

GOOD NEIGHBOR NEWS



NOVEMBER, 2015

Training Schedule:
Saturday Classes @
Abington Friends
Triangle Gym
until December 12, 2015.

BEGINNER:	9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
INTERMEDIATE:	10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
ADVANCED:	11:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.

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NOVEMBER – NEW BUILDING OPEN AND READY FOR CLASSES!

CLUB BUSINESS & MORE

IT'S FINISHED!!!

Our new Good Neighbor Dog Training Center in Willow Grove, PA has a new fully matted floor, newly painted walls and is ready for classes! The building is located at 1837 Davisville Road, across from the Willow Grove Mall on the Davisville Road spur that runs between Papa John's Pizza and the Zumba studio, which is in the front of the building.

A class schedule that includes dedicated Open and Utility classes, CGC/Therapy Dog and Rally is attached. There are also times scheduled for Run-Thrus weekly. Run-Thrus are open to members AND non-members, so let your training buddies know, too.

Here's a picture of the new training center! Isn't it awesome?? Your feet will love the matted floor! COME TRAIN!!!!!!!!!!

HOLIDAY PARTY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19TH at 10:00 a.m.
we will hold the annual GND OC HOLIDAY PARTY AT WILLOW GROVE!! (think "No Snow!!"). Canine holiday apparel is optional!

COME FOR FOOD, FUN AND DOGGIE

GAMES!!! Bring one wrapped dog toy for each dog you bring to the party.



BRAGS

Carley and her Corgi, Gwyn, have achieved their AKC CD! It was a journey, as Carley recounts: *"Gwyn is fearful and sound sensitive in new surroundings; I didn't know how she would do at an indoor show, but needed to try it and see. We arrived early at the Farm Show building in Harrisburg so Gwyn could get acclimated. She did me proud, earning a 194½ and Second Place. Her Second Leg was earned outdoors with a 195½, losing a run-off for First Place. Knowing her environmental sensitivity, I should have given her a day off between shows, but we showed again the following day. She came in Second with a 186,*

completing her CD. I learned the lesson not to push Gwyn too hard. We are already working in Open and Gwyn is retrieving and jumping.” Great news, Carley! You earned a title and learned something important about how to work with Gwyn. (And great news that there are now dedicated Open classes being held at the new Willow Grove location for when you and Gwyn are ready.)

Michele and her dachshund, Colby, got “Double Qs” in Agility at the Staten Island Companion Dog Training Club trial. Colby took a 2nd & 3rd place! Michele, that little dog of yours can MOVE! Congrats on those Double Qs!!!

Andrea and her Chesapeake Bay Retriever, Rio, earned their 1st leg in Rally Advanced at the Penn Treaty KC trial in Oaks on 11/12/15. Andy and Rio took first place with a 99 and the fastest time! I was lucky enough to see their run – Andy moved Rio quickly and efficiently through the different stations and Rio performed beautifully. I am sure that RA title is not far away!! Good job, you two!



KEEP TRAINING, AND SEND ME YOUR BRAGS!!

HEALTH CLINIC

The Lenape Golden Retriever Club is holding a health clinic on Sunday, January 10, 2016. Details in their flyer are attached.



SPOTLIGHT ON.... New, revised class schedule. (Contact Camille to confirm class times.)

	7:00 pm	8:00 pm	9:00 pm
Mon.	KPT	CGC/ Therapy	
Tues	Beginners	Intermed.	Advance
Wed	Open	Utility	Run Thurs
Thur	Beginners	Novice	
Fri	Rally N	Rally A	Rally E

	10:00 am	11:00 am	12:00 pm
Mon.			
Tues	Club Members	Rally	Run Thurs
Wed	Beginners	Intermed	CGC/ Therapy
Thur	Utility	Open	Run Thurs
Fri			

MISC. PROPOSED RATES

New rates to go in effect Jan. 1, 2016

	Length	Price	Members Price
Classes	7 weeks	\$125	\$80
Bldg Rental	Hourly		\$35/group
Dog Park	1 hour	\$15	\$10
Dog Party		\$15/dog	
Dog Wash			\$10

NEW AKC OBEDIENCE RULES EXPLAINED

The Hilltown DTC is presenting Phyllis Broderick, an AKC Obedience judge, who will explain the new AKC rules and regulations for Obedience classes on **Tuesday, December 1, 2015 beginning at 8:00 pm at the K9Jym in Colmar, PA.** This event is open to the public and is free of charge. If you will be attending, please let me know. Email me at kacosta66@gmail.com so I can give the club a head count.

TRAINING TIDBITS!

Those trialing or interested in trialing should check out this website. It has 'random tid-bits' from experienced judges and handlers of what to do (and what NOT to do) when you are competing in an obedience or rally trial.

<http://clubs.akc.org/saints/Archives/Tidbit%20set.pdf>

DOG TREAT RECALL

On September 23, 2015, The U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced the recall of certain lots of **Dingo brand dog chews** because the product has the potential to contain **amantadine**.

Amantadine is a human antiviral drug not approved for use in animal food.

To learn which products are affected, please visit the following link: [Dingo Chip Twists Dog Chew Treats Recall of September 2015](#).

ARE YOU PREDICTABLE? DOES YOUR DOG THINK YOU'RE BORING?

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More often than not these days, and much like their human counterparts, dogs lack patience. Exasperated owners approach me time and time again, wondering why their dog isn't focusing or wondering why their dog will only focus when they have a treat in hand. I've even met an ever growing number of dog owners who plain refuse to use food in training for fear of a lifelong dependence on the tool.

