

# The Whoa Post

February 2022

## Inside this issue:

<i>February Issue</i>	1
<i>Ask Butch</i>	2
<i>Bird Dog Training from the Place in the Middle</i>	3
<i>Interview with a Pheasant hunter: A Reason to Keep a Hunting Journal</i>	4
<i>About Hunting Journals</i>	5
<i>How Epagneul Bretons Changed my Life</i>	6
<i>Who Wants to Stop Hunters and Their Dogs and Why</i>	7
<i>Setting Dog Training Variables to Zero</i>	10
<i>UKC Events</i>	11
<i>Marketplace</i>	11
<i>Recipe</i>	12
<i>Photo Gallery</i>	13
<i>Stud Dogs</i>	15
<i>Breeders</i>	16
<i>Membership</i>	17

## February Issue

I've had a rough couple of weeks. It all started with my yoga studio closing and having to find a new place to work out. I joined our local YMCA. Not a bad choice with lots of workout options. I went in search of new sneakers. The brand most recommended was XYZ. They are expensive, but my feet are worth it. Purchasing my shiny pair of magic XYZ's, I soon found they did not have magic, and in less than 2 days of breaking in the shoes around the house, I was nearly crippled. They went back to the store. I tried another brand, same result.

After a few days, I ventured out again to a different store, fearing the shoe department had a photo of me tacked up in the back room for all to see, so I found a pair of less expensive sneakers. Problem averted. With new sneakers, I was ready to explore class options. I made it to the first class with a few friends — safety in numbers. The second class was a challenge. I went alone and ran into problems — always travel in a pack.

Next, my work calendar had been changed (unbeknown to me) and I showed up on the wrong day. As the oldest person in my work group, there were a lot of aging jokes thrown about. I did not find them funny. Fortunately, I had taken a picture of the original calendar and had it as evidence that I was not losing it.

So what did I learn from this week? Always take a lesson from the dogs. Dogs travel in packs. The reason they do this is to increase their survival. Had I gone to the gym with my pack, I might have had my dates correct. That goes for double checking a work calendar and staying with my pack (work pack). As for the fancy shoes, don't give in to fad or fashion, go with what works. Your dog doesn't care if you are in the newest fad for clothes or shoes, they just want you to feed them, hunt or train them, and give them some affection and they will be happy. Isn't that what we all need to be happy?

Sherry Niesar  
Whoa Post Editor





## *Ask Butch by Butch Nelson*

It's been at least two years since I received a phone call from a friend looking for a young started EB female. We talked about hens teeth but told him with patience and luck we might find one. I did give him a few contacts to follow up with to continue his search. Two months ago he called me with news he had found a female back in the Midwest and needed an opinion. I silently giggled as this was the same pup (or her sister) I was trying to buy earlier but the breeder couldn't make up his mind which one he was keeping.

He bought her on his trip from Montana to New Mexico to extend his hunting season and to get out of the Montana winter. I would text him from time to time to see how they were doing and the feedback was always "She's doing great". I let him settle in his camper before making a trip over to hunt with Jim and Rosie. I watched her and noticed how attached she was to him, almost to a fault, but figured she'd gain some independence the more he hunted. I went back to Arizona until one day he texted and said he thought she was gun-shy. Jim also stated there was a covey of quail very near his camper and that Rosie would pull him with a checkcord the whole way to find them at dusk. All was not lost. I figured she was noise-shy not gun-shy but still needed a plan. My go to is noise, reaction and starvation. Sounds a little cruel but it is very effective. Dogs and myself would do anything for food, including a gunshot. I had Jim bang two pots together and then put the food down. What I didn't mention was to pick up the dish if she ran into the other room. I didn't want to put pressure on him with a young dog that was gaining his trust. I've heard of another technique that requires multiple dogs on a chain gang. By throwing lots of birds while firing a gun, the shy dog notices the aggressive dogs are trying to catch or retrieve the birds. I've never used this method but I can see why it might work.

Because the bird season is still on and he could take his pup for walks after, I suggested many walks possibly with a blank gun and maybe a dead bird thrown and patience and praise. Because she loves birds, she just might overcome her fear. I hope so because she's the perfect first pointing dog for Jim.

I do wish him and Rosie the very best.

*Butch*

PS: Watch for updates on Rosie's training progress!

Put Butch Nelson's years of professional dog training experience to work. Submit you training, behavior or general dog questions for the "Ask Butch" column to the editor at [sniesar@outlook.com](mailto:sniesar@outlook.com).

