



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 2 Mar/Apr 2016

SPRING INTO DOG SCOUTS!

Accepting last minute registrations for our 2016 Texas Mini Camp

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're jamming as many fun and educational activities into this weekend . . .

- 👍 Dog Scout Class and badge,
- 👍 Backpacking,
- 👍 Canine massage,
- 👍 First aid,
- 👍 Overnight camping
- 👍 Puppy paddler,
- 👍 Beach buddy,
- 👍 Water safety.
- 👍 Lure coursing

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

Deadline

for the next newsletter is

May 15th

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

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2016 Frost-a-Thon Results

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's Frost-a-Thon! The success of this year's event once again proves that our members will brave any weather to support DSA and tell others what a great organization we all belong to. Though this winter may have been milder than average it was plenty frosty in many parts of the country.

Congratulations to our big winners Debbie Baker and her Troop 119 – The Lone Star Paw Squad! Debbie will receive a beautiful knit scarf embroidered with the DSA logo (pictured), along with our participants raising \$150 or more Teresa Hamilton, Kristin Keeling, Kelly Ford and Barrie Lynn Wood. Participants earning at least \$50, Marcia Odal, Julie Baumler, Stacey Damm and Lisa Hamilton, all receive a commemorative patch for there efforts.



Troop 119 took top honors but other troops contributed significantly to this fundraiser as well. Thanks go to Troop 219 – The New England Explorers, Troop 230 – The Piney Wood Paws, and Troop 217 – The Motor City K9s for participating this year.

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

dogluvurz@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

Dog Scouts Rock & Roll at the Frosty Dog Follies Freestyle Event!

By Sally Hoyle, with help from Katie

Western Michigan saw some fancy foot-work recently when the Rockin' Rovers held their annual Frosty Dog Follies Freestyle Competition event held in Grand Rapids. There were a number of Dog Scouts competing in this event, some of us for the very first time, and our own Gloria Voss judged the event.

I was thrilled...okay and terrified...to be competing in this event with my dog, Katie. I found myself in this place as a direct result of a "pinkie swear" between Lonnie Olson and myself last fall. That oath is also what got Lonnie to the event with her dog, Caper and very honestly kept us both from giving into the fear of the unknown and backing out at any number of points along the way. Jeff Parker was also competing for the first time with the always happy Hemi, who proved himself as a crowd favorite and loved the applause. Elaine Chan-Whitlow and her dog Moo-Moo Pie were there with some new moves and our group was rounded out by the already very accomplished team of Elizabeth Najduch and Emma.

I experienced many firsts over the weekend as was to be expected but I kept thinking about how lucky I was. Lucky to have such a fantastic, though sometimes too joyful, dancing partner in Katie. Lucky to be able to share the experience with good friends and make new friends along the way. And so incredibly lucky to be a part of Dog Scouts because that's how I was first introduced to freestyle. I learned so much at this event too. It was fun to watch the more experi-



Hemi kept us all entertained in the crating area



Elizabeth and Emma (center) performed with other seasoned competitors in a group routine inspired by Motown



Caper "the leopard" was hiding in the jungle



Katie says, "What are you writing about me, Judge Gloria?"



Elaine and Moo Moo Pie performed to "The Entertainer"



Jeff and Hemi strut their stuff to "Just a Gigalo"



Lonnie with Caper, dancing to "Looking for My Leopard"



...and then returned to dancing rather joyfully. As we danced together my heart truly soared

enced competitors as they danced in the ring. Everyone had such creative ideas for music, costumes and moves and all the competitors were very encouraging and supportive of those of us who were trying this for the first time.

Each of the Dog Scout competitors came away with ribbons, medals, titles and special awards but I'm pretty sure that in the end none of that mattered to any of us. Before the first ribbon was awarded each of us felt accomplished and each in our own way. Katie and I were certainly not perfect in the ring. In fact we were FAR from perfect! I came away humbled by my experience, in awe of other competitors, thankful for my friends and delighted by my dog who showed me what pure joy looks like. Lonnie summed up the experience very well for us all when she said, "I think my dog would say that it was the most fun she's ever had in the ring with her human."

Each of us found ourselves at this event as a step on the path of our freestyle journey. And while freestyle is a sport that is a clear expression of the human-canine bond, we all appreciated the bond we shared with one another, a bond born of Dog Scouts, as we supported each other's efforts and celebrated the many successes of the weekend. If you haven't tried freestyle yet Katie highly recommends it and says it will have your dog jumping for joy. Needless to say, we are hooked.

WHY DOGS DON'T DO AS ASKED by Chris Puls

They don't know why they should do it

If your dog doesn't know why, then you don't have control of the right motivator (reward). Or they don't know you have a reward for them. The dog should know from past experience that doing as you ask will be rewarded. By practicing frequent rewards for compliance, the motivation to do as you ask will be increased. Check the value of the reward you are offering (what does the dog think its worth to him?) Is it a high enough "paycheck" to get the dog's attention? Or is it like getting a cheap pen for attending a boring IRS lecture? Does it motivate the dog to offer the behavior again? The reward drives the dog to action. Most things we ask of our dogs are not natural for them in the situation in which we ask. So rewards for those tasks should not be below "minimum wage" in doggie dollars.



They don't know how to do it

It's not fair to punish a dog for not doing something he hasn't been taught to do in that location and environment. Your dog might know that "sit" means to put his tail on the ground when you are at home, but without practice, your dog probably won't know that "sit" still means you want him to put his tail on the ground when there are multiple other dogs and people around. For complex or multi-step behaviors, break them down into smaller, easier to learn steps you can combine or shape into the final product. Then practice those training steps in many different locations so they learn to do it with distractions. Don't assume your dog understands what you want if you are in a situation that is new to him.

