

# Ruff Notes

March 2008

**Monterey Bay**

Dog Training Club, Inc.



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## March Events

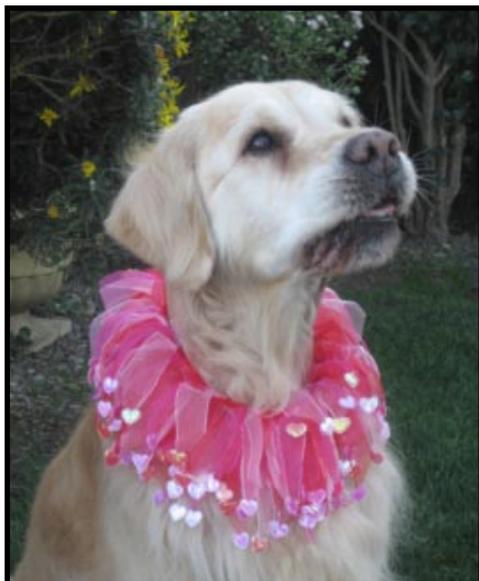
- 3/3 Board Meeting
- 3/4 Watsonville Classes start
- 3/5 Pet Pals, Soquel Classes start
- 3/6 Capitola Classes start
- 3/9 Pooches in the Park, 9-3 Aptos
- 3/11 Conformation Classes start
- 3/15 General Meeting
- 3/18 Ruff Notes Deadline
- 3/22 VST Setup, CSUMB
- 3/23 VST, CSUMB

## April Events

- 4/7 Board Meeting
- 4/15 Watsonville Final classes
- 4/23 Pet Pals, Soquel Final classes
- 4/24 Capitola Final classes

## May Events

- 5/5 Board Meeting
- 5/7 Watsonville Classes start
- 5/8 Pet Pals, Soquel Classes start
- 5/9 Capitola Classes start
- 5/17 General Meeting, picnic
- 5/20 Ruff Notes Deadline



Amber celebrates her 14th Birthday!

## From Membership

**Betty "BG" Garcia**

We have a prospective member to be voted on at our March meeting:

Linda Coleman has been to several Obedience classes, she has a Border Collie "Annie" in our Rally Class on Tuesday night. Linda came to our January General meeting and also has help out at our Pooches in the park and Fair Demo last year.

## General Meeting

Our next general meeting is March 15th at the Prunedale Library. Please save the date! The phone committee will be calling to remind you the week before. If you need directions to the Library, give Tammy a call or e-mail.



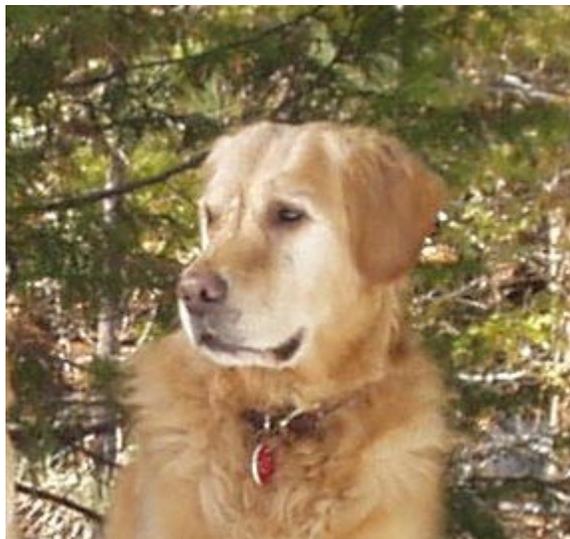
Ready? Set? Let's TRACK! The VST is upon us - come join the fun at CSUMB on March 22 & 23rd. Gloves and scraps of metal may not be as pretty as Easter Eggs, but we'll be beyond happy if our dogs find them ;) For details, talk to Luane Vidak or Lynn Schmitt. See you there!

**Ch Smithaven's Amber Brew RE, AX, OAJ, NF, CGC, OS "Tyler"  
July 30, 1999---Feb. 13, 2008**

My heart is in a million pieces. In November Tyler was diagnosed with multilobular osteochondrosarcoma. We learned that he had bone cancer of the flat bone of the skull, and that he had a huge mass under the skull that we could not see until that day that it appeared as a small lump on the top of his head. Because of the size of the mass, there was nothing that we could do for him but keep him comfortable. Luckily I had retired and was able to spend everyday with my big guy. Last Sunday he did not want to get up and I knew that it was time to let him go. There were still so many things for us to do together, he was my "Big Guy", my "Ty Man", "My Heart Dog". He was always so willing to please, a happy worker, and my constant shadow. He was an athletic dog, and a beautiful jumper, ever light on his feet, even to his last day. I have a beautiful video I shot of him his last day with us at the beach gaiting across the sand.

