

The Gun Dog Supreme

NEWS BULLETIN of the WIREHAISED POINTING GRIFFON CLUB OF AMERICA
EDUCATION & RESEARCH FOUNDATION

<http://www.gundogsupreme.org>

December 2011

Volume 86, Number 6

December 2011



A New Beginning

Coco of Sandhill holds her first pointed rooster for owner, Jon Coil.

Photo by Jon Coil

Copyright © 2011 Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club of America Education and Research Foundation. No part may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club of America Education and Research Foundation.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The December issue is devoted to tales of the new WPGCA puppies for 2011. A sizeable number of owners contributed stories and/or photos of their new pups. Litter age varies considerably, so some pups have had more time for exposure than others. Anyone who has ever raised a griffon pup of their own can readily identify with the anticipation, excitement, bewilderment and frustration contained in these new pup stories.

To add a little variety to the pot, I've included a couple items that underscore our breed's versatility: An extemporaneous duck hunt with Rick Sojda and his dog, Ander of Hundgaard, in Montana, and an outing for Alaskan ptarmigan with new editorial team member, Larry Semmens. You'll be hearing a lot more from Larry in future issues.

Rem DeJong

Please Pay your Dues!

Membership in the WPGCA is for the calendar year. Send a check of \$40.00, payable to the WPGCA to new club treasurer, Andy Rupp at the address below:

**Andy Rupp, WPGCA Treasurer
P.O. Box 2118
Grand Lake, CO 80447**

**Phone number 970 509 0380
AndrewLRupp09@Gmail.com.**

On the Cover:

The pack of Jon and Judy Coil dwindled to just one dog with the passing of Bartos of Marsh Stream, so the arrival of Coco of Sandhill represents the promise of a new beginning in the cycle of griffon ownership.

EDITORS

**Rem DeJong
John Pitlo
Larry Semmens**

SUBSCR./BACK ISSUES

Printed bi-monthly, the GDS is included with a membership to the WPGCA. Subscriptions are \$40.00/year and due at the start of each year. Subscriptions and requests for back issues should be sent to:

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

Word document via email preferred.

PHOTO SUBMISSION

All photos should be sent to:

Rem DeJong
809 West Kaye Avenue
Marquette, MI 49855
Ph: 906-228-6475(EST)

Email: Rem.DeJong@wpgca.org

Include the name of the dog and owner, and who took the photo. Digital photos are required; preferred size is 1024 x 768 pixels. If scanned use 300dpi (grayscale). You can email them or mail on a disk/CD.

WEBSITES

E&R Foundation:
www.gundogsupreme.org

Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club:
www.wpgca.org

OFFICERS

Gary Pool-President
John Pitlo-Vice President
Jim Seibel- Treasure
Judy Coil- Secretary

DIRECTORS at LARGE

Glenn Lehrer
Rick Molt
Ken Hurtig

Letters Home: The Puppy Perspective

by

The Dutchman's Hollow G Littermates (and a little help from their owners)

The following collection of letters are addressed to Boss John (John Pitlo) and Ms Vivian (Vivian Pitlo). Owners are addressed as "New Boss" (NB).

Good Boy of Dutchman's Hollow (M)

Henry Carriger
San Antonio, Texas

Dear Boss John and Ms. Vivian

I am now over 4 months old and weigh almost 40 pounds. A lot has happened since my last report, and I'm learning all about hunting. Just the other day, New Boss, Aunt Belle and I were hunting a tree row when I smelled something weird. I broke off from NB and followed my nose. It led me to a large, black animal with long teeth and an ugly tail. I got scared and screamed as I jumped back. It chased me a little way, but I just backed up slowly and made sure I could watch it. NB shot the animal. I later heard NB telling Chuck about thinking I had found a skunk but that it was really a big fat barn rat.

NB and I were walking the edge of a cornfield when I smelled a pheasant running down a corn row trying to sneak behind us. I froze right there, standing on three legs and making my tail stiff. NB scared the bird, and it flew. It was a real pretty bird before NB shot it. It fell in the middle of the corn field, but Aunt Belle wasn't there to help me. I had to really concentrate to find the bird all by myself. I brought the bird to NB, and all he could do was repeat my name over and over again. He must have said "Good Boy!" a hundred time! I think I like my name.

Near the end of the day, NB and I were hunting in a cocklebur pasture where the birds like to roost. Just before getting to the corner, I smelled another bird. I alerted NB and he walked to where I was looking. The bird didn't fly. Instead, it ran along the ground dragging its wing. NB is old and couldn't run fast enough to keep up with it. I really tore to catch up with it. We had a race along the fence row and I finally got a grip on the bird and brought it back to NB. I was breathing so hard that I could hardly smile and the bird's small feathers were choking me. NB gave me lots of "Good Boys" that time! I must be doing pretty good because NB took off my puppy collar and strapped on a big boy collar that has his name on it. I think he intends to keep me.

