

ETRC Upcoming Events

Volume XXV, Issue 10

October 2025



MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR ETRC'S UPCOMING EVENTS!

1. October 18-19, Saturday—Sunday: Fall Test, Lucky 7 Ranch, 2 JH, 2 SH, Master, Lucky 7 Ranch
2. February 21, 2026, Saturday — Annual Awards Banquet, Bearden Banquet Hall, Knoxville

Photo of the Month



EAST TENNESSEE RETRIEVER CLUB, INC. WWW.ETRCCLUB.ORG

ETRC Newsletter

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President's Message — By J. Michael Evans

Welcome to Fall! It may not feel like it today but Fall is truly upon us. The baseball playoffs are beginning, football has officially kicked off, hunting seasons have begun and the nights are feeling more crisp. Yes, it's a beautiful time in East Tennessee.

September brought us our last club trial of the year where we selected a nominating committee for all open Board and Officer positions. If you are interested in helping the club and serving as an Officer or a Board member please reach out to any one of them, their contact information will be listed in the newsletter. Thank you Jim, Brent and Zach for volunteering to take on the nominations. These gentlemen will be happy to explain what is entailed in being an Officer or Board member so please, if you want to be more involved in the club give one of them, or any Officer, a call.

Our last AKC test of the year is our big Fall test October 18th and 19th. We will offer a double Junior, double Senior and single Master stake. Even if you don't enter a dog, please come out and join us for the festivities! We will be there for setup at 1pm Friday the 17th and the test will start at 8am sharp Saturday and Sunday mornings. If you'd like to help with setup or during the testing we would love to have the assistance. If you have any questions please give me a call.

For those running any of the stakes, Best of Luck!

J. Michael Evans, ETRC President

Member News & Brags

East Tennessee Retriever Club member, Club AKC Representative and Hunt Test Secretary Michele Fletcher ran her two dogs in Missouri on September 6-7, and received two senior passes on each dog earning both their Senior Titles. Congratulations Michele, Amber and Chai!



Left to Right: Thistle Rocks Amber Waves SH, and Calamity Jane's Special Brew SH MSB MJB MXF T2B

NOW!

East Tennessee Retriever Club 2025 Fall Hunt Test

Date: Saturday, October 18, 2025- Sunday, October 19, 2025

Location: Lucky 7 Ranch, 6720 Erie Road, Sweetwater, TN, beginning at 8:00 a.m. ET each day

Stakes: double Junior, double Senior, single flight Master limited to 66 entries.

Entries: Enter on EntryExpress.net. Entries opened Wednesday, September 24, 2025 at 7:00 PM CT; Workers/Amateur Set Aside opened Tuesday, September 23, 2025 at 7:00 PM CT. As of publication date, there are still a few entries available for Master and plenty of space for Junior and Senior. **THERE IS STILL TIME TO ENTER!**

Entries Close: Monday, October 6, 2025 11:59:59 PM CT

Judges:

Master: Mike Greer / Rocky Jones
Senior Saturday: Robert Shell / Kenny West
Senior Sunday: Clint Catledge / Paula Johnson
Junior Saturday: Clint Catledge / Paula Johnson
Junior Sunday: Robert Shell / Kenny West



Additional Info:

This test will not have live flyers as the property is a 'no live ammunition' site.

This is a big test that will have three test sites running simultaneously at different places on a 390 acre farm. Big tests take a lot of volunteers! We are looking for people to help set up / tear down stakes, serve as site marshals, assist in preparing lunches, fill in as relief bird technicians as needed, and more. Contact any of the following to help out:

- ◆ to volunteer for set-up and bird tech work and to get your worker code for early entry if needed, text J. Michael Evans at 865-824-8638 or email to fowlmouthk9@gmail.com;
- ◆ to volunteer as a site marshal or relief marshal, contact Chief Marshal Donna Smith at 615-419-7370 or email donnasmith@gmail.com;
- ◆ For assistance in other areas, contact Karen Edwards at edwardskc@gmail.com.

