



CANINE CONDITIONING

No matter the sport, athletes train year-round; when not competing on the field or track, they can generally be found in the gym, the weight room, on the golf course, or the batting cage. They hike, jog, ride bicycles and horses, drive golf balls, field grounders, swim laps – anything to build and maintain strength and endurance for all kinds of climate and field conditions. Dogs involved in strenuous sports or careers need similar attention to their physical and mental states. In his book, Peak Performance: Coaching the Canine Athlete, Chris Zink, DVM, PhD advises that “Even after a year of age, young dogs should not be worked strenuously until their muscles have been developed by a program of increasing exercise over a period of several months. Just as with human adolescents, canine adolescents need time to adapt to their new bodies and to develop coordination for the specific skills they will be performing.”

Serious physical training involves a planned schedule of exercises suited for the dog and the job. A dog in training for search and rescue work uses his brain and body differently than a dog that will pull a cart or sled or one that will retrieve shot birds. Even within a breed, the task determines the type of training. A Golden Retriever who will become a guide dog or a service dog requires a different training plan than a Golden that will work in the field or the agility ring.

Physical training builds both muscles and endurance. Training sessions should begin with stretches and end with a cool-down period. Again, from Peak Performance: “Dogs love to stretch and can be trained to do so by giving a command such as “stretch” when the dog initiates a stretch on its own. Eventually,

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“Dogs, with their nose-to-the-ground, tail-wagging eagerness, their let-me-at-that-squirrel enthusiasm, remind me that what might on some days seem routine or dreary is only that way if you refuse to see the world at each moment with new eyes.

Steven Bauer

Reminder:

Have you paid your 2010 dues? If not, you need to get them in to Charlene Dunn (treasurer). Associates: \$15; Full Member: \$20 and Family: \$30.

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the dog will make the association and stretch on command. I have taught my dogs to stand up on their rear legs and stretch their front legs upward against my chest while I massage the muscles of their backs.”

Walks are excellent for conditioning if the dog will maintain a pace instead of stopping for every bush and fire hydrant. A conditioning walk should traverse different types of terrain; it works best if the dog has relieved itself before starting and thus is not as tempted to make frequent stops. Running and jogging also provide a good workout as long as speed and distance are gradually achieved.

Swimming is a great exercise for dogs as it allows muscle actions and increases cardiovascular endurance without stressing the skeletal system.

Agility training is not only preparation for competition, it helps a dog boost confidence, exercise muscles, improve coordination, and increase suppleness. A dog that can traverse the narrow board of the dog walk, climb and descend the A-frame, balance on the teeter, crawl through the tunnel, jump obstacles, and maneuver the weave poles, and do so by command, exercises body and mind in preparation for more serious work.

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Training should gradually increase in intensity and length with close attention to the dog’s condition and attitude along the way. A dog that is pushed too hard will quit or break down.

Sessions should fit the dog’s character; some dogs prefer one long training session split with play while

others do well with several short sessions during the day.

Training can be broken into segments with emphasis on different skills throughout a week. An agility dog might work on two or three types of obstacles one week and different obstacles the following week. A search dog might work on tracking and finding today and tomorrow, then on air-scenting for drugs or contraband next week, and on endurance in between.

Adult dogs can learn new tricks. Some dogs trained as service dogs come from shelters, and many adult dogs get a new lease on life when exposed to an exercise program or given a job to do. Many retired obedience and conformation dogs are now active in agility, and many adult dogs go from one sport or job to another.

An adult dog that has not been selected and trained with a job in mind should be examined by a veterinarian before starting a physical training program. The dog should be free of arthritic changes in shoulders, elbows, knees, hips, and spine; have a strong, healthy heart; and test free of eye disease.

Physical problems do not disqualify a dog from participating in all sports or endeavors, but may dash hopes of agility competition, long days in the field, or a career in search and rescue. Dogs with physical limitations can still enjoy exercise and training, but the program will differ from that devised for a healthy dog preparing for the same work.

