



THE SCOOP

Citizen Canine Dog Owners' Association Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 3 Fall 2006

Flyball— Great Fun for Dogs and People

by Linette McElroy

Have you ever gone by the front field at Beaver Lake Park and noticed a bunch of dogs energetically taking turns jumping over hurdles, chasing after their owners, barking their fool heads off and generally having a fabulous time? Still wondering what they heck they were up to? Chances are they were flyball racing!

Flyball is a team sport for dogs that was invented in California in the late 70's. To the untrained eye the game appears to be nothing short of pandemonium but for those of us who know and love this game, it's great fun and perfect for well-socialized, energetic, and ball-crazy dogs of all breeds, shapes and sizes—and their owners.

Essentially, flyball is a relay race with 4 dogs on a team. The course consists of a start/finish line, four hurdles spaced ten feet apart and a spring-loaded box. The hurdles' height is dependent on the height of the shortest dog on the team and can range between 8 and 16 inches. The dogs must jump over all four hurdles and step on a spring-loaded box that shoots out a tennis ball. The dog then catches the tennis ball and runs back over the four hurdles. When the dog crosses the start line, the next dog goes. The first team to have all four dogs run without errors wins the heat. If you've ever seen flyball in action, you'll have seen that speed is fueled by enthusiasm. Flyball racers—canine and human alike—are an enthusiastic and often noisy bunch.

Some flyball teams can complete a heat in less than 16 seconds - remarkable considering that's four dogs, each running a course of 102 feet!



Flyball is an official dog sport, and flyball racing in Canada is sanctioned by the North American Flyball Association (NAFA). As with other official sports, there are points and standings and titles to be earned and celebrated. I won't get into those in great detail here, but will say that some of the fastest, and top-pointed dogs and teams in North America hail from and compete right here on Vancouver Island. There are many of us who play non-competitive flyball as well. It doesn't matter if you're competing or just playing the game; flyball is one of the best ways to have fun with your dog.

Victoria is home to several flyball clubs. If you're interested in learning more about the sport, you could locate one at www.flyballdogs.com/region7/flyballclubs.htm

Or plan to attend Citizen Canine's upcoming Everybody and Their Dog TALK, on October 14 where Capital Comets Dog Sports Club will be highlighting this and other dog sports.

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September 2006

President's Message

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Citizen Canine Dog Owners
Association is a registered
society in British Columbia.
Our goals are to promote and
protect the interests of dog
owners in the greater Victoria
region through advocacy,
education and community
building. To join Citizen
Canine, complete a membership
form from this publication or
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www.citizencanine.org

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I hope everyone has had a great summer - especially its 'dog days'! I'm probably not alone when I say I'm in a bit of denial about slightly shorter days, dewy mornings, and kids going back to school - the tell-tale signs of an altogether different season.

The next few months look to be busy ones for Citizen Canine, starting with our Annual General Meeting later this month (Wednesday, September 20 in the

Douglas Fir Room at Saanich Commonwealth Place). The AGM provides a unique opportunity for all those who support Citizen Canine to come out and help forge its direction and set its goals. Voting privileges at the meeting are limited to the paid membership (you can visit our website for more information on paid memberships). Please use this opportunity to come out and help advance our mandate for responsible dog ownership and policy in the region.

After our very successful lecture last year by Dr. Stanley Coren, we quickly came to realize the incredible appetite local dog owners have to learn as much as they can about their wonderful companions. This year we are organizing an evening symposium on dogs and dog training methods from several respected local experts, also to be held at the University of Victoria. The date is October 14, with more details becoming available on our website over the next few weeks.

Finally I'd just like to say a big thanks to all of our Scoop contributors - both in this edition, and previous ones. With each edition downloads from the website increase as the newsletter is enjoyed by folks in the Victoria area and, indeed, around the world. Please feel free to provide feedback, and consider your own contribution!

Colin Carson

Would you like to have a copy of The Scoop sent to your e-mail inbox? It's easy. Just join Citizen Canine's e-mail network. Network members also get notices of local issues and events of interest to dog owners. To join for free, just go to our website at www.citizencanine.org and click on "get membership details here."



