

*The  
Altrincham & District  
Dog Training Society*

**NEWSLETTE  
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# Winter 2011

## Kennel Club Good Citizens Award

**\* Bronze Level \***

*10<sup>th</sup> July 2011*

Christine McKenzie *with* George

Christine McKenzie *with* Charlie

Sheila Hull *with* Diesel

Julie Coleman *with* Nala

Liz Law *with* Bailey

*17<sup>th</sup> July 2011*

Gill Pullman *with* Ice

Paul Field *with* Sangria

Alan Gresson *with* Blaze



Ania Cybis *with* Sherlock

Nick Durrant *with* Phoebe

Natalie & Brian Imrie *with* Chester

*Front cover - Rafa. See article on page four.*

### **From the Chief Training Instructor . . .**

I would like to thank all those who were involved with making the summer Fun Day such a success. After many years we decided to change the format of the day from team games to a summer fair type programme with various trade and fun stalls. We received a lot of positive feedback and it is our intention to build on this format in future years so if you have ideas for any of the stalls, please let us know.

Members of the society may not be aware that the contents of the training classes are part of a progressive programme. So a puppy or young dog is guided through all the things he may be required to learn into his adult life using positive reinforcement methods. This will ensure the end result is a confident well rounded adult dog. As the modern world changes so quickly it is necessary to update the contents of the classes from time to time. After much deliberation, this is something Tina and I have recently completed, so your classes may contain some new exercises. All the original ones can still be included, in addition to some more practical exercises such as food manners, car travel etc. The class contents also now include everything required to pass all the levels of The Kennel Club Good Citizens Dog Scheme so that more members can take part in the scheme if they wish to. On completion of each level of the scheme: Puppy, Bronze, Silver and Gold, the successful candidate receives a nationally recognised certificate so please let me know if you would like take part.

Within the Society, staff training is always at the forefront our minds so as to enable all staff to stay abreast of the most up to date methods and increase their personal development as instructors. This year has already seen the trainers take part in a six week, 'Dog Training - Theory and Practice' course, as well as a Class Familiarisation evening, in conjunction with The Animal Behaviour Centre. Some staff members will soon be attending a first aid course. In addition, thanks to our friends from The Denzell Gardens and Devisdale, a practical training session was also held one evening during the summer.

This year has seen a number of backroom staff, both administrative staff and committee members, leave us and I would like to give a special mention to all those who have rallied round to ensure the smooth running of the Society during this transition.

D. Campbell CTI, KCAI, AMACC

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## Obituary

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Mrs Joan Eaves, who died in July, was associated with the ADDTS from the 1970s when she trained her German Shepherd dogs with the club. She was a Past President 1989-92 of the society, and a very gifted trainer for many years, until 1995 when she resigned because of ill health. To those members who knew her, she was a most knowledgeable and helpful trainer, to whom some of us owe a great deal.

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## Rafa

Rafa came to live with me as a one year old, having been cared for by a family friend from the age of five months. As a puppy he suffered Parvovirus, so I guess he missed out on early socialisation. Because I knew his background I thought it would all be *SO* easy. I had had Shelties before, albeit as older dogs and had met Rafa three times before bringing him home from Wolverhampton, where he seemed quite confident. So it was a big shock to realise I had taken on a nervous wreck. Unfortunately the move to a new home seemed to traumatise him and he was dreadfully anxious and terrified of simply everything, that is apart from sheep, cats, squirrels and rabbits, which in his book needed chasing! He barked at everything that worried him.

I had wanted a dog to train and eventually do Agility with. So we started at ADDTS in June 2010, after attending a few classes with a trainer nearby and trying to do things on our own at home. Rafa was still very nervous of everything and everybody and it took him a good few weeks before he actually started to settle in and respond to the training in the class. By degrees, he gained more confidence and when he progressed into Class Two I was over the moon! Fortunately the advice and encouragement given, including on the use of the 'clicker', gave us things to work on at home and I found this extremely useful. I was pretty pessimistic about Rafa's prospects for a long time, but attending classes really helped and it was re-assuring to see him progress, and also to see that lots of other people had just as many problems with their dogs, though not necessarily the same ones!

