



TERV TRAILS

A Publication of the Lone Star Belgian Tervuren Club
September-October 2014



SHUMAKER HILLS BENDIT LIKE BECKA
MX, MXJ, OF, HT, NW1, L1C

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Membership Information

Individual Membership \$10.00
Family Membership..... \$15.00

***Write to LSBTC Secretary for membership
applications or newsletter subscriptions***

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: Nov. 15, 2014
Articles, Pictures, Brags Welcome!

MEETING NOTICE

***The next meeting of the LSBTC
will be in conjunction with the
Fall Fun Day: Oct. 12, 2014, 3 pm.***

***3718 Raintree Dr.
Flower Mound, TX 75022***



ADVENTURES IN K9 NOSE WORK

by Pat Thomas

A little over a year ago, I shared the story of how Becka and I got started in K9 Nose Work. I could not have imagined then that a year later, Becka would have finished first overall at a NACSW Nose Work 1 trial. As with any accomplishment, there were many challenges along the way.

In Nose Work, dogs must demonstrate the ability to identify the odors before being eligible to enter a trial. Our first Odor Recognition Test went about as well as our first time in the agility ring. We were actually absent from the first ORT we entered in Austin due to icy roads here in December of 2013. Luckily, the event organizer was able to schedule an additional ORT, and even though I had worked at the hospital the night before, I was able to get a coworker to come in early for me to so that I could make it to Austin in time.

The ORT was held at the club's training facility (formerly a residential home) and when we were called into the 'holding area,' AKA living room, Becka had zero interest

ADVENTURES IN K9 NOSE WORK, Continued

in the warm-up boxes. We were then escorted down a long dark hallway into a small room crowded with workers and volunteers. When I gave Becca the “Find It!” command, she decided the wisest thing to do would be to find the way out. She went and sniffed the exit door. I led her over to the boxes and she finally started sniffing.

She was hesitant, not alerting strongly, so when she seemed to be interested in one box more than the others, I called it...just as she went to the box next to it and gave a real alert.

I learned many things that morning, including the fact that 20 seconds feels like 3 minutes in a little room full of strangers when my dog is obviously stressed. I promised myself that next time, I would give her time to work it out.



The next ORT for birch was offered in Houston, and as it often does there, it poured rain.

At Nose Work trials, handlers must crate in their cars (due to the organization accommodating reactive dogs). Gerard decided that rule was created by people who live up north.

I sat in the car saying a little prayer for no lightning. Becca really hates thunder and lightning.

When our turn came, we were called to the queuing area which offered no cover overhead so that both of us got completely soaked. I was thinking to myself that this was not going to be our best effort.

Becca showed an early soft alert (dog speak for “Mom, could it be this one?”) which I did not respond to and then the next thing I knew she had stopped at a different box and she looked at me with confidence. I cannot tell you what a relief it is to hear “Yes” after saying “Alert.”

With the birch ORT under our belt, we were able to enter our first NW1 trial. We found that Jason Heng (of the scary Austin training facility) had been approved to

ADVENTURES IN K9 NOSE WORK, Continued

have the first NW1 trial in Texas. In addition, there would be element trials the day before the NW1 trial. No surprise, it was quite hot in Kerrville in May. Becka really enjoyed the container Element trial Friday morning.

In an element trial, there are four separate hides for the element. So for the container trial, there were 4 different container hides, two were outdoors, and the other two indoors. Becka had great fun and earned her L1C title. That afternoon, we had the interior element trial which was held inside one of the club member's churches. Becka did well on her first 3 hides but did not get close enough on the 4th hide to qualify. That hide was in a storage closet. I had not realized that in addition to the judge, that the ring steward, photographer and a volunteer would accompany us into the very small space. By finding 3 of the 4 interior hides, Becka earned a leg toward her L1I and I was very pleased.

She did not bring the same enthusiasm to the NW1 trial on Saturday that she had on Friday. I was not sure if it was the heat, change in barometric pressure (of course, it rained), or fatigue, but her confidence wavered. A NW1 trial consists of one hide in each of the four required areas (interior, exterior, vehicle, and container). Becka was successful in 3 of the 4 elements, but you have to get all 4 in the same day to title. I left with a much greater understanding of how NW trials are run and the challenges including small rooms, long wait times in queuing areas, and crating in the car when it's 100 degrees. Luckily, we had a canopy and battery operated fans.

Our next opportunity to trial was in August on the campus of Mizzou at a facility much like our Will Rogers Arena in Fort Worth. After the 600 mile drive, I was thrilled to see that Becka had brought her game. She was confident and alerting strongly with minimal wasted energy. I thought the interior search was challenging. The hide was under a large black trash can on wheels. Becka was searching the perimeter of the room and when she got close to the can the first time, she yanked back having smelled a cleaning brush that was hanging off the side of it. I was worried, but she went right back to searching. When I called "Alert," the judge asked me to point to where the hide was. I pointed to the bottom of the trash can, although I could not know exactly where it was since it was not accessible (being under the trash can).

