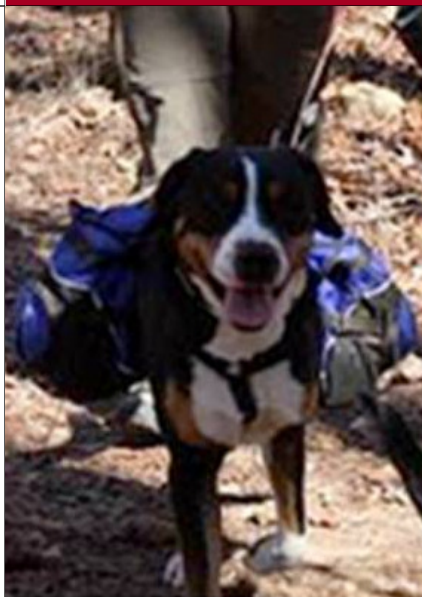


Southern Senniments



All About **SWISSYPALOOZA!**



Southbound 2009

SouthBound GSMD Club - May/June 2009

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The Southbound Board

Back Row (L to R): Cilla Phillips, Secretary; Molly Eichhoefer, President; Glenda Parks, Director; Leigh Poole, Director; Faye Erickson, Director

Front Row (L to R): Val Guthrie, Vice President; Scott Patton, Treasurer

President's Message

With any luck, you're reading this from our new Southbound web site. I hope everyone is excited to see that we've entered the electronic age. (Better late than never.) This is a work in process, so we hope you'll check back often.

Swissypalooza is just around the corner. Cilla's vision of a working weekend is coming together nicely. The staff at the site is excited to have us and eager to watch our dogs work. Melissa and Linda are putting the finishing touches on the event and need your help to make it a success.

First choice would be to join us for the fun either as a participant or volunteer. But even if you can't join us, please consider buying some Swissypalooza merchandise to support the efforts. As we discussed at the annual meeting, Southbound is making a significant investment in Swissypalooza. Help us make sure it's not a one time event.

The 2011 National Specialty is in contract negotiations with the hotel. My thanks to Kathy Nebel for guiding me through the process. We've selected a "theme" and hired an artist to develop the art we'll use to promote this event. It's not too early to start thinking about a Smoky Mountain vacation.

Speaking of logos, we've asked another artist for some suggestions on updating or reworking the current Southbound logo. So keep a watch out for that announcement.

Finally, the Board will be submitting a plan to amend the by-laws to more clearly identify the membership footprint. This is something the Board has talked about for almost six years (if not longer), and it's time we got it done.

On a more serious note, a dog is currently showing in our footprint that is aggressive. He jumped two different dogs at a recent show. I can't help but remember the time where the AKC reps would hover close to the Swissy ring. Our dogs had a reputation of being nasty.

While the vast majority of our dogs only need a good talk to stay in line, remember to put your dog's safety first. If you don't know the dog and owner, use caution.

I look forward to seeing you all this fall....

—Molly E.



SOUTHBOUND

GREATER SWISS MOUNTAIN DOG CLUB, INC.

APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL 2009

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

LIST ANY NEW DOGS YOU HAVE GOTTEN IN THE LAST YEAR:

LIST REGISTERED NAME, CALL NAME, REGISTRATION #, BREEDER NAME AND DOB OF YOUR GSMDs (use back of page if necessary) .

I (We) agree to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of this Club and the rules of the American Kennel Club.

Signature and Date

Signature and Date

Yearly Membership Fees are \$30 for Family Membership, \$20 per Individual Member, and \$15 for a Junior Membership (under 18; children no charge with Family Membership).

****Those who wish to learn more about the GSMD or are on a waiting list for a puppy may join as an Associate Member at a cost of \$20. Associate Members are NOT able to vote or hold office in the Southbound GSMD Club.****

Please send a check payable to the Southbound GSMD Club, Inc. along with this application to the Membership Chairman, Glenda Parks, 3613 Sessions Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70816.

Please let us know what events and support you would like Southbound to provide to you and your Swissy(s). Also, add any additional information you'd like to share about yourself and/or your dogs. Remember, this is YOUR club--let us know what you'd like to do to help it be a great club!

