



Freestyle Obedience – The 4-H Way



Awesome news! In 2008, for the first time ever, 4-H members will be able to compete in freestyle obedience at the Michigan State 4-H Dog Show.

Never heard of freestyle? Most people call it “dancing with dogs.” 4-H member Sophie Benjaminsen, 15, calls it “your own mini-show where you are both the stars.” Quite simply, freestyle obedience is a dog and handler performing to music. Take obedience, rally and agility training and add music, choreography and artistry, and you get freestyle. You can compete in levels ranging from beginner to advanced and in several divisions including heel, freestyle, older dogs, brace, pairs, team, and dogs and handlers with disabilities.

Would you like to learn freestyle obedience? Members of the World Canine Freestyle Organization (WCFO) will be teaching **free** freestyle clinics for 4-H members and volunteer leaders in 2008. The regional clinics will be offered across Michigan for easy access and fun for everyone. Please submit a completed 4-H Freestyle Obedience Regional Training Registration form **by January 15, 2008**. The form is online at <http://www.youngexplorers.net/Statefreestyle>. You will be contacted after that date with details about the clinic nearest you.



Visit <http://www.youngexplorers.net/Statefreestyle> to learn more about Michigan 4-H freestyle obedience. There you'll find out all about the upcoming freestyle obedience competition at the 2008 Michigan State 4-H Dog Show. You'll also find video of the freestyle demonstration at the 2007 State 4-H Dog Show, training tips and competition rules. You can sign up for an online training and discussion group, see photos of dogs and handlers in costumes, learn about international video competitions and watch more than 35 freestyle videos from all over the world!

Questions? Contact Denise Massey, State 4-H Companion Animal Committee member and 4-H freestyle obedience coordinator, by phone at 269-303-5407 or by e-mail at massey49055@yahoo.com. To find out more about the Michigan 4-H dog project, visit <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cyf/youth/aniscipr.html#Companion> or contact Jake DeDecker, program leader for 4-H animal science programs, by phone at 5174327604, or by e-mail at dedecke4@msu.edu.



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