

# VERSATILE HUNTING DOG

A Publication of The North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association • Volume XLIX • No. 5 • May 2018

It's A Brave  
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# V E R S A T I L E H U N T I N G D O G

Volume XLIX • No. 5 • May 2018

## FEATURES

- 4 It's A Brave New World! • *by Judy Zeigler* 
- 8 Sporting Breeds In Demand For Explosives Detection Work • *by Penny Leigh*
- 14 The Healing • *by Kim McDonald* 
- 18 Anything & Everything • *by Patti Carter* 
- 22 We Made It Through • *by Penny Wolff Masar* 
- 29 It's Not Always Easy • *by Patti Carter* 
- 30 Test Prep Workshop • *by Nancy Anisfield* 

## DEPARTMENTS

- President's Message • 2
- On The Right Track • 4
- Spotlight Dog • 25
- Ask Dr. Boyer • 26
- Women's Wisdom • 29
- Tips From Purina • 31
- The Forum • 32
- Kennel Registrations • 32
- Classifieds • 33
- Test Results • 34
- Calendar Of Events • 36



18

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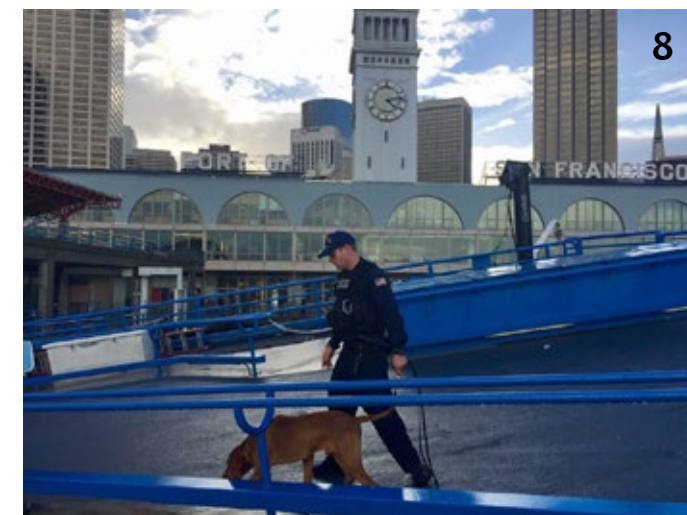
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8



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By Dave Trahan  
Deerfield, New Hampshire



# Announcing New Director of Promotions

The number one thing in *my* life is being together with my family. Watching them grow, I am often reminded that the young ones only stay young for so long! Carol and I want to be at every event in which they participate. We (like other grandparents and parents) watch them perform, knowing that these years are time that you never get back—so we cherish every moment.

People often ask me, “How much time you spend doing ‘NAVHDA things’ each week as president?” To the surprise of many, I tell them at *least* several hours a week, and more during certain times of the year. This is my time to step out and serve. There are also times in life when we need to step back a little and do what matters most.

Jason Wade, our Director of Promotions, will be stepping down. To say the least, we will miss his wonderful personality and great insight on the NAVHDA Board. Jason has two children at the age where they are involved in many things, and Jason wants to support them. So, he has chosen to do what is right by “passing the gauntlet” to someone else. He and I have talked a lot about this. Jason feels that he must do what is best for his family and NAVHDA. With such large responsibilities, he feels that he can’t provide the time that is needed, and we all know that family comes first. All of us on the board wish the best for Jason and his family, and we want him to enjoy this precious time with them. We fully support him in this decision.

I told Jason that he will be back when he can commit to the time needed to the Board. In the meantime, he and the family will still be working dogs and going to training days. Also, Jason will continue to judge. So, we haven’t lost him—or his strengthening influence. It will just be felt in a different part of the organization.

We have filled his board position with a candidate that I know will do a great job. Andy Doak—who was in charge of the youth program—will be filling in until the next election.

Welcome aboard Andy!

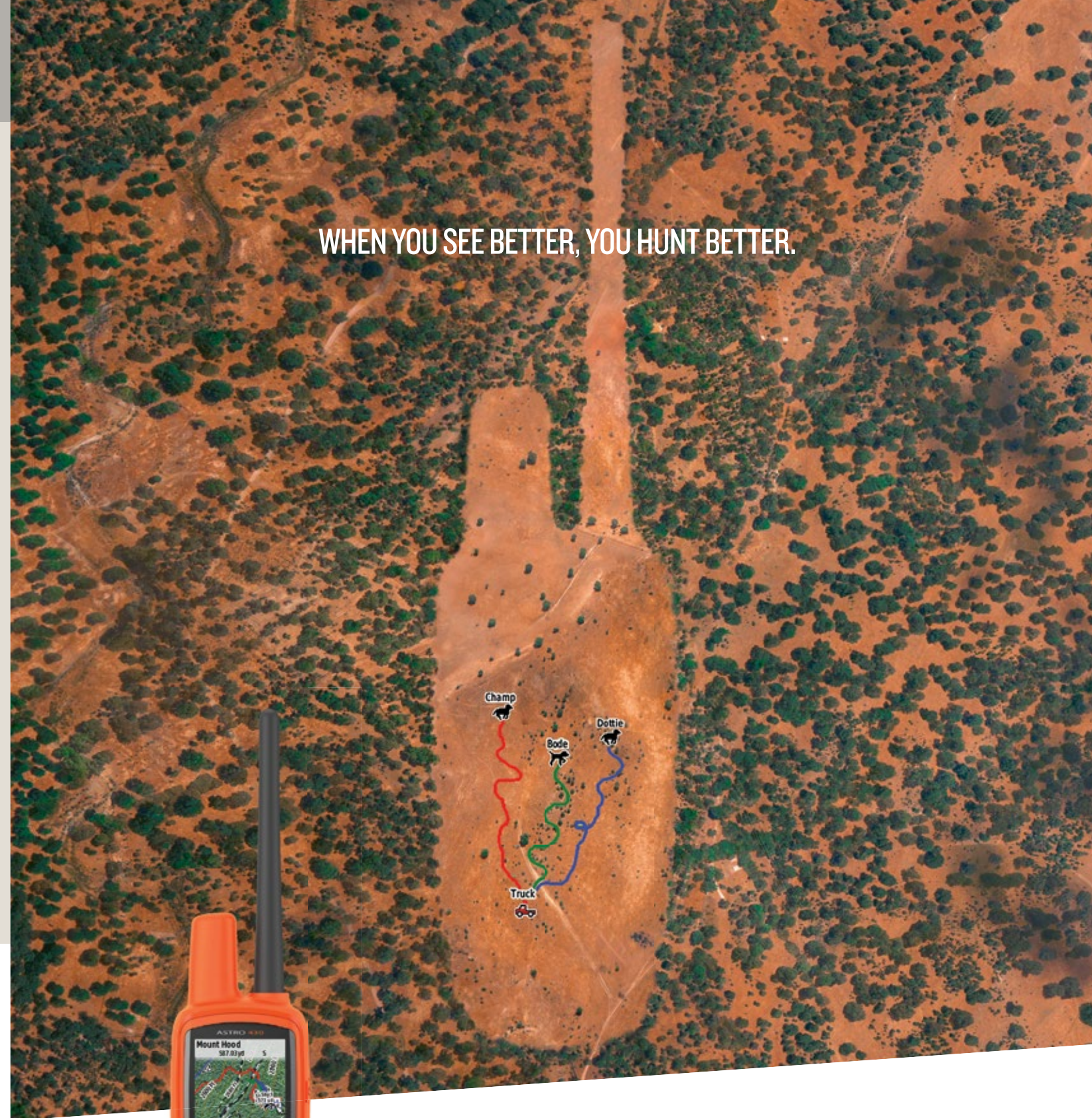
As the new Director of Promotions for NAVHDA I am looking forward to continuing the effort to grow and strengthen NAVHDA as an organization. I have been fortunate to experience and support NAVHDA in a variety of ways so far. Through serving as chair of the NAVHDA youth committee, becoming a NAVHDA judge, president of my local NAVHDA chapter, as well as hunting and training with NAVHDA friends, I have been able to interact with NAVHDA members and chapters across the US and Canada. In these interactions, I have experienced one commonality that rings true throughout: NAVHDA members are passionate about the hunt, versatile hunting dog breeds, and the organization itself. NAVHDA has been on an upward trend with respect to membership for several years, and I hope to be part of continuing that upward trend—a trend which can certainly be credited to these individuals and sponsors who are dedicated to supporting the organization in past and present times. I look forward to this new role and hope to expand upon the growing enthusiasm, foster current sponsor and conservation partner relationships, as well as seek out potential new sponsorships and avenues for growth.

And if we have a chance to meet at a NAVHDA event in the future, I would encourage you to say hello and share a story or two about why you became involved with the organization. Enjoy the training season, and best of luck in hunting season next fall.

~Andy Doak



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# About The Cover

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# ON THE RIGHT TRACK

By Judy Zeigler  
Montour Falls, New York

## It's A Brave New World!

Your new puppy will arrive soon, and you are anxiously waiting with a desire to start training as soon as possible. There are many resources available to help and, hopefully, this article will as well.

Let's start with the critical periods in your puppy's development.

### Neonatal Period (birth-12 days)

Puppy cannot regulate body functions and relies on the mother and/or the breeder for elimination and temperature regulation.

### Transition Period (13-20 days)

Ears and eyes open. Hearing and eyesight are very poor. Puppy moves about more and begins to control bodily functions.

### Awareness Period (21-28 days)

Puppy is moving around in their environment well. Eyesight and hearing function well.

### Canine Socialization Period (21-49 days)

Puppy learns to interact with littermates and his mother. Puppy interacts more with outside stimuli.

### Human Socialization period (7-12 weeks)

Puppy learns by association. Permanent human bonding begins. Puppy goes to new home and begins housebreaking. Puppy now has the ability to learn simple behaviors such as recall, sit, down.

### Fear Impact Period (8-11 weeks)

What puppy learns in this period is permanent. Avoid frightening experiences as they can have a negative effect. Experiences must be positive to minimize adverse conditioning.

### Seniority Classification Period (13-16 weeks)

At this age puppy begins testing independence. Puppy is teething and may show biting behavior. Praise for correct behavior is very important.

### Flight Instinct Period (4 to 8 months)

Teething continues at this time. Puppy shows strong independence. During this period it is critical to shape positive behavior while minimizing negative behavior.

### Second Fear Period (6-14 months)

Fear of different situations manifest in this period. New situations should be handled with patience while avoiding reinforcing negative behavior. Focus should be on building confidence.

Let's now explore how we can positively handle these periods and start puppy on a road to success.



### 'Socialization'

The idea behind socialization is helping puppy to become acclimated to all types of situations, sounds and smells in a positive manner. The key word is positive. According to the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior, improper socialization can impact behavior for that dog's entire life.

The world is brand new to your puppy and can be strange and unusual. Our job is to help them explore and create positive associations.

Avoid doing too much too fast. Start by introducing puppy to a few people at a time versus taking them to a huge party. Start with positive training puppy classes. These help accustom puppy to other dogs and people.

