

# ***SOCAL NAVHDA***



## ***ON POINT***

**NEWSLETTER MARCH - 2015**

**German Wirehaired Pointers**

**Heartworm**

**Force Fetch Step 2**

**NA Test Basics**

**Training Photos**

**Force Fetch Step 3**



## **Natural Ability Tutorial** by Guido Dei

The Natural Ability Test is designed to evaluate the inherent natural abilities of young dogs and gain insight into their possible usefulness as versatile gun dogs. It rates seven important inherited abilities: nose, search, tracking, pointing, water, desire and cooperation.

### **FIELD WORK**

At two random points along the course, a Judge will signal a gunner to fire one round of blank ammunition from a shotgun in order to watch the dog's reaction to gunfire. The dog will then be marked as "Not Gun Shy," "Gun Sensitive," or "Gun Shy" as the case may be. Have somebody shoot a gun while your pup is searching. Pup needs to get used to hunting with several people in the field (4 to 6) Do not talk continuously to your pup. Try to get your pup obedience and cooperation before the test. A good solid recall is helpful. When Pup is on point no command necessary. Pups need to hold the point for only a few seconds. If your pup is whoa trained then you can command whoa after the dog flushes without pointing the first birds. You may lose a point but it's the only way to get your dog back to point next bird.

### **WATER WORK**

A truly versatile hunting dog must possess the desire and confidence to swim. The water test should take place at a spot offering easy, gradual access to deep water. Pups need only to swim. Don't throw birds in the water for the puppy only bumpers. Have a few people around the dog when you throw the bumpers. If is required to throw a bird for the puppy to swim it loses one point. The dog is expected to make a forward moving entry into the water and swim twice. No retrieving is necessary to pass this section. For a complete and fair evaluation, the Judges may ask for the dog to be sent into the water more than twice. The dog's swimming speed and style are of little importance.

**WHERE  
MEMBERS  
TEACH OTHERS  
HOW TO TRAIN  
THEIR BIRDDOG**

***Inside this  
issue:***

Natural  
Ability  
Test 2  
3  
4

TRAINING DAY  
GUIDELINES  
OFFICERS 5

Training  
Cues 6  
7  
8

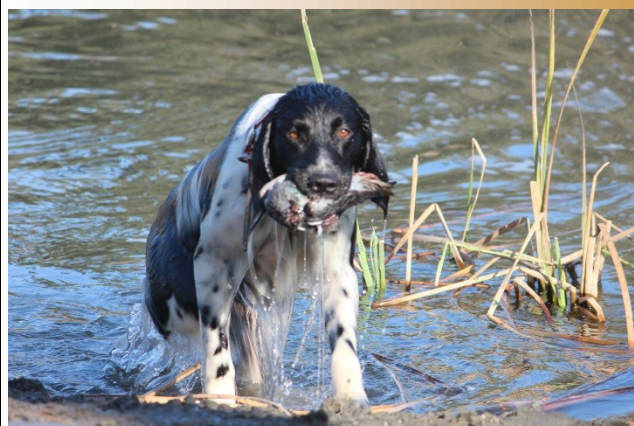
Justin Gonzalez's  
Dixie looks for quail  
Eyes in the back  
Of her head 9

Breed of the Month  
German  
Wirehaired  
Pointer 10  
11

Training Day  
Photos 12

Heartworm 13  
14

**NATURAL  
ABILITY  
TEST**



## Rattlesnake Avoidance Training

SOCAL NAVHDA'S annual rattlesnake avoidance class will take place on May 17 at our May Training Day. This event occurs at Prado and will be provided by Bud Andrew (Andy). The cost is \$50. Your dog will be exposed to live rattlesnakes and learn how to avoid them. This event will be held on our regular training day and takes 10-15 minutes per dog. Contact Guido at 562-598-3285 or [g.deil@verizon.net](mailto:g.deil@verizon.net) to pre register.

### NATURAL ABILITY—TRACKING PHASE

The ability to concentrate on a track is an important trait of the versatile hunting dog. It is this ability that permits the prompt recovery of cripples that are still capable of running long distances. This exercise is primarily a test of the dog's ability to use its nose and to concentrate on the track. Desire and cooperation are also factors which are noted by the Judges during the course of the test.

A flightless pheasant or chukar is released in an area reserved for the tracking. The area should be sufficiently wide to avoid the tracks being too close to one another. Tracks must be laid down-wind or cross-wind, never into the wind. Ideally, the cover should be about 8-10 inches high. To be successful in this phase, at the discretion of the handler the dog may or may not be shown the game bird before the bird is released. If a handler has any question about the advisability of his dog seeing the bird, he or she should confer with a Judge on the matter. Whether or not the dog is shown the bird makes no difference in the scoring. After the decision is made and carried out, the dog and handler are directed to go behind some natural cover or a portable blind from where neither can see the bird being released.

