



NCW NAVHDA News



January
2026



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

It was another great year for NCW NAVHDA, and I'm proud to have served as Chapter President for 2024 and 2025. Being in this role has given me a front-row seat to something special – seeing how our members show up for each other, step in when needed, and keep this chapter strong. That willingness to help is the heart of NAVHDA. Without volunteers, none of this would exist.

I also want to say how proud I am of the NCW NAVHDA Board. The amount of work, dedication, and behind-the-scenes problem-solving that happens throughout the testing and training season is enormous. The goal has been to serve the membership and maintain the welcoming, supportive culture that makes this chapter what it is. It has been an honor to work alongside such committed people.

There are so many people who made the 2025 testing and training season what it was. THANK YOU to every member who joined us, supported us, and especially to those who volunteered their time and energy. Every bird planted, every setup hauled, every bird shot, every quiet task done behind the scenes. It all matters. And it all added up to another successful year for NCW.

2026 is an election year with several open positions – including Chapter President. While I won't be putting my name in for another term, I'm genuinely excited to pass the torch. This chapter is full of seasoned, knowledgeable, passionate members, and I have complete confidence that the next person to take the reins will continue leading with the same positivity and supportive spirit that makes NCW what it is.

Thank you again for your support over the last two years. It's been an honor to serve the good people of this chapter! Hopefully I'll see you and your dog in the field this year.

CASEY KOBACK

2024 & 2025 Chapter President
Casey Koback

LETTER FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

It's hard to believe how quickly this year has gone by. Training and testing wrapped up back in August, yet I can still picture those early spring mornings at the Mead. Dogs buzzing, handlers smiling, and all of us settling into the rhythm that makes this chapter feel like family. That same energy carried through every training and test day we shared.

Now that fall has come and gone, I hope each of you had the chance to watch your dogs shine in the field — searching, pointing, tracking, retrieving, and showing off the skills we spent so many Saturdays building together. Take a moment to look back on where you and your dog started in April and how far you've come. Whether it was a first test, a breakthrough duck search, or a puppy's first point, I'm grateful I got to witness so many of your milestones.

This season is bittersweet for me, as it marks my final year serving as your Vice President. It has been an honor to support this chapter and to be part of the improvements, growth, and positive changes we've made together over the last two years. I'm incredibly proud of the work this board has done and I know that the new board will continue strengthening NCW, building on that momentum, and keeping this chapter moving in the right direction.

While I'm stepping away from the role, I'm not stepping away from this community. NCW will always be home, and I'll still be right there with you! Training, testing, laughing, learning, and cheering you on.

As winter continues to settle in, I hope you carry the memories of this season with pride. And if you ever find yourself in Minnesota, send me a message — I'd love to walk a field with you and your dogs.

Desi Stormont

2024 & 2025 Chapter Vice President
Desiree Stormont



LETTER FROM THE (INTERIM) SECRETARY & TREASURER

As many of you know, I've been serving as your interim Treasurer for the past two years and interim Secretary for the past year. And I'll be honest—there's a reason people don't exactly line up for the Treasurer role. It's a lot of work. I'm not going to sugarcoat it. Keeping the financials organized for the chapter while also having a full-time job, managing the bird orders, catching pigeons with Casey on Friday nights before training days, reminding members to get their bird orders in, AND having a life outside of NAVHDA... made me a little tired by the end of August!

However, it was rewarding being able to GIVE to this chapter. I know how much people care about NCW NAVHDA, and it's been meaningful to contribute to something so many value. The Treasurer (and Secretary) role is background work that simply has to happen, and I was proud to help keep things moving these last two years.

What I've enjoyed most, though, has been the friendships made the last few years and taking pictures of folks with their dogs.

I hope that anyone who's able to give a little more to the chapter will consider stepping in. There's real joy in contributing, even when the work isn't glamorous. This will be my last year (no more getting appointed!) as Treasurer and temporary/interim Secretary. Thank you for the trust, the kind words, and the friendship.

I'll see ya when I see ya!

✌️ Autumn Koback

2024 & 2025 (Interim) Treasurer
Autumn Koback

2025 VERSATILE CHAMPIONS

NCW NAVHDA had 10 chapter members run dogs in the 2025 NAVHDA International Invitational in September. Of those dogs, 4 came back with the title "Versatile Champion". Our Chapter is honored that MANY of our members have achieved the Versatile Champion title.

These Handler/Member Names and the Dog will be engraved on individual tags and added to the NCW NAVHDA Versatile Champion plaque located in the equipment trailer.

