

UPPER SNAKE RIVER VALLEY  
DOG TRAINING CLUB  
**NEWSLETTER**  
JULY 2020



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## JULY 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting

**Location: Tautphaus Park where classes are hosted**

**Time: 7:00PM**

**Bring your own chair and food!**

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## CGC Testing July 1<sup>st</sup>

**\*5:15PM at Tautphus Park**

**\*We need volunteers for this event (this helps fulfill active membership status)**

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**\* If you have brags or any other ideas or information you'd like to see in the newsletter – please send them to me –[dezz1025@yahoo.com](mailto:dezz1025@yahoo.com)**

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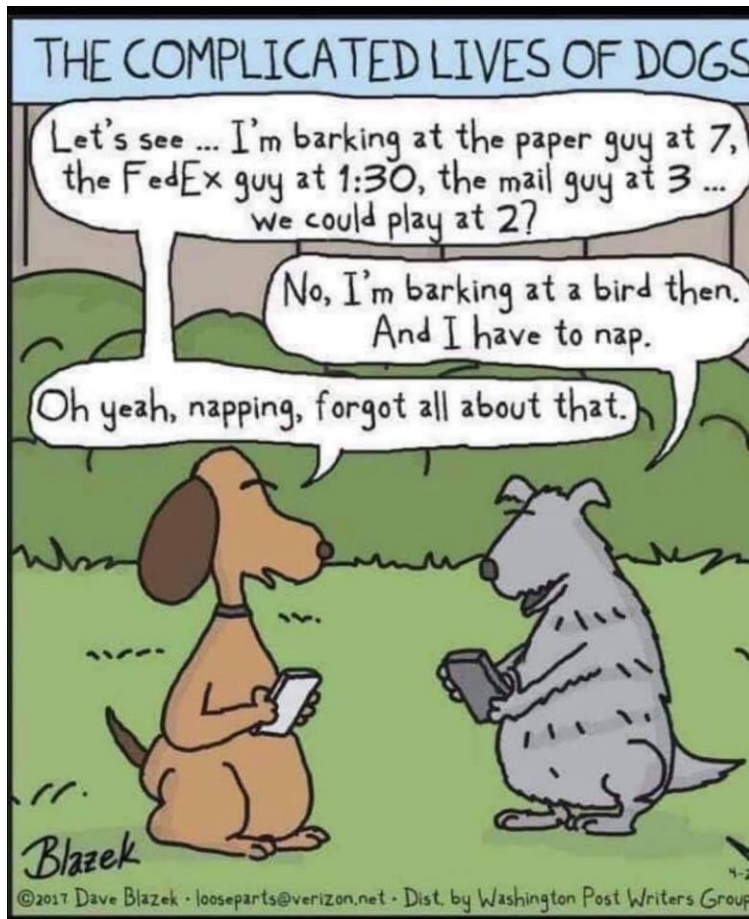
**Missed our meeting in June? Catch up by reading the minutes below!**



# 20 TREATS TO FILL IN YOUR KONG

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| Apple Slices | Oranges       |
| Bananas      | Peanut Butter |
| Blueberries  | Pineapple     |
| Cantaloupe   | Potatoes      |
| Celery       | Pumpkin       |
| Cheese       | Strawberries  |
| Cucumbers    | String Cheese |
| Eggs         | Chicken       |
| Green Beans  | Cream Cheese  |
| Honey        | Greek Yogurt  |

## Fun Facts and Comic Corner



Have you found a fun fact or a fun comic/meme you'd like me to share? Feel free to send it to me!

# Keep the feet moving! Get those exercises flowing!

by [Denise Fenzi](#) | Feb 3, 2020 |



Keeping your dog engaged in training can be a challenge. Food is fine, toys are fine and picking work that dogs like is fine too. Now, in addition, consider this simple phrase: 'Keep the feet moving!'

