

Sherwood Dog Training Club

AKC License Club

October 2025 Newsletter



The Sherwood Dog Training Club (SDTC) was formed in 2003, with official status as a non-profit corporation established in 2006.

We also have Tax Exempt status with the IRS as a 501(c)4.

We received our notice that we have become an AKC Licensed Club in August of 2008.

Sherwood Dog Training Club

President: Danielle Silverstein

Vice President: Linda Ruedy

Secretary: Robin Murphy

Treasurer: Jill Faulmann

Board: Darlene Brushwein

Board: Jan Lewis

Board: Helen Hamilton

Newsletter: Darlene Brushwein

Website:

<https://www.sherwooddtc.org/>



Sherwood Dog Training Club is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Wednesday, October 1, 2025 @ 7PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/2517890074?pwd=VGdKeGhtM3lOT3FOdnJoVEUxRjZoQT09&omn=84115663811>

Meeting ID: 251 789 0074

Passcode: 0Avc7r



Dates to Mark for 2025 at Cash Arena in Sherwood, OR

Match Date: Sunday, October 5, 2025 is FULL

Obedience Trial Dates: Saturday, October 11, 2025, and Sunday, October 12, 2025
Closed to entries

For a complete Look at all AKC upcoming Events

Events: <https://webapps.akc.org/event-search/#/search>



These Trials are closed and full

Obedience Trial Dates:

Saturday, October 11, 2025

Sunday, October 12, 2025

Dear Exhibitors,

You should have received a confirmation that you have made it into the Sherwood Dog Training Club - October Obedience 2025 Trials.

I notified those of you who did not get into the trial on Saturday, September 27th.

If you have not received an email from me, please check your junk mail. The conformation came under sherwooddogtc@gmail.com

I would appreciate you checking for errors before I print armband numbers and the catalog.

Thank you,
Darlene Brushwein, Trial Secretary
sherwooddogtc@gmail.com

Hello All,

Just a few extra little notes from me.

Our SDTC members have the extra advantage of knowing about the Trials before the general public.

The event dates are in every Meeting Agenda and Meeting Minutes, also on the club's Events page and the Newsletter.

Opening dates are not required when listing Events on the AKC Event Calendar.

Opening dates have been used in the past and never seems to make a difference, **except** for early arrival entries that had to be returned, only to upset the exhibitor.

A pile of envelopes with entries on the Secretaries desk waiting to be opened defeats the purpose of an Opening Date.

Once an event is on the AKC Event Calendar and "approved" by AKC, the event can be entered even if the Premium List is not done yet, since entries can be done on a generic form.

The AKC Event Calendar has the classes, Judges, location, Trial Chair and Secretary. The AKC Events Calendar does list other things like Awards and other pertinent information that are in the Premium List.

We are very fortunate to be able to have our events at the Cash's, but always keep in mind that one ring is one ring, entering early is a good thing to do.

Please know that people who have in the past and currently work to make these Trials happen do so for the love of the sport as it takes a lot of time and effort to make Trials happen.

Sincerely
Jill Faulmann, Treasurer, Sherwood Dog Training Club



My shelter rescue "Huey" earned his Pref CDX with Pref HIT on all three legs.

He finished in Roseburg on 9/7 with a score of 198.5

Pat Cook



Awareness & Diligence

are critical to preventing poisoning emergencies.

Be Aware of what is poisonous in your home, in your yard, and outside.

Read ingredients and familiarize yourself with what's toxic.

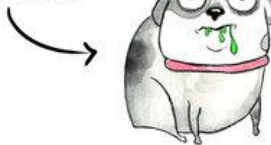
Keep deadly household items safely out of reach, like Gorilla Glue, Xylitol, and human medications.

Reduce the risk even further by not bringing dangers into your home.



Poisons can be...

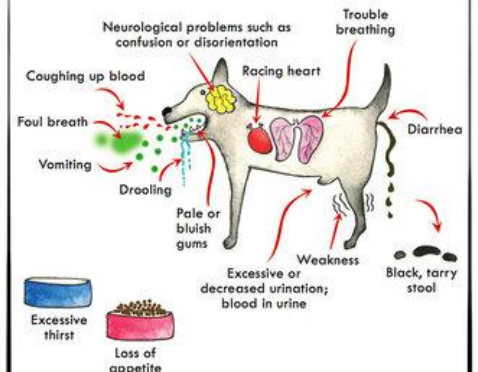
INGESTED



INHALED
(like pesticides & paint)



Common Signs of Poisoning



If your pet has ingested poison—that is non-corrosive—you can induce vomiting.

