



Kathy Huey and Mick competing in the February Agility Trial. See pages 6-7.



CLUB OFFICERS

- President
Christie Black
christieblack1@gmail.com
- Vice President
Donna McGrath
dlynnmcgrath@hotmail.com
- Secretary
Heidi Miller
heidihome1@aim.com
- Treasurer
Sandy Roth
fanfaredogs@gmail.com

BOARD MEMBERS

- Janet Lewis
macleod05bcs@gmail.com
- Leigh-Anne Congdon
lcongdon243@comcast.net
- Cynthia Rabbers
c_rabbers@yahoo.com
- Sue Williams
swilliams310@atlanticbb.net

Send Us Your News!

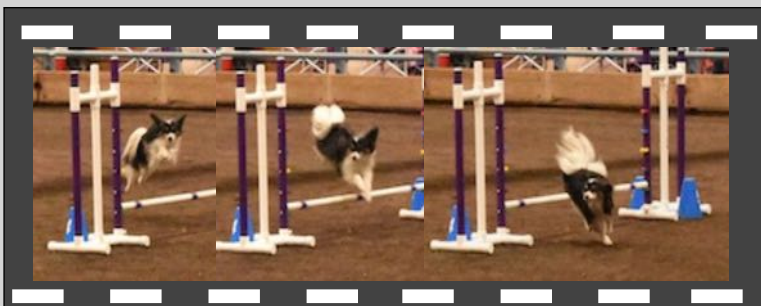
Do you have news for the Mt. Nittany Dog Tales newsletter? Send it to news@mndtc.org. The newsletter is published every other month, before the general meeting.

Newsletter Staff:

- Christie Black
- Heidi Miller
- Brenda Palmgren
- Cynthia Rabbers

ACTION

at the Snider Ag Arena, February 1, 2020



Marliene Froke's Papillon, Stash



Janny and Rich Olsen's Sheltie, Nissa



Christie Black's Lab, Doppler

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Photos by John Palmgren

**General Membership Meeting - 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 10
at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pine Grove Mills**

Club Happenings



Annual Awards Banquet

6 p.m. Tuesday, March 24
 Email your Reservations to
 Cynthia Rabbers
 (c_rabbers@yahoo.com)
 Reservations Deadline: **March 10**



Fast CAT Practice April 18

- Free to members
- \$5/run for applicants and non-members
- See flyer on MNDTC Web site, events page for details. Link below:
<http://www.mndtc.org/public/events.htm>

Coming Soon!

Canine Caring Days on Penn State Campus
 Hosted by Penn State Counseling & Psychological Services

Tuesday, May 5, 12-3 p.m.

To volunteer you and your dog, please contact
 Kimberly Paley kimberly.paley@gmail.com

**Membership - Welcome new applicants
 Brandon Brown and Nicole Glenny!**

Event Calendar

- **March 10:** MNDTC General Meeting 7:00 p.m., St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pine Grove Mills
- **April 5:** MNDTC AKC Tracking Test, PSU Ag Progress Grounds Special Events Building, Pennsylvania Furnace
- **April 18:** Fast CAT Practice catty-corner to Ag Choice Building, Pennsylvania Furnace
- **April 26:** Scent Work Trials Main Events Building, Ag Progress Grounds, Pennsylvania Furnace
- **May 8-10:** Agility Trial at Ag Choice Building, Pennsylvania Furnace
- **May 22-24:** Fast CAT Events catty-corner to Ag Choice Building on Ag Progress Grounds, Pennsylvania Furnace

For more information on events, and dates of up-coming run-thrus, go to the MNDTC events and run-thru pages at www.mndtc.org. Trial Premiums can also be found on the events page as they become available.

What's New?

Do take time to stop and smell the roses...or birch, anise, and clove

K9 Nose Work and AKC Scent Work are fairly new sports in the canine competition realm. AKC Scent Work is being taught in this area through MNDTC and NNKC. For those not familiar, the purpose of the sport is to teach dogs to find target odor: birch, anise, clove, and cypress for AKC, and find this target odor during a search when the hide location is unknown to the handler. It is very similar to what professional drug and explosive detection dogs do.

