

The Gun Dog Supreme

NEWSBULLETIN of the WIREHAired POINTING GRIFFON CLUB OF AMERICA
EDUCATION & RESEARCH FOUNDATION

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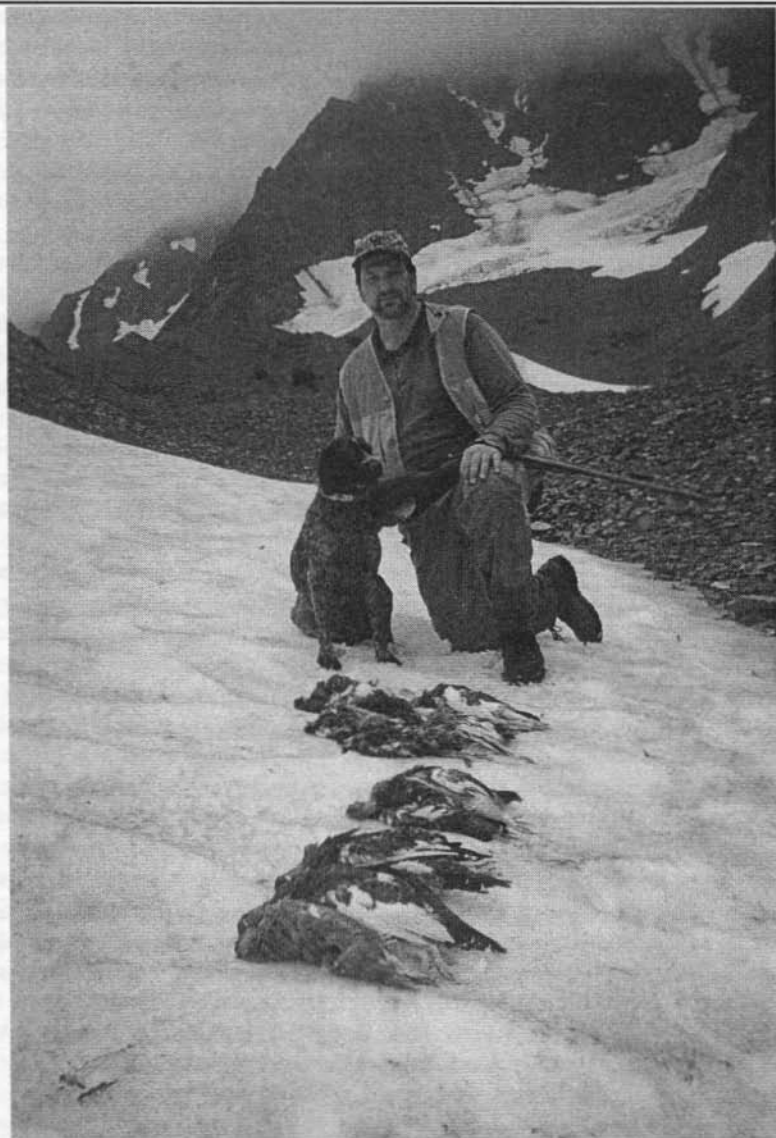
Mike and Kathi Rackouski, Editors, 1806 E. Sixth St. Ashland, WI 54806

Telephone: 715-682-0383(CST), Email: mracko@ncis.net

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

October 4th, 10 am The hunting season is here...and here I sit in front of my computer tapping at the keyboard. If everything went well I should be sitting at the kitchen table oiling my gun and getting my gear together, for a day in the woods, as Badger and Beck frantically pace and whine, by the back door, in anticipation of BIRDHUNTING. But, as you know, nothing ever does go well. It is usually a balancing act. In my case work and weather have conspired to keep me out of the woods more than usual this fall.

Work is my own fault. What dedicated bird hunter would pick a career where fall/winter is his or her busiest time of year? I work at a trout and salmon hatchery, need I say more. My cohorts and I have talked about selectively breeding to make spring spawning trout and salmon, but after much discussion we came to the conclusion that it would bite into our fishing time in the summer. Well, that, and it just wouldn't be acceptable with management. It sure would be nice, though, to close up shop for October and November and just tromp around in the woods and waters.

