



Newsette



WWW.VHOC.ORG

P.O. BOX 10132 CANOGA PARK, CALIFORNIA 91309

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Mark Your Calendars - VHOC Events

- ◆ **April 13th**—Picnic and **General Meeting** in Acton— Topic is Fast CAT (see the flyer on Page 3) Starting at 11:30 AM
- ◆ **June 8th**—Fit Dog Walk at Balboa Park—more information to come
- ◆ **Sept 13th/14th**—VHOC Rally/Obedience Trial in Camarillo

REMINDER

Remember to check the website
<http://www.vhoc.org>
 for announcements, cancelled classes,
 upcoming events and other important club information.

If you know of a member who would appreciate receiving correspondence, such as a get-well card, sympathy card, etc., please email our Corresponding Secretary, Carole Hills, at
chills37@aol.com

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Nancy Giltner

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Allison Pobirs
Jennifer Voogt

Seminar Coordinator
VACANT

Food & Hospitality
Laura Thomas

Trophies
Deborah Lang
Ann Hills

Newsette
Deborah Lang

Website Administrator
Jennifer Voogt

Welcome to our New Members!

(in order to activate membership, applicants need to attend one general meeting or volunteer to help at a VHOC event)

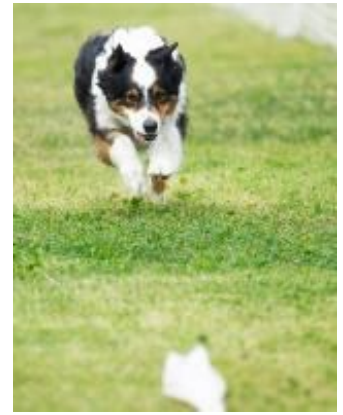
Tracy Caruana and her Labrador Retriever Max

Mickie Hines and her Doberman Pinscher Summer

Jean Muenster, her Border Collie Bagel and her Border-Paps Cheerio and Ditto



April 13th General Meeting



Come join us for the April 13th General Meeting.

We will have a "Intro to FAST CAT" picnic meeting.

We will hold the meeting in the picnic area of Acton Park near the surfaced parking lot.

Acton Park: <https://parks.lacounty.gov/acton-park/#>

Acton Park
3751 Syracuse Ave.
Acton, CA 93510

Starting at 11:30 am we will be able to watch the Fast CAT runs for about 30 minutes, prior to our club discussion about FAST CAT. The meeting should coincide with the break being taken by the Fast CAT event personnel. The trial will resume about 1 pm and VHOC members can try runs themselves or just watch. There are usually day of trial signups be sure and bring your dog's AKC registration number if you want to run Fast CAT.

VHOC will provide the main dish for lunch, please feel free to bring potluck sides to share. Please, bring your own beverages.

This is a public park, so we please be ambassadors of canine good citizenry. All dogs must be leashed or in crates, and remember to clean up after your dogs. Bring lightweight chairs and crates as we may not be able to park adjacent to the picnic tables and car crating in the sun is not advisable.

Directions from SFV: 5 Freeway north to the 14 Freeway north. Exit Crown Valley Rd. Turn right (south). Travel about a mile and the park is on the right. Turn right on Syracuse to the parking lot. The lot is small and street parking may be required.

The link to the FAST CAT trial info : [VCSWC April 12 & 13, 2025 FAST CAT TRIALS - Southern California Scent Work](#)

The link to AKC's FAST CAT page is: <https://www.akc.org/sports/coursing/fast-cat/>

RSVP to Nancy Smith by **TODAY Wednesday April 9th**— nancymyerssmith@yahoo.com

Rattlesnake season brings heightened risks for California hikers and dogs

By: Roger Coryell



While some parts of California might not have the perfect climate for rattlers, the warming weather not only brings hikers and outdoor enthusiasts outdoors; it also marks the return of rattlesnakes from their winter slumber. This seasonal shift prompts heightened awareness among hikers, particularly those who hike with their dogs.

California is home to seven distinct species of rattlesnakes, two of which include multiple subspecies, resulting in a total of ten different forms of rattlesnakes across the state.

