

Dear dog lover,

This month's story at the end of this email: "[Sally and the Christmas Tree](#)"

The Better Companion and Regine Dog Training Facility is closed Dec 18-31.

Please mark this on your calendar, if you plan on coming to Open Play Times or Doggy Day Care. For the Doggy Day Care starting Jan 2nd, we take email reservations now and while we're closed! We'll check the emails infrequently during our absence and will respond to reservations for the first week of January right away.

NEW: Need any last minute stocking or Christmas gift? Come by latest Dec 15th and purchase a gift directly or a coupon for any training aids or a class (coupons are valid for one full year, the recipient decides which class to join), e.g. treats, treat pouches, collars, harnesses... We have high quality nitelite® reflective leashes and collars, padded chest harnesses and unique high quality long-lasting treats. The newest goodies: our **real fish or shrimp treats!**

NEW: Volunteers needed for the Pet Partner® evaluation and Canine Good Citizen test in January! Let me know if you'd like to help and learn about those tests. No pre-requisite required. I'll also need one dog/handler team for each day that already passed the test he's volunteering for. Sign-up for the seminar has already started, just fill out an online registration form and mail it with your payment! Please read the specifics below.

Sign up now for classes starting in January, February and March! Check the schedule for a class that fits you, and just sign up for it! Your payment is never lost, even if the class is already full. Your payment will 1) save you a spot at the class, 2) or save you a spot on the waiting list, or 3) can be carried over to a later class, or 4) can be fully reimbursed if I couldn't get you in the class you chose. Just as a note: I sometimes get up to three dogs per class moved in from a waiting list before the class even started.

Below you'll find:

- 1) Dates and times of upcoming classes
- 2) How to sign up for the classes
- 3) Information on the CGC-test and Pet Partner seminar
- 4) Information on the Open Play Times
- 5) This month's story: Sally and the Christmas Tree

1) DATES AND TIMES OF UPCOMING CLASSES:

Behavior classes starting Jan 9th/10th:

All classes will run for seven weeks and end Feb 20/21.

Wednesday 5-6pm: [Puppy 2 - Kindergarten](#)

Wednesday 6:15-7:15: [Puppy 2 - Kindergarten](#)

Wednesday 7:30-8:30: [Elementary School](#)

Thursday 5-6pm: [Puppy 1 – Preschool](#)

Thursday 6:15-7:15: [Foundation Class](#)

Thursday 7:30-8:30: [Foundation Class](#)

Behavior classes starting Feb 2nd:

The classes will run for seven weeks, with a break on Mar 1st, and end Mar 22nd.

Saturdays 10-11am (first week: 10-12:30pm without the dogs): [Puppy 1 – Preschool](#)

Saturdays 11:15-12:15 (first week: 10-12:30pm without the dogs): [Foundation Class](#)

Saturdays 2-3pm: [Puppy 2 - Kindergarten](#)

Saturdays 3:15-4:15pm: [Elementary School](#)

Saturdays 4:30-5:30pm: [Tricks 'N Clicks College](#)

NEW LISTING: Puppy class starting Feb 18th:

The class will run for seven weeks and end Mar 31st.

Mondays 6:15-7:15pm (first week: 6-8:30pm without the dogs): [Puppy 1 – Preschool](#)

NEW LISTING: Behavior classes starting Mar 5th/6th:

All classes will run for seven weeks and end Apr 16/17.

Wednesday 5-6pm: [Puppy 1 – Preschool](#)

Wednesday 6:15-7:15: [Foundation Class](#)

Wednesday 7:30-8:30: TBA

Thursday 5-6pm: [Puppy 2 - Kindergarten](#)

Thursday 6:15-7:15: [Elementary School](#)

Thursday 7:30-8:30: [Rally College](#)

NEW TIMES: Agility classes starting March 29th

The classes will run for six weeks, with a break on Apr 26th, and end May 17th.

Saturdays 1:30-3pm (includes set-up time): [Agility Beginners and Puppies](#)

Saturdays 3-4:30pm (includes equipment changing time): [Agility Intermediate-B](#)

Saturdays 4:30-6pm (includes taking down time): [Agility Advanced](#)

2) HOW TO SIGN UP FOR THE CLASSES:

We have a new registration form, which should be easy again (pooh). You should again be able to hit any “register” button, to get to the registration form, and you’ll also find the online payment option in that area. Please be aware, **Agility has its own registration form and payment page!** You have to click on “agility classes” in the left menu first, to get to the correct form. My web designer is still working on that form, so it’s at times possible you can only pay, but not fill out a form.

Please note we also **changed our registration policy: Only the payment will hold your spot now.** Spots are reserved in the order I receive payment for them. For P2 voucher holders, the voucher will be your payment. You can always sign up for the class you want to join, even if it would be full. Only the payment will keep you on the waiting list, in case somebody else drops out before the class starts. If I can’t get you into that

class, your payment will either be used for the next available class, another class you wish to join instead or fully reimbursed!

Puppy 1 Preschool clients, please remember you can also purchase the **Puppy School Packet**, including P1 and P2 class. You only have to commit to the seven weeks of P1 class, and will receive a voucher for P2, valid for 1 full year!

3) PET PARTNER® SEMINAR:

What is it: The Pet Partner® seminar is a program offered by Delta Society, to educate (and then test) handlers with their dogs in preparation of visiting hospitals, nursing homes... The test has two parts, one being almost a copy of the CGC-test, which shows the owner's control over a dog, and the other being more a temperament test of the dog.