## *Bird Dog Training from the Place in the Middle by Pete Wax*

Entering the 63<sup>rd</sup> year on the blue planet my thoughts occasionally turn towards retirement. Mine as well as my friends. Some of my friends have retired to new and improved phases of life and some have retired to that tomb that hears no sound and sees no light. We (Ma and me) 37-year plan is to retire someplace out of town. A little spot to train a few dogs, raise our own birds, work in her garden, and paint on my canvas. As the inevitable exit nears, inflation is galloping, land prices are 300% higher than they were just 5 years ago, Russia is preparing to start WWII, and the divide between what is wished for and what can be, is expanding faster than the universe and even the Hubble Telescope cannot make out the far shore.

This situation is just like birddogging. There is a place between starting and succeeding where all seems impossible. Starting a new thing. Success is easily, followed by a long period of failure and struggle (the place in the middle) and only through perseverance is success regained. With it be in training a dog, learning to play tennis, gambling, or love, this place in the middle needs to be passed through. This place cannot be denied. It is woven into the very fabric of the earth.

Over the last 62+ years the place in the middle has been visited and crossed through many times. Born the third son, my entire youth was mired in the middle. In frustration I would turn to my father for help. He would listen to my passionate description of the unfairness in the world. After I was done, he would counsel me with: "Treulos ist derjenige, der aufhört, wenn sich die Straße Verdunkelt" or "Immer am dunkelsten vor der Morgendämmerung". My father, born in a house without heat or indoor plumbing and a survivor of Bloody and Heartbreak Ridges would know a thing or two about both.

Dog training is like that. No dog ever got trained by wishing. No tantrum ever fixed a problem dog. No amount of crying, praying, feeling of deserving ever cut the earth's fabric to make puppy steady. Slow down. Investigate each step of your training. Take a mirror and look back over your shoulder like an artist checking on perspective. Be honest. Learn to find reward in failure. Embrace each challenge as an opportunity. And in honor of my father, put on your suspenders, tighten your belt, and carry on as "faithless is the man that quits when the road darkens", and get a good night's sleep as "it is always darkest before the dawn".

Birddogging is a journey. It is not about the achievement but getting there in the company of gundogs and birddoggers.



Going with the dog in the middle.

## *An Interview with a Pheasant Hunter: A Reason to Keep a Hunting Journal By Ken Bruzelheide*

I have a friend who is an avid outdoorsman. He hunts with a bow and a shotgun and takes fish with a fly rod. He has been doing these activities for about 50 years. All of this time he has kept detailed journals of his adventures: bow hunting since 1970, fishing since 2001, and pheasants since 1979. He is particularly fond of pheasant hunting and only pheasants.

Keeping detailed journals is his way of remembering hunts but also recording the property he hunted, location where the birds were taken, type of cover, weather, dogs, people, and landowner contact information as well as block

management areas. The journaling has added to his expertise in becoming a pheasant hunter. Some folks might think that this is a lot of effort, but it adds to the hobby.

Part of this record keeping was to see if there were any common patterns to the behavior of pheasants. The primary occurrence that he discovered and observed over time has been that more pheasants have been taken at about the 11 AM hour. His reasoning is that the birds were, at that time of the day, in what he refers to as "loafing cover." That is to say that the pheasants moved from roosting to feeding cover then on to loafing cover. Perhaps they are more relaxed due to recent feeding and less aware. This observation may not be substantiated by science but only by his observations.

Now, one might ask is his journal keeping and analysis worth it? I have seen and read his detailed journal entries and tally sheets. They reflect that since 1979 he has hunted 723 days and has harvested 1,607 pheasants...not a typo!

### Locations:

This hunter has lived in several locations across Montana. Thus, he has established a network of landowners to contact for permission to hunt their farms and ranches. Access is certainly added also due to Montana's excellent block management program.

### Dogs:

This hunter has used numerous dogs over many years. Included in the mix have been a couple of flushing dogs but the majority have been pointers of some type. In the mix of dogs have been American Brittanys and



Continued on page 5

## Interview - Continued from page 4

in recent years Epagneul Bretons. He currently has one EB as a hunting partner who also enjoys going along to sit on the bank while he fishes.

While the journal highlights the number of pheasants harvested it also points out the excellent dog work that produced the opportunities. Let us not forget the dogs.

Now when this long-term pheasant hunter told me of his harvest numbers, I was skeptical. But I have examined his journals and the numbers are accurate. Remember 723 days, 42 years of hunting. If you are a young hunter start keeping a journal. The record may help you in the field. It will certainly help you to recount your adventures in the off season and especially in later years when you may no longer be able to walk the fields.