The handler will be allowed to assist the dog for a short distance. The Judges have the prerogative of recalling any dog for retesting. In this case, the dog is recalled after all other dogs have been tested.

It's of paramount importance to read your dog and calm your dog down then properly release your dog.



Send your DOG to



**WHERE  
MEMBERS  
TEACH OTHERS  
HOW TO TRAIN  
THEIR BIRDDOG**

### *Inside this issue:*

New Members	15
Training Day Photos	16 17 18
Training Day Photos	19
Training Day Photos	20
FORCE FETCH	21 22
FORCE FETCH	23 24
SPONSORS	25



The tracking of the game bird is done in the following manner. Strong healthy birds are used for laying a track. The seven primary feathers on one wing of the bird are removed (pulled out, not cut), thereby rendering the bird flightless. A few soft feathers are pulled from the bird and used to mark the spot where the bird is released. The bird is released, and the Judges observe the track. After the bird has gone a sufficient distance and is out of sight, the dog is brought to the release spot and the handler sets the dog on the track. After releasing the dog, the handler will stand quietly, facing forward and allow the dog to track on his own. It is important to calm the dog for this test. The handler should ensure the dog is concentrating on the track before release. The distance the dog works the track is not as important as the concentration and intensity displayed by the dog when following the track. A dog that follows a track a short distance over ground with little or no vegetation and slowly and deliberately "spells" his way forward should be scored higher than the dog that speeds longer distances with little accuracy, especially under favorable conditions of wind, moisture, vegetation, etc. **The young dog must display eagerness and perseverance on a track. His future use as a retriever of crippled game is dependent on this characteristic. Some dogs will track well with the nose close to the ground, while others may carry their head higher and also track well. Some dogs follow the track closely while others will track several yards downwind of the track. Some dogs track slowly and deliberately while some run full out. The score is dependent upon the quality of the dog's performance, not the method used.** In this test the dog is not required to retrieve the bird, simply to follow the track. The handler will be allowed to assist the dog for a short distance. The Judges have the prerogative of recalling any dog for retesting. In this case, the dog is recalled after all other dogs have been tested.

**It's of paramount importance to read your dog, calm your dog down and properly release your dog.**

# NATURAL ABILITY TEST



**WHERE  
MEMBERS TEACH  
OTHERS HOW TO  
TRAIN THEIR  
BIRDDOG**

## Training Days Guidelines & Procedures

- (1) Please keep your dog under control at all times, particularly when he/she is not working on a drill.
- (2) Everyone in the field must wear blaze orange hat, t-shirt or vest. **Members holding a gun in the field must have completed a hunter safety class or have a hunting license.**
- (3) Children are to be supervised and remain in the designated parking area at all times.
- (4) No alcohol on premises.
- (5) "Boat Safety", persons under 12 years of age must wear a life jacket when in the boat.

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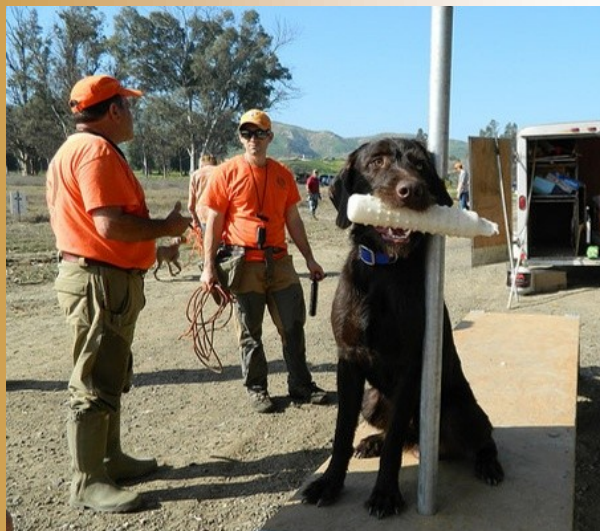


# MARCH TRAINING DAY

**Trust  
your dog**



**V.C. Reni Checks the Board**





We love to share your hunting moments or dog outings with our fellow SOCAL NAVHDA members. Please email your photos or stories to [gary\\_johnson @ busdk12.com](mailto:gary_johnson@busdk12.com)



## **BASIC CUES FOR YOUR DOG**

The following is a list of basic cues and when to use them for your dog. Give some thought to the order in which you teach them. Example: With a young pointing dog one may not want to emphasize the sit command or you may find your dog sitting on point as a default to a high stress situation. Try to use one word, not several. Be patient. Seek the dogs understanding before insisting on excellence. Try and use words that cannot be misunderstood. Do not give a command that you cannot enforce.