Give Hydrogen Peroxide (3%):
1 to 2 teaspoons per 10 pounds of body weight.

(Resource: The First Aid Companion for Dogs and Cats)

@REDANDHOWLING

**Portland Dog Obedience Club presents:
Sunday, October 19, 2025 Obedience Fun Match!**

Location: Brigand's HideOut: 9802 NE 156th St, Battle Ground WA 98604

Pre-entry only. Use a separate entry form for each dog. **ENTRIES CLOSE October 12, 2025**

**Mail (USPS) entries with check made out to "PDOC" to:
Joan Armstrong, 14307 NE 257th St, Battle Ground, WA 98604
\$15 for the first run and \$10 for additional runs for the same dog.**

Setup for the Match will start at 9 a.m. and judging will begin as soon as the rings are ready, around
9:30 a.m.

There will be three obedience rings indoors on dirt.

Run order and other information will be emailed out to entrants the week prior to the match.

Note, this is a fundraiser so there will be no refunds.

Your Name:

e-mail:

Best Phone:

Dog's Call Name:

Circle the Obedience class(es) desired and fill in how many runs of each class:

_____Beginner Novice _____ Novice _____ Open _____ Utility

Obedience Jump Height (Open/Utility):

\$15 for the first run and \$10 for additional runs for the same dog.

By signing this entry form, the exhibitor agrees to the following.

I hereby release the Portland Dog Training Club, the owners of Brigands Hideout, other animal owners, property owners, instructors, spectators, and/or any other participants from any and all liability for accidents, injuries and/or damages to me, my dog or property caused by participation in any activities including the period of time immediately prior to and/or immediately after the conclusion thereof so long as the animals are located on the premises designated for the activity. I understand that by participation, I am a joint venture participant and assume all liability for injury to my dog, my property or myself occasioned by this participation. This waiver shall be effective from the date of signing.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:



Upcoming UKC Shows / www.ukcdogs.com

Washington

October 11-12, 2025

October 17-19, 2025

October 18-19, 2025

October 31-Nov 2, 2025

Lilac City Dog Training Club, Nine Mile Falls / Rally Only

Puget Sound K-9's, Auburn / Nose Work

Lilac City Dog Training Club, Spokane Valley / Nose Work

United Nose Work Tri-cities, Richland / Nose Work

Oregon

November 14-16, 2025

January 30 - February 1, 2026

Canine Action Pack Cornelius, OR / Obedience & Rally

Canine Action Pack, Cornelius, Obedience & Rally

California

October 4-5, 2025

West Coast Patterdale Club, Loomis, Nose Work

Utah

October 18-19, 2025

Utah Nose Work Club, West Jordan, Nose Work

Wyoming

October 4-5, 2025

Rocky Mountain Dog Stars, Sheridan / Nose Work

Colorado

Nov 14-16, 2025

High Plains KC, Castle Rock, Obedience & Rally

Details at ukcdogs.com

United Kennel Club (UKC) is an international dog registry celebrating bonds, rewarding ability, and preserving the value of a pedigree. <http://www.ukcdogs.com/>



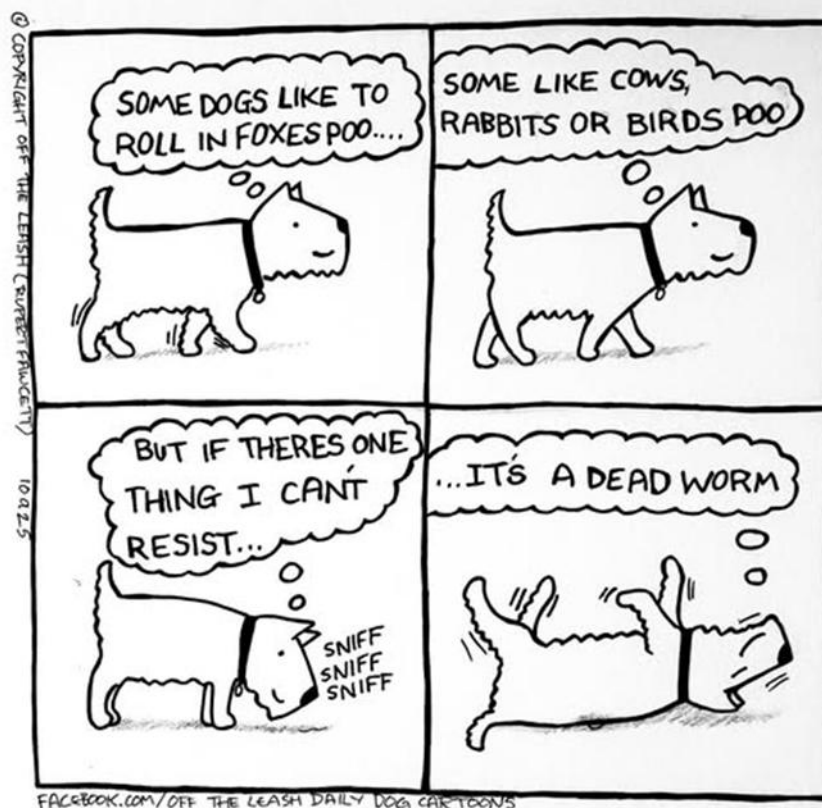
Truly (Haulin'A's Truly Majestic) won the Graduate Novice Class at the Australian Shepherd Club of America National Specialty.

