Volume XXVI, Issue 11

November 2026

ETRC Newsletter

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

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR ETRC'S UPCOMING EVENTS!

1. **ETRC Board meeting, 6:30 p.m., 254 Babbs Road, Lenoir City, TN 37771. Members welcome.**
1. **February 20, 2027 Sat 6:30 p.m. — Annual awards banquet, meeting, elections**

Photo of the Month



ETRC President Alan Bruhin and Cin Qualified at the Master National in Oregon. For more info and pictures of other ETRC Qualifiers, see pages 6-9.

Note: the sweatshirt Alan is wearing is one of the ones we have for sale, see p. 10

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President's Message —
By Alan Bruhin

It seems hard to believe it's that time, but Happy Thanksgiving! This year is just flying by. Maybe it's because I've spent half of the year on the road running weekend and national hunt tests! Between duties for ETRC and serving as regional director for the Master National, my year has been quite busy. I wish I could say it's going to slow down, but I still have some hunt test judging assignments and weekend tests to run.

I hope each of you have had a great year and much success with your retrievers.

Reflecting back on the past few months, ETRC has held some very successful events. Our October hunt test held in Sweetwater had good numbers entered and we had some great help from our members. Not only did we have help from members with setting up and moving tests, marshaling, and feeding the workers, but our junior and senior tests were all judged by ETRC members. Many thanks to everyone who pitched in to make this event a success.

Our next major event coming up will be our annual business meeting and awards banquet in February. Keep an eye on the December newsletter for more information on candidates for election to the Board and officer positions, and a call for our annual awards for people and dogs. The January issue will also have more information on the Banquet itself.

As 2026 winds down, I hope that each of you have had an opportunity to participate in many of our activities. As always, the board of directors are always open to suggestions and ideas for future activities. If you have any suggestions for things you would like to see our club do, please contact me or any other board members and let us know. We will certainly consider any suggestions.

Alan Bruhin
wbruhin1@retiree.utk.edu

Expanded Funding for Dog Aging Study

Understanding the science behind why some dogs remain healthy into old age can teach scientists about the biology of aging and could ultimately help both dogs and people live healthier and longer lives.

New funding from the National Institute on Aging, part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), will support the next five-year phase of the Dog Aging Project, a nationwide long-term cohort study of healthy aging in tens of thousands of companion dogs, allowing researchers to follow participating dogs for longer while expanding studies of their genetics, nutrition, and home environments.

Since its launch in 2018, the project — an observational study that also provides a model of healthy aging in humans — has examined how dogs age, with the goal of improving lifelong health for both dogs and people. There have already been interesting and important findings, and this new funding is expected to result in even more information.

Report: ETRC Fall Hunt Test, October 17-18, 2026
Lucky 7 Ranch

ConOur second and final hunt test of the fall season was held the weekend of October 17-18, 2026, at the beautiful Lucky 7 Ranch in Sweetwater, TN. The weather was lovely! After a 90 degree day on Thursday, the temps fell from 84 at noon on Friday to 53 by 6 p.m., and on the morning of the test was in the very low 40s. We even saw some light frost on the grass! During the day, the temps rose up to the high 60s and even very low 70s — perfect!

A special thanks to our judges, especially those who are club members, and to the wonderful Bird Techs from the community college Wildlife Society, to all the club members who helped with test setup, takedown, moving stakes, marshalling, rebirding, fixing lunches (including pulled pork sandwiches on Sunday thanks to Lois Luthenauer and her husband Bob Houston), purchasing supplies, dealing with paying the bills, and on and on. We couldn't put on all these tests without a lot of help from our members! And, special thanks as always to Ken Campbell for letting us use his beautiful property, and to his farm manager Brandon Kamp for keeping the place in such beautiful condition.

And, a special shout-out to our hunt test Secretary Michele Fletcher, who was there working on her birthday!



Results:

Master Stake: Judges were Robert Wolfe & Lisa Neel. 61 dogs entered, 4 scratched, and 30 dogs qualified. ETRC members' dogs qualifying, in running order, were:

- Tennessee Cinnamon Fireball MH50 MAH4 MNH, with breeder/owner/handler Alan Bruhin;
- Blythe Ferry's Indy Dos MH, owned by Donna and Mike Smith and handled by Donna;
- HRCH RanMar's North Bound Train MH MAR, owned and handled by Dianne Clark
- GRHRCH Hilltop's Fowl Mouth Delta Queen MH44, owned and handled by J. Michael Evans;
- Troublesome Fowl Addiction MH MNH, co-owned by John Broucek;
- Thistle Rocks Amber Waves SH, owned and handled by Michele Fletcher;
- Razor's Coal Cotton, owned by Mike and Donna Smith, handled by Donna
- RoddyDogs Winston Churchill, owned by Tom Gavin & handled by Brian Caldwell;
- Spitfire's Whiskey Teal MH, owned by Janet Summers & handled by Brian Caldwell;
- Dark Hollow Creek's For A Good Time, owned by Troy & Kirsty Perry;
- McCoy's Precious Gem of the South, owned by Luke McCoy, handled by Brian Caldwell;
- Pro member Brian Caldwell also handled several other non-member client dogs to passes.

