

Lucky Dog News

May 2008

The Newsletter of Luckiamute Dog Training Club

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Vice Pres Margie Dykstra
Secretary Betty Schwartz
Treasurer Ellen Parr

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Bob Parker (08/09)
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Bob Parker

Membership Chair
Sherree Lewis

Newsletter Editor
Peggy Miller
berknbelg@netzero.net

2008 Meeting Schedule

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held the first Thursday of the month at the Almost Home Restaurant in Salem.

**Dinner @ 630
Meeting @ 700
May 1**

June 5

JULY NO MEETING

**August 7 - Picnic
Meeting location TBA**

September 4

October 2

November 6

December 4

UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

MAY 4 Variable Surface Tracking Test
Chemeketa Community College Salem

September 27-28 Obedience/Rally Trial
Benton County Fairgrounds Corvallis

November 16 TD/TDX Tracking Tests
Oak Grove School West Salem

Minutes of the April 4, 2008 Meeting

The April meeting of Luckiamute Dog Training Club was held April 2, 2008 at the Almost Home Restaurant in Salem, Oregon. The meeting was called to order by President Laurie Kudna at 7:06 pm. Members present were: Laurie Kudna, Bob Parker, Jean Kane, Betty and Larry Schwartz, Peggy Miller and Ellen Parr.

Moved, seconded to approve the minutes for March as printed.

No President's report.

Treasurer's Report: West Coast Bank report is figured out. There is \$300 that is not in balance with the bank.

A PGE office in Salem has a room available for employee's use. It is at Kale Rd and Portland Rd, consisting about 32 acres which we could use for a tracking seminar.

In the future we will have to charge more for seminars. We need to know where we are spending money. Also we should have a cut-off date after which we will no longer refund seminar money. Moved, seconded and passed to accept the report.

Committee Reports:

Chris Zink wants to change the date of the seminar. This would be for the second time. Discussion followed this news. Laurie will contact her and remind her that she had cancelled last year's seminar. Larry suggested we wait before canceling her until we had more members in attendance for input. Some suggestions for possible seminars were a handling seminar or obedience seminar. Perhaps we can find someone who can give a seminar on canine athletes. Names suggested were Corky Vroom for handling, Jerold Bell for Genetics of Performance, and Pat Norris for tracking were suggested. Suggestion was made in order to give members a club discount that members must work at events or attend a certain number of meetings.

VST: so far has two entries. Test headquarters will be in room 100 of building 34 at Chemeketa.

TD: Judges Roy Fair and Craig Green are approved by AKC. Shelly Brosnan will be asked to do the photographs of our events.

The Club needs to have matches. We could have obedience matches in the summer at the PGE area. One possible time could be Memorial Day.

June 14 is AKC Informational Day.

Moved, seconded, and passed to adjourn.

ADDENDUM:

Laurie contacted Chris Zink. We were unable to come to a satisfactory agreement so the seminar is cancelled. Ms Zink promised to refund our down payment.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Schwartz, Secretary

Anyone for a Match?

Bob Parker writes:

At the last several meetings having a match was discussed, but with other upcoming events nothing was actively pursued. As I recall, matches were fun and relaxed and seemed fairly popular and appreciated by those who attended.

Various locations were discussed, with the newest idea being on the grass outside the PGE building on Portland Road North where Laurie now works. Another possible location might be somewhere on the Chemeketa campus on a Saturday during the school term (when building 2 is open for bathroom access). As soon as we get past the BST perhaps we can all start looking for a FREE location to hold a one-day obedience (and ??) match somewhere to recover some of the money we are sure to lose on the VST.

MY FIRST TRACKING TEST

By Ellen Parr

Although I have acted as tracklayer and secretary for tracking tests, I have never entered a dog, so this was a first for me. As the weekend of April 13th and the Emerald Dog Obedience Club Tracking Test loomed closer and closer, I was alternately nervous and calm. I knew that Merry was ready, but I also knew that even the best tracking dogs can have an off day. I was resolved that we would go out and do our best and have fun and it would be what it would be. As the date grew even closer, I did begin to have some concerns about the weather. It was supposed to be sunny and warm! We live in the Pacific Northwest, we train all winter in the rain and wind and occasional snow. We don't train in warm, dry weather! Saturday did indeed turn out to be the warmest day we've had all year. It was in the mid-80's in the Eugene area. Thankfully, Sunday dawned overcast and cooler and although the sun came out later, it was never truly hot. The hot to cool temperature change also deposited tons of dew on the grass. So we ended up with fabulous tracking conditions.