(The previous is taken from an article written by Norma Bennett Woolf for Dog Owner’s Guide (www.canismajor.com))

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Hi All:

I would like to THANK everyone that helped with the Nov.29 Test. Especially Chief Tracklayer Tracy Freeling, Hospitality Chair Nancy Barclay and Paula Gifford, and our judges Charlene Dunn and Bob Brown. I know we work hard to make things go as smoothly as possible. But its nice to know that Executive Field Rep. Betty Winthers thinks so to. we enjoyed having her with us for the test. It would have been nice to have some of the dogs pass for their TD; they gave it a good try and I am sure they will soon have their TD.

I hope everyone has had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! May the New Year bring lots of good Tracking!

Deb

FALL TRACKING TEST

The weekend after Thanksgiving found members of the DFW Tracking Club preparing for the fall TR test being held at the Tarrant County Junior College Northwest campus. The weather cooperated nicely with only a little wind and plenty of sunshine. Judges R. S. Brown and Charlene Dunn met with the chief tracklayer,

Tracy Freeling, and chairman/secretary Deb Lyons on Saturday morning to lay tracks for the three entrants and one extra "just in case" track. The



AKC rep, Betty Winthers, went along with them. By lunch time two tracks had been laid and everyone was ready for Paula Gifford's beans and Nancy Barclay's sandwiches before going back to work. Tracklayers were Cindi Todd, Cindy Morrow, Sarah Helber, and Cherita Sherrill. Unfortunately Cherita hurt her ankle so Rod Barclay took over for her to lay the extra track.

Sunday morning was brisk but warmed up quickly. The campus police allowed us to set up the hospital-ity table under the walkway so we had cover for lunch. Drawing for tracks took place promptly at 8:00 and the first dog/handler team was off. All three tracks were run before breaking for



lunch. Sadly, no one qualified this morning, but a lot



of promise was shown. Though it was disappointing everyone had a good time and was determined to keep on tracking.

Thanks go to Dennis Lyons for following everyone around and snapping pictures, some of which are shown here. It is nice to have our very own photographer!



DFW Tracking Club was founded in the summer of 2005 by members of the tracking community who wished to offer tests, teach classes, and serve the tracking needs in the DFW area.

The mission of the DFW Tracking Club is to provide a need to the tracking community for tracking tests, tracking classes, and tracking education.

DFW Tracking Club has instructors who can service all levels of tracking from the novice to the advanced tracker. Our classes are structured to teach dogs and their humans to track for an AKC tracking test.

DFW Tracking Club is an AKC recognized club, and a 501(c) tax exempt organization.

For more information about the DFW Tracking Club, check out our yahoo group at dfwtrackers@yahoo.com or email the club secretary at info@dfwtc.org

TWO IN ONE DAY! by Charlene Dunn

Only an insane person would ever think about entering 2 dogs in one Tracking test, much less in a TDX test, but if I was going to drive 700+ miles for a TDX why not try with both dogs. As it is hard to get into TDX tests at all, I entered Charlie and Vegas in the tests I thought they would be suited for and both dogs were drawn in to the Denver Foothills Tracking Association Nov 1st test. Now all we had to do was get there.

With bad weather in the forecast we took off at 6:30am on Thursday from Arlington, bound for Denver. We had to wait for our smallest companion in Fort Worth (you know how women are, she took her time getting to the car, packing all her 40 thousand coats, etc) so we hit rain just outside of Boyd and it continued until we pulled into Wichita Falls making our travel time extend hour by hour. Our way was clear until we hit the border for New Mexico, where we hit SNOW, luckily it wasn't sticking but we fought the snow and wind all the way to the Raton pass where it was sticking and we went inch by inch at 30 miles per hour. In Trinidad it was like an alternate dimension, it was sunny, the roads were clear, and the speed limit was 75 mph! So we sped on into Colorado Springs where on the south side it was sunny and dry and on the north side the blizzard reappeared. We stopped for gas, to let the dogs out, and because I'm sure the native Coloradoans might think it strange for a van from Texas to be driving down the highway in a snowstorm with the driver hanging out the window, as my windshield wipers had frozen and I couldn't see a thing! At the rest stop I managed to clean my windshield and fill the tank, then I got the dogs out, Charlie was ecstatic about the snow, romping and jumping, Vegas on the other hand was like "You want me to do WHAT?!". I dried her off and put her back in the warm car, dinked around with my wipers some more and off I went towards Denver. The roads were packed snow, with not much of a "lane" so I poked along in what I deemed the slow lane, and this is how we eventually pulled in to the La Quinta that was to be our home for the next 3 days at 8:30pm that night. After unloading everything I took the dogs out to potty and for Charlie to play in the snow again. Vegas would follow him, begrudgingly. The next day we awoke to a winter wonderland, but the roads were already clear. However after a brief trip outside, both were content to spend the day indoors in the warmth while I worked. Vegas secretly hoped that 2 days of 60+ degree weather would get rid of that "yucky" white stuff. Charlie hoped work would

