

# HMKC PAWPRINT NEWSLETTER

## HELENA MONTANA KENNEL CLUB\* MARCH ISSUE 2017

President: Marion Erp

Vice President: Desiree Moffett

Treasurer: Kathy Shuck

Secretary: Caroline Hudnall

Newsletter Editor: Nancy Nicholson

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring has --- almost --- sprung, but the show season has definitely begun! Conformation shows, obedience, rally, agility, barn hunt, herding sheep and cattle, and coming soon to your AKC world, Scent Work and Trick Dog Training. If you have the interest, time and money, the activity is definitely there. Somewhere. We may have to drive a little further to get to our activities than the East or Mid-West dog fanciers, but a little extra distance won't stop those of us who want what we want.

Which brings us to why do we do these things with our dogs? Do you remember the piece that was written a long time ago, What Is A Title? Here it is again, because it just seems appropriate for now, the start of the show season and we have a lot of new-to-the-dog world members who weren't raised into this world like some of us oldtimers.

#### WHAT IS A TITLE?

*Not just a brag, not just a stepping stone to a higher title, not just an adjunct to competitive scores, a title is a tribute to the dog that bears it, a way to honor the dog, an ultimate memorial.*

*It will remain in the record and in the memory for about as long as anything in the world can remain. And though the dog itself doesn't know or care that its achievements have been noted, a title says many things in the world of humans where such things count.*

*A title says your dog was intelligent, adaptable, and good natured. It says that your dog loved you enough to do the things that pleased you, however crazy they may have seemed. In addition, a title says that you loved your dog, that you loved to spend time with your dog, because it was a good dog, and that you believed in your dog enough to give it yet another chance when it failed, and in the end your faith was justified.*

*A title proves that your dog inspired you to that special relationship, enjoyed by so few, that in a world of disposable creatures, this dog with a title was greatly loved, and loved greatly in return. And when that dear, short life is over, the title remains as a memorial of the finest kind, the best you can give to a deserving friend. Volumes of praise, in one small set of initials, before or after the name. A CH, obedience, agility, etc. title is nothing less than true love and respect, given and recorded permanently.*

Sandy Mowery

There are various and sundry reasons for actively pursuing a title on a dog, and none of them are right or wrong, or better than the other. First and foremost I would hope that a dog owner enjoys working with his/her dog, getting into another creature's brain and figuring out how it thinks, how to get cooperation from it. Training should be and mostly is fun and challenging and rewarding; trialing often isn't, depending on your nature and your dog's willingness to play along, but we just try and try again. The highs when we succeed feel amazingly good; the lows when our dogs humiliate us are devastating, but we have to shrug (they're just dogs) and keep going.

And yes, of course the titles are for us, exclusively, for our own egos. There's nothing wrong with that. I'll give you my own personal bent on titles. I've had "weird" breeds ever since I started in dogs 40 some years ago with a Rhodesian Ridgeback, rescued Whippet, Irish Water Spaniel, rescued Basenji, two Belgian Malinois, a Swedish Vallhund and now a Kishu Ken. I gravitate towards different, little-known breeds. I don't know what that says about me, but that's what I do. If I wanted to win in many sports, I'd get a Border Collie because nothing beats a BC for trainability. But I've never wanted what everybody else has. I like having the first of a breed to attain a certain title, and that's where I'm headed for Kisha – not to mention the challenge of being successful with an under-socialized half-grown female of a known difficult family of dogs. Yes, I like titles and proudly admit it! You want to call me title hungry? Go ahead.

One of the activities that has been recently beefed up in the AKC system is Rally. I know that many of you are not particularly enamored with Rally, but they have "enhanced" the program with many new signs and changes at every level, and have added an Intermediate level to bridge the gap between Novice and Advanced, and added a more complicated Masters level along with a Championship level. Yes, more opportunities to put money into AKC's pockets, some say, but if you are at all interested in getting your beginning or older dog into a performance event, I'd encourage you to start with Rally. It can be fun, the beginning levels are not too difficult, the courses and exercises do not require a lot of physical ability of either you or your canine partner (as opposed to agility), and the more advanced levels actually will require a great deal of training. The new exercises are a combination of rally as we know them, obedience and some freestyle moves thrown in for fun and good measure. Unfortunately the public has no idea what Rally is, so we might have difficulty drawing from the outside, but if we could get enough people interested, we'd easily have enough work to offer a Beginner or Basic level, and an Advanced level incorporating Excellent and Masters level work. Steve and Connie Leatherman have been leading Rally practices, are taking a brief break, and are willing to return for a combined class incorporating the more advanced signs. There is a doggy lifetime worth of work and training now to take a dog from the basic beginnings all the way to the Championship level.

Our meeting is Tuesday, April 4, 6:30. We will have lots to talk about: The Connie Cleveland Seminar coming up on April 8/9; and our Spring Agility Trial on April 28/29/30.

