

The WAG



PAWS 2 DANCE NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 6

JANUARY 2010

Gala Update

The music and script are just about done. The costumes are being sewn.. Handlers are rehearsing. The set is being built. Money is still being raised (friends run when they see us).

Enzo and Justin have hours of footage of this odyssey.

Check out the new Gala Logo and poster on our website.

(Enzo filming 'Cash for Gold' party)



Welcome new Members

Jane Neve, Black Creek
Suzanne Loblaw, Courtenay
Karen Eskilson, Burnaby
Marianne Harris, Courtenay
Kathy Lang, Renton
Peggy Callister,
Oak Harbour
Loretta Gilbert,
Federal Way
Carolyn Crowson, Olympia
Marilyn Lindsey,
Oak Harbour
Carol Toms,
Campbell River
Alison Trinkaus,
White Rock
Sandra McKeller,
West Vancouver

Calendar of Events

Ray's Dance Workshop	Jan. 23-24
Emerald City Video Day	Feb 21/28
Seattle Kennel Club	Mar.
Courtenay workshop	Mar. 21
BSB 10	Apr. 11
Whistler Dog Fest	Apr. 24-25
Membership due	May 1
Michele Pouliot Seminar	May 15-16
Island Fling	TBA
Garage Sale	June TBA
Golf Fundraiser	July TBA
Presentation Seminar	Aug. 7
Gala rehearsal at Bell	Aug. 28
WCFO NWBB Wash.	Sep. 4-5
SPCA Demo	Sep. 12
Gala rehearsal at A.M.	Sep 18

Coach's Corner — Ray Underwood

Don't take your dog for granted

Training is going really well. Your dog has learned several new tricks and you are working on your routine when suddenly your dog no longer responds and appears listless and unmotivated. Chances are, you are taking your dog for granted.

Remember, the dog works for *you*. It wants to make you happy. The only way it can tell you are happy is if you let the dog know it. Food rewards just don't do the trick. Think back to when you teach a new trick. You are enthusiastic and generous in your praise. The dog is responds to your excitement and works even harder. You must maintain that enthusiasm throughout training sessions. If you are not enthusiastic, take the night off.



Freestyle How to

THE CRAWL



I (Heather) put Harta's crawl on cue by capturing the behaviour. As a pup he acted just like an otter and slithered down grassy banks on his stomach with his back legs stretched out behind him. I just clicked and treated (c/t) this behaviour and added the cue 'crawl' to it. I have to be very careful though where I tell him to crawl. At one point he got a carpet burn on his privates - so now I allow him to crawl in whatever way is more comfortable for him and I make sure it's not on concrete or gravel. By giving a 'flat' cue, which means sphinx like on the floor, and the 'crawl' he figured out how he should move his legs if he was finding it awkward 'slithering' and I accepted that. I'm now thinking that I might go one step further and teach him different cues for the different crawls.

Once he was doing it forward, it turned out to be quite easy to teach him to crawl back. Since he'd already figured out how to move his legs to crawl forward, I just gave a 'flat' then 'crawl back' cue and c/t'd for incremental movements back, over time building on distance.

The key thing in teaching any behaviour is a solid foundation. Make sure they understand a 'down' and a 'back' before attempting to teach the crawl back.

For a dog that doesn't do it naturally there are many ways to set the dog up to learn it. Try telling him 'down' on one side of a coffee table (or small stool depending on size of the dog) with you on the other side. Get down to his level with a treat in hand and slowly move the hand towards you under the table so his nose reaches out towards the treat - c/t, do a few repetitions of this and then wait till he moves more than his head towards the treat, maybe a slight paw movement forward - c/t. Gradually build up till he's moving his whole body under the table. Don't rush it and don't put a cue to the behavior until you have it the way you want it. Of course this is a simplified explanation, but I hope it helps someone give it a try.



Corinne writes: So – I will give you my “take” on teaching crawl – what has NOT worked for me.

When I first learned crawl in an beginning obedience class (the “fun” time of class) – we put our dogs in a down, left hand rest on front shoulders, right hand holding cookie at nose (dog is facing to handlers right). Handler pulls cookie slowly away encouraging dog to get cookie, left hand preventing dog from getting up. I could get my dogs to crawl or I should scramble, but only with the cookie in front, and they would crawl in a short line or circle around me. Every time I tried to take the cookie away or lift my left hand, the dog would get up and move forward.