This is a great test for people new to the sport to see the different levels of dog and get a better understanding of test setup, skill set and training needed at each level, and an opportunity to ask all the questions you want. Hope to see you there!

DIRECTIONS TO LUCKY 7 FARM: The address is, 6720 Erie Road, Sweetwater, TN. BE AWARE that some GPS services may take you to the wrong place, around the back of the farm where there is no entrance. Alternatively, use the address 6979 Erie Road, which is right across the street from the L7 Farm entrance.

Report on ETRC's September Mid Week Master Test

Our first test of the fall season (5th of 2025!) was held on Tuesday and Wednesday at Lucky 7 Ranch. We had terrific weather both days, with cool, crisp mornings in the low 50s, and the high on Tuesday reaching just 80 degrees. It was warm in the sun, but in the shade it was delightful!

Thanks as always to our judges — Allen Dillard and Michelle Love. Allen was a last minute fill in for the judge we had hired originally, whose wife needed surgery — best wishes for a speedy recovery! The bird techs were again members of the Cleveland State Community College Wildlife Society, and as always were just beyond excellent. Judge Allen Dillard, hearing that they were college kids who were working for the benefit of their club, donated \$250 to the Wildlife Society in an extremely generous and much appreciated gesture. Thanks, Allen!

Also, thanks to the many ETRC members who helped set up and run the test, made lunches, marshalled, dealt with ducks, served as ribbon marshal, etc. — it takes a pretty dedicated group of people to put on 6 tests a year and we really appreciate all the people who step up time after time to help out.

58 dogs signed up for the test — and 6 of them scratched for the usual variety of reasons, leaving 52 dogs to start the first series. Only 22 passed all three series and earned a qualifying ribbon.

The first series was very tough. A land triple, with the farthest mark at about 170 yards, and involving challenging terrain and a road that had to be crossed. It also featured a land/water blind that was between the second and third marks and was also 170 yards long. The blind itself was on a strip of land running between two small ponds. Difficulty was increased with the terrain, which meant that if your dog got too far to the right near the water, it was out of sight for a while and if it got into the back pond, it was also out of sight. This series also included the Honor. Very challenging! Only 24 dogs were carried into the second series.

The second series was a land/water setup with a triple with two one land and the third splashed into the water, a diversion shot, a water blind, and a land blind both of which were behind a mark. While a well-designed and interesting tests, the dogs that survived the first series mostly were successful with this scenario and 22 were called back to the third series.

Set up for 2nd series. Other marks and the water blind were out of sight on the right.



September Hunt Test, Continued

The water series was run on Wednesday morning. It was a quick series with a triple mark and no blind. There was some challenging very high cover that dogs had to run through, but all remaining 22 dogs were successful and the test ended mid-morning with the ribbon ceremony.



Statistics on entries — 46 Labradors, 2 Flatcoated Retrievers, and 10 Golden Retrievers, 7 of them owned by one Amateur owner/handler. Of the scratches, one was a Golden and the rest were Labs. The youngest dog, a Labrador, was born March 13, 2024 so was just coming up on 18 months of age. The oldest was a Golden born April 27, 2011, a whopping 14 years and 4.5 months old. 32 were females, 26 were males.

Congratulations to the following ETRC Members who passed this very challenging test, listed in running order:

- ◆ FC AFC Seaside's Troublesome Fowl Pursuits QA2, owned and handled by John Broucek. This was Percy's 5th Master Hunter pass, so he will soon add MH to that impressive title string.
- ◆ Blythe Ferry's Indy Dos MH, owned by Michael & Donna Smith and handled by Donna.
- ◆ Tennessee Cinnamon Fireball MH40 MAH, Bred, owned and handled by Alan Bruhin.
- ◆ Tennessee Gentleman Jack MH, also bred, owned and handled by Alan Bruhin.
- ◆ HRCH Hilltop's Fowl Mouth Delta Queen MH ("Ivy"), owned and handled by J. Michael Evans.

Congratulations also to member Mike Vencille, who handled a client dog to a pass.

