



MERRIMACK VALLEY NAVHDA NEWS

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OCTOBER 2012

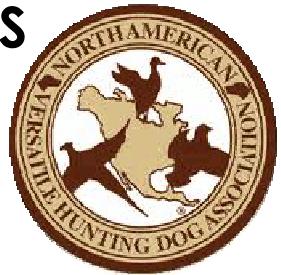


PHOTO BY NANCY ANISFIELD
anisfield hunting dog photography
<http://www.anisfieldphotography.com/>

Where did this summer go....

Merrimack Valley's training and testing days are now in the record books. Wow, our Spring test was 2 full days and our Fall test 3 full days. MVNAVHDA tested 36 dogs / 6 breeds. So many great memories made with old and new friends. The dogs, the people, the training and the food were in abundance. No one went away hungry that's for sure.

There are so many people and "teamwork" has made Merrimack Valley a great success story. Many members were willing to help when help was needed and was welcomed by all. To all the helpers, so many I can't name for fear of forgetting someone, I THANK YOU with great appreciation.

Thanks to our wonderful Board of Directors, our newsletter editor and web master for your dedication to the Chapter.

October is just around the corner → time for Hunting, Hunting and more Hunting.....Enjoy the season; the dogs have all earned it! They know it's their time.

Don't forget to send photos and stories to Jessica for future newsletter articles she will love it!

Thanks again - happy hunting,
Carol T.

Butch, Taylor and the Training Table

Several years ago, a fellow I know—let's call him “Butch”—wanted to train his German shorthaired pointer. He decided to build a “standard” NAVHDA (North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association) training table. He followed the directions in NAVHDA’s “green book” and built one for the back yard. Things went fairly well, and his dog became comfortable with the table. They progressed through mount/dismount, whoa, and things came along nicely—to a point. His dog, Taylor, became bored with Butch’s training program and seemed to respond better to a diverse approach.

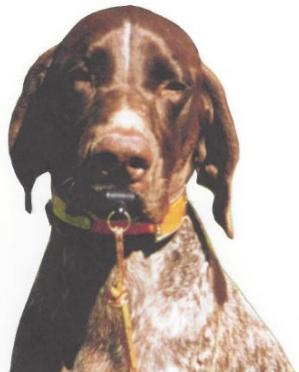
So Butch broke things up a little. They worked on “whoa”, “heel”, “forced retrieve”, “play retrieving” and such. The training continued to grind to a standstill. While his dog seemed to be more and more stubborn and unresponsive to instruction, and Butch became increasingly troubled. They seemed to be growing apart rather than coming together as a “team”.

The problem continued to crescendo until a beautiful late summer day that offered Butch a great excuse to take a break from training and go swimming in the nearby lake. He and the dog swam together in the clear waters—sort of like a boy and a puppy might enjoy the day. He hoped it would provide “bonding moments” between man and dog. (Butch still believes he was *still* young enough to use the rope swing—but that’s another story.)

Returning home refreshed and renewed, they continued to work on the training table. Butch confidently decided to use some new “advanced” techniques that he observed in a recent NAVHDA training clinic. Since he felt his “shorthair” was a little on the “hard-headed” side, he felt that the new techniques would be just what was needed.

After several minutes of Butch’s persistent instruction, the dog picked up the whistle and took over the training.

...and it was at that very moment Butch discovered the problem: he was supposed to be smarter than the dog. # Dennis Swett





Well, when a three days of testing starts out with Dave Trahan, 9:30 on Thursday night, thinking of retiring to his bed, wondering where Jim Olmstead might be with the birds?? Calls Jim, no answer, and then wondering if there is no answer, is it because he is on his way OR? Ummmm.

Dave springs into action and goes out to count how many birds he has, calls Casey to see how many he might have, well enough for 4 dogs to start. Half an hour later Jim calls to say that he thought it was a two day test and a Friday delivery: "No Jim we need them by 5:30 this Friday morn".

Jim, what a life he must lead. I would think by this time of year he might not ever want to see any feathered beings again or receive phone calls at 9:30 pm, but came he did and a three day test took place.

