

The WAG

PAWS 2 DANCE
NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 9

JANUARY 2011



Welcome New Members

Marilyn Gartin
Josette Stenbom
Carrol Haines
Kristen Ficke
Grazyna Pstrong
Nina Green

Calendar of Events

Seattle Kennel Club Whistler	March 12/13 TBA
Emerald City WCFO Mardi Paws Ball	March 26/27
Lower Mainland P2D competition	April 30
Chemainus Workshop	Spring TBA
Cloverdale	May 21,22
Corvalis	May 21,22
Petpalooza, Auburn	May 21, 22
Island Fling	June (TBA)
Poochapalooza, Marysville:	July 9
Boot Scootin' Boogie	Sept/Oct. TBA



Thanking You for Your Support

The final curtain has come down on a two-and-a-half-year adventure. The "Escape the Darkness" team could not have accomplished our goals without the support of the Paws 2 Dance extended family. We thank you for buying raffle tickets, branded products, and bling; for attending (and delivering) fund-raising workshops; for donating generously; for attending the production; for performing demonstrations; for giving us support throughout the entire process; and for warmly applauding our efforts.

We set out to cover our expenses and make a donation to a worthy cause. We're happy to report that we raised enough to make a \$5000 donation to Critter Care Wildlife Animal Rescue Society.

Coach's Corner – With Ray Underwood

Keep it – But keep it fresh!

Attention, position, and heeling are the cornerstones of freestyle and dressage and you should spend time during each training session working on these elements. However, be sure to vary the exercises. One session you might work on dynamic starts in the heel position; the next time, you might work on maintaining attention while varying handler position; another time you might create a game (more on that next issue) to motivate the dog to find position. Just remember to examine your dog's weaknesses and train with a goal in mind.

Maintaining learned tricks is also important. During the course of training over a number of sessions, be sure to revisit all the movements and tricks the dog has learned – including the most basic of elements.

Developing New Tricks keeps both you and your dog excited. Look for fresh ideas, fresh combinations of movement, or fresh handler movement to accompany moves.



How To - The "Back Around"

Kristen Ficke suggests breaking the move into two halves, and with each half, keeping the leash tight to keep the dog's head close to your body and to ensure the dog's rear has to do the work of moving around.

"The first half circle started from a stand in a left heel. I held the leash in my right hand, and let it fall across the front of my body. I used food in my left hand to lure her through a half circle around me, so that she ended up on my right side with her head facing backward. The second half circle started with the dog standing on my right side facing backward. I held the leash in my right hand and let it wrap around behind me. I used food in my right hand to lure her so that she did a half circle across the front of my body, ending up in a heel position on the left facing forward.

Once she had the understanding and muscle memory to do both of those moves separately, I combined them into a full circle-back. The technique worked quite well because once Kai got halfway through the circle, she seemed to easily understand that she was now in the start position for the second half of the circle. It eliminated a lot of fumbling at the half-point of the circle on both our parts."

Lyd F. writes: To teach Ali how to circle back starting on the left, I had her pivot with me then spun myself in the opposite direction to meet up with her again on the left. Somehow, she figured it out and has quite a tight circle back. However, when I tried this from the right, she just looked at me as though I were crazy. **Ray** suggested the following which worked much better.

Make sure the dog knows the "right heel" position. From that position, handler tells dog to stay, pivots a $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to the right, then tells the dog to find the right-heel position. Repeat till the dog can find the position consistently. Next, do the same thing but handler makes $\frac{1}{2}$ a turn and asks dog to find the position. Gradually keep turning more up to about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a circle-back. To initiate the move from the starting position, you will have to give a different cue to get dog started, then as soon as the dog has started, ask it to find the right heel position.

First Half



Left Start



Left Behind



Left End

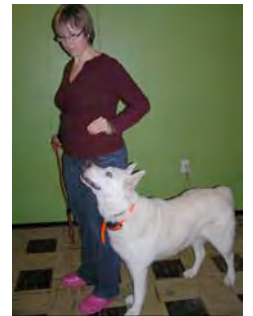
Second Half



Right Start



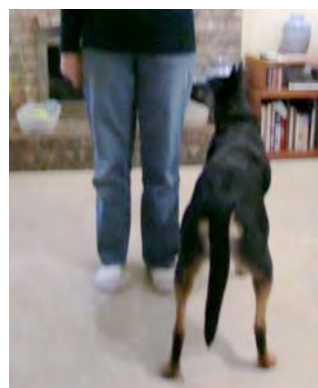
Right Behind



Right End

Lin MacDonald writes: "As I was teaching Corabel to do a circle back, she started to go wide as she learned. So, I took a small-size hula-hoop and put it up on 2" x 4" blocks. Then we both stood inside and I sent her around. As she bumped the hoop, she pulled herself closer to me. I have since gotten rid of the wooden blocks and just use the hoop on the floor to remind her to get in closer.

