



# barking dog express

Yankee Chapter of NAVHDA

OCT/NOV/DEC 2023

## from our president...

Doesn't that sound great, October! It's really a beautiful time of year with so many plans in place with family and friends. What a year for our chapter! We are ending this year with nearly 200 members. So many new faces at our events. It's been a challenge meeting you all. It's what I try to do! So if I missed your face in our crowd of passionate trainers and new puppy owners, welcome to our Yankee Chapter family.

Your Yankee Board of Directors led us through a busy year of training and testing. Behind the scenes there were many decisions made for our chapter and its events. I was fortunate to attend all the Training Committee meetings as they were held here at Merrymeeting Kennels. If you wondered how those training clinics can produce so many happy trainers and skilled dogs, this committee is why.

The ball started rolling at our Indoor Training Clinic in Phippsburg. Member Russell Estes, one by one, cleared the large trucks and equipment for the very large building of Hawkes Tree Service. We filled it with a few days later with trainers, members and dogs. What a day of training and catching up.

A huge thanks to Nick Racioppi, Yankee Test Secretary, for his endless communication with our test entry folks. I so appreciate his dedication to our chapter.

The Maine Sportsman's Show drew a record gate of outdoor enthusiasts and as usual, our Versatile Hunting Dogs drew the largest crowd of the weekend. Never too early to buy a few saltines.

The Yankee Chapter's NAVHDA Apprentice Hunter Program held its 10th Camp this past July. We always think it can never get better but it always does. The smiles and laughter of campers training their mentor's dog was infectious. So many outdoor skills were practiced, practiced and learned during this weekend. We are always looking for campers and volunteers.

The Kenny King Bob Bisson Fund sent several chapter kids to Bryant Pond's Outdoor Learning Center this summer. Thank you Yankee members for your generous donations when you renew your membership each year. Hey Kids, keep an eye out for the announcement that we have opened Camper applications. ( psssst, we never deny a scholarship application).

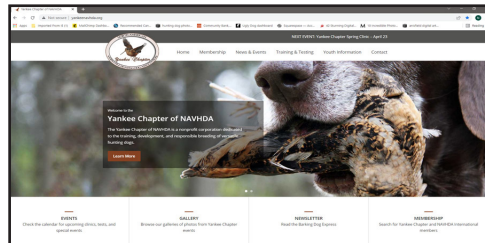
The passion of the 2023 NAVHDA Invitational was hard to miss throughout the year. Signing on the dotted line to run your dog in this event is a huge commitment of resources. The bonds made of members training together all year will be forever. Congrats to you all. You all made us very proud.

Guess all that's left is to head to the woods with your best friends, 4 and 2-legged. Be safe. You are our ambassadors, so show off that Yankee Chapter sticker. If you find one under your windshield wiper, you'll know the Prez is close by.

Have a great fall,  
Patti

## Welcome New Members!

Robert Webster  
Jake Cornish  
Brianna Ellis  
Dana Masters  
Deborah Masters  
Norman Sargent  
William Ericson  
William Van Erickson  
Dave Miller  
Caleb Winder  
James Quadrino



[www.yankeenavhda.org](http://www.yankeenavhda.org)    [ycnavhda@gmail.com](mailto:ycnavhda@gmail.com)

**YANKEE FALL TEST SCORES**

**Upcoming Events**

**January, 2024**

Yankee Chapter Annual Meeting

**January 26-28, 2024**

NAVHDA International Annual Meeting -- Troy, Michigan

**Treasurer's Update**

The current balance in checking is \$5371.62 and in Money Market is \$39,998.52 as of 8/30/23. We are planning to change over to Quickbooks online next year.

-Shawn Mowers

**Yankee Chapter Membership Renewal**

Renew in January. Not October, not November, January.... Like the first freaking month of the year. Why? Because we said so!

Seriously, please mark your calendar to renew your membership in January. This will make it easier for our treasurer to close out our books for 2023.

Thank YOU! We sincerely appreciate your cooperation.