THE SCOOP *Bits*



Tail Wags: Citizen Canine's dogs give a tail wag to the following people:

Duncan and Rick Braun, who took first place in their division at the 2006 Agility Association of Canada Championship in Burnaby in August. Duncan is a seven-year-old Australian Terrier who began training in dog sports a few years ago with Capital Comets Dog Sport Club. Australian Terriers are known for being independent and stubborn—not necessarily good traits for playing agility or flyball (Duncan's other passion). And yet this little fellow is also a Flyball Dog Champion and second highest ranked dog of his breed in the North American Flyball Association! Duncan and Rick are an inspiration to all of us in the world of dog sports, proving time and again that it's not the size of the dog that matters, but the size of his spirit. Way to go, guys!

Carol Broad, who works tirelessly to find homes for dogs and cats in Victoria through the Victoria Adoptables website, which helps potential pet owners find a rescued or rehabilitated dog or cat to nurture. This is an amazing service for people who are looking for a pet. It features animals for adoption from rescue organizations and the local pounds. It also lists lost pets, local trainers, upcoming events, and success

stories. Check it out at www.victoriaadoptables.com and pass the word along. Congratulations Carol and volunteers for providing this excellent resource.

Citizen Citizen Canine presents a symposium on dogs:

The "Everybody and Their Dog Talk" brings together local experts to talk about a variety of dog-related topics. Seven different speakers (including veterinarians and dog behaviourists) will address topics ranging from clicker training to chiropractic for dogs, followed by an open question-and-answer session.

Are you interested in dog sports or behaviour problems? Or perhaps first aid for dogs? Are you wondering about the most effective way to train your dog or how to keep kids safe around dogs? Information on these topics and more will be covered.

The symposium takes place at the David Lam Auditorium at UVic on Saturday, October 14th 7:00 pm. Tickets are available from Chez Terry (both Fairfield and Cadboro Bay stores), Pets West, Pup n' Cup, and Your Pet Pals...as well as through the Citizen Canine website at www.citizencanine.org. Cost for the evening is \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door.

Symposium Presenters:

Monique Anstee, Naughty Dogge—Clicker Training Basics

Sherry Antonishen, Smart Dog Training—Deciphering Dominance

Eva Dudzic, DVM, Oak Bay Pet Clinic—Bite Safety

Mary Anne Leason, PhD, Pet Peeves Behavioural Consultants—Common behaviour problems in Dogs

Linette McElroy, Capital Comets Dog Sports Club—Introduction to Flyball and Agility

Glynis Newman, DVM, Hillside Veterinary Hospital—Chiropractic and Physiotherapy for Dogs

Parm Parmar, St. John's Ambulance—Pet First Aid

Update on the Memorial Fund for Liam McGuire:

Our Spring issue of The Scoop carried a memorial notice for Liam McGuire, friend to many people and pets in Victoria. The notice invited people to contribute to a memorial fund to commemorate Liam's life and spirit. Donations were to be collected to either purchase a bench on Dallas Rd (if contributions met the \$2,500 cost) or for a donation to a local animal rescue organization. The Liam McGuire memorial fund account was closed at the end of August and \$845.00 was donated to Liam's memory. This money will be given to the Nana Foundation, an animal rescue organization on Southern Vancouver Island, which will use the money for its rescue and adoption. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

SENSATIONAL DOGS, SENSATIONALIZED

By Kirsta Thorleifson

Ten months ago, if anyone told me I would be the owner of one American Pit Bull Terrier (APBT), let alone two, I would have said they were nuts. Yet here it is, ten months later, and I have two APBTs who own my heart.

Late September 2005, my spouse and I made the difficult and heartbreaking decision to put down a Malamute/Shepherd cross that we had adopted only the previous month, due to human and dog aggression. His history was unknown, and we did what we felt was best for him and safest for everybody.

