

Happy Tails News

December 2007

Upper Snake River Valley Dog Training Club, Inc.

P.O. Box 1611

Idaho Falls ID 83403

www.usrvdte.org

2007 OFFICERS

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Glenda Haller
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Newsletter Editor

Desertmtnmalinois@msn.com

Deadline:
24th Of Each Month



CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY

Saturday, December 8, 2007
Stanger Building, Iona, Idaho

5:30 pm social hour
6:00 pm dinner

Come and Join us!





USRVDTC REGULAR MEETING MINUTES November 15, 2007



The regular monthly meeting of the USRVDTC was called to order by President, Suzanne Belger, at 7:35 p.m., on Thursday, November 15, 2007, at the 5 & Diner in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

Members present were: Rosha Adams, George Haller, Glenda Haller, Mary Lee Moore, Bill Orr, Diane Orr, Kent McCandless, Rosalyn McCandless, Collette Wright, Vickie Robinson, Jay Robinson, Steven Olson, Lois Olson, Suzanne Belger, Adrienne Belger, Heidi Vitacolonna, Juley Hankins, Mark Whitham, Donna Whitham, Shelby Moad, LaDawn Moad, Darcy Bartholomay and Abbie Zaladonis.

Glenda Haller motioned to dispense with the reading of the previous month's minutes due to the reason that they were included in the club's newsletter. Rosalyn McCandless seconded the motion. PASSED.

Report of President: None.

Report of the Vice-President: Rosalyn McCandless reminded club members that the club Christmas Party is on Saturday, December 8th and that the deadline for making reservations for the club Christmas party is December 1st. The cost is \$16.50/person. She mentioned that we will have a centerpiece exchange and club members should bring a dog-related wrapped present for the gift exchange. Rosalyn asked for individuals to help set up for the party. Those willing to help should be at the Stanger Building between 5:30 and 6:00. She reminded club members that the building regulations prohibit alcoholic beverages. Shelby Moad volunteered to act as Santa.

Report of the Secretary: None.

Report of the Treasurer: LaDawn Moad read the monthly report for Barbara Friedrich in her absence. LaDawn also read the agility trial financial report. She also reported that the check from Dog Events Online to the club for the on-line entries has been returned by the bank as NSF. Suzanne indicated that she has been in contact with DEO and they indicated that the money would be forthcoming. Several club members expressed concern about using DEO again for our up-coming agility trials in March.

Report of Committees:

Agility Trial Chairperson: LaDawn Moad indicated that all is set for the March 2008 agility trials at Wind River Arena. She is just waiting for the signed contract to come back from the owner of Wind River.

Agility Trial Secretary: Suzanne Belger reported that the March and October 2008 agility trials have been approved by AKC. She also reported that there will be agility/OB/Rally practices on 11/18/07, 12/2/07, and 12/16/07 at The Barn. Cost is \$5.00/dog. The practices will be from 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Suzanne Belger reported for Kelly P'Pool that the next session of obedience classes will start on February 5, 2008 and will be held at the Activity Center. Glenda Haller indicated that she has received a number of telephone calls which complaints that the class information on the club's

home page is incorrect and that they cannot get Kelly P'Pool to return their calls regarding classes. Diane Orr indicated that she has not received updated information from Kelly so that she can put the information on the club's homepage. Suzanne reminded club members that they must preregister for the classes the same as non-members. Class size is limited and if club members do not preregister, they may not be allowed in a class. She indicated that the building will be available after the 8:00 class for those wishing to just practice.

Membership Application Voted On:

Election of Officers:

Club members voted on officers and board members for 2008. The following officers were elected and will take office at the January club meeting:

President: Suzanne Belger.

Vice-President: Judy Grof

Secretary: Rosha Adams

Treasurer: Glenda Haller

3-Year Board Member – Steven Olson

2-Year Board Member – Lori Keele

The club wishes to thank the above individuals for volunteering to fill these positions.

Voting for Club Member of the Year:

Club members voted for the Club Member of the Year. The nominees were: Duane Loomis, Barbara Friedrich, Carl Friedrich, Kerwin Hassing and Kelly P'Pool. The results of the voting will be announced at the Christmas Party on December 8th.

Unfinished Business: Juley Hankins brought her laptop to club meeting and had numerous pictures of various club members which she took at the Pocatello and USRVDTC agility trials. She offered to provide copies for anyone interested in the pictures.

