

Golden Tales

MARCH 2019



Crash

Golden boy achieves
NW1 Title through NACSW

MID-FLORIDA GOLDEN RETRIEVER CLUB

In this issue . . .

From the President

2018 Title Winners

Mark Your Calendar

Year-end Awards

New Board Members

Upcoming Agility Trial

Obedience Corner

2020 National Specialty

Dual Dog Hall of Fame

Accolades

Romancing the Cookie



From the President's Desk

Wow - Spring is already right around the corner and we are looking forward to a very busy next few months! On March 16 we are holding a Conformation, Obedience and Rally Match – Our annual all breed Spring Agility Trial is scheduled for April 19-21 – then a Dock Diving Fun Day is planned for May 11 – the MFGRC Specialty on June 14 will be held in Tampa – and let's not forget our Obedience and Rally Trial August 10-11 in Daytona. Whew! Lots of functions and we need your help with all of them!

We are diligently working on plans for the 2020 National Specialty Show – there are many many details to work through but with your help and expertise this will be a fabulous event. Please remember to contact club member Ann Moye at ftnewfies1@aol.com who has taken on the role of the club's volunteer coordinator. She will track tasks that need to be done (for all events) and what you would like to volunteer for to help us out. Remember - In order to be eligible to receive your yearly new title rosette from the club, a member must have volunteered to at least work at one club event during the year, or have done equivalent work for the club behind-the-scenes.

*Our Match will be held **March 16** at my home in Sorrento. This will be a fun day and hope to see you there whether you are showing or just coming to enjoy. Lunch will be available and our monthly club meeting will be held after the Match along with a raffle. We will have a great time - see you all ringside!*