However, my technique may need to be modified for most dogs!" (With larger dogs, try using an X-pen enclosure – from workshop with Michele Pouliot)



Becoming Ring-Ready! – Workshop offered by Corinne Lawson

Corinne tapped into the wealth of knowledge and experience of attendee trainers in this unique workshop.

On July 11, I had the honor to present a newly-designed workshop – **Becoming Ring Ready** – to 14 trainers who ranged from novice to experienced, from freestyle to multiple disciplines.



This workshop was designed with the purpose of incorporating different learning styles and different training techniques so each person could learn something she may have never thought about, understand what “ring readiness” is, and explore training ideas. The material that I wanted to present lent itself to being presented in a round-table format. We arranged several tables into a circle so that each participant sat at a table on the outside of the circle with me in the center. I grouped participants into small table groups, we had our lunch in front of us, a handout packet that had plenty of room for notes, and off we went.

I conducted the discussion by asking certain questions such as “What is Ring Ready?” had people either write down their answer and/or discuss their answer in their group, write results, share ideas in large group discussions, return to small groups for more discussion. We all learned something new that day, including me, which is what made it so great! We started out with our dogs so I could see how each person worked with their dogs – we played games, did exercises and then put our dogs in their crates. During the workshop, we took our dogs out from time to time to apply what we discussed and to explore new options. Even with three hours, we ran out of time. I would love to have had more time for the troubleshooting section which ended the workshop.

Topics that we explored included *definition of training, definition of “Ring Ready”, when to train and how to make training a daily part of your day easily and consistently, working attention, understanding training problems and exploring solutions.* I feel that both novice and experienced trainers learned from each other as there was lots of great discussion and idea sharing. I enjoyed meeting new people and exploring new ideas from everyone! In future workshops, I am planning to add on techniques for warming up before entering a ring, and how to stay on your best “performance-foot!”

To start the day, Carolyn Money and Pat Moore had arranged for a Zumba teacher to come and give a hour Zumba lesson to warm us up and get us moving! Lots of great exercise and a fun way to start the day!

Intermediate Dressage Clarification

Intermediate 1: For **Pivots**, handler must remain on the spot. (think pie-plate). **Heeling on the right** may be on a straight line or on a curve for a minimum 8 steps.

Intermediate 2: Must do **pivots in both directions**, but they need not be together. **Right-side back:** The same rules apply as for back heeling in Novice. **Forward Figure 8:** Any size is fine (as long as it fits with the music). Can be done from either right heel position or left heel position.

Intermediate 3: Focus is on the right side. Same rules apply as for Novice **Inward** and **Outward Side Passes**. For **Back Right Circle**, dog must also maintain heel position – on the inside of the circle.



Karen (as Trixie) and Beezuzu in a Santa Parade.

Beezuzu is catching bubbles.

Photo by John Biehler

And I thought I'd heard every excuse . . .

Gail is notorious for being late for early-morning dressage class. So, when she didn't show up at all, we wondered what excuse she would come up with. Here is what she wrote to us later that day.

I am so sorry about missing today. What a freak accident Pepsi had. I am still not sure how it happened. Pepsi was in the back of the truck in his kennel. We were heading off to dressage class. Believe it or not we were way ahead of time and I was going to get to class with lots of time to spare. Really I am not lying.

As I was driving, I all of a sudden heard a loud bang in the back and Pepsi started whimpering. I pulled over to the side of the road and jumped out of the truck. When I opened the back there was Pepsi with his head upright as though he was looking at the kennel ceiling. The side of his face was right against the kennel wall. I wasn't sure at first what was happening. Pepsi then continued to cry and was squirming trying to pull away from the wall. I could tell he must be stuck on something. I thought his collar was stuck to something.