New Business: Discussion was opened concerning the club's recent purchase of an electronic timing system for use at agility trials. The question was raised as to why the club did not also purchase the printer unit that goes with the system. After using the system at the recent trials, several club members felt like the printer is needed. George Haller motioned that the club purchase the printer unit. Cheryl Loomis seconded the motion. PASSED. The cost of the printer unit is approximately \$180.00 and ERKC and PKC will be approached as to whether they are interested in going in with USRVDTC to purchase the unit. In the event they are not interested, the club will purchase the unit on its own. Suzanne Belger indicated that she will ask Carl Friedrich, Equipment Manager, to arrange the purchase.

Discussion was also started regarding the problem with the NSF check given to the club by Dog Events Online. Suzanne indicated that the representative at DEO told her that the problem resulted because funds were not transferred in a timely fashion from one DEO account to another to cover the check. Several club members mentioned, however, that other agility clubs in Utah and Nevada have also reported that their checks from DEO have bounced. Approximately

\$2700 is owed to USRVDT. Suzanne stated that she was told the check would be made good in approx. two weeks. Several club members expressed concern about the future viability of the company and do not want to risk using DEO for on-line entries for our up-coming agility trials. Discussion was held regarding other options for taking on-line entries, including the club opening a PAY PALS account, or making arrangements through the club's bank to be able to take on-line credit card payments. Suzanne indicated that she will do some research into some options.

Suzanne asked for volunteers for the auditing committee. Only one member can be an officer or board member. The following persons volunteered: Rosha Adams, Juley Hankins, George Haller, and Glenda Haller as alternative.

Glenda Haller motioned for adjournment. Steven Olson seconded the motion. PASSED.

Submitted by,

Rosha Adams
Secretary

PRACTICE...PRACTICE...PRACTICE

We will be having agility and obedience twice a month throughout the remainder of the year. We will be doing both agility and obedience practices at the same time. We will be renting "The Barn" so the cost is \$5.00 per dog. Come and join us and have some fun with your dog!

Sunday, December 2, 2007.....5:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Sunday, December 16, 2007.....5:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Up-Coming Events

12-08-07---USRVDT Christmas Party
01-12/13-07---Agility Trials---Farmington, UT
02-05-08---USRVDT Obedience Classes start

Obedience Classes

The next session of obedience classes will start Tuesday, February 5, 2008. The popularity of these classes REQUIRE PRE-REGISTRATION, even for club members. If you are interested in taking a class get your registration turned in to Kelly Ppool. We will be meeting at the Skyline Activity Center, the space is not large so we are limiting classes to 10 dogs. If you plan on coming and working your dog you need to be registered.

“Braggs”

We must have hit the winter doldrums...there were no braggs are reported this month!

REMEMBER that braggs and other newsletter information is due to the newsletter editor by the 24th of each month. We accept late braggs! You can email your info desertmtnmalinois@msn.com. It is preferred that you email your braggs to the editor.

Holiday Pet Dangers

Halloween, Christmas and Chanukah are cheerful seasons for humans, but some of the decorations, treats, candies, and gifts we enjoy can be harmful, or even fatal, to pets. Here are some reminders to help your pets enjoy a safe and healthy season:

Christmas trees and pine needles: If you have a large dog or a tree-climbing cat, use a strong cord or rope to secure the top of the tree to a wall. Ingested pine needles can puncture your pet's intestines. Clean around your holiday trees and wreaths often. Drinking the water from the Christmas tree base is enough to cause diarrhea, mouth sores, vomiting and loss of appetite. Cover your tree stand tightly with skirting and distract your pet from tree temptations with holiday toys and treats.

Candy: Like you, pets can suffer stomach aces and cavities from overindulgence in holiday candy. Chocolate contains theobromine, a caffeine like substance, that acts like a stimulant and can cause seizures or heart failure and can be fatal.

Plants: Juice from holiday plants, including poinsettia, is toxic enough to cause serous harm or even death to your pets. Vomiting, crying, frothing, depression, and muscle twitching are signs of plant poisoning.

Ornaments: Breakable tree ornaments, angel hair, tinsel icicles, and ribbons should be kept out of your pet's reach. Ornaments, hooks, ribbon and rubber bands can be safety hazards. They can be ingested and swallowed, causing serious and possible fatal digestive problems.

Alcohol: Don't share a "little" alcoholic drink with your pet this holiday season...or any time. It may seem like a fun thing but the effects can be harmful, even fatal. A 30-pound dog, for example, would be considered "under the influence" with just two tablespoons of whiskey. Two teaspoons would make a five-pound cat comatose and a tablespoon could kill the same animal. Alcohol is toxic to puppies and kittens and their "sipping" from you holiday spirit glass can lead to heart and liver complications.