Ann Rowe





2018 MFGRC Title Winners

Laura Bellochi

GCH CH Can. CH Pathfinder's Count to Ten or Else

2018 Titles - GCH, CH, Can. CH

CH Tangleloft Distinguished Flying Cross @ Pathfinder

2018 Title - CH

Can. CH Pathfinder's Kissed by the Sun

2018 Title - Can. CH

Barb & Charlie White

GJCH Omni's at McGuire's Landing DS DJA CGC TKN

2018 Titles - TKN, DJA

Lisa Boudreau

Faragold Sandpiper StarLight StarBright RN DJ CGC TKN

2018 Titles - RN, DJ, CGC, TKN

Sandpiper's Scent From Heaven CGC TKN

2018 Titles - CGC, TKN

Deauxquest Let's Talk About Love DS CCA CGC TKN

2018 Title - TKN

Pat Kopco

CH HR UH Autumn Grove RockStar Appetite for Destruction BN RN MH

WCX VCX DDHF

2018 Titles - CH, DDHF, VCX

CH Autumn Grove RockStar Any Way You Want It SH

2018 Titles - CH, SH

SHR Blazinlake RockStar Disorder in the House SH WC

2018 Title - SH

Jan Casey

Tawntyke BlueTrack Light Up The Sky BCAT DJ DSA TKN

2018 Titles - BCAT, DJ, DSA, TKN

Janet Franklin

Magik's Sweet Dreams CA CGC

2018 Title - CGC

Pam Ginn

CH Lakewood's Rhett Butler @ Kestrel Farm South

2018 Title - CH

Paula Black

Misty Ridge Lillie Santa Lucia RN RI CGC

2018 Titles - RN, RI, CGC

Nina DePetris

Picabo's Sweet As A Peach NA NAJ NF OA OAJ OF AXJ AX

2018 Titles - NF, OA, OAJ, OF, AXJ, AX

Jill Berke

GCH CH GoldRox Burnin' It Up! BN RN CGC TKN

2018 Title - TKN

Ted Misilo

Terrapin's Get My Shotgun Elsa CCA JH

2018 Titles - CCA, JH

Vicki Drerup

Honeybee's Hijinks BN RN TD BCAT

2018 Titles - BN, RN, BCAT

Robin Lemieux

Halia's Christmas In Killarney CGC TKN

2018 Titles - CGC, TKN

John and Rosa Blair

GCH Int. CH Fallchase Jazzie's D'Fining Moment CD

2018 Title - CD

Int. CH Jazzie's Where Everyone Knows Your Name

2018 Titles - BCAT, Int. CH

Johnann Goines

CH Jazzie's Sunshine On A Leash Carter BN RN CA DCAT RATN CGCA

TKN - 2018 Titles - DCAT, RATN

Lakewood's Murphy Brown Bama Clown CD BN RA CAX DCAT THDN

RATN DN CGCA - 2018 Titles - DCAT, RATN, CGCA

Yvette Rivera

Living Waters Bringer of Hope CGC CCA

2018 Titles - CGC, CCA

Mischief's I Change at Will CGC CD

2018 Titles - CGC, CD

Melissa Vaughan

Mischief's Change of Fortune TKN - 2018 Title - TKN

Michele Panetta

RockStars Mick's Little Girl BN RN GN CDX SH CGC TKN TKI TKA

2018 Titles - CGC, TKN, TKI, TKA

Dennis and Myra Kalodish

Nordic Liberties Uncle Sam at MyDen CDX RE THD CGC TKN TKI TKA

2018 Titles - TKN, TKI, TKA

Jill Kennon

Goldenzrule Cool Breeze AXJ DJ - 2018 Titles - AXJ, DJ

Goldenzrule The Eagle has Landed DS - 2018 Title - DS

Victoria Warfel

Goodtime's DreamDogz Gypsy Storm CGC CGCU CGCA TKN

2018 Titles - CGC, CGCU, CGCA, TKN

Sam and Sandy Stokes

Magik's Spirit of the Storm CGCA CGCU RN BCAT Achiever Dog

2018 Titles - CGCA, CGCU, RN, BCAT, Achiever Dog

Marilyn Booher

Surefire My Armani at JBoo CCA Top Derby Golden 2018

2018 Titles - CCA, Top Derby Golden 2018

Julie Wangelin

Questan's RegenerACEshun MBISS RI DSA BN RATN TKI

2018 Titles - RI, DSA, BN, RATN, TKI

(continued on next page)

2018 MFGRC Title Winners . . .

Maria Orlando
**Liebchens Smokey Bones Mountain Mischief VCD2 UDX BN RE AXP AJP
AFP TD TDU AXJ SCN**
2018 Titles - AXJ, SCN

Robin Bowen
Prism's Goldruls One Night (Stand) JH CCA
2018 Titles - JH, CCA
Prism's Sweet As... SH CCA
2018 Titles - SH, CCA
CH Prism's Gin Fizz Over Ice RN
2018 Title - CH

Ann Moye
Magik King of the Storm CGC CGCA
2018 Title - CGCA

Judy Jennings
Topbrass Travelin' Man CD MH
2018 Title - MH

Dalia Ruffatto
Luna The Wagging Tail Wonder CA BCAT RATN DSX CGC TKI
2018 Titles - CA, RATN, DSX

Carolee Stewart
Remington Stewart-Evans CD BN RE CGCA
2018 Titles - BN, CD, Achiever Dog

Ann Rowe
Magik's Top Of The Line RN BN CD
2018 Title - CD
Jazzie's Magik's Hook 'Em Horns CA RN WC
2018 Titles - RN, WC
Magik's Frozen Snowman FDC
2018 Title - FDC
Magik's Princess Leia Organa FDC
2018 Title - FDC
CH Magik's Ice On The Slopes CD RN FDC
2018 Title - FDC

Dee Thibodeaux
**MACH2 PACH Deauxquest It's a Hot VCD2 UD RN MXB2 MJC MXP4
MXPB MJP3 MJPB PAX MXF CA DJ CCA TD**
2018 Titles - MXF, TD, VCD2
**Deauxquest Kiss On The Lips CDX AX AXJ DS CA CC DM RATI RATN
RATO**
2018 Titles - RATI, RATN, RATO

Carol Atkinson
**Snobird's Raise Your Glass, Party Crasher BN RN SWN SEA SIA SHDN
DN CGCA TKP NW1**
2018 Titles - NW1, SEN, SIN, SBN, SCN, SWN, SHDN, SEA, SIA

Michele Throm
Ethos Winter is Coming at Cachet RN RATN
2018 Titles - RN, RATN
Magik's Emerald Belle of the Ball CD BN RE JH OJP DJ CGC WC CCA
2018 Title - CD



Objectives of the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club

To encourage and promote the purebred Golden Retriever; and to do all possible to bring their natural qualities to perfection. To urge members and breeders to accept the standard of the breed as approved by the American Kennel Club as the only Standard of Excellence by which Golden Retrievers shall be judged; and to do all in its power to protect and advance the interests of the breed by encouraging sportsmanlike competition at dog shows, obedience trials, and field events.