Back Crawl (Lyd)

So, I was trying to teach Ali how to bow when she was a pup. She kept scooting backwards away from me. I thought, “Hm. That looks interesting,” so started rewarding that behavior till she did it consistently, then named it “Scoot.” It was easy to then move beside her. To keep her from moving away from me, I scooted against a wall. She finds this move much easier than crawling forward. To teach back crawl pivot, I make a ¼ turn (or less) and have her reposition herself. The command “Close” is handy to help her reposition.

Small dog challenges (Lin)

At first, I hesitated to offer advice. Corabel is just learning to crawl so I hardly qualify as an 'expert'!! But, we have encountered some problems that are unique to little dogs so I thought our solutions might be useful to others.

I began by luring her along the floor with food. It worked, but she wouldn't go any distance; the room seemed too much for her. My solution was to start working her in a hallway. Somehow, she didn't seem so daunted by a space that was only a few feet wide, and she was willing to go further. It also seemed to emphasize a destination for her; the door at the end became her goal!

My second big challenge was to stand up! Anyone with a little dog knows that you spend half your training time bending over to correct them; it's not very attractive, and can be exhausting! Ray said

he had used a soft broom with his dog. I knew that would terrify Corabel so I invented my own 'push-stick'. I took a soft foam paintbrush, bulked it up with a piece of foam pipe insulation and attached it to a stick. (some friends later decided it needed to be upholstered!) Now, I can stand up and walk beside her. When she tries to get up, I say 'down' and touch her shoulders gently with my 'push-stick'.

Since we have moved past these two hurdles, we seem to be making great progress. We are now working on variations to a standard crawl. The latest one is to have her do a weaving crawl between my legs. Now if I can just avoid stepping on her...



Gina Pink: for small dogs, sit on the floor with your legs extended. Lift your knees just enough off the ground for the dog to crawl under. Then, lure him under your legs with a treat.

For all dogs: have the dog do a 'Down'. Lay out a line of small treats in front of him a few inches apart. As the dog goes to eat the treats, gently hold him in the down position while telling him to 'crawl'.

The Lighter Side

She's making
an ass of
herself!



My turn!

No, My turn!

No, My turn!

Out of my way!



Trial by Wind

One of our more hilarious events was a demo in Bellingham. Picture this: the speakers fastened down with Pati's bungee cords; Marilyn L. tucking CD's under her leg to keep them from blowing away; at one point, a canopy, signs and chairs flying in a gust of wind; Sharon hanging onto her blonde wig and sailor's hat while dancing, Lyd's skirt up around her ears while Ali tried to hang on; red dust swirling; Pepsi doing his thing unfazed; and all the while, a huge tree swaying ominously behind us.

Paws 2 Dance Bios



Corinne Lawson

Corinne is known for her creative, take-no-prisoners routines that have included everything from a light-show to a sword fight. It's safe to say that she will try anything!

9 years old, after living in France and Calif. my mother enrolls a very shy me into ballet class. And that was the beginning of a long relationship with an old, dusty, terribly

romantic, basement ballet studio run by a very Russian retired Ballet Russe dancer, Lila Zali. This lady taught us about ballet – how to move and how to be technically perfect and strong. Picture this ... the classic old ballet mistress, sitting in her chair, tapping her cane on the floor to the beat of the music, smoking non-stop, creating art from us young, gangly students. We put on many performances, very professional for a regional company – performances that to this day I am proud of. It was 16 years later when I finally walked away from that studio to find a different life ... a life that did not include 3 hours of classes 5 days a week and a weekend full of rehearsals ... a life where going to the beach to get a tan was okay and horseback riding or skiing permitted! Oh yes, I was married then and I just wanted weekends with my new “family”.

My whole childhood, I wanted a dog but after our 1st dog died (when I was 9), my dad discovered that he was very allergic to dogs and thus ... after many tries ... no dogs could live with us. I “adopted” a neighborhood dog that was neglected and he was “ours” while I lived with my parents, but he had to stay outside. Looking back at pictures, I see that he was an Aussie mix. I will never forget our wedding day with the reception at my parents house; our front door was open and at one point I looked out and saw my little Aussie, just sitting there looking. He was saying good-bye ~ he knew I was leaving. I came back often looking for him, but he disappeared. Never again, will I let a dog live a neglected life with a family.



