



Official newsletter ~ Dog Scouts of America

The Dog Scout Scoop

Published for DSA's responsible dog-loving members and for the friends of dogs everywhere

Volume 19 Issue 1 Jan/Feb 2016



Ready. Set. Hike!

It's time for the annual **Frost-a-Thon!** Have fun with your favorite furry friend as you increase your bond and your fitness level while raising funds for the development of new badges and the enhancement of existing programs—it's a win-win opportunity!

The contest will **begin now and will close February 28.** You can pick a certain date to exercise or count the miles travelled during the month of February. You can hike, bike, sled, skijor, or even snowshoe to log miles (skating, sliding, careening, and tumbling also count for our northern participants). You have to get outside and walk the dog anyway don't you?

The Frost-a-Thon is now live on the **FirstGiving** site so you have the option of using the link below to sign up and create a personal page for you and your dog. It's easy and fun to participate. Once you create a page simply share your link with friends and family and ask for their contributions. Don't forget to start a team for your troop or join one of the troop teams already formed. There are prizes for everyone who raises a minimum of \$50 and \$150, and of course top honors for the top fundraiser and top team.

Go ahead and sign up now to participate.
Your dog wants you to!

www.firstgiving.com/18960/dsa-frost-a-thon-2016

Deadline

for the next newsletter is

March 15th

Please e-mail your news, articles, and pictures to thescoop@dogscouts.org

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Get to Know Our Board of Directors! Part 2

Following our last newsletter, this article introduces our remaining Board Members, Jane Clark, Jennifer Vasinda, and Peggy Zweber (sorry, Heddie Leger's bio was not available at the time of publishing). We asked members of the Board of Directors to tell you a little about themselves outside of the normal biographies, experience and qualifications.



Jane & Dash

Jane Clark *Chairman of the Board*

I live in central Illinois along the Illinois River. I have spent my life here, enjoying the seasonal changes. Now that I have retired, Greg, Dash, Buddy, and I are traveling the United States in search of the best that lower 48 states have to offer.

My first dog, Sumo (a Shiba Inu), introduced me to clicker training. In the early 1990s, I attended DSA camp and later became an instructor. Sumo taught me a great deal about partnering and relationships with dogs.

Dash, a blue merle Australian Shepherd, continued to teach me. He and I trained together for eight years. We did a variety of dog sports and were especially fond of rally obedience. We continued to develop our special bond until his recent passing.

DSA is a great support for all things canine and their humans. I am happy that I can contribute.

Jennifer Vasinda *Board Member*

I currently live in Altoona, Pennsylvania, but grew up in Northeastern Pennsylvania. I also spent a few years each in South Florida and Southern New Jersey. During those years I became certified through PADI as a scuba diver and have been as deep as 140 feet. My favorite dive was to the U-352, a German World War II U-boat which is located off the coast of North Carolina. I am a lifetime member of the Penn State Alumni Association, and a huge football fan. For a few years I did sideline photography for Penn State Football, but now just mostly watch the Nittany Lions on TV as well as any good NFL game. I enjoy vegetable gardening and learning new things outdoors – last Spring I learned how to make maple syrup by tapping the maple trees in my yard.

I bought my first dog, a Miniature Schnauzer named Silver, by saving my own money when I was eight years old. After Silver passed away, my mother bought a second Miniature Schnauzer named Cera. Though technically my mother's dog, Cera and I had an understanding about who her person really was. My current dog Apollo is now a 12 year-old Chocolate Labrador Retriever. I met him when he was five years-old and I am his third owner. Apollo and I share our house with two domestic short hair cats – Sage and Bleu, who help keep Apollo occupied while I am at work. They also did a good job of looking after me during the time that I lived in apartments and could not have a dog. Last year I purchased a Winnebago View RV, and have enjoyed staying in this with Apollo at the June Michigan camp and also the Blue Ridge Mini-camp. He and I have gone on some shorter local trips as well.

Apollo and I have attended Michigan June camp and the Blue Ridge Mini Camp for the past four years. My favorite aspect of Dog Scouts of America is how close you can become to friends that you only see once or twice per year at camp because we have such a strong common bond in love for dogs. I have really enjoyed learning more about Apollo by seeing what activities truly interest him, and I try to focus on trying to earn those badges rather than what I think is cool. On several occasions Apollo has surprised me by taking a strong liking to an activity I didn't think he would have any interest in. It is also nice to see how he recognizes Michigan camp as a safe place that we go to



Jennifer & Apollo

Get to know Jennifer (continued)

be together and be around friends. As soon as we turn onto Nestle Rd, I need to roll down the window so he can start enjoying the scents of his home-away-from-home.

Peggy Zweber

Board Member

I have been a member DSA since 2003 and of Peoria Obedience Training Club since 1999, starting Obedience class with my dog, Nikki, in the fall of 1998. I have four dogs – two Yellow Labs, Charly and Cate, a Picard Shepherd, Luke and a Foxhound mix rescue, Nick.. I do a lot of things with my dogs and am busy most weekends doing trials. I have competed in Obedience, Rally Obedience, Agility, Flyball, Dock Diving and Herding in a variety of venues. Rightt is a photo of me and 3 of my dogs at DSA camp July 2013.

I have served as POTC Secretary for 7 years (not consecutive) under 6 different Presidents, so I have learned to adjust to a variety of management styles and got to know our members and their dogs. I have been Editor of the POTC Tails and Details newsletter for 12 years, enjoying the stories and photos submitted by our membership and cheering for all the skills they have learned and titles they have earned. I was Editor of the Dog Scout newsletter, The Dog Scout Scoop for 4 years from 2008 to 2012. As I am retired, I like to keep busy. The past two years, I had some health challenges and am glad to be back to feeling like Peggy. I want to try competition in Lure Coursing, Scent Discrimination/Nosework, the Barn Hunt and Canine Freestyle, there is just so much you can do with your dogs!

I am honored always to serve the DSA and POTC clubs and their members who have given so much to me and my dogs.



Leadership

Weekend

Have you taken a class lately? Maybe a Denise Fenzi online class... maybe you went to a seminar on dog aggressive behavior with Victoria Stillwell. Did you read a really cool article on the Battle Buddy program (dogs being trained for veterans with PTSD)? Did you just earn a new badge and want to become an evaluator for your troop? You could be that troop leader with a cool new idea that you should be sharing with the rest of us. Possibly you learned a new craft you'd like to share or a new game to play with our dogs...

if so... WE WANT YOU!!!!

