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A Publication of The North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association • Volume LI • No. 3 • March 2020



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V E R S A T I L E HUNTING DOG

Volume LI • No. 3 • March 2020

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 The Versatile Dog denotes that this feature or story is an original article by a NAVHDA member.

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President's Message

By Dave Trahan
Deerfield, New Hampshire



What A Weekend!

Wow, what a weekend! The 2020 NAVHDA Annual Meeting was a huge success. I want to applaud Andy Doak, Amanda Doak, Peter Wade, Marie Wade, Bob England, Danny Albert and many others of the Seabasticook chapter. All your members put on one heck of an event. Many guest speakers and hosting after hours events are just a few of the things that went on. The Executive Council wishes to thank everyone that was involved.

This event was the largest attended meeting ever in NAVHDA history, with well over 300 members participating in the Saturday night banquet and auction.

I had the opportunity to present four outstanding members to our organization—Chip Bonde for his longtime dedication to our organization, along with Tim Clark and Tracy Nelson. And a special thanks to Marilyn Vetter for her longtime contribution, not only to her local chapter but to the national organization serving in many positions over the years. From reorganizing the *VHD* magazine to Vice President, and, finally, the first woman president of our organization.

We had many surprise contributions—especially to a young lady who will be attending this year's Invitational. It started out with the Seabasticook Chapter donating \$200 to Sarah London to help out with training and costs to attend the Invitational. That donation started an avalanche of matching contributions from the banquet crowd. By the end, over \$3,000 was raised for Sarah to prepare and travel to the Invitational this fall.

This meeting was also successful as a fundraiser for the Seabasticook Chapter—they should now be able to purchase their own land for chapter events! This will give an opportunity for current members and future members to have a consistent, guaranteed location to train and test their dogs.

I would like to thank all of our sponsors for the longtime dedication to our organization: Purina Pro Plan, Garmin, Ugly Dog Hunting and Dakota 283, along with our conservation partners: Ruffed Grouse Society, and Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever.



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ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Tightening Up The Retrieve

By Bob Fee
Meredith, New Hampshire

The retrieve of shot bird—whether it be a duck, chukar or some other game bird used in NAVHDA UT and UPT testing—is the culmination of teamwork between handler and dog. Everything leads up to the retrieve. A dog in the field is expected to search with great enthusiasm and intelligence, investigate nooks and crannies that might hold a bird, and, when a bird is scented, the dog is expected to point to the bird’s whereabouts so the handler can produce the bird for the gun. Once the point is established, the dog is expected to remain steady and not move until the retrieve command is given. This all seems simple enough, but one area that we, as judges, have found to be lacking correctness is the retrieve, especially in the Utility Test.

The *Aims, Programs, and Test Rules* book clearly states on page 26: “On command, the dog should go quickly to the fallen bird, pick it up, go directly to the handler and then wait calmly until told to release the bird to hand.” Over the past number of years, the retrieve of bird has become a little “user friendly” and at times down-right sloppy, but the real issue is that these sloppy retrieves have been rewarded with Prize I scores. No longer will this be acceptable. During the past three Judges Workshops we have discussed the retrieve issue, and this year the point was driven home quite firmly. We, as judges, will be scoring retrieves relative to what is written in Rules book. What does that mean to you, the handler?

Before I answer that, let me go through what constitutes a retrieve. The retrieve has four basic components,

each of which can be further broken down, but, for simplicity and brevity, I will talk about the four basics: release by handler (fetch command), pick-up, return to handler, and presentation. The release by handler by way of a fetch command is given to the dog once the bird lands on the ground. There should be a distinct pause between when the bird lands on the ground and when the release command is given. The dog is expected to go directly to the bird with enthusiasm, and once it reaches the bird the pick-up segment of the retrieve starts. The dog is expected to quickly pick up the bird and start back to the handler. Rolling the bird around, picking it up and dropping it, and picking it up again more than once may (probably will) cause a reduction in the dog’s overall retrieve score. Once the dog has secured the bird in its mouth and has turned back to the handler, the return to handler portion starts. The dog is expected to return directly to the handler quickly, happily, and enthusiastically. Dropping the bird during the return will result in points marked against the dog. Now we come to the point of the retrieve that we judges have been discussing for some time. The end of the return to handler and the presentation of the bird should be a smooth transition. The dog is expected to come directly to the handler and stand or sit quietly, calmly and closely in front of or beside the handler. The dog is expected to hold the bird until given the release command whereupon it delivers the bird to hand. The dog is expected to be close enough to the handler so that no steps are required on the part of the handler to accept the bird.

Fly-bys, reach and grabs, parading around gunners and judges, dropping the bird (no matter how close to the handler), extra commands after the initial release command—all of these will result in points against the dog’s retrieve score. It is a matter of fact that the Utility dog is expected to be a finished gun dog with the hope of some owners and handlers that said dog will participate in the Invitational Test. In order to qualify for the Invitational the dog must receive all Prize I scores in the Utility Test. That means a score of 3 or 4 is required in the retrieve elements of the test, and there are three retrieve elements to the test: retrieve of shot bird in the field, retrieve of duck, and retrieve by drag. What is stated above applies to all three retrieve scenarios.

During the Utility Preparatory Test judges are more lenient because this is a more lenient test. UPT dogs are

not finished gun dogs but are well on their way to such status. What is expected of the UPT dog with regards to retrieves is spelled out on page 17 of the Aims Book under the heading “Retrieve of Duck,” and these standards apply to the retrieve of shot bird in the field as well as retrieve of duck and retrieve by drag.

The UPT dog is expected, on the release by the handler, to go directly to the bird, pick up the bird and return straight on to the handler. During the return the dog is expected to maintain a firm and even grip. When the



DENISE HEATH © 2020

UPT dog reaches the handler it is expected to deliver the bird a reasonable distance from the handler. A reasonable distance is now described as within one step of the handler. The UPT dog does not have to deliver to hand to receive a Prize I retrieving score, but it must be within one step of the handler. The dog that puts the bird down outside the one step requirement but within a reasonable distance of the handler can still receive a passing score. Parading around the judges and gunners, spitting the bird out way out of reach of the handler, playing keep away are all faults and will be judged accordingly. Verbal commands should be kept to a minimum, and the amount of commands and loudness of such commands will be noted by the judges and come into account when judging the dog's retrieve scores. While the Utility Preparatory Test is just that, a preparatory test before going on to the Utility Test, it is still expected that the UPT dog perform at a high level while being judged with a fair amount of leniency. Judges realize the UPT dog is not as finished a dog as a UT dog, but the UPT dog should present itself in such a way that a hunter would be pleased to have such a dog with him/her in the field, woods and duck blind.