My new husband David, had become very involved with the ballet performances after he met me during a dance performance in high school – I was on stage, he was back stage - a techie! He knew the Ballet technical director very well, so he started running lights or spotlight or music or sometimes ... video (!!!) for many of the ballet performances. Just after we were married, we ran out (I skipped a ballet class to do so!!) to find a dog. And we found a lovely little dog at the shelter, a Pom-Corgy mix! All red and as sweet as a button! Along with a kitten, we had started “our family.” When she was 7, I decided that she was bored and needed a job – so we went to a local training class – and loved it so much! I started assisting in classes, the beginning of a new love!

We moved from So. Calif to Washington, and when I was 5 mos. pregnant with Jeremy, got Toby puppy. I guess I could not wait for the baby. The two cats were not impressed.



Have you ever flown with a dog?? Well, after being a travel agent for 15 years, I had heard enough stories to know that I do not want to fly with my dogs in cargo if I can help it. When I was pregnant with Jeremy, my parents in So. Calif wanted to give me a baby shower for all our friends there. So, David and I flew down ... with Mandy and puppy Toby. Mandy was a smallish dog (about 12in tall and 20 lbs) and Toby was still a 6

mo old puppy. Got two Sherpa bags, got a travel agent discount for David and I, made the res for us and dog and went to the airport. Oops – got there late – run to the gate – will check dogs in there – no time – run on the plane (not easy at 8mos. pregnant) – show tickets – sit down. Ummmmm flight attendant? I have a dog here that I need to pay for (hmmm flight attendant sees a VERY PREGNANT lady) ... that's okay, just wait until we get to the layover stop. Plane lands at layover – oh your dog is

so quiet – don't worry about it (love that airline!) – take off – land – we disembark ... each shouldering a Sherpa bag ... YOU HAVE TWO!!??? Smile and leave. Thank goodness for quiet puppies!! Oh wait, one pup, Mandy, did decide during meal service (yes, those were the days) that she would unzip her bag and wander down the plane under people's seats picking up the crumbs! She was so helpful. We had no clue until the flight attendant came to us asking "Is this your dog? We found her in row 32." (We were sitting in row 6). Oh my!

Toby introduced me into a world that I had no clue about. We realized that he was herding everyone around, so, I took him to sheep herding lessons, as well as obedience and then agility. We were quite busy. Then the seizures started and agility and sheep herding had to stop. But, what is an Aussie to do?? Freestyle of course. Found a workshop given by Ray and Shannon and immediately went to it. Loved it! Along the line, had another baby, got another puppy Genevieve, a few more cats, left the world of travel to enter the world of dogs as a trainer, walker and gift basket maker. During that time, I tried a few schools of dog training to end up and be very happy with Positive Dog Training. When I became involved in freestyle, Joan saw all the positive aspects of freestyle and how freestyle can enhance the other sports of obedience, rally (which was new) and agility. She encouraged me to learn more so I could start teaching it here as Ray was far away for us. Genevieve, Toby and I have had many adventures with obedience, rally, agility and freestyle. What I love is that I can use my old love of ballet with my forever love of dogs and have such fun!

Besides dogs and family, I have found my "new" career of teaching. My dad was a teacher and a philosopher. I never knew it, but he had always inspired me to teach, it just took me several years to know it. I taught travel agents computer skills, I still teach obedience and freestyle and now, kids! David and I want to travel again but this time with the boys as there are so many places to see in our world. But right now, a new job awaits as well as a little puppy, Pippin. Just can't decide if he is more border collie or aussie? May have some lab there too. Oh – what adventures await us ...



Vickie Phillips

A demonstration chair extraordinaire, Vicky keeps the Lower Mainland group busy with demos all year and manages to find time to chair Prancing Paws each spring.