_____ **I would like to help with the GSMD NATIONAL DOG SHOW (2011)**

_____ **I would like information about SWISSYPALOOZA in Nov 2009**

- _____ RUN FOR BOARD MEMBER OR OFFICER (ELECTIONS 2011)
- _____ PERRY COTTON CLASSIC (APRIL) FUN DAY (2010)
- _____ NEWSLETTER
- _____ DRAFTING SEMINAR/TRIALS
- _____ HERDING SEMINAR/TRIALS
- _____ RALLY OR OBEDIENCE SEMINAR/TRIALS
- _____ ANNUAL STATE AREA FUN DAY PICNICS

Write in your suggestions for activities you would be willing to work on, coordinate, or make a suggestion.



Swissypalooza!
swissypalooza.weebly.com



Southbound Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club

Presents



A Working Dog Extravaganza

November 5 - 9, 2009

Clemson Youth Learning Institute
Pickens, South Carolina

Southbound's Swissypalooza is a celebration of the Swissy's working spirit as well as the ultimate social gathering of dog lovers. Including a puppy match, hiking, drafting, herding and weight pull, as well as clinics in rally, agility and tracking, this event is one you don't want to miss.

More information, entry forms, and lodging forms available at:

swissypalooza.weebly.com

Schedule of Events:

Thu 11/5 - Hiking, Agility Clinic, Social
Fri 11/6 - Hiking, Herding, Rally Clinic, CGC Test, Weight Pull
Sat 11/7 - Draft Trial, Puppy Match, Weight Pull, Social
Sun 11/8 - Hiking, Draft Trial, Tracking Clinic, Social
Mon 11/9 - Hiking

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SOUTHBOUND
GREATER SWISS MOUNTAIN DOG
CLUB

Swissypalooza: Pack Hiking

The Road to Discovering What Pack Dog Hiking Means to You

by Leigh Poole

Hiking with your dog can be extremely rewarding, and to be able to have all of your team's hard work recognized by the GSMDCA through the Pack Dog program is a bonus. Following is a story of how my husband, Ryan, and I got started in Pack Dog. I hope it encourages you to either begin pack hiking with your dog or to dust off your dog's pack and hit the trails!

We acquired our Swissy because we wanted to do as many working events as possible, and hiking certainly was on that list. We have been hiking with Herschel since he was around 7 months old (he turned 3 years old in February). We started without a pack, doing short 1-3 mile hikes with a Trailhounds group in Raleigh. It was great for socialization and exercise. We were careful not to push him too much as a young, growing dog. Once he got a little bit older and we had a better idea of what size pack he would wear as an adult, we ordered a pack and started using it with very low weight. We started out by stuffing the saddlebags with towels (so that he could get used to the width of a filled pack) and a small water bottle on either side. At around a year old, the total weight in his pack was around 7 lbs., or 7% percent of his body weight. We gradually increased the weight in the pack and the distance we hiked.

Our first group hike was in the fall of 2007 and Herschel was 20 months old (note: your Swissy must be at least 18 months old to be eligible to earn legs towards a Pack Dog title). He was so eager and pulled the whole way. I wondered if my patience would last! Thankfully, over the years (yes, I know he is only 3!) he has settled down dramatically from those days. He still gets fired up when we go hiking – his excitement level begins rising when we bring out the pack and start filling water bottles. To me, one reason why pack hiking with your dog is so fulfilling is that it brings out their natural abilities and you can feel how happy they are to have a job. Conditioning is a big part of you and your dog completing legs towards Pack Dog titles. It is vital that

the dog and handler be fit enough to go the distance. Experienced pack dog hikers have their own fitness routines that work for them and their dog. If you are ever curious about how much to do with your dog, do not hesitate to ask – we have many experienced hikers in the club willing to share their expertise. We train and hike during the fall, winter, and spring months. Year-round we walk every day in our neighborhood – which includes some hills – anywhere from 1 ½ - 3 miles per day. Herschel is not big on wearing his pack in the neighborhood, so we train with weight on the weekends on actual trails. That means that during the fall, winter, and spring months we are on the trails almost every weekend.

