



**PLATTE VALLEY  
HUNTING RETRIEVER CLUB  
NEWSLETTER**

**Affiliated With:**  
The United Kennel Club, Inc., &  
The Hunting Retriever Club, Inc

**HRC: Conceived by Hunters for Hunters**  
[www.pvhrc.com](http://www.pvhrc.com)

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“SIT!” “STAY!” “READ!”

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**Calendar of  
Events**

**Monthly Meeting  
November 17, 2008  
7 p.m.  
Front Range  
Community College in  
Westminster**

**Annual Meeting-  
January 19, 2009  
7 p.m. – College Hill  
Library on 112<sup>th</sup> Street  
in Westminster (Front  
Range Community  
College)**

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## Thoughts from Our President

My time as President of Platte Valley HRC is about done but I am sorry to say that one of my greatest challenges is hitting at this late date. I need to issue a call to action if members want this club to survive. Our annual Membership Meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2009. As always we will need to elect officers at that meeting. Usually it only takes a little arm twisting to accomplish nominating willing and capable souls. This year for a variety of reasons all of the offices and some Board positions are coming open at once. Vice President Mike Brockman has agreed to move up and run for President. That means we will need to fill the Vice President; Treasurer; and Secretary Offices. I will begin arm twisting immediately! If you have an interest in filling one of these offices please let me know. My phone number is (970) 290-9889. I know there are many qualified members out there. All it takes is a little time commitment and a love of the dog game. Don't worry about the details. We will train you. If I don't get responses, believe me when I threaten to go to great lengths to encourage, badger, exhort and extort you to take your place of leadership in the club. Platte Valley has a rich tradition of dedicated leadership and Mike is going to be a great President. This is a terrific time to get in on the action. I will be calling!

Now back to the annual meeting. It is as I said **January 19<sup>th</sup> 7:00PM at the College Hill Library on 112<sup>th</sup> Street in Westminster**. Same place as the last couple of years. This year we wanted to provide a real incentive for members to turn out and participate. **The Board of Directors is providing a \$300 gift certificate as a door prize**. You can use it to pay for a good portion of that new shotgun or decoys or whatever you

need to become the most successful hunter ever. Every member in attendance will get one free entry into the drawing. Additional entries can be purchased for \$10. In addition to the officer elections mentioned above we will set dates for training days and hunt tests. This is the best opportunity during the year for members to have a voice in the direction of the club. **Please make plans now to attend.**

### October Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order by President Don Williams at 7:00 PM  
Board members present: President Don Williams; Vice President Mike Brockman; Treasurer Justin Skoda; Director Tom Waskosky (Broncos were playing on Monday Night Football)

Treasurer's Report: \$7700 cash in Bank, Picnic auction grossed \$1959 with net proceeds of \$1793.46 after expenses. Job well done club!

Discussion Items:

**Annual Meeting:** It was decided to hold the Annual General Membership Meeting January 19, 2009 at the College Hill Library. Rather than serve a meal this year the board decided to provide a \$300 gift card to Sportsman Warehouse as a door prize. Each person will get one entry for attending and can purchase additional tickets for \$10 each. The board felt members would rather have a sizable amount of cash to apply toward a new gun or other hunting gear than fast food.

**Election of New Officers:** The Board discussed nomination possibilities for offices and Board positions. Mike Brockman has agreed to run for President. Justin Skoda announced that he will need to step down as Treasurer

because of family commitments. Though not known at the meeting, Tom Vanderpool announced the next day that he and Chris will not be able to continue as Secretary because they are moving to the far south of the metro area and making meetings would be too hard. That means that all positions are up for election with only the president having a known candidate. The board discussed several possibilities. Don will contact several members to see if we can round up candidates.

**Land Leases:** The need to make sure the leases for Mary's place and the East Pond are renewed. The club also needs to pay the insurance premium. Don and Justin will work on getting that done. Equipment: The Board authorized moving forward with purchasing new holding blinds and Winger Screens. We need to find a source for the screens. Don will make some inquiries.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

## **Helpful Hints on Training a Pup:**

### **Pups: Thinking Finished From The Very Beginning –Part 3 by Rich Carpenter**

Again, I asked Rich if he would do up a little article regarding his journey of training his new pup and he so graciously agreed. – Thanks Rich.

