



®

AMSCOPE

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One of the Most Important Commands to Teach Your Dog

By Dr. Karen Shaw Becker

While the form of communication most of us humans use is verbal, our nonverbal [dogs communicate with body language](#). That's why we sometimes use both words and gestures when we ask our canine companion to do something, often after we've tried words alone, or gestures alone.

Example: You're playing fetch with your dog. She's standing in front of you with the ball in her mouth and you say, "Drop it." If she hasn't learned what those words mean (more about this shortly), or if she's just so crazy about her ball that she can't bear to put it down, she won't drop it.

So you bend over or squat down and tap the ground, gesturing to her to drop the ball. Still nothing. So you tap the ground and say, "Drop it," and like magic, she drops the ball. Clearly, something about your gesture coupled with your words did the trick.

Most [professional dog trainers](#) recommend using this "bimodal" form of communication because they know from experience it works. However, we don't really know which cues — words or gestures — dogs prioritize when we're communicating with them "bimodally." Fortunately, a recent study published by university researchers in Italy sheds some light on the subject.¹

Dogs Prefer Gestures Over Verbal Commands, but Respond Most Reliably When Both Are Used

For the study, 13 dogs (six males, seven females) with no previous training, and their owners, were recruited from a dog training

center in Italy. First, the researchers attempted to train all 13 to retrieve three different items when prompted by both a verbal cue and a pointing cue. The dogs who learned to retrieve the objects reliably with both types of cues (four males, five females) proceeded to the next phase of the study, which consisted of 32 trials.

Two objects were placed about 6 feet apart across a room, and the dogs were given verbal commands alone, gestures alone (the owners pointed to the object), and both verbal and gesture commands. In the final eight trials, both commands were given, but they conflicted. For example, an owner would give the verbal command "ball," but would point not at the ball, but at another object. The researchers theorized that the more effective command would be the one the dog responded to.

The researchers observed that in the bimodal situation in which both a verbal cue and pointing gesture were used, the dogs responded the fastest. However, in the trials in which the verbal command and pointing gesture conflicted, 7 of the 9 dogs consistently followed the pointing cue versus the verbal cue.

The remaining two dogs responded somewhat randomly, but none of the dogs showed a significant preference for the verbal command over the pointing gesture. The researchers concluded that dogs prioritize gestures over verbal cues, but the use of both cues at the same time results in a significantly quicker and more reliable response.

I had the pleasure of meeting this team of researchers recently for an interview about the other groundbreaking research they're working on (e.g., the ability of dogs to smell human emotions). Dr. Biagio D'Aniello pointed out that dogs are naturally masterful at reading body language, but not necessarily great at interpreting verbal speech, which explains why they're innately much better at interpreting gestures.

Interestingly, he also told me that guide dogs for the blind don't understand gestures as well as other dogs because their owners don't use them, which was fascinating to me.

According to Dr. Stanley Coren, author of "The Intelligence of Dogs," these study results support the notion that dogs seem to have mental abilities on a par with human toddlers:

"You can confirm this for yourself, if you have access to a child around 3 years old," Coren writes. "Simply get two objects — say, a red ball and a green ball — and place them on one side of the room separated by around six feet. Then point to the green ball, and say, 'Get the red ball.'"

Previous research suggests that under these conditions, the human child will act much like the dogs in this experiment, following the pointing gesture rather than the spoken word.

This corroborates the idea that there is a lot of similarity in the way that dogs and human children think.²

Teaching the 'Drop It' Command

If you're a dog parent, you know all too well how important it is to train your pet to "drop it" or "release" on command.

Dogs explore the world with their noses and mouths, and the [things they sometimes pick up](#) can be hazardous to their health.

That's why teaching the "drop it" command is so important. It's also a big benefit when you play fetch or other games with your dog. It's much easier to pick up that slimy tennis ball from the

grass than it is to try to wrestle it from Buddy's frothy mouth. For most dogs, the "drop it" command is easy to learn when taught the right way, which is to present your pet with a trade — the object in his mouth for the [treat](#) in your hand. The Spruce offers these "drop it" training steps:³

[Hold one of your dog's favorite toys in your hand and tell her to "take it." If she's really jazzed about the toy, let her play with it for a couple of minutes before you start training, but make sure not to let her play so long she gets bored with it.](#)

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The deadline for the October issue is September 10

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Think of Your Dog as a Furry Toddler

LOOK

Please let me know if you make a change

* **DECALS & PINS.** You can get AMSC decals (\$1.00) and replacement pins (\$7.50) from

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***LOCAL CLUBS...**please be sure to include all information when sending Specialty tear sheets for inclusion in AMSCOPE e.g. Judges, dates, entry, obedience.