Introduce puppy to many different people, places and other dogs. Introduce them to many different surfaces such as pavement, plastic, slippery floors, even a ladder or wire crate laid flat. Much research shows that in the first four months of life, exposing the puppy to any and all they may encounter in life will pay off greatly in a well-adjusted adult dog. Again, these must be positive experiences. Inadvertently, if a negative experience occurs such as the puppy being frightened by another dog or person, turn the situation around by tossing some high value treats away from the adverse event and try to distract the pup. Do your best to turn

this into a somewhat positive situation. Do not coddle the pup nor force the situation. Act normally and walk away while redirecting the pup into a more normal/positive behavior i.e. "sit and watch."

### Independence Training

Responsible breeders of sporting dogs will counsel their puppy buyers on the importance of independence training. Sporting dogs may have a tendency towards separation anxiety, and this can be avoided right from the time you bring puppy home. Set aside time during the day when puppy is required to be alone for an hour or so. A crate should be set up in a room where no human shall reside during the time frame set aside for the independence training. A radio may be played softly along with a Kong toy filled with peanut butter or easy cheese. Puppy should be steered towards the crate with a soft command of "kennel" while tossing a high value treat inside the crate. Close the door to the crate and leave for a period of 15 to 30 minutes. Puppy learns to cope on their own and realizes you will return. Upon return do not praise puppy, open door very quietly and take puppy outside to eliminate. It is important to note that if puppy is barking, waiting until they are quiet reinforces the behavior



that quiet=door opens. Time spent alone in the crate, kennel or vehicle can gradually be increased.

### Operant Conditioning

Dog training happens through operant conditioning. This is the way a dog learns or is conditioned from the way the dog behaves or operates in its environment. The change in the behavior will occur more or less depending on positive and negative results. When you take puppy out into the field and feed him treats for sitting you are using operant conditioning. Reward based training has been shown to be an effective way to change behavior and emotion in dogs.

### Positive Reinforcement

Positive reinforcement occurs when a motivating item such as a treat or verbal praise is presented after your pup exhibits a desired behavior. Using positive reinforcement will mean the desired behavior will most likely happen again.

### Negative Reinforcement

Taking something unpleasant away from the dog the instant they perform the desired behavior. Negative reinforcers can be used to shape behavior. The ear pinch is an example of negative reinforcement. The trainer stops pinching the ear when the dog grabs a hold of an object. I am not advocating for the use of pain. We do not need to use pain and discomfort to achieve a high level of training. Another example of negative reinforcement can be pushing on a dog's body to get it to move over, when the dog moves the forceful push is stopped.

### Extinction Options

This method is used when you want your puppy to stop doing something i.e. jumping on people or begging at the table. The only way to stop these undesirable behaviors is to totally ignore (extinction) the puppy until he understands the behavior will get no reward. You must be consistent.

### Shaping Behaviors

Shaping behavior is a training technique that builds on 'capturing.' Capturing is a training technique in which you wait for pup to show a behavior (sit and look up) and immediately reward when it happens. The use of rewards makes the behavior (sit and look up) happen more often, which enables you to add a word or command i.e. "watch" or "pay attention." I like to use a clicker to mark the behavior I am capturing. The clicker has a sound the puppy doesn't usually hear in everyday life, it is quick and consistent.

### Positive vs. Negative Reinforcement

Science has proven that to effectively change behavior there has to be some type of motivation. Punishment will inhibit the developing bond between you and your puppy and can cause avoidance, depression and behavior problems. In using positive methods along with rewards you are strengthening the bond and developing a confident, happy, well-adjusted dog. Reward based training is not only scientifically sound, it will create a deeper bond between you and your puppy. 🐾

*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](mailto:vhd@navhda.org) with "On the Right Track" in the subject line.*



Judy Zeigler is a licensed veterinary technician with a long time interest in canine behavior. She is an active member of The Society of Veterinary Behavior Technicians and is a Fear Free Certified Professional. Judy has been a gun dog and obedience trainer since 1985. She also teaches with the NYS Arson Dog Program and is an AKC hunt test judge. Judy and her husband Andy are avid waterfowlers and upland bird hunters. Judy has been a NAVHDA member since 1995. Judy has bred German shorthaired pointers under the kennel name Crystal Kennels since 1998. The kennel has bred dogs tested through all levels of NAVHDA including three VC dogs, 23 AKC Master Hunters, 22 Breed Champions, two Master Agility Champions along with a Narcotic Detection dog, three Tracking Certified dogs, an Arson Detection dog and a young dog currently working in Search and Rescue.

# Sporting Breeds In Demand For Explosives Detection Work As Need Increases

By Penny Leigh  
Project Manager  
AKC Detection Dog Task Force

**T**he ports of San Francisco are safer thanks to the hard work of US Coast Guard Officer Feco.

Feco patrols ferries and shore-side buildings. He frequently is deployed with the Maritime Security and Safety Team to ships at sea and even to perform security for presidential visits and national football games.

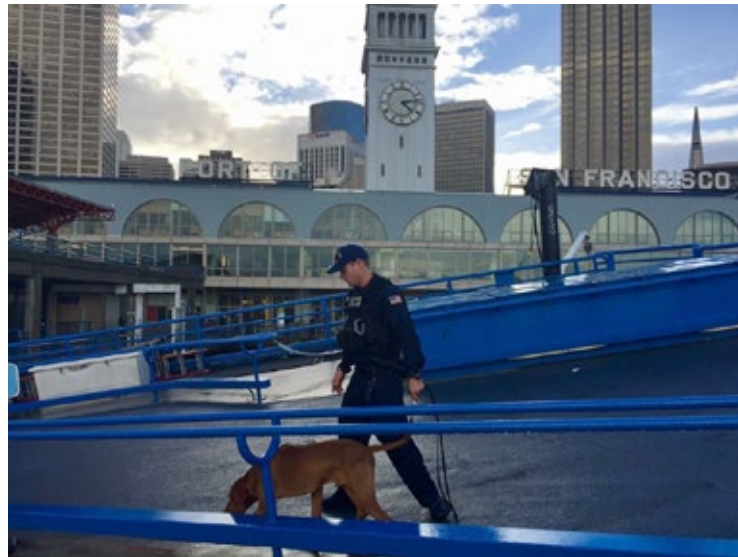
Finding bombs is the valuable skill that Feco possesses, and the only payment he ever requires is a squeaky tennis ball on a rope.

Feco is a 5-year-old Vizsla who joined the US Coast Guard in December 2014 at a little over a year old.

“As with most Vizslas, Feco has a high-energy level and drive to work. He truly enjoys finding an odor source and the reward that comes along with it,” said Petty Officer Cory Sumner, Feco’s handler.

The skills of highly trained explosives dogs like Feco are in great demand today, with the rise of homegrown terrorism and mass shootings in America. In addition to the US Government, bomb dogs are sought by malls, schools, universities, theaters, sports stadiums and concert arenas with one major problem: there are not enough to fill the need.

The United States imports about 80 to 90 percent of their working dogs from Europe, which has a rich heritage for breeding and training dogs for police/military style competitions and certifications.



German Shepherds and Belgian Malinois remain the most popular choice for patrol dogs by law enforcement, and many are dual-purpose canines that also perform detection work.

But the breeds in greater demand for public detection work are sporting dogs, including Vizslas, German Shorthaired Pointers, German Wirehaired Pointers and Labrador Retrievers. These breeds are less intimidating to the public, and their incredible hunting instinct is easily transferred to searching for explosives.

Pointing breeds have great endurance – a trait valued when there is a bomb scare or public security threat, said Sgt. Matthew Henry of the Floyd County Police Department in Rome, Georgia.

Henry’s partner is Blaze, a female German Shorthaired Pointer who never stops running – until she catches a whiff of explosives. She and Henry serve an eight-county area in north-west Georgia but are on call for the entire state.

“The German Shorthair is just an excellent breed in my opinion; they are so loyal and hard working. They aim to please and are really just built for their odor capabilities,” Henry said. “They don’t tire out and don’t have aggression issues. I can’t say enough good about the GSP.”



Although sporting dogs are popular in America, the US Government still imports many from Europe, including Feco.

Feco was born in Germany and was trained by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

There is mounting concern about America’s dependence on imported dogs to provide this national security service. Due to growing terrorism threats and consequent demand for working dogs within Europe and around the world, there is now a shortage of foreign dogs available to protect the United States.

“The irony is that as a nation we do not typically out-source the production of resources needed for national security. It is even more difficult to accept the fact, that

as a nation, we cannot meet our own needs for working dogs when we have so many breeders and dogs within our borders,” said Scott Thomas, former breeding program manager of the TSA Canine Breeding and Development Center.

The TSA’s detection dog breeding program was eliminated in 2012 as part of budget cuts. This spurred Thomas to write the American Kennel Club and ask for support in encouraging a domestic breeding program that would reduce the need to rely on foreign sources for national protection.

AKC Board Member Dr. Carmen Battaglia, a long-time German Shepherd fancier, has been fascinated since he was a child with the amazing contributions that his breed has made to the military. When he became president of the German Shepherd

Dog Club of America in the early 1990s, he organized a trip by the club’s board to the Department of Defense canine center at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

This began a long-time relationship between Battaglia and the military dog team, resulting in many trips to Lackland and Battaglia being named as an advisor to the TSA’s canine program. When Battaglia received the letter from Thomas regarding help with a US breeding program, he took the matter to the AKC Board of Directors, which formed the AKC Detection Dog Feasibility Study Committee to document the current state of detection dog use in the United States and explore how to increase the domestic supply of this crucial national resource.

“AKC has always been a leader in purpose-bred pure-bred dogs. And these purpose-bred pure-bred dogs that have the skills, ability and breeding to produce the traits needed for detection dogs to successfully do their important jobs,” Battaglia said. “It is a natural role for AKC to assist in meeting this national need to protect our country.”

The AKC committee, headed by AKC Senior Vice President Mark Dunn, interviewed key stakeholders involved in bomb detection including people from academia, government, military, policing, training and breeding. Subsequently, the AKC has launched initiatives focused on Government Relations, Networking/Education and Breeder Outreach.

**Government Relations** – There are many obstacles that stand in the way of U.S. breeders being able to easily sell dogs to the government for detection



work, including low market price for top field line puppies and complicated government vendor contracts that make it difficult for individual breeders.

The government has stated that European dogs are less expensive than buying U.S. dogs, but they do not include the additional expenses of travel that could last up to six weeks for their procurement team, including the related costs of a veterinarian; shipping the dogs; and conducting health screenings and training while they are in Europe and again when they arrive.

In addition, most legislators are unaware of the U.S.'s dependence on foreign dogs and the fact that it is becoming increasingly more difficult to meet U.S. needs from foreign sources.

The AKC Government Relations team, led by Vice President Sheila Goffe, has made strides in bringing these issues to the attention of lawmakers.