Handlers, trainers, clinic leaders, and judges need to be aware that starting now, there will be a new emphasis placed on the retrieve of bird. The retrieve needs to be "tightened up." Trainers need to train for proper retrieves, clinic leaders need to express this commitment to better retrieves to their audience during clinics, handlers need to handle with all that is stated above firmly in mind, and judges need to judge accordingly. When a dog has done wonderful work searching for the bird, finding the bird through use of nose, pointing the bird and remaining steady throughout the sequence, it would be a shame for that wonderful vision to be tarnished by a sloppy retrieve. 🐾

*A group of knowledgeable judges and trainers has been assembled and are available to answer your questions about training and testing. The topic will vary each month based on the questions we receive from our VHD readers. Please send your questions to vhd@navhda.org with *On the Right Track* in the subject line.*



Bob Fee was born and lives in New Hampshire with his wife, Lyn, two dogs and a cat. He graduated from Colorado State University, then owned and operated a large, successful restaurant until he and his wife sold it and retired in 2006. Once hunting season starts, Bob loads up the travel trailer and heads for the UP of Michigan and the Maine North Woods in search of Ruffed Grouse. He is also an avid hiker and biker. Bob has been a member of NAVHDA for 17 years, a judge for eight years and senior judge for four years.

About The Cover



VC TOP SHELF'S OZZMAN COMETH, GERMAN WIREHAURED POINTER, OWNED AND HANDLED BY JEFF JALBERT AT THE 2018 INVITATIONAL. PHOTO BY DENISE HEATH.



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The Lighter Side Of Water Training

Article & Photos By Renata Canaday,
Finger Lakes Chapter

As the accidental sporting dog photographer for the Finger Lakes Chapter of NAVHDA, I have had the pleasure of photographing several breeds of versatile hunting dogs over the past few years. Since I'm not a versatile dog owner, that means I'm free to be at training and testing days solely to capture the wonder, the grace, and the beauty that is the versatile dog in action. Wait... (sound of needle skipping on a record).

The NAVHDA written philosophy describes the versatile hunting dog as a dog that is "bred and trained to dependably hunt and point game, to retrieve on both land and water, and to track wounded game on both land and water." Well played, NAVHDA, well played.

We here in western New York don't just "put up" with winter, we embrace it. But, get us a bit closer to springtime and the promise of warmer days (i.e., over 30 degrees), and you will find us outside doing a Jules Feiffer Dance to Spring cartoon. For the local versatile hunting dog contingent, that promise of spring also means frozen ponds will now begin to melt. Which will also start to warm up conversations about future water training days. Whether our local chapter members are gearing up for readying their dogs for NAVHDA testing or simply using the expertise of other members to help prepare their dogs for hunting, the process is still the same.

Regarding water work, it's taken me a few years to understand what is required of the versatile hunting dog to do. Or, maybe what I mean is, understanding what is expected of the handler to convey to the versatile hunting dog what they are supposed to do. So now, on water training days, I like to watch the dance between dog and handler. "Dance" may not be exactly the right word. It's like watching a frustrated YMCA swim instructor years ago trying to encourage my young daughter to dive "properly" from the side of the pool. Unfortunately for that instructor, my daughter had been taught to swim by my ex, a former Navy SEAL. They were taught never to dive from a standing position. Too



many chances for head injuries. Also, you can't sneak up on the enemy if you accidentally splash.

My observations from my perch dockside, or crouched on/in a pond's muddy edge, are that some dogs just do things naturally and that some handlers seem to have the "touch." And then, there's the rest of the pack. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think the final objective of water training is that the versatile dog jumps into the water to retrieve the duck/dummy and returns it to the handler. That is where it gets really interesting. Puppy, or mature dog, age doesn't necessarily dictate that



there may, or may not, be ensuing arguments regarding whether or not the dog will GO into the water (or, what they'll do when they do go in). Breed characteristics and breeder "preliminary water conditioning" aside, when push comes to shove, well, push sometimes comes to shove. Or carry. Or, please follow me in. And, at all times, the word "negotiate" comes immediately to mind (see Roget's Thesaurus, to "argue, barter, debate, deal, dicker, finagle, haggle"). Unless, you're a Brittany owner. Then, there are a plethora of even more synonyms for the word "negotiate." Caveat: As most of my dog friends know, I'm #teamBrittany, but as far as I can tell, being owned by a Brittany just means that your days are spent laughing. This is simply a ruse provided by your



Brittany, so that you never realize you are constantly being manipulated.

It is very tempting for me to join in on the pond-side negotiations. It is equally difficult for me to hold in my laughter in response to all the valiant efforts going on around me. But I remember my place is to not be a distraction and simply document the day's somewhat hysterical training endeavors. Knowing, of course, that eventually the day's hijinks and resulting amusing photographs will just be a humorous (and hopefully, fond) memory for the handlers when a test is passed, or a hunt is successful.

