

The Gun Dog Supreme

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Briar of Bogan's Point owned by Robin Strathy doesn't miss a beat at Exposure Day for the Rocky Mountain Chapter. *Photo by John Trotter*

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hunting season is finally underway for most of the country and many of you have already shared some wonderful pictures and stories. Good for you! Keep the photos and articles coming so we can share your early season bird-chasing adventures with the rest of the club! Rick Sojda and Mike Reilly (newly-appointed Rocky Mountain Chapter field test chairman) co-authored a great piece about their dogs' ummm, shall we say, abilities in the field while pursuing Montana Sharptails.

For the rest of us on the West Coast, hunting season is not yet in full-swing. Mountain Quail has begun, but Valley Quail/Chukar seasons open up this Saturday. The waiting is tough. A few of us have new pups and are eager to get them on feathered game. I included an article on two particular pups that made their way all the way to California from Minnesota. These pups are siblings from **B-litter of Cattail Storm** bred by Damon Bovard. Here's a great update for you Damon! :)

You'll also find a piece written by friend and vet. colleague Lisa Boyer about preparation for the hunting season (better later than never I suppose) and another written by John Trotter giving his account of a successful exposure day in Montana. Hope you enjoy them all!

Anna C. Ziedins

Nominations for National Club

Officers (3yr term) 2006-2009:

You will all remember from reading your copy of the constitution, which you received when you joined the griffon club, that we have our own election every 3 years. If you wish to nominate someone for an executive position, other than the four current officers, please get their permission first, then have the nomination in writing, to the secretary Judy Coil, no later than November 15th.

EDITORS

Rem DeJong
Greg Hurtig
John Pitlo
Anna Ziedins

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Judy Coil
49625 Waldo Rd NE
Kelliher MN 56650
Ph (218) 647-8451
jcoil@paulbunyan.net

ARTICLE SUBMISSION

Send articles or proposals 2 months prior to the issues printing to:

Rem DeJong
809 West Kaye Avenue
Marquette, MI 49855

Ph: (906) 228-6475 (EST)
e-mail: Rem.DeJong@wpgca.org

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Marquette, MI 49855

Ph: 906-228-6475(EST)

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Rocky Mountain Exposure & Training Day

*By
John Trotter*

On July 18th, club members, friends, and dogs gathered for our annual summer event in Willow Creek, Montana at the home of Diane and Randy Ross. As was the case last year, Diane and Randy were great hosts. Good spring moisture again made for excellent cover and abundant water. The ninety degree weather and a lack of wind challenged the dogs and the observers. Twelve dogs participated in the day's events, and nearly forty guests and club members were present.

A highlight of the day was the opportunity to see two twelve-week-old pups from the "C" litter of Salmon River. The youngsters showed good promise, particularly in the area of retrieving. Thanks to Greg Gingerich and son, Ridglee, for making the long trip from Steamboat Springs with their young male, Cieger Hahn! Cree, of that same "C" litter, will certainly make John and Angie McDunn proud. The McDunns were kind to share some of their training expertise, along with Tawna Skinner, at a noon presentation around the training table. Kudos to both Tawna and Anita Andrus for driving over from Salmon, Idaho. Their many years of club leadership continues to be greatly appreciated. We enjoyed the chance to see Anita's CKC Griff, Josette.





Previous pg: **Czieger Hahn of Salmon River** relaxes with Greg Gingerich's son Greg.

Above: J.J. & Theresa Conner with daughter Kaylee and Griff's Athena and Bella.

Opposite page: Mike Vance, still recovering from surgery, takes it easy with his dog **Bijou of High Desert** in close attendance. *All photos taken by John Trotter*

Speaking of leadership, since board member, Glenn Lehrer, was off doing WPGCA work at a Pheasants Forever event, someone had to fill in as our host. Glenn tapped Rick Sojda to emcee, and Rick did a super job of orchestrating the day. His dog, **Ander of the Hundgaard**, showed the younger dogs how it's done! Glenn did send his grandsons, Blake and Austin, and they filled in as bird handlers for Mike Vance, who's recuperating from orthopedic surgery. Mike's wife, Conoco, handled Griff's **Aya of Dakota Prairie** and **Bijou of High Desert** with her usual enthusiasm. Rumor among the Bozeman gang is that the Lehrers are expecting a new four-legged WPGCA arrival. Lyla Lehrer and Griff, **Bessie of the Hundgaard**, seemed low-key as they enjoyed the shade.

