



# The WAG

Volume 15  
July 2013



## Calendar of Events

### Workshops

August 10/11: Shaping skills for Freestyle. Rally Free. Julie Flanery, Lynwood, WA  
October 5/6: Training Excellence. Pam Dennison, Sumner, WA.

### Demos

Poochpalooza, Marysville, July 13  
Critter Care, Langley, BC. July 14  
Hurricane Ridge Kennel Club Show, July 27th and 28th, Sequim  
Ladner Animal Expo, August 11  
New West Doggy Day, August 25th

### Competitions

Cirque de Pooch, WCFO competition, Kent, WA. July 13/14.  
Fun Matches, July 12 and 13 after show.  
BSB, Arlington, WA. September 7/8

## The New Paws 2 Dance Executive

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[skywalker1@shaw.ca](mailto:skywalker1@shaw.ca)  
Vice President: Gail Walsh  
[pepsibc@shaw.ca](mailto:pepsibc@shaw.ca)  
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L.M. Demo Chair: Karen Eskilson  
[rubyclown@yahoo.ca](mailto:rubyclown@yahoo.ca)

Also, check out the newly-revised website:  
[www.paws2dance.com](http://www.paws2dance.com) and click "contact us" if you don't have these e-mail addresses handy.

## Welcome New Members Leaping into our sport

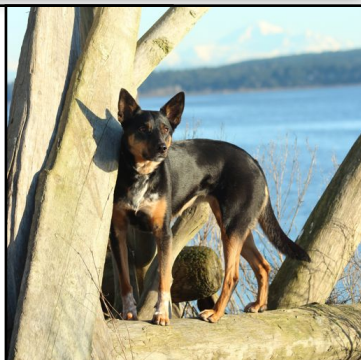
Chris Chen  
Valorie Lennox  
Kathy Herriot  
Linda Osada  
Annette Waterman  
Linda Van Klaveren  
Caryl Darling  
Yvonne Downey  
Angela Gilbert  
Carrie Gauthier  
Darlene Wheat  
Janet Laidlaw  
Karen Share  
Judy Green  
and all their wonderful dogs!

Magnum T. Mincieli Photo

### Editor's Note:

Please send me ideas for articles, news from your neck of the woods, book reviews, training tips, events, pictures. Note new section: *From the Judge's Handbook*. If you have questions you'd like answered, send them in. Next "How To": Distance Moves  
Lyd [freya9@telus.net](mailto:freya9@telus.net)

L. Erickson Photo



## Book Reviews

### *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein

Recommended by  
Lavonne Jarvis and  
California (Cali)

"An unforgettable journey through another kind of mind, through the eyes - and nose - of a dog . . . fascinating."

- Temple Grandin

"Joyful in its language, creative in its narration, and affecting in its story. This is a terrific book."

- The Seattle Times

Cali



### *Chandi* by Tina Humphrey

Recommended by Vickie  
Phillips and Spirit

Tina shares the story of her musical freestyle journey with her border collie, Chandi, in this heart-warming memoir - interesting both by what she includes and what she leaves out.

Spirit



Check out *this* brace trick - sent in by Karen E. <http://www.petplace.com/dog-videos/fetching-the-cat.aspx>

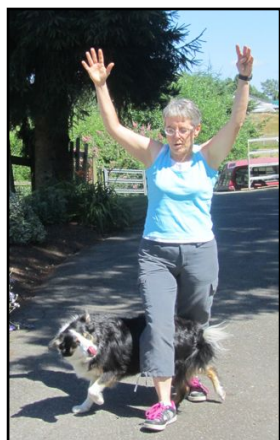
# How To . . . train weaves and create weaving variations

Thank you Heather S. and Lenore B. for your contributions on the next page.

Weaving is one of the first moves freestylers teach their dogs and can be used to great effect in routines to cover space. With just a few variations in handler position and movement, this basic move can become quite flashy.

