

RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, AND BALANCE, Part II

A Position Article by Jay Johnson

As we stated in Part I, we often are heard using the three words: respect, responsibility, and balance in reference to our behavior as a pet club member. What do these words mean to us, and how do we apply them to the Purple Paws Pet Club?

If respect is a charter characteristic of our Club; responsibility should be a solid reflection of our individual members.

We all know what responsibility means, but for our purposes, we define it as "being answerable or accountable for something within one's power." Being a pet owner requires a responsible person. Being a member of a pet club takes responsibility to a whole new level.

As members of the Purple Paw Pet Club, it is our responsibility to set the tone for following safe and acceptable practices with our pets. We all know that Fido should be on a leash when not inside our home, and we always use a leash when walking him. On the other hand, taking shortcuts by letting him off-leash when going from your house to your car or when urinating in our own yard violates that particular leash rule [for most pet owners in Florida, the leash rule is more than a rule; it is the law].

When Fido leaves droppings, while on a walk in the Park, a responsible pet owner and Club Member will pick it up and dispose of it properly. This behavior is the fountainhead rule of simple but necessary courtesy.

Responsible members will make sure their pets have the appropriate inoculations, necessary medicines, and ample veterinarian visits to keep them safe. The

question has been asked before: "If you can't do this, should you have a pet?"

Responsibility is important to our Club, and we recognize that it is a learned behavior. We are also willing to set the example for our neighbors and hope they will follow. We're willing because this is best for our pets and for our Community.