Exposing a pup to the idea of casting through play teaching is seen as a good idea by some and as pretty much a waste of time by others. I guess you pay your money and take your pick. I'm a believer in it, but then it fits into my general philosophy of giving a pup every opportunity to get exposed to useful things and figure that at times it may give them a leg up in training or help them out in an area that otherwise might be a tough learning area for that pup. There are many good ways to train a retriever, what I

do just happens to fit my personal preferences.

The *Tri-Tronics Retriever Training* book by Jim and Phyllis Dobbs with Alice Woodyard gives a good presentation on puppy play casting on the table that will later be used for the Trained Retrieve (Hold and Fetch), also known as Force Fetch or Conditioned Retrieve. Again, Jackie Merten's *Sound Beginnings* puppy teaching/training video has a lot more early training focused ultimately toward more advanced work.

If you are planning to use a table like this for FF, there is an added benefit of the pup spending fun time and getting treats at one of the uprights when "Hold" begins with the dog secured to the upright. A few weeks before "Hold" will start, I'll gradually introduce the pup to the secured collar, giving a treat as it gets the collar on. First it's loose and later tighter as it will be to secure the dog so that "Hold" can be a calm and quiet activity. Even though the "Hold" program is not terribly fun for the pup or the trainer, even during the part that involves insistence, ear pinch and later collar replacing the ear pinch, the pup is still very willing to walk right up to the post, get a munchie or two and get on with the un-fun stuff.

Getting back to puppy casting, I like to give the pup a week to get used to me, the new home, etc. and then start playing on the table. The whole game revolves about the pup liking treats. Dobbs use little pieces of hot dog. My pups have been chow hounds and seemed just as happy with little kibbles of dog food. So, I've just used the puppy food that came with them, since I change over to my preferred brand. Works good and easy to keep a supply in a little jar right at the table and doesn't spoil or be messy like hot dogs.

In good blind retrieve work, most trainers will want their dog to sit and face them when the whistle is blown, then if cast back with the left arm vertical, want the dog to turn to the handlers left as they go back.

Vice versa with the right back arm cast. I think everyone uses verbal "Back" with either. The game for this cast is for the pup to sit or stand (pup's choice) just to one side of the upright at the end of the table. If the pup is to the handlers right of the upright, then a treat is placed behind the pup and the pup is held with the left hand and turned loose for the treat with a vertical right arm cast and a verbal back. Pup hasn't a clue what that means, but is going to get a treat, so all is good. Over time, the pup will chain the stimulus and response. It will also learn the game and gradually come to sit until "cast" to the treat. Gradually the treat is placed further back on the table (2ft x 16 ft). Until the pup is waiting on it's own, I rig a little real light nylon cord through the upright loop that supports the wire over the table from one end to the other. Then I can snap it to pup's collar and gently restrain it as I feed cord through my fingers to go lay the treat on the table ("plant the blind"). There is no resistance so I can leave it attached while I "cast" the pup before he finds a butterfly or something to grab his attention.

The whole notion of puppy turning the correct direction is just managed placement. If the pup is up against the pipe with his head on one side and the treat is behind and on his opposite side, there's not much attraction for the pup to bang his head against the post go get the treat. It's far easier to just turn the other way. Soon it's a habit.

Once the treats are out a little way, then they begin being placed closer to the center of the table, regardless of left or right-hand back. Then the treat is placed and trainer can decide which cast to give once the pup has learned the game. There is never any correction or punishment in this play teaching. You just repeat and work a little harder to set the conditions for the desired response. Later on if platforms are used in CC and as part of steadying, extending the left and right back casts to dummies is easy as tossing a dummy behind

and left or right of the pup on the platform and casting them appropriately. When this and the previous actions have been well-tied to going back and turning the right way, usually you can just go set out a big white dummy where the toss has gone previously and cast the pup with no throw, and surprise, away they go.

