

# *The Gun Dog Supreme*

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

<http://www.wpgca.org>

December 2014

Volume 89, Number 6

December 2014



**Bird Here! Get Ready!**

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

First, I want to say thank you to the contributors to this issue, who took time from jobs and most importantly, HUNTING SEASON, to pen articles and send in some photos.

Our latest generation of Cesky Fousek imports are hitting the field, and it's exciting to see how the new dogs are doing. Meanwhile, the Breeding Committee is busily working on plans for further imports and some critical genetics' research to advance our breeding program. One of these projects focuses on OCD, and as the owner of an affected dog, I certainly wish them the best.

I suggest that you read the back cover first! It's dues paying time. Have you thought of giving a WPGCA membership as a holiday gift? And speaking of gifts, check out the WPGCA apparel items listed in this issue. You can order them from our website.

We've included a couple hunting stories, but we can always use more, so send in your articles and photos.

Rem DeJong

## **On the Cover**

A blue-sky Dakota morning, a rooster hunkered down in thick CRP and your dog frozen on point. Does it get any better?

**Francesca of Dutchman's Hollow** (owned by Dave Finley) is ready for the flush.

(Photo by Rem DeJong)

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

**rstrathy@q.com**

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Rem DeJong  
John Pitlo

## SUBSCR./BACK ISSUES

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

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Email: crdejong@charter.net for photo submission instructions. 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 request instructions for uploading to website.

## WEBSITES

E&R Foundation:  
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Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club:  
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## Genetic Study Updates

by

**Laurie Connell—Breeding Committee**

As you all know we have been collecting blood samples from our dogs for “Genetic Biobanking” at Cornell University. We have 181 dogs in the Biobank as of this writing. There are still a number of dogs that we need to collect additional information on, including PennHIP, measurements or questionnaires. In the past we have asked individual owners to please submit samples but now we are having each litter submitted before they go to their new homes. The imported puppies are still submitted individually. Each puppy that has a sample submitted to the Biobank will need to have the questionnaires and measurements done at the time of the IHDT after they have grown to near full size.

Our current plan for these samples is to ensure we have a complete set of genetic samples from club dogs to be used in future studies as we begin to find markers for specific diseases. In addition, we are waiting for the cost of genome sequencing to drop sufficiently so we can get the most information as possible from those precious samples.

In the meantime we have several other genetic projects that are ongoing and one upcoming. The upcoming project is in collaboration with the Czech Český Fousek club (Klub Chovatelů Český Fousek) to find genetic markers or linkages for the hairloss affliction, alopecia. Most of the samples for that study will come from dogs that are in the Czech Republic. Of the three ongoing projects the first is in collaboration with a graduate student in the Czech Republic and two others are with Paw Print Genetics (PPG) in Spokane, WA and their partners at Translation Genomics Research Institute (TGen) in Phoenix, AZ.

We thank all of the club members and their fine hunting companions for being willing to step up to the plate and send in those extra samples. Some owners have been asked to supply samples for several studies and we extend to them a very special “thank you”. Below are short updates for the three ongoing studies.

### **Genetic Relationships of European Versatile Hunting Breeds:**

The first study is by Silvie Neradilová, a Czech graduate student. The Pools and the Sojdas met Silvie and her dog, Asta Jarpol (Agi), during their visit to the Czech Republic this past fall. Silvie and Agi won the Memorial Dr. Josefa Kuhna competition making this collaboration more exciting.

Silvie is exploring the genetic relationships (gene flow) among the closely related versatile hunting breeds of Wirehaired Pointing Griffon (Korthal Griffon), Český Fousek (from around the world), German Shorthaired Pointer, and German Wirehaired Pointer (Deutsch-Drahthaar). Her data should prove very interesting for us as a club because we will be able to see if our dogs are more closely related to the AKC/NAVHDA Korthal Griffon or to the worldwide Český Fousek populations. We have asked owners

to supply a cheek swab from their dogs. One dog from each litter available is being sent to Silvie as well as from some AKC/NAVHDA Korthal Griffons. Silvie expects to have her data ready for our Spring Judges Seminar and she will send graphs for our website as well as the GDS. So far we have already collected 34 of the 44 samples we are trying to provide.

