

Paws to Dance



The Newsletter of the Canine Freestyle Federation, Inc.

May 2020

T. V. Talent Shows and DogWork®

By Janet Dayton

I think my students think I'm a little crazy at times. This past winter I suggested they watch television talent shows. Have you? I'm talking about shows like World of Dance, The Voice, American Idol, and even America's Got Talent and Dancing with the Stars.

My suggestion was met with scoffs, declarations of "I don't watch that stuff," and noncommittal stares. I told them to watch the performances and then listen to the judges' critiques. I think they were hoping I would forget about it. I didn't.

The first week after the suggestion I don't think anyone had watched anything. I reminded them. The next week a couple of them had watched the performances and then had fast forwarded through the critiques. I reminded them again. I think the third week one had watched and listened. She humored me with a report.

So why did I make this suggestion? By watching the performances and listening to what the judges have to say one can find insights into performance and artistry, into stage presence, technicality, and musicality, and into energy and dynamics. Do those words relate to anything you do with your dog? These shows are a learning tool for what we do in CanineFreestyle DogWork®.

Just so you don't think I'm crazy too or this suggestion is not worthwhile to do at least once, look at what we found. Leila watched a recent

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episode of America's Got Talent. The performer was a magician. Yes, a magician. She observed the magician's attitude toward the tricks he was doing and toward his performance; toward his relationship between himself and the audience. He invited them into his world of magic and made a connection. Hmm, connections, where have we heard that before?

This is what I found on World of Dance: Jennifer Lopez made this comment to a contestant, "The moments in between are the moments." Wow, does that ever relate to us! How often are we told to not just walk from one element of our performances to the next element; to make every movement and moment count? Derek Huff had this piece of advice for a contestant, "Own a movement

in stillness." Do opening and closing shapes come to mind?

So here it is. Take it or leave it. If you choose to venture forward with my suggestion, watch the good performances as well as the not so good. Ask yourself, "Does this performance resonate with me? Why or why not?" Listen to what the judges say. Do you agree? Why or why not? Do you "see" what they are talking about as it relates to the performance? Who had the better performance and why? I know it takes time and you may not be a fan, but watch part of an episode or two. You just might be surprised by what you learn and what insights you gain.

The "Remember Me" Hostas

By Janet Dayton

Last May at our titling event we wanted to remember Joan. It was strange not having her there. Her absence was felt. We decided to honor Joan's memory by giving plants to anyone who wanted one. The plants were purchased at Blue Stone Perennials; a nursery Joan liked to visit here in Ohio. We wanted a perennial that would survive in multiple growing zones and was easy to care for. A hosta named "Remember Me" was chosen.



Janet's hosta



Betty's hosta

I planted Joan's hosta along my front walk. Every time I leave the house I pass it and think of Joan. Daryl, Joan's son said in his eulogy of her, "...she would want us to look forward to the future, planting our gardens for the spring, enjoying the blooms and fragrances of summer and the color and rejuvenation of autumn, and then start the cycle afresh each and every year."

"Joan" came up smiling and healthy a couple of weeks ago. It was like a friend returning. I was happy to see her; to see she made it through the winter. The cycle has started "afresh" again.



North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild

By Janet Dayton

Calendar reminders on our phones had to be deleted once our titling event was cancelled. What a disappointment! It was kind of sad. Losing the Jamboree was sad too. Thankfully, we are all fine and hope we stay that way.

In the last newsletter, I chronicled NCCF's history. This edition starts our 'get to know us' member profiles with Leila Widgren.

What breed(s)? Present: **Shih Tzu (Eddie), Standard Poodle (Charlie)** Past: **collie mix, Border collie.**

How many dogs have you had in your life? **10**

Any other pets? **Now an African Grey, in the past, cats gerbils, rabbits, guinea pigs, fish, and parakeets.**

How did you get involved with CFF? **I made it a habit of going to a dog education thing every year. I was going to a dog dancing (not CFF) seminar and then it was cancelled due to the presenter's dog dying. So I started looking for a dog dancing seminar and stumbled onto a CFF Retreat coming up. I talked to Julia Gregory to see if we (Janet and I) would meet the program requirements. She said, "Bring your friend and come on down." So we went.**

Best moment with CFF? **When Charlie performed in our show with his liver issues. He tried very hard and gave it his all. He kept trying and giving as I supported him. I knew then we were a team. The essence of the sport is to achieve the sense of oneness and team and that happened. It wasn't a stellar performance and it didn't matter what the score was or what the audience thought. I was in awe.**