We arrived at the test site with 20 minutes to spare before the draw. This is a 12 track test, so I was hoping for a low number! I ended up drawing track #4, which was about perfect. The first 3 tracks were in a rye grass field and then we had to drive up over the hill for tracks 4 and 5 in the grass hay field. I got up there with Merry, got her harnessed and headed to the track with the Chief Tracklayer. I almost forgot my

gloves, but my husband ran back and got them. We had to walk through a horse pasture to get there and there was horse dung everywhere! Merry was delighted and was trying to steal bites along the way! The Chief Tracklayer assured me the field we would be tracking in was clean. Thank goodness, or I think I would have had a very full Harrier by the end of the track. We got to where the judges were waiting as they had walked around from the other field and I double-checked by line. They asked if I had any questions and sent us to the start flag.

As usual, Merry was tracking before we got to the first flag. She stopped and checked out the start article and then headed off down the track. That first leg seemed to go on forever. It turned out to be a 140 yard leg, and we started getting close to a fence line. Although Merry was tracking strongly, I was beginning to suspect she had overshot the corner and kept expecting to hear the whistle. Margie and my husband (who both came to watch and support us) were up on the hill watching and they were starting to get concerned as well, and then Margie heard what she thought was a whistle, but turned out to be a bird! I am very glad I didn't hear that bird. But no real whistle blast came and soon enough Merry indicated a corner and then loss of scent. Merry generally will indicate the corner with a head swing in the direction of the next leg, but then she will go forward a bit more and then make a big circle to check herself. After her circle, she turned right and headed down the next leg and covered the next 90 yards quickly. Her next corner, a right turn, was a repeat of

the first and she tracked strongly down the next 90 yard leg. The third corner and third right turn, she had to work a little harder, but then convinced me of the direction. It seemed like about 30 yards and up her head came again. Wow, short leg, I thought to myself. As it turned out, she just did a big circle and kept on going on the same line. I hadn't been paying attention at all to the landmarks, so I didn't realize we were still on the same path. I was just following her! The next corner, a left, was a cinch for her, but again, about 30 yards in her head came up. Now, based on my location and the locations of the fences and the start flags, and how many corners I thought we had already had, I was a little flummoxed. There really wasn't anywhere for us to go but straight. Merry did a circle and then came back to the track about 2 or 3 yards to the right of where she had been and kept going straight. I went with her, a little concerned that she might have missed the article by being a few feet off the track. However, I was rewarded about 40 yards later by her finding the glove!

I had had nothing to worry about. Total time from start to finish was 8 minutes. Total track length was 460 yards, aged 41 minutes.

After I had praised Merry and hugged her and told her how very wonderful she is and waved our glove in the air, I didn't know what to do! I'd never thought about it and never asked. So I decided to stay put. I didn't think I could possibly contaminate another track, but I didn't want to make any mistakes. The judges came to me and told me

that I certainly should backtrack to them to present the glove. Then we exited the field to a big drink of water and some treats for my girl!

It was a fabulous day, 9 out of 12 dogs passed their tracks and 3 of us were first-timers. Passing were a Basset Hound, a Border Collie, Merry the Harrier, 2 Belgian Tervurens, a Labrador Retriever, a Clumber Spaniel, a Colored Bull Terrier and a Chesapeake Bay Retriever.

A big thank you to the members of EDOC and the judges for making my first tracking test a wonderful experience. And many thanks must go to LDTC members Margie Dykstra, Tamara DePue, and Catherine Shields for supporting us and helping me to train Merry.



A very happy Ellen with new TD Merry and judges Jill Jones and Jim Hallet

A Very Special Birthday Boy By Catherine Shields



Danny recently celebrated his 14th birthday!

Danny's Story: I learned of Danny from two different friends in Calgary, Alberta. Danny was an owner surrender – reason for surrender “moving and can't take the dog”. It took a few weeks to figure out that there was a Malinois in need because he was turned in as a German Shepherd mix, leading us to think that this was not Danny's original home when placed from his breeder. All dogs registered in Canada have permanent ID – tattoos were the norm for the year he was born – 1994. His tattoo was copied down wrong at first by the shelter, but after almost 2 weeks where more people were just sure he had to be a Malinois, they did more research. His breeder was then discovered and, in fact, lived in the same town; but he chose not to help Danny.

Yes, it was true. Danny was a 9 year old dog turned into a shelter by his owner and his local breeder did nothing. But there is more to the story!

