

Dear Dog Lover,

Our monthly story at the end of this email: **“Real Life Training”**

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

If you receive this email in full html, you can just [click on the events underlined and in blue](#) to get to the correct page on our web site!

➤ **Open Play Time in 2012:**

Starting January 2012 **we'll offer OPT only on Fridays**. Times stay the same, with 5-6pm for dogs up to about 20#, 6-7pm for dogs 30-50# and 7pm for approved dogs over 60# . For weights in between please contact us! We evaluate dogs at 8pm and 8:30pm by appointment on Fridays, especially before they join the 7pm group.

➤ **Workshops February 2012:**

- **Skijor Workshop:** We're now ready to take sign-ups for our Skijor Workshop **Feb 5th 2012, 10am - 1pm**. Learn the tricks of the trade from one of the best skijor racers of Alaska and let us help you teach your dog to run ahead of you. For the Skijor Workshop you'll need your own skis and poles and should be an intermediate skier. We have limited loaner equipment and also harnesses, skijor belts and lines for sale, if you want to reserve yours for the workshop. Your dog should be one year or older, one dog per handler. **Pre-registration \$55.**
- **Mushing Workshop:** Take your pet dog(s) out for a ride!
Mushing Part I on Feb 12th 2012, 10am - 2pm: Equipment 101; driving a sled - practice. **Pre-registration \$65.**
Mushing Part II on Feb 19th 2012, 10am - 1pm: driving a sled with your own dog(s) - practice. **Pre-registration \$75.**
All equipment provided - just try this out! We have all equipment for sale as well
Both courses together: Pre-registration \$130. We'll provide hot/cold drinks and snacks.

➤ **Classes Feb/Mar 2012:**

- **Treibball** and **Nose Work** **will start January 30th**, one week earlier than originally announced. We'll offer TB Intermediate and NW Beginners and Practice.
- **Agility classes** for all levels start again **Feb 11**. Our Trialing class will stay at the facility for the first two weeks, and after that again practice at Sirius Ranch for the following 4 weeks. All other levels will be held at our Regine Dog Training Facility.
- **Does your dog have C.L.A.S.S.?** Practice real-life skills in our CLASS-BA Course starting March 6, then test your dog to earn a Bachelor's degree! B.A. skills include wait at the door, come and leashing up manners, loose leash walking and attention, meet and greet (people), leave it, wait for the food bowl, stay, and settle. This course is a 6-week class, with maximum 6 dogs. All exercises will be practiced in form of games and role plays, including some higher level (M.A., Ph.D.) exercises

each week as well. Taking the ES or HS class in January can help preparing for this class.

➤ Other News:

- AK Mill and Feed in Anchorage is hosting an **“All Dog Breed Talent Show” on February 4th**, sponsored by the Advocates for Dog and Puppy Wellness. Please inquire at adpwjulie@aol.com about details.
- On a very sad note, I want to let anyone know who knew her, that our dear **Pet Partner instructor Mary Troll** from Anchorage has passed away. Her memorial service was already on January 15. I'm sorry I couldn't let you know sooner. You can probably still find her obituary at <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/adn/obituary.aspx?n=mary-troll&pid=155120543>.
- For our **Nose Work** enthusiasts, there's a new book out there, available as **E-Book at dogwise.com**. “The Canine Kingdom of Scent”, by Anne Lill Kvam. I haven't had a chance to read it yet, but the description sounds like it could be very valuable for us!
- **Rally practice** has been added to the schedule for **Feb 9 and 16**.

The online calendar can look very confusing. Please don't hesitate to call or email us with any questions about upcoming classes or practices.

Enjoy the snow,
Claudia

Below you'll find:

- 1) Information on **upcoming events/ workshops**
- 2) **New classes and workshops**: Dates and times of upcoming classes
- 3) **How to sign up for the classes**
- 4) Information on the Doggy Daycare and Open Play Times
- 5) This month's story: **Real Life Training**

1) Information on upcoming events:

Skijor Workshop: \$60 or pre-registration \$55

For intermediate cross-country skiers.

- Learn to ski with your dog
- Teach your dog to run in front of you
- Part indoors, then outdoors on trail (at the dog training facility, or if conditions require outdoors at Knik Lake)

You should have your own skis and be an intermediate skier. We can loan you the gear to connect to your dog, and you can purchase it here as well. The full starter set including belt, lines and harness for the dog comes to \$85.

Mushing Workshop: \$140 or pre-registration \$130

Mushing I - without your dog: dog: \$70 or pre-registration \$65

- What equipment do I need? Connecting the dogs to the sled, the harness, booties, musher's gear
- Making your own lines from polyrope (material will be provided)
- The sled – parts, types, driving techniques
- Practical training – sled pulled by snowmachine

Mushing II – with your 1-2 dogs: \$80 or pre-registration \$75 (

- Safely hooking up the dog(s), “Line Out!”-command
- Practice with your own dog team (1-2 dogs)
- Teaching the dog(s) to pull despite handler being behind them on the sled
- Safe mushing – uphill, downhill, curves, other teams
- How to teach directions
- After the run: checking the dogs for injuries – what if?