How do I identify a rattlesnake?

Each rattlesnake in California features a blotched pattern on its back and a rattle at the tail end, commonly used as a warning signal. It's important to note, however, that newborn rattlers are born without a rattle, and adults may lose theirs due to breakage, so the absence of a rattle does not necessarily mean a snake isn't a rattlesnake.

The most common rattlesnake in Northern California is the Northern Pacific rattlesnake, known for its adaptability to various habitats, including forests, grasslands, and suburban areas. In contrast, [Southern California](#) is primarily home to the Southern Pacific rattlesnake, often found in rocky areas and dry brushlands. These rattlesnakes are characterized by their distinctive patterns and the classic rattling sound used as a warning signal to potential threats.

Are rattlesnakes very aggressive?

California's diverse habitats, from the desert to the Sierra to the [coast](#) and redwoods, provide diverse habitats for rattlesnakes. In the deserts, snakes find shelter under rocks and within sand dunes, while in the Sierra, they thrive in montane woodlands. The coastal regions and redwoods offer cooler, moist conditions that different snakes may find suitable, depending on the area. Specific small-scale habitats or "microhabitats" compensate for the broader climate challenges, such as rocky outcrops formed by landslides common along California's north coast, which provide ideal sunning spots for these reptiles.

Rattlesnake risks for dogs

A close encounter with a rattlesnake can be particularly dangerous for pets. Dogs, being [naturally curious](#), may inadvertently provoke a snake, leading to a potentially fatal bite. Rattlesnake venom can cause severe symptoms and even death, with first aid treatment including immobilization and urgent veterinary care. Smaller dog breeds are particularly vulnerable due to their smaller body size and higher body-to-venom ratio.

Rattlesnake season brings heightened risks for California hikers and dogs—continued

What to do if you see a rattlesnake

It's crucial for hikers not to provoke a rattlesnake; if encountered, it's best to back away slowly and allow the snake space to move away on its own. Rattlesnakes typically avoid confrontation unless threatened. They are most active between April and October, during the warmer parts of the day when they come out to bask in the sun. To stay safe, hikers should watch where they step and stick to well-traveled trails, avoiding tall grass and heavy underbrush where snakes may hide.

Antivenom for dogs?

Carrying antivenom for dogs isn't practical due to the need for professional storage and administration, its expense, and species specificity. Immediate veterinary care is crucial if a dog is bitten, as vets are equipped to administer the appropriate antivenom and provide necessary treatment.

Suggestions from California Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Stay alert when outdoors.
- Wear sturdy boots and loose-fitting long pants. DO NOT wear sandals or flip-flops in brushy areas.
- Stay on well-used trails. Avoid tall grass, weeds, and heavy underbrush.
- Check rocks, stumps or logs before sitting down.
- Shake out sleeping bag and tent before use.
- Let others know where you are going, when you plan to return, and carry a cell phone. Hike with a companion when possible.
- DO NOT grab "sticks" in water. Rattlesnakes can swim.
- DO NOT let dogs off leash. Dogs are at increased risk when sniffing the ground near brushy areas.
- DO NOT try to touch or handle a snake, dead or alive. Dead rattlers may still inject venom shortly after death.

Got your hiking boots ready? And your snake radar turned on? Keep those pups close and those eyes peeled—it's slither season out there!

URL—[Beware Of Rattlesnake Season: Tips For Safe Hiking With Dogs](#)



Please be aware, Rattlesnakes are very prevalent late-March through June with the start of the warmer summer season. This is also the time that more baby rattlesnakes are hatching and while it is a myth that their bite is worse than the adults, they are still very dangerous and deadly to dogs.

If you are in a rattlesnake area you can get the Rattlesnake vaccine that aims to minimize the reaction to venom, or there is Rattlesnake Avoidance Training.

How to Train Your Puppy Through Fear Periods

By Sassafras Patterdale, CPDT-KA, CTDI

Published: Feb 26, 2025 | 5 Minutes

Is your confident puppy suddenly afraid of things? Fear periods are a natural part of canine development during puppyhood, but they can be stressful for dogs and people.

