

ETRC Upcoming Events

Volume XXV, Issue 9

September 2025



MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR ETRC'S UPCOMING EVENTS!

1. September 9-10, Tuesday—Wednesday: Midweek Master Only, Lucky 7 Ranch
2. September 21, Sunday: Club trial #3, picnic, summer business meeting, Lucky 7 Ranch
3. October 18-19, Saturday—Sunday: Fall Test, Lucky 7 Ranch, 2 JH, 2 SH, Master, Lucky 7 Ranch
4. February 21, 2026, Saturday — Annual Awards Banquet, Bearden Banquet Hall, Knoxville

Photo of the Month



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**President's Message —
By J. Michael Evans**



This feature will return
next month!

Congratulations and Best Wishes to ETRC's 2025 Master National Competitors:

1. Alan Bruhin with 2 dogs
2. Andy Buck with 2 dogs
3. Dennis Wilcox with 4 dogs
4. Pro member Brian Caldwell with Bob Smith's dog and 2 other non-member client dogs;
5. Pro member Melissa Dobson with 2 of her own dogs and 10 non-member client dogs;
6. Pro member Jody Ware with dogs owned by Rhey Houston, John Broucek & Jeff Coffey; and Jeff Coffey, plus 2 other non-member client dogs;

Full report on who is going next month, along with member dogs that qualified for the Master National but are not attending.

East Tennessee Retriever Club 2025 September Mid Week Master Only Hunt Test

Our first hunt test of the fall season will be Tuesday, September 9 and Wednesday, September 10, at the Lucky 7 Ranch, 6720 Erie Road, Sweetwater, TN. This fabulous ranch is almost 400 acres and has 13 ponds including several technical ponds. Judges will be Dustin Hopper and Michele Love. This test will have a single flight, with 58 dogs entered.

The test opened Wednesday, August 20, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. Central time, with workers and amateurs able to enter the day before, Tuesday, August 19, 2025 also at 7:00 p.m. Central. The entries closed on Monday, September 1, at 11:59 p.m. Central.

These midweek tests are more relaxed than our multi-series tests, and as a result are a great opportunity to come see how a test works if you are new to the sport. Of course, these tests are much harder than the lower level tests, but there will be plenty of people around to talk to and ask questions about hunt testing. The tests will start at 8:00 a.m. EASTERN time each morning. The first day usually goes till around 5 or 6, and the second day frequently ends in the early afternoon. Obviously, these guesstimates may be way off, depending on what kind of test the judges set up and how long each dog typically takes on average to run the series. Hope to see you there!

East Tennessee Retriever Club 2025 Club Trial & Summer Picnic

Our third and final club trial will be Sunday, September 21, at the Lucky 7 Ranch, starting at 9 a.m. and ending probably around 4:00 p.m. The Trial will have stakes for Singles Classic, Junior, Advanced Junior, Senior, and Master dogs, plus Senior and Junior puppy stakes for dogs under a year old. Following the trial, we will have a club-provided picnic lunch, and then a brief business meeting for final votes on new members who have joined since the ETRC Banquet, plus an update on where we stand financially and plans for the remainder of the year. We hope that many people can attend! For members, the first two entries in the Club Trial are free; further entries will be \$10 a head. While this doesn't count toward earning AKC titles, the judges will be official AKC judges and this is a great way to check on your dog's progress before our final Fall hunt test. AND, points earned do count towards the End of the Year awards that will be given out at the banquet.

If anyone wishes to bring along a dessert or a salad to go along with lunch, please do — they will be welcomed! Also bring along chairs to sit in, water for your dog, etc. **RSVP's requested — edwardskc@gmail.com or text to 865-300-7607.**

East Tennessee Retriever Club 2025 Fall Hunt Test

The fall test will be Saturday and Sunday, October 18—19, 2025, again at the beautiful Lucky 7 Ranch at 6720 Erie Road, Sweetwater, TN. This test will include a single flight of Master, plus two Junior and two Senior tests. The test opens Wednesday, September 24, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. Central time (a day earlier at the same time for workers and amateur set-asides). Entries close on Monday, October 6 at 11:59 p.m. Central time.

