

The Dog Scout Scoop

Official Newsletter ~ Dog Scouts of America

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

Volume 27 Issue 1 March/April 2024

DSA Paw-lympics Has begun!



The Lane lads, Trevor & Tegan, commemorate International Harry Potter Day as part of DSA Paw-lympics Paws-For-Pics.

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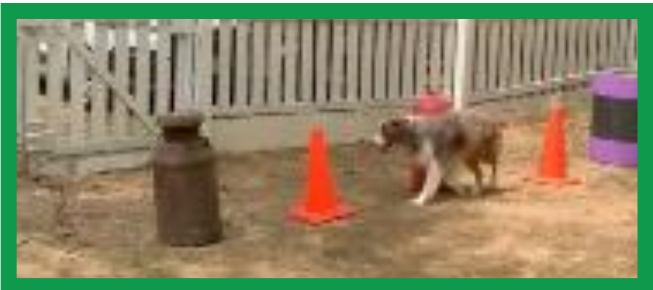
Deadline: for the next newsletter is
June 1

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

New Virtual Camp!

DSA Paw-lympics

DSA Paw-lympics has begun and will run the whole month of May! Participants are posting their pics and videos to the private Facebook group, and we're looking forward to seeing their progress towards **clearer** communication, **quicker** responses, and a **closer** partnership.



2023 Troop Recognition

TOP DOG TROOPS

Recognized for attaining the highest level of involvement with Dog Scouts of America, and in recognition of the troop's outstanding example of knowledge sharing and community service, and the successful demonstration of what can be achieved using positive training methods.



Troop	Troop Name		Troop Leader
217	The Motor City K9s	MI	Sally Hoyle
101	Northern Michigan Trail Blazers	MI	Fay Reid
119	Lone Star Paws Squad	TX	Cindy & Mart Ratliff

TREASURE TROOPS

Recognized for providing invaluable opportunities to enhance the human-canine bond, and for being a treasured resource in the promotion of the vision and mission of Dog Scouts of America.



Troop	Troop Name		Troop Leader
198	SF South/Bay Area Troop 198	CA	Carlotta Gumbin/ Leah Lane
188	DSA Troop 188	CT	Sherry Throop
150	Dog Scout Troop 150 of Arkansas	AK	Sharon Gruetzmacher

TORCH TROOPS



Recognized for their superior level of involvement with Dog Scouts of America, and for shining a light on the benefits of activities which promote canine enrichment and responsible dog ownership.

Troop	Troop Name		Troop Leader
183	Paws Pack 183	FL	Shirley Conley
237	East Bay Dog Scouts Troop 237	CA	Ruth Robinson/ Kristie Iwamoto

Congratulations!

New Dog Scouts! Congratulations!

By Sally Hoyle, DSA President

It's time to welcome the first members of the Dog Scout Class of 2024.

Please join me in celebrating the accomplishments of these dogs and their handlers. They have achieved something special in earning the Dog Scout title and are just beginning their DSA journeys. It will be exciting to see the badges these dogs will earn in the future.

I know others are just starting to work on the skills needed for the Dog Scout title and look forward to seeing the Class of 2024 grow throughout the year!



Kyra Haller, Troop 101
Bay City, MI



Halley Turnbow, Troop 119
Mansfield, TX



Terra Lamphear-Cook, Troop 243
Stevens Point, WI



Correction:

My apologies, Dani Vogley, Quilcene, WA, was incorrectly named in the last *The Scoop*.

The Editor

Badge Bulletin & Title Tales

By Kristie Iwamoto (Maurice's Mom)



Have you thought about earning a new title this year? Here are the Trial Titles earned by our Dog Scouts from September 2023 to March 2024:

Trail Dog

Zebi's Some Kind of Wonderful Almann (UT9K)

Jasmine Burgess (UT)

Henry Doak (TDX)

Maurice Iwamoto (UT)

Jax Long (TDX)

Molly Long (TDX)

Goldy Reid (TDX/UT)

Agent Little Nellie Roller (TDX)

Veda Taylor (TD/TDX/UT) *[pictured]*

Patch Walker (UT11K/UT12K)



Pack Dog

Logan Mulligan

Letterbox Dog

Bruno Hoyle (LBD)

Jax Long (LBX)

Molly Long (LBX)

If you're interested in learning more about Trail Titles, please visit our website's [Trail Dog Titles](#) page, and if you have any questions at all, feel free to email me at titles@dogscouts.org

OncoK9 Pet DX

By Sheri Throop, Troop 188

Indiana and Hudson, Luke Robinson's two Great Pyrenees, Luke (the founder of Puppy Up), Sheri (author), Lucy, and Ricky



Life is made up of a series of journeys, for those of us lucky enough these journeys include canine companions. My journey with Dog Scouts started almost 20 years ago when Lucy, my standard poodle, led me to Dog Scouts. She also introduced me to K9 cancer and the Puppy UP organization. I discovered Puppy Up the same way I

found Dog Scouts, searching the internet for information that would help improve the life of Lucy and my other poodle, Ricky. Puppy Up introduced me to Dr. Andi Flory, Chief Medical Officer of PetDX. Dr. Flory had a canine patient named Poppy who spurred the development of OncoK9 DX and OncoK9 Screen, the liquid biopsy technology now offering dog parents a new choice in the battle against canine cancer. When I stumbled upon OncoK9 and the liquid biopsy technology I will admit my heart jumped...with joy. Joy that I just needed to share with my fellow Dog Scout Parents because I believe you all feel the way I do especially after the memorial online event we held to remember the Scouts who have passed including my Lucy. I also felt joy because I believe that this advance in the fight against cancer can mean better outcomes in the treatment of canine cancer because of the earlier detection of cancer. Read on to find out what I learned during my journey.

