anticipating very exciting or very icky things at the end of his journey, start taking some ho-hum trips. Put him in the car and just drive for a while... don't let him out anywhere other than back at home. Drive him around the block or to fill-up your tank with gas. When you do take him somewhere that necessitates letting him out of the

car, WAIT to let him out until he's calm. This should be practiced at a time when lateness won't be an issue!

For the dog that's responding to things he sees outside the car or that wants to get to you, you have two choices. If your car size permits, purchase a crate for his riding comfort and give him a very special chewy to



keep him busy. Alternatively, you can safely tether your dog in the back seat so he can't see out the windows, but can comfortably lie down below window level. Never attach the lead to anything other than his flat, buckle collar. Make sure he's comfortable, but unable to sit up far enough to see outside the window. While driving, speak to your dog calmly and praise him for his good behavior. You can even toss him a yummy treat every now and then when he's being calm and quiet. The other benefit of these two methods is safety. Not only can't your dog get in the way of your driving and cause an accident, but if you do ever have to brake suddenly, your dog won't become a canine missile, which could result in serious injury to both you and him.

So, no need to go Hum V... but you may want to invest in a good set of ear plugs for the short term!