AKC Government Relations provided recommendations in the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2810) to support using and developing additional sources for high quality domestically-bred working dogs. HR 2810 also requires the Department of Defense to provide reports on specific aspects of military working

dog evaluation, procurement and breeding programs. This includes comparative costs of foreign versus domestically-bred dogs, availability of domestically-bred dogs, and non-classified requirements for "green" (minimally-trained) dogs. HR 2810 has passed the House and, as of this writing, is under consideration in conference.

Goffe also was invited to testify on the issue before a Senate committee in October 2017, where she expressed the dire need for these dogs to protect the country.

"Experts recognize that there is no better or more efficient way to detect explosives than through the use of high quality, specially trained scent detector dogs. Since the terrorist attacks on 9-11, and subsequent attacks worldwide, global demand for high quality explosives detection dogs has skyrocketed," Goffe said. "A shortage of appropriate, domestically-bred dogs available for work as explosive detection dogs presents a significant threat to U.S. security."

**Networking/Education** – The first AKC US Detection Dog Conference took place in early 2017 to start a conversation about increasing the domestic supply of detection candidates. The stakeholders and speakers included members of gov-

ernment, academia and private training/breeding facilities. The 2018 conference is planned for Aug. 28-30 in Durham, NC, and breeders and all interested parties are invited to attend.

In addition, the AKC committee members have conducted research to talk to the experts about the issue and needs, including visits to Lackland AFB, Auburn University Canine Performance Department, and the University of Pennsylvania Working Dog Center.

**Breeder Outreach** – AKC works with thousands of breeders around the country, but most are unaware of the detection dog shortage. The AKC Feasibility Study committee is taking steps to communicate the need to breeders through presentations to kennel clubs and parent clubs and articles in AKC newsletters and magazines.

### The Right Stuff

The most successful detection dogs are developed from field/working lines known to produce dogs that can work all day without losing interest or energy.

"I look for drive, detection ability, tractability and intelligence," said Lane Kjellsen, CEO of K2 Solutions, a detection dog training center in North Carolina. Kjellsen

is also an AKC Field Trial judge and long-time competitor in retriever field trials and hunt tests.

"The field-line dogs have been bred for a long time with a purpose to work. These are the type of dogs that can end up in rescue as their owners do not understand how to channel their energy into jobs," he said.

K2 Solutions trained Blaze after purchasing her from a field-line kennel in Kansas.

Blaze's desire to hunt was focused on seeking the odor of explosives. She was selected for the K2 Person Borne training program, meaning she can trail moving odor, such as a bomb in a backpack that a person carries into a crowded area.

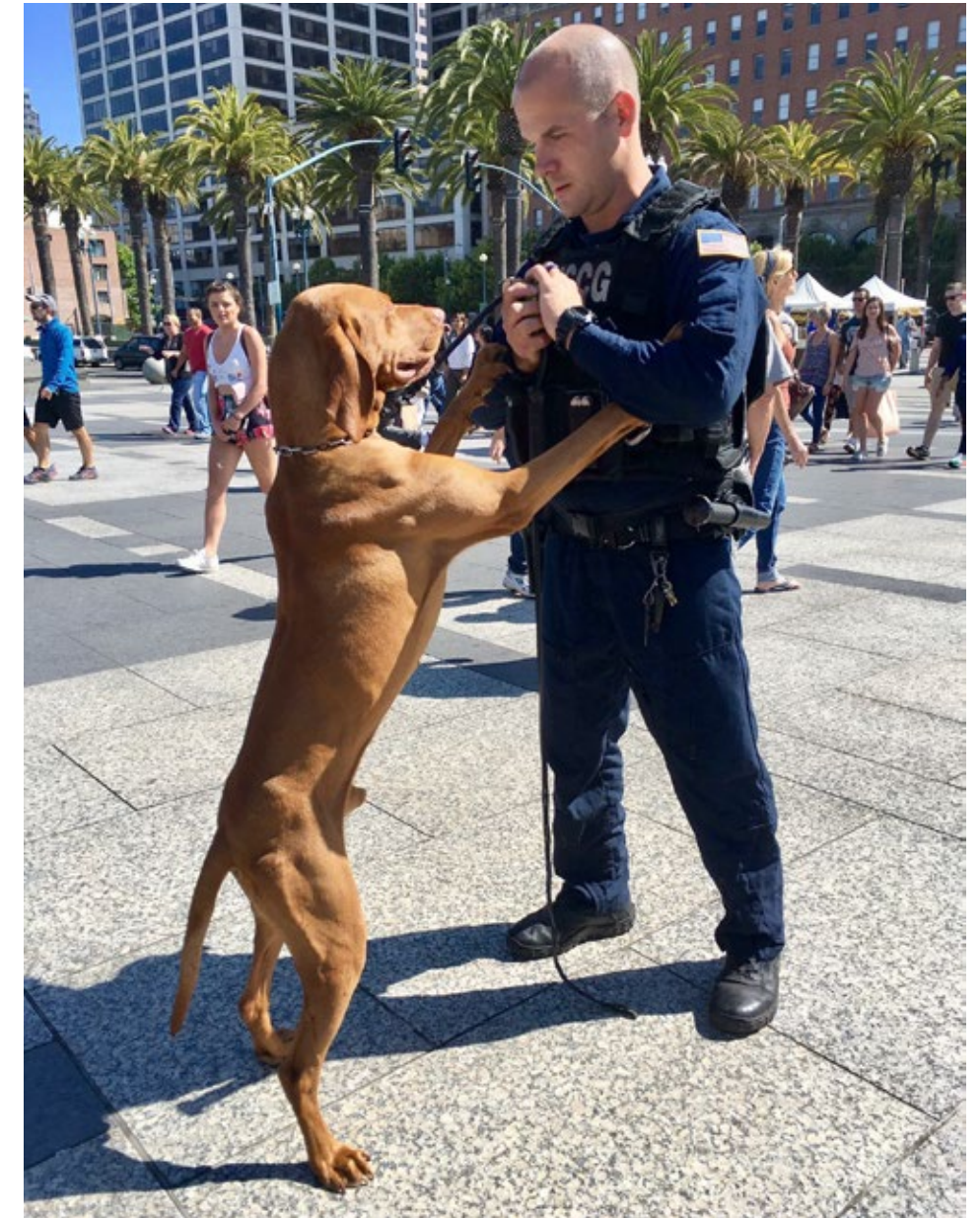
Blaze had received her formal obedience and odor work training when Henry joined her for the "real world scenario" training.

"I am her first handler so there was a bonding period, which we actually had to do while doing our training in school. I picked her up two days before our training started so we didn't have the usual couple of weeks to get to know each other. It made the first couple of weeks interesting. We were put through a five-week school where most of the training was hands-on, running different scenarios at all kinds of different places in metro-Atlanta," Henry said.

"We had to test out of the class with at least a 90% pass rate and once a year after that for certification. Blaze has passed every year with a 100% completion and is to this day as hard working and methodical as she was on day one."

When the US Government receives a detection dog candidate, they must pass a stringent health examination, including hip, elbow and lumbar radiographs, and then undergo an evaluation for these key traits:

**Sociability** – Dogs must be sociable enough to be easily handled by people and to be at ease around people of all types, but should not be so sociable that they are distracted by the presence of people.



**Environmental Stability** – Dogs must not show fear or nervousness around loud and/or strange noises; they must show physical rigor whether working in very hot or cold temperatures; and they must be bold and willing to walk/climb on strange surfaces.

**Desire to Obtain Reward** – The dog's drive to obtain its reward is the key to the dog working. Detection dogs are trained on toys, such as Kongs or tennis balls. The dogs must want that toy more

than anything. Food is not used as a reward on the job as it is difficult for handlers to carry, and there is too much food in the environment that could confuse the dog.

**Hunting Ability** – The dogs must show intense drive to keep hunting, even when they are not finding anything, without getting frustrated and without giving false alerts.

The US Government and most training programs want to purchase dogs at about a

year of age so they are ready to move into advanced training. But this can be difficult as not all breeders are willing or able to keep a puppy for several months so some training centers have started puppy programs so they can accept younger dogs.

K2 Solutions has started purchasing puppies as young as 8 weeks, as well as breeding some of their own dogs “because there is such a demand for these dogs and the supply of good dogs is not there,” K2 Chief Trainer Tracy Campbell said. “We are hoping that the proper breeding, proper nurturing and training them as puppies will make them really good working dogs.”

If breeders opt to keep puppies until they are 10 months or older, they need to provide plenty of socialization and early training opportunities so the dogs are prepared to enter advanced course work. The 2018 AKC US Detection Dog Conference will include workshops on providing the best foundation training for future detection dogs.

In addition to odor detection training, Feco has been acclimated to most any situation that he might encounter on the job with the Coast Guard, including helicopters.

“Training on board helicopters allows the capability to be delivered to a vessel at sea so canine bomb sweeps can be conducted before a vessel can enter the port,” Sumner said.

For all their hard work at their very intense jobs, both Feco and Blaze enjoy a normal life when off-duty and at home with their handlers.

“Blaze loves to hang out with the family and be outside. She is most definitely still a bird dog and loves to chase and point out birds,” Henry said. “She loves to go on runs and play fetch.”

*For more information about the AKC US Detection Dog Conference 2018 or the AKC Detection Dog Task Force, contact the author at [pxl@akc.org](mailto:pxl@akc.org) or call 919-816-3749.*



Join us at the

## AKC US Detection Dog Conference 2018



**Aug. 28-30, Durham, NC**

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# THE HEALING

By Kim McDonald  
Seattle, Washington



Several days ago I emailed my breeder, teasing her that by encouraging me in my pursuit of upland game hunting she'd created a monster. Along with the email, I sent a photo of a book that had arrived in the mail about a woman learning how to hunt. The breeder's response was: "See how we have enriched your life?"

## The Beginning

For over 25 years, I have been an avid fly angler. And during that time, I have been lucky to take my Labrador retrievers with me. Every one of my dogs has waded in streams from east coast to west coast in search of trout. Being outside with my dogs is one of the best things in life. Watching them enjoy the water, the scents, feeling them protect me in some "sketchy" areas that I have fished, makes the day always much better (of course, catching trout is also nice!).

Several years ago I returned to tying my own flies. And I began to think about the

materials I was using to create soft hackle flies, the famous Pheasant tailed nymph, and various flies with waterfowl feathers. Reading great fly tyers like Craig Matthews out of Blue Ribbon Flies in West Yellowstone, who also hunts for his partridge, grouse, and pheasant materials, got me thinking about upland game hunting. And as things usually do in my life, that led to more reading, then visiting, then hunting and finally thinking about hunting dogs.

I am a dog person. Friends have told me they want to come back reincarnated as my dogs. It was not weird, at all, to me to think about getting into upland game hunting by researching, then possibly getting, a "gun dog." I can not tell you the number of guys who have rolled their eyes at me when I tell them I got the dog long before I felt proficient in hunting.

I spent several years researching pointers, flushers, retrievers. I already had two labs, one who was gun shy and the other one an intense hunter, but aging. I spent

time on dog group Facebook pages; I subscribed to magazines, I talked with every upland hunter I knew. And finally I decided a Wirehaired Pointing Griffon was the right breed for me. Sometimes described as an "older gentleman's walking game dog," fit me!