Left to Right:
Mike & Donna
Smith with
Indy; J. Mi-
chael Evans
with Ivy; Kathy
Poole Price
with her
Flatcoat.



September Hunt Test, Continued

Thanks to Donna Smith and Alan Bruhin for these wonderful hunt test pictures!



Behind the Scenes at the September Hunt Test 9/9-10/25



Right: Ron Rubrecht and Topbrass Turbo Don't Ask Why CDX MH60 OD HTHF CCA VCX WCX QA2 "Molly", the oldest dog running our test at 14 years, 4.5 months. She did not pass, but did pass a Master Test at Poole's Knob a week or two earlier that J. Michael Evans judged. She had a blast anyway!





ETRC Club Trial Report Sunday, September 21, 2025, Lucky 7 Ranch

Our third Club Trial of the year was held at Ken Campbell's beautiful Lucky 7 Ranch in Sweetwater. The weather was pretty, with a cool morning but then heating up later on to above 80.

We started with the Singles Classic, a devilishly hard two marks straddling both sides of the gravel road at the middle pond. The right hand mark, which was shot first, was around 250 yards at a guess, and went down the steeply sloping hillside and then up the other side to where the bird landed at the treeline. The second mark was across the road on the other side of the pond — again down a hill, across one neck of the pond, and then up the hill to the treeline on that side.

When the Singles Classic stake was well underway, people running Junior and Senior stakes went on back to the far back where the big technical pond is. In a variation on our most recent hunt test, the stakes were set up on the small double pond up the hillside. It was a single setup, with a triple for Master and a blind; the Senior stake used two of the marks and the blind, and the Advanced Junior stake just used two of the marks and did not have a blind. It was a land/water series, with one of the marks used for all tests going up the hill on land past the pond, and the other two marks involved swimming across parts of the ponds. The blind, which was live, was on the opposite side of the infamous hump that is at the corner of the lower pond from the third mark. The wind had started to pick up by now, and some of the marks got blown even closer to the blind, adding even more challenge.

Thanks a million to Ken for letting us use his beautiful property. Thanks also to our setup crew including Alan Bruhin, J. Michael Evans, Brent Naveiro, Jim Pearce, Mike Smith and others; judges, Alan Bruhin, J. Michael Evans and Michele Fletcher, who kept things running smoothly; to Lois Luthenauer for bringing delicious homemade chocolate chip oatmeal cookies, the tee shirts and hats; J. Michael for cookies and muffins, and Alan for brownies. Also thanks to Karen Edwards and Jim Pearce who ran the sign up table, brought more brownies & ribbons, and ordered / picked up the pizzas. If I missed a few names of people who helped as relief judges, your work was appreciated as well. Finally, thanks to everyone who came and made this a successful day!

Full Results of all stakes are given below:

Singles Classic: 15 dogs entered. First through 4th place color ribbons were awarded, along with JAM (green) ribbons for others who brought back both marks without handles but didn't place in the top four.

Results were:

- ◆ First place was won by Ivey, J. Michael Evans' yellow Labrador. She was the only dog who brought back both marks without any



significant hunting on either mark. Very nice job!

- ◆ Second place was won by Cin, a black Labrador Retriever bred, owned, trained & handled by Alan Bruhin.
- ◆ Third place went to Max, a chocolate Lab owned and handled by Lois Luthenauer;
- ◆ Fourth place was Chai, a Golden Retriever bred, owned and handled by Michele Fletcher.
- ◆ JAMs:
 - ◆ Cotton, Black Lab owned and handled by Mike Smith;
 - ◆ Roxie, Chocolate Lab owned and handled by Lois Luthenauer handling.

Advanced Junior Hunter: One dog entered and passed. This was Oakie, a young Chocolate Lab female owned by Lois Luthenauer and Bob Houston, handled by Lois.

Senior Hunter : Two dogs attempted this test, but neither passed.