Aunt Belle and I were hunting together when I pointed a bird in an open grass field. Belle immediately came in and backed me. The bird was holding. It was neat standing there with Belle. NB laid down his gun and took out his phone/camera. Before he could turn on the camera, the bird flew. NB dropped the camera and picked up his gun but the bird was already gone. It was really funny watching NB scramble to get his gun and then looking for his phone in grass. Aunt Belle was really disgusted and kept muttering something about "staying on mission." I think she heard Mr. Cain say something like that on TV. I don't think that is something a dog would normally say.

I am now back in Missouri after 30 days in South Dakota. I had not been on a leash the whole time we were in South Dakota. I had to relearn how to behave around a real

house. Grandma Linda is really strict about not fetching used underwear and socks. Now Aunt Belle and I are together on the leash all the time and I just have to stand there while she takes care of her business. Boring. NB is in Texas right now. I can't wait until he gets back and takes Belle and I quail hunting.

Yours,
Boy

Gerta of Dutchman's Hollow (F)

Byron Moore
St. Charles, IL

Dear Boss John and Ms. Vivian

Hi Everybody. I hope that things are going good for you guys in your new homes. I've been having lots of fun with my New Boss (NB), who his friends call Moe, but I do miss Ms Vivian. Mostly, I just like to carry stuff, and that gets me lots of attention from NB. He always wants me to bring what I find to him, and mostly I do, because he makes a big fuss over me then. Of course sometimes, when I find something really cool, I just have to show it off first and go in circles around him.

Have you guys got to go hunting? NB took me out last Saturday and I did something that got him really excited, I pointed a bird. I mean, I didn't really try to, but when I caught a good whiff of that bird, I just froze automatically. Of course NB wasn't exactly a big help. I mean, first I flushed the bird and he missed it. But then we saw where it landed, and when we got about 15 feet away, that's when it happened—I found that bird and I just froze on the spot. NB thought that was really cool.

I got to go swimming too, and NB likes to play fetch with me. It's a little annoying that people have all these rules though. Like, when we play fetch—he tosses this dummy with a bird wing into the weeds and I go find it. He has this rule—he says “Whoa!” and makes me wait before I can go chase it. Mostly I do, but sometimes, I just can't wait! Give me a break, I'm still just little.

We get to go on long car rides too, I mean REALLY long, all the way to some place NB calls South Dakota. He said we were there to find birds, but mostly I just sniffed a lot of grass. Those fields sure are big! We had lots of fun, but I didn't see many birds. Back at my new house in Chicago, I helped NB build this table contraption that he says is just for me. It's supposed to be a training table, so I'm training him to pick up his tools. Every time he leaves one lying around, I carry it off. Just so he doesn't get too mad, I carry some over to him and wag my tail a lot. That makes NB happy. You can get away with all sorts of stuff, if you just wag your tail a lot. My new home is pretty nice, but there aren't any of those big pheasant birds around here. I pretend I'm hunting and chase the tweety birds, but it's not the same. Sure wish NB would take me hunting again real soon. Well that's all for now. Hope to see everybody for our big test next spring.

Regards,
Gerta

General Grant (M)

Gary Gaertner
St. Louis, MO

Dear Boss John and Ms. Vivian:

How I thought I could not live without you as I left my home in Iowa that day. But to my amazement, I was adopted by six children ranging in age from 8 to 2, a mom and dad, and Mosby who is my new brother but is nine years old and also a pretty cool Griffon. Dad has taken me on lots of outings with my brother Mosby on the horse trails that run around my new house. I have smelled stuff that my bro says are deer, turkey, dove, squirrel, and rabbits. There's a nice creek which I have been swimming in. But most of all I just like chasing around those six kids and my brother.

Are your new bosses into this training stuff like mine is? I hate when Dad reads that book, *Teaching Dogs to Teach Themselves* by this Bailey woman. It gives him all kinds of ideas; she must really be a slave driver. One thing he 'd been doing is shooting a starting pistol over me at chow time. What's that all about? Besides shooting that darn pistol, Dad likes to train me on this contraption that he built—some type of whoaing plank. At least the training is not too long, and I do get attention, and doing what he wants makes Dad happy. Just the same, I hate going in the bomb shelter in the basement, Dad says it was a 1962 special and cannot figure out how to use it except to have me work on retrieving down there.

Sometimes I miss everybody and just get bored. That's not good. I've already eaten three baseball gloves, but I'm not as bad as Mosby! Last year, before I got here, he once swallowed a bunch of plastic toys and couldn't poo for a week, so a veterinarian had to cut him open. So watch out what you chew!

Let me tell you about my bird hunting adventures. We went for a big and long walk and saw this huge red thing chased out of the woods by my brother, and then heard these six explosions—a lot louder than that starting pistol, and saw the bird fly away. Next day almost the same thing—saw my brother point a huge brown bird but no shots, but later heard those same shots, but the red bird flew away.

