



CALIFORNIA BRITTANY CLUB

“The Brittany Forever a Dual Dog”

NOTHING IS AS IT EVER WAS...

Greetings my friends and neighbors from our socially distanced situation. I hope all finds you and your families well and healthy as we contend with the COVID-19 Pandemic situation. It has had a profound effect on all of us as we set about to a new norm for our lives. This blight upon our health has created great turmoil around the world of which we're all too aware. It too is impacting our club's activities. Since the entire state of California is under a "Safer-At-Home" Order, many of our normal behaviors have had to be altered. Many events, especially those which include the gathering of 10 or more people are prohibited. As a result, all AKC events are cancelled through at least July to include the upcoming Mission Circuit and our 2020 CBC Specialty. This unfortunate circumstance is just one of many cancellations we all must contend with as we practice social distancing to flatten the curve and mitigate the rage of COVID-19.

Hand-in-Hand with the Specialty Show is our Semi-Annual General Membership Meeting as well as our 2019 Annual Dog of the Year Awards. In lieu of our typical meeting after the specialty and conformation events, we will host a virtual meeting. This is an opportunity for of us to still gather but do so safely by way of their phones, computers, tablets or almost any other connected device. We will hold the General Membership Meeting at 2:00 pm on May 24, 2020 followed immediately with the announcement of the Dog of the Year Awards. Connecting to this event is easy...and FREE!!!!

Free Conference Call: (605) 475-4835 • Access Code: 977356
or on your computer, tablet or other internet connected device:
<https://www.freeconferencecall.com/free-teleconferencing-service>
Meeting ID: cbc_spring_2020

It is unfortunate that we won't get to join together to enjoy each other over a great lunch with cake and fellowship, but we can still enjoy our gathering and celebrate our

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wonderful club, the accomplishments of our Brittany's and their owners. Additionally, as a part of this General Membership Meeting we will be voting on a slate of new officers for the Board of Directors. Your participation is important to the Club and I encourage everyone to make the effort to let your voice be heard. An agenda will be sent out prior to the General Membership Meeting to include a list of nominated officers. I am looking forward to hearing all of you at our meeting.

PERFORMANCE BRITTANYS

After a long break for travel (finally crossed off #1 bucket list item, expedition ship cruise to Antarctica), family, holidays, etc., Rowan and I finally hit the road again. We went to our first scent work trial in several months with mixed results. In the buried

competition she literally turned up her nose (oh, smell all the wildlife in the brush next to the competition area, Mom!) and ignored all of the hides. In the exterior search she quickly found the first hide and then went gopher/ground squirrel hunting for the remaining time. Alas, I just wanted to make sure she was tuned up for the Excellent level searches, but I'm ready to go home. Never say never. She turned to the Interior searches and performed well both days, placing sixth on Saturday and second on Sunday. The container search was also in a tough wind condition but she persevered and found all three hides in 2 minutes, 20 seconds. Not her best effort, but good for a fourth place finish and the second leg on that title.

Sensing that she is getting bored with essential oils used in AKC nosework, I thought I would give barn hunt a try. After driving two hours Tuesday evening for the nearest class that I could locate, we found ourselves with a sink-or-swim philosophy trainer. The arena was set up with about 20 bales of hay, stacked loosely and also forming several tunnels. Three canisters were placed in the area, one containing a live rat. This should be fun! I thought, since Rowan loves climbing all over and under things, and catches rats and gophers in the yard with no assistance. Instead of introducing her to the canisters and rats, the instructor had me take her into the arena and turn her loose, telling me to give her a command other than the one I use in scent work searches. OK, "Find the rat", I said. Rowan briefly looked at me as if to say, "Do what?", and then ran to the perimeter fence, beyond which multiple wild rabbits were running in plain sight. "This way," I told Rowan, which actually is a command she



Get to Know the Brittany: A True Celebrity of the Dog World

<https://www.dogster.com/lifestyle/dog-breeds-brittany-spaniel-dogs-pictures-photos>

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understands, at which point she trotted over, glanced at the correct canister, and resumed rabbit hunting. We tried again a little later, when she clearly said she was done with things in containers and wanted bunnies! We're looking for another venue to start over.

The strangest characteristic I have found with my first multi-purpose Brittany is that she is the first dog I have ever had in my 70 years of dog owning who doesn't think "come" is a priority. When I take her out on a run in the fields, she is beautiful to observe, racing from side to side, over hill and dale, etc., periodically checking to see where I am, but refusing to come back until she is good and ready. I finally gave in and found a trainer that I trust and respect who introduced me to the e-collar. Obviously, lots of people use them and I see them on hunting dogs all the time, but it was something I never thought I would resort to. Wow! Did I have that wrong. By the end of the first lesson Rowan was coming happily and quickly while dragging the long line and with the collar on but not being used. Now I can confidently take her for a run off leash and rarely have to press the button.

My take from all of this is a reminder to new Brittany owners, or participants in a new dog sport... find an experienced mentor to help you along the way. Also, to all of you experienced Brittany people, in whatever fields you participate... Please be that mentor to those of us who are still learning, so we don't get frustrated and give up. The Brittany community is so welcoming and supportive, but it can be hard to know where to start!

