

# NEWS

from Fit-N-Trim Dog Sport Training

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 4

AUGUST, 2009

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Student Successes
- Featured Student
- Tip from Karen
- Fit-N-Trim on Facebook
- Upcoming Classes

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## Fit-N-Trim Students Make Their Mark

The spotlight this summer is on our students who are leading the way at trials near and far.

### Obedience

- Anne Francoeur and Reilly, placed 2nd in Open A at the recent Topsfield trial. Only two dogs placed and the other already had his CDX.
- Marion Jacob's Max got his UKC Utility title.

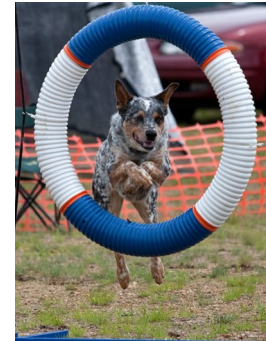
### Agility

- Elaine Hamill's Linus finished his Mach 2 at Tar-Tan making him the youngest Dalmatian by three years to do so. Alvin also had a perfect weekend and finished his Master Jumpers Preferred 9 title.
- Sandy Cody and Rhett got their JCH in May, and

ADCH, PS3 (Standard) and PK3 (Snooker) in July.

- Nicholas Carleton's Sophie has completed her OF, AX, and AXJ. Lindsey Carleton and Gracie have completed their NA and NAJ titles.
- Bunny Watson's Strider started competing in April and has already moved to Level 2 in CPE and completed his AKC NA. Wednesday earned her first CPE Level 1 title in June.
- Judy Belyea's Calvin earned his PDI title in July. Tasker has earned his AKC OA and OAJ Titles.
- In July, Sallie Baliunas' Krypto completed her CS-ATCH title.
- Vanessa St. Pierre's Remington

Q'd in 3 of his 9 runs and placed in each at his first trial; he also won Best Actor at Salem Heritage Days which had a "Howlywood" theme.



Remington

- Judy LeBlanc's Charlie has his AKC OAJ and USDAA Starter's Gamblers titles.
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## Cindy Richmond and Mako

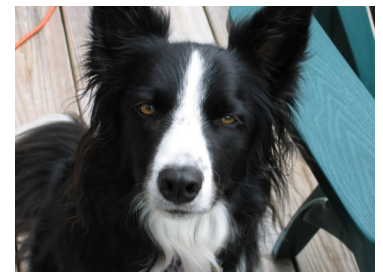
About eight years ago my life changed dramatically. I stopped being a lab rat, started teaching and acquired a ten-week old Border collie. I named him Mako because I had studied shark parasites in grad school. That was a good name for him; a week later he jumped out of our canoe and started swimming. He also disappeared into the woods, found a very active hornet nest and dis-

covered the joy of chasing balls. That was on our first vacation in Maine. Since then he has also developed a love for snow shoeing in the winter and hiking in the fall.

Mako's initial job was to chase geese off the hay fields at Appleton farm. Unfortunately he was a bit too good at it and the geese stopped coming. Obviously, a Border collie without a job is

highly undesirable and a friend at work suggested agility.

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# More Puppies!



Pixe and her Pups

More new puppies have joined our ranks since spring.

Karen Thomas's Pixe became a mom to six pups (3 boys and 3 girls) on June 22nd. All are doing beautifully.

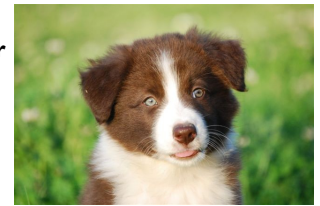
- Lauren Kramer is proud to announce that Zoey gave birth to 4 girls and a boy on July 13th. The last to arrive came at 5:45 PM just in time for cocktails so they are known as the cocktail litter:

Cosmo, Martini, Margarita, Gibson, and Saki.

- Judy Regan's Amber is a regular visitor at Agility



Skyler



Amber

class and getting pointers from big brother, Reese.

- Madelyn Cirinna's Pansy took time off from agility to have a puppy. He is by MACH Striker and is really quite cute. "Skyler" will be out and about helping show what puppies can learn but for now he is enjoying his vacation.

*"Whether you think you can or think you can't, either way you are right"*

**Henry Ford**

## Tip from Karen: Think Positive Thoughts

For this summer's training tip, I would like to talk about the human side of your partnership or team.

