

Paws to Dance



The Newsletter of the Canine Freestyle Federation, Inc.

June 2023

Jamboree 2023

By Shari Bryant

In a word, it was AWESOME! A huge thank you to Janet and Leila. It is obvious they spent a lot of time preparing for it. The topic was “Choreography: It’s All About Choices!” The description stated “We will aim to send you on your way in your choreographic design journey and have you jump out of the box to have your presentation show the judges something that they have not seen before.” There was a lot of “out of the box” thinking and it was fantastic.

The Jamboree started with all participants drawing a composition with the following: house, location (mountains, beach, etc.), flowers, trees(s), celestial body and birds. Then, participants were given a crossword puzzle. I don’t know about anyone else, but I had a hard time filling it in. Janet and Leila told us by the end of the weekend we would have all the answers to the crossword puzzle.

Next was a discussion of “Principles of Design” and “Elements of Art”. Principles of Design included balance, proportion, emphasis, variety, unity, pattern, and movement. The Elements of Art included line, color, shape, form, texture, value, and space. Participants were divided into groups of two or three. Janet and Leila presented a Principle of Design and an Element of Art with videos and photos to demonstrate each. Each group was asked to create a study with the Principle of Design and

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Element of Art. The group could do the study as individuals or as a team. Most of the time the groups chose to do the study as a team. It was phenomenal to watch the creativity that came out of each group.

Leila had material pieces of various colors. Participants could walk their dog in front of each piece to see which colors best complimented their dog. Also, Leila and Janet demonstrated developing an opening shape with Deb and Raphael.

The food was awesome and it was great to be able to eat lunch and supper with everyone. Thank you Janet and Leila and all the participants for a wonderful weekend of freestyle

Canine Freestyle Federation
North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild Titling Event
Friday June 2, 2023

Level I

First Place: Julia Gregory's All American Wildhaven's Hi Jinks earned a Level I Patch and a **NEW TITLE**

Level II Team

First Place: Karen Grettler's Wired Hair Fox Terrier MACH RATCHX HiWire Winking At Life; Diana Simpson's Greyhound Willow; Debra English's Standard Poodle Devin's Purple Brokn Hart Mndr and Janet Dayton's Greyhound Airy

Level II FEO

Katheryn Noble's Golden Retriever Lycinan's Pink Panther

Level III

First Place: Karen Grettler's Wired Hair Fox Terrier MACH RATCHX HiWire Winking At Life earned a Level III Patch and a **NEW TITLE**

Second Place: Debra English's Standard Poodle Devin's Purple Brokn Hart Mndr earned a Level III Patch and a **NEW TITLE**

Level IV

First Place Bridget Telencio's Belgian Tervuren London Du Musher earned a Level IV Patch and a **NEW TITLE**
Second Place Diana Simpson's Greyhound Willow

North Coast Canine Freestylers Award

Awarded to the highest teamwork score
Bridget Telencio's Belgian Tervuren London Du Musher

Highest Artistic Score

Karen Grettler's Wired Hair Fox Terrier MACH RATCHX HiWire Winking At Life

Sally Kirschenman Award

Karen Grettler's Wired Hair Fox Terrier MACH RATCHX HiWire Winking At Life

IN THE MOMENT

Pass/Fail class

Pass

Julia Gregory & her All American Wildhaven's Hi Jinks
Betty Swenson & her Border Collie TBC Seren
Katheryn Noble & her Golden Retriever Lycinan's Pink Panther
Diana Simpson & her Greyhound Willow
Debra English & her Standard Poodle Devin's Purple Brokn Hart Mndr

Canine Freestyle Federation
North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild Titling Event
Saturday June 3, 2023

Level I

First Place: Julia Gregory's All American Wildhaven's Hi Jinks

Level II Team

First Place: Karen Grettler's Wired Hair Fox Terrier MACH RATCHX HiWire Winking At Life; Diana Simpson's Greyhound Willow; Debra English's Standard Poodle Devin's Purple Brokn Hart Mndr and Janet Dayton's Greyhound Airy earned a **NEW TITLE**

Level II FEO

Katheryn Noble's Golden Retriever Lycinan's Pink Panther

Level III

First Place: Debra English's Standard Poodle Devin's Purple Brokn Hart Mndr

Second Place: Karen Grettler's Wired Hair Fox Terrier MACH RATCHX HiWire Winking At Life

