

Paws to Dance



The Newsletter of the Canine Freestyle Federation, Inc.
November 2009

“The Creative Journey” CFF Retreat 2010

by Kristin Sicotte

Mark your calendars and save the date. We have a very exciting CFF retreat coming April 16-18, 2010. Our retreat this year will kick off with a competition Friday morning. We hope you will come and celebrate the joy and delight you have in working with your dog. This is a great opportunity to share with freestylers from around the United States. We will have representation from every guild.

The retreat theme this year is “The Creative Journey”. I have always felt that canine freestyle is a journey and not a destination. The failures are just as important as the successes as long as we continue to learn from both. It is a journey we take with our dogs from puppies to adults to veterans. It is a journey we take when we compete in the different levels from I-IV. It is a journey we take with our fellow freestylers through good and bad times. We face challenges, and as freestylers we learn to solve them creatively, and grow in the relationship with our dogs, in the knowledge and appreciation of the sport and in the friendships we make along the way.

The retreat is a wonderful place to meet other freestylers. You may even meet some of the amazingly talented teams that you see on the competition/demo DVD's. Take this opportunity to strike up conversation with them. They are open and interested in helping you learn as well as making this sport grow and flourish.

We will be teaching conceptually as usual. We hope to increase the comfort level and knowledge of this style of teaching and learning. The retreat will have three different tracks. Track I will be for freestylers who have not had exposure to canine freestyle at all. It will cover the basics and give the participants a very firm foundation from which to grow. Track II will be for participants competing at levels I/II and Track III will be for the advanced students and those competing in Levels III/IV.

We are looking forward to having Jim Moore and his lectures on music and music editing; Joan Tennille and her lecture on the concepts: “Show and Tell”; Kay Richards and her motivation lecture and Kristin Sicotte and Joan Tennille and their music Jam session. We would like to welcome a newcomer to our retreat, Christina Bond from California who will speak on the science of building a happy
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From Your President

Usually I stay pretty close to home, but I have spent half the past month on the road. My travels have landed me in California and Virginia, as well as points in between. At every stop I have been able to spend time with the Canine Freestyle Federation community, and what I have seen and heard makes my heart sing. We know we need to grow in order to prosper, and the potential is exciting. There is a large and enthusiastic group in California, eager to learn about and participate in the joy of our sport. They are joining the forum and working with the Learning Center, and they have a lot to offer. How exciting to see the eagerness and the talent. Let's get to know each other across the country, and support each other in our growth in freestyle.

The Virginia trip was exciting from a different perspective. It always feels good to be surrounded by the "old guard", those people who have been immersed in the sport for a number of years. It feels warm and safe there, and the creativity is palpable. What a wonderful thing to have been present when Mary Sullivan and Tracer achieved the fourth championship awarded by CFF! (Sadly I didn't actually see their performance, as I was warming up, but I could feel from the atmosphere in the room how fine it was. I can't wait for the video!) As much as we are separated by geography, we are joined by love of our sport. Let's stay in touch, support each other, and share the joy of our dog work.

Gaea Mitchel

Up-Coming Events

You won't want to miss it!

Gold Coast Guild Titling Event
Napa, CA
December 5-6, 2009

RETREAT!
Chattanooga, TN
April 16-18, 2010

Retreat

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attitude and confidence in your canine dance partner.

This year we have added individual and private sessions with the instructor of your choice. There will be a limited number of slots and this will be an additional charge.

We have an All-Star line up of instructors for the three tracks. Joan Tennille and Ann Holder will teach Track I, Gaea Mitchel and Elaine Smith will teach Track II and Betty Swenson and Kristin Sicotte will teach Track III.

Please come and join us for this incredible event. It will be held in Chattanooga Tennessee again this year. Details and registration will appear on the CFF website soon. Don't miss this opportunity to learn and grow in the discipline of canine freestyle. Continue your creative journey.

EXCITING NEWS CFF Retreat Scholarship

Canine Freestyle Federation is offering a scholarship to attend the CFF Retreat April 16-18 2010. It will cover the cost of tuition to the retreat. The scholarship recipient will be responsible for travel and lodging.

To apply, the applicant will be required to write a proposal or essay describing their plan to improve and advance Canine Freestyle or CFF itself. The scholarship will be awarded to the individual that has outlined the most promising and creative plan for advancing CFF.

Look to the website soon for details and application.

Guild News—Staccato Notes



Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild

By Shari Bryant

It's been a busy fall in North Carolina. Adele Monroe, Jeanine Johnson-Brown and I have been using the lessons in the Performance Learning Center in our classes. These are drop-in style classes held on either a Saturday or Sunday. We have had one to five people in a class.

