

# Paws to Dance

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The Newsletter of the Canine Freestyle Federation, Inc.

November 2023

## Notes, Impressions, Observations & Suggestions from the November CFF Titling Event Judges

By Janet Dayton, Rickie Morrison, & Leila Widgren

The exhibitors in North Carolina were such a joy to watch. You kept your judges on their toes with the caliber of presentations. Here are some thoughts from your judges....

- When you are traveling on diagonal lines (or any line) you may want to consider adding variations to the movement. For example, if you are traveling from right back to left front instead of just traveling from point A to point B, you may want to add interest by walking in a serpentine pattern, an arc, pausing, adding a small circle, or changing your pace. Let your imagination try different things. What if I.... Be inventive.
- If your dog is prone to visiting or running out of the floor space don't do a fast toward the audience which can excite the dog who will then really want to run away. Move in a different direction or make a shorter fast.
- When you want to switch sides with your dog, you may want to add some variation. You may want to consider a leg weave if you have a smaller dog or a creative turn with a spin instead or, for

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example, guiding your dog with your hands from left heel in front of you to right heel and continuing your forward movement.

- When you do a tigger in your presentation, consider adding variation to it instead of using the version you learned in class. Consider changing the level of the dog and/or handler, the speed of the movements, the plane, the direction of movement, the distance traveled, the facing, etc.
- When you are demonstrating a required move, don't make the judge guess or

question if you have completed it (i.e., laterals, backing, etc.)

- When you are nearing a boundary line, allow enough room for your dog to maneuver with ease. Stepping out of bounds is a deduction that can be easily avoided if you choreograph for it.
- As you are practicing your presentations, work on your movement vocabulary. When there is a goof as you are practicing (e.g., dog ends up on the wrong side), practice getting back to where you need to be in the space. It adds to your relationship and trust you have as a dog team. When you are ahead of the music and getting ready to end, use your movement vocabulary to add movement so that you are not standing in your closing shape waiting for the music to end. You can receive a deduction if your dog is stationary for more than 10 seconds.
- Attire
  - attire should complement the dog
  - avoid fabric flapping in the dog's space, obscuring dog
  - avoid busy designs on fabric
  - ensure a color contrast between the color of the outfit and the color of the dog
  - footwear should not draw attention away from the dog
  - socks should be worn and match shoes and/or pants
- Musical choice is expanding and that is a great thing for our sport.
- There was some excellent use of music matching the mood and the team movement during certain sections and features of the music, making for very rich and interesting choreography.

Everyone should be very proud of their presentations and for showing your dogs to their best advantage.

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## Fearless Freestylers Make Debut

By Sandy Weaver & Theresa Thomas

*From Sandy Weaver:*

How does it happen that between August, when I'd never done any musical freestyle with Kacey, and November, when we attended our first CFF event, the spark to compete was ignited so quickly?

Blame it on Julia Gregory - it's all her fault! :)

Mariana Montiel and I are in obedience class together, and the first time I saw her with her beautiful Collies I mentioned musical freestyle as something she might like to think about doing. Her face lit up, she went internet-searching for an instructor, and found Julia.

Because my "Atlanta Kennel Club program chairman" hat is always on, after Mariana had a class with Julia and told me how wonderful she was, I reached out to her to see if she'd speak to the club. She said "yes" and so we had an August 2023 program.

I not-completely-jokingly tell Julia that I fell in love with her that night. Not romantic love - the love of kindred spirits recognizing each other. Her passion for the sport was the spark, and just like that a bonfire was raging.

We had a September 2023 musical freestyle workshop, and three attendees - Mariana, Diane Castle, and I - decided to train with the goal of competing at the Winston-Salem trials. Julia, probably muttering something under her breath about crazy Atlanta women, graciously made the 2-hour drive to work with us several times, we practiced between times, and then we sent off our entries.

We had audacious goals for our four dogs, and achieved a 50% success rate, as two earned Level II qualifying scores. We all learned a lot, including how welcoming and warm most of the people were to a bunch of rank novices in this sport.

