

Mid Ohio NAVHDA March 2010 Newsletter



Ahh....we're back at it again!

Welcome back to all those returning for another year to your NAVHDA chapter, Mid-Ohio NAVHDA to be specific, and welcome to all those new members. Your involvement is critical and necessary for our chapter's continued health and prosperity. Whether your involvement is offering help or asking a question, it's all pertinent and good. It's time to 'rock n' roll'.....the first tests of the training season are not far behind-April 17th, 2010.



Off the Top of My Head...March 2010:

The calendar may not have agreed, but spring was in the air last Saturday, March 6th, when Mid-Ohio NAVHDA had our first training day of the year. Our meeting was blessed with a bloom of new friends, renewed friendships, members, and their older dogs and/or puppies....lots of puppies! The impromptu 'doggie' socialization of playing and chasing in the snow before the meeting signaled the birth of a new year. The first meeting/the beginning of the training season could very well be my most favorite time of the year.

We all know that winter weather doesn't give up easily, but there are many training activities that can be done in our yards to keep a forward momentum; basic obedience, heel, whoa training, retrieving, fetch and the associated commands. Training without the distractions of birds and gunshot makes the sequencing easier for your hunting companion.

At this month's training day, the A,B,C's of gun safety were discussed. This never can be minimized. The safety of all of us and our dogs is vitally important and will always be addressed and noted. While many areas were addressed in the discussion, a few of items stood out; shoot toward the blue (up and toward the sky), know where others are located and where you will be directing the gunfire, and the handler directs when in the field. (There can only be one 'chief' when guns are 'live'.)

Part of the discussions for next month will be of tagging your birds. Tags can be purchased at ODNR. Also, next month's training day will be a mock test for the upcoming tests later in the month. It is an opportunity to learn of NAVHDA's testing program and to understand expectations and the parts of the tests.

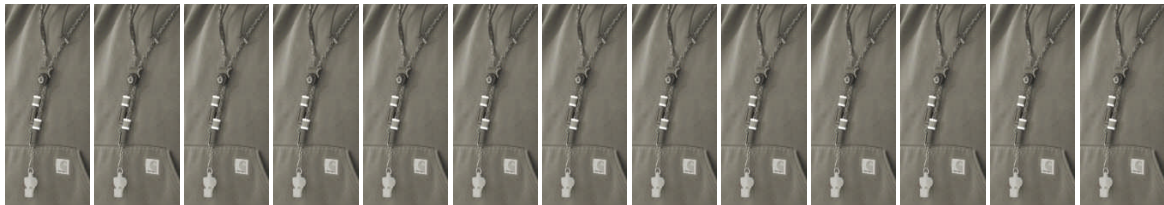
This time of year for training should be filled with wonder and enthusiasm. I am so excited and I want to share this excitement with you....it can be contagious! See you in April!



Dog needs a good home:

Fellow member Larry Walters would like to find a good home for his GWP. Please note the following and pass on to others that might have an interest too.

AKC GWP whelped 4-6-03
Received prize I (110) NA
Points and Retrieves
Free to good home
Phone: 740-389-3240
Email: gobucks764@yahoo.com



Training:

From the Upland Almanac-summer 2007:

Connections...Thinking Like a Dog...Part III by Dave Hughes

The essence of a good chunk of dog training is to make the connections in the dog's head between what you want the dog to do and some word or signal. Oftentimes, dogs are accused of being dumb, headstrong or disobedient for not obeying the commands in different circumstances, but sometimes the dog just did not make the intended connection and the trainer failed to recognize it.

Let's say that a dog is being taught the command "Here" and is then reeled in and rewarded. What is the connection the dog is making?

- Every time I feel that tug on my neck, I go over to that person and he makes a big fuss, rubs me down and says all sorts of nice things about me. *Eventually the check cord is gone and the dog doesn't come. The tug is not there and the pup made the wrong connection.* Don't prompt or tug every time, and make sure the pup is reliable with a loose cord before moving to the next stage.
- Every time he yells something, I will go over to him. The trainer needs to use several commands at once, so the dog isn't just hearing a voice command and only doing one task.

- As long as I am on this rope, I should come to him any time he calls "here". But if I'm not on the rope....This is often a control issue, but is also related to the first two situations. Pup has figured out that no tug means no enforcement. Transition him to the e-collar for all-the-time reinforcement.
- As long as we are just here in the backyard, I should come to him every time he yells "here". But out in the woods or fields where I am supposed to be hunting and busting brush, those rules need not apply. Do your rope training in different places so the pup realizes the commands he is learning apply anywhere and everywhere.