***LOCAL CLUBS...PLEASE** send a copy of your newsletter to the following members of the Local Club Bulleting Committee.

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Alejandro has been involved with Miniature Schnauzers for 25 years, and has been a breeders for 20 years...

They attend 10-20 events a year...They belong to the Miniature Schnauzer Club of Southern California, AKC and TCM...

Alejandro is in Production Marketing and Jesus is a student...They are interested in helping with Newsletter, Legislative Issues, Rescue, Electronic Media, Public Awareness, Awards/Trophies, Education, Membership, Obedience, Agility, Ethics and Health...Their special skills are in Internet and Social Networking...

Their sponsors are Kathy Colby and Brooke Walker...

COMMANDS...from p. 1

While your dog has the toy in her mouth, hold a treat up to her nose. As soon as she releases the toy, give her the treat.

While your dog has the toy in her mouth, hold a treat up to her nose. As soon as she releases the toy, give her the treat.

Repeat the above actions as many times as it takes until your dog is responding reliably.

Now add the verbal command "drop it." Say it convincingly and clearly while holding the treat near her nose.

After several repetitions, hold the treat away from her nose, and gradually increase the distance if she continues to respond to the "drop it" command.

Ideally, your dog should learn to reliably and quickly respond to your "drop it" command and pointing gesture every time you give it.

THE Most Important Thing to Remember When Training Your Dog

When you're about to teach a new behavior or spend time reinforcing a recently learned behavior with your four-legged family member, say these three words to yourself: Make it fun! Training should be an enjoyable experience for both you and your dog. The key is to [make your dog want to do the behavior](#) rather than forcing him to do it, so use whatever will draw him into the "game." Make it seem like the two of you are about to have some fun by using your voice, playful body language, a treat, a toy, etc.

Keep Fleas/Ticks Away for 6 Weeks

Things You'll Need

1/2 cup of water
1/4 cup of distilled white vinegar
1/4 cup of Dawn dish liquid
Soap dispenser with spray pump

Montgomery Weekend

The AMSC has again contracted with Homewood Suites and they are now accepting hotel reservations for Montgomery week. For those that have not joined us in the past, the Homewood Suites Valley Forge is located at 681 Shannondell Blvd, Audubon, PA 19403 and is conveniently located near restaurants, shopping and major roadways.

The room rates and available configurations are:

\$139 for studio suite (1 King bed with pull-out sofa)

\$159 for one bedroom suite (1 King or 2 Queen with pullout sofa rooms)

\$189 for two bedroom suite (1King and 2 Queen with pullout sofa)

Book your rooms by Sept 12, 2018 to guarantee the below rates. Additional 10% room tax applies. There is a \$75 pet fee per room. Studio and one bedroom suite rates increased \$5 per night; the two bedroom suite rate is the same as last year.

Guests may book one of two ways: Call the hotel at 610-539-7300 and mention you are booking with the American Miniature Schnauzer Club, group code AMS. Go online to <http://bit.ly/2CXWjIX> and under the "Book a Suite" reservations on the home page, enter the group code AMS to receive our discounted rate.

Details for the member reception and meeting on Saturday evening, Oct 6th, will be released closer to Montgomery week.

Regards,
 Barbara Donahue, MCKC Hospitality

Don't take my dog "in the back" without me

I've written previously about my aversion to letting veterinary technicians take my dogs "in the back" for blood draws and other quick procedures. My main reason for not wanting to send Otto in the back is that he has an irrational fear of slippery floors. As soon as he thinks a floor is slippery – it doesn't even seem to matter whether I find the floor to be slippery or not – he starts to walk like Bambi on a frozen pond, scrambling in such a way as to ensure that he will fall.

