

Sign On....

There was an article in a week ago Sunday's American Profile insert in the Times- Standard about dogs and how smart they are. I have had several dogs, from Cocker Spaniels when I was a kid to some McNabs and an Australian Shepherd and a big Golden Lab/German Shepherd mix. McNabs are working dogs and very smart, and busy, especially when they are young. We had one, named Pete, who had a banked path around the house, and we could hear him at night or during the day, racing around the house. The Australian shepherd was given to me by my neighbor, Ralph Gordon, and he was a good dog, but would roll over and urinate on himself every time I approached him. So, I decided to get rid of Spud, as he was named. One day, my first wife's uncle Louie from Fortuna came for a party and I was telling him about Spud. Louie had 10 acres or so in Fortuna with some cattle, and he said "I'll take him". Now, Uncle Louie was a good guy, but a gruff sort of a fellow, but I gave him the dog, thinking he'd never last with Louie. Well, a couple of years went by, and one day we went to Fortuna for a party at Louie's, and I asked him about old Spud, totally expecting to hear "Oh, I got rid of him". Instead, Louie said to me-"follow me"- and we headed out the back door and there was Spud. I guess he remembered me, because he wagged his tail and came right to me- no urinating, though. We headed out toward the barn, and Louie said "Spud- I believe I forgot my hat". Spud ran into the

house and came back with his hat! My jaw was down to my upper chest! We walked a few steps more, and Louie said "Spud- I believe I forgot my cigarettes". Spud ran back into the house and came back with a pack of cigarettes in his mouth! My jaw was down to my belt. We walked a few more steps and Louie said-"Spud- go out there and bring in those cows, will ya". Spud went through the fence and brought the cows in. My jaw was at the ground! "Best dog I ever had!" said Louie! I couldn't believe it!* Maybe my problem was that you have to be smarter than the dog to teach him anything. As the saying goes, "Dogs are man's best friend"-you just have to match the dog with the right owner to get the best results.//Speaking of dogs- My grandson Nathan, plays nose guard for the Fresno State Bulldogs and he won the specialty defensive player of the week-The Dog Bone award. At the next game, the winner of the award brings it out on the field in recognition of his ability. Nathan is one of Eureka High School's sports players who has moved on to bigger and better things and gets to play on national TV from time to time.*Getting back to dogs, I see people walking their dogs under all kinds of circumstances- some trotting alongside a bike, some plodding along with an older owner, some on those extendable leashes- good exercise for the owner and the dog, too. I even see people picking up the poop in their little plastic bags-good public relations! My neighbors Eric And Vivianna bring Bluto- a St. Bernard's Mix,

~~Out~~^{By} the house- what a nice giant of a dog!

Sign off.....

DICK JOHNSON