There is always a chance early on in training for me to capture that perfect Covey Rise type photo, but, realistically, those chances won't come until later in the training season. If ever. Every training day is simply another golden opportunity for me to spend a day with, and photographing, dogs, no matter what the end results are. What I do enjoy most in my accidental sporting dog photography is what I've always enjoyed in my other photography. Capturing a moment, a feeling, an expression. You see that moment in the eyes, in the tilt of a head, or a gesture. I get to see all those same moments when I watch handlers and their dogs, whether it is the handler alone, with their dog, or just their dog. The images speak stories to me when I'm editing them later. I'm sure that I sometimes mistakenly read human behavior into a dog's expression, seeing what I perceive to be a human emotion, or something in their body language that is too human to be coincidental. Whatever or however it really is, it's magical to me and I'm sticking to my stories. 🐾



A note from Renata: *That is Brad in the boat, but that is not Brad's dog. Nor did Brad throw that duck. The handler is behind me almost crying with laughter. The rest of us are all trying to laugh as quietly as possible. The dog's eyes are saying (or so WE put words into the dog's expression later), "I am bringing you this duck. WHY won't you take this duck?" And Brad keeps looking away, hoping the dog will go back to the handler.*

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Musing on the Score

By Cornel Yarmoloy
Calgary, Alberta

PHOTOS BY MARTIN JALKOTZY © 2020



I shadowed past Quill. He was locked up solid. Eyes ablaze, intent. He had abruptly frozen in mid-stride, partially turned – focused, quivering.

Thirty yards from Quill, and twenty in front of me, a long-tailed cackling, crimson and gold, wild pheasant erupted. My twenty-gauge smoked twice. Our prey went down hard. I glanced back at my vibrating canine. At the fetch command Quill was off.

As Quill retrieved to hand, I pondered the fact that in two UT tests we only scored a prize two at two hundred points. He had just performed to perfection on a wild bird. But on test day Quill is a creeper.

On pen raised birds Quill points close and takes a step or two from the initial point. Enough to lose a mark and keep him out of coveted Prize one territory.

Yet on just about every wild bird he is rock solid. Except! Of course, there is always an exception. Always an excuse from the handler!

If we are in dense cover on pheasants, ruffed or sharptailed grouse and Quill cannot see the bird clearly at the shot - he breaks. There is no way I am going to correct him. No place for fancy, in my mind, or Quill's mind (I think) when a shot bird is going down in heavy cover. Handler mistake, or common sense or neither?

I have learned, these versatile beasts are something all to their own in the intelligence department. In a different league than the previous five awesome Labrador retrievers I have been privileged to hunt over.

Quill is a talented bird finding and pointing canine. He can absolutely discern a pen raised bird from a wild critter. He adapts his hunting strategy from pen raised to wild - from forest, to thickets, to cattails to prairie.

If Quill is on point on a wild bird and I cannot flush the bird a soft "OKAY" turns him into a flusher and out comes our quarry. Another failure by the han-

dlar? Well maybe as far as a test score? But boy are we ever effective at harvesting wild birds.

Prior to season three with Quill, I mentioned to my dog training buddy Steve my frustration at not getting a perfect score at the NAVHDA tests. This due to Quill taking those aggravating creeping steps after the initial point. I wanted that "perfect score" and needed advice on how to achieve it? Steve looked at me quizzically and said "Cornel re-read that book I gave you" – Pheasant of the Mind. Good advice.

In a nutshell – its not truly about the score if your focus is hunting. It is about the synergy, the flow, rhythm, emotional bond and visceral experience of hunting with a well trained, well-bred, well-loved bird dog. I should have listened to the advice from my breeder following my first UT test, a year previously. Bob had said a word I cannot put in print and stated "---- ! What more do you want!" I had

some learning and experiences I had to go through, I suppose.

A trained, obedient, cooperative dog is a must. However, obsessing over test scores, especially a perfect one, is a hinderance to the joy of working together with your bird dog.

Focus on the value of structured training programs, such as NAVHDA's, learning from the experience of others, socializing, making new friends, having fun.

It took me three seasons and advice from Steve, and Bob, to overcome a self-inflicted obsession regarding test scores. Slow learner!

Once I recalibrated, Quill and I were able to hunt almost as one, to immerse in the essence of the pursuit and experience, absorbing the energy, beauty and secrets of the landscape's offerings together. Success followed us through the season at a level we had never experienced. Even on the days no birds were collected - we smiled a lot.

A test score in the NAVHDA system is a great gauge of you and your dog's abilities as a team. Use that gauge thoughtfully. Perfection between you and your canine is truly hard to measure with a number. 🐾

Late-Season Geese

Article & Photos By Philippe Roca,
Lexington, Kentucky



- Have one or two “confidence” decoys like a coot or a great blue Heron on the side of the pond.
- The decoy spread should be very low-key—maybe a pair on the water and a feeder on the bank. I have used only one decoy before, especially if the last week of January has been warm like this year and they have courtship on their minds.
- For motion, forget the heavy flagging. I like to use a very discrete jerk-string to make ripples on the water.



To be adaptable is one of the most important qualities of a hunter. Paying attention to factors like wind, temperature, dew point, the time of the year, the time of the day, and the patterns of the hunted game, and adjusting your hunting accordingly makes the difference between a successful hunt or bringing all the shells back home.

Water-fowling is no different! And it is especially true at the end of the season. Goose hunting in Kentucky during the last few days of the season requires major adjustments.

Remember...when we are goose hunting, we are spending our time educating the birds because they usually come in fairly large numbers. When we are dropping two or three birds out of a dozen geese, well, we are educating the others. And you know how smart they are! It does not take long for them to shy away from decoys and calls.

Since Thanksgiving, the honkers have seen huge decoy spreads, heavy calling, too many MoJos and plenty of flagging up and down the Central flyway. So, by the last week of January Canada geese are very cautious. The local birds know every pond in the county by heart, and they are on a first name basis with the owners.

At the end of the season you need to pay attention to details and put yourself in their shoes... I mean in their feet.

The goal is to make your pond as friendly and quiet as possible, let them choose to come in. Do not expect a big bag this late in the season—it is like a chess game with a worthy opponent.



- Calling should be kept to a minimum with only one caller doing soft feeding calls. Or do not even call until they start to cup their wings and it looks like they are starting to commit.
- A low-profile layout blind is a must, and the dog can be inside. Be sure to camo your face.
- MoJo decoys are out of the question—they have seen too many. 🐾

From Show Ring To Fieldwork

By Ashley Landis
Gilbertsville, Pennsylvania

This past Fall I had my very first experience at handling a dog in a NAVHDA Natural Ability Test with the Del-Val Chapter in Colliers Mills, New Jersey. I do a lot of conformation dog shows with my Wirehaired Pointing Griffon, Kiera, but it is super important to me that she does well in the field too. Fieldwork is definitely outside of my comfort zone compared to the show ring, so thinking about the NAVHDA Natural Ability Test made me feel nervous.