### Log Summary

17.2 days per year, 2.2 birds per day

Dogs: 2 Golden Retrievers, 8 American Brittanys, 2 French Brittanys

## *About Hunting Journals*

Like all things, hunting journals come in a variety of shapes, sizes and price ranges. You can make your own with a notebook or 3 ring binder like our hunter in this article or find something at your local outdoor store or online. Until you know exactly what you want, try something that is already put together. The pre-made journals offer places to write in location, weather, game species and details of your hunt. After you get a feel for what information you want to include in your journal, you can make your own if you like. There are even hunting journal apps if you aren't a pen to paper person. Check out: IHunt, Quiver, or Hunting Diary on your apps store.

Regardless of what type of hunting journal works best for you, there is something special about pulling out an old journal and reliving the hunt. It will bring back memories of old partners, great dogs and the game that was put in your freezer.



Traditional Hunting Journals



I Hunt App



Hunting Diary App

## *How Epagneul Bretons Changed My Life* *By Riley Pleskac*

Editors Note: Riley (13 years old) attended the Big Sky EB Gun Dog Club Field Trial in August 2021.

I have been around dogs my whole life but when we got our first Epagneul Bretons (EB) everything changed. The first thing EBs changed was how I looked at dogs. I did not realize how difficult and how much time it took to train dogs. The EBs need to learn different commands for different behaviors. They also need to be comfortable in new environments, so we took them to new places and introduced them to new things, like water and swimming. EBs are hunting dogs so we had to introduce them to birds and gunfire so they would not be gun shy.

The second thing they did for me was to open a new world for me with organizations like the AKC and the UKC where we met more people who do the same thing my family does.

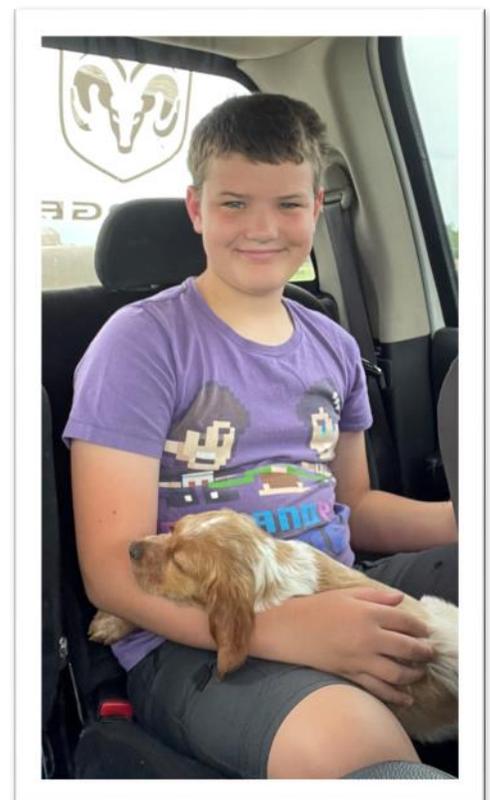
The third thing EBs did for me was helping me handle a dog in a field trial. I got to handle Sway, she passed in the TAN. Another opportunity I had because of EBs was becoming a member of the Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club.

Epagneul Bretons have changed my life and continue to change my life because now I have my own EB Skeeter. I am excited about the changes she and I will go through together.



Riley and Sway at the TAN, Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club, Denton, MT. August 2022.

Photos by Jimmy Cobb



Riley with Skeeter.

## *Who wants to stop hunters and their dogs and why?*

*By Joe Schmutz, Saskatoon, SK*

Reprinted with permission from the VHDF-Canada

It is doubtful, I think, that people go out of their way to needlessly restrict or hurt others – well, not many people anyway. More likely, we all operate in one ‘silo’ or another and can’t ever really comprehend the impacts our views and actions have on others, have on the ‘people system’ as a whole. My point in the end is that we might engage with those trends and try and influence trends that may be threatening. My further point is that VHDF-Canada should be doing this positive engaging in favour of hunting dogs and hunting. We need to team up and open those silos as much as possible.

But what encroachments am I talking about?

Some years ago, some policy people in the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources began looking critically at dog people rendering a duck flightless and releasing it for dog training and testing. The late Ed Bailey and Jim Baker could recall some rumbling re that topic. Wolf Schmid-Körby told me that as a rep. of the German Jagdgebrauchshundverband (JGHV), he and Gruppe Canada members attended a meeting with ministry officials in Toronto in support of the Verein Deutsch Drahthaar – Gruppe Canada. The ministry person driving this backed off. So far so good.

