

# Paws to Dance

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The Newsletter of the Canine Freestyle Federation, Inc.

December 2021

## A Message from the President (of CFF)

By Betty Swenson

Greetings fellow freestyle enthusiasts. I hope everyone is having a pleasant holiday season.

It appears that life is beginning to return to some degree of normality, albeit perhaps a “new normal” where COVID is a factor to consider in all our public interactions. Now looks like a good time for us to contemplate the future of our organization.

Our membership has been diminishing for some time, and the pandemic certainly has not been helpful. Some of our guilds have valiantly carried on with conducting classes either in person or on line over the last year and a half, and the Ohio group did a great job with their titling event last May. Other groups have not had access to their normal training spaces, and the planned Jamboree plus two competitions in North Carolina have had to be postponed twice. But now things are opening back up pretty much everywhere, and the Jamboree in Winston-Salem March 18-20, 2022 (see the brochure on the website: [canine-freestyle.org](http://canine-freestyle.org)), and titling event on March 18 before the Jamboree begins, are looking like a go at this time. Unfortunately, the May 2022 Ohio show is not looking too promising, mainly due to a lack of entrants.

The Board of Directors is soliciting ideas from the membership as to what we can do to increase participation in our sport. How can we get current

## Table of Contents

<b><i>A Message from the President (of CFF) .....</i></b>	<b><i>1</i></b>
<b><i>Mark Your Calendars – Upcoming Events.....</i></b>	<b><i>2</i></b>
<b><i>Hotel Information for the March trial and Jamboree.....</i></b>	<b><i>2</i></b>
<b><i>Jamboree Information.....</i></b>	<b><i>2</i></b>
<b><i>Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild .....</i></b>	<b><i>3</i></b>
<b><i>North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild.....</i></b>	<b><i>5</i></b>
<b><i>2021 CFF Annual Dues Notice .....</i></b>	<b><i>7</i></b>

members more involved, and how can we recruit new members?

Our Education Director, Julia Gregory, has been working on developing an on-line beginner class, but technical wizardry is in short supply in our group so it has been slow going. The Learning Center is still available on the website, which Brandy Jameson has continued to maintain.

So please share your thoughts! What should we be doing? What are you willing and able to do to keep our beautiful sport going? Send your comments to: [directors2020@canine-freestyle.org](mailto:directors2020@canine-freestyle.org), or to any individual director.

Thank you, and I hope to see everyone in March.

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## Mark Your Calendars – Upcoming Events

March 18, 2022

### **Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild and Sirius Guild Titling Event**

The two Guilds will host a one-day trial at the Winston-Salem Dog Training Club in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Regular classes, PhraseWork, and In The Moment will be offered. A premium list for the trial will be available in early January. Note: A signed COVID-19 waiver will be required for entry into the trial.

March 18-21, 2022

### **Canine Freestyle Federation DogWork® Jamboree**

The Jamboree will be held at the Winston-Salem Dog Training Club in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. A registration form is available on the Canine Freestyle Federation website ([www.canine-freestyle.org](http://www.canine-freestyle.org)). Note: A signed COVID-19 waiver will be required for entry into the Jamboree.

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## Hotel Information for the March trial and Jamboree.

La Quinta Inn (Hanes Mall Blvd). 2020 Griffith Road, Winston-Salem, NC  
336-765-8777 (No Pet Fee)

A block of rooms for Thursday night has been added to the Jamboree block. Room rate is \$71.40 for Thursday night and \$67.15 for Friday and Saturday nights.

**Deadline to reserve a room is February 22, 2022.** Call 1-800-753-3757. Mention **Canine Freestyle Federation** and Itinerary Number **5136B224695878** when you make your reservation. Also, mention if you will be traveling with a dog when you make your reservation.

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## Jamboree Information

***\*\*DEADLINE FOR EARLY REGISTRATION IS JANUARY 15, 2022\*\****

Join us for a fun-filled freestyle weekend. There are 24 working spots and unlimited audit spots. Registration fee for working or audit spot is \$115 if your registration is postmarked no later than January 15, 2022. After January 15, registration fee is \$140; deadline for registration is February 24. The registration fee also includes four meals – Friday and Saturday suppers, and Saturday and Sunday lunches. There is no reduced registration fee for auditors because most of the fee is to cover expenses such as building rental and meals. Registration information is available on the CFF website ([www.canine-freestyle.org](http://www.canine-freestyle.org)).