Fall Hunt Test, Continued

Senior Stake Saturday: Judges were ETRC Members Lois Luthenauer & Dennis Wilcox. There were 17 entries and no scratches. Six dogs passed. No member dogs were entered.

Senior Stake Sunday: Judges were ETRC Members Lisa Vencille & Dennis Wilcox. There were 17 entries and one scratch. Five dogs passed. No member dogs were entered.

Junior Stake Saturday: Judges were ETRC Members Lisa Vencille & Mike Smith. There were 16 entries and no scratches. 15 dogs passed. ETRC member dogs passing were:

- Butterfly's Midsouth Riley, owned and handled by Bobby Stogner;
- Fern Hill Duck Call RN CGC TKN, owned by Jo Ann & Victor Burk & handled by Jo Ann

Junior Stake Sunday: Judges were ETRC Members Lois Luthenauer & Mike Smith. There were 14 entries and one scratch. 12 dogs passed. ETRC member dog passing was:

- Butterfly's Midsouth Riley, owned and handled by Bobby Stogner;

Congratulations all! And to those who didn't pass, keep working, it will come.



Master Judges Lisa Neel & Robert Wolfe



Donna smith & Indy at the line

Thanks to our crew of workers — Hunt Test Secretary & Marshal Michele Fletcher, marshals Donna Smith, Janet Summers, and Peter Torok; test workers Alan Bruhin, J. Michael Evans, Brent Naveiro, June Turner and Jim Pearce; member judges Lois Lutheanuer, Lisa Vencille, Mike Smith, and Dennis Wilcox; lunch worker & bill-payer Karen Edwards; and probably others that I didn't see because I was elsewhere making lunch. Many of these listed also helped in other categories — Jim helped with lunches, Lois sold sweatshirts, tees, and jackets and made the pulled pork for the lunch, Mike Smith also worked in set up as well as judging; Alan Bruhin took photos for our facebook page and the newsletter, and more. If I missed you it doesn't mean you weren't appreciated, it just means I am not observant enough!

Fall Hunt Test, Continued







Scenes from the Master Hunt Test — unknown man with Boykin; handler's meeting; June Turner with one of her dogs

Statistics: We had an unusually large number of different retriever breeds participating in this test.

- Labradors led the pack as usual with 58 dogs;
- Goldens were second with 20;
- Flatcoats numbered 7;
- Boykins had 4 represented;
- Poodles and Curly Coated Retrievers were tied with 3 each;
- NSDTRs, better known as Tollers, numbered 2.

There were a total of 54 females and 53 males. Girls have full equality and maybe a bit more in the retriever world!

It was nice to see some of the more unusual breeds participating, and some of them absolutely aced the work at the highest levels! Good job everyone!

Master National 2026

By Alan Bruhin

The 2026 Master National was held in Roseburg Oregon and surrounding areas. I had the opportunity to attend this year and take my two dogs to participate.

Serving on the Master National Board of Directors required me arriving nearly a week in advance to assist with setups. That mostly meant free labor! Sixteen separate tests of land and water were designed by the judges. After each test design, setup dogs ran the tests to determine times to run it and if any adjustments needed to be made. After each test was finalized, a work crew would move in to drive t-post and brush up the blinds. After 4 days all 16 tests were ready to run.

On Thursday morning October 1, all of the participants arrived at the fairgrounds in Roseburg. Handlers picked up packets with information and bibs with their dog's number to wear when running. A Handlers meeting and the annual MNRC business meeting made up the afternoon. That evening everyone was treated to dinner at a local winery. After dinner the starting dog number was selected by none other but a lab owned by the hunt test secretary, Nicole.

Friday morning found handlers and dogs scattered across 5 different testing sites with some of these being an hour and a half away from Roseburg. This made for a very early start to the day!