Now that we are conditioned to do long hikes, we start each hiking season with around 8-10% of Herschel's body weight and go approximately 3 miles. We build up gradually to around 15-17% of his body weight and 5 or 6 miles. It is comfortable for us to stay around this weight and distance for a while. Then, before a group hike, we do at least one or two 8-mile hikes at full weight (note that the GSMDCA rules require teams who are participating in their first hike to have completed a prerequisite 6-mile training hike with full pack weight).

We also try to vary the terrain as much as we can. We are fortunate to live in central NC and have access to many rolling hills and even a few large climbs (we have done a training hike at Eno State Park in Durham that includes a 700' climb!) When we trained for the Crowders Mountain hike in winter 2008, we hiked a particularly difficult trail in Raleigh that includes lots of steep hills and rocky terrain. Do not worry; most hikes are not as difficult as Crowders! The point is to match your training hikes with the actual hikes you plan to do.

We try to do as many pack hikes as we can in a season; normally for us that is around 3 hikes. While we miss hiking in the summer, we take the summer off for several reasons – the heat, ticks, and snakes.

Continued on the next page

When we decide to hit the trails in the summer, it is without a pack and for much shorter distances. Heat stroke is a very real concern and not worth the risk to our dog or ourselves. Along the same lines, one should not attempt to hike with their dog if the dog is injured.

As far as the equipment needed to pack hike, you will obviously need a sturdy pack for your dog that is equipped to hold approximately 20-25 lbs. There are many different brands and price points. Fit is important, so if possible try to find a local store where you can try a pack on your dog (or an online retailer that accepts returns/exchanges). It is also wise to invest in a good pair of hiking boots for yourself.

To get up to pack weight, many handlers use consumables – food and water, since the pack is allowed to reduce in weight only by what the dog and handler have consumed during the hike. Remember that only the dog and handler are allowed to eat and drink out of the pack, so if Ryan comes along without a dog, he carries his own backpack with food and water.

Hikes are organized and held throughout the south and are posted on the GSMDCA website under the Pack Hike events calendar. Typically, hikes are also posted on various list serves (e.g., Southbound, Swissy-L, and GSMD Forums). Registration fees are normally between \$10-20 and typically cover ribbons, certificates, and/or patches. It is best to let the Hike Coordinator know ahead of time that you and your dog will be attending so that he/she can adequately prepare (print certificates, purchase enough ribbons/patches), as well as contact participants with any special instructions or change in plans in the event of inclement weather.

Thanks to several mentors, namely Melissa Jarriel and Kathy Nebel, along with the GSMDCA Pack Dog Committee, I have planned 3 successful hikes. If you are interested in planning a hike, you should familiarize yourself with the GSMDCA Pack Hike Regulations, and I would recommend that you seek advice from previous Hike Coordinators because they will be very helpful in providing guidance. The GSMDCA website is another great resource that, in addition to the rules and regulations and pack hike titles offered by the Club, includes training tips, overnight equipment list, and the confirmation form that owners are

responsible for submitting after meeting title requirements.

Pack Dog Hiking is many different things – for me it is about relaxation (well, at least for our training hikes – the energy level goes up a bit on a group hike with all the other people and dogs!), spending time outdoors with Herschel, and providing him with a way to exhibit his natural working ability over time. In addition, we have met and made many good friends who we enjoy seeing and spending time with. I encourage you to discover what it means to you and your dog, and above all else, have fun with this working event!



Herschel earned his Novice Working Pack Dog title in January 2008 and his Working Pack Dog title in February 2009

Hikes will be offered on Thursday, Friday, Sunday, and Monday of Swissypalooza!

Swissypalooza: Drafting

Born to Draft

by Ron and Pam Capelli

There is no working dog activity more closely identified with the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog than drafting. The opening phrase of our breed standard prominently identifies drafting as a major purpose for which the breed was developed. Historical images show Swissys harnessed to carts, earning their keep bringing goods between the farm and town markets.

Breeding for size and strength was one important aspect of the GSMD natural drafting ability. Equally important was breeding for the temperament to be a willing worker, to work as a team with their owner. While the dogs have lost their farm jobs to mechanization, their working ability, instinct, and temperament - bred for over countless generations - are important characteristics that attract fanciers of the breed, and make Swissys the great companions we love.

