

The WAG

VOLUME 4
DECEMBER
2008



Welcome New Members

Bonnie Norquay
Kathy Herriot
Michele Pouliot
Patti Schaefer
Barb Warren
Violet Fisher
Judy Bonime



Lin's Rupert and Corabel
beat the winter cold.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan. .31/Feb. 1	Ray Underwood Dance Workshop Langley, BC
March 7	Seattle Kennel Club
March 20, 21, 22	Bremerton
March 21st	Fun Match, Alice McKay
March 28, 29	Emerald City WCFO Barkin' Boogie
April 18 (tentative)	Prancing Paws, Cloverdale
April 25, 26	Whistler
May 16, 17	Cloverdale Rodeo (probable)
May 30, 31	WCFO Corvallis
June 27, 28	Paws 2 Dance Island Fling Location TBA

At a recent team practice, after giving up on the handlers, Ray began working directly with the dogs.

Dog vests by Marilyn Knipp. Photo by Joan Strick.



Emerald City hosts Richard Curtis

With much organization and determination, the Emerald City club brought over from England Richard Curtis for a two day workshop. Richard split the 30-odd handlers into two groups and kept both handlers and dogs hopping. Of particular interest was his description of England's eight dressage positions and his tips for revving up the dogs.

Here are his tips for rewarding dogs:

- reward when dog is in position.
- reward during exercise, not at end.
- reward "down the pipe"
- Vary words
- use regular dog food for daily practice – save the better treats for important stuff.



You know you're freestyle material . . .

- when you pick your dinner parties based on who invites the dogs.
- when you can't pass a novelty wig shop without stopping.
- when you browse second-hand stores looking for costumes.

TIPS FROM TWO TOP HANDLERS

Paws 2 Dance members Gail Walsh and Michele Pouliot are arguably two of the best freestylers today, impressing audiences with their intricate routines and winning accolades both at Paws 2 Dance and WCFO competitions.

Michele writes about the art of clicker training and Gail writes about how she uses visualization to beat the competition jitters.

Clicker Training and Freestyle - The Perfect Dance Partners

By Michele Pouliot

I still consider myself relatively new to the sport of canine freestyle, having only been an “addict” since 2005. I have been heavily involved in dog training (both professionally and as a hobby) for over 35 years and have experienced and observed huge changes and trends in training methods.

The ongoing transformation from correction based training towards positive reinforcement methods has touched anyone who is currently training dogs for competitive sports. Reward based techniques have offered trainers the means with which to achieve performance results that were all but unheard of prior



to the 1990's.

I became a basic fan of Clicker Training back in 1999 when I first used it to teach my dogs and horses some basic tricks. It appeared to be a simple training



method (I was wrong) yet the results were certainly impressive to me at that time. Over the past 8 years, I have progressively become a Clicker fanatic. What I didn't realize in 1999 was just how powerful Clicker Training is when it is applied effectively. I initially used the clicker as I see many people using it today – not very effectively. I call this “faux clicker training” as it does not really produce the amazing results true Clicker Training does.

The ability to precisely communicate to a dog what behavior one desires is certainly something any freestyler desires. True Clicker Training gives us that ability to “speak dog” and develop freestyle behaviors one would never have imagined possible 10 years ago. Many freestyle enthusiasts continue to ask me how I trained some of the “tricks” presented in my routines. My answer is always the same; “Clean Clicker Training”.

Freestyle is an art form that is evolving rapidly due to the advancement in dog training methods. The quality and difficulty in freestyle routines is notably higher every year and doesn't appear to be slowing down. I strongly suggest that any freestyler that desires to improve their overall training results should check out Clicker Training. The second suggestion is to be aware that weak clicker techniques are rampant and researching good instruction is worth the extra effort in order to learn effective Clicker Training skills. In all honesty, there is a lot to learn about this powerful tool before reaping its enormous benefits.

Smooth Moves to all!

Overcoming COMPETITION JITTERS

-by Gail Walsh

(Photo by Tristen Lindsay)

It is October 2006 and I am in my car on my way to work. I am relaxed listening to the radio when suddenly an ad comes on announcing the big Lower Mainland Dog Show. My ears perk up since I have volunteered to do a demo along with some of the other Paws 2 Dance members. They go on to talk about the 5,000 or so people that will be expected to attend this event. By the time the ad is over my mood has totally changed. My hands are shaking and my stomach is churning. Stage fright has set in and the demo is still a week away.

Getting ready to compete in a competition or to perform a demo in front of a lot of people, used to be extremely nerve racking for me. I realize now that some of this was due to the fact that I didn't feel ready to perform. It might have been that I felt my dog wasn't ready or I didn't feel ready myself.

Actually I think it was more that I didn't feel mentally ready. Deep down, I felt defeated before I even competed. I imagined every possible thing that could go wrong in the ring. The more I thought about it, the worse it got. By the time the day of the competition arrived I was a mess. I pictured everything going wrong. When I finally got into the ring, I expected the worst and I usual got it.