Danny was the son of my old dog O'Neill, then 13 years old! O'Neill had been bred to a bitch “Mira” in Belgium. Mira was then imported to Canada where she whelped her puppies. This was the year before O'Neill was imported to the US.

Danny was bailed out and on a plane to the US in 48 hours.



August 1, 2003 – Danny Entered our Lives!

I know very little about Danny's life prior to coming to live with us. But he is his father's son – willing, kind, sweet and loving.

In September 2004, Danny's sire O'Neill died (O'Neill had lived with my parents since 1998) and in October 2004 Danny won the Lottery. He moved in with my folks, about the best home in the world and went to work at helping their hearts heal from the loss of his sire. He even earned his own bed in their bedroom (a first in my almost 40 years of life – a dog sleeping in my parent's bedroom!) and he had lived like a prince since then. Danny at 14 still walks with my mother (who is 74) 2.5 miles 5 times a week. He has shown no signs of slowing down.

So on the 21st of April we celebrated his 14 years and hope to do the same again next year!

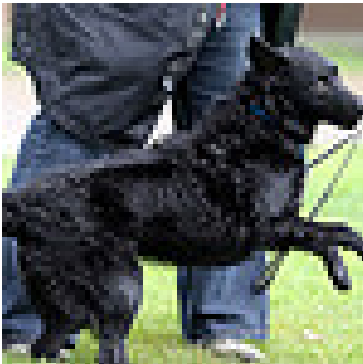
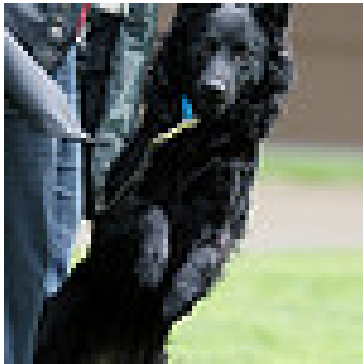


Danny before his rescue.



**Hungarian Mudi Poppy
Owner Catherine Shields**

Poppy got her IABCA Puppy Championship in April. The International All Breed Canine Association is one of the few venues I can show her in. It was mostly for fun and experience and we had a great time.



Poppy photos courtesy of Heatherlyn Christenson

MY FAVORITE DOG ACTIVITY

By Sherree Lewis

The rustle of the breeze through the trees, the call of a loon on a lake, the bubbling of a mountain stream, the sight of deer grazing in a meadow, a beautiful vista; these are all things Abby and I love about hiking. While tracking is our favorite structured activity, hiking is our favorite all-around activity.

There is nothing like enjoying the peace and solitude of the trail, of huffing and puffing up switchbacks to get to the mountaintop view, or dipping in the cold mountain lake after a long, dusty trek. We both carry our own packs, water and snacks ready for a well-deserved break. I couldn't have a better, more enthusiastic and happy hiking companion. We have hiked in areas all around Oregon and Washington. I thought I'd share some photos of a couple of our favorite local trails.



NORTHWEST TRACKING TESTS

By Margie Dykstra

I've had the opportunity over the last couple of years to attend quite a few tracking tests in the area. It is always interesting to see how other clubs handle things like hospitality and "headquarters".

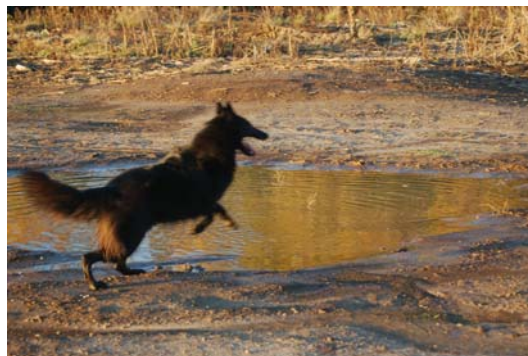
In the overall scheme of things, Luckiamute ranks very high in the hospitality department. Portland Dog Obedience Club is right up there also. Both have indoor headquarters, which is almost a necessity for November tests, and both have real feasts available, mostly home cooked food, for everyone involved. I was interested to attend the Emerald Dog Obedience club's recent TD test in the Eugene area. The weather was very nice, fortunately, because their hospitality consisted of a picnic table, a box of cookies and a bag of chips. Lunch was no host (meaning bring your own). Because it is a large test, they moved hospitality for the second half of the test and had a motor home available for judges – others could use the bathroom. I am sure they had a nice lunch for the judges. I don't know what their plans were if the weather had been as nasty as it has been lately. I suspect it would have involved huddling in vehicles and getting out only when necessary. I know we've had some tests where the gallery did not leave their vehicles!