## Forward Weaves

- Think *tight* and *fast* when you start out.
- If you use food at first, hold the treat right against the front of your leg so that the dog weaves tight and turns in and up. (Sonic, on right, looks up at Ann as she passes through)
- Rather than wait for the dog to amble through, move quickly so that the dog learns it must move quickly to make it through. (This means your leg might bump into the dog – be careful not to kick your dog!)
- Quickly lose the lure and use voice and physical cues. Avoid the “pointing through the legs” cue as it is a difficult habit to break and does not look good. Aim to have your dog weave to your leg movement and voice commands.
- Once this movement is fluid, add hand signals suitable to various styles of music – jazz hands, cowboy shooting, Afro-elbows. Rather than trying to hide little hand signals, go big – as long as the signals match the music – and avoid the “point through the leg” signal. Your signal could be something that isn’t anywhere near the leg. See Ann with Sonic and Annette with Jake below.
- Style considerations: You can change the look of the weave simply by putting weight on the leading foot or the lagging foot.



## Variations:

- Forward weave in a straight line
- “Figure 8” weave: Handler is stationary with legs far enough apart for dog to pass through. Dog weaves around each leg.
- “Stair” weave: One step-weave forward, other step-weave to the side (repeat for “stair” effect)
- “Samba” weave: Dog on left. Step forward with left, then touch right foot to the side. Dog weaves right. Then, step forward with right and touch the left foot to the side. Dog weaves left. So, the handler moves straight ahead and the dog weaves quite wide.
- “Pleat” weave. Handler faces the dog for each weave and pivots 180° for each weave. Once you have this, try with the handler facing away from the dog for each weave. (the dog movement remains the dog doing a forward weave)
- Handler step backwards while dog weaves forward. To start this off, have the dog facing you but slightly to the right. Reach back with your left leg and cue the weave.
- “Mixed Handler” Weave. The dog does a forward weave throughout. The handler does two forward weaves (right, left), then pivots and reaches back with the left foot for one weave, then reaches back with the right for a second weave.
- Try the weave in a crawl position (the dog, that is!). And, if you’re tall enough and your dog short enough, try it with the dog up on its hind legs.
- Add-ons: Spin or circle between each weave.

## Back Weaves

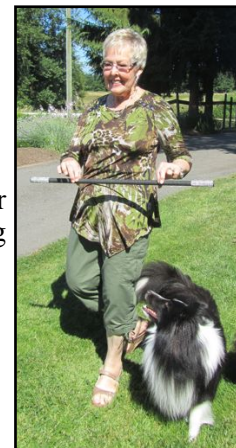
- Once you have your dog moving backwards between your legs, stand to the side of your dog and reach back with the leg away from the dog and cue the weave. Work on one side at a time. To keep the dog from swinging out, try a little flank tap, or go immediately into a back heel and cue the dog to go into heel position. Repeat on the opposite side until dog is fluid with both.
- Start linking the two weaves.
- As with the forward weave, work as quickly as possible to reduce the out swing and to build drive.

## Variations

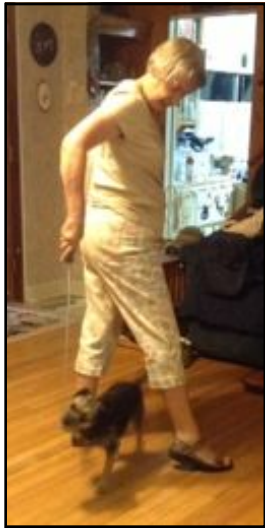
- Straight back weave
- “Figure 8” back weave: Handler is stationary.
- Handler moves in a forward direction, dog heels back through legs but proceeds forward with handler.
- “Exit/Park” weave: Dog starts between handler’s legs, both facing forward. Dog backs through, handler steps and pivots 180°, dog does a half-turn (backwards) and stops between handler’s legs, now both facing the other direction.
- Add on: circle-back, back weave – from right or left side

## With Prop (cane, flag-pole, scarf, hoop)

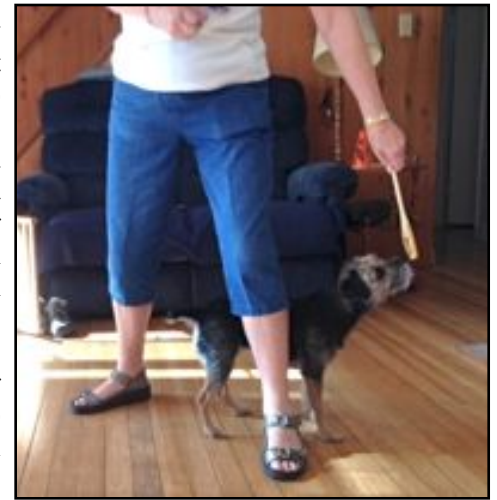
- With two legs and a prop for the dog to weave around, you have many variations with which to experiment.
- Use a prop to cue movement and to avoid the dreaded “point between legs” cue. (See Joan and Poet on right)



