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with Chris Onthank

# Dog Gone Smart

Chatting with **Chris Onthank**,  
animal behaviorist and canine expert.

BY **BRIAN FISCHLER**



Onthank was born to train.

**H**ow does one become a professional dog trainer? Growing up above a kennel house with Dachshund and Blood Hounds sure helps. With a long family history of breeding, judging and showing dogs, it seems Chris Onthank was born to train. He also started one of the first doggie daycare centers in the late 1980's. "It started as a training program, and if you trained with us, you could leave your dog with us," Chris explains.

Dog training "is literally in my blood," says Chris. "I used to watch my grandmother and aunt work with dogs every day. My family used to train dogs with the old school method of compulsion, using a choke collar. That was the way they did things back then."

Since then, the world of dog training has come a long way, thanks in kind to modernists like Chris. His enlightened moment came from a different mammal interaction, though. "I actually started out, interestingly enough, with training marine mammals. I took what I learned from that and turned it into a new methodology to train dogs," he says. "I told my grandmother 'I think I found a new way to train dogs.' I have since developed a very effective way to train dogs by using a conditioned reinforcer such as a clicker, and a two-pronged approach that utilizes both a positive motivational technique and a dog's natural instinct."

## Canine Master

Chris Onthank, animal behavior extraordinaire, interviewed for Pet Life Radio and was nothing short of inspiring.

"I was doing an interview along with good friend, Jill Rappaport," begins Chris. "We have since then professionally collaborated with the end product being Rubie Roadie from the Rescued Me Collection, named after Jill's rescue Dachshund, Rubie. Portions of the proceeds from these sales go to help dogs in need and raise awareness for pet adoption."

The people at Pet Life Radio loved the interview; thus, the inception of Chris' very own radio show, sharing his training tips and talking about trending pet topics. Every show is designed to both educate and entertain about all things in the pet industry, along with Chris' masterful training techniques. Listeners can send in questions and videos for Chris to help them with their dog's specific issues. "It really is a show about how to master your relationship with your dog," says Chris. [petliferadio.com/caninemaster.html](http://petliferadio.com/caninemaster.html)

## CHRIS ONTHANK WAS BORN TO TRAIN.

The result is well-trained, happy dogs. Chris enthuses, "What is better is that the dogs *love* to train this way."

Having trained numerous dogs, including celebrities' dogs, Chris continues to work as the liaison in building the human and canine bond through understanding and positive motivational training. Along with an 11,000 square foot training facility, Chris' Dog Gone Smart™ Pet Products are designed to solve daily problems pet owners have with managing the mess that comes with owning a pet.

For more information about training, visit [caninemaster.com](http://caninemaster.com) or [doggonessmart.com](http://doggonessmart.com) or tweet @caninemaster. 🐾



ABOVE, Training can and should be fun; BELOW, Onthank encourages a client as he jumps through the ring.