Timeline:

Seminar: Sat, Jan 12th, 1-5pm (without dogs); Sun, Jan 13th, 9am-5pm (with dogs)

Evaluation: Sun, Jan 20th, appointments from 9am-5pm (we'll set up the appointments on Sat, Jan 12th)

Cost: \$115, which includes the seminar, evaluation, a book about the program (value \$30), and lunch on Sun, Jan 13th.

Registration: pre-registration at any time! Please fill out a class-registration form, print it and mail it with your payment. To pay online using PayPal, please go directly to www.PayPal.com, sign in, click on "send money" and send the correct amount to betco@mtaonline.net.

CGC-TEST:

What is it: This test proves that you're a responsible dog owner. After successful completion, you can ask the AKC to mail you a beautiful certificate, which you can use to show your landlord, animal control, friends, family... Just show us that your dog is under your control in 10 everyday situations!

You can use this test as a practice-run for the Pet Partner evaluation on the next day! We'll use different volunteers, and it won't count for the pet partner evaluation. To qualify for the Pet Partner program, you'll still have to take the full test on Sunday.

Date and Time: Sat, Jan 19th, 1pm. No reservation required, just show up at 1pm for sign-up. We'll test in the order of sign-up, starting as soon as sign-up is done.

Cost: \$10 per dog per test on the day of the test.

4) OPEN PLAY TIMES:

Due to the success of the **Open Play Times**, we'll continue offering those year-round, twice a week. We have moved the classes to the indoors, on Tuesdays AND Fridays. Come with your dog for one hour of dog play and dog owner social time. Each dog must be supervised by an adult handler, one dog per handler only. First-timers: bring your vaccination papers, in case we ask for them!

Fee: \$5 at the door, punch card \$25 for 6 visits. Vaccinated dogs only (5-way/DHPPi, dogs over 6 mo: Rabies, Bordetella).

Dates: every Tuesday and Friday evening

6-7pm: small, young or timid dogs

7-8pm: large and rambunctious dogs

No Open Play Times during our Christmas vacation from Dec 18th until Jan 2nd.

You can check the web page www.bettercompanion.com for info on classes, facility, and schedule, read testimonies from other students, print out the registration form...

Or contact me by email or phone (see below).

5) SALLY AND THE CHRISTMAS TREE

The idea started with Maggie, my leash-dog, and Kelley, my friend whom I was staying with my first couple years in Alaska. Kelley is not only a long-distance musher, but also well known in the field of dog weight pulls. Not only did I learn from her how to train a weight pull champion by having them pull old car tires over the snow-covered driveway, I also got a new idea on how to exercise my leash-dog. With Maggie, pulling a tire wasn't restricted to the driveway and to weight pull events, it became a year-round opportunity to exercise her properly.

Maggie pulled a tire along the trails behind the house whenever the trail conditions allowed it. Not too soft, where it would be too hard for her, and not too hard or icy, so that it wouldn't impact her pads. Once she learned to stay on the trail instead of getting tangled in the bushes along the side, and if tangled to wait for me to help her instead of just chewing the line, I could allow her to run without a connection to me anymore, just Maggie and the tire. She'd be able to run full blast (especially downhill), and then either come back to me or wait for me down there. The traction of the tire was always enough to keep it from hitting her from the rear.

When I later had Sally, they could help each other in the softer conditions, and two dogs in front of one tire could even "plow" through some light fresh snow and break trail. That way I could always keep my own little trail open, without depending on any snowmachiners to pack the snow down for me. Since Maggie went over the rainbow bridge, different Huskies helped Sally to fulfill the task (Sally does mostly the steering, the husky pulls ☺). When we had lots of fresh snow, I'd walk up front with snowshoes.

With Christmas coming closer, I'm again thinking about getting a Christmas tree. For the last 6 years, I went out into the woods behind our home (they belong to Kelley), and with her permission cut my own tree down with an axe. And since those 6 years, my dogs have helped me pull the tree home through deep snow and over the trails, since I hardly ever find a tree right along the trail. I prepare my dogs with mushing harnesses and lines, take my snowshoes and an axe, and off we go on the search for the perfect tree. We walk through the woods, the dogs either hopping from underneath one tree to the other (because there's less snow), or following me close-up behind or on my snowshoes. Then the dogs have to stay away from me while I'm swinging the axe (if the snow is too cold, a "stand-stay" is really handy!), and the tree will be hooked up to the dog's lines for them to pull it out.

Isn't this ALASKA PURE! And maybe you got some new ideas on exercising your dog?

**I wish you, your family and all your four-legged family members
a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2008**

See you at the Regine Dog Training Facility,
Claudia

You received this email because you were interested in or already enrolled in any of the services of The Better Companion. Your email address is kept confidential and not given to third parties. If you know somebody who might be interested in any services of The Better Companion, don't hesitate to forward this email to them. If a client signs up for a class and mentions your name (the registration form asks 'whom may I thank for your referral?'), **you'll receive a \$5 coupon** for your next class. These **referral coupons** can be accumulated - up to getting a whole class for free!

We hope that you enjoy receiving monthly class information from The Better Companion. If you prefer not to receive future emails, please send a little note to unsubscribe.

Your BetCo Team at

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