

Welcome to our Keegan's Magic student newsletter! Each month, we will share training tips, training philosophies, student achievements, general announcements, and other great information. We hope you enjoy!

Reward Your Dog!

Many of us train and compete in agility to play with our dogs, socialize with friends, earn ribbons and titles, get exercise, or gain a sense of accomplishment. But why does your dog train and compete in agility? Hopefully, the answer to that question is to have fun with you. Your dog doesn't know about ribbons or titles, so you are their main reason for doing this sport. It's your job as the handler to make sure your dog is having fun.

In dog training, we reward the behaviors we want our dog to repeat and ignore the behaviors we don't want them to do again. Rewards range from food, praise, or toys (playing fetch, tug, or taking a victory lap with their toy). Unfortunately, we humans can't choose the rewards our dogs love most. Our dogs pick their favorite rewards, and this can change over a day or over a lifetime.

In training, you can use as many rewards as you like. If you have difficulty with a specific obstacle or handling technique, and you do it well in class, then reward your dog! The reward might be verbal praise given while moving to the next sequence, excitedly giving treats, or playing with your dog's favorite toy. Experiment with different types of rewards in your next class. You might be surprised at how excited your dog gets, how fast they run and, how well they perform.



Remember that some dogs find verbal praise a bit distracting. This is normal and, with practice, you can work through it. At first, your dog may stop weaving or drop a bar when you verbally praise them. That's okay. Repeat the sequence while praising them and see if you can help your dog overcome the distraction. Give your dog time to adjust to this change and they will probably improve with each repetition.

If you only reward your dog at the end of long sequences, then they get used to that and may only do well after taking a few "warm-up" obstacles because they don't expect early rewards. Do the unexpected. Reward your dog for the "easy" parts of the course. Give your dog a variety of rewards throughout training and this will lead to a dog that is willing to do agility to the best of their ability while hoping for the fun that can happen at any point in their run.

Don't underestimate the power of verbal praise and don't be afraid to use it. In a trial, that is the one reward you can bring into the ring with you and use during a run. Change the type of voice you are using if you find that your dog doesn't respond well to what you think is praise. Try yelling, whispering, or varying pitches and see which get positive responses from your dog.

Most importantly, listen to your dog.

[Class Schedule](#)

The next 4-week session starts the week of March 18. Class dates may be adjusted due to unforeseen circumstances. Unless otherwise stated, classes are \$75 for each 4-week session or \$25 for each drop-in.

- **Advanced Agility:** Tuesdays 8:00-9:30 a.m. and Wednesdays 7:45-9:15 p.m.
- **Intermediate Agility:** Tuesdays 6:00-7:30 p.m., Wednesdays 6:00-7:30 p.m., Thursdays 9:45-11:15 a.m., 6:00-7:30 p.m., and 7:45-9:15 p.m.
- **OneMind Dogs Inspired Handling:** Thursdays 8:00-9:30 a.m.
- **OneMind Dogs Foundation:** Tuesdays 7:45-9:00 p.m. (\$136/8-week session, no drop-ins)

Private lessons available on Monday and Wednesday mornings. Ring rentals are also available for students. Please contact Maren directly for scheduling and availability.

Accomplishments & Brags

This is YOUR section of the newsletter – where our students can share accomplishments with their dogs, including titles, placements, training breakthroughs, etc. Please [contact us](#) if you have a brag to include in the newsletter. We love celebrating achievements with all our students!

Please note: As of 2019, brags must be sent directly to Maren Baldwin or the newsletter editor to be included.

Congratulations to the following:

- **New Champion!** Diane Gailit's Skylar earned her TACH in TDAA agility. She also earned High in Trial both days of the Cool Critters TDAA trial and qualified for the Petit Prix. She also earned ten Level C Qs in CPE, all with 1st placements. At the MADTA AKC trial, she earned a Q in Open FAST with a 1st place and Q in Masters JWW with a 3rd place.
- Helen Yettaw's Angel earned her AKC Novice Standard title.
- Ellen Kurland's Magic earned his Utility Dog title in AKC Obedience.
- Maren Baldwin's CleverGirl earned her AKC Novice Jumpers with Weaves title.
- Vicki Drenup's Hijinks earned his Companion Dog title in AKC Novice obedience.
- Elaine Rinicker became an ACT Evaluator for AKC agility.
- Lisa Schmeling's Kili earned his ACT1 title in AKC agility, his first Q in AKC FastCAT, his first Q in AKC Beginner Novice obedience, and his first Q in CPE agility.



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- Ellen Kurland's Encore earned his ACT1 and ACT2 titles in AKC agility. He also earned his first Qs in CPE agility, all with 1st placements.
- Jan Casey's BT earned his Advanced Temperament Test title at the Strawberry Cluster and had four first placements with 3 Qs at the Pasco Paws agility trial.
- Monica Gobeli's Rocky competed in his first agility trial at the Pasco Paws CPE trial. He earned Qs and 2nd placements in Jackpot, Snooker, and Standard. He also qualified and earned a 1st place in Jumpers.
- Marilee Pasche's Sunny Bunny had a perfect day at the Paws & Ques CPE trial and another perfect day at the Pasco Paws trial. He also just received certificates from CPE for his Enthusiast Champion Snooker and Enthusiast Champion Jumpers titles.
- Sally Treat's Ty earned his Lifetime 10,000 points award in CPE agility.

Training Tip

Use your class-time to your advantage. Take chances and try new things. Your instructor is there to help. If you struggle with rear crosses, don't take it easy on yourself to do the "safe" front cross. Try the rear cross and have your instructor help you be successful. More info on this tip will be in April's newsletter.

Do you have an article suggestion for our newsletter? Please [send us your suggestion](#) and we might include it in a future newsletter.