In Saskatchewan, according to one rumour, a Sask. English Springer club was challenged by members of the local humane society for releasing and shooting pigeons. Having contacted two English Springer breeders in SK, neither is aware of such a club existing now. However, members of the Eastern Slopes Spaniel Association could confirm that such a club had existed in SK and exists no longer.

In June 2021, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment released updated Captive Wildlife Regulations which now make it illegal to release our ordinary city/farmyard pigeon. One can shoot-, poison - and capture them but not release them. No doubt this was not done intentionally, but more likely an oversight. In revising the captive wildlife regulations, the province did not consult widely enough as falconers, racing pigeon aficionados, dog trainers, and game farms now confront restrictions whose purpose is obscure at best.

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association is opposed to tail docking and while there is no federal ban, provinces decide for themselves, some legal some not.

The Verein Deutsch Drahthaar – Gruppe Canada has closed its registry in part for the tail docking ban and in part because the organizers found it hard to find enough volunteers for a functioning club. Tail docking is an example where VHDF-Canada should have intervened on behalf of hunters and their short-haired dogs. We can still draft a well-explained position, get other dog clubs to sign on and share it with the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association. This in the hopes that they’d care what matters to practitioners and accommodate accordingly as other jurisdictions have done.

### **Surgical manipulations re-visited.**

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) calls tail docking a cosmetic surgery. This misses

## Stop hunters - Continued from page 8

the mark for hunting breeds. Veterinarians and veterinary medicine, needless to say, are of enormous benefit to us all, but this relationship could be based on a more solid understanding of what are the things that matter.

For a hundred+ years the tails of short-haired hunting dogs, and even those of long-haired flushing breeds, have been docked shortly after birth. In recent years, breeders have left up to 1/3 of the tail intact recognizing that the tail is an important tool for steering while swimming or on land.

In our own experience, when we lived and hunted Ruffed Grouse in the mixed woods of eastern Ontario, even the tails of our long-haired dogs could be bloody on the tip from the enthusiastic wagging against woody vegetation while hunting. We tried taping a single glove finger to the tail tip but these invariably came off. One of our dogs developed a hairless tip from repeated injury and the 5 cm tip had to be removed.

Even with their long hair, springers wag their tails so enthusiastically that bloody tails would be the norm. In comparison, English Pointers, by their very nature don't wag their tails nearly as much, nor do pointers work thickets with the same diligence of springers or versatile dogs. So, when people say an English Pointer gets by with a long tail, why would a German Short-haired Pointer not, the previous is the answer.

When the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association calls tail docking "cosmetic," it signals both a lack of understanding and a disregard for breed histories and function. Springers originated as hunting dogs and hence the tail-docking tradition.



What opinion would Zeus have on tail docking, if we could ask him?

Peter Wax - Photo

Of course, a good case should be made for breeders of show and companion dogs to abandon tail docking where it no longer serves its original function. Hunters should be actively engaged and provide the education and logic that should be applied.

Unnecessary surgeries should of course be avoided. In our kennel, Sheila and I have long felt that when it comes to dogs, the scissors or surgical scalpels come out far too rapidly (see also neutering below). Front dew claw removal is a case in point. I know of one owner of one of our dogs who hunts in rocky terrain in the inter-mountain US-West whose dog injured one claw and it had to be removed. We've never removed front dew claws on puppies and feel it is better to attend to an injury in the rare case when it occurs. We are not aware that the remaining 246 pup-

Continued on page 6

pies had any health issues with front dew claws. Front dew claws are used by dogs for grooming and their removal may well contribute to phantom pain throughout life.

I strongly suspect there is an imbalance in the positions taken by CVMA. While the CVMA has taken a problematic blanket opposition to tail docking <https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/documents/elective-nontherapeutic-procedures-for-cosmetic-competitive> the CVMA still advocates for not only neutering dogs but doing so pre-puberty <https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/documents/neutering-of-dogs-and-cats-position-statement> There is mounting evidence that the neutering which interferes with an animal's hormonal function, has harmful impacts on dog health. Is there an economic undertone in what the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association recommends; tail docking can and is often done by breeders in their own litter room, whereas neutering involves expensive intervention by a veterinarian?