NEVER give ham, steak, or poultry bones to your pet. Ingestion of these can lead to severe intestinal disease such as perforations or obstructions. Ingestion of excessive fatty food may cause severe vomiting and diarrhea.

The following article is taken from web site <http://www.dogtrainersworkshop.com>. This is Brian and Connie Cleveland's website. There are many great articles on this site. Anyone who is serious about training and understanding their dogs should check it out.

What Motivates Dogs

I knew as I stood outside the ring and watched the dog that he couldn't possibly perform that badly at home. He trailed his owner on the heeling and wandered around in the article pile staring at the crowd. He raced wildly to the wrong glove, shaking it as he returned, and then walked in on the moving stand. His first go-out was in the corner and the second go-out was too short to be sent over a jump.

He had gotten his UD ten shows earlier but his performances had steadily deteriorated since his third leg. What was happening?

When the AKC added the UDX to the list of obedience titles, many exhibitors were inspired to continue showing in Open B and Utility B. Many of you are pursuing seemingly elusive UDX legs and becoming frustrated by your dog's low qualifying rate or by the errors he is making. Many of you are discovering that keeping a trained dog working well is more difficult than it was to teach him the exercises.

I believe there are four motivations that cause dogs perform correctly.

Desire

A dog's natural enjoyment of the exercise or activity. Many dogs enjoy some aspect of performing so much that their natural desire motivates them. For example, avid retrievers consider the dumbbell or glove the reward for retrieving. Some dogs love to jump, so the act of jumping is motivating and rewarding. The dog described in the Introduction of this article was obviously thrilled with the glove exercise. His behavior demonstrated his enjoyment of the exercise. Shaking the glove was certainly self-rewarding!

Those training field trial dogs rely heavily on a dog's natural desire to retrieve a bird. The bird is the dog's reward. This can be a problem when the dog is completely disobedient, finds the bird, and feels rewarded for his performance.

A similar situation can occur in the obedience ring. A dog that loves to retrieve might not care you're annoyed that he ran around the high jump. He got his reward, the dumbbell. Likewise, a dog who jumps the bar twice may not care if you're displeased, since he enjoyed sailing over the jump.

Just because a dog enjoys doing a certain activity does not mean that he understands that the activity is his

job. For example, you may believe that your avid retriever understands the command fetch. He fails, however, when the situation is such that he doesn't want to retrieve (as when the dumbbell rests against the ring gating). Most serious competitors teach the dog a correction for failing to retrieve because they understand that even the best dogs don't retrieve in all circumstances.

I've spent 10 years training service dogs for the physically disabled. We always start with a dog that has a natural desire to retrieve. But I have not yet seen a dog that would willingly pick up all of the items we pointed to. These are often items that are not moving and makes them less desirable to the dog than a thrown object. Sometimes the item is an awkward shape, such as a set of keys or a bulky article of clothing. While desire can make getting started quite easy, it does not guarantee that the dog understands he must perform the task.

Rewards

The praise or reward the dog receives from his handler.

Dogs can certainly be motivated to earn a reward from us, whether that is our praise, a treat, or a toy we hold as ransom for the correct behavior. The problems here are twofold.

Reward Expectation

Sometimes our rewards are more accurately described as bribes. When the bribe is not present, the dog does not perform. Handlers make the mistake of bribing most often on heeling and go-outs. At a recent seminar, I was presented with a dog that heeled beautifully in practice. The handler complained that the dog performed poorly in the ring. She heeled the dog for me and I discovered she was holding food in her left hand. This was a dog competing in Open. I asked if she felt the food was still necessary to keep his attention and her reply was that she always carried it. I think this is an excellent example of a dog that is performing because he is bribed to do so. And will stop almost immediately when he discovers the bribe is not present.

It is quite common to bribe a dog to do go-outs by placing an expected toy or treat at the end of the ring. It doesn't take some dogs long to discover, however, that in a dog show situation there is no 'bribe.' This can result in a dog that does crooked or short go-outs in the ring.

Reward Situation

Before I enter a show, the dog must understand that the rewards are a bonus, not his sole reason for performing. There are times in practice that I reward my dog by throwing a toy, playing tug of war or giving him food. If the rewards we offer our dog in practice and training are noticeably different than they are in the

ring (frequency or amount), then the dog quickly realizes that the reward is not forthcoming in the ring and stops performing.

Corrections

The correction the dog receives from his handler.