ESTABLISHED 1984

Find us online at: WWW.MFGRC.ORG

Mark your calendars . . .

Fun Match – at Ann Rowe’s house **March 16**. General Meeting will be held after the Match

Annual all-breed Spring Agility Trial - at the fabulous Grand Oaks Resort near Lady Lake FL, April 19-21.

Dock Diving Fun Day for club members – May 11 - Central Florida Dog Sports, DeLand FL (details to come)

MFGRC Specialty - June 14 - Tampa FL

MFGRC Obedience and Rally Trial - **August 10-11** - Daytona Beach, FL

A Word About Yearly New Title Rosettes

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club will continue to offer rosettes for members who earn new titles on their dogs in 2019 but this year a stipulation has been added by the Board.

In order to be eligible to receive a new title rosette from the club, a member must have volunteered to at least work at one club event during the year, or have done equivalent work for the club behind-the-scenes.

The stipulation was added to encourage members to help with club events.

CONFORMATION . OBEDIENCE . RALLY

AKC SANCTIONED “B” MATCH

Saturday, March 16th . 8 am – 4 pm



At the home of Ann Rowe
23840 Oak Valley Lane . Sorrento FL
Registration info at mfgrc.org

On the Cover:

Carol Atkinson’s Golden boy Crash closed out an outstanding year in Scent Work On December 29 in Tucker, GA earning his NW1 title through NACSW (National Association of Canine Scent Work).

MFGRC

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club, Inc. (MFGRC) was founded in 1984 by a group of Golden Retriever enthusiasts who came together in order to pursue ways of promoting and enjoying their Goldens. We are currently a member club of both the Golden Retriever Club of America (GRCA) and the American Kennel Club (AKC). MFGRC is licensed by the AKC to hold conformation shows, obedience and rally trials, agility trials, and retriever hunting tests. We also hold Working Certificate / Working Certificate Excellent tests in accordance with the rules of the GRCA, and also offer a breed/obedience match every year. In addition, MFGRC offers an ongoing slate of seminars, clinics and "fun days" to encompass all aspects of the Golden Retriever. We promote the versatile competition golden, the gentleman's hunting retriever, and the consummate family pet.



MFGRC Announces Year-end Award Recipients

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club announced its 2018 year-end awards recipients and winners at the club's annual Christmas party on December 15 at the home of club president Ann Rowe in Sorrento FL.



Agility Dog of the Year
MACH4 Knox's Singing My
Praises MXB2 MFG TQX T2B7
CA DJ (Singer)
Owner: Pat Carlile



Field Dog of the Year
Surefire My Armani At J Boo
(Mya)
Owner: Marilyn Booher



Obedience Dog of the Year
Magik's Top of the Line CD RN
(Lexus)
Owner: Ann Rowe



Rally Dog of the Year
Ethos Winter Is Coming at Cachet
RN RATN (Arya)
Owner: Michele Throm



Show Dog of the Year
GCH CH Nocatee Wonderlands
Stone In Love (Stone)
Owners: Diane and Vern Gank



Versatility Dog of the Year
Surefire My Armani At J Boo
(Mya) (Field, Rally/Obedience,
Conformation (CCA))
Owner: Marilyn Booher



Fallchase Owner-Handler Award
Vern Gank
GCH Summit's Wonderlands
Orange Twist (Zest)



Gold Standard Challenge
CH Richwood Winds Aloft SH WC (Tuuli)
Owner/Handler: Kristin Sipus

2018 Year-End Club Member Awards

Mover and Shaker Award
Robin Bowen

Above and Beyond Award
Chris Jeffrey

Lloyd Kierman Service Award
Andy Hall

Members of the Year
Cheryl and Pete Browne

Meet the New MFGRC Board Members for 2019

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club welcomed two new members to its board of directors for 2019 – Marilyn Booher and Ann Moye.

Marilyn and Ann join returning board members Robin Burket, Pam Ginn, Pat Kopco and Ted Misilo, along with club president Ann Rowe, vice president Michele Throm, secretary Andy Hall and treasurer Dee Thibodeaux as the club's leadership.

Meet Marilyn Booher . . .

Marilyn, who lives in Archer, FL has been a member of the club for seven years. Her primary focus with her Goldens is field events and hunt tests, but she also has put CD titles on her dogs and has also started competing on Rally.

Marilyn started with Goldens more than 35 years ago when she lived in Ohio. She moved to Florida in 1981 and got back into working with dogs eight years ago.