Introducing friends and new members to the WPGCA is an important part of this yearly event. We were glad to meet the Oswell family (friends of the Lehrers), as well as the Adelmans (Hy, Brook, and son, Jake), who will be getting a pup in August. John Trotter brought hunting buddy, Paul Wagner, from Cody, Wyoming. Paul's lab pup, Annie, did well in tracking and water work. Mike Reilly's son, Jon, was home from Cambridge, Massachusetts, and they enjoyed getting club Griff, **Amos of Dakota**

Prairie some work. Jim McDermond of Billings brought **Bobbie McGee of Eagle's Point** for some exposure. Jim didn't get to hunt as much as usual last season for health reasons. We're glad Jim's feeling better, and we enjoyed meeting his daughter, Karlee.

Others who attended included club regular Robin Strathy, who brought **Briar of Bogan's Point** and AKC Griff, Sophie; Chuck and Tammie Gozelanski of Helena, who worked **Benelli of Glacier Ridge**; the McDunn's friends, Tony Lenz and Luella Schultz; the Kluchkos of Bozeman (Bill and Katie), with AKC Griffons Fritz and Bucky, as well as Shawn Olsen with Montana and Bridger.

Our youngest (two-legged) participant and newest club arrival was J.J. and Theresa Conner's daughter, Kaylee. For some of us this was the first chance to see this future handler. We're glad that mom, dad, and daughter are thriving after a rocky 2008. Their Griffis, **Bella of High Desert** and **Athena of Glacier Ridge** will enjoy their new companion in the years to come.

For visitors to this chapter's events, the sense of family among its members is always evident. Geography and weather sometimes present issues that make us differ from our fellow chapters, but the comraderie of this group goes a long way to diffuse such matters. We hope that March 2009 will bring the opportunity to share hunting successes and stories of young Griffons with our brethren across the divide.



Jeroming: The Gerund

By

Rick Sojda & Mike Reilly

So Rick Sojda and I were hunting grouse yesterday in Notellum Gulch in the fine coulees and mountains of Montana. We had hunted for sharptails and huns a couple of hours in the morning, with lots of points, lots of shooting, and very little game in the bag. Truth be told, returning to the truck, I had but two shells remaining in my vest and only one bird. But then, Rick had no birds, and plenty of empties, himself. Both **Amos of Dakota Prairie** (my dog) and **Ander of the Hundgaard** (Rick's dog) were working pretty well and finding lots of birds. They weren't holding particularly well (the birds not the dogs) and some of the shots we took were tricky but makeable—except that we were making hardly any of them. I was on the verge of disassembling one of my shotgun shells to see if, maybe, I'd gotten a box where the manufacturer had neglected to put any pellets in the shells. Either that, or we'd stumbled into a mutant population of sharptails who had been hunted so much that they'd evolved Kevlar feathers over the years. Since we were on not-so-heavily hunted private land, we were both clamouring for a better answer. I'm far from a dog psychic, but I thought I could sense an air of bemused frustration on the parts of Amos and Ander.

In the afternoon, we gained nearly a thousand feet in elevation and switched to hunting mountain grouse in some thick aspen. It was awesome habitat. Again, lots of flushes, a couple of shots, but no birds in the bag. Rick thought he had one down, but the dogs disagreed, and we found nary a feather. We worked around the downslope of an aspen grove when Rick calls out that Amos is on point. I look about 20 yards upslope and there he is, locked up on the other side of a small shrub. I start to walk up, and as I get closer I can see that there are a couple of grouse under the bush, and that they are pinned between Amos and me. I get ready to shoot, thinking that since one is pointed Rick's direction, he'll probably (or maybe not, as Ander often relates) get that one. The other one is mine, all mine.

I come to within about 10 yards and the first bird goes Rick's way, as planned. Rick's 20 gage pops and drops the one barreling his way. Smiling Ander goes in for the retrieve. The second bird flaps a time or two in preparation for a hurried departure, and Amos just dives in and grabs him. I convince Amos to give me the bird he caught. Those of you who've watched Amos at his Native Ability and Intermediate Hunting Dog tests may recall that there is occasionally some discussion about exactly to whom the bird really belongs—indicative of my relative lack of training ability. Rick looks over and remarks "Wow, you got one too. I never saw the second bird. We must have shot simultaneously. Cool. A double." While I was tempted to tell him that I was tired of missing and had used my psychokinetic powers to down the bird, I fessed up and told him what happened.