**“Ah, Ah”** — Condition the dogs to the sound “ah, ah” for all unwanted behaviors. For anything the dog is doing wrong, “ah, ah” can be used to redirect their focus and communicate to them that what they are doing is unwanted. “Ah, ah” is just before or during correction or negative reinforcement is used. “Ah, ah” is quick, clear, and easy. It is similar to saying no. It redirects the dogs focus to the task at hand and if the unwanted behavior persists we can apply correction or negative reinforcement as needed. This is called a conditioned aversive stimulus and can be associated with any sound as long as it is consistent, conditioned and aversive. The dog will want to avoid this sound. **“Here”**— Use the word “here” to bring the dogs to us fully. Say the dogs name and once you have their focus, say the word here. The dog is taught to come in and stay with the handler until he/she is released. You may use the “vibrate” or stimulation feature on the e-collar to reinforce this behavior. The dog has been taught to turn the collar off by coming in. If he or she leaves before the approval, turn the collar back on until the dog returns. **“Heel”**— Is when the dog is next to our side. Before we start to walk, we say the dogs name and make eye contact with the dog. Once the dog has made eye contact, we then say heel and begin to walk. If the dog starts to walk in front or pull, we use the “ah, ah” and then follow up with a tug on the lead or a light nick on the e-collar. **“Whoa”**— Whoa, is used with the pointing breed when we want the dogs to stop and stand still with out taking extra steps. “Whoa” is also used when the dog establishes point and we “whoa” them so we can flush the bird. While at home, you can “whoa” the dog for food, before going outside, or when working on retrieves. It is important to maintain the “whoa” cue on the off season to ensure that the dog does not get confused the first time out hunting for the year. “Whoa” can be reinforced with the e-collar by using a nick every time the dog takes a step or moves. **“Okay”**— This is the universal release word. Any time the dog is to be released use “okay”. This word can be used for releasing the dog from heel, the dog bed, when ready to hunt, or when they have returned with the retrieve. **“Kennel”**— Is the cue used for having the dog physically go in a kennel, going into a “mutt hut”, or going on his or her dog bed. Dogs are very place oriented so, if the dog has maintained the conditioning, they will stay until you have released them. When releasing from the dog bed, kennel, or hut, physically go to them wait for them to be calm (licking their lips or yawning is a good sign) and say “okay”. They will then be allowed off or out of the location.

## Cues (continued) - keep it simple, distinctive, one syllable if possible

**“Find it”** — This cue is used when the dog is to physically find an object. Whether, it is a treat, bumper, ball, or bird, we use “find it” so; the dog knows to start searching. We continue towards the object to help the dog in the right direction until the object has been retrieved or consumed. If the dog has been threw a conditioned retrieve, we would then use the word fetch.

**“Fetch”** — This term is used when the dog must go and pick an object or bird up and return to the handler’s hand. If the object is dropped, use a light stimulation or vibrate until the dog has returned to the object and picked the object up. Once the dog has picked up the object, turn off the stimulation or vibration.

**“Sit”** — When the dog is asked to sit, we say the word one time. If the dog does not sit, use the “ah, ah” and then show them what you are asking or move your body forward towards the dog using subtle dominance to get them to sit. If the dog hears the word more than once, they will start to re-condition themselves to respond after it has been repeated several times. The dog then must remain sitting until they are released or until another cue is given. With the pointing breeds, typically we only use this while dog is on lead at our sides or when they are also used for waterfowl. If the dog is collar conditioned to sit, it can be reinforced with the e-collar.

### Whistle Conditioning

Whistle conditioning is a form of communication with the dog. Depending on the queue from the whistle, will indicate to the dog, what you would like him/her to do. **One Long Tap** — One long tap or blow from the whistle will indicate one of two things: With the flushing breed or with waterfowl training, this will indicate “sit”. If the dog does not sit to the whistle, use the “ah, ah” and reinforce with the e-collar (if the dog has been collar conditioned to sit) or show the dog what you would like them to do. The second is for the pointing breeds. When one long tap has been done, the pointing dog should stop and “whoa”. This can also be reinforced with the “ah, ah” and a light nick on the e-collar for every extra step the dog takes. To release the dog, use “okay”. **Two Taps** — Two taps from the whistle lets the dog know that they are getting to far out of range or that the hunting group is going to be turning (example: the group needs to turn left or right, make two taps on the whistle and start turning. The dog should follow the lead of the group and turn). If the dog doesn’t come back into range or does not turn with the group, use a light stimulation on the collar or the “vibrate” until the dog is where he or she should be. Once the dog is in the right area, turn the stimulation or the vibration off, and the dog will continue to hunt. **Three Taps** — Three taps on the whistle indicates to the dog that they need to come all the way back to the handler. This is equivalent to the here cue and can be reinforced the in the same manner.

