



barking dog express

Yankee Chapter of NAVHDA

SPECIAL EDITION!
summer 2022



A little history of the Yankee Chapter's NAVHDA Apprentice Hunter Program...

At the 2014 NAVHDA International Annual Meeting, held in Manchester, NH, there was much discussion about generating more youth involvement. Up to that point, the only NAVHDA program for youth was the Kristin Reiser Youth Aims & Rules Clinic Program. It was time to do more.

To that end, Yankee Chapter members took the lead. Enough discussion and words -- they were ready plunge in with concrete actions. Blaine Carter spoke to the meeting assembly, saying it was time to "put some boots on the ground" and pledged to develop a camp to encourage more youths to learn about hunting and hunting dogs. Terry Wilson and Nancy Anisfield announced their donation of \$200,000 dollars to NAVHDA to establish the Youth Endowment Fund to support more youth programs.

In 2015, Blaine's vision became the NAVHDA Apprentice Hunter Program. Concurrently, a Youth Development Committee was formed on the International level to direct the endowment funds into two working programs: the NAVHDA Youth Testing Incentive Program which offers partial reimbursement of their test entry fees and the NAVHDA Youth Events Program which provides financial assistance to support NAVHDA chapters in developing the next generation of dog enthusiasts, hunters, and NAVHDA members. Through the Events Program, chapters can apply for funds to help cover expenses such as those for the NAHP

camp. The Yankee Chapter has been fortunate to have very generous local donors and conservation organization sponsors help with most of the expenses each year. The Yankee youth members even donated from their designated fund last year.

The NAHP Camp was designed by Yankee's Jason Carter, a member of NAVHDA's Youth Committee and Yankee's Director of Youth Development at that time. He created the program for our chapter and presented it to NAVHDA. Each year Jason and his team choose eight young people, 12-14 years old, most of whom have little or no outdoor education. Many of Yankee's youth members have family and friends to teach them about the outdoors and to guide them through working with hunting dogs. The NAHP camp was designed primarily for kids who may not have that resource but are interested in learning about hunting, gun dogs, shooting, and outdoor survival skills.

The camp runs three days, with the campers (and parents) tenting overnight. Each camper is paired with a mentor and dog. They learn a full range of dog handling skills through drills, games, and an actual chukar hunt. The campers also get a shooting lesson, and learn firearms safety, fire building, dog first aid, orienteering, how to build a shelter, how to clean game, cook game, and clean a gun.

Year after year, the mentors and team of Yankee volunteers staffing the camp agree that the camp experience has as much impact on them as it does on the youths.



2022 campers, mentors and dogs make magic together!



Seeking Campers for 2023

We are looking for girls and boys who will be 12 - 14 years old next year who may not have had the exposure and opportunity to train or hunt over a versatile hunting dog.

The NAHP Camp will be held Friday - Sunday the third week in July.

For more information or to recommend a camper, please contact the Yankee Chapter at ycnavhda@gmail.com.

Phil, Patti, Jason, Misi, and Blaine,

I wanted to take a minute to thank all of you for inviting me to be a mentor at the Apprentice Hunter Program. It was truly an honor and a privilege.

Phil, thank you for the invite to mentor and for the time you put into organizing camp.

To all of the Carters... I don't know what is in those Carter genes but you all can run circles around me!! I'm happy to try to keep up!

Seriously though, I'm not sure I can adequately articulate how impressed I really am with all of you and your dedication to furthering hunting and an understanding of versatile hunting dogs.

I cannot believe how much you fit into 3 days!! Jason what a great curriculum!

Thanks again for letting me be a part of the experience.

Dani Murphy

Yankee Chapter President Carter (Patti),

I want to thank the Yankee Chapter for providing me the opportunity to participate in the Apprentice Hunter Program as a Mentor. It was one of the most rewarding experiences lending to the growth and development of a next generation of outdoor enthusiasts; hunters taught the respect of game and importance of safety.

The entire Program has such forethought and purpose teaching outdoor skills, marksmanship, safety, conservation, and yes working with our dogs. I have such appreciation for all responsible for creating and working this Program for all these years.

It was especially heart warming to see the youth camp counselors who had graduated the Program now working to pass on their experiences to their peers. It was amazing to witness the growth in the Campers who by day two were safely and confidently harvesting game over our dogs in the field. Learning how to clean and then enjoy the hunt sharing a meal with their fellow hunters. Isn't that the epitome of our best days afield, a successful hunt with our friends having worked with our dogs to then share a meal of the harvest over memories of the day. I believe they not only learned important skills of woods and hunting but also a lifetime of shared experiences to come that none of us who know of this should ever take for granted.