Cancer Touches Everyone – it was a slogan I encountered in Puppy Up. Many of us have had a dog with cancer or know of one for in fact cancer is the leading cause of death in dogs. Our dogs tend to be stoic when it comes to their health. By the time, they show us that there is a health problem it often is in an advanced stage, making treatment more involved and expensive. In the realm of veterinary medicine, the search for non-invasive, sensitive, and specific tests for the early detection of cancer in dogs has been a pivotal area of focus. This quest for precision has led to the development of liquid biopsy technology, which is set to revolutionize the field by offering a way to detect cancer in its earliest stages through a simple blood test, before any clinical signs are even evident. Enter the now available OncoK9 DX.

The OncoK9 DX uses liquid biopsy technology, an innovative approach that enables non-invasive detection of cancer biomarkers circulating in a dog's bloodstream.

This method offers a minimally invasive alternative to traditional tissue biopsies, allowing for earlier and more accessible detection of cancer. OncoK9 is a multi-cancer detection test, designed to detect thirty of the cancers that afflict our furry kids. This means that with just a blood sample, we can look for a cancer signal originating from distinct types of cancer including the most common cancers seen in practice: lymphoma, osteosarcoma, hemangiosarcoma, histiocytic sarcoma, mammary gland carcinoma, malignant melanoma, mast cell tumors, soft tissue sarcoma and anal sac adenocarcinoma.

When cancer cells are present in a dog's body, they shed certain molecules called biomarkers into the bloodstream. The OncoK9 DX test detects these biomarkers, providing insights into the presence and type of cancer, even before clinical symptoms manifest. By analyzing a small blood

Liquid Biopsy Technology

Liquid biopsy technology refers to the non-invasive analysis of various bodily fluids, such as blood or urine, to detect and watch various conditions, including cancer. The use of liquid biopsies in dogs builds upon the foundation laid by similar developments in human medicine, where it has shown promise in detecting and characterizing various cancers.

OncoK9 Pet DX (Continued)

sample, veterinarians can gain valuable information about a dog's cancer status, facilitating timely intervention and treatment.

Recently, Dr. Andi Flory, Chief Medical Officer of PetDX, introduced the OncoK9 Screen, a new screening test built upon the foundation of OncoK9 DX technology. The OncoK9 Screen further enhances our ability to detect cancer in dogs, offering an initiative-taking approach to canine healthcare.

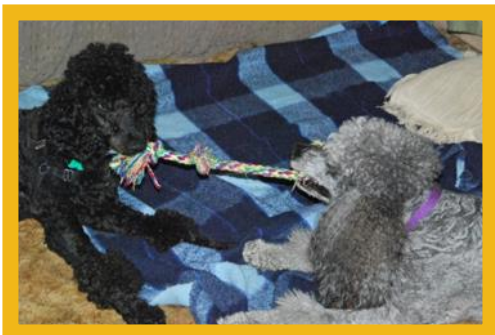
The OncoK9 Screen can help a veterinarian identify cancer in dogs before it progresses to advanced stages. By utilizing liquid biopsy technology, this test offers a minimally invasive means of monitoring a dog's health and detecting potential cancerous changes. The ability to detect cancer at an early stage, often before it has spread or caused significant harm, can significantly impact treatment outcomes and the overall well-being of our beloved canine companions.

As dog parents, our priority is to ensure the health and happiness of our four-legged friends. With advancements like OncoK9 DX and the new OncoK9 Screen, we have powerful tools at our disposal to detect and combat cancer in dogs. By incorporating these tools into our dog's annual physicals, we can provide our furry companions with the best possible care, giving them the chance for a longer, healthier life. When to start adding one of these tests depends on age, weight, and breed(s). The OncoK9 Cancer SAFE™ (**Screening Age For Early detection**) tool uses data from over 3,000 cancer-diagnosed dogs to recommend the age at which it may be useful to start annual cancer screening for your dog.

With the invaluable contributions of researchers, veterinarians, and organizations like PetDX, we are moving closer to a world where canine cancer can be detected early, treated effectively, and, where more dogs can live longer, healthier lives, helping us as Dog Scout Parents live our Dog Scout Motto - "Our dogs' lives are much shorter than ours – let's help them enjoy their time with us as much as we can." Not only learning about this innovative technology gives us the opportunity to follow our Dog Scouts motto – "Let us learn new things that we may be more helpful. ", (written from the point of view of our scouts) but what better way to be helpful than to learn about advances available in canine health care that can help us give our scouts longer healthier lives.

Sources:

1. Breaking Cancer News <https://breakingcancernews.com/2023/09/26/are-cancer-treatments-going-to-the-dogs-a-new-liquid-biopsy-offers-early-cancer-detection-for-mans-best-friend>
2. "Validation of OncoK9, a liquid biopsy test for detection of canine cancer" - <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0266623>
3. Pet DX - <https://petdx.com>
4. Information for pet parents - <https://petdx.com/pet-parents/>
5. Fuzzybutts & Friends <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1928374/14453068-s3-episode-4-dr-andi-flory-petdx?t=0> a podcast
6. Pet DX Cancer SAFE Tool - <https://cancersafe.petdx.com/>



PetDX: Empowering Pet Parents

PetDX, the organization behind the development and distribution of the OncoK9 DX and the new OncoK9 Screen, is committed to empowering pet parents with access to innovative diagnostic tools. Through their website and dedicated resources for pet owners, they aim to provide comprehensive information about the OncoK9 Screen and its potential impact on the early detection of cancer in dogs. By fostering knowledge and understanding, PetDX looks to enable pet parents to take proactive steps in safeguarding their pets' health.

