

Dear Dog Lover,

**Our monthly story at the end of this email: “Cold Weather – Warm Clothing”**

**We have moved our Mushing Workshop** a little up, to give the snow that’s supposed to come time to accumulate and settle. Now the **new date for the Mushing Workshop Part I is Jan 30<sup>th</sup>, and Part II will be held on Feb 13<sup>th</sup> from 10am-1pm**, before the Flyball Intro. The Skijor Workshop will so far stay on Feb 6<sup>th</sup>. Find details below under “Upcoming Events”.

**We start more Agility classes Feb 5<sup>th</sup>** and have some openings. Times are listed below under classes.

**Our Introduction to Flyball Class, February 13, 2010, 2-4pm** has some openings left. Come join in the flyball fun beginning with this 2-hour “let’s get started” class that features laying the foundation for you and your dog, a basic training plan to achieve Flyball Dog status, at home training techniques and a sneak peak at Beginner Flyball, the next step for you and your dog! Pre-registration is only \$25, so sign up now!

This is a non-working class (i.e., without dogs) but be prepared for some entertaining flyball action and live demonstrations with a few experienced flyball dogs.

This 2-hr Introduction to Flyball Class will be required before participating in any other Flyball class after that.

**Our 4-week Beginner Flyball Class**, starts March 8. Sign up for this class is now open! You can call in or just go on our web page to register and make your payment for the intro seminar and the class.

**We’ll offer Nose Work Beginner classes as 6-week sets starting March 22<sup>nd</sup>**. If you’d like to take advantage of the drop-in style and pay only for the hours you attend, then you want to join us now. Your dog will need about 6-8 weeks before going on to the next level. The advanced level keeps its drop-in style.

**The next set of Behavior Classes starts March 9/10**. If you’re right now in Puppy 1, you can already reserve your spot for Puppy 2. If you’re currently enrolled in the Puppy 2 or Foundation Class, make sure to reserve a spot in the Elementary School Class! Anybody else, **Tricks ‘N Clicks** might just be the right class for you! Want to make your dog a little household helper, cleaning up their toys, and maybe even your stuff? We teach you how to train your dog to show tricks like Roll-Over, jumping through a hoop, close the door, bring the remote, and open the fridge – oh wait, not the last one!!! ☺ The class will be at a convenient time at 7:30pm.

**There’s a new dog trainer in town!** Northern Tails Dog Training is owned by Heather Boyer. Some of you might know Heather from having had a class at my facility with her. She helped me instructing classes before she got her own facility. Her classes will help fill the gaps when I can’t offer new classes fast enough. Since my next beginner classes for puppies and adult dogs won’t start until March 9/10, you can take your dog to Heather’s next classes starting in February! Then join us for any further training in Behavior, Clicker Training, Agility, Obedience, Nose Work or other sports. To contact Heather and find out about her services, go to [www.NorthernTailsDogTrainingAK.com](http://www.NorthernTailsDogTrainingAK.com) or email her at [sadiedog@rocketmail.com](mailto:sadiedog@rocketmail.com).

Like last time you’ll find all changes from the January newsletter in RED below. Please, even if you’re already signed up, check the schedule below to see if your class is affected

Enjoy playing in the snow,  
Claudia

**Below you'll find:**

- 1) **Information on upcoming events/ workshops**
- 2) **New classes and workshops:** Dates and times of upcoming classes
- 3) **How to sign up for the classes**
- 4) **Information on the Doggy Daycare and Open Play Times**
- 5) **This month's story: Cold Weather – Warm Clothing**

**1) INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Mushing Workshop 2011:**

Mushing Part I: Sunday, January 30<sup>th</sup> 10am – 2pm

Mushing Part II: Sunday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 10am-1pm

Instructor: Frank Sihler, Iditarod finisher

Mushing Part I - without your dog: \$70 or pre-registration \$65

- What equipment do I need? Connecting the dogs to the sled, the harness, booties, musher's gear
- Making your own lines from polyrope (material will be provided)
- The sled – parts, types, driving techniques
- Practical training – sled pulled by snowmachine

Mushing Part II – with your 1-2 dogs: \$80 or pre-registration \$75 (Mushing I+II: \$140/ \$130)

- Safely hooking up the dog(s), "Line Out!"-command
- Practice with your own dog team (1-2 dogs)
- Teaching the dog(s) to pull despite handler being behind them on the sled
- Safe mushing – uphill, downhill, curves, other teams
- How to teach directions
- After the run: checking the dogs for injuries – what if?

If you'd like to try it out before buying all the equipment: we have a couple loaner sleds and loaner dogs, to add to your one-dog-team ☺.

**Skijor Workshop 2011:**

Skijor Workshop: Sunday February 6<sup>th</sup>, 10am

Instructor: Kirsten Ballard, US World Championship Skijor team

Skijor Seminar: \$60 or pre-registration \$55

For intermediate cross-country skiers – one dog per skier.