And before you think that pup is dumb or rebellious, try to determine what *connections* you may have actually taught him.

From the Upland Almanac-summer 2007:

E-Collars as a Tool, Not Torture by John McGonigle:

- Dogs enjoy hunting or training as much as we do because it makes them the center of our attention.
- Another point worth repeating is that training dogs requires repetition; repetition helps avoid one of the biggest faults dog trainers have when training: nagging. Here's where the e-collar comes in....the dog knows what is expected and compliance is needed. A quick correction is much better than constant nagging.
- As long as the pup has been introduced properly to the 'come' command in conjunction with the collar, keeping pup close should be fairly easy. If there are birds in the field, anticipate pup's downward burst before he picks up the scent. Give the 'come' command or whistle before he makes a move
- Job number one when hunting with a flushing dog is to watch pup all the time. An early command, whistle or hand signal can make all the difference between pup flushing a bird in range or out of range. If the flush is out of range, it is often the owner's fault.
- More often than not, an e-collar is used as a small reminder to pup to watch his manners, which he knows because he has been taught properly.
- Sometimes more than a nick is needed...deer, snakes or other incidences that would potentially harm your dog or even losing them.

An e-collar is not the total answer; it is just another tool in our repertoire. Used correctly, e-collars provide good results.

From the July/August Pointing Dog Journal 2007:

My Kind of Dog, Part II: My Early Training Program:

- Early socialization with other canines is important.
- Age is not a factor; my philosophy of early socialization also applies to an older dog. I never support the old adage about old dogs and new tricks. A dog can learn at any age, and every dog that has never been trained can still be taught. Learning is an ongoing process throughout a dog's life.



Shooting techniques or suggestions:

From the Upland Almanac-summer 2007:

You Need to See It To Hit It by Chris Batha:

Eyesight is an essential part of shooting. Your hands are controlled by the brain, which receives its instruction from the eyes. This is referred to as eye-hand coordination, but it is simply the result of the eyes and the hands working as a single unit.

In our day-to-day life we have very little cause to 'hard focus', and our normal vision setting is "panoramic", with no single object in mind. This is because we have no real need for concentrated focusing, which is hard on the brain.

To hold a "hard focus" for even a few seconds is extremely hard, but an essential skill we need to master if we are to shoot straight and make clean kills with any consistency.

It takes concentration to maintain focus on a moving target, and "hard focus" requires no distractions. Concentration is divided into two parts:

Saccadic-This is the first visual reaction to a moving target; it locates the target by direction and speed.

Pursuit- This is the second reaction; it centers in on the target.

Saccadic and Pursuit work independently. Saccadic cannot center and Pursuit cannot locate; it is a balance between the two that is essential to straight shooting. Once the target is centered, if you let your Pursuit reaction lapse into the Saccadic mode, the bird becomes lost in your peripheral vision, and vice versa.

Learning how to properly look for and at the bird is one of the critical fundamentals of shooting straight consistently. The secret to centering on a target is knowing where to look and why.

Optical Illusions:

The eyes are programmed to detect and react to movement-a defense mechanism-and therefore we naturally look at where the target has been, not where it is going.

Centering:

If our focus is on the rear of the target, this margin is considerably reduced because the target is moving away from the shot-string. If we learn to center on the beak of the bird, we achieve two important benefits: First, the bird will appear slower, and second, it is now traveling into the shot string, maximizing our chances of success and increasing our margin for error. When you learn to concentrate on the beak of the bird, you will feel more in charge, and you will feel that you have more time to take your shot.

Visual Hold:

If we look in the wrong place, usually where we think it is going to flush from or where the dog is pointing, the bird is seen only every other frame, or as a blur. To maximize this, you need to look halfway between the barrels and the cover; this becomes your Visual Hold and maximizes your Saccadic reaction to the bird and ensures swifter Pursuit movement, translating into hard focus on the bird. Opening your eyes wide as you look for the bird will result in a marked improvement in your shooting performance.

Visual Enhancement:

The bird is in constant motion against a background, and the fluctuating light and shadows make it difficult to maintain hard focus on the bird. This creates inaccurate information for the brain to process, and the result is often a missed shot. Shooting glasses aid in your vision and depending on the conditions will dictate what color is best. In addition, shooting glasses should be polarized for the best vision.