Scout Scoop & Troop Tales



Troop 183—FL ~ Paws Pack 183

Shirley Conley—Troop Leader



In December Troop 183 had fun searching for rats with a Barn Hunt activity and in January we met for lunch and a discussion on our 2024 activity plans.

Since it's a favorite for our dogs, we've scheduled another Barn Hunt for March—hopefully Florida's summer won't have kicked in too early!

In April we're planning a doggy swim date and anticipate finally adding a rubber coating to the regulation sized A-frame that Troop member, Dave, made for us quite some time ago!

In May we have two activities planned: a humans-only pontoon boat ride followed by lunch and later in May we will hold a Paw-lympics training date where we will have fun exploring some of the activities from DSA's international virtual event.

Troop 243—WI ~ Dog Scouts of Central WI

Renea Dahms—Troop Leader

In December Troop 243 had our Holiday Party. We played pick your favorite treat games, worked on Dog Scout Testing items and set our preliminary 2024 schedule.

An agility outing is planned for April 14.





Troop 101—MI ~ Northern Michigan Trail Blazers

Fay Reid—Troop Leader

December Christmas Party

After exchanging doggie gifts, the kiddos had a wonderful time picking their own gifts, we discussed DMT from Absolute Dogs referring to: **D**istracti**M**, **M**arker, **T**reat—Get your dog to look at something (or if they are distracted), have a marker word that gets your dog to focus on you, treat as you walk away from the distraction.



Our newest members, Cathy with Jasper enjoying his



Remy is very sure she wants this one!!!



Booker used his scent training to find the one with of course...I found balls mom!!!!



Kyra takes her time choosing just the right one.



I can spin this!

Each troop member got a turn at spinning the wheel (idea we got from troop 188 (CT) that had different behaviors on it and once they completed the behavior, they got to choose a toy from a pail.



Booker spun the "Walk on Loose



OH NO Santa needs help!!! The dogs only had 1 minute to get the packages to a spot (however they could) so they could be packed up in a bag for Santa!! And Santa requires well-behaved pups so they had to keep the leash loose while their moms packaged up the presents in 30 seconds.

 Troop 101—MI (cont.)

Since this is Michigan and the weather can be questionable at times, we decided to start Mall Walking on Thursdays for anyone in the troop that can attend. Our new jackets got some attention.



Goldy visiting Santa making sure she's on the nice list



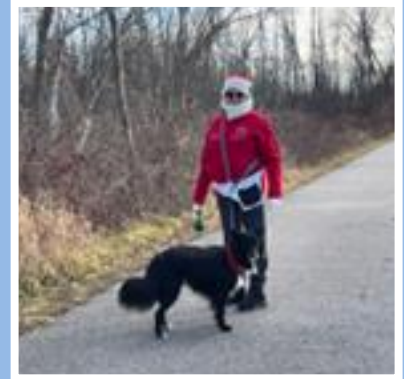
Cathy & Jasper



Valerie & Kyra

December 13, 2024—Turkey Trot & Gobbler

Troop walk on a new trail for some of us along Hotchkiss Rd.



Congratulations to our newest Dog Scout: Kyra Haller, DSA



Merry Christmas Kyra!

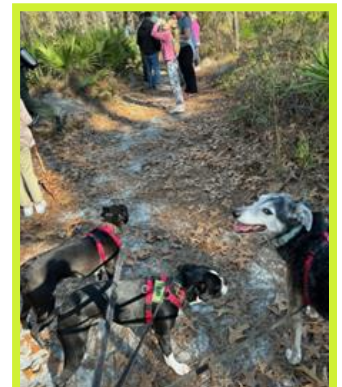
Troop 101's newest Dog Scout, Kyra continues to show her intelligence by quickly learning new skills and embracing the DSA mission.

Along with her mom, Valerie, Kyra learned to play the banjo, paint, and both are loving letterboxing



Troop 101 rang in the new year taking the first hike of the Year at a new park for us. It was a little cold at 28 degrees but we had a few brave souls.

Part of our troop walked at Laura S. Walker State Park GA where it was a little warmer.



January & February Meetings

We work on some Manners and Rally FrEe. All Rally FrEe courses start with a Heel forward and ends with a Bow. Either of these can be on the right or left side so make sure you practice both. Rally FrEe is mainly verbal only so fade out the visual cues as soon as you can.

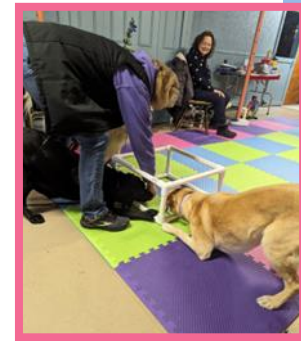
Kyra and her band members
Remy on the piano and
Booker on the drums!



Sign #32: Bow: Dog drops his chest toward the floor while keeping his hind end up. Dog performs the bow in the same position on approach to sign. Dog and handler must then pass the Bow sign to complete the course. Goldy says to remind everyone to not celebrate too early otherwise you lose points like we have done a few times.



Jax demonstrating how he learned Bow



Bow
(2 for 1)

Some of the ways to teach this are: Catch them stretching when they get up from a nap, Lure them with a treat between their front paws further back, have front feet in a box & get them to lean forward, lure their front end down but throw treat before they can lay down



Valerie teaching Kyra a stand with a hand touch

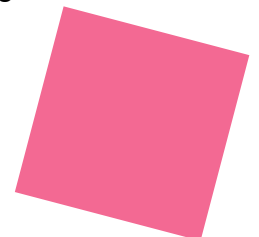
Sign #4: Sit Stand: Dog performs a sit in position and then moves directly into a stand before moving forward. There should be a brief pause while the dog is in the sit and again in the stand. Dog should change behaviors without changing position relative to the handler. ALT EXEMPT



Kyra learning to go around Valerie's body

Sign #15: Circle Around Clockwise: Dog circles handler in a clockwise direction one revolution, beginning and ending in left heel.

