The WAG

Paws 2 Dance Newsletter July 2015 Volume 19



Lagotto Romagnolo - Truffle Hunting Dog & freestyler



Calendar of Events

Competitions

July 11 & 12: WCFO *Dance the Skies* Langley, BC
August 27 - 30: WCFO event in Seattle

Demos

July 25 & 26: Hurricane Ridge KC, Sequim

Seminars

August 27 - 30: WCFO event in Seattle

Showcase

2016: Mid-February - Mid-March. Date TBA

Let Ray know as soon as possible if you would be interested in performing.

Coach's Corner: Building a Freestyle Routine – from February 28/March 1 handler's workshop in Langley

- Ray's mind set: Freestyle is an art, not a sport. The aim is to make people feel things.
- Ask yourself: why am I doing this particular routine? How do I convey the feeling, emotion, meaning of that piece?
- Sometimes the music provides the theme or emotion, but sometimes it doesn't so you can decide what you want it to mean.
- One technique with non-obvious thematic music is to create a story. Have your body express your story.
- If the routine doesn't mean anything to the audience, you will elicit less of a response.
- Don't put a lot of work into something that doesn't mean anything.
- Start with basic movement and determine styling (arms, carriage, foot placement, etc.)
- *The arm movements are not the cues.*
- Meanwhile, work on the *separate* elements, movements, tricks, transitions (including *wait, watch)* with the dog
- Have the routine worked out and consistent (including styling) before adding dog
- Be realistic: make sure your dog is capable of doing the movements needed in the routine
- Better to see something done more simply and cleanly than more difficult moves done with struggle
- Carriage: keep torso firm, lifted, supported (avoid slumping)



Reehana & Samia

All the way from Edmonton





No, it's not a battle! Participants work on arm movement and body extension. Ray later gave individuals tips for each of their routines.

How to Train and develop "Away" moves

Advisor: Ray

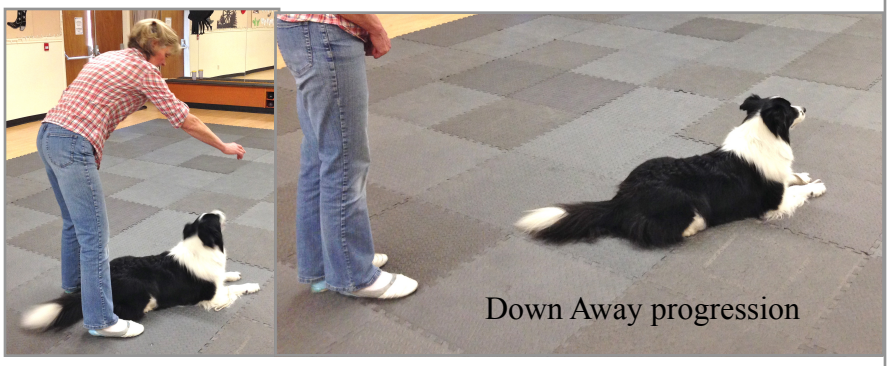
Definition: an "away" move is a move in which the dog faces away from the handler.

Challenge: You've worked diligently to have the dog watch you. Asking it to now look away may create some anxiety and confusion in the dog. Make sure you start this in an environment where the dog feels safe.

Starting off: use a lure, target, or touch stick to have dog point away from you. Alternatively, gently hold the dog in the away position. Once the dog is performing the movement with assistance, put a name on the behavior and gradually fade the aid. If your dog responds to a "hold" command, use the command along with the "away" command to keep it looking off. Be patient, rewarding small steps. If you must use a "no," do so sparingly and only once the dog knows the command; and reward the dog when it follows with the correct behavior. Depending on what movement you want, you may have to allow some peeking, particularly if you are moving away from the dog. Vary how you reward the dog. You could reach over while still being behind the dog, or you can move around to be in front of your dog. Either way, try to reward the dog before it breaks from the position. Be sure to have a consistent and solid "away" before adding distance and movement.