Who's feet are we talking about? It doesn't matter much but someone's feet should be moving as much as possible because when all of the feet stop moving things get boring fast. Dog and handler doing not much of anything, staring at each

other. Waiting. For something. That never comes. Or comes so slowly as to suck the life out the entire session,

So, as the feet are moving, how fast should they move? Well, what are you doing? When I'm within an exercise, I may not be moving very fast at all – neither may my dog – because maybe we are concentrating and performing. For example, if my dog is selecting the correct scent article, the feet are moving but...slowly. But between exercises? Well someone's feet are moving rather fast! Maybe everyone's feet if I'm taking the dog to a new spot in a light and playful fashion. Maybe only the dog's if I sent them to the new spot. But odds are pretty good that no one is moseying along, doing not much of anything.

Keep the feet moving.

And while you're at it? Keep the exercises flowing!

What does that look like?

It's a function of creativity. What's gonna happen? Your dog isn't sure because THINGS are happening. Feet are moving, cues are flowing, and you're using up as much of your training space as possible. All of a sudden your dog is really paying attention, not because they have been trained to do so, but because they are curious about what might happen next. Paying attention is the way to succeed! Plus, it's more fun. We covered that already; don't be boring.

Got an error? So what, who cares?! Get back to moving your feet or your dog's feet. Get on with it, let it go, and enjoy that training time with your dog. Keep going! This isn't the time to stare at your dog like a deer in the headlights while stewing about how you'll fail if your dog does that in a show. It's not important. Get those feet moving and the exercises flowing again so your dog doesn't start stressing and worrying. Move your feet and move through the exercises.

Keep your feet moving. Get the exercises flowing.

How about disengagement? You're working just fine and your dog finds something better to do?



Errors and disengagement are not the same thing. If you have errors get back to work! Disengagement is more complicated. A whole workshop's worth of complication. If you have issues with disengagement from a dog who starts out engaged, consider joining my [“Disengagement from Engagement” workshop](#) and learn your options under a variety of circumstances and with different types of dogs. The focus will be rally/obedience types of disengagement but the general principles and considerations apply to all sports – just weighted somewhat differently. The first video lecture was just released. Now you have one week to watch it and submit your questions before I do my follow up video lecture where I review disengaged dogs and answer your questions. I hope to see some of you there!

# Life Lessons Learned From Training Dogs

## Discovering the power of an affirming feedback loop

By Eileen Anderson, MM, MS -

Published: June 25, 2020 Updated : June 18, 2020



The author's formerly feral puppy, Clara. Despite her seemingly innocent puppy charm, the time that Clara had spent fending for herself in the world made her a tougher customer than she appeared

When I first started to learn about training, it was in the world of competitive dog obedience. In that specialized niche, dog training was mostly separate from everyday life. You trained the dog to do difficult but stylized stuff. It was a sport, a competition, a mini-culture. I jumped in, competing with several dogs. This changed the course of

my life a bit, adding new interests, activities, and friends.

But a friend used to tease me and ask why this training didn't include anything practical. Why didn't it teach my dogs not to jump on her when greeting? I would weakly tell her about the Canine Good Citizen classes and test, which are a great step in the right direction in the obedience world. But I also knew in my heart that a dog could easily pass the CGC at that time and have poor manners in real life. (I know because I did it with two dogs!) There was something missing.

I only gradually learned about another type of dog training – one that is based on the science of learning but is *also* all about practicality. This type applies to everything from helping dogs get along in human homes to agility to search and rescue. (It applies beautifully to competitive obedience as

well.) It considers the ethics of changing functional behaviors. It encourages us to learn about dog body language so that we may better perceive our dogs' response to training and other situations. This type of training emphasizes enriching our dogs' lives even as we may need to change some human-unfriendly behaviors.

It help us realize that the laws of learning apply to humans too. Professional dog trainers train humans as much as they train dogs.

This was the new-to-me world of training that I had hoped was out there. This was the missing piece. And when I finally found it, the lessons I learned caused sea changes in my life, my beliefs, and my behavior.