Specialty Clubs often have a little different approach – probably for a variety of reasons. Our Labrador Retriever National tracking was held at Champoeg Park and followed PDOC's lead. We had the building and a nice little feast. The recent Flat Coat Retriever National Specialty test also at Champoeg had hospitality on a picnic table and again were very fortunate that the weather was nice (although there was a covered picnic area available if needed). They did have good food from Costco for all involved. The Puget Sound Labrador Club's annual test is held in Cherry Valley in Washington and, while they had decent food available, it was a "huddle under a canopy" situation – with NO toilet facilities! They

suggested the nearby road overpass as a good place to "go".

The Basset Club test, held in December, had a small room that people could huddle in when not out watching or laying tracks. The food was very good and they had a club member's motor home for the judges – and the tracklayers used it for lunch on track laying day.

So, there really is no set protocol on how hospitality is handled. We can be proud that we do such an exemplary job of hospitality. And we can count ourselves lucky to have relatively inexpensive facilities available for our tests. Should we ever lose Oak Grove School, or if Chemeketa finally prices us out of their facility, we really will have to get creative. For now, we are doing great, and I know we will continue that – one way or another even if our situation with our facilities changes. There are lots of options, and tracking exhibitors are generally very thankful to have tests available and are very forgiving if a club doesn't have access to wonderful hospitality options.



Hospitality at Tracking Tests By Peggy Miller

Margie's comments brought back fond memories of tracking tests I've been to in the past 15 years. Although I am definitely biased, I will say that Luckiamute is consistently tops in hospitality regardless of venue.

The very first test I entered was in Southern Oregon at a wildlife preserve. There was a motor home for restroom use. There was no coffee or goodies available at the draw. Doughnuts did arrive after the first teams

(me!) went off to run their track. By the time we got back there was nothing left but some maple bar frosting stuck to the lid of the box. Luckily there was a nearby fast food joint. That test taught me to come prepared with a caffeine source and snacks!

My next experience was EDOC – again, no goodies. I don't even recall a bathroom although there must have been something. While the Puget Sound Lab club had decent food, their lavatory facilities were "primitive" to say the least! (Judge Stephanie Gonyeau said when she did their very first test she was handed a trowel and pointed to the duck blind. Clothes pins and bags served as flags!)

Belgian Sheepdog National Specialty tests I have been in have been great. Probably the most primitive was the 2004 Washington specialty but there were outhouses and a canopy. The show chair even had a boom box to play the National Anthem before the test started. The tracking site at the Delavan Wisconsin specialty was so cool it almost made me want to move back there! Even though there was some spectacular lightening and thunder displays the morning of the test, we stayed safe and dry in a nice little clubhouse on the top of a knoll overlooking the tracking fields. I believe they call that configuration a "kettle". The state owned area is specifically for dog use and is normally used for gun dog events. In the Tulsa Oklahoma area, the Indian Nations Tracking club has exclusive use of a huge former ranch that was bequeathed to various youth groups, fly fishermen and the tracking club. There is a nice clubhouse and challenging TDX areas – complete with cottonmouth snakes!

EDOC's TD tests are definitely the "neglected stepchild" in their tracking family. I'm not sure if it is always so nice, but at last year's TDX test in May there was a wonderful spread pre-draw followed by a fantastic brunch after the tracks were run – complete with seafood omelets prepared by Roy Fair. The test is on a private hunting ranch and they have access to a really nice clubhouse.

Tracking tests held in Bow Washington also have the advantage of having access to an indoor facility. The Chuckanut test I attended provided a nice pot luck brunch.

I will second Margie's statement – serious trackers are fairly easy. As long as the tracking fields are good, we will put up with inconveniences. We are used to being out in bad weather and eating our dog's bait if we get hungry and bushes make great bathrooms – just give us some nice tracks and stinky tracklayers!



A little refreshment is always appreciated!

Long-Term Health Risks and Benefits Associated with Spay/Neuter in Dogs

Laura J. Sanborn, M.S.

May 14, 2007

At some point, most of us with an interest in dogs will have to consider whether or not to spay/neuter our pet. Tradition holds that the benefits of doing so at an early age outweigh the risks. Often, tradition holds sway in the decision-making process even after countervailing evidence has accumulated.