Janet Dayton and Leila Widgren will be the instructors. Janet and Leila are Master Instructors and DogWork Mentors-Novice Levels I, IIA and IIB. Also, Janet is the Judges Director for the Canine Freestyle Federation and Leila Widgren is the Vice-President for the Canine Freestyle Federation.

On Friday, March 18, the Jamboree will start in the late afternoon following the trial. Plans include a Canine Freestyle Federation meeting, social hour, and dinner. Also, video of the original four teams will be shown.

On Saturday, March 19, we will explore choreography, artistry, and music from Level I through Level IV. For Level I & II, your dog should be able to heel on the right and left on lead or off lead. For Level III & IV, your dog should be able to heel on the right and left, and be able to do backing and laterals in at least one direction off lead. Those with a working spot will be given a phrase to develop at the level appropriate for their dog. Several teams will be selected to demonstrate the phrase at each level. Also, we will discuss music and how to select music for each level.

On Sunday, March 20, participants will develop a phrase for their dog using puzzle cards. For those unfamiliar with puzzle cards, puzzle cards have movements listed on the card (e.g., front work) and are placed in several categories. You will select a puzzle card from each category then develop a phrase using the movement listed on the puzzle card. For example, a set of cards might be: heel work–left side, around finish–right to left, pace change–fast, front work, and back left pylon to front right pylon. You can arrange the cards in whatever order works for you and your dog to develop your phrase. Afterwards, a judges panel will provide updates on judging and answer participant’s questions.

We hope to see you there!

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## Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild

By Shari Bryant & Adele Monroe

Since we had to cancel our trial for this year, we decided to hold a Zoom freestyle class on November 6. It was a roundtable discussion on “Preparing for Competition.” We had a great discussion, and there were some wonderful suggestions and ideas from the participants. Below are the discussion questions (in italics) and the answers (bullets) given by participants.



*As a handler, what do you feel is your biggest challenge to success in the ring?*

- Being relaxed and confident. If I am upset my dogs pick up on it immediately.
- Disconnecting from any potential outcome.
- It is different with each dog. If I expect a lot from a dog, then I am more disappointed if it does not go well. Whereas if I don’t have high expectations, and it does not go well, then I am less disappointed.
- Being the same person in the trial as in I am when training.
- Waiting to go in to the space is the most stressful time.
- How to do a warm up. I have taken notes on what works and what doesn’t work.
- Going from using food to no food.

What helps:

- Flower essences for me and maybe my dog.
- Someone once said to me “Nobody cares except for you.”

*How do you prepare your dog to perform?*

- Work through a few phrases and maybe put it all together once a week.
- Work on reinforcing basic cues during day-to-day activities (e.g., “Wait,” “Touch”). Also, mix up the cues. My dogs get bored running through obedience exercises.
- Separate the technical aspects from choreography. My dogs have moves they really like to do, but when I drill before a show, my dog may refuse to do the move in the show.
- Watching what my dog likes to do and putting those moves in strategic places.
- Being able to cue my dog out of any unexpected situation when it is presented on the floor. So, if my dog does something unexpected, I can cue my dog with a move to get back on track (e.g., “Weave” or “Go Around”)
- Teach my dog the concept of food delay so he understands he gets more and better treats when I don’t have food on me.
- Letting my dog indicate when she is ready to work. She is ready to work when she starts looking at me and then offering behaviors.
- Allowing my dog to have choice in the choreography as well as before we start to work together in training and at the trial.
- Letting my dog choose to engage. My dog’s performance is better when I wait until he’s ready to engage and work with me. However, it is a challenge determining the amount of time needed for my dog to choose to engage and work.
- Have a cue (e.g., “Tag”) for reconnecting, particularly after honoring the judges. I teach my dog if I am not looking at you, something spontaneous and good will happen.
- Quit practicing the performance, including phrases, at least two weeks ahead of a trial.
- Teach the honor process, from entering the space to setting up for the opening shape.
- Use the honor process to allow the dog to get a sense of the space before the performance.
- When possible, have the choreography designed so the opening shape set-up is on the opposite side of the space from entering. This allows my dog to see the remainder of the space when moving from the honor to the opening shape set-up.