Here are three of the many things I've learned:

**1. Perceive the dog (or person) in front of me.** I tend to live in my head. My friends tell me they could rearrange the furniture in my house and I wouldn't notice. I believe my thoughts. So when things go counter to my expectations, I don't always notice right away.

A potent example of this happened when I took in my once-feral puppy, Clara. She had grown up wild to the age of about 11 weeks; her mother had a litter of puppies in the woods and I and other people in the neighborhood were feeding the mother in hopes of catching and rescuing the whole family. The puppy came in my house – completely ignoring me and slipping past me through the door – because she heard my dogs barking. She started to engage with them and I closed the door behind her – captured! In the space of an hour she had accepted my dogs and me, too.

When Clara accepted me, I assumed that would extend to the rest of the human race. She was young and she had turned the corner very quickly with me. Plus, she was a puppy! Puppies are fun; puppies are joyful. Puppies return our love for them!

The next day I put her in my car to take her to the vet for an exam and vaccinations. On the way, I stopped at a friend's house to show her my new puppy. My friend stuck her head in the car and Clara growled – and *not* a cute growl. But I didn't believe what my ears heard! I encouraged my friend to look in again and reach her hand out. This was met with louder and lower growls. Yikes!

That's what it took to make me let go of my "puppy" preconception. I finally noticed that this puppy was extremely uncomfortable and doing rather un-puppyish things.

Clara's extreme case forced me to learn and relearn this lesson: Perceive the actual dog in front of you, instead of your preconceived idea of the dog in front of you. I have become more observant because of her!



These folks are watching the conclusion of a bicycle race. As each bike whizzes by, people ring cowbells and cheer. This dog's owner hasn't yet realized that her dog is stressed by all this, even though the dog is trying hard to say she would like to leave.

But *you* don't need a feral puppy to make this mistake. When you plan an outing with your dog that you're sure she'll like, how long does it take you to notice if she

is *not* enjoying it?

If you're like me, you might have had a picture all fixed in your head of the wonderful time you were going to have together. It can sometimes take a while to notice that your beloved dog is not happy. She may not like the noise or the water or the other dogs or whatever and she has been trying to drag you back to the car. Oh! There is a real dog here on the end of my leash, and she's not acting like the imaginary one in my head!

## THE DOG IS OKAY

Interestingly, it works the other way as well. A dog might actually be okay when we assume she is distressed. I had this experience with my elderly dog Cricket after she developed canine cognitive dysfunction. Dementia, in humans and in dogs, is a tragedy. It is terrible and heartbreaking to see your loved one's cognitive functions fail. My Cricket did go through what appeared to be a period of anxiety in the early and middle stages of her dementia. But she was fortunate because as the disease progressed, she got *less* distressed, not more. But it took me a while to catch up with this and believe it.

For a long time, I would experience a wave of sympathy and grief when Cricket walked in circles, forgot what she had just done, or zoned out in a corner. But I came to believe, through careful observation and what we know of dog cognition, that she wasn't suffering when she did these things.

Unlike me, she didn't remember her former capabilities and grieve them. She didn't show frustration or anxiety as the disease progressed. The dog in front of me was impaired, but she was actually doing okay.

**2. See the good.** This sounds simple enough. Most of us know the benefits of "seeing the good in the world" and looking on the bright side. But that's not what I'm talking about. I'm not talking about attitudes or the big picture. I'm talking about the *little* picture.

In positive reinforcement-based training, we set the stage for the behaviors we want. When our dogs perform them, we reinforce with food, play, and other things that work for that particular dog. But we have to *see* the behaviors first. We have to pay attention.

One method of developing a new behavior is capturing. With this method, we are on the lookout all the time for a behavior we want in a specific context. We look for the moment our dog bows, does a fold-back down, or checks in with us in a tough situation. We reinforce it. We are looking for what we want, rather than reacting to all the stuff we don't want.

