

Dear Dog Lover,

Our monthly story at the end of this email: **Certified Professional Dog Trainer - KSA: What does this mean?**

Like last time you'll find all changes from the Mar 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 link underlined and in blue](#) to get to the correct page on our web site!

➤ **Open Play Time:**

- **Reservation policy:** The **Friday OPT is restricted to 12 dogs at 6pm and to 8 dogs at 7pm, reservation required**, and we WILL send home any additional dogs. Your dog can get on the **waitlist** and you will be called if we have a cancellation. If you reserved a spot for your dog in OPT, didn't show that day **and** we had someone on the waitlist, **you WILL be charged** for that day even though you weren't there. We have not yet had to limit the number of small dogs/puppies at the **5pm play group** but reservations are appreciated.
- **Kennel cough update:** our facility hasn't been hit as hard as some other places in South-Central Alaska, but we had isolated cases here and there. If your dog shows any symptoms of kennel cough, **we ask you to not bring that dog or any house mates to our Open Play Time until:** 1) any medications (cough suppressant, antibiotics, steroids...) are finished and 2) your dog hasn't coughed for 3-5 consecutive days. Healthy house mates can come to a class, but should avoid direct contact to other dogs in the class and not drink from the common water bowl.

➤ **Fight the Winter Blues!**

- **Nose Work and Treibball:** They promise us a long and cold spring, and I can't imagine how bad the flooding will be.... To fight the winter blues, we offer beginner classes for Nose Work, our pet dog sniffing sport and Treibball, the urban ball herding sport. Both provide you with **easy dog activities to continue at home**, improve special skills in you and your dog, and enhance the team aspect between you and your dog. **We switched Treibball Beginners to our late spot at 7:45pm**, to allow our late workers to join this sport!
- **Rally Practice:** Ella-Kate can probably offer Rally practices for our Rally College graduates in April on Wednesdays, 7:30-8:30pm. They're already on the calendar. We'll keep you posted with our weekly Rally Practice update as we get closer. If you'd like to be added to that list for Rally graduates and Rally trialers, please contact us!
- **Therapy dog training:** If you'd like to start your dog in training to become a therapy or service dog, the **Foundation Class in April or May** is the best starter, to be ready and continue in **July with the High School Class**. For those students who have taken (or are currently enrolled in) FC class, **Elementary**

School Class in May will help increase/improve the skills you learned in FC and start you on High School level exercises. These classes prepare the dogs for the Canine Good Citizen (CGC®) test offered by AKC; and a lot of the training and tests preparing you and allowing you to register your dog as a therapy or service dog are based on your dog being able to pass the CGC® test.

➤ **Other News:**

- **Please welcome our newest instructors:** We have two new instructors for our C.L.A.S.S.-BA course, the Puppy 1 and Foundation Class. Karla and Ella-Kate will teach in teamwork, assisting each other when teaching our future **Tuesday and Wednesday classes, starting in August. Until then, they'll drop in whenever possible and I'll hand part of the class over to them to teach under my supervision.** That has already worked very well for the February Sunday classes. **Karla** is already known to some of you from teaching our Flyball and Treibball Classes and managing our daycare and Open Play Times. She's a Speech Therapist for the Mat-Su School District and has three dogs of her own: Mason, an Aussie/Collie-mix, Marley, a Mini-Aussie and her newest addition is Miles, an Aussie-mix who lived like a sled dog on a chain until she took him at age 10. After visiting the ClickerExpo earlier this year, she knew she wanted to be more involved in training dogs and helping their owners to train them. **Ella-Kate** is a very talented long-time client, trialing her dogs in agility with me and having trained one of her dogs trial-ready for Rally obedience. She's an Elementary School teacher and has coached soccer. Also after attending the ClickerExpo earlier this year together with Karla, she knew teaching dogs and their owners is what she'd like to get more involved in. She and her husband currently own two dogs: Rocco, a rescued Shepherd-mix and Grayson, a Golden Retriever.

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 warmer weather,
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: **Certified Professional Dog Trainer - KSA: What does this mean?**

1) Information on upcoming events:

No events scheduled at this time - watch for our summer schedule! We plan on offering again our popular work sessions for shy dogs, leash walking, recall and reactive dogs.