*How do you prepare yourself for the performance?*

- Video the phrases during training to see what looks good and what needs to be changed.
- Practice with your show shoes and attire. Also, have a show collar readily available (i.e., collar with no tags).
- Walk the performance alone multiple times.

- Use deep breathing exercises and visualization. Remember to breathe—our dogs know when we don't breathe.
- Have an index card with my goal, motivation, and motivational quotes. My goal is something I am 95% confident we can achieve. It may be as simple as my dog showing "joy" in the performance. It also helps me to detach from any specific outcome (e.g., titling).
- Having a "what to do when" list. For example, if my dog forgets a move or runs out of the space, I decide in advance how I will handle it. It allows me to make good decisions in the moment.
- Use a lot of visualization in the couple weeks before the trial.

*Do you use a freestyle run-through or show and go to prepare?*

- No. It doesn't help.
- Yes. It allows me and my dog to get in the space to practice.
- Yes. It allows me to get comments on my performance before entering the trial.
- Yes. If it is six or more weeks before the trial, then I will do the presentation. If it is a few weeks before the trial, I will walk the presentation myself but do something else in the space with my dog.

*Do you use other performance events (e.g., rally) to prepare?*

- Yes. It allows me to figure out a warm-up that works for each dog.
- Yes. It allows me to determine if my dog stresses up or stresses down, so I can determine what will help my dog to be successful from crate to gate.
- Yes. Doing rally helps build a warm-up routine, determine timing of when to get my dog out of the crate before a performance, the number of treats to have for warm-up, etc.

## North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild

By Janet Dayton

We had a busy fall here on the North Coast. Diana and Willow were invited to the AKC Lure Coursing National in Muncie Indiana. I went along too. It was an awesome experience to be a part of and to see. The dogs were fabulous to watch run. Bridget, Lava, and London have been busy in the obedience ring. Lava earned her CDX and London has two legs on his CD. Deb is busy with nosework and her new puppy, Raphael. Airy continues her puppy agility classes and is doing quite well. She is sequencing two to three jumps with the tunnel and is also making progress on the teeter.



Our guild offered a four-hour CFF introductory workshop. We had three attendees. They seemed to enjoy the content and are very interested in continuing. We also tried a phrase for a team routine. We are going to change our regular guild meeting day to Sunday afternoons, so the newbies won't have to drive in the dark. For some it will be an hour and a half drive. It might take us awhile to complete the six-week intro class depending on the weather. The workshop went well thanks to our small but mighty group. Thanks to Leila, Bridget, Diana, Deb, Claudia, and Lois. You are much appreciated. We hope to get the new class started in January.

We wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Some photos of the teams participating in our workshop.



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## 2022 CFF Annual Dues Notice

The CFF membership year has been changed from:

January 1-December 31 with members joining between September and December having their membership carry through to the following year.

-to-

April 1-March 31 with members joining between January and March having their membership carry through to the following year.

However, for this year only, members joining between September and December 2021 will have their membership will carry through until March 31, 2023.

Dues are \$25.00. Please renew today! (Your membership expires on March 31, 2022 unless you joined since October 1, 2021 or have a life membership.)

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to CFF, Inc. and mail to Carl Tennille, Treasurer CFF 14430 Overlook Ridge Lane Beaverdam, VA 23015 or go to CFF website, login to your account and pay via paypal (This is the fastest method.). Instructions to pay through your member account at <https://bit.ly/2GBB0yB> or you can pay via the store.

Remember, if you joined in the last quarter of 2021, your dues are not due until March 31, 2023.

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.



Paws to Dance  
c/o Shari Bryant  
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## FIRST CLASS MAIL

### Upcoming Events

Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild & Sirius Guild Titling Event, Winston-Salem, NC, March 18, 2022

Canine Freestyle Federation DogWork® Jamboree, Winston-Salem, NC, March 18-20, 2022

### Canine Freestyle Federation Board of Directors

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