### Something to Consider

If you use the same commands as most people do it will make it easier for others to handle your dog. If you hunt with others and see a benefit to this you should use the standard commands. However, these common commands could create a problem. For example, if you are hunting next to someone or testing with others and they yell fetch to their dog and your dog responds and sprints for the retrieve. It is said that everybody blows a whistle differently and the dogs can distinguish your whistle from another’s. I have trained next to people using the same brand of whistle as mine and it does appear our dogs can hear the difference.

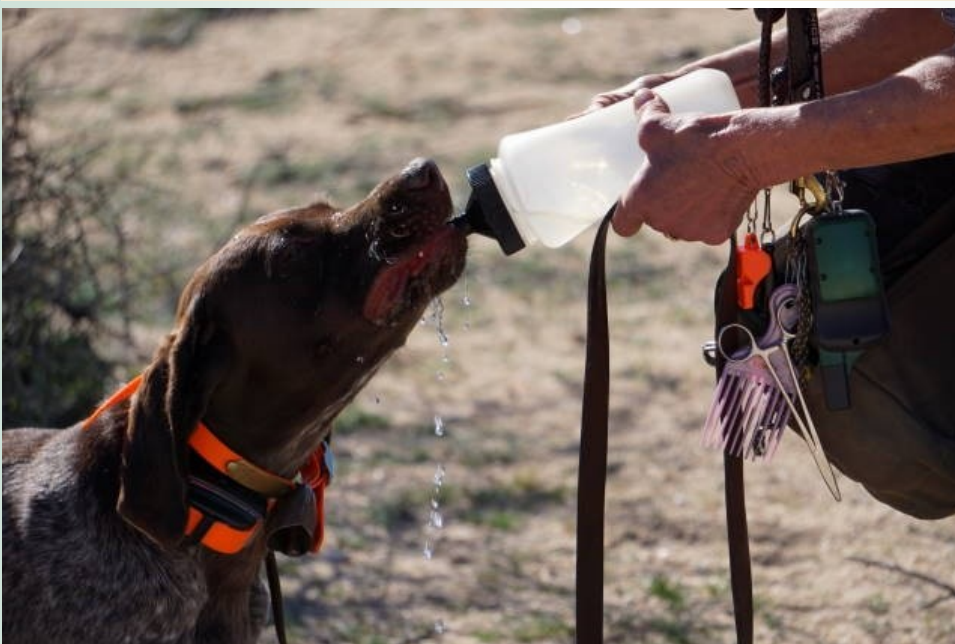


One of our members **Justin Gonzalez** had a truly unique situation while training his Wirehaired Pointing Griffon, **Dixie**. **Dixie** was busy pointing a pigeon when a quail landed on his back. The quail then proceeded to walk up his back and perch on his head. This SOCAL NAVHDA dog is truly **STEADY** and **ON POINT!!**

**Thanks for the great photo Justin! If you have any unique, memorable moments while training, hunting or when you are in the midst of a local adventure please snap a photo and email it to us. We would love to share that memory with your fellow members. Email these memories to [gary\\_johnson@busdk12.com](mailto:gary_johnson@busdk12.com).**



One might be skeptical of the above photo as it seems so unlikely for a bird to land on a bird dog. However, if you look at many pictures of the wirehair breeds when they are hunting you soon realize when they stand next to a tree or a small bush they have the perfect “camo”. In some of these photos it is hard to tell where the bush ends and the dog begins. To some birds a Wirehaired Pointing Griffon like Dixie may look exactly like a typical bush that they normally land in. **Dixie is either real steady or taking a nap!**



**Rodge and Irene Fradella** sent in this photo from a recent hike with their pup **Skyler**. This is not only a great photo but you can see many of the things they take with to keep their dog safe on a hike. Water, E-collar, Bell, Whistle, Comb, Forceps?, Leash and I'm sure a few other things in the training bag. **What do you take with on your trips?**



# German Wirehaired Pointer



German Wirehaired pointers trace their origins back to 1880. They originated in Germany, where breeders wanted to develop a rugged, versatile hunting dog that would work closely with either one person or a small party of persons hunting on foot in varied terrain; from the mountainous regions of the Alps, to dense forests, to more open areas with farms and small towns. **The breed the Germans desired had to have a coat that would protect the dogs when working in heavy cover or in cold water, yet be easy to maintain. Careful crosses of the German pointer with many other breeds. Sources differ on the exact lineage, though the Wirehaired Pointing Griffon, Pudelpointer, Stichelhaar, and Deutscher-Kurzhaar are commonly accepted as the most likely contributors.** This is a dog that can fully respond to the needs of its hunter. The goal was to develop a wire-coated, medium-sized dog that could:

- Search for, locate and point upland game
- Work both feather and fur with equal skill & retrieve water fowl
- Be a close-working, easily trained gun dog
- Be able to track and locate wounded game
- Be fearless when hunting "sharp" game such as fox
- Be a devoted companion and pet; and
- Be a watchdog for its owner's family and property.