be done soon so he could go play in the great white stuff again.

After work we took a drive to the park in the daylight to see how far it was from the hotel. The park was absolutely breathtaking.

One of the reasons I took the dogs up there early was to get acclimated to the climate. They do not call Denver the mile high city for nothing! I think it affected me more than the dogs, they seemed fine. On Friday I laid a short 1-turn track for each of them, Charlie blew through the track and pounced on his glove; Vegas, not so much. Her whole attitude to that "icky" white wet stuff was, "You HAVE to be kidding." On Saturday we slept in, laid around all day while I worked and we watched movies.

In the afternoon, I decided I needed to take the dogs out for some exercise since most of the snow was gone; maybe



Vegas would be a bit happier about that. So off to the closest park we went. Again I laid short 1-turn tracks, which Charlie blew through his, but since it was a public park, Ms. A.D.D. had to bark at the kids, bark at the bikers, look around, basically avoiding the track at all costs. Hmmm. Wonder if Sunday will be any better?

Sunday dawned brisk, but sunny. I packed up the car and off to the park we went. As the draw drew near, I was Velcroing on my dusters that I use when I snow ski (just in case), when one of the judges asked, "What are you wearing?" and I said, "Boots. Why?" Her response was there might be snow. Great... All exhibitors were sternly warned that any perceived guiding would be immediately whistled. The draw proceeded with Vegas drawing the last track of the day and Charlie drawing the second track of the day. Since our start was nearby we were told to wait with our driver (cars cannot be left by the roadside), while the first dog ran its track.

Agas seemed to go by, but eventually it was our turn. I drove the car to our start flag and proceeded to harness Charlie, when our judge said, "Just follow the 2nd set of prints in." To which I replied, "Hang on; let me get him

dressed because I can't see anything." Well we never saw tracks and just took off towards our start flag, which didn't faze me as we had practiced starts at "bad" angles before. No sooner had I asked Charlie to down and picked up the start article then he took off like a shot and it was all I could do to hold on. At the first turn, as we headed down hill, I slipped and yelled "easy" as

he popped up over the road and down the rest of the hill, through the gully and up the hill on the other



side where we briefly paused at a brown child's shoe. At the top of the hill I had to stop him and untangle him as the line had gotten wrapped around his leg twice and then we were off again at breakneck speed. He turned down the hill again and back towards the road as we found a red sock, then through the gully, around the trees and knee high snow up the hill, over the road, and up another hill, at which time I gave up trying to keep up and yelled "PULL!" At the top of the hill, Charlie circled and headed parallel to the road to a tree where he circled again, got caught up, once I got him untangled he went straight down the hill and stopped. I was coming down behind him so he was up near the road when I picked up the blue glove and held it in the air. At which time the judges yelled and Charlie jumped on me knocking me over in the snow. As I lay there with my chocolate Lab licking my face trying to catch my breath, I could only imagine that I was a sight to see. I stood up and told Charlie, he was a good boy Charlie Brown! As I climbed up to the road to speak with the judges, through huffs and puffs, I asked how long the track took. 13 minutes! No wonder I was out of breath! After I loaded Charlie in the car, the driver said, "Did I hear you yell something as you went down the hill, it sounded like "EASY!" I smiled and nodded as we drove off...