Do you have a goal you are working towards in CFF? **For Charlie and Eddie to do a brace together.**

What do you hope people see when you work your dog in a CFF routine? **See the joy of the relationship we have; being a team, not a forced relationship, letting his personality show through. Having people see the fun and watch our relationship.**

Why do you have a dog in your life? **Wouldn't have it any other way. Dogs are in our lives for such a short time. They teach us so many things, take us to places we never may have gone, to people we may have never met, teach us profound things about love and what it means, teamwork, friendship, and the training relationship.**

What behavior was hardest to train your dog to do? **Bar none, laterals.**

Hobbies/Interests? **I love learning about health, wellness, and essential oils. When I have the time, I like to color adult coloring books.**

Job(s)? **I have been in IT since 1982 and currently I'm an IT Business Systems Analysis, Senior for Progressive.**

Favorite song(s)? Why? **"I Can Only Imagine" and "Flawless" by MercyMe. Their music makes my faith come alive and become real.**

Favorite book(s)? Why? **Can't say I have a favorite book, but I really like The Shack by William P. Young. It is a faith filled book and meaningful. I like to read to learn and read for education.**

If you could go anywhere, where would you go? ***I would love to go to the Holy Land.***

Do you have a hero or special person you admire? ***My mom; she was the one that taught me how to live. She was the epitome of a Christian woman and instilled Christian values in her children. She was a good example on how to treat people with respect. My father died when I was 6 and we lived on her social security. We weren't rich, but we didn't know that.***

What makes you happy? ***In general, being around people who like the things I like. I like the fellowship, sharing, relationships made, and learning done while being with these people.***

Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild & Sirius Guild Trials

By Kathy Noble & Shari Bryant

Because of the Pandemic, the April Jamboree was cancelled. Because of the Pandemic, the North Coast Canine Freestyle Guild Trial in Ohio was cancelled. So what about the joint Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild/Sirius Guild trial? Well, your board of directors have been thinking about it and are continuing to monitor the COVID-19 situation and to consider everyone's safety. We have a date (October 31st and November 1st), a contract for the usual terrific site in Winston Salem, and our panel of judges. We also have a block of rooms being held at the Winston Salem La Quinta. Those are the things that must be done well ahead of time, and they are all in place. Because the situation with COVID-19 continues to develop and change on almost a daily basis, our plan is to continue to move forward with the trial plans. As we get closer to the trial date, a decision to hold the trial will be based on government restrictions/recommendations, safety considerations, and also, ultimately, on whether our members feel comfortable entering and we have enough entries to support the trial.

Canine Freestyle Federation DogWork® Jamboree

By Shari Bryant

Unfortunately, the Canine Freestyle Federation DogWork® Jamboree had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. However, we have rescheduled it for next spring. The Jamboree will be held on March 19 – 21, 2021 at the Winston-Salem Dog Training Club, in Winston-Salem. More information regarding hotel and registration will be available later this year. We hope you will be able to join us next year to celebrate canine freestyle.

Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild

By Shari Bryant

Not much is happening in North Carolina. Our Durham Kennel Club classes have been canceled until at least August. We are continuing to move forward with our plans for our November trials with Sirius Guild.



In the last newsletter, we reported the Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild gave a talk and presentation demo at the Durham Kennel Club monthly meeting in January. Teams included: Trish Koontz and Boon, Judy Arnold and Brisa and Starla, Michele Meloy and JoJo, Dee Wallis and Harry, and Barbara Long and Ambrose. Below are some artistic photos that Trish Koontz prepared of the teams during the demo. Thank you Trish for sharing these photos!



Teams (clockwise starting from lower left):