Master Hunter : 13 dogs entered, and 10 passed. Passing dogs and handlers were:

- ◆ Amber & Chai, Golden Retrievers with Michele Fletcher;
- ◆ Cin and Jack, Alan Bruhin's black labs;
- ◆ Fee - Karen Edwards' and Jim Pearce's Golden, with Jim handling;
- ◆ Max, Lois Luthenauer's Chocolate Lab,
- ◆ Indy, Black Lab with Donna Smith;
- ◆ Cotton, Black Labrador handled by Mike Smith;
- ◆ Waylon, Zach Pry's Labrador;
- ◆ Ivy, Yellow Lab with J. Michael Evans



There were no entries for the puppy stakes.

Following the test, the club provided a pizza lunch to go along with all the goodies brought by various members. These were from Little Caesars in Sweetwater and included 5-meat pizza, everything supreme pizza, Classic Cheese, Veggie, and Hula Hawaiian. After that, there was a brief business meeting (see minutes later on in this Newsletter). A very successful event!

Each member received two free entries. Additional entries were at the normal rates, \$10 each (\$5 for puppies). Total receipts were \$120. Cost for the pizzas was \$152.76 and there were no other costs.



Update on ETRC's Master National Competitors

The Master National Invitational Hunt Test is being held this year in Bastrop, Texas (Lee County). The event runs from Thursday, October 30 to Sunday, November 9, 2025.

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

- ◆ Alan Bruhin with 2 dogs, Tennessee Cinnamon Fireball MH25 MAH and Tennessee Gentleman Jack MH.
- ◆ Andy Buck with 2 dogs, Coosawatte Backwater Drake MH, and Moon Over The Coosawatte MH.
- ◆ Dianne Clark with Ranmars North Bound Train MH, MAR.
- ◆ Randy Clark with Rattlin Ridges Willin O Ranmar MH MNH MAH.
- ◆ Dennis Wilcox with 4 dogs, Chosen Spots Black Ice Warning MH; Chosen Spots Irish Nobleman MH, Chosen Spots Splash of Tequila MH, and Rsr's Leader Of The Pack MH. FLASH: Ice has been scratched, he is recovering from a broken neck sustained in a training accident. Best wishes for a complete recovery!
- ◆ Pro member Brian Caldwell with Bob Smith's dog (L7 Troublesomewhataboutbob MH) and 2 other non-member client dogs.
- ◆ Pro member Melissa Dobson with 2 of her own dogs (Southern Comforts Crack Shot MH and Southern Comforts Run Your Tail Off MH) and 9 non-member client dogs;
- ◆ Pro member Jody Ware with dogs owned by Rhey Houston (Crosspoint's Blindside Blitz MH), John Broucek & Jeff Coffey (Troublesome Fowl Addiction MH); and Jeff Coffey (Troublesome Lucky On Heads MH), plus 2 other non-member client dogs.

We wish the very best to everyone on all aspects of this big adventure — the lengthy road trip out there, the days of training beforehand, the long days of testing, and the trip back home. Stay safe and healthy, and do good work! Oh, and best wishes for success!

If I missed anyone, please let me know. And all of you, after your return please send pics and info!



Master National Retriever Hunt Test News

The following is additional material concerning the Master National Hunt test and proposed Bylaws changes to be discussed and voted on over the next month. Refer to last month's Newsletter, which announced that the 2026 MN test would be limited to approximately 800 dogs, and a separate Bylaws proposal that would allow pro trainers to be Master National Judges.

The Missouri Valley Retriever Club has proposed a bylaws change that would consolidate the four regions into 3. Region 1, Atlantic, and Region 2, East Central (where ETRC is) would stay the same. Region 3 would now be a combined region including the rest of the country from Kansas on to the Pacific coast and Alaska.

They are also proposing that the Bylaws be amended to require that the test location each year will continue to be rotated, but that test sites must be selected which will accommodate all national qualifiers that wish to attend. This would overturn the MNRC Board decision sent out last month (see the September newsletter for details) that would limit the number of dogs attending to approximately 600, and would require each entrant to prioritize the dogs they want to enter, with lower priority dogs potentially being cut off from participation.