First time ever in Open earlier in the day, he wasn't confident enough to stay in the far corner of the ring when I left for the Drop on Recall. However, he pulled it all together for the GN class.

ASCA has two retrieves in place of the AKC dumbbell recalls, which makes the class more appealing to me AND more fun for Truly.

So proud of my boy.

Laurie Ruben





Dog Days Obedience Run Through Class with Laurie Rubin

A monthly half day Obedience Run Through Class is starting at [Dog Days Dog Training](#) in Vancouver, Washington. The inaugural class will be Wednesday morning, August 27. Dog and handler teams run through the exercises offered at obedience trials. The time can be used for any level of obedience and/or for problem solving specific exercises. Handler choice whether to ask for feedback or simply have the exercises called as in a trial.

This month's class, Wednesday, October 22.
\$15 via PayPal or Zelle or \$17 via mailed check.

Time slots can be reserved by clicking on the following link to fill out your entry information on a Google Form <https://forms.gle/PmJVbQa8MJ6V8r2k7> **AND** sending \$15/time slot via PayPal <https://www.paypal.com/> to Laurie Rubin. After logging in to PayPal and clicking "**Send,**" search for Laurie Rubin or earthlaurie@sonic.net. My link has a photo of a red merle Aussie. In the box that asks "What's this For?," please type "Dog Days October 2025 Run Through Class." Zelle \$15 payments accepted, too. Checks made out to Laurie Rubin for \$17/time slot are OK. **Both your payment and Google Form must be received for your entry to count.** Payments are non-refundable unless the class fills before I receive your entry. In that case, I will notify you and refund your payment. The schedule will be e-mailed to those who have reserved a slot by the day before the class

Next class. Wednesday, November 26th.

Time slots can be reserved by clicking on the following link to fill out your entry information on a Google Form <https://forms.gle/Ww29ZFuTMsrtyTY7> **AND** sending \$15/time slot via PayPal <https://www.paypal.com/> to Laurie Rubin. After logging in to PayPal and clicking "**Send,**" search for Laurie Rubin or earthlaurie@sonic.net. My link has a photo of a red merle Aussie. In the box that asks "What's this For?," please type "Dog Days November 2025 Run Through Class." Zelle \$15 payments accepted, too. Checks made out to Laurie Rubin for \$17/time slot are OK. **Both your payment and Google Form must be received for your entry to count.** Payments are non-refundable unless the class fills before I receive your entry. In that case, I will notify you and refund your payment. The schedule will be e-mailed to those who have reserved a slot by the day before the class.

Future class date: Wednesday, December 24th.

Obedience Run Through Class with Laurie Rubin

A monthly Obedience Run Through Class takes place at **Penny Harvey's training building in Sandy, Oregon**. Dog and handler teams run through the exercises offered at obedience trials. The time can be used for any level of obedience and/or for problem solving specific exercises. Handler choice whether to ask for feedback or simply have the exercises called as in a trial.

**This month's class, Saturday, October 4th,
\$15 via PayPal for each slot of up to 15 minutes or \$16 via mailed check.**

Time slots can be reserved by clicking on the following link to fill out your entry information on a Google Form <https://forms.gle/kuezjTLQ9bEhs3PL9> **AND** sending \$15/time slot via PayPal <https://www.paypal.com/> to Laurie Rubin. After logging in to PayPal and clicking "**Send**," search for Laurie Rubin or earthlaurie@sonic.net. My link has a photo of a red merle Aussie. In the box that asks "What's this For?," please type "October 2025 Run Through Class." Zelle \$15 payments accepted, too. If you prefer to mail a check for \$16/time slot, be sure to also fill out your entry information on the Google Form linked above. Payments are non-refundable unless the class fills before I receive your entry. In that case, I will notify you and refund your payment.