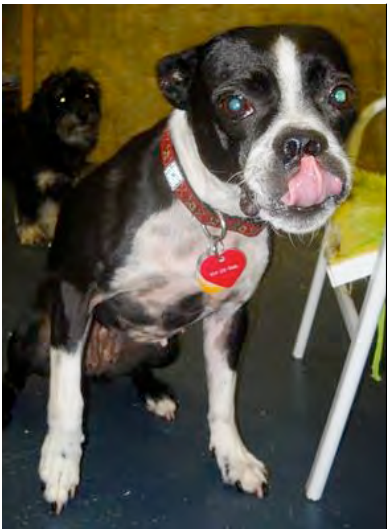
I immediately jumped into the truck and saw that the bungee cord that I had hooked to the kennel to keep it from moving around while travelling, was hooked about an inch and half under his eye. He was pulling down and away that it the hook was coming out of his eye. I tried to unhook him and couldn't. He was pulling so hard and panicking that I couldn't get him to put his face right against the wall so I could push his head up to unhook him. I then thought that I would just unhook the cord and that would give me some slack. Well it was already unhooked and I still didn't have any slack. The metal coil that attached the hook to the cord was on the other

side of the half inch slats and was too large to pull through so I could release him. I realized that I would have to pry the slats apart on the kennel wall in order to release the cord. It took several tries and every ounce of energy I had but I finally got it through and unhook Pepsi.

I checked his eye and could immediately see blood going into the white of his eye. I was an absolute mess and luckily I was only about a mile from home since I probably shouldn't have been driving. When I got home I phoned the vet right away but of course the answering machine said it didn't open till 10. I waited to till then, which seemed like an eternity and went up to the vet's office. After totally breaking down trying to tell the receptionist what had happened, she informed me that the office is open on Sunday's but there no vet on Sundays.

I then headed off to the Langley Emergency Clinic. I was still a total mess but made it there in one piece. After a complete check up they feel the cornea of his eye is not damaged and I just have to watch to see if he is in any pain or rubbing it. If he rubs his eye he may make it worse. But so far he isn't. I have to put some cream in his eye several times a day to make sure he doesn't get an infection. So almost \$200 dollars later we went home.

One positive thing about today is that I left them with several brochures and they seemed very interested in the fact that Pepsi was a dancing dog.



Upset with Karen,
Zuzu flips her a bird.

Joan had barely
finished painting the
drop before she found
someone had mistaken
it for a climbing wall.

Meanwhile, Bandit
had climbed a tree and
wouldn't come down.



Paws 2 Dance Bios

Kathy Weaver

Kathy's background in obedience and herding has given her a leg-up in freestyle.

My first introduction to freestyle was at the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) 1997 conference in Memphis where Sandra Davis and others demoed freestyle routines. I thought, "Someday, that's what I want to do!" Eleven years passed before I took my first freestyle class and entered the most challenging and rewarding dog sport in which I've participated.

Since I'm retiring from my office manager position at Cancer Research And Biostatistics (CRAB) in Seattle the end of this year, I look forward to more adventures in freestyle. Even though working at CRAB has been rewarding, I don't regret resigning. I couldn't resist my husband when he asked last September, "So, when are you going to quit work and spend more time with me and the dogs?" More time with hubby and dogs? He didn't have to ask me twice! I've had many wonderful experiences throughout my working years: I've published a magazine about training and using herding dogs (*The Ranch Dog Trainer*), worked as a vet tech and as a business manager for a veterinary clinic, and owned an Internet service provider business in the years when the Internet first became user-friendly with the advent of browsers. Career-wise, it's been a fun ride with lots of highpoints.

Beyond work, many of the highpoints in my life involved dogs. I thought it couldn't get any better when I won high-in-trial with Letty, my first Tervuren, or finished in the top 20 at the United States Border Collie Handling Association (USBCHA) national finals with Bob, my working border collie. That was before I started competing in freestyle. Earning a 199 ½ in AKC Open B or watching my dog bring 500 sheep in from pasture was a thrill, but not like the thrill I'm getting out of training and competing in freestyle.

For me, accomplishing even small steps along the way to competition is a bit of a thrill . . . training the behaviors, developing the transitions, finding and editing the music, and then creating a choreography that brings it all together. What a rewarding adventure!

And the challenges? There have been many over the last two years. First, I had to overcome my own dance experience. My husband and I tango. Great dance, good mental and physical exercise, but often challenges the partners' relationship. It's a

man's dance; the man, or "lead," interprets the music and creates the choreography on the fly while the partner follows. The lead in tango is a lot like the human partner in freestyle. Let's just say that I now have a whole new appreciation for times when my husband gets frustrated with me when I miss a cue and step in the wrong direction! Also, I have had to look at training in a new way, as I found that clicker training is one of the best methods for training freestyle behaviors. I'm still learning and refining those techniques and improving my timing and observational skills.