They don't know what they are supposed to do

Be sure they are clear about what you are asking. Dogs are masters at reading our body language, so changing the position of your body can make it a whole new cue. If you are sitting on the floor with your back to your dog, will your dog still respond quickly and correctly to your requests? This is an extreme example of a change in body position, but much more subtle changes can have the same effect.

Also be sure you aren't giving conflicting signals. If your boss or spouse yelled "get over here NOW!", you know they want you to go to them, but are you going to be excited to comply? Even if all you say is "Fido come" but your tone and/or body language are saying "get over here now!" don't expect a fast recall!

They don't think your way will work

They don't trust you to pay out or give them what they want. It might also be that the dog hasn't learned the concept of indirect access. I'll talk more about this concept in just a bit.

They think their way is correct

Sometimes they are right (especially if you are relying on their nose) but if they aren't getting results, they may be thinking your way won't work.

They think something else is more important

By helping them learn to focus and understand that listening to you will get them what they want, the dog will be willing to comply. Their senses are keen and they are thinking beings with their own desires.

You likely know how to read a book, but how effective will that reading be if you're trying to do it while your favourite show is on a TV in front of you? Are you asking the dog to do something while HIS favourite show is going on in the next ring? Can he learn to concentrate on the task you are asking him to do, sure! But have you practiced it enough? How long would it take you to learn to concentrate on only the book and ignore your favorite show? Don't ask your dog for college level behaviors if you haven't taught him the grade school stuff first.

Little or no positive consequences for doing it

Show them it pays well to do as you ask. Don't be stingy with rewards! The harder their work, the higher their "pay" should be.



They think they are doing it

This means your training wasn't clear. Help them understand exactly what you want by going back to training.

Rewarded for not doing it

Remember, punishments can't negate rewards. You need to remove or prevent rewards they are getting for ignoring you or not doing it in the desired way.

Punished for doing it

Sometimes things that are not intended as a punishment can interfere. Learn to read your dog and see what they feel is a punishment and try to remove the punishment they might feel for doing as asked or increase the reward to overcome it. Rewards CAN

overcome punishers. There are many dogs that will tolerate pain to get something they want. Lab rats have shown they will walk across an electrified floor to get a treat. If the reward is high enough, it can be used to help the dog overcome fears as well.

One story that perfectly illustrates this is a person who was training their dog for a long down in Texas. This dog was usually excellent at maintaining his down for a long time, but on this day, the dog just wouldn't stay put. Finally, the owner realized that she had asked her dog to down over a small fire ant mound! The poor thing was trying to comply, but was getting painfully bitten for his efforts. For those that don't know, fire ant bites are more painful than bee stings.

Anticipates negative consequences for doing it

This is true especially if punishment methods have been used in the past or something negative has been associated with the desired behavior. Make the task easier by only expecting part of the behavior and reward heavily for compliance to gain trust and overcome fears.

If you try "free shaping" with a dog that has primarily been trained with punishment, the dog is likely to stand there with a blank look on his face. He has learned that you will do the thinking for him by showing him what you expect and that being creative gets punished. So it will take time for the dog to trust that the rules have changed. Start with very easy behaviors and build on that.

No negative consequences to them for not doing it

If the dog gets the same reward for doing the task as for not doing the task, increase rewards for doing it and decrease or eliminate rewards for not doing it. Look for ways to increase motivation. An example of this would be loose leash walking. If the dog gets forward movement when he pulls on leash and he gets forward movement when he keeps the leash loose, where is the motivation to keep the leash loose. If instead he doesn't get to move forward if the leash is tight and he gets high value treats AND forward movement for keeping the leash loose, he will be much more motivated to keep it loose.

Didn't hear you

This can refer to the brain not being engaged or that the dog couldn't hear you due to other noise interference. While dogs' hearing is often better than humans, things happen and noise can be a factor. Have you ever "zoned out" and then came back to reality to realize someone was trying to get your attention? I'm sure this also happens to dogs. If you have a million things to worry about at home, work

and personal life, will a punishment for not paying attention make things better or just add stress? Maybe the dog was thinking about the bone he left under the couch and was worrying about another dog finding it. Who knows what goes through their brain at times! :-)

Point is that dogs are thinking beings and if you want a robot dog- get a robot.



If the dog really can't hear you or didn't hear your cue because of distance or background noise or maybe their hearing isn't what it used to be, then punishment is not warranted. Simply try again and if you need to, reduce the difficulty a bit and work back up to the situation where the dog was having trouble.

If the dog is over the top excited, or super focused on something, it's very likely they are not hearing you. The Reticular Activating System in their brain is what lets them switch between thinking mode (where they can process learned cues) and those other states of mind where there is no thinking. You can teach them to be better at switching between thinking mode and non-thinking mode, but it takes practice.

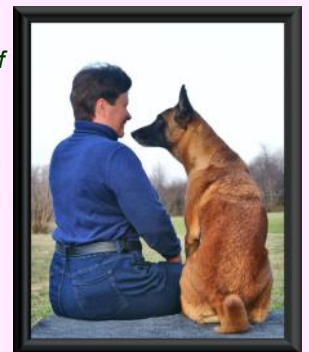
Obstacles beyond their control

You may or may not be able to control these sorts of obstacles. It could be interference, the dog's physical limitations or injuries/health problems, or other physical reasons the dog CAN'T comply. Try to anticipate problems and obstacles and provide solutions. Set the dog up for success, not failure.