Her Maggie was a Master Hunter and qualified all age before lymphoma took her at age 5. She now works with Mya, who was the No. 1 Derby Golden in the country in 2018 and is currently working toward her Master Hunter title.

In addition to being a member of MFGRC, Marilyn is a member of the Jacksonville Retriever Club and has co-chaired that club's hunt test twice. She regularly volunteers to work at the MFGRC's hunt tests and last year also worked at the club's Obedience and Rally Trial.

Marilyn is a retired teacher, having worked in classrooms for 38 years teaching primarily chemistry and physics but also biology and math.

Editor's Note: In the next issue of Golden Tails, we'll introduce our members to new board member Ann Moye.

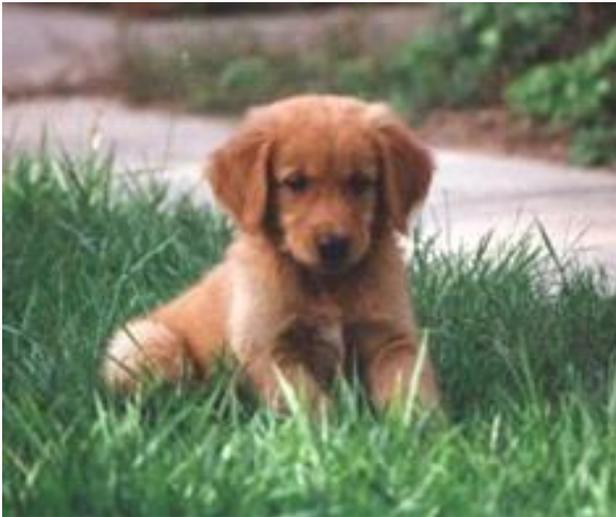


Spring Agility Trial

MFGRC will host its annual all-breed **Spring Agility Trial** at the fabulous Grand Oaks Resort near Lady Lake FL, April 19-21.

Club members are needed to help with the event – the most urgent need is to assist with set-up on Thursday, April 18 beginning at 1 pm. In addition, volunteers are needed to help with the running of the trial for all three days as timers, gatekeepers and scribes.

Anyone interested in volunteering is asked to contact MFGRC volunteer coordinator Ann Moye at ftnewfies1@aol.com.



The Obedience Corner

Socializing and Obedience Training

By Jean Bates

The importance of socializing your puppy or adult dog is frequently overlooked. No matter the breed. No matter what plans you have regarding his future training, be it hunt tests, herding, obedience, dock diving, etc.....socializing is of supreme importance and will impact the success or failure of your ultimate goals.

The window of opportunity for socializing a puppy is relatively brief. Hopefully by the time you get your puppy at 12 weeks the breeder will have leash broken your puppy, taken the litter outside many times daily, accustomed it to loud noises by dropping stainless steel food bowls, had many different people hold them and interact with them, made them accept the alpha roll over, (most important), had them on different surfaces such as grass, stone, sand, carpet, etc. In addition to all this they should be used to sleeping by themselves in a small crate with a radio on and well on their way to being clean throughout the night.

It is up to you as the new owner to continue in the same vein. Take your puppy somewhere new every other day. Let him interact with other (good natured) dogs. Meet people. Smell new smells. Hear new sounds. Investigate, investigate, investigate.

Hopefully your plans for this puppy include some activity that relates back to his original purpose.

Take your hounds out in different fields and woods. Let them smell those delicious smells that their ancestors revelled in. If they come face to face with Peter Rabbit so much the better. Let your Pointers and Setters run in fields and along hedgerows where they can smell quail and pheasant. Find out who has sheep or goats and test your herding dog, or at least let him absorb farm aromas. Walk him on a leash through a stable.

Help your puppy, and eventually your adult companion, to be comfortable in any environment.

The importance of socializing your obedience prospect may not be immediately apparent to you. In basic the dog is always close to you, in fact the shy, insecure dog frequently scores well at the lower levels. However, as you move up through Open to Utility they must work more independently. This is where your dog's insecurities really show up. You can train him to do all the exercises in the familiar home environment but every trial site/situation is different. Many dogs cannot handle this. It is not necessarily a reflection on your training but a gap in your dog's makeup.

Many of us get our obedience dogs as young adults from unknown backgrounds. We do our best with what we have. I have seen someone deserve more credit for getting a CD on a dog, than another person deserves for putting a UD on a dog.