**Some consider the "Drahthaar" to be a different type of dog than the German wirehaired pointer. While the breeds are genetically indistinguishable, "drahts" have to meet rigorous hunt and show tests before being eligible for breeding. These tests include tracking wounded game such as fox, rabbit, deer and boar,**





which may not be required of a dog that hunts birds predominantly. A desire to recover and retrieve game stands out in both styles of dog (GWP and Drahthaar). In double blind studies, the tracking capabilities of Drahthaar and GWP's has shown to be statistically indistinguishable. For upland (i.e. non-waterfowl) bird work, many GWPs have distinguished themselves with all-breed Field Championships and Master Hunter titles. Unlike many sporting breeds, there is no "breed split" with Wirehairs (though individuals have varying talents). Dual Championships (both field and show) are not uncommon in the breed. The German Wirehaired pointer is affectionate, lively, very determined, active and intelligent. Eager to learn and loyal to its family, it needs a handler who is consistent in approach. They like to be occupied, are vigorous and enjoy working for their owners. They are friendly with those they know, but are naturally aloof with strangers and should be socialized at an early age. This is one breed of dog that does not do well in a kennel environment. German Wirehaired pointers are happiest and most well behaved when they are part of the family and can spend time with their people. They can be rather willful and they like to roam. Powerful and energetic, they can become bored and hard to manage without enough exercise. The German Wirehaired pointer is a good all-around gun dog, able to hunt any sort of game on any sort of terrain. This dog has a good nose and can track, point, and retrieve on both land and water. Loyal and playful, the German Wirehaired Pointer thrives on human companionship. These dogs should have the correct temperament to live with children of all ages. **The German Wirehaired pointer is a well muscled, medium to large sized dog of distinctive appearance. Balanced in size and sturdily built, the breed's most distinguishing characteristics are its weather resistant, wire-like coat and its facial furnishings. Typically pointer in character and style, the German wirehaired pointer is an intelligent, energetic and determined hunter. The tail is typically docked to two-fifths of the natural length. In countries where docking is prohibited the tail should be of sufficient length to reach down to the hocks. Like all German pointers, they have webbed feet. This dog is sometimes confused with the Spinone Italiano.** Some SOCAL NAVHDA members **With GWP'S:** Raffi Barbarian , John Tsarouhas , Vladimir Litvin, Bob Worrell, Jon & Natalie Vesely, Garo Missakian, Mark Miller. Eric Sellas



# TRAINING DAY

TRAINING is simply the process of decreasing uncertainty in any given situation



Young dogs practice tracking to prep for the Natural Ability Test.





# HEARTWORM

Heartworm disease is a serious and potentially fatal disease in pets in the United States and many other parts of the world. It is caused by foot-long worms (heartworms) that live in the heart, lungs and associated blood vessels of affected pets, causing severe lung disease, heart failure and damage to other organs in the body. Heartworm disease affects dogs, cats and ferrets, but heartworms also live in other mammal species, including wolves, coyotes, foxes, sea lions and—in rare instances—humans. Because wild species such as foxes and coyotes live in proximity to many urban areas, they are considered important carriers of the disease.

**Dogs.** The dog is a natural host for heartworms, which means that heartworms that live inside the dog mature into adults, mate and produce offspring. If untreated, their numbers can increase, and dogs have been known to harbor several hundred worms in their bodies. Heartworm disease causes lasting damage to the heart, lungs and arteries, and can affect the dog's health and quality of life long after the parasites are gone. For this reason, prevention is by far the best option, and treatment—when needed—should be administered as early in the course of the disease as possible.

The mosquito plays an essential role in the heartworm life cycle. Adult female heartworms living in an infected dog, fox, coyote, or wolf produce microscopic baby worms called microfilaria that circulate in the bloodstream. When a mosquito bites and takes a blood meal from an infected animal, it picks up these baby worms, which develop and mature into “infective stage” larvae over a period of 10 to 14 days. Then, when the infected mosquito bites another dog, cat, or susceptible wild animal, the infective larvae are deposited onto the surface of the animal's skin and enter the new host through the mosquito's bite wound. Once inside a new host, it takes approximately 6 months for the larvae to mature into adult heartworms. Once mature, heartworms can live for 5 to 7 years in dogs and up to 2 or 3 years in cats. Because of the longevity of these worms, each mosquito season can lead to an increasing number of worms in an infected pet.