2) Dates and Times of Upcoming Classes:

Drop-in practices running right now:

Indoors or outside – please bring clothes accordingly. Training punch card available online. One card for all practices!

 [Nose Work Advanced](#) For ‘Intro to Odor’ Graduates:
Supervisor: January

No practice Jan 24.

Starting Jan 30, 2012 on Mondays, 7:45-8:45 at the facility

Dates for practice are: Jan 30, Feb 6, 13, 20, 27, Mar 5. We might add an ‘outing’ on Mar 12. TBA.

Reservation required.

 [Flyball Practice:](#)

Supervisor: Karla

No further practices planned so far.

If the demand is there for some **indoors box work** at our facility, Karla can set something up for a Tuesday in February. **Contact us or Karla if you're interested!**

 [Rally Practice](#) for Rally College graduates:

Supervisor: Claudia

Thursdays, 7:30-8:30pm, on Feb 9 and 16, 2012.

Trying to show the classes sorted by class, not by date. Is this better??? Let us know what you think!

All classes are held once a week, at the time specified, for 6 weeks.

Behavior Classes start dates:

Puppy 1 – Preschool:

Sunday, Feb 5, 5-6pm. Instructor: January
Sunday, Feb 5, 6:15-7:15pm. Instructor: January
Thursday, Mar 8, 7:30-8:30pm. Instructor: Claudia

Foundation Class:

Thursday, Mar 8, 5-6pm. Instructor: Claudia
Thursday, Mar 8, 6:15-7:15pm. Instructor: Claudia
Next: April on Sundays

Puppy 2 - Kindergarten:

Wednesday, Mar 7, 6:15-7:15pm. Instructor: Claudia
Next: May on Thursdays

Elementary School:

Next: May on Thursdays

Rally College:

Wednesday, Mar 7, 7:30-8:30pm. Instructor: Claudia
Next: September 2012

Tricks 'N Clicks Class:

Next: July 2012

High School (CGC-prep class - 4 weeks):

Next: August 2012

C.L.A.S.S. Course:

Tuesday, Mar 6, 6:15-7:15pm. Instructor: Claudia
Tuesday, Mar 6, 7:30-8:30pm. Instructor: Claudia

Evaluations:

CGC-Evaluation: Sunday, Sep 9, 2012

C.L.A.S.S. Evaluation: Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Sports classes start dates:

Skijor and Mushing Workshops, Feb 5, 12, 19 (see under “Upcoming Events” above!)

Agility Puppy/Beginners:

Saturday, Feb 11, 10am-12pm (class 10:30am-11:30am). Instructors: Claudia, Kat
Next start: Mar 31

Agility Skills Training:

Saturday, **Feb 11**, 11:30am-1pm (class 12-1pm). Instructors: Claudia, Kat
Next start: Mar 31

Agility Sequencing:

Saturday, **Feb 11**, 2-4pm (class 2:30-3:30pm). Instructors: Kat, Claudia
Next start: Mar 31

Agility Trialing:

Saturday, **Feb 11**, 3:30-5pm (class: 4-5pm) - if at Sirius Ranch, we'll start at 4:30pm.
Instructors: Claudia, Kat

Saturday, **Feb 11**, 5-6:30pm (class:5-6pm) - if at Sirius Ranch, we'll run from 5:30-7pm (for 6-9 dogs). Instructors: Claudia, Kat

Next start: Mar 31

Treibball Beginners:

Next start: Apr 9

Treibball Intermediate:

Monday, **Jan 30**, 5:15-6:15pm (set-up starts at 5pm) Instructor: Karla

Next start: Apr 9

Nose Work Beginners:

Monday, **Jan 30**, 6:30-7:30pm. Instructor: January

Next: June 2012

Nose Work - Intro to Odor:

Next start: Apr 9. Instructor: January

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 and workshops**. 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. Please note that **some workshops have their own cancellation policy**, even though they use the same registration form as the classes. Take advantage of our **pre-registration fee** by signing up a minimum of **14 days before the start of your class**. Different deadlines might apply to some of the workshops and seminars.

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 six 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 can take credit card payments over the phone and at the facility.**

4) Doggy Daycare and Open Play Times:

Doggy Daycare: Offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays 6am-7pm, with their playtime ending at 5pm, at which time they'll be kenneled if not picked up before.

Open Play Time: 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.

First-timers: bring your vaccination papers, we want to see them! Larger dogs over 6 months, please call us before your first visit, so that we can decide together which hour would be best for your dog, and if we need to evaluate your dog first. We offer evaluations on Fridays at 8pm (see below).

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 our 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 (large dogs) is limited to 8 dogs, and reservations can be made in advance. Just call us and we explain the details.

Since Jan 1st 2012 on Fridays only:

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

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

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

8-9pm: By appointment only –for evaluations. \$35/half hour

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

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

5) “REAL LIFE” TRAINING

I couldn't write it any better, so I just pasted this from the webpage of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers, www.apdt.com. You're welcome to go directly to their site for more information, free webinars and handouts, and to find an APDT member trainer near you! We have quite a few APDT members here in Alaska!