**NAVHDA Apprentice Hunter Program Camp Funding**

The Yankee Chapter was approved this summer for \$1641 to help with the cost of our NAHP camp. NAVHDA Youth Committee Chair Julie Towers wrote, "On behalf of NAVHDA and the NAVHDA Youth Committee, I would like to thank you for your support and commitment to youth involvement in NAVHDA. With your support and efforts, you are helping to promote NAVHDA and provide youth with a great experience and exposure to hunting and to NAVHDA."

handler call name score/prize

**Friday, 9-8-2023**

Kelley Grover	Nyx	176	UT II
Justin Nicols	Arlo	80	NA III
Amanda Haiss	Tink	108	NA I
Ian Burnes	Bramble	106	NA I
Scott V. Levesque	Beau	96	NA III
Patricia McNamara-Vannoni	Lucien	66	NA no prize
Kimberly Haynes	Dory	112	NA I
Tim Hoechst	Maggie	112	NA I
Matthew Lamontagne	Winnie	84	NA no prize

**Saturday, 9-9-2023**

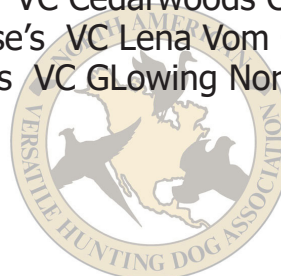
Blaine Carter	Keepah	201	UT I
Brian Pike	Quill	165	UT II
Melissa Knutson	Wren	201	UT I
Jason Carter	Ruddah	201	UT I
Carolyn A. Romano	Fausto	82	NA no prize

**Sunday, 9-10-2023**

Donald Lucas	Ziggy	166	UT III
Betty Blackman	Luuka	171	UT no prize
Shawn Mowers	Roxy	184	UT II
Russell Oakes	Jeb	169	UT III
Peter Bako	Lady	169	UT III
Gocki Andrews	Tilde	202	UT I

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE YANKEE CHAPTER'S NEW VERSATILE CHAMPIONS!**

Justin Dodge's VC Cathance's Jacked Up Tillie  
 Bill Thomas's VC Cedarwoods CL Allagash Jake  
 P.J. Rose's VC Lena Vom Cohansey  
 Dani Murphy's VC GLOWing Northwoods Ember



# Yankee Semi-Annual Meeting Minutes

Date: July 15, 2023 Location: Sugarfoot Kennels, Burnham, ME

The meeting was called to order and President Patti Carter spoke regarding:

The Secretary Kathleen Weller has resigned her position due to a move. Clinics had been well attended and run smoothly. Patti expressed gratitude to the membership and all of its volunteers.

Treasurer's Report: Shawn Mowers reported that financially the chapter was doing well. The executive board would be discussing changing banks to a bank which was easier for Shawn to get in to, so that Misi Carter did not have to do it anymore.

Director of Testing Report: Tyler was absent but the judges were lined up for all testing and had gotten all of the birds ordered for the tests and training.

Director of Training: Blaine Carter complimented the training committee on all their hard work and recognized them in the meeting. Training over 80 dogs in a clinic was successful with a lot of positive feedback. The training areas are directed at our testing programs.

Apprentice Hunter Camp: The camp is scheduled for July 21-July 23. NAVHDA Managing Director Kim Arnett will be attending. The focus is for kids that don't have access to hunting and fishing through their parents.

Director of Gunning: Matt Lorello stated that apprentice gunners were doing well, and testing and clinics had been managed safely and efficiently. Matt complimented the quality of the Yankee gunners. Matt complimented the quality of the training and that it is showing in the field. Matt eloquently stated that he felt that the chapter was improving with its training, and it was showing in the field.

Director of Communication: Misi Carter reported that things were going well, and solicited articles, news, etc. to share in the Barking Dog Express newsletter.

Newsletter editor Nancy Anisfield stated that if people found good content to send it to her and she would try to get permission to reprint it.

Director of Testing: Nick Racioppi was not present, but Patti reported that the tests were full with 10 UT dogs on the waitlist.

Membership: People were reminded to renew their membership in January. Brian spoke regarding a problem using the wrong member list, but it had been corrected and if people had not received their email they should with the next communication.

