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## A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT:

### Dog Breed Clubs and NAVHDA

One of NAVHDA's underlying goals is to support local pointing dog breed clubs. This past weekend I had the opportunity to assist at the SoCal German Shorthair club's first annual fun day. I was assisted by a few experienced NAVHDA handlers who willingly donated their time. One objective of the fun day was to show new sporting dog owners and members of the SOCAL GSP club what was involved in training and testing their dogs at AKC and NAVHDA hunt tests.

AKC judges John Pace and Ken Scruggs covered AKC JR, Senior and Master level hunt test. They provided information as to what was required to pass each test.

We set up new puppy owners with experienced NAVHDA handlers and did bird introduction and field work.

I was able to speak about NAVHDA and summarize NA, UPT and UT test procedures. Demonstrations were done by Kevin Billy -Kevin did an awesome track with his young Vizsla. Ty Mitchel and Kevin demonstrated field work with Ty's GSP and Kevin's Vizsla. Bob Worrell demonstrated NA water work with his puppy. Mike Shepherd Demonstrated "Search for Duck" with his GSP. Gary Johnson demonstrated remain and steady by blind with his GSPs. Afterward there was play time with puppies in the water. Pete Hollenhorst grilled hamburgers, hot dogs and provided side dishes.



## SHEP'S KITCHEN TABLE APRIL 2018

First off, I would like to thank Jim for putting this together. I know that I have put him off, The last few times. So here goes. As you all know a group, club or chapter is only as strong or good as its members. We have been very blessed with a great group of folks. We have a very good leader and supporting cast. When asked to help you all jump in. I have seen people that have no dog show up and help. Others that have been here forever do the same. What I have really liked is when I see new members that jump right in there to give a hand where ever needed. Not always knowing what they are doing but willing to learn. That has been a joy to watch. so, keep your eyes and ears open for upcoming events, where we may ask for volunteers.

Thank you all as always. Shep





## Duck Hunt Training without Ducks nor Water

Sylvia Hansen

Photos: Sylvia Hansen, Gary Willhite

Finding ourselves with a surplus of pigeons, bored dogs, and myself, Sylvia, in need of gunning practice, Gary Willhite and I came up with a plan.

Since we want to take the dogs duck hunting next season, something we have yet to do, we decided that both the humans and dogs would benefit from experience which could be gained prior to the hunting season.



Although both dogs have passed the UT with 4's in "Remaining by Blind", and "Steadiness by Blind", this is a far cry from being in a blind for an extended period of time while multiple birds are launched and multiple shots are fired.

We set up a blind, and staked each dog one at a time. Three launchers were set up 10 yards from the blind, to the left, center and right. A pigeon was placed in each one.



First Yoli, and later Delsa, was staked in the blind. Gary launched each bird as I did my best to shoot each one. Once three birds had been launched, the staked dog was sent to retrieve the birds that had been shot. We returned the dog to the blind and repeated the exercise. Each dog had a total of six birds.

# GUN DOG GAZETTE

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Both dogs did remarkably well, remaining patiently in the blind. Yoli retrieved each of her birds in great fashion. Delsa retrieved all but one as instructed. Given her love for running, she decided to leave one in the field as she ran and ran and ran for the sheer joy of it. As she had been Positive Reinforcement Trained to Retrieve, she knew what her task was. Punishment was warranted at this point. She was shocked, and responded immediately by running to the downed bird and returning it to hand. She remembered where it was, what she was to do, and did it.



The goals of the exercise had been achieved. I got practice shooting, and the dogs gained experience in the blind. We reduced our bird numbers, and due to reduced dog boredom we all got a good night's sleep.





## AMERICAN BRITTANY DEER TRACKER UPDATE

By Sallie Ehrlich

Europeans define “Versatile Dog” in broader terms than those used by NAVHDA, and that broader definition is what convinced us our “bird dog” could be great for tracking downed deer!

...Once long ago in a land far away, only the very wealthy could afford dogs, and boy did they have dogs: each one ultra-specialized in target prey and hunting task. As the middle class emerged, the need for a single dog willing to hunt all types of prey and cross all hunting disciplines became apparent. Since kennels and trainers were generally cost prohibitive, these new breeds were also required to be sweet with the family and well-behaved in the home. And so began the breeding of dogs with really big prey drives, a propensity for focusing on their humans, and sweet and biddable temperaments. BTW, Vizslas are considered to be among the first breeds “brought into the home.” But I digress.

Piper has now experienced three deer hunting seasons. Her first year she performed beyond our expectations, considering it was her first time in situ, tracking a real bleeding deer. The second year both deer taken fell in their tracks, so we just set her off to “find” them where they lay, which she had fun doing but it wasn’t difficult. This past fall was her third hunt and we had three opportunities. Two deer were taken in the same morning in the same area and she found them both handily. With a decent blood trail and her generally good air scenting nose this does not seem to be a challenge, but she applies herself cheerfully and a good time is had by all.

So let me tell you about deer number 3.

The buck was hit with an archery shot, and at first glance the arrow appeared to have gone through and through, but the blood display was sparse at best, so while the archer was certain it was a kill shot, others weren’t so sure, but this was a job for Piper for sure! Tracking this deer required three separate sessions. The first was three hours, the second two hours, and the third session was on the next day for another two hours when we brought in another hunter with better experience than ours. In the end it was determined it was not a kill shot, nor was the



his behind, but my focus was of course on how the dog handled the situation.

