



Obichaff

The Monthly Newsletter of the
Capital Dog Training Club of Washington, D.C., Inc.



October 2025

Volume 82 - Issue 9

"You cannot share your life with a dog and not know perfectly well that animals have personalities, minds, and feelings." - Jane Goodall

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From the Editor



Fall has officially arrived in Colorado: cooler mornings, yellow leaves on the sidewalks, and

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[Shirley Blakely](#)

**New Membership
Information**

[Shirley Blakely](#)

**Historian (not a
board member)**

[Joan Adler](#)

the occasional (or not so occasional) excuse to grab a pumpkin spiced latte. It's our first fall out West, and I'm loving how peaceful it feels. A nice calm before the holiday season chaos kicks in. Hadley and I have been making the most of the weather with slow neighborhood walks and a little extra time on our obedience training. The cooler temps make it a great time to train in new environments and around different distractions. And no one minds having their dog's obedience sharpened up before the icy sidewalks show up!

Right now, we're just enjoying the change... crunchy leaves, golden trees, and plenty of hikes out in the colorful mountains. Fall doesn't last long, but we're definitely loving it while it's here!

****LAST CHANCE****

Marsha Smith Seminar

“POLISHING SKILLS FOR NOVICE TEAMS”

CAPITAL DOG TRAINING CLUB PRESENTS

Marsha Smith Seminar

"POLISHING SKILLS FOR NOVICE TEAMS"

Saturday, October 18, 2025

Participants and their Novice A/B dogs and Open A dogs will learn how to work on:

- Getting and maintaining attention for Heel Work
- Transitioning to Off-Lead Heel Work
- Ratio of On-Lead v. Off-Lead work
- Rewarding appropriately

Additional topics may include:

- Warm-up strategies at trials
- Handling ring nerves
- Ring choreography
- Set-ups and transitions.



SEMINAR LOCATION: 2758 Garfield Ave, Silver Spring, MD 20910

TIME: 10:00am – 4:00pm
Lunch break 12:00 – 1:00pm

FEE: \$100 for working spots
\$50 for non-working/audit spots

SNACKS AND LUNCH PROVIDED!

SIGN UP: [HERE!](#)

QUESTIONS?: Email – CDTCclasses@gmail.com



Capital Dog Training Club is thrilled to announce that registration for the upcoming seminar by Marsha Smith, "Polishing Skills for Novice Teams", is now open.

Click on the poster above or [here to register](#) for a working spot, and [here to register for an auditing spot](#).

Register and secure your spot today!

AKC Meet the Breeds

We're already looking ahead to February, when AKC Meet the Breeds returns to New York City. If you've never been, it's one of the best events for learning about different dog breeds in a hands-on, approachable way.

We attended a few years ago, pre-COVID, and it's still one of our favorite memories. There's just nothing like seeing all of these special breeds in person. You're bound to learn something new and maybe even fall in love with a breed you didn't know existed!

More than 100 breeds will be represented and you can meet them all in person. Each booth is set up to teach visitors about the breed's origin and purpose. You can talk with breeders, ask questions, and get a better sense of what each dog is like to live with. For anyone thinking about adding a new dog to the family, it's a great way to figure out what breed might be a good fit.

There are also demonstrations throughout the weekend that highlight what different breeds are best known for, from agility to scent work to service tasks. It's always impressive to watch, no matter how long you've been in the dog world!

This year's event will be held at the Jacob Javits Center in New York City on February 7th and 8th. [Tickets are already available](#) through the AKC website, and there's a discount code (MEET) for \$5 off general admission.

If you're in the area or up for a weekend trip, this is a good one to check out. It's kid-friendly, packed with information, and a fun way to spend a few hours surrounded by dogs. Don't miss it!

How to Become a Member of CDTC

Submitted by: Shirley Blakely

Becoming a member opens so many opportunities for you and your dog.

Membership requirements are as follows:

To apply for membership at Capital Dog Training Club you must first attend 9 of 12-weeks of classes. You are then eligible to take a proficiency test (administered by any club member with an obedience title except the Training Director,

or Assistant Training Director). A copy of the test is available from your instructor. The proficiency test consists of the following five exercises: heel on leash, figure 8, sit for exam, sit-stay, and recall. This test is not needed if you have earned a leg or title in obedience, rally, agility or other companion sport. Upon meeting either of the above requirements, you will fill out and submit the membership application form along with proof of rabies and a check (or Paypal receipt) for the current membership dues amount (\$150 July 1, 2025) to CDTC (prorated to \$75 for applications received after the first of the year).

Once your application has been filed, you will be notified by the Membership Chair. You are now eligible to enroll in two free classes including obedience, agility, flyball, freestyle, etc. If you wish to enroll in more than two classes, each additional class costs 25% of the list/published price.