Sign #16: Circle Around Counter-Clockwise: Dog circles handler in a counter-clockwise direction one revolution, beginning and ending in right heel





Troop 101—MI (cont.)

Sign # 21a: Switch Back:

With dog in left heel, dog and handler perform a 180 turn to the left, simultaneously, and independent of each other. Upon completion of the 180 turn, the dog will be in right heel.

Sign #21b: Switch Back:

With dog in right heel, dog and handler perform a 180 turn to the right, simultaneously, and independent of each other. Upon completion of the 180 turn, the dog will be in left heel.



Booker demonstrating the switch back



Remy learning to turn with Vickie

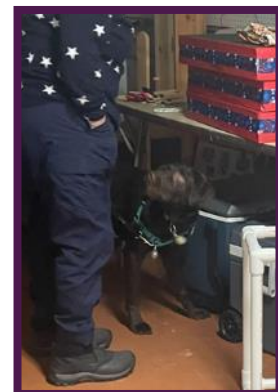
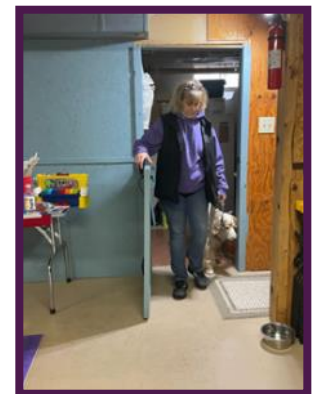
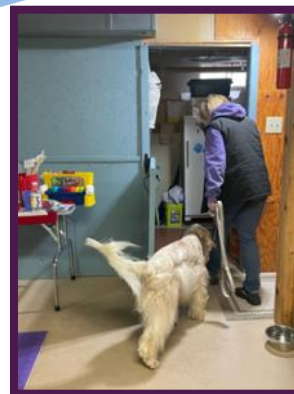


(we are walking the same way then we both turn in the same direction and end up heading the opposite direction. This is a change in direction sign.)

If you or your troop is interested in Rally FrEe check out Rally Freestyle Elements for all the signs and rules.: www.rallyfree.com/rally-free-signs-2016

We also worked on the Manners badge with going to our place, wait to go thru doorway and look back to us on other side, and touch the hand.

With Valentines day we worked on sign language for I Love You. We also had some scented hearts hidden for the dogs to find.



Troop 101—MI (cont.)

Booker & Goldy represented Dog Scouts by attending a Business expo to let people know about Dog Scouts, the MI camp and the virtual camp coming up. They did a demonstration on manners, playing instruments, how dogs can help by alerting to sounds and finding items lost like phones.



Molly worked on her Clean Up America 2 (Poop) badge. We went to a small park and picked up 100 piles! That's a lot of poop!! She got her badge in one day!

Attention all Letterboxers!!

**Power of Pawsitivity 2.0: Caped Crusaders
Letterboxing Event (AtlasQuest #4913)
is coming May 18, 2024.**

Members of Troop 101 along with Martha Thierry & Sally Hoyle from Troop 217 are hosting this event to raise food, toys, treats and donations to help animals in need.

Proceeds will go to local animal shelters!

Join us if you can!

[Power of Pawsitivity 2.0 Caped Crusaders | Atlas Quest](#)





Troop 119—TX ~ Lone Star Paws Squad

Cindy Ratliff—Troop Leader

Troop 119 has had a great start to 2024 with new members and new troop dogs!

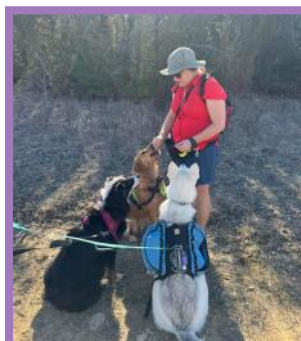
In January we started the year off with an Urban Hike through the UTA campus in Arlington. We had a great turnout for a beautiful day out with our friends and dogs. The dogs did a great job hiking through the city together, crossing over some strange grates and surfaces, doing leave its with trash (which had to be planted because the campus was so clean!) and politely passing others on our route. The dogs were able to log 2 miles toward their Urban Hiking badge and enjoyed a great day with their humans.

AND, we got to celebrate our newest troop Dog Scout, Halley Turnbow, who had recently completed all her Dog Scout requirements. Proud mom is Shaun Turnbow!



In February we had planned a 3-mile nature backpacking hike at a new, cool nature trail within the city of Fort Worth.

The Texas ever-unpredictable weather surprised us with a temperature in the upper 80s with no cloud cover. As a result, many of the dogs decided to ditch the idea of a backpack and we shortened the trek to a 2-miler instead of 3. We came with plenty of water and were able to enjoy a bright, sunny day on the trails.



Troop 119—TX (cont.)

March brought an annual troop favorite – our annual Easter Egg Hunt! We had another beautiful (but not as toasty) day. It was a record breaking Hunt this year as the bunny helpers put out a whole lot of freeze-dried liver filled eggs. How much is a whole lot of eggs? 1,074! And the most incredible part of that is that 1,070 were found and recovered!

Dogs won prizes for finding the most as well as second and third place as many. Kira & her mom, Leah Franczek, won the top egg prize, collecting 103 eggs!

We also had a little costume contest for the most festive participants with top prize going to the Hip Hop Crew of Rouen, Rainey and their humans Debbie & Tim Baker.

This year we got to have an extra big celebration as Lacey's mom, Maureen Callahan, brought pupcakes and human cupcakes so we could all celebrate Lacey's 18th birthday this month!! Lacey is a rescue so she's keeping her exact birthday a secret, but best guess is that she turned 18 around March 15, give or take. She has slowed down but still enjoys her troop outings!