I admit that my dogs that I used to dance with were not nearly as proficient at freestyle that Pepsi is but with the attitude I had, I only made my dogs' chances of success in the ring even harder. I am sure my dogs felt my apprehension. "If mom is worried in the ring then there must be a reason, so I should be worried as well."

Now I have a totally different outlook on preparing for competitions. This is done both physically and mentally. First I make sure that I am totally confident with my part. I practice my part over and over without my dog, until I feel really comfortable with it. While I am doing this I train my dog, breaking down the routine into sections then focusing on the transitions. When I feel we both know our parts well, I start training with the dog, adding in my part.

One very useful preparation for getting a solid picture of your routine in your mind is to listen to your music over and over. I often do this in my car on the way to and from work. I visualize my every step. Once I feel comfortable with this I then visualize doing the routine again but with saying the dog's commands at the appropriate times.

Preparing your dog on the day of the competition can vary for everyone. I cannot tell you how to do this. No one knows your dog better than you do. With my first freestyle dogs, I would like to expose them to the competition environment as much as

possible since they tended to be nervous. I would make the most of the warm up time by getting them comfortable with the surroundings. I would play with them in the ring, walk them around, and run through a few sections of the routine. However, I wouldn't over do the routine section. I just wanted them to be at ease in the ring. I would then crate them in the crating area so they would get used to the sounds and smells of the building. Looking back on this now I am wondering if they might have been better off being crated in a quieter area like my car, where they would feel more comfortable.

With Pepsi my competition preparedness regime is quite different. Pepsi is totally confident in almost every environment. However, he is also a dog that gets very excited. His excitement builds if he stays in a busy area with lots of excitement. If left in an area like that he could be very wound up by the time we had to compete and would have a hard time focusing on his routine.

At the beginning of the warm up time, which is usually about an hour or two before we will be performing, I take Pepsi into the ring. I walk him around the inside edges of it so he is familiar with the area and there won't be any surprises when we get out to perform. I then run through sections of the routine, correcting and rewarding as we do it. I do this for ten minutes at the most. I then take him out to my car and put him in his crate. Pepsi relaxes there and he is very comfortable in his crate.

About fifteen minutes before we are to go on, I try and find a quiet spot away for other people and dogs. I put on my I-pod and run through a few of the harder sections of our

routine keeping my mood upbeat and relaxed. Again, I do this only a few minutes then I put Pepsi back into the car.

What really helps me to relax is the last part of this regime. About ten minutes before I am to go on, I put a copy of my music into my car stereo or listen to it on my I-pod. I sit back, close my eyes and relax. I run through my routine in my head imagining myself and my dog doing every part of the routine perfectly. I do this several times. I do not let any images of mistakes creep into my thoughts – only perfection. I imagine finishing the routine and feeling so proud my dog and letting him know it. I then imagine the judges giving me a qualifying ribbon and the elated feeling that goes along with it.

I do this last visualization process not only just before I go into the ring but over and over during the last two weeks before the competition.

Think and act as though you have already achieved your goal and you will.



Dressage - Requirements in detail

Dressage is taking off! Here is a detailed description of the required elements for each level. Note some changes and additions in the Intermediate and Advanced levels. Consultant: Ray Underwood

Heel position:

Either on the left side or on the right side.

Dog must not move more than 45° from parallel to handler.

In advanced divisions, dog may be facing the opposite direction from handler.

Transitions:

A transition is any move that

- changes the position of the dog. ie. from left side to right side, from a crawl to a heel
- changes direction of movement. ie. north to south

For the transition, dog may move out of heel position.

Any move may be incorporated (weave, spin, circle, roll) but the move must be used as a transition, not a trick.

Therefore, a single spin or single weave, not multiple.

Steps:

All steps would be considered "normal" handler walking steps. If sideways, approximately shoulder width apart.

Novice I

- Heel position: Dog is generally (90% of the time) in a heel position and is under handler control while in the ring. *Having dog facing you is not a heel position.*

Novice II

- Back heeling: Dog remains in heel position while handler takes a minimum of four steps backwards *in a straight line*. To count, dog must be in heel position (no more than 45° from parallel) for *four consecutive* steps.

Novice III

- Back heeling: Dog remains in heel position while handler takes a minimum of four steps backwards *in a straight line*. To count, dog must be in heel position (no more than 45° from parallel) for *four consecutive* steps.
- Inward side pass: Dog remains in heel position while handler takes a minimum of four side steps *in a straight line toward the dog*. Dog must be in heel position for *four consecutive* steps.
- Outward side pass: Dog remains in heel position while handler takes a minimum of four side steps *in a straight line away from the dog*. Dog must be in heel position for *four consecutive* steps.

Intermediate I

- 8 steps right heeling: Dog remains in a *right side heel position* for 8 consecutive steps. Movement may be forward, backwards, in a straight line, or on a curve.
- 360° Pivot Right: From a left-side heel, handler pivots to the right on the spot (no forward movement) a minimum of 360° with dog maintaining heel position.
- 360° Pivot Left: From a left-side heel, handler pivots to the left on the spot (no forward movement) a minimum of 360° with dog maintaining heel position.