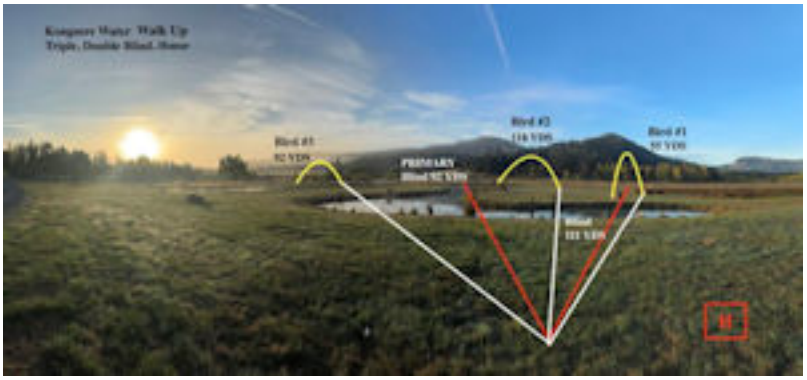


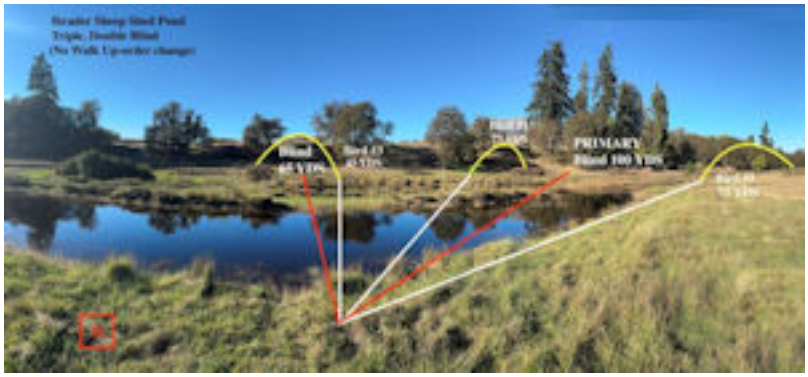
The event lasted for 9 days running 5 flights in 5 series. Plans were to run 6 series, but fog delays 7 of the 9 days prevented that from happening. All together, fog caused us to lose a day or more of testing time.

As the flights completed their final test, an awards ceremony was scheduled to present ribbons and plates to all the successful teams. At the end of the day, 707 dogs started the Master National and 421 passed for a 59.5% pass rate. Of those, 131 dogs were handled by amateurs with a pass rate of 58%.

My dogs followed that statistic, with Cin passing and Jack not. The tests were extremely challenging this year. Very few dogs made it through the test clean, but I was extremely happy with how Cin ran. She ran all 5 series without handling on any marks, and in fact not even having any hunts on the marks. She had some very good blinds as she picked up her second master national pass.



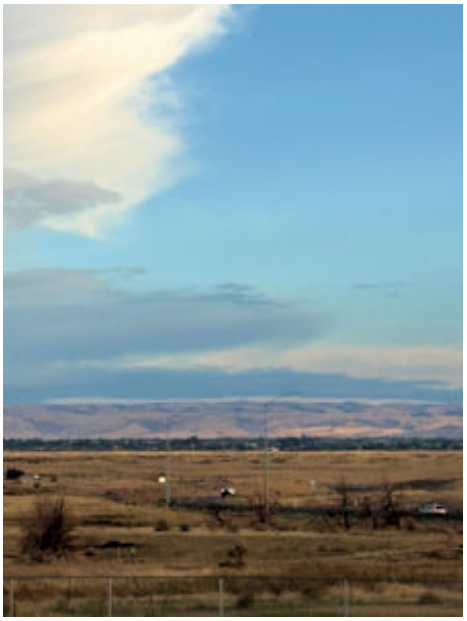




Some of the pictures of the test setups are shown at left. The top one is the Kongsore Water Walkup, and the bottom is the Strader Sheep Shed Pond No Walk Up.

The event itself was only part of the adventure. Driving over 7,000 miles round trip across 11 states made for a Interesting trip. It's truly hard to believe how big this country really is until you make the drive across Wyoming, Idaho and Oregon. Large vast lands crossing mountains, plains and desert. The trip home included hours of rain storms and snow in the Idaho mountains.

Next year's event will be held in South Carolina. I would encourage everyone with a master dog to get qualified and run this event.





ETRC Members at the 2026 Master National

The Master National for 2026 is in the books! The test ran from October 1 through October 11 in beautiful Roseburg, Oregon. 757 dogs were entered in five flights, with around 150 dogs in each flight, and 5 series were completed. 44 dogs scratched before coming to the line, leaving 713 running. Passing rates ranged from 44% to 62%, which still seems like a mighty big spread but probably isn't too surprising considering that each flight had different judges that stayed with the same flight from start to finish, and not all dogs ran on the same grounds or test setups.

Several AKC members made the long trip to Oregon, with the following results:

ETRC Member Dogs participating:

Alan Bruhin took two dogs, Cin and Jack. He is the breeder, owner, and handler on both dogs.

