

The Monthly Mutt

the official newsletter for Rockin' E Training and Consulting

Winter 2016



"Our philosophy is to build harmony and understanding between owners and their companion animals by using positive methods and education."

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Meet the trainer: Michaela McKay



Michaela McKay, Rockin' E assistant dog trainer, and her shepherd mix, Kaiah.

Growing up with a father in the army, Michaela McKay never lived in one place for long. Born in Germany and living everywhere from Korea to Colorado Springs, she didn't have a chance to own a dog either.

"Moving around a lot I had to wait for what felt like forever to have a dog," Michaela said. "I was always volunteering at animal shelters, and I pet-sat and dog-walked for neighbors to get as much animal time as possible."

At 16, Michaela began volunteering at a veterinary clinic and was able to observe and assist in the care of the animals there. She also helped out with grooming.

"That's one great way to learn to observe and predict a dog's behavior," Michaela said.

After graduating high school, Michaela came to Laramie to attend the University of Wyoming, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in criminal justice and in psychology. She also began taking her shepherd mix, Kaiah, to classes at Rockin' E; a decision which would eventually lead to her being hired as a trainer there.

"One day during classes I mentioned off-hand that I had been looking into working with dogs more," Michaela said. "Jenny (Williams) said that she would speak with the other owners and see if there was a possibility of me moving forward with them."

The owners decided to invite Michaela in for an interview, and she was then brought on as an assistant-in-training. In order to become a full-fledged assistant dog trainer, Michaela had to log a certain amount of observation hours, in which she sat-in on multiple class sessions led by the professional trainers at Rockin' E.

"By observing different classes and different trainers, you become more aware of how to

handle a variety of situations," Michaela said.

In addition to hours of observation, Michaela learned about the "paperwork" side of Rockin' E. She was also eventually able to participate in demonstrations with dogs during classes.

"In this way, the trainer and the assistant trainer can observe you and offer feedback as you continue to learn," Michaela said. "When you move out of this stage, you graduate to a full assistant for Rockin' E."

When it comes to working for a company like Rockin' E, Michaela says there are numerous things which set them apart from similar companies.

"The focus here is on learning to understand each other for a deeper bond and a more harmonious life together."

"They have a passion for science-based training through positive reinforcement," she said. "This approach has not only been proven to be the most effective, but also the most humane. The focus here is on learning how to understand each other for a deeper bond and a more harmonious life together."

Now married and with two dogs at home, Michaela can certainly vouch for the positive impact a strong bond with your pets can have.

She is also thankful for the support from her family at Rockin' E. When Michaela was diagnosed with lymphoma last fall, her coworkers stepped up to cover her classes and dog sit when she was out of town for treatments.

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“Meet Michaela”

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“They also went above and beyond by organizing a fundraiser on my behalf to help with medical expenses,” Michaela said. “They were absolutely amazing.”

Now back to working at Rockin’ E, Michaela is an assistant trainer in the Advanced Aristotles and Early Einsteins classes. She has also assisted with the Canine Good Citizenship class and with agility training.

Michaela says her most memorable experiences have come from working with dogs who come in to the facility for one-on-one behavioral training.

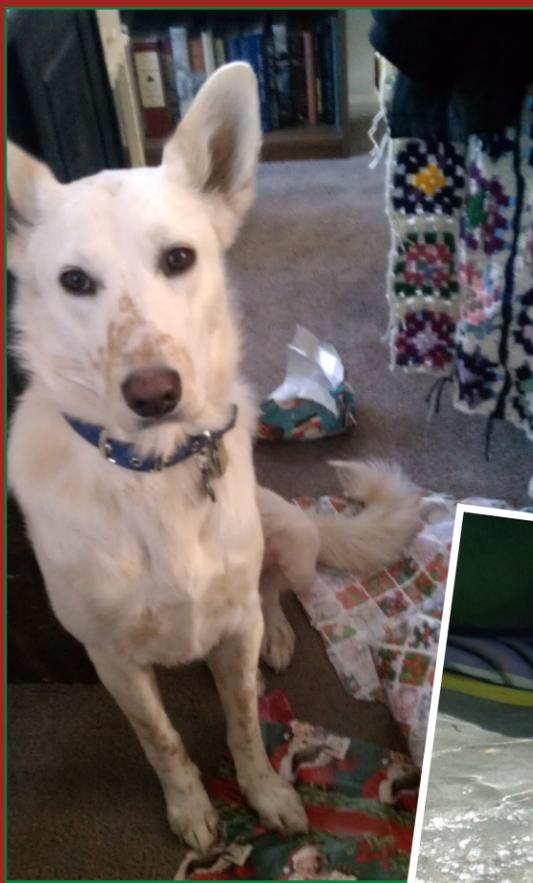
“Since I have my own dog with nervous tendencies, I tend to gravitate towards shy dogs and I focus on building a relationship with them to help build their confidence,” she said. “That always makes me feel successful...being able to assist with and observe the progress that owner-dog teams make together is so amazing!”