Intermediate II

- 360° Pivots in each direction: See above
- Right Side Back: Dog remains in heel position on the

right side while handler takes a minimum of four steps backward *in a straight line*. Dog must be in right heel position for four consecutive steps.

- Forward Figure 8: Dog remains in heel position *on the left right side* while handler completes a figure 8 moving forward.

Intermediate III

- Right Side Back Heel Circle: Dog remains in heel position on the right while handler walks backwards in a circle (approximately 6' in diameter) Dog on the inside.
- Right Side Inward Pass: Dog remains in a right-side heel position while handler takes a minimum of four side steps *in a straight line toward the dog*. Dog must be in heel position for *four consecutive* steps.
- Right Side Outward Pass: Dog remains in a right-side heel position while handler takes a minimum of four side steps *in a straight line away from the dog*. Dog must be in heel position for *four consecutive* steps.

Advanced I

- High Step Normal Pace: Dog heels with high step for *eight consecutive steps*.
- Right side 360° Pivots: From a right-side heel, handler pivots to the right on the spot and to the left on the spot (no forward movement) a minimum of 360° in each direction with dog maintaining heel position .
- Creative Pose: Dog holds a pose for *three seconds*. Pose may be free-standing or in gentle contact with handler. ie. handler must not hold dog in pose.

Advanced II

- High Step Slow Pace: Dog heels with high step at slow place for *four consecutive steps*.
- Reverse - position Heeling: Dog heels on the right or left, facing opposite direction from handler for *eight consecutive steps in a straight line*.
- Modified heeling: Dog either crawls, walks on hind legs, or performs flying changes (skips) for *eight consecutive steps in heel position*.

Advanced III

- Dog Finds Heel Position Pattern: Handler leaves the dog a minimum of four steps and the dog moves into heel position, handler and dog then move together in a different direction for four steps. This pattern is repeated three times. Example: Dog stays while handler takes four steps backward; dog takes four steps backward to join handler; both dog and handler do an outward side pass for four steps; this pattern is repeated two more times.
- Backwards Figure 8: Dog remains in heel position (either side) while handler completes a figure 8 moving backwards. (Each circle approximately 6' in diameter)
- Roll-Overs into Heel: While performing a side-pass in either direction, dog rolls into position a minimum of *three consecutive times*. *Dog remains in a constant distance to the handler's leg*.

And, just when you didn't think you could have any more fun, Ray is working on three levels of Elite! Stay tuned.

A word about costumes: although the focus is on the dog, a costume that works with the music fine - as long as it doesn't over-shadow the dog or the movements.

FIRST VANCOUVER ISLAND COMPETITION AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS

Submitted by Glenda Gentleman (on behalf of Island K9 Freestylers)

Special thanks to Sandy Franceschini, official event photographer, who selected and donated the photos.

Sunday October 19, the Native Sons' Hall in Courtenay was a whirl of activity. The air seemed alive with excitement as 36 individual (and three teams) of performers each took a turn on the Grand Hall floor (well matted for the occasion) to show two judges and an appreciative audience what competitive 'Musical Freestyle and Dressage' are all about. Never before has this type of competition taken place on Vancouver Island !.

Paws 2 Dance executive, recognizing that interest in 'Freestyle' on the Island had increased in the past couple of years, had suggested to some of us that Fall 2008 might be the time to offer a competition on the



Island.

Local enthusiasts checked with those 'down Island' and concluded that the First Island competition should be held in the Comox Valley in one of the oldest most stately buildings in our community. A planning committee (now calling themselves The Island K9 Freestylers) was formed to plan and develop this inaugural event.

It seems that **'The Island Fling'** fulfilled the expectations of all concerned.



The considerable support of generous local businesses was reflected in the Company Banners hung from the balcony, Business Cards in the Official Program, plus the numerous baskets of donated goodies and special items in the Silent Auction room. Volunteers from as far away as Campbell River, Victoria and

Vancouver offered their services to help man the various 'work stations' required to keep the program running smoothly. Publicity opportunities served us well, as an unexpectedly large public turnout 'dropped by' to see what this event was about. Most stayed to watch the afternoon's performance - becoming a marvelous and enthusiastic audience for this new-to-many dog sport

Enthusiasm was tangible as the afternoon concluded with the awarding of Placement titles (and ribbons) for a total of 19 dogs/ handlers in the 'Musical Freestyle'



component; with 6 in the "Dressage" component. Well done everyone !

Best of all was the final presentation of the Special Awards: 'High Artistic MF' (Gail Walsh/ Pepsi); 'High Technical' MF (Gail Walsh/ Pepsi). *High Technical*

MF Novice (Ann Reiland / Tess) with High Artistic MF Novice becoming a shared award (Magi Schoffield-Reid/ Diva) and (Ann Reiland/ Tess). Gail Walsh/Pepsi claimed the awards for both the 'High Dressage' and 'High Versatility' performances.

Congratulations to all who participated (regardless of scores you may or may not have achieved). We were delighted that you are on record as having participated in this FIRST EVER Island Event.