I knew that the test was made up of three major elements to prepare for: field, water, and tracking. Kiera hadn't shown much interest in our swimming pool, so I was a little worried about the water part of the test. My mom and I took Kiera to a nearby park to familiarize her with retrieving a bumper from a pond. This helped ease my concerns about her entering the water because we had more trouble getting her out of the pond than into it! It turns out, Kiera loves the water, she just doesn't like the sudden drop off in our swimming pool.

Before signing up for the NA test, my mom and I both handled Kiera in the field at hunt tests to get her AKC Junior Hunter title. However, I had personally only been in the field under judging one time before the NA test. A few weeks before the test, we met with Loren and Jack Rogers in New Jersey to practice all the individual components of the test. Loren and Jack are very knowledgeable about the test and shared their experience with me about what the judges would be looking for and what I should be doing to better my chances. We did pheasant drags to expose Kiera to a track similar to one she would experience in the actual test. One important piece of information that really stuck with me was the "bowling ball" method that I used for the track. This is where you take a few steps with the dog before letting go of the collar to ensure they follow the scent.

On the day of the NA test, I was nervous that I might mess up, but extremely excited to show the judges what Kiera could do. I wasn't the only first-time handler there, but I was the only junior handler. Everyone was super supportive and told me that I had nothing to worry about. First was the field test. Loren walked with us as part of the gallery, which was very reassuring. I was so proud of Kiera for finding and pointing four birds! Watching her move in the field is beautiful; she moves



out and quarters the field so well! The next test was water. As soon as Kiera saw the water she was ready to go and pulled me to the edge with excitement. Kiera was in the water waiting for me before I even picked a bumper to use! After the water test, all that was left was tracking. One of the judges mentioned to me that I should stand tall and face the direction of the track to hint to Kiera where she should be. I honestly couldn't tell you how we did during the tests, I just trusted Kiera to do what her instincts told her. She even went behind my back and out of my sight for a few moments before coming back to the track. Those moments felt like eternity! Later, everyone gathered near the clubhouse to find out the results of the day. I held my breath waiting for her scores. When the judge read down the list I was happily surprised to receive the maximum score for a Prize I! It was an amazing day, I am so proud of Kiera, and I can't thank all of my family and friends enough for the support they have given me!

I'm looking forward to doing more fieldwork with Kiera and working towards advanced test levels in the near future. I also hope to try my hand at wing-shooting soon. From handling my girl in the show ring, to handling her in the field, I want make myself as versatile as my hunting dog already is! 🐾

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- INT CH/VC S SHARP SHOOTERS FUNKY DIVA NA-II, UT-I
- VC SHARP SHOOTERS ROCKSTAR MH, NA I, UT I
- INT CH/VC SHARP SHOOTERS F-FIVE MH
- VC SHARP SHOOTERS HERE 4THE PARTY MH, NA I, UT I
- INT CH/VC NOBELLES HOLY TERA MH, NA-II, UT-I
- VC/INT CH "PARADISE" NA-I, UT I
- INT CH/VC GROUSE POINT'S BLITZ MH, CGC, NA-II, UT-I
- INT CH/VC SHARP SHOOTERS NW MR MOTION MH, NA I, UT I
- INT CH/VC SHARP SHOOTERS FAST AS YOU NA I, UT I
- VC NORTHWATERS PUDDLE JUMPER MH, NA I, UT I
- INT CH/VC SHARP SHOOTERS HOT ROD MH, NA I, UT I
- VC GUNSLINGER'S NW HEARTBREAKER NA I, UT I
- VC RUGERS CYNDA KIT WELTMEISTER UT-I

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- VC SUNDANCE REVELATION MH, NA I, UT I
- HUSTLER'S MEGAN V D WESTWIND
- VC SUNDANCE DIXIE CHICK NA I, UT I
- KRISTAN VOM POETTSIEPEN
- VC, DC, AFC FRIEDELSEIM'S
FREIGHT TRAIN MASON
MH, NA I, UT I
- SUNDANCE DEMI VOM MAX NA I, UT I
- INT CH/VC SHARP SHOOTERS MAN IN BLACK MH, NA I, UT I
- INT CH/VC SHOOTING STARR'S SHARP SHOOTER MH, NA I, UT I
- INT CH/VC S SHARP SHOOTERS FUNKY DIVA NA-II, UT-I
- VC FRIEDELSEIM'S LUCI MH, NA I, UT I
- DEADWOOD'S TITAN NA I, UT II
- CALLIE VOM FRIEDELSEIM NA I, UT II
- STORMIN' MORGAN VON EBERSOLE SH, NA I, UT II

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Falconer Briana Tallitsch & Gus the Mighty Small Munsterlander

By Julia Arnold
Minnesota Chapter

It was Briana Tallitsch's small but mighty beloved Small Munsterlander, Gus, who led her to NAVHDA. Gus, her first versatile dog, was born on Valentine's Day in 2018, and the duo now actively participates in the Illinois Chapter. Since joining the organization, the young woman has realized the immense value NAVHDA brings to the table: "Having help is indispensable," she says. "Even that first training day, everyone was so welcoming."

Briana appreciates the honest feedback she receives from members as she learns to work and train with Gus. From the beginning, she says, "they were honest with me, which I needed—they told me his weak spots—but then they helped me learn what to work on." Besides practical training help and receiving praise or constructive critique, Briana appreciates the sense of support she feels from NAVHDA. "It's a group of people I can use as a sounding board," she says. She has also learned countless lessons simply by watching other handlers training and working their dogs. She may have started with NAVHDA to learn how to train her first versatile dog, but she comes back because of the strong community atmosphere.

What led her to the Small Munsterlander breed? "They are so earnest!" she chuckles, adding, "They always try their hardest. Even if Gus is being naughty, he isn't doing it *because* he's naughty. I love working with him, and that bond is there. [Small Munsterlanders] want to please, but they are also so driven." It's easy to see that, for her, Gus is the perfect companion.