Variations:

- **Sit Facing Away:** easiest since it is easy to reward and you can be close enough that the dog can still see you if it tilts back a bit.
- **Down Facing Away:** you could start beside the dog and walk around it. You may want to leave a treat in front of the dog to start. Gradually increase distance.



Down Away progression

- **Into Stand in front, Facing Away:** A versatile position. Dog can go into this position in a variety of ways
  - from a front, dog turns 180° to face away
  - from front, dog does a 360° turn and then 180° more to face away (try both directions)
  - from a heel, dog does a front then a 180°
  - from a heel or between the legs, dog goes straight forward into an away
- **Variations of Stand – adding distance and movement**
  - from an away position, both dog and handler move forward
  - handler back away from dog and return - gradually increasing distance
  - handler back away from dog and have dog back up into you
  - handler pivot 180° to be back to back with the dog
  - handler pivot 180°, walk away from dog and have dog back toward you
  - handler slowly pivot while directing dog to maintain relative position with hind end close to handler's legs
  - from an away position, dog moves forward away from handler
  - handler slowly pivot while dog is in a distant away position, and have dog maintain the relative position
  - From an away position, dog raises paw. Gradually increase distance.



Dog backing toward you as you walk away (peeking allowed!)



More variations on next page . . .

- **Other Variations**
  - from a 180° turn, dog goes onto hind legs and backs into handler (gradually increase distance the dog backs)
  - from an away position, does a sit, bow, or down while continuing to face away
  - from an away down position, dog crawls backward as handler backs away
  - from a side-by-side position, handler looks one way; the dog looks the other way
  - Dog stands on your leg looking toward your foot (restrictions may apply!)







- **Check out this lovely routine which includes many away moves, particularly at the start.**
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqlGn-K42U8

In Memoriam

MBIS BISS GrChEx/Am Ch You Make My Dreams del Basaburua DD CD RN CGN

"Rico"



Sadly, at such a young age, we say goodbye to Doug and Cindy's rising star, Rico. You are missed, big guy.

From the Judges' Handbook - Lyd

Despite three events held back to back, there were no major issues raised by competitors or judges this spring. At least that came my way . . . *that I remember*.

The judges did mention that many people are not finishing cleanly their **360° pivots** in dressage and many came close to failing because they stepped out while the dog was not quite in position so the dog fell behind. Do more than 360° to be safe and make sure your dog is with you before you step out.

Also with **360° Pivots**, handler must stay on the spot (think pie-plate).

The judges also mentioned that in the Novice 1 they really need to see some **continuous heeling** as heeling is the only required element for this division. It's okay to throw in the odd weave or spin, but keep in mind that 80% of the routine must be in heel position. That *could* be normal, either side, in crawl position, or up on hind legs, but the judges need to see *regular-position heeling* at the novice level in order to have something to evaluate.

Prancing Paws To accommodate a really busy 2015 schedule, Prancing Paws and Boot Scootin' Boogie shared a weekend and a venue in Langley. The two groups worked well together to host a fun weekend. Despite losing our photographer the last minute, we wound up with several shots thanks to individuals who snapped away and to Lin who assembled all the photos and put them on line. It seems many people were just starting new routines as we had the largest training class in the club's history. (Some PP photos on BSB page)

