

The Villager

News for Finger Lakes

NAVHDA members



President Dave Diem

Words of Wisdom

Hope everyone is staying warm with the current weather conditions. January and February will be busy months with the NAVHDA Annual meeting in Montana, NAVHDA Presidents with NAVHDA manager Kim Arnett; a regional NAVHDA meeting with local chapters and finally our own annual meeting in February.

We will have reports of these meetings along with any NAVHDA updates for our annual membership meeting February 15 at the Batavia Rod and Gun Club. Prior to our meeting the sporting clays will be available to us at 1:00.

The Meat Raffle team have secured a location and will have updates for the February meeting. They are in need of volunteers for the April 12 event. A sign up for volunteers and tickets will be available at the annual meeting.

We are currently working the 2025 training schedule. If anyone has any ideas or places to train please reach out to myself or Al. Test dates are set for May 17-18 and August 22-23-24.

This year will definitely be a bit different than years past. Hopefully Mother Nature cooperates with us and we can get a couple of nice days in the woods searching for some Grouse!

Stay warm and see you at the February meeting,

Dave

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Calendar of Events

Feb 15, 3:30pm: Finger Lakes Chapter Annual Meeting, Batavia Rod and Gun Club

April 12: George Lamm Post 962 Wehrle Drive, Williamsville NY 14224. Tickets will be available at the Membership meeting or text Gene Mongan 716-418-2966 or Jacob Wargala 716-364-8776.

May 17-18: Spring Test; NA – Burkhart Kennels

DATE TBA: Duck Search Clinic with Baine Carter

June 14: Sporting Clays Fundraiser, Batavia Gun Club

Aug 22-24: Summer Test NA, GDT, UT Three F Club
Niagara Falls

October TBA: Youth Hunt

Chapter Annual Meeting

Sunday February 15th 3:30pm

Batavia Gun Club

10509 W Bethany Rd, East Bethany, NY 14054



Pizza and Wings to be served

Sporting Clay course will open at 1:00pm

Many thanks to the club for allowing us again to use their facilities



Burkhart Kennels

6597 Fairground Rd BYRON
NY 14422

Al has puppies!!

**Ziva Von Burkhart x Tell Von
Burkhart (Earl)**

Contact Al for more information 585-704-4394!

Congratulations Jen



Jen is a NAVHDA judge! That is correct, with one year of apprenticing, a lot of commitment on her behalf she was approved by the NAVHDA executive to be a judge at the recent NAVAHDA annual

meeting in Montana. Jen apprenticed 23 test days, 82 NA, 73 UT, and 1 UPT dogs.

Jen was also our Village delegate at the annual meeting casting votes on the various motions that were presented with prior consultation from the Executive Committee.

In her spare time, she trains Argo, is a competitive Gravel Bicycle rider and is an editor of this newsletter.

For Jen, now the real work starts. We now look forward to Jen reviewing our dogs, passing along information she learns in her travels judging.

Congratulations; Your Village

Note from me (Jen)

First, a thank you is not enough to everyone who called, texted, and messaged me after hearing the news. Once again, I feel like this accomplishment is due to the support and energy from this chapter. When I had questions, there were resources. When I needed to practice looking at teeth, there were volunteers. Each of you contributed to this in some way, and I appreciate all of you. Special thanks to our President, who continues to guide and lead by example, who has unfaltering standards and makes me proud to represent this chapter wherever I may go.



Duck Search - QUESTION

Do NAVHDA People really hunt ducks the way they train?

I was grilled by a non NAVHDA dissenter about the way we hunt waterfowl.

I am not sure about the method(s) my fellow NAVHDA junkies hunt waterfowl but I know I don't send my dogs out totally blind, without direction or guidance as we demonstrate in our utility duck search test. I want my dog in and out promptly. If I have an understanding where the bird is, I assist them. I don't want the dog out flaring incoming ducks. I don't want them out there for long duration in icy November waters. I will aid the dog with whistle and hand commands, just like my dissenter friend does with his lab.

So why do we train our dogs to search for a duck?