He's actually made a LOT of progress, largely because I've never dragged or forced him across a floor that freaked him out (contrary to LOTS of advice from the kind of trainers I don't listen to). He may quail for a moment at the entrance to a pet supply store, when he steps off the entry carpet and finds himself on a sea of tile, but then he will gather himself and walk cautiously along with me. His turns will be wide and wobbly, and he will pant a bit with the effort of staying upright, but he's game, he'll go. That's hard-won progress – and admittedly, I don't put him through it a lot, or for no good reason. Any time we have to navigate a super slippery place, I make it as rewarding – and brief – as possible for him.

Veterinary clinics almost always have tile or other hard, smooth floors – they are the easiest to keep clean. But they present a challenge to Otto, and knowing this, I protect him as best I can by telling the techs, as they lead us to exam rooms, "I need to let him go slow and pick his own path; he's really cautious on slippery floors." And – usually – I don't allow them to "take him in the back," because they don't know this behavior as well as I do, and I don't want him to backslide. If he gets scared and puts the brakes on for a second, I can encourage him with a word and he will start walking again. At clinics, they will almost always respond to a dog locking up by just dragging the dog – gently, but dragging nonetheless! – through the door into the back. Most dogs are afraid to leave their owners and are fine (if not better behaved) once the door between the "back" and their owner is closed. Otto is happy to go with the techs, he likes them! Inconvenient though it may be, it's really all about the FLOOR.

My son was visiting over the weekend. He was delivering his young dog, Cole, to me to dog sit while he and his girlfriend take a short vacation (spring break). We took both of our dogs to the vet on Sunday. Eight or-so-month-old Cole needed to be weighed again (he's growing like a weed)

to make sure we are giving him the right amount of heartworm preventive, and to receive said preventive; and he received his first rabies vaccination. (It was given later than usual, as we have been sorting out his immune response to his other vaccines.) Otto needed his annual examination to renew his prescription for heartworm preventive. I also wanted the clinic to take a blood sample to send off for his annual vaccine titer test. (He hasn't been vaccinated for any thing but rabies since I adopted him in 2008; his titers come back strong and positive every year.)

As usual, Otto hesitated at the door of the clinic, and then walked into the waiting room carefully. He happily got onto the scale, which was covered with a paper advertisement for some veterinary product, and which made the scale less slippery than the floor. And within a minute, we walked into an exam room. He was doing GREAT, for him. He started panting a bit, but otherwise looked happy enough to be there. The tech came in and greeted both dogs, and took the temperature of each, and administered Cole's rabies vaccine. Then she asked if she could take Otto in the back for the blood sample.

I hesitated for a moment, but he was doing great, and she seemed to have a good handling technique with him. I actually considered for a moment that I didn't want to come across as nutty and overprotective. So I broke my own rule, and said, "Sure, you can take him in the back." To my credit, I also said, "Please just let him take his time, don't pull him if he stops for a second, he's just REALLY cautious on the slippery floors." She said, "No problem!" and she chirped at him, and he went with her through the door into the back quite cheerfully, no hesitation or balking – though with the usual "walking on ice" gait he uses on slippery floors.

They were gone a bit longer than it takes to take a blood sample, and my son and I were discussing what might have gone awry when the tech and Otto walked back in – accompanied by the unmistakable odor of released anal glands. My son quickly pulled his shirt over his nose and mouth, as I asked, "What happened?!" He's usually good with blood draws!" The tech said, "Oh, he was really good! He did that right afterward, for some reason. We tried to clean it off . . . do you want us to bathe him for you?"

I answered no; I didn't want him back out of my sight again! And I was instantly so mad at myself. Why is it so hard to trust one's own instincts, and just gently request (then insist, if need be) that the procedure be done right there, not "in the back"?

On the way home (with the car windows open), my son and I discussed what we thought probably happened; we were both certain that he must have stalled on the floor at some corner and someone tried to pull him along, forcefully enough to panic him, if just for a moment. The tech said that he was good for the actual blood sample, and I would expect him to be; I've been present many times for the procedure with him, and he's never seemed to notice or mind either the restraint or the needle.

I know that veterinarians and technicians have many good reasons to prefer the dog to be "in the back" for routine procedures, and in some cases, it might be truly necessary. However, this was a reminder to me that I need to insist, every time, that for simple things like blood samples, Otto stays in the exam room with me.