You all have a vast knowledge base of dogs, dog body language, positive reinforcement, and lots of other skills you might not even be aware of... and why is this important? We want you to share it with us on **May 13-15th**. **This workshop is FREE!!!!** You'll only need to cover your lodging and travel expenses. Everyone will take turns doing a little presentation to teach all your fellow troop members and leaders. We will all take a part in planning and fulfilling meals.

Please put this on your calendar and plan to attend. Space is limited so don't delay! Send me your RSVP today (dogs2katz@yahoo.com) Send \$25 to Lonnie at DSA to hold your spot (this is non-refundable and will be put towards your lodging).

MINI CAMP 2016 PLANNING

Texas

April 15-17, 2016

Tyler, TX

Troop 225 has started planning their next mini camp.

See Page 23 for more details.

Contact Natalie Fletcher

pen3cows@gmail.com

Texas

Fort Worth, TX

Stay tuned for updates

Contact Cindy Ratliff

doglurvz@prodigy.net

Blue Ridge

Swanton, MD

Stay tuned for updates

MICHIGAN CAMP

June 2016

July 2016

Saint Helens, MI

Stay tuned for updates

On-line registration:

Dogscouts.org

Contact Lonnie Olson

Dogscoutcamp@gmail.com

2016 Winter Outing

People have already been asking when we'll have the winter outing. All I can say is that it will be on a "To Be Announced" basis, and it will be in March. We did not even have snow in Northern Michigan until a few days ago (as I write this). I have a feeling this is going to be one of those weird winters. But, if we should happen to have snow, and it is cold enough to hold on to the snow toward the beginning of March, I'm looking at **March 5-6 or March 19-20**. The weather is unpredictable in Northern Michigan, and this year it will be particularly unpredictable due to "El Nino."

If we don't get much snow this year, we won't be able to have the winter outing. But if we do get snow, we wanted to try to hold the outing later enough in the year to not have to "dewinterize" the lodge, only to have to winterize it again right after. That makes for a very costly winter outing, and the lodging income from a handful of participants can't justify the expense.

So please stay tuned to the discussion list, facebook page, newsletter, and any other means of communication we have, to stay informed about our chances for having a winter outing this year.

Lonnie
Olson,
Michigan
Camp
Manager



Congratulations to the following TX mini-camp attendees

New Pup Scout: Poppy Payne-Tettamant

New Evaluators: Sharon Gruetzmacher (Troop 150) — *Manners*, & Bob Deeds (Troop 119) — *Hunt Retriever*

New Scout Master: Kristen Keeling (Troop 230)

Plus 8 of the dogs listed below earned their Dog Scout title while at camp

55 New Dog Scouts in 2015

In addition to the 28 Dog Scouts listed in our July/August 2015 newsletter, we congratulate the following dogs and their pet parents on earning the Dog Scouts title in 2015

Biscuit Nava
Burt Conway
Casey Pietras
Casper Odal,
Darby Francis
Doc Given
Duncan Lane
Harlie Hamilton
Harper Parrigin-
Clark
Havoc Hamilton
Heikki Patterson
Jurnee Mimms
Laci Gutshall

Lola Cannici
Marcy Ranson
Mason Hamilton
Millie Tucker
Patton Paxson
Payton Waits
Pepper Phillips
Reveille Schmitt
Sasha Mimms
Sassy Wagner
Sunny Wood
Tempest Stewart
Wyatt Lane
Wyatt White

Rainbow Bridge

Pandemonium 08/12/2005 - 12/11/2015

Panda lost her fight with Lymphoma. She was only 10, but that's quite old for a dog of her size and breed.



Around the first of November, the doctor gave her 6 weeks to live. That was accurate almost to the day. During those 6 weeks, she had many ups and downs, and I thought that I would be "making the call" several times, but she somehow would wake up right as rain the next day, and was able to participate in long walks (we did the Turkey Trott together), chipmunk chasing, and even a Barn Hunt Fun Match at the end of November! It was so great to see her having fun with great enthusiasm, after intermittent days where she couldn't get up off her bed, didn't want to eat, or was refusing to put weight on one front leg at all! She seemed to be feeling fine on the morning of her appointment. No limping, and was able to jump up on my bed the night before. But the subcutaneous petechial hemorrhaging told a different story. The vet said that her blood wasn't plating the way it should, and was sort of leaking into places it shouldn't. I couldn't put it off any longer.

Panda was my dock diving, lure coursing, trick performing, sled pulling, critter hunting, agility-loving dog. She would bell ring, and even came up with a cute trick that made it look like she was "guarding" the bucket. At pet expos, she would wear glasses, and sit at a booth, under which a sign read "Psychiatric Help - \$1.00 The Dogtor is IN." Then, I would tell the people to hold out their hand, palm up, and she would place her head in their hand and look soulfully into their eyes. People would say, "You can't get much better psychiatric help than that!" Then, she'd take their dollar, and put it in her basket.



Panda was the princess of our house. If I had company, and they sat in her spot on the couch, she would come and sit in front of me and let out this singular "Owwooo" of a whine, and stare at the person and stare back at me. She was telling me that I should have them get out of HER spot! She used that whine a lot, whenever she wanted something, and was trying to communicate it to me, like if there was a plate on the table that nobody got to lick yet, and she wondered if maybe I forgot about it... As near as I can figure, the utterance simply meant, "Hey, YOU!"

Early in November, I heard that whine coming from her room, while I was watching a video. I kept stopping the video to go see what she wanted. I went through the list. She didn't have to go out, I moved her water bowl closer, but it wasn't that... After about 6 trips to her orthopedic bed, without her being able to tell me what she wanted, she somehow dragged herself up and came out to the living room and lay down on the other cushy bed that I had put there for her. All she wanted was to be near the rest of the family in the living room, watching television.



Panda used to be a contributing writer for the Dog Scout Scoop, "penning" the column, "The Truth About Cats and Dogs." She never really played with other dogs. I think she thought she was a human or something. The only dog she ever played with was Bear Puls.

Sorry to be verbose. I just wanted to give you a picture of the kind of dog Panda was.

She will be dearly missed.