By learning to draft with your Swissy, you can help show that breeding programs never lose sight of the GSMD legacy, and you will develop a stronger bond with your dog as team members having mutual trust, confidence, and respect for each other.

Working toward a drafting title provides guidance for effective training, and a concrete goal against which progress can be measured.

Getting started

The ideal way to get started in drafting is to find and join, or form, a group of carting enthusiasts. For example, we are fortunate that the Austin, TX area has a very active carting community. Our drafting mentor, the late Dick Shumer, a Newfoundland owner and trainer extraordinaire, inspired many of his students to become more involved with carting and to continue to keep the local community strong by encouraging and teaching newcomers. Many of us meet nearly every weekend in the fall and winter to practice and coach each other.

Another way to get started is to attend draft clinics

held by regional clubs such as Southbound.

Equipment

There is an investment needed to start drafting, namely a harness and a cart.

We strongly recommend a **siwash harness**. Avoid parade harnesses as these provide less support for your dog to pull. Siwash harness suppliers include Nordkyn, Wilczek, and Dog Works among others. We don't like the siwash "freight" harness style. This style differs from a regular siwash harness in that it has a permanently attached spreader bar which is inconvenient when the dog is unhitched.

The most important measurement for a siwash harness is the neck. The measurement is from between the shoulder blades to the breastbone and back. The measurement typically ranges from 26 inches for a small 85 lb adult Swissy girl to 32 inches for a 145 lb Swissy male.

Commercially built carts are available, but building a cart is not at all difficult. Basically, a cart is a **box** mounted on an **axle** with **wheels**, and **shafts** attached to the box. We've built carts using a plastic milk crate for the box, but considering extra parts and work to reinforce the plastic for the axle mount and shafts, a wood box is probably easier and less expensive to build. A ½ inch solid steel rod from the hardware aisle of Home Depot or Lowes serves as a good axle, attached to the box by angle brackets from the same hardware store. Lowes carries 14" wheels and 20" wheels are available from Northern Tool. Both types of wheel fit on the ½ inch rod axle. Shafts can be wood, ½ inch electrical conduit, or aluminum tubing. Metal shafts can be bent with a pipe bender. The design and construction only becomes potentially complicated if you want metal shafts that are detachable to make transportation and storage of the cart easier.

It's important to know how to hitch the cart and adjust the harness on the dog. Shafts should be level. They

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should come just forward of the dog's shoulder, and there should be enough room for the dog to drive their rear legs without hitting the cart (or "single tree" if used). The shaft loops of the harness *must* be restricted from sliding too far back on the shaft by a **shaft brake**, which can be something like a shaft collar found on commercial cart shafts, or a simple eye bolt through a home built shaft.

Initial Training

An extremely important aspect of training is the need for basic obedience work. The dog must be able to reliably heel on leash at this initial training stage.

Be patient and take it slow when introducing your dog to the cart. Swissys need to be sure the cart is "OK". When initially hitched to the cart, they may feel trapped between the shafts and spooked by the cart and noise that is following them and that they can't get away from. This situation not only can set back training by frightening the dog, but it is also potentially dangerous. Before ever attempting to hitch up, be sure the dog thinks the cart is a good thing and is desensitized and accepting of the moving noisy cart and bumping shafts.

The Swiss farmers of old probably had their puppies walk along side while an older dog pulled the cart to market. By time the puppies were old enough to pull the cart, they were used to it and understood what was expected of them.

Treat and feed near or on the cart. Lure the dog between the shafts with treats. Eventually then, try walking the dog with someone else pulling the cart closely along side. Every so often bump the dog's side with a shaft. When the dog accepts all this matter-of-factly, the time is ready to hitch up.

Keep a very short lead when initially hitched up in case the dog still becomes spooked. By controlling the dog's head you control the body. Keep everything soothing and upbeat. If necessary, go back to training unhitched.

Because of the shafts, it will initially be hard for the dog to make turns with the cart. Work in an area large enough for long straight runs and wide turns both right and left. Over a period of days, start spiraling in to ever tighter turns. Your dog needs to learn to step with one leg crossing over the other to make the tightest possible turn.