But wait... There is more... I had 2 dogs in this test... When the draw occurred the alternate was present, I

had alerted her that if the snow was too deep I was going to have to pull the Dachshund, as we had not had a good experience tracking in the snow the past 2 days, and I would say knee high snow was a bit too much. After we got back to base camp I went in search of the alternate and a bottle of water. The cross track layers for Vegas' track had just gotten back and I was asking if they knew the alternate person so I could tell her, but they said "Oh that's the best track she could have drawn, the snow is almost gone." So I vacillated, thinking if it was at all doable, we should try and there were 3 more dogs to run. So we waited, and waited, and waited. In the mean time, Vegas' co-owner, Cindi, and one of her local friends, Dawn-Renee Mack, were conspiring against her, wanting to dress her in skintight coats, etc. Vegas would have none of that though. Once dressed in this "non flattering" attire she became "yard art". So I took it off of her and said I had a hard enough time keeping her moving without her being yard art. If we were going to do this, we were going to do it how we always have done it. Don't mess with the routine! With that I packed her and my driver in the car and we waited for the "call" to come to our track. It eventually came and off we went. I looked at the clock, it was after 11 am and the temp was approaching 60 degrees; both good signs for small dogs who don't do cold. We pulled into the parking lot and I got out and started to get Vegas dressed when I noticed there were no judges, to this I heard from the people gathered, "Aren't you running this track?" Uh-oh... The driver questioned them as to the start and we packed up and off we went down the road where we found the judges and our start flag. I got out again and harnessed Vegas up, watered her and put her down. Our start was less than 10 feet from the road and we were very distracted by all the traffic. I asked, "How would you like me to approach, and we entered the field. At the start she sat and I put the article away and said, "Find me another!" Off we went at a slow and methodical pace. We stopped 10-15 yards in and turned to bark at a passing car, "Vegas, leave it and find me another." We made it to the first turn, as we paralleled the road, we had to stop and bark at the bikers, "Vegas leave it and FIND me another." Along our second leg we noticed judges following so we had to stop and bark at the judges, "VEGAS! Leave them alone and find me another." At the second corner there was some snow and little paw prints that we had to investigate, "Vegas, leave whatever that is alone and FIND ME ANOTHER." At this she took off into the woods, and since we were actually moving I was like great, we are following the rabbit or

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JANUARY, 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Class
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 Class
10 VST TR-TX	11	12	13	14	15	16 Class Lay Track
17 VST	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 Class
TR 31						

FEBRUARY, 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6 Class
7 TX	8	9	10	11	12	13 Class
14 TR-TX	15	16	17	18	19	20 Class
21 TX	22	23	24	25	26	27 Class
28 TR-TX						

EVENTS

Jan. 10: Tracking Club of El Paso—**VST**
Las Cruces, NM Closes 12/16 (Linda Fischer: canyonflowers@junocom)

Jan. 10: Southwest Tracking Assoc. of Metro Houston—**TR/TX** Houston, TX Closes 12/31 (Cathy Daniel: danielmk@airmail.net)

Jan. 17: DFW Tracking Club—**VST**
Bedford, TX. Closes 1/6 (Nancy Barclay: berrybar15@verizon.net)

Jan. 31: Tracking Club of El Paso—**TR**
Fort Bliss, TX Closes 1/20 (Norma Rust: njrust@aol.com)

Feb. 7: Sandia Dog Obedience Club—**TX**
Placitas, NM Closes 1/28 (Lynn Wilson: 505-884-9095)

Feb. 14: Greater Kansas City Sheltie Club—**TR/TX** Smithville, MO Closes 1/27 (Marshall Brown: gkcscsecretary@gmail.com)

Feb. 21: Tracking Club of El Paso—**TX** El Paso, TX Closes 2/10 (Michele Mauldin: mauldinm@msn.com)

Feb. 28 Greater Kansas City Obedience Club—**TX** Smithville, MO Closes 2/11 (Christine Lero: cmlero@sbcglobal.net)

Feb. 28: Texas Try-City Obedience Club—**TR/TX** Fort Worth, TX Closes 2/15 (Judy Jackson: 817-233-2481)

MARCH, 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 TR	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 TR/TX VST	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 TR/TX VST	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

APRIL, 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 TR/TX
4 VST	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 TR/ TX	26	27	28	29	30	