These classes have been filling. Both your payment and Google Form must be received for your entry to count. The Thursday before the class, the schedule and driving directions will be e-mailed to those who have reserved a slot.

Next class. Sunday, November 2nd.

Time slots can be reserved by clicking on the following link to fill out your entry information on a Google Form <https://forms.gle/nQMCdVS73MJdtAZd9> **AND** sending \$15/time slot via PayPal <https://www.paypal.com/> to Laurie Rubin. After logging in to PayPal and clicking "**Send**," search for Laurie Rubin or earthlaurie@sonic.net. My link has a photo of a red merle Aussie. In the box that asks "What's this For?," please type "November 2, 2025 Run Through Class." Zelle \$15 payments accepted, too. If you prefer to mail a check for \$16/time slot, be sure to also fill out your entry information on the Google Form linked above. Payments are non-refundable unless the class fills before I receive your entry. In that case, I will notify you and refund your payment.

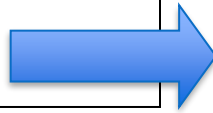
These classes have been filling. Both your payment and Google Form must be received for your entry to count. The Thursday before the class, the schedule and driving directions will be e-mailed to those who have reserved a slot.

Future class date: November 30th. (No class in December)



July 27th our first AKC trial was in Sequim

Two 1st placements in Novice
1st and 2nd in Rally



Western Classic
August 1st-3rd

UKC Novice (UCD) and 3
High in Trials with 194, 197
and 197.5 and our RO2 title.

High In Trial also earned her
three, 40-pound bags of
Eukanuba Performance, so
she is officially a "working
girl" 🐾

September 6th, RATSX at
Valley Dog Sports

**Jan Franz and
Goldwynn's a Streetcar
Named Desire
("Stella")** 🐾❤️



August 8-10
First ever in my life Agility trial,
2 legs of Novice Fast, 2 legs of Novice
Jumpers and 2 legs of Novice Standard





Located in the Hazel Dell area of Vancouver, WA:

7206 NE 37th Ave., Unit A
Vancouver, WA 98665

Phone: 503-807-1212

Email: info@dogdaysnw.com

New Classes

Novice Obedience & Foundations Class – Sunday at 9 am
Start out on the right paw. This class will teach dogs and handlers the foundations, the rules, the exercises and so much more.

Novice Rally Class – Sundays at 10 am
This class will focus on the basic foundations all the way to walking into the ring.

Rally Class Openings

Masters Rally - Thursdays at 9am

Excellent Rally - Thursdays at 10:15 am

For more info call/email

Dee Pigman - Instructor
Dog Days
503.807.1212
deepigman@comcast.net
www.dogdaysnw.com

Common Problem: Sniffing

Jun 30, 2025



Considering the incredible power of your dog's nose, none of us should be surprised when they want to sniff. However, we must be able to communicate when it's appropriate to sniff and when it is not.

If you are struggling with a sniffing problem during your obedience training or performance, consider the following.

✅ Offer an Alternative Behavior

Getting your dog to stop sniffing is most effective when you tell him what you want him to do instead. "Repeatedly telling your dog, "no sniff" doesn't tell him what he should be doing. Tell him to stop, "no," but follow that no with a command he can do such as "Sit," "Down," or "Come!"

For example, if your dog is sniffing while in a down position, tell him "no, Down!" and watch his head snap up to look at you as if he's saying, "I am down!"

✅ Insist on Attention While Training

Sniffing and paying attention to you are mutually exclusive. Teach your dog that there is a correction for inattention. Systematically teach your dog that paying attention is required as outlined in the blog post: Heeling with Attention

We would like to believe the dog's interest in our rewards is more powerful than the distraction tempting the dog to sniff, but that is probably naïve. Teaching your dog that attention is required, and that paying attention causes rewards to happen is a more balanced approach.

✓ There are Appropriate Times to Sniff

When you arrive at a training area or competition venue, if your dog is prone to sniff to satisfy his curiosity about the location, let him do so. However, when you are ready for him to perform, be clear that it is time to stop sniffing and get to work.

Years ago, a handler with a hound was so frustrated with his sniffing that she became determined to never allow him to sniff. This standard caused the problem to get worse as he quickly realized that the only opportunity he had to sniff was during the off-leash portions of his performance. When she relaxed, and allowed him to sniff outside the ring, before his performance began, he was much more inclined to pay attention to the task at hand as his need to sniff had been satisfied.