After a while, capturing can generalize – for the human! We aren't looking for just that one behavior anymore. We notice all sorts of cool and helpful stuff that our dogs do.

It's easy to notice the bad stuff; we are wired that way. It's a survival issue. If our forebears missed seeing the stand of blackberries, the ripe pecans on the ground, or the excellent fishing hole, they might've gone hungry. Usually, however, they got another chance. But if they missed noticing the coiled snake or the rip tide – well, they weren't anyone's forebears.

This is not to say that positive reinforcement is flimsy. Far from it. We have to eat eventually, after we finish hiding from the tigers. We have to do it regularly or we die. It's just that things that are dangerous or unpleasant grab us by the amygdala.

But I learned to notice when my dog did the right thing, the pleasant thing, or the safe thing. And this habit spread slowly to the rest of my life. I started noticing the good more, and that led to behavior change on *my* part. I not only noticed the good, but also encouraged it.

It meant going out of my way to say, "Thank you" – and not only in rote social situations, but in circumstances where a little observation told me that the person had gone out of their way to do something kind or helpful. It meant seeing common ground with difficult people. It meant sticking up

for someone I disagreed with if they were arguing politely and fairly. It meant complimenting perfect strangers if I liked how they were interacting with their kids, their parents, or their animals.

Finally, it made me examine my values carefully. What is “good,” to me anyway? If I’m going to encourage people in certain behaviors, I’d better have thought things through!



Humans are hard-wired to notice problems and imperfections. It takes a lot of practice to learn to notice (and reinforce) all the tiny good things our dogs do – even when we know that the more we reinforce the behaviors we want, the more the dog will do them.

**3. Have patience with behavior change.** I can remember the days when I thought I should be able to change my dog’s behavior instantly, if only I knew the right trick or could buy the right gizmo. Abracadabra, and the dog no longer jumps over the fence into the garden. There is some kind of disconnect in our culture about that. Because even if we haven’t heard of things like learning theory, positive reinforcement, or extinction, we are probably familiar with habits.

We know habits are hard to change – and I’m not even talking about addictions, just everyday habits! How long does it take you to consistently remember to take the new route to work because of the long-term construction happening on your usual route? What about that time four weeks into the new route when you were daydreaming and went the old way again?

How many times do you try to flip on a light switch when you know your power is out? How long does it take to change your posture because of your physical therapist’s instructions? To breathe differently?

Most adults have been bopped on the head by reality many times when trying to change habits. Yet we still can buy the idea that we should be able to change a dog’s behavior instantly when said behavior is currently working great for the dog. And even if we are taking our time to train the dog well and the dog is a happy participant – we are *still* working against habits.

What I have learned from dog training and behavior science and by paying attention is that changing an ingrained behavior can be slow. When I see how difficult it can be for me, it gives me more patience with my dogs (and with people, too!).



## COMPLEMENTARY LESSONS

These three lessons enhance each other. Not being hampered by preconceptions (#1) helps me see the good in a situation (#2), and patience (#3) helps me shape the good that is already there into something better. This is true for dog training, people training, and my own personal growth.

## **USRVDTC BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Date 6/18/2020

The regular monthly board meeting of the Upper Snake River Valley Dog Training Club was called to order by President, Nicki Bowden , at 7:07 p.m., on Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup> 2020, at Tautphaus Park, in Idaho Falls ID.

Previous Board Minutes Read/Dispensed: Last 6 board meetings posted in the newsletter

Motion by: Melissa Meyers

Seconded by: Marilyn Manguba

Board Members Present:

Marilynne Manguba

Melissa Meyers

Suzanne Belger

Nicki Bowden

Lacey Moon

Report of President: None

Report of Vice President: None

Report of Secretary: AKC has sent approvals for our All-Breed Rally and Obedience trial in August and New Club Bylaw Provisions for Holding Meetings.

