



MERRIMACK VALLEY NAVHDA NEWS

www.mvnavhda.com

MARCH-APRIL 2014



Carol Trahan, Chapter President

Just when we thought winter was gone, *it's back!!* Last weekend's weather was great for training my puppy Grace in the field

& water. What a difference!

I'm looking forward to the upcoming training & testing season. Merrimack Valley's first training clinic for this year looks to be a small number of participants due to the conditions of the road to Sharpe's Farm. The Army Corps of Engineers has agreed to let us still hold our clinic—with requirements regarding parking and driving on the road. Chris Doherty sent out an email to the membership outlining the Army Corps requirements.

Please check the website for Merrimack's calendar of upcoming events. It

looks to be a busy training and testing season. Many volunteers will be needed to help during these events. All are Welcome!

Thanks go out to Jerry Roy for stepping up to take over as our new merchandise coordinator. New shirts have been ordered and will be available for sale at all Merrimack Valley events.

We are still looking for a volunteer to serve as a food coordinator at our training and testing dates. Anyone interested please give me a call or seek me out at a training day.

Carol



[EVENT CALENDAR](#)

IS LOCATED AT

MVNAVHDA.COM

IT IS THE REPOSITORY FOR
UP-TO-DATE
INFORMATION



To The Point:

This newsletter will have less photos than usual. The winter has stayed with us so long that we haven't had much time for getting outside with our dogs and taking photographs. It's been tough on us *and* the dogs. By the time this newsletter gets out, many of us will be in the mode of winter-weight "burn-off".

For those of you who are interested, Yankee Chapter is putting on a Handlers' Clinic in June. See page nine for more details. The location is Green Point WMA, Dresden, Maine.

See page seven for an excellent article about Chris Pope's "Bucket List" and some history on Chris and Kris. We like it a lot.

MV and Yankee chapters have a new joint fund-raiser featuring a Fausti O/U 12ga donated by Terry Wilson of Ugly Dog Hunting. See page six. *There's not much time left before the drawing!*

As we all move into the training season, we at the newsletter are raising the "**Send photos!**" flag. Lots of images were received last year which greatly added to the 2013 newsletter. Pictures and articles really "flesh out" the newsletter and truly reflect MV Chapter's "personality". So, send your (G-rated) pictures and articles. Remember, it's *your* newsletter!

Speaking of pictures, the "Editor's pick" for this issue is Gunny while he was hunting out on the prairie. I felt like it captured a great moment. See if you agree. (Page eleven).

Finally, a get-well wish to Gene Sartini who underwent a "nasty shoulder surgery"—as Gene called it. It looked like about twelve weeks of recuperation. My estimate is four weeks to go.



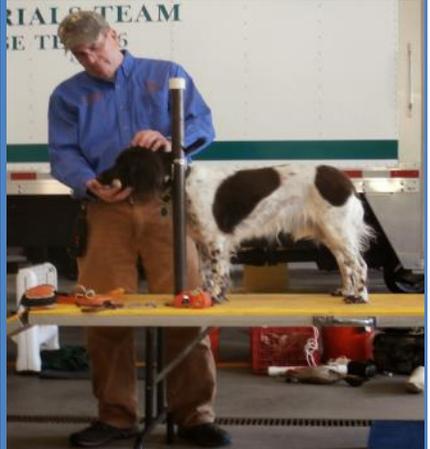
Get well soon Gene!

Den

Send your ideas, comments, pictures and articles to:
mvnavhda.editor@gmail.com

MV Tips Worth Sharing

I went to a Forced Fetch Seminar that was put on by New England Seacoast Chapter. One "take-away" for me was the instructor's version of Jim Dobbs' bench "pipe" on *his* training table to teach "HOLD" to the dog. It was brilliant!



The concept is that the dog is secured to the pipe by a collar. *Shackles may be needed for a pup not used to constraints, but it seems that they are soon not needed, so I wouldn't spend much money on them unless I were training a lot of dogs.* With the dog secured to the pipe, both hands are free to work with the dog. The pipe holds him securely, and if there is any objection to being fastened in such a manner, the dog feels that the pipe is the problem, not the trainer. It also helps the dog remain calm.

I noted that time on the table--teaching the dog to properly "hold"--was greatly reduced using the post. There was much less resistance, and much more learning .

If anyone has more interest, they can check out [the NES Chapter Face-book page.](#)

Den

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF TRAINING:

Hi all,

As of this writing I am organizing our first training day. It should prove to be an interesting, challenging, and fun day. Sharps Farm entrance road and some of the field roads still have over a foot of snow and ice, but we are not going to let a minor thing like that stop us from training. We have a busy month of May coming up and I look forward to seeing all of you again.