Thanks to the initial seed money (offered so kindly by Paws 2 Dance), the generosity of our community donors, and those who took advantage of the Silent Auction goodies, a future event IS guaranteed.

As October 19, 2008 ended, the planning group, the sponsoring body (Paws 2 Dance), competitors and public seemed to agree - this inaugural event had been a real success, well worth repeating another year

Variety is the Spice and all that
--Lyd

Summer and Fall 2008 gave the Lower Mainland P2D group the opportunity to demonstrate at a variety of venues and events and to meet new challenges.

Kelowna: 2 demos for a dog-education fest: letting the people of Kelowna know that they can do more with dogs than walk them. Challenge: For Annette - getting changed without being asked for directions. Twice, in two different places, Annette was in the middle of a costume change, once crouched down between two cars . . . in her underwear, when some guy stopped to ask her for directions. I was standing on the other side of the car, fully clothed but clearly invisible.

Critter Care: 2 demos helping a worthwhile cause raise money. First time for some beginners to show off the Line Dance. Challenges: Having Chaps pay more attention to the routine and less to his nether parts. Then there was the question of horse-droppings.

Richmond Pet-Wellness Expo: drawing attention to organizations that make dogs' lives better. Challenge: The sound system: during "Grease," a group started singing over the mic - and it wasn't our song!

Sunrise Chicken Anniversary: Finding out we can entertain at a corporate function and be appreciated by people who were not particularly dog-loving.

Challenges: finding a level surface. Keeping the dogs' attention away from the petting zoo next to the stage. Then there was Charlie walking by with a plate full of food, just as Tess was performing.

Shaw TV: A chance to have the dogs dance with a television camera just inches away - okay, so nobody actually



watches Shaw TV. Challenge: actually finding the show on TV.

Newton Regency Care Home: making elderly people smile (those that were awake) and bringing back memories. The dogs were instant therapy dogs as the residents hugged and petted them - and fed them ice-cream. Challenge: keeping the dogs out of the ice-cream.

TNT Workshop: delivering a 2 1/2 hour demo and workshop outside in front of a group of avid obedience handlers and trainers. Reviews were all positive. Challenge: coping with the stress.

Brookwood Seniors Center: Indoors on our own mats in front of an appreciative crowd of Brookwood members. Challenge: fitting 7 people in a row in the line dance. A tad crowded.

Rising Stars Horse Dressage: Demonstrating canine musical freestyle and dressage to a group of youngsters from across the country.

Challenges: finding a place to demonstrate. Originally, we were to be outside the ring but no place was big enough. We had no choice but to perform in the deep dirt (generously sprinkled with



horse droppings) in the main arena. Vickie kept losing her shoes so decided to perform in stocking feet. George's little legs sunk deep into the dirt, so all the audience saw was his top half - like a little mop - moving over the surface. The sound system. We had to use their system, but could not have it very loud as the sound was being pumped into the other areas and disturbing the horses. Someone kept coming by to turn it down and each time she did, the sound would cut out - right in the middle of the routine. But, nobody stopped.

Langley Gardens
Care Home

Bringing more
smiles to the elderly.

Challenges:

Carrying the mats up three floors on the elevator (The trolley wouldn't fit into the elevator so Annette and Charlie plus some others had to load and unload the mats 8 times!) For some reason, Seniors like the temperature to be around 90°. By the time all the wheel-chairs were rolled in, the floor size wound up about 15' x 15'! Try fitting a line dance and Grease into that! We did, but things became hairy when a couple people in the audience leaned in to grab the dogs part way through their routines.

SPCA Paws for a Cause, Crescent Park

Another opportunity to raise some money for a



worthwhile cause. Challenge: Since we were on one right after the other without much babble, our costume changes had to be quick. At one point, 5 of us in various stages of undress, were vying for change-tent time to prepare for the line dance. Not a pretty sight!

LMDF TradeX

Performing to our largest audience.

Challenges: The LMDF event is so huge, every year organizers miss some of the details. This year was no exception. They said they'd have entry wrist bands for us. They didn't. We had so much Paws 2 Dance signage what with our new turquoise jackets, grey rain jackets, and monogrammed dog vests, Gail figured they were bound to let us in. No luck. Someone finally came through with wristbands. We were promised a change room. It wasn't available. Eventually we did have a change room - thanks to Gail's quick talking - but then a meeting was scheduled in the room during our performance - "So where would we make our costume changes?" we asked. To her credit, when an organizer saw the looks on our faces, she said, "Don't worry, we'll deal with it." The LMDF group really were trying hard to accommodate us, but rules are rules, and the man at the door still tried to stop one or two of us from entering the lobby with our dogs -- despite the fact that we were wearing wigs and poodle skirts.

Performance challenge: how to have a dog weave when your stockings are slipping down past your knees. Snowy tried gamely. Here's a tip: when you are performing in stockings, slip a pair of running tights on over the stockings.

Boot Scootin' Boogie #8 - Another Hit!