✓ Using Proofing

It is appropriate to set up situations that might entice your dog to sniff during training. Putting out small pieces of paper or cotton balls may cause your dog to become distracted and try to sniff. Having a helper entice your dog with something smelly and/or delicious is appropriate when he is heading for a retrieve or coming on a recall. However, your response should be directed toward his lack of attention, failure to retrieve, or failure to come as opposed to the sniffing he exhibits because he is distracted.

Connie

*It's the little noises;
the pitter patter of
paws on hard floors,
the snuffles,
the ruffles,
the mid nap snores
that make me feel at
home.*





Cato board: \$50
Measures approx. 16" x 24"



**I can deliver to SDTC
Match or trials.**

Carolyn Wray
cswwray@comcast.net



Set of 3 pop up traffic cones.
Full height 28"
All three for \$10.
Great for obedience and Rally



**I would love to announce that I am a
provisional Rally Judge now.**

**Special thanks to Joan Armstrong and Carolyn Wray
for their help and encouragement.**

<https://www.facebook.com/bannertraining>



"Remember, don't flip out when they say
the word 'treat.'"

**IN DOG SPORTS, IT FEELS LIKE
THERE IS ALWAYS PRESSURE TO
LEVEL UP. TO TITLE. TO MOVE UP
TO THE NEXT CLASS. TO SHOW MORE.
MAYBE EVEN TO GET A NEW SPORT
OR SHOW PROSPECT.**

**HERE'S A REMINDER TO JUST BE
WHERE YOU ARE AND TO ENJOY IT.**

@DOGHANDLERSAY | IG 🐾

TIPS TO PREVENT **BLOAT** AND TWISTED STOMACHS (GDV) IN DOGS:

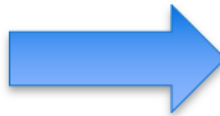
- USE SLOW-FEEDER BOWLS TO REDUCE GULPING AND MINIMIZE AIR SWALLOWING
- ADD DIGESTIVE ENZYMES TO EVERY MEAL TO IMPROVE NUTRIENT BREAKDOWN AND ABSORPTION (REDUCING GAS PRODUCTION AND BLOATING)
- NO RIGOROUS EXERCISE AN HOUR AFTER EATING
- FEED TWO SMALLER MEALS IN 8 HOUR EATING WINDOW, INSTEAD OF ONE LARGE MEAL IN HIGH-RISK BREEDS
- FEED DOGS SEPARATELY TO REDUCE FOOD-BASED COMPETITION
- CHOOSE MEAT-BASED, LOW-STARCH PET FOODS
- AVOID KIBBLE WITH OILS LISTED IN THE FIRST FOUR INGREDIENTS
- REDUCE STRESS AND ANXIETY – TRAINING, ENRICHMENT, ADEQUATE DAILY EXERCISE AND CALM ROUTINES HELP
- TALK TO YOUR VET ABOUT LAPAROSCOPIC GASTROPEXY FOR HIGH-RISK BREEDS