## What are the signs of heartworm disease in dogs?



In the early stages of the disease, many dogs show few symptoms or no symptoms at all. The longer the infection persists, the more likely symptoms will develop. Active dogs, dogs heavily infected with heartworms, or those with other health problems often show pronounced clinical signs.

Signs of heartworm disease may include a mild persistent cough, reluctance to exercise, fatigue after moderate activity, decreased appetite, and weight loss. As heartworm disease progresses, pets may develop heart failure and the appearance of a swollen belly due to excess fluid in the abdomen.

Dogs with large numbers of heartworms can develop a sudden blockages of blood flow within the heart leading to a life-threatening form of cardiovascular collapse. This is called caval syndrome, and is marked by a sudden onset of labored breathing, pale gums, and dark bloody or coffee-colored urine. Without prompt surgical removal of the heartworm blockage, few dogs survive.

## HOW SIGNIFICANT IS THE RISK?

Many factors must be considered, even if heartworms do not seem to be a problem in your local area. Your community may have a greater incidence of heartworm disease than you realize—or you may unknowingly travel with your pet to an area where heartworms are more common. Heartworm disease is also spreading to new regions of the country each year. Stray and neglected dogs and certain wildlife such as coyotes, wolves, and foxes can be carriers of heartworms. Mosquitoes blown great distances by the wind and the relocation of infected pets to previously uninfected areas also contribute to the spread of heartworm disease (this happened following Hurricane Katrina when 250,000 pets, many of them infected with heartworms, were “adopted” and shipped throughout the country).

The fact is that heartworm disease has been diagnosed in all 50 states, and risk factors are impossible to predict. Multiple variables, from climate variations to the presence of wildlife carriers, cause rates of infections to vary dramatically from year to year—even within communities. And because infected mosquitoes can come inside, both outdoor and indoor pets are at risk.

For that reason, the American Heartworm Society recommends that you “think 12:” (1) get your pet tested every 12 months for heartworm and (2) give your pet heartworm preventive 12 months a year.



Heartworm disease is a serious, progressive disease. The earlier it is detected, the better the chances the pet will recover. There are few, if any, early signs of disease when a dog or cat is infected with heartworms, so detecting their presence with a heartworm test administered by a veterinarian is important. The test requires just a small blood sample from your pet, and it works by detecting the presence of heartworm proteins. Some veterinarians process heartworm tests right in their hospitals while others send the samples to a diagnostic laboratory. In either case, results are obtained quickly. If your pet tests positive, further tests may be ordered.

***This article is reprinted from the American Heartworm Society.***



Be aware that heartworms are real and prevalent throughout the United States, even in the dry desert climates. Prevention is simple but costs about \$10/month. If you talk to breeders who have many dogs you may find ways to reduce that monthly amount. Ask your vet if the heartworm medication is effective against other forms of parasites, whipworms, tapeworms, etc..



# WELCOME

## NEW MEMBERS

## NEW MEMBERS

Ralph Martinez sent this photo in from a recent training session. Ralph received the coveted UT Prize I and is training for the NAVHDA Invitational



**Citori points a Chukar**

**Griffin honors his point**

- Mitch & Terry Reynolds — Isabelle German Shorthair Pointer
- Steve Engelgau - Cory Pudelpointer
- Michael Macias - Moxie Brittany Spaniel
- William Zaring - Tanner Vizsla
- Kevin & Staci Billy - Mika Vizsla
- Matthew Moore - Rhody Vizsla
- Clint Lager—Duke Vizsla
- Daniel Branco - Lady German Shorthair Pointer
- Eran Haber - Reba Vizsla
- Jim Johnson - Ginger Vizsla

**ATTENTION NEW MEMBERS—** We would love to get to know you by placing a picture of you in our newsletter with your new puppy or dog. If your shy and don't like your photo taken . . . don't worry . . . most of OUR MEMBERS are only looking at the dog. You will acquire many memorable moments while training with SOCAL NAVHDA. Moments like you see in the photo above. A very short time ago both of those dogs were puppies running recklessly at full speed during our monthly SOCAL NAVHDA training days. **Please send your photos to [gary\\_johnson@busdk12.com](mailto:gary_johnson@busdk12.com)**



# TRAINING DAY

"A dog is the only thing on earth that loves you more than he loves himself."