Everyone who owns a dog is probably impressed at some point by the incredible sense of smell their dog has. Either your dog found your dinner sitting at the back of the counter or tracked the deer droppings at the far end of your yard to roll in, or maybe has a tracking dog title. Regardless of the circumstance, it is amazing what dogs can find using their nose. For me that moment was when my 11-year-old Spitz Mix, Ava, pushed her environmental sensitivities aside during a Nose Work trial and used her nose to track a hide on a 3.5 foot tall railing over 100 foot away (see photo below). I later found out she was one of five dogs (out of 28) to find that hide that day. I share this story, not to boast about Ava's success, but to tell you about the positive change this sport brought about in Ava that led her to this success and why I hope everyone gives Nose Work and/or Scent Work a try.

Ava was the second dog I started training in Nose Work. Being a rescue dog, her past is checkered with a lot of unknowns, but



what was known was she was very leash reactive to other dogs, she had a fear of loud noises, and was anxious in new environments she was unfamiliar with. In fact, during her first Nose Work class, she stood in the middle of the room for what felt like eternity and would not search for the hidden morsels of food she was supposed to find to determine if she had the drive to search. However, over time she learned that cardboard boxes spread out across a room meant we were playing the game where she finds target odor and gets rewarded with her favorite treat: Colby Jack cheese. And yes, specifically Colby Jack cheese. Slowly we could take this game to new buildings, different parks, friends' houses, and she started to work in these new locations; her confidence was growing. Fast forward to today and we are in our sixth year of our Nose Work journey. The dog that wouldn't even move around in a new environment is now able to search in novel environments with almost no hesitation. The hide I described at the beginning of this article? That was at a minor league baseball stadium in the middle of a city! This would not have been possible without the growth of Ava's confidence through the power of searching.

I urge everyone to try this sport with your dog. This sport has truly allowed my dog to gain more confidence, become more comfortable in new situations, and strengthened our bond immensely. Not only is this sport fun for people (you can pretend to be a professional canine handler for the day), but the dogs absolutely love it!

The Scent Work Committee is excited to announce the club will be offering a repeat of the introductory class taught by Cheryl McMillan as well as an intermediate class for dogs already searching for target odor this spring. This is an exciting opportunity and my hope is everyone gets out there and lets their dog start sniffin'!

~Addie Hellmers

Addie's Ava finds the Hide!

Photo by Alyssia Greiner

What's New?

Making Use of Opportunities to Prepare Our Dogs

I recently got a new purebred puppy. I purposely made this choice after getting my first dog as a young adult from her breeder and my second from a rescue. There were many reasons why this was the right choice for me, and it came with the bonus of being able to take advantage of introducing my puppy to the show environment at a very young age.



The AKC has a relatively new class available in conformation that allows puppies between the age of 4 and 6 months to compete in a conformation show. The puppy class is a separate event and has its own best in show competition. You usually only find it at larger shows, so it provides a great opportunity to introduce your puppy to the chaos of the show environment early in their life.

One week shy of 5 months old, we made the trek to Erie for the Erie Kennel Club's annual show. They only offered the puppy competition on Saturday but that was plenty for our first go around. Our goals were to have fun in the ring and build some positive association for the show environment.

As dog shows go this was a relatively quiet show although very crowded. The rings were congested with throngs of people creating a maze to pass through. Most of the grooming areas were in other rooms as were the obedience competition and the vendors. There was a small grooming area in the far end of the ring, so we got to experience a little bit of grooming noises. We met people of many ages and abilities including people that utilized various medical equipment to get around. Some people passed us without a glance, but many

stopped to pet the puppy and several children sat in a semi-circle and took turns accepting puppy kisses.

Then we had our moment in the ring. She was a happy, bouncy puppy although for the conformation ring such behavior is certainly out of control. It didn't matter though because we weren't really there for the conformation part of the show, we were there to make sure rings are thought of as fun and judges are people that we don't interact with but who may stop by for examination. As the only Siberian Husky entered, she got to bring home a best of breed puppy ribbon and go back in the ring for a second positive ring experience.