Dee & Harry

Michele & JoJo

Judy & Starla

Trish & Boon

Barbara & Ambrose

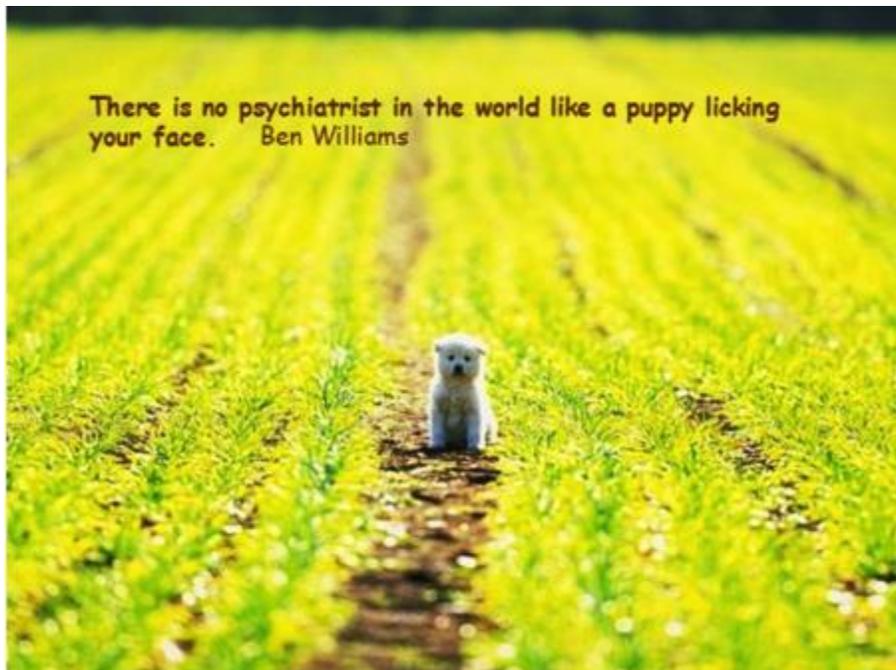


Responses to Resist?, Insist?, Desist? (Article in February newsletter)

From Rickie Morrison: I have always taught laterals to both sides using dowels because my BCs respond well to pressure. The dowel touches their hock they move to the side away from it. I have since worked with folks whose dogs either are afraid of the dowel or (like my Golden pup) just look at me as if to say "OW why are you hitting me with a stick?" and don't move a muscle. First off I would probably check with the vet to see if there is a physical problem that hurts her if she moves to the left or right. If all checks out fine there I might try to entice her to move using a wooden spoon in front of me at her level with peanut butter or baby food or liver pudding slathered on one side and have her in front position. If she wants to lick the food she needs to be in position and give me one step, then lift the spoon and praise like there is no tomorrow. After I get one good step I will try adding one more at a time until I get a nice line. Then the spoon moves up farther and farther until you can get several steps between giving her the reward. She may also be a dog that will only give you one step at a time, that is alright just look for a place in the music you can fit in side step, pause, side step. Mary Sullivan does a beautiful job of that so watch some of her performances. Those are just some of my thoughts. Hope they help.

From Betty Swenson: What I would do in Julia's position is go ahead and choreograph a level 4 without a left lateral and take the 1 point ding. I would also, in a separate context, keep trying to shape the behavior in order to strengthen Nina's muscle balance.

From Shari Bryant: Jace's laterals mostly were captured, but I did teach him a shoulder target to my hand, then to a fly swatter so I could stand up rather than be on my knees. As he moved into my hand (or fly swatter) I would take a step to the side. It did help me to get a bit more control of his laterals. I don't know if it would work for teaching laterals, but recently I have been doing side-stepping over cavaletti poles with Jace. The poles should be set apart at one-half the withers height and the pole height should be less than hock height. However, I have found for Jace, the poles need to be a little farther apart and nearly on the ground. I hope that helps some.



From the Editor

By Shari Bryant

In February, I was looking forward to seeing everyone at the DogWork® Jamboree and the Ohio Trials. Unfortunately, neither of those events happened. Also, our freestyle classes at Durham Kennel Club have been canceled until at least August. Although I've been working with Jace, finding a space large enough to try out new freestyle moves can be quite challenging. When trying to work with him in smaller spaces, like my living room, I often feel like I'm trying to turn a semi-truck around in the driveway.

At a recent Board meeting, Julia Gregory suggested an article in the newsletter about training in non-traditional places. I thought this was a great idea, but I have not made any progress on getting it ready for this newsletter. So, I thought I would come to the collective freestyle mind for ideas. If you too have found yourself without your usual place to work with your dogs, what are you doing? Send your thoughts, and photos if you want, to me at Lunar61@aol.com by August 1st and I will compile these for the August newsletter.

Mark Your Calendars – Upcoming Events

October 31 – November 1, 2020

Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild & Sirius Guild Titling Events

Winston-Salem Dog Training Club

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

More information coming soon.

March 19 – 21, 2021

Canine Freestyle Federation DogWork® Jamboree

Winston Salem Dog Training Club

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

More information coming soon.



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Upcoming Events

Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild & Sirius Guild Titling Event, Winston-Salem, NC; October 31-November 1, 2020

Canine Freestyle Federation DogWork® Jamboree in Winston-Salem, NC; March 19-21, 2021

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