EVENTS

March 7: Greater Kansas City Dog Training Club—**TR**: Smithville, MO Closes 2/28 (Cathy Daniels: puppyheadcate@gmail.com)

March 14: DFW Tracking Club—**TR** Fort Worth, TX Closes 3/4 (Tracy Freeling: taf76137@yahoo.com)

March 14: Gateway Tracking Club—**VST** St. Louis, MO Closes 3/4 (Linda Schulte: Imschulte@yahoo.com)

March 14: Louisiana Capital City Obedience Club—**TR/TX** Jackson, LA Closes 3/4 (Cheryl Warren: 225-202-0080)

March 21: Houston Obedience Training Club—**TR/TX** Houston, TX Closes 3/14 (Brenda Gin Joe: rotti4us@flash.net)

March 21: Sandia Dog Obedience Club—**VST** Albuquerque, NM Closes 3/10 (Vickee Jones: gordongirls@comcast.net)

April 3: Dalmatian Club Of America - **TR/TX** Smithville, MO Closes 3/17 (Onofria: mail@onofrio.com)

April 4: Springfield MO Dog Training Club—**VST** Springfield, MO Closes 3/17 (Anna Freeman: aandjfreeman@sbcglobal.net)

April 25: Southwest Tracking Assoc. of Metro Houston—**TR/TX** Houston, TX Closes 4/15 (Gayle Mahar: gmahar@att.net)

OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES

DFW Tracking Club

10-25-09 Meeting Minutes

1:50 pm (Meeting called to order)

In attendance: Deb Lyons, Paula Gifford, Rod Barclay, Nancy Barclay, Ronna Miller, Sarah Helber, Monica Becherer, Charlene Dunn, Anna Gustafsson, Tracy Freeling, and Daphne Price. Guest: Chelly Quinn

A motion to accept the minutes of last meeting as printed in the newsletter was made by Charlene Dunn and seconded by Ronna Miller. Motion passed.

OFFICER REPORTS:

President's Report: None.

Vice-President's Report: None.

Secretary's Report: None

Treasurer's Report: Income/expense report was passed around. Charlene reported that the replacement for the tent has been ordered and should be here in time for the test. John and Darlene's tickets have been purchased, Bob's ticket has been purchased, and the domain for the website has been renewed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Tracking Committee: November TD Test. Deb reported that she has not received any entries yet, all hospitality items have been transferred to Nancy Barclay, arrangements have been made to pick up Bob Brown and Betty Winthers (AKC rep) from the airports, and Charlene will bring the flags to the site. Nancy Barclay & Paula Gifford are heading hospitality. If anyone would like to bring something please contact Paula or Nancy. Tracy is the chief tracklayer; if you would like to volunteer to lay tracks or carry flags, contact Tracy.

January VST Test: Secretary- Nancy Barclay. Chief Tracklayer- Rod Barclay. Hospitality -Deb Lyons. Judges John & Darlene Barnard arrive Friday morning and leave Sunday evening. Deb will pick them up from airport. Discussed premium layout- It has to have AKC and Club license on it and flip the two AKC form pages to be in compliance.

Spring TD Test: Judges - Jon Bishop and Gillian Salling. Secretary - Tracy Freeling. Still need a chief tracklayer.

Seminar Committee: No report.

OLD BUSINESS:

T Shirts –The t-shirts are now available on CafePress. Long sleeve, short, and sweatshirt. The shirt can have a larger or regular pocket patch, but the only color is light gray. To order at a discount, email Charlene size, and sleeve length (short or long).

Web Page – New look and feel is now up. The only thing lacking is the member only section and members need to send tracking pictures for titles, etc.

NEW BUSINESS:

Christmas Party – Paula graciously offered her house again for the club Christmas party and December meeting. The meeting will be held on 12-13-09 at Paula Gifford's house. Bring a covered dish and a gift of not more than \$25 for the Chinese gift exchange.

Spring Test Location – Charlene said that Toni had contacted her about when we would like to hold a test on her land in Ferris, TX. Charlene said the land is beautiful and Toni will mow or do whatever is needed to suit us. It has a covered area with electricity, but we will have to rent a port-a-potty. Charlene also mentioned that the sooner we have a test there the quicker the other land owner will get used to us being there. A motion Move the Spring TD Test on 3-14-10 to

Toni Skiles land was made by Sarah Helber and seconded by Ronna Miller. Motion passed.