For many months I despaired of ever being able to let Rafa off lead when out, due to him being so nervous and liable to bolt, but a great discovery has made a big difference - a simple frisbee! Rafa would not play with any toys outside until we tried a frisbee - and he's now so obsessed that he forgets what a scary world it is and this has transformed our walks in the fields. I still have to be cautious in unfamiliar areas, but it's such a joy to see him run free and a great relief that he will come back to me.

Being a keen walker and now retired I had been looking forward to taking Rafa into the hills, but this proved very stressful as he was desperate to go after the sheep and on one occasion we had a very scary encounter in a field full of cows. Whenever there was livestock around, Rafa became a lunging, screaming whirling dervish! By chance, while 'surfing the net' for advice on behaviour problems, I came across the Association of Pet Dog Trainers, which runs various courses. To my delight I found there was someone who specialises in problems with dogs and livestock. We went on a weekend course in Herefordshire in April this year and it was great fun and fantastic. We did all sorts of exercises and I learnt a great deal which complemented all

other training. We practised with ducks at first, progressing to recalling past a group of sheep -amazing! Although Rafa still wants to go after sheep when we're on walks, I now have more skills to practise with him. There's no more screaming, so walks are becoming more peaceful at last.

In January we started a 'Pre-agility course' which was to teach some key skills for agility and to enable assessment for suitability. Unfortunately this was in a small church hall, in which he was really scared of everything. However he gradually improved and, to my delight, passed the assessment. The trainers were still unsure how he'd cope in the indoor Equestrian Arena, so we spent a few sessions just observing the class. Then in June we started Agility Training 'proper' and he LOVES it, I have been amazed how fast he is learning. He can now do a series of jumps, tunnels, 'A' frames and is doing really well with weaving poles. It has really improved his social skills and confidence, which is helping in other areas of life. The biggest challenge in training now is weaning him off treats. I am finding this very difficult, as he is very food orientated!!

Friends say that Rafa is now a different dog, which is very encouraging. He is certainly a lot of fun and is far easier to manage and live with. His barking has at least reduced in intensity and volume. I am very hopeful that his remaining fears will diminish using the techniques learnt at ADDTS.

I read somewhere that the more control you have over your dog, the more freedom you can give him. I am certainly finding that to be true.

Ruth Hambrey



## Beyond the Tunnel

When Tina asked me to write an article for the newsletter, my initial reaction was "Oh no, what can I write that anyone is going to be interested in? Help!" But I remembered that when we returned from our holiday in France, a few people had asked me about the logistics involved in taking the dog with us. "Good topic", I thought. (Please note that I write this article for general interest, individual owners are responsible for complying with the legal veterinary or travel requirements in force at any particular time.)

We took our dog through the Channel Tunnel for the first time several years ago because, although otherwise very healthy, he was getting old and stiff in the hind quarters and I didn't want to leave him in kennels because he needed to be kept fairly mobile. Following advice on the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) from our vet, we arranged for the dog to be micro-chipped, blood-tested, vaccinated against rabies and issued with a PETS passport. We discovered that

there was a lead-in time of at least six months, so planning ahead was essential. Needless to say there is expense involved in going through this process, although one inoculation with the rabies vaccine gives immunity for three years. There are no restrictions or checks when leaving the country, save the car having a window hanger declaring a 'Pet on Board'. All the checks are carried out at the DEFRA office on return to the Calais terminal.

Planning for the journey must include considering the probable temperatures; making sure there are no restrictions with regards to particular dog breeds in the countries to be visited; ensuring appropriate pet travel insurance and allowing for plenty of breaks for the dog. Taking the dog's normal food and always having plenty of water in the car are a 'must'. Accommodation, sometimes with a small supplement, and even restaurants are far more amenable to accepting dogs than in England, but again advance-planning is the key. A Google search on "dog friendly hotels in France" is a quick and easy solution.

At the end of the holiday, it is necessary to visit a vet to have the tick and worm treatment administered and the passport completed. I usually book this appointment before leaving home and just re-confirm it once at the destination. Again, there is a cost involved. It's probably also worth mentioning that the treatments which have to be used under the pet travel scheme may not be the same as the dog's regular ones. The biggest tip I could give anyone whilst at the vet's is not to enter into any social chit-chat until you have carefully checked that the passport is correctly completed. (When I was in the DEFRA office at the end of August this year, there was a lovely couple with two beautiful golden retrievers who were definitely *not* going home on the train they had booked, because their passports had been incorrectly completed!) Another point of planning - the return trip must be carefully timed because there is a window to re-enter the UK not less than 24 hours and not more than 48 hours after the dog has been seen by the vet (although I believe this limit is going to be extended). At Calais, the next stop is the DEFRA office, and this is where you wait in a queue with your fingers crossed and pray that the scanner can read the microchip! We find that having the dog abroad with us does add another dimension to the holiday, not least that we end up chatting to all sorts of people. Information is available from several sources including the vet and the DEFRA and Channel Tunnel websites. Happy Holidays!