Personal limits prevent them from doing it

Be aware of physical and mental limitations. Provide alternatives, training or accommodations whenever possible. Don't ask for what the dog can't give. One person I know asks her dog for a high 4 because he can't give a high 5!

Chris Puls LOVES training dogs and her life revolves around training, competition and teaching others to train their dogs. She has been training dogs for over 30 years and has used positive reinforcement methods since first learning about them 17 years ago. She is constantly expanding her knowledge and use of positive reinforcement methods and has helped many Dog Scout Camp attendees train their dogs for a variety of sports as well as problem solving and behavior modification (many of her training articles can be found on the DSA website). In August of 2014, she was approved as a Barn Hunt Judge and has Judged many trials. She also founded and has been a Judge for K9 Scent Detection.



Rainbow Bridge

Red Charles of Carriage Lane

aka Charly

4/13/02 to 2/2/16

This is not a memorial that I thought I would be writing for awhile. I hate cancer and what it does. Charly was such a magnificent and beautiful animal, so full of life and joy. He was my buddy, my teammate, my main man. Each night when I went to bed, I'd turn off the light and say, "I love you Charly." And I would hear in the dark, "Thump, thump, thump" as his tail hit the floor. Now there is only quiet as the other dogs don't mimic Charly. I miss the thump.

He was a furry red puppy when I brought him home at 8 weeks, outgoing, active and happy. I have always loved dogs that were that way. I was soon a "soccer mom" at my dog club. I had Charly in puppy and then manners classes and my older dog Nikki in agility class. I practiced a lot at home, getting up at 5:30 am to fit in some time before work and then after work again. It was June when I brought him home. He caught on to everything so quickly, his mind like a sponge. He also had his own thoughts on how he should perform, especially agility, doing three or four obstacles and then leaving the ring. I was working with Emily Czapek on conquering Nikki's fear of the teeter, so I brought Charly in for training too. Emily gave Charly this red and blue twisted, knotted rope for his 2nd birthday and he just loved it and would retrieve it for hours if I let him.

It was Carol Kluka who discovered the way to keep Charly in the ring with me. I was at her place and throwing Charly's rope. She told me to stuff it down the back of my pants. Sure enough, Charly followed me everywhere and didn't leave the ring. Then, there was the table, which he would stand on a bark at me, not sitting or downing on command. I would call out the names of vegetables to distract him, and then say "sit" and he would sit in slow motion. Thank goodness, when stand became a command you could use on the table.

So Charly and Nikki, my rescue, started doing UKC agility and NADAC agility and both started to get titles. I finally did AKC and CPE venues also. During this time, I had two hip replacements and started to teach distance handling to both dogs. My goal was to just stand in one or

two spots and send the dogs everywhere. I must thank Emily Czapek and Doris Humes for helping me with those exercises.

Next, we discovered Dog Scouts of America and I went to their first camp when Nikki was 7 and Charly was only two. They both earned badges for the skills they learned at camp. It was like a magic bubble where anything was possible. One of the skills that Charly learned was dock diving. I met a woman at a NADAC agility trial and she asked me if I ever did dock diving with Charly, he was so tall and I said, "Just at camp." She told me about an **event** in Rockford the next weekend.



2010 Charly earning his water retrieval badge at camp



Charly at 2 years becoming a Dog Scout



2011 w/Charly, Cate & Luke at Dog Scout Camp

Rainbow Bridge (continued)

So, Charly and I went dock diving. I have never seen such a happy dog. I could barely contain him. His very first jump was 13 feet and he was soon jumping over 20 feet. I put agility to the side and took Charly dock diving almost every weekend. My dog was in 7th Heaven. He soon became a well known dock diver and got an article on him in the Dock Diving Magazine. During his dock diving career, he was pictured on the home page for the Illinois State Fair and when he was 11, on the front page of the Peoria Journal Star during the Morton Pumpkin Fest. He earned the top title of Iron Dog.



Charly doing Extreme Vertical during National at Dubuque, IA 2011



Charly doing Big Air (length jump) during Morton Pumpkin Fest.

Photo appeared on front page of Journal Star. Charly was 11 years old

My favorite memory during the dock diving days was in Rockford, IL was after the show, I stopped at a Burger King and Charly's head was hanging out the window. I ordered and Charly started barking. The lady asked name and breed of dog and I told her and asked for 3 plain burgers for Charly, Cate and Nikki. The lady was thrilled with the dogs. Well, I went back the next day and Charly started barking as I drove up before I could order. I heard a familiar voice saying, "Hi Charly, you're back. Do you want 3 plain burgers again?" Charly's ears perked and he barked back twice. I was laughing so hard at the ongoing conversation. After I ordered and drove up to the window, the service person had gotten Milk Bones which she put in with the plain burgers.



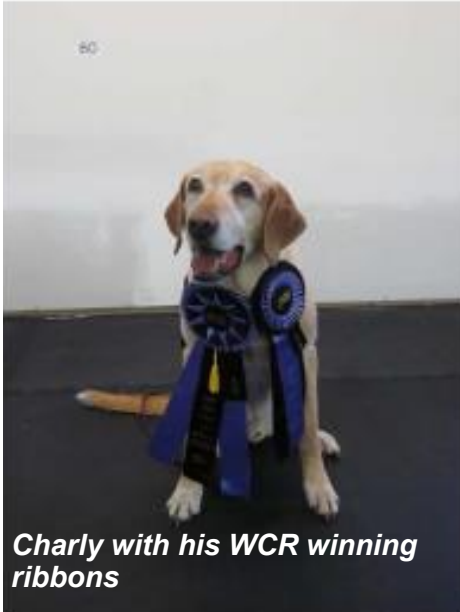
Charly at CPE Nationals



Charly's talent increased in agility also. With practice, he was working farther and farther away from me. We started working in Canine Performance Events (CPE) when he was 6, which has various courses at different levels from 1 to 5. When he was between 3 and 4, he earned enough points to qualify for the CPE National Event which was in Minnesota. So, I entered him. I was at a CPE event in Iowa before the National one. During a break, the judge walked up to me and said, "I hope you're taking Charly to Nationals. It's amazing how far away from you he works!. I didn't remember the judge but obviously she remembered Charly. It made me feel good to get the encouragement.