Dr. Karen Shaw Becker
Common Sense Veterinary Medicine
www.drsbecker.com

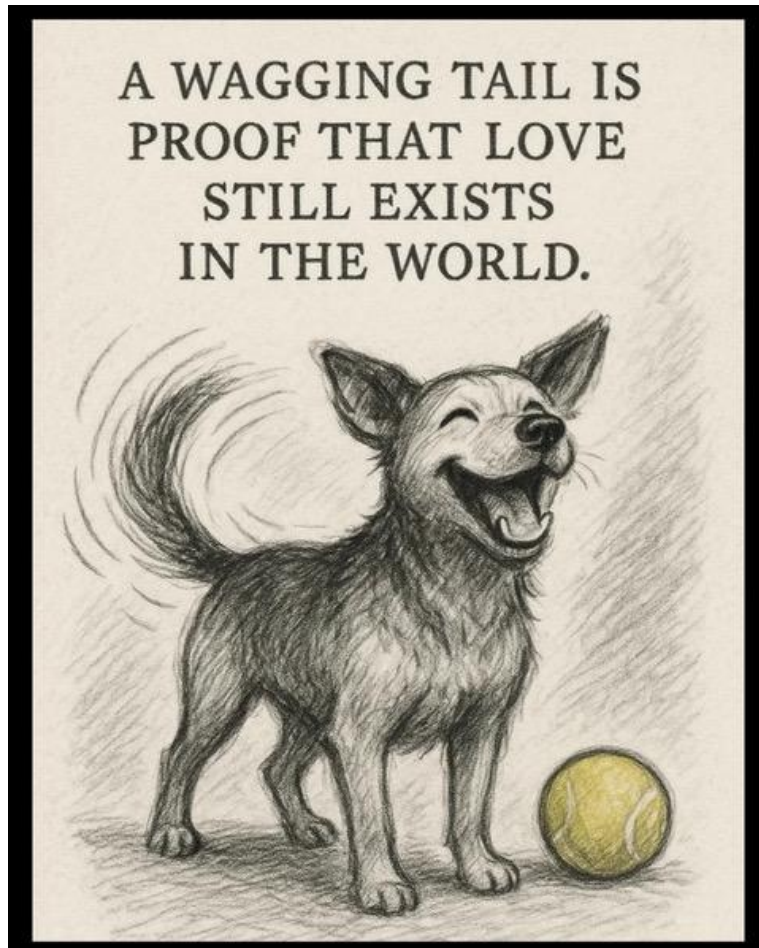




- 3 large Ruffland crates.
 - Color is Whitestone.
 - One door..no damage
 - Price is \$250.00 each.
- 1 Xlarge Ruffland crates.
 - Color is Whitestone.
 - One door..no damage
 - Price is \$300.00 each



Contact CJ Johnson
cjseeker06@gmail.com



Canine Camper Folding Crates

2 Sizes

Small \$40.00

18" Long, 16" High, 14" Wide

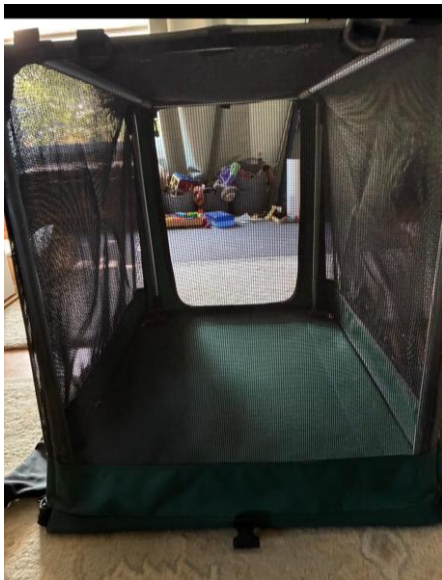
Large \$40.00

24" Long, 20" High, 17" Wide

Excellent condition, clean, no damage, used lightly @ Obedience Invitational and National Specialties. They fit in my Luggage.

Including carrying case

Linda Ruedy
lmruedy04@gmail.com



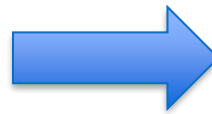
Cabana Crate \$40.00
30" Long, 24" High, 19" Wide
Excellent Condition, Clean,
No damage

Linda Ruedy
lmruedy04@gmail.com



Old Style Size 300 Vari Kennel \$50
32" long, 22" Wide, 24" High
Airline compliant
Clean, No damage

Linda Ruedy
lmruedy04@gmail.com





A Reflection on the New Trend in Trial Bragging

It's become a post-trial weekend classic: a flashy high score on social media, paired with a caption like "we only went on the field once" or "second time tracking this year." On the surface, it sounds impressive. Minimal prep, max results. But let's unpack what that actually means — for the sport and for those of us who live in the grind.

To the handlers tracking at 5am in the rain, showing up every week at the club, working through problems, and still earning modest scores — this narrative can feel defeating. Not because we don't want others to succeed, but because it suggests success comes easy — that hard work is optional.

So, what's behind this trend?

Are these handlers just that good? Some might be.

Are their dogs naturally gifted? Possibly.

Are some judges more generous than others, or focusing less critically on certain phases? That's a valid conversation too.

But when this "effortless excellence" becomes the standard — without honesty or context — it does real damage.

It skews expectations. It invalidates the reality of the work required. It tells newcomers that progress should be quick, and if it's not, something's wrong. It shifts our culture from valuing mastery to chasing optics.

Success should be celebrated — especially when it's earned. But let's be real about what it takes. And let's not forget the real heart of this sport: the journey, the struggle, and the bond we build through it all.

To those putting in the work, even if your score doesn't scream it — we see you. You're doing it right.

CANINE BODY BEHAVIOR

GENERAL SCENT WORK

What is Your Dog Saying?