Probably the biggest challenge is my dog Troy. As lovely a dog as he is, I'm the first to admit that he's a tad on the goofy side. He was a challenge even in the obedience ring. "Hey, mom, forget that heeling stuff, there's something really nifty over *there!*" And,

boy, has he been a challenge in the freestyle ring! During our first year in freestyle, we participated in demos with the Emerald City K-9 Dancers. Troy was a big hit with the crowd because he obviously had a great time . . . visiting spectators, grabbing toys off of a table outside the ring (he did come back in the ring to finish our routine), but mostly going, "Wow! Look at all the nifty stuff over *there!*" Now that he's three years old, all of our attention work is finally starting to pay off. At our last competition in Corvallis, he was solidly with me and never offered to leave to check out the nifty things outside the ring.

So, even though I am still working through the challenges I've found in freestyle, the rewards are, indeed, great. And the best reward of all? It's when the music starts and Troy looks at me, eyes shining, tail wagging. "Music -- cool! Hey, partner, what's next? Weave? Spin? Jump? Let's go!"



Photos: Dick Capello

Lenore Baskin

A Renaissance woman, Lenore brings her artistic flair to her dog training.



I have been lucky to have a great childhood, full of play and freedom. I was born in Saskatoon and spent a lot of time in the country with dogs, horses and other farm animals. I was always bringing stray dogs home to live with me and couldn't understand why I couldn't keep a horse in my basement. My family moved to Edmonton when I was 13. I didn't like it there so much. I thought there was more to life than school and so I ran away at 17. At the age of 19 I moved to Victoria. After about 2 years, my family followed me here. I have been in Victoria ever since! I love it. My two daughters still live in Victoria as well. So I am close to my grandson who is the joy of my life!

I have interests in many fields. I am an artist at heart and have entered and won a few art competitions. I paint with oils and acrylics, pencil sketch, charcoal and conte. I love to paint horses, dogs, dragons and skeletons. I also love still life and wilderness scenes.

I spent years underground as a caver, back packing around the mountains of Vancouver Island – exploring the depths and beauty of its rocks and caverns, repelling into dark holes and crawling through tunnels.

I have a black belt in karate, and a beautiful garden. Not a Zen one though, more like a country type garden.

I live in an old house that I have been restoring back to its early 1900's glory. I do most of the work and design myself. I love old things, so I have a nice collection of antique things and furniture. I had an old 63Volkswagen beetle that I restored. I rebuilt the engine and won best engine in a car show with that car. I sew as well and at one time made my own patterns and a line of clothing. I did shirts for the local bike gang and painted things like snakes and serpents

creeping around the shirts. That was a great contract! Throughout all this I have always maintained my interest in animals, especially horses and dogs.

My husband and my two dogs live with me. I have a black Great Dane - Miss Nahli, and a smooth coat Border Collie - Sir Lance.

I have been doing freestyle for about 6 years. I started with an older dog, Buddy. He was 6 ½ when he came to me. He had no training. He could sit and down on command but that was about it. But I got him to the point where I could put him in competition in freestyle.

I train just about every day, although some days we are doing what I call Kitchen Freestyle. That is practicing freestyle in my very small kitchen. I spend a lot of effort on creating drive and the will to work with me in my dogs. Having a Great Dane, I am getting very good at creating drive. Sometimes I wonder if I created too much drive in the Border Collie, but really I believe there is never too much drive. I also play a lot with my dogs. This is the basis of my attention and working relationship with my dogs. Without drive and attention there would be nothing to work with.

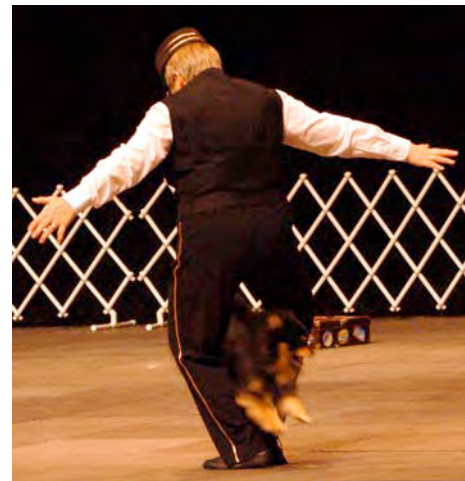
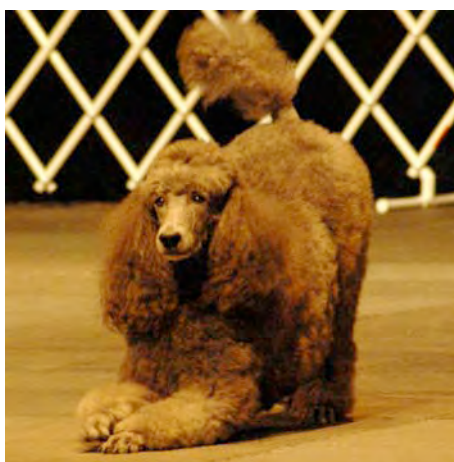
I train using a combination of clicker, hands on, and leash work. I use different motivators depending on the dog. I have done a few other sports with my dogs, but Freestyle gives me the most satisfaction. I think it is one of the hardest dog sports. It requires precision, obedience, drive and enthusiasm from the dog, and artistic choreographing, inventiveness, and the ability to be open minded on the side of the handler. So if you are asking for a front and your dog comes in and does a little jump before he fronts, you should see that as something that you could keep for flair or a possible new trick. I love it when my dogs offer something creative like that! Perhaps this is why I find it so interesting and consuming.