Weather. What can I say about weather? It never cooperates; it is either too hot and dry or to cold and wet. It is generally unpredictable, except lately you can count on it being beautiful during the work days and lousy on the days off. Take yesterday and today for example; yesterday I had to work, so of course, it was partly sunny, 55°F and beautiful for grouse and woodcock hunting. Today, my day off, it is barely 50°F, cloudy, overcast and dreary with a steady and constant downpour, which according to the radar will probably clear up sometime early Monday morning. Just in time for the start of a new WORK WEEK! I am not complaining, though, because it is a good time for me to finish up the October GDS and send it off to the printer.

For those club members that haven't heard, the Education and Research Foundation (E & RF) was granted permanent tax-exempt status on June 25th, 2002. Glenn Lehrer, one of the main people who pursued that goal, tells about how the idea for the E & RF came about and the work that took place over the years to make that dream a reality on page 3.

On page 4, Trent Semmens wrote an article about a ptarmigan hunting trip he was able to make with his father, Larry, and fellow club member Steve Grieser from Washington state this past August. If you recall, Larry wrote an article about his hunting and training experiences with Glacier Point of Auger Falls last October. I am always impressed with the dedication members have to the WPGCA and it's breeding program and Larry, living in Alaska, is a good example. I also love receiving photos from him because the landscape is so breath-taking.

Ralph Nodine of Maine, a long time Griffonier, recently sent me a letter, which appears on page 6, expressing his thoughts and feelings about Joan's retirement. It is always educational to get the perspective of a long time participant because you get an historical point of view. I have not been involved with the club for all that long, compared to other members, but having taken over some of the responsibility of editing the GDS (Something that Joan had done by herself for many years) I have come to have a deeper respect for the time and work Joan has given to the club over the many years. Thank you Joan.

On page 7 Dennis Carlson sent me an article attesting to the versatility of the breed and which has given me an idea. You see I mistakenly gave my car keys to my 3 year old daughter, Kylie,...4 days ago and I have not found them since!

Have a happy and safe hunting season,

Mike Lockauke

COVER PHOTO: A HUNT OF A LIFE TIME! Steve Grieser and GRACIE OF AUGER FALLS (Prairie Storm's Beau x Ellie of Auger Falls) on a successful willow and white-tailed ptarmigan hunt in the Kenai Peninsula of Alaska. Read about it on page 5. (Photo by: Trent Semmens, August 2002)

WPGCA EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FOUNDATION GAINS PERMANENT TAX EXEMPT STATUS

By: Glenn Lehrer

After a four-year trial period, on June 25th, 2002 the WPGCA Education and Research Foundation received from the IRS permanent recognition of its tax-exempt status as a 501(c)(3) organization. As a result of this ruling, deductibility of future donations to the Foundation is assured.

The ERF is the outgrowth of a brainstorming session between Griffoniers Glenn Lehrer, a director, and Bill Madden, a lawyer, who developed the idea of forming a tax exempt organization during a long drive to one of their favorite hunting spots in eastern Montana. Concerned with inability of the WPGCA to raise sufficient funds from membership dues to defray the expense of the testing program, judges' seminars and the publication of the Gun Dog Supreme. They hit upon the idea of broadening the resource base by spinning off these functions of the WPGCA into a separate, tax exempt organization that could attract funds not only from WPGCA members but also from the public at large.

Following their hunting trip, Glenn presented the idea to the WPGCA Board of Directors, who readily endorsed it at a meeting in the fall of 1997. Bill then formed the WPGCA Education and Research Foundation and, with the assistance of Glenn and a Bozeman accountant Ed Orazem, an application was submitted to the IRS for recognition of the Foundation's tax exempt status.

On June 10th, 1998 the IRS granted tentative approval of the ERF's tax exempt status, subject to the Foundation being able to show over the ensuing four year period that it either had sufficient support from the public at large, as to warrant its continued recognition as a publicly supported tax exempt organization.

Through the efforts of Mike Rackouski, who in addition to his responsibilities as editor of the GDS also volunteered his time to development of the ERF web site, Jim Seibel, who handled all of the financial record keeping, and numerous WPGCA members, who solicited contributions from the public and themselves made sustaining contributions to the ERF, the Foundation was ultimately able to show the IRS that not only was it organized to attract public support, it in fact did so. Over the four-year period ending December 31st, 2000, the Foundation received total income of \$56,000, \$16,000 of which was from contributions and \$8,500 of that was from a qualified public source.

