



NEWS

from Fit-N-Trim Dog Sport Training

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

DECEMBER, 2008

Fit-N-Trim is closed for the holidays from December 22nd through January 4th. See you in 2009!

LOOK FOR:

- Training Tips
- Featured Student
- Chiropractic Notes by Dr. Sue Ferguson
- Student Brags
- New Classes
- Special Events and Workshops

IN THIS ISSUE

October Fun-Day	1
Rosemary Decie, Jake and Rhys	1
GeriAction	2
Training Tip	2
Chiropractic Notes	3
Student Brags	3
Classes and Workshops	4



October FunDay



Rosemary Decie and Her Boys Jake and Rhys



I adopted Jake 6 years ago. When I got Jake he was 2 years old with some bad habits, including not liking other dogs, water, children, and bikers. Like many Parson Russell Terriers, Jake was smart, full of energy, and strong-willed. He thought he was in charge. It is good he was so cute! Fortunately Cam, my 12 year old yellow Lab, proved to be a good and patient teacher. Through Cam, Jake learned that other dogs can be friendly, children are okay, and

*Karen and John and the Fit-N-Trim Team wish you
A Happy Holiday Season and a Prosperous New Year!*

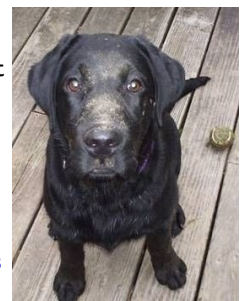
Friends and Students of Fit-N-Trim celebrated a successful year at our first annual FunDay on October 26th. Fit-N-Trim students and their instructors had the opportunity to try nested agility courses designed for novices and advanced students. Marcia Pierce's Tess (right) took home top honors in the costume contest. Entry fees from the contest were donated to PawsNewEngland.



water can be fun. People on bikes still can be a problem. Two years later, when Cam died and Jake needed something to keep him thinking and burn of energy, we tried agility. He loved it and, although I had not intended to compete, he now has his AKC NA and NAJ titles and 2 legs of his Open Standard title. Agility brought more than we thought though. When Paige said she had lab puppies, I couldn't resist and brought home Rhys, who is quite handsome but something of a goof, and a comedian. Every morning he goes out to the driveway to get the paper and only a waiting reward saves the paper for reading. Like any Lab, he loves hiking, swimming and retrieving balls or sticks in the river. He also likes to steal items (like gloves) so you will chase him to get them back. If we are walking and I drop Jake's leash, Rhys is right there to pick it up

and continue the walk with Jake's leash in his mouth. He is very good at aggravating his "big" brother Jake by stealing his tennis balls or chew toys. He is always forgiven though, and most nights they sleep together on the same dog bed. Rhys started agility training after completing puppy class. I thought it would give us some time together and he does well, as he tries very hard to please. His favorite obstacle is the A frame and he will run up it any chance he gets. He sometimes gets bored, but then he still acts very much like a puppy. I'm not sure Rhys is ready for agility trials but we might try competing at CPE in the spring just for fun. I know that he will try his best and of course he has Jake to help him out.

Rhys



“Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you cannot be successful or happy.”
- Norman Vincent Peale

Ger>Action: An Exercise Class for Older Dogs

By Karen Gorman
 As a long time agility trainer with aging dogs of my own, I have worked over the years with many dog owners who are looking for a way to keep their older dogs engaged and fit without risking their safety. When my 13 year old dog, Mesa, a large mixed breed who had always been very active, tore both her ACL's, physical therapy got her up and moving well, but when winter came, walking on the ice or snow would set her back again. This year as we move into winter, Mesa is in great shape and can even accompany me on weekly walks in the woods. I want to be able to keep her moving through the winter to maintain the

mobility she has regained. Thus, our new GeriAction class has been born. GeriAction classes will be held at either our covered ring or our heated, indoor facility with a rubber, non-slip agility floor. The pace of the class is very slow. Exercises are adapted to meet each dog's abilities. Exercises are done at a walk and dogs are carefully supervised to ensure that they are not overtaxed. Equipment used includes ladders and 12" planks on the ground to improve coordination and balance; 4" jumps to build strength and coordination, open weave poles to help with shifting weight, and a very low A-frame to help build strength in dogs who

need to climb stairs. As dogs build strength, they and their owners will regain confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

We are very excited about GeriAction and hope you are too. Although it is ideally suited to dogs who have recently completed physical therapy or who just need a way to exercise safely, it may also be well-suited to dogs who are recovering from surgery or from an injury. We do, however, recommend to our clients that they be referred by a veterinarian if there are questions regarding their dog's ability to participate.