Above: Pam with Eiger pulling a Dog Works cart through a 90 degree left turn

Draft Trials

A draft trial is a stylized test of a draft dog and owner's skills in performing tasks that were commonly required when Swissys earned their keep on the Swiss farms of old.

Swissys are eligible for draft trials held under GSMDCA, Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America (BMDCA), Newfoundland Club of America (NCA), and New England Draft and Driving Club (NEDDC) rules. While there are important differences in the various club rules, the test formats are basically the same.

Novice level tests are mostly on leash. Open level tests are off leash.

There is a **basic control test**, meant to ensure safety in that the dog will follow the handler's lead and commands. This is similar to a formal obedience test in terms of the exercises and judges commands, except that the handler may talk to and encourage the dog for most parts of the exercises. There is a heeling pattern with left, right, about turn, fast, slow, and halt commands. There is a recall exercise. Some club rules have a long group stay as part of the basic control test.

Hitching and harnessing ensures the dog is cooperative, that the owner can put the harness on the dog, adjust it, and hitch the cart to the harness properly.

The **maneuvering course** tests the team's ability to work together to traverse a course with elements like those that would be encountered on a trip from farm to market. There are sharp right and left turns. There

Continued on the next page

is at least one “narrows”, barely wider than the cart. that the team must pass through. There is an element like a gate or other movable obstacle where the dog must wait while the handler opens the gate or moves the obstacle, then pass through and wait again while the handler closes the gate or moves the obstacle back. There may be stations where the handler meets a steward and accepts a load to be placed in the cart, and subsequently delivers the load to a steward. There is an element where the dog must back up a short distance with a time limit, as would be necessary in the old days to back out of an alley or similar situation.

There is a **long stay while hitched** (out of sight for open level tests) that mimics the situation where a Swiss farmer might have left their dog to, say, go visit someone, collect payment, or purchase goods. The farmer expected their dog to remain without moving until he returned.

Finally, the **freight haul** tests the team’s ability to

pull a cart with some weight over an extended distance, over natural terrain that may have (steep) hills.

Sometime during the maneuvering course or freight haul, there is some staged **visual or sound distraction** that should not cause the dog to react inappropriately.

We believe the draft trial elements are a good guide for effective training for drafting. All the test elements are rooted in essential skills needed by the Swiss dogs of old to perform their duties as working draft dogs.

We never stop being impressed by our Swissys working dog instincts and abilities. A Swissy thrives on being given jobs to do, and even more so loves working with their owner as a team. With drafting, it truly does require teamwork to be successful. The bond that develops and grows stronger between a Swissy and its owner is the biggest reward.



Above: Brig with Pam and Ron’s three-year-old grandson Logan in a milk crate cart

Draft Trials will be held on Saturday and Sunday during Swissypalooza.

Entries are limited, so sign up now if you want to ensure your spot!

Pam Capelli has graciously volunteered to provide draft run-throughs on Friday afternoon. What a great opportunity to practice right before the trial and get some great pointers from Pam!

Swissypalooza: Weight Pull

Harnessing the Swissy Drive to Pull

by Dale Appel

Do you remember the Animal Planet episode of "Meet the Breed" with the Greater Swiss Mountain dog? I know I sure do. I went upstairs and woke my wife (it was 12:30 am) and told her I had to have one of these great dogs! Four months later, we went to a "weight pulling" event to meet our first Swissy. I remember being amazed at the time. Not only was I getting to meeting this wonderful breed of dogs, I was at the same time introduced to an aspect of dog sport that I had no idea even existed.

"Let me get this straight," I asked one of the competitors, *"you hook your dog to that cart and he pulls it over to you. What's so hard about that?"* I received a look that was somewhere between pity and amusement. *"Just watch them for a while, you'll see what all the fuss is about."*

Not only did I fall in love with the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog that rainy September morning, but I was also captivated by sport of canine weight pulling.

Anyone who has ever held a Swissy ringside will immediately be inclined to think, *"Pull? Sure my dog can pull!"* They may even offer to let you hold their dog just to show you how much their dog can pull.