During this period, 127 contributors from 25 different states and Canada donated an



*This is what it is all about. Bryan Rowder and **GRATONE OF AUGER FALLS** (Prairie Storm's Beau x Ellie of Auger Falls) after a rewarding chukar hunt. (Photo by: unknown)*

average of approximately \$125 each to the ERF. This support not only enabled the ERF to continue the testing, seminars, and publication activities previously performed by the WPGCA, but also to significantly expand upon them. Due to the generosity of these contributors, directors John Pitlo and Jim Seibel were able to travel to the Czech Republic to meet the geneticist Dr. Dostal and learn about the Czech breeding and testing program. Dr. Dostal was, in turn, able to travel to the United States to teach the spring 2001 judges' seminar and to observe and critique our testing programs; and, as a result of this newfound relationship, arrangements were ultimately made for importing Czech Fousek semen to help expand our dog's bloodlines and improve the gene pool.

Future improvement of our Griffons depends on the continued success of our controlled breeding and progeny testing programs, continued education of our judges and of our dog owners and others interested in gun dogs of all breeds through publication of the GDS, our web site, and articles of interest bearing on breed improvement. All of this requires adequate financial resources; so continued support of the ERF is important, indeed essential, to this effort.

Those interested and able to do so are strongly encouraged to consider making a tax-exempt gift to the ERF as part of their regular year end tax planning. Those desiring to make a contribution this year should make their checks payable to the WPGCA Education and Research Foundation and send it to Jim Seibel, Treasurer, 17550 Seventeen Mile Road, Marshall, Michigan 49068. Please do so sufficiently in advance of December 31st to allow its receipt and booking prior to years end.

KENAI PTARMIGAN

By: Trent Semmens



*L to R; Larry with **GLACIER** and Steve with **GRACIE** and a mixed bag of ptarmigan. (Photo By: Trent Semmens August 2002)*

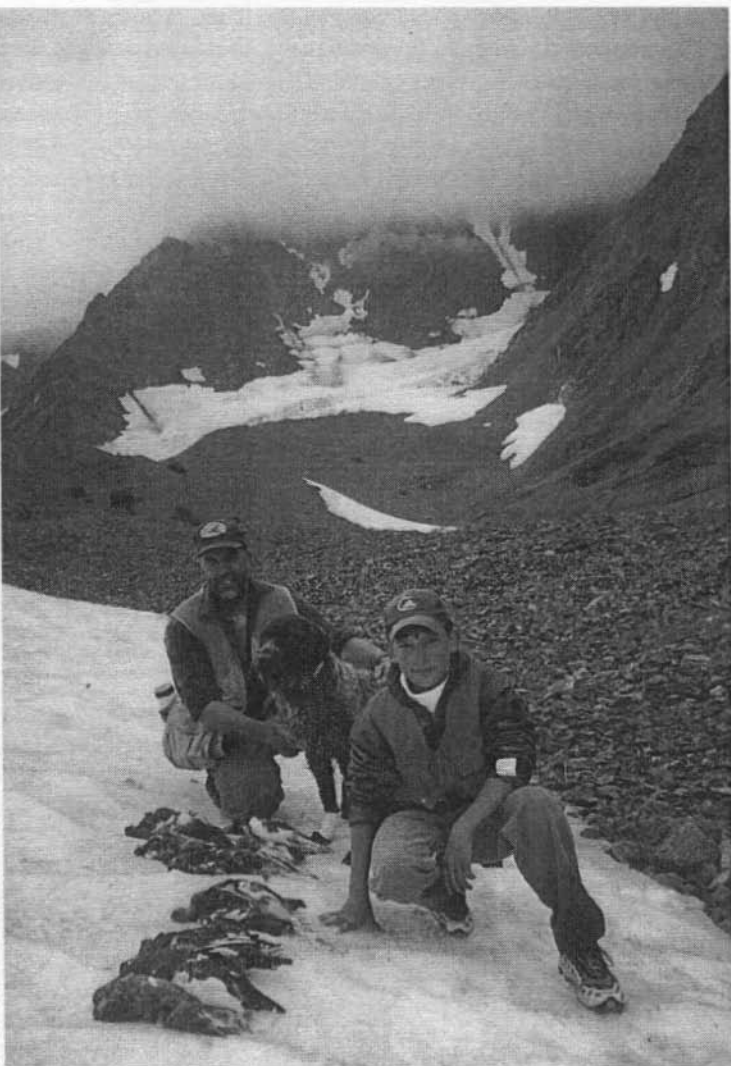
Thank goodness for big guys and small planes! I didn't think I was going to get to go on this ptarmigan hunt, but Steve Grieser, his dog, Gracie of Auger Falls, along with my Dad and Glacier Point of Auger Falls were just too much for one plane-load. Since they were going to need two trips, they had room and I got to go. We climbed into the Ingram's Air Cessna 185 on floats. Dad sat up front, Glacier and I in the back. It was a beautiful short flight through steep mountains. We had a nice landing on a lake and were soon unloading the gear. I quickly learned that the area around the lake was very swampy. We grabbed some

gear and headed up a hill that flattened out on a nice bench where we decided to camp. The pilot, Dennis, was soon back with Steve and Gracie and we were set for three days.

