

CALLBACK

Spring 2009



The Saskatoon Retriever Club Newsletter

President's Message

Well, as winter reluctantly releases its grasp on the flatlands, we can look back on the winter and yell "Good Riddance!" Despite the obscene weather that has characterized much of the season, the club has remained active and keeps planning for the future. As usual, the spring training class has been going on, and as usual, many club members have graciously assisted at our Sunday evening sessions. We have eight dogs this year, and after grinding through the basics, both dogs and handlers are no doubt looking forward to last outdoor sessions in the fresh air.

The club figured prominently at this year's Sports and Leisure show. We had a good sized area to work with and took three appreciative crowds through the basic, intermediate and advanced elements of retriever work. Thanks to all the handlers who took their dogs "off the shelf" to run through their paces. It was a real pleasure to see how impressed the general public was with the excellent drill and retrieving work.

Your executive and the various committees have been busy the last while examining grounds usage and insurance policies. As the club grows and develops, it is important that we anticipate and prepare for potential issues that may arise. A number of proposals relating to land access and non member usage will be presented to the membership at our next meeting on the 28th. Come and provide your input.

Your 2009 membership cards and membership list are enclosed. If there are any errors or omissions, please contact Lynn at 931-1157 or bigskylabs@sasktel.net.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message	1
2009 Event Calendar	2
2008 Spring/Summer Trials and Tests	2
2008 SRC Awards	3
Rainbow Bridge	4-5
Just a Dog	6

On a sad note, this winter was the last one for a number of the more senior retrievers in the club. Brooks, Dune and Char all passed on to that place where all good retrievers go. I don't know if the retrieves there are short and easy, but I'm pretty sure the e-collars all have dead batteries, the skunks don't spray, and all porcupines have been requisitioned as seat cushions in one of the other eternities.

Once the ground reappears (and I am assured it will) we can all get out to prepare for the summer's fun. Don't forget that we have club grounds that will need attention in May, so leave a little weekend time open for some clean up work when the call comes.

- Jeff Morari

Saskatoon Retriever Club President

REMINDERS

- Next SRC general meeting will be Thursday May 28, 2009 at 7:30 pm at Doug & Anne's.
- To submit your article, event notice, story or anything else for the next issue of the Callback, please send it to Dale Johnstone at dale.johnstone@sasktel.net.

2009 Event Calendar

This is shaping up to be a busy year for the Saskatoon Retriever Club. As Jeff mentioned, the annual Spring Training Class is underway and that is just the start of the activities for this year. Here is a preliminary list of events and dates. Please make sure to send any important dates/events to Dale so they can be posted on the website and in the newsletter.

May 16 - 17, 2009

Spring Field Trial

June 6 - 7, 2008

Working Certificate Tests

August 1 - 3, 2008

SRC Hunt Test

May 28, 2009SRC General Meeting
(7:30 PM)**June 27 - 28, 2008**

SRAC Field Trial

Spring Field Trial

The Saskatoon Retriever Club will be hosting our annual Spring Field trial on May 16 and 17th. We are looking for volunteers to help us in many capacities at the trial. We need marshalls (people to help set up and move equipment and throwers and keep the stake running), bird hangers, book marshalls, volunteers to help Anne Hildebrand with the Saturday night tailgate dinner, etc.

If anyone is interested in throwing for a day that would also be greatly appreciated. If you are unsure what you can do to help just give us a call and we will pair you up with someone who is experienced and give you a job. Please call or email. Garry and Sue Taylor 343-4993, sue.taylor@usask.ca .

Work Days

Spring has come and it will soon be time to clean up the clubhouse, the grounds and do a little work to get everything ready for the upcoming season. There will be 2 weekends where we'll be forming work parties. The tentative dates are: May 2-3 and May 9-10. Dates are subject to weather. Generally we work in the morning, have some lunch and usually run dogs in the afternoon. Please come out and lend a hand when you can.

2009 Hunt Tests

For 2009 the committee has decided to run a three day Hunt Test in August rather than a two day test in June and one in August. The dates are going to be August 1 – 3, 2009.

Putting on a 3 day test is going to require a lot of help, so as always we will be looking for volunteers for throwers, marshals, help with dinner, etc. We also hope to have a large silent auction this year so if you have something to donate or can help out with getting donations please contact Helton at 653-3756 or by email at heltonf@yourlink.ca.

2008 Awards

SASKATCHEWAN RETRIEVERS ASSOCIATION AWARDS

HIGH POINT DOG

- FTCH AFTCH NMH GMH Clubmeads Autumn Breeze CDX WCI

HIGH POINT QUALIFYING DOG

- NMH Saskquill's Prairie Thunder MH owner/handler Doug Hildebrand
- GMH TaylorLabs Muddy's Crew WCX,QFTR

SASKATOON RETRIEVER CLUB AWARDS

QFTR

- GMH TaylorLabs Muddy's Crew WCX,QFTR owner/handler John McDonald
- Crew also achieved his GMH title award

Junior

- Bigsky's Morning Anthus JH owner/handler Katherine Brewster
- Bigsky's Morning Mist JH Lynn & Ross Campbell, Handler Lynn
- Prairiestorm Ruby CD WCI JH received JH title
RCL's Prairiestorm Maverick WC JH received JH title
- High Voltage Dawnlit Fen CD, WCX, JH handler Louise Thorpe
Taylorlab Black Jack JH owner/handler Tracy Auchstaetter

Senior

- Wyldfire's Flames Are Roaring WCI SH (Flame) - Senior Hunter
- Owner/handler Charlene Couch
- Trailrunners Neko M J WCX SH (Neko) - Senior Hunter owner Michael Couch, handler Char Couch
- High Voltage Dawnlit Fen CD, WCX, SH owner Louise Thorpe, handlers Louise & Jeff Thorpe

Master

- TaylorLabs Magic Spell WCX MH owner/ handler Tim Fahl

NMH & MH

- NMH FTCH AFTCH TaylorLabs True Blue MH owner/handler Garry Taylor
- NMH Saskquill's Prairie Thunder MH
- NMH Prairiestorm Hawk CDX WCX MH
- Danielle Greanya & Sean Hemmingsen, Ross Campbell

Grand Master Hunter

- GMH TaylorLabs Muddy's Crew WCX,QFTR owner/handler John McDonald
- GMH Blue Goose's Just Call Me Mister QFTR owner/handler Rob McDougal

Grand Master Hunter & NMH

- NMH GMH Clubmead's Thundering Thor MH owner/handler Doug Hildebrand

NMH

- FTCH AFTCH NMH GMH Clubmeads Autumn Breeze CDX WCI

Rainbow Bridge

Sandpocket Charon "Char"

On Sunday March 7th, the Morari family sadly bid farewell to Charon, a trusted and loved companion for over 14 years. Char was the last of the Diamond Jim - Duxback Daisey Mae litter raised by Don and Earla Lardner. A bantam weight black lab whose heart was always the largest part of his body, Char had drive and speed to spare. His titling ended close to the completion of SR. hunter, when a broken bone and "the baseball years" conspired to define his status as a family and a field dog.

Char never seemed to mind. He was always easy going, except when the birds were flying and there was work to be done. Char taught me that pheasant are opium to a retriever, there is no such thing as quitting on a cripple in the dark, and that canine loyalty knows no bounds. He was a great friend to our gang and will be remembered as "the favourite". Char will be laid to rest this spring near his predecessor Brock at a spot where many great retrieves were made.

We will toast his memory while the ducks and geese provide the honorary fly - pass, enroute to renewing the cycle of life. So long old friend.

- Jeff Morari

FTCH AFTCH Sandpocket Diamond Dune MH

We are very sad to let you know we have put down FTCH, AFTCH Sandpocket Diamond Dune MH on Monday February 23, 2009. He was a wonderful dog and we can't remember him ever growling at anyone or anything. Our son Garth would take him home so his children could play with him. They would dress him up and crawl over him. We competed all across Canada with him along with our other dogs (at one time 5 dogs). Once Dune won an open competition in Manitoba with back to back wins. With the loss of Dune, it is a loss of a way of life for Don and I, and the end of an era for us. Dune is buried on the farm with most of the other of our dogs.

- Earla and Don Lardner

TAYLORLABS BARON OF THE BROOKS JH, WCX July 1996- January 2009

After many family discussions, of which I seemed to be on the losing end, it was decided that the family needed a dog. The only concession I received is that it would be a lab that I could use for hunting. We had heard via friends at the university that a lady had assisted in whelping a new litter of 9 pups. This was Pauline Gaudette and through her we got in touch with Garry and Sue Taylor. Upon meeting Garry and Sue, we learned about the Saskatoon Retriever Club and the training class for young dogs. A few weeks later we received Brooks as our puppy. He was a great pup, who was curious, loveable, and had a desire for retrieving.

Continued on p 6

Rainbow Bridge cont.

The class was great and we were introduced to the club and the retrieving world. As first time dog owners we made many errors in training Brooks, as he was never one to let us decide what he needed to do and was a prime candidate for that new SPECIAL collar.

He loved to go hunting and would bounce in excitement anytime the guns or any hunting apparel came out. Brooks had a great desire and always had to come back with a bird, and during hunts he would never give up until his quarry was found. He loved to watch for ducks and like many labs would spot the single or double coming our way before we would.

Trialing and testing was another matter! He could hardly contain himself and often didn't. He quickly became the dog to watch, not because he did a good job, but because it was the entertainment value that was appreciated - the whining, breaking and carefree attitude. He always had to head into the water before picking up a bird. I learned quickly that if we had a land series test to do, I had to let him get wet prior to running the test. If this was not done, the first mark would be via the first waterhole whether it was online to the mark or not. He always knew where the birds were but he just had to get wet first. . (I always hinted to him after the unsuccessful trials that "You know you can be replaced") He wasn't very happy when Crew - his replacement showed up, and it took two or three weeks before he would quit growling at the new intruder.

Brooks was no dummy. He figured out quickly as a young dog how to use the doorbell when asking to get into the house. I initially thought this was by accident, but while on holidays at my parents' and also my sister's house, he would do the same to get in. He was also quite adept at Christmas time and opened up his gifts carefully pulling the wrap off to get to the new toy or treat.

I remember when he was a pup, he would watch waterfowl hunting videos with me and if a bird was shot on the screen he would quickly ran behind the TV to see where it went and if he couldn't find it there, he would check outside the closest window to the T.V.


By far Brooks' best attribute was that he was part of the family, and took great interest in the kids as they grew up and would dutifully watch over any sick member of the family as he lay by their bed until they got better. He was the protector of the house and yard and was quite vocal if no one was home.

Unfortunately, in the fall of 2008, he developed tumours in his nose that were quickly shutting off his breathing and the family decided to put him to rest before he became too uncomfortable.

Brooks, without you our family wouldn't be as it is. We would have missed becoming members of the Retriever Club and developing new friendships. Not only were you a beloved member of the family, but you were an entertaining hunting and training partner. You will be sadly missed and never forgotten by both your families and I was wrong – **"You can't be replaced!"**

Love the McDonald and the Berry families

Just A Dog



From time to time people tell me, “Lighten up, it’s just a dog,” or, “That’s a lot of money for just a dog.” They don’t understand the distance traveled, time spent, or costs involved for “Just a dog.” Some of my proudest moments have come about with “Just a dog.” Many hours have passed with my only company being “Just a dog,” and not once have I felt slighted. Some of my saddest moments were brought about by “Just a dog.” In those days of darkness, the gentle touch of “Just a dog” provided comfort and purpose to overcome the day.

If you, too, think its “Just a dog,” you will probably understand phrases like “Just a friend,” “Just a sunrise,” or “Just a promise.” “Just a dog” brings into my life the very essence of friendship, trust, and pure unbridled joy. “Just a dog” brings out the compassion and patience that makes me a better person. Because of “Just a dog” I will rise early, take long walks and look longingly to the future.

For me and folks like me, it’s not “Just a dog.” It’s an embodiment of all the hopes and dreams of the future, the fond memories of the past, and the pure joy of the moment. “Just a dog” brings out what’s good in me and diverts my thoughts away from myself and the worries of the day.

I hope that someday people can understand it’s not “Just a dog.” It’s the thing that gives me humanity and keeps me from being “Just a man or woman.”

So the next time you hear the phrase “Just a dog,” smile, because they “Just Don’t Understand.

~ Author Unknown