I always wanted to stand in one place on an agility course and send Charly to all the obstacles. Well, at nationals one of the courses looked like I could stand in one spot and send him. All the runs were videoed and this run was my favorite of all times. I stood in one spot and didn't move except for arm command. The video showed Charly going through the course and you don't see me. He won 3rd place with that run and a new title. I was so proud of him. He eventually got through all the levels and reach the championship level called a CATCH. He was 11 years old.

Rainbow Bridge (continued)



Charly with his WCR winning ribbons

The third sport that he excelled at was Rally Obedience, the performance of obedience commands with signs on a course that is timed. The venue he did best was APDT (Association of Pet Dog Trainers which became WCR (World Cynosport Rally) . I had to give the commands very, very quiet or just give hand commands because if Charly got really happy because he was doing well, he would bark. A bark is one point off, so I worked hard to keep him silent but happy, such a struggle. The first time he went through a course without a bark, he got the top score for the course!!! My friends covered the score on the chart for the course and I thought he had disqualified. No, it was top score and first place!!!!



Charly doing Rally Obedience

He began to love everything I threw at him. We went to Dog Scout Camp where all sorts of skills and trainers were available and Charly loved everything: Lure Coursing, Water Retrieval, Dog Freestyle (Dancing), Scent Detection, Search and Rescue, Back Packing (on leash) and Hiking (off leash).



Charly and sister Cate

I'm sure there is more. It seems the more things I tried, the easier it was to teach him. I could actually see him thinking and deciding what to do. Of all the dogs I have had, he was the smartest, most versatile and most willing to start something new. The most charming that Charly could be was doing Therapy Dog, which he earned at camp when he was two. Although he liked visiting at local nursing homes, you could tell his biggest joy was working with children. A local early learning center had a program where the children read to therapy dogs after school from January through May. The children were cautious around a large dog but by the end of program loved Charly and were real comfortable with him. A 7 year old named Ian was fearful at first and by May was sitting on his back. I showed a photo of Ian with Charly to his mother and she laughed and gave me her email to send it to her. He definitely was a kid dog. I could write about Charly forever, there were so many "Charly Moments" in my life that when I think about them, I smile and cry both.

I am glad I exposed him to so many things. I am also glad I got his sister, Cate, when he was 5. There are things she does that remind me of him. He adored her and groomed her often each day. I am glad that I have photos and videos of him to remind me of those things he did for me.

My boy, I miss him so.



Charly at the Dog Jog kissing booth last year at Lifestyle Show at Civic Center downtown

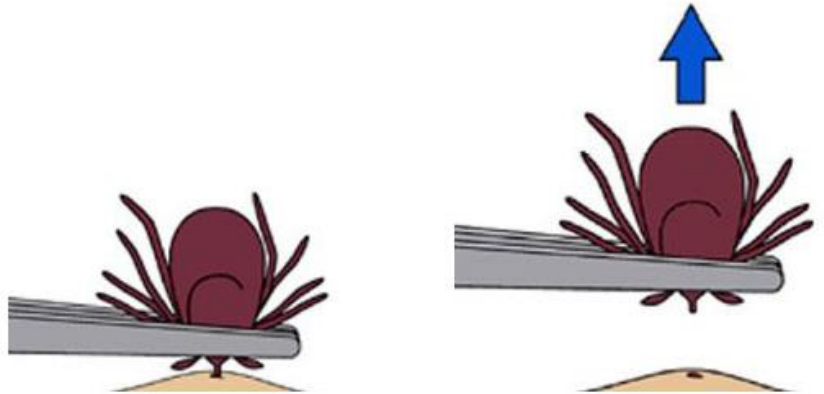
Trails Titles Bulletin

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

Here in Connecticut we are happy to finally be seeing signs of Spring, crocuses, birds, and chipmunks, and, of course ticks. Please check yourself and your pups for ticks whenever you come inside. Some species of ticks can be very small. If you have a long haired dog, I recommend a flea comb. Don't wait for the tick to detach on its own, that's when they disgorge all their poisons.

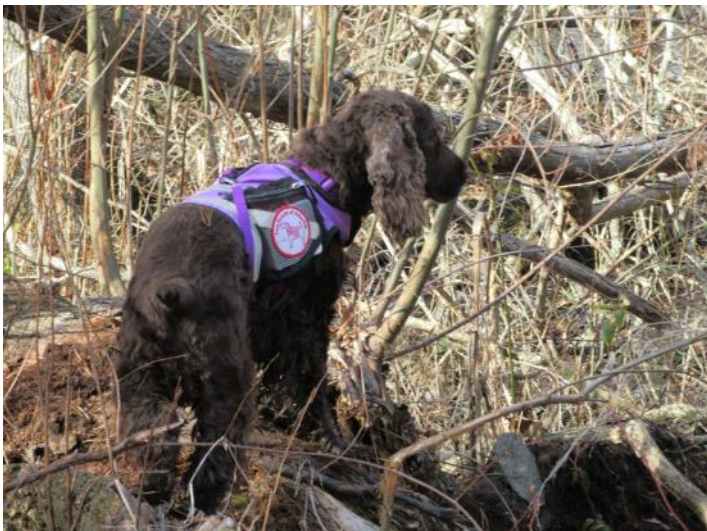
Tick removal from the CDC:

- ◆ Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
- ◆ Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.



