

# Gwinnett Daily Post

**Meet the  
Candidates**

Gwinnett County, Georgia

Thursday September 7, 2006

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## [Dog whisperer helps pet owners solve problems](#)

02/25/2006

By Rachael Mason  
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As he walks on the treadmill, Obe wags his tail back and forth. Though the white pit bull isn't tethered to the machine, he stays put, walking calmly as other dogs run and play in the room around him.

Obe, who once attacked other dogs, is one of the success stories of U.S. Canine in Buford.

"We specialize in behavior issues — dog psychology, if you will," said owner Angie Woods. She is known as the Atlanta Dog Whisperer.

"I've always had a gift with dogs," Woods said.

She helps pet owners solve problems by helping them learn about dog behavior. "We try to teach people what dogs do," Woods said.

While people express themselves verbally, dogs communicate in a physical way, she said. "It's body language, eye contact, physical touch — that's the big difference between us and them," Woods said.

Woods has been working with dogs for more than 20 years. She based her methods on observations of dogs and the pack mentality. Successful pet owners must establish themselves as pack leaders, she said.

"I feel like our big job here is to train people to be a good pack leader and to teach dogs to be a good pack member," Woods said.

Though it's easy to get frustrated with a pet who is behaving badly, remaining calm is key in dealing with dogs, Woods said.

"They follow calm, authoritative people. Calm is very powerful in the dog world," she said.

### The canine crew

Woods is the leader of her own pack, which includes Obe (pronounced OH-bee).

"I have 12 healthy dogs — healthy, balanced, calm, cool, submissive dogs. They help me train," Woods said.

Other dogs in the U.S. Canine pack include the 5-pound poodle Tiny and the 90-pound German shepherd Luke. "Most of my guys have come from bad situations," Woods said. Tiny, for example, had a biting problem. Not only would he bite everyone in the family he used to live with, but he also would steal food from the family's 2-year-old. Now, he belongs to Woods and hangs out in the office at U.S. Canine, calmly chewing an oversized bone.

Katrina, another pit bull, was rescued from New Orleans. She hated all other animals before coming to U.S. Canine, Woods said.

"We just started a socialization process, and she is now able to be around dogs, cats, you name it," she said.

### Walking the dogs

Dog owners often don't realize the importance of exercise, Woods said. She takes her dogs, as well as those she's training, on a five-mile hike every morning. She usually walks with a group of between 15 and 25 animals.

"Dogs walk all day in nature," Woods said.

Dogs who live with people, in houses or behind fences, often become frustrated because they don't get to walk. "Energy builds up. It has to go somewhere," Woods said.

Chewing, digging or barking problems can often be solved with increased exercise.

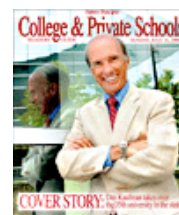
Woods recommends at least an hour a day.

High-energy dogs, like Obe the pit bull, may need more exercise. In addition to the five miles with Woods, he walks on the treadmill for another five miles every day.

"A tired dog is a good dog," Woods said.



Angie Woods, known as the Atlanta Dog Whisperer, works with problem dogs and their owners on behavior modification.



### A family business

U.S. Canine is a family business. Woods' son Joshua, 22, works there full-time, while her husband, other son and daughter also help out.

Business has tripled in the past year. Woods used to run her company from her home in Dacula. In September, the U.S. Canine office opened in Buford.

On March 4, Woods will teach a seminar on the basics of dog psychology at the InterContinental Hotel in Buckhead.

At her Buford office, she offers one-on-one consultations with dog owners and their pets. Rates start at \$150. Boarding training, which includes overnight stays, is also available. Boarding rates begin at \$450 a week. Woods also visits clients at home.

Typically, it doesn't take long for a pet owner to see results, she said. "People are amazed at the change in an hour and a half that we spend together," Woods said.

### If you go

What: Dog behavior seminar by Angie Woods

When: 8 to 11 a.m. March 4

Where: The InterContinental Hotel, 3315 Peachtree Road in Buckhead

Cost: The fee is \$80.

Info: Call U.S. Canine at 770-682-5434 or visit [www.uscanine.com](http://www.uscanine.com).



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