Being entered in the show doesn't have to be about winning ribbons or titles, it can be about whatever goals you make for yourself and your dog.

All in all, it was a success and all of our goals were met. Although there aren't any more 4-6-month puppy classes during the time when we are eligible, we may utilize the conformation ring to continue to build those positive experiences. Being entered in the show doesn't have to be about winning ribbons or titles, it can be about whatever goals you make for yourself and your dog. So, if you find yourself in a position where a purebred puppy is your next choice, I encourage you to think outside the box and take advantage of early opportunities to prepare your dog for the show environment.

~ Cynthia Rabbers



An AKC 4-6 month puppy class winner.
Used with permission from Lisa Moreau. Photo by Garth Gourlay

Club Event Happenings

Pulling Sports

The MNDTC board approved the addition of a new committee to explore pulling sports. It is currently a small committee and welcomes anyone interested in helping with this exploration.

The classic example of a pulling sport is a sled racing team of dogs, most commonly Siberian Huskies, Alaskan Huskies, Alaskan Malamutes, or Samoyeds, pulling a sled over snow. Other examples are bikejoring, where at least one dog is attached to a line and pulls a bicycle; skijoring, where the dog pulls a human on cross-country skis; canicross, which is cross-country running with dogs. If all of that sounds like too much physical activity for you, there is also dryland mushing in which the handler sits, squats, or stands on a cart and has one or more dogs pull the cart as in sled racing. Dryland mushing is how many sled racing teams continue to train during seasons without snow.

One additional sport the committee will explore is weight pull. In weight pull, the dog is hooked up to a special wagon which is loaded with weight and the dog attempts to pull the cart a short distance. Each



successful attempt leads to additional weight being added until the dog reaches its maximum pulled weight.

Safety is the first goal, for both dog and handler. The committee will organize a workshop to learn more about pulling sports. If you are interested in joining this new committee, please contact Cynthia Rabbers at c_rabbers@yahoo.com.

Photos by Desiree Ramirez



Club Event Happenings

February Agility Trial Wrap-up

What a wonderful weekend we had for our February AKC Agility Trial! The trial ran smoothly with great courses created by Judge Jen Young. The weather even cooperated!! There was tremendous help from many members of our club. There are too many to name who put tireless hours in with course building, kitchen work, worker wranglers, workers for the runs, set up and clean up. I am very proud of the people who helped me with this trial.... without you I couldn't do it. Thank you.

~Karen Keller.

Photos by Brenda Palmgren



Chairperson, Karen Keller ring side



Julie Mikesell and Christie Black course building



Maureen Romej and Desiree Ramirez helping in the kitchen



JoAnn Shaffer and Marliene Froke helping to set up ring on Friday



Line for the Pizza Friday afternoon. Right, Kerri Moyer.



Donalee McElrath, Donna McGrath, Nancy Miller and Kay Waslohn



Craig Bohren with Birch



Pam Bilger in the novice class with her Shepherd, Izzy.



Sandy Roth working ring crew

New Kid on the Block

Bella Luna Blu, call name, **Luna**, joined our family on October 31 at 9 weeks old. **Ava** was really missing her big sister Chloe and is being the sweetest big sister to Luna. Luna's pregnant mother was taken from a breeder who was neglecting her. She had a litter of puppies in a shelter in Yukon, PA. We took a rainy four-hour drive, fell in love with this little sweetheart, had a five-hour drive home in a torrential rainstorm and are so glad we did. Luna is very sweet, smart, very attached to me, and adores her big sister. She also earned her first two WCRL Rally Q's at just 6 months.



~ Diana Sheatler

Congratulations!

Braggs

Breeze earned her AKC Novice Standard Agility Title at the Keeshond Club of Delaware Valley trials in January with a first place. She also picked up her first Open JWW leg with a first place the same weekend.

~ Lois Albright