I am still soliciting a food coordinator for training and testing days. Please, if you think that you might be willing to step up and help, give me a call or send me an email. I will gladly explain what needs to be done and would be available to you for food advice during the training season.

Wishing all of you a belated Happy Passover and Easter,

Chris Doherty

landlubber30@icloud.com



Chris Doherty and Frit

We need a person or persons to help out
as

“Meals Coordinator”.





From the Test Secretary's desk:

Test entries are now being received for both the MV Spring Test to be held May 23-25, as well as the MV Fall Test to be held August 29-31.

All of the information you need is on the MV website www.mvnavhda.com under the FAQ's/Forms tab, then click **Test Info**.

If you are interested in testing your dog with us this year, don't delay! The tests *do* fill up. Send in your completed test entry form and fee as soon as possible to reserve your spot in our test. (*Both the form and the fee are required to guarantee your spot*).

Thank you and happy training!

Joanna

HELDCA Cleanup Days have been rescheduled for April 26 —with a rain date of April 27.



“Mar 30th: The HELDCA work day at Sharpe's Farm and the Dike Side has been moved to Saturday, April 26, 2014. The rain date is Sunday April 27, 2014. Please arrive at the Sharpe's side shelter area around 8:00. If you cannot come but want to clear trails or assist please email Richard at dragonwoods@mcttelecom.com so we can get credit for the time you work.” Terry T. Long , Director-at-Large





Paul Bruk

CHAPTER SECRETARY ANNOUNCEMENTS (REVISITED):

FINANCES:

The Chapter is looking for a few members to serve with our Treasurer, Gus Gouzoules on an “Investment Committee,” to oversee the investment and use of our new funds. Please contact our Gus if interested.

For your convenience the Chapter is keeping it’s PayPal account and when set up on the Chapter’s website (soon!) you will have the added option of making your payments both on-line and via credit card at our events! Membership Dues, Test and Clinic Fees, Bird Orders, Meals, etc., may all be paid electronically. Please note: there will be a nominal, 3% additional charge for this PayPal service.

MEALS COORDINATOR NEEDED:

I have heard it said that one of the many things people love about Merrimack Valley is the wonderful “spread” we put out for people to enjoy at our Chapter events. It would be a real shame if we are no longer able to offer meals at our Chapter events. We are still looking for several people to be the “Meals Coordinators” for our Chapter events. Suzi and Chris have their hands full with their regular Chapter duties and can no longer handle both their regular duties AND coordination of the Chapter’s meals. So...the next training clinic lunch **will/may** be our “last meal.” After that, we will all be SOL! *Don’t let the title intimidate you.* This is an important job but not an overly difficult one. PLEASE “STEP UP TO THE PLATE!” (pun intended) WE NEED MEAL COORDINATORS!! Contact Suzi Moore or Chris Doherty for more info. ([Email addresses on last page of newsletter.](#))

APPRENTICE JUDGES:

The Chapter Is also in need of more Apprentice Judges! If interested, please contact Dave Trahan for more info. To be an Apprentice Judge, you will be required to attend a Handler’s Clinic. Both the Southern New England and Yankee (see NAVHDA’s website for others) Chapters are holding Handlers Clinics this Spring.

ANNUAL MEETING LOCATION:

We held our 2014 MV Chapter Annual Meeting at St. John’s Masonic Lodge in Portsmouth. This is a comfortable venue, with everything we need to hold our Annual Meeting. And we sincerely thank the Lodge for allowing us to use their facilities but as many of our Chapter members travel from all over, we are searching for a more centralized location and venue (Manchester-Concord area) for future Annual Meetings. So we are calling out to the Membership for help in finding a new location for next year. Good location, parking, seating, heat/electric, bathroom... Cheap! Please submit some recommendations. Outrageous ideas will bring smiles while good ideas are appreciated. Thanks!

NEW RAFFLE

MERRIMACK VALLEY AND YANKEE CHAPTERS

1 ticker per \$10 donation—only 400 tickets to be used

FAUSTI 12 ga O/U—*Ducks Unlimited* Gun of Year 2013

Donated by Terry Wilson *****Never Fired*****

Choke Tubes included ** 28” barrels ** auto ejectors

Serial Number: 794

Below is a representation of the gun — not THE actual gun.



Winning ticket to be drawn at Merrimack Valley Spring Test — coming soon!



Thanks to Terry Wilson for donating the Fausti 12 ga

Send your \$10, \$20, \$30 (or more) donation check made out to “MV NAVHDA” *with*

A STAMPED, SELF -ADDRESSED ENVELOPE TO:

**Paul Bruk, Secretary
4 Rasmussen Circle
Andover, MA 01810**



Chris and Gunny with a woodcock

Item #32 on the bucket list was “Train Pointing Dog”.