While your puppy is experiencing a fear period it's important to have a thoughtful training plan to support them. Here are tips for structuring your puppy's training during a fear period.



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What Are Fear Periods?

Fear periods are a naturally occurring part of development for puppies when they're more sensitive to the world around them. Puppies typically go through two fear periods. The first fear period is between 8–11 weeks, and the second generally when dogs are between 6 and 14 months of age.

Fear periods are especially important to be aware of when it comes to training your puppy, because not only are puppies more cautious during this period of their life, but they are also more impressionable. Puppies and adolescent dogs who have negative experiences during a fear period may not bounce back as quickly. A negative experience during a fear period, can have life-long consequences for a dog's temperament and behavior. For this reason, it's important to approach training during these fear periods intentionally and carefully.

Readjusting Training Expectations

When puppies go through fear periods, they're not likely to respond to stimuli, the environment, and training situations in the same way as they have before. Specifically, they are likely to be more cautious and sensitive. Something that didn't bother your puppy last week, might be frightening when they enter a fear period.

Just as you want to be particularly thoughtful about your training plans during a puppy's critical socialization period, the same is true for puppies going through fear periods. It's ok for your puppy to be afraid, it doesn't mean they will always be fearful or that you have done anything wrong as an owner. The best thing you can do to help your fearful puppy is to keep your training sessions short and fun. You're going to want to lower your training criteria so that they can be successful. Also, try not to panic yourself. It can be destabilizing to see your puppy acting differently than you're used to, but by staying calm you can help your puppy work through their fear.

Lower the Criteria for Success

We want to always keep our training sessions fun, fluid, and dynamic, adjusting to how our dog is feeling on any given day. One week your puppy might have been confidently getting on a wobble board, but by the next, they could be terrified to put even a foot on it. Instead of trying to force your puppy on the wobble board, shift your criteria for success. Reward your puppy for stepping toward the wobble board but not getting on, or reward your puppy for doing a simple cued skill like a sit or down near but not on the wobble board, praise, treat, and end your training session there on a positive note.

How to Train Your Puppy Through Fear Periods—continued

Lowering the training criteria and ending the session with your dog being successful is more beneficial than attempting to push your puppy through their fear to achieve the higher level of success you might be used to.

Help Your Puppy Gain Confidence

While it can be tempting for some dog owners to keep pushing their puppy to work through the fear, this generally doesn't lead to success. If you are afraid of spiders, someone telling you that they can't hurt you likely won't make you feel better about letting a bunch of spiders crawl onto you. In the same way, we might know that something isn't dangerous. But if our puppy is suddenly afraid of it, we need to honor their fear and not try to force them to engage.

Watching your confident and outgoing puppy go through a fear period can be stressful and overwhelming. Some owners worry that not pushing them to work past the fear can feel like coddling or giving into fear. In reality, we are being developmentally appropriate for our puppies. Lowering the criteria helps puppies build confidence when they are having an emotional regression. Letting your puppy have an "easier" success and ending a training session during a fear period will go further than continuing to train and trying to push or force your puppy to work through fear.

Selecting Appropriate Training Locations

We always want to be thoughtful about where we take our puppies to train. This is especially true if your puppy is going through a fear period. Puppy training classes are great at this age, if you can find one run by trainers who understand puppy development and how to support a puppy and owner through a fear period. Before enrolling in a class, be sure to ask about their training methods, such as if they use positive reinforcement techniques, and how they handle interactions between puppies.

The training experiences and what we expose our puppies to at this age can have life-long impacts. When your puppy or adolescent dog is going through a fear period, avoid over-stimulating and busy training outings. A crowded pet supply store can be a great location to practice training around distractions and proof obedience skills. However, that busy store might be too much for a puppy, especially a puppy in a fear period.

Even if your puppy has been calm, focused, and confident in a variety of settings in the past, they are going to be more environmentally sensitive when going through a fear period. Sometimes the locations where we want to take our dogs aren't the best match for their emotional state. If you get somewhere, and it is busier than you anticipated, or if your puppy seems nervous or stressed, there is nothing wrong with heading home or taking your training session elsewhere.