Certain breeds take to obedience better than others. In my opinion the person who put a UD on a Basenji deserves more credit and is possibly a better trainer than the person who gets a UD on a breed traditionally easy to train!

No matter what breed you have chosen to train keep in mind that HIS temperament and YOUR training combine towards the final result. ■

2020 Golden Retriever Club of America National Specialty

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club has been named to host the **2020 Golden Retriever Club of America National Specialty**, which will include 13 days of competition, social events, clinics, seminars, shopping and more.

The National will span October 16-28, 2020, with the majority held between Monday, October 19, and Saturday, October 24 at the beautiful new **World Equestrian Center in Ocala FL**

A three-day Hunt Test will kick off the National beginning Friday, October 16, and a three-day Field Trial will conclude on Wednesday, October 28. The Hunt Test and Field Trial will be held at Lazy J Ranch in Williston, FL which is only 25 miles from the World Equestrian Center.

Conformation will include Sweepstakes, Junior Showmanship and a CCA and other events will include Agility, Obedience, Rally, Tracking and WC/WCX. MFGRC members Pat Kopco and Tom Misilo are co-chairs of the National.

Preview of the facility can be found on <https://worldequestriancenter.com/>





Dual Dog Hall of Fame

Kristin Sipus's Golden girl **Tuuli** (CH Richwood Winds Aloft MH WC) became the newest member of the **Dual Dog Hall of Fame** after earning her Master Hunter title at the MFGRC Hunt Test in Montverde, FL in February. **Tuuli** joined her mother Sophie in the DDHoF and is the fourth of her offspring to be among the elite group of dogs to have won Conformation CH and Master Hunter titles.

BIG CONGRATS!

Accolades . . .



Dalia Ruffato's Golden girl **Luna** (Luna The Wagging Tail Wonder CA BCAT RATN DSX CGC TKI) earned her CAA (Courinsg Ability Advanced) title on January 19 in Brooksville. **Luna** also went into the Conformation ring with Dalia's 12-year-old son Tyler and he took first place in Novice Intermediate for Junior Handlers.



Judy Jennings and her Golden boy **Seger** (Topbrass Travelin' Man CD MH) earned his Master Hunter title at the MFGRC Hunt Test in December. **Seger** is her first field dog – she trained and handled him herself with both of them learning along the way. **Seger** also is in the Morris Animal Foundation Golden Retriever Lifetime Study.

Carol Atkinson and her Golden boy **Crash** closed out an outstanding year in Scent Work On December 29 in Tucker, GA with **Crash** earning his NW1 title through NACSW (National Association of Canine Scent Work).



Laura Topping and her Golden girl **Gretchen** (GCH Lorelei's Here For the Party WC VC RN CD JH) finished Gretchen's Junior Hunter title in the MFGRC Hunt Test in December.

Club member **Julie Wangelin** earned two titles from different disciplines in December and January with her Golden boy **Ditto** (CH Questan's RegeneRACEshun MBISS RI DSA BN RATN CGC TKI). On December 14 at the Royal Canin show in Orlando, **Ditto** finished his Beginner Novice title, Julie's first title ever in Obedience. Then in Brooksville on January 14, **Ditto** finished his championship in the conformation ring.

More Accolades . . .



It was a great day at the MFGRC Specialty on December 14 for **Kristin Sipus**. Her Golden girl **Millie** (CH Richwood Moments Away MH) started her day with first in the Veteran Bitches 7-10 class. Then **Millie** went back for Best of Breed and received a Judge's Award of Merit and Veteran Best of Opposite Sex. Congratulations!



Club members **Yvette Rivera** and **Nancy Clinchy** won a new title in December - Yvette's Golden boy **Maui** (Mischief's I Change At Will) earned his CD in Perry, GA. **Maui** is trained and handled by Nancy.



MFGRC President **Ann Rowe** and her Golden boy **AUSTIN** winning his Jr. Hunter Title in Montverde FL February 10.



Nancy Sigmon and her Golden boy **Jackson** earned his Rally Novice title at the Royal Canin show in Orlando on December 14.



Vern and Diane Gank's Golden girl **Zest** (GCH Summits Wonderlands Orange Twist BISS) finished her Grand Championship in Brooksville by winning Best of Breed on January 14. **Zest** was handled by Adam Peterson.

And More Accolades . . .