For example, of studies and comments on the negative health impact of neutering, see:

- O'Neill, D. G., et al. (2020). "Epidemiology and clinical management of elbow joint disease in dogs under primary veterinary care in the UK." *Canine Medicine and Genetics* 7(1).
- Strauss, L. (2015). "To spay or neuter: Not so fast. It might be better to delay or avoid "fixing" your duck dog." *Delta Waterfowl* (Winter 2015): 30 & 32.
- Character, B. (2014). "Neutering health effects: Are there breed differences?" *Pointing Dog Journal* 22(6): 50-52.
- Zink, C. (2013). "Early Spay-Neuter Considerations for the Canine Athlete." [www.caninesports.com](http://www.caninesports.com).
- Torre de la Riva, G., et al. (2013). "Neutering dogs: Effects on joint disorders and cancers in Golden retrievers." *PLOS One* 8(2).

All of the above trends, I fear have one thing in common. Hunters do not advocate for themselves enough. In the case of veterinarians, how many will be hunters when less than 10% of Canadians hunt and of those only a fraction will hunt with dogs. How many veterinarians will have practical experience or even sympathy with what matters to hunters and their dogs?

My point, - once again - we need to do a better job engaging with the various sectors that influence what is important to us. Capably prepared statements and stories shared with the main purpose to educate and share what is important for hunting dogs can gain us allies. The use of capable hunting dogs in the field is unquestionably important for game conservation. Versatile dogs top this conservation-utility function in my opinion. VHDF-Canada is in an excellent position to take on this allegiance-building role. VHDF-Canada does not promote one breed nor certain breeders over others. Our goal is to have hunters take capable hunting dogs into the field.



## *Setting Dog Training Variables to Zero By Peter Wax*

During WWII the Statistical Research Group, a classified program that assembled the mightiest “American” statisticians to the war effort — something like the Manhattan Project, except the weapons being developed were equations not explosives.

One riddle presented to the group was how to efficiently protect war planes with just enough armor. The Allied Air Forces studied the most common areas struck by enemy fire on planes that returned from battle and proposed strengthening these areas. Abraham Wald, an abstract mathematician, pointed out that they were looking at the holes and not the problem *“Planes that do not come back”*.



Wald made the picture perfectly clear by setting the variable of a hit to the engine as zero. This mathematical output resulted in areas without holes receiving additional armor and saving many allied lives.

While attempting to overcome a training issue we often concentrate on the end of the trail instead of the steps required to teach the response (delivery to hand, go out, sit still). When starting a new task or when struggling with an old one – start, one at a time setting the variable of the task to zero to identify those important to accomplishing the desired response.

## UKC Events

### **March 5th & 6th, 2022**

Winston Salem, NC  
Carolinas Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club  
Field Trial Type L, OPEN, GUN, TAN, WRT  
Contact: Donald Clements, 913.710.0310 or  
Events@carolinasebgdc.com

### **March 12th & 13th, 2022**

Le Roy, IL  
Heart of the Prairie Pointing Dog Club  
Liberated, TAN & WRT  
Contact Event Secretary: Kevin Banasik

### **March 30th & 31st, 2022**

Webb, IA  
UKC Pheasant Championship  
Great North EBGDC  
Field Trial Type W, TAN, WRT  
Event Secretary: Matt Van Maanen 641.780.9581 -  
buckleycreek@gmail.com.

### **April 1st - 3rd, 2022**

Grinnell, IA  
Field of Dreams EBGDC  
Field Trial Type W, TAN  
Event Secretary: Matt Van Maanen 641.780.9581 -  
buckleycreek@gmail.com



*"A dog will teach you unconditional love. If you can have that in your life, things won't be too bad."*

**Robert Wagner**

## Whoa Post Marketplace



### **Electronic Collar For Sale**

New in the box Garmin 550 E collar. Price: \$300.00 including delivery in the continental United States.

Sells new for \$399.00

Contact Jim at 406-579-0851 or email at  
jimhoschouer@gmail.com





## *New Orleans School of Cooking Gumbo*

### *Provided by Chris Knopik*

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 C. oil
- 1 Tbsp. chopped garlic
- 1 chicken, cut up or de-boned
- 8 C. stock or flavored water
- 1½ lbs. Andouille
- 2 C. chopped green onions
- 1 C. flour
- Cooked Rice
- Joe's Stuff seasoning
- \*File (*File*– A fine green powder of young dried ground sassafras leaves, used in gumbo for flavor and thickening. It may be placed on the table for individuals to add to their gumbo if they wish. ¼ to ½ tsp. per serving is recommended.)
- TRINITY: (Next three items)
  - 4 C. chopped onions
  - 2 C. chopped celery
  - 2 C. chopped green pepper



#### PROCEDURE:

Season and brown the chicken in oil, lard, or bacon drippings over a medium heat. Add sausage to pot and sauté with chicken. Remove both from pot.