Tips from Karen: Take Training to the Woods



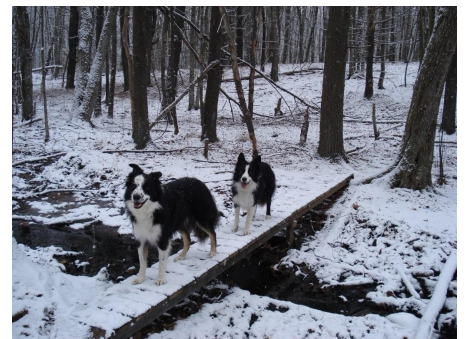
challenges. After your dog has practiced balancing on a rock several times and can hold a wait for 15-20 seconds while on the rock, you can try gently pushing him from side-to-side. This



throws the dog's balance off and makes him engage all of his muscles to regain balance and stay on the rock. As

A well rounded, balanced agility dog should be able to safely traverse a log on the ground, turn around on the log without falling or jumping off, and maintain his or her balance. I also like to practice my 2 on 2 off contact position on the end of low logs. Rocks are also great for teaching your dog to maintain balance as well as for practicing your wait command. Rocks of different shapes offer different balancing

you try the side-to-side push, you should remind the dog to wait. Remember that, to prevent injury, you should attempt these exercises only with a healthy fit dog. And, as always, go slowly when introducing anything new...and have fun!



“Having your dog traverse a log or balance on a rock is a great way to teach balance “

Preventing Injury

An occasional series by Dr. Sue Ferguson, owned by Sadie and Board Certified in Animal Chiropractic by the AVCA

One of the things that we all want for our dogs is that they live long healthy, high-quality dog lives. There are a lot of components in working towards that goal but since the cold weather season has started and this impacts both our dogs and us in several ways, I thought it would be a good idea to start with a reminder to warm up before class.

Unless you are one of those organized people, you probably rush home from work, wake your dog from a pleasant nap, rush him or her to the car after a quick pee break, and drive frantically at just above the speed limit to get to class. Then it's park, grab treats, time for another quick pee break and into class. There, it's catch up on the news and walk the course. Sound familiar?

So, here's the thing...unless you and your dog were out running before class you are not warmed up!

When it's cold you start your car to let the engine warm up and get the engine oil moving. Likewise you need to warm up both your engine and your dog's. Joints in cold or damp weather stiffen up. If you

have been sitting at a desk all day or your dog has been napping on the couch, those joints haven't been put through their end ranges of motion. Synovial joint fluid becomes somewhat thick and viscous when not being used. Tendons don't have a blood supply and become shortened keeping your joints nice and tight; muscles haven't been working so they are short and weak.

To wake everything up, you need to gradually move those joints, tendons and muscles so that the tendons become supple and the joints more flexible with synovial fluid becoming thinner and nourishing. This will cause blood to pump through your muscles, carrying the oxygen and energy they need to get them warmed up so that they elongate and become stronger.

It doesn't take long to warm up. First dress yourself (and your dog if necessary) appropriately for the weather, then take a few minutes to walk/jog round the ring or parking lot with your dog. Do a few low jumps, get your dog to do some tricks, roll over, spin, and flip directions. You need to warm up your upper body as well, so flap those arms; do jumping jacks. Take your dog with you to walk the course.

We all love to watch our classmates do their runs but while you are waiting keep moving. If your dog needs it, put its coat back on. If you or your dog is older, has old injuries or arthritic joints you need to pay extra attention and take extra time to warm up.

Instructors should encourage warm ups and provide a jump or obstacle for the class to use. Start with short runs for everyone before running the full course.

Injuries can start off with little sprains and strains and may not be symptomatic for a long time so you may not relate any problems to a specific trauma. Knowing and observing your dog are key to picking up problems early. Problems can be very subtle. Keep a log; watch the dog at play and on walks. Look for changes in behavior. Don't ignore those nagging doubts; listen to your peers and your instincts.

Here's to a healthy, fun-filled, not too cold holiday season.



Braggs

Conor



Fit-N-Trim has been well-represented at local agility, breed, and obedience trials this Fall. Here are some recent accomplishments:

- Walt Lutter and Dottie: CPE Level 2 Fun Games Certificate
- Kim Kezer's Fiona is now a Canadian Breed Champion. She has also earned her second leg towards her Canadian Novice B Title. She was high-scoring Irish Water Spaniel.
- Elaine Hamill's Alvin earned his PAX 2 at Springfield. He has placed on every Q in Excellent B, usually 1sts. He earned his MACH in June 2007 and his first PAX in June, 2008 at almost 9.5 years old.
- Judy Regan's Reese Q'd with a 1st of 56 20" dogs in Open Standard at