At least two decades ago I did the "other" canine musical freestyle. The CFF version is quite different, and quite beautiful. I loved watching the other teams, trying to see how they achieved the "human disappearing act" and showcased their dogs. While I have SO much to learn in that regard (yes, Julia, I'm trying to stay off the beat!!) it's exciting to look for Level III music for Kacey, and I wonder what other surprises - hopefully good ones! - she has in store for me on the dance floor.

Thank you to the members of the Sirius Guild and the Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild - the weekend was wonderful, and your hospitality was first-rate. What a lovely way to be introduced to the world of CFF canine musical freestyle!

*From Theresa Thomas*

I had been trying to figure out a sport that I could do with my senior dog, GCH Calavar Moon For The Misbegotten NA NAJ CGC ATT as she really missed doing all the things and was envious of the younger dogs who were still competing. Our training club had a 4th of July picnic and Julia Gregory and one of the other club members did demos of freestyle with their dogs. I thought this would be perfect for Misbe.

I signed up for the next class Julia offered, and was the only student. I indicated I was interested in the fall competition and she put Misbe and I on a fast track. Because I was the only person taking the class my husband Michael "volunteered" to come and video our progress. When it came time to pick out



music Julia provided a number of ideas. Michael and I went home to do some listening, but it soon became clear that Misbe had her own preference. The first time we played Susie's Song she got up and came over to the computer to listen. Later Michael was playing it and Misbe came into the kitchen and seemed to indicate she liked it. Michael did some editing so that we had a piece that was the right length.



During the short time we had to practice Michael and I had planned a 2-week trip to visit relatives in the SW. We decided that Misbe would have to come so we could work on some of her skills. We worked in back yards, parks and rest stops. Michael helped me learn where the music changes were for my choreography.

Along the way Julia introduced us to some of her Atlanta based students, Mariana and Bernardo. They also had collies, and it turns out that one of them came from a litter I bred with my co-owner.

At the trial I was amazed how outgoing and friendly everyone involved was. People who had competed before had tips for us. Everyone there watched all of the performances and cheered for the dogs. The level of support was more than I have encountered in any other dog sport I compete in. Misbe squeaked out her CFF II title over the weekend.

On the way home Michael talked about how much he enjoyed the trip, and he was looking forward to going to the next meet-up in May. As he continued to talk, I asked if he would like to get a dog ready for the spring. He has always been a supporter of the things the dogs and I do, but he has never before showed any interest in competing himself. We talked about the other dogs at home, and he is ready to start working with Misbe's brother Moze.

Julia is a great ambassador for the Canine Freestyle Federation.

Thank you, Julia, for everything!

## The Fearless Freestyle Group



Diane Castle, Michael Thomas, Theresa Thomas, Julia Gregory, Bernardo Montiel, Mariana Montiel and Sandy Weaver

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## Canine Freestyle Federation, Inc. Annual Election

You may send your digital ballot by email to [caninefreestyleorg@gmail.com](mailto:caninefreestyleorg@gmail.com), which must include your real name in the address or body of the email. Ballots are due by December 31, 2023

- President – Leila Widgren
- Vice-President – Sarah Jinnah
- Treasurer – OPEN
- Secretary – Shari Bryant
- Director of Judges – Janet Dayton
- Membership – Diana Simpson

Canine Freestyle Federation  
Carolina Canine Freestyler and Sirius Guild Titling Event  
November 4, 2023

**Level I**

**First Place** Sarah Jinnah's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Tanbrits Jemma Redgrave Flying Little White Dove RN CGC earned a Level I Patch and a **New Title**

**Second Place** Ellen Coltrane's Corgi Mix Teddy Roosevelt RATM CGC TKP earned a Level I Patch and a **New Title**

**Level II**

**First Place** Pam Cannon's Lagotto Romagnolo Pinnacle Tiramisu earned a Level II Patch and a **New Title**

**Second Place** Sandy Weaver's Siberian Husky CH Halo's Follow Your Arrow at Kachme BN RN CA FCAT CGCA TKA RATO earned a Level II Patch and a **New Title**