After we set up camp, we loaded our vests with shells and set out for the hills. Everyone was excited, especially the dogs. Ten minutes from camp a shot sounded. Steve had shot his first ptarmigan; I think my dad was relieved. We hiked on and crossed many streams, but never did see another bird in that direction. We decided to walk all the way back, but when we got to camp we kept going. We hiked into some willow brush and birds scattered, Steve and Dad shot but missed. The dogs were putting up lots of birds, but the shooting wasn't the best. Then we scared up a bird that landed on the side of a nearby hill. We decided that we should try to get it. Gracie came up on the bird and froze into a beautiful point. Steve motioned me to come up and flush the bird. The blood was pounding in my ears as I eased along the side of the little hill. Steve coached me to keep the gun up and I knocked the bird out of the sky in a bundle of feathers! Gracie made a nice retrieve to Steve who tossed it to me. It was my second ptarmigan ever, I felt very excited. Back at camp Dad fired up the old Buddy-L propane

stove that sent flames roaring 8 inches into the air and cooked dinner. We ate a nice meal and went up to the tent to set out the sleeping gear.

The next day we didn't even bother going down the lake, like we had the first day, we went where the birds were. We flushed a few birds with Dad and Steve on the outside and me on the inside. The dogs were doing very well at finding the birds. We hiked out pretty far and then split up. Dad and I bushwhacked it through the brush and Steve went with Gracie up on the hill into some rocks. Glacier pointed and we busted up a big covey of which Dad shot two birds. I got one shot but then my gun jammed. We met up again with Steve, and then turned around and came back. This time I went with Steve and he gave me lots of pointers that were



Larry Semmens with **GLACIER POINT OF AUGER FALLS (Prairie Storm's Beau x Ellie of Auger Falls)** and Trent Semmens with a nice mixed bag of willow and white-tailed ptarmigan they shot with fellow club member Steve Grieser. (Photo by: Steve Grieser, August 2002)

very helpful to me on the hunt. On the way back we saw more birds but it was rather uneventful. I was very tired and Dad and Steve went over to hunt some more while I headed for the tent. After dinner Dad went to fish in the lake while Steve went to go try his luck after white-tailed ptarmigan up in the rocks. Dad came running up and yelled that I should get some shells and come down. I grabbed my little 20 gauge 870 and was soon down by Dad. He had seen many birds on his way to the lake, and since I had not gotten a bird that day he thought I should hunt with him down there. We worked Glacier on quite a few birds and I shot and shot but never hit one.

The third day we decided to follow a river that went up to a small lake. Dad and I crossed the river and hunted on one side while Steve hunted on the other. Glacier was really getting better at pointing and retrieving birds. As we crossed a high rocky pass we flushed a covey of white-tails. One bird, exactly the color of the rocks, waited for Steve to come up and make a nice shot. We crossed the creek that connected the two lakes, but Glacier raced ahead and flushed some birds. Dad called him back and put him on a check cord and we moved into the cover. Suddenly I spotted the little brown heads of several willow ptarmigan sticking above the grass. We moved downwind of them and came in with Gracie in the lead. She moved in hesitantly and about 15 birds burst into the air. We shot about 5 out of the covey, birds and feathers

seemed to be everywhere. It was awesome! After that Steve got a nice double, both Dad and I got a few more birds and we started back, we were almost out of shells. On the way Dad shot a nice double over Glacier with his last two shells. Both Steve and I had 1 shell left. Gracie locked up on a covey of about 8 birds and I dropped one. Everyone was out of shells so we headed straight back to camp. It was a great day, I got 5 birds. The next morning we were lounging around in the tent when Dad jumped up and said he heard an airplane. It was Dennis, it was raining and he said the weather was getting bad and we should get out now. We threw our gear together and soon Steve was in the air with half the gear and Dad and I finished carrying down the rest just as Dennis arrived. Back in the truck on the way home we talked about the birds, the dogs, and the country and we agreed it was a super hunt, the kind of hunt we dream about and hope to get to do again.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editors,

So Joan says she is withdrawing from active work for the breed! I can't believe it—not after she has had better than 30 years with the fuzzy faces. Perhaps she'll be less active, but that leaves plenty of scope for activity.