Master judges will be Mike Greer and Rocky Jones. Junior judges on Saturday will be Clint Catledge and Paula Johnson — they will be judging Senior on Sunday. Junior judges on Sunday (Senior on Saturday) will be Robert Shell and Kenny West.

With three test sites going, and handlers entered in multiple stakes, this test will need a lot of volunteers to help out and make sure everything runs smoothly. Volunteering will get you a bagged lunch and our undying gratitude, and a worker entry to Master a day early if you need one. If you want to help, please contact J. Michael Evans at 865-824-8638 or email at fowlmouthk9@gmail.com. Texting works best. To volunteer to be a site steward or assistant (good way to learn about how tests operate), contact our Chief Steward, Donna Smith, at 615-419-7370, or email her at donnasmith1@gmail.com. Because this test is running at the same time as the Master National, several of our regular helpers will not be here so extra help is definitely going to be necessary!

Master National Retriever Hunt Test Board Meeting

The following is some information from the Master National Board of Directors regarding the annual business meeting which will be held in Texas at the Master National Hunt Test. Any topics of discussion that you may want to have brought up at this annual meeting must be submitted by September 5th. If you have any questions or have any suggestions for discussion topics, please contact Alan Bruhin right away at WABruhin@retiree.UTK.edu or phone 865-850-8712.

Annual Meeting Business and Bylaws Proposal Submission Reminder

Dear MNRC Member Clubs,

We wish to express our sincere appreciation for your continued engagement and valuable insights that help guide the direction and success of the Master National Retriever Club. Your input is instrumental in shaping our community and strengthening our shared mission.

As we prepare for the upcoming 2025 MNRC Annual Meeting, we kindly remind all member clubs that new business items to be considered must be submitted no later than September 5, 2025. We encourage you to take this opportunity to bring forward any topics, ideas, or initiatives you believe will benefit the organization and its members.

Additionally, if your club wishes to propose any changes or additions to the MNRC Bylaws, please submit your proposals to Dede Paterson, Master National Secretary, no later than September 5, 2025. Proposals should be sent to: dede1paterson@gmail.com.

Timely submissions ensure that all items and proposals receive proper consideration at the Annual Meeting. Thank you once again for your dedication and for helping shape the future of MNRC. We look forward to your contributions.

Best regards,

Master National Retriever Club Board of Directors

Bylaws Proposal

The MNRC has just sent a bylaws proposal to our club for review and within the next several weeks we will be asked to vote on it. The only change proposed is to permit Pros to serve as judges at the Master National. All other requirements for judging remain the same. Currently, only Amateurs are allowed to judge this event.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions concerning this proposal, please send me an email about it. I will collect these and send them around to all the Board members to help us decide how to vote on this proposal.

Karen Edwards, Secretary/Treasurer edwardskc@gmail.com

New Proposed AKC Rules Governing Hunt Tests

The August AKC Gazette has been published. Please note the following from page 134 affecting AKC Hunting Tests.

Retriever Hunting Tests – Judges Must Score All Abilities.

Staff outlined a recommendation to make a change to the Regulations & Guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers that will emphasize that judges are required to assign a numeric score for each of the four abilities – Marking, Style, Perseverance and Training as part of their evaluation of a dog's performance. These are changes to the Regulations & Guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers and may be made by a vote of the Board. If approved, these changes would become effective for events taking place on or after October 1, 2025. This will be discussed further at the August Board meeting.

Retriever Hunting Tests – Added Clarity for Master Level Retrievers.

Staff outlined a recommendation to provide more clarity and consistency in the description of retrievers at the Master level by adding three standards when judging a Master dog. Specifically, a Master dog should have one clean triple marking series in a three series weekend test, a Master dog that is out of the area of the fall gets scored zero if running at length with no results, and a Master dog should make continuous progress towards a blind retrieve. Staff also recommended a change to the number of years, from seven to four, that a judge must have handled a qualifying dog in advance of their assignment. These are changes to the Regulations & Guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers and may be made by a vote of the Board. If approved, these changes would become effective for events taking place on or after October 1, 2025. This will be discussed further at the August Board meeting.

Upcoming AKC Fee Increase for Events

Editor's Note: Below is an email from AKC sent out to all club officers concerning event fee increases.