Vickie was born in North Vancouver, BC. However, that's not where she grew up, actually she may never grow up. She spent only 1 yr in North Van, then once she was on her feet so to speak, she set off with her bush pilot father and homemaker mother for some amazingly remote areas along BC's coast: Tahsis, Bella Coola, Bella Bella, Ocean Falls, Victoria, Campbell River, Tofino, Queen Charlotte islands (Sandspit), Prince Rupert, Gold River, Richmond, Kelowna, and even Edmonton to name a few. They lived in some areas just long enough for her Father to open up a base for BC airlines and off they'd go to another place. Her longest stay was in Richmond, when at 13yrs old, where they remained for 4 years. Vickie describes her childhood as absolutely perfect. She says a kid couldn't ask for a better environment to grow up in or better parents to raise her. She says living in areas that are only accessible by plane or boat makes you resourceful and very well planned. "You can't just hop in the plane for the carton of eggs that you forgot. As a kid, growing and playing in that type of wild nature teaches you so much, and I've seen places where most people will never get to see in their lifetimes." Dogs were always a big part of her life while growing up. Her mom bred Chihuahua's. "Not the best dogs to have along the coastal towns! The eagles would swoop down and try to catch them, and let me tell you when a Chihuahua wants to move it can." Her first dog of her own was a northern breed mixed with wolf. "Timber and I were inseparable" and she was hooked on that breed as is evidenced by the dogs she currently has.

Vickie graduated from High School in Edmonton AB, and decided to be a Bartender. "It just looked like such a cool job, because you got paid to work at a party." She moved out on her own at 18 and moved in with a group of friends. Joining a rock band for a couple of years she played keyboards and sang backup vocals while working as a bartender. One of her roommates later became her sister-in-law when Vickie married Tia's brother, Gary. This year will be their 23rd anniversary.

Finally having enough of Edmonton winters she moved back to BC and started working on her Bachelor of Science while working as a bartender again. While working in a “cop” bar she met the head of Toxicology at the RCMP crime labs and decided to focus her sciences in that direction. She spent a summer working at the crime labs in Tox but at the end of the 3 months decided it was just too boring standing in front of instruments all day waiting for results to spit out. She did, however, spend a week in ballistics, watching the testing of various weapons, and loved that. So off she went to learn how to shoot, and for years she did target shooting as her hobby. She shifted to hospital laboratory medicine, where she currently works as a Lab/ECG Tech for the past 16 years. “It’s an amazing job. Where else can you see the first breath of life, the end of life and the struggles and miracles that happen in between, all in the first hour of your work day?” She spent 2 years on the Neo-natal ICU working with the “tiniest beans you’ve ever seen. Try taking a blood sample from something that’s only as big as a pound of butter.” But her main enjoyment comes from working in the hectic “organized chaos” of trauma ER, where she has worked for a number of years, on occasion leaving for various short term assignments like teaching. “Working trauma gives you a very different outlook to life.” Vickie’s philosophy is to make the most and enjoy every minute you’re given and ever sweat the small stuff. She says, “everything outside of an emergency room is small stuff.”

Vickie had a couple more northern/wolf crosses over the years and now has Spirit and Sy. She became interested in freestyle during a particularly stressful time and was looking for some type of activity that would be a stress outlet. “I think taking up freestyle to relieve stress caused me more stress. Working with that breed and Spirit’s ‘I’m the boss’ attitude had me questioning my sanity.”

Ray, with all his patience, was an enormous help. “I just wish I’d known him earlier in Spirits formative years. I think we’re at a point where we’re at the best we’ll ever be and that’s fine just staying at the novice level, and enjoying demo’s. Spirit will always be the difficult dog but if I waited till I had the perfect routine and perfect dog we would never have enjoyed the places, events, and people we’ve met over the years, so I’m glad we didn’t wait.”

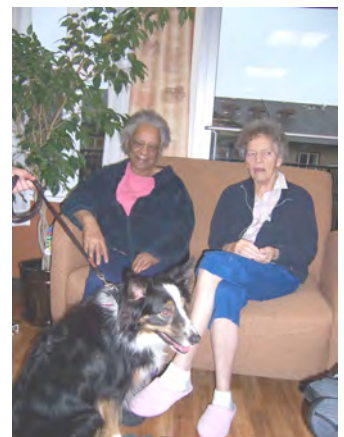
Vickie and her husband have traveled extensively over the years but after traveling to Ghana last year, Vickie has found a new passion in West Africa. She traveled there last year with one of the Doctors she works with. While working in his newly opened clinic in Accra, setting up his lab, she toured Ghana’s main teaching Hospital, Korle Bu. She has now become involved with Korle Bu’s Pediatric ward, fundraising, “shamelessly encouraging others to become involved.” She will be traveling back there for 2 months this fall carrying 1500 hospital gowns for the kids, and hopefully oximeters, cannulas, and ambugs, depending upon how the fundraising goes. “The Ghanaians are an amazingly resilient, resourceful, and friendly people, who are just so happy to meet you,” she says.