- ◆ After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.
- ◆ Dispose of a live tick by submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with your fingers.
- ◆ Avoid folklore remedies such as "painting" the tick with nail polish or petroleum jelly, or using heat to make the tick detach from the skin. Your goal is to remove the tick as quickly as possible--not waiting for it to detach.

I would like to congratulate everyone who has earned a Trails Title from January 2016 to March 2016.



PackDog (PD)

Wyatt White (pictured)

TrailDog (TD)

Jib Almann
Taika Almann
Barkley Cook
Rouen Baker
Holly Hopscotch Smith
Maggie Lakey

Scout Scoop & Troop Talk

Troop 119—TX

Cindy Ratliff—Troop Leader

Troop 119 has gotten off to a great new year! We have already had 8 new members join the troop this year and more are coming!

Typically in January, since we are all still recovering from the holidays and the weather is generally quite chilly, we do a troop hike at an area park and all get out and enjoy bundling up and feeling the briskness in the air! This year, however, our January troop hike brought sunny skies and temperatures in the mid-70s! It was still a beautiful day in the park, we just didn't get to use those winter coats and gloves that we were expecting to bust out!



In February, we had another gorgeous day at the park! We did a mini-hike then settled in to work on learning lots of fun tricks and get a start on the Tricks badge. Several troop dogs showed off tricks they already knew to help inspire other dogs & their humans. We then broke out into groups to learn a variety of tricks. Many of the dogs learned something new and many others got a start on some training homework!



Also in February, one of our troop members, Connie Romano, hosted a painting party at her doggie café & boutique, Bark Out Loud. Several troop members joined in the fun and created personal masterpieces of their favorite (or one of their favorites!) pooch!



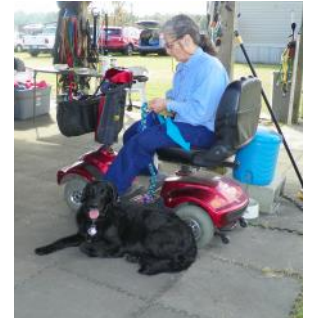
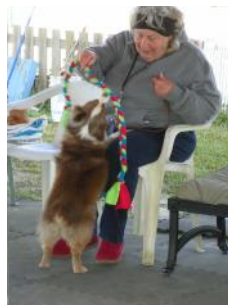
Somehow we managed to get away from the last two meetings without many photos at all, which is so unlike us! Stay tuned for the next Troop Scoop, though, which will include loads of fun photos from our annual Easter Egg Hunt!

Troop 183—FL

Shirley Conley—Troop Leader



In January our troop got together to plan our first part of the year. The beginning of February didn't start off well, with the loss of Dog Scout, Maya, one of our troop's foundation Dog Scouts. She will be much missed by Carl and Karyn.



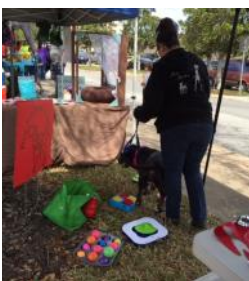
We spent a couple of Valentine's Day hours developing the human-canine bond with our favorite canine companions at a **Puppy Love S.M.A.R.T. Party**. Attendees had access to **Swimming**, **Making new friends**, **Agility**, **Rally**, and dog **Toymaking**, at Best Paw Forward, a local dog training center where some of our members train. The dogs had fun playing frisbee, working on the agility and rally courses, and romping in the pond. Best Paw Forward's owner, PJ, inviting her friend, Linda, to teach us how to make a variety of braided dog toys. Our dogs were happy to have new toys that promoted interaction with us. PJ also shared some handling skills that would be useful for sensitive dogs who, when leashed, tend to bark at approaching dogs.



In March, our troop spread the word about Dog Scouts of America and the joys of positive training methods during the 13th annual Seminole County Adopt-A-Thon. In the morning, assistant troop leader, Carol and member Cyndi worked the booth, helped by Dog Scout, Kingston. In the afternoon, members Mary Ann and Fran took over. Mary Ann was interviewed by a couple of reporters, and pictures were taken of LeeRoy—unfortunately we haven't been able to find a link to the articles online to see what, if anything, was written. We handed out lots of information and explained the fun that we have in DSA while helping out the community as a service organization. Carol also set up some basic nose work activities for attendees to try when they stopped by our table.



Little LeeRoy had lots of people coming over to ask about him—if he had been up for adoption he would have found several homes. He loved dancing and showing off for his fans. There were several people that Mary Ann didn't personally know who recognized him from Facebook and yelled his name from a distance. He gave lots of kisses and Mary Ann told people he had been rescued twice and was seven years old and still going strong. Dog Scout, Bling, had fun with Fran on the agility course at the event. Bling recently earned his Naked Obedience and Retrieve badges.





