

No Weiners at the Table !

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No Weiners at the Table !

By Rick Hoogendoorn

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The Year is 2168

The Place: Winnipeg, North Dakota, USA

The Channel: 51,479 on your in-brain t.v. chip

Your on site personal newshost is: Zig Zaggner

Hello again, everybody, and welcome to the negotiating table, I'm the straight-shooting Zig Zaggner, telling it like it is...direct to your cranium.

Today, we're talking hot dogs. Weiner Corp International has finally consented to re-opening negotiations with the Union of Processed Meat Employees after 12 hours of stalled talks, and credit for all this is being given to one Gus Simpson.

Gus, what's your part in all this?

I, uh, like hot dogs, Zig.

And?

And, well, that's it. I really miss having my hot dogs.

So what did you do to get the parties back to the negotiating table?

I, uh, yelled and screamed and stomped my foot.

I see. And now you're right in here as part of the negotiations too.

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That's right, Zig. You see, as a member of the hot dog eating public, I am a STAKE HOLDER in this process. Those are MY hot dogs they are NOT producing. I am ENTITLED to those hot dogs. These people do not have the right to keep me from my processed meat!

Surely, not. We should also mention to the folks at home, and listening up there on the moon, that there is a long, illustrious history of consumers injecting themselves into the middle of labour negotiations. It dates back to the late, great Jim Boone, whose Ottawa-based NHL Fans Association first claimed the right to sit at a negotiating table.

I am proud to call myself a Booner, Zig.

Quite. With 25,000 members, Boone managed to get a seat at the negotiating table back in the year 2005 when the owners of a sport called Ice Hockey, had trouble with the athletes called Ice Hockey Players.

Can I interject here, Zig.

Uh, sure Gus.

If it wasn't for Boone and his organization, we might not have Ice Hockey today.

We don't have Ice Hockey today, Gus. Global warming has made that sport impossible.

Ya, but if we could have ice.

We can't Gus. Get a grip.

Look, I haven't had a hot dog since 7:18 this morning, so I'm a little edgy, okay? It's not like the public has much choice in what they eat anymore. Without hot dogs, I'm having to eat, well, you don't want to know!

Our viewers want to know!

Well, Some Processed Alternative Meat.

Ugh! Ooopsy, it looks like we have some activity here. The parties are being ushered back into the negotiating room and, of course, you'll be right there with us. The President of Weiner Corp and the head of UPME are about to address the group together. Let's listen.

(Cough!) Ladies and gentlemen, I think I can speak on behalf of Weiner Corp and the Union of Processed Meat Employees when I say "What were we thinking?" Here I was looking out for the interests of Weiner shareholders and completely overlooking the needs of Weiner eaters.

And I was looking out for the needs of the UPME membership and missing the big picture too. The Weiner eaters.

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Together we beg the forgiveness of Gus Simpson and every other Processed Meat Consumer. Weiner employees have agreed to take a massive pay cut and Weiner Corp has agreed to, um, revise our budgets accordingly so y'all can eat wieners again. And finally, our creative department has come up with a new slogan for Weiner Corp International. So here's the head of that department, Sandy Beech.

Thank you, sir. The new slogan for Weiner Corp International is: Weiners aren't a luxury, they're a right. So get stuffed with your Rights!

Rick Hoogendoorn has been in the financial services industry in Victoria since 1991. He misses NHL hockey too, but doesn't think that means he has the right to be involved in negotiations.

Agility Fun On A Rainy Day

By Brad Carlson

Ok, its raining outside again for the past five days. I want to train my young pup, but what can I do, I feel we're both stuck inside and bored.

Break out the pause table. Or keep one in your living room as a continuous fixture as we do. The pause table is a magical training box that brings out the best in sit stays, down stays, "Go" and "Come". Building your "Go Table": develop your distance from the table in small increments, send your dog to the table as you move further and further away from the table, wind your way into other rooms. Follow your dog to the table at a distance, always staying behind him.

Get a second table so that you have two pause tables that you can use at the same time. Start with the tables about 10 feet apart. Send your dog to one of the tables, "Go Table, practice sit stay, you move to the opposite side of the other table, call your dog to the table, "Come Table". Build distance by moving the tables apart and into other rooms.

Setup two chairs like a jump, but don't use a jump bar. Have your dog go between the two chairs like jump uprights. Practice with your dog at different angles to the chairs and different distances. Use four or more chairs and have your dog weave between them. You may need to start on leash until your dog gets the idea of weaving with the chairs.

Practice your directional commands around sofas or stuffed chairs. Starting with your dog on leash walk up to the end of the sofa, use your "Out" command, with the leash guide your dog away to one side of the sofa, while you walk on the other side. Make sure you work your dog on both of your sides, sending your dog "Out" from your left side and then "Out" from your right side. Practice with different pieces of furniture and at varies distances.

Brad Carlson is a dog trainer at Agility by Carlson. For more training details, visit our website at

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