- #B96, Tennessee Cinnamon Fireball MH50 MAH4. Cin made it through all five series and qualified again. This is her third successful pass. See their picture on the front page of this newsletter.
- #B135, Tennessee Gentleman Jack MH25. Jack, who is usually reliable, decided this wasn't his year and was dropped after the 2nd series.

Melissa Dobson took along 12 dogs. Four of them were hers or owned by another ETRC member, and the rest were non-member client dogs.

- #E50, Southern Comfort's Run Your Tail Off MH MNH "Thor", owned by Melissa, Qualified.
- Two other client dogs also qualified.



ETRC Members at the National: Alan Bruhin, June Turner, Michele Fletcher, and Melissa Dobson. Michele did not run dogs, she was there as the MNRC





Master National, Continued

June Turner took two dogs and qualified with both:

- Rr Fetch Me A Mule MH19 MNH (Tito);
- HRCH Rr Mountain Girl Runnin on Shine MH (Mo)

June's comment about the experience: "FOG! Our flight traveled to the North tests and we had fog delays almost every morning.



Other ETRC Connections at the Master National:

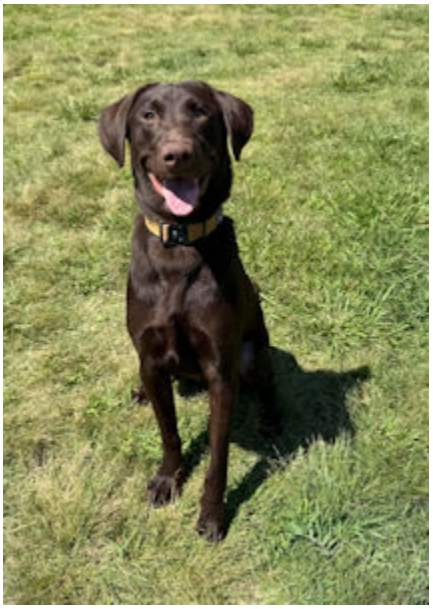


One of two competing Fern Hill dogs bred by Karen Edwards and Jim Pearce qualified:

- #D116 Fern Hill Panda's Sunday Player MH42 (Chi), owned /handled by Bruce Hayes of California
- His littermate sister, Fern Hill Panda's Sunday Best, who has qualified at both the MN and the MA in previous years, decided this was not her year and fell out in the first series.

These dogs are out of Karen & Jim's Fern Hill Pandemonium MH WCX OD ("Panda") by FC AFC The Sunday Swimmer MH WCX OS ("Wyatt"). They are littermates of our Fern Hill Sunday At the Zoo MH OD (Zoey), a 2016 litter.

Chocolate Labrador for Sale



One year old Chocolate Lab male for sale. This dog is a littermate of member Rob Chasse's dog Dottie. The pups just turned a year old on October 25.

The owner bought this dog for service work, but all parties agree he needs to be working "more" than that. Very smart and hard working. He is currently being trained by Kirby Stevens at Timber Ridge Retrievers. Interested parties can contact Kirby at 270-860-6889, or the breeder, Trisha Cross at Upper Cumberland Labradors, (931) 310-1507, with questions.

ETRC Shirts & Jackets for sale!



We have some new options for ETRC wear! Shown at right is the new performance-fabric 'camo green' tee shirt which we now have in stock. We currently have a wide variety of short sleeved and some long sleeve cotton and performance cloth tee shirts in black & a variety of other colors and sizes, including a few childrens' sizes. Prices range from $15-$30.

New cooler weather gear now available:

- A black half-zip heavy cotton sweatshirt/jacket for $35: The ETRC logo is embroidered in color on the left front pocket area. It is available in small numbers in Medium, Large, Extra Large, and 2XL. If you don't see your size, or if you want to make sure to get one of these, let Lois Luthenauer know and we'll see about doing a special order.
- Available, for special order only, is a handsome ightweight full-zip soft shell water-&-windproof jacket with a standup color, available in a range of colors including black, navy, red, purple and more. The embroidered ETRC logo would be in the left pocket area. Price is $70 plus tax, and for an additional $5 you can get your name embroidered as well. This is an excellent gift for someone special or a treat for yourself!

Our hat lineup includes some in camo and different colors, with an embroidered ETRC Logo. Call Lois for more information on availability and current pricing.

If you are interested in getting a special order shirt, or a regular shirt, contact Lois, tell her what you are looking for and your size(s), and make arrangements for her to bring them to one of our events that you will be attending.

Lois's email is MountainLO717@gmail.com, and her phone number is 865-803-1187.

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 web-site for rules and an application form at http://www.etrclub.org/etrc_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 2026 with 4 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. Join or renew now for 2026!

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.