I modestly continued by saying that Amos was just performing what he had demonstrated at his IHDT in Jerome, where he found all the planted birds by walking in and picking them up. And, of course, Ander relates to that saga all too well, himself. Rick



Here is the staunchest point of the season for **Amos of Dakota Prairie** (owner Mike Reilly). Amos seems to be thinking “I swear there is a Sharptail right here, I know there is” This is NOT a picture of **Ander of the Hundgaard** (owner/photographer Rick Sojda) because Ander is approximately 3 miles west, chasing the bird Amos thinks he is pointing. An A+ is granted to Amos for staunchness. NO grade for Ander for steadiness to wing. The bird escaped because the photographer was only shooting digits!

decided that we’d officially created a new word—Jeroming. For those of you who are English Language People—obviously having read this far, you can tell that I am not—this is actually a “Gerund”, which is a noun made into a verb by adding the letters “-ing” to the end. Don’t ask me why adding ends in “-ing”; add is not a noun but rather a verb. As I said, I’m not an English Language Person. Anyway, I submit for inclusion into the WPGCA Lexicon:

Jeroming— the acquiring of a game bird through the simple expedience of walking in and grabbing it.

Happy hunting, with or without, your shotgun!

Are You *REALLY* Ready For Hunting Season?

By Lisa A. Boyer, DVM

Eight years ago, if anyone had told me I would become a hunter, I would have bet them a large sum of money that it would never happen. When I married my husband Robert, it was with a clear understanding that hunting was one of *those* things that he would be doing without his wife. We were a Labrador-owning family and not once, had I any interest in their hunting endeavors. Who would have guessed that our Griffon would change my mind so quickly? I have been the primary handler and trainer of our Griff and through this experience, decided that I really liked taking our dog out to do what she loves most. I truly enjoy working with her and last weekend, I made the plunge and got my first hunting license. My first real hunt was a dove hunt a few weeks ago. It became apparent to me through preparing for this trip, that there was more to hunting readiness for our Griff than just loading her up and taking her out to hunt.

Pre-Season Health Considerations

I highly recommend you schedule your hunting partner for a physical examination with your veterinarian about 2 – 3 months prior to hunting season. Depending upon the age and physical condition of your dog, your vet may have specific recommendations regarding nutrition and pre-season conditioning. Your veterinarian may also detect health conditions that could put your dog at risk in the field. For example, undiagnosed hypothyroidism or other endocrine disorders can lead to serious complications with the physical demands of hunting. In addition, you may wish to update vaccinations that would safeguard the health of your Griff as well as those people and dogs with whom your hunting buddy comes into contact.

No one wants to vaccinate pets unnecessarily, so it's important to become familiar with the vaccines that are needed or recommended for hunting dogs. Although most of the diseases we immunize against are unique to dogs, some of these diseases are "zoonotic" which means that the disease is transmitted between animals and people. I don't recommend the same vaccine protocol for all of my patients. Each dog receives specific recommendations based on age, health and risk of developing the disease. Depending upon your geographic location, the following vaccinations should be strongly considered for your hunting dog. Just as an aside, Rabies vaccination is not discussed separately here. It is considered a core vaccine for all dogs, not just hunting dogs, and the need for them should be considered a "no brainer". Rabies is a fatal disease!

DA2PP (DHPP) – This vaccine is also considered a core vaccine for all dogs, regardless of breed and exposure. It covers Distemper, Adenovirus (Hepatitis), Parvovirus and Parainfluenza. The vaccine should be given to puppies starting at 8 weeks for a series of 3-4 vaccines. It is boosted at 16 months and then given every 3 years thereafter. None of these viral diseases are transmissible to people, but they are common preventable diseases. The vaccine has a low risk of vaccine reaction when administered properly.

Leptospirosis – This bacterial disease is zoonotic and hunting dogs, depending upon location, are at risk for contracting this potentially deadly infection. The bacteria

are shed by wildlife in their urine into natural water sources. People and dogs become infected by coming into contact with the bacteria in the water or with contaminated food, bedding, soil or other objects. Lepto bacteria prefer warm weather so summer and fall (hunting seasons) pose a particular risk. Infection may cause kidney failure, central nervous system disease or even sudden death in dogs and people. In small breed dogs and young puppies, this vaccine has a moderate incidence of adverse reactions. In my practice, I do not vaccinate dogs less than 6 months of age with Leptospirosis and I do not combine this vaccine with any other vaccines. The vaccine is a two shot series (3-4 weeks apart) and then it's boosted annually.