The actual language proposed in this amendment, however, does not do what it wants to do. It states that in 2026 the test "will be held at a site **that will accommodate all qualifiers in Region 3.**" Similar language is included further on. To go back to unlimited entries for everyone, not just those in the region where the test will be held, the language would have to be changed to read instead "...at a site IN REGION 3 that will accommodate all qualifiers."

The new language also allows that if the MN committee is unable to be able to find test sites that can accommodate 1200-1500 dogs each year in the proper region, they can run the test anywhere that can accommodate that number of dogs. 35 other clubs have already signed as supporting these language change.

The North Alabama Retriever club has also recommended a Bylaws change that would require the MN Board to not place limitations on the number of dogs that can attend. Their language would be an addition to the current Bylaws language on site selection that would add the following paragraph:

"Suitable sites will have adequate resources and the accessibility to support the conduct of a national level quality event, enable the required level of testing, and be able to accommodate all Contestants deemed eligible under Article IX, Section 3. The Board is fully responsible for selecting a site that will not require any limits on the quality and level of testing at the event nor limit the number of eligible qualified Contestants that may enter the event."

11 other clubs have already signed as supporting this language change.

At the picnic meeting, the general membership decided to put these to a vote and all three passed. More details on the discussion and background of these proposals are contained in the meeting minutes on the next several pages.

Minutes: General Meeting, Sunday, September 21, 2025 **Lucky 7 Ranch, Sweetwater, TN**

Present from the Board: J. Michael Evans, Alan Bruhin, Mike Smith, Karen Edwards, Michele Fletcher, Jim Pearce, & Bob Smith,

Absent, Excused: Jeff Rader, Travel; Nathan Lamping, no reason given; Luke McCoy, travel; Kyle Griffin, other event.

Others Members Present: Dick & Jolynn Lamping; Donna Smith, Zach and Tyra Pry; Steve Cum-bie, Lois Luthenauer, Bob Houston.

A quorum is 20% of the voting membership. 13 memberships were represented, and the current membership stands at 66 (20% would be 13). Therefore, a quorum was present.

Meeting called to order at 208 p.m. following our third club trial of the season, and a picnic pizza lunch provided by the Club.

Officer's and AKC Delegate's Reports

President's Report: J. Michael Evans

- J. Michael welcomed everyone who came, and mentioned that we had put on several other club trials this year and a lot of hunt tests. Our last hunt test is coming up at Lucky 7 on October 18-19, and will open up for Amateurs and worker codes this coming Tuesday. It will be a double Junior, double Senior, and single flight of Master. He thanked everyone who had helped us with all our events this year – property owners who let us use their property including Ken Campbell, Brian Caldwell, and Cory Smith, as well as all the members who judged, worked, helped and/or participated in any of our events during the year.
- **New equipment:** We purchased two new 5-shot Thunder launchers this year so we don't have to have so many people out working in the fields during our club tests and other group training activities. We now have two 10-shot launchers and two 5-shot launchers. Anything more that we need before the end of the year? Nothing was mentioned at the meeting, but see the addendum at the end of these minutes for a last-minute overnight motion for more equipment.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report. Karen Edwards.

- **Minutes:** Last meeting was 4/6/25. Minutes were approved by a majority of Board members and sent to the club website. Alan moved that we dispense with reading the minutes out loud, and vote formal approval. Mike Smith seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
- **Membership:** Membership at the end of December 2025 was 67. Membership today is 66, with 12 who didn't renew from last year, and 11 new members since the beginning of the year.
- **Correspondence:** Our accountant completed and sent off our tax return for 2024, fee of \$850. Various correspondence from the Master National concerning proposed bylaws changes – more on this later.

Treasurer's Report: Current balance is \$40,236.64. Upcoming expenses include the portapotties for our test 9/10-11, expenses and receipts for this trial today, and for our final hunt test. We are in excellent financial shape but are not making as much money on our tests this year and our tests have not all been filling, which is a slight concern. A year ago, at the same point in our events year, our balance was \$45,713.60. We need to take care and carefully examine our costs to make sure that we don't spend down our reserves.