Julie Coleman

## **Wendie the Guide Dog Puppy**

I first read about puppy walking a guide dog in the local paper and the idea really appealed to me. I applied and had an interview with a supervisor who brought an older puppy with her. The interview was mainly making sure I knew what was involved and checking that the house and garden were suitable. There was no training beforehand but I was given a copy of the training handbook and my supervisor made sure I knew what to do at each stage and was very patient with my frequent questions!

In March 2010 Wendie, a tiny yellow Labrador/Golden Retriever crossbreed puppy, arrived at our house along with a blanket from 'mum' and a bag with food, collars, leads and other equipment. I was very excited but nervous when my supervisor drove off. I had read the training handbook from cover to cover but I had never been responsible for a dog before. We started to go out and about after giving her a couple of days to settle in. Before her

vaccinations we had to carry Wendie most places, although as a guide dog puppy she could go into supermarkets and other shops where other dogs weren't allowed so we could let her walk and give our arms a rest! I got used to allowing half an hour to buy a loaf of bread in Tesco's – everyone wants to say hello when you have a puppy with you. She was happy in the local shops so when she was a bit older we moved on to the Trafford Centre. All was well in the shops and the mall and I was impressed with how relaxed she was in such a big shopping centre with all the noises, smells and slippery floors. However, when we came to the stone lions outside the food court she barked loudly at them! Everyone in the vicinity turned to look – it's not a noise anyone expects to hear there. We moved on very quickly!

Another embarrassing moment was on a very hot day when Wendie decided to lie down in front of the chiller cabinet in a supermarket to cool off – people were waiting to pass but she wasn't moving for anything and she was too big to carry. The next couple of minutes felt like half an hour but she finally decided to get up, much to my relief, and, no doubt that of the people queuing up to get past us.

Most of the basic training for Guide Dog puppies is the same as for any dog but there are slight differences, such as the dog having to touch on recall, so a blind owner would know the dog was there. A big difference is the long list of experiences the puppies need to have over the year. These include small and large shops, stairs, lifts and public transport. Wendie even came to a couple of hospital appointments. She had lots of fun too – she came camping with us in the Lake District and on a cottage holiday in Scotland and loved running on Llandudno beach when we visited relatives there.

When she was 14 months old, Wendie moved on to the Guide Dog centre at Atherton for basic training. She got used to the harness and learned to guide her trainer, starting with going round the training centre and graduating to going into town. By the end of this stage of her training she could confidently guide her blindfolded trainer past obstacles and distractions. In August she moved on to advanced training in Leeds where she spent the days in the training centre but spent her nights and weekends in the home of a volunteer boarder. It is at this stage that the dogs are carefully matched to their new owner and Wendie is going to be a guide to a young woman in Halifax. They will work together in the last stage of training and practise the routes they will use most often. Wendie will officially graduate in November and get her white working harness – dogs in training wear a brown harness.

There is a lot of help and support for puppy walking from all sorts of places – all the shops and supermarkets we have been to have welcomed us (working Guide dogs have to be allowed in by law but for pups in training it is voluntary) and the bus, tram and train companies allow free local travel for puppy-walkers with their puppies, as it is an essential part of their training. My supervisor visits once a month and is always available for advice and there are guide dog puppy classes (although I can't make them as they clash with my job as a school dinner lady). All food and vet fees are paid for by Guide Dogs and all equipment is provided. It costs Guide Dogs over £40,000 to support a dog over its lifetime, from birth to retirement.

I found it very hard to say goodbye to Wendie but I am very proud of her and she is going to make a huge difference to someone's life. I enjoyed my year of puppy-walking her and now I have started again with Poppy the Golden Retriever.