Corrections can certainly motivate a dog to perform. Remember, a correction is not a random act of violence, but a negative occurrence that the dog knows how to stop and how to avoid. Yet, if the dog is solely motivated because of his desire to avoid a correction, he will soon discover that corrections do not occur during a performance. He does not stop performing because he is spiteful or because he wants to get even with you for correcting him, but because he is situational. It is easy for your dog to discover that in a show situation you will not correct him.

Habits

The most important reason that a dog performs correctly is that it is his habit to do so.

A few days ago, I was watching Brian's dog heel. It is so clear that if she could be interviewed and asked, "Why do you watch Brian? Why do you hold your head up while you are heeling?" her response would be, "Because that's how I do it." The bribes that initially enticed her to look at Brian are so far in the past that she no longer looks for them or expects them. The leash correction that she was taught as a penalty for looking away is not a threat that causes her to hold her head up.

Now, She enjoys the praise and the enthusiastic release that Brian gives her; it is not the anticipation of that praise that keeps her head up. She heels as she does out of habit. A dog's habit should replace the motivation of the corrections or rewards before he is asked to perform in competition.

Habit is a very complex issue. We err as dog trainers by not understanding how our dog's performance is controlled by habit. I look for a dog's attitude, his attention, his jumping style, and many of the details of our sport, such as straight sits, fronts, and finishes, to be largely controlled by habit.

Attitude

The most important aspect of an Obedience dog's performance that is controlled by habit is his attitude. A good trainer creates a learning atmosphere that keeps the dog's interest, from the first training session. This dog will become an attentive and concentrated performer because it is his habit to behave in this manner. A trainer who allows a dog to move slowly and become distracted during a training session could easily allow his dog's habit to become one of slowness and disinterest.

If this is a concern for you, apply this rule to your training session: Your dog must be playing with you, practicing an exercise or on a down stay waiting to do one of the two former. Do not allow your dog to wander off while you set up equipment or talk with your training partner. When your dog is waiting in a down stay, go to him to release him then move quickly to the next exercise you intend to practice.

Attention

Teaching a dog to pay attention can involve bribing, rewarding, and correcting. A dog that is paying attention, however, because of these motivators is not ready for the ring. Attention, especially during heeling, needs to become the dog's habit before he is asked to perform in competition.

Jumping

A competitive obedience dog will spend lots of time jumping, so take the time necessary to create a comfortable jumping style. My dogs learn to jump on command and are taught to do directed jumping before they are expected to retrieve over a jump. This insures a habit of jumping correctly before the dog becomes distracted by the retrieve.

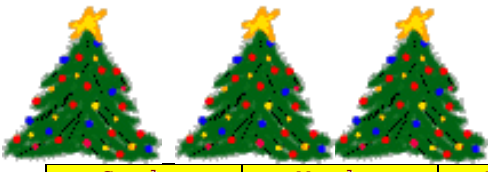
Details

I define a 'detail' as anything that costs me a half-point to three-point deduction if done incorrectly. Many of the details in our sport can only begin to be performed correctly after hours of practice. That is how good habits become established. For example, it is the dog's habit to sit automatically. He is not doing so because he expects a reward or a correction. He has done it so many times, that he is in the habit of performing an automatic sit.

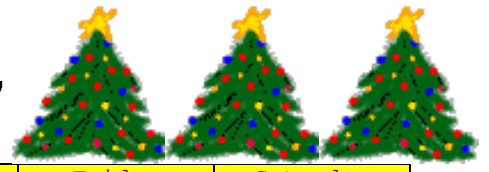
Repetition

Repetition is necessary to create a good habit. That's why most great dogs have heeled a hundred miles more than an average dog and done hundreds of finishes more than most of their competitors. Although repetition in a familiar environment can help create good habits, keep in mind that it does not help him understand how to perform in unfamiliar circumstances. There is no substitute for going to many varied training locations to practice.

It is not possible to evaluate the dog's performance described at the beginning of the article without more information about how he performs in practice. You can evaluate your own dog's performance and determine why it changes in the ring. Ask yourself if you are depending on the promise or threat of bribes, rewards and corrections? Are you assuming that because your dog has a desire to perform an exercise that he understands that he must perform even under demanding circumstances? Are you allowing correct behaviors enough time and repetitions to become good habits?



December 2007



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 "Suki" Loomis
2	3	4	5 Lois Olson	6	7	8 "Chance" Guidinger Christmas Party
9 Craig Cazier	10 Linda Newby-Reimann	11	12	13	14 Nyda Ovard	15
16	17 Bill Orr "Oscar" Haller "Meg" Loomis Brian Nielson	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25  Christmas Suzanne Belger	26	27	28	29
30 "Chloe" Dent	31					

 Merry Christmas! 