It starts with the four letter word **"test"**. From the NAVHDA Aims and Rules book we read. *This is a test of the dog's ability to locate wounded waterfowl. It tests use of nose, cooperation, desire, obedience, and stamina. Of significance is the fact that it places the dog in an environment where the*

handler often cannot physically follow the dog or even see the actual situation, thus requiring the animal to rely on its own initiative and intelligence in going about the task independently. A dog that must depend entirely on signals from the handler to locate the game is unsatisfactory. Got it -it is a test.

Yes, the search training will be used once you get your dog lined to the approximant location of the duck. The training of duck search will kick in to gear with the intelligence of the dog recognising the scent of a duck. Their nose will react to the scent and the search is on. We don't line the dog in the direction of the duck during the test, the judges want to see independent search; how the dog reacts to being on its own, without guidance, the prey drive to search, its cooperation in working for the handler and obeying the command to search.

Once you are at a juncture in your retrieve training it may be time to commence drills such as force to the pile, baseball drills, and blind retrieves. You may even want to throw in staying in a blind while ducks drop. Working your dog on these drills will polish the dog for those days in the blind and even possible have a start on training when you qualify a dog for the Invitational.



from Standing Stones

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmApUHgazvM>



Four Locations to Serve You

680 Campbell Road, Getzville
2131 Grand Island Blvd, Grand Island
1436 Niagara Falls Blvd Tonawanda
4241 Delaware Ave Tonawanda

Focus on the Details?

Every training session should be an opportunity to refine your dog's skills. One day, you might focus on steadiness, another day; you might work on retrieve in different covers. The goal is to make your dog better every time you train—never settle for less. Make a plan, plan your training day!



Carey Killion

careykillion@gmail.com

Carey has puppies as of January

Judge Selection



Have you ever thought of how we select our judges?

NAVHDA has a policy that you must have one senior judge and two additional approved

judges to run a test. The judges are selected by the chapter and then approved by NAVHDA as long as we have followed the guidelines. Up to two apprentices can join the team to learn how to assess our dogs.

NAVHDA attempts to have uniform and consistent standards in judging throughout the 114 chapters in 2 countries. To obtain this, chapters are to submit the names of recruited judges to the Director of Testing for approval. Currently our chapter offers two test weekends a year. We are required to bring in one out of region judge every fourth test weekend.

NAVHDA reviewed the "out of region" definition at the Annual Meeting and passed a motion to redefine out of region to be 500 miles from the chapter.

NAVHDA currently has 170 judges and last year held 497 test weekends. The August weekend we

held our test there were seventeen chapters hosting tests. That is a need for 51 judges to fulfil the judging requirements. Simple calculations make it appear that there should be an abundance of available judges for that weekend.

Judges have other obligations.

Judges that have dogs qualified for the Invitational and do not want to give up a weekend to judge when they should be training just weeks before the Invitational. Other judges have dogs that they want to test and that is the identical weekend their home chapter is offering a test. NAVHDA also require judges to test a dog in Natural Ability or Gun Dog Test once every four years and also to test a dog in Utility Prep / Utility / Invitational every eight years. These demands further reduce the available judges. Add that the judges may have judged the weeks prior or have commitments for following weeks and have a family commitments.

Numerous considerations need to be given when recruiting a judge.

Chapters have budgets, and the most expensive line item is the cost of judges for a test. To bring in an out of region judge usual mandates air travel. Over the years we have found that there are some areas that have direct flights to Buffalo that reduce the cost but still come in at just over \$300.00 (example Chicago to Buffalo \$390.00; Minnesota to Buffalo \$400.00) . There is still airport parking and travel to the airport that occasionally need to be added to the fee. With the Buffalo airport less than one hour from our sites there are frequent flights out at 7:00 pm on Sunday evening; otherwise we need to find accommodation for the judge on Sunday evening.

Travel by vehicle can get expensive and asking a judge to drive if they have more than six hours after a test is not a good practice. A day in the sun, walking and standing next to a humid swamp is

exhausting. A five hour drive and fuel return trip can add up to \$350.00 or more very quickly.

Recently we have had some generous members donate the use of their trailers for judges to stay in. This eliminates the costs of motel rooms for a least two nights and two to three rooms. The judges seem to appreciate the trailer stay as they and several chapter members enjoy the comradery after the test and they have no travel back to a room.