The next week we went on another huge walk and big brother got into big trouble! He ran up the creek bed and over to this huge animal he later told me it was calf. I thought my brother was a lion as he jumped on this critter's back and started biting the calf's neck. My Dad was real mad and threw my brother off the calf and he landed in a briar bush I better not try to jump on a calf! We got to hunt quail too. At one spot where we saw about twenty quail, Dad got us out and brother pointed at something about 50 yards away from where those birds had flushed. 12 more birds flushed, and Dad's friend shot three times again and no birds fell. My brother said Dad's friend is fun to be around, but he sure is a crappy shot.

Today, I went to a duck club and hung out with other some dogs because my brother got stuck at home. Cruised around for a while, but was put back in my crate. Dad was not being nice, so I puked my breakfast again in the crate, just to piss him off. I used to poo in there too, but I did not like that myself. Laying in it was no fun. Dad finally came back, and I met six HUGE mallards, I played with one and it did not move, but smelled real good. I rode home with the birds next to my cage—sort of being in heav-

en, even though I still had the puke in the cage. When I got home, bro and I watched Dad with my six other buddies ass he cleaned those ducks. Boy, are those birds fun! Then Dad sprayed me down again, and his car and my cage maybe I will try to keep my food inside of me, because I got really hungry, wet and cold.

I am tired now and have bird feathers in my mouth and ready to sleep next to bro. That's all for now.

General

Gipper of Dutchman's Hollow (M)

Wayne Ransbottom

Dayton, WY

Dear Boss John and Ms. Vivian

I'm just really pooped from my big adventure, so New Boss wrote this for me. Besides, he has opposable thumbs, so he can type faster. Here's what he said:

Gipper and I went to Nebraska for 4-days prior to Thanksgiving and really worked on our field bonding, i.e. slow, easy and full attention to Gipper. My old Brittney, Gus, was laid to rest the week prior so I really needed some "Gipper-and-me" time. Because it was just the two of us, I didn't expect much other than company. Gipper and I have been walking the field for a month, and I've gotten trained to keep Gipper in front of me and God knows he likes to be the leader. He usually stays within 10 – 15 yards and got a little nervous in the deeper grass when he lost me for any length of time.

Within the first 100 yards of getting out of the jeep in Nebraska, we jumped and shot a rooster which the Gipper proudly pounced upon and brought back to me. The second morning he caught the scent of something and turned in to the wind. Up came a hawk, but that didn't deter the Gipper who went in to pick up and retrieved a freshly killed rooster upon which the hawk had been feeding. A couple of hens flushes later and I really noticed his interest level picking up, and low and behold, as I looked down in the tall grass I saw Gipper stretched out in a beautiful point and up came a hen. That evening, after a long unproductive and tiring walk with a worn out Gipper at my heels, we were heading back to the Jeep when another hen jumped at his feet. Gipper went bonkers and started working the ground hard flushing another hen and then pointing a third. I was ecstatic! Another 30 yards and he started working hard again and locked on to point and this time as I walked in, out came the first rooster over point! I dropped it, and Gipper proudly retrieved his bird, carrying it by the head.

The next day was windy and Gipper got the opportunity to work a group of 7 pheasants for maybe 50 yards and then they flushed simultaneously. I dropped a rooster and in spite of a long search we were not able to track that bird down. I've now shot 6 roosters over Gipper, and he has found a cripple and hawk-killed rooster, both of which he has retrieved. My new huntin buddy – GIPPER!

Bye for now. Gipper

Gabby of Dutchman's Hollow (F)

Andy Yeast
Johnston, IA

Dear Boss John and Ms. Vivian

I've wanted to send you a note for some time, but my New Boss (NB) hasn't shown much cooperation. I'd give him a 2. Anyway, I finally cornered him and did some "force-breaking". Here goes...

These are things my NB says I'm REALLY good at:

- Eating...pretty much anything, and doing it fast! NB assures me that as soon as I develop the same passion for birds as I do for food, I am going to be a bird-finding machine!
- Some obedience stuff (come, down, whoa when I come in the door, or get out of the kennel).
- Beating up on Aunt Beka. I like to bite her beard, or nip the back of her leg. She loves to play almost as much as I do. Man, is she patient with me, but every now and then she can get really ornery! She used to knock me down a lot, but I'm getting bigger all the time, so she doesn't put me down as much anymore.
- Peeing, mostly outside, and pooping. NB says I can fill up the yard in less than a week! From the tone of his voice, I can tell he's really impressed.
- Sleeping at night in my kennel.
- Traveling. NB takes me lots of places. I like to ride!
- Finding gum.

NB and NBM (New Boss Mom) take me to soccer games where NBB (New Boss Boy) and NBG (New Boss Girl) are playing. I stay on the leash and have fun meeting lots of new people. When I'm on the leash, and close to NB, I don't have any fear at all. When I'm off the leash...well, sometimes I get a little afraid, but NB says he's very proud of me because I'm getting over my fear more quickly every day. Anyway, back to the gum...last Sunday I found 7 pieces of gum on the sidelines. NBM says it's a new record, and NB thinks it's because I have a good nose. I don't eat it, I just like to chew it. NBG says it's gross, because someone else has already chewed it, but I don't care. Man, I love that stuff!