### **Determination of Disease Markers:**

As we reported in a previous GDS our Board of Director member John Pitlo met the CEO of Paw Print Genetics (PPG) Dr. Lisa Shaffer at Pheasant Fest 2013. PPG is a company that has developed a panel of genetic disease markers that can be used to make choices in breeding programs. Dr. Shaffer offered to put 15 of our dogs through their current panel of about 200 disease markers at no cost to us. These would be diseases that we just don't know are lurking below the surface as recessive genes. We chose dogs that either are currently or might potentially be in our breeding program. This included most of the puppies imported from the Czech Republic over the last two years. This fall we completed getting the 15 samples into PPG so they can now run their panel. We hope to have results by early spring and when we do we will have a report for the GDS.



**Burley of Salmon River** with Dr. Dale Aho after first surgery. Surgery can provide complete recovery from OCD but it's expensive.

Photo by Rem DeJong

### **NEW STUDY- Determination of genetic markers for Osteochondritis dissecans (OCD):**

Why is this study so important for our club? At the moment we have had a number of dogs with OCD. The incidence of OCD appears to follow specific families and therefore has a genetic component. The Breeding Committee no longer breeds any dogs that have a littermate with OCD because we do not know if a littermate of an affected dog may be a carrier. Clearly this may be taking a number of good quality dogs out of our breeding pool when they may not be carriers and thus reducing our potential genetic diversity.

How would we use genetic markers if we had them? Before a dog was entered into the breeding program we could use a very quick and simple genetic test to determine if they were a carrier of OCD.

Due to our years of accurate registry and collection of pertinent health data, PPG and their partners at TGen are offering their services at

no cost to us; we just need to have owners willing to supply a genetic sample from selected dogs. This is a very intensive and expensive study to carry out with large amounts of bioinformatics required. There is no guarantee that they will be successful in finding markers but dogs from our club gives them the best chance. We initially had blood (or frozen semen) samples submitted from 25 dogs. The more dogs we have in the project the better chance of success we have in finding genetic markers for OCD.

After PPG teamed up with TGen more funds became available, therefore more samples could be processed. Dr. Lisa Shaffer (PPG) with Drs. Trent and Huentelman (TGen) have selected specific litters for this study. Some dogs are affected with OCD and others are related to affected dogs. To add statistical power to the study and to increase chances for success they have requested DNA samples from ALL living siblings in these litters regardless of if they have had OCD or not. Because of that we are asking all owners of dogs in the litters listed below to please help us out with supplying samples. We will be sending out information on sample collection soon but if you plan to have your dog to the veterinarian in the next month please contact Ann Pool ([gapool@ctcweb.net](mailto:gapool@ctcweb.net)) or Laurie Connell ([laurie.connell@umit.maine.edu](mailto:laurie.connell@umit.maine.edu)) as soon as possible so we can send instructions for sample submission. Several owners have already contacted us directly because of their interest in participating in the study. Blood samples are preferred because of the amount and quality of DNA but if that is not at all possible to submit a blood sample we have special swabs for cheek cell collection available that can collect samples for DNA at home.

#### **OCD study Selected Litters:**

## **Do you own a dog from one of these litters? Please help!**

- "A" of Ash Coulee
- "A" Arrowrock (2009)
- "B" of Arrowrock (2011)
- "A" of Banded Peak (2001)
- "F & "H" of Dutchman's Hollow (2010 & 2013- repeat breeding)
- "A" Glacier Ridge (2005)
- "A" of Hundgaard (2005)
- "B" of Hundgaard (2006)
- "B" of Marsh Stream (2002)
- "B" Salmon River (2008)
- "A" Sourdough Trail (2004)
- "C" Valley House (2003)

## How a Neophyte Dog Trainer Nearly Screwed up a Perfectly Great Dog

by  
Vince Esposito



### **Budding Bird Dog**

Pheasants or grouse or whatever, “Ellie” (**Helena of Dutchman’s Hollow**) has it covered. She’s teaching owner, Vince Esposito how to be a good handler.