Don't forget to send me your stories and brags about those great performance Brittanys at jeanganton@aol.com.

- Jean Anton, Performance Chairman <jeanganton@aol.com>

MORE FROM JEAN...

Anyone who says dogs don't have a good memory for places is crazy! After my experience at the beginning of March, I can testify to that. I think I told you about the barn hunt introductory class in which Rowan ignored tubes filled with live rats in favor of lots of wild bunnies hopping all around outside the perimeter of the hunt area. Then I was silly enough to take her to the same location three days later and try to compete in a scent work trial. Well, at least she did earn the second leg in her Container Excellent title, but she was quite capable of finishing both that title and her Buried Excellent title, if I had picked a better site. She definitely hadn't forgotten the bunnies. Then, since the rest of our competitions for the month were canceled or

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postponed due to the coronavirus, I decided to take her the next weekend to practice her scent work locally. Where did we go? To the nearest high school, which would have made sense, except that she had, some months earlier, had a glorious time racing around the athletic fields. We were practicing in the front of the school, and the athletic fields are out of sight at the far end of the property, but Rowan knew exactly where they were, and made every effort to lead me back there by any route possible. She may not have learned much that day, but I learned that school will be forever designated as a running location.

Since we can't go to classes or events during the stay-at-home orders, we've been looking for other ways to stay sharp and entertained. Maybe you have done some of the same games with your buddies. Some are scent work related, some just plain fun.

First, of course, I set up scent work searches, but with a few twists. I left Rowan outside while I hid 6 hides for her to find (she normally finds three or four in a single search). Instead of making one type of hide, I used tins stuck to elevated spots, hidden underneath things, and in all types of household containers, boxes, suitcases, under beds, on bookshelves, etc., all through the house, upstairs and down. I didn't use Rowan's scent work harness or long line, but, when I let her in I told her to "search". She sniffed like crazy in every room without any prompting or directing, and found every hide in a remarkably short time! We've since done similar extended searches outside, which include the garage and back yard, utilizing buried, container, and other objects, with the same excitement and success.

The other type of searching game we have played surprised me even more. I frequently ask her to find her ball so we can play a game of fetch, but I discovered that I can show her an object we have never played with, give it a name (she probably doesn't care about that but it makes me feel better), tell her to stay while I go hide it somewhere in the house, tell her to find it, and she will! Of course, once in a while she comes across something else she likes and brings it instead, but when I decline it she will go back out and look for the correct item.

The final game was introduced to me by my friend, and fellow Brittany owner, Noah. This one will be a no-brainer for everyone who does water retrieves, but for the rest of us it is interesting to see how our dogs react. Noah calls it "snorkeling for cheese". You fill a good-sized bowl with three inches of water. With your dog sitting in front of you, you drop five cubes of cheese into the bowl and tell the dog "ok" or "get it", or whatever command you choose. The idea of the game, as Noah perceived it, was a competition to see which dog could pick up all five cheese cubes the fastest. Rowan really wanted that cheese but was clearly puzzled by the water. She tried stomping on the cheese to get it up but, when that didn't work, she just plunged her head into the

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bowl and got all five cubes in seconds. The funniest part was that, of all the dogs in our training group, only the two Brittanys were willing to put their heads under water to retrieve the prize!

I'd love to hear what kinds of games the rest of you are playing with your dogs during our confinement. Stay healthy and happy!

Jean Anton

P.S., I did hear last night that my French Brittany friend, Nero, recently earned his excellent containers and excellent handler discrimination titles. Many congratulations to him!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Board of Directors Meeting	May 6, 2020	7:00 pm via Telecon
General Membership Meeting & 2019 Annual Dog of the Year Awards	May 24, 2020	2:00 pm via Telecon

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

We are looking for Volunteers to join the 2020/2021 Board of Directors. A member of the Nominating Committee will be reaching out to solicit and vet member candidates. With the realignment changes approved at the May 2019 General Membership Meeting, CBC officer terms are two years and are offset for continuity's sake. This coming year there will be vacancies for President, 2nd Vice President and Treasurer. Jeri and I will not be running for any club offices. Other board members, 1st Vice President (Ed Moody), 3rd Vice President (Christa Wedel) and Secretary (Kris Sandberg) will serve out terms through June 2021. I look forward to a new and energized leadership team and encourage all members to consider the opportunity to lead and drive positive change for our Club.

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

We are always looking to brag about our accomplishments...I can't brag on you if you don't first brag to me. So, please send me your accomplishments, victories...adventures. Also, if you'd like to share something with our fellow members, feel free to become a contributing editor/author. Pass on your great stories to our members.

v/r Kurt Conklin, President
California Brittany Club

CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kurt Conklin, President
Ed Moody, 1st Vice President
Vacant, 2nd Vice President

Christa Wedel, 3rd Vice President
Kris Sandberg, Secretary
Jeri Conklin, Treasurer

Past Presidents: Linda McDonald, Ed Dixon, Bill Leffingwell and Sheri Harder

CBC Website: <https://www.californiabrittanyclub.org>

CBC Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaBrittanyClub/>