Troop 157—FL ~ Broward Paw Patrol

Teresa Irvine



Letterboxing and Hiking at Markham Park

On Sunday, February 11th several of us met up at Markham Park in Sunrise, FL to create and plant our DSA Troop Valentine Letterbox. Dawn Hanna scouted out the park ahead of time to find the best place to plant the letterbox. It was important to find a spot off the beaten path so it would only be found by using clues and Dawn found the perfect place near a pond and running water.



Once we created the letterbox, Dawn and River, Monica, Biscoff and Bubbles, Shari and Penny, Teresa and Ripley set off through the native Florida Pine Trees to plant our DSA Troop Valentine Letterbox (www.atlasquest.com/boxes/clue/?boxId=363451).



Thankfully Dawn brought all the necessary gear (gloves, trowel, and axe) so the letterbox could be positioned perfectly.



Afterwards we took a nice hike with our dogs in another area of the park, which was partially shaded and was enjoyed by all.



Heritage Park Troop Meet Up

On Saturday, February 24th we got together with former troop leader Cindi Stone, who moved to Louisiana several years ago, for a group walk at Heritage Park. It was great to catch up with her during her visit to South Florida with her dogs Nola & Citrine.

Also, Nola earned her DSA title during this trip, and Citrine was checked off on her Honorary Pup Scout title. Citrine is happy to be the youngest member of DSA Troop 157. Both were able to do a little work on the next badge while at the park. We are thrilled that Cindi, Nola, Citrine & her other dogs Roxus & Kenzie are rejoining Troop 157 as long distance members!



Lastly, as part of the meet up we were able to take a group photo of those of us who participated in the 2023 Turkey Trot with our medals (Christine and Clover, Dawn and River, Shari and Penny, Teresa and Ripley).



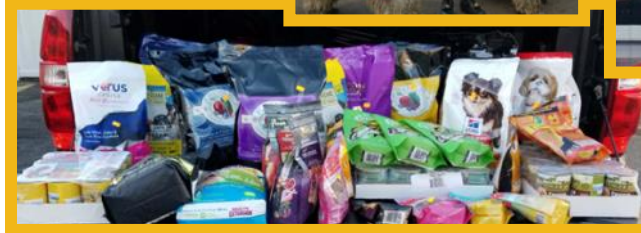
Troop 188—CT ~ DSA Troop 188

Michelle Lake—Co-Leader

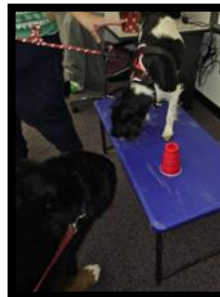
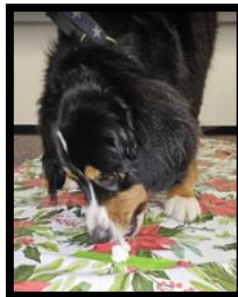
A busy December started with our annual Pet Photos with Santa event. Having had to cancel last year due to a wind storm, this year the weather cooperated by giving us a warm and sunny day! We had a long line of kids and pets during the time we were there. Not only dogs came, a cat, llamas and even a goat came this year! This is our largest fundraiser, and we are thankful for the enormous support that allowed us to donate a large amount of quality food to a local pet pantry.



Our holiday celebration featured “Dipsmas” where we brought different savory and sweet dips to share. The dogs had a Yankee swap as well.



Then we had fun playing “Rein-Dog” games including whipped cream races, the shell game, recalls and leave its.



A group outing to the Lobster Trap Tree was next up. We managed to find the buoy we privately sponsored! We are pointing to it in the photo.

