



So Celebrities Can Be Trained?

She admits she's been called the "Dog Whisperer to the Stars," "Canine Rock Star," and "Wolf Woman," but **Jennifer McCarthy**—a former Chapman University communications student now living on a Colorado ranch—is really just a normal person with an extraordinary job that often brings her back to Orange County. McCarthy recently sat down with *Orange Coast* to talk about what she does, and what it's like to work with celebrities and their dogs.
—Rose Flores Medlock

Q "Dog Whisperer to the Stars"? Seriously?

A Yeah, I've done a lot of [work with] celebrities in Los Angeles. ... Jim Carrey and Christina Aguilera and Alyssa Milano. I worked with [Milano and] her protection dog.

Q Any difference between regular dogs and those owned by celebs?

A People of high-profile or even people who have very busy jobs don't have the time to put into a pet. If you're working for a big celebrity or movie star, they're going to be gone maybe six to eight months out of the year shooting movies, so then [with that dog] you've got a whole staff of people that you've got to train and work with. You have the house manager, the chef, the personal assistant, the bodyguard, so it's like a whole realm of people to get on board with whatever you're doing. It can actually be very difficult. There's also a lot of people using dogs as accessories. We went through the whole Paris Hilton phase of, kind of, accessories that poop. And dogs don't want to be [treated] like that.

Q But your work involves training humans.

A People come from all over the country and they live, stay, and train with me [at the ranch] with their dogs. My philosophy is very owner-related—the dog is just a small part of the puzzle. I always have to work with the celebrity for a portion of time. That's the only way I'll take them on as a client. If you were a celebrity and you flew in on your jet and you showed up with five Louis Vuitton bags, I'd probably send four of them back. I'd take away your cellphone, your Palm Pilot, your computer, and I'd take you and your dog up into the mountains and I would show you what this whole animal thing is all about. I find that it's really the human that has the problem and the dog is just a component of that. And once we get that fixed, the rest is easy.