



Muncie Obedience Training Club

## MOTC HONORS MEMBERS' ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2023



The annual MOTC Award Dinner was held Feb. 25 at the MOTC Clubhouse. Members in attendance shared a pot luck dinner, received plaques and applause as their accomplishments with their dogs were announced. Bobbi Siccardi did a

PowerPoint presentation of dog photos submitted



### Inside this issue:

President's Letter	2
Editorial	4
Behavior Chains	6
Braggs & Wags	5
Calendar	3



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

MARY-KAY SCHROEDER

Well Spring is finally here and I'm sure you are as happy as I am to have it arrive. Let's make the most of it and get out there with our dogs.

April has been an exciting month for many of us. We had that beautiful eclipse and that really was something to see. My girl Meme had 7 beautiful puppies that morning right before the eclipse. Indiana cooperated and we had perfect weather to see the eclipse.

Then not too long later one of our members rearranged our building. Yes we had a drive thru!!! We have a hole in the wall the size of a car, and one of our support beams was taken out. This happened the day Jonas was finishing up the addition to our building. So once again we will be under construction. The building has been inspected and is safe to use. We now need to wait for the estimates, and insurance companies to settle so that construction can once again begin.

And due to some of our members stepping up for our work day, the building was ready for us to host our April obedience and rally trials. A big thank you to Garnet, Chris Bragg, Eric, Rick and my husband Jerry with me.

The trials were a success and we had many compliments on the improvements to our building. Let us know if there is anything we can do to help you enjoy the club more? We are planning a cook out for our member meeting in June. Membership renewals will be out soon, sorry for the delay.

Hope to see everyone at the next member meeting,  
Mary-Kay  
President MOTC

### Slate of Candidates for 2024-2025 MOTC Board of Directors

Mary-Kay Schroeder, Rick Dalessandro, Therese Lattanzio, Jeann Crowcroft, Ann Wiggin

There were no nominations offered from the floor at the March members' meeting therefore the membership will vote whether or not to affirm this slate as board of directors to serve from 7/1/24-6/30/25.

## FRIDAY NIGHT TRAINING CONTINUES!

MOTC makes 30 min. training slots available by reservation on most Friday nights. MOTC members may reserve slots for free. Non-members pay \$10/slot and must sign a facility waiver and show proof that their dogs are current on shots; these are kept on file for one year. To view slot availability and get directions for reserving a slot visit [muncieobediencetrainingclub.blogspot.com](http://muncieobediencetrainingclub.blogspot.com).



