

# *The Gun Dog Supreme*

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

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Spring WPGCA activities are now in full swing. The Rocky Mountain Chapter recently concluded their spring test and the Heartland Chapter test and the Judges Seminar are coming up fast.

The club is also anticipating some new litters this spring, including a new breeding effort with an AWPGCA dog. You can read the details from the Breeding Committee in this issue. Also on the technical side, we present an update on our DNA project with Cornell University.

Member commitment to the WPGCA is vital to our organization, and nowhere is that commitment displayed more than in our Pheasant Fest participation. A big THANK YOU to all who helped out this year. If you have a chance, please join us next year in Milwaukee. It's a blast.

Speaking of blasts, every issue needs a hunting story and Tawna Skinner relates a great experience with what has become a Rocky Mountain tradition, "Gals with Grifons."

Enjoy.

*Rem DeJong*

## **On the Cover**

### **Hunting Family Dog Is a Big Hit**

A patient **Ammo of Ash Coulee** is a magnet for the kids while owner Kyle Kessler talks bird dogs with a Pheasant Fest visitor to the WPGCA booth. Read the whole story inside.

(photo by Rem DeJong)

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

**[robin.strathy@wpgca.org](mailto:robin.strathy@wpgca.org)**

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

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## Gals with Griffons Hunt with Braun

by  
Tawna Skinner



### **See. I may be getting older, but I can still deliver!**

A methodical working **Braun of Marsh Stream** proudly displays a ringneck rooster during her retrieve to owner, Tawna Skinner.

(Photo by Anita Andrus)

It was the last morning of our annual “GALS WITH GRIFFONS” Montana bird hunting trip. This year’s participants included club members Robin Strathy, Anna Ziedins Artz, Anita Andrus and I. This morning we had chosen Braun (**Braun of Marsh Stream**) to be the first dog of the day since the younger dogs (**Griffon'dor Jo-sette** and **Belle of Cattail Storm**) were pretty tired from previous days’ hunting.

On this morning we planned to do a 2 hour loop along a meandering creek and into a field of uncut oats bordered by brushy draws. It looked like a perfect place to find some

roosters, though previously we had found little to nothing in the same vicinity.

Braun, now 10, is close-working, deliberate and careful. She doesn't cover a lot of ground, but is thorough and effective in the area she does cover. She hates having a bird flush wild in front of her. She wants to point and pin the bird so I can flush them. She is a team player. As a result, she is SLOW... so slow at times that one could have a telephone conversation, make a shopping list, eat a snack or take a bathroom break while waiting for her to "read" the local news.



### **Just Trust Me. I've Got the Bird!**

Thick cover and water are no problem for **Braun of Marshstream** as she makes a beeline back with her pheasant.

(Photo by Anita Andrus)

In order to lower expectations, I had warned Anna that hunting with Braun was an altogether different affair than hunting with our hard charging, ground covering younger dogs. She said it was "ok" and that she was "up for it." So off we went.

We parked the cars, crossed a road, went through a fence and proceeded downhill toward the creek. As we hit the flatter country along the creek we spread out and followed Braun. Pretty soon she

started getting birdy. She headed into a small (50 yds. square), thick, grass-covered peninsula that jutted into a large bend in the creek. Because the area was so small we stood around watching her work, ever ready for the multitude of birds we hoped to flush at any moment. Braun pointed several times and I walked in to flush and nothing happened. I was getting impatient as we had walked all over this "little place" with no action. I was ready to move on. Braun pointed again and Anna walked toward her and a rooster rocketed out. I got the first shot off, hitting it just as it cleared the opposite bank of the creek. Anna's shot was close behind. I sent Braun for the retrieve and when she got to the bird she joyfully tossed the bird in the air a couple of times before bringing it back. Anna took pictures; we talked, admired the bird and the dog work and then went on with our hunt.

Not twenty feet away, Braun locked up again and another rooster flushed. Two simultaneous shots by Anna and me dropped the bird and Braun retrieved it. "Whoa," I thought and once again reminded myself to "not be in a hurry" and to "trust your dog,"

especially one who has ten years of experience seeking those wily pheasants!

After field-cleaning the birds, we crossed the creek and headed for the oat field. Near the edge of the field, Braun started getting birdy. I was following Braun and Anita, and they were already in the field to my right and left. Suddenly a rooster flushed to Anna's right and she swung on it, firing two shots, winging it on her second. We saw it land in front of a clump of trees about a quarter mile away, so we high-tailed it over there, crossing a fence and a fallow field in the process. When we got to the spot, I put Braun on the track. Anita and Anna went on either side to search and surround. All of us searched diligently for 20-30 minutes with no luck finding the bird. "Damn!"