I spent another bit of time researching breeders, talking with several, and finally met George and Kathy Stirner in Helena, Montana, who were breeding their stud to their dam, both hunting machines. Of course, understanding what that meant required me to understand "titles." And that was my first encounter with NAVHDA.

I filled out the puppy application with the Stirners, sent them a deposit, then waited.

## Family

My brother, Mark, and I grew up truly being city mice/country mice. Our extended family were all in the grocery business and owned a farm within several hours drive time from our city. Mark was four

years older than me, so of course, as a little sister, I followed and annoyed him from the get-go. We would spend weekends and summers on the farm, herding cattle, riding horses, playing in rivers and streams, breaking bones, harvesting and hauling hay. Both of us grew up with a grandfather who was an avid duck hunter and fly angler. Along with our six other cousins, we ranged over 250 acres, learning to love being outside far more than being inside.

But eventually the farm was sold, my brother went to college, met the woman of his dreams, got married and moved to California. As we grew older we got closer, and when I took up fly fishing, he perfected my double haul cast on a warm summer night casting into his swimming pool. With technology, we stayed in closer touch despite the miles between us. And as our parents aged and I took up care-giving duties, Mark and I operated like a well-oiled machine in making

decisions about our parents. Their deaths increased our closeness.

Mark had two Golden Retrievers in his life. After the last one died, his wife didn't want another dog. So Mark lived his "dog needs" though my "herd." Vicarious dog love. I sent pictures, called and told stories, and would drive them all to California so he could spend time with my labs.

## Molly

Molly was whelped in May, 2106. As soon as Kathy Stirner started sending me pictures, I would send them to Mark. He asked questions about training a hunting dog and how my other two labs would deal with a puppy. And when I finally drove to Helena to pick Molly and then pick her up, I immediately called Mark. A wiggling puppy was on the other end of my FaceTime with Mark the day I picked her up. She was quite a July 3 firecracker!

Prior to picking her up, I spent way too much money getting bumpers, bird scents, whistles, dog training books, check cords, leads. I was trying to be prepared so Molly and I would start out on the right foot.

The Stirners did not require me to have Molly tested for her natural ability, but having researched and spent a lot of time with Griff owners, I was curious about doing it. However, the Stirners greatly encouraged me to test her, they were confident she would be a star. I am sure, in private moments, they rolled their eyes about me, but all I ever got from them was total encouragement and support.

I started thinking about how I would train her. Like me when I was a pup, Molly spends weekends on a non-working farm where there are plenty of California quail, an occasional ruffed grouse, and chuckars who come down from the rock outcroppings behind the Aspen stand. It's a gun dog paradise. And I was ready to work with Molly to get her "bird crazy."

About a month into having Molly in my life and integrating into the pack, my

brother called out of the blue. He told me that he had just been to the doctor and they found evidence of cancer. He was optimistic, upbeat, and gave no indication of worry. At our ages, of course, we both know how to ask questions and probe, but I wasn't hearing any concerns. So I didn't check with my nieces or sister-in-law. I continued to stay in close touch, sending him pictures of this crazy puppy, and asking about his treatment.

August rolled into September and Molly and I began working on some bird training. I gasped at her first point at a robin, bragging to Mark that soon she will be pointing at the quail.

In early October I was driving back to the city from a meeting and my brother called. This time when I talked to him over the car speakers, I heard something very different. Panicking, I called my niece and told her I thought I should come down for a visit. Hours later my brother called me again and suggested I come sometime after Thanksgiving.

The next day I texted Mark a picture of Molly sitting on the stairwell. I asked how he was and his response was "better now that I've seen this one." I smiled. He was okay.

But several weeks later, in the middle of a Friday night, my phone began ringing. It was my sister-in-law to tell me that my brother had died. My only sibling, my family, had died.

## The Funk

I hadn't realized how much my brother's death would impact me. For the first few weeks I busied myself, with the holidays, getting to his memorial, making sure my nieces and sister-in-law were okay. I would spend a lot of time with my dogs, but neither my heart nor head were in to training Molly for hunting. Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years all came and went. Friends worried about me. I felt like I was sleepwalking through the days. I have dealt

with a lot of loss in my life, but somehow this time all the losses piled up, and I felt weighted down.

One thing I did with Molly's breeders was to set up a Facebook page for all the litter's owners. It's been a delight to see Molly's nine other siblings grow. And one owner, Bill Kellerman started posting about training his Griff, Chip for the NAVHDA Natural Ability test. As the snow melted, and training Molly with bumpers became a bit more practical, I started reading Bill's posts, then reading "the green book," and thinking about whether I could test Molly. I had no intention of breeding her, but I was curious how a great of hunter she really could be.

In reality, I didn't know the first thing about handling Molly. I would look at the test schedules and think about taking her to Montana or Idaho, but the trips never got organized—mostly because I couldn't get my mind wrapped around the logistics, much less what was I supposed to do with Molly. I was clearly in a funk.

## Testing

Finally, sometime in the summer, Bill Kellerman posted that he tested Chip, and the pup was a rock star. But now the closest

test was several days after Molly turned 16 months, a test run by the Pacific Northwest Chapter. Kathy Stirner gently nudged me, saying even if Molly "can't prize," she can show she did it. I dilly-dallied about signing up Molly, until August when I finally filled out the application, sent in the check, and hoped the test would be filled. I kept working Molly on our training routine, but I never went to a Handler's Clinic, much less even talked with a trainer who knew what they were doing.

Molly got in, I got a test date, and finally had to organize myself. I would make a weekend of it, taking all the girls on a hike the day before, staying in a hotel the night before, and hopefully not embarrassing Molly too much the day of the test, which was the last day, Sunday.

The whole time getting ready for the test, I kept thinking about how much I wanted to talk with Mark, to tell him about this adventure. Get him to laugh at me, think his little sister was totally off her rocker. There was a loneliness in getting to that Sunday.

When I drove to the staging area, it was filled with men and women who actually looked like they knew what they were doing. Dogs in crates, lots of blaze orange, and a few gorgeous shotguns. I pulled up

looking like the Clampets moving to Beverly Hills. The labs hanging out the truck window, Starbucks cups scattered in the truck. I wasn't feeling too optimistic. And needless to say, my joke about opening the truck door and letting Molly show her natural ability didn't go over very well.

To the judge's credit, they whipped me into shape. Molly was going to be the last dog tested, so I could at least observe from a distance what was happening. Poor Molly had energy to burn, so on the first portion of the test, search, she ran amok. Finally the judge assigned to me, Brendon, took me to his side and offered advice to get Molly focused, which she finally did in the last few minutes in the field, snapping into several great points at the Chuckars. Needless to say, getting her to recall after all that excitement was impossible and Judge Cameron finally suggested that I use my stern "mother voice." I walked back to the truck thinking I should just give up, pack Molly up and head home. But we didn't.

Lunch was served, people were telling stories with lots of laughter. Slowly I was beginning to feel like this was something actually good for me—and certainly for Molly. The water portion was the next part of the test, and I knew Molly would ace it. She loved water. All water. Bill Kellerman had advised me to make sure Molly could enter brackish water, which after one morning when she dove into a sludge pond, I was sure she would be just fine. Again, Molly was the last dog. I threw the first bumper and off she went, bringing it back to me. I threw the second bumper, and it went up behind me, into the trees, barely grazing one of the judges. And Judge Kohnke dryly said: "well, throws like a girl." I started laughing. It was something my brother would have said. I threw the third bumper (this time into the water) and Molly retrieved it, then, once again, ran amok.

I had never tracked with Molly, so I was most worried about that portion of the test. Again, Molly was last. One of the chapter members who was helping with the test had given the handlers a piece of advice about releasing the dog over the pile of feathers... "sort of like releasing a bowling ball." With that in mind, I got Molly up to the feathers,



took off the snap lead, grabbed her collar and walked her over the feathers. Then I stood still. She immediately headed to my left, went into a point, then flushed an errant chuckar. Oops. So we tried again. And Molly once again headed to my left, but this time, she stopped, looked at me looking straight, came back to the line, and beelined up the hill, nose in the grass. At the top of the hill, in the cover, she went into a point, and I could hear the judges gasp.

"Go get her," a judge said to me. I walked up to the cover and Molly, still in a point, was staring at a pheasant. I beamed with pride.

## Results

After all of Molly's exuberance (or misbehaving) I was quite worried about her

score, until she locked into her point on the tracking. For some reason, at that moment, I didn't care how she scored. I knew she was a hunting machine, and that sooner or later, I would learn how to handle her. I walked back from getting her off the pheasant, happier than I had been in a long time.

Sitting around, waiting for the results, all the handlers joked and laughed. A real sense of relief that the test was over came over all of us. And after I heard Molly would have "prized" if she hadn't been a few days over 16 months, I was ecstatic. I called the Stirners to let them know, then sat by a river, playing with the dogs, drinking a beer in celebration.

It wasn't until several days later, as I joined NAVHDA, that I realized what

the test really meant to me. When I finally decided to fill out Molly's application, I devoted much more attention and time to training. I was able to focus on something other than losing Mark. And at some point during the test I realized that there were a lot of people in my world, in my life, who shared my interests and passions. If I couldn't call Mark about Molly, I could call the Stirners, or talk with someone from my NAVHDA chapter, or post something on the Hunting Griff Facebook page. Molly got a good result, but I got a great result. I miss my brother terribly. But getting engaged in that one moment, realizing that life does go on, adventures are to be made, pulled me out of a deep funk and back into the world of a pretty nice life. 🐾





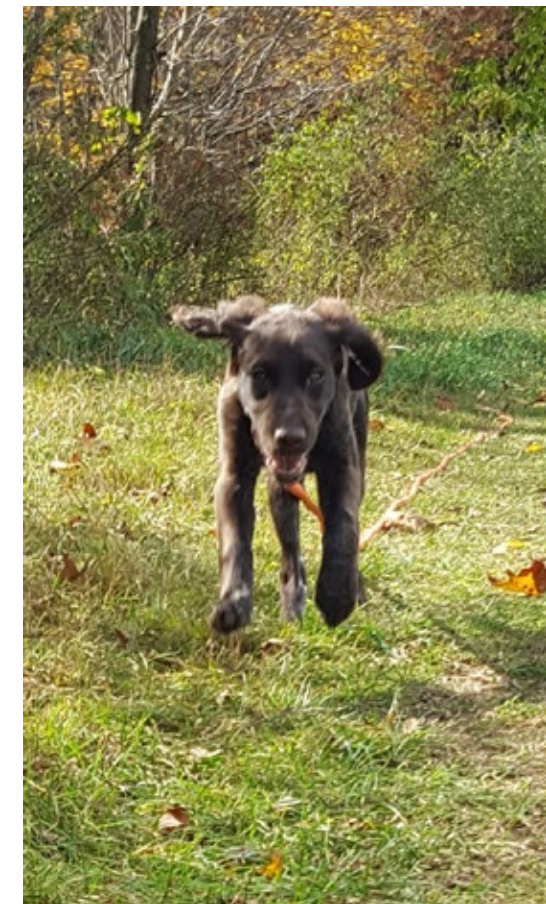
# ANYTHING & EVERYTHING

By Patti Carter  
Contributing Editor  
Brunswick, Maine

NANCY ANISFIELD © 2018



THIS IS OUR VIZSLA "SADIE OF THE PURPLE SAGE" FROM KING SAGE GUN DOGS OF JEROME, IDAHO. SHE WAS 4 MONTHS OLD AT THE TIME AND TEARING UP OUR FLOWER GARDEN! ~ MARK & VICKIE MILTON.



