

Dear Dog Lover,

Our monthly story at the end of this email: “Good Leadership Doesn’t Mean Being Bossy”

Our biggest annual event, the Responsible Dog Ownership-Day is coming closer!

Before that, visit us on **doggie-day at the Alaska State Fair, Sunday Aug 29**. You get to see all the different dog sports and can visit with all the different clubs and groups that offer dog sports and other dog training in South-central Alaska. Our demonstration will be at 6-6:45pm, at the Corral. For more information, check out the information on upcoming events below.

Right after Labor Day weekend we’ll celebrate our **Responsible Dog Ownership Day on Sep 11**. Lots of activities will be offered and presented, including a **CGC-test, a Dog First Aid seminar, Nose Work and Agility demonstrations, meet-the-breed, vendor booths, a professional dog photographer will be on site, face painting and more...** We’ll sell off some of our **agility equipment in form of a silent auction, and other used dog gear can be found or sold by you with our Gear Swap**. Please check below for times on the different events.

Agility classes will resume on October 2nd. You can sign up at any time!

Like last time you’ll find all changes from the Aug newsletter in **RED** below. Please, even if you’re already signed up, check the schedule below to see if your class is affected.

Enjoy the sun, get out with your dog(s),
Claudia

Below you'll find:

- 1) Information on upcoming events**
- 2) REVISED: Dates and times of upcoming classes**
- 3) How to sign up for the classes**
- 4) Information on the Open Play Times**
- 5) This month's story: Good Leadership Doesn’t Mean Being Bossy**

1) INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sunday, Aug 29: Dog Day at the Alaska State Fair in Palmer

We’ll have our presentation at 6-6:45pm in the corral. All dog demos will be at the Pebble Corral, starting as early as 10:30am this year, with The Birdman of Las Vegas having several shows in between.

Saturday, Sep 11: Responsible Dog Ownership Day at the Regine Dog Training Facility

Every visitor will receive a little welcome gift! Make sure you receive your ticket for the:

Door prizes!!!

10am-5pm: Vendor booths – open to visit. **Also: gear swap, face painting, photographer** on site. Would you like to have a booth at our event? No fee, we'd just like to know ahead of time to plan you in. The booths will be outside on grass. You could bring a pop-up tent, a table and a chair to set up your stuff. If you need any of those, please let us know. We can help with some of it!

10am: Canine Good Citizen® test: 10am: same-day sign-up; paperwork for everybody; then general briefing of all participants; testing starts after the briefing in the order of sign-up (payment received). Fee is \$10 (pre-registration) or \$15 (day of test) per tested dog. Would you like to see what a Canine Good Citizen® test is about? Then **come and volunteer!** No pre-requisite required, we'll teach you on the job. Let us know if you can help, so that we can schedule you in. Then show up at 9:30am, ½ hr before the sign-up starts. We also need a CGC-dog for the meet-and-greet with a strange dog. If your dog has passed the CGC-test and is mellow and neutral about strange dogs, you could be the one!

11am: Nose Work demonstration – check out this new fast-growing sport for our four-legged friends! Every dog with a nose can do it! This sport builds confidence in shy dogs, mellows out dog-reactive dogs, and is fun for any dog of any size and shape!

12-5pm: Meet the Breed – have a purebred dog/ want a dog? **Bring your dog** and we'll present your breed to the crowd, talking about their temperament as well. Not purebred, but well-behaved? Bring him/her on and let us guess what breeds yours combines! 😊

12:15pm: silent auction – part 1 will close (smaller items). We'll part with some of our used agility equipment.

12:30pm: Sharing Alaska's Trails – keeping (or getting) dogs out of traps in AK. Free DVD presentation (Alaska Trapping Association).

1:30pm: Agility demonstration – watch our students practicing with their dogs on our school equipment. Agility is more than just having the dog take each obstacle safely. It's handler strategy, distance handling, focus training, and building that ultimate team of dog and handler.

2:45pm: silent auction – part 2 will close (larger items). We'll sell some more agility equipment, even heavy stuff.