One of the mistakes we often make with our dogs is thinking that dogs see training classes in the same way that we often see being in school—in other words, that learning is reserved for the classroom! In truth, dogs (and people) are constantly learning every second of every day. To have a truly well-mannered dog, you need to reinforce the behaviors that you want during the course of your daily life. “Use It or Lose It!” is a good maxim to follow when teaching your dog new behaviors. Here are some ideas on how you can involve “real life” in your training practice:

Take your dog with you when you go shopping. There are many stores that allow dogs. Always call first to make sure of their dog-friendly policies. Examples of stores that allow dogs in are garden/nursery stores, camping/outdoor gear stores, home improvement stores, pet supply stores, some restaurants and coffee shops with outdoor eating areas, and “specialty” pet food stores such as dog treat bakeries. Once you are in the store, you can practice walking nicely on leash, sitting politely for petting and no jumping, and even stays in the aisles or under your chair or table if you are sitting and having a cup of coffee. You can also practice having the dog stay before getting into your car and before jumping out, and while you are loading any goodies you've purchased from the shopping cart into your car.

Take your dog on car rides. Even if you have a quick errand to run, such as to the bank or to a drive thru restaurant for food, take your dog along! You can practice stays with the dog getting in and out of your car, and going out is always a good socialization opportunity for the dog. Some drive thru establishments even keep jars of dog treats on hand to say “hello!” to new canine visitors.

Practice sitting politely when guests come over every time a friend or relative visits. Practice sit stays when the mailman drops off your daily mail, when the garbage collection truck comes by, and when the newspaper deliveryman drops off your paper.

Practice sit and down stays while you are watching TV, on the phone, cooking, eating dinner, working at home on your computer, or while your children are doing their homework. The dog learns to be quiet and relaxed during times that you are busy and need to work, and it doesn't require much extra effort on your part to train the dog while you are doing other things.

Practice stays when you go to pick your children up from school or from extracurricular activities. Arrive a few minutes early and take your dog out on leash and have them stay while watching the busy parking lot full of children. This is a highly distracting atmosphere for the dog and it's great practice for stays, as well as walking nicely on leash.

Use the recall command in your house in the course of your daily activities, such as when you want the dog to come to eat his or her dinner, or when your dog runs to the front door or a window to bark at a squirrel or the mailman.

Use all of your dog's behaviors to earn him "what he wants." Make getting anything that your dog desires a learning opportunity! If your dog wants to go out, he has to sit for his leash to be put on, or lay down at the door, or do a trick instead. Do the same when your dog wants his dinner, or to play or be petted or get attention. It doesn't really matter what behavior you ask for, as long as you ask the dog to do "something" in exchange for a valuable "life" reward.

Training your dog isn't just fun, it also makes both of your lives easier! Often times dog owners learn the basics of sit, stay, down, etc. but they don't use these behaviors in the course of their everyday life. Here are some ideas on how to use what you've learned with your dog!

<http://www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/default.aspx>

For example, here are 25 uses for the down:

1. Down for a veterinary exam.
2. Down for husbandry tasks such as clipping back nails.
3. Down as emergency cue when dog is running off or toward danger.
4. Down stay while family eats a meal.
5. Down stay on a mat away from door when visitors enter home.
6. Down stay when encountering something you need to go deal with (e.g., something dangerous like a snake, helping someone who's fallen down).
7. Down stay while dinner is being prepared.
8. Down stay while working with another dog in the house.
9. Down stay while you are doing sit ups or yoga.
10. Down stay while you are getting the children ready to leave for school.
11. Down stay when being petted by small children.
12. Down on a mat with a bone or chew toy when the family wants to relax in the evening.
13. Down stay can discourage some dogs from barking at other dogs, such as in a training class.
14. Down to prevent your dog from running off.
15. Down at the door to stop your dog from jumping on guests.
16. Down at the door to prevent your dog rushing out when you open it
17. Down and roll on his side for grooming.

18. Down and relax while you're watching TV or using your computer.
19. Down and relax while you visit with friends and relatives.
20. Down stay to prevent your dog being underfoot when you're working in the kitchen/busy.
21. Down stay at family gatherings such as birthday parties.
22. Down stay at outdoor events such as kids' soccer games.
23. Down stay on a walk when you stop to pick up after your dog.
24. Down to teach the "rollover" trick.
25. Down to teach the "play dead/go to sleep" trick.

Enjoy live together with your dog,
Claudia

Claudia Sihler, CPDT-KA
(Certified Professional Dog Trainer)
APDT C.L.A.S.S. Evaluator
AKC CGC® Evaluator

Your BetCo Team at
The Better Companion - Regine Dog Training Facility
Claudia Sihler, CPDT-KA
Frank Sihler, Iditarod Finisher
Deb Frost (office)
Kelly Saunders (office)

(907) 357-2521
betco@mtaonline.net
www.bettercompanion.com
1400 E Regine Ave, Wasilla, AK 99654