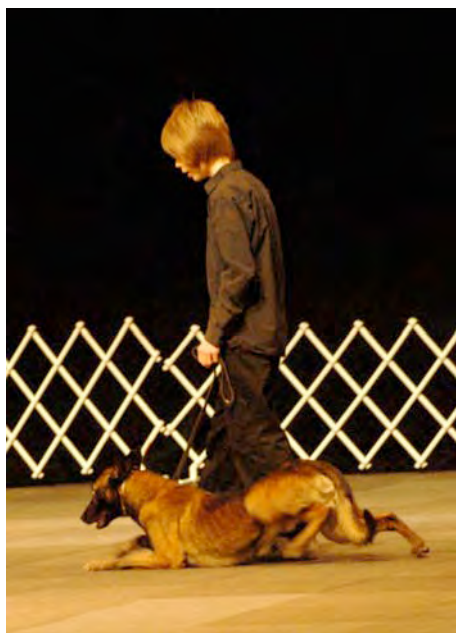
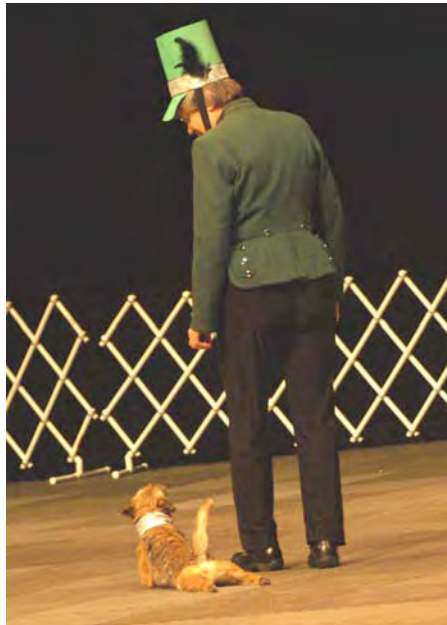
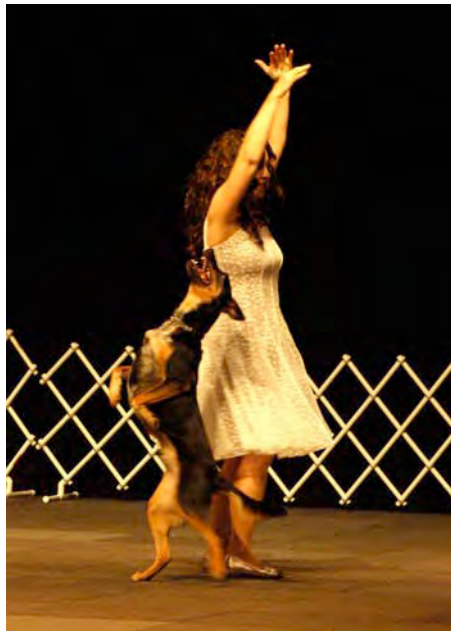


Freestyle has become a great passion of mine and I am very interested in drawing new people into the sport, either for competition or just to have the opportunity to build a better relationship with their dogs. I have taught Freestyle classes and basic pet obedience classes. I really like to teach Freestyle. I love to see the relationship grow when handlers are working their dogs! Currently I am on the executive of a small freestyle club in Victoria called the Muttley Crew. Having people around who are in the same sport is a must. You can bounce ideas off each other, help with routines, share encouragement and support. My dogs are everything to me; I cannot imagine my life without them. Freestyle gives me an opportunity to bring that relationship to a full rewarding experience of satisfaction and love.