We were all tired and hot from all that energy expended, so we sat down in the shade to rest and have a snack and water. We talked for some time when Anita said "did you hear that?"

Anna said, "Yes." They had heard that telltale rustle of leaves as something moves through the brush. We jumped up and began searching again. I sent Braun on a blind retrieve command. Pretty soon Anna yelled, "I see it." She had spotted the bird and then shot it as it tried to escape again. Braun retrieved it to her.

Yeah! We had recovered that winged bird. We stood around a bit more talking about our experience, our good fortune recovering a downed bird, our perseverance and teamwork and then headed back toward the cars. We had been out a couple of hours longer than our original intent for hunting with Braun, an older dog with arthritic hips, and we were hot and hungry. We had enjoyed the good weather, hunting behind an ever enthusiastic, skilled older dog, exploring the local terrain and we had three roosters in the bag. nothing could be better than that.



### **No Escape!**

Anna Artz displays a rooster that almost got away while a tired Braun gets her second wind.

(Photo by Anita Andrus)

## Genetics Database Update

by  
**Laurie Connell & Liz Cory**

Over the last few years, the WPGCA has been making a concerted effort to get as many of our dogs as possible into Cornell University's genetic database, the Biobank, (<http://www.vet.cornell.edu/faculty/Todhunter/TodhunterLab.cfm>), led by Dr. Rory Todhunter. This is a long-term project and will take years to complete. However, the benefits to both dog health and our breeding program could be great.



### **I'd Rather Be Hunting**

Recently Chester (**Dorchester of Iamonia**, owned by Peter Rosen) donated his blood for the cause at the Cornell veterinary clinic. Susan Garrison is shown in this photo.

(Photographer unknown)

We have been trying to get all of our dogs submitted to the Biobank with some success. Last year, we tried a new approach—to have all the pups submit blood during their last veterinary appointment before going to new homes. Ted Vanderpan brought his “A” litter in as a trial run and things worked out fine overall. However, we identified a few procedural steps from this trial run:

- ◆ Making sure that we keep track of the pups names to be paired with their blood (we used the new owners last name so it could be tracked easily)
- ◆ and to bring only a few pups in at once. That keeps Mom comfortable and makes the record keeping more manageable.

Thank you very much, Ted, for being the guinea pig on that one!

At this writing we now have 169 dogs in our database. This is just the first of, what we hope, will be many good things to come about from all the hard work and effort everyone has put into collecting blood samples.

Liz Cory is the head honcho of the blood collections and she is excellent at her job. In fact her co-workers tell me that Liz could get DNA from a rock—she is that good! Many WPGCA have participated in drawing the blood samples, but you might be interested in knowing what happens from there. After a sample arrives at Cornell in its special shipping container, Liz extracts the DNA from the blood using a two-step procedure. It is a “salt extraction” protocol. First the red blood cells are separated from the white cells. The DNA is in the white blood cells and not the red cells. Then the protein and cell debris is separated from the DNA with a high concentration of salt. Separations are done by centrifugation. (Sounds exotic, but it’s more or less along the principle used in a washing machine; it is centrifugal force generated in the “spin” cycle that forces water out of the fabric to facilitate faster drying.) The DNA is precipitated with alcohol and then dissolved in a buffer. The concentration and quality are checked, and then the DNA is frozen until it is used. That is where our samples are at this point. Everything is updated in the database which includes all the information about the dog (name, age, sex, GRB#), the sample (when collected, amount of DNA extracted, where it is stored in the freezer), and any health issue that the owner reports including the PennHip scores and measurements that we collected. All the health and morphological information is critical to make the DNA samples useful later on.

What happens to the DNA after that depends on the study. Right now, the DNA Bank is directly involved with genotyping samples for approved studies on an Illumina genotyping platform (this is a specific method). A study gets approved for a particular grant by a committee. The committee bases the approvals and rejections on such questions as:

1. Is there is enough genetic basis of the disease for the study?
2. Are there are enough diverse samples available, balanced for disease and controls, with enough statistical power to have a meaningful study?