MY SMALL MUNSTERLANDER, TIMBER TRAILS LUNA, ON AN OUTING IN THE FIELD AT AGE 4 MONTHS. DO YOU THINK SHE'S HAVING FUN? ~ MATT BOGDANFFY

Finally, it's time to bring home your pup....you have a training plan, correct? Here's my timetable for the second two months my pup's life.

**Socialize, socialize, and socialize!**

From the moment your pup enters your life your task is socialization. I tell puppy buyers "introduce your new pup to anything and everything puppy will do or encounter in the rest of their life." By 16 weeks of age, puppy needs to meet at least 200 people of every shape and size. Your pup also needs to see, touch, hear and smell everything and anything, i.e., live birds, dead birds, gunfire, car rides, crates, noises of all kinds, puddles, fields, and tons of kids. Remember, everything in moderation, and make sure puppy is having fun. If puppy's tail drops, rethink and adjust your plan.

**Caution:** Not all dogs tolerate lively little pups, so be careful. Only visit with healthy, safe and well vaccinated dogs!

**Training: it is time to "learn to learn."** During the 8 to 16 week time frame, I introduce place board and treat training. By 16 weeks they are excited to train and have learned to at least stay, come, recall, fun retrieve, sit, heel, whoa, and give eye contact. After 18 weeks it becomes more difficult, and sometimes impossible, to teach a dog to like what he was not exposed to earlier. Remember, both of you should be happy and wagging.

Enjoy,  
Patti



HERE IS A PIC OF OUR STONYRIDGE Z LITTER AT 7 WEEKS OF AGE OUT OF OUR DAM STONYRIDGE REMEMBER SHINGOBEE WHO IS A DAUGHTER OF VC STONYRIDGE NIKKA FROM LAST YEAR'S INVITATIONAL, AND THIS LITTER WAS Sired BY STONYRIDGE OTTIS WHO ALSO RAN AT LAST YEAR'S INVITATIONAL ~ JOHN POSTHUMA



THESE ARE THE PUPPIES FROM OUR 2017 BREEDING—BONNIE X JOSH (VC BLACKTHORNS ABSOLUTELY BONNIE G X VC CRYSTALS UP CLOSE N PERSONAL) ~ BLAKE & BOB GELDER



MY HUSBAND AND I HAVE BEEN LONG-TIME OWNERS OF GSP'S. IN THIS PIC OUR SON, MACK (WHO IS NOW AN ARMY BLACKHAWK CREW CHIEF), LITERALLY HAD TO HOLD HIS SHORTS UP SO THE PUPS DIDN'T PULL THEM DOWN! IT'S ONE OF OUR FAVORITE PICS. ~ JENNIFER WALTERS



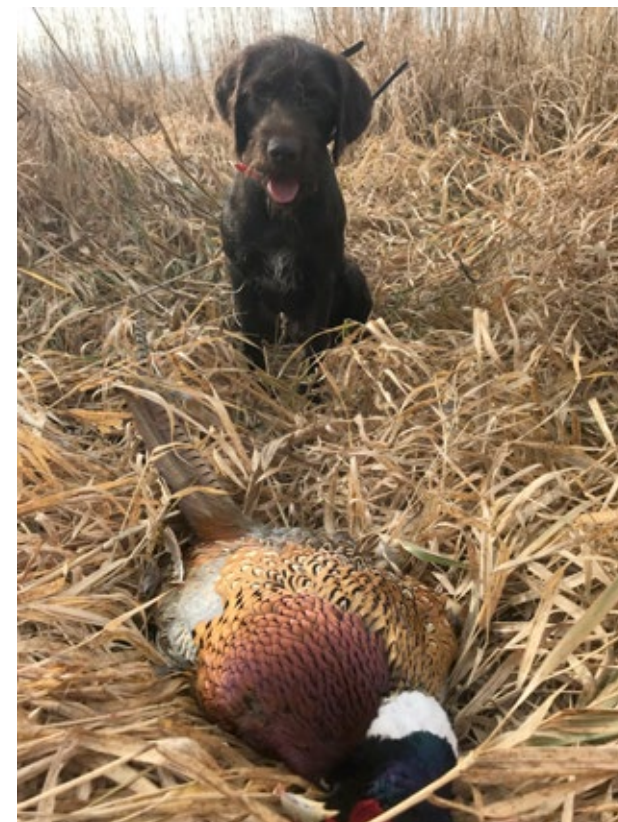
WORKING ON STEADINESS. HUNTING NERD SAID HE WOULD BE A QUICK LEARNER. ~ JORDY JORDAHL



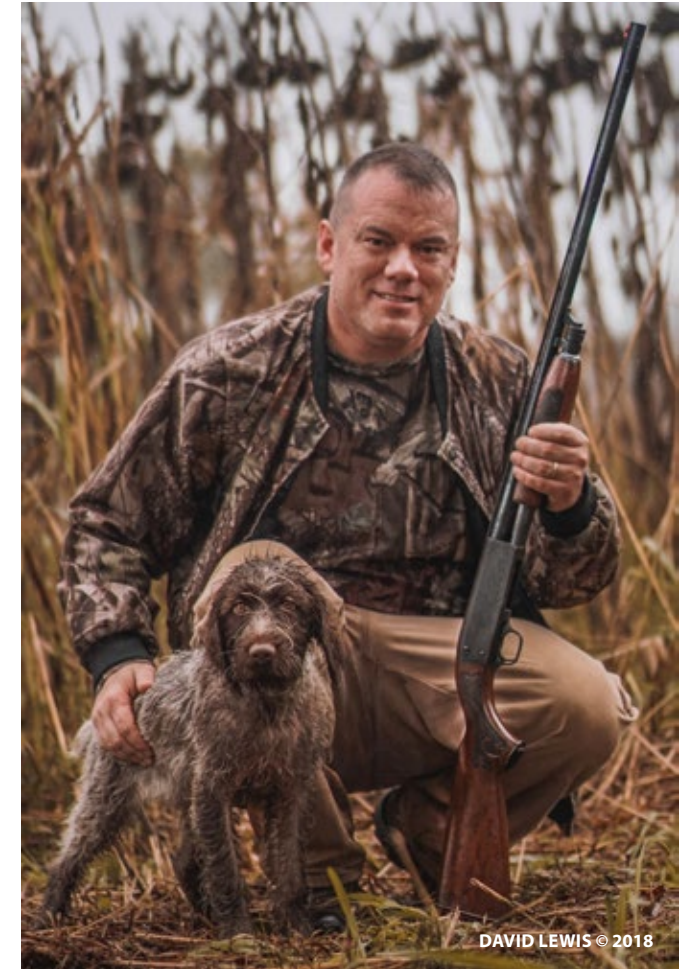
MY PUDELPOINTER, HAY DEVIL IMPERIAL RED "TIKKA" ~ KAREN KUCKER



SPINONE HUGS. ~ JONATHAN PARANJOTHY



LOKI (CEDARWOODS LESU VODA LOKI), PUDELPOINTER, AT 16 MONTHS OLD, CHECKING OUT HIS 28" TAILFEATHER IN MINNESOTA LAST FALL. "PLEASE MAY I HAVE ANOTHER?" ~ STEVE LORENTZ



DAVID LEWIS © 2018

JEFF WILLBURN, A NEW NAVHDA MEMBER, AND SOUTHERN FIRE'S RIDGE RUNNER "JESS." ~ KAREN CATE



# WE MADE IT THROUGH

By Penny Wolff Masar  
New Plymouth, Idaho



**M**y husband has trained many Natural Ability and Utility dogs. I have helped him along the way, but when I decided to run and train my first NA dog, it was his idea to train me to train the pup, and, let me tell you, that is a quick road to divorce!! But we made it through, and Vivi (our Spinone pup) and I spent lots of time together getting ready for the test. I have been a test secretary and helped organize our tests for years, so I thought this would be fun.

Vivi and I learned a lot, she was good at recall—coming pretty much when I called her. She was pointing beautifully and holding the point. She was swimming any time I asked and retrieving the dummy every time, so I was ready.

I was the test secretary, so after I tried to get everyone on the days they needed, I knew I would take what was left—so we ran on the first day, a Friday. The weather was overcast and raining. When our time came, we headed out to the field, and Vivi was like a loose cannon. She was full of pent-up energy and, yes, she actually is a Spinone! We headed out, and she found her first bird, pointed and held the point until I was able to flush the bird. Whew! I was feeling good. We were on our way. We kept searching, and she came across another bird, pointed, and the bird flew before we got there—and off went Vivi chasing the bird.

We had one of the worst winters in our area we'd had in years. Lots and lots of snow had melted and our rivers were full and running fast. The bird

headed toward the river, and off went Vivi chasing it. Next thing I knew I was running after her, calling her back—remember, her recall was good. One of the spectators yelled that she was in the river. All of the judges took off toward the river as I followed. She was being swept down the river, paddling as fast as she could, with the bird in her mouth! Thankfully, Vivi knew our apprentice judge, and, as he called her name, she tried to get to the shore. He and the other judges jumped in and made a human chain and grabbed her as she got hung up in the bushes. She still had the bird in her mouth! What a scare! But we got her back on land and out looking for birds again. The judges kept saying to me, “Head away from the water!”

We finished our 20 minutes, finding another bird with a good point and not chasing in the wrong direction. We went right over to the track, and she smelled the feathers, and I walked a couple

steps with her to get her on the track and let her go. Perfect track. I was worried, but very relieved when I heard the Senior Judge say he had seen enough!

Then we waited for water. I was feeling pretty good, since she loves to swim. Our time came, and I threw the dummy and she hesitated. I was thinking, “Oh no.” But after a couple of rocks, off she went. We had to do it two more times, but she did great. Later in the day, I wondered if the water experience in the river had scared her a bit for the water. Guess we never know what goes through our dogs' minds!

It was time to read the scores, and we got a 110 pt. Prize I, only losing two points for cooperation. I was so happy and so thankful that we made it through the day and survived the river!

