



Midnight Sun Gun Dog  
Association  
P.O. Box 241291  
Anchorage, Alaska 99524-1291

**“Preserve Game, Use a Trained Retriever”**

MIDNIGHT  
SUN  
GUN DOG  
ASSOCIATION



MSGDA Website <http://msgda.org>  
*Check out our web site for more information!*

**BOARD MEMBERS**

- Jeff Carlson- President**  
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email: ccarlson@gci.net
- Kody Bull - Vice President**  
Eagle River: 441-8722 (C)
- Joanne Cobban - Secretary**  
Big Lake: 892-3700 (H); 240-7466 (C)  
email: aklablady@yahoo.com
- John Alexander - Treasurer**  
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- Kent Bull-NAHRA Regional Director**  
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**Paula and Jim Ferguson—Board Members (2)**  
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**Julie Hermans—Board Member**  
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**Mike Walsh—Board Member**  
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*Please come join us!*



MIDNIGHT SUN GUN DOG ASSOCIATION

**2005 FEBRUARY  
NEWSLETTER**

MSGDA Web Site

[http:// www.msgda.org](http://www.msgda.org)

*Check out our web site for more information!*

**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

*by Jeff Carlson*

2004 was a great year for MSGDA! We got a lot accomplished and were busy getting it all done. We held our Board Meeting / Spring Banquet, a 10 week training session, two sanctioned NAHRA hunt tests, and a Fall Fun Hunt at Falcon Ridge. The Fall Fun Hunt was a great success and was a perfect primer for the start of our upland season.

Based on feedback from our membership, our Board has planned yet another busy year in 2005. Here is a quick overview of what we have scheduled for this year. You will find more information and dates about each of these events in this newsletter, as well as at our club website.

- Board Meeting / Spring Banquet
- Sportsman’s Show Booth
- Upland Fun Hunt at Falcon Ridge
- Gun Raffle Fund Raiser
- 2 NAHRA Events
- 3 Picnic Events

New in 2005 we will be holding three picnic events. The picnic events will be training days to simulate actual NAHRA land and water marks. This will give newcomers a chance to be exposed to potential testing scenarios and expose dogs to actual birds before coming to a sanctioned event. Experience handlers will also benefit as it provides another opportunity to get in some field work in and visit with the MSGDA family.

As we go through 2005, the success of our club depends on our members voicing their thoughts and volunteering time to our club. Everyone has something to contribute; it is just a matter of what you enjoy doing and a willingness to help out. Feel free to contact any of the board members to volunteer. Thanks again for making MSGDA a family-oriented club dedicated to hunters and their hunting retrievers.

**JUDGES WANTED**

**Anyone who participates in hunt tests know the judges play a big part. On the surface, they evaluate the performance of dog / handler teams, but they're actually involved in many aspects of the hunt test and it is often their planning, oversight and effort that insures the events run smoothly.**

**It is a common misconception that people who judge have been asked to judge because they know everything. While they may have a significant amount of knowledge and meet judging qualifications, it is the rare person who judges that knows everything.**

**Judging is actually the beginning of an entirely new learning experience, rather than the end result. Anyone who judges with an open mind will readily admit that they learn something new with each judging assignment.**

**The MSGDA, in conjunction with NAHRA, is looking for motivated, dog loving folks to take their training and hunt test involvement to a new level by**

**2005 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

- APRIL 7-10, 2005: MSGDA & FALCON RIDGE BOOTH AT GREAT ALASKAN SPORTSMANS SHOW**  
**APRIL 16, 2005:MSGDA MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND BANQUET AT BIRCHWOOD SHOOTING RANGE**  
**MAY 7, 2005: MSGDA PICNIC TEST, LOCATION HEAVENS FIELD “LAND MARKS”**  
**MAY 21, 2005: MSGDA PICNIC TEST, LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED “LAND MARKS”**  
**JUNE 5, 2005: MSGDA PICNIC TEST, BOYDS FARM “WATER MARKS”**  
**JUNE 25-26, 2005: NAHRA LICENSED HUNT TEST**  
**JULY 23-24, 2005: NAHRA LICENSED HUNT TEST**  
**AUGUST 13, 2005: MSGDA FUN HUNT, FALCON RIDGE**

