

NVDTC Training Committee Meetings – Fall 2014

Submitted by Marilane Bergfelt on October 30, 2014

September 3, 2014 Meeting w/ light dinner provided.

Attending: Midori Morgan, Sandy Bonifield, Linda Luchsinger, Jim Spiva, Teresa Russell, Vange Leonis, Chris Mayer, Sue Osborn, Stefanie Meinhardt, Maria Giaccio, Lea Ronald, Mary Ash, Marlene Soldavini and Laura Ecklin.
Meeting called to order by chairperson, Marilane Bergfelt, at 6:34pm and adjourned 8:40pm.

October 22, 2014 Meeting w/ light dinner provided.

Attending: Sandy Bonifield, Linda Luchsinger, Jim Spiva, Vange Leonis, Stefanie Meinhardt, Cheryl Meyer, Maria Giaccio, Lea Ronald, Mary Ash, Marlene Soldavini, Deassa Binstock and Carol Coawette.
Meeting called to order by chairperson, Marilane Bergfelt, at 6:35pm and adjourned 8:50pm.

Building & Equipment:

- Broken equipment: Large ladder & Puppy A-Frame broken – Deb mending.
Carpeted steps & Blue tunnel – will be cleaned by Marilane due to repeated marking.
- Training Floor: Buckles in back of room to be mended by Linda's son.
- **All staff** please be mindful of breaking or broken materials, especially replace broken kiddie gate feet. Place broken pieces in office with note for Marilane / Deb.

Office Forms & Procedures:

- Reminder to Pup / AdoDog / GM1 instructors – if you have slots open AFTER Orientation, please use “Post Orientation Sign Up” (yellow) sheet on your board.
- The ‘Fee, Discounts & Voucher Allowances’ are updated & posted inside and outside the office. Please check these when accepting payment. (EXAMPLE: If handler works 2 dogs in one class, they are expected to pay for both dogs. 2nd dog fee reduction is \$15 for 6-week class.)
- Sandy has written guidelines and steps for processing Class Refunds and Credit Vouchers. Sue is working to update both forms for easier use. Steps will be posted in office and Marilane will be sure instructors get a copy.
- NEW Green Slips were used by intermediate and advanced classes in Session 5. At October's committee meeting it was agreed that slips were difficult to implement and staff should try a new approach. Starting in Session 6:
 1. Green Slips will be used when selling equipment, drop-in fees and with students payment AFTER the first week of classes.
 2. On the first night of classes the instructors will:
 - Complete the Roster & Attendance Form – including the payment portion (under the student's name & signature).
 - Clip individual payments together.
 - Put their completed Roster and all payments in a manila envelope and place it in the top, right hand drawer of the Office Desk.
 - Office volunteers will process payments and double-check information on the Roster & Attendance Form. Once completed, the form will be returned to the instructor's clipboard.

Class Updates / Reminders:

- “Out-n-About” class was approved by Committee and Board in September. Vange will be offering in 2015.
- “Fitness for the Senior Dog” was not approved due to committee & board concerns on how to fill / make profitable. Marilane has communicated with Marcia to see if she will offer a one-day workshop instead. If enough interest, then a class could be offered.
- Yellow Dog information page created and included in Orientation Box – now missing. No one knows where it went. Marilane will try to make another one when she has time.
- Recent Good Manners 2 class had young dogs not included at this level in past years. Short discussion by committee noted changes in client base may be a contributing factor.
- Results of discussion at Sept committee meeting regarding footwear while training on the floor at the clubhouse: Lea sent Marilane some information which was used in the Building Use Guidelines for outside groups renting our clubhouse. This wording might be used in club's standard handout / rules at a future date. Committee agreed that NVDTC Training Staff should follow our rules.

Class Updates / Reminders (continued):

Session 5, 2014 –

- Complaints about one instructor, Adolescent Dog / Wednesday evening class, resulted in follow-up phone calls by the Chair. Some students did not complete the session or transferred to other classes. One Class Credit Voucher was issued to student.

Session 6, 2014 -

- CLASS EVALUATIONS to be completed by all classes.
- Instructors of GM1, GM2 and AdoDog - - please check your original class list for a small notation on the left margin "LAPS". This indicates teams who recently participated in the LAPS' event on 8-23-14 with the goal of doing animal-assisted therapy.
- Dog-to-Dog incident in the last few minutes of Adolescent Dog on Wednesday at 5:00pm. Incident Report completed by instructor and assistant. Instructor called and spoke to both families afterwards; neither dog was injured nor has shown signs for concern. Linda L. will speak with them again as final follow-up.

