

Hello,

Thanks for your interest in our services. You're now signed up for the monthly newsletter about classes, activities and other events at Regine Dog Training Facility and The Better Companion. Your first newsletter is attached below. Please check out our class schedule as well as our Daycare, Open Play Times and more! I have also attached detailed directions to the training facility.

**You'll receive 1-2 emails per month**, which will inform you strictly and only about BetCo's upcoming class schedule or any special events held at the Regine Dog Training Facility. I hope there'll be something that fits your needs or wishes. We also invite you to **like us on [Facebook](#)**!

Again, welcome to the dog lovers of the Valley,  
Claudia

Dear Dog Lover,

**Our monthly story at the end of this email: "Depression in animal-related businesses"**

We added our annual **[Weight Pull class](#)** to the schedule **in November!**  
Check our updated schedule below and online – you ask, we listen to your requests!

Enjoy your dogs,  
Claudia

## **Our November Newsletter:**

### **PART I: News**

1) Dr. Sophia Yin will be missed – a legend and forerunner in positive-reinforcement training

### **PART II: Events**

No special events this month. Watch for February events!

### **PART III: Classes + Workshops**

- 2) Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>: P2 class added on Sunday afternoons
- 3) Nov 9<sup>th</sup>: **Weight Pull class** (2 weeks)
- 4) Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>: Treibball for Beginners on Tuesday nights
- 5) Jan 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015: Nose Work Beginner class added!
- 6) Jan 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015: High School on Thursday nights

### **PART IV: Open Play Time and Daycare**

7) Next Scheduled Closures

## **PART V: Class Schedule**

### **PART VI: Monthly Story**

8) Depression in animal-related businesses

## **PART I: News**

**🐾 Dr. Sophia Yin will be missed – a legend and forerunner in positive-reinforcement training**

The news of her death left us baffled. Dr. Yin was only 48 years old and a very successful public figure, teaching other dog trainers and owners as well as veterinary staff the importance and possibilities of force-free, positive-reinforcement training and techniques. Read more in this month's story about depression in animal-related professions.

## **PART II: Events**

No new events this month – just lots of classes!

Watch future newsletters for events in February, when we offer skijoring and mushing classes!

## **PART III: Classes + Workshops**

**🐾 Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>: P2 class added on Sunday afternoons**

We're changing our P2 schedule to add a class starting Sunday, November 2nd. The class will run from 4:15-5:15pm. We'll cancel our P2 class planned for December and offer one again most likely in February.

**🐾 Nov 9<sup>th</sup>: Weight Pull class (2 weeks)**

Our annual Weight Pull class is back!!! This two-week class on two consecutive Sundays (Nov 9 and 16) at 1pm (about 1.5 hrs each) shows you how to teach your dog to pull the kids' sled, the firewood, or just a tire for tiring faster on your walks. Suitable for dogs 40# and up, and 1 year or older. The instructor has owned and still owns several Alaskan weight pull champions. She'll provide harnesses and pulling gear as needed.

### Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>: Treibball for Beginners on Tuesday nights

Want to get more control over your dog in a fun way? This class is for you! It helps building teamwork with your dog and is a **wonderful supplement if you want to excel at other sports** like agility. Didn't get into the agility class you signed up for? Think about bridging the time with this class!!! The dogs will start on-leash and you could see progression to off-leash exercises within this one class! Dogs will learn to push exercise balls towards you, but also develop a lot of self-control and specific behaviors at a short distance from you.

### Jan 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015: Nose Work Beginner class added!

You asked, we deliver! We had so many requests about another Nose Work Beginner class, that we added it to our schedule. On Wednesday evenings, 5-6pm. We can't offer this class at a later time at this point. Bring your dog to sniff it out! This sport teaches us to observe our dogs for how they see the world – with their nose. Any dog with a nose can do it! Good for puppies, adult dogs, old dogs, shy dogs, reactive dogs, leash dogs, blind dogs, deaf dogs, three-legged dogs ...and it's FUN!

### Jan 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015: High School on Thursday nights

We have a date and time for the long-awaited High School class. Thursday evenings, 5-6pm. For all Elementary School graduates and some already adult and mellowed out Foundation Class graduates. This class practices everyday situations that could happen in public and prepares the dogs for the AKC's Canine Good Citizen®-test. We might offer the test afterwards if there's enough interest.

## PART IV: Open Play Time and Doggy Daycare

### Next Scheduled Closures

OPT every Friday evening  
Next scheduled closure: Nov 28 (Thanksgiving weekend)

DDC every Tuesday and Thursday  
next scheduled closure: Nov 27, Thanksgiving 😊

## PART V: Class Schedule

Listed are start dates. The classes will run one hour, once a week for 6 weeks unless otherwise specified. A **“maybe” for a class means YOU can tell us** if you want this class to happen. Enough student interest could put it on the schedule! 😊

Click [here](#) to view the online calendar by month. To see who's instructing the class you're interested in, go to our online [calendar](#) and click on any week of that class to see the details.

Click [here](#) to register for a class.

Already registered? Click [here](#) to pay for a class.

Or contact us by email or phone: [info@bettercompanion.com](mailto:info@bettercompanion.com), (907) 357-2521.