Last spring, Gus completed his Natural Ability test and earned a 98, Prize II. It was a moment his owner will never forget, and one many NAVHDA members can relate to: "I was so ecstatic...I wasn't expecting it, and I was so proud of him," remembers Briana.

Briana and her husband are also falconers, which is originally why she got Gus. 'Munsters' are becoming increasingly popular with falconers, Briana explains, "because they're independent enough to run hard, have a great 'off switch' in the house, and tend to be safe around the hawks (i.e. have a brain in their head, not just prey drive!). I easily know of four falconers just off the top of my head that run SMs. For a rare breed in a niche community, that's a lot of people!"

But now that Briana and Gus have experienced success and encouragement with NAVHDA, she plans to train him to the UT. She likes that the NAVHDA testing system helps members set goals for themselves and for their dogs. "That's what's cool about the testing system," she explains, "it breaks it down in black and white." In addition to her receiving a Prize II NA score, her favorite NAVHDA moment so far was her very first training day with Gus. With the live birds they used, she says, "it was the first time Gus had ever unmistakably pointed... I thought, 'Oh my god, he's doing it!'"

Gus is also making progress in his falconry work. Briana says she now trusts him around the birds "99% of the time, and they're a lot more comfortable with him." She is hopeful that he'll soon be ready



to run with their falconry birds to flush rabbits and point birds for them.

Now that she's ensconced with NAVHDA, Gus's future is full of even more adventures. She says, "I think [NAVHDA's] an amazing opportunity to let him do every part of his job—point, flush, and retrieve—which sometimes he doesn't get to do with the falconry birds... At NAVHDA training days he can be shot over and have the retrieve, since I don't typically do a lot of upland hunting." But upland hunting may happen sooner rather than later for the eager little Munster, because Briana's father-in-law, an avid duck hunter, is also itching to go up north with Briana and Gus to hunt grouse or pheasant.

To any ladies out there unsure about joining NAVHDA, Briana would say this: "I have never experienced anyone treating me differently because I am a woman...everybody is there to make me and the dog the best we can be, regardless of gender." In fact, Briana's sister, Bethany, has recently joined the Illinois chapter after following her big sister's lead and getting her own Munster. The sisters have even brought their mother along to training nights, giving a whole new meaning to "Girls' Night Out!" 🐾



SISTERS BRIANA AND BETHANY WITH THEIR 'MUNSTERS'

This article, and those to be published over the course of the next several issues of the *VHD*, are the brainchild of Wight Greger, Women's Wisdom editor, and myself. After acquiring my first versatile dog, a Small Munsterlander named Sunny, last spring, I joined NAVHDA knowing very little about the organization and what might ensue.

After spending several warm Minnesota nights training Sunny with NAVHDA members last summer, often with my young children in tow, I knew the organization was something special. I wanted other women—especially newbies like me—to know that they too could get involved training their own dogs and that they too would be welcomed.

The eight amazing women I interviewed for this project have been involved with NAVHDA in various degrees over the years. They come from a diverse set of backgrounds and locales, from the Yukon to Georgia. Some are partial to Griffons, others swear by Shorthairs, and there's a Small Munsterlander and a couple Wirehaired Vizlas thrown in the mix. They may be unique individuals, but all of these hardworking ladies share a deep love for the dog that fellow NAVHDA members understand so well.

These women were generous enough to share their NAVHDA journeys with me, and Wight and I are excited to share them with *VHD* readers, both new ones (like me) and our experienced, 'seasoned' members. We especially hope our fellow females out there feel inspired to join in all that NAVHDA has to offer.

Happy training,

Julia Arnold,
Minnesota Chapter



I am excited to share these stories with you! We are seeing a phenomenal growth in participation in hunting, training and handling of our versatile dogs by women. These stories are representative of our NAVHDA women throughout the continent. While these women all have a love for hunting, their handling experience encompasses novice to very experienced. I'd like to thank them all for sharing their stories with us, with a special thanks to Julia Arnold for taking the time to interview each of them and to pen their thoughts and experiences. I hope that you will find their NAVHDA adventures as inspirational as I do!

Wight Greger,
Women's Wisdom Editor



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FIND A TREE...

By Patti Carter
Contributing Editor



NANCY ANISFIELD © 2020

While watching our chapter's three-day Utility Test last fall, I noticed a trend during the Retrieve by Drag. As each dog came out of the woods and headed back to the handler, more often than not the dog stopped to 'pee' before delivering the game. Hmm, an act of prolonging possession? I didn't think so.

I reminded the last three handlers to walk their dog to a tree to pee. They looked at me funny, but there was plenty of time for the potty break. They were all very surprised how much their dogs urinated.

Think about the time that passes between the marshal calling the six handlers to the drag area and actually doing the drag. You water your dog and walk from truck to waiting area with your dog obediently at heel. Your dog sits obediently at your side, waiting his turn. Judges drag the retrieving article to the woods. Once out of sight, judges call the handler. You walk, with your dog obediently at heel, to the judges, listen to their instructions and finally release your dog on the scent. Your dog is driven to follow the scent trail to the game, grab and return. Ahhh, pressure is off in your dog's eyes, once he clears the cover. Staring at you, he stops to pee and pee and pee! As a handler, a thought flashes through your head, "Do I command, fidget, or just sweat it out?" Your dog's concentration on the task at hand *could* go south right now, if it hasn't already.

The last three UT handlers that I spoke to that day had perfect deliveries with no stops to urinate. The moral of the story is: Find a tree and go pee.

Versatile Chef

by Hank Shaw



NAVHDA is pleased to team with renowned chef, outdoorsman, and cookbook author Hank Shaw, whose beautiful and tremendously popular website *Hunter, Angler, Gardener, Cook* (huntgathercook.com) has helped invigorate the recent surge of interest in preparing game. We will be featuring one of Hank's recipes each month, so put on your aprons, sharpen those knives, and set the table!