Thank you again for creating this Program to pass on a lifetime sport that has brought so much to me as a hunter, a sporting dog enthusiast, and one that seeks to see a future generation know and experience the great outdoors as I have. The success of the Program is evident by the accomplishments I witnessed in the young participants. Each one achieving every skill that was taught, praised and rewarded throughout. And as great as their rewards were, I'm left feeling that I may have received the greatest reward amongst them as having had the chance to be a Mentor.

Thank you, and my appreciation to all who have worked so hard to make the Apprentice Hunter Program what it continues to be. I am both proud and grateful to be a member of the Yankee Chapter of NAVHDA and to learn how to best advance its values through tomorrow's young hunters.

Sincerely,
Steven Buck
Yankee Chapter Member



NAVHDA Apprentice Hunting Program 2022

by Dan Riley

I was excited to have the opportunity for a youth to experience the greatest joy on earth by working with a versatile hunting dog.

Planning, adjustments, and enthusiasm are some key aspects that I witnessed to make this year's NAVHDA Apprentice Hunter Program a fun event. All those involved, made sure this outstanding group of campers were set up for success from the moment they arrived until the moment they left.

It was wonderful to witness how these eight campers performed when given the opportunity with a challenge. Their politeness, enthusiasm, stick-to-itiveness, and especially their commitment to working with the dogs was amazing to see. Each camper gave their best by working hard, listening, overcoming challenges and even failure with great respect and appreciation. Every camper shot a bird behind a pointing dog!

It was a great fit for Willow to have Abi, the only girl of the group, work with her. She immediately showed interest in learning how to connect with Willow improving her commands throughout the three days. She helped Willow win the cracker challenge again. We were lucky enough to work as a team to be the first group to start a fire. The most joyous moment came when Abi made an impressive shot over Willow's stunning point. I was smiling so much my chubby cheeks hurt.

Anything that needed to be done, Jacob Haskell, Wyatt Knuston, and Natalie Peasley made it happen. These three youth counselors presented fantastic role models for these campers with their welcoming, enthusiastic, and contagious positive energy. I will admit that my favorite part was Jason Carter getting soaked by his nephew, Wyatt. A little sprinkle of good-natured mischievous behavior is good for the soul.

As the camp continued over the three days, I was in awe of the generosity of the mentors that volunteered their time and especially their dogs to such a noble event. Some mentors even took the day off to pass the baton to these eight youths in an effort to carry on the most sacred of all forms of hunting. I am convinced that the best way to find your best true self you need to look no further than owning a bird dog. Phil Laperriere was a key leader in our efforts for a great camp experience had by all and critical vet care for our precious dogs were taught by Dr. Charles Ellithorpe. Jim Greenleaf was kind enough to lend a hand on Monday in support of the many tasks to run camp.

Steve Buck, Brian Pike, Joe Wadleigh, Pat Bowles, Jason Hawes, Casey Mowers, and Dani Murphy represent the true meaning of stewardship for upland bird hunting. These impressive mentors helped each camper become more confident, more diverse, and more exposed to the wonders of life by giving these kids a special childhood moment that they will remember. I believe that they contributed to the positive imprinting in each child's development that will help them become happy and confident human beings. Each mentor brought their own authentic selves with great enthusiasm and commitment. It was an honor to be part of such a special team.

One must ponder, how does an undertaking of this magnitude come together with such great success? What causes people to be inspired to give back to kids? How do you create an atmosphere that helps kids succeed at a difficult task like shooting a bird on the wing behind a pointing dog? The Carters.

In a reflective pause after a three-day action-packed camp, I recognized something unique about this family. They demonstrate such commitment, time, talent, resources, and love in all they do for the betterment of the dogs. By creating a culture of support, excitement, opportunity, camaraderie, and resources, they exponentially increase the chances that the owners develop the skills that is necessary to care for these magnificent hunting dogs and enjoy a life these dogs deserve.

The Carters are like the four chambers of a heart. Each person brings their own set of skills, talent, unique connectivity to dogs and owners, while simultaneously working in unison for a common cause. Their interactions as a family and team were impressive to witness as they shared their gracious positive energy to all those around them. It was inspiring to see all four family members perform with one heartbeat.

I plan to follow in the footsteps of others like Jason Hawes who want to contribute to this lifeline. It is an incredible opportunity to be a member of a wonderful group of people. Together we can make a difference for our hunting dogs.



from Patti Carter, President of the Yankee Chapter



Our Yankee Chapter has always attracted and welcomed young families and their children. Back in the 80s, the Yankee Chapter held their first youth event. At that early event, a pheasant shoot, the youths were taught safety, handling skills, and target practice. Parents were present and wonderfully supportive.