I spent the past few days with NB and some of his friends from work hunting in Nebraska. NB's friend had a line on a farm in central NE near the Kansas border. He'd been told that there were lots of pheasants! Well, I can tell you that was a lie. NB used some other words too, but I think they were naughty so I won't use them again. All the other guys had Small Munsterlanders (4 in total). Boy, Beka and I felt a little outnumbered, but I think we represented our breed quite nicely.

Most of the time I went out by myself with NB, and we had some nice walks. At the end of one day, though, I got to run with the big dogs! It was a blast! I chased one and then another. I even investigated some smells on my own. But here's the coolest



Learning to Read

Gabby of Dutchman's Hollow enjoys a little bonding time with her new human pack member Elly Yeast.

Photo by Andy Yeast

part...NB and I were hunting off to one side from everyone else. I was checking stuff out, minding my own business, when all of the sudden I heard a big boom come from over by the other guys. I didn't even look at NB, I just perked up and started to run over to them. I was excited! I thought they were getting some action, and I wanted to see. Alas, OB and Ms. Vivian, it was all a trick. I turned around to see NB put his hat back on, and the other guys just kept walking. I think they meant to set me up...

Shortly after that, I heard a bunch of noise and this cackling thing. It came from behind us, and off to one side. At about the same time, I heard a boom from NB's gun. He looked at me right away, because I think he was scared of the noise, but I did one of my happy dances a little bit and then went out to make a cast. That seemed to make NB feel a lot better, knowing that I wasn't scared at all. Well, I can tell you I really didn't know what was going on. NB was walking around a little bit, and he kept saying really gently "dead bird". I didn't know what the heck he was talking about, but as he

and I were standing there, I suddenly caught a whiff. I left NB, hoping he wasn't still scared, and followed the smell into the tall grass. It was intoxicating! (That's a big



word for a little puppy, but it still fits.) And do you know what I found? The beautiful, colorful bird I'd seen in South Dakota. It smelled so good! I was a little nervous to pick it up, but eventually NB came over to see what I'd found. He held it up for me to lick and smell. Wow! he was one happy Boss. He must have said good girl a million times!

After that, I think I really impressed NB. I liked that bird so much, I wanted to find another one, and I worked and worked trying to do just that! I heard one of NB's friends say that he thought I was going to be a hunter, and NB agreed.

So, that's my story. I'll send some pictures soon. Hope all is well with you guys!

Gabby

Future Hunting Team

Nick Yeast and Gabby of Dutchman's Hollow get acquainted.

Photo by Andy Yeast

Something Different...

by
Rick Sojda

At least it was something different for **Ander of the Hundgaard, Amos of Dakota Prairie**, Mike Reilly, and me. It was opening of pheasant season in northwest Montana, and we had permission to hunt some private land. The rancher had given us directions to his honey hole. But, apparently roosters are not fond of honey. The boys did point one--just five yards off the ranch we could hunt, of course. Mike talked to some other hunters, and heard them bemoan: "This is the worst I have seen it in 24 years." "We always have our birds by now when we hunt here, but we saw but one and missed."

We decided it was time to change geography. There was a Waterfowl Production Area that I wanted to check out for sharptails that sits in the shadow of "the Bob", which is the local name for the Bob Marshall Wilderness. Several miles before we got there, we stumbled upon some inviting riparian cover. The boys pointed again, just out of the truck, and the bird flew without a shot. We followed the rooster into the thick willows, where suddenly I remembered we were in grizzly bear country when I stepped into a large pile of bear scat. I reached for my bear spray. Oh crap (bad pun)! I had left my canister in the truck. Needless to say we high-tailed it out of there and got our spray. But, no more roosters.

As we approached the WPA of our original interest, our eye caught sight of some extensive aspen stands at about 5,000 feet in the Lewis and Clark National Forest, so we decided to look for forest grouse, and I missed a couple including a dusky over a dandy point. An aside: this is country in which **Briar of Bogan's Point's** handler, Robin Strathy, is professionally employed helping manage our wonderful National Forests. Thanks, Robin.

But, all that was prologue to something different. Next, we went to the WPA, our original target destination, to find a beautiful little pothole wetland about thigh deep and full of bulrush about nose high. There were a number of ducks in the openings. But, how to hunt them? Hmmmmm. Mike stayed on dry land. I decided to wade. Why couldn't I jump shoot and have Ander swim at heel? Well, I could and did. We would walk and swim together for five minutes or so, jumping birds as we went from opening to opening. When I hit one, I would send Ander for the retrieve. It worked well, and I shot 3 birds in a half hour, and missed a couple more. The scenery was nothing short of spectacular with the peaks and snow fields of the Rocky Mountain front rising some 3,000' above us; but, what will stick in my mind is watching Ander and Amos swimming along beside me for 5-10 minutes at a time as I walked around this awesome little wetland. It turned out to be something different for me: my dog swimming at heel while I jump shot ducks. Here's a toast to versatile hunting dogs!