### Considerations for smaller dogs: Heather Somers



• One of the main considerations is having the *handler* stay upright as bending at the waist isn't flattering. To prevent bending over at the waist, Heather suggests using a touch stick to start the dog off. Of course, make sure the dog knows what the touch stick is all about! Instead of a touch stick, you could always put some peanut butter, liver paste, or cheese whiz on a wooden spoon. You could also try bending at the knees rather than the waist, but that could be really tiring really quickly! In the photo on the left, Dansa is touching a stick with her nose. On the right, she is following the wooden spoon.



• Heather held the stick and wooden spoon further away from her body for the camera. To promote closeness when training, keep stick closer to body. Remember, where the nose is, the body will follow.

• Luring and touch stick are different. Touch stick is done with a clicker. Luring has the treat on the spoon, but can quickly progress to being used as a touch stick when you move the treat from the spoon into your hand. Way more to it of course.

• To keep a small dog from going wide – especially with back weaving – you could use gating or work close to a wall to steer the dog in the right direction.

### Considerations for larger dogs: Lenore Baskin

• It can be a real challenge to weave with a big dog, especially if you have short legs! I am quite short so my Great Dane had to learn to duck. Teaching Miss Nahli to duck was fairly easy. I taught her to go under my legs by throwing treats between them. She was eager to do that. The next step was to get her to do this with some speed. I did some recalls at a short distance so she had some energy going through. I used treats for this as well. I kept increasing the distance until I could place her at one side of a field and have her race across and duck between my legs. (see photo at right)



• When it came to actual weaving, it became apparent that she needed a lot of room. I needed to accommodate for this. High leg marching exercises became a must so I could balance on one leg with the other held high so she could learn to weave through gracefully. This worked well for forward weaving. I have to admit that on more than one occasion, I lost my balance and we (I) would end up in a heap on the floor. Practice, practice, practice.

• Weaving in a standstill or sideways movement was very awkward for both of us, her especially. What I found was I again needed to make room for her. So having her weave while I was at stand still, does not work well, unless I hold up one of my legs. And that felt a bit klutzy. But I could make it flow better if I did a bit of side step so as to line myself up to her natural position. We both liked this better!

• One point to mention is that because it can be so awkward to weave with a big dog, Nahli would often get frustrated and just refuse to weave. So lots of rewards and do not push it. This is complicated move for these big souls, so one small weave at a time.

### Rally-Freestyle



If you're looking for a canine sport that's fun and will sharpen your musical freestyle skills, Rally-Freestyle may fit the bill. Check out <http://www.rallyfree.com/> for more information on the sport. There may be some spots left in the workshop held August 10th and 11th in Lynnwood, Washington. See <http://www.goodtimecanines.com/Flanery-Aug2013.html> for information on this workshop.

Lower Mainland freestylers can contact Gail Walsh who is offering classes in Rally-Free this fall at [pepsibc@shaw.ca](mailto:pepsibc@shaw.ca). On the left is Heather Van Oene and her Dandie Dinmont Terrier, Sam, working through a Rally-Free run focusing on weaving.

*From the Judges' Handbook - If you have questions, send them in and someone will answer them.*

**Artistic Impression – Ring coverage** *What happened to the ring-coverage percentages on the score sheet?*

The percentages formerly indicated were to encourage handlers to move around the ring. We have recently removed the percentages required since ring coverage mark should not be based solely on the percentage of the ring covered.

The performance should not be comprised of a series of tricks done in a stationary position. However, a routine that goes mechanically corner to corner and covers the entire ring may not be as aesthetically pleasing as one that uses perhaps less of the ring but incorporates a variety of floor patterns.

Small dogs should not be expected to use the same amount of ring as large dogs.

Considering all these aspects, then, the ring-coverage is on a continuum from stationary (< 5) to effective and aesthetically pleasing (10).

**Artistic Impression - Costume** *Could one fail a musical freestyle routine because of an inappropriate costume?*

Short answer: That would be pretty difficult!