Josh Billings



**BOSS**



**WHERE MEMBERS  
TEACH OTHERS HOW  
TO TRAIN THEIR  
BIRDDOG**



At the Inland Empire NAVHDA Chili cook off. The two award winners were Guido Dei for Best Tasting and Gabby Awbrey for the Hot-test Chili! Congratulations to both winners!!



# TRAINING DAY

"If you think dogs can't count, try putting three dog biscuits in your pocket and then give him only two."

Phil Pastoret



## KENNEL COMMAND

This is an important command as you begin taking your dog out. In the kennel, you and your dog knows it will be safe for them. You can use treats initially to encourage them to enter. Then begin to lengthen the time.





# ***SOCAL NAVHDA ON POINT***

## Is Your Dog Ready for the Natural Ability Test?

Pointing birds?

Tracking?

Swimming?

We can help

Train your dog.





# WIREHAired VISZLA

# WIREHAired POINTING GRIFFON



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S e a r c h  
s o c i a l  
navhda and  
see photos  
taken on our  
training  
days.

Thank you  
**Dan Mick**  
for creating  
this web  
presence.





# TRAINING DAY

"The average dog is a nicer person than the average person."

Andy Rooney



Do not give a command you cannot enforce



If you have not had any resistance from your dog with force fetch yet, congratulations!!! Get ready though it's bound to happen soon enough. You are now moving away from table acclimation, hands around and in the mouth to putting some pressure on your dog to get him to "grab something". Some use a toe hitch, some an ear pinch and some an e-collar. This method is using an ear pinch. It is very important that the dog feels the pressure, (ear pinch), and that it is an uncomfortable feeling. This may be one of the first times you have purposefully made your dog uncomfortable. Try to ignore that feeling that you are doing something "wrong" the dog is learning a new skill, retrieving when my master asks (not just when your dog wants to). An additional benefit is that many dogs will soon OBEY our other commands regardless of whether they WANT TO, no questions asked.

## FORCE FETCH—STEP 2

This is the second phase of the force to retrieve on the table. Hopefully by now your pooch is relaxed up there, and holding a variety of different objects with no hesitation, and not releasing until you command him to. **Keep feeding him up there after each session and he will look forward to his lesson.** Up until now we have been prying his mouth open to insert the roller or dowel. Hopefully you have been rubbing his ears and getting him comfortable with your hands around his head. **Bring the collar up as tight as possible to the ceiling so that he cannot lower his head. Make sure that he can breathe properly and that he is in the sit position facing straight on to you with his head up as high as possible.** Inside the dogs ear there is a spot that has very little hair on it and that is where we will give a light pinch with our thumbnail. Timing is important here when we go to pinch the ear. **Stay very calm when you do this or your anxiety will transfer to your pupil.** Take a dowel with duct tape wrapped around it about a half of an inch in diameter and ten inches in length. The tape makes the dowel easier to hold, and it won't slide so easily on the dog's hard teeth. Hold the dowel with your right hand and have him hold it like he has all the other objects. While he is holding it rub his ears vigorously and say good boy. Now take it out, and with your right hand bring it up and rest the dowel gently against his muzzle. **If he tries to stand make him sit back down before you continue.** Bring your left hand up to his right ear and find the area that has no hair up high in the ear. As you pinch gently with your thumbnail, push the dowel firmly against his teeth and say the word Fetch. Some dogs will get frightened and want to clam up when they feel the pinch stimulation. Just stay calm and as I said don't pinch too hard at first.



The most important thing is to get the dog to open his mouth wide enough to accept the small dowel and immediately stop the pinch. Once he has the idea that as soon as he has this thing in his mouth he gets praise and no pinch discomfort. As soon as we can trust him to grab the dowel we can start to give him more slack on the chain. We have to get our timing down pat and pinch the ear at the same time that we offer the dowel to him. Once he is actually grabbing the object and making a conscious effort to hold it, we are ready to start traveling on the table from the right to the left. Start holding the dowel a little further away from his mouth each session only a couple of inches or so. As you pinch the ear say fetch to get the desired response, and as the dog takes the dowel release the pinch immediately, but make sure that he holds it. Allow him to hold it for at least ten seconds at first and then keep adding a little distance for him to reach. Sooner than you think your dog will be moving a few feet to grab the object from your hand. This is when you will have to hook him to the cable to get the distance required. Remember to watch that he doesn't get sloppy on his hold and make him sit as soon as he gets back to the center of the table. I can't express how important it is to really praise your dog when he does well. Once you are happy with that session, feed the dog up there as his reward. This part of the training is pretty boring for both you and the dog but believe me it needs to be done. Try to pick up some speed as you both become more accustomed to the routine. We are looking for the dog to start reaching for the object on the table and this is where most of the refusals begin. The transition of taking it from your hand is one thing but when we take the hand away and ask him to pick it up from the table the dog usually tries to bail out and refuse to grab the dowel. Just lift the object slightly and keep the ear pinch on until he grabs it firmly.

