



Autumn upon Eagle Creek/10C



Theatre opens with comedy/3C



Thanksgiving cheat sheet/4C



Group leader Julie Wunderlich shows Coalton Herrera, 10, how to train his seven-month-old miniature heeler, Angus, to lay down recently during a meeting of the Round-Up City Barkers 4-H group in Pendleton. Staff photo by E.J. Harris

— A TIME OF — HEELING

Kids trained to keep dogs in line

By ANTONIO SIERRA
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Given that it was brimming with untrained dogs, the banquet hall at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Pendleton was surprisingly civil.

Before the Round-Up City Barkers 4-H Dog Club started class, instructor Julie Wunderlich had the kids and their dogs warm up by walking in a circle.

While little could be heard except the sound of padded paws on hardwood and the gentle admonishments from young dog owners, a four-year-old dog named Kiah would occasionally break the quiet with barks directed at her classmates.

When the barking failed to cease, Wunderlich took the leash from owner Clare Durant, firmly told Kian to stop before switching tones to praise her when she went quiet.

Positive reinforcement following strict



Clare Durant, 13, pets the head of the four-year-old border collie, Kiah, while working on obedience training with the Round-Up City Barkers 4-H group recently in Pendleton. Staff photo by E.J. Harris



Boone, a two-year-old lab, comes to her owner Macy Rosselle, 13, while practicing long recalls. Staff photo by E.J. Harris



Asia Tachella, 12, scratches the belly of her four-month-old Brittany spaniel, Nyxie, during obedience training. Staff photo by E.J. Harris



Callie, 3, a border collie-Walker hound mix, stares up at her owner Parker Feller, 10. Staff photo by E.J. Harris

discipline became a theme for the night as Wunderlich ran through the basics of sitting, walking and heeling.

"If they don't get their 'good girls,' then it's a bad thing," she told the class. "Unless they're boys and then they get their 'atta boys.'"

Wunderlich said the hardest part of teaching these classes was resisting the urge to take the leash herself. And besides the earlier incident with Kiah, Wunderlich stayed mostly hands-off with the canines.

As a teenager and young adult, Wunderlich showed dogs in obedience competitions.

After putting aside dog training to raise a family, she got reinvolved in it after 4-H officials asked her to take over the Round-Up City Barkers after several years without a leader.

Six years later, Wunderlich said her greatest satisfaction is seeing the incremental improvement kids make each year from sticking with the program.

While one of the main goals is to have the kids show their dogs in obedience competitions, another goal is to have the dogs pass the American Kennel Club Good Canine Citizen test.

The exam measures dogs on various tenets

of obedience like sitting, coming when called and accepting a friendly stranger.

Many club members want to start showing their dogs, but kids and parents alike were eager to turn their gregarious companions into better behaving animals.

Two-year-old Tobv is one of the largest participants in the class, but it's hard to say the same for his owner, Sarah Tachalla.

Her mother, Michelle, was originally concerned Toby would be too much for the diminutive Sarah, but her fears haven't materialized yet and she's already seen some progress.

"We're looking forward to having an obedient dog," Michelle said.

Throughout the beginners class, L'Rissa Sohappy helps some of the younger kids with the basics.

At 16 years old, Sohappy has been a member of the Barkers for years. Working with the younger children reminds her of how far she's come since she started participating in 4-H.

She recently retired her previous dog from showing and is introducing a new dog, Shy, to obedience training.

While Shy may be new, he certainly doesn't look it.

During the expert portion of the class, Wunderlich tries her best to distract Shy, rolling around a toy duck and waving a plastic bag.

Shy barely budes, which is a victory for the dog and his owner.

Running the Barkers isn't always easy.

After the Pendleton School District started renovating its facilities as a part of its bond project, Wunderlich was forced to move the Barkers to the smaller banquet hall at the Church of the Redeemer.

Without a consistent source of income, Wunderlich is also in constant fundraising mode so that club members have the right leashes and collars to train with.

But when dogs from the Barkers score better at obedience competitions or on the canine citizen test, Wunderlich said it makes it worth all the effort.

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