The Winston-Salem Dog Training Club invited Adele Monroe and me to do an "Introduction to CFF" seminar for their club members. We did a four-hour seminar and had about 20 people attend. We described CFF freestyle, performed a couple of demos, demonstrated how music is selected, showed videos, and helped participants construct simple phrases. There was so much interest that we have been back to Winston-Salem twice. These subsequent sessions have included music selection, making heeling fun, teaching delayed reinforcement (food delay), and more work on phrases. We have had 10 to 12 people attend each session. There seems to be a lot of interest. So, after the first of the year, we probably will start drop-in style classes in Winston-Salem using the lessons in the Performance Learning Center.

We plan to co-host with Sirius Guild two freestyle titling events on November 6-7, 2010 at Durham Kennel Club, in Durham NC. Finally, we are planning a seminar, probably for August 2010, with Teoti Anderson. Two of our new members – Shirley Deasy and Lisa Mastin – have agreed to co-chair the seminar committee for next year.



The Gold Coast Freestyle Guild

by Judy Gamet

Holiday Freestyle Festival – Dec 5 & 6

"Over the River and Through the Woods to Napa we will go", oops wait, that's tracking! "Here comes Mr. Judge, Here Comes Mr. Judge, docking me for a tight leash again!" Oh no, that's obedience. How about this one? "Oh the weather outside is frightful, but my minivan is so delightful, and the routine, my dog and I know, so let us show, let us show, let us show!" Oh yes, much better...

While the rest of the country begins to kick back and relax with the holidays approaching, the Gold Coast Freestyle Guild is gearing up and getting ready for our annual show in Napa, CA! Days off to us mean heavy training hours. This year, after Saturday's show, we will be featuring Santa's Showcase. Any dogs not yet ready for competition will have a chance to get some ring experience. This is where the wine and cheese and the chocolate covered cherries will come out. It will truly be a celebration of not only our dogs, but our camaraderie and friendships as well.

If you'd like to join us, and have not yet received a premium list, feel free to contact me: Judy@DogsCanDance.com and I can e-mail you the file. I have mailed them to the members in the western states.

And this year, at Thanksgiving, let's all remember to give thanks for the lessons our dogs have shared with us, the miles they have walked by our side, and their never ending love.

Guild News More Staccato Notes



Misha Guild, Utah

By Susan Colledge

The big news is that we have a new member to our group so now we are up to four members! She hasn't had any training classes so we will be spending a lot of time helping with that also.

We lost two members that we thought were going to join because they wanted to "dress up" and have me just "give them the steps". Once they found out it was going to be a lot harder than they thought - it's more than just my giving them the "steps" so they can perform, they haven't been back. That's what has happened several times. I think people are watching what is on the computer and expect the same thing. I'm so glad we have a sport that is dog-centered, creative and artistic. Maybe with the new videos on the website, things will begin to change.

October will be a lean time for training because we all went to the Boise show recently. Kayli and I are going to Oakland for the demo at the APDT conference and the next weekend we will be doing the Yorkie national in Memphis. The weekend after that I will be in Virginia to judge. Busy times!

We're looking forward to the retreat next year.

Canis Major Guild

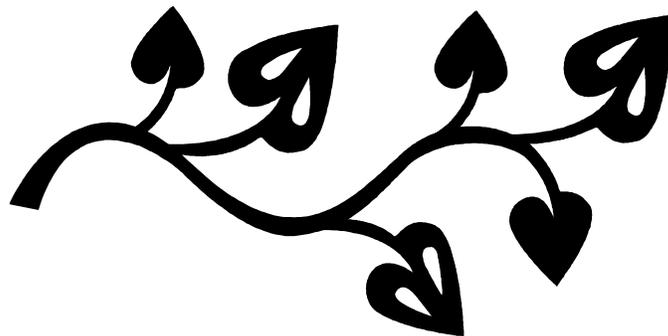
By Fay Taylor



Canis Major Guild is located in the corners of Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama. Our people live on top of a mountain, in a valley, or part way up a mountain. We can only see beautiful foliage in every direction we look. What a wonderful time of the year to travel among the Appalachian Mountains! But, because of the health problems of our dogs, we will not be able to come to Virginia this November.

But, here in Tennessee we are training. Our new students have the advantage of class instructions taken from the new E-book that adds a form of structure and direction to classes. The students are enthusiastic and quick to grasp these concepts.

Canis Major is looking forward to the upcoming retreat in Tennessee in April, 2010, hoping to see you all then.



