

The Gun Dog Supreme

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

<http://www.gundogsupreme.org>

December 2012

Volume 87, Number 6

December 2012



Better than Christmas

Ander of Hundgaard provided first-time hunter, Sean Boylan, with a memory to last forever.

(Photographer Unknown)

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

My Christmas gift, as GDS editor, is a great article by veterinarian, Dr. Carrie Crouse –Quigley, on canine geriatrics. With everyone so engrossed in hunting throughout the fall, inducing people to write articles for the December issue is usually a challenge. Carrie came through with a superb piece that I'm sure you'll find beneficial.

At the other end of the age spectrum, we have report on the new generation of griffons that shipped off to their new owners; most were too young to really hunt much this year, but there's a great deal of anticipation for the future. I encourage all the new pup owners to keep us up to date on the proud moments and pratfalls of raising your pup. We're posting photos and notes on our website and Facebook page:

(www.facebook.com/griffon.fan)

I hope to see many of you at Pheasant Fest, and do try some late season hunting if you can. It's a long time until next October and you'll have all summer to thaw out.

May the New Year bring you lots of tail-wags and cold noses.

Rem DeJong

P.S. DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR wpgca MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

For information requests or to join the WPGCA please email Robin at:

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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:

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Montana PF and Rocky Mountain WPGCA Success by Rick Sojda



WPGCA and Pheasants Forever: A Great Combination

Sean Boylan poses with dog owner Rick Sojda and **Ander of Hundgaard** while having a great time helping Pheasants Forever promote hunting for the next generation.

(Photo by Rick Sojda)

A dozen Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club of America griffs and their handlers from Western Montana teamed up last weekend to help the same number of kids bird hunt for the first time in their lives. It was the culmination of a 10 week program sponsored by Pheasants Forever to teach young hunters the ABC's of bird hunting, from hunter ethics to shooting skills to the value of hunting dogs, especially our beloved Griffons. Glenn Lehrer, former Board member of WPGCA gets the credit for organizing it all.

Afterwards, here's one parent's reaction:

The smile on Sean's face was worth about a dozen football games. What a day, what a great location, and what a marvelous program. I understand it's a flagship model program and I think it's AWE-SOME. A thousand thanks for the selfless time money and effort all of you put into this.

By the way his team won 24 to 0 so there was no guilt on him and he knew his decision was hard but right, just part of growing up too.

Sean and I are committed to the idea of protecting and propagating vigorous wild pheasant/upland bird populations and that will tie in with our existing conservation and wildlife management plans. Joining Pheasants Forever and contributing to the young hunters will be a pleasure

.
Greg Boylan



Pheasant Fest – 2013

by

John Pitlo

As in the past 4 years – the WPGCA will again have a booth at Pheasants Forever’s annual showcase – Pheasant Fest. This year, Pheasant Fest will be held February 15-17, 2013 at the Minneapolis Convention Center, 1301 2nd Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN. Club member Kirk Dilly is already searching for motels in the Twin Cities area that are dog friendly for our members to stay while working the booth. Ken Hurtig and I will set up the booth with a Power Point photo program that GDS editor Rem DeJong developed. Judy Coil (our Secretary) will bring handout materials and membership information. I have already developed a list of club members from the upper Midwest who are willing to work the booth. It is very important to have our dogs at the booth for people that come by to lay their hands on the dogs and visit with us. Last year club member Jim Crouse had new banners made that really helped people find our booth – we will be using them again this year. If you want to help staff the booth, please contact me (John Pitlo) via email (jvpitlo@iowatelecom.net) or home phone (563-872-5764) for details and motel information. I will develop a work schedule once I have a list of people and the days they expect to be in Minneapolis. I hope to see you in Minneapolis,

Caring for your Geriatric Dog
by
Carrie Crouse Quigley, DVM

Dedicated to Henry and Sadee- Two old timers who will forever be in my heart



Just Hangin' Out

Anka of Cherry Point, owned by Jeff Hogenson takes in the Spring 2012 Rocky Mountain Test.