Mark Schlicht - Willow (GSP)

Sheryle Tepp - Django (VI)

Brent Catura - Chayce (BS)

Mike Lardy - Gianna (GWP)



“The Invitational is NAVHDA's highest level of testing. Only those dogs that have achieved a Prize I in Utility are eligible. This limits the entry to exceptional dogs who have demonstrated a high level of training and have tested their skills in the advanced work. The Invitational is a pass/fail event. Dogs that pass the test are legally renamed in the NAVHDA registry to include the letters "VC" in front of their name.

BIRD PEN UPDATE

BIG THANKS goes out to **Mike Meyer** for taking charge of the bird pen upgrade! The chapter – and the other dog clubs who use the grounds – appreciate the upgraded digs!



And a huge thanks to chapter members **Bob Popelka, Carl Radke, Dan Lennon, Craig Braatz, Gary Engebretson,** and **Terry Christensen** for jumping in to help out. The work everyone put in will extend the life of the pen, make it safer for the birds, and a whole lot easier for the folks working inside.

SPEAKING OF BIRDS...

Please consider volunteering to help transport or store birds.

You can't train a bird dog without birds — and getting birds is one of the biggest ongoing needs that keeps our chapter running. Whether it's hauling crates, coordinating pickups, or offering short-term storage, every part of the "bird-wrangling" effort is important.

A little help from more members makes a huge difference in keeping training days possible

NCW does not raise training birds and they are only available for the Saturday club training days. We cannot hold or keep birds.

Bird orders are due TEN DAYS prior to training days. This gives us time to communicate with our bird suppliers and gives them time to plan and catch birds.

During training season, birds for NCW NAVHDA chapter training days at can be ordered at www.ncwnavhda.org/bird-orders

TESTS & VOLUNTEERING

It takes a minimum of 8 individual volunteers on-site and 3 judges *-who are also volunteers!-* for one person to test a dog.

This doesn't include the "behind the scenes" volunteers who set up the day before/day of, the test secretary who has been collecting test submissions and fees for months and organizing the running order. It doesn't include the volunteers transporting and caring for live birds, or the test coordinator who scheduled judges and planned their accommodations, the person submitting permit requests to the DNR, etc. Without every single one of these individuals these tests would not be possible.

**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

- Field Marshal
- Assistant Field Marshal
- Bird Stewards
- Bird Planters
- Gunners
- Lunch
- Duck Handler
- Grounds Clean Up

The NCW NAVHDA chapter runs multiple double-tests in June and August. This means we host TWO tests at the same time, same day. Double the volunteers, double the judges, and double the dogs and handlers in one day.

If you've tested at NCW previously or you're planning to test this year or in the future, give back to the folks giving to you – sign up and volunteer for a test.

Go to ncwnavhda.org/test-volunteers to see a full list of volunteer positions and instructions.

We need volunteers & lunch for ALL test days!

Sign up at the next training day!



LUNCH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We need volunteers to make the main course for lunch for approximately 50 people on training and test days – summertime cookout style. The club will reimburse you for the food – just bring receipts and submit them to the Chapter Treasurer. *You may also donate the meal if you'd prefer.*

We'll provide plates, bowls, napkins, cutlery, and serving utensils. If you are bringing a hot main dish, we'll have the generator available for power. We ask that the lunch volunteer bring a 20 pound bag of ice for the water cooler.

Find the clipboard in the pavilion and sign up in-person at the next training day!

The \$5 lunch donation helps to cover the costs of reimbursing the main dish lunch volunteers. Remaining funds are deposited directly into the Chapter bank account to further support our club.

Don't know what to make? How about...