### RENT-A-RING SCHEDULE

Both rings available

Obedience 9 am-1 pm, sign up at 8 am

Rally 1-4 pm, sign up at 12 pm

\$10 for 10 minutes, \$5 for 5 minutes

July 21

Sept 15

Nov 3

### UPCOMING EVENTS

6/9 MOTC member meeting 1 pm

6/22-23 MOTC Scent Work trial

6/24 Monday S.T.A.R. Puppy & Basic Obedience classes begin

7/9 Tuesday PM next Obedience sessions start

7/10 Wednesday AM next Obedience sessions start

7/21 Rent a ring

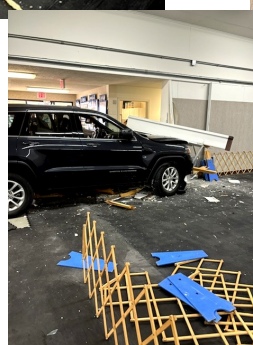
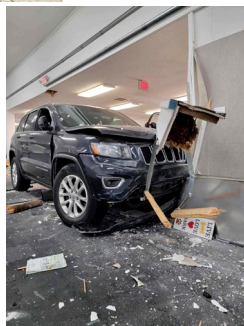
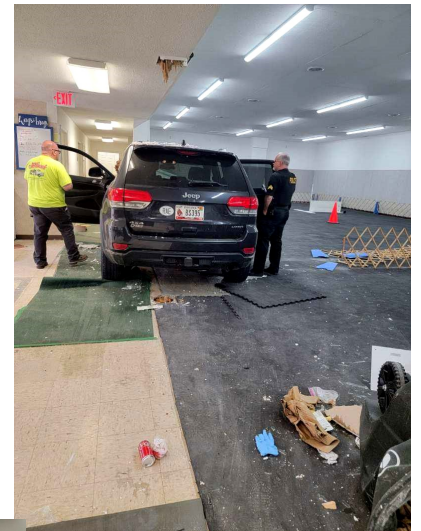
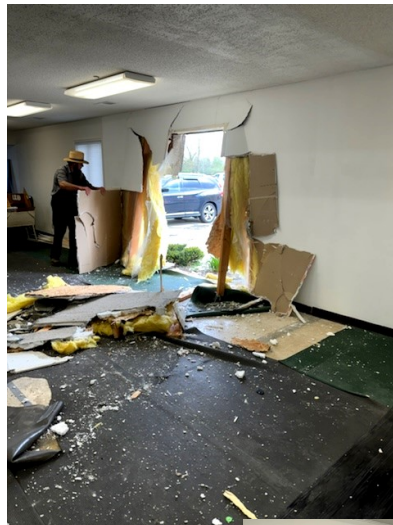
8/3-4 MOTC Scent Work trial

8/10 Saturday S.T.A.R. Puppy & Basic Obedience classes begin

8/19 Monday S.T.A.R. Puppy & Basic Obedience classes begin

### OOPS! CAR ATTEMPTS TO JOIN TRAINING CLASS

Just as construction was winding up before the April Rally and Obedience trial weekend there was excitement on a Wednesday morning when a club member accidentally drove their car into the building. Fortunately no humans or dogs were hurt, but it appears the car could have used a little training. Pictures featured with the member's permission.



## EDITYORIAL

### WORK SMARTER NOT HARDER

BK GRICE

Getting older is not for the faint of heart. Somehow I've managed to hurt my shoulder, not seriously, but enough that my movement needs to be careful and am painfully reminded if I reach my limit. I can type, use a computer mouse, walk; but lying in certain positions, turning my head, or movement that tightens my shoulder and/or neck muscles I am trying to avoid. With cold packs, rest, and aspirin, I am confident I'll be back to normal in a few days, but I remember a time when I would bounce back much sooner. Those of you around my age or older probably already realize that you learn to do things smarter rather than harder as much as possible. At a puppy class earlier this week I was reminded how much my training methods have changed in the past 20 years. I no longer fight dogs in classes; struggling to hold an exuberant adolescent German Shepherd mix to help an owner work with it. Instead I use a clicker or verbal marker and toss treats; teaching the dog that if it stands quietly and looks at me or maybe sits, I will toss it a treat. I like making the dogs think, and if I can get a dog to think, then I can usually get it to work for me. The owner, who has been struggling to get the dog under control, is sometimes amazed and sometimes relieved that by standing quietly and tossing treats I get their dogs to stand or sit quietly, watching me. I've learned to train smarter, not harder.

Many of our current club members have been members for several years, are paying senior dues, and are getting older. We need to work smarter rather than harder. One of the things we need to do is focus on membership. Certainly recruitment is important, but so is retention. It does little good to get new members who leave after a year or two. We harp a lot about not having enough volunteers when maybe it's not that people need to volunteer more but that the pool we pull our volunteers from (the membership roll) needs to be larger. Why do people join MOTC? What are they looking for, expecting? Why do people fail to remain members? Do they feel unwelcome? Do they feel used? Are their needs and expectations being met? If you've been a member for awhile you may know how to get around the jumps and hoops of working with the club and where the dead ends are. Just because we've been doing things a certain way (with all the hoops, jumps, and dead ends) doesn't mean it's the best way. We need to work smarter, not harder. We need to get younger members interested, involved, and motivated to stay or MOTC may not be around another 78 years.



## BRAGS & WAGS

Chris Ashmore-Good's dogs completed totals this quarter. Obi, German Shepherd, finished his Rally Advanced title under Nancy Grim at Queen City, to be followed by his first Rally Advanced leg at MOTC's April show. Lexi, Great Dane, finished her Rally Novice title under Kenneth Kincaid at MOTC's April trial.