A Pretty Picture

by Marge Hetrick and Sally Kirschenman

As the time draws near for our November show, we are talking to the members of our class about the things to remember for our presentation other than our routines. What is involved? When does the program start? When is it over? What is the "dress code"?

CFF is all about the dog so let's start with our canine partner. He/she must be groomed; that is bathed, brushed and wearing only his/her collar or no collar. Most handlers use a buckle collar—no training collars and definitely no prongs. The collar may be decorative if it does not take away from the dog. Your pal is ready to go!

Now, how about you? Your job is to enhance your dog by presenting a balanced picture, not to detract from your canine buddy. Attire is different than costume! This is not a Halloween contest but a serious effort to show the audience that you are a team. After all, who are we without our audience? We are trying to let them experience the joy and beauty of our sport. We want them to understand this special relationship we have with our dogs; to see the interaction we enjoy with these partners.

Our judges are nicely attired to fit the occasion showing that this is a special event. They are really the first people to see the team. Show them that you care about your team's appearance.

For several years, we had dress rehearsal in our class so our dogs could get accustomed to the "dressed up" us, and we could be sure new shoes etc., worked well and comfortably. Looking back over the years, jackets, vests, and nice slacks have been popular. Think color when you choose your outfit. We are not like the obedience ring where we wear a color close to the dog's color to hide any errors that might happen. Instead, we dress to enhance our dogs giving them the opportunity to be seen.

In most situations, avoiding stark differences in print or color between tops and slacks works better, although the same color in different tones can be lovely. Bold prints can be distracting. Nothing too flashy is better than too much bling! Long sleeved shirts or jackets hide the arms while short sleeves break the line of the arm and reduce the smooth effect that we are trying to achieve. If you are wearing a jacket, be sure that it buttons or does not swing! This can be quite disconcerting to your dog and again, distracting for the audience. Of course, there are exceptions. A very short jacket or bolero that does not swing even though it does not close could work.

Selecting shoes, in a color that shows the least contrast with your outfit, presents a more finished look. In most cases, black or tan shoes fit the bill. No, you don't need royal blue shoes to match the royal blue slacks but you get the point. Please wear stockings which match the shoes! Be sure that your stockings are tall enough that no bare leg becomes visible. Knee highs work very well. Contrasting stockings don't "do it" unless they are VERY close to your slacks color. Orange sox and black shoes, for example, would be very hard to match closely with slacks so go for black with black shoes, tan or similar with natural color shoes etc. It helps to remember that jewelry is usually a distraction, however, plain earrings that don't dangle work if not too glittery. A necklace often bounces and reflects light as do sequins.

Now both of you are ready to go, groomed and polished, showing a well put together team. There is a SMILE on your face! Next up is honoring, why? Not only are you setting the scene but allowing your dog to enter what may be a new space for him/her and take a short time to acclimate. As you reach the mid-point in the performance space where we honor, be sure to look at the judges as you bow. No, it isn't scored as part of your routine but it is the first thing the judges see. Not honoring either before or after IS
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“So What Breed Is This?”

by Kristin Sicotte

This was the typical question I got where ever I went with my Azawakh. The exhibit Hall of the APDT conference was no exception. I was asked literally hundreds of times over the course of three days, “What is this breed of dog”? What I was not expecting were the questions, comments and dialog that followed.

The participants of the APDT conference commented on the wonderful bond shared between the handlers and the dogs. They spoke of being captivated by the performances and were pleasantly surprised at the emotional response they felt. They appreciated the incredible amount of training it took to produce such a demonstration, and wanted to know if and how this dog sport produced such skilled handlers. There were comments on how the performances brought out the uniqueness of each breed and each individual team, and how it all seemed so natural.

What I discovered was that CFF and APDT were a good fit. We were two organizations that were all about the dog. We shared an appreciation and dedication for training as well as the goal of furthering the human canine bond.

I wanted to acknowledge the wonderful teams and volunteers that made a huge effort to be a part of this historical CFF event:

Chris Bond and her partners Magic (level II) and Spryte (level III) California

Debbie Crain and her partner Mayo (level II) California

Susan Colledge and her partner Kayli (level II) Utah

Ann Holder and her partner Pip (level IV) Florida

Gaea Mitchel and her partner Pelli (level IV) Florida

Kristin Sicotte and her partners Konan (level II) and Felaou Level (IV)

Joan and Carl Tennille (Mother ship and music man)

Jeanine Brown (chief booth tender and in charge of everything computer)

Hugues Sicotte (videographer)

It was an honor and a pleasure to be a part of this event.