(Photo by Tina Benedickt)

Maybe it's a few gray hairs in the eyebrows, or maybe your dog is slower getting up after exercise, but one day you realize that your griffon buddy is getting old. Defining a

point when your pet is geriatric is different for every dog. You can find many charts that relate dog years to human years, and many veterinary recommendations will start calling dogs geriatric after the age seven, but there can be many breed and individual variations. As anyone who met my dad's dog, Sadee, knows, age is not a disease! That Brittany was all heart and lived to be 18! I would not have considered her to be geriatric until she was well into her teens. As a general rule, the larger the dog the more quickly it ages. Individual dogs also age at different speeds, but I would recommend more regular veterinary exams and screening starting around seven or eight years of age. If your pet is "old before its time", you may need this monitoring earlier, but it certainly won't hurt to start at seven or eight even if you still have a spring chicken.

An annual or bi-annual exam can catch changes early and is a good opportunity to discuss any concerns with your veterinarian. You should find a veterinarian with whom

who you communicate well and whom you trust to provide this care; staying with the same veterinarian or clinic will help them know your dog and make more specific recommendations. To get the most out of your visit, make a list of any concerns you may have or changes in your dog you have noted including weight, skin/hair coat, activity level, behavior, thirst, lumps or bumps, etc. As a general rule, I recommend annual screening blood work (CBC and biochemistry profile) and a urinalysis. Your veterinarian may make other recommendations for screening tests that may be appropriate (chest x-rays, abdominal ultrasound, etc.) based on what has been going on with your dog, its physical exam findings and your preferences on the level of screening you would like to pursue.

There is a lot of information in this article about how you can help your dog,



Just 'cause there's snow on the roof doesn't mean the fire's out.

With proper diet, exercise and medical care, both old dogs and their owners can enjoy time afield. John Pitlo, Dean Umphrey and Ken Hurtig share a moment with Dean's old griffon, **Redhot Ace of Dutchman's Hollow.**

Photo by Rem DeJong

diseases you may see and treatment options that exist. I still think that some of the most important things you can do for your dog are the same you can do for yourself—a good diet, plenty of exercise and plenty of fresh water will do amazing things for both you and your dog's long term health.

I recommend feeding a high quality maintenance dog food from a reliable company. You may want to research from where the company sources their ingredients; whether they actually manufacture it themselves so they have better oversight; whether they employ a veterinary nutritionist, and what their accountability is in the case of a recall. Pet food recalls have scared many pet owners into investigating home cooked or raw food diets for their dogs. There are serious concerns with feeding raw food diets and potential bacterial contamination that can affect not only the dog but also the people who live with them. I have not been convinced enough of the benefits of a raw food diet to outweigh the potential health concerns. While home cooked diets can give you the assurance of knowing where the ingredients come from, they can be difficult to feed without the concern for nutrient deficiencies which would be avoided in commercially available dog foods that are evaluated by AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials). If you really want to prepare your dog's food yourself, I recommend consulting with a Board Certified Veterinary Nutritionist to make sure that you are feeding a complete diet.

Consult with your veterinarian prior to switching to a 'Senior' dog food; many of these may not be adequate for active hunting dogs, even if they are becoming geriatric. Many dogs will do well on the adult-stage food they have thrived on for years and don't need a specific senior diet just because they hit a certain age. I don't recommend paying more for a food with glucosamine added; the amounts are not enough to see a benefit. (See the section on supplements below for more information on glucosamine.) Dogs with certain health issues may require a specific diet for that problem, i.e. lowered protein for kidney issues, lowered sodium for heart issues, etc. There are many prescription diets out there that can be recommended if your dog has special dietary considerations. It is important to involve your veterinarian in these decisions because switching a diet should be made with the stage of your pet's illness in mind; limiting certain nutrients too early in the course of a disease process can make the situation worse.