The birds were Northern shovelers. If you have never eaten spoonies, try it. We filleted the breasts and thighs, dipped them in egg beater and then in panko, cornmeal, and cayenne, and then fried them quickly in olive oil. It made a great camp meal. Like all ducks, our advice is just don't over cook them. Shovelers have a bad reputation on the table, but in Northern Montana, I shoot them at every chance, and always enjoy them.

Adventures with Aniak (Annie from Alaska)

by
Larry Semmens



Ptarmigan in Alaska

Aniak of Wolf Fork Canyon demonstrates griffon versatility by retrieving an uncommon game bird for owner Larry Semmens.

Photo by Larry Semmens

It was still dark when I got to work the third Monday of October. My inbox showed an email with attachments from my hunting buddy Bob Bird. I wasn't able to hunt that weekend, so naturally Bob and his Brittany had their best day of the season. After looking at the pictures of near limits of ptarmigan I was jealous and definitely lacked the proper attitude for work. By 9 a.m. I couldn't stand it and decided to take the day off. Annie and I were shortly headed northeast on the hour drive to the mountains.

Aniak of Wolf Fork Canyon is in her first full season of hunting. Her litter was whelped 8/29/2010, which is a bit later than most litters. She got to hunt a little in March at the end of last season and she has hunted quite a bit since the opener in Au-

gust. She is doing better each hunt and really enjoys getting feathers in her mouth. Annie is very different from my 11 year old partner Glacier of Auger Falls, who was described at his NAT as BOLD. Glacier has only met a few ptarmigan he didn't think he could catch without my help. You can read about how he got that idea in the October 2001 GDS.

In about an hour after a grueling mile with over 1500 feet of elevation gain to reach a pass, we were in habitat that holds ptarmigan. Willow brush in the valley and part way up the very steep slope gives way to low blueberry brush and scattered clumps of stunted fir amongst impressive rock outcroppings. The weather was challenging too. BB sized snow driven by 20 knot wind was hard to face, yet invigorating. It also made the fir cover the logical spot to find birds, so we worked higher into ankle deep snow. Finally I heard birds and saw a white ghost slip across an avalanche chute 75 yards above us. I stopped on the edge of the chute and watched Annie get birdy and work her way up the slope. I was impressed as she tracked the bird out of sight behind a large rock outcropping. Four nervous birds showed up on the rocks 20 yards to my left and above me. With my heart rate maxed and gun at the ready, they flushed and I tracked one flying across and below. It reminded me of the numerous chukars that have successfully executed this tactic then laughed at me from afar. To my surprise a single shot from the 20 gauge pump dropped him. It was so steep the bird quickly slid down the hill over an even steeper section and out of sight far below. Annie was up on the rocks looking for the birds when I called and threw a snowball in the direction of the downed bird. She got the scent and disappeared below me. I don't know how far down that bird slid. It seemed like a couple minutes and here she came up that impossibly steep slope with a mouthful of white. Man! I was proud of her! I could have turned around and headed home right then and considered it a great day.

We kept on and managed a double over a point, then my shooting fell apart and I missed the next several birds. We finally got a somewhat rare whitetailed ptarmigan after a nice point. Unlike the other strains of ptarmigan which have some black in their tail feathers, the only black on these upland chameleons is their eyes and beak. White-tails are smaller than either willow or rock ptarmigan and usually are found at higher altitude. We like to call them snow quail. When whitetails flush against a snowy background they are very hard to see which makes them hard to hit. This one had sky all around him and he crashed in a half acre or so of real thick fir. I waited as Annie worked and eventually found the bird which I would have had great difficulty recovering without her.

As we were leaving the valley Annie met her first porcupine. I was unprepared so pulled about a dozen quills with my teeth. She is a pretty cooperative girl and seemed to appreciate me getting at least the ones sticking in her nose. At home I got another half dozen with pliers including two that had gone all the way through and were sticking up under her tongue. But one was completely buried in her lip and two were in her tongue, so we took a trip to the vet for sedation and removal. My wife Susan likes to say I am supporting local business. What a great wife!

All in all it was a super day. Annie found birds on her own, tracked in tough conditions, pointed several times and retrieved some difficult birds. Hopefully she learned about porkies too, but just in case, I will remember the Leatherman next time. Trust me; pliers are easier than using your teeth.

Sandhill C Litter Update

Breeder – Pete Engman

Arthurs Pal of the Midnight Sun X Andrew of Sourdough Trail

Cedar of Sandhill (M) owned by Kirk Dilly, Loretto, MN



Bird Dog in the Making

Cedar of Sandhill puts a grin on owner Kirk Dilly’s face with retrieve of this rooster.

Photo by Kirk Dilly

Cedar is progressing very nicely as both an addition to the family and as a hunting dog. He loves people and always acknowledges everyone with an eager greeting. Overall his intelligence seems to be very good and generally he is eager to please. He loves to wrestle, so that’s part of our daily routine. Even though he had the “off colored” coat within his litter with a white coat and brown ticking, it’s held up exceptionally well to both cold weather and hunting in heavy CRP. I’ve been very impressed at both of

those attributes. He did display some dependency issues early on with barking and some shyness to the gun, but both of these issues have greatly improved with age and exposure to hunting.