At the MFGRC Hunt Test on Dec. 9, **Robin Bowen's** Golden girl **Sweet** (Prism's Sweet As...SH CCA) earned her last qualifying Senior leg. **Sweet** was handled by club member Nancy Clinchy.

MFGRC Treasurer **Dee Thibodeaux** (second from right) and her Golden girl **Sizzle** had a good day in the Orlando Dog Training Club tracking test in December. **Sizzle** earned her TD and is now a VCD2.

MFGRC Member Jane Eisenberg and Kol Honored by AKC



Jane Eisenberg and her outstanding Golden boy **Kol** were recognized by the AKC as recipient of the 19th annual AKC Humane Fund Awards for Canine Excellence (ACE) Therapy Dog honor. The award was presented at the Royal Canin AKC National Championship in Orlando in December.

Nine-year-old **Kol**, certified as a therapy dog at age two, helped provide comfort at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland FL on a daily basis for several months following the shootings there on February 14, 2018. For years, **Kol** has helped comfort Floridians at locations ranging from hospice facilities to nursing homes. **Kol** also is a Grand Champion Bronze – his full name is BISS BVISS GCHB CH Gemini's House of the Rising Sun CDX BN RAE JH THDD CGCA TKA VCX PBIS BOSS BVISS TDIG.

Jane, a member of the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club and the Everglades Golden Retriever Club, lives in Boynton Beach FL.



Judy Gilick's "Coach"

Romancing the Cookie

by Linda Koutsky

*The article below is written by Linda Koutsky - it appeared in **Front & Finish** July, 1996.*

Like many other obedience competitors, I started training my first dog at a local club. The club had a rich tradition, and had been in business for many years. So I joined, and quickly became hooked on dog training. I loved working with my dog, and never missed a training session. The problem was my dog didn't love it. The more we trained, the more she hated it. At the time, I felt that her poor attitude toward training, was because the club didn't approve of food and toys. I now know that was only part of the problem. The real cause of my dog's poor attitude was my own lack of knowledge, a teaching program that focused on physical corrections, a system that lacked balance between positive and negative, and my dog's own soft temperament. In reality, her dislike of obedience had little to do with food and toys. But in my mind, all she needed was positive motivational training. I wanted ears up and eyes bright. I knew in my heart that the positive trainers had the answer...if I was just reinforcing enough, my dog would love to work for me. So for the next four years, I took off my leash, filled my cheeks with food, my pockets with toys, and had a wonderful time teaching my dog.

To obtain my goal, I embarked on a quest for knowledge that continues today. I attended every motivational seminar, watched every video, read every book, even joined the clicker list on the Internet. My vocabulary expanded, and I learned the difference between a lure and a reward, between positive and negative reinforcement, positive and negative punishment, between primary and secondary reinforcers. I studied schedules of reinforcement, and knew that variable schedules with a variety of

reinforcers, produced the best results. I developed both verbal and physical Conditioned Reinforcers for use in the ring. I put my heart and soul into learning as much as I could about learning theory itself. BF Skinner became a household name, and Operant Conditioning was the game. In the back of my mind, I knew Skinner's work included both positive and negative, but I wanted to believe that I could achieve what the marine mammal trainers have achieved. The more I worked with my dog, the more positive my training became. Corrections were a thing of the past. My dog was simply stunning, with ears up and eyes bright. She loved training and so did I. Together we romanced the cookie.

You see, pure positive, or pure motivational training (call it whatever you want), was a "feel good" method, and I felt wonderful. It's a very romantic idea. Imagine actually training your dog without any negatives. Teaching your dog to offer a vast array of behaviors in hopes of reinforcement. Imagine walking into the obedience ring with a dog that displays the utmost in willingness and enjoyment, simply because you positively conditioned it. The creativity in teaching behaviors, via hands off shaping, is a high in itself. Further reinforcement came from our results in the obedience ring. In Novice A, we brought home nothing but Blue ribbons, in Open A we placed on every leg.

The move to Open B was a piece of cake. Our first OB trial, and there we were in the front row, along with three OTCh teams. I was hooked, and I was in love with cookie-power. Looking back on those four years, I wonder just how much pure positive had to do with dog training. For me, it may have had more to do with self validation.

(continued on next page)

Romancing the Cookie continued . . .