Finding the Right Balance With Rewards

Utilizing positive reinforcement training techniques is the most effective way to teach new skills to our puppies. This is going to look like using lots of treats and praise to reward our puppies as they learn new skills. However, we want to be careful not to use treats to accidentally push our fearful puppies into situations they cannot handle.

How to Train Your Puppy Through Fear Periods—continued

It's a careful balance of pairing treats with things our puppies are worried about to help desensitize and create positive associations without pushing them into situations they aren't emotionally prepared for. Using treats to lure puppies into getting closer to something they are afraid of can lead to them to feeling overwhelmed and trigger stacked being so close to the source of their fear. The result will likely be a bigger fear response. Instead, we want to use rewards when puppies are being curious about a stressor or being calm at a distance from something they're worried about.

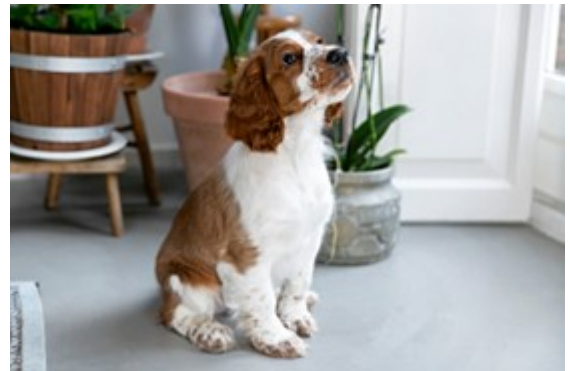
When to Look for Support

Fear periods can appear suddenly, cause a quick change in a puppy's behavior for a short amount of time (generally no more than two weeks). While some amount of fear is normal for a dog, if your puppy continues to be fearful of new situations, this may be a fear or anxiety issue that extends beyond a developmentally normal fear period.

Working with an experienced professional dog trainer specializing in fear issues can be beneficial. You'll also want to make an appointment with your dog's veterinarian to rule out any underlying health conditions. Getting professional support early can help give you and your puppy or dog the support necessary to help your puppy gain confidence and be less fearful.

Article URL—[How to Train Your Puppy Through Fear Periods in Puppyhood](#)

From the AKC website



Rosanne de Vries/Shutterstock

Tired of training outside?

Preparing for that big, noisy indoor show?



Need to do some fine-tuning in front of a big mirror?

Come enjoy climate-controlled comfort at our Indoor Training Facility!

J9sK9s is located in the west San Fernando Valley near Sherman Way and Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

Boasting "Agiliflex" rubber flooring, our 1600+ square feet of space and 35 feet of mirror are waiting for you and your canine pal to come train in!

We have obedience jumps, baby gates, crates and some agility equipment too.
Available to rent to individuals for just \$25 an hour.

Also available for pre-approved events and small groups at an additional cost.

Call 818-832-9906 for more information
www.j9sk9s.com

For AKC Agility Trials check the websites for:Lynda Tjarks [Home - Lynda Tjarks Agility Production](#)Jump City [Jump City Agility](#)Weekday Wing Ding Trials [Upcoming Trials – Weekday Wing Ding Agility Trials](#)**Calendar**