**Midnight Sun Gun Dog Association**  
P.O. Box 241291, Anchorage, Alaska 99524  
**Membership Application/Renewal**

*The Midnight Sun Gun Dog Association is dedicated to Alaska's hunters and their hunting dogs. Please fill out the information below and mail it with your check payable to the Midnight Sun Gun Dog Association. Thank you for your support!*

Name(s):		Mailing Address		City & State	Zip Code
Home Phone	Work Phone	Mobile/Cell Phone	Fax	Email	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>New Member</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Renewal</b>	Type of Membership (please check one):			
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor* .....	\$100.00		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Contributing * .....	\$50.00		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Family* .....	\$30.00		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Individual .....	\$25.00		
		Additional Contributions .....	\$_____		
		Total Enclosed .....	\$_____		

Please indicate which committees you would be willing to work on:  Membership  Newsletter  Publicity  Fund-raising  
 Education  Hospitality  Field Events

*\* These memberships are entitled to list two voting members per family. Please include names of both voting members on your application.*

**Jim Hagee, D.V.M.**



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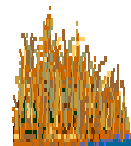
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becoming a judge for the upcoming 2005 season. If you're interested in increasing your personal knowledge and satisfaction while making the hunt tests a success, log on to the MSGDA website and link to the NAHRA website to download the judges test and rules, or contact Kody Bull at 441 8722.

**Ducks Unlimited & Midnight Sun Gun Dog Association Raffle**

**686 Onyx Pro Over and Under 12 Gauge Shotgun**



**WIN THIS GUN!!!**

This shotgun features a 26 inch barrel, will accept 2 3/4 or 3 inch magnum shells, mobile (exchangeable) chokes, vent rib, and Beretta carrying case, MSRP \$2045

The Onyx Pro features the new X-tra wood finish, a special waterproof process that reproduces the rich grain pattern of Beretta premium grade walnut. The action is a low pro-file, improved box lock. The stock and fluted beavertail forend are both X-tra wood with a semi-gloss finish. The stock dimensions include a drop at comb of 1.50" and heel drop of 2.36". This shotgun features the new Gel-Tek recoil pad and a single selective trigger. Also included are a 1/4"x1/4" vent rib equipped with a TruGlo Tru-Bead sight with three choke tubes per barrel and a carrying case included. The average weight of the gun is 6.8 lbs.

**Tickets are \$10 each or 3 for \$25**

**Get a Ducks Unlimited membership with every \$25 purchase!**

**Ticket sales are strictly limited to 250 tickets!**

**Drawing will be conducted as soon as all tickets are sold!**

**We accept cash, check, VISA, MC, AMEX, DISCOVER.**

**Take a chance on a unique gun and support Alaska Ducks Unlimited and America's wetlands while doing it!**

**Contact: Kody Bull at 441-8722**

**How your dog learns**

Pictures, pitch, tone, pleasure and repetition are the keys to retention

By Vic Barlow

Special to ESPNOutdoors.com

Dogs are not big on verbal communication. Whatever you may think, your dog understands very little of what you say. When my wife comes home to find her golden has dug up the new plants she scolds him and he leaves the room sulking.

"Why are you wasting your breath on him?" I ask knowing that Max has difficulty remembering what he did ten seconds ago.

"He knows what I'm talking about," she says wagging her finger at him. But Max doesn't have the slightest idea. She could be swearing the Oath of Allegiance for all he cares. Max simply reads her body language, a skill in which all dogs excel and he knows whatever she's saying is not good.

If you want to put this to the test next time your dog misbehaves and annoys you gesticulate in an irritated manner and shout, "I did not have sexual relations with that woman." You will see your dog cower just as if you had scolded him (that's if he's not laughing).