Now, most bucket lists are intended for those who are trying to catch up on the fun things in life they wanted to do but didn't have time, prior to “checking out”. I have no immediate plans to depart, however over a 37 year career in public safety I had accumulated a long bucket list of items. Those items were written down in my hunting journals which I have been keeping since the 1980's. So on January 6, 2013, I stepped down from my position as Governor Lynch's Homeland Security Advisor and Director of Emergency Management. With Kristine's (my partner in life for 23 years) encouragement I decided to take a couple of years off and implement the “bucket list”. She continues to solve computer problems in the IT department at St. Paul's School.

Kristine and I had always been Labrador people, flushing dog people. Labs fit our psyche and our lifestyle. They were family dogs, good with kids, loved to be outdoors, liked road trips (note- our first black lab actually came with us on our honeymoon!) and especially loved to hunt. While Kristine does not hunt she did grow up in a family of hunters and dogs and really enjoys the training, being outside and walk-alongs during the hunting season.

Over the years we have been blessed with phenomenal upland/waterfowl dogs. But we always had that “pointing dog itch”. For almost ten years I had taken a weeklong trip to South Dakota with several buddies hunting pheasant over all sorts of dogs- GSP's, Weimaraners, Vizslas, Pointing Labs, and a little dog I had never even heard of called a Wirehaired Pointing Griffon. Wow! Did those Grifs impress me in the field!

The ones I hunted over were bred and trained by John Arkins of Spruce Creek Kennels in Laurel, Montana. John and I became friends. And during a fly fishing trip with him on the Big Horn River (bucket list item # 26) in the summer of 2012 he suggested I drive back out to Montana from NH the following spring, do a little more fishing and take home a Grif pup.

So, in March of last year another retired hunting buddy and I got into a Toyota Prius with our fishing gear and drove 2200 miles to Laurel, Montana to fish for a week and bring home Kristine's and my new family member, Spruce Creek's “Gunny”.

Gunny immediately brought immense joy to our home. But we knew absolutely nothing about training pointing breeds. John Arkins, who is a board member of the Montana Sharptail Chapter of NAVHDA, made two suggestions. Use Joan Bailey's book, [How to Help Gun Dogs Train Themselves, Taking Advantage of Early Conditioned Learning](#), and join our local NAVHDA chapter. Kristine and I attended our first Merrimack Valley Chapter training day in spring of 2013. And we are so happy that we did. Like most new NAVHDA members we really began to learn how to partner with a versatile bird dog and, most important, we made new friends and had fun. We even participated in last Fall's Natural Ability Test. “Gunny”, in spite of his rookie handler, did well for a 9 month old and passed his NA test in September.



Kris Pope snowshoeing with Roe and Gunny



Chris & Gunny in
Pittsburg

October brought hunting, hunting and more hunting (item #27, 27 and 27 on bucket list!) Gunny and I travelled to the north country for the first ten days of the season. Early in the morning of the first day two hunting partners and I climbed/slid down a steep embankment into our favorite woodcock cover, got situated, and loaded up. I always have a chat with myself at the beginning of a hunt reviewing safety rules and putting my absolute best attitude forward. After all I would need great patience hunting with a 9 month old pup that “pointed” birds plus we were both new to it. I turned towards Gunny to give him some positive words of encouragement and the “hunt’em up” command to officially launch his new pointing dog career- something I had dreamed of doing for many, many years. However, in all my romantic upland glory I had failed to realize that Gunny was 30 feet to my left already on a rock solid point. Holy crap! Wait a minute!

We haven’t even started yet. I’m not ready... I walked up, flushed the bird, pointed my favorite 20 ga. shotgun and yep, missed ‘em clean with two shots. It was really one of those simple flushes- woodcock pops straight up, gets to the top of the alders, pauses, hovers and then gracefully flies away. Really it was the type of flush that you read about in a hunting magazine. One of my hunting partners made some kind of snide comment about how the young dog seemed to do a great job and the old dog handler was something or other...blah, blah, blah...

Well Gunny and all of his new hunting partners had a great time that opening day and had a great season. He pointed and retrieved woodcock, snipe, grouse and pheasant. Yes he bumped a bunch. Yes he chased a few. But he also pointed and held steady on way more than I would have ever hoped or expected. He hunted a lot of days and was a great companion in hunting camp, on the road and in hotels. We drove together to South Dakota and hunted pheasant and ducks (bucket list item #33). He really likes pheasant and ducks. We put on a lot of miles. We even bumped into Dave Trahan in Pittsburg while was guiding some happy bird hunters.