This routine dedicated to Rico

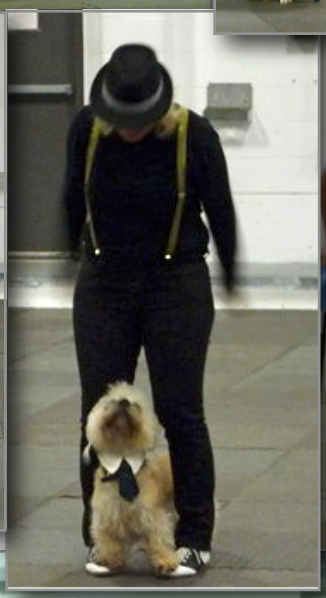






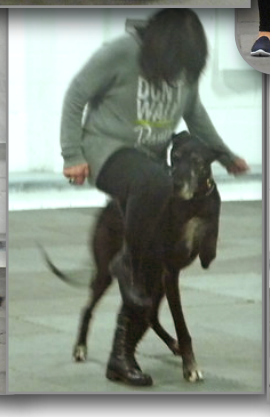















Boot Scootin' Boogie The fun continued on day two with a slightly smaller but equally enthusiastic entry. Before the awards presentations, several handlers took advantage of a handling class put on by Ray. Carolyn and Kris had once again assembled a great array of BSB special awards – a much-loved tradition.





Island Fun Day – *Carol Toms*

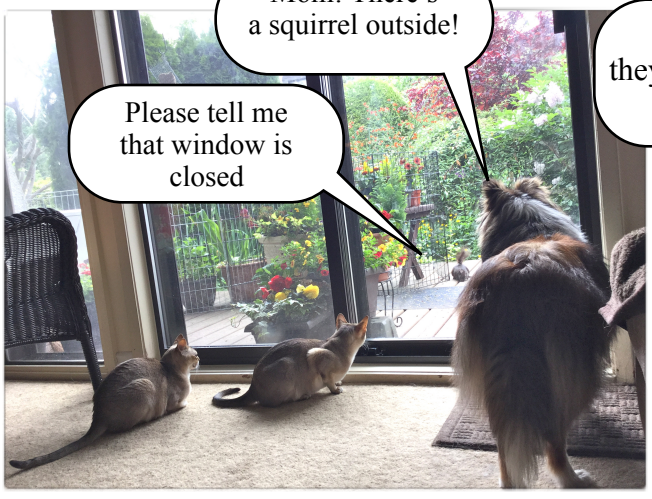
On March 28th, the Island Freestylers got together for a fun day of dancing with our dogs. We had twelve people and 15 dogs enjoy a day out to share ideas and practice some routines.

Photo Challenge: Out-of-Ring Moments







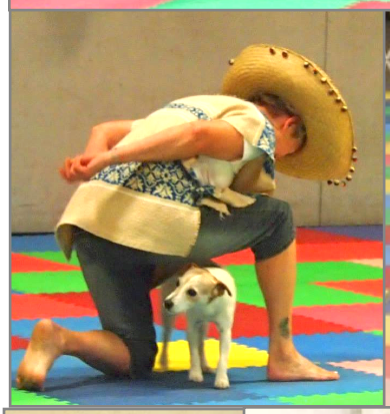




Island Fling With the sun shining, a straw umbrella, and leis garlanding the ring, it was easy to believe we were on a tropical island. The islanders put on another excellent competition with their usual artistic touches including sand-etched "paw" glasses and a program filled with colorful photos. The silent auction table sported everything from art to dog paraphernalia to high-tech. Big thanks to Ray who was on hand to lead a handling class and to everyone who made their photos accessible.



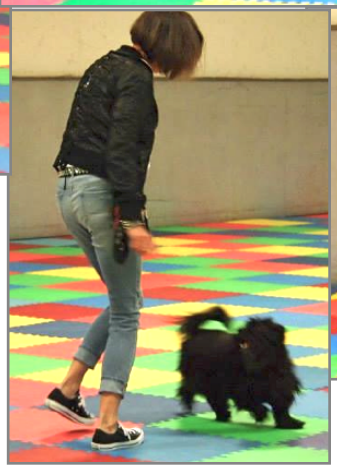














Photos by
Angela Gilbert
Lenore Baskin
Caryl Darling
Anila Rondeau
L. Francescutti

Musical Freestyle

Island Fling – Dressage and Training



Editor's note: Let me know what you want to see in your newsletter. freya9@telus.net