“Costume” makes up only a part of *Presentation* which is one of five areas the “Artistic Impression” judge considers.

An “inappropriate” costume would have to be pretty extreme – say if the handler wore torn sweat pants and a grease-stained T-shirt when performing to a Strauss Waltz or wrapped herself in nothing but cellophane. If a handler makes any attempt to wear something which suits the music, then that costume would garner at least a minimum passing mark. That doesn't mean wigs and period costume, either! Sometimes, a simple outfit suits the music best.

That being said, since “costume” is only a small part of the artistic criteria, a great costume will not automatically guarantee a pass.

Note: The audience responds well to costumes, and many handlers comment that a costume (or wig) helps reduce inhibitions. Just a reminder – dogs may wear a fancy collar and something small around their ankles. Ruby, to the right, is a little over-dressed!



**The Heel Position in Dressage** *Is the “T-position” heel recognized by P2D?*

The “T-position” heel, where the dog is either in front of the handler or behind the handler, but is facing to the side, is not recognized by Paws 2 Dance as a heel position. Use this move in Musical Freestyle as much as you wish. If you use it in the Dressage discipline, however, not only will you receive no credit for it, but you may be deducted as the routine should be in heel position except for transitions or other specific elements as outlined in the dressage rules. For example, if your dog does roll-overs, they would be in the heel position. The dog can crawl or be up on two legs, but must aim to maintain the heel position. P2D *does* recognize reverse heeling (dog's head is at handler's leg, facing opposite direction of handler) as a heel position.

*Discovering Musical Freestyle . . . Why we do this thing we do* (Send in *your* experiences!)

Annette

For about two years Odie and I visited my Dad in a Care Home almost daily. In addition to visiting my Dad, who had advanced dementia, we also spent time with the other residents. During our visits Odie performed several tricks, but it didn't take long for me to tire of our very limited repertoire. One afternoon I happened to be chatting over the fence with my neighbor. When I mentioned my desire to find someone who could teach Odie some fun tricks, my neighbor told me about this guy who taught dog tricks at a studio in Langley. I went right in and phoned the studio. They invited me to come down that evening to observe a class. I was immediately hooked. We then took obedience classes simultaneously with the freestyle (by the way, Odie went on to earn is UD title!!) Of course freestyle turned out to be far more

challenging than it first appeared, but I have loved almost every moment of the journey and cannot imagine stopping until I can no longer walk and by then I just may, with Ray's help of course, find a way to incorporate a walker in a routine!!

Lavonne

I was introduced to this wonderful sport in 2000 by reading an article in the DOGS IN CANADA magazine entitled “Dances with Dogs” by Wendy Wallace. It was a pleasure to meet her several years later, through our Paws 2 Dance involvement. The thought of teaching our family dog to dance was beyond my wildest imagination! However, an advertisement in DOGS IN CANADA enticed me to attend a *Prancing Paws* competition in the Sheraton-Guildford Hotel ballroom on April 17, 2005. I was awestruck and spellbound by the incredible performances!! My favorite routine was a beautiful Spanish flamenco dance by Marilyn Knipp and Blitzen. I will never forget that Portuguese Water Dog, smiling and dancing while holding a long-stemmed red rose in his teeth.

*Sadly, Lavonne's Cali (seen on the left) passed away earlier this year. As you can surely tell, Cali loved to dance.*



Despite a number of hiccups (Cloverdale double-booked our usual venue, several members were unable to attend due to illness and other last-minute issues, record-breaking temperatures) this year's event was one of the most entertaining. It featured the first-ever dressage brace routine, two team and one pair dressage, and an incredibly varied mix of music and routines. MC Bonnie Hartup kept us entertained between routines. Photographs by Bob McNeill.



# Island Fling 2013 Nanaimo

Nanaimo knows how to host an event! Not only was this the biggest entry in Island Fling history, but an exuberant audience filled the chairs to watch 40 routines, 15 of which were performed by first-timers! Big congratulations to the organizers, to everyone who helped, and to all those novices who jumped into freestyle with both feet.

Photos by Gail Beerman. See her work on <http://gailbeerman.smugmug.com/> or contact her at [gbeerman1@hotmail.com](mailto:gbeerman1@hotmail.com)