The pheasant population in western Minnesota where I hunt was severely hurt with a severe winter and spring flooding, so bird exposure has been tougher than I anticipated. However, he seems to build off of each hunting trip, regardless of whether birds were bagged or not. He’s generally very cooperative in retrieving and I feel his pheasant tracking is outstanding. He’s very thorough and deliberate in his tracking and generally does not give up until a bird is found. Initially, most pheasants were getting bumped and were therefore not shot at. Lately however, he’s begun pointing more than what he’s been bumping, so I’m very pleased with his progress there. He’s only been sprayed by one skunk, but we’re really hoping he remembers what that animal looks like for future reference. Overall Tracy and I are 110% happy with Cedar and his maturing process.

Coco of Sandhill (F) owned by Jon Coil, Kelliher, MN

Coco of the Sandhill is very precocious so far. Over the summer she hit the water with enthusiasm and didn't hesitate when we tried a retrieve in a large lake. She is a gentle little pleaser if you aren't Aleksander of Cattail Storm; to him she is his worst nightmare, almost as bad as he was when he was a puppy!

In mid-September she turned six months old, and at six and a half months, she started pointing woodcock and then some grouse during our busy October. We managed to shoot several woodcock and a ruffed grouse over her. The real frosting on the cake was our pheasant hunt to southern Minnesota. Minnesota pheasants were really hurt by the deep snow last winter followed by a wet spring and I thought finding a rooster would be akin to locating the needle in a haystack. I was hoping to even find a couple hens. Coco was hunting pretty close to me in the heavy unfamiliar grass. What are the odds that we would walk right into a rooster that held for her point? It happened, and with a successful conclusion! We have some more pheasant trips to southern Minnesota planned for December. I am so pleased with this little girl's progress!

On our first hunt Coco came to me and pawed at her eye. When she turned I saw a stick about 3 inches long and almost as big around as a pencil sticking out of her eye socket. I know it is not recommended to remove an object that has penetrated the body. It is not a text book world, there was no fluid dripping out of her eye, she didn't seem in that much distress, just pawing at the object, I was a quarter mile from the road and an hour from a vet when I got out of the woods. I grabbed the stick and pulled. It came out and she looked at me with two clear wide open eyes. The stick must have been between the socket and the inner eyelid. I took a break and the eye looked just as clear and open. We went hunting! Got lucky on that one.

Colonel Buckley of Sandhill (M) owner Tim McCarthy, Oconomowoc, WI

Here are some other tidbits on Buckley's development as a family companion and as a hunter. Around the time of the Heartland Fall Test in September, I was experiencing some questionable behavior in Buckley. I had been conditioning him to the gun in a progression, but then, suddenly, he was showing signs of being overly dependent when I would shoot a .22 pistol. He would run back to my side no matter if he was 50 yards from me or in one case, chasing a flock of geese. He would remain by me side for the remainder of the walk. I wasn't sure if this was the early stages of gun-shyness, or just a strong dependency on his master.

I mentioned my concern to some of the senior judges at the Heartland Test; Ken Hurtig recommended trying cheddar cheese to distract him. I had my wife, Kathy, fire the gun at a distance while I fed Buckley cheese and over several sessions, we progressed to using a .410 and closing the distance until Kath was standing right next to Buckley. It worked like a charm. (What else would you expect from a guy from Wisconsin?)

Our last dog, Brogan, for some strange reason, would only chew on Kathy's things: a necklace, socks, sweaters, etc. This same pattern has been true for Buckley, although to a far less degree. He loves his chew toys, but has chewed through several throw rugs and has been known to drag a half burnt log out of the fireplace and chew on it. This is

not a good thing and Buckley is now aware of it ... Buckley loves to be "in touch" with people. He leans on us and lies literally "on our feet" when we watch TV. He is only allowed on our main floor and we have only one staircase, so it is his practice to lie at this strategic point and wait for us to appear. Kath told me that when I was out of town recently, Buckley laid in wait at the top of the stairs thinking that I was in the lower level.

We had a bumper crop of frogs this year. I would run over them with the lawnmower and the car on the driveway and Buckley was used to "retrieving" these smelly little creatures and to bring them to Kath. I had to "train" her to accept them cheerfully and without hesitation, which was not a natural predilection for her. Maybe that early experience explains why he's been such a good retriever once hunting season arrived.

I just got back from SD with my son, Mac, and another friend, Matt. We had 3 solid days of hunting. The birds were quite scattered and wary, but we did get 6 birds between us (5 pheasant and a sharptail) and Buckley had 5 retrieves to hand. Although he had no points, he has progressed so much. He displays no gun-shyness; there's far less dependency; he was quartering quite well by the end of the trip, and he finally connected the dots as to tree-lines and tall grass being where you find birds. His last two retrieves were memorable:

- The sharp tail we shot next to a cattle dam in the National Grasslands. We dropped it in some tall reeds next to the pond and he had to make a blind retrieve; no great distance, but it was his first use his nose to make a retrieve.
- The last retrieve was a pheasant that we downed on the other side of a back access road. It turned out it was on a runner that went down the ditch about 100 yards and made a ninety degree turn up a driveway and ran another 50 or so yards. It took us about two minutes to realize that we had a runner and to get Buckley on the scent, but he tracked it down and retrieved it to my son's hand. I was so darned proud ...!