Report of Treasurer: Report held for regular meeting

Report of Committees: None

Unfinished Business: None

New Business: None

Motion for Adjournment: Suzanne Belger

Seconded by: Melissa Meyer

Time Adjourned: 7:10pm

## **USRVDTC REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Date June 18<sup>th</sup> , 2020

The regular monthly meeting of the Upper Snake River Valley Dog Training Club was called to order by President, Nicki Bowden , at 7:11 p.m., on Thursday, July 18th, 2020, at Tautphaus Park, in Idaho Falls ID.

Members present (for Board meeting and regular meeting)

Lacey Moon

Aubrey Parry

Nicki Bowden

Suzanne Belger

Rosha Adams

Diana Robinson	Lois Olson	Steve Olson	Duane Loomis	Cheryl Loomis
John Baughman	Desirae Chase	Richard Brizzee	Dave P'pool	Kelly P'pool
Donna Whitham	Brian Meyers	Melissa Meyers	Heiki Vitacolnna	Mark Whitham

Marilyn Manuba

Introduction of Guests/Visitors: None

Minutes of Previous Regular Meeting Read/Dispensed: Printed in Newsletter (Feb, March, April, May)

Motion by: Desirae Chase Motion to accept as corrected

Seconded by: Diana Robinson

Reason: Cheryl Loomis pointed out that in the February minutes, referring to the election of Sean Hernandez as member it states, "It was verified that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the general membership was present so that a new member could be voted in." The minutes need to be amended to say, " $\frac{3}{4}$  OF MEMBERS PRESENT voted to accept the new member".

Report from the Board Meeting: Motion to suspend since everyone was here by Suzanne Belger. Melissa Meyer seconded.

Report of the President: None

Report of the Vice President: Layla is doing better and should be home in a week.

Report of the Secretary: None

Report of the Treasurer: Suzanne Belger read the monthly and year-to-date financial reports. Copy included. Taxes filed.

Report of Committees:

Obedience – Suzanne Belger – Obedience trial in August approved. Judges are still willing to come. Lucien wants the committee meeting the first week in July. The trial will be in the park with social distancing and following measurements: No group food or drinks provided. Lunch for the judges (boxed lunches). All stewards wear gloves, judges wearing masks, volunteers wearing masks. Spacing between entrances. Novice sit-stays have to be spaced. Cheryl Loomis asked– Sanitize restrooms? Maybe have bleach wipes and sanitation station at the bathrooms. Entries close July 31<sup>st</sup>. We have until that day to cancel without AKC fees. City wants to wait until the 1<sup>st</sup> of July before it gives the OK for the trial. We'll know more at next meeting.

Agility classes going well. Cancelled yesterday due to rain and extended an extra week.

CGC – July 1<sup>st</sup>. Need volunteers. Trick dog at CGC? If someone asks we'll do it since there shouldn't be many dogs. Interest in CGC-A or CGC-U contact Richard Brizzee. For CGC testing - No handshakes -instead: stop, pause. "Crowd" will be social distancing.

Unfinished Business: Tracking trial approved Sept 20<sup>th</sup>.

New Business: July 15<sup>th</sup>-Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> obedience classes are full. We have two 6pm classes. Someone needed to teach 2<sup>nd</sup> 6pm Obedience class. Desi? Rally at 7pm.

Agility 4 – Different night? Monday night. Starting July 13<sup>th</sup>. 6PM – Brian Meyers will fix the website on that.

David P'Pool- Winter classes that were canceled? Suzanne Belger - Vouchers were given to those that had their class canceled.

Fun Matches – start them again? Leslie Hill still in charge? We'll ask Leslie if she wants to start them back up. If so, Desi can put in the newsletter.

Membership Applications Read/Approved: None

Motion for Adjournment: Lois Olson (and then more was added) and then Steve Olson

Seconded by: Aubrey Parry , Lois Olson

Time Adjourned: 7:45

Location of Next Club Meeting: July Meeting no picnic in Tautphaus Park. July 16<sup>th</sup> 7pm