Lonnie Olson and family (Kozi, Caper, & Mango the cat)

**We also send our condolences to
Bill & Chris Kloski
on the loss of Trixey**

and

**Peggy Zweber
who recently lost Charly.**

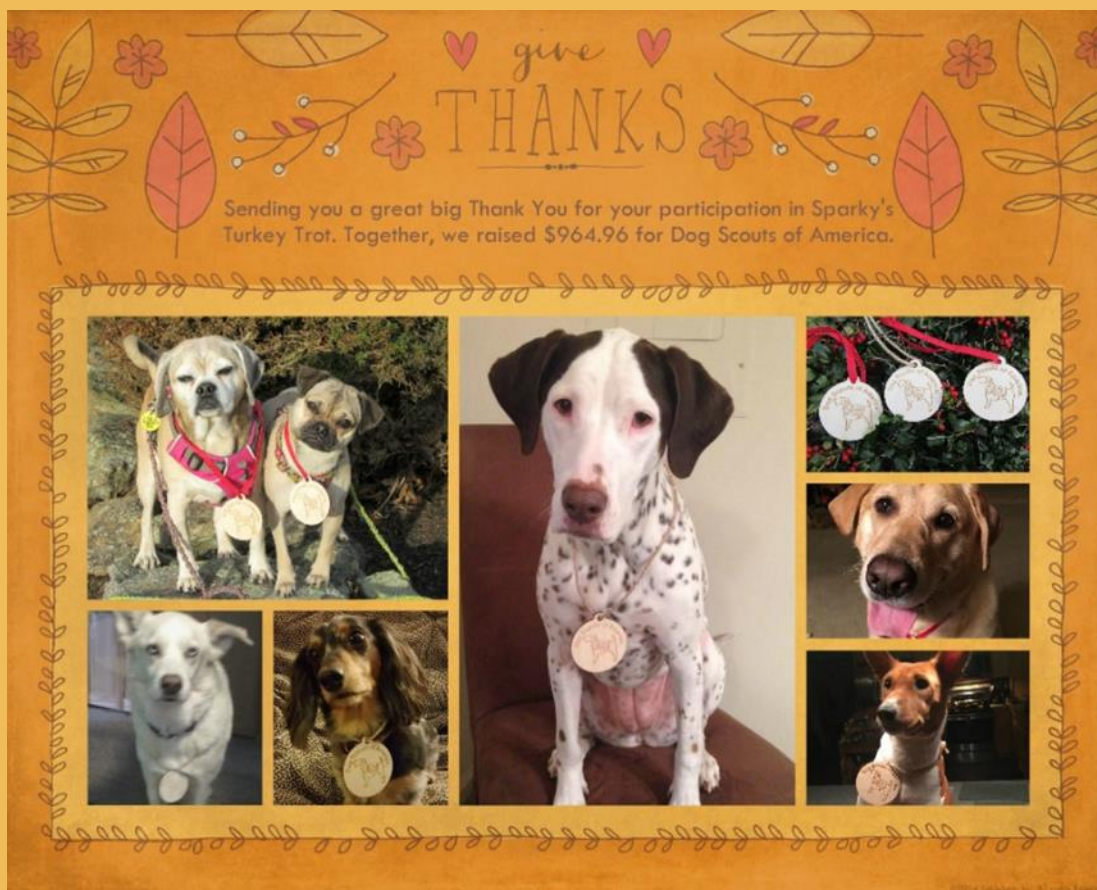
Here's two lives well lived!

Trails Titles Bulletin

Kelly Ford—Troop Leader, CRN Secretary and Trails Titling Program Coordinator

Congratulations to everyone who participated in the first ever run/walk for DSA, Sparky's Turkey Trot! I've heard some wonderful stories of how you earned your medallions and your miles. Together, we raised \$964.96 for Dog Scouts of America. Have fun and Happy Trails!

I would like to congratulate everyone who has earned a recent Trails Title.



Trails Titles Earned in November 2015 thru January 2015

Trail Dog (TD)

sMuttynose Withun
Toka Almann
Kiyomi Almann

Trail Dog Excellent (TDX)

sMuttynose Withun
Sirius Miehm
Kiyomi Almann

Utility Trail Dog (UT)

sMuttynose Withun
Kiyomi Almann

Utility Trail Dog 500 (UT500)

Kiyomi Almann

Utility Trail Dog 750 (UT750)

Kiyomi Almann

Pack Dog (PD)

Flynn Hinchman
Toka Almann

Pack Dog Excellent (PDX)

Gambit Stewart

Utility Pack Dog (UP)

Tempest Stewart

Utility Pack Dog 500 (UP500)

Kiyomi Almann

Utility Pack Dog 750 (UP750)

Kiyomi Almann

Letterbox Dog (LBD)

Sassy Neu

Geocache Dog Advanced (GEOA)

iZar Blackstone

Making Dog Scouts Great, One Troop at a Time

As we start the new year we thought it would be a good time to talk about what it means to be a troop leader and what it means to be a troop member.

Both roles come with responsibilities but we might not think of those responsibilities as we get caught up with the day to day activities that make up our lives. Though every troop is a little bit different, this is a good opportunity to look at what it's like on the other side of the fence.

Everyone knows that a troop leader plans and carries out activities and events for the troop but what goes on behind the scenes?

Good troop leaders make all those activities look like they were effortless to carry out but the truth is that for many events there is much more to it than just establishing a time and place to meet. Remember that camping trip your troop took? Well your troop leader had to ask which members were going, determine an appropriate location, get approval and secure arrangements, collect and pay any associated fees, arrange for food, determine activities, ensure that everyone is in the loop and the list goes on and on. Think about all the details that go into every single activity your troop does, big or small. Your troop leader has a lot to do in order to make sure that each participating member has a fun and meaningful experience. Simply sending emails to your troop and collecting responses can be a big job, especially for a large troop.

Each leader must listen to the wants and needs of each and every member, all the time. That includes asking for, receiving and acting on feedback from the troop. So you are probably wondering why anyone would want to be a troop leader. Well I can only answer that question from my perspective, but I hope that other leaders share my view. I find the troop leader experience to be very rewarding. I love seeing people achieve things with their dogs that they might have previously thought to be impossible. I also love trying new things with my own dogs,

knowing that they won't likely be the best at everything we try. Having a co-leader who is always there to share ideas makes my job easier and I take advantage of the strengths and talents of not just my co-leader but of all my troop members. Sharing the load not only takes some of the work off of me but also ensures that members are truly invested in the troop. And let's face it, I don't know everything and there are things that are just not my strengths.

Let's take a look now at troop member responsibilities. Most importantly, your troop leader wants to hear from you. She wants your response to her email. She wants to hear your ideas for troop activities. She wants to hear what you like and what you don't like. Do you have a great idea for a new activity, know of a hiking area where your troop hasn't been before or hear about a community event? Send her an email or give her a call. Your troop leader can't possibly know everything about your area or every event held within the community and is counting on you to keep her informed. If you are happy or unhappy with any aspect of your troop, from communication to logistics to specific activities you have the responsibility to let your troop leader know. If you have something to say but fail to speak up then nothing will change.