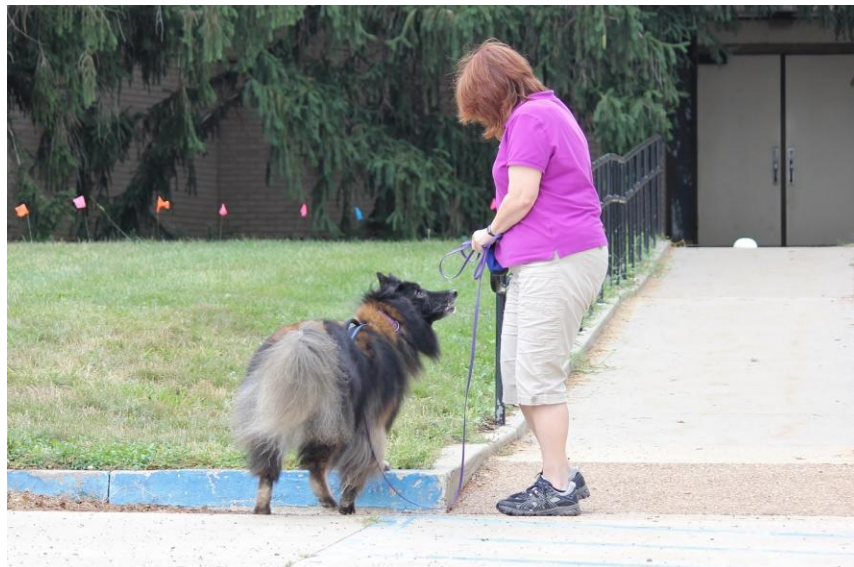
Our final search of vehicles consisted of 3 cars (two parked side-by-side with the 3rd making a T formation). In our first NW1 trial, my strategy was to ensure that Becka had searched all of search area. At this trial, I let Becka take the lead and I tried to stay out of her way. In the vehicle search she rocketed to the truck that held the birch in its trailer hitch. When I said "Alert" the judge said "YES! In 11.81 seconds!" Since the vehicle search was our 4th element I was so happy since that meant that we had earned the NW1 title!

ADVENTURES IN K9 NOSE WORK, Continued

At NW trials there is an awards ceremony at the end of the day. I was thrilled to get our qualifying ribbon as well as a first place ribbon for having the shortest time in the vehicle search.

At the end of the ceremony, they acknowledge the top 3 teams overall (based on the shortest time minus faults among those who titled). When they announced that the first place team had taken only 1:29.91 seconds of the 12 minutes allotted, I was thinking it was probably the woman I recognized as the judge from my 2nd ORT in Houston with her border collie. When they called out our names, I was speechless.

With her environmental sensitivities, things don't come easily to Becca. It meant the world to me to see her working happily with confidence on that day. I will remember it always.



Our next adventure in NW will be the ORTs for anise and clove at WAGD in October. If we are successful in Anise at the ORT, we will be eligible to enter NW2 trials. The performance expectations in NW2 are a big step up from NW1 with up to 2 hides within each area, both birch and anise tested, and shorter search times. If you are interested in learning more about K9 Nose Work, here are links to the two main organizations that offer trials.

NACSW www.nacsw.net

UKC (Formerly United Nosework)

<http://www.ukcdogs.com/Web.nsf/WebPages/DogEvents/Nosework>



NEW NOSEWORK 1
SHUMAKER HILLS BENDIT LIKE BECKA
MX, MXJ, OF, HT, NW1, L1C
and Pat Thomas



FALL FUN DAY and ANNUAL MEETING!

Come for an afternoon of Terv Games, Food and Fellow Tervuren Lovers.

Bring your Terv, chair, appetizer and drink

When: Sunday, October 12th, rain or shine

Time: 3:00pm

Where: 3718 Raintree Dr., Flower Mound, TX 75022; Phone: 817.430.6221

Games:

Musical Chairs: the Classic Game with you and your dog

Potato & Spoon Race: Relay Race with potato on a spoon held in the hand with your dog's leash

Doggie Dress Up: Relay Race to dress your dog

Trick Show: Polish up your doggie tricks, best one wins

To be followed by a short Annual Meeting and by a meeting of the new Board of Directors.

RSVP - Hope to see you.

REPTILE-PHOBES--QUICK, CANCEL THIS PAGE!!!!!!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?



Grace and I were walking under a bridge, and she gave just a little stutter-step. I quickly dragged her off the path, put her on a sit-stay and got out my camera.

Snakie coiled up a bit, but then froze. A jogger came by. I showed him the snake, but he kept right on going. (I got my camera ready to video Snakie moving out of the way, but Snakie was frozen.) Then an elderly man walked by. He was amused but not alarmed. And not helpful. Then a walker came by, and he stuck around, but offered no help. I was worried that some kid would come by and try to play with Snakie.

So I got an 8-foot long stick and handed Grace off to the walker. She was very intrigued with what I was doing. I tickled Snakie's tail. He suddenly woke up! He slithered toward Grace, but I blocked him with my stick, just barely touching him. Finally he slithered away off the path and headed back toward the creek! Snakes really can slither quite rapidly! That got the adrenalin going for our morning walk!

GOOD GIRL GRACE--WHAT A GOOD SIT-STAY!

(The good news--we believe it was a yellow-bellied water snake. Not poisonous.)