To shamelessly promote her cause again, Vickie encourages all her freestyle friends to check out the Korle Bu Family fund website, kbff.org, or just email her if you’re interested in getting involved too. “Having seen first hand how others live makes me realize just what a privileged life I’ve led so far

with family, friends, dogs, and amazing opportunities in life, and I can hardly wait to see where and what the next half century brings me, and hopefully will still be dancing with my dog”



Visiting Seniors



New Dogs

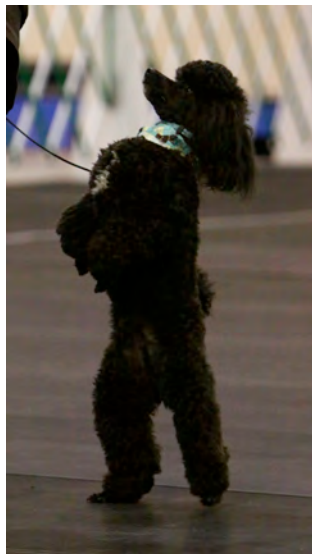
Saying Goodbye

Welcome Champion, Duckabush Nose for News aka Hunter Money to the freestyle family. Hunter has won the hearts of both Carolyn and her husband. As fast as greased



lightening, he looks like a road-runner when chasing tennis balls. At his first try at rally, he passed with a 92/100. Carolyn plans on turning 6-year-old Hunter into a Freestyler.

Say hello to Pat Moore's Ricky B., Jack's half brother. His registered name is Larkyn's Talladega Nights and his call name is RickyBobby (anybody else a NASCAR fan like Jim?). He's about 15 mo old now, and starting in dressage and the Fling on the island was his first time out (hadn't even been to a demo) and Pat was very proud of him.



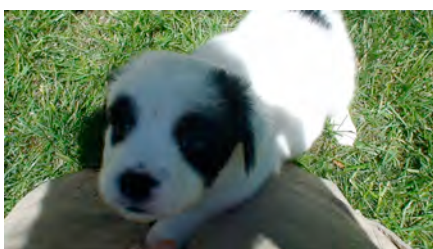
And if you really want to go for new and cute, here is a picture of Danna (Larkyn's AfterGlow). And yes she has a white chin and HAD white



toes but they have gone away. Her Momma is Jack's litter Sister Paris (who belongs to

Violet and is starting to dance too). So she's Jack and Ricky's niece and Pat's future partner.

And now, here's Pippin, Corinne's Aussie - Border Collie - lab mix, not quite ready to dance but learning the ropes.



Ray's Stevie Wonder passed away this year. At 15 years of age, Stevie was still the mischievous pack leader of the house, making sure none of the other animals beat him to the food. The day before he died suddenly, he was as feisty as ever.

Although Ray danced with him for only three years, Stevie will be remembered for his lively routines including "Alley Cat,"

"Crazy Little Thing Called Love," and "the Classic Waltz." One of Stevie's signature tricks was running backwards on his hind legs – at full tilt!



Tundra, a Kuvasz, was Gail's first freestyle dog. He wasn't really keen on dancing, but did his best to please Gail. Tundra looked impressive just striding along in the ring.

Christmas Freestyle Fun Match on the Island



Gina Pink Seminar

--Lin

On the weekend of Sept. 12th & 13th, The Naughty Dogge, in Victoria, hosted a wonderful seminar given by Gina Pink. It was well attended and there were many familiar 'Paws 2 Dance' faces present! For those of you who don't know, Gina is a world class Freestyle Performer and has many awards, including a First Place in the prestigious 'Heelwork to Music' at Crufts in 2007! She is a talented handler and teacher, and is often called upon as a Judge in the UK and other European countries. She is currently Co-Chair of '[Paws n Music](#)' in Great Britain and is also the Show Chair for that Organization.