Finally, both troop leaders and members have to be sure that they are acting and managing their dogs according to the Dog Scout way. To me this comes down to respect. By that I mean respect for every dog and every person, for the parks and areas where we hike and play and for the entire community. It's not easy to be a troop leader but it's not always easy to be a troop member either. As we begin the year let's stop and think about both roles and how we can all work together to make sure that our local troops are the very best that they can be. By doing so we also make Dog Scouts of America the very best that it can be.

Don't have a troop in your area? Consider starting one today! Find more information about troops and troop leadership at <http://dogscouts.org/base/troops/> and contact Brenda Katz at dogs2katz@yahoo.com for further information.



Scout Scoop & Troop Talk

Troop 119—TX

Cindy Ratliff—Troop Leader



In November, Troop 119 did our favorite annual community service project, Meals On Wheels for Pets! This was the 12th year we have collected items for doggie gift bags for the Meals On Wheels of Tarrant County clients.

This year we collected: 125 dog bowls, 125 holiday bandanas, over 500 tennis balls, over 400 plush toys, 125 rolls of poop bags, 4 cases of treats, over 60 frisbees, over 100 miscellaneous toys/frames/collars, 12 large boxes of milkbones and several hundred pounds of dog food!! We decorated and filled 110 gift bags full of goodies and fun for dogs who may not otherwise have much of a Christmas. This year the troop dogs were represented by Libby Betts, who did a fine job monitoring & inspecting the treats!

Once we loaded up the Meals On Wheels vehicles, we headed to Chili's for our annual Parents Nite Out. Since the MOW event is one of the very few times we all get together without our dogs, we take the opportunity to go out to eat together so we can all visit more than we usually are able to at troop meetings.

Our troop took December off and we plan to hit the ground running in 2016!

Troop 183—FL

Shirley Conley—Troop Leader

Tracking

Troop 183 invited PJ Lacette with Best Paw Forward to guide us in our tracking activity on November 22. The last time we did tracking was a couple of years ago, and we worked on grass. This time we worked on a different surface using Steve White's Hydration Intensified Tracking Training methods. We'd had some rain this weekend, so the parking lot was wet, which would have been fine for the dogs, but we humans like visuals to follow, so we moved to the part of the parking lot that had a shale-like surface - the imprints were not deep, but we could see a contrast when we sprayed the water and walked the track, which made it easier to stay on the same line when we went back to lay treats.

We set up three starting points so we could have multiple dogs working. We used a cone to identify the start of the track, with our sprayers we sprayed NON-CHLORINATED water (Chlorine kills the bacteria that is a major component of human scent) in front of us and walked a straight line - about 20-30 ft. At the end of the line we placed an object (toy, glove, sock, treat pouch) then we walked around the perimeter of our training area back to the starting point.

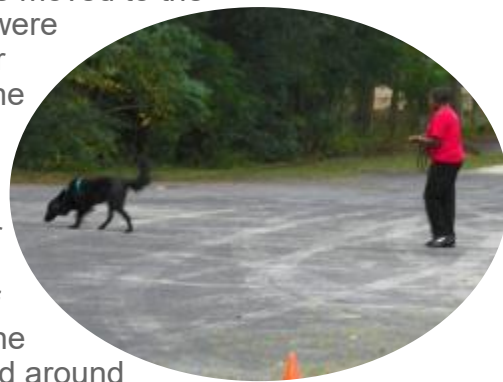
Next we walked over our trail of water dropping treats in front of us on the water line - this laid a second track over the top of the first. At the object we'd previously left we added some treats to jackpot the dog when they reached it. One more time walking around the perimeter of the training area and this time we collected our dogs.

We walked our dogs up to the starting cone, made sure our lines were ready to feed out, pointed to the ground by our feet and encouraged our dogs to sniff the ground. Not everyone had a harness, so PJ showed us a way to wrap the leash around our dogs ribs so that the pressure if/when they pulled would be dispersed, rather than directly on their necks. Some of us weren't quite ready and a couple of our dogs thought they were being corrected when the leash got tight as they moved out ahead of us and sniffed the track - it was a good reminder that if we don't keep slack in the line we'll need to work harder to rev our dogs up and encourage them to try again. PJ mentioned a number of times, **tracking is about confidence in our dogs, trusting them to know where the scent is, and also encouraging them to have the confidence to work away from us.**



When PJ did the first track, she demonstrated using the clicker to mark when her dog was sniffing the track and coming up to a treat, at the end of the line when her dog reached the object she had a big party (treats and praise).

After the first couple of runs we began to lay tracks for each other, this enabled us to get more practice time, and we also swapped tracks so we weren't working on the same area every time. Half way through our session we added a 90 degree turn at the



Troop 183—FL (cont.)

object and ending the second part of the track at a target plate with treats on it. By this time we were not laying as many treats on our track as there were plenty still from the previous times. Once we added the turn we did not put treats on the object at the turn - although it seems that every track had a treat bag at the end of it which was a little difficult for the dogs to leave, but they started to figure out that they weren't getting paid for that object any more and to move on to where the food was easily accessible - on the 2nd leg of the track.



We ended the session with Susan and Jasmine working a track that had two 90-degree turns on it.

A couple of things we had to remember:

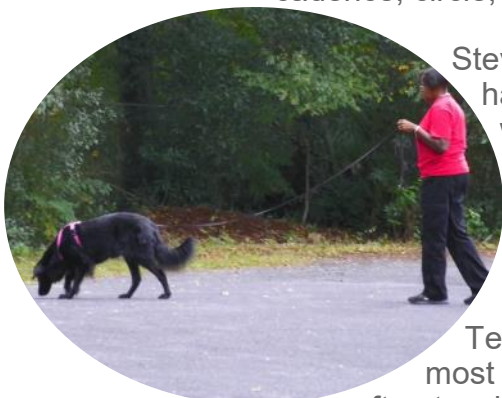
1. Feed the leash out when the dog is in front - tight leashes at this point (particularly for those not on a harness) can be considered a correction and the dog will stop working; however, if our pups decided to swing back behind us to pick up those treats that they missed, then that's the time to not give them more leash, but to encourage them to work forward and ahead of us - particularly when it comes to the change in direction at the turns.



2. Don't walk too close to the dog, allow them to work ahead of us so a) we don't muddy up the scent, and b) we're not hovering/and possibly either leading the dog rather than letting the dog do the work or causing the dog to back off.

3. Be patient, if the dog is casting around to find the scent, stand still and let him work it out.

4. Practice - the more we do this activity, the better understanding we'll have of our dog's body language (See McKenzie's 8 Scentwork Indicators in the Intro to HITT link: pull, nose height, tail carriage, breathing, cadence, circle, crabbing, and nose anchor).