I MISS MY SHADOW!!!!!!

Forever loved by Linda and Dick Lang





## MBDTC @ AOCNC

Thank you's out to:  
 Karleen Quick, P.J. Bay,  
 Dale Root, Pam Strametz,  
 Judy McLeod, Marion  
 Bashista, Michael Bashista,  
 Linda Lang and Trainee  
 Peggy Barker!



# BRAGS

1/19 from **Crissy Hastings-Baugh**: Border Terrier Club of the Redwoods

JWW ExB 16" SCT 42/146 yards

**Gracie**: 33.02 (78%) **Cash**: 31.51 and his MXJ Title (75%)

FAST ExA 16"

**Gracie**: 68 points / 39.43 secs for 2nd place & AF Title

**Cash**: 65 points/ 41-32 secs for 3rd place

1/20 from **Crissy Hastings-Baugh**: Border Terrier Club of the Redwoods

JWW ExB 16" SCT 39/136 **Gracie** 31.92 (81%)

Standard ExB 16" SCT 66/174 **Gracie** 51.00 and a Double Q (77%)

FAST ExB 16" **Gracie** 64 points & 32.90

2/2 from **Crissy Hastings-Baugh**: Vizsla Club of NorCal

JWW ExB SCT 42/148 **Gracie** 34.69 (82%)

2/3 from **Crissy Hastings-Baugh**: Vizsla Club of NorCal

JWW ExB SCT 41/99 **Gracie** 32.68 for 4th place (79%)

Trainee Brag: **Peggy Barker** and Vizsla **Penny** ( MB Novice class) earned their 2nd CD leg at SCKC under Ron Simmons.



The Agility Hot Dog for the Month is **Gracie** for her JWW ExB run on 2/3. None of our Obedience competitors reported scores for the month.

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## Upcoming Matches and Workshops

**6/15/08:** Vallejo DTC "Mini Show and Go"

Vallejo DTC Club Facility

528 Capitol Ave

Vallejo, California

<http://www.valledogtraining.org/index.php?topic=SpecialEvents>

**4/12/08:** Vallejo DTC "Mini Show and Go"

Vallejo DTC Club Facility

528 Capitol Ave

Vallejo, California

<http://www.valledogtraining.org/index.php?topic=SpecialEvents>

**3/9/08:** Oakland DTC Obedience Workshop

Cal State University, East Bay

Music Building Lawn

Hayward, California

<http://www.ddsdogtraining.com/ODTCworkshop2008.pdf>

**3/8/08:** Sacramento Valley Dog Fanciers Association Obedience Workshop

Dixon May Fairgrounds

Dixon, California

<http://www.ddsdogtraining.com/Sacramento%20Valley%20DF%2008Match%20flyerpdf.pdf>

(site source: <http://www.ddsdogtraining.com/>)

source: [http://www.slate.com/id/2184364/pagenum/all/#page\\_start](http://www.slate.com/id/2184364/pagenum/all/#page_start)

## **Dog Dancing**

**My beagle and I try America's weirdest pet hobby.**

**By Emily Yoffe**

Posted Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2008, at 11:52 AM ET

Uno, a ridiculously cute tricolor beagle from Columbia, Mo., won "Best in Show" this week at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show—a first for the breed. In a 2005 "Human Guinea Pig" article, reprinted below, Emily Yoffe tries to teach her less-than-champion beagle a few dance steps. My beagle, Sasha, and I were going to try the sport of "canine freestyle." (You could call it "dog dancing" but just not in front of anyone who does it.) The materials from the Canine Freestyle Federation suggested that when our performance came together, Sasha and I would flow to the music in a pairing of such joy that we would experience the kind of transcendent unity that used to be described in the final chapter of marriage manuals.

Things looked unpromising from the start. The thorough instructor, Mary Sullivan, called me the night before the first class to assess Sasha's level of preparedness. I suggested it might be best if Sasha just audited, since it's not clear she knows what her name is. I was also worried about us as a dancing team. You could say I have two left feet, but Sasha actually does.