When he was gone, we had a gaping emptiness in our lives. We began searching for a new canine companion, and saw many pit bulls available for adoption. In my thorough research of the breed I discovered the following positive traits common in APBTs:

- * Intelligent, loyal, and extremely people oriented
- * Confident, outgoing, active and athletic
- * Responsive to training and eager to please
- * Couch potatoes indoors, 4x4 vehicles outdoors!

I also read that there was the potential for the following:

- * Dog aggression
- * High prey drive for small animals
- * Health problems such as allergies, ligament tears, and mange and parvo due to lowered immune systems

The positives outweighed the negatives, and we wanted overall to have a smart, active, people-



friendly dog that would be part of the family. We understood that these dogs, due to negative media publicity, irresponsible ownership, and over-breeding, were facing breed specific legislation (BSL) throughout the world, but perhaps that appealed to our love of a challenge! Our research led us to apply for a dog from HugABull Advocacy & Rescue Society, and we took our Tully girl home on October 31, 2005, after falling instantly in love. We found that she was hard work and total responsibility; no dog parks for her, and no off-leash jaunts. But what we did get were all the positives listed above, and more. We went to Growl classes to help with dog-ag-

gression issues, and three months after getting Tully we added Rhino, our male, to the family. Rhino is Tully's opposite - short and thick where she is lean and athletic, slower to learn where she anticipates a command. However he is extremely people and dog friendly, and trying to outgrow misbehaviours common to a puppy of any breed.

My passion for these dogs has resulted in my position as the Vancouver Island Coordinator for HugABull, hoping to help educate current and potential pit bull owners about the responsibility they take on with this much-maligned breed. I also strive to show members of the pit-fearing public how truly wonderful a sound, well-bred pit bull can be, and many have "crossed over to the dark side" after

being loved-on by my people-crazy dogs! My role also allows me to liaise with Island shelters and SPCA's, temperament test shelter dogs for our program, attend Island events with our informative HugABull booth, travel to national pit bull rescue conferences, and provide advice, experience and support to those in need of it.

I never knew what doggy love was until I experienced the unfailing devotion of a pit bull. The complete willingness to please their humans is what makes these dogs everything they are.

www.HugABull.com

Supporting Member Profile/Canine Citizen



Meet Helen Zeilstra and her Dog Riachu

You may have seen Helen and her 7-year-old German Shepherd Dog, dog Riachu around Victoria. Maybe you've run into them at Dallas Road or one of the other off-leash parks. Or maybe you've seen them swimming at Beaver Lake or Thetis Lake. Riachu is a very lucky dog because he gets to go almost everywhere with Helen. She takes him with her to her work at a group home, and every day they're out walking or playing, and talking to people.

Helen has had dogs in her life since she was five years old, but Riachu is her first purebred German Shepherd Dog. Unfortunately Riachu has had some medical problems and he can't run very far, but resourceful Helen has found a way to take Riachu biking with her.

He rides behind her in his own trailer. She says one of these days she's going to get him a red scarf and goggles. Riachu also loves

swimming for a ball or a stick, but Helen says he's happiest when he's swimming with her.

Besides Riachu, Helen lives with her son and another dog that was left behind by the owner, as well as four foster bunnies and the birds in the attic. Riachu's name is an unusual one and it was chosen by her son and his on-line friends through a contest. The name Riachu was the winner. It comes from a Phillipine dialect and it means "powerful little mouse."

When Riachu was quite young, he had some problem behaviours and Helen used to meet every day with other dog owners to "talk dog" and share experiences and learn together. Since then she has discovered the work of authors like Turid Rugass, Suzanne Clothier and Jean Donaldson, and is a huge help to people who visit Citizen Canine's forum with questions about training or behaviour.

Helen is one of the corner stones of Citizen Canine. She organizes our Canine Good Neighbour Fun Tests as well as other community-building events. She would like to see more work done to educate people who are afraid of dogs and to teach people about dog behaviour.

If you do see Helen and Riachu around, make sure to say Hello. She'd love to meet you and your canine companions.