Gina is a highly entertaining speaker; both witty and flamboyant. Although suffering from jet lag after a 9 hour flight, she kept us enthralled for 2 full days!

She began the first day by showing us her 'Warm Up'. Gina feels strongly that dogs need a good warm-up to get all their muscles moving and to help prevent injuries. (Surprise! Same as humans!) She uses a small routine at the beginning and end of all of her sessions with her dogs. It works to warm them up (or cool down) and also to signal that it is 'working time'. I've always done something as a warm-up but it varied; it never occurred to me to do a consistent set of exercises!

Gina's Warm-Up:

- 1) Heel 12 steps (dog on left, off leash)
- 2) Dog does a Spin
- 3) Heel 12 steps back (Dog now on right)
- 4) Heel 12 steps out incorporating 3-4 counter-clockwise spins (dog on left)
- 5) Heel 12 steps back incorporating 3-4 clockwise spins (dog on right)
- 6) Weave out for 12 steps
- 7) Circle (dog goes around you clockwise)
- 8) Around (dog goes around you counter-clockwise)
- 9) Curtsey (dog does a bow with chest on floor, stretching the back)

Later, after Gina taught us some new weave variations, (wait for these to show up at Competitions soon!) she moved on to a discussion of Music. She suggested that it was a good idea to start by discovering your dog's natural BPM (beats per minute) and then trying to find some music that roughly matched that. To find your dog's BPM, have him heel with you at a comfortable pace (for him!). Have a friend with a stopwatch count the number of times his feet hit the floor in a 15 second period and



then multiply that by 4. To find out your music's BPM, you can go to the **Paws n Dance** website and use their handy [BPM Calculator](#) and database. (Or, for those geeks out there, there is an iPhone Metronome App: [Orfeo](#) that incorporates a tap bpm calculator) You should always choose your music based on a combination of your dog's bpm, his style, and your intended audience. Gina also suggested starting the routine with moves the dog likes and incorporating at least 3 'Wow' moves; everyone should also have a 'default' move for that moment when your dog (or you) has a mind-freeze! This would be something that your dog likes to do and will do reliably; it should be a moving action; not a stationary one to help break the 'Dancer's Block'.

Whenever she starts a new routine, Gina always tries to include at least 3 new moves that no one has seen her dog do yet; it helps to keep her routines fresh and unique. To help with the transition to 'No Food' in Competitions, Gina suggests that you should be unpredictable with your treats; give them out with either hand, throw them onto the floor near the dog, or in the air for them to catch, etc. She also recommended that you praise your dog first, and then treat. In that way, the dog comes to associate the praise as his reward and the treat as a happy afterthought. (Hmmm.... I've read this to Cora several times, and she is still not buying it!)

On Sunday, we all got to show Gina our current routines and get some great feedback and suggestions from her. Then, we spent the rest of the day picking her brain for ideas for new moves, and how to teach them to our dogs. I think she gave us some really fun ideas, and some things that no one has used here before, but for those – you'll just have to check out the new routines that will be coming in a few months!!

SCARLET FEVER SPECTACULAR



Did you hear about the brief but intense epidemic that swept Vancouver Island recently? Island k9 Freestylers did and were honoured when asked to be part of the ‘local entertainment’ which complemented the Parksville “RCMP Musical Ride Island Tour.” Of course the invitation was accepted.

The ‘Arbutus Meadows Equestrian Center’s 60,000 sq ft indoor arena was packed with people. We guesstimate 2-3000 watched the young 4H equestrian Drill team, the two Dressage riders, a dozen young ‘vaulters’ performing off the back of moving Clydesdales’ – all done to music. Some amazing horsemanship – reflecting hours of the riders’ dedication to teamwork, precision footwork and their love of horses.

Seven ‘Island K9 Freestylers’ presented the only Dog Sport demonstration. Wendy Wallace braved the official Viewing Stand, to competently provide the ‘sold out’ crowd with a quick Musical Freestyle briefing – and an introduction to Marianne Harris, Anila Rondeau, Marlene Smith, Magi Scoffield- Reid, Heather Somers, Glenda Gentleman performances. The 3inch dirt/sand flooring offered a bit of a challenge, (as did a temporarily reluctant sound system), but perform we did – offering both an

afternoon and an evening performance. Our selections included the team routine ‘Stairway to Heaven’ plus two solos – Glenda Gentleman/Joni doing ‘The Continental’; Heather Somers and Harta doing ‘The Drunken Sailor’. We’re pleased to advise that the dogs cooperated beautifully. Enjoy ourselves? – you bet we did!