Agility you may have heard is like a dance, a dance between you and your dog. When you dance at a wedding you don't think about anyone else except the person you are with in that moment. It does not matter what anyone else thinks, you are out there having a good time for yourself. This is what it should feel like when you are doing agility with your dog, at trials as well as at training and practice. Your dog is listening to you...no one else. Your dog can feel your emotions; he is connected to you.

Now that does not mean he or she may not have favorite obstacles, or may read your signals incorrectly sometimes.

But most of the time, it is our timing that is off or we just cannot get somewhere in time to give the right information.

Think about how important your relationship with your dog is and how hard he or she is trying. Our dogs are there for us; we say, "Jump" and they hop to it. They don't complain or procrastinate; they are ready to go...to dance with us.

My point is that we humans... WE need to try harder. WE need to think more positively and act more confidently. Everyone has heard about the power of positive thinking. We need to think positively every time we work with our dogs.

When your instructor asks you to do a sequence that seems hard to you, what do you say? "Oh I don't think I

can do it", a half-hearted "I'll try, no way I can get there...."

How can you improve if you do not try? How are you going to ever get there if you do not practice? I am not saying that every handling strategy is right for every dog and handler. But you will never know if it is right for you until you try, and you will never improve unless you are willing to try new things.

So try to think more positive thoughts; if you don't make it for that front cross try again and again. At the end if you still did not make it have a giggle and tell yourself that you tried hard. Most importantly you and your dog had fun! Some day you will make it! 😊

## Fit-N-Trim on Facebook

Thanks to the efforts of Bunny Watson, Fit-N-Trim is now on Facebook. We're excited about launching the Fit-N-Trim Fan Page so that Fit-N-Trim students and instructors can share information about themselves and their dogs, and their accomplishments.

So, log on to Facebook and join us. You can upload your latest photos and movies, ask questions and get opinions and advice.

The page is open only to students so you can feel comfortable asking questions and sharing ideas.

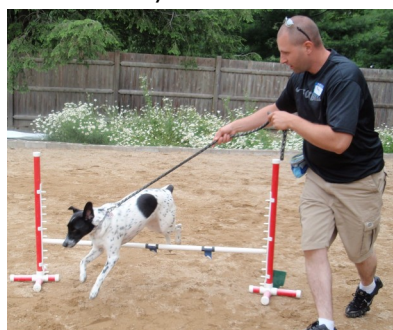
# Summer Agility Camp is a Hit!

## Belle tries the A-frame

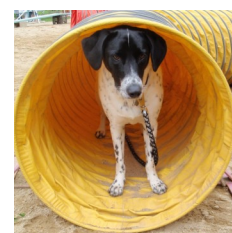


Jumping is fun....

Fit-N-Trim's Advanced/Intermediate and Beginner Camps were a terrific success this year. Cindy Ratner and Kym Jarvis were our guest instructors in the two day Advanced Camp and helped us focus on specific course skills. Karen, Kym, and Madelyn Cirinna introduced the Beginners to agility equipment and gave them a head start for their classes this year.



...but I am not so sure about the tunnel.



## An Outsiders View: World of Agility Craft

A couple of weekends ago I observed a dog agility trial for the first time, at the Topsfield fairgrounds. Mom and Charlie (her Welsh Terrier) had three "Q's," (qualifying scores) out of six runs, including a blue ribbon in his first ever Excellent "A" Jumpers run.

It was an amusing scene to watch. Everyone had their requisite gear: sun-shade tents, folding camping chairs, exercise pens. They spoke a common jargon dialect and wore T-shirts with pithy, dog-loving slogans. In other words, it was just like a gaming convention in an alternate dimension. The strangest sight to outsider eyes was

the part where the dog owners "walk the course"—sans dog—to get a feel for the flow and tactics of the course. When all these people walk around the ring in roughly the same pattern but different speeds, gesturing and signaling their invisible dogs, the scene comes to resemble a kind of demented folk dance.

Of particular interest was the Organized Play structure. Owner and dog start at the novice level, and "level up" over the course of many events. And while ribbons for first and second place are always desirable, any run that "Q's" (i.e., avoids disqualification) accrues progress towards the next level; advancing in level is largely a "Player vs. Environment" ex-

perience. The disqualification rate is quite high, even at the highest skill levels. In Charlie's first "Excellent A" run, he was the only dog of any size to qualify.

