

GCOC Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

DECEMBER 2009

GREATER COLUMBIA
OBEDIENCE CLUB

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Spring Agility
Trial—April 9-10,
2010. S. Congaree,
SC

Spring Obedience/
Rally Trial—May
15-16, 2010. Co-
lumbia, SC

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GCOC Obedience Trial—January 16-17, 2010, by Kathy Evans

Things are really shaping up for the January trials. We have ordered new matting, ring gates, stanchions, and jumps to replace a lot of our really old equipment. The trial will be in the Hampton Building of the Fairgrounds again. It looks like it is the best building for the winter because it gives us plenty of room to spread out. Let's hope it doesn't rain like it did last year, though.

The premium for the trial is on our website. Remember that we have an early closing of **December 23**. So get your entries in.

We will be having all regular obedience classes and all the optional titling classes. In addition, we will have the following non-regular classes: Pre-Novice, Veterans, Wild Card Novice, Open and Utility. **AND** we are going to have TEAM!

For Rally we will have all the regular rally classes along with the non-regular Rally Novice and Rally Advanced teams. We cannot run a trial without the help of club members so here is how you can help:

Raffle: We need raffle donations of new and gently used items. Please bring them to the January



meeting. Or if you are in the training building at any other time, you can leave your donations there –just remember to label it as a raffle donation for the trial with your name.

Food: We need food donations for the Judges' luncheon both days. On Saturday, we just need sides and dessert to go with the barbeque sandwiches and on Sunday, we need donations of soup, chili, and/or stew, bread, salad, appetizers, and dessert. Please contact Sara Harris if you are able to contribute a dish. All food donations need to be at the trial site by 10:30AM. Our Judges' lunches have been legendary. Let's do it again. **REMEMBER, EVERY MEMBER WHO WORKS THE TRIAL MAY EAT AT THE JUDGES' LUNCH.**

Trophies: The obedience trial is something we do because we love to do it and because our exhibitors love to come to show off their dogs. We do not

make money on the obedience trial. Club members offset the cost of the trial by sponsoring trophies for the classes. We need you to sponsor a class—that means all of the toys and ribbons that we give out to the first four placements in that class. Sponsoring a class is \$25 and as you can see from the list above we have a LOT of classes to cover – 28 obedience classes and 16 Rally classes over two days is over \$1000! If you are able to sponsor a class or make any donation at all toward trophies, contact Caroline Hair.

Stewards: The trials could not run without people volunteering to steward. Again, we have a lot of classes and we need a lot of people to fill in those stewarding spots for each class. We need three stewards per class so that's a LOT of people. If you can steward for obedience in the morning Saturday, Sunday or both days contact Sue Cluxton. If you can steward Rally in the afternoon contact Karen Hoxie. (NO EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY.) We will train all volunteers. For additional information visit: www.gcoc.net



Jemme, Peggy's youngest dog training partner.

President's Letter to GCOC Membership

Peggy Langdon

2009 marked my twentieth year as a planner in my non-dog training world. Most of my clients like to look back, see where they were at the start of the year, see where they are now and set goals for the year ahead. I thought GCOC could benefit from that same process so the purpose of this letter is to remind everyone of the things we accomplished this year as well as asking you to think about the goals for the club for 2010.

We started the year off with a survey to the membership. It was a way for me to get a sense of some of the things you might like to see changed as well as the things you most appreciate and want to retain about the club. The board of directors met for several working meetings through the year and used the results of the survey to guide them in making some changes to club meetings, committees, and programs. As a result of that survey, we began having some meetings at restaurants. We started developing some programs to go along with our meetings. We have also started serving refreshments when the meeting is held at the Club. Our most recent program was on November 5th when we discussed Turid Rugaas' book "On Talking Terms With Dogs: Calming Signals" and viewed sections of the video. The refreshments were superb and the discussion lively and helpful. I would like to see more of these kinds of

events and I hope you do as well. Obedience and Rally classes were offered with consistency and quality. Our instructors and their assistants kept the building in regular use and classes alone brought in enough to pay for the building. On the other hand, without an agility training director we were only able to get two agility classes completed back in the spring and early summer. We need an agility training director who can build a more robust educational program for Agility.

Our trials, both Agility and Obedience, were resounding successes. As you all know, putting on a trial takes a lot of hours of work. Thank you to all who contributed to the efforts. We have always done this well and we continue to run very fine, well respected and well attended trials.