Mary assured me there would be dogs and owners at all levels of ability, and she was excited by the challenge of a beagle doing canine freestyle, since beagles are a notoriously difficult breed. She asked if Sasha had had any training.

"She can sit," I replied.

"Does she focus on your face?" asked Mary.

"No," I said, although I wanted to add that she would if I had a frankfurter sticking out of my nose. But Mary seemed confident, and she told me to bring a bag of treats to class.

I discovered the world of canine freestyle one night while watching an episode of the cartoon *King of the Hill*, in which Hank Hill and his beloved bloodhound, Ladybird, entered the vicious world of competitive dog dancing. I was admiring the show's brilliance at inventing the dog-dancing concept when it suddenly dawned on me: They were not making this up. I went to my computer and searched for "dog dancing" and discovered there are international competitions and even warring leagues.

Not only that, one of the earliest, and still continuing, venues for freestyle instruction was the Capital Dog Training Club in Silver Spring, Md., about 20 minutes from my home. Freestyle, which began in the early 1990s, has not caught on with dog owners like "agility" and "fly ball." Watching a video of freestyle highlights, I understood why. I had imagined I could just pick up Sasha's front paws and we would box-step to victory. In freestyle the dogs aren't doing four-legged versions of human dances, but a complicated choreography of twists and side steps and pirouettes—think of it as Balanchine for bichons. I was strangely moved by the menacing sexuality of a Doberman dancing to "Goldfinger."

The Canine Freestyle Federation, which was founded in 1995, has an almost ascetic aesthetic. The emphasis is on showing the dog's skill with a variety of required and optional moves. The handler, who is dressed conservatively, is not supposed to dance along to the music or even touch the dog during competition (thus ending my fantasies of dancing cheek to snout with Sasha).

This is in contrast to the World Canine Freestyle Organization, which has a more Las Vegas approach to the sport and even uses the term “dog dancing.” Under WCFO rules, both canine and human can be covered in sequins and engage in flamboyant displays of jumping and rolling. The Canine Freestyle Federation regards the WCFO much as the National Collegiate Wrestling Association views the World Wrestling Entertainment.

About eight of us—seven women—and our dogs had signed up for Mary Sullivan’s beginner class, but within minutes it was clear that only Sasha and I were true novices. I was immediately intimidated by the showmanship of Edgar Allan Poo, an 8-year-old miniature poodle, and Joell Silverman, his 75-year-old owner. I watched, while Sasha whined and pulled at her leash, as Edgar and Joell, to a polka tune, worked on a routine full of twirls and passes and changes of direction. Edgar concentrated on Joell’s face with the same intensity that North Koreans are supposed to have when they gaze upon their Dear Leader.

When I talked to Joell I found out I wasn’t the only reporter to have been taken with Edgar’s charms. The poodle had already been profiled on the front page of the Wall Street Journal for his prowess in his previous sport, fly ball.

Then another woman got up with her black-and-white whippet to run through a program that showed off the dog’s lithe and elegant form. I was more mesmerized by what went on when owner and dog weren’t performing. The whippet sat in her owner’s lap as the owner dispensed treats directly from her mouth into the dog’s.

Mary wanted an idea of what Sasha and I could do, so she called us up in front of class. I felt like a mother who had bullied her child into a gifted and talented program, only to have to confront the truth that what her kid really needed was special ed. I suggested we just continue watching, but Mary and the other humans insisted we get up. I hadn’t exactly lied when I said Sasha knew “sit,” it’s just that she doesn’t sit in response to my saying it.

Mary asked me just to walk along with Sasha beside me. At first Sasha resisted, then she decided to pull me. Mary had me reposition Sasha on my side and get her to obey by feeding her a stream of treats.

Sasha responded erratically and Mary asked to see my treats—a bag of her regular dry food. Mary explained that for training purposes I needed something better. Sasha wasn’t going to participate in a canine version of A Chorus Line by being bribed with kibble. Mary suggested I bake a pan of “tuna fish brownies.” Then Mary stood in front of Sasha, held a chunk of hot dog near her face, and started peeling off bits of it, giving her the command “watch” as she moved backward. Sasha followed brilliantly—obviously I was on to something with the idea of a frankfurter up the nose. Mary was impressed with Sasha’s level of food motivation and said that would really help with training.

“Soon you can put food in your mouth and feed her from your mouth like the rest of us,” Mary explained. “Then she’ll maintain eye contact on your face.”

