



# Charlie Trayers' Cowdog Notes



The official newsletter of  
Trayers' Cowdogs™ • Cottonwood Falls, KS

Winter 2002 Issue

## Trayers' Cowdogs™ Upcoming Events

**January 12, 2002**  
*Purina Mills Beef Cattle  
Improvement Clinic w/Curt Pate*  
Victoria, TX

**February 14, 2002**  
*Purina Mills Beef Herd  
Improvement Seminar*  
Bowling Green, KY

**February 19, 2002**  
*Nebraska Cattlemen's Classic*  
Kearney, NE

**March 2, 2002**  
*Purina Mills Dog Expo*  
Manhattan, KS

**May 25-26**  
*Cowdog Clinic &  
ACDA Annual Meeting*  
Cottonwood Falls, KS

**September 25, 2002**  
*Purina Mills Equine  
Education Seminar*  
Longview Lake, Kansas City, MO

For more information call Trayers'  
Cowdogs at (620) 273-8472 or visit  
[www.ranchersguide.com/cowdogs.html](http://www.ranchersguide.com/cowdogs.html).

Please confirm all dates.

## Trayers' Cowdogs™

Cowdogs for Sale  
Training Clinics

Charlie Trayer  
Route 1 Box 42  
Cottonwood Falls, KS 66845  
**(620) 273-8472**

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## Are You Thinking of Buying a Cowdog?

There are several things to consider when buying a cowdog.

First you need to consider the types of dogs to buy—they include puppies, started dogs, and finished dogs. Puppies range in age from seven weeks to five or six months old and have had no training. Started dogs range from dogs that are 10 to 12 months old and just started on cattle and that will stop when told and will come when called to 18- to 24-month-old dogs that have more training and more actual work in various cattle situations.

Finished or advanced dogs are dogs 24 months old and older and have had a lot of work handling cattle in a lot of different situations including handling small groups, large herds, wild yearlings, and cows with calves. These dogs have worked in all types of terrain.

You also need to consider your experience training and handling cowdogs. If you have

not trained a dog before, you must ask yourself if you are willing to dedicate yourself to the task and allow time to learn. If you do have experience handling cowdogs, have you trained young dogs? Have you been successful and had dogs you could control? If not, you will need to sharpen your skills.



Next, consider what type of work you want your cowdog to do. Do you want to gather and handle cows with calves, gather and handle yearlings, work in a feedlot type of situation, or do you need a dog that can handle all of these situations?

If you're going to buy a pup, you will need to allow

time for the pup to grow up. You can start introducing your pup to stock at a very young age—five or six months, but I think it is a mistake to do very much training before 10 to 12 months. A pup needs time to grow up and get mentally mature before he can be expected to stand intense training or to work cattle.

At least once or twice a week I get a phone call that goes about like this, "I was wondering what you have in the way of a started dog. I don't need a dog that has a lot of fancy training. I just have a few cows," they will say, adding that they have anywhere from 25 to 100 and they are not too wild. "I just need a dog to go in the brush and get them out and help me pen them so I can doctor them and wean calves." they'll say.

Well, this sounds simple enough but I will tell you right now it just does not work this way. To begin with, when you are handling cows with calves

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# Charlie Trayer Hosts Beef Improvement Clinic with Curt Pate



Charlie Trayer & Curt Pate demonstrate to clinic attendees the proper technique for doctoring a heifer.

On September 19, 2001, Midwest cattlemen gathered at the Cottonwood Ranch for a very unique all-day clinic centered around beef cattle handling techniques with Charlie Trayer and Montana cowboy and horse trainer, Curt Pate.

Charlie started the day off with a working cowdog demonstration and then Curt demonstrated basic roping techniques before the lunch break.



Curt Pate demonstrates proper roping technique.

Lunch was prepared and served by Purina Mills, LLC district representative Ernie Rodina and after the meal Purina Mills representative, Drew Shain, gave an informative seminar on beef cattle nutrition.

During the afternoon, clinic participants watched as Charlie and Curt demonstrated a variety of roping and cattle handling techniques including

the proper method for laying down a cow both with and without assistance. Both cowboys focused their techniques on safety of cow and cowboy.

At the end of the day, a drawing sent Purina Mills products and Trayers' Cowdog merchandise home with several clinic participants.

Another Purina Mills sponsored Beef Cattle Improvement Clinic featuring Charlie and Curt is scheduled to be held in Victoria, TX January 12, 2002.

For more information on Curt Pate and his horsemanship clinics, check out his website at [www.curtpate.com](http://www.curtpate.com).

## Buying a Cowdog, continued from first page

regardless of how gentle the cows are they are going to fight the dog or dogs. To put a young started dog in this situation, regardless of how much potential he shows will more times than not set him back in his training or ruin him completely. What you will ruin is his confidence in himself to handle cattle.

It takes an older cowdog to go gather and stand up to cows with calves and whip the cows so they will handle well. When a cow, or cows, come charging at and trying to run down a dog, I want a dog that will fight and whip them, but at the same time have enough brains to get out of the way and save his life when he needs to. A dog that doesn't have the sense to get out of the way probably won't do you much good tomorrow when he is dead.

To handle very many pairs you really need two or more dogs. One dog will just simply be over powered. Two dogs can do so much more work than one alone.

If you are wanting a dog to handle

stockers, the dog will have to do a different type of work. Stockers are going to do a lot of running to start with and will scatter if not held together. For a dog to handle this, he needs a lot of experience knowing how to herd and keep the cattle gathered in one group.