**Third Place** Teresa Hicks's Border Collie Lunas Rainbow Moon earned a Level II Patch and a **New Title**

**Fourth Place** Theresa Thomas's Collie GCH Calavar Moon for the Misbegotten NA NAJ earned a Level II Patch and a **New Title**

**Level IIB**

**First Place** Mary Sullivan's Belgian Sheepdog Poetry's Bend Theo earned a Level II Patch and a **New Title**

**Second Place** Julia Gregory's All American Wildhaven's Hi Jinks! earned a Level II Patch and a **New Title**

**Third Place** Sarah Jinnah's Lab Mix Tanbrits Wandering Sunflower Zoe CD PUTD RE THD TKA earned a Level II Patch and a **New Title**

**Level III**

**First Place** Katheryn Noble's Golden Retriever Lycinan's Pink Panther RE JH WC CFF II earned a Level III Patch and a **New Title**

**Second Place** Lin & Bill Spodak's Briard Nous Aimon Lucy De Bejaune earned a Level III Patch

**Third Place** Diane Castle's Border Collie Hey Soul Sister earned a Level III Patch

**Level IV**

**First Place** Sarah Jinnah's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Princess Charlotte of Wellington at Tanbrit CFF II CFF III CD PCD BN GN RE earned a Level IV Patch and a **NEW TITLE**

**Second Place** Diana Simpson's Greyhound FC Willow CD RA TD SC CGC

**Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild Award**

Awarded to the highest scoring first time exhibitor  
Pam Cannon's Lagotto Romagnolo Pinnacle Tiramisu

**Highest Artistic Score**

Sarah Jinnah's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Princess Charlotte of Wellington at Tanbrit CFF II CFF III CD PCD BN GN RE

**Sally Kirschenman Award**

Mary Sullivan's Belgian Sheepdog Poetry's Bend Theo

**In The Moment**

Pass/Fail class

Pass

Julia Gregory & her All American Wildhaven's Hi Jinks!

Pam Cannon's Lagotto Romagnolo Pinnacle Tiramisu

Canine Freestyle Federation  
Carolina Canine Freestyler and Sirius Guild Titling Event  
November 5, 2023

**Level I**

**First Place** Sarah Jinnah's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Tanbrits Jemma Redgrave Flying Little White Dove RN CGC

**Second Place** Ellen Coltrane's Corgi Mix Teddy Roosevelt RATM CGC TKP

**Level II**

**First Place** Pam Cannon's Lagotto Romagnolo Pinnacle Tiramisu

**Second Place** Teresa Hicks's Border Collie Lunas Rainbow Moon

**Third Place** Theresa Thomas's Collie GCH Calavar Moon for the Misbegotten NA NAJ

**Fourth Place** Mariana Montiel's Rough Collie Wyndlair Marbella earned a **New Title**

**Level IIB**

**First Place Tie** Mary Sullivan's Belgian Sheepdog Poetry's Bend Theo

Julia Gregory's All American Wildhaven's Hi Jinks!

**Third Place** Sarah Jinnah's Lab Mix Tanbrits Wandering Sunflower Zoe CD PUTD RE THD TKA

**Level III**

**First Place** Katheryn Noble's Golden Retriever Lycinan's Pink Panther RE JH WC CFF II

**Second Place** Lin & Bill Spodak's Briard Nous Aimon Lucy De Bejaune and a **New Title**

**Third Place** Diane Castle's Border Collie Hey Soul Sister

**Level IV**

**First Place** Diana Simpson's Greyhound FC Willow CD RA TD SC CGC

**Second Place** Sarah Jinnah's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Princess Charlotte of Wellington at Tanbrit CFF II CFF III CD PCD BN GN RE