(Photos by Vince Esposito)

The trouble started this way. We were in the sage brush where I knew we would find some wild game for Ellie to point. It was April of this year and had snowed quite a bit the night before, on what had been for the last few weeks a dry hillside. This spot held jack rabbits, cottontails and the potential for sage grouse and chukar. In the new snow Ellie had the upper hand on the juvenile bunnies and started to do the unthinkable! By the time I could reach her in the slippery snow and mud, she had killed and consumed

two or three bunnies. I was devastated and deeply concerned. My concern was not unfounded; Ellie became a very independent dog from that time forward. In an instant everything had changed between us. When out in the field she did not fetch, and only would come when she felt like it. She was on her own agenda. How we moved from this mess to become a bird hunting team has been an adventure.

It will be one full year this month that Helena of Dutchman's Hollow (Ellie) became a member of our family. On September 6, 2013 I departed Iowa with Ellie and her brother Huck for our home near Park City, Utah. Huck continued on to Oregon with his owner Jeff Dillon.

A lot has happened in that year to shape Ellie into the hunting dog she has become. A lot has happened in that year to shape me into the dog trainer I have become. Just like Ellie everything was new for me. I have never trained a dog for hunting. Always having dogs in my life, I understood a few things about training a dog how to sit, come and roll over. When it came to getting a puppy to work with me as a team in the pursuit of birds, I was a neophyte. And I can't tell you how many people told me the key to training a well-bred dog like Ellie is to not screw her up!

The first six months, "the honeymoon", seemed to go without a hitch. Ellie was getting exposure five or more days a week; although I never shot wild game over her during that time. It turns out that may have been a mistake. Sit, come, whoa, fetch and gun sensitivity training, no problem. Dragged game through the woods was tracked and returned to me in great form. Her search was appropriate for the cover. In the thick aspens she was in close, and in the sagebrush she was making large sweeping casts in front of me. Once, in February, she even pointed and held chukar for over five minutes, but I could not get close enough to make the shot. Water took a little time, but when it came she was full tilt, swimming across icy cold rivers to fetch bumpers. She was a brilliant hunting dog and I was a brilliant trainer, or so I thought. Then we went to the Rocky Mountain Spring Natural Ability Test (NAT) at the end of March.

We arrived in Jerome, ID the morning before the test and my plan was to go to the test site in the afternoon to stretch our legs and give Ellie a chance to get the lay of the land. As Ellie and I made our way through the test grounds that afternoon I was seeing a different Ellie than I knew in Utah. I thought it might have been the long car ride that messed her up, so I was glad we had the time to just goof around and get over it. Up bright and early the next morning, I arrived at the test grounds with enough time to take Ellie out alone for a quick walk. Soon after we split up in groups and headed out for the morning's test. Ellie had mixed results and didn't point, which the judges dismissed as normal for her young age (nine months). What I saw was a poor showing for the Ellie that I knew, and I was puzzled to say the least. On the way home, I noticed that she had started her first heat cycle, and I thought it may have been a contributing factor to her mixed results that day. Before leaving Jerome I had several good talks with club members and judges and the consensus was that Ellie was too dependent on me. It was suggested that I not call her back with my whistle until she gains confidence.

Determined to get this training right, I followed club member advice and got her out in the field without the whistle. She was getting more confident by the day. That's when I made the big mistake of taking her out to that sage brush field just after a spring snow

and the horrible bunny event happened. I contacted Ellie's breeder, John Pitlo, that day and explained the situation. He said that the only way to deal with this would be to put her through fetch training. He emailed me Ed Bailey's Retrieve Methodology. I started the next morning.