Grilled Doves, Portuguese Style

INGREDIENTS

12-16 doves, plucked and whole, or 4-8 whole squab
4-5 large garlic cloves, chopped
4-5 bay leaves crumbled fine
4-5 small hot chile peppers (piri piri peppers, ideally, but Thai are fine)
1 tablespoon sweet paprika
1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary
1 tablespoon sea salt
1 cup sweet white wine (white Port or Madeira is ideal)
½ cup olive oil
1 tablespoon honey (optional)

Serves 4.

Prep Time: 15 minutes, plus overnight soak

Cook Time: 6-8 minutes

The flavors in here are pure Portuguese: garlic, chile peppers, bay leaves, paprika, sweet wine, rosemary, olive oil. They are all buzzed in a food processor until smooth and used as a marinade for the birds. Doves are especially good marinated because they are so small: According to food scientist Harold McGee, marinades will only penetrate meat to the depth of about ¼ inch during an overnight soak – but this is more than enough to get to the center of a whole dove, and it will get about halfway down for a domestic squab.

Put all the ingredients except the doves and the honey into a food processor or blender and buzz until smooth, about a minute. Pour the marinade into a freezer bag and put the doves in. Seal the bag and mix the marinade around the doves so they are well coated. Put in the fridge overnight.

The next day, remove the doves from the marinade and pour the remaining marinade into a small pot and bring to a boil, stirring often. Taste and add the honey if you want a hit of sweet-hot going on – adding honey makes this a lot like a Portuguese BBQ sauce.

Get your grill as hot as it will go. You want the temperature to be at least 550 degrees, and 600 degrees is better.

Place the doves on the grill, breast side up. Cover the grill and let roast for 4-6 minutes, depending on how

done you like your doves: 4 minutes will ultimately result in medium-rare doves, which is fine: Like duck, dove and squab is red meat, and should be served medium-rare to medium.

Since all the Portuguese I know in California's Central Valley love their meat with more than a little char on it, blacken the doves by roasting them on each side for 1-2 minutes more. This means your doves roast for no more than 6-10 minutes.

Remove the birds from the grill and let rest. Pour the sauce over them and grind some black pepper over them all. Eat with your hands and have a bowl for the bones nearby. Drink a lusty Touriga Nacional with these birds, and you will not be disappointed.



THE FORUM



Photo of the Month

Last summer, Kelson, my 1-1/2 yr-old Pudelpointer, was so interested in my ear muffs that I wore while cutting grass he just had to try them for himself. If only I could teach him how to cut the grass...
~ Byron Kerr, Bend, Oregon

track2wing

Applications are open for the Anisfield-Wilson Track2wing Project!

Track2wing buys Action trackchairs for individuals with mobility challenges, so they can train and hunt with bird dogs. Open to non-members as well as NAVHDA members, applications will be reviewed by a six-person Track2wing committee of NAVHDA members. Applications for the first round of trackchairs closes June 1st. Trackchairs will be delivered 5-7 weeks after orders are placed.

For more information or an application, email track2wing@gmavt.net or call Terry Wilson at 802-482-2561.

And some other important stuff you really should think about reading...

Don't forget that **May is our special Puppy Issue!** Submit your puppy photos and articles to us at vhd@navhda.org by April 1st.

To all breeders: when submitting a **litter registration** please make sure to sign your application. Owners of both the sire and dam need to sign the application before you submit the registration application.

To all members: please keep your **contact and mailing information up to date.** Email the international office at navoffice@navhda.org with any changes.

The International office is having problems reading many of the application requests for both registry and membership. **Please type the application or write clearly,** as this is very time consuming. Also, when attaching documents to the International office email for registrations, **please attach a pdf file.** Look at what you are attaching before sending, because the office is having problems getting blank applications, and the attachments are not readable. The files need to be 8x11, and not dark.

We are always looking for **fun photos, quotes, short training tips** and anything else that you'd like to share in The Forum. Please send them to vhd@navhda.org.

Kennel Name Applications

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MAGNOLIA	GS	G M HAUPTMAN
VOM SEEFELDTANZ	GL	ALAN R NICKELSON
SUPER V	GW	DON L & KATHY F VANDERLIP
FLAGSTAFF	GS	KEVIN L SCHOFIELD
BIG DIPPER	SM	PAUL & SUZANNE OSTOFF
COMPLETE GAME	GR	ZACKARY P. ANDREWS
EIRE	GW	FRED & CINDY HANSEN
BROOKESIDE	PP	RYAN BYRD
WESTERN MOUNTAIN	GS	DONALD & KELLY LUCAS
FOURWINDS	GS	KRISTINA C. MOTT

These applications for registration of kennel names have been received by the NAVHDA Registry. Any objections must be written and submitted to Lisa Pehur, Registrar, NAVHDA, PO Box 520, Arlington Hts, IL 60006, on or before April 1, 2020. To obtain registration forms, write the Registrar at the above address or go to www.navhda.org.

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2020 NAVHDA Testing Calendar