Brian Pike spoke about seeking a new software for the website and Elyse offered to assist.

Correspondence: The Spinone Only day resulted in a \$200.00 donation to the chapter.

Discussion: Matt Lorello brought up concerns regarding the limiting availability of NA testing and brought up concerns with Yankee allowing dogs who are not born yet being registered for the tests. Yankee as a chapter had decided to allow dogs to be signed up for a test if they have not yet been born. Discussion resulted in researching what other chapters do in this situation and exploring adding additional NA test dates.

Patti Carter appointed Danielle Murphy to the position of secretary.

Meeting  
adjourned.



## Hunting Season is Here!

It's finally the end of our training season and the beginning of hunting season. Have you got a plan? Keep your young dogs in training mode!

Your dog is only as good as the ground you are working him on. Bird counts may be down this year due our cold and wet spring. Take a little extra time to research a few new covers. The Ruffed Grouse Society, one of NAVH-DA's Conservation Partners, could possibly help you locate potential habitat. The more game your young dog finds the quicker the dots get connected. Be patient and try to have fun even if it is not going as you planned.

For the older dogs, stay with

your well established training plan. You have trained hard this year to prep them for the upcoming hunting season. For those of you that tested this year, no matter the Prize, it pushed you toward your goal of a finished gun dog. It's time to give your dog the opportunity to prove himself by finding wild game, allowing you to safely shoot that game and have your dog retrieve to hand.

I also want to pass along a huge congratulations to all 2023 Invitational participants. There was a very fine line between Pass or Fail this year!! As Yankee's Director of Training, I am very proud of you all. Tremendous dog work! This hunting season will prove to

be your best ever.

To all the members who have helped and worked hard at all our training events, I can't thank you enough. We are grateful to have such a huge crew of volunteers and workers, so I cannot list you all.

The Yankee Chapter family rocked it this year. I can't wait to hear your hunting stories.

Remember, hunting is about the story not so much about the killing. May your pup live up to all your expectations.

Good Hunting,  
Blaine



## Podcasts: A list of recommendations

Thank you to **Elise Wright** who sent in this great list of upland hunting and bird dog podcasts.

Bird Dog Babe—Courtney Bastian/Her Upland (Spotify)  
Bird Shot Podcast—Nick Larson (Apple Podcasts; Spotify)  
Gun Dog It Yourself—Nick Adair (Apple Podcasts; Spotify)  
Her Upland Podcast-- (Apple Podcasts; Spotify)  
Hunting Dog Confidential—Project Upland (Apple Podcasts)  
On The Go—Project Upland (Apple Podcasts)  
On The Wing Podcast—Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever (Apple Podcasts)  
Sporting Dog Talk—Tony Peterson (Spotify)  
The Accidental Birddog—Terry Ann Fernando (Apple Podcasts; Spotify; Podbean)  
The Flush: Stories from the Field—Ron Schiara Productions (Apple Podcasts)  
The Hunting Dog Podcast—Ron Boehme (Apple Podcasts)  
The Upland Rookie (Apple Podcasts)  
Upland Nation—Scott Linden (Apple Podcasts)



