



WALLOWA COUNTY'S NEWEST SPORT

K9 'nose work' training planned



Ellen Bishop/For the Chieftain

Lola Johnson rewards her dog, Zita, for locating the target scent during an outdoor Nose Work trial.

The Wallowa County Humane Society will introduce the new sport of K9 Nose Work to Wallowa County with an affordable two-day workshop in Joseph Sept. 15-16.

"We want to help dog owners engage with their dogs," said Carol Vencill, president of the society. "Whether it's young dogs or old dogs, big or

N. River Street, Enterprise.

The sport challenges dogs to find hidden scents. It is similar to, but less demanding than, search and rescue work or detection of explosives or contraband. The sport of Nose Work was founded in the late '90s by three trainers experienced in these fields, who saw an opportunity for every dog and owner to seek a closer relationship.

confidence in dogs," Beithan said. "It's really the easiest dog sport for the human end of the leash. People learn to understand their dogs better, and to read their body language, and then just stay out of the way. The most important thing is to keep it easy. Dogs never get tired of being successful."

The two-day workshop is divided into four three-hour sessions each of the two days.

'Whether it's young dogs or old dogs, big or little, it's a fun sport that owners and dogs can do together, and dogs can use that wonderful sense of smell...'

Carol Vencill

president of the Wallowa County Humane Society

little, it's a fun sport that owners and dogs can do together, and dogs can use that wonderful sense of smell that nature gave them."

Workshop organizer Lola Johnson has more than seven years experience in Nose Work. She has won multiple awards with her dog, Zita, and is starting a younger dog, Sissi, in Nose Work. She plans to develop a Nose Work club that will offer practice sessions and additional training.

Johnson, Zita, and Sissi will be on hand to demonstrate and answer questions 7 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 28, at the Wallowa County Humane Society, 104

Nose Work is a recognized canine sport governed by the National Association of Canine Scent Work, with certified instructors and judges and contests across the U.S. and Canada, Australia, Japan and Sweden.

Nose Work training begins with dogs finding treats hidden in boxes and progresses to more difficult "finds," including work indoors, outdoors and around vehicles.

Certified K9 Nose Work trainer Joyce Beithan, of Ridgefield, Wash., will conduct the September workshop at Carol Vencill's barn in Joseph. "Nose Work really builds

The cost is \$30 for the first session, and \$20 for each additional training session. These additional sessions will be designed to help build additional skills in each participating dog.

Information sheets and registration forms are available at The Wallowa County Humane Society, 104 N. River St., Enterprise, as well as The Dog Spot in Joseph, The Bookloft and Wallowa County Grain Growers in Enterprise and Main Street Feed and Supplies in Wallowa.

Info: Carol Vencill 541-432-1630 or Joyce Beithan 206-819-7297.

'I like everything about it.'

— **Claire Farwell**, 15-year-old Enterprise High School sophomore who plays for the Wallowa Valley Cubs

Softball is Farwell's sport

Summer season with Lightning team wraps

By **Steve Tool**

Wallowa County Chieftain

Claire Farwell loves softball, and she doesn't care who knows it.

Although a three-sport athlete who also competes in volleyball and basketball, softball is her favorite. The 15-year-old Enterprise High School sophomore plays for the Wallowa Valley Cubs combined high school team as well as summer softball in La Grande.

"I like everything about it," she said. "I like the team aspect where I can contribute — and win," she said with a laugh. "I've put more time into it than either basketball or volleyball."

Farwell played summer softball with La Grande's Union County Lightning team, getting plenty of practical experience under her belt. She's been playing summer ball in Union County for several years and is also the only returning high school softball

player who played summer ball.

"We didn't have a Juniors team here when I was in junior high, and I really wanted to play softball," she said. "Jeff Edison (Cubs assistant coach) got me a tryout with the 14-year-olds (La Grande team) when I was 12. I knew I wasn't going to make the team, but the coach from the U-12 team called me that spring and said, 'Hey, do you want to play?' I was like — yeah."

She noted the difference between high school and summer ball.

"I think summer ball is more competitive," she said. "You see teams that aren't that good, but you also see teams that can beat our high school team or stand with them pretty easily."

The Union team, which recently ended its season, traveled extensively. Its last tournament was in Selah, Wash., near Yakima, and they played as far south as Boise and Fruitland, Idaho.

The Lightning team did well, placing second in several high-profile tournaments.

She doesn't have a preference for either of the two teams

for which she plays.

"I like my teammates on both teams," she said. "They're different age groups, and the coaches on my teams are both really good."

Farwell credits her parents, Lisa and Troy Farwell, for supporting her success, including driving her to practice.

"My parents are very committed to me," she said. "Since I'm only 15, I only have my driver's permit, so I usually drive home from practice, because I don't want to be stressed about getting there late."

She practices with the team in La Grande once or twice a week depending on tournament schedules.

On top of that, she also works at Wallowa Lake cleaning vacation cabins.

"I stay pretty busy," she said with a laugh.

Farwell plays multiple positions but generally is at second base or shortstop, and she even pitches on the Cubs JV team, although she's particularly fond of the catcher's position.

"I really enjoy catching; I can be in on every play," she said. "I don't like pitching that much because it's pretty

stressful."

She added she was most comfortable at second base because she spends the majority of her time at the slot.

The summer season ended, but Farwell is looking ahead and has already tried out to play for next year's team.

"I'm thinking I made it because it's the same coach, and he's probably going to want the same team," she said.

Farwell plans to play the sport through her high school years but isn't yet sure about playing at the college level.

"I feel like college sports are just stressful from people I've talked to," she said. "You don't have a college life. I might look into it, though, because I really enjoy it."

She hasn't decided on a career yet, but is considering teaching or orthodontics.

"My mom's a teacher, and I like kids, but I haven't looked at colleges yet," she said.

Farwell said that the next season with the Cubs may provide some opportunities for her to branch out.

"I think we lost seven seniors, and that was about half our team," she said. "It's leaving a lot of slots open."



Submitted photo

Enterprise High School sophomore Claire Farwell at her favorite softball position, catcher. The three-sport EHS athlete also plays summer softball for the Union County Lightning team because of her love for the game.

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