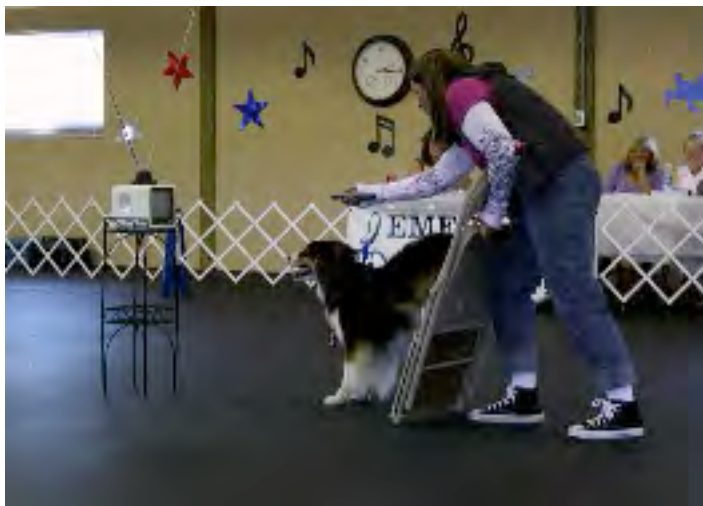
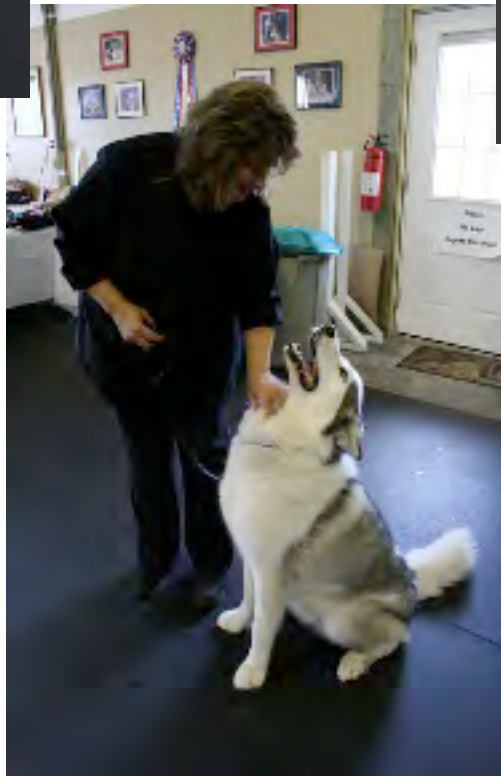
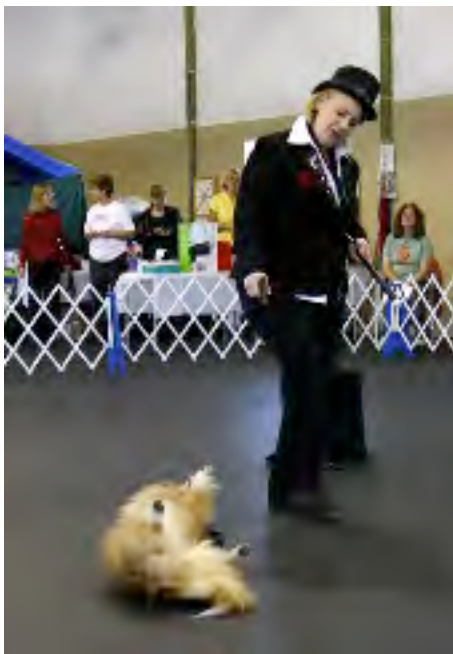
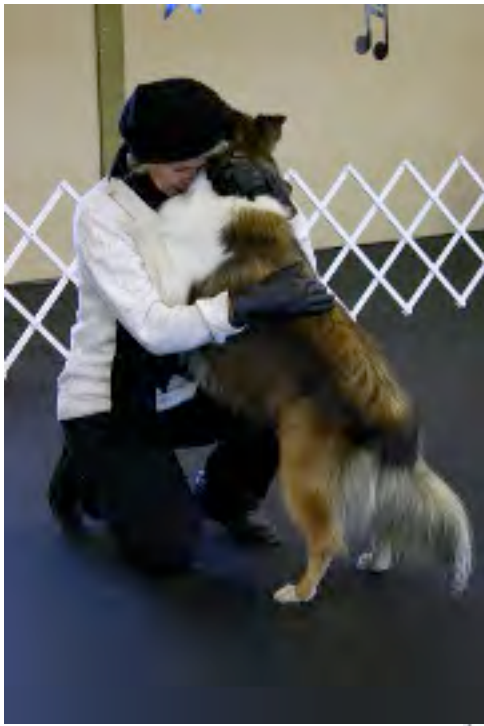
Although this year's competition had fewer entries than in past years, the competition was exciting, particularly at the advanced level where Michele, Gail went head to head. Michele finished first overall with a score of 9.63. Gail finished second with a 9.58. Shelley Denton took high dressage and high versatility.

Thanks to Photographer Tristin Lindsey who chose the following photos to contribute to this edition of THE WAG.



BSB #8 also showcased some of the most unusual routines ever to grace the world of freestyle! Just check out these photos and the ones on the next page and you'll know what that means.