Steve White likes to teach behaviors in "modules", so the "report" behavior is taught separately from the "search" behavior - much like we often teach the components of competition obedience separately, e.g. in a recall the sit stay, and precision behaviors of sit in front, and sit at heel are taught separately from the coming when called portion of a recall so we can encourage an enthusiastic response to being called as the first order of learning.

Teaching a report behavior is needed for most scent-related activities. In fact, we often teach different report behaviors without realizing it - retrieve an object with the handler's scent in scent discrimination; sit and/or bark for other odor detection, bark and/or scratch in barn hunt - search and rescue dogs often have a different report behavior for a live find to distinguish it from a cadaver. We did not work on the report behavior during our activity, but we've included a link to a video of how Steve White teaches it.



www.dsatroop183.shutterfly.com

Troop 188—CT/RI

Sheri Throop—Troop Leader

Yippity Yahoo !

Meet Troop 188's newest Dog Scout is Yippity Grove !

Yippity, a Chihuahua, is a big dog in a 4 pound package. He is just 3 months shy of his 18th birthday making him Troop 188's oldest scout. This prancing gentleman earned his Dog Scout badge after working very hard on the sits during heeling exercise.

December was a banner month for Yippity as he also earned his RATI (Barn Hunt Instinct title) and is schedule to compete in upcoming trials including one on February 28th his 18th birthday.



Scouts SHINE in the Dark

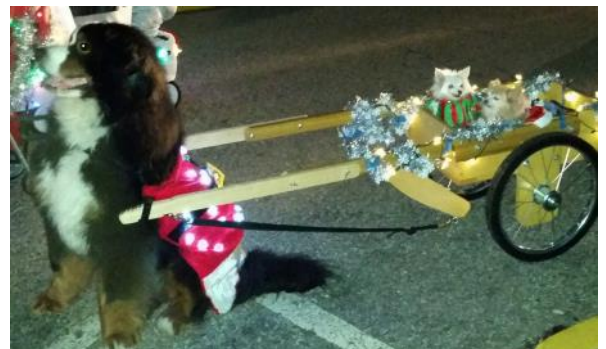
The holiday seasons is one chock full of activities for the scouts of Troop 188 and their people. From community service events, to public education, and even a fundraiser, the scouts of



Troop 188 shine bright during the holiday season. The season begins the Sunday after Thanksgiving with the Ledyard Light Parade and Carol Sing.



*Above: Members of Troop 188 ready for step off.
Right Top: Pirate and friend ready to go.
Right Bottom: Phantom gives scouts Yippity and Truffles a tow.
Left: Newman relaxes waiting for step off.*



Scouts SHINE in the Dark



Troop 188 marches in the parade down “Main Street” in their homemade lighted coats, but that is not the only occasion that the scouts are out and about in their glowing apparel.



Olde Mistick Village, a popular tourist attraction, holds an annual Festival of Lights in the beginning of December. For the third year Troop 188 participated in this favorite event wearing their lighted coats and teaching children about safety and proper greetings between dogs and people.



The scouts and their humans also shared the joy of scouting with people from all over New England, showcasing good behavior and the benefits of a strong bond with each other. The lighted coats attract attention allowing the scouts to shine. The scouts and their partners work long before the holiday season constructing the coats and

learning to be comfortable moving and working in the holiday regalia.

The scouts move around the venue showing off skills and answering questions, entertaining and informing all the while making new fans.



From the first event of the holiday season to the last those lighted coats shine bright bringing cheer and comfort and joy event if we are a bit off key! Just before Christmas the scouts and their accompanying choir caroled at King’s Man-



or, Ledyard’s senior housing area. Many of the residents had dogs before moving into the Manor and welcome the time with the scouts.. During our visit at Halloween, where we treat residents to some tricks, the troop warns all to purchase ear protection for our upcoming caroling adventure. The dogs light the Scout Troop “Choir” is led by Meghan Norcia and her scout Baylee.

(Photos from L-R: JoJo and Ella at step off, Luna and Ella at the festival, Lucy making friends, Mr. Peepers and friend, Chanssy and friend, Ella meets the children, Baylee and Meghan lead the Carolers, Casey makes new friends, Some of the Troop 188 Carolers.)

A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words



One of Troop 188's annual fundraisers is held every December at Olde Mistick Village outside a shop called Raining Cats & Dogs. It is on this village green that our Pet Photo's with Santa is held. This is a very popular event due in large part to our fantastic Santa and Mrs. Claus who work with the children and pets to make everyone comfortable whether on his lap or in his Harley Davidson side car!



This year the weather, while not a winter wonderland, was perfect to bring out the crowds. With Mr. and Mrs. Claus arrival via motorcycle, the photo fun ensued. Over 100 families had their pictures taken. Money raised at this event helped the Troop fill items on several non-profits holiday wish lists. (Photos from the top: Paquin Troop, JoJo, Mr. and Mrs Claus, and Mambo#5)



Helping in Our Community

One of the local non-profits Troop 188 enjoys a relationship with is SMART, Summit Missing Animal Response Team. This group is named



after a Dog Scout who passed away. Several Troop members work with their dogs in this organization which is devoted to helping to locate missing pets and reunite them with their families. During the hectic holiday season a local Bergamasco breeder had two of her

dogs escape from the yard. A call went out asking for volunteers to help the next morning with hanging posters and canvassing neighborhoods. Troop 188 responded with 6 volunteers hanging posters and searching beginning at daybreak. As the last of the posters were being hung two of the members of Troop 188 re-



ceived a lead from a utility worker. After working that lead the dogs were found SAFE & SOUND and returned home. It was a fabulous way to end a successful 2015!

The Bergamasco is an ancient shepherding breed which traces its origins back thousands of years. Bergamascos are a highly intelligent breed that combines a deep desire to please and help its master with an ability to think for itself and to figure out its own ways to accomplish the mutual goals.



Troop 188—CT/RI (cont.)

Photogenic Scout

Phantom is one of Troop 188's most recognized scouts. One reason is because of his size and affability he is favorite where ever he goes, and Phantom visits a lot as a Delta Pet Partners Therapy Dog. Here he is pictured at work in a photo that was selected as one of the year's favorite photographs published in our local newspaper.



Therapy dog "Phantom" visits resident Robert Crecca at the Avon Health Care Center at Stoneledge in Mystic on Jan. 14, 2015.

Helpful Scouts

In December of 2015 our vaccination clinic partners All Friends Animal Hospital let us know that they were doing a free rabies clinic at the local soup kitchen to help those who would not otherwise be able to afford the vaccinations for their animals.



Troop 188 In the News

In December word came down that Lambeau one of our local K-9 officers was in need of a new bullet proof vest as his current vest had expired.



