

Teaching dogs new tricks
(<http://dailyindependent.com/local/x1443106908/Teaching-dogs-new-tricks>)



ranger, a chocolate Lab working with Rod Niemer, retrieves from the Ohio river Monday. John Flavell/The Independent

Group encourages owners to train pets in water

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The Independent (<http://dailyindependent.com>)

IRONTON — Watching dogs in jumping contests is good entertainment.

Imagine seeing your own dog do it.

The organization Buckeye Dockdogs offers the chance from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday at Lake Vesuvius.

Ginny Haas, one of the organizers of Let’s Try Dock Dogs III, said the free event is open to all kinds of dogs, even though most dock jumpers are labs.

“Any dog can try,” she said. “The dog must be six months or older. We have dachshunds who jump and Great Danes who jump.”

She said it’s difficult to predict how a dog will react to the concept of jumping off a dock and into water to retrieve a toy.

“Some won’t go anywhere near the water and look at you like you’ve lost your mind,” Haas said. “Some, after they get over the fear of the 2-foot drop, that’s it. They love it.”

She said the event is safe but owners who believe their dogs might have trouble swimming can have someone in the water to help them. Haas said some owners have flotation devices for their pets to provide an extra element of safety.

Haas said those planning to participate should bring a four-foot, non-retractable leash, a floating fetch toy, towel, bags to dispose of the dog’s waste and a water bowl.

Each participant has about two minutes to work with his or her dog; if there is no line, they can continue, but if others are waiting, they must move to the back of the line after two minutes to await their next turn.

Members of Buckeye Dockdogs will be present to give demonstrations and advice to owners.

Haas said the two previous dockdog events were in Franklin Furnace and have drawn up to 50 participants. “I would like to see 50 or more this year,” Haas said. “Who knows? It has a tendency to grow.”

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