Sheri Throop—Troop Leader

Winter has been very kind to Troop 188. Here in SE New England we have had some great hiking weather. In the last two months members and friends of Troop 188 have hiked several parks in two states with terrain from swampland to the beach. Napatree Point in Watch Hill, RI, is a favorite beach hike off season. During the season it is quite crowded with beachgoers and tourists. Bluff Point, a Connecticut State Park located in Groton, has farmland and beaches. Letterboxes, geocaches, and clamming are all popular at this venue along with some great views. Great Swamp Management Area in RI has over 3,000 acres to explore, and Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, a wildlife conservation area full of trails and water.

The two months concluded with a hike at Rome Point in RI. From the point of land at the end of this preserve, hikers enjoy a view of the ocean and the 7 Sisters rock formation. The 7 Sisters are a popular resting stop for migrating seals. Troop hikers enjoyed the hike, the view and spotted seals on their migration.

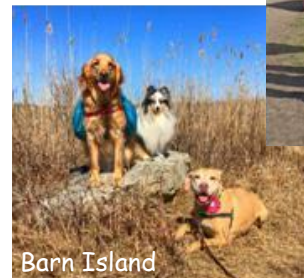
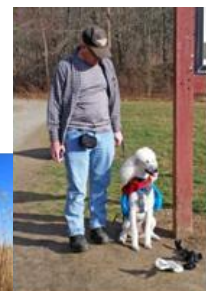
While hiking, some troop members worked on badges such as Backpacking, Clean Up America 1 & 2, Hiking, Letterboxing, and Geocaching as well as logging miles and finds for various DSA Badges and Trail Titles.



Napatree Point



Bluff Point



Barn Island



Rome Island



Prep Time



Winter months are a great time of prepping for all the fun and outdoor activities planned for spring, summer, and fall. Troop 188 gathered together this January and February to work on Letterboxing, Backpacking, Bonnet making, and Drill team skills.



Learning to Share



Several members of Troop 188 attended a seminar held by Professional dog trainer and author Grisha Stewart. This Teamwork seminar includes information on BAT 2.0 and leash handling skills designed to help encourage clearer communication with your dog.

Chowder Festival

An annual area favorite, the Olde Mistick Chowder Festival, a fundraiser for the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center, is also a Dog Scout favorite. Scouts and their people joined the more than 12,000 people together raising more than \$17,000 for this worthwhile charity. More than 20 chowder were entered that the Troop favorite was also the overall winner by popular vote—the Westerly High School lobster chowder with fresh fritter topping.



During the festival our dogs meandered through crowds, met children, saw street performers, and encountered a lot of food “leave-its”, all handled in true Dog Scout fashion! Well done Troop!



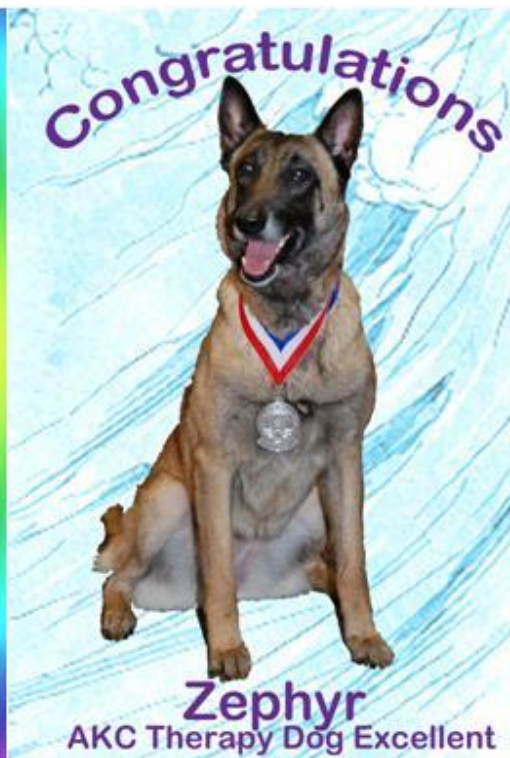
Helping a Friend

Monthly Gatherings

Each month the troop gathers to take a look at upcoming events and work on various skills that will be useful during those events. At the February gathering we worked on skills for our upcoming visit to our senior buddies, leash walking crowds with distractions for use during our upcoming outings, doorway etiquette, and tricks. During our March group up, Linda Caplan presented on the AKC Good Citizen program. Members then practiced some of the skills for the upcoming tests and made plans to work on others. We also continued to practice our skills for upcoming events, and had some playtime too.



Getting together for a little play time can be fun, but Troop 188 makes it special by using the play session to help one Troop Member (Gus) work on skills that will allow him to join in more activities away from home.



Troop 188 would like to congratulate Calypso DSA and Zephyr DSA for earning the AKC Therapy Dog Excellent award!

Calypso has been making therapy visits for over 10 years and Zephyr not only does therapy but road races with mom to raise funds for worthy causes.

Troop 198—CA

Leah Lane—Troop Member



The troops in the San Francisco Bay Area have been working together to get the word out about DSA. Troop 198 in Milpitas, Troop 233 in Morgan Hill and the “Pre Troop” in Burlingame came together in December to decorate a Dog Scout Tree at Christmas in the Park in downtown San Jose; we marched in the Sunnyvale Christmas Parade, and the night time Holiday in Lights Christmas Parade in Morgan Hill.



In January we came together to do an informal outdoor “Mall Walk About” at Stanford Shopping Center in Palo Alto, inviting the public to join us in training and socializing with our dogs. Our big January event was an information booth at the west coast premier Golden Gate Kennel Club All Breed Benched Dog Show at the Cow Palace in San Francisco. We also helped promote the start up of a new Chapter of Love On A Leash Pet Therapy in Milpitas.