Level IV

First Place: Bridget Telencio's Belgian Tervuren London Du Musher

Second Place: Diana Simpson's Greyhound Willow

North Coast Canine Freestylers Award

Awarded to the highest teamwork score

Debra English & her Standard Poodle Devin's Purple Brokn Hart Mndr

Highest Artistic Score

Debra English & her Standard Poodle Devin's Purple Brokn Hart Mndr

Sally Kirschenman Award

Debra English & her Standard Poodle Devin's Purple Brokn Hart Mndr

The event was held at the Canine Affair Center in Chesterland, Ohio. The judges were Rickie Morrison and Betty Swenson. A huge thank you goes out to members of the North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild that helped put on this event.

Mark Your Calendars – Upcoming Events

November 4-5, 2023

Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild and Sirius Guild Titling Event

The guilds 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.

Volunteers Needed to Test CFF On-line Class

On or about August 1, the first lesson of our new interactive, on-line class for Beginning Canine Freestyle DogWork will be ready for testing. We need testers. Testers may be members of CFF or students of CFF instructors. After spending a few hours learning the basics as Joan Tennille taught them, testers would be asked to complete a survey and participate in a brief interview. Those interested, please contact Julia Gregory at grinninmilo@gmail.com.

Music Rule Change

At the Ohio show, a discussion of several judges ensued when an exhibitor's music did not start at the beginning of the soundtrack. Exhibitors have worked hard to be able present their DogWork at a titling event and deserve to have their music played correctly and completely. As a result of this and other mishaps that have occurred over the years, the rules will be changed to accommodate music challenges. The judges want to give you every opportunity to present your dog to his best advantage, so please alert us when issues arise and don't just try to catch up or adjust your presentation on the fly.

Rule:

The decision to restart the music will be made by the exhibitor prior to the completion of the affected freestyle presentation. The decision to restart cannot be made after the closing shape and honoring to the audience is completed.

The following situations will be recognized as cause to stop, reset, and restart your presentation:

- Wrong music is played
- Music is not loud enough
- Music does not start at the beginning
- Music stops in the middle of your presentation
- Music starts over again

If you would like to stop and start again, approach the judges table to discuss the issue. Exhibitors will be given the opportunity to rest, regroup, honor again, and present their presentation.

Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild

By Shari Bryant

On May 3, Barbara Long, one of our Guild members, passed away. Barbara was a founding member of our Guild and the Guild's training director. She and her Gordon setters, and recently her English cocker spaniel, were very active in freestyle. She was instrumental in helping our Guild put on successful events whether it was a seminar, a class, or a trial. Her freestyle classes were always a joy to attend. She was very creative and a great teacher.



I have known Barbara for more than 20 years. She and I often practiced together. We would explore music, develop phrases, practice our routines, and prepare for trials. She had a great eye and always offered constructive comments. We were making a lot of plans for the Guild, co-teaching a freestyle class, and our own personal training goals.



Photo of Barbara and Niamh by Jim Poor.

Barbara was instrumental in helping me raise my puppy, Skipper. Barbara was a professional dog trainer and had her own dog training business. Skipper was in her puppy class, Basic Family Dog class, and we were in her Basic Family Dog "plus" class when she passed away. Also, Rhona, her English cocker spaniel, was helping Skipper overcome his fear of dogs.

One of the things I always will remember about Barbara is that every time we were preparing our freestyle presentations for a trial, she would share a quote by Coco Chanel. The quote was *"Before you leave the house, look in the mirror and take at least one thing off."* As we worked on finalizing our presentations there was usually something each of us could remove from our presentation and it always made it better.

Thank you, Barbara, for everything you have done for me, freestyle, and the Guild. You will be missed more than words can express. Goodbye, dear friend.

North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild

By Karen Grettler

The North Coast Canine Freestylers 2023 Titling Events and CFF DogWork® Jamboree are in the history books!



The Titling Events on June 2nd and 3rd attracted seven total entries (one Level I, one Level II FEO, two Level III, and two Level IV and one Level II team). Judges Betty Swenson and Rickie Morrison were so supportive and encouraging, laughing and crying along with everyone. Entrants came from Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Maryland.