Please use caution when adding supplements to your dog's (or your own) diet. Supplements make many health claims and are not regulated for safety or efficacy. The health claims can be very tempting, but keep in mind that some supplements can interfere with medications that your pet takes. Keep a current list of any medications and supplements that you give your pet so you don't forget to mention any to your veterinarian. That being said, I am not "anti-supplement" I just reserve caution when using them and recommend researching the source to ensure that you are getting what you pay for. Keep in mind that supplements designed for humans will not be an appropriate dose for your dog; it is not ideal for you to start giving your furry friend your antioxidant capsule that you take daily without checking with your veterinarian. Specifically, Vitamin E and Omega 3 fatty acids can cause bleeding issues when the dose is too high. I think that antioxidants show promise in treating cardiac disease, cognition changes, aiding the immune system, arthritis and cancer treatments but use of these supplements should be monitored and recommended by your veterinarian. Omega-3 fatty acids are another group that shows significant promise in many disease conditions and aging changes.

Caring for the Aging Dog

Here are some common age related changes and health concerns.

Temperature tolerance

Aging dogs tend to be less tolerant of extreme temperatures. This is important to remember both when working them and in the house. They will be more susceptible to heat and heat stroke in the summer; be sure to provide lots of water and be conscious of the time they are outside in the sun. Extra bedding or even heated beds may be much more comfortable for them in the winter, and they will likely not enjoy being outside in frigid weather for the lengths of time that they did in their younger days.

Cardiac function

As dogs age they have a decrease in cardiac function that can make their heart not as efficient. This may mean the heart rate goes up more quickly with exercise and may decrease the length of time they are comfortable exercising. This can also affect anesthesia; older dogs can be anesthetized safely but generally need a modified plan for the medications used. Geriatric dogs also lose some of the elasticity of their lungs, which will also decrease their capacity for exercise. Keep this in mind when planning training days or hunting trips; your geriatric dog may not be able to keep up for the length of time that it could 5 years ago or even last season.

Dental care

Appropriate dental care is an important aspect of caring for the older dog. The majority of dogs will develop some level of dental or gingival disease as they age. Brushing with toothpaste designed for dogs can help slow the accumulation of tartar and keep the gums healthy. Most dogs will need to have their teeth cleaned under anesthesia by a veterinarian at some point in their life. Some dogs require this multiple times per year to keep their teeth healthy (just as humans need to see the dentist twice a year!). A dental cleaning under anesthesia allows for a thorough evaluation of the teeth and dental x-rays to examine the roots of the teeth to help make any decisions on further treatments or needed extractions. Untreated dental disease can lead to infections, cause chronic pain making eating difficult and has been linked to systemic infections (infections in other parts of the body).

Hearing and vision loss

Hearing and vision loss are common aging changes that may require special attention. Hearing loss in dogs tends to affect lower frequencies first. A high frequency whistle can temporarily help your dog not lose you in the field. Consider a GPS or other tracking collar to help you keep track of your dog. You may notice a blue color to the lens (center area at the pupil) of your dog's eye; this is a normal aging change called "lenticular sclerosis" and usually only slightly affects vision. A white lens indicates a cataract and should be monitored by a veterinarian. Cataracts can cause complete blindness; some can cause inflammation in the eye and sometimes glaucoma, and therefore require treatment. There are surgeries available to remove cataracts and return your dog's vision.

Obesity/Muscle Loss

Obesity at any stage of life can contribute to health issues. As dogs age, their metabolism begins to slow, and they begin to lose muscle, which can contribute to weight gain. This can be combated with exercise to maintain muscle tone. Obesity is the most common nutritional disorders in dogs and cats, and increases the risk of premature death, diabetes, arthritis and some forms of cancer. It has been shown that lean dogs can live up to 2 years longer and have a lower incidence of osteoarthritis, diabetes, and hip dysplasia. Avoiding high calorie treats and adjusting food intake can help reduce weight gain.

