

PET TALES

Pet etiquette important at parties

ELLA NAYOR

enayor@florida-weekly.com

I spent the better part of a recent Friday evening trying to avoid a rather rotund and amorous Jack Russell Terrier.

Now I am all for doggy love — just not the kind that involves candlelight dinners and moonlit walks on the beach.

But apparently “Spot” is afflicted with some kind of canine confusion and assumed I might want to be his new girlfriend.

So instead of paying attention to the guests at the party, I spent my time fending off an unwanted furry suitor. This was not exactly what I had in mind for my Friday night.

But I can't blame Spot for his poochie advances or bratty behavior. Nope, the spotlight needs to shine on the owner — which in this case was a tad too tipsy to think Spot was being anything other than adorable.

Good or bad doggy behavior is usually a direct reflection on the pet-owner. Though Spot's dad seemed to think his fuzzy white pooch was being anything less than a model canine citizen, the guests had a different story.

Recent news reports show more people are electing to take their four-legged pals with them to social events, including swanky soirees and teas. Fun for the pets? Possibly, depending on the food available for raiding. Fun for the folks attending the bash. Not so much.

As fellow animal lovers, we need to temper our eagerness to bring our pets to every function. Just use common sense and courtesy.



As cute as Fifi looks dressed in a pooch-sized Prada gown, her nose rooting in the bowl of imported truffles might not be as charming. Nor will Prince's Casanova-like behavior with the ladies wow most of the crowd.

According to reports from Charlotte Reed aka Miss Fido Manners, the better you and your pet behave, the better impression you will make as pet and pet-owner goodwill ambassadors.

And folks it's pretty easy to be a goodwill ambassador. Basic stuff like keeping pets leashed and under control while at social functions will go a long way towards insuring everyone has a good time.

Other details for party and pet success include bringing a stash of your four-legged pal's food, bedding and toys. Make sure the other people attending the event are comfortable with pets and not allergic or scared of them. Also, only bring well-behaved and socially adept pets to functions.

Leave hormone crazy and wild critters at home where they'll be safe and sound and not driving others to howl or join some anti-pet league.

In other pet news:

The Calusa Nature Center, 345 Ortiz Ave., Fort Myers will hold a dog walk from 4-6 p.m. on , May 6 on its walking trails. Cost is \$5 per leashed dog. Humans are free. For more information, call 275-3435.

PETCO is sponsoring a Chihuahua race in Miami at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 5. So if you have a sporty little guy ready to burn some rubber enter him in the regional race at North Miami PETCO, 14601 Biscayne Boulevard, North Miami Beach. Register on line at www.PETCO.com. For more information, call 305-940-2840.

The Gulf Coast Humane Society, 2010 Arcadia Street, Fort Myers is sponsoring a Golf Tournament on Saturday, May 5 at the Gulf Harbour Yacht & Country Club. For more information, call 332.0364. ■

Pet Etiquette Tips:

►Walking the Dog Walk. With the hot weather, the city is an urban jungle thick with tourists. Don't create chaos on city streets with a frolicking dog. Use a four or six foot leash for control walking on crowded sidewalks. Use a retractable leash in the park so that your pet can romp and run ahead.

►Doggy Doos. Be kind to others city dwellers by always picking up after your dog using a plastic bag that can be tied or sealed to contain the unpleasant odor. Deposit in appropriate waste receptacles.

►Help Keep Your Neighborhood Beautiful. Volunteers spend many hours and dollars to keep our neighborhoods looking good. Keep your canine out of neighborhood tree pits. Their tramping can destroy delicate flowers, and their fertilizer is not the kind that residents wish to see or smell.

►Meet and Greet. Although it is always fun to meet and greet new pet parents and their charges, do so politely and carefully. Ask other dog owners if their dog is friendly before allowing the canines to approach and sniff each other.

Source: Charlotte Reed, Dear Miss Fido Manners columnist. For more information about pet etiquette, contact Reed who is a pet expert at Two Dogs & A Goat Incorporated at 212-966-5225.

Contact Ella

►Readers are welcome to share their stories, information and needs with Ella Naylor. Pet Tales is designed to provide entertainment, support and education to our pet lovers.

Pets of the week



Bubba

Bubba is a handsome, seven-year-old Shetland Sheepdog. He is eager to please, walks well on a leash and would make a great companion. Ask about I.D. #355723.



Precious

Precious is a one-year-old Siamese mix. Although she can be a bit shy at first, a little TLC brings her out of her shell and she shows how loving she would be. She'd be an ideal pet for someone who wants a lap kitty. Ask about I.D.#281667.

To adopt a pet

Contact Lee County Animal Services, call 432-2083 or visit the shelter at 5600 Banner Drive, Fort Myers, in Six-Mile Commercial Park off of Six Mile Cypress Parkway. Adoption hours are 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday and 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday. Pictures of pets available for adoption can be viewed on line at www.leelostpets.com. The adoption fee is \$65 for dogs and \$50 for cats and includes age-appropriate vaccinations, spay/neuter surgery, flea treatment, worming, heartworm test for dogs, if six months or older, feline aids and leukemia test for cats, a county license and microchip ID. ■



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