Make a roux; with equal parts of oil (must be free of food particles to avoid burning) and flour to the desired color. Add onions, celery, and green pepper. Add garlic to the mixture and stir continuously. After vegetables reach desired tenderness, return chicken and sausage to pot and cook with vegetables, continuing to stir frequently. Gradually stir in liquid and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer and cook for an hour or more. Season the Gumbo to your taste with Joe's Stuff Seasoning.

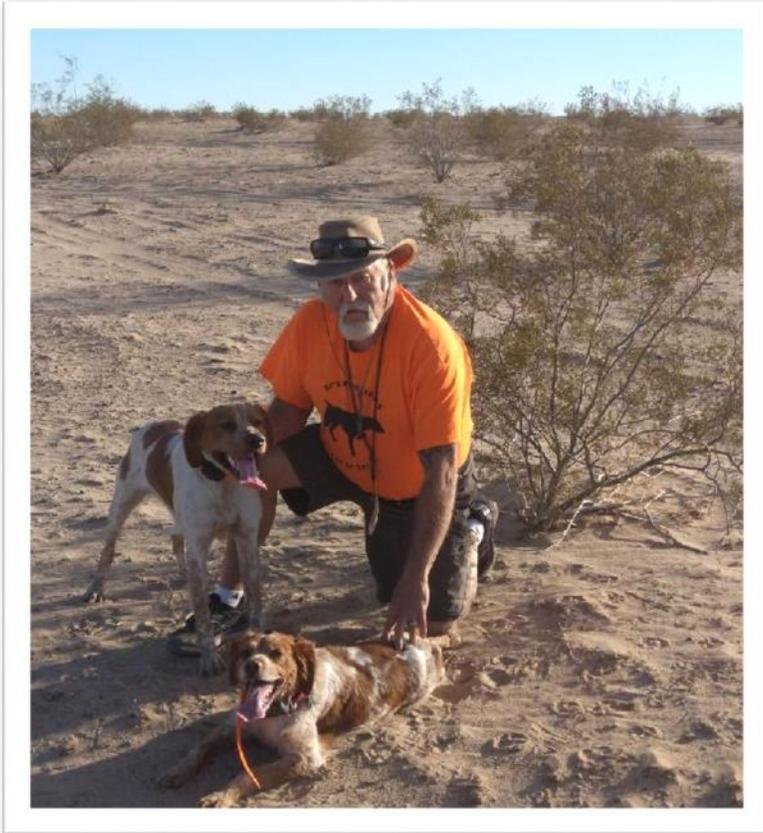
Approximately 10 minutes before serving, add green onions. Serve gumbo over rice or without rice, accompanied by French bread.

*Enjoy!*

Have a recipe to share? Send them to the Whoa Post Editor at  
[sniesar@outlook.com](mailto:sniesar@outlook.com)