We have a Publicity Chair and you are seeing the very tangible benefits of the work being done on that front. We hope this newsletter becomes something you look forward to each quarter and that it helps keep you informed and connected to GCOC. You should also check out Facebook. The club has a group site complete with photos, discussions, listing of events, and numerous other links and tidbits of information. Now, I know not everyone is a fan of social networking sites like Facebook so we want to also really spruce up our website. We hope that by January 2010

you will see the results of the work in this area.

We have created a facilities committee and though we had to make a second attempt at getting up and functioning, you should be seeing improvements in the condition of the building. At the same time, the board authorized a search committee to check on possible alternative locations to our existing facility. We would like to find something that is reasonably centrally located and able to accommodate both Agility and Obedience. No news on that front just yet.

I have probably missed a great deal of the good things we accomplished in 2009 but I need to mention some of the goals I have for the club and based on the survey and conversations I have had with members all year, you share them as well. I hope that we can re-build our Agility training program, find a place where we all can train and practice year round, provide programs of value to our members and the public, try to offer some seminars, and other opportunities for training not only in Obedience, Rally, and Agility, but also in herding, tracking, freestyle, flyball, field work, carting, etc. At the same time, I think it is crucial that we increase the core of active club members. I sincerely hope that you see the accomplishments of the past year and see ways in which you can contribute to making GCOC an organization that provides value to all its members. Here's to a very successful 2010!

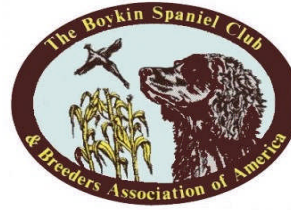


Jake. Boykin Spaniel
co-owned by club
member **Beth Crocker**
& breeder **Patricia**
Watts of Hollow
Creek Kennels in Lees-
ville, SC.

Breed Spotlight: Boykin Spaniel

On December 1, 2009, the AKC recognized the Boykin Spaniel as a breed eligible for full membership. But South Carolinians have recognized this breed for many, many years! Originating in the Upstate area in the early 1900s, the Boykin Spaniel breed began with a small brown spaniel-type dog named Dumpy.

Dumpy fell into the hands of Mr. Whit Boykin for training because he showed an aptitude for hunting. Because Dumpy was smaller than most retriev-



ers, he was an excellent companion in the boat for duck hunting and out in the field as well.

Dumpy's hunting ability has passed along to today's Boykin Spaniels, and convenient size (14-18 inches in height), along with likeable personality traits

make the Boykin Spaniel an ideal family pet, loyal companion, and dedicated competition partner in a variety of dog sporting events.

If you are interested in joining the Boykin Spaniel Club, of America and learning more about the breed, please visit: www.boykinspanielclub.org/

Or if you are interested receiving the quarterly Boykin Spaniel Quarterly, please visit: www.boykinsforever.com/quarterlyjournal.htm

Ready, Set, FLYBALL!! By Maria Tully

Barking dogs, flying dog hair, tennis balls galore, racing light trees, toys, tugs and treats all mean one thing: a flyball tournament is under way!

Flyball is a canine team sport that was invented in California in the late 1970s. In the early 1980s, the North American Flyball Association (NAFA) was formed. There are over 21,200 dogs registered with NAFA with over 176 different breeds, including mixed breed dogs.

Flyball is a relay race with each team composed of four dogs and two alternates. The course consists of a starting line, four hurdles and a spring-loaded flyball box at the end of the line. The height of the hurdles is dependent upon the height of the shortest dog on the team.

Two teams race side by side and the dogs jump over the hurdles and step onto a spring-

loaded box that releases a tennis ball (or some variation). The dog catches the ball and then runs back over the hurdles to the starting point. When one dog crosses the finish line, the next dog starts the course. The first team to have all four dogs run without errors wins the heat and earns points toward the tournament placement and/or titles.

NAFA offers a variety of classes including: regular, multi-breed (four different breeds), open (teams with different flyball club affiliations) and veterans (dogs seven year of age or older).

In 2004 the United Flyball League International formed as another venue for flyball racing. They utilize a different method of measuring a dog's jump height and offer singles and pairs racing in addition to standard and variety (four different breeds) and pick up

teams (teams with different flyball club affiliations).

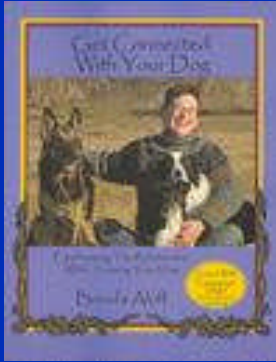
The current NAFA world record is 15.22 seconds and is held by Spring Loaded of Madison Heights, Michigan. The current U-Fli record is 14.963 seconds and is held by Touch N Go of Las Vegas, Nevada.