While I have no facts whatsoever about the origin of weight pulling as a sport, one can only imagine the early dog carters gathered at their favorite watering hole after a long day of deliveries bragging about how their dog was better than anyone else's dog and after a few beverages, they would happily go out and see who could pull more.

While dogs today are not worked like they were hundreds of years ago, we still enjoy the opportunity to go out and compete with them against other like-minded individuals.

Great, you have a dog that you are sure wants to pull, how do you start? You can look all over the internet and find dozens of sites explaining weight

pulling, talk about training, and find all sorts of tips on getting the most from your dog. I feel that many of these sites miss the most important step. You as the trainer/handler have to have a relationship with your dog that makes them want to work for you. Have you ever watched a child participate in a sporting event where they were only playing to satisfy a parent? This is how your dog can be if you don't make weight pulling rewarding, exciting and fun!

Simple obedience is critical to your dog's success in weight pulling. Stay, come and down commands will really help you get going. As you get into the heavier weights, getting your dog to "jump" into the harness to create momentum will also assist in your pulling.

There are numerous weight pulling events where there may be exhibitors who are willing to allow you to try their equipment if you are still considering weight pulling. Once you've further established an interest in the sport, you should consider having a harness made for your dog. I have found several good sources for weight pulling harnesses: The Working Canine <http://www.theworkingcanine.com/index.html> CD Pits weight pulling harnesses <http://www.itsmysite.com/cgi-bin/itsmy/go.exe?page=1&domain=1&webdir=cdpits> These folks will make harnesses to custom specifications for your dog. This is important when weight pulling at the heavier weights. Once you have your harness, you should acclimate your dog to wearing it. This may take up to a month for him to be entirely comfortable.



Above: Applewood Lucy Livin' Large "Lucy" during training

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Once you and your dog are comfortable with the harness, you are ready to proceed to training. Some will suggest having your dog pull some milk jugs or 2 liter bottles with rocks in them to acclimate them to noise behind them. If this is necessary, take your dog on walks with their harness and this type of "weight" until they are no longer bothered. Once you are ready to begin with weight training, start pulling a 20'-30' binder or logging chain through grass. Do this three times a week working up to a total pulling time of 15 minutes per session. While your dog is not pulling more than 50 lbs., the chain produces friction in the grass giving a significant workout. When your dog is comfortable with this routine, add some weight to the chain by adding a couple of old fashioned window weights to the chain to further increase the friction.

Below: Lucy training with a tow chain and window weights



If you have availability, it would be good to occasionally practice with some type of cart or wheeled weight. This can be a garden cart, lawn cart, wagon or other wheeled vehicle. The idea is to get your dog ready to work for you.

Your dog can earn titles for 10x, 15x and 20x body weight pulled. These titles are through the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club of America. Remember, check the national club site, <http://www.gsmdca.org/> for further details and the proper forms to document your pull. You can also visit the International Weight Pull Association, <http://www.iwpa.net/> for more details about pulling.

Weight Pulls will be offered on Friday and Saturday nights at Swissypalooza!

The equipment and surface will be a wheeled cart on carpet over concrete floor in a sheltered area.

Extra weight pull harnesses will be available. "Day of event" entries will be accepted.

Prizes will be awarded to the first place winners in each weight class. Weight classes are: under 90 lbs, 90 - 109 lbs, 110 - 129 lbs, and 130 or more lbs.

Entry fees are \$20 per dog/per day.

It is not unusual for a dog to earn a leg at their first pull, so novice dogs (age 14 months or older) are encouraged to attend.

Swissypalooza: Agility

An Interview with Melissa Jarriel

(Melissa will be teaching the agility clinic on Thursday, Nov. 5th)

How long have you been training/competing in agility?

I started training in Spring 2004 when Keygan was about 20 months old and competed in my first trial in Fall 2004 when he was 28 months old.

Who was your role model/mentor when you started agility?

I really didn't have a role model or mentor when I started. I took a beginners class at my local club and when I became an obedience instructor and had unlimited use of the field and agility equipment, I trained and learned the rules on my own. After Keygan obtained his Novice title I started working with Angela Morgan, a local competitor who runs Shelties. She taught me more advanced handling techniques and exercises.