He has proven to be a wonderful dog. Andy Yeast's and Ken Hurtig's words are still resounding in my memory: "Just have fun!" We sure did!



“B” Litter of Arrowrock

Breeder – Robert Bullock
Annie Oakley of Glacier Ridge X Boone of Salmon River



Look What I've Got!

A very young **Banks of Arrowrock**, shows off his first sharptail to owner Nathaniel Umphrey of Nampa Idaho. These pups were only about four months old when bird season opened, so they require lots of exposure, patience and praise.

Photo by Nathaniel Umphrey

Beelzebub Ezekiel of Arrowrock (M) Russell Dill, Helena, MT

Zeke is a delight. He is very laid back by himself, but if you get him with his Aunt Belle then he is a true terror. I believe one of his favorite joys is harassing his Aunt Belle. But if you try to separate Zeke from either me or Belle for longer than 30 seconds he winds up and can really howl.

At the very beginning of September, I hunted Zeke and Belle together so Zeke could learn from his Aunt and get good exposure. Zeke looked awesome. He would charge out at a good distance and make sweeping arcs of the terrain and charged through the brush; he just blew me away. He never pointed, but when Belle would point, I would grab him, then release Belle on the flush, and my father would shoot the bird. Belle would race around and ignore the downed bird and Zeke would run out, find it, bring it back and show it to us. He showed absolutely no gun shyness or hesitation; just like a big dog, he nearly has an orgasm when the shot goes off. I thought: Holy smokes he is going to be an unbelievable dog!

About a month ago I decided that he was old enough to hunt by himself; it was time to be a big dog. He had been exposed to Hungarian partridge, sharpshooters and pheasants and had even chased our pen raised bobwhites when he was just a little guy. Now it was time to put the total equation together for him. The puppy came out, big time. I hunt with Zeke nearly every weekend, (this last weekend is the only exception I can think of since September). When we hunt together he could not be more excited to get out, but he doesn't really hunt. He walks around. And that is what caught me by surprise. He walks, he does not run. I will go and walk him for an hour and a half and he never gets excited enough to get his tongue hanging out. I walk through river bottoms, and high plain CRP, (We have CRP this year that is waist high, and we have grazed state land that won't reach my boot laces.) Zeke has walked it all, in a circle around me of about a 30 foot radius. Dense willows and dried sagebrush plains, he is seeing it all. Deer, antelope, cows, horses—Zeke has met them up close and personal. He doesn't chase deer, or rabbits, or birds very far. He is just delighted to be there. I wonder if my initial forays into the field with Belle may have stunted his curiosity? I wonder if he developed a need for a crutch? I wonder if his own fear doesn't overcome his natural curiosity?

I know that his nose has been slow to develop. He is just now really starting to use his nose for finding things. Bird circles are obviously a treat, any kind of poo is a delight. He found part of a dead cow and I could tell by the expression on his face that he thought he might have found heaven. He has mastered the dead drag. I have put him in borrow ditches so close to wild hen pheasants that he almost caught them involuntarily when they erupted under his nose but his natural search for live wild game has been slow to develop. I am accustomed to Belle, who is female, who developed rapidly. I also have never hunted behind a bird dog as good as Belle.

One thing I can say for Zeke is that he will continue to hunt with me for at least another month, this year. Then we will chase pen raised birds after the first of the year until we develop his point. Then I will hunt him 30-40 days a year for the rest of his life even if he only walks around and smells the daisies.

He is really pretty to look at. His furnishings are really classic griffon and he has a bit of a hump in his nose that makes him look roman. His coat is awfully thin for geese on the Yellowstone in January but it does not hold a burr. I love that; it is awesome. He is easy to train, as all of our club dogs are, he is eager to please. He is calm and generally in a good mood. He is a really good looking dog. And if he never really develops an affinity for birds then I will take him down south and introduce him to the wily raccoon and the southern razorback and Zeke can walk through the beautiful hardwood bottoms of my youth and do what he currently does best..... Howl at the moon!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
 AAAAAWWWhhhhOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Beauregard of Arrowrock (M) Dave Larson, Grageville, ID

I picked up Beauregard of Arrowrock (Beau) from breeder Bob Bullock on August 8th of this year. He is a real sweetheart. He was not at all happy about being separated from his litter mates and barked and howled most of the way home. I put him in a travel crate next to my bed for the night and he soon forgot about his former life and adjusted to life with Nancy and me plus Sunny (Nancy's dog) and our cat. The cat hates him and looks insulted whenever there is any contact with Beau. Beau can't understand why the cat is so hostile. After all, Beau only wants to lick and smell him.