Dance the Skies

Paws 2 Dance Celebrated their 10th anniversary with a record 54 entries in their inaugural "Dance the Skies" competition and wish to thank everyone who helped make it a success. **Photos by Josette Stenbom.**



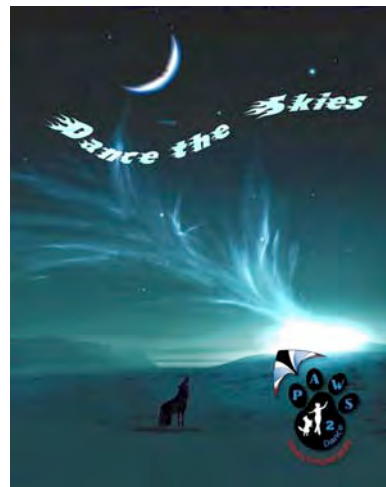




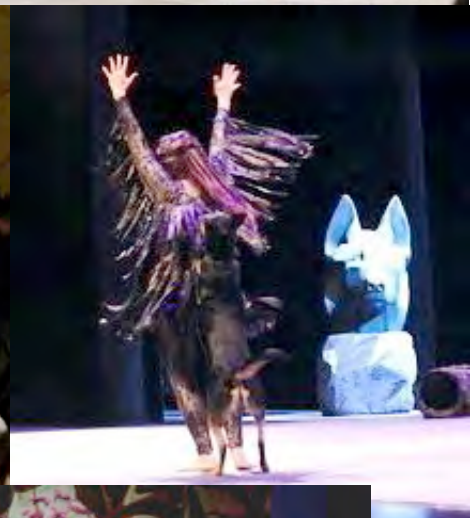
Special thanks to our performers – Michele Pouliot with Listo, Gail Walsh with Pepsi, Dana Gallagher with Zephyr, and Tristan Underwood who pushed the limits of canine freestyle with their artistic, dynamic performances.

And then there were our three weary videographers who made it to “Dance the Skies” despite running out of gas on the Pattulo Bridge.

Our competition sign was designed by Vickie and Joan and printed – as a donation– by Photo Expert (Scottsdale Mall, North Delta)









Many thanks to Gala photographers Sheena Staples, Shannon Underwood, and Carrig.

Reflections Reflections



Ann: I learned that I CAN get on a stage in front of 900 people and NOT throw up. *Escape the Darkness* will always be one of the highlights in my life. It's right up there with running the Boston Marathon and meeting Charlie. I am proud of myself and everyone who worked together to make this thing such a huge success. I still can't wipe the silly grin off my face.

Egan: The whole experience surprised me. It surprised me how similar the kite world is to the dog world. I enjoyed that challenge knowing my part was a small part of a larger whole. Performing in front of the audience was a thrill! I loved it! Overall, I wish I could do it again and am sad that it is over. Saturday night was so exciting! I will never forget it. Thanks to Ray and thanks to everyone of you guys!!!

Gail: So much work but such talent to do it. So much training for both our dogs and us. So many problems but it brought us all closer together. Was it worth? Most definitely! We got to show off our talents while having fun and raising money for a worthy cause. What an experience!!!

Joyce: I can see the colors of the costumes, hear the music, and remember the great feelings I had as months of work and rehearsals finally came together to create *Escape the Darkness*. A smile comes to my face and my mood is immediately lifted when I reflect back to being on stage. I wish to thank all who envisioned this amazing experience. We can do it again!

Lyd: The *Escape the Darkness* experience was a series of challenges and opportunities. We were committed enough to tackle every challenge and fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with people from the theatre and kite worlds as Ray pulled all the pieces together into a pretty amazing production.



Jan: To everyone who took part in the massive undertaking of turning a group of women of a certain age into performers who managed to earn a standing ovation at their debut I only want to say four words: Thanks for the memories. Memories that will stay with me forever, of friendships, of encouragement, of sharing, of late nights and early mornings, of learning about stage movements and becoming comfortable in an alien theatre world, the laughter, the needless worries, the time we all gave to make this bigger than any one of us (I never realized you could do so much with styrofoam), the sight of us in costume and wig. Most of all the memories of our beloved dogs who gave their all and only because we asked it of them. It's so true that you regret only the things you don't do, and I'm so glad we can say WE DID IT!!!!

As 2010 came to an end, we performed at a West Van. Care Home. One of the residents (she's turning 101 in February) said it best: In my 100 years of life, I have never seen anything like these dancing dogs.