3. Would a significant finding lead to something helpful to animal health (diagnosis, treatment, prevention)?

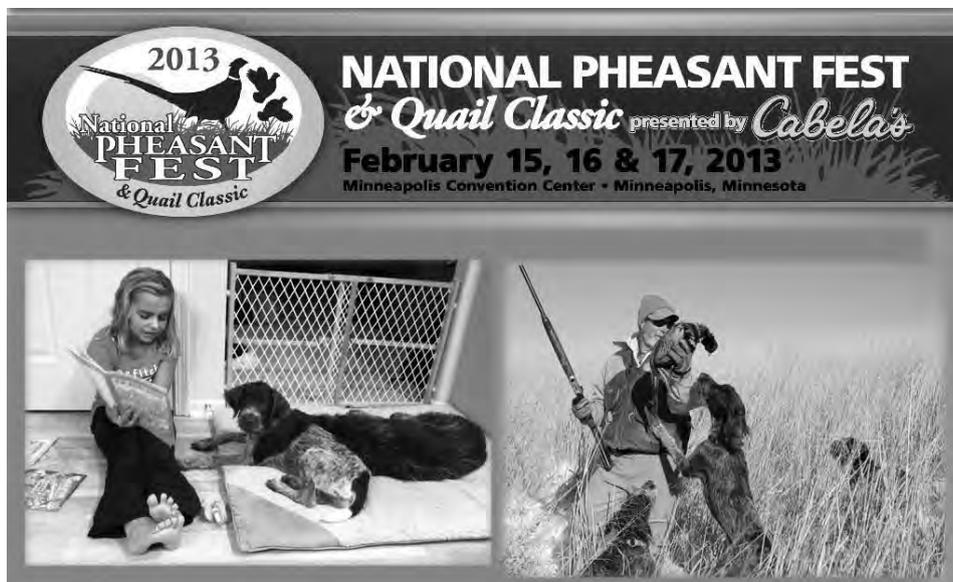
The Biobank is investigating a number of diseases in several breeds, based on their long-term work in Labrador Retrievers. The disorders and health problems their laboratory and collaborators are investigating are directed toward developing a genetic panel to screen for a number of genetic diseases and traits, such as owner-directed aggression; hip dysplasia; elbow dysplasia; ruptured cranial cruciate ligament; lymphoma, dilated cardiomyopathy; endochondral ossification and growth rate related the hip dysplasia, protein-losing enteropathy, myxomatous mitral valve degeneration, osteosarcoma, lymphoma, hemangiosarcoma, granulomatous colitis, and mast cell tumor.

If a sample is genotyped for one disease study, the genotypes may then be available for another study if the animal meets the study criteria. For instance, if a dog with hip dysplasia is genotyped for an approved hip dysplasia project, another study that is looking at heart defects can use that dog's genotype as a control if the dog is free from the heart defect.

Last year the Cornell Biobank asked us to select 12 of our dogs for a much larger study comparing many, many breeds (1000 dogs). The WPG genotypes are being analyzed in this comparative study in the large multi-breed group, but the 12 genotypes by themselves really can't tell us much about WPG as an isolated breed. BUT, when there is a specific WPG study that is looking at a disease or a trait within griffons, whether it is part of this current project or not, those 12 genotypes are available for that project analysis, whatever that project may be. Right now, except for that one comparative study, all of the approved studies have been breed specific. So far the approved studies have had a focused phenotype (a disease with high prevalence in the breed) and enough affected and control samples in the bank (at least 50 affected and 50 control, but usually more). We are at a bit of a standstill with our samples because 1) we don't have enough "affected" dogs to balance a clinically significant study, and 2) we don't have a focused disease or trait from our club to pursue a study. Most of our dogs are healthy (lucky for us).

So as we begin to collect more and more dogs in the Biobank and look though our health records for diseases that crop up, we will be able to accumulate enough dogs to pursue a specific study. This is another reason why it is so critical for the other information about each dog is also collected and submitted. Keep up the good work and get those health forms updated!





## Pheasant Fest – 2013

by  
John Pitlo

The WPGCA booth at Pheasants Forever's annual showcase – Pheasant Fest was held February 15-17, 2013 at the Minneapolis Convention Center, 1301 2nd Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN was a rousing success. Official tally for the three day event was 28,855 visitors. Ken Hurtig and I loaded up Ken's suburban the day before we were going to leave and then I met him at 5 AM on Friday morning and we headed to Minneapolis. We arrived around 11 AM and were greeted by Dave Finley and Jim Crouse who had arrived the night before. Dave is from Indiana and Jim is from Ohio – these dedicated griffoners have been to all 4 of the Pheasant Fests where the WPGCA has had a booth. Also on hand to help with the set-up were Jon and Judy Coil and Kirk and Tracy Dilly (who had also found the dog friendly motel where we were all staying). Set-up was completed rather quickly with all the helping hands. In no time – everyone with dogs was getting ready for the Bird Dog Parade which began at 12:30. I was told that griffons (our club dogs) were the largest contingent of bird dogs present!