Muscle loss in aging pets can add to frailty and exacerbate underlying arthritis conditions. Muscle mass helps stabilize joints and protect them from injury. All dogs will begin to lose muscle mass as they age but slowing this with appropriate nutrition and exercise will help prevent or delay the onset of other problems.

Urinary Incontinence

Urinary incontinence is common in older dogs, especially older, spayed females. Usually they will leak urine when they are lying down or sleeping. Luckily, this is usually very responsive to medications. Dogs that are newly incontinent should be evaluated and have a urinalysis performed at a minimum to make sure they do not have any other medical conditions contributing to the problem. There are 2 common medications used to treat incontinence; PPA (phenylpropanolamine), which works on the muscle tone in the urethra, and DES (diethylstilbesterol), which replaces estrogen. They both have potential side effects that should be discussed with your veterinarian but can be used safely in most dogs. Male dogs become incontinent much less frequently than females, and if this occurs, the dog should have its prostate evaluated with a physical exam and possibly an ultrasound. If your dog is having accidents in the house, but it is aware that it is going (i.e. you see it squatting or lifting its leg) it should be evaluated for other health problems, especially if this is accompanied by a significant increase in thirst.

Osteoarthritis

Arthritis in dogs is most commonly related to joints that are not ideally formed (i.e. hip dysplasia) or from an injury involving a joint like a torn cruciate ligament (ACL). The goal in treatment of these conditions is not to cure the arthritis because this is not possible, but rather to slow the progression and lessen the pain associated with arthritis. X-rays can help diagnose the joint affected by identifying arthritic changes, but the severity on x-rays does not correlate to what the dog is feeling. X-rays can be a good diagnostic tool, but monitoring your dog's response to treatment is a much better gauge as you start therapy. Pain from arthritis can show up in an obvious limp but may be more subtle such as slower recovery from activity, reluctance to jump or climb stairs. Often these dogs may be very "creaky" when they first rise in the morning. Arthritis affecting either both front or both hind limbs equally may not produce a distinct limping but rather a change like a very short-strided gait, bunny-hopping in the hind legs, shuffling, etc. Weight loss in an overweight dog is the first and most important aspect of arthritis management. Keeping your dog lean goes a long way in helping with arthritis pain not to mention the other many health benefits! I do not recommend completely restricting

your dog's activity after a diagnosis of arthritis but it may need a modification to its current exercise regime. Controlled low-impact activities like leash walks and swimming are ideal for less stress on the joints while supporting muscle tone. I recommend daily walking or swimming for these dogs; multiple shorter exercise periods are better than one long period. You will need to monitor how the dog recovers from working and time in the field to determine how long it can safely spend hunting or training.

Medications are often an important arm in the treatment of arthritis. The most common family of medications used is non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and include drugs like Rimadyl, Deramaxx, Metacam, Previcox and Zubrin. Aspirin is also in this family of drugs but I do not recommend its routine use for arthritis as the incidence of side effects is much higher than with the veterinary prescribed medications. All of these medications have a risk of gastric ulcers, vomiting/diarrhea, liver or kidney damage, so they should not be used in every dog and they should be used as needed. While the potential side effects are severe, these drugs can really help arthritic dogs. Ideally the usage should be based on the needs of your dog, not an automatic daily usage (although some dogs will get to the stage that they need daily medications). They can be used after an increase in activity or in anticipation of an increase in activity that will likely cause soreness for your dog. They can also be used on a day where your dog seems more stiff but not used on a day when they feel more spry. Some dogs do better on one medication over another and you may need to try several with your veterinarian. I have also found that some dogs may do wonderfully on one medication for years and then stop responding, but they will respond if changed to a different NSAID. NSAIDs should be given with food and never given if your dog is sick (vomiting, diarrhea, not eating).

Additional medications are available that can help in addition to the anti-inflammatory effects of NSAIDs. Tramadol is an opioid pain medication that can help control pain in addition to NSAIDs or in patients that do not tolerate NSAIDs. This medication can cause sedation in some dogs but overall has a high safety range and fairly minimal side effects. It can be used like an NSAID, given when pain is anticipated or seems to be worse and stopped on days when your dog is more comfortable. In chronically painful dogs, medications that slow the nerve conduction associated with pain like Gabapentin and Amantadine can be used.