Keep working on this until the dog becomes used to grabbing off the table surface and we will start to mix the objects up that he will pick up as we go into the next phase.



**THANK YOU!!** Ty Mitchel for organizing our training day and his wife Linda (and helper!) for providing the great corned beef and cabbage lunch. Also, we cannot forget Jon Vesely for his work with all the puppies and of course Guido Dei who is seemingly non-stop helping others!





# FORCE FETCH—STEP 3



Now that your dog is picking up objects off of the table consistently and returning to the middle and sitting and holding until commanded to release, you are well on your way. Next thing you want to do is to place the object to the right about six feet from the dog and command him to fetch with your hand in his collar but start backing off on the pinch. Having your hand this close will allow you to reinforce the fetch command if you get a refusal. **Enthusiasm here in your voice will take you a long way when doing this type of training.** Once he is holding all of these different objects, start to use your training dummies and dead fowls. I prefer to use the Avery brand because they are the easiest for a dog to grab and hold consistently with very little sloppiness on the hold, because of their firmness and the hex design. As soon as he is picking up all of these objects, you have to move on to birds on the table. We will use only thawed out pigeons at first because of the size of the bird, to make it easier for you and the dog. Remember to only start this if the dog is consistent on retrieving from the table any object that you send him for without hesitation and holding firmly until told to release. **Sit him down in the middle of the table and tie him up short the first time that you ask him to hold a bird. It is like going back to square one for a short time.** Chances are that when you started force fetch the dog wasn't retrieving to hand so let's take small steps here and see what we have accomplished so far. I like to take a fresh thawed out pigeon and wrap duct tape around the wings to hold the body firm, much like a bumper. I've seen many dogs refuse to take a pigeon from my hand at first so I open the dog's mouth and place the bird in, and command the dog to fetch. If he tries to spit or drop the bird I now have a built in backup plan that I did not have before, and that is the ear pinch. The point here is to show the dog that he must hold everything firmly and not try to avoid the command. Allow him to hold the bird longer and longer until you can leave him up there holding it as you walk away a short distance from him. Always keep the dog in sight to avoid any accidents if he tries to jump off the table. **As you return to the dog, make sure that he continues to hold right up until you ask him to release. Watch out for the dog that starts to anticipate your hand around his mouth and starts to release too early.** This will start to deteriorate a good solid delivery in the field.

# FORCE FETCH—STEP 3

## CONTINUED

Leave the tape on the bird and once he is holding and grabbing it well, start making him travel for it further and further, just like he did for all of the other objects. Now as he sits in the middle of the table, place the bird about six feet away to the right then go back and face the dog. As you command him to fetch, use some body language here and point to the bird with your right hand. If he balks stay calm and put your hand on the bird and lightly pinch the ear. Hopefully he will pick the bird up firmly with no hesitation and return to the middle of the table and sit. If you have done all of the other steps properly this drill really should go smoothly. If you have difficulty, back up to the previous lesson. Always be sure to have the dog connected to the upper cable when doing this lesson of moving up and down the table, to pick up what you have sent him for. If he is successful at jumping off of the table to avoid the command, then you are training backward, and the dog will always be looking for a way to avoid situations that he

doesn't like. Start sending the dog further and further down the table to retrieve the bird and use a lot of enthusiasm in your voice to get him to pick up speed going to the bird. This is where we are going to start placing a pigeon and one other object next to each other to the right of the dog, about a foot from the end of the table. When we send him it doesn't matter which one that he picks up first as long as we get a good solid delivery before sending him for the next object. **The dog may refuse to pick up the object after picking up the bird, but remember that this is the best place to get a refusal because your in a great position to quickly correct him for doing so.** You just have to show him that he cannot ignore or blink the other object, and must go back and complete all the retrieves with no hesitation. As he gets better and more consistent, start adding more birds that are freshly thawed out or even live shackled birds. With a live shackled bird first have him grab the bird by its back. When he promptly grabs the bird from the back, then grab the bird by the wing and let him grab the bird so that the legs of the bird will be inside his mouth. **The bird will be moving his legs inside the dogs mouth, make sure to be applying the ear pinch if the dog trys to spit the bird.**

I always use everything that he may encounter in the field on any given hunt, even rabbits if I am planning on using this dog for hunting them. **The table will be your best tool to go back to and fix retrieving problems that may arise in the future.**




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