Karen Reynolds

## The trials and tribulations of training

I am the proud owner of Willum, who is an eleven month old Labradoodle (Miniature Poodle/Labrador crossbreed) – chocolate brown but with increasing streaks of grey. I started training with ADDTS as soon as he was old enough to attend the classes, having had three private lessons with a trainer at home when I first got Willum, to help me with the basics. This really helped my self-confidence and set me on the right path with house-training, and some of the basic commands. I live on my own and because of this, I was anxious that Willum might not become well socialised, so I have always made sure that we spend plenty of time walking round the park and meeting other people, other dogs and their owners. I read several books about dog training and started the basic training at home before coming to ADDTS therefore in the first few lessons I didn't come across anything that I didn't know already. But what I did find, and what was so important in those earlier days (and still is now), was the support and confidence I gained from mixing with other people who had dogs at a similar stage. Hearing about the problems they were having was really helpful – to know it wasn't just *my* dog that would listen at times and ignore me at others, or who had jumped up with muddy paws at a man in a suit on his way to work, or who had cocked his leg inside the house of a friend we were visiting.....!

I did learn as well that I can't rush the training beyond the natural maturity of the dog. I often forget that Willum is a puppy, as he looks much older with his grey bits and long whiskery face and at times I do need to relax and remember that dog ownership and dog training is meant to be fun for both of us. I also found the 'Three Ps': Persistence, Patience and Practice important to keep in mind. I'm good with the first one, but patience is something I'm having to learn and I'm not sure how well I do at the practice either! I have always tried to see the training as something that occurs all the time, rather than at a set period in the day or week. This works fine for commands etc. that Willum and I are competent with, but when it comes to putting into practice the new commands and techniques we are learning on a Sunday afternoon, I must confess, that these are not always included in the daily routine, especially if I'm tired and grumpy... if the weather is rubbish... if I'm in a rush or if Willum just doesn't want to listen. Hearing about the 'Three Ds' helped me understand a bit more about what was going on and that I needed to work on training when there were different Distractions around, when we were at different Distances apart, and when I needed Willum to carry out an exercise for a longer Duration. So I've tried to develop this in the daily training.

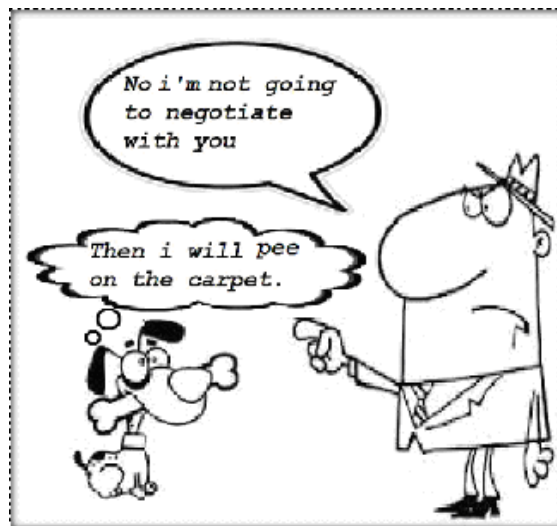
I was shocked, but delighted of course, to find out that Willum and I had been awarded the Jose Provis trophy for coming first in the Class 1 assessment. It shows that the training classes *are* having an effect. I'm aware that Willum is now moving into adolescence and have heard that this is where everything breaks down. Well, at least I have the support and expertise at ADDTS on hand. I hope to continue with the training over the next year or so at least and really do appreciate the dedication of all the Club's volunteers, on and off the field. Looking to the future I am particularly interested in the role of animals for health, following my counselling training and some training I did in equine assisted psychotherapy. I would like to hear from anyone who is involved in pet assisted therapy schemes in any way. Eventually I would like to use some of my spare time for voluntary work with Willum.

Roger Harrison

What Breed?

1. Buhidzainon (2 words)
2. Pnirsaggelsenir (2 words)
3. Nromherdapcsibne (2 words)
4. Rirleobcelod    5. YDorughne
6. Hlwopsiodnlepglahosed (3 words)
7. Radrobla 8. Jebisna 9. Rdirba
10. zuhavnsignalrai (2 words)

*Answers below*



*Cartoons by Liam Paulson*

**Answers to: What Breed?**

1. Ibizan Hound 2. Springer Spaniel 3. Doberman Pinscher 4. Border Collie 5. Greyhound
6. Polish Lowland Sheepdog 7. Labrador 8. Basenji 9. Briard 10. Hungarian Vizsla