- Learn to ski with your dog
- Teach your dog to run in front of you
- Part indoors, then outdoors on trail (at the dog training facility)

## **2) DATES AND TIMES OF UPCOMING CLASSES:**

### **Drop-in classes running right now:**

Instructors: Claudia, January

Weekly every Tuesdays we can offer 2 classes back to back.

Indoors or outside – please bring clothes accordingly. Punch card available online.

Nose Work (maximum 6 dogs – please call to reserve a spot):

Tuesdays 5:15-6:15pm (Beginners)

Tuesdays 6:30-7:30pm (Intermediate and Advanced)

No Beginner class on March 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, Advanced will be in the field those days.

**NEW AGAIN: Rally Practice: On Tuesdays, starting January 18, from 8-9pm** (please call or email to decide level of course)

### **Mushing Workshop Jan 30<sup>th</sup>/ Feb 13<sup>th</sup>:**

Instructor: Frank

Sunday, Jan 30, 10am-2pm: [Mushing 1](#)

Sunday, Feb 13, 10am-1pm: [Mushing 2](#)

### **Agility classes starting Feb 5th:**

Instructors: Claudia, Kat

The classes will run for 6 weeks, with a break on March 5<sup>th</sup> (for an agility seminar held in the Valley) and end Mar 19<sup>th</sup>.

Saturday 10am-12pm (class 10:30-11:30am): [Agility Puppy/Beginners](#)

Saturday 11:30am-1pm (class 12-1pm): [Agility Skills Training](#)

Lunch break: 1-2pm

Saturday 2-4pm (class 2:30-3:30pm): [Agility Sequencing](#)

Saturday 3:30-5pm (class: 4-5pm): [Agility Trialing 1](#)

Saturday 5-6:30pm (class:5-6pm): [Agility Trialing 2](#)

### **Skijor Workshop Feb 6th:**

Instructor: Kirsten

Sunday, Feb 6<sup>th</sup>, 10am-2pm: [Skijor](#)

### **High School class starting Feb 8<sup>th</sup>:**

Instructor: Claudia

The class will run for four weeks, and end Mar 1<sup>st</sup>.

Tuesday 8-9pm: [High School](#)

### **Introduction to Flyball Class on Feb 13<sup>th</sup>:**

Instructors: Karla + Linda

Sunday 2-4pm: [Intro to Flyball](#) (without your dog)

### **Flyball Beginners Class starting Mar 8<sup>th</sup>:**

Instructors: Karla + Linda

The class will run for 4 weeks and end Mar 29<sup>th</sup>.

Tuesdays 5:15-6:15 or 6:15 -7:15pm: [Flyball Beginners](#) (without your dog)

### **Behavior classes starting Mar 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>:**

Instructor: Claudia

All classes will run for seven weeks, and end April 20/21.

Wednesday 5-6pm: [Puppy 2 - Kindergarten](#)

Wednesday 6:15-7:15: [Elementary School](#)

Wednesday 7:30-8:30pm: [Tricks 'N Clicks College](#)

Thursday 5-6pm: [Puppy 1 – Preschool](#) (first week: 6-8:30pm without the dogs)

Thursday 6:15-7:15: overflow class

Thursdays 7:30-8:30: [Foundation Class](#) (first week: 6-8:30pm without the dogs)

### **Upcoming classes:**

**Nose Work Beginner Class starting March 22<sup>nd</sup>. More agility starting March 26<sup>th</sup>. This will be our last indoors agility class, before a short break in May and outdoors classes starting in June.**

## **3) HOW TO SIGN UP FOR THE CLASSES:**

It's easy!!! On our webpage [www.bettercompanion.com](http://www.bettercompanion.com), use the menu bar on the left. You'll find a button "Classes", with the subtitle "Registration", which brings you directly to the **one registration form for ALL classes and workshops**. After clicking "enroll" at the end, you'll get to the pricing and payment page, which explains all payment options, policies, and allows you to pay online, too. You can also check out the pricing page first, to learn about prices, payment and cancellation policies. Take advantage of our **pre-registration fee** by signing up a minimum of **14 days before the start of your class**. Please read our cancellation policy on the pricing page – you almost can't lose!

Puppy 1 Preschool clients, please remember you can also purchase the **Puppy School Packet**, including P1 and P2 class. You only have to commit to the seven weeks of P1 class, and will receive a voucher for P2, valid for 1 full year! For P2 voucher holders, the voucher will be your payment. After you fill out the registration form for P2, you can email us the voucher number, mail the voucher to us or drop it off at the facility.