Tacos

Deli-style sandwiches

Baked/Grilled chicken

Pulled pork

Sloppy Joes

Burgers/Brats/Hot Dogs



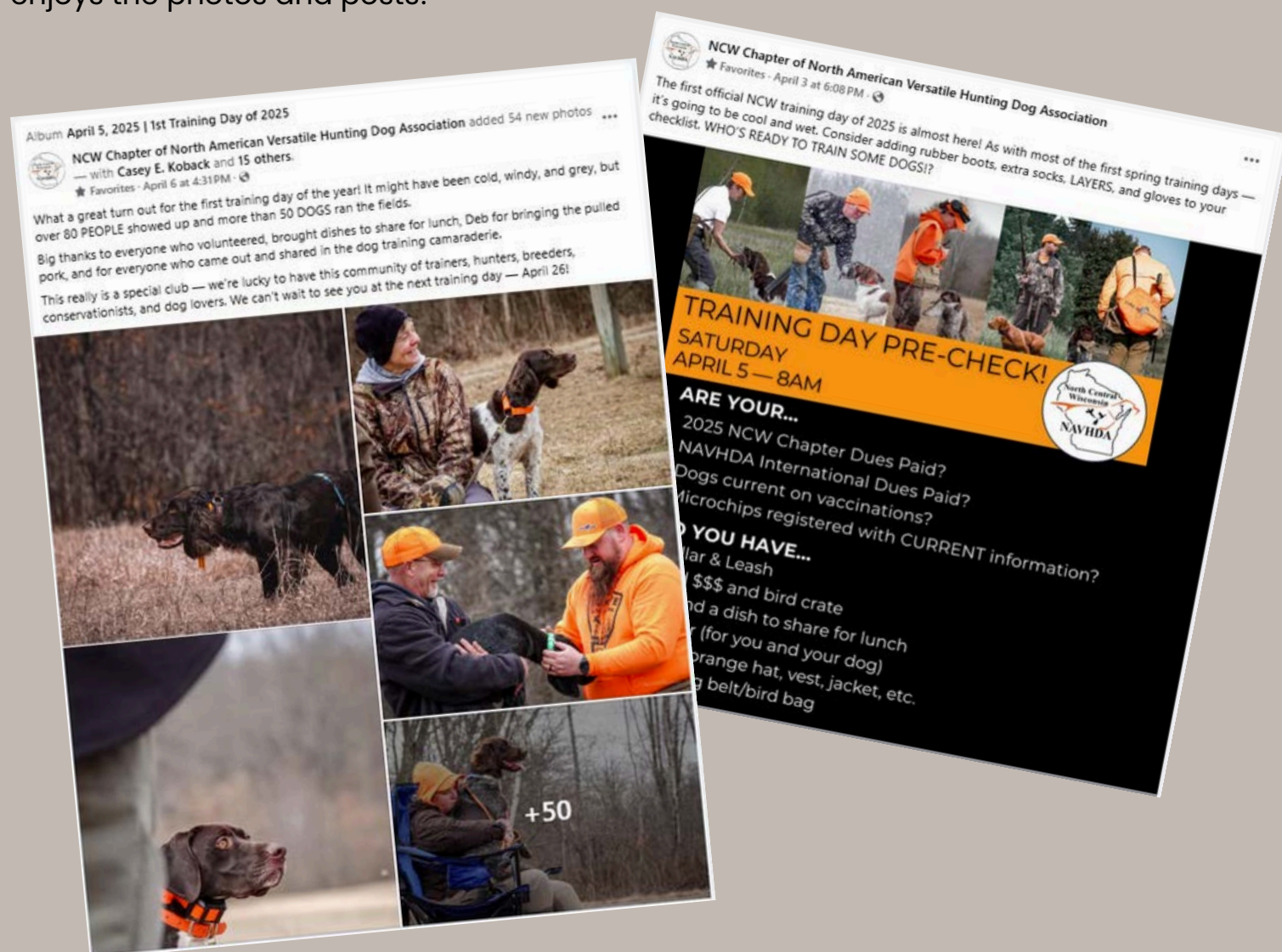
FOLLOW US



Photos from training and testing days are uploaded on the [NCW Chapter of North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association](https://www.facebook.com/NCWNAVHDA) Facebook page.

Even if you do not follow us or have a Facebook account of your own, our page is Public and you can view photo albums and posts without signing in. Just click the X on the "See more on Facebook" pop-up.

Need another reason to follow us on Facebook and Instagram? We post bird order deadline reminders, training day countdowns, test day checklists and reminders, quick announcements regarding test openings, volunteers needed, etc. Staying engaged and communicating with the chapter is important to the Board. We hope everyone enjoys the photos and posts!



<https://www.facebook.com/NCWNAVHDA>

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2025 MEMORABLE MOMENTS



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2025 MEMBERS OF THE BOARD



Casey Koback
President



Desiree Stormont
Vice President



Autumn Koback
Interim Secretary & Treasurer



Joe Mella



Brian Roth



Mike Duffin



Jamie Kuhn

NAVHDA is a nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to foster, promote, and improve the versatile hunting dog breeds in North America; to conserve game by using well trained reliable hunting dogs before and after the shot; and to aid in prevention of cruelty to animals by discouraging nonselective and uncontrolled breeding, which produces unwanted and uncared for dogs.



NCW NAVHDA appreciates the support of the NAVHDA International Sponsors.

Remember to tell them you are a NAVHDA member!

NAVHDA International Sponsors



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