Often, as arthritis pain becomes more advanced, a combination of medications and supplements are needed to best manage your dog's pain and keep it in the activities it enjoys most. Just as in human medicine, there are veterinary pain specialists who manage pain in veterinary patients from a number of causes (arthritis, cancer, etc.). Supplemental drugs may also include glucosamine and Adequan. Glucosamine and chondroitin supplements are thought to help protect the cartilage in the joints and help with the viscosity of joint fluid. There is currently not a significant amount of research to support their use in veterinary medicine, but they are believed to have a positive effect in some dogs. The over the counter versions of this supplement can be extremely variable and may not be absorbed by dogs. You can purchase a glucosamine and chondroitin combination supplement from your veterinarian called Cosequin made by a company that has close monitoring of their quality control. They also make a product called Dasuquin that adds ingredients from soybeans and avocados which also help with joint health and complements the function of the glucosamine. Adequan is a polysulfated glycosamino-

glycan, a main part of healthy joint fluid. It is available as an injection from your veterinarian. There is also not a lot of research that supports the benefit of this supplement but anecdotally it is believed to help some dogs. Both glucosamine and Adequan take weeks to even a few months for their benefits to be seen. They can both be somewhat expensive when compared to other options, if you elect to try them be prepared to use them for 1 to 2 months, and if you do not see an improvement stop using them.

Alternative therapies may be available in your area that include acupuncture and low-level laser to control arthritis pain. Both have been shown to help dogs with painful conditions and may be used in combination with medications. Surgery may also be an option if medications are no longer working to control arthritis pain. Some dogs with hip dysplasia can benefit from a surgery called a femoral head ostectomy (FHO) where the head of the femur is removed to reduce the painful friction in the joint. Typically this procedure is better for small or medium breed dogs, larger dogs don't usually do well with this procedure but can benefit from a total hip replacement which would need to be performed by a board certified veterinary surgeon. If you are interested in advanced therapies like these, consider a consult with a veterinary surgeon at a veterinary school or private specialty hospital in your area.

Veterinary rehabilitation is a growing field and is used both for dogs with acute injuries (i.e. torn ligaments, post-surgery) and for chronic issues (i.e. arthritis, spinal damage). A veterinary physical therapist can help teach you exercises, range of motion activities and massage techniques to perform at home. They often have water treadmills or pools and special activity areas to work with these patients. Be sure to look for someone who is certified in canine rehabilitation, which indicates they have gone through special training in this area.

Keep in mind with arthritis or even just with muscle loss from aging, you may need to make some accommodations to your home. Stairs and slippery floors can become difficult for them to navigate. Consider putting up a baby gate to block off stairs and carpet runners over areas where your dog commonly walks. You can use a large towel under your dog's belly to help support them on slick surfaces or outside in the winter to prevent falls; they also make veterinary slings with padding and handles.

Cancer

Cancer is the leading cause of death in old age for dogs. The older the dog, the more likely he or she will develop cancer. Going through the types, prognosis and treatment options is beyond the scope of this article. Dogs like people can get cancer from exposure to chemicals and toxins, and some can have a hereditary predisposition. If you notice new lumps, wounds that won't heal, significant weight loss, a sudden change in activity level, or any other signs that you find concerning you should have your dog evaluated sooner rather than later. Many changes may not be a big issue; for example, the most common type of lump under the skin for old dogs is a lipoma—a benign fatty tumor that does not usually require treatment, but it does require your veterinarian to rule out other causes with a needle aspirate to look at a sample of the cells in the lump. Cancer treatment options in veterinary medicine are vast and improving constantly. Most types of cancer treatments will include some combination of surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy. Radiation therapy is the least common of those options and is typically found only at universities or large specialty centers. There are veterinary