What motivated you to begin training for agility?

I took a beginner agility class for something to do after beginner obedience. Keygan was the star of the class and loved it, so he was my motivation.

Describe your training techniques.

In a nutshell I use a "praise the good, ignore the bad" training method. Unlike obedience, I don't see an advantage to using corrections in agility. The key is to make it fun and build confidence. That said, obedience is a necessary foundation for recalls and other off lead work and I do use a praise/correction method for obedience.

How often and how long do you train?

Except during the hot months, I run two full courses once or twice a week and work on specific obstacles or difficult jumping sequences 3 or 4 times per week. Training sessions are very short – no more than 10 or 15 minutes.

What would you do differently if you started to train a new dog, what would you keep the same?

I would definitely change how I train the table. I would start a puppy downing on a square board with a table command early on to get an automatic

down whenever he got on the board (table), then teach pulling up to a sit after the down was rock solid.

I would keep the confidence building/make it fun approach.

What words of wisdom can you give to newcomers to this event?

If you feel like you have two left feet when it comes to handling, run many courses without a dog or borrow a trained dog. Agility dogs need confident, competent handlers to keep from becoming confused and frustrated. It is really important to have fun and enjoy the journey. Be diligent about stretching your dogs before they train and compete.

How often do you compete?

On average, I go to a two-day trial once per month from September through May and take most of the summer off.

What do you do to prepare for a competition?

We do an intense training on problem areas the Monday and Tuesday before competing, then rest until the day of the trial.

Where are the competitions held?

In the Southeast, you can generally find a trial within a 4 hour drive each month. I attend trials in Columbia and Charleston, SC; Savannah, Alpharetta and Perry, GA; Charlotte, Asheville, Concord and Sanford, NC.

How do you enter a competition?

You can usually obtain the premium list from the sponsoring dog club's website. Most clubs in SC and NC use Peggy Franklin as their secretary and you can find the premium lists on her website, which is www.pegfranklin.com. Once you start attending trials the trial secretaries put you on their mailing lists, and they will e-mail you trial notices and premium lists. Since you have to attach a jump height card, it is easiest to use snail mail to enter, but some

Continued on the next page

trials allow on-line entry. Trials in this area do fill up quickly, so I usually send my entry on opening day.

What are the classes/levels for agility and how do you know which class to enter?

This is where things get a bit complicated. AKC agility classes are divided by course type, level, and height.

The course types are:

- Standard (Jumps, Weaves, Tunnels, Tire, Chute, Table, Teeter, Dog Walk, and A-Frame)
- Jumpers (Jumps, Weaves, and Tunnels)
- Fast (All obstacles except the table, each assigned a certain number of points. The handler chooses the course to try to accumulate the most points within a designated time frame.)

The levels are:

- Novice A (Dog and/or handler have/has not earned a Novice title for the course type)
- Novice B (Dog and/or handler have/has earned a Novice title for the course type)
- Open (Dog has earned a Novice title for the course type)
- Excellent A (Dog has earned an Open title, but not the Excellent title for the course type)
- Excellent B (Dog has earned an Excellent title for the course type)

Note: For each level there is a “Preferred” division (see explanation below).

The height divisions are:

4, 8, 12, 16, 20, 24 and 26 inches

For regular titles, dogs are required to jump their height (withers height) or higher up to 24 inches. The 26 inch class is optional.

For the “Preferred” titles, dogs may jump one jump height lower than the required height for regular classes. Giant breeds, short-legged breeds, and veteran dogs generally compete in the Preferred division. Your dog must stay in either the Preferred or Regular division through the progression of titles.

How much does it cost to enter?

Typically, it costs about \$25 for the first class and \$12 for the second class for the same dog on the same day. So for a two day trial, the entry fees to run both Standard and Jumpers courses would total \$74.00.

What type of equipment is needed?

To compete you just need the dog and a buckle collar (or no collar) and leash (to enter the ring).

To begin training, you can start with jumps and weave poles then begin accumulating some of the other items over time. The large contact obstacles are very expensive to buy so consider having them built, or join a club that holds agility classes or rents their field for self-training.

How old should my dog be before I begin training in agility? begin competing?