Lyme Disease – This is another zoonotic disease and is now common in most of the United States. The disease is spread via the bite of an infected tick. The infection is transmitted only after the tick has become partially engorged (24-48 hours after attachment to the host). There are studies now that suggest a pregnant bitch can even transmit this infection to her puppies in utero. Lyme disease can cause an inflammatory condition of the joints, heart, central nervous system as well as other tissues. Recurrent episodes result in chronic disease and arthritis in people and dogs. While a "bull's eye" lesion often occurs at the site of the tick bite in humans, it is not often found in dogs. The vaccine is an annual vaccine and is usually reserved for dogs considered high-risk for coming in contact with ticks.

Rattlesnake Vaccine – This vaccine is somewhat controversial although I do use it in my practice in California. The vaccine is specific for the Western Diamondback Rattlesnake and there is no evidence that cross-protection extends to dogs bitten by other species of rattlesnakes. The vaccine is designed to neutralize the snake venom and reduce the likelihood that anti-venom treatment will be needed which can be difficult to find and very expensive. Vaccinated dogs still require immediate treatment for the bite wound, but the vaccine often gives you more time to make it safely to the emergency veterinarian. The initial vaccine is a two shot series with an annual booster about a month prior to the start of snake season.

Parasite Control/Heartworm Prevention – Many people don't realize the importance of flea, tick and parasite prevention. Parasites (both external and internal) can be transmitted via infected animals and the environment. Some parasites are zoonotic and your family can be at risk of infection as well. Many of the parasites can cause gastrointestinal distress, vomiting, diarrhea, lung damage and other health issues. Fleas and ticks especially, can carry diseases leading to serious illness in your pet. In addition, ingestion of fleas causes tapeworm in dogs and cats. Heartworm is present in many areas of U.S. and is transmitted via mosquito. Four months after being bitten by an infected mosquito, worms migrate through the heart and lungs and eventually cause death. Treatment for this disease is painful and expensive. We are fortunate that we have products on the market that will prevent fleas, ticks, heartworm and other parasites, all in a single product. Be aware, some over-the-counter flea and tick medications are ineffective and can be toxic. Please check with your vet for specific recommendations. The cost of parasite prevention is reasonable, and there are effective generic brands available

Hunting Readiness: Physical Conditioning

Human athletes train year-round to build and maintain their strength and endurance. It would be unreasonable for a person to expect to be able to go out and run 10 miles without proper conditioning. The same holds true for our canine athletes. We have a challenge because strenuous exercise can be difficult during the summer just prior to hunting season due to high temperatures and the risk of heat stroke or exhaustion. But, it is critical that an exercise and conditioning program start at least 6 weeks prior to taking your dog out on a strenuous hunt. Training sessions should be thought out ahead of time. Restrict activity to cooler parts of the day, and be sure to include a warm up and cool down period. It should encompass different terrain and conditions that your dog is likely to encounter when working. The workouts can be done in one long session or broken up into several short sessions, depending upon your dog's mental and physical state. Walking is excellent for conditioning, especially if it includes hills and varying terrain and the pace of the walk is brisk. Swimming is a non-impact exercise that also has major cardiovascular and musculoskeletal benefits. Most dogs will adapt readily to walking and running on a treadmill. Any exercise program should begin slowly and allow adequate time for your dog to adapt and gain muscle strength and endurance.

Hunting Readiness: Nutrition

Year-round, all dogs should be fed a nutritionally balanced diet. A hunting dog is a "performance dog" and during hunting season, their nutritional needs change dramatically. The energy expenditure of your dog depends on several factors. It is critical to recognize the special nutritional needs of your dog before, during and after hunting. As a general rule, hunting dogs should be fed a diet higher in protein and fat during hunting season than the rest of the year. A "puppy" food is approximately 30% protein and this is what I would target during the season.