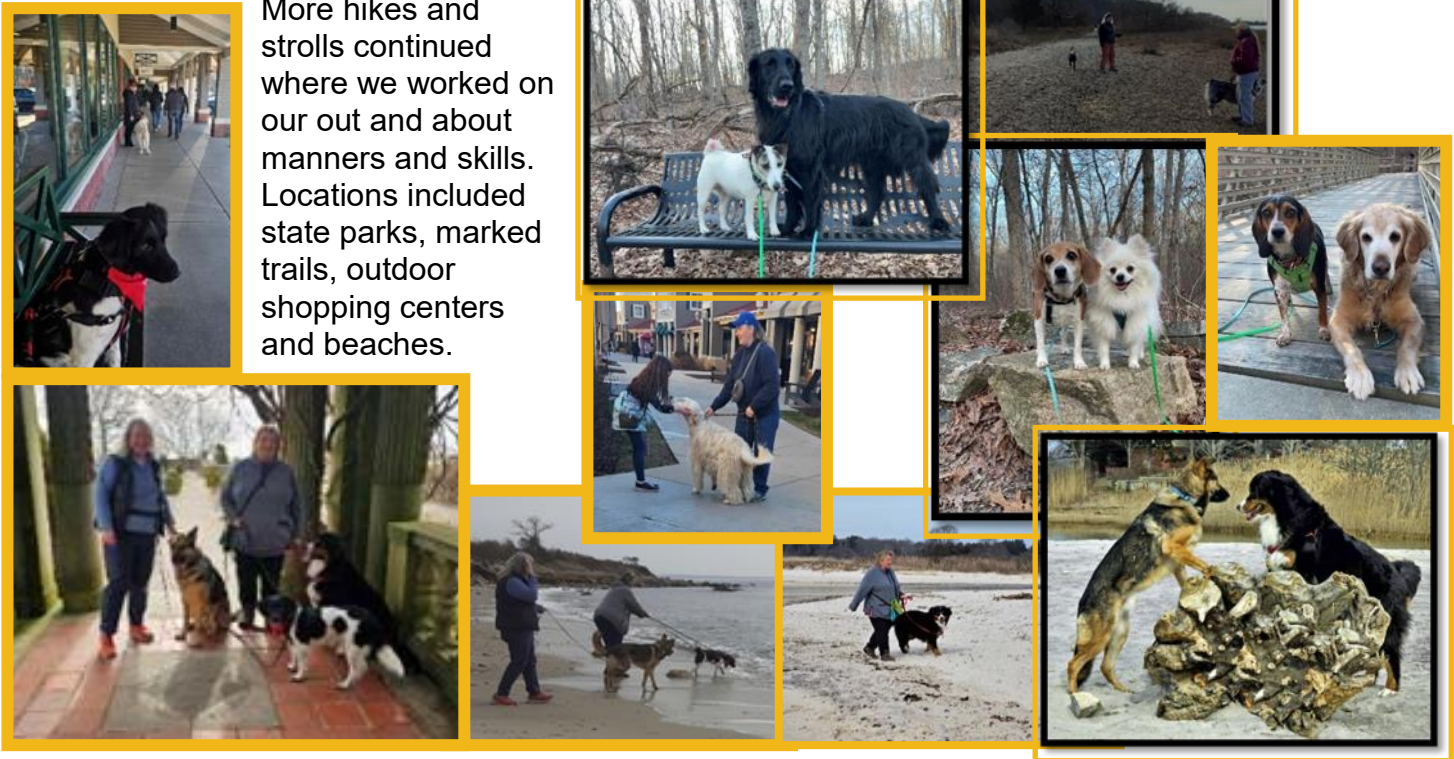


We said goodbye to 2023 with a group hike.

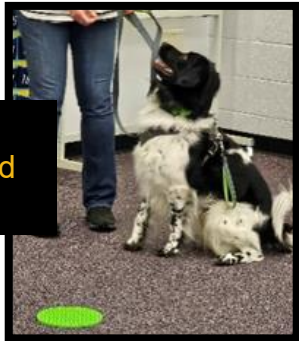
Troop 188—CT (Cont.)

Then we welcomed 2024 with a troop walk at a state park.

More hikes and strolls continued where we worked on our out and about manners and skills. Locations included state parks, marked trails, outdoor shopping centers and beaches.



We began a carting workshop starting with beginner movements and concepts. Strengthening basic leash walking, backup, turns, stops and stands.



A Level 1 K9 Fitness course had members working hard. Skills like tuck-sits, kick-back stands, rear-end awareness and core strength were all covered and many saw improvements in their dogs.



Congratulations to Trick Dog Champion Doug!



The troop was invited to a 4-H Teen Leadership Weekend. Their theme for the weekend was using your gifts to impact the community. We talked about how our dogs help our communities and that you don't have to be perfect to make a difference.





Troop 198—CA ~ SF South /Bay Area Troop 198

Janet Gee

This winter, we held training sessions, mall pack walkabout and gladly participated in Morgan Hill's Holiday of Lights parade, which was rained out last year, but had great weather this year. We decided not to hold our annual Howl-a-Day party due to the mystery canine respiratory illness circulating, and happily had no reports of it among our troop.

The Morgan Hill Lighted Holiday Parade sponsored by the Kiwanis is a fund raiser for local charities that our troop is proud to support and it puts everyone in the holiday spirit of giving.

Here's Christina and her Gumbin Golden, Crystal, Luna and Bailey in their holiday attire, while Mark, Kim, and Gumbin offspring, Juni, prepare to follow their leads

Rita and Izzy are ready to rock and roll

Mark and Juni, Patty and Sprocket, and Leah and Trevor just about ready to parade, as the sun sets

Rita and Izzy are lit and joined by Richard and Barkley, while Leah, Trevor, Sprocket and Mark waited to follow their lead



Juni glowingly keeps watch on our festive float



Our pack is gathered and ready to light up the night

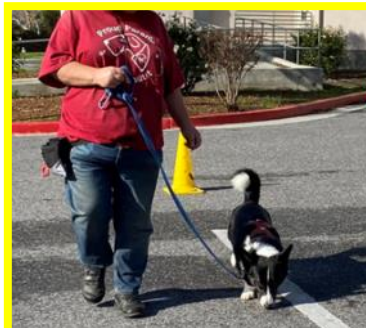
Training at San Jose's Los Paseos Park

In January, our Troop co-leader Leah demonstrated requirements for the First Aid badge, including what to do if we arrive to an accident, the importance of training our dogs to wear a muzzle, what to have in our emergency kits, and hands-on practice with applying an emergency muzzle.



Here's her ready-for-anything kit, and Trevor modeling his muzzle that matches his coat

We also worked on loose leash walking alongside weaving and turning around cones



Crystal shows off her sit/stay and amazing self-control





Troop 198—CA (cont.)

Training at San Jose's Los Paseos Park



In February, Troop co-leader Carlotta led us and first-timers Kattia with Buffy, Bill with Shadow, John with Nico, Maggie and her family with Oliver, through loose leash, parkour and agility exercises.



Pack Walks at the Mall and Park

We had two training walks at Santana Row mall to practice Urban Hiking badge skills around other dogs and people.



We practiced our sit/stay at multiple locations.

First up were the four-legged, Sadie and Scout doing a great job for mom Sharon



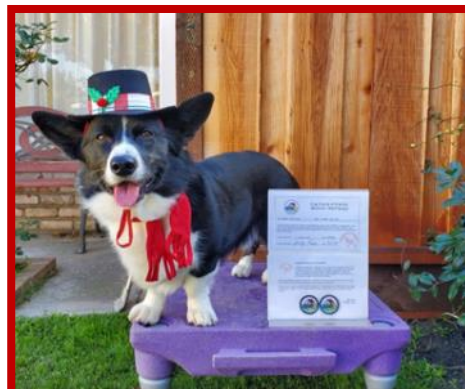
Then we practiced sit/stay and come from the furthest distances on a pack walk so far. Here Juni races from dad Mark to mom Kim, while Crystal with mom Carlotta, Trevor with mom Leah and Cider with dad Rod stick with sit/stay, though sorely tempted



Then we all practiced our sit/stay together at our fav spot for distractions from cars and people.