AUG 17, 2025

https://www.scentworku.com/blogs/scent-work-university-blog/what-is-your-dog-saying?fbclid=IwY2xjawNFQIleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETE0a2xQR0pjWnNKWGIFM1dpAR7C-RBHKTXTrWEhM-wsf4oRLsZA1T3OH7r6BTfX6dQsst9oWE8NX2vTKt93A_aem_JPohLXCXsIpQ2ukp5PgZKw



We hear it all of the time in Scent Work, “learn how to read your dog.” Understand what they are communicating as they work through a search area and space. When do they get a whiff of the odor? How do they announce they are chasing odor or are going in and out of an odor plume? What are the cues they share when they are assessing odor information or something else entirely? How do we know when they are sourcing a hide? How do they let us know they have made a final decision?

Grasping how our individual dog communicates their experience with odor is indeed critically important when searching with our dogs.

However, it is folly to only focus on the odor side of this communication. What about everything else? Wouldn't these pieces of communication be equally, if not more, important for us to listen to and understand? As far as I am concerned, they are imperative for us to succeed and is an area far too many of us are lacking in.

Before embarking on any sort of behavior work, be it as a dog owner or baby trainer, the first piece of business is to better understand canine communication. How dogs use their bodies to communicate with one another and us. Learning how to correctly interpret the dog's cues is key. Is the dog requesting space or inviting a greeting? Is the dog excited, inquisitive, puzzled or concerned? Is the dog in their "thinking" brain or have they flipped over into their "reactive" brain?

It may not seem obvious, but this knowledge is equally important when it comes to participating in Scent Work.

Can you tell, for certain, when your dog is asking for assistance due to being confused as opposed to being overwhelmed? You should, these are entirely different scenarios which necessitate unique responses from us. Keeping an overwhelmed dog in a space to "sort it out" will not serve you well. Likewise, cutting off a dog who was merely asking a question to rush them back into their staging area can deny them a key learning opportunity and cause more confusion.

We must be able to correctly decipher what our dogs are telling us so we can respond appropriately!

Are you confident you can tell when your dog is urging you to do the puzzle for them as opposed to balking because they are scared, concerned or worried? If we are training and practicing with our dogs, the answer should be a resounding "YES!" However, all too often people are unsure.

Let's say you are working on building your dog's confidence. A favorite exercise of mine utilizes a pile of boxes. An odor box is placed on the ground with a bunch of open empty boxes piled on top of it. Can the dog confidently work their way through the pile to get to the odor box or do they show me this is something we need to work on?

Let's say a dog hesitated getting to the odor box. What does this mean? It all depends on HOW the dog hesitated and what they were communicating when they did so.

A dog who circles around the pile, stretching while keeping the majority of their weight back on their hind end and jolting anytime a box moves is concerned. Are they panicked? No. They are still actively trying. However, there is a level of concern there. It is our job to recognize this concern and determine how close to this dog's "edge of the ledge" we are.

Our goal is to push the boundaries, dancing right up to this edge without forcing the dog to tumble off of it. Thus, we have two choices: wait the dog out to see if they can indeed solve the puzzle on their own or quit while they are still trying. If we chose the latter, we would say "NICE TRY!" with a kind tone of voice, put the dog up for a few minutes and adjust the exercise slightly so they CAN be successful. The goal being to work back to the original setup and even surpass it, understanding this may take time and several repetitions.

Now let's say we have a dog who circles the pile of boxes, sniffs it a few times, is not stretching or jolting but promptly looks back up at their handler. This dog is not working their way to the odor box in any way, shape or form. Are they concerned? It doesn't sound like it. The communication cues are more along the lines of, "Hey you with the thumbs, go get that hide for me, it is over there." We can all agree this is NOT what we are looking for in our searches. What can we do?

One option is to pretend to do what the dog wants. Pick up a nearby empty box, step toward the pile as though you are about to solve the puzzle for them. However, instead of doing their bidding, place the empty box on top of the pile. The dog will likely look at you with disappointment. That was not helping! You made the puzzle harder, boo! Now, in reality you can be sneaky and use this opportunity to make the pathway to the covered box wider or easier to traverse. But to your dog, you were useless! You've made it clear that asking you to do the puzzle for them will not work, they must do it on their own. Which just so happens to be precisely what we were looking for in the first place.

Can we all agree these two dogs who both hesitated to solve the same exact odor puzzle were saying drastically different things and thus required unique responses from us as trainers?

If we cannot truly grasp what our dogs are telling us, how can we hope to be the supportive teammate they deserve? We could respond in a way that undercuts them entirely, setting their progress and trust in us backwards.