Minutes 09/21/25, Continued

AKC Delegate's Report: Michele Fletcher reported that AKC is planning to send out event packets only once a year, to the club President. However, it seems like they are also being sent to past presidents, officers, etc. If any of our past or present officers get one, please get them to Michele as Hunt Test Secretary. These packets include a variety of things including rules, misconduct regulations, and various judges sheet changes and other paperwork associated with AKC.

There are some new regulations on the horizon that will impact hunt testing. These have gone through various levels of consideration already, and were up for final approval at the September 19-20 AKC board meeting. We do not yet have word whether any of these were not approved. If approved,

- As of October 1, 2025, judges must rate all 4 abilities with a number score. Some judges just draw lines indicating that all scores are the same as the one that the line descends from; others leave some of the scores unrated altogether.
- As of October 1, 2025, three standards are being added to provide more clarity and consistency in the description of retrieves at the Master level –
 - 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;
 - A Master dog should make continuous progress towards a blind retrieve.
- Staff has recommended a Rulebook change to the number of years, from seven to four, that a judge must have handled a qualifying dog in advance of a judging assignment.
- Staff has recommended a change to the Hunt Test Rulebook, to be effective November 1, 2025, to allow clubs the option to award qualifying ribbons at the end of each dog's run rather than at a ribbon ceremony at the end of the test.
- The Board has voted to approve a recommendation to count a disqualification given by a judge in Retriever Hunting Trials or Field trials as one disqualification across both sports. This would also apply to Pointing Breed, Spaniel and Beagle Hunt Tests and Field Trials. Note that it is the JUDGE that can file paperwork to disqualify a dog (for dangerous behavior etc.) and not the hunt test committee.

Old Business

Election of New Members:

- 1 ***New Members:*** two for final vote into membership:
 - Rickey Peebles, Project Controls, 905 Belltown Road, Tellico Plains, TN 37385. RLPPeebles@gmail.com, cell 803-602-2378. Volunteers for 'whatever is needed,' hunt test set-up, and photography. Has two flatcoats, one 8 years one 3 years; older one is a MH, younger one is SH. Interested in hunt tests and dog training. Sponsors are Nate Lamping & Mike Smith.
 - Ronnie & Paige Cowan, Wildlife Biologist, UT. 317 Ashley Drive, Seymour, TN 37865. RC@UTK.edu, 865-214-2167. Volunteers for duck wrangler/assistant, hunt test set-up, Board of Directors, bird tech and/or coordinator, gunner, and interested in judging at club trials and being a hunt test chairman. Has a 1 year old chocolate Lab. Interested in hunt tests, field trials, hunter's safety course, dog training, club trials, judging/judging clinics. He is a DU member and a certified Hunters Safety Instructor. Sponsors are Alan Bruhin and J. Michael Evans.

Lois moved that we accept all these people into full membership in ETRC. Alan seconded the motion which then passed unanimously.