Dog Scout Troop 188 donated \$500 towards this vest. The total amount necessary for the vest was raised in less than 24 hours.

Troop 188 heard about their efforts and donated money for flea and tick treatments, food, toys, crates for the dogs, jackets for the people, and blankets for both the dogs and their people.



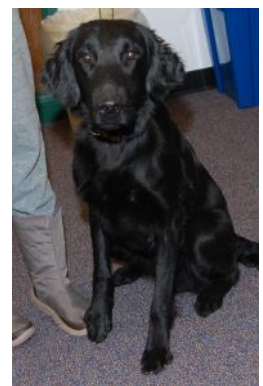
The donations were collected at our December meeting and delivered the next day to the soup kitchen.

Wrapping Up & Looking Forward

Each month Troop 188 gathers on the second Tuesday to discuss upcoming events and work on useful skills and December and January were no exception.



We added holiday cheer to our December meeting with a special meal provided by Luke Robinson, chef extraordinaire and the founder of PUPPY UP a nonprofit organization that works to bring awareness to and find a cure for cancer in people and pets.



In January we reflected on a successful 2015, set goals for 2016. We practiced leash skills through game play, discussed a full and varied calendar that contains a range of activities from Barn Hunting to Seal Watching, and had a rousing social time, all the while continuing our education, learning to be better pet parents and making a positive difference in our communities for people and pets.



Troop 217—The Motor City K9s—MI

Sally Hoyle—Troop Leader

December was a very busy month for our troop as we spent our time giving back to our communities. We started with the Garden City Santaland parade. This parade has become a tradition for us and the crowd loves our dogs. The Garden City community really supports this 125 unit parade and the crowds are huge along the entire parade route. Katie pulled her cart and took great care with her little passenger, Shelby. Shadow and Sunny walked with our troop's banner and Sassy and Sam rounded out our group. The parade is televised on a local TV station and is streamed live on the Internet so friends and family were able to watch us from their homes both locally and across the country. We know they had to wipe off the lens on one of their cameras after Shadow and Sam gave the cameraman a very enthusiastic greeting.

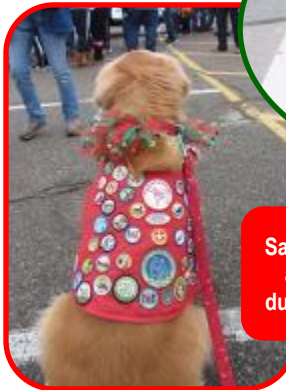
Sassy, Sam and Sunny say hello to Roary the lion in the parade staging area for the Garden City Santaland Parade.



Shelby getting settled in the cart with mom Julie in the parade staging area.



Katie checked on her passenger, Shelby, throughout the parade.



Sassy showing off all her badges during the parade.



Our group walking the parade route as seen from TV and web broadcast.

We also walked in the Chelsea Community Holiday parade for the second year in a row. This is a smaller parade with just 50 units. The parade takes place at night so everyone gets to be creative with lights to wow the crowd. This time we filled Katie's cart with wrapped gifts and put lights all over everything. All of our dogs wore lighted collars and leashes and we found creative ways to put lights on all of the people as well. This is a great parade in a small community and it seems like every member of the community comes out to watch. The residents even light the entire parade route with luminaries that they make. Sassy, Shadow, Heikki, Sally (the dog) and Katie all had a great time in this parade.

Many of our dogs participated in bell ringing for the Salvation Army throughout the holiday season. On each shift that we had people stuffed those kettles full of bills as our dogs showed off their musical abilities and did tricks. Of course all the dogs enjoyed all of the attention! Bert, Betty, Merlin, Casey, Shadow, Ember, Sassy and Katie all participated in bell ringing this year.



Betty



Ember with Sue



Bert

Troop 217—MI (cont.)

Our troop spent some time during the holiday season collecting toiletries and other goodies for the veterans who would be hospitalized in the Ann Arbor VA Hospital at Christmastime. We filled 64 gift bags with the items we collected. We had made arrangements with the hospital to drop bags but at



This is just part of the items we collected for the vets at the VA Hospital.

off our gift the last mi-

minute the volunteer coordinator invited us to come and deliver our gifts and of course we jumped at that opportunity. Sam led our group around the hospital on December 23 as we handed out our gifts and visited with the vets. Julie Lawler-Hoyle, Michelle Neu and I found this to be a very rewarding experience as we brought smiles to the faces of those who had not had a lot to smile about lately. Sam



Sam with Julie and our first cartloads of gift bags as we begin our visit to the VA Hospital.

was really in his element as this is where he regularly does therapy work.

Also in December, troop members enjoyed our second sign language class led by Julie Benson. Shelby proudly showed off her skills as our demo dog and everyone had a great time as we continued to learn more sign language and worked with our dogs. Several dogs have mastered quite a bit of sign language and are ready for badge check offs!



Shelby with mom, Julie, as we learn sign language.

In all, 2015 was a banner year for Troop 217! We currently have 38 members including 14 new in 2015. We held 40 troop events throughout the year and had 17 members attend camp. Our dogs earned 93 badges, including 9 new Dog Scouts, as well as 5 new titles. We raised \$2,200 for DSA and another \$1,500 for other non-profit groups. It was a busy year, but oh did we have fun!

2016 has us once again hitting the road running with our first event, Canine First Aid class. I taught the class for 5 troop members including some new to First Aid and some simply wanting a refresher course. It was a fun afternoon and resulted in Merlin, Sunny and Bert earning the First Aid badge.



Checking Bert's capillary refill time during first aid class.

First Aid veterans Shelby, Sassy and Katie just enjoyed the day and served as demo dogs when needed.



Merlin paying close attention during class.



Sunny with an emergency muzzle.

We've already done a lot of planning for 2016 and have a number of things scheduled for the year. Coming up soon is the start of our hiking stick craft. This is a multi-step process that will result in hiking sticks that are truly works of art and useful when we can get outside in the spring and do some hiking. With the creativity of our troop members I'm sure our hiking sticks will be fabulous! We will be sure to share pictures once we are done.

Troop members are looking forward to training days coming up later in the year where we'll focus on Travel Safety, CPR, Rally and more. We are already planning our 2nd Letterboxing event and have many dogs working on trails titles. It going to be another busy year!

Troop 219—CT—New England Explorers

Kelly Ford—Troop Leader, CRN Secretary and Trails Titling Program Coordinator

I would like to introduce you to Troop 219's newest Cadet Scout, Danica Joy (Dani). Dani was adopted on November 6th by Zora DSA and myself. She was picked up by Norwich Animal control when they found her wandering the streets. She is a Puggle and is currently 9 months old. Zora and Dani play together and they both love to hike and run in the woods. I am so happy to have Dani on Team Puggle!