Izzy with mom Rita and Jelly with mom Janet joining the others

Accomplishments



Crystal Gumbin and Trevor Lane both received their Obstacle 1 badges, earned after we did last quarter's Turkey Trot and practiced on the agility equipment.



Troop 217—MI ~ The Motor City K9's

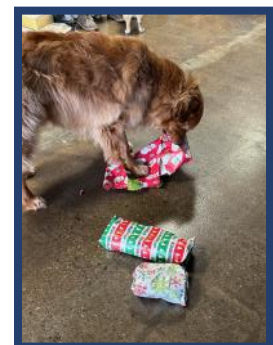
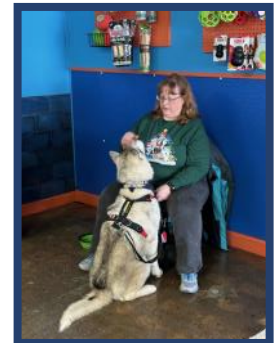
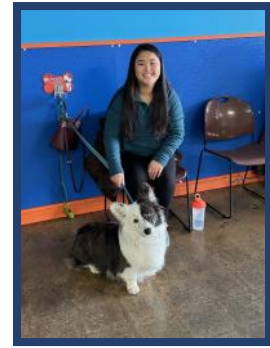
Sally Hoyle—Troop Leader

Parties, Parkour and Community Service – with a little scent work thrown in too. That's what Troop 217 has been up to in the new year.

We started the year with our annual post-holiday Holiday Party where we got together for good food, fun and games. We did our traditional gift exchange, where each dog brings a gift to give to another. We put all the gifts in a pile and one at a time each dog selects and then unwraps his chosen gift. This is a lot of fun for the dogs and results in laughs.

We slipped some training into the party festivities by playing a couple of scent games. First, we set up the muffin tin game and paired up 2 dogs to see which could remove all the balls and get the treats out the fastest. The winner of this round went on to face a dog from another heat and we proceeded until we had a champion. We also played a scent game where a scent in a vial was hidden in one of 6 holiday centerpieces placed in a line on the floor. Each handler and dog attempted to locate which held the scent. Several of the dogs found this to be a rather easy challenge but they all had fun trying.

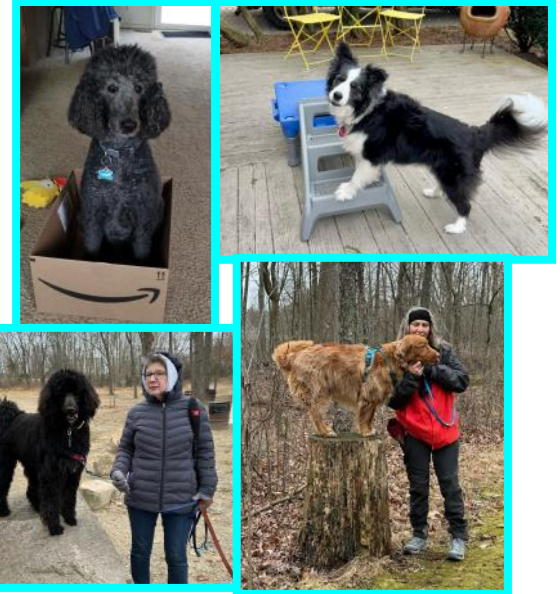
After all this activity the dogs were tired, so they got a break while we played a human game where each person took a turn attempting to bounce a ping pong ball into a muffin tin in attempts to win prizes. It's not as easy as you might think, especially when trying to get the ball in a particular muffin cup to win the biggest prize! Nevertheless, everyone had fun trying and our party finished on a successful note.



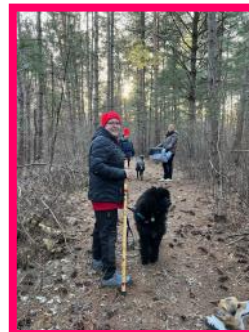


Troop 217—MI (cont.)

We have focused our monthly Zoom meetings throughout the winter on the Parkour badge, where we have been reviewing 2-3 requirements each month. The requirements we reviewed each time were the ones assigned to work on in the coming month. Then, people sent in video clips of the dogs completing each skill for review. Sometimes dogs actually demonstrated the requirements live on our next Zoom meeting. This approach has been very successful with this approach. Two dogs have already earned the badge with quite a few others expected to complete the requirements in the next month. We are looking forward to getting together as soon as weather permits to take a Parkour hike.



Winter in Michigan brings one of our favorite opportunities for community service which is placing the lanterns for a lantern hike at one of our local state recreation areas. The lantern hikes are managed by a very small group of park volunteers, so they always appreciate our help. We have done this for several years and love that we get to do the same 2-mile hike and be helpful within our community at the same time. We have devised a method of loading up sturdy hiking sticks with the lanterns and that way we can carry them all in one fell swoop. This year we had our best weather yet for the task, with clear skies, a full moon, no snow and only moderately cold temperatures.



Right now we have dogs in our troop working on many different badges, either singularly or in pairs, including Urban Hiking, First Aid, Letterboxing, Geocaching, Dog Care, Travel Safety, Art of Shaping, Tricks and Naked Dog. We look forward to finishing up all of these badges this spring!