Pretty Picture

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a penalty. After you honor, move to your beginning space smoothly and without excessive movement around the performance area. At this point, you are setting up your opening shape, showing the audience that a “picture” is about to unfold. Remember to wait for your dog’s attention and energy! And don’t forget your own controlled energy! When you and the dog are ready, it is time to signal the music steward. This is not the time for small talk with your partner!

Whew, you have now successfully presented a lovely routine, even fudging if necessary without anyone guessing. All that work! But the final picture remains with all who are watching so don’t blow it by rushing out. There is NO picture if you run out. You have destroyed the effect that you worked so hard to get. Instead, hold your closing shape, which is the completion of the picture, for four long seconds! Face the audience again and acknowledge them with a bow, then release and go leaving your audience enchanted.



CFF had a handsome delegation at the APDT conference in Oakland, California. Pictured from left to right are Gaea Mitchel (with PelliAnne), Kristen Sicotte (with Felaou and Konan reclining), Marcia Barkley, Ann Holder (with Pip), Jeanine Brown, Joan and Carl Tennille and Susan Colledge (with Kayli).



Canine Freestyle Federation Titling Event
Sponsored by the Sirius Guild
Saturday November 7, 2009

Level I Team

First Place Joanie Brobst's Norwich Terrier Long Valley Godzilla
Robin Carneal's Australian Shepherd Captain Jake Boot
Brandy Clymire's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Cyclone Victorious Glorious
Anne White's Miniature Poodle Mijenna Windtalker Codey

Level I

First Place Janet McBrien's Welsh Terrier Brightluck's Fame and Glory

Level II Brace

First Place Renee Filep's Border Collie Radiant's Chili Will Do
Border Collie Radiant's I'll Zig U Can Zag

Level II

First Place Kathy Noble's Golden Retriever Lycinan's Noble Yellow Rose

Level III

First Place Renee Filep's Border Collie Radiant's Chili Will Do **NEW TITLE**
Second Place Marge Hetrick's Standard Poodle Gretara Not Tonight
Third Place Wendy Ely's Greyhound Sol Roulette

Level IV

First Place Mary Sullivan's Belgian Sheepdog Signature's Carbon Copy **NEW CHAMPION**
Second Place Betty Swenson's Border Collie Lacy's Yahtzee
Third Place Pepper Guzman's American Eskimo May Be FSBO **NEW TITLE**
Fourth Place Sally Kirschenman's Old English Sheepdog Seathwaite's Calamity Jane
Fifth Place Janet McBrien's Welsh Terrier Datawelsh Everlasting Cash **NEW TITLE**

Highest Artistic Score

Mary Sullivan's Belgian Sheepdog Signature's Carbon Copy

Canine Freestyle Federation Titling Event
Sponsored by the Canine Freestyle Federation
Sunday November 8, 2009

Level I Team

First Place Joanie Brobst's Norwich Terrier Long Valley Godzilla **NEW TITLE**
Robin Carneal's Australian Shepherd Captain Jake Boot **NEW TITLE**
Brandy Clymire's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Cyclone Victorious Glorious
NEWTITLE
Anne White's Miniature Poodle Mijenna Windtalker Codey **NEW TITLE**

Level I

First Place Janet McBrien's Welsh Terrier Brightluck's Fame and Glory **NEW TITLE**

Level II Brace

First Place Renee Filep's Border Collie Radiant's Chili Will Do
Border Collie Radiant's I'll Zig U Can Zag

Level II

First Place Kathy Noble's Golden Retriever Lycinan's Noble Yellow Rose **NEW TITLE**

Level III

First Place Renee Filep's Border Collie Radiant's Chili Will Do **NEW TITLE**
Second Place Wendy Ely's Greyhound Sol Roulette
Third Place / Marge Hetrick's Standard Poodle Gretara Not Tonight

Level IV

First Place Mary Sullivan's Belgian Sheepdog Signature's Carbon Copy
Second Place Sally Kirschenman's Old English Sheepdog Seathwaite's Calamity Jane
Third Place Gaea Mitchel's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Lewiswood Coppelia Fianna
Fourth Place Janet McBrien's Welsh Terrier Datawelsh Everlasting Cash

Highest Artistic Score

Mary Sullivan's Belgian Sheepdog Signature's Carbon Copy

Both events were held at Pup N' Iron in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Many thanks to the judges Brandy Clymire, Marge Hetrick, Susan Colledge, Susan Allen, Cathy Nirenberg and Kay Richards.