PAWS 2 DANCE BIOS

Joy Thompson

Joy has taken the freestyle world by storm, with her flamboyant costumes and energetic routines.



When Lydia asked if I would write an autobio, I said yes because I hoped it would lead to meeting the rest of you at upcoming club events. I'm counting on you to say hi the next time we are together!

I live on Whidbey Island with my husband, 2 dogs, and 2 cats. We don't have any children. My husband is a pilot, formerly with the US Navy and now with a commercial airline. I have had a variety of jobs over the years including camp counselor, geologist, picture framer, art gallery manager, retail sales person in hardware and in tall women's clothing, community college instructor in earth science and ESL, and dog training instructor. Currently I am self employed. My dog training business is Joyful Dog Training. I chose that name because it reflects my philosophy of how I feel when training dogs. I love to see a joyful relationship between people and their pets. You're invited to visit my web site at www.joyfuldogtraining.com.



My two dogs are Molly and Clancy. Molly is a 12 year old, cute as a button, mixed breed. Clancy is 8 years old (I can hardly believe it!) and is a red merle Australian Shepherd. Together we did a lot of agility until I injured my back three years ago. After surgery, I wasn't able to move the way I wanted for agility so I

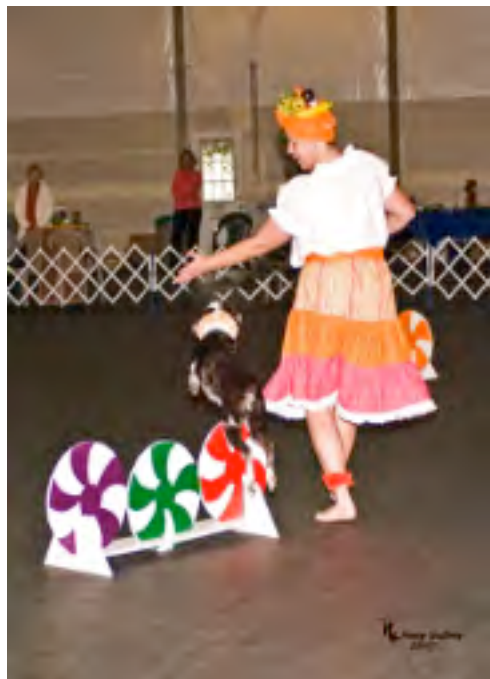
started taking musical freestyle classes with Corinne Lawson. I felt very self conscious at first. Corinne and my classmates were completely nonjudgmental and very encouraging. It was so much fun just to try! Before I knew it I entered a show and had a blast in the ring with Molly. We were hooked. Clancy takes a little more encouraging but he is coming along nicely. We just entered our first video competition and eagerly await the results.

What I like best about belonging to a freestyle club and participating in the competitions is the camaraderie among the participants.

Even though it is a competition people are extremely supportive and encouraging. I love coming out of the ring and hearing people say things such as, "great routine", "your dog is so cute", "well done." It doesn't matter how the routine seemed to me. My fellow competitors

have nothing to say but nice remarks. It is so uplifting! A good example of how much those positive comments can mean is when I fell during my routine in B.C. last April. Of course I was totally mortified. Since the floor didn't open up to swallow me, I had to get up and keep going. I couldn't wait to get out of there! Shortly afterward someone said to me, "I saw you fall, but then you popped right up just like an ice skater." I have seen the video, and it wasn't *quite* as graceful as that, but that comment kept me going for days. I don't remember who said that, but it could have been any one of you and that is why I like doing musical freestyle. I get to meet the nicest people.

The best advice I have for anyone starting out in freestyle is the sage advice I was given by a wonderful mentor, "SHAKE IT BABY!"



Bonnie Fergusson

With her show-stopper Newfie, Kyak, Bonnie has shown the canine freestyle world that the larger breeds can dance.



Bonnie was born and raised in Abbotsford, BC, before moving first to Toronto when she was ten and then to Burlington, Ontario, for three years before moving to Montreal where she completed school, attended college, and worked as a graphic technician at the National Film Board until moving back to BC where she met her future husband, Don.

Bonnie and Don lived on a sailboat based out of Miami for 14 months. They spent most of their time in the Bahamas with their Golden Retriever, Schooner.

When just seven weeks old, the retriever slipped over-board in shark-infested waters. Faced with either jumping in after him to save him or losing him, Bonnie dove into the water, grabbed him, and waited the agonizingly long time for Don to turn the boat around and come back for her.

Back in BC, Bonnie and Don settled on an 80-acre hay farm in Princeton which Don had a partnership in. Bonnie worked for the Royal Bank for the two years they were there. Deciding to move closer to friends and family, they bought their first house in Langley where Lisa, now 26, and Trevor, now 24, were born. While the kids grew up, they always had horses. Lisa's love of horses led her through to the highest levels in Pony Club. Needing more room for horses, they bought five acres in Aldergrove in 1993. Lisa has started numerous horses and has excelled in three-day eventing. An accident with her horse, Uni Griffon, kept Lisa out of the running for the last Olympic trials, but she and her horse are now hopefully back on track. Lisa splits her time between Minnesota and Florida where she trains and competes with her horses. Trevor, who lives in Langley and works at the Shark's Club, is an on-call fire-fighter who is just finishing a paramedic course. Trevor is looking forward to a career as a firefighter.