In selecting judges we have asked our judges past and present to secure judges. They may have judged with them at another test, met them at a NAVHDA venue, or have had a good reference from a fellow judge. We may have brought in executive member judges to help them understand issues we have, and also to help an apprentice going through the judging program. You want judges that work well together and with the chapter. You do not want to bring in the same judge routinely for the same reason NAVHDA requests you to have out of region judges. NAVHDA want consistency, and have two or three judges frequently judge together at our test or other tests has them coming up with their variation of rules.

With many chapters offering tests the last weekends of August a chapter needs to secure judges almost a year prior. We have spoken with judges that are obligated over one year prior to judge a test.

Last August we attempted to secure judges to offer a four day test. In early July we had enough dogs on a waiting list to do four days of testing. The other option was to offer two days of double tests. That is two tests going on at the same time. One test starts in the field and the other at water. They then switch roughly midday. You require six judges for this however. The four day test we would have would have brought in another judge to work each judge for three days. Three days judging can be

both physically and mentally challenging, and if the weather is not cooperative it can add extra stress to the weekend.

One bonus we offer to judges is to opportunity if they can arrive early is to bring their passport and they can get a tour of Niagara Falls. Several over the years have taken this offer. This year with our August test site moving the Triple F in Lewiston the offer to see Niagara Falls becomes very easy.

Looking ahead we currently have two judges, and one apprentice.

Have you considered becoming a judge?

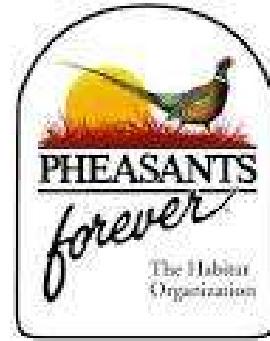
The obvious requirement is knowledge of versatile dogs. You are one that has some weekends free, can slip away from work on a Thursday or Friday. You are sociable, are willing to learn and more over willing to give in return. As a judge you will have the opportunity to see the dogs of various breeds, at all levels of development, in various geographical terrains. You will see first time handlers nervously bringing their dog to the line and aiding them through the test, you will also see a handler attempt to conceal a deficiency he has with a dog being tested. You will enter the NAVHDA network which opens doors to obtaining quality breeding, invitation to hunts in areas you never would have dreamed of. You are also one that brings back your experiences to your chapter and others in a way to assist better their training programs.

Talk to Carey, Jen, Waylon or Jack of their experiences and if this is right for you.



**Can't Wait for this
Familiar Sight!!**

Training Dates Coming Soon



Trained Retrieve



It's February, its cold outside, football season is over, your dog is showing anxiety moments as they have not been

active and you are bored! This is the best time of the year to train your dog to be a reliable retriever. That is a dog that will go out pick up the bird, and quickly return it to you in a willing manner. Some call it "Force Fetch" others "Trained Retrieve" and there is likely some new terminology and method out there that we haven't heard of yet. It all translates to teaching your dog to retrieve. For the trainer, you chose your method, if you are new, talk to other successful members about their methods. Call on them to mentor you. There are also subscriber programs available that mentor you through the process.

Start now, five minutes a day, in the quiet of your basement and by March you will be able to do drills of force to pile, and fetch outdoors that finish the task.

A retrieving program is foundation training for the duck search, the duck drag, along with retrieve of duck and retrieve of shot bird in the field. Even if you are not into testing, as a hunter your dog needs to understand that a bird needs to be retrieved to you; you owe it to the game you shot in good conservation.

FYI!!! Avian Virus

Getting birds may get a little difficult as the year progresses. Several states have producers of chickens, turkeys and ducks ordering euthanasia. Producers of pheasants, and chukars could be affected.

Several years ago the NAVHDA Invitational had to adjust the use of ducks at the double marked retrieve. Dokkens were used and a pheasant was used on the blind.

Avian Virus

The Avian virus can be transmitted to you!

Symptoms include

- Eye redness and irritation
- Mild fever
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- muscle aches
- headaches
- fatigue