3pm: Dog First Aid seminar – pre-registration recommended, fee is \$40 (pre-registration) or \$45 (at the seminar), including a book with DVD. You'll receive a card stating that you attended the American Red Cross Dog First Aid Class.

We'll add more items as they're getting planned!

Sep 25/26: 2010 WDMA (Willow Dog Musers Association) Symposium in Willow

We've been asked to give a demonstration on **Saturday at about 11am** about the new dog sport Nose Work.

Who wants to help???

2) DATES AND TIMES OF UPCOMING CLASSES:

Drop-in classes running right now:

Instructors: Claudia (NW, RP), January (NW)

Weekly every Tuesdays we can offer 2 classes back to back.

Starting in August we can also go indoors if it rains or gets too cold. Punch card available online.

Tuesday 5:15-6:15pm: Nose Work (maximum 6 dogs – please call to reserve a spot)

Tuesday 6:30-7:30pm: Nose Work (maximum 6 dogs – please call to reserve a spot)

Tuesday 7:45-9pm (including set-up): Rally Practice (maximum 6 dogs)

Behavior classes starting Sep 8/9th:

Instructor: Claudia

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

Wednesday 5-6pm: Puppy 1 – Preschool (first week: 6-8:30pm without the dogs)

Wednesdays 6:15-7:15: P1 or FC overflow class (whichever will be needed)

Wednesdays 7:30-8:30pm: Foundation Class (first week: 6-8:30pm without the dogs)

Thursday 5-6pm: Tricks 'N Clicks Class

Thursday 6:15-7:15: Puppy 2 - Kindergarten

Thursdays 7:30-8:30: Elementary School

Flyball class starting Sep 9th:

Instructors: Karla, Linda

Flyball runs for 4 weeks (2hrs each week) and ends Sep 30th, unless we have a rain-delay.

Thursday 5-7pm: [Flyball](#) (this link brings you to the web page of the local club, to see what flyball is about)

Agility classes starting Oct 2nd:

Instructors: Claudia, Kat, Heather

The classes will run for 6 weeks, and end Nov 6th.

Saturday 10am-12pm (class 10:30-11:30am): [Agility Puppy/Beginners](#)

Saturday 11:30am-1pm (class 12-1pm): [Agility Skills Training](#)

Lunch break: 1-2pm

Saturday 2-4pm (class 2:30-3:30pm): [Agility Sequencing](#)

Saturday 3:30-5pm (class: 4-5pm): [Agility Trialing 1](#)

Saturday 5-6:30pm (class:5-6pm): [Agility Trialing 2](#)

Behavior classes starting Oct 5th:

Instructors: Claudia and Heather

The classes will run for seven weeks, and end Nov 16th.

Tuesday 8-9pm: [Puppy 1 – Preschool](#) (first week: 6:30-9pm without the dogs)

Upcoming classes:

Oct 27/28: Puppy 1, Puppy 2, Foundation Class, Elementary School, Rally College

Nov 13 + 20: **Weight Pull Workshop**

Nov 27: Agility classes

Nov 29: Puppy 1

3) HOW TO SIGN UP FOR THE CLASSES:

It's easy!!! On our webpage www.bettercompanion.com, use the menu bar on the left. You'll find a button "Classes", with the subtitle "Registration", which brings you directly to the **one registration form for ALL classes**. After clicking "enroll" at the end, you'll get to the pricing and payment page, which explains all payment options, policies, and allows you to pay online, too. You can also check out the pricing page first, to learn about prices, payment and cancellation policies. Take advantage of our **pre-registration fee** by signing up a minimum of **14 days before the start of your class**. Please read our cancellation policy on the pricing page – you almost can't lose!

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! For P2 voucher holders, the voucher will be your payment. After you fill out the registration form for P2, you can email us the voucher number, mail the voucher to us or drop it off at the facility.