Having read Joan Bailey's books and others, I was already familiar with the force fetch concept and was ready to start. On paper it all sounds so straightforward, and I'm sure for someone who has trained many dogs over a lifetime it is. For the novice like me, it's a little more complex. Timing and good judgment are paramount and I was always feeling like I was a step behind Ellie. A problem was knowing when to move on to the next level of training. Move on to the next step too early, and she would get confused and frustrated. Too many repetitions of any given step, seeking perfection, and Ellie became bored and lost interest and focus. It took a while but we did prevail and made it through force retrieve training. With training Ellie's concentration became stronger and she began to understand that this is work, and it is different from play. But one crucial part was missing in my estimation. She didn't always seem to enjoy the task. My fear was during hunting season I would not consistently have that cooperation needed out in the field with wild birds.

During the weeks leading up to the first "real" hunt, we scouted the forest for grouse and zeroed in on the best spots. Ellie and I were both getting excited as September approached. We were out early on opening morning to a spot guaranteed to hold grouse. Nothing! I think I heard one bird flush in the distance. Probably a good thing we saw nothing because I was so nervous for Ellie, that I would have missed the shot. The next day was much better. A different spot and we were in grouse. On the first bird I didn't take the shot for fear of shooting Ellie. She was out in front and doubled back towards me, getting very birdy, when a ruffie exploded under my feet and flew right over Ellie and into the dense aspens. Shortly after, Ellie got very excited again and started working her way up a very steep hill with me charging hard to keep up. On a flat area in the hill she found two dusky grouse. I managed to knock one down but not kill it. I went over to find she had the bird pinned down with her paw and had a mouth full of feathers she was trying to expel. It turned out that this was an exceptionally large specimen and maybe too much for her first wild bird. We celebrated just the same and continued to hunt and find one more bird on the return trip downhill. (OK, this part of the story brings tears to my eyes just writing about it.) Ellie's beeper was going off in hold mode as I made my way to her. She came into view, and she was holding a ruffed grouse in a clearing in the aspens, making it an easy shot for me. As I moved in the bird flew and I made a clean kill. Ellie and I watched the bird drop to the ground. Next, Ellie ran over to pick up the bird without hesitation and made a direct line to me; she sat, and presented the bird! I got down on my knees, tears in my eyes, and gave her lots of love. She did it!! We did it! We were a team.

The next morning and each training session since, she has had a different attitude to fetch training. It seems that she now understands what we have been doing all summer long. What was missing from that training was shooting wild game over her. I wish I'd had the guts to shoot over her when she was four or five months old when I had the chance. Who knows how much easier training might have been the last six months.



## Breeding Committee Notes

John Pitlo, Jim Seibel, Laurie Connell, Jen Lachowiek, Ted Silver, and Rick Sojda

There are about 30 people interested in getting puppies in 2015. We anticipate having three club females available for breeding and trying to import another 5-10 Český Fousek puppies from the Czech Republic. It seems that most folks receiving Czech puppies in the past two years have been happy with their new hunting companions. Of course, not much test data has yet been collected, although both 2013 pups prized in their NAT. As this issue of GDS goes to press, we are sponsoring an informal conference call so we can hear hunting stories about the new puppies from Fall 2014.

There have been lots of pictures of these puppies in action posted on our club's Facebook pages; so if you have not explored them, please do. We now have 2,800 "likes" and are reaching lots of folks involved in the best versatile hunting dogs:

<https://www.facebook.com/griffon.fan>

<https://www.facebook.com/ceskyfouseknorthamerica>

There is interest in further discussion towards using "Český Fousek " North America [Bohemian Wire-haired Pointing Griffon] in our "dog" and club names. We now recognize that nearly all our dogs in the past several years qualify as Český Fousek under European rules. We wonder: "Why not call them what they are?" A side note is that this would also place our PennHip scores and other medical information in the technically correct breed category. Laurie Connell and Ann Pool are taking the lead working with a graduate student in the Czech Republic who is collecting DNA data to quantitatively assess the degree to which our club dogs are similar to pure Český Fousek s from outside North America. Laurie hopes to be able to report more on that soon. At this point, a bit more discussion seems warranted. Can anyone in the Club offer legal counsel to the Education and Research Foundation regarding what is necessary to affect a name change?