Troop 219 kicked off the Holiday Season bell ringing for the Salvation Army. We were a hit on Black Friday in front of our local Walmart.



We had a large group participating in Sparky's Turkey Trot and on November 28, 2015, we hiked 3 miles at Bluff Point State Park in our best Turkey Hats. Our pups got to play and run on the trails. And we had a giant turkey hike with us!



Troop 219—CT (cont.)

We spent two more Saturdays' bell ringing for the Salvation Army before Christmas. We raised a total of \$751.17, more than any other local group.



Several members of Troop 219 participated in the Annual Jingle Bell race for hope. The race is a 5K run/walk and everyone dresses for the holidays. Havoc DSA, Harle DSA and Danica Joy received an award for best dressed doggies.



After Christmas, we went hiking and Geocaching at Oswagatchie Hills. Wyatt DSA and Danica Joy found several geocaches. The weather was incredibly warm for Christmas weekend in New England and we hiked several miles. Danica Joy helped plant her first geocache, a special Christmas cache with gift cards for the first three finders.



Since several of us were on vacation for the holidays, we had a Troop craft day. The Troop members new to letterboxing, learned about stamp carving and carved their first stamps. We all made paw print ornaments of our dogs (and cats, we love them too).

We kicked off the New Year with a long hike at Bluff Point State Park on New Year's Day. Numerous friends of the Troop joined us for a big happy hiking group. We even found a geocache.



Troop 220—NV

Linda Hubbard



(Photo: Marcella Corona/RGJ)

My dog Brindy and I are members of troop 220, the Silver Paws, and our scout leader (Terry Cuyler) thought I should submit our story for the newsletter. The PetCo Foundation sponsored a national contest for the best adoption story ("Holiday Wishes"). Out of over 3,000 entries, Brindy's story was selected as #1 and won \$100,000 for the Reno Humane Society.

Terry and I have taken advantage of the situation and hope to get new dog scout troops started in Reno and/or Carson City.

Following is the story from the Reno newspaper which includes my submission at the end. Two other newspapers covered the story as well as 3 TV stations which all mentioned our association with Dog Scouts.

Woman wins \$100,000 grant for Nevada Humane Society

Marcella Corona, mcorona@rgj.com 2:24 p.m. PST December 9, 2015

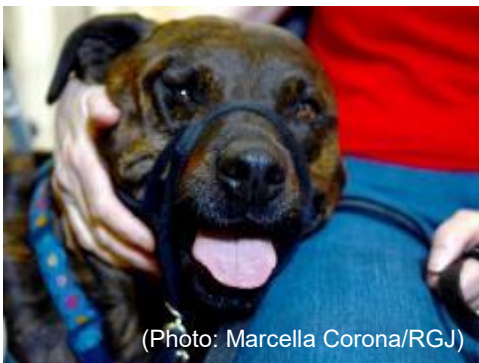
Linda Hibbard and her service dog Brindy pose for a photo on Tuesday after attending a ceremony honoring a \$100,000 donated by the Petco Foundation to the Nevada Humane Society.

The Petco Foundation donated \$100,000 to the Nevada Humane Society after learning about a Reno woman who trained her own service dog that she adopting five years ago.

Linda Hibbard has multiple sclerosis, a disabling disease that affects the central nervous system and disrupts the flow of information from the brain to the body. Because of her disability, she has a difficult time moving around or doing some daily chores.

That's why she decided she needed a service dog. But getting a trained dog takes two to four years and can get very competitive, she said.

"So I went looking for a dog to adopt out of a shelter, and in my area where I live (in Douglas County), there weren't any that fit the criteria that I needed," Hibbard said, adding she also searched shelters in Carson City. "I tried several places, and then I came up here to Reno."



(Photo: Marcella Corona/RGJ)

Hibbard said she was looking for a lab mix, but instead found Brindy, a pit bull mix. Brindy was 10 months old at the time.

"...and I fell in love," Hibbard said.

"...Sure enough, Brindy has been perfect," she said. "She has been a wonderful, wonderful dog for me."

Linda Hibbard hugs her service dog Brindy on Tuesday at the Nevada Humane Society in Reno. She attended a ceremony honoring a \$100,000 grant that was donated by the Petco Foundation to the Nevada Humane Society.

The donation was part of Petco Foundation's third annual Holiday Wishes campaign. This year, organizer asked adopters to share how their adopted pet changed their lives and made it better, said Susanne Kogut, Petco Foundation executive director, on Wednesday.

The Holiday Wishes campaign saw more than 3,000 submissions.

"It was incredible, and I have to tell you the staff and everyone at the foundation that was reading the stories, I mean we were laughing and smiling," Kogut said during a check presentation on Wednesday. "But there were also some tears because they were really heart-felt stories about how important pets are in our lives and how much they change it."

One of those submissions was Hibbard's.

"It was just remarkable to not only know that adopting a pet not only saves the life of a pet, it truly can change your life," Kogut said of Hibbard's letter.

Linda Hibbard and her dog Brindy pose with Nevada Humane Society volunteers for a photo Tuesday after Petco Foundation awarded \$100,000 to the Nevada Humane Society.

Troop 220—NV (cont.) Hibbard took Brindy to a local dog training class and eventually went to Dog Scouts of America, where Brindy earned three badges.

“She helps me walk with her harness,” Hibbard said. “She retrieves my phone. She goes and gets my brace – I have a leg brace – and if I leave my leg brace in the other room, I can tell her to get it, and she’ll get it and bring it to me.”

Brindy also closes doors and helps Hibbard walk without a brace.

“She loves to go places, and she loves to go grocery shopping,” she said, adding she and Brindy volunteer for the Salvation Army. “When you have a disability, people look at you kind of funny, and it’s very awkward for them. Close

“But when you have a dog breaks down that barrier.”



(Photo: Marcella Corona/RGJ)



GARDNERVILLE, Nevada, December 18, 2014 — A few of the Silver Pawis Dog Scouts of America from Troop 220 will help the Salvation Army raise funds Saturday, Dec. 20 at Smith's in Gardnerville from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dogs can take folding money and put it in a basket, hold a basket for donations, wear a donation vest or even ring a bell. Come by and donate.

Hibbard said most people approach her to compliment and say hello to Brindy first.

“I’ve had animals all my life, and I could always tell my animals things that I could never tell another person,” Hibbard said. “...I can talk to her, and she’ll just love me. I’ll say, ‘Give me a kiss,’ and it’s right there.”