At any rate, it may be time to review her accomplishments with the breed, for there are many. I'll let others who have worked with her during the last decade or two write about what they find most impressive (and she surely has done a great deal, I recognize, even though she and I have differed on many point for at least thirty years!) and I'll point out what I see as critical, an achievement that others may not mention.

Working with dogs may not be easy, but working with people is a lot more difficult, and Joan has done a superb job of steadfast and disciplined in pursuit of the perfect versatile hunting dog, built and working along the traditional Griffon type. Just such a group was built by Korthals, and it was that group, the original Griffon Club, that continued his work after he died.

With or without Joan's immediate attention, the group that she developed will go forward, will face the problems of the future, and will find solutions that will improve the breed.

Sincerely,
Ralph Nodine, Maine

RADIO DOG

By: Dennis Carlson

I got that heavy sinking feeling at the bottom of my gut when I realized that I lost my radio. After tearing my truck apart in the desperate hope I might have just misplaced it, I spent the next two hours retracing my forest inventory plots looking for it. Lately, I'd been casually carrying the radio in my back pocket instead of securely zipped up in my cruiser's vest. It's kind of a pain to unzip my vest and rummage around in there for it when somebody calls and I'd been forgetting to take it out of



CZECHERS OF IAMONIA (Erik Od Jezarek x Flora Z Hlozku) with the radio he found. (Photo by: Dennis Carlson.)

my vest to charge overnight. The radios cost about \$400.00, which was probably coming out of my paycheck because of this gross negligence. That wouldn't leave much left and just before hunting season. As I was searching for the radio it reminded me of when I used to hunt birds without a dog. Ding! A bunch of brain cells fired. I'll ask my boss if I could bring my dog to work.

Czechers was a hit in the office. She's so friendly and people were impressed that she would stay on sit or lay down on that spot next to my desk until somebody would pet her, which is an unplanned release command that just sort of happened. When I'd call her, she'd go back to that spot and lay down. I loaded her into her crate in the back of my work truck and headed back to the woods with my work partner, Mark Adams.

The plan was for me and Czechers to go out in front, while Mark followed behind keying the mike on his radio so, hopefully, I might hear the lost radio squelch or Czechers might scent it. Before we got started, I gave Czechers some impromptu lessons on retrieving a radio. It was pretty simple. I'm glad I've force fetch trained my dogs to retrieve and have used many different objects such as a pocketknife or keys to finish the training. I held the radio out in front of her and commanded her to fetch. She did it without hesitation and held until released with "give". Then I walked the radio out about twenty feet away and tried it again. No problem. She got lavish praise. We did it again and headed off into the brush with Mark following and keying the other radio. The parcel is pretty decent grouse habitat and it looked like Czechers was hunting as she always does, so from time to time I would purposely leave the radio on the ground and bring her around down wind. She would pick it up without command and bring it back to me, for which she would get more lavish praise.

It wasn't working. The batteries in the lost radio were probably dead. We were almost to my last plots when I thought I heard something. I asked Mark to key his mike again, then I heard him yell, "She's got it!" My heart shot up like a rocket. I've never felt so high. No dog ever got so much praise. We might have found the radio without Czechers. Mark thought he saw her key into the sound. Still, I think she helped. It's funny how our egos get wrapped up with our dogs and it sure feels good sometimes.



Four generations of Griffons. Left to right - Rick Molt, **ADMIRAL DOZER OF MARSH STREAM** (6 mos.) (Chipper De Los Altos x Bristol of Alderbrook), **AMY OF DUTCHMAN'S HOLLOW** (12 yrs.) (Blue Mountain's Brew x Avaj of Iamonia), **CAPTAIN BLIGH OF ALDERBROOK** (3 yrs.) (Chyt Ze Zaplay x Bailey of Ocean House), **BAILEY OF OCEAN HOUSE** (9 yrs.) (Dan Cernicky x Amy of Dutchman's Hollow), Bob Hinckley. (Photo by: Tina Molt)