We have not yet completed a thorough assessment of Club breedings that took place in 2013 and 2014, but need to do so as some test scores are now available. There has been some initial concern over the coats that resulted from using the first AKC stud in some time (other than Blue Mountain's Brew) that produced the "B" litter of Wolf Fork Canyon. But, we do not breed for coat alone, or any other single trait.

We have invited folks from the Czech Club to visit us at the Heartland Spring 2015 test and Judges' Seminar. More on that as it develops.



**The Legend Begins . . .**

Kirk Dilly and 7 month old "Ike" Ivar od Vavřineckélto rybníka with Ike's first retrieved woodcock.

(Photo by Jon Coil fall '14)

## The Legend of Beltrami County

by  
Jon Coil

In coming years, around the fire at grouse and woodcock camp, at Ruffed Grouse Society Banquets and in the dim, warm dens where wintering woodcock hunters await the first peents of spring and sip the dark, golden liquid that matches the color of our Griffon's eyes, a story will be told of a legend. The legend arose deep in Minnesota's Beltrami County, along the edges of a series of ten to fifteen year old aspen cuts where the young aspen grow so thick they force a hunter sideways to squeeze between the stems; fighting the hazel brush to mount a shotgun is the norm. The pale yellow aspen leaves cover the ground and rustle with the shuffling feet of the hunter and the quick searching feet of the griffons.

I know this is truly legend because I was there. I was hunting with **Coco of the Sandhill** and Kirk Dilly was hunting with **Cedar of the Sandhill** and 7 month old "Ike" **Ivar od Vavřineckélto rybníka**. Kirk, Cedar and Ike were two hours into the miserable thick cover and had yet to feel the ecstasy of completing a shot at a woodcock. Coco had pointed a couple woodcock that flushed close to me. I missed them plus a wild flushed grouse. Situation normal.

We hunted into a thick stand of aspen—twenty five feet tall and two inches in diameter at eye level. There was a shot to my left and Kirk yelled that he had his first woodcock. As remarkable as it was that Kirk had shot and killed his first woodcock in this thick stuff, it was doubly rewarding that he did it over Cedar's first point on a woodcock.

We separated and resumed our slow march through the thick stuff. Minutes later, I wild flushed a woodcock and missed. It flew high and to the left, passing in front of Kirk. It was flying fast. Don't believe it when you hear woodcock aren't fast. Kirk shot and in the quiet that followed shouted, "Come see this!" He was surprised that the woodcock was caught fifteen feet up in the tree though it would have been more surprising in that thick growth, if the bird had fallen all the way to the ground. By the time I got there, it had dropped halfway down and caught up again. I was surprised he hit it. It was not an easy shot. High, fast crossing right to left. Cleaning birds in the evening gave evidence of the speed it was traveling, a pencil sized branch had pierced its body cavity and what obviously had held it high in the aspen. This guy can shoot.

We met Judy for a campfire lunch a few miles away and enjoyed the fine fall sun, then headed off for the evening hunt. After walking through tough unproductive ground we got into some more attractive younger aspen and hit the jack pot. Coco led the charge with some points and I was able to pick up a couple of woodcock myself. Kirk missed a wild flush and then a little later, BAM, Cedar pointed, the bird flushed and Kirk had his third woodcock. Read that again. His third woodcock, his limit. Look back through the page. His first woodcock hunt. Three woodcock in the bag. Two pointed by Cedar whom hadn't seen a woodcock before today and Kirk got both. Four shots. I have hunted woodcock for over thirty years and keep detailed records of my flushing and shooting. I know a legend when I see one. I salute you Kirk and Cedar!