Interested in knowing about other dog owners in Victoria? Each issue we plan to write about one of Citizen Canine's supporting members. We're thrilled to begin with a profile of one of our founding members Helen Zeilstra. Do you know someone that we can write about? Or would you like to be featured in this column? If so, contact us at newsletter@citizencanine.org



Ask an Expert

more a respected and valuable tool for making our pets healthy and keeping them that way. You should discuss its merits with your regular veterinarian, and if you decide to seek chiropractic care for your companion, make sure that you and your veterinarian are satisfied with the training and qualifications of the veterinary chiropractor

you choose. To help you, the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association has a website with a link to "Search for an AVCA Doctor" at www.animalchiropractic.org

Dr. Glynis Newman,
Veterinarian and Veterinary Chiropractor
Hillside Veterinary Hospital

Dr. Newman will be speaking on chiropractic and physiotherapy for dogs at our upcoming Everybody and Their Dog Talk on October 14th.



My friend suggested I take my lame dog for chiropractic treatment, but I thought this service was just for people. Could it help with my older dog's stiffness?

Yes! All species of animals can benefit from chiropractic care. The bones of the spine (vertebrae) and joints in the legs are maintained in a specific alignment in a healthy animal. The nerves that surround each joint and exit between vertebrae are in constant communication with the central nervous system, brain and all organs, including muscle. When even a subtle change in that alignment occurs, it affects the nervous system, local muscles, joints and even distant organs, glands and body functions. By correcting the misalignment through a chiropractic adjustment, we can return the nervous system input and blood flow to more normal function, thus improving hormone and neurotransmitter levels that directly affect the organs and glands, skin and joints.

Many ailments can be treated with chiropractic:

- * Neck, back, leg and tail pain
- * Muscle spasms and nerve problems
- * Injuries from slips, falls and accidents

- * Jaw or TMJ problems
- * Event or sports injuries
- * Post-surgical care
- * Bowel, bladder and internal medicine disorders

In addition, chiropractic can be helpful in the maintenance of joint

"its value is far reaching and becoming more and more a respected and valuable tool for making our pets healthy"

and spinal health, and thus in the prevention of injury in your dog, and in achieving optimal performance in the canine athlete. In senior pets, chiropractic can be extremely helpful with stiffness, difficulty getting up and down, maneuvering stairs, incontinence, and general well-being. Frequently, chiropractic care can markedly decrease the dosage, or even the need at all, for pain-killing drugs that can have serious side-effects.

Chiropractic isn't the cure for all conditions, but its value is far reaching and becoming more and

Clicker Basics

by Monique Anstee

You've probably heard about clickers. They're thought of as a new and fabulous training method, but really they're not that new. The first clicker was introduced to the dog training community in the 1960's and it was popularized by Karen Pryor in 1985—a whole 20 years ago!

More recently, the clicker has gotten the attention it deserves. It is an amazing tool for dog training. The clicker works because it makes a distinct sound and the dog soon learns to associate the clicking sound with a food reward. This allows you as a trainer to mark a desired behaviour, and then begin to shape whatever behaviours you want.

Shaping

To shape a behaviour you simply click and reward the initial steps towards the final behaviour you want. After being rewarded for successive tiny steps your dog will eventually learn the complete behaviour. For example, if I want my dog to pick up his dinner bowl and put it back where it belongs, I will first click him sniffing his empty bowl, then for his nose touching the bowl, then teeth on the bowl, then an open mouth, then the bowl in his mouth. After that, I will click walking forwards one step, then I will show him where I want the bowl to go and will click movement in that direction. Complex yes, but it is the clearest way to teach a complicated behaviour.

The clicker can also be used for simpler behaviours that you might want your dog to do. One example is if every time your dog looks at you

when out on a walk, click and feed. Pretty soon you will notice your dog is looking at you much more frequently.

How Do I Get Started?