We recognize that the increasing costs to put on AKC events may be challenging for some clubs, and we feel it's important to acknowledge this essential issue in our sport before sharing the following information.

Beginning January 1, 2026, the AKC event fee will see its first adjustment since 2008—an increase of one dollar, from \$3.50 to \$4.50 per entry. The following year, on January 1, 2027, it will adjust again, moving from \$4.50 to \$5.50 per entry.

After a thorough review and the implementation of cost-saving measures across the organization, this course of action was determined to be necessary due to steadily rising operational costs. The AKC has worked hard to reduce expenses, improve efficiency, and maintain the current fee structure for as long as possible. However, ongoing inflationary pressures and rising costs across staffing, technology, insurance, and event operations have made this adjustment essential to sustain the programs and services that support our community.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' CPI Inflation Calculator, \$3.50 in 2008 is equivalent to approximately \$5.35 in today's dollars. In other words, the purchasing power of \$3.50 in 2008 has declined significantly due to inflation. The new \$4.50 fee brings the amount into closer alignment with 2025 dollars, restoring its real value while remaining slightly below the inflation-adjusted equivalent.

Revenue from event fees supports the more than 29,000 AKC-sanctioned events held annually. It also helps fund key initiatives that strengthen the sport, protect our mission, and benefit the dog community as a whole.

We understand that many clubs are also facing the challenges of inflation and want to ensure you have adequate time to prepare for any adjustments you may need to make. We hope this advance notice helps your club plan and prepare accordingly. We sincerely appreciate your understanding, dedication, and continued support for the sport we all love.

Important Update to New AKC Educational Requirement for Judges

By now you should have received an email from the AKC regarding an important continuing education course on preventing child abuse, Stewards of Children. The training has been updated and is now titled From Bystander to Upstander. It continues to focus on how to actively recognize and respond to concerns, can be completed in about an hour and does not need to be renewed.

While no one enjoys adding another requirement to our schedules, child abuse is a serious and far-reaching problem, and this training equips us to help create a safer environment for youth involved in our sport. Even one incident prevented makes this time investment worthwhile.

All retriever community judges are required to complete this training no later than September 30, 2025. Failure to complete the training by December 30, 2025, will result in your removal from the AKC Judges Directory.

With the shortage of qualified judges we currently face, we simply cannot afford to lose any of you — please don't delay!

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important requirement and for your continued dedication to our sport and its standards.

Sincerely,
Jim Rickoff, *President – Retriever News*

Copy of Email from AKC is reprinted below, with bolding of new info added:

Dear Field Trial/Hunt Test Judges,

In April 2024, the AKC Board of Directors adopted the *AKC Educational Requirements Policy and Recommendations* as an additional step in creating a safe and respectful sports environment for all. This policy requires all AKC-approved judges to successfully complete the *From Bystander to Upstander* training from the non-profit organization, Darkness to Light. **Recently, the AKC Board of Directors voted to remove the requirement for judges to complete this training every three years. This means, judges will only be required to complete this training one time.**

The purpose of the *From Bystander to Upstander* training program is to raise awareness about child abuse prevention. Within our canine-oriented community, it is intended to empower our judges to recognize signs of abuse while also promoting a protective atmosphere for children and families involved in dog-related events.

To access this training, please start here. *[Editor's Note: The link is too long to cut and paste here, but if you are a judge and didn't receive this email already, please contact the email address below to get your copy.]* The user guide provides helpful tech suggestions and will walk you through the steps of creating your account, launching the program, and accessing your certification. It is not necessary to finish the training in one sitting. For convenience, this training can be completed at your own pace where you can start and stop as needed until you finish.

If you have questions, concerns or comments, please contact judgecompliance@akc.org.

Member News, Announcements, Brags

More ETRC Master Amateur Qualifiers!

Dianne and Randy Clark are proud to announce both their girls Alice (Rattling Ridges Willin @ RanMar MH MNH4 MAH) and her daughter Tripp (RanMar's North Bound Train MH MAR) passed the Master Amateur in Maine this summer. Tripp ran the test CLEAN!! Both girls are qualified for the 2025 Master National in Texas (coming up in October/November) and the 2026 Master Amateur in Wisconsin.

Neither girls are fans of a photo session!