2) Dates and Times of Upcoming Classes:

- A) Drop-in Practices (Nose Work, Rally, Flyball)
- B) Behavior Classes (include Rally and Tricks class)
- C) Sports Classes (Agility, Treibball, Nose Work and seasonal sports)

A) Drop-in Practices:


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/Claudia

Nose Work Practice on Mondays, 6:30pm: April 2nd until May 7th at the facility.
We'll be outdoors (rain or shine) for vehicle and exterior searches, some outside box drills.
Sign-up preferred. No student limit until May trials.

 [Rally Practice](#) For Rally College Graduates and Rally trialers:
Supervisor: Ella-Kate/Claudia

Rally Practice is scheduled for 7:30 pm on Wednesdays beginning April 4th and continuing through May 2nd.
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 might be able to set something up. **Contact us or Karla if you're interested!**

B) Behavior Classes (include Rally and Tricks class):

Listed are start and end dates. The classes will run once a week for 6 weeks.

Puppy 1 – Preschool:

Sundays, **April 1 - May 6**, 5-6pm. Instructor: Claudia

Wednesdays, **May 16 - June 20**, 6:15-7:15pm. Instructors: Claudia and Karla, (Ella-Kate)

Sundays, **June 3 - July 8**, 5-6pm. Instructor: Claudia

Foundation Class:

Sundays, **April 1 - May 6**, 6:15-7:15pm. Instructor: Claudia

Sundays, April 1 - May 6, 7:30-8:30pm. Instructor: Claudia

Wednesdays, **May 16 - June 20**, 7:30-8:30pm. Instructors: Claudia and Karla, (Ella-Kate)

Sundays, **June 3 - July 8**, 6:15-7:15pm. Instructor: Claudia

Puppy 2 - Kindergarten:

Possibly: Wednesdays, **May 16 - June 20**, 5-6pm. Instructor: Claudia

Thursdays, **May 17 - June 21**, 5-6pm. Instructor: Claudia

Thursdays, **July 26 - Aug 30**, 5-6pm. Instructor: Claudia

Elementary School:

Thursdays, **May 17 - June 21**, 6:15-7:15pm. Instructor: Claudia

Thursdays, **July 26 - Aug 30**, 6:15-7:15pm. Instructor: Claudia

Rally College:

Thursdays, **May 17 - June 21**, 7:30-8:30pm. Instructor: Claudia

Next: **November 2012 or January 2013**

Tricks 'N Clicks Class:

Next: **November 2012 or January 2013**

High School (CGC-prep class - **6 weeks**):

Thursdays, **July 26 - Aug 30**, 7:30-8:30pm. Instructor: Claudia

C.L.A.S.S.-BA Course:

Tuesdays, **June 5 - July 10**, 5:15-6:15pm. Instructors: Karla, (Ella-Kate), Claudia

Tuesdays, **Aug 14 - Sep 25** (if break for week of Labor day), time TBA. Instructors: Karla and Ella-Kate

Evaluations:

CGC-Evaluation: Sunday, Sep 9, 2012

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

C) Sports classes (Agility, Treibball, Nose Work and seasonal sports):

Listed are start dates. The classes will run once a week for 6 weeks.

Agility Puppy/Beginners:

Saturdays, **Mar 31 - May 5**, 10am-12pm (class 10:30am-11:30am). Instructors: Claudia, Kat

Saturdays, **June 16 - July 21**, 10am-12pm (class 10:30am-11:30am). Instructors: Claudia, Kat

Next: Saturdays, **Sep 15 - Oct 20**

Agility Skills Training:

Saturdays, **Mar 31 - May 5**, 11:30am-1pm (class 12-1pm). Instructors: Claudia, Kat
Saturdays, **June 16 - July 21**, 11:30am-1pm (class 12-1pm). Instructors: Claudia, Kat
Next: Saturdays, **Sep 15 - Oct 20**

Agility Sequencing:

Saturdays, **Mar 31 - May 5**, 2-4pm (class 2:30-3:30pm). Instructors: Kat, Claudia
Saturdays, **June 16 - July 21**, 2-4pm (class 2:30-3:30pm). Instructors: Kat, Claudia
Next: Saturdays, **Sep 15 - Oct 20**

Agility Trialing:

Group A: Saturdays, **Mar 31 - May 5**, weeks 1-4 at Sirius Ranch 4:30-5:30pm; weeks 5+6 at RDTF 3:30-5pm (class: 4-5pm).
Group B: Saturdays, **Mar 31 - May 5**, weeks 1-4 at Sirius Ranch 5:30-6:30pm; week 5 at RDTF joined with group A, week 6 at RDTF 5-7pm (class: 5-6:30pm).
Group C: Saturdays, **Mar 31 - May 5**, weeks 1-4 at Sirius Ranch 6:30-7:30pm; week 5 trialing at Sirius, week 6 at RDTF 5-7pm (class: 5-6:30pm joined with group B).
Next: Saturdays, **June 16 - July 21**
Next: Saturdays, **Sep 15 - Oct 20**

Treibball Beginners:

Mondays, **Apr 2 - May 7**, 7:45-8:45pm (set-up starts at 7:30pm) Instructor: Karla
Next Start: Tuesdays in June

Treibball Intermediate:

Mondays, **Apr 2 - May 7**, 6:30-7:30pm (set-up starts at 6:15pm) Instructor: Karla
Next Start: Tuesdays in June

Nose Work Beginners:

Mondays, **Apr 2 - May 7**, 5:15-6:15pm (set-up starts at 5pm) Instructors: January, Claudia

Nose Work - Intro to Odor:

Mondays, **June 4 - July 9**, 6:30-7:30pm (set-up starts at 6:15pm) Instructors: January, Claudia

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. Call us for details.

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 the group from 6-7pm (medium dogs) is limited to 12

dogs. Reservations can be made in advance. **Your dog can get on the waitlist and you will be called if we have a cancellation. If you reserved a spot for your dog in OPT, didn't show that day and we had someone on the waitlist, you WILL be charged for that day even though you weren't there.** Just call us and we explain the details.

Every Friday (not before holiday weekends e.g. Memorial Day, Labor Day, ...):

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) CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL DOG TRAINER (CPDT) - KSA: WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

As an animal lover, the **Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT)** understands how important it is for you to **find an animal training and behavior professional that you can trust has the knowledge** necessary to meet the needs of you and your animal. Animal training and behavior modification is a science but it is not a regulated science. There is no licensing and no oversight. With the CCPDT designations, you can gain the confidence you need to choose an animal behavior and training professional for your animal.

The CCPDT establishes and maintains **humane standards of competence for animal training and behavior professionals** through criteria based on experience, standardized testing, skills and continuing education, and identifies and markets those individuals to the public.

The CCPDT works with experts in creating and administering **certification programs** to assure the authenticity of the program. By securing the expertise of psychometricians, the CCPDT has developed knowledge and skills based examinations to evaluate individuals who wish **to validate basic knowledge and skills in animal training and behavior**. The CCPDT issues a certificate indicating that the individual has met the minimum experience and educational level, and passed the CCPDT examination.

When the CCPDT started offering an exam to become certified in 2002, the title a candidate could obtain was the **Certified Pet Dog Trainer**. I earned this title in 2003 by fulfilling different requirements (e.g. having taught over 200 hours of group classes as the main instructor) and passing a written exam. They later changed our title to

Certified Professional Dog Trainer, since a lot of us don't only train pet dogs, but also competition dogs, service dogs, therapy dogs and others.

A couple years ago they changed our title to **CPDT-KA (Knowledge Assessed)**. At that point they already started working on a new examination to also test our skills, not only our theoretical knowledge. This new examination was launched last year, September 2011. Once I pass this skills examination, I'll be allowed to extend my title to **CPDT-KSA (Knowledge and Skills Assessed)**. As of November 10, 2011, there were 2,191 CPDT-KAs worldwide. As of December 1, 2011, there were 58 CPDT-KSAs worldwide.

Eventually, with enough hours of private lessons under my belt (I'm getting close), I could also sign up for another examination, to become a **CBCC-KA (Certified Behavior Consultant Canine-Knowledge Assessed)**. As you can see, they're already working on a skills examination for that, too. It's not available yet. As of December 1, 2011, there are 58 CBCC-KAs worldwide.

Keep an eye out for a change in those letters behind my name... 😊

Claudia

Claudia Sihler, CPDT-KA
(Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed)
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)
Tel Nelson (office)

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