Husband Don was commercial fisherman gone six weeks every spring, and from June to October. Even though he would drop by periodically, he'd blast off again, leaving Bonnie to raise her kids pretty much on her own.

Bonnie's love affair with the Newfoundland breed began while her family was living in Montreal. Her father, whose business often took him to Newfoundland, kept telling the family of a beautiful black giant of a dog. When Bonnie was finally able to travel to Newfoundland one summer with her family to see the dog for herself, she knew this would be the dog for her. She has since owned twelve -- the sail-boat Golden Retriever and a Pekingese she rescued were the only exceptions.

Bonnie saved enough money while she was working for a Vet in Montreal to purchase her first Newfie in 1970. Sadly, this dog survived just three years. Since a number of her dogs have had orthopedic issues, Bonnie now makes sure she acquires her dogs from a

breeder who breeds for soundness.

The Newfie is more than just a lumbering giant. It is an incredibly powerful working dog. Bonnie has trained several of her dogs in water rescue. In this sport, the dog must jump off a boat to save a drowning victim, pull in an abandoned boat, swim out to a drowning victim with a lifesaver after first determining which of three swimmers is, in fact, drowning, do an underwater retrieve, and do a "perfect swim" next to the handler.

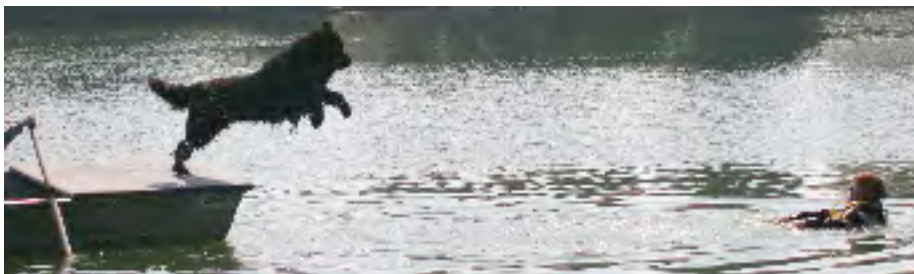
Kyak excelled in this sport. He could swim 75' to a boat and pull it to shore in under one minute. Any time he heard "Help! Dog! Help!" he would bark back "I'll come!" and be on his way. He was famous for his leaps off boats.

In winter, Bonnie trains her dogs in draft work which involves such exercises as pulling a cart in patterns with the handler beside the cart and behind the cart as well as one-mile back-packing.

In 1987 Bonnie entered her first competition dog, Meara, in an obedience trial with virtually no obedience training. Meara passed three out of four trials with an average score of 186. Bonnie admits it was one of the stupidest things she's ever done.

Bonnie began training with Ray in the early 90's and he helped her with her first male newf, Gideon, and Sally, an older newf she took in. Kyak was the first puppy that had been trained by Ray all the way through and Ray's expertise helped Kyak excel in the many areas of his working life.

A few years ago, Bonnie volunteered as a timer at several freestyle events (prompted by Ray) and later enrolled in a tricks class with Ray. Of all the sports Bonnie has been involved in, she finds freestyle the most terrorizing. When she first practiced with Ray while



people watched, she kept telling herself, "I can't do this!" And, coming from a long line of non-dancers, she has never felt comfortable with dance steps. So, as much as Kyak is a natural ham, especially in front of a big crowd,

Bonnie has to fight her fears. To help quell those doubts, Bonnie is taking dance lessons and hopes to soon be dancing with Ivy.

Who can forget Kyak's "playing dead" move? He didn't just drop. First, he would circle slowly on the spot, milking the moment, then slowly collapse to his side, before raising his four legs straight up. A natural showman. Bonnie believes that Kyak's gift of joy and fun and his quirky sense of humour always drew people to him like a magnet. If not for him, Bonnie would never have

remotely entertained the idea of actually doing a freestyle routine, but now she's glad she's tried. Each of her newfies has taught her a different lesson and they all have been truly wonderful companions.



Annette Granbois

Club vice-president and go-to person whenever something big has to be moved, Annette draws more “Aws” from the audience than anyone with Odie’s “hug” move.

My life began in Copenhagen, Denmark. My parents immigrated to Canada when I was two and my brother five. They set off on this adventure leaving behind parents, eighteen siblings, and countless cousins. After crossing the Atlantic on a rickety ship, they touched Canada’s shore at Pier 21 in Halifax as did tens of thousands of other Europeans. Although I don’t remember my landing in Canada, I can imagine the many people arriving on the shores of this land full of hope and promise – many of them with little more than the clothes on their backs, small children in tow, not understanding the language.

We immediately proceeded to Calgary, a one-street-light town at the time. I often marvel at the tenacity and sense of adventure of my my parents and thousands of others who took on such a challenge!

