

Coming Events

- ◇ 03/05-03/06/2016 Old South HRC
- ◇ 03/12-03/13/2016 SOWEGA HRC
- ◇ 03/12-03/13/2016 Charleston Retriever Club
- ◇ 03/19/2016 NEFHRC Training Day
- ◇ 03/19-03/20/2016 Midlands HRC
- ◇ 04/02-04/03/2016 Backwoods HRC
- ◇ 04/09-04/10/2016 Central Alabama HRC
- ◇ 04/16-04/17/2016 Coastal Empire HRC
- ◇ 04/16-04/17/2016 Eastern Carolina HRC
- ◇ 04/16/2016 NEFHRC Training Day

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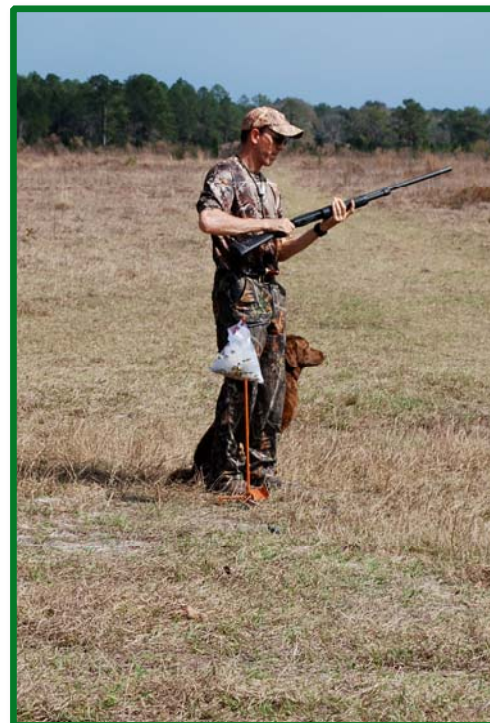
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About NEFHRC Newsletter . . .

This monthly newsletter is to help members keep updated on our club events, achievements, or other announcements that may be of interest. Please call or email Karen VanDonsel at (828) 877-3254 or karenvandonsel@gmail.com if you have anything you would like to submit. Alternatively, you may contact Sherri Osborne at (904) 753-1155 or osbornequarters@aol.com.

Please feel free to submit pictures, announcements of events, brags, the sale of dog or training equipment, litters, or any other announcements for club members! The deadline for submissions will be the 15th of each month.

If you have an idea for a recurring feature article, please let us know. This newsletter is for you, our members. We want to include what you want. So, please help make this a great newsletter. Submit your articles, pictures, stories and ideas. We want to hear from you!



Dog/Puppy Points

Please take the time to send your dog/puppy points to our Webmaster, Karen VanDonsel. You can send the information to Karen via e-mail at karenvandonsel@gmail.com. Be sure to include the following information in the e-mail: owner's name, dog's call name, dog's date of birth, points earned only in the current calendar year and total points earned in all years.

Alternatively, you can fill out the form on the club

website at <http://www.nefhrc.net/club-information/submit-your-dog-points/>.

NEFHRC recognizes the top dog and top puppy each year. In this context, a "puppy" is defined as a dog aged 24 months and younger.

Last year (2015), only two members reported any points for their dogs! I know we have more than that!

Did You Know . . .

HRC Foundation

Hunting Retriever Club, Inc. established the HRC Foundation, Inc. in 1994.

The Foundation's sizable grants are primarily awarded to worthwhile animal health research projects at various universities and colleges. Some recipients of the grants are: Comparative Oncology Unit and the Animal Tumor Center of the Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at Colorado State University in Ft. Collins, Colorado, Dr. Stephen J. Withrow, DVM, Chief, Clinical Oncology Service; University of Wisconsin, Veterinary Teaching Hospital Cancer Tumor Research Program, Madison, Wisconsin; Louisiana State University, Companion Animal Fund, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and Auburn University Labrador Retriever Muscular Dystrophy Fund, Auburn, Alabama; Texas A & M University Veterinary Teaching Hospital - Anesthesiology Research Program, Bryan-College Station, Texas; The National Association for Search and Rescue Dogs; The University of North Carolina Canine Soft Tissue Cancer Research Program and Michigan State University for Characterization of Colonic Microbial Ecology.

Recommendations for the grants are received from the HRC Membership for consideration and are determined by the Foundation President and it's Board of Directors at the annual National Board of Directors Meeting of HRC, Inc.

Additionally, a minimum of five educational scholarships are awarded to HRC Members or the legal dependent of an HRC Member, each year. The Guidelines for a scholarship are:

- 1) The applicant must be a citizen of the United States or Canada.
- 2) The applicant must be an HRC member, or the legal dependent of an HRC member on a family membership, and that membership must have been in place for a minimum of one year (12 months) at the time of application.
- 3) The applicant must be a high school senior, or graduate, with a minimum of a 3.0 Grade Point Average on a four (4) point system, or the equivalent on a five (5) or six (6) point system. College students must meet the same requirements.
- 4) The applicant must be ranked in the upper one-third (1/3) of his/her class.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS are published in the December/January issue of the Hunting Retriever Club magazine.