It must be stressed however that dogs are not easily fooled. Their ability to read your genuine mood is uncanny and feigning annoyance is a waste of time. Pretending to be firm and resolute just won't work. Somewhere in your dog's make up is a built in polygraph that's impossible to beat. It's been handed down from his ancestors and honed by thousands of years of sharp-eyed observation.

It's no good preaching one thing but practicing something else, it won't wash. If you determine that your dog can come into the kitchen but no other room, he'll know if you mean it. Older dogs can read your intentions before you know them yourself. Set out the rules, keep them simple and be consistent



## MSGDA TRAINING LIBRARY AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

We have our training references available for members to check out. The list below is what is available to check out. Any of the books and videos can be checked out by members. We hope that everyone will take advantage of this great opportunity. If you are interested in checking out any books or videos, contact Paula Ferguson at 562-7774 or via email at jpferg44@aol.com. New books are now here!!!

### BOOKS

**Water Dog**, by Richard Wolters  
**Working Retrievers**, by Tom Quinn  
**Tri-Tronics Retriever Training**, by Jim & Phyllis Dobbs  
**Training Your Retrievers**, by James Lamb Free  
**Hunting Retriever**, by Bill Tarrant  
**Retriever Training Test**, by Jim Spencer  
**Retriever Puppy Training**, by Loveland & Rutherford  
**Problem Gun Dogs**, by Bill Tarrant  
**Retriever Training for Duck Hunters**, by Robert Milner  
**Training Retrievers to Handle**, by D.L. & Ann Walters  
**Training Retrievers for Marsh & Meadows**, by Jim Spencer  
**Smartwork Vol I** by Evan Graham  
**Smartwork Vol II** by Evan Graham  
**Smart Fetch** by Evan Graham

### VIDEOS

**Water Dog**, by Richard Wolters  
**Game Dog**, by Richard Wolters  
**Total Retriever Training**, by Mike Lardy  
**Marking** by Mike Lardy  
**Tri-Tronics Video Trained Retrieve Part I "Hold"**  
 by Jim & Phyllis Dobbs  
**Tri-Tronics Video Trained Retrieve Part II "Fetch"**  
 by Jim & Phyllis Dobbs  
**Command Performance** by David Dikeman

## MSGDA AT THE GREAT ALASKAN SPORTSMAN SHOW

This year MSGDA will be sharing a booth with Falcon Ridge and the Arctic Bird Dog Association. This years Sportsman Show will be at the Sullivan and Ben Boeke Arena, April 7-10. Stop by and say hello!!



## 2005 PICNIC TEST SCHEDULE

This year MSGDA will be conducting 3 picnic hunt tests. These will be mock hunt tests with the intention to show new members how the NAHRA hunt test can help improve your dog in the duck blind, as well as in the pheasant field. This also will be a great time to learn some training tips. Also, this is a great time to shake off the rust of a more seasoned dog from the long winter.

DATE	LOCATION	TIME	EVENT
May 7	Heavens field	9:30am	Land
May 21	TBA	9:30am	Land
June 5	Boyds Farm	9:30am	Water

All events will include land or water marks, as well as land or water blinds. This will be a great time to meet other members and develop training groups. Ducks and pigeons will be used for all events. June 5 will be a potluck lunch with MSGDA providing hot dogs and hamburgers and pop! Please bring a lunch for all other events. Price *PER EVENT* will be \$10 *PER DOG* for members and \$15 *PER DOG* for non-members. Please check [www.msgda.org](http://www.msgda.org) for any changes or updates.

All MSGDA events are family events we hope you bring the whole family.

**Help/Volunteers:** These events are made possible by volunteers. If you can help out, please contact Paula Ferguson at 562-7774. Your help is appreciated



at all times. Your dog will respect you for it.