Date	Chapter/Location	Test Type	Contact	Telephone	E-mail
Mar 6-8	Florida Palmetto	FL	Missy Bettis	407/493 3485	missyb5567@yahoo.com
Mar 7-8	Lone Star	TX	Megan Murphy	281/989 5933	megan-murphy@att.net
Mar 13-15	Chattahoochee	GA	Adam Mayo	256/590 2706	adammayo84@gmail.com
Mar 14-15	Tarheel	NC	Kyley Googins-caldwell	910/514 6059	kyley.googins@gmail.com
Mar 14-15	San Diego	CA	Chelsea Coddington	917/748 4209	chelscodd6@gmail.com
Mar 14-15	Tarheel	NC	Kyley Googins-caldwell	910/514 6059	kyley.googins@gmail.com
Mar 21-22	Carolinas	NC	Kim Lewis	850/602 2515	klewis700@ymail.com
Mar 28-29	Rappahannock	VA	Alyssa Pease	703/765 5715	spinonecos@yahoo.com
Apr 18-19	Grand Canyon Of Arizona	AZ	Ted Hamilton	928/713 6941	pudelpointerguy@msn.com
Apr 18-19	Missouri Uplands	MO	Billy Wundrack	573/489 2899	wundracks2016@gmail.com
Apr 24-26	Wasatch Mountain	UT	Brenen Dye	801/372 9093	brenendye@gmail.com
Apr 25-26	Inland Empire	CA	Kraig Dix	619/846 3113	kraigdix@yahoo.com
May 1-3	Northern California	CA	Erin Gregoire	707/338 3828	erindowdy@gmail.com
May 2-3	Appalachian Valley	OH	Vincent Wehrle	614/519 8764	vinw99@yahoo.com
May 2-3	Finger Lakes	NY	Carey Killion Shultz	716/830 9834	careykillion@gmail.com
May 2-3	Zia	NM	Linda Sanders	505/264 3050	lsanders2316@gmail.com
May 9-10	Pocono Mountain	PA	John Wolfe	610/613 1482	wolfejohn88@yahoo.com
May 15-17	Pacific Northwest	WA	Carl Vinke	206/427 2185	carlbvinke@gmail.com
May 15-17	Rocky Mountain	CO	Allen Kidd	970/406 1530	aamkidd@gmail.com
May 16-17	Delmarva	DE	Edward McWilliams	703/395 4936	smartbizns@aol.com
May 16	Bushkill	PA	Jacob Bartells	610/637 8484	jakebartells@yahoo.com
May 16	Illowa	IA	Michelle Wilbers	563/672 3291	brushdale.kennel@gmail.com
May 16-17	Wisconsin River	WI	Anne Zeches	608/334 5022	atzforever@yahoo.com
May 16-17	Minnesota	MN	Jacob Tillman	612/978 3898	jacobtillman80@gmail.com
May 16-17	Northern Illinois	WI	Amber Glaves	262/206 3159	glavesa911@gmail.com
May 16-17	Midwest Tri State	SD	Tate Martinsen	605/261 8141	tatemartinsen@yahoo.com
May 17	Illowa	IA	Michelle Wilbers	563/672 3291	brushdale.kennel@gmail.com
May 22-24	Big Sky	MT	Lisa Troyer	406/590 0018	lmtroyer@hotmail.com
May 23-24	Merrimack Valley	NH	Joanna Korte	603/664 5394	joannakorte@gmail.com
May 23-24	Mokan	MO	John Corrigan	540/295 3421	mokannavhda@jackquest.com
May 23-24	Buckeye	OH	Christopher Carr	740/632 0473	fulltiltkennels@yahoo.com
May 29-31	Treasure Valley	ID	Penny Masar	208/739 2138	pmasar@onlispinoni.com
May 29-31	Midwest Tri State	SD	Tate Martinsen	605/261 8141	tatemartinsen@yahoo.com
May 29-31	Minnesota	MN	Kathleen Aplikowski	612/597 3189	kathleen@peteandkathleen.com
May 29-31	Southeastern Michigan	MI	Lisa Pehur	248/231 7957	shooterslisa@comcast.net
May 30-31	Hawkeye	IA	Donald Cross	641/521 4445	djcross@iowatelecom.net
May 30-31	Hudson Valley	NY	Ann Bagnell	610/304 6047	annbagnell@gmail.com
May 30-31	Ontario Grand River	ON	Jan Wolff	519/759 1674	vizslat@rogers.com
May 30-31	Brew City Navhda	WI	Brian Pogue	262/888 2757	bphorsetrain1@yahoo.com
Jun 5-7	Eagle Rock	ID	Sean Allen	208/403 9937	brokenbowkennels@gmail.com
Jun 6-7	Northern Michigan	MI	Brent Kroll	616/893 8601	brntkroll@yahoo.com
Jun 6-7	Sebasticook	ME	Marie Wade	207/778 4868	uplandhuntress@myfairpoint.net
Jun 6-7	Shenango	PA	Bryan Labuda	412/480 1932	gyno497@yahoo.com
Jun 6-7	North Central Wisconsin	WI	Desiree Stormont	414/870 3306	toldt@uwalumni.com
Jun 6-7	Central Oregon	OR	Jeremy Davis	541/728 4376	jeremdavis@gmail.com
Jun 6-7	Southern New England	CT	Joshua Flowers	845/661 8354	flowersjosh@att.net
Jun 6-7	Central Oregon	OR	Jeremy Davis	541/350 5189	jeremdavis@gmail.com
Jun 6-7	Toronto Ontario	ON	James Harwood	905/767 8376	torontotestsecretary@gmail.com
Jun 6-7	Michigan	MI	Kendall Weiden	231/766 1381	kweiden1@comcast.net
Jun 12-14	Yankee	ME	Alexander Runyon	207/841 0630	runyon@maine.rr.com
Jun 13-14	Quebec City	QC	Benoit Martineau	418/564 0247	benoitmartineau1@gmail.com
Jun 13-14	Hoosier Hills	IN	Amy Musia	812/459 8833	musiafineart@gmail.com
Jun 13-14	Kettle Moraine	WI	Deborah Stott	920/265 5334	kmnavhdatestsecretary@gmail.com
Jun 20-21	Red River Valley	ND	Steven Buck	701/729 6483	bucksbuck@gmail.com
Jun 27	Ottawa Valley	NY	Anne Kernan	315/783 8423	anne.kernan@yahoo.com
Jun 27-28	Central Dakota	ND	Alison Schaper	701/870 1961	ali_schaper@hotmail.com
Jun 27-28	Black Hills Chapter	WY	Lisa Uhrich	307/262 4089	lisa@wyowires.com
Jul 11-12	Montreal	QC	Annie Ulrich	450/501 3499	sbrodeur07@gmail.com
Jul 11-12	Kettle Moraine	WI	Deborah Stott	920/265 5334	kmnavhdatestsecretary@gmail.com
Jul 18-19	Pacific Northwest	WA	Carl Vinke	206/427 2185	carlbvinke@gmail.com
Aug 7-9	Montreal	QC	Annie Ulrich	450/501 3499	sbrodeur07@gmail.com