Sunny is another issue. Beau always wants to play and Sunny will oblige him for a while. Then Beau wears out his welcome and Sunny jumps in the middle of him and tries to remind him who is still top dog. One minute Beau acts like his is being killed and the next he is back to his old tricks. He is very resilient.

Beau has not learned that going to the bathroom is an outside activity. He still wets whenever he feels the urge without regard to where his is. Fortunately we have tile floors so it's not a difficult problem. Slowly he is learning to go outside only, and I have hopes he will get his act together after a while. Also, we are getting more attuned to when he needs to go outside.

Someone gave him a stuffed animal when we first got him. He has managed to chew it to shreds. He knows that I like his toy, so whenever he brings what's left of it to me, I throw it for him a couple of times. He takes great delight in finding and bringing it back to me. He still thinks he owns the toy, but slowly he will give it up to me if I am patient. I make sure not to pull on it but rather tell him "Out;" then hold on to the toy till he decides to give it up. I think he is gradually sensing that I will throw it for him if he lets me have it.

Water work: I have a pond on my place. He likes the water and wades around whenever we go down there. He hasn't gotten past his belly. It's pretty cold now so I will have to wait for spring before we do much water work.

Bird work: So far I have been able to get him into quite a few quail and "BBS" (little brown birds). He is really, really birdy. He remembers where he jumped birds the last time and searches those areas very carefully before moving on. I don't know if he has pointed yet. He has stood "transfixed" several times after he has made contact with birds. I don't know if a person could call it a point.

When he was younger he was pretty independent and would go off on his own. I hid from him several times and watched him as he frantically searched for me. The result of this is that he watches me a lot more closely now and when we go for walks he will run ahead as he always did before but I can see he is really watching me out of the corner of his eye at all times. When I change directions he moves quickly to get in front.

Bob did a really good job socializing Beau. He does not shy away from new experiences. He likes people and other dogs and can't understand why cats are such hostile beasts. That however doesn't stop him from further examination of said cats.

We did have one difficulty with Beau. About a month ago it rained really hard for a couple of days and the mushrooms came up in our yard. When we were out for one of our walks I saw him snatch up several mushrooms and eat them. Later I was sitting in my chair watching TV and Beau came over and tried to crawl up in my lap. I helped him up and I petted and scratched him for a while. Then when he decided he had

enough he tried to jump down. He was unable to crawl off my lab so I helped him down. To my horror his back legs were paralyzed and he couldn't stand up.

It was Sunday afternoon and after about an hour of calling we got our vet to open up the clinic. I then remembered the mushroom episode and surmised that they were affecting his nervous system. We spent the next several hours inducing him to vomit. About 10 p.m. that evening we took him home and Nancy and I stayed up all night watching him. The next morning his back legs were still paralyzed so we took him back to the vet. After some further examination and some x-rays we finally concluded that it wasn't a mushroom problem but rather he has somehow injured his spine. We don't know when, but he was in the habit of jumping off chairs and other high places whenever the spirit moved him. Probably in one of those great leaps of abandon he injured himself. The vet gave us some pills and told us to keep him quiet for a couple of weeks. Much to his dismay he spent the next 2 weeks in his crate. Slowly he healed and now he runs around as if nothing happened.



**Hey Boss! You think this is bad?
You forgot to pay your annual
WPGCA Membership!**

Upcoming WPGCA Events

(see <http://www.wpgca.org> for up to date info on all activities)

Pheasant Fest 2012

Where: Kansas City Convention Center, Kansas City, MO

When: February 17-19, 2012

WPGCA Activity Coordinators:

John Pitlo (563) 599-2487

jvpitlo@iowatelecom.net

Ken Hurtig (608) 963-5764

hurtigkenka@centurytel.net

What is Pheasant Fest?

Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic is a trade show that will focus on wildlife conservation, upland game bird hunting, dog training, and wildlife habitat management and restoration. Pheasants Forever will hold seminars on habitat improvement, pheasant hunting, shooting sports, wild game cooking, dog training, conservation and lots more!

Regional WPGCA Tests & Judges Seminar

Rocky Mountain Chapter Spring Test and Judges Seminar

2012 Judge's Seminar to be held March 30 in Jerome, ID. Dr. Claudia Orlandi will present a seminar on the subjects of dog breeding and anatomy as related to movement. Dr. Orlandi has authored two books of interest to the WPGCA judges and breeding committee: *ABC's of Dog Breeding* and *Practical Canine Anatomy and Movement*. Dr. Orlandi is known worldwide for her educational contributions to the canine world.

Rocky Mountain Chapter Spring Test: March 30, 31, & April 1st, 2012

Heartland Chapter Spring Test: mid April 2012. Dates not final at press time

Northeast Chapter Spring Test: Dates to be determined

WPGCA DUES Mail \$40.00 check payable to the WPGCA to:

Andy Rupp, WPGCA Treasurer

P.O. Box 2118

Grand Lake, CO 80447

Suggestion: Help someone you know discover the WPGCA. A membership makes a great gift idea!