While in the field, during the first 5 minutes of exercise or during short bursts of activity, all dogs use glycogen (the storage form of glucose in the muscle and liver) as fuel. An untrained or poorly conditioned dog relies heavily on glycogen stores for the duration of activity. The dog has limited glycogen stores and when the glycogen is deple-



ted, his performance is significantly impacted and their focus and drive may be diminished. Free fatty acids are also used as fuel, but some glycogen is still needed. Studies suggest that even when fed a normal diet, dogs only replace about 65% of their glycogen stores 24 hours after strenuous exercise. This means that on successive days of hunting, the glycogen stores are further depleted and without replenishment, your dog may be significantly fatigued.



Above: Ander of the Hundgaard (left) & Amos of Dakota Prairie after a Montana Sharpie hunt give us their best “pouty” look. *(photo Rick Sojda)* **Opposite page: John Pitlo and a** limit of Sharpies in South Dakota. Pictured are **Ami of Agazzi Lowlands (left) & Ayla of Ancient Kennel.** *(photo Cliff Koele)*

Traditionally, hunters carry either simple carbohydrates (fructose) or sucrose (honey). These are easily carried and given to the dog. The concern is that simple sugars attract “water” and either pull water from other tissues or require that large amounts of water be given to the dog. A common issue with simple sugars is diarrhea due to the water shift in the body. Honey also requires at least 30 minutes to convert to glucose in the liver and can also cause a rebound lowering of blood sugar to below normal levels. Some people give complex carbohydrates (starches and whole grains) but again, it takes energy and time to convert these to glucose (more than 30 minutes) so the benefit for immediate replacement is minimal.

Recent research has shown that the most beneficial thing for replacement of glycogen stores is Maltodextrin. They are not simple sugars or starches, but are an intermediate compound. They are taken up very quickly by the muscles and do not cause blood sugar or gastrointestinal problems like the simple or complex carbohydrates. Maltodextrin is available as a powder or in special bars manufactured by various companies. Studies have shown that dogs recover 50% of their glycogen stores within 4 hours after being fed Maltodextrin and 85% of their glycogen stores after 24 hours.

With sufficient preparation and planning, your dog can be in top physical condition for the hunting season and remain healthy and successful throughout the year. Recent advances in vaccines, nutrition and supplementation can enhance your dog’s performance during this year and into the future.

Cattail Storm in California

By Anna Ziedins

I'm sitting and typing away at my computer getting this article ready for the GDS and I can't help but notice the peace and quiet in my house. **Casey of Valley House** has taken up his normal position near me, snoozing contently in the office, while **Belle of Cattail Storm** is asleep in her crate. With all this blissful calm & quiet I am almost hard-pressed to recall the chaos of just a few months earlier, when my brother and I received our B-litter of Cattail Storm pups from Damon Bovard in Minnesota. I did say ALMOST!!! What follows is a not-so-brief, categorical summary of our pups (mis)adventures and a sort of coming-of-age in California.

Every new puppy owner I'm sure can share in our misery when it came to crate training. With great dread, I vividly recall the screaming, full-throttle temper tantrums Belle would throw in her kennel when I put her to bed at night. She was loud and persistent and told me EXACTLY what she thought of her confinement. It was impressive. Did I mention she was loud? Anyways, I did receive many a sympathetic nod and understanding smile from neighbors because Belle's unearthly shrieking could actually be heard emanating from my house while standing outside!! Like I said, impressive! I remember being so thankful my neighbors were all dog people and were very forgiving of the noise pollution. Those days were not fun, but I knew they wouldn't last forever. I just gritted my teeth and thought, "Lord Almighty, if this girl has legs on her that match the power of her lungs, I will have a star athlete on my hands one day and all THIS will surely be worth it"!!!

My poor brother Robert suffered through the same puppy "rite of passage" with his new dog **Bronco of Cattail Storm**, but his neighbors were MUCH less understanding. When Bronco arrived, my brother was living in a very small apartment with paper-thin walls. He was the recipient of several nasty notes from the apartment manager, so it was tough going for a while. We would call each other often and commiserate. Fortunately for him, the bank came through on a home loan, and both pup and handler quickly relocated to a beautiful 3 year old house complete with landscaping.... er, well, used to be complete with landscaping. What a pup paradise though! Belle has gone "a-visiting" her brother several times there now and it's always the same; 4+ hours of no-holds barred, WWF-style smackdown on the back lawn. While the pups romped, we would shake our heads and cringe at every major "wipe-out" and wonder how it's possible they hadn't cracked their skulls or broken any flailing limbs. Well, actually they both do have medical records now at the Sacramento Emergency Vet. Sorry Damon! Not long after their arrival by plane from Minnesota, Bronco & Belle had one of those rowdy romp sessions at my boyfriend's house. They were together less than 10 minutes when they both got hurt trying to play "slip-n-slide" on the concrete patio. Go figure! \$385 and several x-rays later, we were all in the truck headed back to finish our BBQ that was interrupted by the puppy circus. Fortunately for us, neither pup was seriously hurt, just banged up a bit, and we learned an important lesson. Water, slick surfaces and folding card tables don't mix.