oncologists across the country that can educate you on what your options are and give you a good picture of what to expect in response to treatment, side effects and survival times for your dog. A diagnosis of cancer can be overwhelming, but many pets can have a good quality of life with treatment for a significant period of time. When I have to break the news of cancer to my clients, I frequently immediately hear the response that they would never put their pet through chemotherapy. While there can be some situations where the potential side effects of chemotherapy don't outweigh the benefits of treatment, this is usually not the case. Unfortunately almost everyone knows someone who has had cancer and has seen or heard about the horrors of the side effects of chemotherapy. The goals in dogs are different than in people; in people higher doses are given with the knowledge that the side effects are increased, but the goal is a cure. Most often in dogs, our goal is to prolong the dog's life while still maintaining a good quality of life, so lower doses of these drugs are used. You may still decide not to pursue this treatment after hearing all of the options, but I encourage owners with a new cancer diagnosis to at least learn about available treatments so they can make an educated decision.

Dementia

Canine cognitive dysfunction (CCD) is dementia of the canine world, and similarly to the human disease, the risk increases with age. Brain changes are expected in all dogs as they age, and normal aging changes are usually very gradual over a period of years. CCD often progresses more suddenly. Signs include disorientation, changes in interactions with family members, alterations in the sleep cycle, house soiling, anxiety, loss of memory, and changes in ability to learn. There is a helpful checklist that can be found at www.cdsindogs.com that can help you monitor changes in your dog. Completing this survey monthly once you start noticing changes can help in diagnosis and treatment. Alternatively, keeping a log of specific changes you are seeing is just as helpful to your veterinarian and to your family as you try to keep the big picture in mind. Many of these signs overlap with many other aging changes and require a good exam and sometimes multiple visits to the veterinarian to rule out other medical causes of the changes. Hearing loss, vision changes, and pain from other conditions can all present as some of the changes listed above.

Treatment for CCD may include medications and supplements. Anipryl is the only medication approved for use in CCD and has been shown to have variable results. It can have severe interactions with many other medications and some tick collars, so be sure your veterinarian is aware of all medications, supplements and tick treatments you are using. Supplements of coenzyme Q10, acetyl-L-carnitine, omega-3 fatty acids may improve signs in some dogs, there is not much scientific evidence to support their use but they are unlikely to harm your dog. Brain enrichment exercises can also help slow down progression and are great to use for any aging dog before they develop any signs of CCD. Allow your dog access to new sights and smells, take a walk in a different part of the neighborhood, switch up the park or fields you visit, add new toys and rotate them weekly. Try teaching new tricks; consider doggy daycare for new experiences. If your dog is unable to hunt with you at this stage, try exposing it to birds, dummies, etc. as further mental stimulation.

Preparing for emergencies

I work at a large specialty/emergency veterinary hospital in the emergency department. I see a lot of serious illnesses and have to give a lot of costly estimates to many owners who never expected something like that to happen to their pet. A large part of my job is to help families become aware of what options exist for their aging loved one and then to help navigate them through that information to decide what the right choice is for their dog and their situation. I can offer many of the treatments discussed above and then some, but that is not what everyone can or should choose for their pet. While no one wants their pet's care to come down to cost, it can be a big factor in your decisions, especially when that care can cost thousands of dollars. As your pet ages, the odds are that he or she will have some type of medical issue at some point, even if it has been extremely healthy its entire life. Hopefully, it won't end up in the ER, but I recommend that people prepare for it by considering a savings account for their pets as an emergency/illness fund. There are also many good options available for pet insurance. Most companies will probably not start a policy on a geriatric dog so consider this early in your dog's life. Just like all things, read the fine print before signing the dotted line! Make sure to read the inclusions and exclusions; some policies do not cover congenital problems, cancer, etc. Some are for basic wellness care only. Make sure you know what you are purchasing but overall insurance can be very helpful over the lifetime of your dog.