All and all, it was a great experience—and what is better than spending time with your dog in the field? 🐾

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Photo by Nancy Anisfield

## Spotlight Dog

### BEC DUCHASSEUR Wirehaired Pointing Griffon



Owned by Philippe Roca

#### PERFORMANCE

NA Prize II  
UT Prize I  
FD Senior Hunter Canada  
FDX Master Hunter Canada  
Placed in NSTRA Competition  
AKC Conformation Champion

#### PROGENY IN THE FIELD

Versatile Champions: 2  
UT: 8 Prize I, 2 Prize II, 1 UT Prize III  
NA: (34 tested) 18 Prize I, 5 Prize II, 6 Prize III  
MH: 2

#### PROGENY IN THE SHOW RING

2 AKC Conformation Champions  
2 CKC Conformation Champions

#### BREEDER AWARDS

3 NA Breeder Awards  
1 UT Breeder Award

#### OFFSPRING PERFORMANCE

Bec's daughter, Unique Amie, is the only WPG dam to accomplish all three NA, UT, and VC Breeder Awards

When a great hunting dog turns out to be a UTI, a Master Hunter and a Conformation Champion, it seems like there is nothing else to look forward to. But there is nothing like watching his offspring and grand offspring following in Daddy's footsteps.

Bec's success was a group effort. He was bred in Quebec by Steve Brodeur; trained by Dominique Demers and Jacques Dumas (his owner for 3 years). He was then sold to Harry MacVicker and Philippe Roca before his Invitational run, for which Dominique Demers trained and handled him. Bec started his breeding career in Kentucky, and he obtained his Conformation Championship in the US. He also ran a couple of times in Woodcock Championships in Michigan and Wisconsin.

Bec's strengths were his mental qualities: cooperation and trainability, plus his tremendous "quiet love" of birds. He was as comfortable with upland birds as he was with waterfowl. He was a tremendous swimmer and a truly versatile Wirehaired Pointing Griffon.

Another very valuable strength for a sire is his ability to pass on his qualities to his offspring and grand offspring. We have several at home, and I can certainly see his influence on the little ones. 🐾

*Is there a dog that you feel has had a significant influence on the advancement of its breed in North America? We are looking for submissions to include as a possible Spotlight Dog in this new, monthly feature. Please send a few short paragraphs, list of accomplishments of the dog and progeny, and high quality photo(s) to [vhd@navhda.org](mailto:vhd@navhda.org) with Spotlight Dog in the subject line.*

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HONOR THE HUNT

# Ask Dr. Boyer

By Lisa Boyer, DVM  
Loomis, California



Dr. Lisa Boyer is an emergency medicine veterinarian who practices both Western and integrative medicine in California. She breeds, trains, hunts and shows Wirehaired Pointing Griffons in northern California. Please contact her at [getagriffon@gmail.com](mailto:getagriffon@gmail.com). She welcomes suggestions for future articles.

## All Breeders Are Not Created Equal

So, you've decided to get a puppy. You've spent a lot of time searching the internet to learn about different breeds, and now it's time to find the perfect dog. The purpose of this article is to discuss key points to consider when finding your puppy, and to make the best choice to ensure that the puppy you purchase is healthy and will meet your lifestyle and expectations.

Many of our versatile breeds are in high demand and, often, short supply. As you search around for a breeder, it is easy to get puppy fever and commit to purchasing a puppy from any breeder who has an available puppy and will take a deposit from you.

In ideal circumstances, you should have an on-going positive relationship with your breeder. Purchasing a puppy is not just a routine action; you're not buying a toaster. You may find yourself needing follow-on support with training, health questions and general information about the breed. A breeder should be there to support you after the sale and should want to assist you in making a smooth transition with your puppy.

Breeders and buyers need to interview each other. A breeder should take the time to understand you, your family and your living situation and be comfortable with where the puppy is going. The breeder should have sufficient information to know the purchaser is suited for both the breed in general and the characteristics of the specific litter. Temperament, training needs and energy levels vary by breed. What you read on the internet about a breed may not be accurate. Each breeder should understand the temperament of their dogs and make a judgment as to whether they are a good fit for a prospective family.

Some questions that may be asked of you are:

- What do you envision doing with the dog (hunt, performance work, family pet, search and rescue, breeding, etc.)?
- What is your dog experience? What breeds did you previously own and what did you like or not like about them?
- How do you intend to train the puppy (professional trainer, self train, etc.)?
- What is your hunting style? What type of training method would you use to train a hunting dog? Would you send your dog for training?
- What is your work schedule?
- Have you made provisions for someone to be with the young puppy during work hours?
- Where will the puppy live (indoors, outdoors, both)?
- Where will the puppy be when you are not home?
- Does anyone in your family have allergies to animals?
- Do you have children? Ages? Have they been around dogs?
- Do you have a fenced yard? How high is the fence?
- How do you plan to exercise the puppy?
- Have you ever relinquished a dog for any reason to a rescue, breeder or shelter?
- What happened to the previous dogs/pets you've owned?
- Are you willing to pick the puppy up in person? Are you willing to have a home inspection? Will you send the breeder photos of your home if they can't visit due to distance?
- Do you have personal and veterinary references?

Reputable breeders ask these types of questions, and more. Many require you to visit their home or at least do an interview by video conferencing if distance precludes an in-person interview. Breeders who have been involved in their breed for quite some time understand the unique needs of their breed. There are some breeds that wouldn't do well living in an outdoor kennel. Others have a particular hunting style that may not match with your expectations. A knowledgeable breeder will take the time to ask questions to help determine the likelihood of an owner's success with their breed.

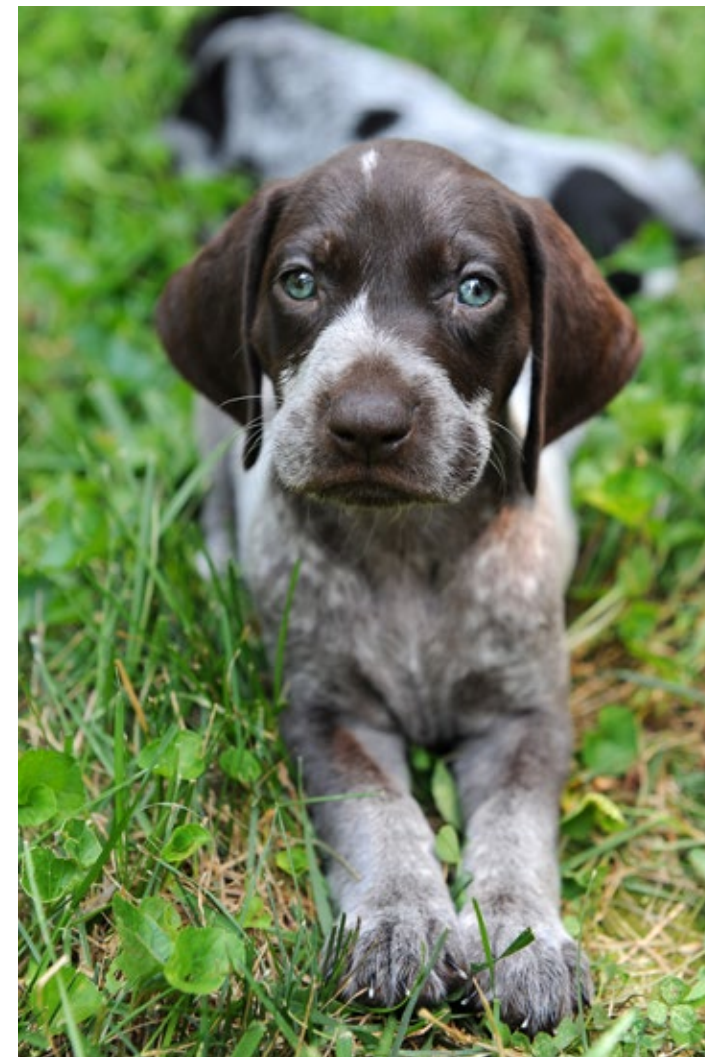
If the breeder you are working with does not ask many questions nor require you to fill out an application, that's a red flag and you may not receive much follow-on support. Additionally, it probably means that the breeder does not take much time to determine appropriate placements for their puppies.

If you live within driving distance to the breeder, they should be willing to allow you a visit to their home or kennel to see the dam and sire, if on site. Frequently, only the dam is on site and the stud is elsewhere, so this is not an issue. However, the breeder should provide you with specific information about the sire and why they chose to breed these two dogs. Simply having titles are not good enough reasons to breed dogs. There are no perfect dogs and when pairing a dam and sire, the goal should be an improvement in the next generation. Ask the breeder about their goals with the mating. They should be able to tell you the strengths and weaknesses of both dogs and how they compliment each other.

An experienced breeder should be able to discuss their dogs' lineage and what traits have been consistent throughout the generations. They should understand their breed's standard and be able to explain how their dog exemplifies the breed. Ask questions about temperament as much of this is genetic. How are the dogs, their parents and their grandparents with children and strangers? What type of training worked for them? How easy were they to train? Were they cooperative or stubborn? How independent were the dogs? Has there been issues with separation or other anxieties? Have any of the dogs in the line had aggression issues? Remember that not all aggression issues are hereditary; some are situational.

Ask a breeder how many litters a year do they breed? Also, how many times is each bitch bred? Some cause for concern with these questions are if a breeder breeds a dog before 2 years of age (the age at which full health clearances can be done) or after 6 years for a bitch, 8 years for a stud, depending upon his semen quality and health. There is nothing wrong with breeding a female "back to back" on successive heat cycles, provided they are in good body condition and have recovered from the previous pregnancy. It is far better to breed a dog in successive cycles and finish her breeding career at a younger age than risk a pyometra (an infection in the uterus) which occurs more frequently as an intact female dog ages.

Ask your breeder if he or she ships dogs to owners either out of state or out of country. If they do, there are many federal requirements that they must meet. Ask if they can explain them to you and see if they follow them. They should understand the new USDA regulations that govern the shipment of puppies by breed-



ers. This can give you some insight into the breeder's ethics. Ask the breeder if they will deliver a puppy before 8 weeks of age. In many states it's illegal to do so. Moreover, separating a puppy from its dam and litter mates before 8 weeks is not usually in the puppy's best interest. The puppy learns so much about his world in the last few weeks. At 8 -10 weeks, he's ready to bond with his new family.

As hunters, ask about the dog's hunting style. How is their endurance and drive and what motivates them? How cooperative are they? Do they like water and will they get in it willingly? A breeder/hunter may offer to take you out and hunt over their dogs, or at least be able to show you video of their dogs working in the field. Titles earned do not tell you everything you need to know. If you are a hunter who prefers a specific hunting style, look for a breeder whose dogs exhibit what you are looking for. Ask the breeder for references of owners who are hunting their dogs and call these people and ask questions. It's worth the time and effort.

The OFA website ([www.ofa.org](http://www.ofa.org)) lists recommended breeding stock health clearances by breed. Before speaking with a breeder, take time to understand the diseases that are common within a breed and how those diseases are screened. For example, a breed with inherited eye issues must undergo an examination by a board certified veterinary ophthalmologist to "clear" the eyes. The results of the clearances are usually placed in the OFA database. If a clearance is not in the OFA database, then it either wasn't done,

## Women's Wisdom

By Patti Carter  
Contributing Editor  
Brunswick, Maine

# IT'S NOT ALWAYS EASY

Isn't what you see in this photo the worst feeling in the world? For those of you that have been there, it's gut wrenching. I truly just wanted to vomit. What this picture doesn't show is the gallery filled with friends and family with similar postures, also praying that Raven would take off and do her duck search.