Although my brother lives just 20 minutes away, our pups have spent much of their time apart. Our work schedules are nearly polar opposite, but this worked out okay. It gave us time to really bond with our individual pups. Bronco & Belle were

taken out separately to explore the local open spaces and introduce them to the sights and smells of their new home state. Comparing notes with my brother, these first few walks were very limited. Understandably, neither youngster ventured too far from us. We could hardly take two steps before tripping over the pups. It was frustrating at times, but with continued outings, the pups' confidence quickly grew and they began to venture farther. It was fun to see them actually start using their noses and follow up on many wondrous and tantalizing new smells; a pile of rabbit dung, a rodent trail, or Belle's particular specialty, anything dead or disgusting. After some patient coaxing, both pups also eventually swam for us on these outings. Nice!

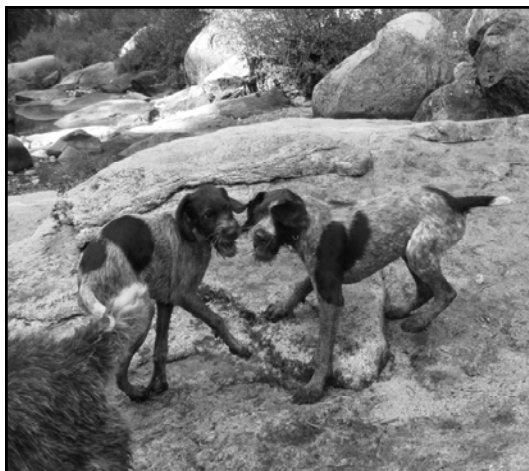
Last month, we decided to expand their horizons a bit and took the pups to the mountains for their first camping trip. It was fantastic! Belle and Bronco were exposed to very different country, VERY cold water (snow melt), different smells and their first gunshots! Ro-

bert & I carefully orchestrated the pup's exposure to gunfire using an old dummy launcher with 22 caliber blanks. My brother stayed down by the river with the dogs (Casey, Bronco, Belle and Daphney) while I clambered up the hill towards camp. We used 2-way radios to communicate and I was told when to fire the shot. My brother said both pups heard the first shot, interrupted their play, looked around, but were not upset. Casey of course was all fired up and bolted in my direction to find the "downed bird" for mom. After a repeat of this sequence, Casey was wise to our tactics and ignored the ensuing "false alarm" and stayed by the river with the pups. Later on, we switched "shooters" and positions and the pups could care less! Whew! We were immensely



Puppy love!!! Bronco (pictured below) & Belle of Cattail Storm both arrived safely in Sacramento, CA 7/26/09 from Damon Bovard's home in Minnesota.

Photo by Andrs Ziedins



Belle & Bronco in typical fashion, perfect their WWF smackdown routine on a recent fall camping trip. *Photo by Anna Ziedins*

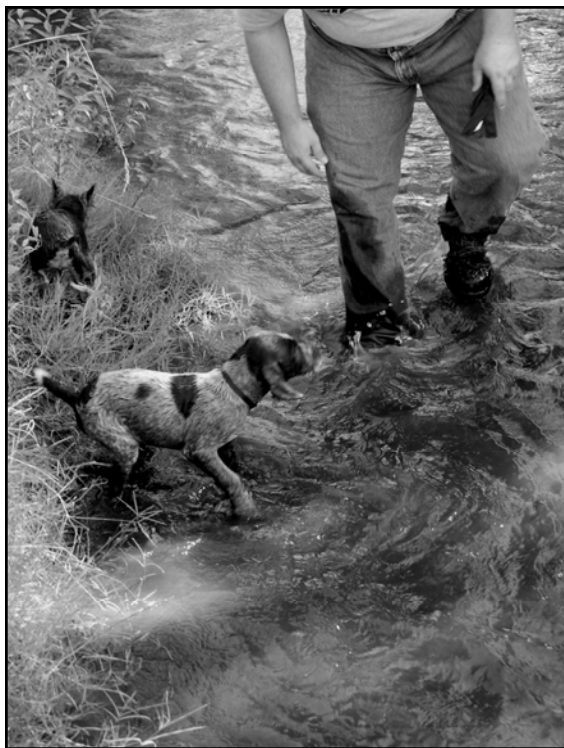
relieved to have safely navigated this first big hurdle. Hunting season was right around the corner and we had not yet been able to shoot over the pups because of where we live. We celebrated our success in camp that night with grilled steak tenderloin and enjoyed the tranquility of the high woods.