After twelve years in Calgary, we moved to Sechelt on the Sunshine Coast, another beautiful part of our country! Upon graduating from high school, I moved to the West End of Vancouver to continue my education. I worked as a legal secretary until I was hired by Pacific Western Airlines. Although the name has changed three times, I am still there – 40 years later – and still (for the most part) enjoy flying above this amazing world we live in!

Shortly after moving to Vancouver, I met Russ. We married two years later and set deep roots on five acres in South Langley where we still live. So, I’ve been married 39 years, have lived in the same place 38 years, and have had the same job 40 years -- does that make me reliable or boring??!! Maybe a little of both!

Our daughter at the age of 12 received her first horse (just to ride around the park – famous last words!) Anna-Lisa started competing in 3-day eventing which took the two of us on many adventures together – driving to Winnipeg for National Pony Club Championships, flying to Japan for an International Championship, and many other road trips to competitions around the province. I have to say, it is MUCH easier to travel to dog shows than horse shows!!

My son, Thomas, 6 years younger than Anna-Lisa, did not

share the same interest in horses – his love is computers. His passion has also led to interesting times: On one of my flights I happened to be chatting about computers and my son’s passion for them with a passenger who asked me to send Thomas to him for an interview. Before we knew it, Thomas was hired and working at Michael Jackson’s Neverland Ranch installing the computer system at the ranch. He made several trips back to the ranch and Las Vegas while Michael was performing there. Quite an

adventure for a 16-year-old!

At the age of eight, Thomas asked us to take him to church – of course we complied, although we were surprised by the request. Thomas’ interest grew. A couple years later, when the opportunity arose to join a group of twelve people and the minister of our church on a tour of the Holy Land, Thomas and I jumped at it. The trip was one of the most incredible experiences of my life – something I would recommend to

any one with an interest in that part of our history.

Both Thomas and Anna-Lisa are now married, but there are no children as yet! Anna-Lisa and her husband live in Langley and Thomas has recently moved to Pasco, Washington, with his new wife.

I can’t remember a time in my childhood without a family dog, so it was a “no brainer” that Russ and I would start our life together with a dog – actually two German Shepherds and two cats, then a Basset Hound, Collie mix, Husky, Sheltie, and now my wonderful second Sheltie, Odie, who joined our family eight years ago.

With my parenting responsibilities drawing to a close, I decided to try my hand at competitive obedience.

We were going along quite well for two years till we had a family crisis – we discovered major rot in our house and proceeded to tear it down by hand with just a sledge hammer and saw – taking the whole thing to the dump piece by piece in our pick up truck and living in a friend’s motor home for year. There was no time for dog training!

During the same time, my Dad had to move to a care home as he had Parkinsons and dementia. Odie and I visited every day (when I wasn’t working). While I visited with my dad, Odie entertained the other residents – doing a few tricks and helping them finish their lunch! When Dad passed away, I decided to continue visiting care homes after experiencing the joy Odie’s presence brought to so many



people's lives. I thought it would be more interesting to have a greater repertoire of tricks. A neighbor told me about a guy in Langley who taught dog tricks. That afternoon I went to Underwood's Training Facility and watched my first freestyle class. I signed up that night and was immediately hooked.

Odie and I also started working on obedience again. He has earned his CDX in Canada and US. He has also earned 2 legs of his UD in Canada. When we earn the UD title, Odie will have fulfilled a dream I have had for many years – something I never thought would be possible.

Freestyle has become my great love that combines the thrill of learning a few dance steps and the joy of spending so much time training with Odie. My only regret is that I didn't discover freestyle many years ago.

I now have a puppy with whom I'm already having a blast training. I have great hops that with a new puppy and Ray's amazing teaching skills, we will have many years of exciting challenging freestyle!

It has been four years since I discovered freestyle – what a wonderful journey it has been! Another terrific bonus is meeting so many like-minded people. It has been reassuring to know that I am not the only one with this obsession!!! I look forward to finding ways to grow with this wonderful sport for many years to come. I wish everyone the continued joy of spending time with their dogs doing whatever their passion is.



In Other Words

The November 2008 Canine Review featured breed is the Portuguese Water Dog. Marilyn was asked to write a good-bye article about Blitzen since he was so well known in this area.

She considered it an honor. The article is on page 28 and is prefaced with these words:

"Many of you saw the wonderful Portuguese Water Dog, OTCH, Pickwicks Blitzen Di Pacifica, at the Tradex Lower Mainland Dog Fancier's Shows where he and his devoted owner, Marilyn Knipp, performed their dances during the noon hour entertainment. Blitzen was a dance partner par excellence performing with humor, dignity and joy along with his partner Marilyn. Marilyn writes of their life together."



Marilyn wrote about her journey with Blitzen, knowing he was a once in a lifetime dog. She then asked the question, "Could there be 2 dogs of a life time?"

Marilyn ended her article: "Blitzen opened so many new doors to me. Now it's up to Chaps and me to carry on. Blitzen is looking down on us with that silly dog grin."



Editor's note: Thanks to everyone who submitted ideas, articles, and photos. Apologies for any mistakes or omissions. Comments and suggestions for future editions always welcome. --Lyd