### Pictures

Pictures are very important to your dog. He gains much of his learning from the illustrations he sees before him. When my young dogs go training they jump up into the truck with me standing on the *right hand side* holding the door open. I call each of them by name and give the command, "Inside." One by one they load up. Last week, for reasons I can't remember, I stood on the *left hand side* of the truck and went through the same routine but none of them moved. The command remained the same but they were unsure until I realized that I had inadvertently changed the picture. I switched sides and they jumped in without hesitation. Associating a picture with a command helps their learning process enormously.

Raising your right hand when you give the command to 'sit' creates a recognizable picture and repetition helps them understand. Later, in the field you will be creating different pictures to help them grasp more complicated concepts.

### Pitch and tone

Your dog interprets your tone of voice much better than he understands your words. If you growl at him in a deep voice and tell him 'No' he will pick up the meaning much quicker. When you want to confirm that he is doing the right thing say, 'Good boy' in a high-pitched voice. Dogs like this high tone and will work to hear you use it. Be consistent at all times. Don't suddenly change 'No' to 'Bad boy', or you will confuse him. Recently I heard a handler say to his errant young dog: "Y'all ought to be ashamed of yerself. It ain't no good being sorry. Fer two pins I'd whip your ass." God knows what his dog was thinking? All he needed was a firm 'No.'

You will never hear your retriever laughing but he knows what it means. Dogs haven't observed us for centuries without realizing that laughter indicates approval. So don't snigger at your dog's antics unless you want to encourage a repeat performance. Should you find your young pup has chewed your gun slip to ribbons do not laugh, in fact, don't even smile. He'll take it as a clear sign of consent and the state may run out of gun slips before you can cure him.

### Pleasure versus displeasure

Dogs learn by the contrast of pleasure and displeasure caused by their own actions. A young pup that is rewarded with a slice of hotdog sausage for responding to the recall whistle will soon compare this to the scolding he receives when he ignores it. Do not make a big fuss of your dog for doing nothing. Make him work for your approval. It's a powerful tool that you can use in training throughout his entire life. You want him to place a high value on your relationship

and you can only do this by restricting your petting and praise to times when he has completed a difficult task. If you are constantly fussing him your approval will mean nothing. He will know that he can gain it any time without effort.

With a young pup you need to *lead* him into doing the right thing. If you ask him to 'sit' hold his head up with the leash so that he's naturally inclined to lower his bottom. The moment it touches the floor tell him, 'Good boy' in a high-pitched voice.

As he matures and moves into formal training he must be *made* to do the right thing and experience displeasure if he chooses to disobey. (We will talk about praise and pressure in the future)

Be careful not to inadvertently reward or re-enforce 'inappropriate behavior'. If your pup runs off with your slipper do not make the mistake of chasing after him. It will only show him how much pleasure is to be had by running away with a retrieve object. Later on it could be a duck.

That's why retriever training is so time consuming. It's not because of the duration of each session it's due to the number of repetitions required in so many different locations. You may think that your dog knows when you hold your right hand out and say 'over' he should go right but that's not how he reads it.

From his standpoint he sees you holding out your right hand against the background of a white fence. When you move to new ground the picture changes. He now sees you, right arm extended, framed by a hillside. What's that supposed to mean to him?

Perhaps at the next location when you extend your right arm you will be stood in front of a tree creating yet another new picture? After many repetitions he will finally work out that the one consistent communication is the extension of your right hand and the command 'over.' Then, and only then, will he truly understand.

*This column was excerpted from Vic Barlow's book, "British Training for American Retrievers"*

## MSGDA ANNUAL BANQUET & MEMBERSHIP MEETING

This years banquet and membership meeting will be held Saturday April 16th, 2005 at Birchwood Shooting Range. Festivities to include dinner, door prizes, silent auction, and live auction. A email and flyer with more details will be sent to all MSGDA members. Also check our website, [msgda.org](http://msgda.org) for more information. To RSVP or for any further info, please contact Paula Ferguson at jpferg44@aol.com or 562 -7774.