# yankee YOUTH!

from Director of Youth Development Philip Laperriere

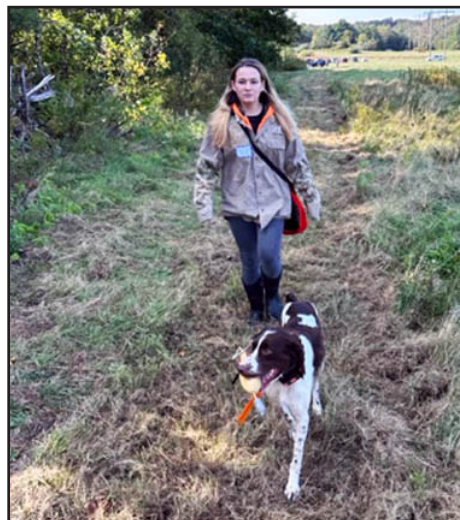


The 2023 Yankee Chapter NAVHDA Apprentice Hunter Day Camp was another great success. This year's participants enjoyed three days of great weather with hands on events centered around working with versatile hunting dogs and the knowledge necessary to safely hunt over them in the woods. Led by Camp Director Jason Carter, the campers were paired up with our volunteer mentors and the stars of the show, their versatile hunting dogs: Pat Bowles and Gunner, Steve Buck and Hamilton, Russ Estes and Doc, Sarah Franklin who was backed up at times by Adam Levesque and Maverick, Jason Hawes and Gus, Casey Mowers and Jasper, Danielle Murphy and Asha, and Brian Pike and May.

Our eight campers Cayden, Collin, Françoise, Jack, Nellie, Oliver, Samantha, and Seamus learned about firearm safety, survival techniques such as shelter and fire building should one find themselves lost in the woods, compass navigation, caring for their dog after a day in the field and most importantly how to work and connect with the dogs. By the end of the second day every child had successfully harvested a bird on the wing with their mentor and their four legged friend, cleaned, prepared and enjoyed the harvested game as a meal.

A special thanks goes out to all who volunteered and made donations, making this event incredibly successful yet again. All of the mentors, Brad Varney who donated the use of his sporting clays facility, The Rocky Mountain Elk foundation and John Petros for donating the ammunition used throughout the weekend, Bob and Debbie Brey and Sarah Devan for preparing meals for the campers and volunteers, Bob the Screen Printer for donating this years camp T-shirts, RGS for donating hats and upland vests, Wyatt Knutson and Natalie Peaslee our camp counselors, our Banner crew who helped get everything set-up, and everyone else who contributed to the weekend's success.

Keep your eyes posted for the dates for next year's NAVHDA Apprentice Hunter Camp as well as our upcoming winter activities. Weather conditions permitting, we will once again be checking wood duck boxes in late winter.



## Yankee Youth Demo Dogs at Bay Day Event

Sarah Mitchell and Devi Martinez represented the Yankee Chapter at the Friends of Merrymeeting Bay's, Bay Day Event at Wildes Point WMA in Bowdoinham. Several area schools bussed hundred of children to the management area for a day of education, learning the history of Merrymeeting Bay.

Sarah and Devi demonstrated the versatile hunting dog to the kids and explained their use as a conservation tool while duck hunting and upland hunting in and around the tidal waters of the bay.

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# showcase:

## hunting season's future investment

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Jason Carter and Savvy. Photo by Sarah Devan.

*Jason: "Being that the litter was raised around gun fire and taken through gun acclimation process showing no signs of sensitivities, I was comfortable with Savvy back there. Not something I'd recommend for most pups."*

" not your normal chapter "  
page 6

# Invitational Anxiety vs the Greatest Prize

by Dani Murphy

This morning I walked to cupboard and as I scanned the shelf in disappointment, I realized I had very little food available. I turned to the fridge, the condition there was even more dismal. I sighed and closed the door. What else have I been neglecting I thought. You see, I am three weeks out from the Invitational. I have been so focused on obtaining that VC title that I have been neglecting some important things like... you know... nourishment. As I reflect on this truth and my stomach pains with hunger, an article materializes in my brain. Advice I have given myself in the past reverberates and speaks to my soul.

I have test anxiety; it is attempting to creep in and take over my actions and steal my joy. It is not my friend, but it is real. I hear anxiety talking, it causes me to question my decision to run the invitational. It has me saying things to myself like:

“What if I fail?”

“What if I embarrass myself?”

“Should I even go?”

“What if I let the people down who have supported me and helped me train.”

As I think about this and think about the questions circulating in my brain I come to an abrupt conclusion. “Me, hi I’m the problem, it’s me.” This is a great Taylor Swift song, and it is ringing way too true now. I review the questions that anxiety is causing me to ask. Each of those questions contained an “I”. My ego has crept in. I have lost the focus on what is important, and I begin to redirect myself.