Staff:

- Both master lists of Approved Instructors and Assistants have been newly updated & are posted in office. Instructors should review these lists when looking for a substitute or assistant.
- Ongoing problems with support for daytime, early evening and late evening classes. Lack of assistants limited number of students in a few classes.
- 2015 Instructor Contracts were provided at October's meeting. Instructors are asked to complete, sign and put in Training Chair's mailbox by mid-December.
- Instructors and assistants are encouraged to let Marilane know when they plan to take time off in 2015 so we can cover classes.
- NVDTC Instructor's History: Marilane has reviewed billing records starting in 2006, and class schedules starting in mid-2009. List shows classes taught by each instructor to our best knowledge.

Other updates -

- Jim is taking a Leave from teaching indefinitely but will continue as the club's CGC Coordinator.
- Midori has moved to Cool, CA.
- Robert has been very ill and it is unsure if he can help anytime soon.
- Debbie Taylor & Carol Coawette were approved by the committee and board. They have participated in the mandatory in-house training and are ready to start their Probationary session(s).
- Maria, Chris, Stefanie, Katherine and Lea have been approved as GM2 assistants.

Research on Groups and Private Trainers:

At October's meeting Lea shared information about regional groups and private trainers in our area. She will continue to research with the hope of building relationships that may help build the club.

Additional Information -

- Pet Food Express has offered Puppy Socialization Classes via Sirius Dog Training. Deassa has spoken to manager and NVDTC Board regarding offering something at their site that would feed into our puppy classes.
- ARF offers 6-week classes at \$150. Veterans get free classes, ARF adopted dogs pay only \$75 per session. Per Marilane's ARF contact this group has cut perks to own volunteers & staff.
- Marin Humane offers 6-week classes for \$150 and limited to 8 dogs. Other options include shorter classes for lower fees, plus recreational classes in agility, rally, freestyle, etc.
- Pet's Lifeline provides 6-week classes for \$150. Tuesdays only, GM1 – GM2 type classes taught by private instructor. Per Lea they are looking to expand staff and classes.
- Vallejo DTC providing 4-week classes at \$100, specialty classes (like scent) at \$120, rally at \$60.

Scheduling Sessions 1 – 4 in 2015:

Seven, 6-week sessions are planned for 2015. (Thank you Sandy and Linda L. for providing those dates.) At the October meeting committee penciled Special Classes in Session 1 (Tricks and Games – Thursday Night with Vange) and Session 2 (Sampler Class – Tuesday night). All other classes will remain in their current locations for the first ½ of the year so long as there is sufficient staff to support.

Marilane will communicate with instructors not at the October meeting to learn their interests for the upcoming year.

Review of Club Building and Class Expenses:

Rough numbers were shared at the September committee meeting, more solid information provided at the October meeting. Gerry has reviewed the information Marilane was able to pull together about class income and expenses for Sessions 1 through 4 in 2014. Note - this information was compiled from standard class forms and payment records. Marilane did NOT go through log book to find missing information.

Summary:

- Class income / loss included instructor's fee and building expenses. Each class shared in the expense of the building. (Example: \$143 per 6-week session. Shorter sessions were pro-rated this expense.)
- Greatest income & profit from Puppy, AdoDog and GM1.
- Lowest income & profit from advanced classes with lots of vouchers & fee reductions.
- Poor record keeping in some of the advanced classes meant little-to-no income recorded.
- Drop-in fees were difficult to locate and document. In most cases they were not included.

Results:

1. Club does not keep good records of income for each class. Changes in forms during 2014 might help.
2. Prime Slots (Tues – thru – Thurs at 5:30-7:30 pm) are the club's best option for income. Currently Wednesday night makes best use of these times.
3. Summer months has lowest attendance in all classes. Session 5 & 6 traditionally affected. (Common issue with similar organizations, including those with air conditioning.)
4. Canine Sports (agility, freestyle, competition obedience and rally) are currently not augmented with additional activities to help build interest for the sports, support for classes or help with income for the club. Exception was the Sampler Classes held in session 4 & 5, 2014.

Outcome of the above work:

- ❖ Freestyle students & Judy Gamet are planning 3 workshops in early 2015 to help support their sport, classes and club.

Discussion:

Repeat discussion of previous ideas and classes, like Drop-In Puppy Playtime, with no results. Chair encouraged instructors and participants in all canine sports and advanced classes to consider Fun Days, Show-n-Go's, Guest Speakers, etc. to help promote the club and their interests in 2015.