If you are working in a feedlot situation, most of the time you will be working fresh cattle that have never been handled with dogs. It takes a pretty tough dog to handle this type of cattle day in and day out. Another point I would like to make is most young dogs do not have the endurance to stand up to very hard work day after day until they are around 20 months old.

A situation that happens too frequently is when someone will see good dogs work while being handled by an experienced handler and think it looks easy. They will want the same results, but not want to spend the money to buy an advanced dog. Instead, they buy a well-bred pup and take

him home to grow up. After a few months the pup starts to go to cattle but is always in the wrong place or is doing something wrong. The new owner does not understand this because he thinks this well bred dog should know what to do naturally.

Another problem occurs when a started dog that is demonstrated handling a small group of cattle that are dog broke. The young dog does great with the job he is given to do, but the new owner takes the young dog home and sends him out to gather some calves that are fresh or some pairs and the young dog acts like he never saw a cow before in his life. Either situation is a bad deal with an unhappy dog owner. In either instance the new owner is going to have to become a cowdog trainer if he is going to get along. He is going to have to work at it—it is not going to just happen.

These are a few things to think about before you buy a dog, good luck and I hope you make the right choices.

-Charlie Trayer

# A Visit with John Lavelle of Ohio

In November I had a visit from John Lavelle from Ohio. It was a real pleasure to finally meet John. Four years ago, John bought a female pup from me by picking it from a video I had sent him. The pup is out of Smoke by Spade and a littermate to my Lil. The pup was picked up by some employees of John's who were hauling horses to Colorado.

I had never met John, but had talked to him many times on the phone. I had wondered many times how the pup was doing, but never knew for sure. When John stopped by this Fall it was on a Sunday and he had his dog with him, her name is Lady. John came in mid-morning and was only planing to stay a short time and then get headed home. After visiting a little while we went out to work some dogs. We would work one set of young dogs then get another set and work them.

Time kind of got away and first thing we knew it was starting to get dark. Off and on through the day, John would work Lady. I was very impressed with how John had done with training his dog. To begin with, he had never trained or handled a stockdog before

Lady. He had bought one of Gary Ericsson's videos which I recommend to him and trained Lady by himself without help from another trainer or an older dog. Lady isn't perfect, but she sure is a good dog and can get the job done.

I'm sure John had a lot of disappointments and a lot of frustrations working with his young dog but he stayed with it and has done a good job. I sure respect someone like this, someone who is determined to do something, stay with it and see it thru.

John bought another young dog from me that day named Spud. I got a card from him a few days ago and he is getting along very well with Spud—although it didn't just happen. John had to make some adjustments in the way he handled Spud.

I think John is a good example of the way people should try to get along with their dogs. When things don't go just right, back up and try a different approach— go back to basic methods. I wish the best of luck to John and know he will get along well with his dogs.

-Charlie Trayer

## Cowdog Clinics

One & two day intensive hands-on clinics  
with Charlie Trayer of Trayers' Cowdogs™

**Starting Young Dogs**  
**Basic Training & Handling Techniques**  
**Advanced Training**

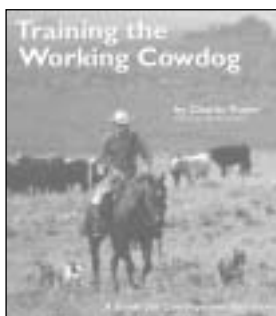
Call (620) 273-8472  
for more information or to book a clinic!

## Charlie Trayer named to Tri-Tronics Advisory Staff



Tri-Tronics, Inc. recently asked Charlie to join their advisory staff. The staff consists of one expert from each field of dog training. Charlie is serving as the staff's stockdog training expert.

In January, Charlie attended a special advisory meeting held at Tri-Tronics headquarters in Tucson, AZ.



**Finally!**

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train the working  
cowdog.**

**Basic & Advanced Training for the Working Cowdog.**

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Mail form to: Trayers' Cowdogs, RR1 Box 42  
Cottonwood Falls, KS 66845

# Cowdog Training Clinic Scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend

Trayers' Cowdogs will host a cowdog training clinic with Charlie Trayer Saturday, May 25 at the Cottonwood Ranch in Cottonwood Falls, KS. The clinic will have something to offer both beginning and advanced dogs and trainers.

The training clinic will begin at 8 a.m. with a session for beginning dogs and/or handlers. At 1 p.m., there will be a session for more advanced dogs and handlers.

On Sunday, May 26, the American Cowdog Association will

hold their annual association meeting. Members and non-members may attend free of charge. A cowboy cowdog trial for Hangin' Tree Cowdogs will be held after the association meeting.

Purina Mills, LLC will serve lunch during both the clinic and the annual meeting.

For more information, or to reserve your place for the cowdog clinic, call Trayers' Cowdogs at (620) 273-8472.

We'll see you there!

## **Beginner & Advanced Cowdog Training Clinics with Charlie Trayer**

Saturday • May 25, 2002 • \$100 per dog

## **American Cowdog Association Annual Meeting**

Sunday • May 26, 2002 • FREE!

Hangin' Tree Cowdog Working Trial

**Lunch (for the humans) provided by  
Purina Mills both days.**



### **Trayers' Cowdogs**

Cottonwood Ranch  
Route 1 • Cottonwood Falls, KS 66845  
(620) 273-8472