To contribute to the HRC Memorial/Honor Program, download a contribution form from <http://huntingretrieverclub.org/PDF/HRC%20Memorial-Honor%20Contribution%20Form.pdf>.

In addition to annual corporate donations to the Foundation, HRC, Inc. has designated all funds from its Memorial/Honor Program to go to the Foundation to further its philanthropic endeavors.

From HuntingRetriever.org

“The Foundation’s sizable grants are primarily awarded to worthwhile animal health research projects at various universities and colleges.”

"Your voice is very soothing for your pet. Be sure to talk to your dog (often) and let him know when you are approaching and before you touch him."

Living With the Blind Dog: Helpful Tips

There are several conditions that can lead to blindness in dogs. Injury, illness, birth defects or age can all cause or contribute to canine blindness. Blindness in dogs may have occurred from birth or been acquired later on. In the latter case, your dog will need to adapt to his new situation.

If the cause of the blindness is limited to the eyes and the health of the rest of the dog is good, then blind dogs can lead fairly normal lives. Their remaining senses can help them adapt to their surroundings. Considering all of your dog's senses; eyesight is actually number three in importance behind hearing and his sense of smell. You will need to capitalize on those other senses, plus the sense of touch, to help your dog move through his environment and interact with others.

You also need to understand that your dog's blindness is much harder on you than it is on your dog. Dogs don't really understand what is happening to them. They live very much "in the moment." They are also very in tune with their owner's emotional state. If you are happy or sad, they can sense it. Be sure to treat your sightless dog the same as you did before the blindness. It will be up to you to help your dog adapt.

Let's take a look at a few tips that will help your blind dog adjust to his new situation.

Speak to your blind dog in your normal, cheery voice.

Your voice is very soothing for your pet. Be sure to talk to your dog (often) and let him know when you are approaching and before you touch him. Your voice plus walking with a "heavy" foot to make vibrations will alert your dog that you are coming.

Small bells can be attached to you, other family members and the other pets in your home. The sound, too, will alert your blind dog to your whereabouts.

Some dogs may become depressed and withdrawn as their blindness develops. You can help by keeping a positive attitude with your dog. Maintain his routine; go for walks, continue to play with a favorite toy, etc.

Using the other senses: toys and play

Since scent and sound are now your dog's main senses, place a unique scent on the toys or use a toy that contains a bell or other noise maker. Squeaky toys also work great. This will help him follow and locate the toy.

Dogs can and do learn the names of toys. Work on this with your dog. Unique sounds and scents will help. Use treats to reinforce learning. The interaction between you and your dog is very healthy.

There are many toys that serve blind dogs very well. Toys that hide treats and toys that make noise when they are played with both work well.

Indoor tips

A carpeted runner or large area rug can be a great play area for a blind dog. The dog will learn quickly where the edge of the runner is and the traction is good.

Create a "base camp" for your dog. This can be the area where his crate, bed and food bowl are located. If your dog becomes confused, he can return to base camp to re-orient himself.

A large plastic floor mat for your pet's food and water will help your pet identify their location. He will learn the feel of the mat and know where he is. This is another good place for a unique scent.

“Your dog will need to “map-out” his surroundings in his mind. With a short lead and some treats, walk your dog from room to room throughout your home.”

If your dog uses a crate to lounge or sleep in, tie the door open or place the crate on its side with the door tied "up." This will prevent your dog from running into the door or inadvertently closing a partially open door.

Drinking water fountains work very well for blind dogs. The bubbling sound of the water fountain helps the dog locate his water source.

Getting around in the house

Your dog will need to "map-out" his surroundings in his mind. With a short lead and some treats, walk your dog from room to room throughout your home. Reinforce good behavior with the treats. Be sure to examine your home and yard at your dog's eye level to make sure there are no hazards (furniture, low hanging limbs) that could injure your dog. You can also use key words such as "watch" when your dog approaches a hazard such as a slippery floor surface or a piece of furniture. Sharp edges on furniture can be padded with bubble-wrap or foam pipe insulation to help prevent injury.

If you have a small or toy breed, avoid picking him up and carrying him around your house. Allow him to re-discover and map-out your house. Being carried and set down in another part of the house is very confusing to your blind dog.

Leaving a radio or television on can be re-assuring for your blind dog especially in your absence, and help the dog orient himself.

Use baby-gates to block stairways and other hazards until your dog has mastered the location and navigation of these hazards.