Booth at MARS Animal Rescue of Grapevine adoption event – Nancy Snyder, who attended our 2009 seminar, contacted the club about having a booth at their event. It would be Sunday 11/8/09 at Creekside Pet Center on Davis Blvd from 10AM to 4PM. Nancy asked if we would like to have a booth and do a demo. Paula Gifford volunteered to put together a booth and Anna Gustafsson said she would try to do the demo. Anyone wishing to help at the event should contact Paula.

Dues – Charlene reminded everyone that dues are due January 1, 2010.

A motion to adjourn was made by Charlene Dunn and seconded by Nancy Barclay. Meeting adjourned at 2:55pm. Next meeting is December 13, 2009 at 1:30pm.

Submitted by Cindi Todd, kindly taken by Paula Gifford.

DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

DFW Tracking Club

December 13, 2009

Paula Gifford's House

The meeting was called to order at 2:50 p.m. by President Deb Lyons. Members in attendance were Deb Lyons, Anna Gustafsson, Charlene Dunn, Ronna Miller, Paula Gifford, Monica Becherer, Sarah Helber, Tracy Freeling, Cindi Todd, Natasha Decker, Nancy Barclay and Sherry Creighton. Guests in attendance were Den Lyons and Peter Moonen.

October minutes need revising and the revised minutes will be published in the newsletter.

OFFICER REPORTS:

President's Report – Discussion about the classes starting in January pertaining to participants. So far we have 2 new students and 1 member signed up.

Vice President's Report – No report.

Secretary's Report – No report.

Treasurer's Report – Deb Lyons read the income/expense report. Charlene reported that Quicken has been sending update announcements for Quicken 2010. She also mentioned due to her new computer she will either need a Macintosh version of Quicken or someone else will need to do the Treasurer's job and we will need to upgrade the current version anyway. A discussion was had about whether the club needed electronic software for the finances and the costs associated with the upgrade. Tracy Freeling moved, Cindi Todd seconded, that the appropriate software be purchased for Charlene's use as Treasurer. Motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

January Tracking Test: The test is January 16th-17th. Chairperson / Secretary, Nancy Barclay, reported that we have 2 entries to date. Deb Lyons will send the spreadsheet form for Rod Barclay's use as Chief Tracklayer. Deb Lyons is hospitality chair and as such has volunteered to pick up the judges from the airport on Friday. Deb Lyons has reserved a room at the hospital for our use for hospitality and the drawing of tracks for Saturday and Sunday. Sarah Helber, Charlene Dunn and Deb Lyons have volunteered to be tracklayers. A discussion on the necessary tracking articles for VST ensued and whether the club would provide. Sarah said that she kept all her VST articles and Tracy commented that she had given her articles to Jeff Shaver when he passed. The club should not expect tracklayers to supply articles if the person is going to keep them. Nancy Barclay will email January judges to see what articles they would approve so that she could purchase them.

Spring Tracking Test: No news.

OLD BUSINESS

Belgian Tervuren Tracking Tests. Sarah Helber reported she will firm up the commitment from the Tervuren Club as to what they will be offering the DFWTC members who will be working for them.

Bylaws Revision Committee. Three changes to bylaws were discussed. Discussion tabled.

Budget. Sarah said at the end of the year, we will run a report and reconcile with the 2009 Budget. Discussion tabled until after year end.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 7, 2010 at 1:30 pm at the HEB Hospital. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 3:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindi Todd