Rainbow Bridge

Crystal, aka Hylane's Haunting Melody CGC RN THD NW1 NW2(P) TKN, DSA, passed over the Rainbow Bridge at 15-1/4 years old, 10/29/2008 – 2/13/2024.

We decided to get another Cardigan Welsh Corgi when our first corgi, Frodo, was about 2. He was very fond of other dogs, but not strange people, so my dreams of having him be a therapy dog were never to be fulfilled as he preferred to protect the house. I met a Corgi breeder at a Corgi get-together; she mentioned that she had a blue merle girl, just over a year, that she was thinking of placing as she was too small for showing in conformation. A couple of months later, Crystal entered our lives. Frodo adored her from the moment he saw her; we got him a girlfriend -- both were fixed, but you could see his delight! At first, she ignored this pesky boy, but they shortly became the best of friends.



She started pet therapy work in July of 2010, a little over a year and a half later, and never looked back. She visited convalescent/skilled care facilities, schools, libraries where children read to her, high schools and colleges for stress relief, Ronald McDonald House, homes for foster children, hospice patients, [San José Mineta International Airport](#), a crisis relief visit for people after the shooting at the 2019 Gilroy Garlic Festival, and many others, as she was registered in [Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services](#) and [Love on a Leash](#). We had many years of "Oh, I love your Aussie/Corgi mix!" and explaining she was actually a blue merle Cardigan Welsh Corgi.

In 2011, we attended our first Dog Scouts meeting, loved the idea, and attended all the meetings from then on. We also dabbled in Obedience; she got her Rally Novice title, but she was not particularly fond of obedience, in and of itself. You could see on her face that she thought this was stupid, and didn't know what the point was. So, we pivoted to tracking a bit, then discovered scentwork/nosework, which she loved to do. Crystal got her first two titles, and had a 'Pronounced' on the second title, the only dog that trial to do so. She LOVED finding the odors and signaling to me where they were located. We played a bit with barn hunt but never really got going. She absolutely adored lure coursing, but was too smart for her own good, as she would try to cut the lure off by turning back to catch it at the start, or jumping over fences in the obstacle courses. We had a great deal of fun with all her Dog Scouts friends, and finally achieved Dog Scout status in 2019.



Crystal played with her cats Wembley and Wookiee, mostly ignored the cats who ignored her, and managed to sneak on the table and eat two gingerbread houses and 13 oz. of Hershey's kisses. She could never be trusted around any food, and tied for first at a 'my corgi will eat that' contest -- she ate every single thing offered to her, including pickles. She was intolerant of rude dogs or dogs with rude body language, and would tell them off. After Frodo died, she visibly mourned him; we got Sprocket, at about 5 months old, a couple of months later. She stopped mourning Frodo, although for about a month she pretended that puppy did not exist, even when he was dragging her across the floor by her tail.

Rainbow Bridge (Cont.)

Eventually, they also became good friends and playmates, and she helped him to become a good pet and therapy dog. She was an excellent dog in so many ways; friendly, but hated strangers coming to the door and snarled at FedEx/UPS people, but once we accepted them, she was fine. She rarely slept in my bed since I couldn't trust her anywhere there was cat food, no matter how high off the ground, and she'd swallow cat toys.



Near the end, we could see her physical and mental issues taking a greater and greater toll on her. and decided that the best thing for her would be to help her over the Rainbow Bridge. Making the decision on the other end of things is always so hard, but part of the responsibility of loving pets. She will be very much missed by us!



Rainbow Bridge (Cont.)

Troop 237 lost one of our own recently, our wonderful and exuberant Kobi. Here is a beautiful tribute to him in the words of his mom/owner, Ruth Robinson.

Tribute to Kobi

Kobi, English Cream Golden Retriever, crossed the Rainbow Bridge on March 7, 2024 at the too-young age of 10 years. His name came from the Japanese word, *yorokobi*, which means 'joy'. Kobi was born to be a therapy dog, and his career was working primarily with children of all ages in libraries and elementary schools. He was a Dog Scout with that title and also earned several merit badges. When our troop met for monthly training in a variety of merit badges and other areas, he was our Demo Dog, always willing to show the other doggos what and how to do something. On Pack Walks, Kobi ran zoomies, ran and ran... always the good sport, and thought the best of the best was going for a swim in the cold waters of San Francisco Bay. Puppies could climb all over him, shy dogs could approach without fear. What a guy! Kobi is truly missed and it fills us with gratitude to know he was in our lives.



Contact Dog Scouts of America

Learning new things that we may be more helpful

Website: dogscouts.org

Facebook: facebook.com/DogScouts

Instagram: instagram.com/dogscoutsofamerica/

Youtube: [Dog Scouts of America - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqB8p1Dk1q1q1q1q1q1q1q1q1)

[#dogscoutsofamerica](https://twitter.com/dogscoutsofamerica)

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."

President: Sally Hoyle — president@dogscouts.org

(Also Mini-Camp Mentor, Merit Badge Submission Process)

Dog Scout Camp (MI): Lonnie Olson — DogScoutCamp@gmail.com

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

Dog Scout Obituaries: Chris Kloski — ChrisBill1966@gmail.com

(Memorial recognition and engraving)

Membership: Shirley Conley — membership@dogscouts.org

Troop Administration: troops@dogscouts.org

(Starting a troop/Troop Leader Tests)

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

MERIT BADGE RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Video Evaluation: DSAVideoEval@gmail.com

Evaluator Certification: troops@dogscouts.org

Newsletter: Shirley Conley (Editor) — thescoop@dogscouts.org

TITLES/COMPETITIONS

Titles/Competition Registration Number: Kristie Iwamoto — titles@dogscouts.org

Hosting/Competing: Sally Hoyle — president@dogscouts.org

Website/Communications: Sonja Klattenberg — webadmin1@dogscouts.org

(Also for newsletter distribution)