We had 12 UTs, 3 UPTs, and 3 NAs: 6 prize 1s, 5 prize 2s and 3 prize 3s and 4 no prize, for reasons that will be taken care of by our next spring or fall test. This is what winter is for, and why we have basements or live in NE.

Weather was a tad warm the 1st day but got cooler each successive day; the severe thunderstorms predicted seemed to arc around us very nicely and left us uncomplaining. It also meant that our evening FEAST- courtesy of Jess (she who whips us all into shape), Moishe (who won't eat bacon but sure knows how to cook it), Chris (the calm, cool, vegetarian that provides us with delicious meat), Colleen (the provider of the amazing huge disappearing cake, brownies, something else that was gone by the time I peered in) , and many, many others who contributed side dishes, beer and wine for the thirsty, and help with the setting up and taking down. If it had been raining, our gluttony would have been crowded, but it wasn't and all that remained were some beans and rice. It meant that Sunday lunch was a little sparse, sorry about that. Each day for lunches, people testing their dogs or not, were responsible for special edibles that would wordlessly, appear. I, for one, feel that it contributes to a sense of community that is wonderfully addicted to dogs, hunting and training. We can gather together and not apologize for our seeming insanity, and eat different food. Myopic for sure, but there it is, and how great to be part of it. We are very glad that even though Max ate 1 ½ pies, Louise had enough time to make more and that Max didn't eat those, helped with the Sunday scarcity.

NONE of these tests could actually take place without WORKERS who appear, sometimes year after year, day after day: get the key to Sharpe's Farm, landscape the pavilion, mow the fields to appropriate heights, plant the birds, bring a four wheeler, provide water for the back course, sleep ducks, pluck ducks and pheasants, water and feed the birds for the next day, be excellent gunners in the field.

Hey to all of you who came and worked and on the behalf of all those who tested, **many many thanks**. AND for all those who did test, remember, a test is only as good as those who come and make it happen.

May our dogs find many birds and ducks, may we shoot straight and eat well this fall.
~Suzi~

FALL 2012 TEST - Photos by Moishe & Chris



NEWS FROM THE ROAD



PHOTO BY CHRIS DOHERTY

Hi everyone. Just on our way back home from the Invitational in Iowa. We had three dogs pass the test. Bob Fee with Pokey; Paul Bruk with Tess; and myself with Dutch - all received their VC title. Mike Trull and Spenser gave a gallant try, but did not pass due to some small trouble in the field. Those of you who have trained for this level of testing know what it takes to even get there. Congrats to all of them for the work they have done. Mike has already said he will work for a second chance at the big show.

We all stood in the front row with the MVNAHVDA banner showing our club support for one another. Fellow members went out to lend a hand for several days to help run the event. Chris Doherty spent days at the winger with Mike and took in a lot of info for training Frit for next year. It is long journey to get there but it is so fun to stand in front row with others who had come together for this event.

The weather was great for the dogs - cold mornings to warm days. All of the meals after the events were great. Being in cow country I think I may have changed Chris to eat meat. I thank all of the Merrimack members who help us get there on training days.

Well, hunting season is coming soon. Go out with your dog and have fun. Shoot plenty of birds and we'll see you all soon.

