

# Paws to Dance

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The Newsletter of the Canine Freestyle Federation, Inc.

February 2023

## CFF is Everywhere

By Julia Gregory

At our recent Jamboree, one of the instructors, Leila, gave us homework for the next day. We were to be attentive to the world around us to see if we could “see CFF”. The discussion led me to believe that I was meant to notice the movement of birds (singly or in flocks) or the movement of cars in traffic. I’ve seen those before and used them for inspiration for the choreography of performances. As I pondered the assignment and watched for such as these, it occurred to me that there are other things that we espouse in our freestyle creations that are universal.

One of our major principles is that we teach freestyle CONCEPTUALLY. We don’t teach “steps”. We teach the technical achievement of movement that is then approached in the creative process by focusing on one or more of various choreographic concepts. What are concepts? They are statements of things that are true of movement like “all movement is forward, backward, sideways or around”. That assumes that we are humans on planet Earth, that is, we cannot naturally fly and we are beneficiaries of a certain gravitational force.

Then I remembered a quote I had transcribed from an Ayn Rand book, *The Fountainhead*, to which I had listened in the car. In it, the author is denigrating modern theater that seems to her to address cheap and petty concerns. She praises instead a more traditional style that she labels

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romanticism. Whether or not one agrees with her at this point in the book, her words took me straight to the idea of teaching and learning conceptually as we do. I share her words with you here.

“Romanticism ... is the conceptual school of art. It deals not with the random trivia of the day, but with the timeless fundamental, universal problems and values of human existence. It does not record or photograph – it creates and projects. It is concerned, in the words of Aristotle, not with things as they are but with things as they might be and ought to be.”

I hope we can show our spectators a world of dogs and their people as it might be, as it ought to be ... a world of all the heart-stirring movement that comes of joyful relationship.

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## Facebook – Do You Use It?

By Donna Kesten

I am trying to determine if the CFF Facebook page is useful and what CFF can do to draw more followers and eventually more members to the site. Some questions to ponder.

What do you feel the goal should be for the CFF Facebook site?

Would or do you as a member post?

What type of posts would you like to see?

Would you take part in an activity on Facebook if it involved posting pictures or videos of yourself and your dog?

Do you feel the site is worthwhile?

How can it be better?

I will be posting these questions on our site in a few days in hopes to generate traffic. Please submit your comments on Facebook or you can send your comments to me via email ([gidannod1@gmail.com](mailto:gidannod1@gmail.com)).

Also, it's time to make sure your contact information is correct on our mailing list. Please check your email, phone number, and address, and remember to pay your dues in March.

Have a fun March.

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## Volunteer Opportunities

CFF is developing a committee to work on archiving the organization's information. If you would be willing to serve on the committee, please contact Betty Swenson ([bswenson@bettyandjim.info](mailto:bswenson@bettyandjim.info)). Ideally, the committee would have some members that have IT expertise. So, if you have IT expertise and are willing to serve, please contact Betty.

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## Mark Your Calendars – Upcoming Events

June 2-3, 2023

### **North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild Titling Events**

The North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild plans to host a two-day trial at the Canine Affair Center in Chesterland, Ohio. More information will be available soon.

June 2-4, 2023

### **North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild Jamboree**

The North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild plans to host a Jamboree in conjunction with their two-day trial at the Canine Affair Center in Chesterland, Ohio. More information will be available soon.

November 4-5, 2023

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

The two guilds tentatively plan to host a two-day trial at the Winston-Salem Dog Training Club in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Regular classes, PhraseWork, and In The Moment will be offered. More information will be available soon.

## **2023 Jamboree**

### **Choreography: It's All About Choices!**

Save the Date and Come to Chesterland, Ohio!

Friday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> through Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup>

- ♪ 2-Day Titling Event – Friday & Saturday
- ♪ Planned down-time for dogs after competition
- ♪ Grab your freestyle partner and join us for a weekend of learning, exploring, and fun!

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## North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild

By Karen Grettler

North Coast Canine Freestylers are busy getting ready for the two-day titling event June 2-3, 2023 to be held in conjunction with our Jamboree June 2-4, 2023. It will be an exciting three days in Chesterland, OH. We are hoping the Jamboree will attract new people to the sport of freestyle from northeast Ohio and western Pennsylvania.



Which leads me to this question – how do you explain CFF freestyle to folks? It is not what they see on TV because they assume handlers are in costume and various props are used. Nothing wrong with that but it's not CFF! A long-time obedience buddy told me freestyle looks like "sloppy heeling". My agility instructor told me it's nothing but front, rear, and blind crosses! A local rally instructor said it is a bunch of rally moves without the signs. I try to tell them it's so much more. I piqued the interest of a scent work competitor this weekend when I told him that we choreograph our own routine. He thought that was pretty cool. When I invited him and his dog to one of our Sunday classes and promised the instructors would watch him move on the floor with his dog, he said he would definitely come!

Our North Coast guild meets at 12:00 noon every Sunday, weather permitting. Sometimes, we are there until as late as 5:00 p.m. Leila Widgren and Janet Dayton are so very generous with their knowledge and time. Leila is the music guru and together, she and Janet bounce off ideas to help us choreograph our routines. We sure do have a lot of fun.

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## Canine Freestyle Federation, Inc. Board Election

Elections were held in December 2022. All votes were in favor of the proposed slate of officers and directors. Congratulations to the following officers and directors:

Vice President – Leila Widgren

Director for Education – Julia Gregory

Director for Guilds – Kathy Noble

Director for Communications – Donna Kesten



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## 2023 CFF Annual Dues Notice

Dues are \$25.00. Please renew today! (Your membership expires on March 31, 2023 unless you joined since October 1, 2022 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.

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.

Also, when renewing your membership, please confirm that your contact information (i.e., mailing address, phone number, and email address) is correct. Your contact information can be updated on the website if you renew membership online through your member account or by sending an email with the updated information to the Diana Simpson, Membership Director, at [Disi74@roadrunner.com](mailto:Disi74@roadrunner.com).



Paws to Dance  
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## FIRST CLASS MAIL

### Upcoming Events

North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild Titling Event, June 2-3, 2023

North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild Jamboree, June 2-4, 2023

Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild & Sirius Guild Titling Event, Winston-Salem, NC, Nov. 4-5, 2022\*  
(\*tentative)

### Canine Freestyle Federation Board of Directors

**President**

Betty Swenson  
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**Vice President**

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