Here is the process:

Your application will be read at the next general membership meeting, held on the second Tuesday of each month at 8:00PM. It will then be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval. The BOD meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month. For the final step, your membership will be voted on at the following general meeting with a quorum present. You will be contacted by a Board Member to inform you that your status has been changed from training member to Active Member. If a quorum was not reached at the meeting, the process will extend to the next month.

Membership is renewed annually on July 1st. A reminder and renewal form will be included in the June issue of OBICHAFF, our newsletter. Your membership renewal form along with your dues and rabies certificate must be received by July 31st or your membership will expire and you will need to reapply.

Supporting Your Dog on Halloween



We've learned to keep things quiet on Halloween. Even the dogs who are fine with house guests or busy sidewalks can get overwhelmed when the doorbell rings nonstop and people in masks are standing at the door. Costumes are confusing. Kids are unpredictable. And candy ends up... everywhere.

No matter how well-trained your dog is, this holiday is filled with unfamiliar sights, smells, and sounds. Halloween is a great time to be proactive and set your dog up for success by keeping things calm and controlled.

Exercise early, settle in before dark.

Most dogs benefit from physical exercise earlier in the day. A long walk or play session in the morning can help them relax in the evening when neighborhood activity picks up. Once it starts to get dark, it's usually best to keep pets inside and away from windows or the front door.

Create a calm space.

If your dog is reactive to the doorbell or tends to rush the entryway, consider setting them up in a separate room with something to occupy them - like a long-lasting chew, a snuffle mat, or a frozen Kong. A white noise machine or soft music can help mute the sounds outside. Crating is also a good option for dogs who feel more secure that way.

Not every dog enjoys trick-or-treating.

Even if your dog is comfortable in crowds, Halloween night is a lot. Many costumes change a person's silhouette completely (masks, hats, bulky outfits) and that can confuse even the most confident dogs. There's also the issue of candy on the ground, strollers, flashing lights, and kids running up behind them. Unless your dog is truly unfazed by that level of stimulation, they're usually happier staying home!

Costumes are fine... if your dog is okay with it.

Some dogs are totally comfortable wearing gear! However, if your dog hasn't worn clothing before, Halloween night isn't the time to try. Even if it fits well, a costume can restrict movement, affect balance, or make it harder for your dog to communicate with body language. Always supervise your dog when they're wearing anything, and if they seem uncomfortable, it's okay to skip it. A seasonal collar or bandana is plenty for the more sensitive pups!

Keep candy out of reach.

Chocolate, raisins, xylitol (found in sugar-free gum and candy), and even candy wrappers can all be dangerous to dogs. Some will chew through plastic to get to what they want... others will eat the entire bag, wrappers and all. Make sure candy bowls and treat bags stay well out of reach, and let any visitors know not to offer treats to your pets.

Be mindful of decorations.

Glow sticks, candles, and battery-powered decor should all be kept away from curious canine companions. Dogs may try to chew on fake spiderwebs, cords, or plastic decorations, which can become a choking hazard or lead to digestive issues if swallowed. No one wants to be rushing to the emergency vet on Halloween!

And at the end of the day, Halloween is all about fun - for everyone, including your furry family members. By planning ahead and keeping things calm and cozy, you're helping your dog enjoy the season safely and comfortably. After all, a relaxed pup means a happier holiday for the whole household. Here's to spooky fun, sweet memories, and tails wagging peacefully all night long!

Brag

Amy Scheiner shares:

Amy Scheiner's Shetland sheepdog, Devyn, qualified in four of her searches--two Interior Advanced, one Exterior Excellent, and one Container Excellent search--at Carroll Kennel Club's scent work trial on September 7. She earned Q's the very first time competing in the Exterior Excellent and Container Excellent classes, and her time in the Container Excellent class was fast enough to earn a third place! As you can see from the photos, she had a bit of a vertical challenge with the elevated hide, but she sourced it correctly!





Submit yours to CDTCObichaff@gmail.com

Delegate's Corner

By: Joyce Dandridge

In the Companion Events Committee Meeting:

- Steven Hamblin, an AKC Board Member explained the invent fee increase and why the Board had to consider it. \$1 per entry increase effective Jan. 1, 2026. Another increase will occur effective Jan. 1, 2027. Although several clubs have objected to this increase, it appears to be a done deal.
- Doug, VP of Sports Events, presented the staff report. He mentioned the concern continues about the drop in Conformation entries which is -4.8%. There was mention of Agility entries leveling out. Obedience entries dropped to -2.4%. There was a discussion of Fetch dropping -31.9% and maybe it is because it gets harder in the higher classes which are more challenging. Overall entries are down 43,000. He mentioned things are going on in the economy now that are affecting AKC.
- Doug mentioned UKI in Agility is growing and they have younger people participating. Also, USDAA and AKC are falling in participants. The AKC is concerned and has asked staff to look at their growth and reasons why drop is occurring.
- There are 24 obedience judges who have not completed the Obedience Judges' Educational Program. They have until September 30, 2025 to complete the requirements.
- In Rally, work is continuing in the Canine College. Additional filming will be in December. No launch date has been determined.
- Agility Equipment Safety Study: AKC will provide data to CARIS, The Canine Sports Science Consortium research group. Other organizations committed to providing data regarding safety in Agility are USDAA, UKI, NADAC, FCI, involving several countries, Canine Performance Events, Australian Shepherd Club of America, and Royal Kennel Club.
- The recommendation to reduce the dogs per hour that a Rally judge can judge from 20 to 18 for scheduling purposes was approved- effective Nov. 1, 2025.
- Rally Mid-Year Rankings: The new rankings can be found on the Rally webpage- [AKC.org/sports/Rally](https://akc.org/sports/Rally). Overall standings by RACH points, Breed rankings by RACH points, Breed rankings by class and score – Like Obedience rankings, the Rally rankings will be published mid-year and year's end.
- The CEC subcommittee reviewing BN and CD exercises presented their final report to give to staff. The subcommittee was asked to look at Preferred Novice Class before submitting recommendations to staff.

In the General Meeting:

- It was stated that 18–44-year-olds have the lowest awareness of AKC and most of them would like to get or have a dog. 67 plus are more aware of AKC. There is a need to introduce AKC. Since reaching out in Hulu, Disney Fox, and YouTube, they have

received 10 million views in addition to 9.2 million on Facebook. There are plans to use other social media and TikTok.

- There has been a 17% decline in AKC Registrations and 4.3 % in Conformation.
- The AKC Board revised the Code to Sportsmanship. I sent all CDTC members a copy of the new code. Update includes the word Civility in the title which helps the code emphasize the awareness of character and equity.
- AKC Delegate Standing Committees were elected by the Delegate body and I sent CDTC members a copy of the results. I also sent you the nominating committee's selection of candidates for the next AKC Board election in March 2026.
- Some Delegates submitted a proposal that the one-year term limit be changed to four years for Board members. The four proposal was voted down.

In my next report I will discuss the presentation made on strategic planning.

Finally, if anyone has any input on why they think agility with AKC is down beyond what I have mentioned above, I would be happy if you would share with me your thoughts, including what you think should be changed and why. Please send your concerns and suggestions to me.

Available Classes

[Class List and Registration](#)

Upcoming Classes/Tests/Trials

Classes

Register for all classes [here](#).

Permission is required to register for Beginner Novice, Novice, Open, and Utility Obedience classes
Contact [Training Secretary](#)

Fill out the [Agility Waitlist Questionnaire](#) to get on the wait list for the next available classes.
Email the [Agility Director](#) with all agility related questions.

Email [Training Secretary](#) with all other questions.

Training Groups

Rally Training Groups

A group meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays each month at 2pm.

Mary Carson hosts a Rally Training Group every Thursday from 11 am to 12:30 pm

Obedience Training Group

meets the 1st Saturday of the month

Conformation Group

More information to come.

Thursday Open/Utility Training Group

(Goldstein @ 12:30pm). Contact [Burton](#).

Friday Utility Training Group

(Cleverdon @ 1:00pm). Contact [Donna](#).

Saturday UDX Training Group

(Tatham @ 1:00pm). Contact [Tom](#).

Masters Agility Training Group

Meets Tuesday 10:30 AM. Contact [Training Secretary](#)

For information about **Freestyle Training Group**

Contact [Training Secretary](#)

Thinking of joining CDTC as a Member?

Active membership in the Capital Dog Training Club (CDTC) is available to an individual who:

- has completed no less than three (3) months as a training member paying the prescribed fees/dues, and
- whose dog has passed a Proficiency Test as prescribed by the Club with a dog that she or he has trained **or** has obtained a qualifying score toward an AKC title in any “dog companion sport” trial (Obedience, Agility, or Rally).

Active membership includes the right to attend meetings, vote, access to the Members Only section of CDTC’s website, access to seminars, events, announcements of the Club, the right to hold an elective office in the Club, and all other privileges and benefits of the

Club (including 2 free classes per quarter). Visit cdtc.org/membership.

Email [Training Secretary](#) with questions.

Next Membership Meeting: October 14th at 8:00pm

Do you have an idea for an article? Perhaps a message for dog-people is taking up space in your brain and you need to put pen to paper? Submit your articles for the Obichaff [here](#)!



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