When I asked my friend, Betty Blackman for this photo, she commented, "I remember, you were so mad at Raven!" I replied, "Oh no, Betty, I was never, ever mad at Raven, only myself for my training mistake!"

So the first step in retraining Raven was to figure out my mistake and fix it. Sound simple? Figuring out where my training went wrong was not all that easy. Everyone—and I mean everyone—had a suggestion. Pop traps that quack, duck chases, retriever trainers, body language and more. I tried them all, but still the "glitch" remained.

### Raven's first ever duck search

The bay where we test is huge, reaching toward the ocean. The wild rice and lily pads go out about 600 yards and then the open water continues for miles. I put Raven's duck out about 30 yards and in fairly thick vegetation. I fired the shot and sent her. She did a tremendous duck search, eventually reaching the open water, but, after 45 minutes, returned to my shore, duckless. I paddled with her trying to help her find the duck. Throughout the summer, I saw her confidence in the task decline. It seemed like Raven's duck

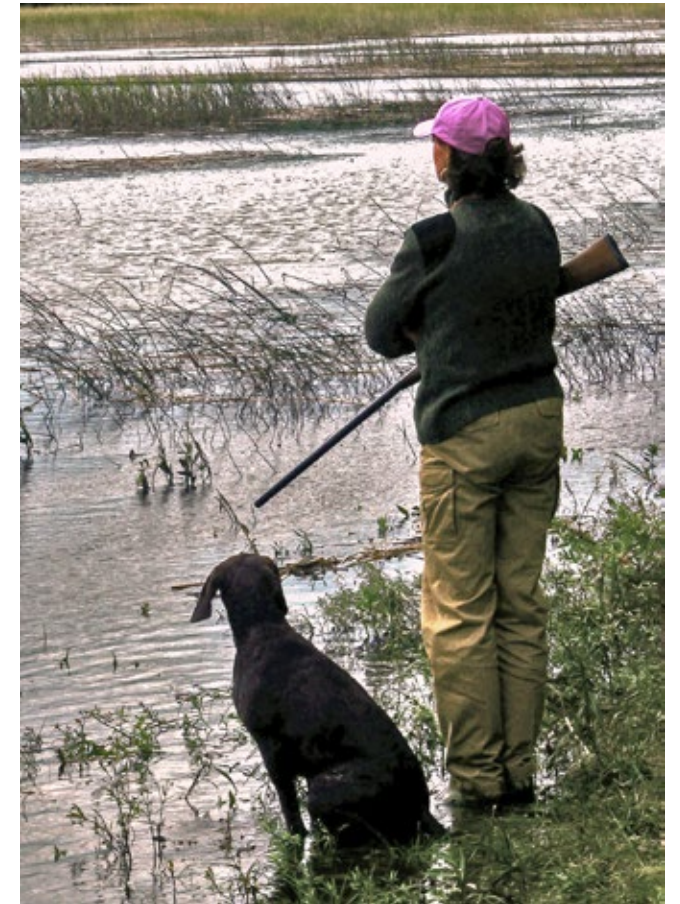
was always the one that disappeared. I would, repeatedly, get in a kayak and paddle in the direction I thought the duck would be to help her succeed. We sometimes found the duck, and sometimes I'd toss a dead one.

Test day arrived, and Raven crashed into the water for her search, but she continuously looked to me for direction. She would glance at me as she paddled by, just off the shore, looking for my part in her search. The worst sound as a handler is your dog shaking the water off. Even worse is when they dutifully sit next to you looking for direction. No, I never threw a rock in training. Good try! Raven got a "1" for her search that day because of her dependence to me.

We hunted ducks all fall. She has an unbelievable passion for ducks, water and hunting. She loves searching for cripples in the prairie ponds of Saskatchewan and blacks along Maine's coastal waters.

Strangely to me, test numbers two, three and four went pretty much the same as the first. We did get 2s in those tests, but the "glitch" was still there. No, I don't use electricity in the water. I know that works for some, but it's not for me. Thanks for the suggestion anyway.

I was noticing her siblings were all getting 4s in their duck searches. Hmmm, it really was ME. Without recognizing it, I had created a dependency in this independent task.



or the result was abnormal and the breeder chose not to publicly disclose the abnormal result. Some clearances, like eyes and thyroid, must be repeated more than once over the breeding lifetime of a dog. On occasion, a breeder may choose to use a private lab to run the same tests as required by OFA and not submit something to the database. If this is the case, a breeder should be able to provide you with a copy of the paperwork proving the clearance was accomplished. Your veterinarian can help you interpret those results. It surprises me that in my 10 years of breeding dogs, how few people actually ask to see the clearances on breeding stock. In addition, some breeders will say that health clearances were done, but when pressed for proof, cannot provide it.

Breeders should be able to provide you with information about deworming, vaccinations and any other relevant health information about the litter. In addition:

- Does the breeder microchip their puppies?
- Will they assist you in registering the microchip?
- How was the litter socialized?
- What things have the puppies been exposed to (children, vacuum cleaners, television, car rides, crates, busy household, cats, other dogs, music, etc.)
- Were the puppies exposed to live birds and what kind?
- Does the breeder have video of the bird introduction? If the breeder only exposes the puppies to a "wing on a string" or frozen birds, that may do more harm than not exposing them at all. The wing on a string teaches a puppy to sight point rather than scent point.
- What precautions were taken to prevent exposure to Parvo and other diseases?
- Who picks your puppy? If the breeder does, how are the puppy assignments made?
- Will you receive registration papers for the puppies and if so, when? Papers are necessary to participate in organization events like NAVHDA. If the breeder doesn't follow through with registration, it may be difficult to participate in testing.

A breeder should provide you, in advance of any deposit being taken, a copy of the purchase contract. You should ask if the deposit is refundable and if so, under what circumstances and get that in writing. You should receive a receipt for the deposit. Sometimes, even the best breeders have situations they cannot control (small litters, unexpected health issues, etc.) and may not be able to follow through on a particular sale. When the breeder cannot provide you a puppy as promised, you should be offered a refund of a deposit or at a minimum, a pup out of the next litter if within a reasonable period of time. In contrast, many breeders will not refund a deposit if you back out of the deal. This is very reasonable given the fact that the breeder has already invested significant time working with you and now has to find another buyer. Make sure when making a deposit to have everything in writing.

A purchase contract should detail, at a minimum, the following items:

- The identifying names and registration numbers of the dam and sire.
- Purchase price.
- The type of registration (NAVHDA, AKC, other registry) provided and when papers will be provided, if applicable.
- Health guarantee for infectious diseases for a period of at least 10 days, which is the incubation period for diseases like Parvo and parasites.
- Health guarantee for congenital or hereditary diseases like hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia, entropion (an inherited eyelid disorder), etc. for a period of 2 years. Some of the diseases are not able to be detected prior to 2 years of age.
- What is the recourse if the puppy has an infectious disease or a hereditary disease?
- Under what circumstances can the puppy be returned? Will anything be refunded if the puppy is returned?
- What is the policy if the puppy needs to be re-homed at an older age?
- Will the breeder take the dog back for any reason throughout its lifetime?
- Are you allowed to breed the dog? If so, under what terms?
- Is the breeder willing to mentor you if needed and help select the pairing? Is the breeder entitled to a puppy back (or more) from any litters?
- Does the breeder require the owner hunt test or show the dog?
- If the terms of the contract are broken, what is the jurisdiction of any legal action or mediation?

A red flag for me in a contract is if the breeder stipulates that the health guarantee is void if you "vaccinate the puppy for particular diseases." The breeder should allow you to make health decisions for your puppy with the help of a veterinarian.

In my veterinary practice I see many puppy buyers who come to me for their puppy's first health exam after getting it from a breeder. More often than not, when a health issue is found and I ask if they have a written contract with a health guarantee, they do not. They have paid thousands of dollars for a puppy only to discover it has a medical issue that may or may not be treatable. Although most NAVHDA breeders are excellent breed stewards and care about their puppies, there are those that either are inexperienced or do not wish to provide a reputable level of service to their buyers. It is an individual's choice to decide what they want in a puppy and what is important to them when making that choice. But given the fact that you will pay thousands of dollars for a dog, make sure you know what you are getting and under what terms before you enter into an agreement to purchase your next family member. Be informed before you buy. Remember, a puppy is, hopefully, a 10-15 year commitment. 🐾

### Spring training

I had an idea. I came to believe the mistake I made was attaching me to her duck search. I was afraid of losing my dog. My heart would race when I didn't know where she was out in that huge bay (having lost a dog to a tragic accident, I was protecting my heart). I started training her in a flooded drainage ditch where the duck was stuck between dams. I shut up! I waited her out! No more re-sends! Her drive, her passion for the duck and the water got the best of her and off she went. NOT helping her was the answer. I took Patti out of Raven's search for the duck.

Her searches on the bay got bigger and better. With binoculars in hand, I tried to watch for the moving wild rice and her splashes. I remained quiet until she returned with her duck. I tested Raven that fall along with her daughter Tiza, they both earned 204s.

Figuring out our mistakes and then fixing them is not always easy and, obviously, time consuming. Don't ever give up. NAVHDA is a tremendous resource, and its trainers will share their past training experiences to help. Thanks Raven for putting up with me! Thanks to the Yankee Chapter for their loving support. 🐾



## Test Prep Workshop Helping Your Dog Succeed On Test Day

A few years ago, the Yankee Chapter developed a new workshop for handlers, not their dogs. As many of us have learned after testing dogs several times, there are lots of ways we handle our dogs and ourselves during a test that affect its outcome. Practical tips can be picked up during training clinics, but often testing questions or situations just don't come up. Besides, we all know that a test day is very different from a training day.

**Concept:** NAVHDA Handler Clinics focus on the NAVHDA testing and judging system. They concentrate on the scoring system, what judges look for and what the elements of the test are designed to accomplish. The hands-on part of a Handlers Clinic usually has the participants assuming the role of judges, giving them an opportunity to evaluate dogs themselves. In contrast, our Test Prep Workshop focuses on handlers' actions and options in the field and at the water. We don't teach tricks or ways to beat the testing system; we simply present practical and effective handling advice for both the Natural Ability and Utility Tests.

**Method:** Test Prep is a one-day workshop, covering Natural Ability in the morning and Utility in the afternoon, approximately three hours per session with a break in the middle of each and a break for lunch. Participants have the option of attending both sessions or just one. The workshop features a panel of four or five Yankee Chapter directors, trainers, judges and/or apprentice judges.

It has been very important to have a facilitator—someone up front with the teaching panel whose job it is to keep things moving, directing questions, helping the demo handlers. There is a tendency for the discussion to dissolve into trading war stories about what happened where and when on what particular test. Another risk is that people start asking detailed questions about how particular actions are judged, and the discussion ends up veering into Handler Clinic territory. With so much material to cover, we found it essential to keep the discussion on topic.