# Griffon Gear

## Just in time for Christmas

### Support the WPGCA and look good doing it.

The Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club of America is a nonprofit organization; with our companion organization, The WPGCA Education and Research Foundation, we promote sound breeding practices for raising griffons and responsible ownership. All money raised by selling merchandise goes to supporting the WPGCA and the WPGCA E&R Foundation. The merchandise offered for sale here is normally only available at our field test events, but we are now offering limited on-line mail service sales.

1 Ash T Shirt

Price: \$18.00

2 Cap, Olive or Blue

\$21.00

Olive or Blue Cap with a velcro adjustment on back. Wirehaired Pointing Griffon embroidered on the back of the cap and WPGCA with a griffon head embroidered on the front.

3 Cap, Blaze orange or Olive camouflage.

\$26.00

Camouflage or Blaze Orange Cap with a Velcro adjustment on back. Wirehaired Pointing Griffon embroidered on the back of the cap and WPGCA with a griffon head embroidered on the front and a pheasant embroidered on the side.

4 Sweat Shirt Green \$40.00

Green Gilden sweatshirt with dryblend fabric

5 Sweat Shirt Gray \$40.00

Gray Gilden sweatshirt with dryblend fabric

6 Button, logo shirts

Women's Blue \$50.00

Blue women's Tri-Mountain long sleeve button shirt. Embroidered with WPGCA under the embroidered griffon head and Wirehaired Pointing Griffon on top in matching colors.

7 Button, logo shirts

Men's Green \$50.00

Green Men's Tri-Mountain long sleeve button shirt. Embroidered with WPGCA under the embroidered griffon head and Wirehaired Pointing Griffon on top in matching colors.

- 8 Men's Khaki/Blaze Orange Shirt  
\$60.00  
Silverhill Khaki/Blaze orange shooting shirt with a blaze orange shooting patch. Khaki is 100% cotton. Embroidered with WPGCA in blaze orange under the embroidered griffon head and Wirehaired Pointing Griffon on top.
- 9 Moisture wicking shirts. Maroon \$31.00  
Women's maroon moisture wicking shirt with silk screened WPGCA emblem.
- 10 Moisture wicking shirts. Men's Blue  
\$31.00  
Men's blue moisture wicking shirt with silk screened WPGCA emblem
- 11 Tri-Mountain charcoal grey, fleece jacket  
\$70.00



**See WPGCA website for complete order information.**

**<http://www.wpgca.org/griffon-gear/>**

# Photos from the Field





**They're off to a great start.**

**Upper left:** Dan Walsh was super pleased with **Henry of Dutchman's Hollow** during Henry's first real pheasant hunt in South Dakota.

**Lower left:** It was a mother and child reunion for pup **Artemas of Blackberry Briar** (owner Rob Reed) on the left and mom **Francesca of Dutchman's Hollow** (owner Dave Finley). Artie blossomed into a bird dog and breeder Dave couldn't have been more proud.

**Above:** Owner Jim Crouse and **Jena od Tyrše** celebrate her first point and retrieve of a wild Dakota rooster.

(Photos by Rem DeJong)

# Reminder

**WPGCA membership dues are on an annual cycle and should be paid by January 1st for the 2015 year. Dues are \$40.00 per year. Please visit our web page for membership renewal form.**

<http://www.wpgca.org/about-us/join-or-renew-membership/>

**A WPGCA membership makes a great Christmas gift too!**



**NATIONAL PHEASANT FEST**  
*& Quail Classic*  
**February 20, 21 & 22, 2015**  
 Iowa Events Center • Des Moines, Iowa

Attendees

Seminars

Attractions

Hotel Information

Exhibitor List

Vendor Information

Pheasants Forever

Quail Forever

Shooting Sports  
Invitational

Attendee FAQ'S

A smaller version of the 2015 National Pheasant Fest &amp; