

Northern Nevada Stock Dog Association

June 2009

Volume 1, Issue 1

The Northern Nevada Stock Dog Association (NNSDA) was established to promote the proper training of stock dogs for herding through events and education, and to provide opportunities for herding and herding dog enthusiasts to share their ideas and interests with each other.

NNSDA is a non-profit entity; there is an annual membership fees:

\$25 (Individual)

\$50 (Family)

help to defray event and operating expenses.

Benefits of membership include priority registration and reduced rates at clinics, a monthly newsletter, online training forum, and more.

OFFICERS:

President
Kathy Givens

Vice President
Erin Singley

Secretary Treasurer
Sandra Kinsey

Members at Large
Ann Marie Cuneo
Lori Brower

Advisor
Ian Caldicott

Please address newsletter questions/ comments to

Sandra Kinsey
Sandra@a-capital-idea.com
(916) 410-5186

We're Off To A Great Start!



I'm excited to be president of Northern Nevada's newest herding club. We are unique in what we offer our members and I'm anticipating a great time ahead!

We have been privileged to have had 2 herding clinics given by such a gifted instructor in February and May of this year. I watched so many new members spellbound at this excellent

What's Next?

As Vice President of the NNSDA, one of my responsibilities is to chair two standing club committees, both of which will be involved in locating suitable locations for events such as clinics and trials, and

helping to manage the administrative needs of club activities.

I would like to encourage all our members to consider serving on one (or both) of these committees. Your participation will help to

teaching and so many talented dogs....mostly rescued dogs!

We look forward to more clinics, some in vineyards, some near the ocean, and some deep in sheep country.

We will soon post dates for beginner practice sessions on sheep in the round pen (at New Paradigm Ranch), where so many of your dogs have been tested when Ian was here.

What great exercise it is to work your dog and yourself. I love to watch a working dog work!

Please contact us if you would like to add to our list of fun ideas for future practices, competitions, and get-togethers!!

~Kathy Givens, President

Beginner Practice Sessions Will Start Soon! Reserve a Spot by Calling Kathy: 775 267-4068

ensure that everyone's ideas are represented, but we also need your assistance! If you are inclined to help or have questions, please call me:

775-463-1429

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What's Next (Continued From Page 1)

We would like to host our 3rd clinic of the year in August; Bridgeport, California was suggested as a location with the hope that the altitude would provide cooler weather. It's not good for either dogs or sheep - and, dare I say, people - to work in weather over 90 degrees. If you have any ideas of a suitable location, please let me know. We will get more information to you as the plans take shape.

Practicing with our dogs between now and August will make attendance to the clinic more productive. To that end, Kathy Givens

and Jeanette Evans will be scheduling practice sessions at Jeanette's Ranch in Gardnerville. This leads me to the practice facilities and events committee.

Because traveling to Gardnerville on a regular basis may be difficult for some of us who live outside of the area, the club would like to find other suitable facilities which would give us more opportunities to hone our skills and those of our dogs. This is where I could use your help in finding likely sites and property owners willing to let us use their facilities and herding

stock. I have several ideas for places in Mason Valley and Smith Valley, but I think I am the only member who lives out here so that's not doing anyone besides me much good.

I hope you are taking every opportunity to challenge the mental and physical abilities of your herding dog. I look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions and, most especially, that you want to join a committee! -

~Erin Singley, V.P.



Thanks Kathy Wharton & Rebecca Sawyer for the pictures!

Most of the photos in this newsletter are from both February and May



Training the Trainer

I have been asked to write a monthly newsletter column about training issues.

I would like future columns to be driven by questions from members so please forward any questions you have about any training-related issues to the Editor so that I can address them in the next newsletter.

In this issue, I would like to share a topic that I am often asked about at clinics: *How long does it take to get good at training herding dogs?* I will also be referring to an article which I distribute at clinics entitled "The 10,000 Hour Rule."

People ask me all the time what it takes to get good at herding, be it





Website Plans & Request

We would like to include a picture of you and/or your dog(s) on the website. Please send one in jpeg If possible as soon as possible!

Sandra@a-capital-idea.com

Other plans for the website include the development of a forum where members can post comments, questions, suggestions, ideas, etc.

www.nnsda.com



training or trialing. I believe that with commitment and practice anyone can get good at herding. Certainly some people have more natural aptitude for it than others, but to quote the title of one old herding book “Anybody can do it.” I often hear students complain that they have been herding about once a week for a couple of years without much progress. This is where a little math and logic come in.

“Discouraged Student,” if REALLY consistent over the course of 2 years, has clocked a total of about 100 lessons with a “green” dog, or approximately 1,200 minutes with their dog on stock (about 20 hours). Now think back to any complex set of skills that you have had to learn that didn’t come naturally to you and that you didn’t already have a basic understanding of... something as simple as typing.

You may have taken a typing class in school, say a 20-week course for an hour a day with an average of 40 minutes per class spent practicing your typing. With assignments you probably spent about 20 hours typing. At the end of those 20 hours, if you have been a good student, you are probably typing about 30 words per minute fairly accurately and seldom glancing at the keyboard. Now compare that to a top-flight secretary doing 120 words per minute.

Learning to type is nothing compared to learning everything needed to be a good herding trainer or competitor; a more accurate comparison would be to become a world chess player. That does not mean you can’t or won’t be good at it. It means that it takes time and you need to do more than just show up for lessons. To excel, you need to think about herding and livestock on a regular basis, you read everything you can get your hands on, practice in your head even when you can’t practice in person, in a word, **you need commitment**. What kind of commitment?

There is a popular academic theory that talks about what it takes to get really good at anything. It’s called “the 10,000 hour rule.” This rule - which seems to apply in most fields of endeavor - basically states that it takes 10,000 hours to become really good at something, chess, pole vaulting, wood carving, etc..

What that amounts to - for the less mathematically inclined - is 3 hours a day, every day for 10 years. Of course 10,000 hours does not guarantee success. For a number of activities there is also a prerequisite of natural ability. You can spend 10,000 hours practicing the pole vault and never be world class if you don’t have the natural talent or ability, but you will be very good. This does not mean you have to spend all 10,000 hours out in a field with your dog and a bunch of sheep. You can do many things to cultivate your knowledge and abilities, for example:

- Read books and articles;
- Watch videos with the sound off and pretend you’re the handler, then replay with sound and compare the differences;

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- Have practice sessions in your head, imagine scenarios and how you will deal with them in your mind, how you will move and what you will say;
- Keep a journal that you write in before and after every session about what you plan to do, what you saw, what you learned, what you need to learn more about, or ask your trainer about.

I have been involved with herding dogs for 20 years now. I started just going out once a week and never thinking about it in between and took long stretches off; I am probably at 8,000 hours. I'm good, better at some things than others. I am a better trainer and teacher than I am at competition handling, because that's what I have decided to focus on. I can see there is still plenty of room for improvement, my training methods have grown and evolved, my skills as a handler have slowly improved, my understanding of livestock has grown enormously and my ability to convey my ideas to others has blossomed. My point is that you need to decide what level you want to reach, and make the necessary commitment of time and effort needed to get to that point. For those of you that would like to read more there are several sources online, but perhaps the most popular now is a book called "Outliers" by Malcolm Gladwell.

- Ian Caldicott, Trainer/Advisor



The first NNSDA Membership Meeting was held following the first day of training on May 11th.

A copy of the Membership Meeting Minutes have been attached in an email to all active members.

Financial Summary (As of May 30, 2009):

- Total Deposits - \$2050
Membership dues, clinic fees
- Total Payments - \$1772
Clinic expenses, DBA filing, bank charges
- Balance \$278

If any NNSDA Member would like a detailed account, please let me know and I will make it available to you.

Secretary/Treasurer Report

As you have heard...NNSDA hosted a Stock Dog Clinic with Instructor Ian Caldicott, on May 11-12, at New Paradigm Ranch, Minden, NV. This was our second clinic of the year and attended by more than 25 people and 15 dogs. Everyone received two lessons on day one and three lessons on day two, some with Ian's Border Collie Joe. This was the first experience at herding for several and despite the wind (just leave the fence down), the dust (sorry allergy sufferers), and sheep escaping (it was an accident!), it seems everyone had a great time, learned a lot, and can't wait for next time!

THANK YOU...

- Jeanette, for allowing us to once again "invade your space!"
 - Kathy, for all the time and effort you put into making these clinics a great experience for everyone from making phone calls to making lunch and everything in between;
 - Ian, for being the awesome trainer that you are, and giving each dog and handler the individual attention and encouragement they need;
 - Everyone Who Attended!
- ~ Sandra Kinsey, Secty/Treas.