Swissy puppies can be taught to walk over ground poles and on ground planks at an early age, then progress to the teeter, mini dog walk and flattened A-frame when they are confident enough to do so. Swissys should not jump more than 12 inches or weave until they are 18 months old. Since trialing requires more intense/frequent training, I recommend waiting until the age of two to compete with a heavy breed.

Below: Keygan during a Standard run.



**Agility Clinic: Thursday, Nov 5th
3:00-5:00pm**

Swissypalooza: CGC Testing

Your Dog Could Be A Canine Good Citizen!

by Faye Erickson

The Canine Good Citizen Program was started by the American Kennel Club in 1989 to recognize dogs that have good manners both at home and out in public. This is a good first step in training your dog, as it produces a dog that is a pleasure to be around both at home and out in the community. Additionally, some insurance companies that normally would not insure a home with certain breeds of dogs will make an exception for a dog that has passed the CGC test, and some therapy dog certification programs require a CGC certificate.

I became a CGC evaluator because my kennel club (Columbia Kennel Club, Columbia, SC) wanted to offer the test at our annual Fun Match. To become an evaluator, you must be at least 18 years old, have at least two years of working with owners and their dogs and have experience working with a variety of breeds (I was an assistant instructor with the Greater Columbia Obedience Club and an instructor for the CKC handling classes), and you must be in good standing with AKC. You must fill out an application on line and after it is approved by AKC, they send you instructions for taking the test online. The test is based on the Evaluator's Guide and is an open-book test. When you pass the test, AKC sends you a certificate, a personalized identification badge, and you will receive the monthly Evaluator news online.

Training your dog should begin as early as possible, whether you are training specifically for the CGC test or not. Training sessions should not last more than about 15 minutes twice a day for a young dog, but "minute" sessions can be done frequently during the day. If you notice your dog is about to lie down, give the command "down" and then praise him, or have him sit for a treat. While I don't have training classes, I do let people know that I am available to help them with problems they might be having and I'm always willing to meet with them to evaluate their dog's progress.

A dog does not have to be AKC registered to take the test – any dog (mixed breed or purebred) is eli-

gible. There is no minimum age for the dog to be tested, unless the testing is done in conjunction with an AKC event, and then the dog must be at least six months old. The test consists of ten exercises which cover the normal, everyday behavior of a dog—the things that every dog needs to learn and every owner should be able to train:

- Accepting a friendly stranger
- Sitting politely for petting
- Allowing grooming procedures
- Walking on a loose lead
- Sitting and lying down on command and staying in place
- Coming when called
- Reacting appropriately to another dog
- Reacting appropriately to a distraction
- Staying with a stranger while the handler goes out of sight.

While treats cannot be used during the test, the CGC test is much more relaxed than competitive obedience, and CGC Evaluators encourage the handlers to talk to their dogs as they would under normal circumstances. Depending on how many dogs are waiting to be tested, I sometimes combine exercises – for example, accepting a friendly stranger and sitting politely for petting, or accepting a friendly stranger and allowing grooming procedures.

Tests in your area can be found at the CGC page of the AKC website, or may be advertised in your local paper. Entering is easy: show up. The most important thing to remember about taking the test is to relax, and just have fun with your dog. The hardest part of the test for most handlers is the out of sight separation, but the dogs seem to take that part in stride. All you will need is a slip collar or a buckle collar and a leash.

You can be very proud of your dog – and yourself – when your dog passes the CGC test and you can brag to your friends and neighbors!

CGC Testing will be on Friday, Nov. 6th!

1 2 3



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aka "Ditto"



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Dam: BISS CH Derby's Simply Bewitching

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Excellent Jumper and New Veteran



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CD
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Agility

NAP
NJP
OJP
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Drafting

NDD
DD

Weight Pull

WWD
WWDX

Pack Dog

NWPD
WPD
WPDX



Photo courtesy www.jimdunawayphoto.com

BISS CH Rippling Waters Havelock Key, CDX, NAP, AJP, DD, WWDX, WPDX, VGSX

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Ms. Angela J. Purport

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"Coda" is owned and loved
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In the next issue...

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Puppy Match**
- . Summer Vacations**