Those in the parade included:

Ted Vanderpan with **Arli of Dakota Prairie**  
 Rem De Jong with **Burley of Salmon River** and **Brinker of Indian Creek**  
 Ken Hurtig with **Desert Jazmine of Sandhill**  
 Kirk and Tracy Dilly with **Cedar of Sandhill**  
 Andy Yeast with **Gabby of Dutchman's Hollow**  
 Jon and Judy Coil with **Coco Sandhill** and **Aleksander of Cattail Storm**  
 Tim McCarthy and **Colonel Buckley of Sandhill**

Mike and Jane Chlapaty with **Flapjack Frankie of Dutchman's Hollow**  
Kyle and Sara Kessler with **Ammo of Ash Coulee**  
Ray and Jolene Dentlinger with **Anastasia of Prairies Promise**



Pheasant Fest officially opened at 1 PM on Friday and a schedule was quickly developed where everyone with dogs worked 2 hour shifts and then were free to roam the Convention Center until the next shift. We learned that one of the best ways to get people to the booth and talk about our dogs was to roam the Convention floor with a dog and when people asked, "What kind of dog is that?" it would be an "in" to give them our business card with our booth number written on the back. We tried to have 2-3 dogs present in the booth at all times. The booth had a constant stream of people wandering by, with many stopping to visit and pet dogs and talk about our dogs. The Fest was open until 9 PM on Friday and then re-opened at 9 AM the next morning. Saturday was very busy with many contacts made, free Gun Dog Supremes handed out, and many business cards distributed. Jim and Tammy Edgar and their pup **Dulcie of Sandhill** showed up and we put them to work in the booth. The event closed at 6 PM on Sat. and we all got together at a restaurant for supper afterwards— lots of tales were told during a very fun evening.



### **This Is for Me!**

Ken Hurtig and Judy Coil sign up a new WPGCA member at our booth. Almost 29,000 visitors attended Pheasant Fest.

(Photo by Rem DeJong)

Sunday morning the event opened at 9 AM and although there were a good number of people wandering around – it was not as busy as Saturday. The booth was required to remain open until 5 PM (if you did not stay until 5 PM – they would not let you in the show next year) after which we could break down the booth and head for home. Pete Engman (Sandhill kennel) and his son Kyle and daughter Meredith, and Kirk and Tracy Dilly stayed until the bitter end and helped Ken and I tear down the booth and load it in the vehicle. We had lots of good help and we were able to get on the road by 6 PM for the five hour drive home.

It was a good weekend. We talked to a lot of people, handed out a ton of literature and hope we made some future friends in the process. The most frequently asked question: was: “What is the difference between and griffon and a German Wirehaired Pointer”?

Ken and I have laid the ground work to have other capable people take over the Pheasant Fest Booth after next year (by the way – it will be held in Milwaukee, WI and Mike and Jane Chlapaty are already searching for a dog friendly motel in the area). After next year, Dave Finley, Jim Crouse and Kirk Dilly will be running the booth. That means after next year – they will be taking the carpet, TV, banners, table, extra handout materials and a box with tape, pins, pencils and other odds and ends back to one of their houses. The club needs to purchase a tablet or something similar to run the Power Point slide program which we show on the TV in the booth. The last several years we have used Ken’s personal computer. I believe the Heartland Chapter has already voted to buy one for the club.



**Promise for the Future**

Maintaining genetic diversity is crucial to our breeding program. **CrownPoint Wykeham Lad**, owned by WPGCA member Vicky Foster, won the 2006 AWPGCA “Field Dog of the Year Award” and was recognized as a 2006 NAVHDA Versatile Champion. He is the stud for a breeding with **Akay of the Midnight Sun** owned by Randy and Myra Mann.

(Photo by Vicky Foster)

## Breeding Plans 2013: New Blood from AKC Griffon

by  
WPGCA Breeding Committee

For some time the breeding committee and BOD have been searching for griffons from outside of the WPGCA to use in the breeding program. Although some good dogs were identified, the main obstacle was that information regarding littermates was lacking. Most of the potential dogs had been tested in NAVHDA, however few if any littermates had been tested. We were reluctant to use dogs whose littermates had not been evaluated. Littermate data is crucial because the dog under consideration for breeding received its genes from the same pool as the littermates. We look for a dog that comes from a litter that has uniform desirable characteristics because there is less likelihood of undesirable recessive traits being present.