You can get a clicker at a pet store or you can use a juice bottle lid to make a clicking sound. The first thing you need to do is charge your clicker. This simply means teaching your dog that every time he hears that sound, something good is about to follow. Sit on a chair, and click your clicker. Say nothing to your dog and within one second of the click, give him a small piece of food. Continue doing this, but be careful that you don't fall into a pattern of clicking, feeding, then waiting five seconds before you click again. Your dog might think that the wait of five seconds is what brings the click on—we call this superstitious behaviour. All other actions can be unpredictable, but the click is always predictably followed by food. You'll know when your dog understands the connection because as soon as you click he'll look at you in anticipation of his treat. Then you are ready to move onto the next step.

How and When to Use It

If your dog does something that you want to happen more often, click and feed. If you want to teach a complex behaviour, click and reward all the steps along the way. Or, a personal favourite, if you run into a problem with your dog and he simply doesn't understand what you want, pull out your clicker and it will make the process clearer for your dog.

I recently worked with a dog that had been trained by someone who punished the dog whenever he showed any aggressive behaviour. The result was that this dog gave absolutely no warning before he attacked. We worked on this for

several hours, but made no progress. So we decided to click the dog for any warning signs that he was uncomfortable. At first he showed none so we had to create them. One warning signal is sniffing so we put cookies into the grass. Because the dog wanted to find them he would sniff around—at which point we clicked and gave him a much more substantial reward. Within the hour, this dog was giving warning signals again, and we were able to move forwards with the aggression problem.

Actually, the clicker isn't really necessary; it's just an easy way to mark the behaviour you want. Many pet owners and trainers prefer to mark the correct behaviour with another consistent sound, like the word 'yes'. As long as the 'yes' is consistently and correctly used, and is taught by being paired with food just as the clicker is, then it too will work effectively. One advantage that the clicker has over the word 'yes' is that it is a very distinctive sound; however it is something else you have to carry and think about. If you are going to use a clicker though, you must never use it to get your dog's attention. The click should not be used as a lure to get attention or behaviour. It is always be used to reward the correct behaviour and must be immediately followed by a treat.

Owner Challenge

So, now that you understand the basics, give it a try. Get yourself a clicker and load this sound for your dog by clicking and treating. Then, see if you can teach your dog to touch your hand with his nose or woof on command. To really challenge yourself, try teaching him to close a door. Happy Training everyone!

Monique owns Naughty Dogge Training and offers a clicker trick class.

Join Us—As a Supporting Member of Citizen Canine



In 2004, Citizen Canine Dog Owners Association incorporated as a British Columbia non-profit society with the goals of:

- Advocating for inclusive public policy regarding public access, acceptance, and welfare of dogs and dog owners in Greater Victoria
- Promoting responsible dog ownership and educating the public about dogs and their behaviour
- Developing a strong community of responsible dog owners.

We invite you to become a supporting member of Citizen Canine. Anyone who supports our goals can join by completing our application form and paying the \$20 annual membership fee. All funds raised will go to support our work on behalf of dog owners in the Greater Victoria area.

Benefits of Citizen Canine Membership

As with any organization, the more members we have, the stronger our voice will be. By becoming a supporting member you can help us in our work, both through the membership fee and through active involvement in the organization. Membership offers the following benefits:

- Opportunities to participate in a local organization that works for dogs and their owners
- Voting privileges at Citizen Canine General Meetings
- A Citizen Canine membership card
- The option to receive mailed copies of our quarterly newsletter, The Scoop.
- Discounts at a growing number of local pet-related businesses (see our website for details).

To become a supporting member of Citizen Canine, complete the application and mail it to us with the membership fee. If you don't want to be a supporting member, you can still get our e-mail updates by registering at our website, www.citizencanine.org

CITIZEN CANINE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION - 2006

I hereby apply for membership in CITIZEN CANINE DOG OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Postal Code _____ Municipality _____
Email _____ Phone _____
Dog(s) Name(s) and Breed(s) _____
Date: _____ Signature _____

Please enclose a cheque or money order for \$20 made out to Citizen Canine. Send the completed application and membership dues to: **Citizen Canine, Cook Street RO, PO Box 23078, Victoria, BC V8V 4Z8**