Yankee offers the workshop to our members at no cost. Non-members are asked to pay \$10, and if they'd like to join the Yankee Chapter, that \$10 can be applied to our \$20 membership fee.

Since this isn't a dog training clinic, we emphasize that participants will not be training or practicing with their dogs. Two handlers (a "good handler" and a "bad handler") and their dogs demonstrate various points during the discussion, such as how to release a dog on a track or how to best throw a bird if it won't flush. We've held the workshop outside, asking participants to bring their own chairs.

The workshop leaders cover the various parts of the test where the handler's actions are critical, using the demo handler and dog teams to show what they're talking about. They present *practical test handling tips* rather than extensive analysis of testing and judging variables.

The Yankee Chapter has offered this workshop three times. Each was well attended. Most interesting to those of us presenting the workshop was how different the questions have been year to year, and how there seems to be endless variety in the nuances of testing situations to be explored. 🐾

### Test Prep Workshop Outline

#### Commands

- When to command and when not to
- How to decide if you should issue a command
- What types of commands are best to use – verbal, whistle or hand

#### Intervention and Correction

- When should you intervene to change the way things are going – or not going
- What's considered a command and what's considered a correction

#### Field and Time Management

- NA and UT: How to move through the field – pacing, direction
- NA and UT: Watering your dog – when and how and why
- NA and UT: Praise – when to give it and why
- UT: How to handle your gun
- UT: Tips on receiving the retrieve

#### UT Heeling

- How to start your dog
- Pacing and mid-course corrections
- Moving from the heeling course to the water

#### Water Work

- NA: How to motivate an NA dog into the water on test day
- NA and UT: How to help the judges check coat and teeth
- UT: Body posture
- UT: Timing gun shots
- UT: Handling the gun and poppers
- UT: When to throw stones on a search
- UT: Tips on receiving the retrieve

#### Judge Interaction

- What you can ask of the judges
- What you should tell the judges
- What to do if you don't agree with what a judge asks you to do

#### Set-up and supply list

- Front table
- Chairs for teaching panel and facilitator
- Pointer (we use a heeling stick)
- Easel with large poster of the workshop outline (above)
- Two handlers with dogs for demonstrations
- A couple of bumpers and dead birds
- Gun (for demos)
- NA and UT scorecard
- Shade/rain canopy if needed
- Water and snacks optional

# PRACTICE HEALTHY HYDRATION TO HELP AVOID THE DANGERS OF OVERHEATING

Training and conditioning during the late spring and early summer don't have to be unbearable. Practicing healthy hydration can help reduce the dangers of overheating in your hardworking dog.

**“Dogs should always have fresh water available to help establish true hydration.”**

Brian Zanghi, PhD,  
Purina Senior Research  
Nutritionist

Water is the most essential nutrient for dogs, as it supports many physiological functions, helps to remove metabolic waste and establishes a complex body-fluid matrix that underlies all metabolic processes.

Purina Senior Research Nutritionist Brian Zanghi, PhD, explains that hydration is a dynamic process between

water intake and loss in which there is no consensus on how to define optimal hydration in dogs.

“Many factors influence a dog's daily water loss and hydration,” says Dr. Zanghi. “These include a dog's environment, health condition, age, physical activity, water availability and diet. There's no doubt a dog's body water is in constant flux, thus regula-

tion of water balance and thirst-driven water intake is necessary to replenish the persistent evaporative loss of water through respiration, skin and coat, and urine, saliva and feces.”

Keep in mind that dehydration can occur rapidly. Dogs that exercise 30 to 60 minutes at 70 to 80 degrees can experience mild to moderate dehydration, depending on the activity and the intensity. Among the effects of dehydration is an impaired ability to maintain a normal body temperature.

The most common risk to a dog is an excessive increase in body temperature causing heat stress. The level of crisis ranges from simply making a dog uncomfortable to a life-threatening situation.

Most dogs are very good at controlling their body temperature — until their temperature goes past a critical level. When this happens, even after the dog's temperature is lowered back into the safe range, your dog may experience permanent inability to regulate his or her body temperature as well as before overheating.

The bottom line? “Dogs should always have fresh water available to help establish true hydration,” Dr. Zanghi advises. ■



### TIPS TO KEEP YOUR DOG PROPERLY HYDRATED

- Always keep an eye on your dog and monitor for signs of heat stress and dehydration
- Give your dog small amounts of water every 15 to 20 minutes during exercise, especially during bouts lasting more than an hour, to help slow dehydration
- Cool your dog down by squirting him or her with a spray bottle or mister every so often; the wetness on your dog's coat will have a cooling effect as it evaporates
- Always give an overheated dog cool water rather than ice water, which could cause him or her to cool down too quickly; ice water can cause blood vessels to constrict, which slows blood flow to the brain
- Bait your dog's water with low-sodium chicken broth or mix a few food kibbles with water and add low-sodium chicken broth to encourage his or her water consumption
- Use running water from a faucet or hose to wet down a dog's body; avoid submerging your dog in water, as warm water can impede the cooling process and cold water can cause him or her to cool too quickly and lead to other problems
- Be sure your dog has access to water after exercise, but wait until his or her panting slows down before allowing your dog to drink a large volume of water

# THE FORUM



**Photo of the Month**  
 "Gavin, our future NAVHDA trainer, and his puppy Gabby!"  
 ~Submitted by Jenny Martinsen, Humboldt, South Dakota

## THREE NEW NAVHDA CHAPTERS!

### HOOSIER HILLS (Columbus, Indiana)

KAREN THOMPSON  
 vktk@att.net 812/342-3683  
 LOUIE KITCOFF  
 kitcoff@bluemarble.net 317/407-7139

### CENTRAL CALIFORNIA (Bakersfield, California)

CRAIG SMITH  
 blackdogknives@yahoo.com 661/859-4662  
 MITCH PROWSE  
 cencalnavhda@gmail.com 805/540-9691

### QUEBEC SOUTH SHORE (Sainte Croix De Lotbiniere, QB)

NICOLAS BRETON  
 academieduchiendechasse@gmail.com 418/988-1343

## Northern Michigan NAVHDA in Action

On a yearly basis, the Northern Michigan NAVHDA chapter has a spring potluck and informal auction to start the training season and raise money for the club. This year, we were saddened to learn that one of our members and a NAVHDA Judge, Craig Jones, has developed serious medical issues. With that in mind, we changed the focus of our auction to a fundraiser for Craig and his family. On March 21, Northern Michigan NAVHDA humbly sent Craig and his family a check for \$2802, to be used as they see fit. We hope and pray to see Craig in the fields again this spring. Further donations may be forwarded to Craig through our treasurer, Bill Quinlan, at 6092 Plum Drive, Williamsburg, MI 49690.

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

### CHANGE IN DNA TESTING REQUIREMENTS!

Beginning January 1, 2019, all dogs running the Invitational will be required to submit their DNA through NAVHDA's central office. As of that date, we will no longer recognize or accept DNA done through AKC as we have in the past.

Why? The primary goal of the genetic testing program is to establish a data base of confirmed parentage of our NAVHDA registered dogs; unfortunately, AKC will not share their genetic testing results with NAVHDA, and, therefore, we cannot confirm parentage of dogs that are tested through AKC.

**Got something to sell? Why not advertise with us!** We have online classifieds available through the NAVHDA store and also magazine classifieds and regular ad sizes. For more information, go to our website ([www.navhda.org](http://www.navhda.org)) under "Advertise with Us" for full details.

## Kennel Name Applications

BIG COUNTRY	GS	JON GJERPE
MYSTIC HILLS	SM	HOWARD MEHRINGER
CROSS TIMBER	PP	JACK F. TRACY
ALUM CREEK	SM	MICHAEL A. ANDERSON
BB'S	SM	CURTIS KIEFFER
VOM CALLERAN	GW	C. ROSS CALLAHAN
V.DEN BRIARWOODS	GW	CHRISTOPHER A. PHILLIPS

These applications for registration of kennel names have been received by the NAVHDA Registry. Any objections must be written and submitted to Steve Brodeur, Registrar, NAVHDA, PO Box 520, Arlington Hts, IL 60006, on or before June 1, 2018. To obtain registration forms, write the Registrar at the above address or go to [www.navhda.org](http://www.navhda.org).

## CLASSIFIEDS

### GERMAN WIREHAIRD POINTER PUPPIES

Bachman Bay Kennels "H" litter. Puppies due April 29. Accepting deposits. Bone Points Quicksilver (NA I, AHAE 157) x Bachman Bay's Bluebill Banger (NA I, UT II). OFA hips and thyroid. Contact Dominic Bachman: 530-708-2141

**Free Online Puppy Ads!** Yes, you read that right - FREE! We are trying to generate some interest in our online advertising page, and are offering to post puppy ads, free of charge to NAVHDA members, for the 2018 Spring puppy season. Email your ad text to [mhoyer@navhda.org](mailto:mhoyer@navhda.org) with "Free Puppy Ad" in the subject line.

Classifieds must be paid for and submitted through the NAVHDA Store at [www.navhdastore.org](http://www.navhdastore.org) in the "Pre-Pay VHD Ads" section. All classified ads are limited to 35 words and price is \$35.00 for all categories. Submission deadline for classifieds is the first of the month before the month of issue. For example: deadline for July issue is June 1<sup>st</sup>.

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**NAVHDA Test Results**

CAROLINAS 03/17/2018 Utility Test Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz SP 3.94 149 None

2018-0012 Owner JOSEPH S ZAWADOWSKI

TEXAS Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz GS 10.26 108 I

2018-0019 Owner RYAN J JOHNSON

CAROLINAS 03/17/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz GW 10.52 110 I

2018-0013 Owner SCOTT J FERGUSON

TEXAS Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz GS 11.97 106 II

2018-0020 Owner MATTHEW HILL

CAROLINAS 03/18/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz GS 11.65 112 I

2018-0014 Owner MAX E ZALDIVAR

RAPPAHANNOCK 03/24/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz GR 15.13 108 II

2018-0021 Owner ELAINE L HUNSICKER

CAROLINAS 03/18/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz GW 11.84 110 I

2018-0015 Owner JOHN D PATRICK

RAPPAHANNOCK 03/25/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz SM 10.97 110 I

2018-0022 Owner ALVIN L CORBIN

SAN DIEGO 03/16/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz PP 7.77 112 I

2018-0016 Owner BRAD SCOTT

MID SOUTH 03/31/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz GR 10.19 93 None

2018-0023 Owner NICOLE A MORAN

SAN DIEGO 03/17/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz GR 9.74 107 I

2018-0017 Owner BRETT A FABER

MID SOUTH 04/01/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz PP 11.93 112 I

2018-0024 Owner TIMOTHY D BAILEY

SAN DIEGO 03/18/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz PP 11.32 112 I

2018-0018 Owner MELINDA W TOMES

MID SOUTH 04/01/2018 Natural Ability Breed Mo - Yr Pts Prz SM 11.27 66 None

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Help Wanted! The 2018 NAVHDA Invitational is in need of volunteers to help with the test. Whether you are going to observe or going to support a friend, now is the time to start planning your trip to the big show.

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