Leash Handling in Freestyle

by Judy Gamet

Everyone wants to have a polished, impressive freestyle routine when it comes to competition or demonstrations. And we all know it takes a lot of training for both the dog and handler to accomplish this. Often I am finding people coming into this sport with great enthusiasm without knowing just how much training it really takes! Creating an on-leash routine is practically an art in itself when it comes to the sport of canine freestyle.

How often in class do you see a handler who gets discouraged with their dog as they are going through their routine and their dog is breaking away, ignoring them, lacking team focus; and the handler gets disappointed with the dog? My first question is, was the dog fully off leash trained? That doesn't mean "my dog will come when called" it means being able to execute movement and behaviors off leash with precision.

The Vision: What does a good on-leash routine look like? What do you want your dog to look like while performing on leash? What qualities would you give yourself when describing your handling of the leash in a perfect routine? What would you want people to be saying about your routine? You have to have a clear vision before you begin in order to accomplish it, and you need to be able to put it into words that will paint a clear picture in your mind! For those of you who are going to enter Level I, or are struggling to qualify at that level, take the time to answer those questions, it might just make all the difference.

Leash, clear communication or conflict: The leash is always communicating to our dog, whether we are aware of it or not. A slack leash could indicate that our dog is at an acceptable position in relationship to us. A tight leash could mean stress, improper behavior, any number of things to our dog that could be going wrong. Sometimes it's a handling habit. I'll give you 10 bills of \$10 each. As you go through your on leash routine, every time that leash tightens, you

have to pay me back \$10. Videotape your practice, see how much of that \$100 you were able to keep. Every time you train, keep the goal in mind that you want to keep all of that \$100! Use your body, verbal cues, thoughts, every resource you have available to you to communicate clearly what you want your dog to do. Don't expect the leash to carry the load.

Flow and design: As if the above isn't enough to think about... try thinking about the leash design and flow! Is the leash communicating the same cue that I am trying to convey to my dog or is it giving a totally conflicting signal? For beginning dogs, I like it when they don't have to make choices, the flow of the cuing and the leash all communicate the same path.

When I began competing with CFF, it was my goal to earn my way out of each level. That first Level I competition took Anabelle, my youngest rottweiler, and myself a year to create the routine and train it. A second year was spent designing the leash work. I wanted the leash to basically disappear so every move was calculated and recalculated from my handling standpoint. Sometimes it worked best when the leash was in the same hand as the side of my dog. Sometimes it worked better in the opposite hand, sometimes the leash worked best behind my back held by my opposite hand. Play with the design, the leash is part of the artwork!

Good luck Level I teams, it's a challenge but a very worthy challenge!



2010 CFF Annual Dues Notice

Dues are \$ 25.00. Please renew today!

(The date in the upper right corner of the mailing label on this newsletter indicates when your present membership expires. (If you get the newsletter electronically you will receive an email telling you if you owe 2010 dues)

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In May 1998 CFF filed an Application for Recognition of Exemption under 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code with the IRS. The IRS granted CFF's request in 1999 as exempt from federal income taxes. CFF dues are not deductible for federal income tax purposes as a charitable contribution.

2010 Performance Learning Center Fee

If you subscribed to the CFF Performance Learning Center prior to October 1, 2009 you will receive an email telling you that it is time for you to renew the licensing agreement for 2010. The fee for 2010 remains \$ 35.00. Please make the check payable to CFF, Inc and mail it to :

Carl Tennille, Treasurer
14430 Overlook Ridge Lane
Beaverdam, VA 23015-1787

Receive *Paws to Dance* electronically

Members can receive *Paws to Dance* by email instead of snail mail. Approximately 35 members have signed up for this service and the more the merrier. If you would like to receive *Paws to Dance* by email please send an email to ctennille@aol.com with *Paws to Dance* in the subject line and provide the email address to which you want the newsletter sent.

CFF, Inc.
c/o Julia M. Gregory
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President Gaea Mitchel 2902 Terry Road Tallahassee, FL 32312 850-385-7875 gemitchel@earthlink.net	Vice President Jeanine Brown 12 Gatlin Court Durham, NC 27707 919-489-0013 jajbrown@nc.rr.com	Treasurer Carl Tennille 14430 Overlook Ridge Lane Beaverdam, VA 23015 804-883-1174 ctennille@aol.com	Recording Secretary Sally Kirschenman 5743 N, 16th Street Arlington, VA 22205 703-536-7450 skirsch122@verizon.net	Membership Chair Brandy Clymire 10603 Seven Oaks Drive Spotsylvania, VA 22553 heypreston@verizon.net
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