In February we had a Valentine’s Day Hike at beautiful Uvas Canyon Waterfall Loop Trail, near Morgan Hill in the South Bay’s Santa Cruz Mountains, and had an information booth at the Santa Clara Valley Kennel Club All Breed Dog Show in San Jose.



To wrap up February, the Burlingame group had a guest speaker, Michele Muller give a talk on Truffle Hunting With Your Dog, and fellow troop member, Jackie Phillips who is a real life pet detective and proprietor of “The Social Pet,” gave a talk on Lost Pet Tracking. The Dog Show at the Cow Palace brought us the parents of a Golden Retriever that are interested in starting their training with us so that they can start a new troop in the San Francisco East Bay area, Contra Costa County.

GO SF BAY AREA DOG SCOUTS!!!

Troop 217—The Motor City K9s—MI

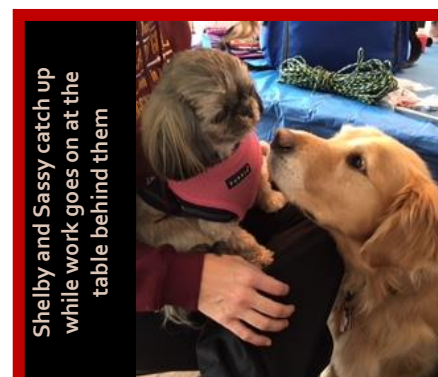
Sally Hoyle—Troop Leader

We are so excited that we have a new troop logo thanks to our very own troop member Martha Thierry! Though our troop extends far beyond the Detroit metro area and even includes parts of NE Ohio, we made the decision last year to identify ourselves as the Motor City K9s. We think our new logo captures the essence of our troop very well and hope people begin to recognize the image and associate it with our troop as we get out and participate in community events. We have logo t-shirts in the works and have already had custom patches made with the image. We are all very excited to be able to show our pride in DSA and in our troop!



Though this winter was a mild one, it's still been plenty cold and we haven't been able to get outside as much as we'd like. So instead we've been spending time inside preparing for outside activities for spring and summer. One of our biggest projects has been making hiking sticks. Since making these sticks takes several sessions with a bit of homework in between, we knew it would take some time for each of us to finish. Now, nearly everyone's stick is complete and even those who started the project thinking, "I'm not creative" have found themselves surprised and pleased by the end result.

We started by gathering ideas and determining the images each of us would like on our sticks. And then the creativity truly began! Some drew on their sticks freehand while others used tracing paper or simply transferred images from pencil drawings. Of course the one thing that everyone's designs had in common were dogs! There were Border Collies and Golden Retrievers, Cattle Dogs, a Sheepdog, a Poodle and a trio of Corgis encircling a stick. Paw prints were popular as were boot prints, Native American symbols and letters spelling out DSA and the names of dogs, past and present. Once everyone finalized their design they started using a wood burning tool or router to make the images permanent. Some painted too. Next came staining and sealing, inseting PathTags, compasses, rivets and/or stones and putting on the rubber foot. Finally, the handles were wrapped with a paracord weave design and carabiner clips, mini flashlights and whistles were added as the final touches. At some point as we worked on our hiking sticks, they stopped being just sticks and turned into works of art that everyone is very proud of and excited to be able to put them to use!



As we worked on our sticks, our dogs enjoyed socializing and getting to play in someone else's home. Some of our dogs found great joy in locating and emptying others' toy boxes. There were plenty of breaks for belly rubs and

Troop 217—MI (cont.)



Vickie's stick is ready for hiking!

for practicing tricks. There was lots of laughter and good conversation and each time we met we felt blessed to have such amazing dogs who trusted us to manage their environment appropriately and rewarded us with exemplary behavior. Not only did we finish the project with great looking hiking sticks, we also took away great ideas for all

things dog-related and a greater sense of community as we learned new things about one another and about our dogs.



It's an Old English Sheepdog!



Some of our hiking sticks very close to completion. Everyone chose the color they wanted for their paracord handle



Sassy wore her letterboxing shirt for our workshop

Our other indoor activity has been to focus on getting ready for our Letterboxing event coming up in April. There are a number of troop members who are passionate letterboxers and we really enjoyed the event we held last June. We have dogs in our troop working on various levels of badges and titles but wanted to get other troop members involved and build upon the numbers of people and dogs for our rather frequent letterboxing afternoons. We held a workshop to introduce letterboxing to members who weren't yet familiar with it and to get more people involved in our upcoming event. We covered all aspects of letterboxing including signing up on and navigating AtlasQuest, finding and planting boxes, etiquette, and we even helped people to carve their first stamps.

Then we braved a cold and snowy afternoon to go out and

find a box planted nearby. Now we are busy carving stamps, preparing boxes and mapping locations as our event draws near. We are expecting a great afternoon and will have a custom patch to commemorate the day. Each person contributing to the event in a significant way will receive a patch and we will have some available for purchase at the event as well, with the proceeds going to DSA. This year's event is called "Must Love Dogs" and takes place on April 23. Please come and join us if you can!



From left, Sassy, Katie, Lizzy and Shelby (on table) at our letterboxing event last year. This year's event is sure to be a lot of fun!

Troop 219—CT—New England Explorers

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



Danica Joy and Zora DSA with a geocache they found.

2016 is going to be a great year. We have started off with several energizing hikes—winter doesn't hold us back! In the beginning of January, we went hiking and geocaching at Connecticut College Arboretum.



Zora DSA with our sparkly find.

Later in January, Zora, Wyatt and Danica Joy spent an afternoon geocaching at Stenger Park in Waterford. One of the best geocaches we found was filled with "diamonds". All three pups got a diamond to carry home with them.