Given the sport's popularity with, well, old ladies, I find the high failure rate to be somewhat surprising. Conventional game developer wisdom would suggest such a casual audience wouldn't like losing. Of course, this audience, with its tents and T-shirts, is hardly casual. It seems likely that the failure rate is linked to the level progression. The high failure rate not only makes successes precious, but also rewards player skill by allowing the more skillful players to progress more quickly.

(by Marc LeBlanc, a computer game designer who lectures frequently on what makes games fun.)

## Cindy and Mako (continued)

I can't say that Mako's first love in life was (or is) agility, geese and balls being way more important, but we worked at it and I eventually tried a few trials way back in '04. Mako thought it was a great opportunity to meet new dogs and frequently flipped the "tail" at me and ran off. We didn't go to another trial until the spring of '06. Mako has settled down since those first

few trials, thanks to many hours training with Karen and practicing in the yard and we now enjoy a good working (and play) relationship which culminated a few weeks ago with a C-ATCH. I've had many pets that I loved, but Mako is different, with him it is a partnership. It still amazes me that two different species can communicate so well with each other and work as a team.

Mako after a Swim



## Upcoming Classes/Events



103 Haverhill Street  
Rowley, MA 01969

Phone: 978-948-2745  
kunabug@comcast.net  
www.fit-n-trimdogagility.com

**“Helping you and your dog reach your goals with confidence”**

- Six week sessions:
  - Puppy Kindergarten: Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> at 6pm, Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> at 9am
  - Basic Manners: Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:15am
  - Intermediate Manners: Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am
  - Come When Called :Sept. 16<sup>th</sup> at 6pm
  - Agility Beginner: Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:15pm
  - Obility I: Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> at 6pm
- Four week session
  - Novice Conformation: Sept 21<sup>st</sup> at 7pm (\$100)
- Single session workshops
  - Puppy Head Start: Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9am
  - Basic Manners Head Start Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10:30am
  - Come When Called Practice: Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> at 8pm (check web site for additional dates)
- Chiropractic Appointments with Dr. Sue Ferguson are available from 1 to 6PM on August 14<sup>th</sup>, September 11<sup>th</sup>, October 9<sup>th</sup>, November 6<sup>th</sup> and December 4<sup>th</sup>. To schedule, please call 978-758-6890.

## Summer Fun

What do your dogs do for summer fun? Madelyn Cirinna certainly keeps hers busy both in the water and out.



**Raven loves to skateboard!**



**Swimming isn't so bad either!**

## Successes Continued!

- Darryl Townsley's Lucy received her AKC Novice Agility title.
- Trisha Flanagan's Tessie, the All-American, earned her Level I Title, had a perfect weekend and went High In Trial at Act-Up in April. She earned her Level I 1,000 point title at EMAC in August. She's now Tessie Flanagan CL-I, LI-PLT.
- Madelyn Cirinna's "Dickens" Scottfree Great Expectations, RN, MX, MXJ, OF now has 19 double Q's toward his MACH. CH Scottfree Indy earned his Open Jumpers title - finally! He has two Ex Standard legs and 1 Ex JWW leg. Scottfree Spellbinding Lyric, AX, MXJ finished her Open Fast and needs only 2 more MX legs. Scottfree Rockin' Raven earned her first Novice Jumpers leg with a 2nd place.

### CPE Nationals

- Rosemary Decie's Jake had 2 4th place finishes and Q'd in 6 of 9 Level 4 runs.
- Sally Baliunas' Krypto earned 8 firsts as well as High in Trial (Standard) and 2nd in Games Trophies. Ava earned 7 firsts and two trophies: High in Trial (Standard) and 3rd in Games! What a summer for Sally and her band!
- Trisha Flanagan's Sailor, the Labrador Retriever, earned his CPE Championships in Full House and Jumpers and placed second in the Can-Am Games at EMAC in Maine in August. He qualified in 4 of 9 runs at CPE Nationals in June. Now he's Spring Rock's Sailor CGC, TDI, CL-4, ChFH, ChJU.

### Sheep Herding

- Sallie's Skywokka, a 2 yr. old Kelpie, placed 4th and 6th in Novice and qualified for NEBCA's finals.

### Field Trials

- On May 31st, Lauren Kramer's Seastar's Burgundy Zoey CD RE NA CGC and Seastar's Dashing Prince CGC both passed their first leg towards their starter field title of HRC.

### Conformation

- Lauren Kramer's Dasher received his second major at the Northshore Kennel Club show in June and is 7 points from his championship.
- Richard Jacob's Lula has a new UKC title.