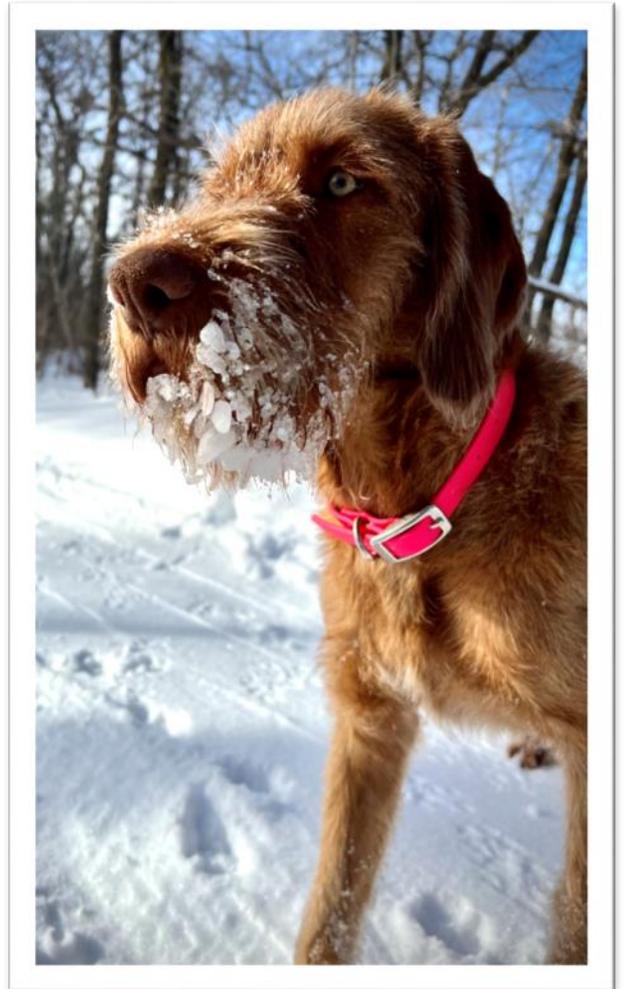


## Photo Gallery



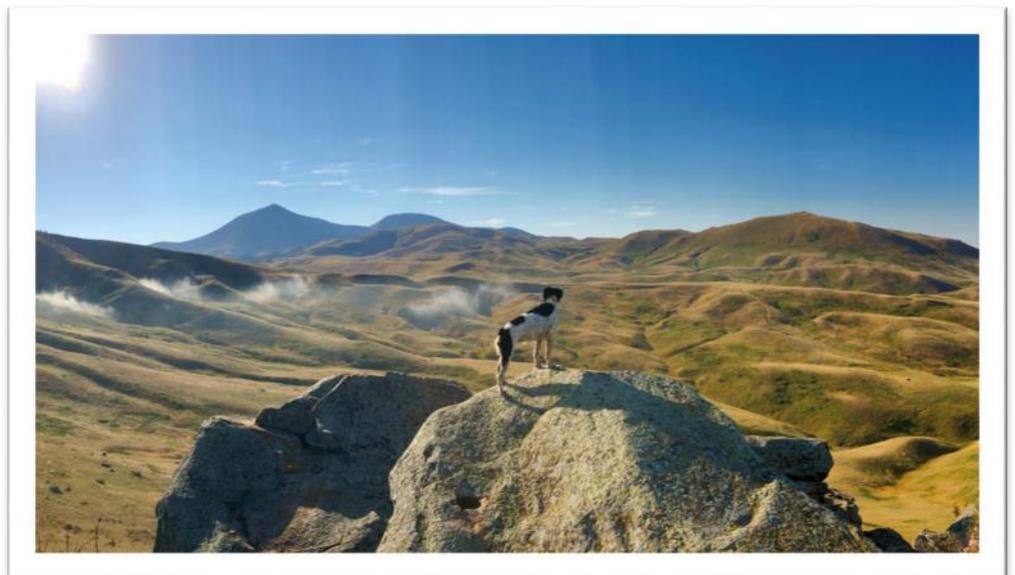
Bob Yoeurin with Lacey and Stryker enjoying the desert sun.

Photo provided by Jill Yoeurin



8 month old Wirehaired Vizsla, Condi on her first cross country ski trip. Something to do after upland bird season has closed!

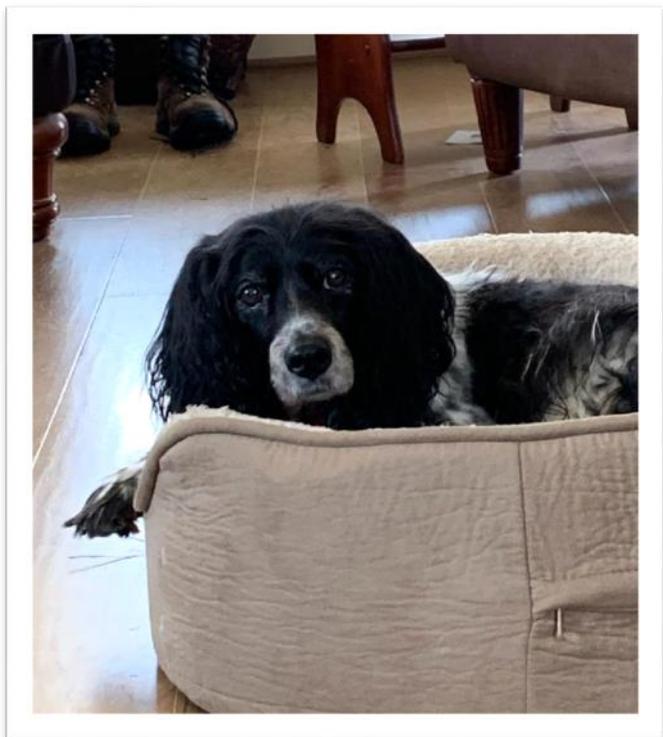
Photo provided by Susan Davy



Bean (Topperlyn Sabine) doing her best Simba.