“She’s more than I imagined,” Hibbard said of Brindy.

A look at Linda Hibbard and Brindy volunteering to ring bells for the Salvation Army (Photo: Nevada Humane Society)

The Petco Foundation works with more than 1,400 stores and has invested about \$135 million to help animals nationwide. Petco stores have also done 4.2 million adoptions. The Petco Foundation has also awarded 750,000 grants to more than 50 organizations throughout the country that range from \$5,000 to \$100,000.

Here's a look at Hibbard's letter that won the Nevada Humane Society a \$100,000 grant from the Petco Foundation:

I have Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and thought that a service dog would be a great asset to me. Unfortunately, it takes 2-4 years to get a pre-trained dog. Since I have always enjoyed animal training, I decided to train my own service dog. So, I compiled a list of requirements for a dog to match my needs. I went looking for a Lab cross, but found “Brindy” at the Reno Humane Society in May 2010. Brindy is a beautiful, brindle Staffordshire Bull Terrier / Rottweiler mix, and is the most intelligent dog I’ve ever owned. She performs a multitude of tasks for me including balancing me as I walk, retrieving just about anything (including her own leash), removing my socks, and opening and closing doors. Brindy goes with me almost everywhere but especially enjoys going to church where she helps me teach Sunday School and snores through sermons!

Brindy earned her AKC Canine Good Citizen award early in her training, and we continue earning awards – actually “badges” as Brindy is a member of Dog Scouts of America. As members of a local Dog Scout troop, we go on outings and help with community service. Our young troop donated a set of dog/cat oxygen masks to our local fire department. We have also been Christmas “bell ringers” for the Salvation Army. Brindy and her fellow Dog Scouts collected money from passers-by, placing bills in a basket for this noble organization.

People are often uncomfortable around individuals with disabilities, but having a dog breaks down that barrier. People often greet Brindy first and then ask me about her. This makes me smile as I am able to tell them about her. Brindy is an ambassador for the Pit Bull breeds, helping to dispense with the “mean dog” stigma.

So Brindy has enhanced my life greatly by being a terrific service dog as well as by helping me be a positive contributor to society. She is also the most loving dog I’ve ever owned - a delightful companion who comes running when I need her. All this from a dog who was found wandering the streets of Reno by the Humane Society.

I’ve heard people reject pet adoption because you don’t know what you are getting. That was certainly true in my case. Brindy is far more than I expected!

Troop 229—CA

Mary Blackstone—Troop Leader

November—December

November we worked on obstacles and our manners badge. iZAR was on strict exercise restriction because of his knee and spent most of November on his bed being a distraction. I found a snow board at a yard sale and we practiced balance. Kip liked it so much her mom got a skate board!

We had to cancel our Sit-With-Santa Photo Fundraiser because of an outbreak of dog flu in our area.



Every year we make Holiday Treat Bags that we pass out to our local community center to put with the holiday baskets they give out to the poor and also a local senior center that has many older people that live on incomes that don't leave much for something special for the holidays. We made 140 bags for dogs and 60 bags for cats. They had food, a bag of mixed treats and toys!

And we got dressed up for the deliveries.



Troop 229—CA (cont.)

Soon after this we got the news that iZAR's knee was better and we got to start walking ¼ mile-20 minutes a day! Boy were we glad.

His next checkup we were told we could walk ½ mile!



And it snowed for Christmas. The dogs thought that was a WONDERFUL Present!

YEE-HAW! TX MINI CAMP SCHEDULED FOR APRIL!

Troop 225 is going to have a 2.5 day weekend dog scout camp the weekend of **April 15, 2016.**

We will meet at Faulkner Park for a Meet and Greet on that **Friday** night for a one mile walk. Then we will have two full days on **Saturday** and **Sunday.**

Lonnie and Claudette will direct and teach at our camp.

This camp will cost \$100 per human.

Camp will be held at Grasshopper Hill Farm and Ranch.

We are offering the Dog Scout Class and badge, backpacking, canine massage, first aid, overnight camping on **Saturday** night, puppy paddler, beach buddy, and water safety. Lonnie says she will also bring her lure coursing equipment for those that want to try it out!

This is a low budget camp, so bring your own water, food and snacks. Bring everything you need for your dog.

If you are not local to Tyler, Texas, then we have motels like La Quinta that are dog friendly.

Hope to see you there!
Contact Natalie Fletcher
pen3cows@gmail.com

Dog Scouts of America

Website: Dogscouts.org
Facebook: facebook.com/DogScouts
Yahoo Discussion List:
pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/DSA_TalkList

Learning new things that we may be more helpful

Dog Scouts of America (DSA) was established in 1995. It is a non-profit organization with people dedicated to enriching their dog's lives and the lives of others with dogs. Founder Lonnie Olson has made it her life's ambition to experience as many dog sports and skills as possible with her dogs.

If you believe that dogs really enjoy learning new things and spending time with their owners, you're our kind of dog person. Dogs were not meant to be "furniture." Working dogs want to work. Without having an acceptable activity in which to use up all of the energy that comes "built-in" with a dog, our canine companions often get into trouble.

By better understanding how your dog thinks, how he learns, and what drives his behavior, and by participating in a variety of dog sports and activities, you will become a more responsible dog owner.

We hope to prevent misunderstandings, communication failures, and behavioral problems which often lead to dogs being given up as a "lost cause."

Contact Us:

President: Lonnie Olson — DogScoutCamp@gmail.com

Lonnie also handles the Dog Scout **Calendar**, Sparky's Camp **Store**, Dog Scout **Camp (MI)**, and she is the Board contact regarding **Camp Scholarships**

Hosting a Mini-Camp Mentor: Sally Hoyle — sally.hoyle@yahoo.com

Dog Scout Obituaries—Memorial Recognition and Engraving: **Chris Kloski** — ChrisBill1966@gmail.com

Membership: Julie Benson — bensonjulie@earthlink.net

Troop Administration (Starting a troop/Troop Leader Tests): Brenda Katz — dogs2katz@yahoo.com

Treasurer/Donations: Barb Whiting — bwhitingdsa@comcast.net

Merit Badge Recognition Program Coordinator: Heddie Leger — pawzone@yahoo.com

Merit Badge Recording Secretary: Julie Benson — bensonjulie@earthlink.net

Merit Badge Evaluator Certification: Chris Kloski — ChrisBill1966@gmail.com

DSA Competition Hosting/Competing: Ann Withun — Ann@Withun.com

Contact **Ann** regarding **Titles** also

Trail Dog Title: Kelly Ford — DSA.Troop219@yahoo.com

Kelly also issues the **Competition Registration Numbers** for our Competition and Titling department

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