The Jamboree was truly a once in a lifetime experience and one which I will personally never forget. Presenters Janet Dayton and Leila Widgren were phenomenal. They challenged every student to think outside the box and to see freestyle in everyday life so that its concepts would carry over to the performance space. The mix of students was fantastic. We had a judge with a new rescue dog, an experienced freestyler with a puppy, freestylers with Level IV dogs, freestyle instructors, and relatively new exhibitors like myself.

The comradery built during the Jamboree was amazing. Teams of 2-3 handlers were asked to come up with short phrases to demonstrate one or more CFF concepts. I learned so much about freestyle and my own potential during those teamwork exercises. My favorite part was the end. On Saturday, we were tasked with choreographing a short routine for Sunday morning with opening and closing shapes to demonstrate one or more CFF concepts. I must be honest I was not sure what concept I was addressing. I just wanted to show a few movements which my Wink loves to do but which did not fit into my Level III performance. I knew that routine would be Wink's last time in the performance space as I would retire her that weekend. Those 31 seconds, videoed by a good friend, will remain with me forever. One of the judge/students said it demonstrated "energy". Thank you, Betty, for naming the concept.

Canine freestyle is a performance sport like no other. It takes the dog/human relationship to a completely new level. I am forever grateful to Janet and Leila for helping me to experience my love for the work and my love for my dog in that beautiful performance space.

Sirius Guild

The attraction of Freestyle from a neophyte.

By Marianne Litzenberger

As a newcomer to the sport of Freestyle, I was asked to share my background and the journey that led me to this wonderful activity with my rough collie. For many years my family was deployed overseas where dog training opportunities were not available. I met my husband through his 'Heinze 57' mix rescue (complete with double coat and a smile like a



Samoyed) and for 17 glorious years this dog and I shared the “Vulcan Mind Meld” (to coin Star Trek). This beautiful creature could anticipate my movements, and I believed he knew what I was thinking before I did! This very special relationship developed naturally, and it was the ‘relationship’ between human and K9 that became my focus and priority with our subsequent family dogs.

Our family always had one if not two canine family members who traveled with us from post to post. Of all places, I was introduced to positive reinforcement clicker training while posted to Serbia. I happened to come across a talented young Slovenian trainer there (whose dogs were earmarked for TV commercials), and our rough collie and I joined her agility games class and practice sessions. I learned so much about teamwork, and just having fun with your dog from her. I saw how a dog could blossom with varied, fun, and enrichment activities.

While overseas I had access to BBC programming and watched the Crufts Dog Show annually. I believe this was where I first saw what I called ‘Doggie Dancing’. This wasn’t circus entertainment, but a real relationship-based team activity and I was in awe. I wondered where on earth one could learn and participate in this new sport! Alas it was not where I was currently living so ‘Doggie Dancing’ went on my list of things to do when time and place allowed.



Fast forward several more years, while settling back in the DC area, I started to research this wonderful thing called Freestyle. I had adopted another young collie, Ginger, who was just starting her basic training, but I decided to inquire about Freestyle and the skills needed. In August of 2018, the training secretary of Capitol Dog Training Club (CDTC) put me in touch with Katherine Noble who was their welcoming and enthusiastic Freestyle point of contact. After exchanging emails, I knew this was something I wanted to do and could do within the year!

Ginger completed training, and had also become a registered therapy dog by 2019, when another assignment abroad came our way. Suffice to say life has a way of derailing my best laid plans. After another overseas move, a 3-year pandemic, and retirement, I joined the 20-30 year, CDTC Freestyle veterans (no pressure!) during their open practice sessions this past winter!

Freestyle is everything I’d hoped it would be. It’s fun (Ginger is a happy dog on ‘Dancing Days’), and it helps strengthen and builds the connection between me and my sweet collie. If interested, a team may register for judged Freestyle events where one can compete for titles and placements, or just one’s personal best. And because the dog is working on both the right and left side of the handler, the dog enjoys physical health benefits. I thank my new Freestyle cohort for their warm welcome and encouragement as Ginger and I learn movements and try to put them to music. I’m so glad I pursued the dream, and hope to participate for many more years to come.

Paws to Dance
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

Upcoming Events

Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild & Sirius Guild Titling Event, Winston-Salem, NC, Nov. 4-5, 2023

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