Still nothing compared to the Mounties performance. It was spectacular. There is nothing that makes one feel so ‘Canadian’ as the sight of those red serge jackets, with the straight backed riders, mounted on jet black horses -lance flags flying as they perform an intricate drill or their famous ‘Charge’.

The day passed quickly, as when not actually watching events in the arena, we relaxed together, enjoyed a gourmet pot luck lunch, strolled over the grounds or watched Mounties prepare for their turn in the spotlight. During one interval, a couple of charming Mounties were more than happy to pose with us. Willing spectators snapped not one but many shots (with numerous cameras) –so all of us could be included in the pictures.

Memories are made of summer demos like this one!



Top Seven Demo Tips

7. Stress the need to organizers for an **even surface** because, yes, a rocky hillside with a surface made up of gravel mixed with cow pies with a sprinkling of scotch thistle could possibly be dangerous for the dogs!
6. **Stand clear** of others’ routines. Standing in the ring or fussing with bags or props near the ring distracts from the performance.
5. Do a **costume check** before stepping onto the floor: (Do you have your skirt tucked into your panties? Do you have all the props you need? Ie. Hat, scarf, wig?)
4. Bring plenty of **water** – and containers – for the dog . . . and for yourself. Spray bottle also a good idea.
3. Bios/**introductory words**: keep them short and lively. Add some humor if possible. Write in BIG font since most of us need reading glasses! If each bio is on a separate card, then the organizer need only put the cards in the right order and write up an order list rather than write up the whole thing. Cards are easier to handle than full sheets. Also, it’s usually best if one or two of the members do the MC duties. We’ve had some disastrous host readers.
2. Pack along your own **music system** as a back up.
1. **Put your well-marked CD in a clear sleeve.** (There’s nothing worse than finding an empty case or the wrong CD)

And now, from SMITHERS!!!!

Our Smithers club of one – Lorna – took the plunge this summer and started doing demos. Lorna writes:



Rayla is not a new partner; we've been together for almost 9 years, we have our ATChC in AAC agility and Versatility title in CARO Rally Obedience. But we're both new to freestyle and are enjoying the challenge.

In September, we performed demos at 2 local Fall Fairs, with the music of ABBA's "Dancing Queen". They were low

key, ideal opportunities to try something new with an audience who had never heard of freestyle so were not critical😊



Overall they went well, even if we had to dodge the occasional toddler who wandered over to "pet the dog"!

When I adopted Rayla from a shelter at 6 months old I'd never heard of Rally O or freestyle so it's been an interesting learning experience.

The Challenges of some Summer Demos ...

... as experienced by Corinne, Genevieve and Truffles the Pug.

Oh – those lazy, hazy, summer days! Or, should I say crazy, racy summer days? Sometimes, it feels like we are racing thru the summer just running from one event to another. Last year, Emerald City K9 Freestyle Dancers had many requests for demos and for the first time, we had to pick and choose and turn down some requests. We learned a lot during that time.

We learned that we do need to be choosy and that not all demos will be good for us, good for our dogs nor good for the sport. We learned that afternoon demos on hot days will most likely “melt” our dogs into just not wanting to do anything or worse – leave the ring. We learned that hot afternoons bring out all those great duck smells from the grass! We learned that even liver cookies may not help much when our fur-baby is too warm to move. I will never forget how my dogs and I almost really melted trying to perform in a 10x10 hot ring in the middle of a parking lot that seemed to draw the sun and heat in! First time Pug tried to leave the ring – desperately! Never again!

At the same time, **we learned** that we get the bigger audiences in the afternoon. While morning demos are much better – cooler dogs, cooler & not so-smelly grass, walkable pavement – the audiences at these events are smaller as the event is just beginning. Tough choice.