While we continued involving chapter youths in all our activities, Jason Carter has designed an amazing three-day program of outdoor education for 12 to 14 year olds from outside the chapter.

This special edition of the Barking Dog Express celebrates our chapter's focus on youth and the huge success of our commitment to youth. Yankee kids have banded geese, cleaned wood duck boxes, worked hard at our clinics, attended the International annual meeting, done some great fundraising, and supported the NAHP campers every year. We are proud of them and know they will go on to be safe, responsible, dedicated hunters and sporting dog owners.



Yankee Chapter Youth Members, seen here at the 2019 NAVHDA Annual Meeting, support the NAVHDA Apprentice Hunter Program through donations and by serving as camp counselors. Many attended the camp when they were younger.

As the camp has evolved, my favorite aspect is how the campers interaction with dogs has increased. This year the dogs came even more to the front.

The youths learn various segments of a hunt during the first day that are geared toward helping them see how the dogs participate with the handler in real hunting situations. Everything from heeling to retrieving is covered. They learn repeatedly about gun safety and have a shooting lesson. When the time comes to put it all together in an actual chukar hunt, they are ready.

What is unique about this hunt is that it doesn't end when the bird is shot. (Note -- this year every camper harvested at least one bird over "their" dog.) From the field they worked through three post-hunt stations: checking their dogs over with a veterinarian, cleaning their birds, and cleaning their guns. Then they cooked and ate their game.

This part -- the post hunt progression -- was so awesome. Each mentor accompanied his or her youth to each station and continued the education there. Each station was manned by a staff member. The learning process was incredible.

Having three full days devoted to this camp is one of the secrets to its success. It's not a one-and-done day's shoot or hunt. Skills are repeated and reinforced, and even more special -- in the fall, each mentor invites his or her camper on a real hunt during hunting season.

- from Jason Carter, Director of NAHP

I feel proud to be a part of such an amazing event that promotes getting youth into the outdoors. To watch each and every youth develop such passion for their dog and be able to develop the skills to successfully hunt over it is truly special.

The success of this program is only possible from the generosity of our amazing chapter members. It takes a huge culminating effort of so many to pull this event off. Thank you to all who stepped up over the years and shared so much, making this a life changing experience for so many future conservationists.



- from Philip Laperriere Yankee Chapter Director of Youth Development

To start, from my perspective, the NAHP camp put on by the Yankee Chapter is something that has developed into the amazing event it is today from the Carter family's love for the dogs, they're love for the sport, and their passion to share it with the next generation. We are also very fortunate to supported by an amazing chapter of volunteers who contribute their time to the further the same cause.

Being my first season as the Youth Director, I participated in the NAHP to understand how this well designed and orchestrated event was conducted. With his background in young childhood education, Jason has incorporated the key elements to learning: introduction to a concept, demonstrating the concept, and practicing the concept to ensure it is understood, learned, and can be demonstrated by the individual. This organized fashion of teaching was approached with firearm safety, outdoor survival concepts, orienteering, and learning to train and handle bird dogs throughout the weekend.

I was amazed to see a group of young men and women, some of whom had never worked with a dog, fired a shotgun, or hunted upland game, over the course of a day and half, hunt and harvest game over a dog and respectfully prepare it for a meal. Throughout the three-day event, the campers learned new skills and shared experiences that will provide a foundation should their future aspirations lead them toward the great outdoors and the sport of upland game hunting.

I'm looking forward to working with the Yankee Chapter to conduct an equally successful event next year.

- a note on Gun Safety and Gun Carry

Blaine Carter explained how at the NAHP camp, they drill the kids on gun safety over and over each day. Besides handling real shotguns during their shooting lesson and hunt, there is a "toy" practice gun that sits right out there each morning for them to handle and pass. The campers "get it," and they remember it, Blaine said. "I've been impressed with how much attention they pay to safety." He also pointed out that the instructors teach the kids safe positions for carrying a gun, something most gun lessons forget about. With emphasis on muzzle awareness, the campers learn how best to hold their guns in different situations and how to always to make safety the priority.



" not your normal chapter "
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Photos from past camps



survival shelter building



dog handling drills



fire building



orienteering



making survival bracelets



NAVHDA

APPRENTICE HUNTER PROGRAM

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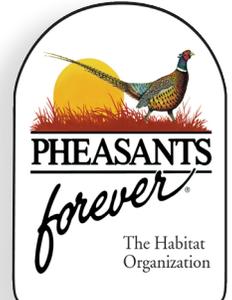
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