Zora with her new badge and her little sister Danica, who had to get in on the action.

Troop 219 is proud to announce that Zora DSA has earned the first badge in our Troop for 2016. Zora has earned the coveted **DSA Service badge** after many years of hard work.



Almost the whole group are ready to go!

In February, Zora, Wyatt, Danica Joy and Ollie went hiking at Haley Farm. We explored some corners of the park that we hadn't found before.



Wyatt DSA and Danica Joy running down the trail.

The CT Department of Environmental Energy and Protection (DEEP) has announced a 2016 Sky's the Limit Challenge. Several members of Troop 219 completed the 2015 challenge and we are really excited about this year's challenge. In 2016 the challenge will highlight bodies of water: lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, canals, wetlands and Long Island Sound. Participants in this friendly competition will once again have the opportunity to receive a medallion for hiking ten of 16 designated locations.

Troop 219—CT (cont.)

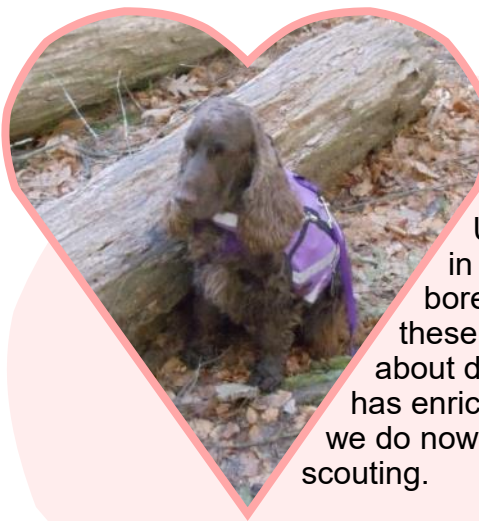


Zora DSA and Danica Joy
and their new favorite hiking buddy.

At the end of February, Troop 219 started the challenge with a hike at Devil's Hopyard State park. We hiked 3.5 miles, to the vista. We had a great time, checking out the trails, the river, and all the signs of spring. We also found a geocache along the way.



Our hiking group at the vista



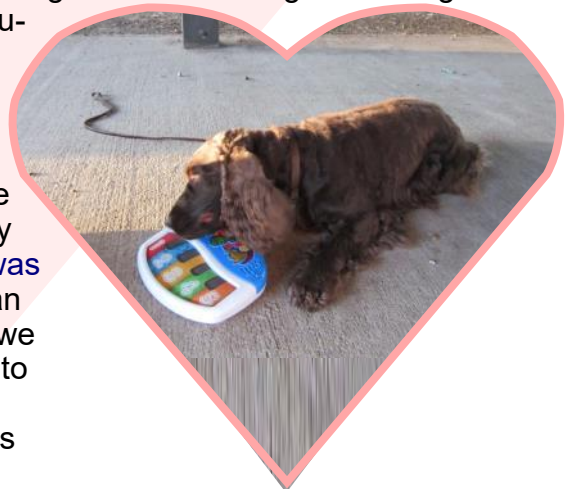
Wyatt DSA

by Lori White

Wyatt and I started our lives together in the world of AKC and UKC bench show competition. He also has taken multiple classes in competition obedience, rally and agility over the years. But alas, boredom set in for me as I have competed for more than 20 years in these venues and the financial burden became too much. Then I heard about dog scouts. **Dog Scouts** changed our lives. It **enriched us** both. It has enriched the community. We have never spent more time together than we do now and we have developed a bond of love and trust – because of scouting.

Wyatt, DSA earned 5 merit badges in 2015 and we have completed requirements for Letterboxing 2 and Geocaching 2 so far this year. He also has completed the requirements for the Pack Dog Title and once confirmation is complete, will become the first English Cocker Spaniel to achieve this title.

But that is neither here nor there as the BIG achievement is the joy of the journey that we share spending time together and with our beloved Troop 219. I have lived in Connecticut for most of my life, but yet I had never been to Devil's Hopyard, Haley Farm, the Sheep Farm, or ConnCollege Arboretum or other places! Wyatt and I have spent time geocaching and letterboxing and hiking in these places. For the first time ever, we took part in a community clean up event and rang the bell for the Salvation Army as we acquired community service time. We manned a booth with our troop at the grand opening of Pet Value in Groton and spread the good word about scouts and responsible pet ownership. Wyatt has learned to play a piano, shake hands, roll over, speak, sit up. He knows more tricks than any other dog I have ever owned. **Teaching was fun. Learning was fun.** Dog Scout motto: "Our dog's lives are much shorter than our own, let's help them enjoy their time with us as much as we can." Who can argue with that? There are so many badges to work towards, and we look forward to exploring new things, learning, loving, and helping others as we continue our joyous journey of dog scout fun.



Contact Dog Scouts of America

Website: Dogscouts.org

Facebook: facebook.com/DogScouts

Yahoo Discussion List:

pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/DSA_TalkList

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(Also for Dog Scout Calendar, Sparky's Camp Store, Dog Scout Camp (MI), Camp Scholarships)

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

Dog Scout Obituaries: Chris Kloski — ChrisBill1966@gmail.com
(Memorial recognition and engraving)

Membership: Julie Benson — bensonjulie@earthlink.net

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

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

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Recording Secretary: Julie Benson — bensonjulie@earthlink.net

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Trail Dog Titles: Kelly Ford — DSA.Troop219@yahoo.com
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Website/Communications: Sonja Klattenberg — webadmin1@dogscouts.org
(Also for newsletter distribution)

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."

