

Dear Dog Lover,

Our monthly story at the end of this email: **Claudia & Sally's Trip to Germany!**

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

 Treibball - not only for herding dogs!

Every dog can push around a gymnastic ball, and be taught to use the head and shoulders, not the teeth. The dogs learn directionals, a 'send out', self control and how to have fun while following your commands. You gain distance control over your dog. We have a seminar with Nancy Tanner from Bozeman, Montana coming up in April, and the **Treibball classes starting Tuesday, Feb 12** will be the perfect preparation for that!

 Skijor Workshop - not only for Huskies!

Teach your dog to run in front of your skis, learn about the equipment and how to manage your skis and your dog at the same time. Find other Skijor enthusiasts to share this sport, and find out about trails and trail etiquette. The [Skijor Workshop](#) is set for **Sunday, February 17**. We will again have Kirsten Ballard come and teach you and your dog this wonderful sport ☺. Sign up now! You can go [online](#) or call in with your registration and payment.

 Pet Partners evaluation coming up:

This evaluation is for people who want to take their dogs to nursing homes, hospitals or schools. The evaluation takes place on Sunday, Feb 24 in Chugiak. You can prepare through an online course. More information below under EVENTS.

➤ **[Sign up now!](#)**

 Treibball Beginners: Tuesdays, 6:15pm; starts Feb 12.

 Skijor Workshop: Sunday, 10am - 2pm; one-day event on Feb 17.

 Check our class listings below in a new easy overview format!

➤ **[Open Play Time/ Doggy Day Care:](#)**

- **DDC** every Tuesday and Thursday
- **OPT** every Friday evening; next scheduled closure won't be until **May 24th**

➤ **[Upcoming Events:](#)**

Mark your calendar for the following events in 2013:

 Feb 17: Skijor Workshop

You can skijor with a Beagle - it doesn't take pulling power to skijor with a dog!

This is a safe way for an outing on our winter trails. Your dog is hooked up to you and learns to stay in front of the skis to give you full range to skate and stop. It might be easier if your dog doesn't pull as much, but you sure get further with less energy if s/he does ☺. Kirsten will help you hands on with how to hook up safely and get over our "little Iditarod" trail around the facility property. This could also be a **valuable refresher for repeaters**, helping your dog to remember about this kind of outing.

Time: 10am-2pm

Fee: \$55 pre-registration (paid before Feb 3) or \$60 after that.

BTW: REI in Anchorage offers a Skijor Workshop (without the dog) on January 26. They have skis and nice belts for the humans, we have the better harness for the dog ☺.

🐾 **Feb 24: Pet Partners® Team Evaluation (in Chugiak).** Contact: Terry Yeomans at luv2labs@gci.net. To find out if you and your dog or other pet are eligible to become a Pet Partners® Team, click [here](#). Then read about the required steps [here](#). There's currently no Pet Partners Instructor in Alaska and therefore no local hands-on workshop offered to prepare for the evaluation. You'll have to take the [online Therapy Animal Handler Course](#) through Pet Partners®. After passing the online assessment and the required veterinary health check, you and your dog can be evaluated here in Alaska by a Pet Partners Team Evaluator. Feb 24th is the next available evaluation date. Contact Terry if you are interested in being evaluated either on that date or later.

🐾 **March 16: Odor Recognition Test (ORT)** for "Nose Work - Intro to Odor" graduates at the Cook Inlet Kennel Club building in Palmer. **Host: Cheri Hagen - contact: stonerdg@alaska.net for info and sign-up.**

🐾 **April 6/7: Freestyle/ Dog dance** workshop by Nancy Tanner in Anchorage at Alyeska Canine Trainers. Contact: Karen Hill at akk9agility@aol.com.

🐾 **April 8: Treibball Workshop** by Nancy Tanner here at The Better Companion. We can take 8 working dog spots and additional auditing people. Prices will be available with the March newsletter. If you contact us now already for a working spot, we'll inform you first about the pricing to give you the first chance to sign up.

🐾 **May 3/4/5: Nose Work trials** level 1 and 2 in Chugiak. Contact: Liz at AK Dog Sports at akdogsports@aol.com.

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

Stay warm,
Claudia

Upcoming Classes and Practices:

Listed are start dates. The classes will run 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.

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, (907) 357-2521.