- Apr 12 – Poochability Match
- Apr 12 & 13 – Fast CAT at Acton Park [VCSWC April 12 & 13, 2025 FAST CAT TRIALS – Southern California Scent Work](#) (if room day, of entries accepted)
- ⇒ **April 13 – VHOC General Meeting with Picnic and Intro to Fast CAT to be held at Acton Park at the same time as the Fast CAT Trial**
- April 19-20 the GSDCSGV is holding another herding trial, this time "C" course and HT and PT (boundary) in Lancaster at Bel Cante. (closed)
- April 26/27—Ventura County Dog Fanciers Association - Scent Work Trial—Camarillo (Closes April 18)
- May 2, 3—Fast CAT at Action Park [VCSWC May 3 & 4, 2025 FAST CAT TRIALS – Southern California Scent Work](#)
- May 4—Hollywood Dog Obed Club—Obed and Rally Trial—Camarillo (Closes April 16th)
- May 10, 11 BDTC—Obed and Rally Trial—Camarillo (Closes April 23rd)
- May 17—Greater San Diego Basset Hound Club—Rally Trial - Anaheim (Closes April 30th)
- May 17/18- Scent Work Club of the San Gabriel Foothills—Scent Work Trial—Burbank (Closes April 29th)
- May 18—Southwest Obedience Club of Los Angeles, Inc. Obed/Rally Trial—Torrance (Closes April 30th)
- May 22 (Thurs) - Tri-Valley Working Dog Club of Pinon Hills Obed/Rally Trial—San Bernardino (Closes May 7)
- May 23, 24, 25, 26 AKC shows in San Bernardino with have Obed/Rally, closing on May 7th
- Fast CAT all 4 days—[GLASWC May 23 – 26, 2025 FAST CAT – Southern California Scent Work](#)
 - May 23—South Bay KC. May 24—Antelope Valley KC
 - May 25—Los Encinos KC. May 26 San Gabriel Valley KC
- May 31/June 1—Ventura County Dog Fanciers Association Scent Work Trial at Summer Fest in Ventura (Closes May 23rd)

All Trial Dates were taken from the AKC Events Page, many of the Trials have Premiums associated with them on the event pages. [American Kennel Club - Event Search](#)

Braggs

Monica Nolan with Augie and Rose

- At the 3/22-23 GSD Rally trial Rose came away with two triple Qs plus lots of RACH points. Augie stayed home and snoozed.
- At the 3/29 AKC agility trial, both dogs Q'd with first places in their respective Jumper classes - Novice and Masters. Rose also earned her **Novice Jumpers title (NAJ)**.
- At the 4/5 ASCA trial at Juniper Hills, Augie Q'd and was in the ribbons in 4 out of 6 Elite classes. Rose, despite some shenanigans, managed to get 1st place in 3 out of 6 Novice classes.



Laurie Burnam with Scusi and Tesla

March 14, 2025

AKC Fit Dog Bronze titles

Scusi Title #132

Tesla Title #72

German Shepherd Club of SGV, AKC Obedience and Rally Trials, Freedom Park, Camarillo, March 22/23, 2025

Tesla & Laurie

Rally Advanced 99 Q 1st place 1st leg

Rally Advanced 100 Q. 1st place 2nd leg

Novice B Obedience 194.5 2nd place 1st leg

Novice B Obedience 196.5 2nd place 2nd leg



Robyn Zelden and Crew

Crew Q'ed in Novice Buried, Containers and Interiors and earned his **Novice Interiors title** at the South Coast Vizsla Club Scent Work Trial on March 22.

Cynthia Binder and Rhea

HC PACH PAM-G Rhea vom Binderhaus: CGCA, CGCU, THDN, TKA, RATS, HCTs, HTD1s, HRD1s, HTAD1ds, RLF1s, FSSs, FSIs, FSXs, RM, BN, CD, CA, BCAT, HT, PT, HSAd, HIBs, HIDs, HXDs, HSAsM, HIAd, HIAsM, HXAd, HXAsM, HSCs, HXCsm, NA, AJP, AXP, PAX, MJP3, MXP4, MJPB, MXPS, XFP, TC, TDI, OFA H&E. Top 10 ATAA (Annual Training Achievement Award) dam for 2018, 2019, 2020,2021,2022, 2023 (in the GSDCA standings)

Rhea
Happy 11th Birthday



Rhae—Pictured doing CAT when younger



Braggs

Karen Ullman and Bowie

Bowie earned his first leg in Open Preferred Standard and placed 1st at the Tri-Valley Shetland Sheepdog Club trial on April 5th

Please Contact Me With All
Your Real Estate Needs Or Questions!




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Braggs



Nancy Smith and Izzy
Izzy earned her ASCA **Novice Regular Agility Standard (RS-N)** title in February, completing her three Novice ASCA agility titles



Nancy Smith and Echo
Echo earned her AKC **Master Excellent Jumpers Preferred** title in March.
Additionally,
Echo ran 100% clear at the AKC National Agility Championship in Tulsa, OK in March. She was 25th out of the 144 dogs competing in the 16-inch Preferred



Diane Schlesinger and Maple Cider

Six-month-old Maple Cider earned her first AKC titles at Goldie Palooza on April 6, 2025:

Novice Tricks and Intermediate Tricks.