Items Tabled in 2014. Possible committee(s) formed to work on . . .

- a) Pup / AdoDog / GM1 – Become 60 minute classes with 15 minute break between classes.
All other classes remain at 50 minutes with std.10 minute break between classes
- b) Advanced classes to have scheduled break (1 session) to make room for Specialty Classes at prime slots. Most likely during slow / low attendance periods – Session 5 or 6.
- c) Change title of some classes to better market / clarify class focus.
- d) Add activities to better fill client needs / member interests? As previously suggested:
 - 3 or 4 week special skills classes
 - 1-day weekend workshops (heeling, recalls, etc.)
 - Open building for members to use for a fee.
 - Bring in Specialty / Guest Instructors with 'draw'.

Updates since April Training Committee Meeting

Building & Equipment:

- Building equipment cleaned 8-2-14. Items included kiddy gates, large items used in Pup/AdoDog/ GM1, some jumps, some chairs, water bowls, etc.
- 2 storage bins were purchased for Rally signs. The old container now stores Orientation materials.
- Deb fixed both PVC ladders, used in beginning classes.
- Kiddy gate feet – as broken items are found they should be replaced. New feet are stored under the toy bins and instructors / assistants expected to replace as needed. Broken feet to be left (with a note) on the counter for Marilane and Deb.
- Target Sticks - wooden dowels and spoons are now stored in the office, adjacent to the class clipboards. Instructors and assistants are expected to clean and return them after use.
- First Aide Kits have been updated.
- Yellow Dog posters and mounted in 3 locations in building. Informational piece put in Orientation Box - - but it seems to have been misplaced ?
- The equipment drawers in office have been fixed; file cabinets moved to make room for expanded clipboard wall; posters mounted, etc.

Assistants & In-House Training:

- List of approved assistants is now kept current quarterly and includes volunteer's availability.
NOTE: Anyone removed from the list is no longer interested in helping, did not renew club membership, &/or did not respond to multiple to letter & emails.
- Application for instructors / assistants has been created. This is the first step for anyone interested in helping teach classes. Copies will be available in the office.
- In-House Training materials were adapted after May's session and emailed to committee & board. It is 95% done. Once completed, it will be filed in the office and stored digitally on the club's website.
- 'Process for Approval' is under board review at this time. Board is providing input and will vote at their September meeting. It is the last piece needed to complete the In-House Training materials.

Class Vouchers / Refunds:

Sandy and Linda are outlining steps in writing & checking files for outdated materials. Once completed this will be posted in the office and stored digitally on the club's website.

Class Lesson Plans:

Board has directed Lynda and Marilane to make final adaptations to Puppy and Adolescent Dog Weekly Lesson Plans. Changes will reflect how current instructors are using the materials. Once done, materials will be filed in the office and stored digitally on the club's website.

Good Manners 1 weekly lesson plans are currently in use. Marilane continues to ask for feedback from those using the materials. Weekly plans will be adapted via input from current instructors and finalized in 2015.

Reminder: All instructors teaching Puppy, Adolescent Dog and Good Manners 1 are to use the approved weekly lesson plans. Making minor adaptations to meet the student's needs are acceptable. However, per Board, instructors may not ignore the lesson plans.

"Outline for Proposed Training Class at the NVDTC" is now in use.

If anyone has suggestions for this form please let Marilane know by September 12th. After that time, it will be considered completed and provided to Board for approval.

Reactive Dog:

Deassa has researched and is working with Sue to create pre-screening questionnaire for office volunteers. Instructors are encouraged to communicate with Deassa about ways to help reactive dogs in their classes.

Club Use by Outside Groups / New Forms:

Board has updated release form and will be providing guidelines for non-NVDTC groups who rent / use the building. The information is coming from Club Rules, Guidelines, etc. We hope to give it a 'dry run' at the upcoming AOCNC event with the long-term goal of creating ways for groups, classes & students to use the building during off hours.

Not Started Yet:

- a) Good Manners 1 updated handouts have been tabled so Marilane could work on other club issues. The project is now slated for completion by the beginning of 2015.
- b) 'Instructor Responsibilities' – Marilane is working on solo. If someone would like to help with this, please contact Marilane.
- c) 'Mentor Support' – Committee agreed that mentoring should include: 3-weeks of new assistant or instructor shadowing on the floor, followed by 3-weeks of hands-on experience with Mentor shadowing. This format was followed with recent new assistants.
Note: Additional information / guidelines were requested by committee but no one offered to head up efforts. Marilane, Sandy and Mary will try to create a written outline.