Frames:

Properly designed shooting glasses sit high up on the nose and have optics placed such that when the head is lowered into the proper shooting position, the pupil is looking through the optical center of the lens, slightly above the actual center. The lenses usually are oversized and frameless, so there is not obstruction between the eyes and the bird. The frame arms are padded so they fit snugly on the head and not jarred from the gun's recoil. They stand slightly off the face so they won't fog on humid, wet days.

Eyesight Correction:

The lenses for shooting glasses are made from two materials: CR 39 plastic and polycarbonate. Polycarbonate is the best and most effective. They are half the weight of glass lenses and polycarbonate has an outstanding impact resistance. The lenses should have an anti-scratch finish applied. A clear lens only lets in 90% of the available light losing 10% to reflection. Anti-glare coatings allow more light to reach the eye and will allow you to see better, especially in poor light conditions. Polarized lenses offer the ultimate in UV protection, but importantly, also eliminate reflections and glare.

Misses are often the result of faulty visual perception caused by failure to center on the bird. Learn to zero in and remain locked on the point of impact-the primary zone-of the bird (head) throughout the shooting action. The primary zone of the bird is always changing direction, speed, angle, and distance, and hard focus needs to be learned and practiced.

**For the Health of Your Dog:**

From the July 2007 issue of Your Dog Magazine:

The Morris Animal Foundation (MAF) is leading a \$30million effort to cure canine cancer in 10 to 20 years. The foundation has launched a new Web site for the campaign at www.CureCanineCancer.org

From the July 2007 issue of Your Dog Magazine:

Good grooming at home can promote health and comfort (C.C. Holland):

- Bathing every couple of weeks is adequate for mid-length coats
- Puppies...start young so he'll welcome nail clipping and being handled...and don't forget to trim the dew claws
- Senior...daily tooth brushing to prevent disease ***use only toothpaste formulated for dogs; human toothpaste will upset a dog's stomach

**Recipe of the Month:****Wild Ohio Fall 2009****Squirrel Pot Pie...Susie Vance**

Filling

3 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled

3 squirrels, boiled and boned

2 cups frozen mixed vegetables

1 cup chopped onion

1 cup thinly sliced celery

1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced

3 Tbsp. flour
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp. pepper
½ tsp. dried thyme

Topping
2 cups buttermilk baking mix (e.g., Bisquick or Jiffy)
1 cup milk

Heat oven to 400 degrees F. combine all filling ingredients in a mixing bowl. Coat 9x13-inch baking dish with nonstick spray. Spoon filling mixture into baking pan and set aside. In medium mixing bowl combine topping ingredients. Spoon batter evenly over filling. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until crust is golden brown.

Miscellaneous Information:

From the Upland Almanac-summer 2007:

License Sales Record...Figures from 2005 recently released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service show that, nationally, license sales set a record, topping \$723 million. This was a rise of 2.8 percent from 2004.

From the Upland Almanac-summer 2007:

Ohio ranks 5 out of 10 for performance of projects with the help of Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever benefiting wildlife and habitat.

Your Dog Magazine....December 2009

- Holly and mistletoe are toxic to dogs.
- Warm, moist conditions in the ear can predispose an infection.
- Chronic chewing of hard toys can wear down the teeth.
- Lack of oxygen for as little as 20 seconds can cause brain damage.
- The largest dog: Moose, a mastiff who weighed in at 201 pounds.
- Dogs' third eyelids move up from the lower lid to clean the eye.



DO NOT FORGET.....

OUR CHAPTER'S SPRING TESTS, NA ONLY, ARE APRIL 17, 2010. WE WILL HAVE MOCK TESTS FOR THOSE RUNNING OR INTERESTED DURING OUR APRIL TRAINING DAY ON APRIL 3RD. ALSO, PLEASE REMEMBER TO VOLUNTEER A FOOD/DRINK ITEM. (WE NEED SOMEONE TO VOLUNTEER JAVA, CREAMER, AND SWEETENER!)

REMEMBER TO TRY TO SECURE RAFFLE ITEMS. THOSE COMPANIES OR INDIVIDUALS WILL BE MENTIONED IN OUR NEWSLETTERS, RUNNING ORDER, AND WEBSITE. THIS SHOULD BE VERBALIZED WHEN CONTACTING PROSPECTIVE RAFFLE DONORS.