Chris, Gunny and friends in SD

Kristine recently remarked, “I have never had a dog that was as affectionate as Gunny.” So he is a great member of the family too and enjoys non-hunting activities like snowshoeing and trips to the beach. We must thank John Arkins of Spruce Creek Kennels who has really found some awesome Griffon genes. We must thank the Montana Sharptail Chapter and we especially want to thank the members of the Merrimack Valley Chapter who welcomed Kristine, her father George and me, and of course Gunny. It is a warm and knowledgeable group that knows how to train dogs and have fun. It is really amazing how two NAVHDA chapters, 2000 miles apart and a great dog breeder have created a new NAVHDA family.



The question at this point is, do we add another item to the bucket list- “Begin Training for UT”? We’ll see.

Kris and Chris Pope live in Concord, NH with Kris’ father George and their 7 year old Labrador ‘Roe’ and their 16 month old Grif, ‘Gunny’. Their son Mike graduated from UNH last year and lives and works in Florida. Kris works in the IT department at St. Paul’s School and Chris stepped down from his position as the state Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management when Governor Lynch left office in January of 2013. Chris and Kris have trained several Labradors over the past 25 years but are totally new to the versatile dog world and are grateful for the help from the great folks in the MV NAVHDA chapter!

**Yankee Chapter is hosting a NAVHDA Handlers Clinic
Green Point Wildlife Management Area
Dresden, Maine
June 28-29, 2014**

What is a Handler's Clinic

A Handler's Clinic is an educational tool developed by NAVHDA to help dog owners and handlers understand the testing system. The clinics are conducted by designated trained leaders; all of whom are NAVHDA Senior Judges. During the two-day clinic weekend, participants experience all aspects of a Natural Ability, Utility Preparatory and Utility Test. The first few hours of each day are devoted to informal classroom instruction. There is discussion of test mechanics, the scoring system and NAVHDA philosophy.

The group then goes to the field to judge and score dogs being run in the actual test process. After each dog has been run and scored, there is a discussion of performance and scoring as observed by the participants and the clinic leader. The discussion includes strengths or weaknesses of training and handling observed in the demonstrations, and how they may have affected the dog's inherited skills.

If you would like to get into the apprentice program to become a judge you need to attend a Handler's Clinic. The Yankee Chapter is very fortunate to have Jim Moe as our clinic leader. Assisting Jim are two Senior NAVHDA Judges and friends from Quebec, Canada.

To watch a video which further explains a Handler Clinic, go to the NAVHDA website under Testing. (<http://www.navhda.org/testing/holding-handler-clinic>)

If you would like to attend the Handler Clinic, please send your contact info and \$100.00 to:

**Dave Trahan
101 Coffeetown Rd.
Deerfield, NH 03037
603/494/3802
davidt@onpointkennel.com**

CHAPTER STICKERS FOR SALE

\$3 ea or 2/\$5

Tickets will be on sale at all Training/Test events
Contact Jessica mvnavhda.membership@gmail.com



BE PROPERLY ACCESSORIZED!

Chapter pins and stickers (above) for sale.
New shirts are on the way. MVNAVHDA
Hats and other items for sale.

Info and more at mvnavhda.com

LITTER ANNOUNCEMENT:

Chapter members Jean McCurdy and Tony Ferragamo are the happy “puppy-parents” of 8 Cesky Fouseks—5 males and 3 females, whelped March 29th. Both parents scored 112 NA Prize 1 and the sire scored 159 Prize III in Utility.

Interested parties may call at 978-544-6510 or email at IJOGIL@yahoo.com.



VERSATILITY

**Fausti O/U
DU Gun of the Year 2013**

donated by Terry Wilson

Never fired, 28” barrel, auto ejectors, choke tubes included

serial no. 794

Merrimack Valley & Yankee Chapter raffle—only 400 donation tickets will be distributed.

(1 ticket for each \$10 donation)

CONTACT
PAUL BRUK , secretary
pbruk@comcast.net

EDITOR'S "PHOTO PICK"



MORE COMING!!

The Board of Directors has approved the following businesses as 2014 sponsors of the Merrimack Valley Chapter. We thank them for their generous support.



Rochette Tax Professionals

**7 Church Street
Deerfield, NH 03037
603-463-9911**



MVNAVHDA Officers/Directors/Staff

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Paul Bruk	Secretary 2012-2015	pbruk@comcast.net
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Casey Matthews	Director of Gunners 2014-2016	CamTile@AOL.com
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Jessica Barker	Membership	mvnavhda.membership@gmail.com
Mike Trull	Webmaster	webmaster@mvnavhda.com
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Jerry Roy	Merchandise Coordinator	jerry.roy@us.army.mil
VACANT	Meals Coordinator	VACANT

“Thank you” to our NAVHDA International Sponsors and Conservation Partners