Though we never quite achieved the same level of utmost in the ring, that we enjoyed in training, we scored well, and she was basically a happy worker. But there were little nagging problems undermining our journey through Utility. We finished the UD with two firsts, and a second placement, but behaviors had started to break down. We're now working on the UDX, and those little nagging problems that we never really faced, are no longer little problems. Under the pure positive (no physical aversives ever) approach, when behaviors break down it's often thought that the behavior simply isn't reinforcing enough. I still believe that theory is true, but I now know the answer is not always another cookie. Where did the romance go sour for us? I feel that we encountered three major areas of breakdown in teaching performance exercises, using a totally non-corrective approach. My dog learned what behaviors to do, but never learned what not to. I failed to lead with my relationship, and lead with rewards instead. Reinforcement schedules for training and performance were not balanced.

First, because the focus was always on correct behavior, my dog never learned what wasn't an option. Yes, she tends to escalate those behaviors that bring reinforcement. But she still explored other options, and she learned some interesting things from that exploration. She learned that the environment is jam packed with it's own wonderful array of reinforcers. She learned that if she chose not to do the behavior I requested, because something else was more reinforcing, that her choice carried no negative consequence. Sure, I withheld the cookie, but she was reinforced anyway. Besides, she could always earn a cookie later whenever she wanted one. She actually learned that the environment was more reinforcing at times, than I was. Because our training was correction free, we encountered problems in training when she would refuse to do a behavior. I only had two options, one was to abort the exercise, the other was to bribe her through it. Neither are acceptable. I watched her like a hawk, for any sign of stress. Whenever she showed the slightest sign of aversion, I would work around it. I had not taught my dog to deal with stress, to learn that she could be successful when presented with a challenge, I had not given her the confidence that achievement brings.

My next area of breakdown when using a pure positive approach was the lack of developing a meaningful working relationship with my dog. While our relationship in life is incredible, our relationship in training never reached that same level. Reflecting back, I believe that my mistake was in leading with the reinforcer, instead of my relationship. I had both verbal and physical Conditioned Reinforcers. Like many other trainers, I had taught my dog that the word "yes" meant that you did the right behavior, and that you have earned some reward.

I did not teach her that her behavior pleased me, or that it was fun for her to do. No, I romanced the cookie, and lead

with my reinforcement. Earning the cookie became the focal point in training, and I was the delivery boy. I actually took myself out of the training picture. What happened to verbal and physical praise, the interaction between teammates, the joy in working? I offered it, but in reality it was nothing but a distraction. She was not learning what I thought she was. I thought I was being reinforcing, while she continued to romance the cookie.

My final point of failure in the application of a pure positive approach, occurred as I got better, and better at it. I knew my dog was quite context sensitive, and that she knew cookies wouldn't be falling from the heavens in the ring. So I did what any savvy pure positive trainer would do. I started to mix up my reinforcers. I used various kinds of food, toys, and finally added games to the training picture. I thought I had it all figured out. Well while this plan sounded good, and while my dog was marvelous in training, a strange thing happened. I had made training so wonderful, and stress free, that the AKC ring with it's limited reinforcements, and all of it's formality, could never measure up. I taught my dog, and myself, that the ring was no fun, and that it was a very stressful place.

Today I'm trying a more balanced approach. I'm thankful for the great learning experiences that I have encountered. Through my initial Correct and Praise club experience, I learned to focus on the positive, not the negative. Through my use of pure positive, I've learned to focus on the positive, but include the negative. From my dog, I've learned that she is not a dolphin, that she is my dog and she is the true master of this game. That she has her own needs, abilities and limitations. That my job is to foster an environment where she can learn to be the best she can be. I've learned that she is my friend, my partner, and a very honest creature. I've learned that the AKC ring with it's limited fixed reinforcement schedule, is not Sea World.

I've learned not to base behaviors on types of reinforcement that I can never deliver during performance. I've started to enlighten my dog that all behaviors have a consequence, some are positive, some are not. I'm not avoiding stress issues. I'm working through them. I'm leading with my relationship now. I'm working to become the jackpot. I've learned that correction does not have to be painful, that correction can enhance learning and build confidence. I've learned that corrections should never be made in anger, or used to make up for a trainers lack of knowledge. I've learned that they are a valid teaching tool.

Our goal now, is to interact and play, to gain attention and approval...not to earn a cookie. I'm working to develop ways through sounds and gestures, to actually reinforce my dog in the ring. I don't want to tell her that she will get her reward after the performance is done. I want to reinforce during. I want her to love working, and being with me. We still enjoy our cookies, but now the romance belongs to us. ■