<b><u>CLASS</u></b>	<b><u>Nov</u></b>	<b><u>Dec</u></b>	<b><u>Jan 2015</u></b>	<b><u>later</u></b>
<b><u>Behavior Classes</u></b>				
Puppy 1		Tue 12/2	Thu 1/8	Feb 2015
Foundation Class	Sun 11/2	Mon 12/1	Thu 1/8	Feb 2015
Puppy 2	Sun 11/2	cx		Feb 2015
Elementary School			Sun 1/11	Mar 2015
High School			Thu 1/8	Jul 2015
CGC-test (one day)				2015
C.L.A.S.S. - BA				Apr 2015
C.L.A.S.S. Evaluation				May 2015
Tricks 'N Clicks				Mar 2015
<b><u>Sports Classes</u></b>	<b><u>Nov</u></b>	<b><u>Dec</u></b>	<b><u>Jan 2015</u></b>	<b><u>later</u></b>
Rally College				May 2015
Rally Practice		maybe		TBA
Freestyle I				TBA
Freestyle II				TBA
Nose Work Beginner			Wed 1/7	2015
Nose Work Odor				2015
Nose Work Practice	cont'd	cont'd	Wed 1/7	Jan 2015
Treibball Beginner		Tue 12/2		TBA
Treibball				TBA

Intermediate				
Treibball Practice				TBA
Flyball Beginner				Summer 2015
Flyball Practice				Summer 2015
Agility Puppy/Beg	Sat 11/1		Sat 1/10	Mar 2015
Agility Skills	Sat 11/1		Sat 1/10	Mar 2015
Agility Sequencing	Sat 11/1		Sat 1/10	Mar 2015
Agility Trialing	Sat 11/1		Sat 1/10	Mar 2015
Weight Pulling	Sun 11/9			Fall 2015

You can check our web page [www.bettercompanion.com](http://www.bettercompanion.com) for more info on classes, Doggy Day Care, Open Play Times, our facility and schedule, read testimonies from other students, print out the registration form (or fill one out online) and more.

Or contact us by email or phone: [info@bettercompanion.com](mailto:info@bettercompanion.com), (907) 357-2521.

## **PART VI: Monthly Story**

### **Depression in animal-related businesses**

I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Sophia Yin (Veterinarian and Applied Animal Behaviorist) at several occasions, listening to her lectures at a dog trainer conference in the lower 48 and at a workshop up here in Alaska! Being a dog trainer and veterinary behaviorist; she spoke not only to dog trainers but also to the veterinary community. I loved her approach, her kindness, and simplicity in handling dogs efficiently and humane at the same time, reminding veterinary personnel not to rush through an exam but to take a minute to allow the animal to cope with the stressful situation.

We all are stunned to find out that she committed suicide, being pretty much only my age! ([Obituary Dr. Sophia Yin](#))

How can somebody who works with dogs/animals as their livelihood and spends that life spreading the word and practice of humane handling and training techniques be or get depressed??? She seemed to be living out what she was passionate about – and successfully! We don't know the circumstances that led to Dr. Yin's tragic death, but I

came to realize that depression is actually a common occurrence not only in shelter and rescue related working with animals, but also in the veterinary and dog trainer community.

Dr. Yin's death has initiated a discussion about depression in dog trainers and veterinarians. Veterinarians are believed to be four times more likely to commit suicide than people in other professions. Jessica Dolce calls it 'compassion fatigue' in her [recent post](#). Combined with the perfectionism that sometimes goes hand in hand with these professions; a caregiver or trainer can experience even more stress and exhaustion, which can lead to depression with all its clinical signs.

I can relate to that. We sometimes get hung up on dogs we couldn't help, people who refused our help or situations that were just unbelievably inhumane. I remember too well a handful of cases that can still easily pull me down that alley, and I even cried when I attended one of the dog trainer conferences of the Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT), as I started talking about some of these cases.

The other trainers there were all super supportive and gave me a remedy: FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE! REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE NOT ALONE!

So when I came home I did two things. First I invited some like-minded fellow dog trainers for a meeting, created the Alaska Dog Trainer Group for trainers who want to focus on force-free, positive-reinforcement training. We have occasional gatherings to support each other and to just remind each other that we're not alone out there, we're growing! We tell each other success stories and sometimes brainstorm about better ideas to teach clients successful ways to train their dogs, enjoy a nice dinner together or plan on watching a dog training DVD. We actually need to meet again!

And the second thing was that I looked a bit closer at my clients. I saw all the smiles when they worked with their dogs in class, I heard success stories from them, I listened very closely when somebody said how happy they were to have found us and I read evaluation forms after the classes, in which I found mainly support, sometimes wonderful suggestions and rarely an unhappy word. When I came up to the house yesterday after a long night of classes and clean-up afterwards I was all smiles, telling my hubby about the great people I had the pleasure to work with that night and how much I already look forward to the next classes, even though I also complain about being a bit worn out and tired (like everybody else in our society?).

Let's not forget the third part of my remedy that helps me so much keeping everything going smooth – my staff!!! Girls, I couldn't do it without you! I remember the times I had to go back to the computer after classes to answer emails until 1am, then sneaking into bed and missing my hubby getting up in the morning because I was too tired. No matter if you're part of our daycare, office, play time or instructor team, you are all very much appreciated and part of my anti-depression team, reducing my stress level and exhaustion and minimizing the chance of 'compassion fatigue' or depression.

And whenever I have to deal with one case that could drag me down, I focus on the other 20 or more dogs who I see that same week that make me feel good and happy!  
We're changing the world, one dog at a time!

Claudia

Claudia Sihler, CPDT-KSA  
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APDT C.L.A.S.S. Evaluator  
AKC CGC® and STAR® Evaluator  
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