For more information on flyball, please visit these websites: NAFA, www.flyball.org U-Fli, www.u-fli.com

Flyball Home Page, www.flyballdogs.com

In addition, there are various teams that train and compete here in South Carolina. On Your Bark trains here in Columbia, and the group offers Flyball training for those who are interested. If you are interested in learning the basics of Flyball, please contact me or watch the GCOC website for details on upcoming classes.





Training book by
Brenda Aloff.

BOOK REVIEW BY
PEGGY
LANGDON



Get Connected with Your Dog: Emphasizing the Relationship

While Training with Your Dog. A Book Review by Peggy Langdon.

This book by Brenda Aloff is one that has had a very great influence on my training style and my understanding of how to communicate clearly with my dogs. It was comprehensive, logical and well demonstrated with pictorial sequential illustrations and an accompanying 90 minute DVD. It focuses on improving the relationship with your dog by using “bodywork and space; encouraging teamwork and developing trust and respect”. It has been particularly effective with my 4 year old male who has difficulty thinking instead of reacting. On the down side, the author strongly encourages reading the entire book before embarking on the exercises and that was somewhat tedious. I wanted to get on with doing things. Despite my irritation at being asked to do it that way, I persevered and found many useful concepts to broaden my knowledge base. So many in fact that I am re-reading it to see what else I can pick up. Essentially, along with all the theory, Aloff teaches a Basic Training Boot Camp; a series of foundation skills ranging from installing a “marker”, name recognition, release cues, a very helpful skill called the Back Away, eye contact, impulse control, basic desensitization body work, and finally reading your dog. All this before you really work on

the get connected protocol. The protocol is simple but builds on the skills of the boot camp and therefore cannot be mastered without mastering the boot camp skills.

So what is the Get Connected Protocol? A series of only 5 exercises each with a goal of improving the relationship with your dog. First, the “Be Still” exercise that teaches the dog that his body has no NO GO areas. It teaches that a person can approach without being mobbed and jumped on, and finally, it teaches that the dog can rely on the handler.

The second exercise is “Follow the Feel.” This exercise teaches that the dog is to yield to collar pressure; that stepping backward can be attained by slight pressure, and that you can take hold of a dog’s collar from any position and he will still be comfortable. The third exercise is the “Move Into”, an exercise that teaches a dog not to be concerned about personal space. The dog learns that a shift in the handler’s position conveys information. The dog learns to immediately orient toward the handler. Most importantly, the handler is relevant to the dog and the dog is therefore more likely to prioritize cues given by the handler. The fourth exercise is to “Walk Nice”. In this exercise the dog learns to keep

his toes behind your toes. You will not be knocked down by your dog and you will not be dragged anywhere.

The final exercise is the “Mirror and Switch Game.” This is the fun one. In this exercise the dog mirrors your body, following the suggestion and direction you indicate with your body. This exercise will also help your dog switch from an active, aroused state to a state of calm focus.

The boot camp and the get connected exercises sound basic but I have found that consistently working them has significantly enhanced the relationships with both our dogs. The DVD is an excellent resource and watching the techniques being demonstrated is very helpful. The “Let’s Do It” Chapter contains a 10 session work plan. It was very valuable.

Even after all the content, the DVD, the work plan, Aloff still isn’t done. She provides 12 case histories of dogs and the training plan developed for each one of them complete with medical history, training history of the handler, behavioral history, training plan, owner’s input and changes in interactions with the owner and the dog. Get Connected is now one of the staples of my training plan.



Greater Columbia Obedience Club

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Serving Columbia since 1968

The Greater Columbia Obedience Club (GCOC) started in 1968. It is an American Kennel Club (AKC) sanctioned organization made up of local dog enthusiasts. GCOC is charged with providing valuable community education and seminars to educate the public about dog sports, dog obedience and many other canine health and well-being subjects. GCOC also regularly hosts AKC sanctioned Obedience, Rally and Agility Trials.

As part of its mission, GCOC has been offering obedience training classes for pet owners and their pets in the Columbia area for many years. All instructors are volunteers who have earned one more titles on their dogs.



Save the Dates!!!

The next GCOC Agility Trial will be **April 9-10, 2010** at the S. Congaree Horse Arena.

The next GCOC Obedience and Rally Trial will be on **May 15 and 16, 2010** at the Ellison Building at the S.C. State Fairgrounds.



Spring Training classes will start in **mid-January**. To sign up for your next obedience and/or rally class, please visit: www.gcoc.net

The next GCOC Club meeting will be on **January 7, 2010**. Watch the website for more details at: www.gcoc.net