Otto is mature enough now that I don't think the scary event will scar his sensitive psyche; he was perfectly cheerful and comfortable with the veterinarian's exam immediately after this. And he was due for a bath anyway. But I feel like I failed him – and it could have been worse.

What's your policy on this practice at the vet's office?

Specialty Wins

**Lone Star MSC
Thursday July 5, 2018**

Sweeps Judge: Mr Larry Abbott

BSS/G1: Gangway's Mission
Jetpack/Brown/Larsen
BOSS: Gangway's Mission Jackpot/
Brown/Larsen

**Regular Classes Judge:
Mr. Kerry Lee**

WD/BOW: Car*Benz Feelin' Groovy/
Lee

RWB: ZRules Pizzazz/Mendelsohn

WB: Rockyhill Judge Judy's 'It's All
Over Now'/Fry

SEL: Lion-L-Imperial Palace Pullman
Car/ Jacobs

BOB: CH VF Jovi/Sanders

BOS: GCHB CH Dreamaker Blue
Angels/ Allen

SEL: CH. Car*Benz Cecilia/ Benson

“ALL THREE OF THESE FACTORS— TYPE, TEMPERAMENT AND SOUNDNESS —ARE INTERCONNECTED.”

be in the realm of type, temperament, or soundness. How does one choose which to sacrifice?

TYPE

“Type” or “breed type” is the combination of characteristics that makes a breed a breed. German Shepherd Dogs look like German Shepherd Dogs, Chihuahuas look like Chihuahuas, Dalmatians look like Dalmatians. Type takes the basic dog shape and molds it into something specific, from the chiseling of a Collie’s head to the long luxurious coat of an Afghan. These breed characteristics arose as a by-product of the dog owners way back when that were breeding dogs to perform specific tasks and now the breeders of today are trying to preserve those characteristics and functions.

TEMPERAMENT

Temperament is the dog’s personality and behavior, or, if you want to get a little wordy with Merriam-Webster, the “characteristic or habitual inclination or mode of emotional response.” We generally talk about dogs having either a “good” or “bad” temperament, with the former being solid and friendly to one degree or another and the latter being spooky or aggressive. Temperament traits can vary between breeds as well as by the individual dog.

SOUNDNESS

Soundness can refer to either structure or temperament, but since the author of the quote at the beginning of this column separated temperament out, I assume he or she is referring to the structural soundness of the dog. This is how the angulation and build of the dog comes together and whether or not the dog can move appropriately and naturally. The basics of structure are the same for every dog, but breeds may vary on details—for example, a straight front is desirable on a Sighthound, but not on most Herding breeds.

IN THAT ORDER

All three of these factors—type, temperament and soundness—are interconnected. Breed-specific temperament and structural traits by definition tie in to type because they are part of what makes each breed unique and the basics of temperament and soundness apply to all dogs. The vast majority of breeders strive to achieve high quality in all of these areas to produce dogs that excel in every category.

When the author of the aforementioned quote says, “in that order,” he or she is arguing that type is more important than temperament and soundness and should be given the higher priority when making judging decisions. Many people agree with this, because if breed type is totally ignored, each breed will start to lose the qualities that define it. In an extreme case, we could end up with all dogs looking generically the same. Breed type is important.

However, if the three categories of type, temperament and soundness have to be ranked rather than considered equally, I believe that type should be the least important. This is partly because many facets of breed type cannot exist without the foundation of temperament and structure. But I also don’t think that type is useful in a vacuum.

Soundness is required to keep the dog moving and functional. A dog with poor structure may not only move poorly in the show ring, but could develop serious orthopedic problems as it ages or if it does anything strenuous. All of our beloved breeds were developed for a purpose. Can a structurally unsound Collie with a coarse and ugly head work on a farm for its whole life? No. Can a structurally unsound Collie with a beautiful chiseled head and perfect eye shape work on a farm for its whole life? Also no. But a Collie that is structurally sound but happens to have a coarse head can still work. Now, it is valid to point out that most of today’s dogs do not work for a living. That does not

mean that unsoundness is acceptable. Pet dogs deserve to live a long, comfortable life with their families and their families deserve to have dogs that can hold up to the strains of everyday life.