Reserve your spot! Please note **our registration policy: Only the payment will hold your spot.** Spots are reserved in the order we receive payment for them. **Always sign up for the class you want to join**, even if it could be full. Only the payment will keep you on the waiting list, in case somebody else drops out before the class starts. **Your payment is never lost**, even if the class is already full. Your payment will 1) save you a spot at the class, or 2) save you a spot on the waiting list, or 3) can be carried over to a later class, or 4) can be refunded if I couldn't get you in the class you chose, or 5) can cause me to open an overflow class 😊. Just as a note: I sometimes get up to three dogs per class moved in from a waiting list before the class even starts. **We now can take credit card payments over the phone and at the facility.**

4) SOCIAL HOUR - OPEN PLAY TIMES:

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. Vaccinated dogs only (5-way/DHPPi, dogs over 6 mo: Rabies, Bordetella). We also require having the dog dewormed or a fecal sample checked.

Please note the following dates when we'll be **closed for Open Play Times:**

Sep 3: No OPT

Sep 6: No OPT, no daycare (Labor Day)

BetCo will be closed Dec 18 - Jan 2 (no daycare, no OPT, no classes)

First-timers: bring your vaccination papers, we want to see them! Dogs over 6 months, please for the first time come on a Friday, when Claudia and Frank are managing the play times. After that, we'll discuss with you which hour will be best and if you can come Mondays as well.

Fee: \$7 at the door or punch card \$35 for 6 visits.

Our Open Play Times (indoors + outdoors) have become a safe playground for dogs of any size due to the newer size restrictions for each group. Only timid and absolutely non-reactive dogs can be slightly heavier than the group limit. The group from 7-8pm is limited to 8 dogs, and reservations can be made in advance. Just call us and we explain the details.

Every Monday AND Friday:

5-6pm: toy and small dogs and puppies up to 25#

6-7pm: puppies and medium adult dogs 30-50# (giant breed puppies can be heavier)

7-8pm: Large adults over 60# (indoors: 8 dogs max; outdoors: 10 dogs max)

8-9pm: Large Dogs over 60# (if needed)

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 us by email or phone (see below).

5) GOOD LEADERSHIP DOESN'T MEAN BEING BOSSY

Dogs are pack animals. They look at us as their pack. They check us out to see where everybody is standing in ranking. And every pack has a leader, they know that. If we give them wrong signals, and inadvertently suggest to them that we are just regular pack members, but not leaders, they might decide to take on that open position.

We like to see our dogs as our companions. We feed them, we take them on walks, we care for them, we pet them, we groom them. This doesn't make us automatic leaders. This could backfire and make us their servants. Have you ever thought, what an alien might think of us, watching us from out of space? They see a dog and a human connected by a string (leash), the dog being in the lead. And if the dog drops something (the "number two"), we eagerly clean that up for them. Doesn't that make us look like servants?

Now we don't need to constantly walk in front of a dog to show him that we're in charge. And we only have to prove it to the dog, not the aliens, right? And we still need to feed, walk and groom them. What makes us the leader, is HOW we do so. Do we feed the dog because she's letting us know that it's time, that she's hungry? Then she's demanding it, and we follow. That makes her the leader. Or do we feed him because we decided to, and because the dog just 'pleased us' with good behavior, then we are the leaders.

That's why the NILIF-concept evolved as the best leadership program: NILIF stands for Nothing In Life Is Free. If the dog has to "say please" every time before he gets something, it's clear that we're "in charge". In charge of the resources, in charge of the dog's life or death. And I'm not only talking about food. I'm talking about all the little things dogs desire: giving them attention, in form of a look, a pet, or even play; giving them the toy they want so badly; opening a door for them (house, car, gates...); taking them for that walk (which includes hooking up the leash or allowing them to jump in the car); allowing them to proceed towards the field, the class room, that other dog, while they're on leash. We have the power to deny any of that, or allow.

If we use that power wisely, that alone will show our dog that we indeed are their master, without having to get loud with them, argue with them, or roll them on their back once a day. A good leader is calm, consistent, predictable, and honest – in the dog world as well as in the real world!

Happy training,
Claudia
Claudia Sihler, CPDT-KA
(Certified Professional Dog Trainer)

Your BetCo Team at

The Better Companion - Regine Dog Training Facility

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