**Reserve your spot!** Please note **our registration policy: Only the payment will hold your spot.**

Spots are reserved in the order we receive payment for them. **Always sign up for the class you want**

**to join, even if it** could be full. Only the payment will keep you on the waiting list, in case somebody else drops out before the class starts. **Your payment is never lost**, even if the class is already full. Your payment will 1) save you a spot at the class, or 2) save you a spot on the waiting list, or 3) can be carried over to a later class, or 4) can be refunded if I couldn't get you in the class you chose, or 5) can cause me to open an overflow class ☺. Just as a note: I sometimes get up to three dogs per class moved in from a waiting list before the class even starts. **We now can take credit card payments over the phone and at the facility.**

#### **4) DOGGY DAYCARE AND OPEN PLAY TIMES:**

**Doggy Daycare:** Our regular hours are now from 6am-7pm. That means NO SURCHARGE for drop-offs any time after 6am!

The fee for the monthly daycare is \$325.

**Open Play Time:** Come with your dog for one hour of dog play and dog owner social time. Each dog must be supervised by an adult handler, one dog per handler only. Vaccinated dogs only (5-way/DHPPI, dogs over 6 mo: Rabies, Bordetella). We also require having the dog dewormed or a fecal sample checked.

First-timers: bring your vaccination papers, we want to see them! Dogs over 6 months, please for the first time make an appointment with us to come on a Friday, when Claudia and Frank are managing the play times. After that, we'll discuss with you which hour will be best and if you can come Mondays as well.

Fee: \$7 at the door or punch card \$35 for 6 visits.

Our Open Play Times (indoors + outdoors) have become a safe playground for dogs of any size due to our size restrictions for each group. Only timid and absolutely non-reactive dogs can be slightly heavier than the group limit. The group from 7-8pm is limited to 8 dogs, and reservations can be made in advance. Just call us and we explain the details.

#### **Every Monday AND Friday:**

5-6pm: puppies, toy and small dogs up to 25#

6-7pm: puppies and medium adult dogs 30-50# (giant breed puppies can be heavier)

7-8pm: Large adult dogs over 60# (indoors: 8 dogs max; outdoors: 10 dogs max)

8-9pm: By appointment only

**You can check the web page [www.bettercompanion.com](http://www.bettercompanion.com) for info on classes, facility, and schedule, read testimonies from other students, print out the registration form...**

Or contact us by email or phone (see below).

#### **5) COLD WEATHER – WARM CLOTHING**

Let's face it, we're all tired of this extremely cold weather. We like snow, we like winter, but ongoing temperatures below 20F are hard to sustain.

This year I even had to take my sled dogs in the house. Below zero one of my 10yr-old sled dogs started shivering, no matter how much straw I put in her dog house, so I decided to take her in. Then I thought I'd better take the other 10yr-old in as well, and then I didn't want to leave the 5yr-old out alone... So they all ended up in the house for quite a while 😊.

But in the end they're still sled dogs, and enjoy running around out in the cold. So even at -5F, I dress myself in arctic winter gear and take them mushing whenever time allows. That means super warm boots, snow pants over a pair of thick sweat pants, a coat that could even serve as

a sleeping bag, with a ruff to keep the wind off my face, hat, neck round for the face, and warm gloves with hand warmers.

My sled dogs don't need any gear when they're running, but now they sure stand in front of the house door when we come home, instead of at their dog houses. They learned fast 😊. I guess we now have 5 pet dogs.

I always take Sally with me when we go mushing. She runs with the team, doesn't really pull anything unless there would be a moose on the trail, and sometimes gets to run free with the team, which she likes the best. She needs to wear booties below 10F, otherwise she starts lifting her feet from getting too cold. It looks like a bad limp, like she stepped in a needle. As soon as she's on warm ground again (in the house), the limp is gone. With booties she can be out in the cold for hours without getting cold feet. She likes it out there. No surprise, she's half a sled dog, and her grandma went to Nome.

I like to take Lucy with me, too. But that non-existing undercoat of my Jack Russell Terrier is always a challenge. She wants to go so badly, and I don't want to come home from mushing, being tired, and meeting a dog that's full of energy. I have booties for her and several different coats: knitted, wool, fleece, anorak-like, you name it. I tried everything to keep her warm. The best is if it's above 20F and she can run in between, only wearing a thinner sweater. Below 10F I have to bundle her up so much that she can hardly move anymore. 😊

We were out again for a couple hours with the ultimate clothing: Thick neoprene booties to keep her feet warm, a fleece suit with four legs, covered with a snowsuit with four legs (covering the whole belly), and a neck round for her head and ears. She was cozy and warm, sitting inside my sled bag, and very tired from the trip! She sure had to stick her head out and watch everything, including when we met other dog teams.

The only times when we were grounded this winter, were the windy times. At 20mph the wind chill makes it really very uncomfortable, and above 40mph I think it's flat out dangerous to be outside. But cold doesn't bother us as much anymore – we just dress up right!

Happy outing,  
Claudia  
Claudia Sihler, CPDT-KA  
(Certified Professional Dog Trainer)

Your BetCo Team at  
**The Better Companion - Regine Dog Training Facility**

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