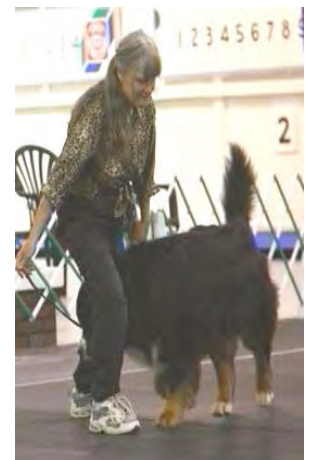
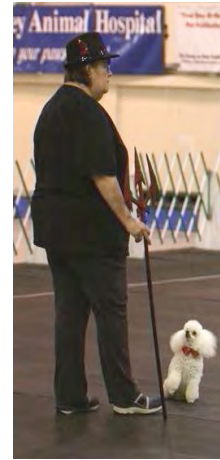
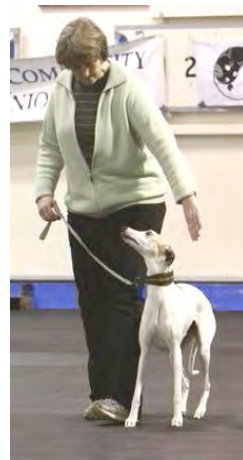
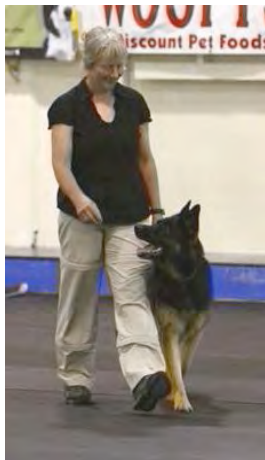
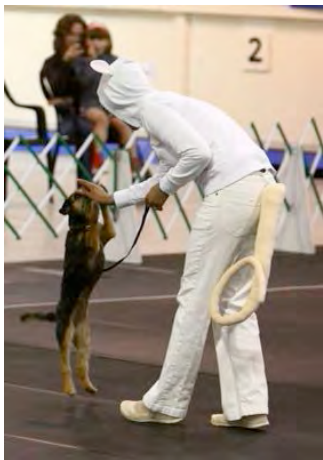
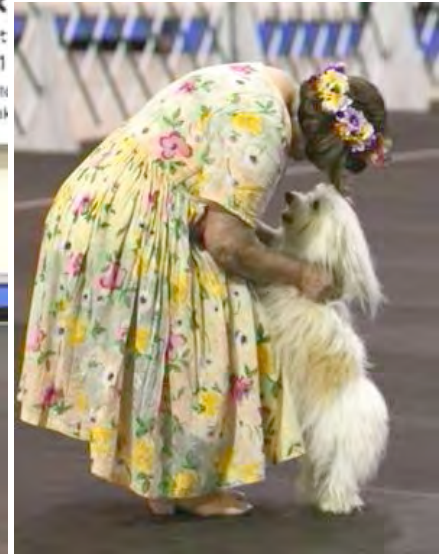
We learned that not all players play music equally. During one demo, we could only hear one part of the track (such as the treble only) and that the audience would hear the other part. I didn't know that speed would change as well. Also – what may sound loud to us in the ring may sound like a whisper to the audience. Wow – the power of improv!

We learned that we can and should have some parameters to make our demos enjoyable to the audience, enjoyable for our dogs and handlers, and most importantly, SAFE for our dogs. It is okay to ask for morning demos during the middle of hot summer days – we know our dogs will not give a good performance so why risk their health and the enjoyment of our sport? It is okay to ask for ring gates and if they cannot provide, we will. It is okay to ask for a shaded area to crate our dogs during the demo. It is great to get from all demo-teams a written bio/introduction that would be read before their demo. We are also learning to try and have more people do at least one demo so that there is not just a ‘core’ group of dedicated performers.

We are learning to try new things. Audiences seem to like it when they can ‘participate’: show a ‘demo class’ then introduce a particular move and then have them look for it during the routine, show how to teach a move that they can teach at home with their dog. New idea: bring all teams out for a group finale that would be fun music and improv dancing and tricks!

Island Fling

Kudoa to the Courtenay ladies, led by Heather, for hosting the first-ever 2-day Paws 2 Dance Event!
Photos by Cal Dawson



BSB 9

Kudos to first time show-chair, Marilyn Lindsey, for upholding the tradition of excellence.
Photos by Tristin Lindsey