Striving to develop Uber confident dogs who will stride into any space and tackle a search with tenacity and resiliency is a good goal to have. However, our dog's experience while we train to obtain these goals matters. "Just train for it" or "stop babying your dog" doesn't account for the fact there are times we mess up as trainers.

We design an exercise our dog simply cannot do. It could be that they are physically unable or lacked the requisite skills. Perhaps the environment was too challenging, we stacked far too many stressors on top of one another or we placed too much pressure on them. Maybe we did not fully grasp what the intent of the exercise was, so there was confusion on both ends of the leash. Perhaps they simply do not feel well and drilling something to death is not going to help! It is our duty to listen to our learner, to get feedback from them and make adjustments from there.

When our dogs are saying, "Hey, I'm struggling," we must listen, truly grasp what their communication means and react accordingly.

To help, here is a short exercise for you. Think through the following scenarios and describe what you believe the dog is communicating and how you would react. Write your guesses in the comments.

You approach a start line for a container search with your dog. After giving them 5 seconds to focus on the space, you give your search cue. The dog takes a step, does a full body shake and turns toward their flank before slowly entering the space with their head skimming just above the ground.

Your dog is tackling an exterior search and has successfully found 2 of the 4 hides set in the space. As they are striding along, they suddenly spin, halt and plaster their nose to the ground, locking their front elbows and swinging their hind end.

During an interior search, your dog is in the process of sniffing the outer edges of a chair when a door slams shut in the distance. Your dog's head shoots up, their mouth closed, ears and tail erect. The seconds tick by as your dog continues to stare off in the direction of the noise. Even as you try to apply some leash pressure, they brace themselves, maintaining their stare and stance.

Your dog is working a vehicle search set out in a parking lot during a hot summer day. They perform a lovely wrap around the vehicle, mouth closed while closely investigating the outside of the vehicle. When they reach the wheel well, they pause and do more concentrated sniffing before opening their mouth, panting heavily and heading toward some shade.

For each of these scenarios, consider how you may follow up. What would you adjust or do differently in a subsequent exercise? What information has the dog provided and how will this inform the decisions you may make going forward? Does this require more drilling of a certain skill or exercise or something else entirely? Does the solution exist in or outside the realm of Scent Work?

Yes, we must be capable of reading our dogs as they work odor. However we are hindering ourselves by not striving to hear everything our dogs are telling us.

Looking for resources to learn?



Dianna has been training dogs professionally since 2011. She has done everything from teaching group training classes and private lessons, to specializing in working with fearful, reactive and aggressive dogs, to being a trial official and competition organization staff member.



Context and leg positioning can help you decipher a bow

How and when dogs bow can be very individual.

The Misunderstood Bow[©]

It isn't always a signal for play.
A bow can be given for many reasons.



They can be used as a signal to have a break and perhaps continue shortly

Break time

They can be used to position so they can chase more easily. This may or may not be play

Placement to chase

Some dogs will position themselves with their heads lower to stalk

Stalking



They may use this as a greeting that has become a habit over time

Ritualised greeting

Dogs can position themselves for a rapid exit if needed

Placement to escape

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This can be used to show the other dog they mean no harm.

Calming signal

It can just mean they are stretching or repositioning

Stretching

They can do this to synchronise with another dog

Synchronicity

It may be shown as part of a mating ritual or interest in another dog

Mating ritual

It can be used in play or to initiate play.

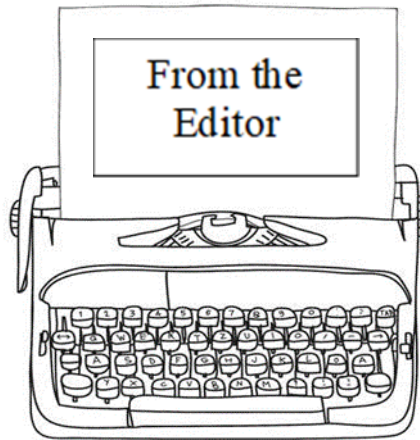
Play



ABC Dogs NZ

All Behaviour is Communication





SDTC Newsletter Advertising Policy

- **Advertisements for rehoming k9 equipment, etc. are always welcome.**
- **Training programs and classes offered by members will be posted with a link to a website for members only [possibly under a column specifically designated for that purpose].**
- **Advertising of puppies/litters will not be accepted**

We are looking for articles from our membership.

- **Do you have a brag or accomplishment?**
- **Have you written an article that the membership could benefit from?**
- **Know of an upcoming event? Example: Obedience trial, Scent trial, Specialty, Health clinic..... etc.**



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