Dave



The November 17th Chukar Challenge

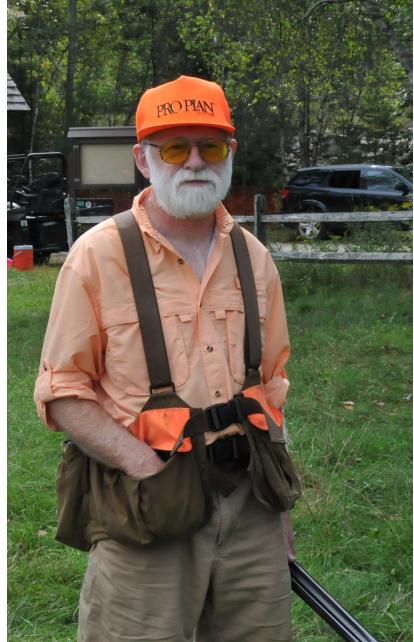
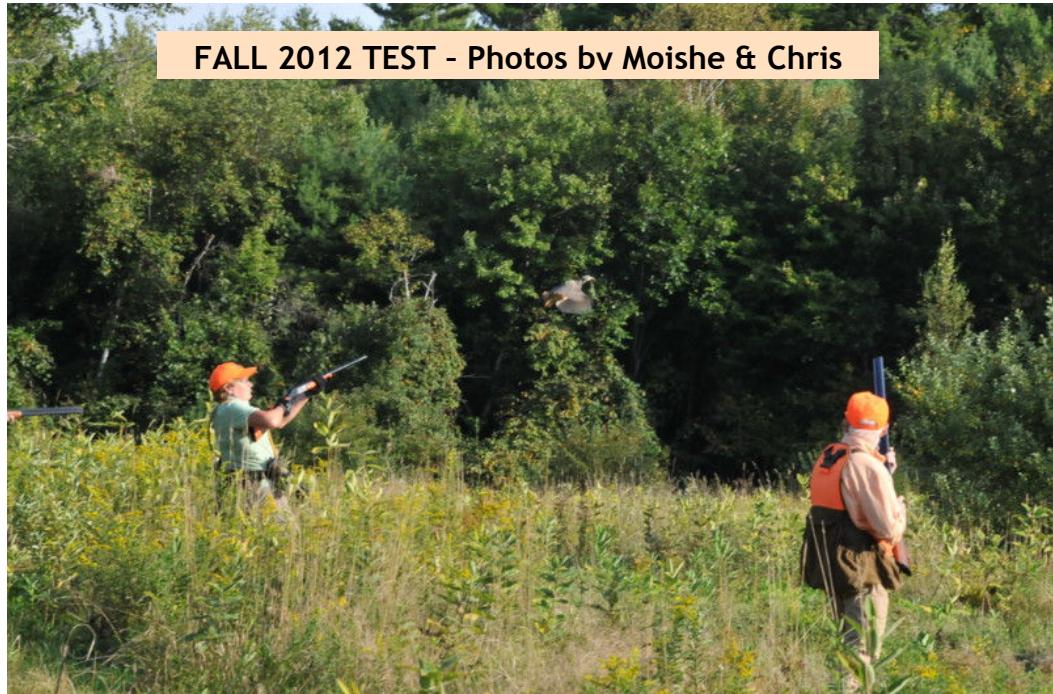
Hi all,

Response to our first Chukar Challenge has been great. We have the maximum amount of teams registered and that will give us a full day of hunting. The top three teams will receive gift certificates to Cabela's. We will be serving a pot-luck for lunch. Any food dishes would be a welcomed addition. Dave has promised he would make his special chili, so anything that could accompany it would be a perfect match.

The day will start at 0730 with the first team starting shortly thereafter. All are welcome to come and cheer on the teams and enjoy the camaraderie of the chapter.

See you soon!
Chris

FALL 2012 TEST - Photos by Moishe & Chris



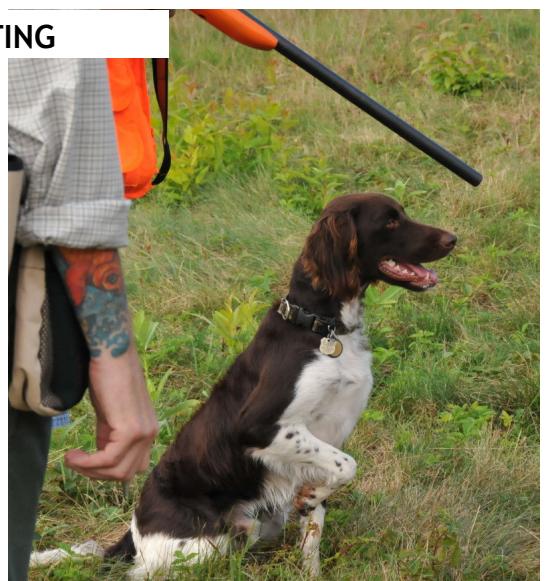
AFTER A LONG DAY OF TESTING



WHERE IT BEGINS



TESTING. TESTING. TESTING



UT PZ I ACHIEVED - NOW ON THEIR JOURNEY TO TRAIN FOR NEXT YEARS INVITATIONAL



2012 NAVHDA INVITATIONAL
PHOTOS BY NANCY ANISFIELD



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