If one category has to be given more weight than the others, personally I would choose temperament. A dog’s temperament plays a huge role in how it behaves and handles the world. A spooky dog, whether sound or unsound, ugly or pretty, will spend most of its life afraid. An aggressive dog, whether sound or unsound, ugly or pretty, will be inclined to respond to stimulation with violence. Neither of these temperaments are sustainable, for show dogs, breeding prospects, or family pets. A fearful dog will cower at dog shows, be petrified of changes at home and will probably pass on that fear to its offspring. If scared enough at any given time, it may bite. An aggressive dog will be a threat to people and dogs at shows and to anyone who comes into its house and could pass on that aggression to its offspring.

I am not saying that type isn’t important, because it is. But I do not think that type should be given priority over structure and temperament, because those two characteristics are vital to a dog’s quality of life. If forced to choose, I would much rather have an ugly dog that is sound of body and mind than a pretty dog that can’t do anything or be taken anywhere. That generic dog can still be a solid foundation on which to build and gradually add in the fine points of type.

Luckily, the efforts of all the judges and breeders before us have created a global pool of dogs in every breed that have valuable characteristics to bring to the table. We can afford to get picky about the fine points of our standards because we already have the foundation. But we need to keep that “whole balanced dog” in mind, in judging and in breeding and not become so focused on a few details that we lose everything else. ■

Dog Safety Tips for Taking Your Best Friend Boating



By Lindsay Lowe

Boating can be a fantastic activity for both you and your pup, but there are several dog safety considerations to keep in mind to ensure a safe and stress-free outing on the water.

Before you do anything else, check your local laws regarding dogs and boats. Once you've ensured that dogs are allowed on the water in your area, it's time to start planning your trip.

Here are seven boat safety tips to consider before setting sail with your dog.

1. Find the Right Dog Life Jacket

A proper flotation device is a must. Look for a dog life jacket with a handle on top so you can grab your dog if she falls into the water, suggests Arden Moore, a dog and cat behaviorist and pet safety coach based in Dallas, Texas.

Also, make sure the dog life jacket fits well.

"The jacket needs to allow full movement of the shoulder joint, and the front leg needs to be able to reach forward completely without restriction," says Dr. Tari Kern, a veterinarian at Pawsitive Steps Rehabilitation & Therapy for Pets in Rochester Hills, Michigan.

The dog life jacket should not put any pressure on the dog's neck or throat, and it should be adjustable.

"This is not an item to skimp on when purchased," Dr. Kern says. "If it is really inexpensive, it may not be very good quality."

Give your dog a chance to wear the life jacket around the house before heading out on the water. Be sure to offer lots of praise and even a few dog treats when she has the life jacket on and acts like she is comfortable in it.

2. Make Sure Your Dog Is Comfortable Around Water

There are several dog safety precautions to consider before going boating with your dog, including making sure your pup feels comfortable around water.

First, your pet must absolutely know how to swim in case she falls overboard, says Moore.

She also recommends walking with your dog around a marina so she can get used to the sights and sounds of a boating environment.

In addition, Moore suggests starting slowly with short trips. Don't take a day-long boating journey until you are positive your pet can handle it without becoming stressed.

While some dogs love boating, it isn't for every pet. "Some dogs will never be comfortable on a boat, and this should be respected," Dr. Kern says. "Never force a nervous dog to go boating."

3. Know Your Dog Safety Basics

Pet owners should have basic dog first aid and CPR training before any boat outing.

"You need to know what to do when an emergency happens," Moore says.

A dog first aid kit is also essential on board. These kits often include basic dog safety supplies like bandages, antibiotic ointment and an extra dog leash.

If you know your pet gets a little queasy while out on the boat, you can talk with your veterinarian about possible motion sickness medications that you can use. Only give medications that your vet has prescribed, and be willing to accept that fact that your pup might not enjoy boating if they have motion sickness.

4. Have a Plan if Your Dog Goes Overboard

Dogs should be able to respond to basic commands like "sit" and "come" so they don't venture too close to the water, Dr. Kern says. A long lead may also be used, though Kern warns against using a retractable leash, which could get tangled around objects or people on deck and could also act as an anchor in the water.