She tracks leashed and harnessed. And she tracks really fast! (Whoever is on the other end of the leash [which is usually me] mostly just focusses on not falling on their face.) The number one rule of Nose Work is “trust your dog”, but we wanted to confirm a blood trail, so she and I would barrel through the woods and shale and cactus beds for about 50 yards, then stop and wait for others to confirm the blood findings. I was torn between “trust your dog”, and “OMG, we cannot just run willy-nilly through the woods, without knowing for certain she’s not chasing squirrels” . . . . So as we continued our wild dashes with extended wait times I asked the guys “are you seeing any indication that she is leading us in the wrong direction?”. The answer was “no.” But what we were seeing was almost no blood (we’re talking a drop or two every forty feet if we were lucky), and a long distance of travel (over a mile and a half) . . . we quit for the night with plans to return in the morning, and this presented new issues. Would this confuse the dog, or would she be able to pick up where she left off? We didn’t save any bloody leaves as a reminder odor; the cloth markers were there but maybe the blood trail itself was degraded, blah blah blah . . . I was awake all night worrying over the possible pitfalls to her performance. I was certain our “super-experienced helper (brother-in-law, Dusty)” would dismiss the dog’s efforts and that I was about to be exposed for exactly what I am: a very proud but oh-so-foolish mother. And most importantly, I did not want to set the dog up to fail.

## The Morning After:

The humans found their way back to the last cloth marker, dog in tow. We spent an hour combing the area for blood, finding nothing. The previous day the dog had repeatedly moved further along a notable track, so Dusty says the magic words, “Well, let’s see what the dog was inclined to do”. Music to my ears! And off we go . . . Down the slope, across the wash, up the incline at the two crooked trees. Stumble up that little hill, then down the other side of that same hill and across the “road”, to the creek’s edge, and make an attempt to cross the creek at the same submerged stump. That is where I stopped the dog. Over the creek and beyond the road on the other side is the deer’s bedding ground. We don’t disturb that for any reason, especially if we are following a deeply scraped but going-to-survive-to-give-us-the-finger-next-year deer. In Piper’s wake, Dusty DID find two more blood markings that we had

zmisses, but after another hour combing the creek banks the guys called it quits. The deer was not dead, nor mortally wounded. He was safe with his kin, just nursing a serious gash.

## Conclusions:

1. The dog knew what she was doing from the get-go (I didn't tell you about the tissue snagged on the barbed wire fence, did I?).
2. On Day 2, she didn't miss a step, picking up right where she left off the previous day.
3. She was steering us in the correct direction the entire time, whether nose-to-the-ground or augmenting the blood trail with air scenting.
4. She repeated her track at least three times, almost verbatim.
5. Trust your dog.
6. We are now at the point where we believe she understands exactly what she's doing. And we need more repetition in situ before we forego the blood trail and just follow the dog. And **WON'T THAT** be a HECK OF A LOT OF FUN!!
7. Our challenge now is to set up tracking practices here in the city.





## INLAND EMPIRE NAVHDA CHILI COOK OFF AND TRAINING CLINIC MARCH 2018

Rain or Shine, Inland Empire NAVHDA will continue to make the annual chili cook off and training clinic a huge success. Cliff Fleming has been able to create an amazing day for the IE NAVHDA members/public each year. I have had the pleasure of seeing this event for 3 years and each year I learn valuable information needed for the daily challenges (and achievements) associated with owning a hunting dog.

Each year he has special guests and this year we were able to have Dr. Mary Sebzda, a veterinarian reproductive specialist and the Perris Vet Clinic come out for vaccines including rattlesnake vaccines. We have a female dog and this information was intriguing and informative for all stages of owners. The sessions comprised of a wide range of intro to e-collars, intro to force fetch (with Bob Wornell), to advanced force fetching, and even included a class on dog booties for desert hunting. This is a necessity out here in California. The field work portion enabled our new and experienced handlers one on one attention to specific field work needs. We had 3 sections going a once including the puppy field of course, the Utility Test field work area and a more advance section of line drills by our invitational guys. This was amazing to watch as a new dog owner. We had Ruth Weiss for our "Ask a Senior Judge" segment which she handled all the "on the spot" questions with ease and grace!

The most delicious part of the day is the Chili Cook off. Each year we get more chili entries and it's fun to see how competitive we get! IE NAVHDA presents plaques for the hottest and most flavorful. This was the first time I was able to be a judge and I could not believe how difficult this job is with so many great chili options. Silvia, one of our members graciously makes embroidered hunting dog kitchen towels to go with the plaques as part of the prize to the winners. This year was the year of the Vizsla.

The Best part of this day is to see the new families with their new pups, members we don't see often as well as having fun with such an awesome group of people. There is literally something for everyone at these events including a children's activity table. Every stage as a dog parent, handler, hunting dog owner is covered. We get together and share in this experience and this day with each other which is a blessing for all involved.

# GUN DOG GAZETTE

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# GUN DOG GAZETTE

...MAY 2018





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### Training Day Rules:

- Dogs are under control at all times. (Leash rule is in effect)
- Everyone in the field MUST wear blaze orange hat, shirt, or vest.
- Must have completed a hunter safety class or have a hunting license.
- Children are to be supervised and remain in the designated parking lot area at all times.
- NO alcohol on the premise.
- Shotguns must be break action only.
- Must have an active NAVHDA international membership.

### Board of Directors:

President: Cliff Fleming

Vice President: Mike Shepherd

Treasurer: Steve Engalgau

Secretary & Media Manager: Shelly Oliver

Training Coordinator & Web Master: Kraig Dix

Media Coordinator: Gabriel Awbrey

Newsletter Editor: Jim Bellmeyer

Equipment Officer: John O'Donnell

### Treasurer's Report:

(as of August 2017)

Checking	\$2,912.25
Savings	\$3,004.09
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TOTAL	\$5,916.34



Executive Sponsors: \_\_\_\_\_



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