



Get yourself outdoors and your little dog, too

By KENDRA HARTMANN | SAN DIEGO PETS

Just about everywhere Dawn Celapino goes, her Cairn terrier, Jack, goes, too. And if there's a place Celapino needs to go — a restaurant or shop — that doesn't allow dogs, she simply doesn't go there.

It's not just when running errands or eating out, however, that Celapino insists Jack join her. As a personal trainer and an avid lover of the great outdoors, Celapino has built her life — and Jack's — around activities that the two can do in tandem.

"He's my best friend and I couldn't imagine doing my outdoor activities without him," she said.

When Celapino says she does all of her outdoor activities with Jack in tow, she's not exaggerating. The two have gone kayaking, surfing, mountain biking, camping, running, hiking, swimming and paddle boarding together — to name a few ("We're shopping together right now!" she said during our phone interview). Celapino is of the opinion that Jack should never have to stay home alone for any measurable

length of time — which is why she started her business, Leash Your Fitness. A fitness training program based around a joint human-dog workout, the program offers training in cardio, strength, balance and yoga — with some dog obedience training thrown in, as well.

"People don't realize what their dogs can do," Celapino said. "Even now, when I tell people what I do with Jack, they say, 'What?!' They don't give their dogs the benefit of the doubt."

Jack even does some activities that Celapino doesn't. Take surfing for example — "I don't like to surf," she said, "but he loves it." Jack readily jumps on the surfboard, and Celapino pushes him in to shore on a wave, proving her pet truly enjoys his active lifestyle.

Just like humans, however, dogs don't necessarily have the ability to perform physically demanding activities from the get go. The most important thing when including pets in a workout, Celapino said, is training.



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Dawn Celapino catches a wave with her Cairn terrier, Jack.

Courtesy Photo by Dale Porter, KillerImage.com

"People have to realize they have to train their pets like they train themselves," she said. "You can't take your dog biking up a mountain when it can't walk a mile."

The trick, she said, is to start slow.

"Just try a few things at a time. And a better-behaved dog will be able to do more of these things with you, so obedience training comes in handy. And it's not a good time to teach them how to behave when they're in the kayak with you."

The stigmas about what a dog can and can't do relative to what we humans do are slowly fading away, Celapino said. The evidence can be seen, she said, in the travel industry.

"Airlines are changing their policies, and hotels are, too," she said. "You and your pets can travel all over the country

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CELAPINO STARTED LEASH YOUR FITNESS WHEN, WHILE WORKING AS A PERSONAL TRAINER, SHE DISCOVERED SHE ENJOYED WORKING OUT WITH HER DOG — and her clients did, too. She offers boot camps, running clubs, aquatic adventures (like kayaking) and circuit programs (which focus on upper body, core, yoga and cardio routines), among others. For more information on programs or class schedules, visit www.leashyourfitness.com.



UPCOMING LEASH YOUR FITNESS ACTIVITIES

MONTHLY TRAIL RUNNING CLUB

Every Monday and Wednesday. Locations Vary. Join Kelly, Scooter and the rest of the gang for drills, stairs, hills, sprints, endurance, run specific stretches and help running with your dog.

CIRCUIT MADNESS

Every Thursday at UTC--Nobel Athletic Field.

Circuit style class with focus on upper body, core, yoga and cardio.

KAYAKING WITH THE DOGS

Saturday, June 23, from 2-4 pm at Aqua Adventures. Easy, flat guided paddle on the bay to Fiesta Island where the dogs can get out and play and then we paddle back!

YAPPY HOUR / YOGA CLASS

Friday, June 29, from 6-7 pm at Mission Bay. Beginning with a short walk with standing stretches along the way then 45 minutes of yoga with your dog incorporated into a few stretches. Optional yappy hour at nearby dog friendly restaurant after class.

For more info and prices, please visit www.leashyourfitness.com



Leash YourParticipants recently returned from Leash Your Fitness' fourth annual canine camping trip in the Laguna Mountains outside of Julian.



Dawn Celapino and Jack lead a Yoga session at the end of a circuit-style class held at UTC.

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together. Jack has been in 18 different states, and we swam together in all of them. It's definitely different state by state, though, and California is very dog friendly. I think we humanize our pets more here than in other places."

Taking your dog out for an outdoor activity, whether it's a four-day camping trip or an afternoon boot camp class, should be a no-brainer, Celapino said.

"I just can't believe it when I see people out walking, and they've left their pet at home," she said. "Maybe it's because the dog is not well behaved enough, I don't know. I can't overemphasize the fact that people need to train their dogs, and not just puppy training when they're 6 weeks old. You wouldn't only teach your child things when they're a toddler, and leave it at that, would you?"

Next time, bring me along.



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