Braggs



Cynthia Casby with Griff and Potter

Griff finished his **HSA**s title at the IEHDA herding trial on Saturday March 22 at Diamond Dogs.

Potter earned her second started leg at the same trial.

Kirsten Cole handled both dogs.



Different Dog Organizations

Now days there are so many things we can do with our dogs. There is just too much going on to be able to list all of the events or the superintendents.

Below are links to different organizations, the list isn't comprehensive and I'm sure I've missed some that people have been associated with. But it is a start.

AKC—[American Kennel Club - Event Search \(akc.org\)](http://www.akc.org)

ASCA (Australian Shepherd Club of America) —[Events Calendar- ASCA](http://www.asca.com)

NADAC—[The North American Dog Agility Council \(nadac.com\)](http://www.nadac.com)

USDAA—[Home | USDAA](http://www.usdaa.com)

Jump City Agility —[Jump City Agility](http://www.jumpcityagility.com)

Lynda Tjarks Agility—[Home - Lynda Tjarks Agility Production](http://www.lyndatjarks.com)

Weekday Wing Ding Dog Agility Trials (Stone Pony, Action Dog Sports)—[Upcoming Trials – Weekday Wing Ding Agility Trials \(wwdat.us\)](http://www.wwdat.us)

Jack Bradshaw - Dog Show Superintendents—[Jack Bradshaw - Dog Show Superintendents \(jbradshaw.com\)](http://www.jbradshaw.com)

Barn Hunt—[Barn Hunt Association](http://www.barnhunt.com)

National Association of Canine Scent Work—[NACSW | NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE SCENT WORK](http://www.nacsw.com)

AHBA—American Herding Breed Association—[Home - American Herding Breed Association \(ahba-herding.org\)](http://www.ahba-herding.org)

CPE—Canine Performance Events—[CPE | CPE DOG Canine Performance Events Home - Canine Performance Events](http://www.cpe.com)

UKC—United Kennel Club—[Home | United Kennel Club \(UKC\) \(ukcdogs.com\)](http://www.ukcdogs.com)

USCSS—United States Canine Scent Sports—[USCSS \(uscaninescentsports.com\)](http://www.uscaninescentsports.com)

World Canine Freestyle Organization (Dance)—[The World Canine Freestyle Organization – WCFO, Inc.](http://www.wcfo.com)

Dogs Can Dance—[DogsCanDance.com](http://www.dogs candance.com)

NASDA—North American Sport Dog Association—[North American Sport Dog Association – Celebrating Canine Versatility \(nasda.dog\)](http://www.nasda.dog)

International Dog Parkour Association—[Home | International Dog Parkour Association](http://www.idpa.com)

Love on a Leash—Therapy Dog— [Love On A Leash® – Volunteer pet therapy certification](http://www.loveloonaleash.com)



VHOC Training Classes

Obedience - Beginning Competitive - Thursday 6:30, Simi Valley

Obedience - Open / Utility Obedience—Thursday 7:45, Simi Valley

Instructor: Patti Rovtar, For more information, please contact Patti Rovtar at pattirovtar@gmail.com

Agility - Skills & Drills -

Skills and Drills I (Novice/Intermediate) Wednesdays 6:30 pm, Reseda

Skills and Drills II (Intermediate/Advanced) Mondays 7:00 pm, Reseda

Instructor: Olga Chaiko, For more information, please contact Ann at tonkanuki@aol.com

PLEASE CHECK WITH OUR INSTUCTORS FOR NEW CLASS START DATES

VHOC Website— <https://www.vhoc.org/copy-of-group-classes>

NEW Scent Work Classes

Continuing Nose Work (Intermediate—Advanced) - Mondays 6:30-7:30 Chatsworth

Contact Carole Hills for information—chills37@aol.com

Beginning Nose Work—Wednesday evenings in Moorpark

Contact Shiro Torquato for information—drshiro2000@gmail.com