If you have wooden or otherwise slippery stairs, place non-slip strips on the stair treads to make them easier to use. Place a unique floor mat at the top and bottom of stairs to help your dog identify the stair's location.

You can teach your dog to use the stairs with treats placed on each stair tread. Place yourself in front of your dog and encourage him without pulling on his collar or harness. Let him figure it out.

Use scents (e.g., flavored extracts, scented oils, colognes) to "cue" your dog to particular areas of your home: doorways, top and bottom of stairs, etc.

Carpet squares or throw rugs can also be useful to alert your dog where doorways and other obstacles are located.

Artificial and real plants placed around hazards like posts, corner cabinets or other solid objects can act as "feelers" and alert your dog of the danger.

Settle on a furniture lay-out you like and stick with it.

Keep floors picked up.

Getting around outside of the house

A wind chime, placed by the outside door used most often by your blind dog, can be very helpful. The unique sound will help him locate the door.

In-ground swimming pools, decorative ponds and other hazardous areas outside your home should be fenced off to protect your dog.

“When meeting other dogs, remember your dog will not be able to “read” their body language. So take things very slowly.”

To help your blind dog locate trees, buildings or other large solid objects, place a "warning track" of mulch or bark chips 1-2 feet around the object that will alert your dog that the danger is close.

Traveling away from home

Your blind dog will still enjoy walking with you. A collar should be exchanged for a harness and his lead should be short to avoid tripping.

Socializing is still an important part of your dog's mental health. Be sure to walk your dog in areas frequented by other dogs. When meeting other dogs, remember your dog will not be able to "read" their body language. So take things very slowly.

Let others know that your dog is blind. A bandana or vest that displays "I'm Blind" will alert others of your dog's condition. Let an approaching person know your dog is blind. Let the dog smell them and their hands before they pet the dog.

In addition to an identification tag, get a tag for your dog's collar that says, "I'm blind."

If your dog will be visiting a groomer or spending time at the kennel or veterinary clinic, create a sign for the cage or run door explaining his condition.

If you will be traveling to a strange place, take along some familiar items like a favorite toy or blanket.

Other tips

If you have younger children, they can develop an understanding of your dog's blindness by wearing a blind-fold and crawling through the house at the dog's level (this should be a supervised event).

Teach your dog new words that will help him navigate new surroundings: "watch," "easy," "left," "right," "step up," "step down," "stop," etc.

If you intend to bring home another dog, introduce the two dogs slowly. You can use a baby gate in a doorway to separate the dogs while they get to know each other. Some sighted dogs will actually help the blind dog get around.

As you can see there are many ways you can help your blind dog acclimate to his new situation. Blindness in dogs does not need to spell the end of quality life. With patience and training, you will be able to enjoy your sightless canine friend's company for many years to come.

With help from: Blinddog.net - [Tips & Suggestions to Help Your Blind Dog](http://Blinddog.net)

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NEFHRC is sanctioned by the United Kennel Club, Inc. We are a club devoted to the training of bird hunting dogs for the purposes of hunting and hunt tests. As the UKC says, we are a club "Conceived by hunters for hunters."

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For the dogs!



Book Review: *Building a Retriever: Drills & More*

By Carol F. Cassity

This book contains 136 pages which includes 40 drills. In the introduction, the purpose is stated as a "simple one: to present information in order to help you, as a trainer develop your dog to his fullest potential as a retriever. Great retrievers don't just happen: they are built using a blend of raw materials and consistent training."

Part one is a collection of practical advice and principles. Using the concepts of reading your dog, training through attrition, training instead of testing and the need for team work. Part two consists of drills for all levels including info about E collars. Each drill includes: Level, Purpose, Materials Needed, Procedure, Potential Problems, Solutions, visuals if needed. Part three includes Jargon, Titles and other helpful info.

I purchased this book in 2006 and have used it regularly with my three Labs. It is an excellent source for planning training sessions, analyzing problems, and training alone. I would recommend this for those who are new to the sport and others as well. Carol is an excellent handler and has earned major titles for her dogs. She judges in HRC and AKC. She is also a full time teacher for students with specific needs. Her book can be purchased online.

Submitted by: Carolyn Abood

MARCH 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		01	02	03	04	05 Old South HRC
06 Old South HRC	07	08	09	10	11	12 SOWEGA HRC Charleston Retriever
13 SOWEGA HRC Charleston Retriever	14	15	16	17	18	19 NEFHRC Training Day Midlands HRC
20 Midlands HRC	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Easter Sunday	28	29	30	31		

APRIL 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					01 April Fool's Day	02 Backwoods HRC
03 Backwoods HRC	04	05	06	07	08	09 Central Alabama
10 Central Alabama	11	12	13	14	15	16 NEFHRC Training Day Coastal Empire Eastern Carolina
17 Coastal Empire Eastern Carolina	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30