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For Sale:

Two lightly used Dogtra pheasant launchers, two RR Deluxe receivers and one transmitter. These sell new on Gundogsupply.com for \$720. I'll sell these to an ETRC club member for \$300. Non club member price will be \$350. Contact Peter Torok at 423-930-4776, or email at pandmtorok@outlook.com.

A New Way To Communicate: GroupMe for ETRC

By Jim Pearce

I am trying to improve ETRC communication by creating a GroupMe messaging system account for the club. Please join me in making ETRC better and more enjoyable.

What is GroupMe and why do we need it? GroupMe is a free texting app for smartphones and media devices such as the Apple iPad. The app works on both Apple and Android devices and is similar to SMS texting.

Why not just use text? I started this project because we have various training groups within ETRC that communicate with text chains. Once that text chain is started it is difficult to add or subtract people. This may lead to the exclusion of some members that would benefit from attending a training session.

GroupMe allows all members to be aware of both club-sponsored events as well as those run "privately" by individual members who choose to post an announcement on GroupMe.

The app allows the manager to create or delete subtopics as they may become relevant. Initially the app has a "Main Chat" where general discussion on whatever subject you would like to bring up. In addition to that, I have created the subtopic "Training Opportunities" where training sessions can be announced.

In the future, additional subtopics such as "Hunt Tests" or more specific "October '25 Hunt Test" could be created.

It is important to note that the discussions on GroupMe are not visible to anyone except to members of the ETRC.

How do you participate? Use your smartphone camera to scan the QR code below or enter the following link into your browser: https://groupme.com/join_group/108028884/oye9med0



Once you scan the QR code or click the link the GroupMe app will download onto your smartphone and provide instructions on creating a free account. After your account is created GroupMe will automatically send the administrator a request to add you to the group.

Once you receive an enrollment confirmation within the GroupMe app please participate! I have used GroupMe in other special interest clubs and it has been a very popular addition for the membership.

Youth Program



2022 Award Recipient, Bella Martin

The Luthenauer Young Handler program was established as a memorial to ETRC member Kevin Luthenauer. The program is supported by generous contributions from family and friends to encourage youth participation in retriever sports. Kids who are interested in applying are encouraged to join; check out the website for rules and an application form at http://www.etrclub.org/etrclub_youth_program.htm.

There is no application fee; if the applicant is not already part of a family membership, their membership fee will be paid for by the Luthenauer fund. The program will reimburse AKC Hunt test fees and any fees for other ETRC events such as club trials.

Yearly awards include a perpetual trophy along with a plaque to keep, and participation awards for everyone in the program.

ETRC Membership Information

Membership for a year is \$25 for a single person or a family (one vote). New member and renewal forms are available online at <https://www.etrclub.org/join.htm> — just cut & paste the link, print it off, & send it along with your check to:

Karen Edwards, ETRC Secretary /Treasurer, 254 Babbs Road, Lenoir City, TN 37771.

Membership includes electronic copies of the newsletter, special announcements, eligibility to attend all ETRC Sponsored events, and consideration for end of the year awards. There are extra awards for volunteer workers at one of our events! Don't miss out on the opportunity to make friends with like-minded dog people and learn more about our favorite sport. We are one of the most active Retriever clubs in the country — and have another great year ongoing in 2025 with 6 AKC hunt tests, club trials, picnics, awards, and more.

The membership year runs from March 1 to February 28/29th; people who join after November 1 are also paid up for the following year.

Newsletter / Facebook Info

NEWSLETTER: The ETRC newsletter is published monthly, usually on the 1st of the month. Send us your test results, new titles, litter info, new dogs, dog-related jobs, items and services, death notices, interesting articles, and any brags you care to share, along with pictures! Deadline is the 26th of the month but we can sometimes sneak something in a little late.... Send items to newsletter editor Karen Edwards (edwardskc@gmail.com).

Numbering System: beginning with the January 2020 issue, the volume number is the last two digits of the year, in Roman numeral format — so this is Volume XXIII (for 2023). Newsletters are archived on the club Website, www.etrclub.org.

FACEBOOK: we have an active Facebook page! Either post on it yourself, or send pics and info to our moderator, Alan Bruhin, at wbruhin1@retiree.utk.edu.