Ms Sanborn has reviewed the veterinary medical literature in an exhaustive and scholarly treatise, attempting to unravel the complexities of the subject. More than 50 peer-reviewed papers were examined to assess the health impacts of spay/neuter in female and male dogs, respectively...

No sweeping generalizations are implied in this review. Rather, the author asks us to consider all the health and disease information available as individual animals are evaluated. Then, the best decisions should be made accounting for gender, age, breed, and even the specific conditions under which the long-term care, housing and training of the animal will occur...

*Larry S Katz, PhD, Associate Professor & Chair
Animal Sciences, Rutgers University*

(I have excerpted salient points from Ms Sanborn's paper – the entire text can be found on the National Animal Interest Alliance website www.naiaonline.org ~editor)

INTRODUCTION

Dog owners in America are frequently advised to spay/neuter their dogs for health reasons. A number of health benefits are cited, yet evidence is usually not cited to support the alleged health benefits.

When discussing the health impacts of spay/neuter, health risks are often not mentioned. At times, some risks are mentioned, but the most severe risks usually are not.

This article is an attempt to summarize the long-term health risks and benefits associated with spay/neuter in dogs that can be found in the veterinary medical literature.

Nearly all of the health risks and benefits summarized in this article are findings from retrospective epidemiological research studies of dogs, which examine potential associations by looking backwards in time. A few are from prospective research studies, which examine potential associations by looking forward in time.

SUMMARY

An objective reading of the veterinary medical literature reveals a complex situation with respect to the long-term health risks and benefits associated with spay/neuter in dogs. The evidence shows that spay/neuter correlates with both positive AND adverse health effects in dogs. It also suggests how much we really do not yet understand about this subject.

On balance, it appears that no compelling case can be made for neutering most male dogs, especially immature male dogs, in order to prevent future health problems. The number of health problems associated with neutering may exceed the associated health benefits in most cases.

On the **positive** side, neutering male dogs:

- Eliminates the small risk of dying from testicular cancer
- Reduces the risk of non-cancerous prostate disorders
- Reduces the risk of perianal fistulas

On the **negative** side, neutering male dogs:

- If done before 1 year of age, significantly increases the risk of **osteosarcoma**
- Increases the risk of **cardiac hemangiosarcoma** by a factor of 1.6
- Triples the risk of **hypothyroidism**
- Increases the risk of **progressive geriatric cognitive impairment**
- Triple the risk of **obesity**
- Quadruples the risk of prostate cancer
- Doubles the risk of urinary tract cancers
- Increases the risk of **orthopedic disorders**
- **Increases the risk of adverse reactions to vaccinations.**

For female dogs, the situation is more complex. The number of health benefits associated with spaying may exceed the associated health problem in some (not all) cases. On the balance, whether spaying improves the odds of overall good health or degrades them probably depends on the age of the female dog and the relative risk of various diseases in the different breeds.

On the **positive** side, spaying female dogs:

- if done before 2.5 years of age, greatly reduces the risk of mammary tumors
- nearly eliminates the risk of pyometra, which otherwise would affect about 23% of intact bitches

On the **negative** side, spaying female dogs:

- if done before 1 year of age, significantly **increases the risk of osteosarcoma**
- increases the risk of **splenic hemangiosarcoma** by a factor of 2.2 and **cardiac hemangiosarcoma by a factor of >5**
- triples the risk of hypothyroidism
- increases the risk of obesity by a factor of 1.6-2
- causes urinary spay incontinence in 4-20%
- increases the risk of persistent or recurring urinary tract infections by a factor of 3-4
- increases the risk of recessed vulva, vaginal dermatitis, and vaginitis, especially for bitches spayed before puberty
- increases the risk of orthopedic disorders
- **increases the risk of adverse reactions to vaccinations**

One thing is clear – **much of the spay/neuter information that is available to the public is unbalanced and contains claims that are exaggerated or unsupported by evidence.**

The traditional spay/neuter age of six months as well as the modern practice of pediatric spay/neuter appear to predispose dogs to health risks that could otherwise be avoided by waiting until the dog is physically mature, or perhaps in the case of many male dogs, foregoing it altogether unless medically necessary.

The balance of long-term health risks and benefits of spay/neuter will vary from one dog to the next. Breed, age, and gender are variables that must be taken into consideration in conjunction with non-medical factors for each individual dog. Across-the-board recommendations for all pet dogs do not appear to be supportable from findings in the veterinary medical literature.

(It is obvious that more attention needs to be given to the risks vs benefits of altering our dogs)



This is April??