Springfield

- Judy Belyea's "boys" continue to shine. Her newest, Tasker, picked up two 1sts and a 2nd at his first CPE trial. Grady earned his MX and MXJ this Fall. Calvin earned his AXJ and was one of the top 10 Aussies in the country. He earned his Nov JWW in three trials with 3 1sts...and last week at Riverside, the "boys" Q'd and placed in 12 of 12 runs!
- Kathy Kishbaugh's Tessa Q'd in Obedience at Springfield with a 4th place...her 1st leg toward a CD.
- Judy LeBlanc's, Charlie, got his first Open Q with a 2nd in Jumpers at Springfield. He also earned a Starters Jumpers Q (1st place) and two Gamblers Q's (1st and 4th) at recent USDAA trials.
- Nadia Innes' Ziggy double Q'd all three days at the Cape Cod Agility Trial.
- Madelyn Cirinna's, Dickens, got his 13th and 14th Double Q's at the Boston trial with a 4th in Ex B JWW and 3rd in Ex B Standard. He has also finished all the CPE Level 4 requirements. Pansy finished her Open JWW at Springfield with a 1st, 2nd,



Calvin, AXJ

- and 4th. Nell finished all requirements for her CPE Level 4 at Riverside.
- Chris Lavoie's, Becca, double Q'd on Sunday at Boston with a 1st in EX B Std and a 3rd in JWW.
- Linda Coe's, Conor, got his first USDAA Starters Q in Snooker. He also Q'd in Wild Card with a 2nd, in Full House, with a 2nd, and in Snooker with a 4th at the CPE trial at Happy Tails.
- Marcia Pierce's Tess got her MJP with two 1sts and Drew earned her Novice Fast Preferred with two 1sts at the AKC Bullmastiff trial.



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Fit-N-Trim is owned by Karen Gorman, a nationally recognized competitor. Her dogs, Reno and Kuna, have both earned their AKC Mach and USDAA ADCH titles in agility. Kuna, now retired, was one of the top 5 Miniature Pinschers in the country in 2006 and 2007. Karen's youngest dog, Ticket, began her competitive career in 2007 and is moving rapidly up the ranks. Karen has been training dogs for 15 years and has owned Fit-N-Trim since 1998. She is committed to providing dogs and their trainers with a strong foundation in a supportive, fun environment.

Fit-N-Trim offers indoor, heated and air-conditioned facilities at 108 Newburyport Turnpike and outdoor and indoor facilities at 103 Haverhill Street in Rowley, MA.

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

Classes

Upcoming six-week class sessions include:

- **Puppy Kindergarten** (for puppies two to five months old) - Starting Tuesday, January 6th at 7PM, Thursday, January 8th at 6PM, Saturday, January 17th at 9AM, Tuesday, February 24th at 7PM, Thursday, February 26th at 6PM and Saturday, March 7th at 9AM. (Note that the first class is without dogs.)
- **Basic Manners** (for dogs six months old or older) - Starting Thursday, January 8th at 7PM and Saturday, January 17th at 10:15AM.
- **Intermediate Manners** - Starting Saturday, November 15th at 11:30AM. Fit-N-Trim also holds a drop-in class on Tuesdays at 6PM (\$15 per session) for those who cannot commit to a full six week session
- **Agility I** - Starting Wednesday, January 7th at 11AM and Thursday, January 8th at 6PM at 103 Haverhill Street in Rowley, MA.
- **Beginner Obility** (for dogs six months old or older) - Starting Wednesday, January 7th at 5PM.
- **Obility (Level 2)** starts on Wednesday, January 7th at 6PM.

Workshops and Other Events

- **Canine Massage:** Friday, Jan. 9th at 6PM; Sunday, Jan. 18th at 1PM; Saturday, Feb. 21st at 4PM
Learn how to massage your dog at one of Fit-N-Trim's workshops. Tracy Powers, a Certified Canine Massage Therapist, will demonstrate massage techniques you can use with your dog. This is a hands-on opportunity. \$45
- **Rally-O Run-Thrus:** Weekly starting Jan. 6th at 8:10PM. \$15 per dog.
- **Massage:** April Capen, a certified horse and dog masseuse, is available at Fit-N-Trim (indoor) for dog massages on Mondays (2:00-6:30PM). 1/2 hour = \$35. Call or email Karen to sign up.

Upcoming

Say Cheese!
Fit-N-Trim
dogs will
stay any-
where!



- **Games** (Sunday, Jan. 11th at 9:30AM; Saturday, Feb. 14th and Sunday, March 15th at 11AM. Come 15 minutes early if you are new to games and would like an overview of the rules. All levels above Beginner 1 are welcome. Drop in fee: Fit-N-Trim students \$10.00 (per dog) ; guests \$15.00 (per dog).
- **Fit-N-Trim Gift Certificates:** Have a friend with a new puppy or know someone special who would enjoy a seminar or class? Contact Karen (kunabug@comcast.net)

For more info about classes and other events or to read the newsletter online go to: www.fit-n-trimdogagility.com

The FunDay pictures on Page 1 are by Jeremy Kezer Photography. Pictures of this and many other canine events can be viewed and purchased at:

www.jeremykezer.com