I look down to a set of brown eyes and a bearded face, and it seems to say... “I LOVE THIS!! What are we doing tonight? Blind, field work, oh and I Love you!” Ember is a Wirehaired Pointing Griffon, my first versatile hunting dog; we began this journey 5 years ago. She can say a lot with those eyes. As I put myself in check, I recall my journey with Ember.

We joined NAVHDA so that I could learn to be a better handler, so I could be a better partner to Ember and give her the best hunting life. We headed to our first NAVHDA clinic when Ember was only a few months old. I watched Ember point her first bird and

then bound after it with ears bouncing and her little stubby tail wiggling back and forth, my heart leapt for her. I was hooked.

I landed at the Yankee Chapter and began training. I signed Ember and me up for our first test, and Ember received a UT Prize 2. I was elated. She acted like she had spent the day at the best doggie amusement park ever!! The following year we went back to try to obtain a Prize 1. This is where the lessons come in, the ones I need to remind myself of today as ANXIETY tries to occupy space in my head.

We did not obtain a prize 1 on our first attempt, or our second, third or fourth, not even on our fifth. I have a wall of six plaques. Only one of them reads Prize 1 score 204. I was visiting with Blaine Carter, an exceptional trainer who has helped Ember and I become a better team. He has a wall of NAVHDA Prize plaques. Not unlike mine, except most of his are for a Prize 1 and are for many different dogs. I gazed at that wall in awe, turned to Blaine and said, “You covered your wall with different dogs, I covered mine with just one.”

Without missing a beat Blaine smiled over at me, with that mischievous grin and said, “You always had a Prize 1 dog, you’re just a slow learner.”

We both laugh but I know in his words there is truth. You see, me. I am the problem it’s me.

Every time we fell short it was because I needed to plug a training hole. Sometimes my ego got the best of me, and I would run her again in a test without plugging those holes. Thus, the number of plaques.

Before Ember’s last UT test, ANXIETY tried to creep in. What if we fail, what if I am embarrassed. Now looking back... I think: what if we hadn’t tried?

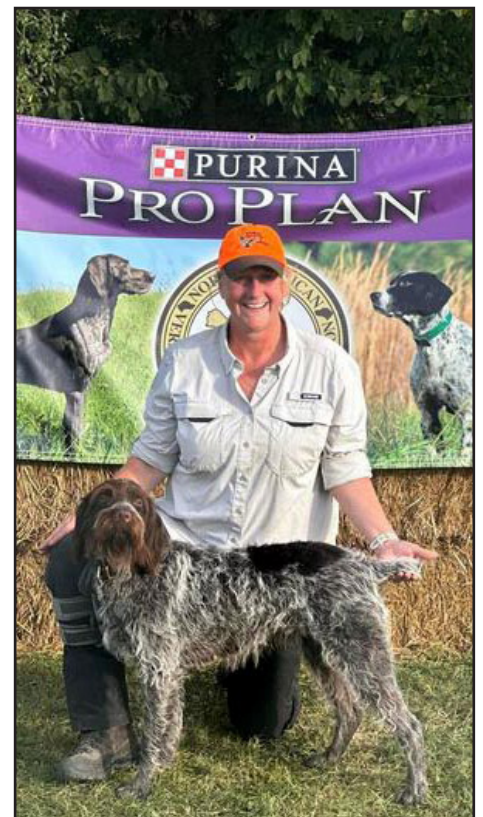
My journey has led me to a valuable lesson. Anxiety is generally wrapped up with Ego. If we can put our Ego aside and focus on the journey, we will all be better for it. I didn’t “succeed” by obtaining a prize the first time, or the second, or the...

If my wall only had one Prize 1 plaque, I would have missed some of the best parts of this journey, and Em-

ber and I are better for them. If I had listened to Anxiety and allowed my Ego to take over then I would have let myself and my dog down. Every plaque has a story, and the book behind each one is full of lessons and experiences. Looking back... if anyone had said you can have a Prize 1 on your first run, but you must give up all the lessons, friendships, and experiences you gained because you didn’t. I can say with great confidence I would not take the deal.