If your dog falls overboard, shut off the motor immediately, says Dr. Kern. If the motor is on, the dog could be injured by the propeller.

Also, make sure your pet is trained to swim immediately toward the boat's steps or ramp. Dogs that become overtired while trying to get back to the boat can have fatigue and be at risk for drowning.

Resist the urge to jump in to help your dog get back onboard. Frantic dogs can cling to whoever is trying to help, putting that person at risk of drowning too. Call your dog over to the steps or ramp and use the handle on her life jacket to pull her aboard.

If you have to enter the water, make sure you are wearing a life jacket that will keep your head above water even if your dog is in your arms.

5. Keep Your Dog Safe From the Elements

Ideally, there should be a place onboard where dogs can take shelter from the sun, Dr. Kern says. It will not only help them stay cool, but it will also provide them some protection from sunburn.

To further help your pup, you can also apply dog-safe sunscreen to her more sensitive skin areas, especially if she has light-colored fur or a thin coat. Check with your veterinarian about the safest dog sunscreen for your pup.

Kern also recommends bringing a mat or blanket for your pup to lie on, as metal boat floors can get very hot. You can also try a cooling mat like TechNiche International Evaporative dog cooling pad that uses a unique fabric to help cool your pet.

However, the sun isn't the only weather concern to keep in mind.

"Don't take your pets out on the boat if storms are in the forecast," Dr. Kern says. "Storm anxiety while on the water will be no fun for anyone." Rough waters also increase the likelihood that your dog will suffer from motion sickness or fall overboard.

6. Have a Potty Plan

Moore recommends using a dog potty turf designed to help dogs 'go' on the go.

These grass pads are made with an attractant that lures dogs to them, and they are made with odor-resistant and antimicrobial materials that mask odors.

Be sure to bring plenty of dog poop bags, and if an accident does happen on deck, make sure you have an environmentally friendly, dog-safe cleanser to clean it up, Dr. Kern says. Also, only discard waste once back on shore—never in the water.

7. Keep Your Dog Happy on Board

Bring healthy snacks and clean water for your dog to enjoy, Moore says. Dog travel bowls like the Lixit Water Boy travel bowl will help keep your pup hydrated, and it's BPA-free and spill-proof.

You should also give your pup fun activities to avoid boredom on deck.

Playing fetch on board is never a good idea for obvious safety reasons, Moore says, but dog puzzle toys can be a great way to keep your dog occupied.

A boating trip should be a positive experience for everyone involved. So, it is important to take dog safety and boat safety precautions to make sure that everyone has a safe and fun time.



AMSCOPE

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UPCOMING SPECIALTIES

Greater Columbus MSC Nov. 17, 2018
Regular Classes: Ms. Debra Thornton
Sweepstakes: Ms. Anne M. Beckwith

Portland MSC Jan 16, 2019
Judge - Betsy Dale
Sweeps - Manuel Itriago

Gateway MSC April 5th, 2019
Judge: Lydia Coleman Hutchinson
Sweepstakes: Janet L. Taylor
Obedience: Mrs. Virginia Kinion
Rally: Mr. James Comunale

AMSC SPECIALTIES

Montgomery County October 7, 2018
Regular Classes: Steve Hayden
Sweeps: Susan Atherton

Schnauza Palooza April 6, 2019
Regular Classes - David Kirkland
Sweepstakes Classes - Patricia O'Brien

Great Western 2019
Regular Classes - Steve Hayden
Sweepstakes Classes - Cheryl Coffman

Montgomery County 2019
Regular Classes - Brian Bogart
Sweepstakes Classes - Carla Nickerson

Bouquets & Biscuits

*Southcross Ground Rule Double, CD, BN, RN, AXJ, XF (GCH CH Southcross Bad Moon Rising x CH Southcross She's Got A Way) completed the requirements for her Companion Dog title on 7/14/18. She comes close to making me tear my hair out sometimes, but she finally got that third leg. I love her to pieces for her enthusiasm and drive. Sparrow was bred by Sonny Lelle and is owned by me, Lynn Tamms.

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE: The following information is given to help conduct AMSC business more efficiently. Please remember that the Secretary and the AMSCOPE editor should **BOTH** be notified of address changes, club officers and specialty results.

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