Another of Michaela’s favorite things about being a trainer at Rockin’ E is the exposure she gets to all different dog breeds.

“When I was a kid, I spent hours upon hours pouring over my dog breeds book, attempting to memorize every little fact I could,” she said. “To have the privilege of meeting breeds that I wouldn’t have met otherwise has just been so enjoyable, and such a learning experience.”

When she isn’t at Rockin’ E or working with her own dogs, Michaela volunteers at the local animal shelter, spends time outdoors, reads books, watches Disney movies, and enjoys game nights with her friends. She has lived in Laramie for seven years now, which is three times longer than she has lived anywhere else in her life. For now, she seems content to stay here and to enjoy the friendships she has made through her time with Rockin’ E.

“It’s such a wonderful community which focuses on growth, patience and positivity,” Michaela said. “I’m just so appreciative of the opportunities I have had so far, and will continue to have, as part of the Rockin’ E family.”



*Michaela's
pups, Timber
& Kaiah!*



Happy Howl-idays!



Helpful tips for keeping your dog safe and happy throughout the most wonderful time of the year:



Some holiday plants, such as holly, miseltoe and poinsettas are dangerous for dogs to ingest, so make sure to keep them out of reach.



Electrical cords tend to multiply during the holidays! Keep an eye on your pup to make sure he doesn't chew on them.



Burning candles can be a serious safety hazard. Make sure they aren't in a place where your dog could knock them over!



Tinsel and tree needles, both real and artificial, can be dangerous to your dog if ingested. It's a good idea to move your tree somewhere where your dog does not have access to it.



In a house with a dog, it's a good idea to avoid edible decorations like popcorn or cranberries. Your dog might knock over your tree to get to them!

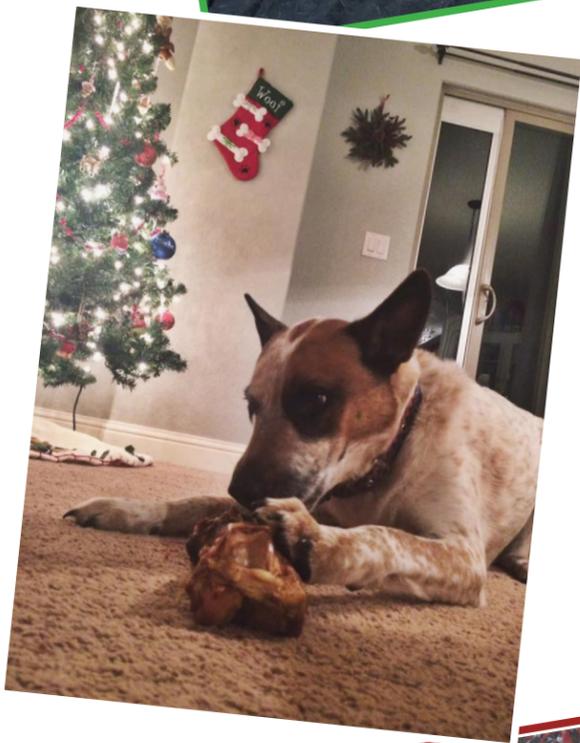


When it comes to gifts for your pup, look out for small plastic toys or other objects which pose potential choking hazards. Wrapping paper: your dog will likely want to rip it up! Just be sure he doesn't ingest any of it.



Your house can get crowded this time of year. Pay attention to the comfort level of your dog and make sure he has a safe space to escape the holiday chaos if needed.

Rockin' E Dog Training & Consulting presents Holiday Photo Corner!



Class Offerings

(sessions typically begin every 6-7 wks)

CANINE CONDITIONING: learn to use FitPAWS brand equipment to strengthen both your dog's body and mind

BEHAVIOR CONSULTING: work with an expert trainer on difficult behaviors like separation anxiety & aggression

EARLY EINSTEINS: learn basic obedience skills with your dog aged 6 months or under

BEGINNING DAVINCIS: learn basic obedience for dogs over 6 months of age

NEARLY NEWTONS: refine and perfect your dog's obedience skills

CANINE GOOD CITIZENSHIP: work towards passing the AKC's CGC test

THERAPY DOG CERTIFICATION: prepare your dog for therapy work

SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK: a summer class that focuses on reality training in Laramie's beautiful parks

ADVANCED ARISTOTLES: higher level obedience training for dogs over 6 months of age

BEGINNING & INTERMEDIATE AGILITY: have fun and learn to use agility equipment

AGILITY DROP-IN: come use our agility equipment and hone your skills

DOG-TO-DOG REACTIVE PROGRAM: for dogs who act in a reactive manner towards people or other dogs

ASSISTANCE/SERVICE DOG TRAINING: let us help you train your service dog!