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>Feb 2013</u>	<u>Mar 2013</u>	<u>Apr 2013</u>	<u>later</u>
<u>Behavior Classes</u>				
Puppy 1	Wed 2/13	Sun 3/10	Wed 4/17	
Foundation Class	Wed 2/13	Sun 3/10	Wed 4/17	
Puppy 2		Sun 3/10 + Maybe Thu		May 2013
Elementary School		Thu 3/7		May 2013
High School		Thu 3/7		July 2013
CGC-test (one day)				Sep 8, 2013 (one day)
C.L.A.S.S. - BA			Wed 4/17	Aug 2013
CLASS Evaluation				June 5, 2013 (one day)
Rally College				May or Sep 2013
Rally Practice	Wed 2/13			
Tricks 'N Clicks				May or Sep 2013
<u>Sports Classes</u>	<u>Feb 2013</u>	<u>Mar 2012</u>		<u>later</u>
Nose Work Beginner		Maybe?		Mar or May 2013
Nose Work Odor		Mon 3/11		May 2013
Nose Work Practice		Mon 3/11		May 2013
Treibball Beginner	Tue 2/12		Maybe?	Maybe June
Treibball Intermediate	Maybe?		Tue 4/16	Maybe June

Treibball Practice	Tue 2/12		Tue 4/16	June 2013
Flyball Beginner				Summer 2013
Flyball Practice				Summer 2013
Agility Puppy/Beg		Sat 3/9		July 13
Agility Skills		Sat 3/9		July 13
Agility Sequencing		Sat 3/9		July 13
Agility Trialing		Sat 3/9		July 13

You can check our web page www.bettercompanion.com for info on classes, daycare, Open Play Times, 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.

MONTHLY STORY: CLAUDIA & SALLY'S TRIP TO GERMANY!

This was a dream of mine: going **back to the roots of my love for dogs** with my beloved dog Sally! Germany was where it all started - my love for dogs, walking dogs, taking daytrips with them, bicycling, riding the metro, dog parks, the forests, fields, and most of it off leash.

It would be a test for me and Sally if I trained her well enough for **the city life of Munich**, including the many visits with friends and family. And last October I finally was able to take time off and book the best flight connection for Sally: Anchorage, AK to Frankfurt, Germany direct. If you don't know my Sally, she's an Aussie/Husky mix and now 11 years young. She's in very good shape and still pretty active.

Sally did wonderful! We started right away from the airport walking over one hour with my brother and his dog along the road side, and found a couple areas where Sally could be off-leash already. My brother told me later that he was very surprised about his dog never growling at my Sally. She usually is rather insecure with new dogs and they often come at her too quickly, but my Sally was just happy that his dog didn't jump at her, and so they were good friends from the beginning, rather ignoring each other.

We came across several friends or relatives who didn't own a dog and weren't sure about a dog in their home, but Sally with her charm, tricks and calm behavior won them all! She ended up being allowed on more couches than I expected, and **my mom's bed** became her favorite resting spot in her apartment while we sat together in the living room.

One highlight of the trip was the participation at a **Treibball workshop** with Sally. I learned a ton about the roots of Treibball, and how in Germany the herding community revolted against the comparison of Treibball with their activity. In their opinion herding has a lot to do with the behavior of the sheep (or other herded animals), and how the herding dog reacts to that. The herding instincts are often triggered by the specific movement of the herded animal, which can't be done with a gymnastic ball.

This statement actually opened up the sport of **Treibball to all dogs**, not only herding dogs, and helped the sport grow even more. Now it was clear that this is just another new distance handling activity for any dog, no herding instinct needed, even better! I learned about different approaches to sending the dog away behind the ball, and saw some amazing dogs. I found a new friend in the workshop instructor, who also teaches clicker training, freestyle and other fun games and activities in weekend workshops at different dog-friendly hotels.

And then we met Sally! I mean **the human counterpart!** My Sally is actually named after a human friend of ours, who encouraged Frank to call me up after 5 years of separation. If she wouldn't have been as persistent as she was, Frank wouldn't have had the guts to call me. He thought I'm probably happily married with kids already 😊. Because of Sally, he did call me and we connected again, and we were married within a year after that. For eleven years I was hoping Sally would someday meet Sally! And since human Sally never got around to visiting us here, I had to bring my four legged Sally to her! They were best friends instantly, and Sally's cats were happy to dig into my Sally's leftover canned dog food. Yes, leftover! She got fed so well there, she couldn't possibly finish her dish! Watching the cat at her dog dish, she sure had that look in her face of "how could I let that happen!"

It was a great adventure, and Sally made me a proud dog parent once again. She sure was happy to be back in Alaska, and even greeted Lucy with a look like "It's good to be home!".

Training never ends! Enjoy every day with your dog(s)!
Claudia

Claudia Sihler, CPDT-KSA
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