As your pet ages, emergency care need increases. Be aware of what after hours veterinary care is available in your area and keep that phone number handy; your veterinarian may take calls after closing or may refer you to a local ER if one is available. Keep this information when traveling with your dog also. Some changes will be obvious that you need to seek veterinary care immediately; some fall more into a gray zone. Collapse or change in consciousness, inability to stand on its own, or pale gums can indicate a life threatening condition and should be evaluated as soon as possible. A bloated abdomen, especially when accompanied by significant discomfort and retching or attempting to vomit can indicate gastric dilatation volvulus (GDV) also known as bloat. This condition where the stomach twists on itself is a surgical emergency. Difficulty breathing should also be seen through emergency, it may indicate a problem in the lungs, or sometimes in older large breed dogs, we can see laryngeal paralysis where the airway cannot open and close normally causing an airway obstruction.

Have your dog evaluated if it begins to have seizures especially if it has never had them before, doesn't become normal afterwards, has multiple seizures or the seizure lasts more than 3-5 minutes. Vomiting and diarrhea can often wait until your regular veterinarian is open again, unless they are severe (more than 4-5 bouts), contain blood, your dog seems very painful, or is not acting like itself. If you are ever unsure of whether your dog should be evaluated, it's probably better to be safe and take it in, but you can also try calling your local ER and describing the symptoms to get guidance on whether a visit should happen right away or can wait until your vet's normal business hours.

End of life decisions

Unfortunately no article about geriatric dogs is complete without including a discussion about end of life decisions. Most people hope that when it is their pet's time, they will

pass away peacefully in their sleep, but regrettably this does not often happen. Determining the point when your dog's quality of life is so affected by its condition that euthanasia is an appropriate choice can be very difficult. When you are trying to assess whether the past week was better or worse than the week before it can be very hard when you are with your pet all the time. It can be helpful to have an outside pair of eyes or even to keep a notebook and log some of your dog's activities (or lack of activities), how is their appetite, are they still playful or interested in their surroundings and family, etc. Keeping track can help you make a decision in a very emotional and difficult time. Talking about euthanasia and your beliefs ahead of time can take a slight burden off of you when the time comes.



Seeking Closure

Owner Dave Finley releases ashes of **Elmo of Auger Falls** over some favorite Iowa pheasant habitat.

Photo by Jerry Yeast

The actual euthanasia procedure involves giving an overdose of an anesthetic drug often with a sedative medication first through an IV catheter. There is no pain associated with the procedure, dogs lose consciousness first and then will go into cardiac and respiratory arrest from the drugs, the entire process is quick and peaceful. Most of my clients elect to be with their dog when the injections are given but this is a personal decision. I find that in most cases being with their dog helps with closure and helps the dog relax, but do not feel that you have to be there if you are not comfortable.

You may want to talk to your family ahead of time about what aftercare you will choose for your dog. Some people still have the option to bury their pet at home, but you should check if

any local ordinances exist regulating burial of a pet on private land. Cremation is the most frequent option chosen at my clinic, you can elect to have a private cremation with the ashes returned to you or a common cremation where your pet is cremated with other pets and the ashes are not returned. There are still some pet cemeteries out there but they are not very common. Many times your veterinarian will make paw or nose prints or take hair clippings if you would like them as memorials to your companion. Healing after losing a family member will take support and time. Reach out to family and friends; there are also many pet loss support groups available that you can contact if interested. Sometimes writing a brief memorial, even if only for your eyes can be very therapeutic. Remember that the pain of the loss will fade but the joy that your dog brought you will never go away. They leave their paw-prints all over our hearts.