Many people have asked what changed. What was different about my last test with Ember and why do I think we achieved a Prize 1. I think the answer comes down to TRUST and LUCK. I think I trusted that Ember and I had plugged the holes, and as we walked into the field (our first event). I felt a calm I had not previously felt. The anxiety was now excitement, and the test was now a walk with my best friend. While we prepare and train for all conditions with any success there is at least a small amount of luck. We ran on a day with sunshine, and moderate temperatures, a slight wind, and Ember didn’t find the duck.

*continued on page 8...*



...continued from page 7

Remembering all of this helps me to remind myself of what is important about the Invitational. Ember is having a blast; WE have spent countless hours in the field forming friendships; WE have learned to volunteer and to cheer the success of others. WE have learned to encourage people when they have doubt and I have travelled places with Ember I never thought I'd go. My life is richer for the gifts of these experiences.

One of the biggest gifts from all our training didn't come during a hunt or during a test. It came in a nursing home in 2022.

You see, I spent Christmas of 2022 in a nursing home with my father, the man who fostered my love for hunting, and who shared my love for dogs. While he never owned a versatile dog, he loved following my journey with Ember. When he could no longer take to the woods, we would peruse Versatile Hunting Dog magazine and he would ask me questions. His eyes would light up through the fog of Alzheimer's and he would ask things like "What is steady to flush". I would explain and he would turn the page and ask another question.

Christmas 2022 was his last Christmas, and I think we both knew it would be. He opened his presents through tears, and we fought through the sadness. When it seemed neither of us would be able to hold it together much longer, he asked me to go get Ember.



Because of the obedience part of Ember's training, I was able to walk to my truck, place an elf hat on Ember's head, and walk her back into the nursing home. She spent the next hour brightening the Christmas not only for my father but for all the residents in his unit. The last picture I ever took of my father, was that day he is sitting next to Ember, and she is wearing her elf hat.

So, as I push my anxiety and my ego aside, I don't know if Ember will return from the Invitational with a VC title, but I do know we will both return better for the experience, if I focus more on the journey and less on the prize.

**EPILOGUE:** This article was written in August; I have now been back from the Invitational for two weeks. A few days ago, I gathered with the group of Yankee members who trained together all summer. As we sat reflecting and sharing laughter and stories, it was abundantly clear that the journey together and the improved partnerships with our dogs was indeed the greatest prize.

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## Safe Exercise for Puppies

Misi Knutson sent us this excerpted article, "Can Exercise Damage a Puppies Growth Plates" which she shared with the Merrymeeting Kennels' new puppy buyers. Click on the link in the article to see the full piece and posted May 21, 2022, on the "Wiggles and Wags Blog" by Andy Long.

Is your little rascal driving you crazy? Do they have bounds of energy and then start biting, chewing and being mischievous? Your first instinct is that they need more exercise when in fact that can do more harm than good.

As odd as it sounds, exercise can, in fact, be harmful to a puppy. Now, although we know all dogs need a reasonable amount of exercise to thrive, too much at an early age can damage a puppy's growth plates. This works by preventing the bone from growing normally and in some cases, stops it from growing altogether. A clear sign that a growth plate has grown incorrectly can usually be spotted when a dog's wrist is not straight but starts to turn to the inside of the leg instead.

If a plate stops growing altogether, this can result in severe problems and complications. Shortening of the limb and even deformities can be the devastating result. While a dog's growth plates are still soft, it is essential they are exercising at a level that is suited for them. Activities that are considered high impact should be avoided until the growth plates are fully closed, as should any activities that involve leg twisting, vigorous play and chasing Frisbees.

### What Activities Are Suitable For A Puppy?

While your puppy's growth plates are maturing, you can encourage them to participate in low-impact activities, such as lead walking, exploring their surroundings by using their senses, and socializing with other dogs. Monitoring your dog and its activities while encouraging these low-impact exercises at a younger age will help protect its delicate growth plates.

Simple games such as hiding a ball and swimming can be enjoyable. Nose work is a game that involves hiding a treat in one box and leaving the other five boxes empty. The dog then has to sniff out which package contains the treats. This is a gentle game that never gets old and encourages the dog to use its senses and brain, as well as some delicate maneuvering around to find the box with the treats. Never underestimate how problem-solving games have the potential to stimulate and wear your puppy out as much as an active play session. For the full article:

<https://wigglesandwags.co.uk/blogs/news/can-exercise-damage-a-puppies-growth-plates#:~:text=Monitoring%20your%20dog%20and%20its%20activities%20while%20encouraging,are%20suitable%20for%20your%20puppy%E2%80%99s%20age%20and%20development.>

From Misi:

Here are some great mental / enrichment activities I did with Wren.

- Scent training: line kibble on your floor leading to a pile of kibble. Start easy and make harder as they become more efficient.
- Short sniff walks in your yard on leash.
- Hallway Fetch: Pile of toys at the end of the hall. This helps with recall and fun retrieves. This is a good way to start teaching fetch as it limits where your dog can go before bringing back to you.
- Take old shirts or dish towels and roll up kibble and knot them. They have to work through untying the fabric to get to the kibble.
- Toilet paper or paper towel rolls filled with kibble.
- Hide and seek
- Puzzle games
- Obedience: Don't forget your 5 minute training sessions as enrichment activities.

Lastly, like kids, puppies need naps and lots of them. A good quality nap can completely change a pup's disposition. You may already notice they start chewing on you and after a few minutes crash. Just like kids when they get overtired, puppies misbehave too. The crate is the best and safest place for a nap and they should want to go there to rest from all the confusion of the house. Your other animals will appreciate it too.



**CLASSIFIEDS**



**BUY! SELL! SWAP! or TRADE!**

No charge for chapter members.  
Send a photo and information to:  
anisfield@gmavt.net

**Time flies like a migrating woodcock with a strong north wind!**



The Yankee Chapter wishes all our members and their families fabulous hunting and holiday seasons. May the days be filled with joy, adventure, laughter, tasty game birds and happy gun dogs!

**From our Director of Communications:**

Send us your photos! We're looking for hunting season pictures to update our Facebook and Instagram pages. Please send Dogs, Kids and Family photos to: ycNAVHDA@gmail.com -- Misi Knutson

**barking dog schedule**

The Barking Dog Express will be published five times a year:

- Oct/Nov/Dec
- Jan/Feb
- Mar/Apr
- May/June
- July/Aug/Sept

Issues will be published the first week of the first month for each issue.

**Birch Spring Brittanys**



603-964-3779 - bsbritts88@gmail.com

**PLANNED BRITTANY LITTER SPRING 2024**

**Birch Springs Sweet Whispering Willow**

**NAVHDA NA 105 - NAVHDA UT 204**

*Ran the Invitational 2023*



**X**

**Just Call Me Brookside's Yoshiko**

**NAVHDA NA 112 - NAVHDA 204**

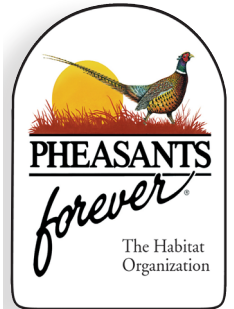
*Ran the Invitational 2022*



For more information contact Dan Riley: 207-692-7995

*The Yankee Chapter does not endorse specific kennels or litters. Litter announcements are a service to chapter members and paid ads from non-members.*

# NAVHDA INTERNATIONAL SPONSORS AND CONSERVATION PARTNERS



## yankee chapter contacts

### Yankee Chapter Officers

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Secretary	Dani Murphy	danilrd207@gmail.com	207-754-1707
Treasurer	Shawn Mowers	shawnmowers@gmail.com	207-522-5741

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Test Secretary	Nick Racioppi	feathersfins@comcast.net	207-751-3133
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Youth Development	Philip Laperriere	pnlaperriere@gmail.com	860-885-4770
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### Yankee Chapter Support

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Website	Brian Pike	bpike@maine.rr.com	207-749-5097
Grounds	Bob Brey	bdande@myfairpoint.net	207-442-0752
Newsletter	Nancy Anisfield	anisfield@gmavt.net	802-233-9158

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