Not long after this trip, a group of hunting friends put together a Water Exposure/Training Day about an hours drive from Sacramento and our pups were invited. This was an opportunity not to be missed. Unfortunately Robert had to work, so we arranged for me to pick up Bronco on my way out of town and I promised to take lots of pictures (see back cover). What an

amazing day it turned out to be. The event was held on a beautiful piece of private property comprised of 100+ acres of rolling oak woodlands with several large ponds that had natural cover. There was an interesting mix of dogs present, both retrievers and pointers, and a huge age range. The oldest dog was 12 years old and Belle and Bronco were the youngest by far at 4.5 months.

I put the pups on the "chain gang" next to Casey so they would stay out of trouble and learn to be tied-out. After some theatrics, they both settled down nicely, and dog owners gathered round with coffee mugs in hand to meet the other participants. Everyone had a chance to introduce themselves, their dogs and express what they wished to accomplish that day. Most folks just wanted to expose their young dogs to live game and/or water for the first time. It was a great time. The environment was very supportive. Everyone cheered the young dogs on, especially when a tentative start led to confidence-building, then success. Bronco and Belle eventually got their turn, and each had a chance to retrieve a bumper from water. Towards the end of the day, several requests were made for Casey to demonstrate steadiness-at-the-blind and a duck track. ***gulp*** Turned out Casey was the most advanced dog there (training-wise) and several of the newer handlers had never been to a hunt test. Obviously I was hoping for a "good showing" and secretly kept my fingers crossed. Casey was flawless at the duck blind (where was this performance during his Utility Test?) and his track was nicely done, taking him through the really thick, nasty stuff. His performance earned him well-deserved praise and several inquiries on the side as to, "what kind of dog is THAT"? It was a good day. The pups got some excellent exposure and so did the WPGCA!

Well, the CA hunting season is just around the corner now, and my brother and I are eager to get the pups onto their first wild birds. Belle and Bronco are very young still, but they've changed substantially from just a few months ago. They're growing like weeds of course, but more importantly, there's been a lot of positive emotional development. We'll try to take pictures this season and keep you posted on their progress.



Above: **Bronco of Cattail Storm** (*photo by Andrs Ziedins*) is not so sure about this water-thing! Patient encouragement from handler Robert Ziedins & plenty of exposure proved to be key ingredients for building Bronco's confidence in the water as seen in this later photo (below) taken while camping in September. *Photo by Anna Ziedins*



Regional Contacts:

Northwest/KDK Chapter

Dennis Carlson
3801 Barrett Drive
Hood River, OR 97031
Ph: (541) 386-4830
carlson@gorge.net

Rocky Mountain Chapter

Mike Reilly
Ph: (406) 624-6533
Ph: (406) 579-0901
mreilly@montana.edu

Heartland Chapter

Jim & Donna Crouse
6221 Moore Road
Delaware, OH 43015
Ph: (740) 881-3041
jccrouse01@yahoo.com

Northeast Chapter

Erik Anderson
354 Beech Hill Road
Andover, NH 03216
Ph: (603) 735-5827
anderson11@tds.net



Water Exposure & Training Day: Timbuctoo Sporting Estate in Marysville, CA on 9/26/09. In attendance were friends with a shared love of hunting & hunting dogs. Our assembled gang included 6 Griffons, 3 Labs, 2 GSP's, 1 Weimeraner & 1 Bracco Italiano; but this day was *really* for the pups. There was plenty of water exposure, live birds to chase in/out of the water, and even some careful, positive exposure to gunfire! The day proved so successful, another is being planned very soon. *Photos by Anna Ziedins*