I felt like I was in some dystopian fantasy. I came to do a little cha-cha with my pooch, and the next thing I know I’m regurgitating tuna fish brownies into her mouth. I vowed to resist—both out of prudery and self-preservation. I imagined as soon as Sasha realized my mouth was a source of fish brownies, she would go into a frenzy and chew my lips off.

For my homework Mary told me to work on getting Sasha’s attention: I should always have treats with

me, and every time Sasha looked at my face, I should feed her one. I took to carrying a bag of cheese in my pocket—thankfully I’m alone most of the day—and tossing chunks to Sasha when she walked next to me or made eye contact.

Over a month, as the lessons progressed, despite her improved attention, Sasha and I fell ever further behind. One problem was that we never made it though an entire two-and-a-half-hour class. After 45 minutes Sasha would be glassy-eyed and near collapse—like the first competitor eliminated in a dance marathon. There was also so much to learn. While we were in a corner of the studio practicing walking back and forth, the other dogs were doing amazing moves called serpentines, scallops, spirals, and thunders. I tried to draw diagrams, but they involved the owner and the dog moving around each other in some pattern I found impossible to follow. Mary taught everyone a “tugger—a type of pivot named after the dog that first did it. I thought having a move named after your dog would be a great honor. What would a “sasha” be? Perhaps eating the judges’ shoes.

Once you got the moves down, there was the whole matter of choreographing them into a seamless routine and selecting music. We were strongly discouraged from choosing marches or waltzes. Marches had such strong beats that the human was helpless to resist marching along—distracting from the dog. As for waltzes, Mary explained, “When you have four feet it’s hard to move to a melody with three beats.”

During one class, we were supposed to work on staying within the cones that delineated the competition floor. A substitute instructor had us each get up, stand in the upper left corner, cross to the middle of the floor on the diagonal, and cross back to the lower left corner. To Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass everyone did their triangular move. Then it was my turn. I explained that Sasha and I didn’t really participate, but the class erupted with encouragement. I had to do it, everyone insisted—what was I there for? As Sasha and I got to the corner I felt as if I was in that recurring dream where you show up for your final exam and realize you’ve neglected ever to attend class.

Herb’s trumpet sounded and I tried to get Sasha to follow my cheese cubes and get to the middle of the room. A stream of advice poured forth: “Loosen the leash,” “No!” “Turn the other way!” “Use your voice!” “Loosen the leash!” I realized my classmates were right—what was I there for?

Sasha is an adorable, sweet pet who is wonderful with children. All she wants out of life is to eat until she explodes, to sniff repulsive things, and to poop on newly cleaned rugs. She is no Edgar Allan Poe because I am no Joell. Sure, I could make fun of Sasha for her inability to simply walk in two diagonal lines, but whose fault was that? It turned out dog dancing had brought us closer as I realized how well-matched we were. I was as lazy and uninterested in turning her into a champion as she was in becoming one.

Emily Yoffe is the author of *What the Dog Did: Tales From a Formerly Reluctant Dog Owner*. You can send your Human Guinea Pig suggestions or comments to [emilyyoffe@hotmail.com](mailto:emilyyoffe@hotmail.com).

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**Happy Birthdays to:**



3/12 Trish Duarte  
 3/23 Yvette Cook  
 3/25 Mary Nie

**Birthday Wags to:**

3/16/94	14	Jasmine	Shetland Sheepdog	Pam Fugitt-Hetrick	MACH, MACH2, CD, HS, MX, MXJ
3/30/94	14	Hailey	Mini Long Haired Dachshund	Mary Nie	CH
3/4/98	10	Jiffy	Labrador	Luane & Anita Vidak	VCD3, JH, TDX, MX, MXJ, UD
3/26/98	10	Tess	Shetland Sheepdog	Pam Fugitt-Hetrick	PT, AX, AXJ
3/7/99	9	Gerwood	Mini Long Haired Dachshund	Amanda Nie	CH, CGC
3/9/00	8	Mercedes	Mini Long Haired Dachshund	Mary Nie	CH
3/9/00	8	Lexus	Mini Long Haired Dachshund	Mary Nie	CH
3/16/01	7	Jade	Pug	Denise Panzich	CD, CGC, RN, RA
3/7/06	2	Rose	Doberman	Tammy Del Conte	
3/8/06	2	ZuZu	Shetland Sheepdog	Betty Garcia	

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