Breeding Committee Update – 2012

by John Pitlo and Jim Seibel

We started the year of 2012 with plans to breed 4-5 females. One of the first females we expected to come into season was **Bridget of Willow Springs** owned by Brad Meyen. We waited all year for her to come into season – we are still unsure if she skipped her heat cycle or the owner simply missed it. Our second effort with **Akay of the Midnight Sun** also did not go well because when we called owner Randy Mann – he informed us she had been into her heat cycle several weeks ago and she was now coming out of it. Our next female – **Amazing Grace of Arrowrock** owned by Dr. Tom and Cheri Coombe went much better. She came into season in late January and was bred to **Friederich of Dutchman's Hollow** (owned by Kurt Eickhof) on Feb. 14 and 16, 2012. This breeding resulted in 6 pups, however 2 pups died and of the remaining 4 pups there were 2 males and 2 females. The second female to come into season in mid-May was **Arthurs Pal of the Midnight Sun** owned by Pete and Linda Engman. Pal was also bred to **Friederich of Dutchman's Hollow** on May 23 and 25, 2012. This breeding resulted in 8 puppies (7 females and 1 male) that were born on July 24, 2012. The final female to come into season was **Arlie of Dakota Prairie** owned by Ted Vanderpan. She was bred to **Andrew of Sourdough Trail** (owned by Dr. Tom & Cheri Coombe) on May 28 and 30, 2012 and whelped 7 puppies (4 females and 3 males) on July 28, 2012. So the club produced 19 puppies for the 2012 breeding year. These pups were placed with the following club members.

“A” litter of Ash Coulee – Breeders are Dr. Tom and Cheri Coombe Amazing Grace of Arrowrock X Freiderich of Dutchman's Hollow	
Ammo of Ash Coulee (male) owned by Kyle Kessler, Minnesota	Abe of Ash Coulee (male) owned by Jon Hoffart, North Dakota
Alex of Ash Coulee (female) owned by Max Close, Ohio	Arikara of Ash Coulee (female) owned by Bill Madden, Montana
“D” litter of Sandhill – Breeders are Pete & Linda Engman Arthurs Pal of the Midnight Sun X Freiderich of Dutchman's Hollow	
Desert Jazmine of Sandhill (female) owned by Ken & Karen Hurtig, Iowa	Drew of Sandhill (female) owned by Dave and Jill Mickelson, Minnesota
Decca of Sandhill (female) owned by Jon Kasworm, Iowa	Dulcie of Sandhill (female) owned by Jim and Tami Edgar, Minnesota
Doc of Sandhill (male) owned by Joe and Mary Smith, Ohio	Dusty Santa Fe Trail of Sandhill (female) owned by Brice and Helen Fawcett, Kansas
Darling Ellie of Sandhill (female) owned by Gavin Good, Iowa	Daisy of Sandhill (female) owned by William Hillman, New Jersey
“A” litter of Prairies Promise - Breeder is Ted Vanderpan Arlie of Dakota Prairie X Andrew of Sourdough Trail	
Ares of Prairies Promise (male) owned by Ron Stellingworf, Wyoming	Augsburg of Prairies Promise (male) owned by Jason and Sarah Koth, Iowa
Archie of Prairies Promise (male) owned by Mike Branigan, Michigan	Avian of Prairies Promise (female) owned by Jeff Hoganson, Colorado
Adora of Prairies Promise (female) owned by Eric Briggs, Washington	Anastasia of Prairies Promise (female) owned by Ray Dentlinger, Iowa
Awsome of Prairies Promise (female) owned by Steve Rossow, South Dakota	



Gunnery Sergeant (Gunny) von Tuefelhunden of Dutchman's Hollow got the perfect holiday gift for his owner, Lt. Col. Dan Seibel.

(Photo by Dan Seibel)

Our dogs are great, but we handlers need help, so follow Gunny's lead and get your favorite griffon lover a copy of *How to Have the Best Trained Gun Dog* by Joan Bailey. (Available at Amazon.com for \$23.95.)

Reminder

Your 2013 membership payment for the Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club of America is due January 1st. WPGCA membership also makes a great gift and helps recruit new members. Please consider giving a membership to your local veterinary clinic or other business where interested readers might like the Gun Dog Supreme. Dues are \$40.00/yr. Send your check payable to: *Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club of America* to:

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