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something, because the judges are NOT following us. By now we have gone at least a hundred yards when she wraps herself around a tree. So I go to untangle her and off she takes parallel to the second leg of our track. At this point the judges reappear at a distance (nice of them to stay back since we are SO distracted and SO being a blond, hmm must get that from her mother!) and I am wondering if we are ever going to get to an article, just then she stops at a black thing, which I approach and hold up for the judges to see the black patent leather shoe, "GOOD girl, find me another." We went a bit further and turned again, still moving at a snails pace, my arms were getting tired trying to hold the line up so it wouldn't get wet, another hundred yards or so and she turns again, this time we are facing a hill that hasn't had the sun on it and the snow is deep. Vegas had to climb the hill by hopping foot step to foot step and about half way up she stopped at another black thing, this time it was a sock, "GOOD GIRL, find me another." She continued up the hill and turned right, heading for a street. In the distance, I can hear a car speeding down a road, so I am looking around to see if someone is stopping traffic or what, not a soul was to be seen and Vegas was heading for the road. About this time she pops onto the road and the car (a black Mercedes) comes barreling around a corner and slams on her brakes. To this interloper we have to stop AND bark at the car, "Vegas! Leave the car alone, find me another." She continues across the road and up the bank, skirting some tall reeds, still going straight. At this time the judges come across the road and have invaded her space, so we had to turn side ways, raise our hackles, posture, and bark at them, "VEGAS, LEAVE IT AND FIND ME ANOTHER!" To this she

turns around and continues down the reeds for what feels like forever, and eventually I can see the parking lot we first stopped at, at that moment she stops and turns and sits, "OH GOOD GIRL!!" I picked up the glove and showed it to the judges, then picked her up and walked back to them.



The gallery, who had been waiting and couldn't really see anything but me pick up the dog and turn back to the judges, thought she quit and everyone left. Pessimism must be running rampant, because when I called her co-owner, her first thing was "That was too quick, what happened?" Silly mom, no faith in the spotted dog, I said, "Vegas is one step closer to that triple champion!" To which the line was dead silent.

Our trophies were these great hand painted tiles, and the food was delicious, or maybe I was just delirious with altitude sickness or running 2 TDXs in one day but, whatever, life was grand and I floated home (still took forever, even with the roads clear) watching the stars in New Mexico that were so much brighter than in Dallas...



Tax Deduction for Pets: Good Idea or Bad?

A recent column by Jena Stregowski (Jenna's Dog Blog) discussed the following bill which is currently being looked at by the Ways and Means Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. Wouldn't it be nice if pet care expenses were tax deductible? Most of the readers who responded were overwhelmingly in favor of the bill. Every pet owner has faced huge veterinary bills at one time or another and it would be nice if, at the very least, they were tax deductible. But other readers cautioned about getting the government involved in yet one more aspect of our lives. What do *you* think?

HR 3501 IH

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a deduction for pet care expenses.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

July 31, 2009

Mr. MCCOTTER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a deduction for pet care expenses.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the 'Humanity and Pets Partnered Through the Years (HAPPY) Act'.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

- (1) According to the 2007-2008 National Pet Owners Survey, 63 percent of United States households own a pet.
- (2) The Human-Animal Bond has been shown to have positive effects upon people's emotional and physical well-being.

SEC. 3. DEDUCTION FOR PET CARE EXPENSES.

(a) In General- Part VII of subchapter B of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to additional itemized deductions for individuals) is amended by redesignating section 224 as section 225 and by inserting after section 223 the following new section:

This bill is in the first step in the legislative process. Introduced bills and resolutions first go to committees that deliberate, investigate, and revise them before they go to general debate. *The majority of bills and resolutions never make it out of committee.*

SEC. 224. PET CARE EXPENSES.

(a) Allowance of Deduction- In the case of an individual, there shall be allowed as a deduction for the taxable year an amount equal to the qualified pet care expenses of the taxpayer during the taxable year for any qualified pet of the taxpayer.

(b) Maximum Deduction- The amount allowable as a deduction under subsection (a) to the taxpayer for any taxable year shall not exceed \$3,500.

(c) Qualified Pet Care Expenses- For purposes of this section, the term 'qualified pet care expenses' means amounts paid in connection with providing care (including veterinary care) for a qualified pet other than any expense in connection with the acquisition of the qualified pet.

(d) Qualified Pet- For purposes of this section--

(1) QUALIFIED PET- The term 'qualified pet' means a legally owned, domesticated, live animal.

(2) EXCEPTIONS- Such term does not include any animal--

(A) used for research or owned or utilized in conjunction with a trade or business, or

(B) with respect to which the taxpayer has claimed a deduction under section 162 or 213 in any of the preceding 3 taxable years.'