Date	Chapter/Location	Test Type	Contact	Telephone	E-mail
Aug 7-9	Alaska Yukon	AK	Dori Hollingsworth	907/491 0393	dori@gci.net
Aug 8-9	Wisconsin River	WI	Anne Zeches	608/334 5022	testsecretary@wrcnavhda.com
Aug 14-16	Prairie Vista Navhda	AB	Susan Ravenhill	587/834 5053	pudelpointerchick@gmail.com
Aug 14-16	Minnesota	MN	Tammy Lynn Hill	218/263 3424	thhill@mchsi.com
Aug 14-16	Eastern Quebec	QC	François Laplante	418/884 4227	francois.laplante@videotron.ca
Aug 15-16	Michigan	MI	Kendall Weiden	231/766 1381	kweiden1@comcast.net
Aug 15-16	Hawkeye	IA	Donald Cross	641/521 4445	djcross@iowatelecom.net
Aug 15-16	Brew City Navhda	WI	Brian Pogue	262/888 2757	bphorsetrain1@yahoo.com
Aug 15-16	Southern Minnesota	WI	Monica Redmond	608/385 9194	monicaredmond@live.com
Aug 15-16	Ottawa Valley	NY	Anne Kernan	315/783 8423	anne.kernan@yahoo.com
Aug 21-23	Midwest Tri State	SD	Tate Martinsen	605/261 8141	tatemartinsen@yahoo.com
Aug 21-23	Finger Lakes	NY	Carey Killion Shultz	716/830 9834	careykillion@gmail.com
Aug 21-23	Rocky Mountain	CO	Allen Kidd	970/406 1530	aamkidd@gmail.com
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Aug 21-23	Hudson Valley	NY	Ann Bagnell	610/304 6047	annbagnell@gmail.com
Aug 22-23	Kettle Moraine	WI	Jaymi Busby	801/450 7639	kmnavhdatestsecretary@gmail.com
Aug 22-23	Wild Rose	AB	Vito Caramia	780/478 1174	cvito@telus.net
Aug 22-23	Hickory Run	PA	Barbara Brookman	610/294 9022	bjbrookman8@yahoo.com
Aug 22-23	Red River Valley	ND	Steven Buck	701/729 6483	bucksbuck@gmail.com
Aug 28-30	Pacific Northwest	WA	Carl Vinke	206/427 2185	carlbvinke@gmail.com
Aug 28-30	North Central Wisconsin	WI	Desiree Stormont	414/870 3306	toldt@uwalumni.com
Aug 29-30	Wisconsin	WI	Steve Harmeyer	920/668 8619	ckennel@gmail.com
Aug 29-30	Central Indiana	IN	Kimberly Caudill	812/365 2689	kimtravelconnection@yahoo.com
Sep 4-6	Minnesota	MN	Bryce Adams	651/387 8556	bryceadams059@gmail.com
Sep 5-6	Buckeye	OH	Christopher Carr	740/632 0473	fulltiltkennels@yahoo.com
Sep 5-6	Ontario Grand River	ON	Jan Wolff	519/759 1674	vizslat@rogers.com
Sep 11-13	Merrimack Valley	NH	Joanna Korte	603/664 5394	joannakorte@gmail.com
Sep 11-13	Sebasticook	ME	Marie Wade	207/778 4868	uplandhuntress@myfairpoint.net
Sep 11-13	Illowa	IA	Clint Henning	563/320 5908	clnthenning@gmail.com
Sep 11-13	Yankee	ME	Alexander Runyon	207/841 0630	runyon@maine.rr.com
Sep 12-13	Shenango	PA	Bryan Labuda	412/480 1932	gyno497@yahoo.com
Sep 12-13	Central Oregon	OR	Jeremy Davis	541/728 4376	jeremdavis@gmail.com
Sep 12-13	Central Oregon	OR	Jeremy Davis	541/728 4376	jeremdavis@gmail.com
Sep 12-13	Minnesota	MN	Jeff Pleskac	320/260 6202	hhfarmsmn@gmail.com
Sep 12-13	Hoosier Hills	IN	Amy Musia	812/459 8833	musiafineart@gmail.com
Sep 19-20	Toronto Ontario	ON	James Harwood	905/767 8376	torontotestsecretary@gmail.com
Sep 19-20	Rock Tavern	NY	Christopher Orcutt	860/342 5724	corcutt01@comcast.net
Sep 26-27	Midwest Tri State	SD	Tate Martinsen	605/261 8141	tatemartinsen@yahoo.com
Sep 26-27	Southern New England	CT	Joshua Flowers	845/661 8354	flowersjosh@att.net
Sep 26-27	Appalachian Valley	OH	Vincent Wehrle	614/519 8764	vinw99@yahoo.com
Sep 26-27	Northern Illinois	WI	Amber Glaves	262/206 3159	glavesa911@gmail.com
Sep 26-27	Zia	NM	Linda Sanders	505/264 3050	lsanders2316@gmail.com
Sep 26-27	Delmarva	DE	Edward McWilliams	703/395 4936	smartbizns@aol.com
Oct 3-4	Missouri Uplands	MO	Billy Wundrack	573/489 2899	wundracks2016@gmail.com
Oct 3-4	Mokan	MO	John Corrigan	540/295 3421	mokannavhda@jackquest.com
Oct 3-4	Delmarva	DE	Edward McWilliams	703/395 4936	smartbizns@aol.com
Oct 17-18	Texas	TX	Gregory Kadesch	817/271 7878	greg.kadesch@texasnavhda.org
Nov 14-15	Rappahannock	VA	Alyssa Pease	703/765 5715	spinonecos@yahoo.com

2020 NAVHDA Handler's Clinic Calendar

Date	Location/Chapter	Contact	Telephone	E-mail
April 25-26	Missoula, MT/Big Sky	Jason Rice	406/240 4265	landworks.jrice@yahoo.com
May 2-3	Hugo, MN/Minnesota	Pete Aplikowski	651/485 0055	pete@soldbypete.com
June 13-14	Mandan, ND/Central Dakota	Jason Babinchak	701/833 2098	ffbabs@hotmail.com
June 13-14	Red Deer, AB Canada/Wild Rose	Vito Caramia	780/478 1174	cvito@telus.net
June 27-28	Mazomanie, WI/Wisconsin River	Anne Zeches	608/334 5022	testsecretary@wrcnavhda.com

The most recent versions of these calendars are available on the NAVHDA website at www.navhda.org.



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