Minutes 09/21/25, Continued

2. **First Reading of Provisional New members:** J. Michael Evans. We have 7 new members who are coming before the membership tonight for first reading and assignment of sponsors.
- Steve / Robin Cumbie, joined 9/16/25. Swimming pool builder, 353 Raccoon Valley Road, Powell, TN 37849, RSteveCumbie@gmail.com, 865-389-2700. Volunteers for whatever is needed, has a 6 month old Golden, interested in dog training. Jim Pearce and Karen Edwards volunteered to be sponsors.
 - Nicole Pizzo "Nikki" (works with Mike and Lisa Vencille), joined 9/8/25, requests Michele Fletcher & Mike Smith as sponsors. 454 Lick Creek Road, Ceres, VA 24318, nicole.pizzo@yahoo.com 276-252-0506m, has a yellow lab, volunteers for bird tech, interested in hunt tests, dog training, DU member. Michele and Mike S have agreed to be sponsors.
 - Samuel / Alexandra Hartsell, joined 5/18/25. Finance / debt financing, 2521 Woodrow Drive, Knoxville, TN 37418, samuelhartsell@gmail.com, 704-425-5580. Has a yellow English lab, 11 months. Brand new to competition but trains his lab for hunting. Interested in field trials, hunt tests, club trials, judging clinics, DU member. Brent Naveiro and Alan Bruhin have volunteered to be sponsors.
 - Scott Corum, joined 5/18/25. Engineer, 12424 Ooltewah Georgetown Rd, Georgetown, TN 37363, corum.scott@yahoo.com, 423-779-6351. Volunteers for whatever is needed, hunt test set-up, gunner, food prep/supplies. Has a 4 year old black lab. Interested in hunt tests, field trials, club trials, is an NRA and DU member. Bob Smith and J. Michael have agreed to be sponsors.
 - Colton /Tiffany Cross, joined 5/18/25. Gas Company, 582-Hughes Lake Road, Cleveland, TN 37323, cmcross303@gmail.com, 423-716-7646. Volunteers for food prep/supplies, training supplies. Has a 3 year black lab. Interested in Hunt Tests and dog training. Mike Smith and Bob Smith have agreed to be sponsors.
 - Kenny McCormick, joined 5/18/25. Ocoee Steel Manager, 338 Charles Circle, Cleveland, TN 37323, KMAC2323@hotmail.com, 423-650-8425, volunteers for whatever is needed. Has a 5 year Black lab Master Hunter, interested in hunt tests, field trials, hunter's safety course, dog training, club trials, judging clinics, breeding and is a DU member. J. Michael and Alan Bruhin agreed to be sponsors.
 - Gay / Bob Coffin, joined 5/8/25. Retired, 4567 Signal Forest Drive, Signal Mountain, TN 37377, jcoffin121@gmail.com, 203-981-4522 (Gay), volunteers for marshalling. Have 2 flatcoats, one 9 (SH, WCX), one 6 (JH WC). Belong to 5 flat coat or HRC clubs, interested in hunt tests and dog training. . Bob Smith and Jim Pearce agreed to be sponsors

Lois moved that we accept all these people into provisional membership in ETRC. Alan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

New Business:

- 1 **Update on Master National Stuff:** J. Michael gave the following summary of where we stand now with proposed updates and changes to the Master National:
 - a. The MNRC Board has announced that in 2026, the MN test will be limited to approximately 840 dogs. Each entrant with more than one dog will prioritize them; all the 1st priority dogs will be entered, then all the second priority dogs will be entered, and so on until there are approximately 840 dogs (all dogs at the same priority level will be accommodated, they won't cut it off at exactly 840 if there are some more dogs at the same priority level). Currently there are over 1200 dogs that are entered to run this year, were over 1100 last year,

Minutes 09/21/25, Continued

- and the test committee is having a tough time finding enough judges and test grounds that can accommodate that many dogs.
- b. Two clubs have presented Bylaws changes to prevent this from happening. They both want to continue to have all dogs that qualify able to enter and run the MN test without limitations. As a club, we have been asked to vote Yay or Nay on these proposals.
 - i. The North Alabama club has proposed a simple and straightforward amendment that will simply require the MNR Committee to find land that will accommodate all qualifiers and allow a quality, master level test.
 - ii. The Missouri Valley club has proposed two things:
 - That the entire half of the country from Kansas to the Pacific coast and Alaska be combined into a single region. No rationale for this is given in the documents provided along with the proposal.
 - An amendment to require the test to be held at a site that will accommodate all qualifiers in that region. The way this is worded, with the 'in that region' after the 'accommodate all qualifiers' instead of before it, does not match the stated intent, that all qualifiers from all regions must be accommodated without limitation. A wording change would be necessary to accurately reflect their stated intent.
- C. There is also an unrelated proposal that would allow Pro trainers to judge the Master National. At the present time, only Amateurs can judge.

