

## President's Message

*I would like to thank all the members for there hard work and time, putting on our show. It cannot be done without the members coming together and contributing. I think this Show Cluster Weekend is one of the best in the state and we should all be proud to be part of the Lizard Butte Club.*

*Rick*

## Steps Showing a Dog To Success "SET 'EM UP!"

Most people think a dog is "conformation trained" if she walks on a leash and doesn't sit or bite the judge. The pros know that training a dog for the Specials ring is, in fact, as complicated as training a dog for Utility. The more a dog knows about how to do her job in the ring, the closer she is to that elusive "Ch" title.

### EASY BEGINNINGS

To begin, the dog needs to be ready to work, standing up, willing to be handled in all her parts, facing your right hand, understanding the clicker, and wanting treats. Only one part of that is within the bounds of this article, and that's "standing up".

We teach pups to sit - nothing wrong with that, but for showing, we ALSO have to teach the pup to be comfortable standing up. Don't get fancy - observe the butt in the air, click, treat. Are her front feet even? Back feet even? Head up? Who cares? Click and treat when her feet are down and her hips and elbows up. What do we call this behaviour? Don't call it anything. First, it isn't an end behaviour, it's just a beginning. Second, conformation is a dance cued with subliminal signals. We'll speak to the dog with our bodies, not our voices.

### HAND STACKING

Hand stacking is the art of physically placing the dog's feet in the best position. Determining the best position for each dog's feet is as individual as the dog is, but there are a few things that remain constant.

You don't control the dog's feet until you control her head. Stick this on your fridge: **you do not control the dog until you control her head.** If you have a small dog, put her on a grooming table. A medium to large dog will do best standing on a pause table. You can work this with the dog on the ground, but you can see her feet better with her up higher. Another tip - conformation is a sport of inches. You'll be moving her head an inch to the right or left. Her foot will move an inch forward or back. Subtlety is the key to a polished performance. Start with the dog standing in front of you, facing your right hand. Take her muzzle in your right hand. Click and treat. Repeat until she's comfortable with you holding her muzzle while she stands unresisting in front of you. Now hold her muzzle and move her head to her left. If she goes with the pressure, click and treat.

[www.dragonflyllama.com](http://www.dragonflyllama.com) Sue Ailsby, Mind to Mind Training and Steps To Success clicking.

### CONFORMATION STACKING 1

You will want to evenly stack on her right and left front feet. As you move her head to the left, her weight shifts more to her left foot, taking the pressure off her right. When you move her head to her right, she'll have more weight on her right foot and less on her left. That's what we want... or mentally, you don't control the dog's body until you control her head.