



Spirit Ridge

K9 Training & Rescue

... *because sit happens* ...



RUFF STUFF

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www.spiritridge.net

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From the Editor's Paw ...

Jim Tsitanidis, K9 Trainer & Behavioural Consultant

The dog days of summer are upon us with all its heat and humidity! But don't despair autumn is just around the corner and there is no nicer time of year, with the cooler weather and the colour of changing leaves, to spend time outdoors working with your dog and/or going for long walks.

I am happy to announce that we will be introducing a **fall seminar series** to help out with the most common problems handlers face with their dogs. Designed for busy handlers not able to commit to weekly classes, as well as those who want a refresher course or to just work their dog with like-minded people, each seminar will be an independent 2 hour class addressing a specific problem. Warning - some sessions will be offered in reality based situations and locations. Those not willing to have fun or learn should not attend. For more information on these sessions, turn to page two of this Newsletter or visit our website (clicking on the ['Services'](#) link).

Spirit Ridge Dogs' Trial Successes

Our own summer has so far been full of success in the trial competition ring; **'Jesse'** achieved her Rally Excellent title in May, and her Advanced Agility Dog of Canada title in July. Our youngest guy, **'Sonic'**, also received his Advanced Team title and Rally Excellent title. **"Tequila"**, who most people have never met due to his dog aggression and fear biting, received his Rally Novice title with an average score of 195, earning 2 second place and one third place finish. This accomplishment brought tears of joy to my eyes given that "Tequila" has been a dog reactive to other dogs and humans and through working him in both Agility and Rally O, we have managed to fulfill his needs and improve his temperament. This is precisely how we address clients' dog aggression tendencies, by putting the dog to 'work' and fulfilling these needs while mentally challenging and tiring them out!

Client Successes

The summer has also brought huge successes for our clients. **Helen** and **'Cooper'** earned their Advanced Games Agility Dog of Canada title and the Masters Agility Dog of Canada titles. **Shannon** & **'Riley'**, **Cindy** & **'Ozzy'** and **Kathy** & **'Shep'** all competed and earned their Rally Novice (with distinction) titles! With distinction means that out of 3 runs the average score was 190/200 or higher. The Rally Obedience circuit will be glad to see the backs of the "Spirit Ridge" gang as all dogs had 1st to 4th place finishes in all three runs with "Ozzy" receiving a perfect score of 200. After more training, the gang will be back in the new year to compete for their Rally Advanced title.

Have a great summer and remember - **Handle every stressful situation like a dog. "If you can't eat it or play with it, just pee on it and walk away"!**



'GOING ONs'

FALL Group Classes in:

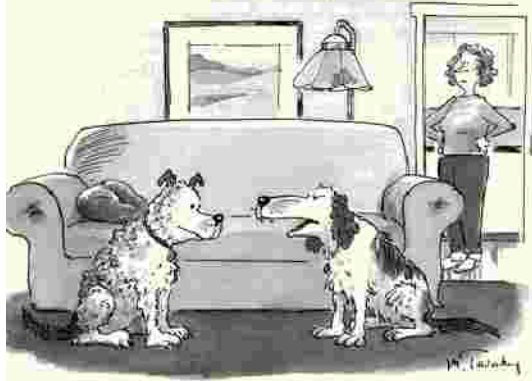
- Obedience – Beginner Level
- Rally Obedience - Beginner & Advanced
- Agility – Beginner, Novice, Advanced
- Puppy Classes & Puppy Agility classes
- Tracking – all levels
- Fall Seminar Series

Don't forget we also offer private sessions for all your needs including starter puppy, introducing a new dog or baby into your pack, all behavioural issues including lunging, barking, jumping, pulling, aggression, housetraining.



The Rally Obedience gang with smiles and fists full of ribbons. From R to L: Cindy and 'Ozzy', Kathy and 'Shep', Shannon and 'Riley', Jim and 'Tequila'

Fall Seminar Series (continued from the Editor's Paw)



"I actually know more commands than I respond to."

- **Achieving the perfect "walk":** designed for handlers that don't dare take their dogs for a walk due to lunging, pulling, dog/human aggression etc.
- **Improving 'Recalls' (the 'come' command):** designed for handlers who want to improve or even begin to achieve a more reliable 'come' command.
- **Learning How to Drain 'Energy' via the Treadmill:** designed specifically for handlers that have a treadmill and dogs with too much energy

For more information please visit our website www.spiritridge.net and click on 'Services'.

Spirit Ridge Dogs pass the KCRC Herding Instinct Test

June 10th, Woolagon Farm, Belwood, ON



The "girls" of Spirit Ridge strutting their stuff' and demonstrating that they are definitely true to the Belgian Shepherd breed by showing sustained 'interest' on sheep. Our gals were fabulous both with their management of the sheep as well as being 'biddable' (ie listening to the handler's directions).

Above - Spirit Ridge's "Jesse" showing her interest in sheep

Right - 12 yr old Literacy Assistance and Therapy Dog 'Koukla' showing that even seniors still love to work.



DOG BEHAVIOURAL TIPS

To Crate or not to Crate?

The vast majority of rookie beginner handlers, cringe the thought of using a dog crate (often referring to them as 'cages'). Even handlers that reluctantly agree to use them, frequently use them improperly thereby negating the benefits of crate training. The overwhelming majority of dog professionals (trainers, breeders, vets etc) use dog crates for their own dogs. If dog professionals swear by them, why would using them be such a bad or cruel idea? Well it's not and the sooner crate training is introduced into a dog's life as a training tool as well as a 'safe place', the easier your life with your dog(s) will be.

Below are some of the most glaring mistakes some handlers make when using dog crates:

- Crate train for the full span of your dog's life NOT just for its 'puppyhood'. You never know when your dog will need to be isolated from other humans/dogs for health reasons, to protect a senior dog from that relentless new puppy or for 'time outs'! Not to mention safety in car travels and having your dog's own 'motel' at the cottage or travel destination.
- Do NOT just crate when you are leaving the house! This is an almost certain way to create 'separation anxiety' as you signal you are leaving every time 'Rover' gets put in the crate!
- Do NOT leave your crate door open and allow the dog to treat it like a hotel with 'in and out' privileges! You choose when she goes in and when she comes out, NOT the dog! Otherwise, when you start closing the crate door, you convert the crate from a dog hotel to a dog prison – at least in your dog's mind and instinct!
- Teach your dog never to lunge out the crate when opening the door – this will be so valuable the next time you are at a truck stop and your dog waits for you to put its leash on when you open the crate door instead of lunging out of the car!
- Start crate training by feeding or treating in the crate and graduate the time in it (unless it's a brand new puppy in which case persevering for the first three nights ought to do the trick!). Reserve that special treat or chewy ONLY for the crate and NEVER allow your dog to bring it out when leaving the crate!

These are just a few of the many crate training tips we teach here at Spirit Ridge as part of our puppy training programme as well as an integral part of teaching or re-initiating adult dogs to the crate.

"The Truth About Dogs" by Stephen Budiansky

Commonly held myths are dispelled and the true origins of dog behaviours are traced. This is a superb book that will hold the reader's attention from the Introduction to the very end – not without controversy though!



Spirit Ridge highly recommends this insightful book for those handlers that have gone beyond the behavioural issues and want to delve deeper into the psyche of our canine companions. A 10/10!

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