Last month at the end of the meeting, we watched the Carmen Battaglia video on Choosing a Puppy, which was excellent. He is an excellent, experienced, astute and articulate presenter. If you've ever wondered why your youngster behaves in certain ways, he has outlined the importance of socialization and environmental exposure at a young age that is so critical to a well-rounded adult down the road. The next series is Better Breeding of Dogs, which we could start looking at if anyone is interested. If not, we don't have to take the time to set up the video, and you can see me to take it home and watch it at your leisure.

*--Marion Erp. President*

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

*(subject to approval)*

### **HELENA MONTANA KENNEL CLUB**

#### **MINUTES OF THE MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF MARCH 7, 2017**

Those attending: Jeanine Blaner, Ted Brodowy, Cyd Charlier, Allyn Ann Cummins, Peggy Duezabou, Alice Elliott, Marion Erp, Caroline Hudnall, Deirdre Kane, Chris McGonigle, Desiree Moffett, Linda Owen, Kathy Shuck, Kristina Vincent and Michelle Vallance.

The president opened the meeting and asked for approval of the February minutes. Allyn Ann moved to approved and Ted seconded, all approved.

President called for the following:

Secretary's report, Caroline only had one item, that of the changing of the door combination which will be done between March 8 and the 15<sup>th</sup>.

President reported the following:

Thanked Alice for the excellent guest speaker at the February meeting. Discussed that we will be holding run thrus Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. The President discussed the meeting of the Fairgrounds sub-committee that she and Caroline attended. Many ideas were discussed for fund raising and bringing awareness of the Fairgrounds to the general public.

Treasurer did not have a report as the bookkeeper was not present.

**Cluster:** Jeanette or Barb was not present to give a report.

**Agility:** Marion advised that Jean was out of town and she gave a short report on the upcoming trial. Practices are being held at Susan's barn on Sundays from 10 to 12. For the trial we will need members to help do the set up and also tear down of equipment.

Marion also advised that the changes to the agility equipment will have an effective date of 1-2-18.

Agility classes the first two classes have finished and Jeanine is working on the advanced agility class lesson plans.

The Great Falls Club has lost it's building and are interested in getting together with our club and perhaps having practices together. Catherine is in contact with them.

**Obedience:** Connie Cleveland Seminar. April 8 and 9<sup>th</sup> are the dates and anyone who wants to attend is now put on a wait list. **NOTICE:** All crates must leave the building for the seminar, only those having a working place in the seminar can leave their crates in the building. Jean will need some help for the seminar and an email will go out on that.

Obedience run thrus are going well and Rally practices on Wednesday evening are also going well.

**New Members:** Michelle Vallance and Kristina Vincent applications were read for a second time. Alice moved and Rachelle 2<sup>nd</sup> Michelle's application. Alice moved and Ted 2<sup>nd</sup> Kristina's application, the membership approved both applicants.

Marion announced that we need a **web master**, please contact her if interested.

Meeting adjourned. A video was watched for those interested.

Respectfully submitted

Caroline Hudnall, Secretary

## **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Reminder to Club Members,**

The Connie Cleveland Competition Obedience And Problem Solving Seminar is fast approaching. The seminar dates are April 8 & 9 :

### **CONNIE CLEVELAND COMPETITION OBEDIENCE AND PROBLEM SOLVING SEMINAR**

Join us on April 8 and 9, 2017

Helena Montana Kennel Club Training Building

Lewis and Clark County Fairgrounds

2 West Custer Avenue

Helena, Montana 59601

Connie offers a limited number of competition obedience seminars. These seminars begin with a discussion of how dogs learn, then Connie works individually with handlers and their dogs. Plan on attending to solve your training problems, organize your training sessions, and create long-range training goals. [www.dogtrainersworkshop.com](http://www.dogtrainersworkshop.com)

Recent seminar attendee comment: *"I want to thank you for giving such an outstanding seminar this past weekend. It was clear, concise, informative, and extremely helpful. I have been to other seminars; however, the direction you take your seminars outshines the rest."*

**Jean Norderud-431-8122 to be put on a Wait List.**

## **CLUB MEETING AGENDA- TUESDAY APRIL 4, 2017**

- Call the meeting to order
- Introduction of guests, if any
- Minutes of March 7 meeting
- Secretary's Report – Caroline
- Vice President's Report – Desiree
- President's Report – Marion
- Bookkeeper's Report – Catherine
- Report of Committees
- Cluster/Show Committee
- Vacant positions call for volunteers
- Agility Committee
- Preparations for our April 28/29/30 AKC trial
- New AKC guidelines for agility equipment
- Report on agility classes and practices
- Obedience Committee
- Connie Cleveland Seminar report
- On-going Basic & Continuing Ed classes
- Rally practices
  
- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment
- Brag Box
- Possible video program on Better Breeding of Dogs by Carmen Battaglia.