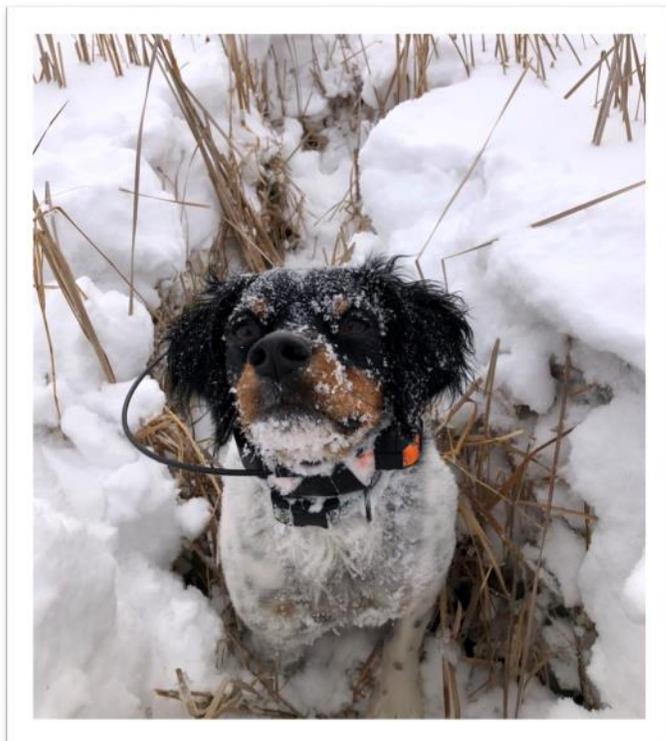
Photo provided by Matt Crootof

 Photo Gallery



She is 16 1/2 , loves to run and still slams a nice point.

Photo provided by Larry and Anne Ellison



Bean on the last pheasant hunt of the season in cold, driftly South Dakota.

Photo provided by Matt Crootof



Smith Nikon Rebel who received his AKC Master Hunt in Buckeye, AZ

Photo by James Cassara

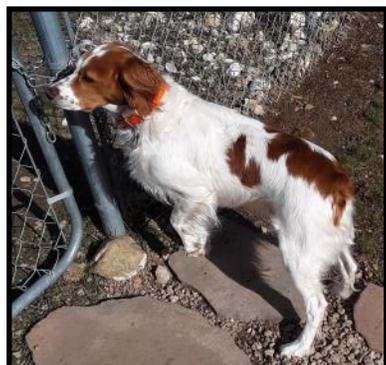
## *Stud Dogs*



**Just Perfect Du Auburn Bretons**  
**NAVHDA NA Prize 1, 112 Points**  
**NAVHDA Utility Prize II**  
Sherry Niesar  
701-527-3714  
[www.coteaukennel.com](http://www.coteaukennel.com)  
[sniesar@outlook.com](mailto:sniesar@outlook.com)



**NBOB CH GUN Smith's Legend de Pondsider TAN WRT**  
OFA: GOOD  
Smith's Epagneul Bretons  
W. Edward Smith  
574 699 6302  
[www.smithepagneulbretons.com](http://www.smithepagneulbretons.com)



**Nathanael De Chantant K3**  
Arthur Haines  
[arthur.haines@yahoo.com](mailto:arthur.haines@yahoo.com)  
(307)752-7508





## Renew Your Membership

Membership to the Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club is due at the beginning of each calendar year in January. Each member is an important component to the club, adding to the newsletter with articles and photographs and at the clubs annual field trial. If you are not a member, then consider joining. Aside from becoming a part of a group of talented, friendly and likeminded dog owners, members:

- Receive the Whoa Post
- Are eligible to place ads in the Marketplace at no charge
- List Breeder and Stud Dog information (newsletter and web site) at no charge
- Have access to dog training professionals and mentors
- Receive advance notice of special events
- Have opportunity to participate in UKC sanctioned field trials
- Join a fellowship of like minded individuals

Sally says, "Hey Boss, it's time to pay our membership dues!"



*Complete your membership form today and help support the UKC trial system.*

### Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd Family Member \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Category** \$20 Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$30 Family \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Business \_\_\_\_\_

Make Check out to: **Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club**

Return form & dues to: Mel Kotur 2525 Arnica Dr. Bozeman, MT 59715