Enter KeenPoint Kennel, owned by long time WPGCA member, Vicky Foster. Vicky has chosen to stay with AKC registered griffons for a number of reasons. One of those reasons is that Vicky wanted to be able to test and run dogs in NAVHDA events.

But in addition, she wanted dogs of sound temperament, conformations and also equally good in field performance. Vicky has developed a great eye for conformation through her many years of experience in the show ring. She now concentrates on breeding sound dogs that meet her interpretation of the "Griffon Standard" for both conformation and field performance. Like the WPGCA, Vicky only sells to hunters who agree to test her pups in at least NA. For these reasons, the club has chosen to breed to one of Vicky's stud dogs



### May 2013 Litter Anticipated

**Akay of the Midnight Sun** owned by Randy and Myra Mann is shown at her IRocky mountain HDT in 2008.

(Photo by Ann Pool)

(**CrownPoint Wykeham Lad**) this year. Several of the judges from the Northeast chapter and I judged Lad in UT about three years ago and were very impressed with his performance. The female chosen to breed to Lad is **Akay of the Midnight Sun** owned by Randy and Myra Mann. This will be the second litter from Akay. The breeding has happened and the pups are due in May.

One of Vicky's current females, **Duchasseur CrownPoint ("Cru")**, won the Korthal's trophy at the AWPGA specialty event last October in Sioux Falls, SD. The Northeast chapter of the WPGCA tested Cru in September. It was the opinion of all the judges that Cru was as talented as any griffon we had seen in a utility test. The point of this is that KeenPoint Kennel has been able to produce griffons with solid structures, good field performance and appropriate temperament. We feel confident that the WPGCA will benefit significantly over time by blending KeenPoint stock into ours.

We will also continue to look for other griffon blood that will complement our present stock. This will need to be continued in the future to keep the gene pool refreshed with the appropriate genes from qualified dogs that meet the breed standard.



### **KeenPoint Kennel Performer**

**Duchasseur CrownPoint ("Cru")**, owned by Vicky Foster, demonstrated her strong ability in a WPGCA Utility Test last September with the Northeast Chapter.

## Nominations for National WPGCA Offices

(3 year term) 2013-2015 (3 yr term)

The executives of the WPGCA (Gary Pool, John Pitlo, Judy Coil, Jim Seibel have nominated the following individuals:

President: Gary Pool, Idaho  
Vice President: John Pitlo, Iowa  
Secretary: Judy Coil, Minnesota  
Treasurer: Andy Rupp\*, Colorado

\*Andy Rupp has been serving as interim Treasurer pending the election results.

WPGCA officer elections are for 3-year terms and are normally held in October. Due to an oversight, nominations for 2013-15 terms are due by May 15, 2013. If you wish to nominate a member for one of these offices, please secure the individual's permission before nominating. Send your nomination in writing to the WPGCA secretary office:

Judy Coil  
49625 Waldo Road, NE  
Kelliher, MN 56650  
Judy.Coil@wpgca.org

## Upcoming Events

### **Rocky Mountain Chapter Exposure and Training Day**

Saturday July 27th at the Headwaters State Park (Carpenter Road horse pasture) starting at 8 a.m. sharp. If you are going to attend and need a live pheasant for training, you need to contact JJ Conner at (406)202-4483/3369 by July 1st. Bring your own water, lunch, and lawn chair to the training, which will conclude by 3 p.m. A club BBQ will be held at Glenn and Lyla's home located at 8636 Panorama Drive East, Bozeman, MT 59715, starting at 4 p.m. Please bring your own lawn chair to the BBQ as well and let JJ know that you will be attending.

**Heartland Chapter Michigan Training Days** are held roughly monthly near Marshall, MI from April to September on Saturdays. See Heartland Chapter page on website for details. Contact Jim Crouse to be on the mailing list [jcrouse01@yahoo.com](mailto:jcrouse01@yahoo.com); 614-562-1860 cell .

### **Northeast Chapter Spring Test**

Saturday, May 18, 2013 Winterport, ME  
Contact: Field Test Chairs  
Scott Craig & Laurie Connell  
(207) 581-2470 email: [Allagash\\_stream@myfairpoint.net](mailto:Allagash_stream@myfairpoint.net)



**Dog Tired at Pheasant Fest**

**Burley of Salmon River and Brinker of Indian Creek** are all decked out in their neckerchief finery as they catch some Zs in the middle of all the Pheasant Fest hubbub. All that mauling by little kids is exhausting.

(photo by Rem DeJong)