**Sirius Guild Award (a tie)**

Awarded to the highest teamwork score

Diana Simpson's Greyhound FC Willow CD RA TD SC CGC

Mary Sullivan's Belgian Sheepdog Poetry's Bend Theo

**Highest Artistic Score (a tie)**

Diana Simpson's Greyhound FC Willow CD RA TD SC CGC

Sarah Jinnah's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Princess Charlotte of Wellington at Tanbrit CFF II CFF III CD PCD BN GN RE

**Sally Kirschenman Award (a tie)**

Mary Sullivan's Belgian Sheepdog Poetry's Bend Theo

Julia Gregory's All American Wildhaven's Hi Jinks!

The event was held at the Winston-Salem Dog Training Club in Winston-Salem, NC. The judges were Rickie Morrison, Leila Widgren, and Janet Dayton. A huge thank you goes out to members of the Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild and the Sirius Guild as well as the Winston-Salem Dog Training Club that help put on this event.

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## Mark Your Calendars – Upcoming Events

May 18-19, 2024

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

The guild plans to host a two-day trial at the Canine Affair Center in Chesterland, Ohio.

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## North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild

By Karen Grettler

North Coast Canine Freestylers held a CFF workshop on Sunday afternoon, October 1, 2023. Leila Widgren and Janet Dayton brilliantly led the workshop. Both Leila and Janet are CFF Certified Master Instructors, DogWork Masters, and CFF Judges. The



workshop was a lot of fun. Clearly, the afternoon was inspiring because it attracted four new freestyle students from northeast Ohio. Each of the students committed to a six-week introductory CFF class which began in mid-October and which will end in mid-December with a “Day of Sharing”. The new students are showing a great deal of promise. We hope that they will join our guild.

Our North Coast Guild will hold a titling event on Saturday and Sunday, May 18 & 19, 2024 at Canine Affair in Chesterland, Ohio. Canine Affair is a beautiful facility dedicated solely to dogs with very nice black matting that teams love. We hope some of the teams that competed in North Carolina on November 4 and 5, 2023 will enter.

Chesterland is a very picturesque Ohio town with lots to do. Bremec’s is a huge garden center located just a ¼ mile from Canine Affair. If you like to hike with your dog, there are three parks with gorgeous trails just a couple miles away. Orchard Hills is a former 18-hole golf course that has been allowed to return to nature. Holden Arboretum is 3,600 acres, one of the largest arboreta and botanical gardens in the U.S. Chapin Forest, my personal favorite, is part of the Cleveland Metropark system with beautifully maintained wooded trails. Stay an extra day and hike on Monday. I am sure at least one of the North Coast guild members would join you. If you like to visit Amish country and shop their country stores, Middlefield, Ohio, the heart of Amish country, is just a half hour away.

As you can see, CFF freestyle is alive and well in northeast Ohio.

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# Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild

By Shari Bryant

The Carolina Canine Freestyle Guild and Sirius Guild hosted a two-day titling event on November 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in Winston-Salem. Several of our Guild members showed in the trial and all teams earned a title in their level. Sarah & Charlotte earned the High Artistic Score on Saturday and tied for High Artistic Score on Sunday. Congratulations to all the teams!



## PhraseWork

Michele & Jojo

## Level I

Ellen & Teddy

Sarah & Jemma

## Level IIA

Pam & Tira

Teresa & Luna

## Level IIB

Sarah & Zoe

## Veterans

Beth & Kara

## Level IV

Sarah & Charlotte



Teddy



Kara



Pam & Tira  
Teresa & Luna



Sarah & Zoe (in front), Jemma, & Charlotte



Sarah & Charlotte – High Artistic Score

Paws to Dance  
c/o Shari Bryant  
627 Morgan Summers Road  
Gibsonville, NC 27249

## FIRST CLASS MAIL

## Upcoming Events

North Coast Canine Freestylers Guild Titling Event, Chesterland, OH, May 18-19, 2024

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