Alan Bruhin elaborated on some of the background for this issue. The MNRC board, of which he is a member, is not unified in their thoughts about how to move forward with the yearly national test. Earlier efforts a few years ago to try to deal with the large number of dogs and difficulties in finding adequate grounds were all defeated – this included proposals to have 4 national tests, one in each region; have four regional qualifying tests which dogs would have to pass AFTER passing 6 weekend tests, in order to qualify for the Master National; various methods of increasing the difficulty of qualifying such as passing 8 tests instead of 6, or having to pass 6 tests out of 8, etc. The current decision by the board to limit the numbers by requiring handlers to rank their dogs instead of taking all who qualify was not unanimous, and a recent Board proposal to cancel their stated plans for 2026 also failed.

There was some discussion on how ETRC should vote, recognizing that it is only a small minority of club members who are interested in the Master National competition. The general consensus of those present was that all qualifiers should be able to attend, if they wanted to. There was also discussion about the difficulties this prioritization process to limit entries would place on pros, telling some of their clients that their dogs were not good enough to be prioritized high enough to actually be able to attend.

With regard to the Missouri Valley Club's proposal to combine Regions 3 and 4 into one geographically enormous region, Alan was not sure of the rationale -- but the results would mean that tests in the combined region would be scheduled once every three years instead of once every two years as under the current bylaws, perhaps making it easier to find suitable land in the combined region. It would also make it easier for people in Regions 1 and 2 to be able to attend more years since 2 out of 3 tests would be in the Eastern half of the country. On the flip side, it would possibly mean that the Pacific Coasters always would have a 14-18 hour drive or more to be able to attend, since large tracts of land on the coast are hard to come by. Another side effect, possibly unintended, would be to reduce the representation on the Board from the western half of the country.

Alan moved that we vote AYE on both of these proposals, since a Bylaws change requires 2/3 ayes to pass, and picking one of the two proposals would make it more likely that neither of them would get enough votes to pass. This was seconded by Jim Pearce.

Minutes 09/21/25, Continued

Alan was asked how, if both proposals passed, would the language from the two proposals be reconciled in the Bylaws. Would we then be asked to vote again, and just pick one? Alan thought this was unlikely, that it would probably be that someone on the board would rewrite the bylaws in a way to attempt to reconcile the two passing resolutions and this would just be done internally as a board action.

The question was called, and the motion passed with all ayes except for one dissenting vote, because of the inclusion of the Missouri Valley proposal along with the North Alabama one.

Next, Alan moved that we vote to approve the amendment that would allow pro judges to judge the Master National. This was seconded by Brent Naveiro. Discussion focused on the fact that any pro judges would probably come from regions of the country where driving with a truckload of dogs to that particular event would probably be too far to be feasible. There was some speculation about pro judges possibly being more lenient to other pro handlers (professional courtesy), but it was also noted that all of this depended on the quality of the judge, whether pro or not. The vote was called and the motion passed unanimously.

Karen Edwards will fill out the ballots reflecting ETRC's AYE vote on all of these proposed amendments, and will return them to the MNRC Secretary, Dede Patterson. .[Update 9/25/25: the ballot specifically calls for the Club President or MNRC Delegate to cast the vote. J. Michael fills both these roles so he is the one who will complete and send in the ballot.]

2. **Nominating Committee:** J. Michael Evans. We need to have one board member and 2 regular members for this committee; we are also supposed to have two non-board alternates. The committee has to have a meeting (virtual, emails, phone or in person) before November 15, and must report to the Secretary (Karen) their nominations before November 24. If you agree to serve, Karen will send you the full details of what is involved and which positions are to be filled. Jim Pearce agreed to be the Board member, and Brent Naveiro and Zach Pry agreed to be the two non-board members.

Any other new business?

Adjourn: There being no other new business Lois moved that we adjourn. Jim Pearce seconded the motion which then passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.



Youth Program



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 / Group Me 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). 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.

GroupMe: 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. GroupMe allows 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. For more info, contact Jim Pearce, at jwp1002@gmail.com.