I hate to break it to you, but this is something you've taught. Or at least something you've reinforced. In fact, food is one of the most effective tools for training dogs - you just might not be using it right.

Why? Because YOU are too predictable. You've taught them that "Sit" = tasty-treat-and-exercise-over. Wash. Rinse. Repeat.

Let's face it, if every time your dog sits, you give them a single biscuit from a familiar box, what's to keep them sitting for any duration of

time? Of course their butt will instantly pop out of the sit once they've been rewarded. Why shouldn't it? What have you done to teach them to be patient? Sure, you could approach this by dangling the treat in front of them, by drawing out the time before the reward is issued, thereby making them wait, filled with ever mounting anticipation for the reward that will surely come. But does that actually promote patience? You can bet the instant that dog gets what he's after, his butt will pop off the ground, and you'll be back at square one.

When we find ourselves rewarding the same behavior in the same manner day in and day out, our dog starts to predict our action. Good for establishing a common language, for teaching our pup what words mean and that good behavior = good rewards. But not so good when our rewards become so predictable that they end up predicating unwanted behavior.

Think about it. By giving your dog a single biscuit day in and day out every time he sits, you are becoming predictable. When you become predictable, your dog starts to make decisions on his own. Now, because you are predictable, he can start making decisions based on your future behavior.

If he knows what reward to expect, he can decide things like: "Is it good enough?", or "Is it worth it?"

If there are other interesting things going on, he can do the bare minimum to get the reward and then instantly be off engaging with whatever interests him at that moment.

What makes you so boring to your dog? Why do you feel the need to do the same exercise, day in and day out, with the same outcome? How to keep 'em guessing:

1. Vary the Rewards: In the initial phases of training, we typically use food. But do you always have to reward with the SAME food? Nope. One day you could use your dog's kibble, and one day you could use cut and boiled chicken. Sure, you want a few treats to hold value for those really tough situations, so you can leave those out of this routine, or better yet, you can toss them in VERY rarely so your dog is always thinking the "jackpot" may come. By changing your reward, you can combat the mindset of the dog who wonders, "Is this really worth it?", as he never really knows what it is he's going to get.

2. Vary the Volume: When I start dogs out, I reward pretty consistently. After all, I need to build an association that obeying "X Command" = Really

Good Stuff. That being said, I don't simply offer a single treat and then send my pup on their way. By doing that, I would be contributing to impatience in commands and predictability in my reward system. Instead, I reward consistently, treat after treat. Sometimes the dog gets 3 treats, sometimes they get 7, and sometimes... they get entire handfuls of kibble. The key here is that I only reward IN the behavior. By doing this, you'll instantly build patience in your commands as the dog holds the position, never knowing if another reward is on the way.

3. Vary the Value: Most people's training regimen looks like this: Around the house or in low distraction settings, rewards are low value. As distractions increase, so does reward value. But why? Why be so predictable to your pup? Instead, what if your reward schedule as a whole was unpredictable. For my pup, for instance, occasionally I reward with kibble. Occasionally I reward with chicken or meat. And occasionally I reward with the coveted tug, for which we have built such value that it trumps anything and everything in his life. For him, the tug is the jackpot. Of course, in general, my rewards have higher value as distractions peak, but I don't leave those high value rewards out of my training at home. And when I'm out and about, my moves are never predictable. Regardless of where we are, he never knows what he's going to get. And because he never knows, his focus remains peaked, ever hoping for that jackpot game of tug.

4. Vary your Reinforcement: When you first start teaching a new command, you'll want to reinforce consistently. After all, you are trying to establish a correlation. "If, I sit," for instance, "I get a reward". As the command is new, you don't want the correlation to become "If I sit, I sometimes get something good." At first, you simply want to teach that sitting is AWESOME. But once your dog gets the hang of things, you'll want to start phasing out your reward. After all, you don't want to have to carry treats with you for the rest of your life... do you? To accomplish this, we simply reward in a variable and unpredictable fashion. Sometimes your dog gets some kibble, sometimes your dog gets a pat on the head, and other times, your dog gets the coveted jackpot. It's variable, and, if the promise of something good is always present, your dog will continue to maintain focus and anticipation in his work.

[Most of our dogs] suffer from one ailment: a predictable owner. [They] know that if [they] hold out long enough, [their owners] will get a treat to entice her to behave. She knows what the treat is (it was always the same, and after all, she WATCHED her owner retrieve it from the box), and she knew that it was "one and done". For that reason, she easily made the decision as to whether or not her reward was worth the effort. And when she did agree to behave, she knew the exercise was over the moment the reward was achieved.

In training, while consistency and predictability are key in giving our words meaning (i.e. "Sit" = GOOD), to achieve peak performance, our rewards can't become predictable or boring. We have to keep our dogs guessing. And we have to keep the promise of "GREAT" dangling in front of them. If we can accomplish that, we can achieve levels of focus and engagement that we once thought were inconceivable.

Quit letting your dog outsmart you..... as much as possible! And quit being boring and predictable. Your dog, and his engagement, will thank you!

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REMEMBER! Your dog didn't sign up for Obedience class, YOU did. Keep it fair and MAKE IT FUN!!!
Happy dogs enjoy learning!
☺.....Ed.

MAKE SURE TO CHECK our Club Website for Class Schedules, Club News, Closing for weather, etc., etc.
Our website is: www.gndog.com

Please feel free to send me any newsworthy tales, stories, jokes, articles (recipes?) or anything else you think may be of interest to our Members for inclusion in future newsletters! Emails are:

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and home email is: kacosta66@gmail.com

Kathy Acosta, Editor



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