Mary Ann Mattingly's Whippets were active. Sonic passed the Canine Good Citizen-Urban test, got his first Rally Excellent leg with a 3rd place, got his first Obedience Novice leg, and placed 17th of 52 in the Whippet Triathlon. The Triathlon consists of Lure Coursing, Obedience, and Conformation. Risky passed his Canine Good Citizen-Urban test, placed 2nd in Lure Coursing Singles, and got his first Rally Novice let at his first trial.

BK Grice's Perry, Shetland Sheepdog, completed his Rally Novice title with 3rd place with a score of 100 and an insurance leg with 2nd place and a 99. He also finished his Obedience Beginner Novice title with a 3rd place for both his qualifying leg and his insurance leg.

Laura Beth and her dogs, *Into the Storm* and *Thunder Rolls*, participated in a "Meet the Breeds" event hosted by the Evansville Obedience Club in Evansville, IN on March 23. The event organizer noticed Storm's success in the Rally ring and considered her a prime candidate to showcase and help bring attention to some of the rarer breeds. "It was great to showcase our breed to a group of people who wouldn't normally get a chance to see a Black and Tan Coonhound in person at an obedience club," Laura said. The event was a huge success with numerous amounts of "Oh I just love their ears!" and a few "My dad used to hunt with coonhounds" from the public in attendance.



Chris & Lexi getting a new title ribbon from Ken Kincaid



Chris and Obi getting a new title ribbon from Nancy Grim



Perry sporting his Obedience new title and placement bling...



Laurabeth and Storm at Meet the Breeds



...and his Rally new title and placement bling.

## BEHAVIOUR CHAINS

### BK GRICE

Have you heard of behavior chains? Behavior chains occur all around us all the time. Being aware of them can help you train your dog and offer help when training problems occur.

A behavior chain is a series of behaviors that occur in the same order every time, often as the result of a single cue. For example, in the retrieve on flat, your dog is cued to get the dumbbell and he then runs to the dumbbell, picks it up, carries it back to you, sits in front of you with it, and holds it until you tell him to release it. You might teach the retrieve by front chaining: teaching the dog to go to the dumbbell, then go to the dumbbell and pick it up, then go to the dumbbell to pick it up and carry it to you. You also might teach the retrieve by back chaining: teaching the dog to hold the dumbbell, then to hold the dumbbell while sitting at front, then to carry the dumbbell to you and front with it, then to pick the dumbbell up and carry it to you to front with it. In front chaining the dog is moving from behaviors it's practiced a lot to those it has less experience with. Front chaining is how most of us learn the alphabet; we recite the first few letters quickly but slow as we get to the end. In back chaining the dog is moving from less familiar behaviors to those it has more experience with. Back chaining is like driving back home from a trip as you encounter familiar landmarks.

Each behavior (link) in a chain cues the next one to occur: going to the dumbbell cues to pick it up, picking it up cues to carry it back to you, carrying it back to you cues the front. Each link in a chain also reinforces/rewards the one before it: sitting at front with the dumbbell (where praise or food may occur) reinforces carrying the dumbbell to you, carrying the dumbbell to you reinforces picking the dumbbell up, picking the dumbbell up reinforces going to the dumbbell. If problems develop in the chain (a break), looking at the cues and reinforcers may help you fix it. If the dog stops picking up the dumbbell, you might start with checking the dog's mouth for injuries and the dumbbell for burrs that might hurt. You the might check the link that cues the dog to pick up the dumbbell (running to the dumbbell); is picking up the dumbbell reinforcing going to it? You might also check the link that reinforces picking up the dumbbell (carrying it to you); is carrying it to you rewarding to the dog?

Behavior chains occur all the time, all around us. The complex things we teach our dogs to do are often chains. When teaching a chain you might start at the beginning and work toward the end, or you might it better to start and the end and work toward the beginning. Understanding how chains work can help fix them when problems occur. Understanding how chains work can help your training.





Muncie Obedience Training Club is a 501c3 non-profit organization that has been part of the Muncie, Indiana community since 1946.

Our mission is to teach people to be responsible dog owners and canine companion sport participants and hold events that demonstrate the benefits of dog training.

We do this by holding classes, seminars, Canine Good Citizen tests, and amateur dog trials in sports like Obedience, Rally, and Scent Work.