Left and right casting happens the same way, with the pup restrained with one hand and the treat placed with the other hand. Then with right cast, pup is held with left hand and released as the horizontal arm right cast is given with the verbal command. "Over" for either left or right over is still the accepted, standard cast. I prefer to use a different command for right over and left over. I use the muleskinner Gee and Haw. Some use Left and Right. Probably easier to remember than getting used to Gee and Haw. But, my first HRCH had to have an eye removed at 8 years old, and to successfully do multiple marks hunting and in Finished; he needed a little help and quickly learned "Mark Left" and "Mark Right". I figured my chances of remembering left and right with quick marks was better than Gee and Haw and held Left and Right for that unlikely use in another dog.

I think the argument for "Over" for either cast is that you shouldn't have your dog out of sight when you make a cast, so the dog can see the arm cast. Hell of an idea in an ideal world, but I'm always amazed how quickly a dog can slip into the cattails or fade out of sight from terrain. When a dog can't see you and has gone one way to get into trouble, I'm here to tell you that seeing nothing and hearing only "Over" the dog's going to continue deeper into the doo-doo, not come out to be cast again. But, that's a personal choice; you do as you will.

Left and right casting is same procedure basically as the left-hand and right-hand back cast play game, except for direction. Before long pup doesn't need restrained and you can put out treats on both ends and cast to your choice. I always make

my "choice" the direction that to cord won't stop the pup on. Then if he makes a mistake, it's impossible to carry out and the correct cast is taken. It's amazing how quickly good habits form when you set the stage so they always do it correctly and never do it wrong.

With both the "over" and L & R-hand back casts, by the end you are moving way back from the table. Also for the "over" casts, you are working with only arm cast as well as only verbal cast. Since I'm a belt and suspenders kind of guy and also a real believer in generalization, I further proof verbal-only Gee and Haw by putting up a plywood shield or getting behind a vehicle so the dog a) can't see me, and b) it guarantees I'm not thinking I'm doing verbal only casting when in fact the pup is reacting to non-verbal clues such as body leaning or eyes darting in way of desired cast. OK, I admit, it sounds goofy, but some research I was doing at the time on possible basis of water witching and tangentially related matters surprised me. It turns out that on some issues like animals counting, people guessing numbers others had chosen, or guessing step on a ladder they had placed a penny on, etc., it was real clear animals and humans could read some clues they were not aware of. It was also clear that people were not aware of the non-verbal cues they were sending. For example the old 1800's horse in Germany that did addition could no longer do it if the questioner was removed from sight. But enough of why.

Anyway, a pup that has played this left right over game for a couple months is pretty well in the habit of going one way or the other for a treat. If platform casting used in CC or training, it comes very naturally to cast, and adding a dummy just fits right in. If platforms are used, they can offer some opportunities to cast past suction, etc., as the casting to the platform command is generalized by doing in 5 different location. By the end of that it's pretty easy to set a platform where the pup passes a point of caitails on a "back" cast, or goes across a

narrow strip of water to a platform on an over cast.

Certainly not necessary in developing a good blind running dog, but for me just provides an opportunity to get a jump on things and be doing some different things before serious training can begin.

Next time I'll try to cover a little about the Trained Retrieve (Force Fetch), as well as where we go from there. If space permits I'll talk a little about some simple drills that require no space to begin to expose a very young dog to some concepts they won't have to use until Finished.

### ***Letter from the Editor:***

2008 is winding down. I have been happy to serve as Secretary for the Club, however, Chris and I are moving further south, making the drive to the meeting a bit much after a long day of work. We will still be active members available to help with Hunt Tests and Training Days.

Again, for the next month if you have anything you would like to see in this year's newsletters, please let me know. If you have any helpful tips about working with your dog(s) you would like to share, please send them to me. If you have hunting equipment for sale that you would like to post in the newsletter, send me the information. My e-mail is [vanderpooltom@msn.com](mailto:vanderpooltom@msn.com).

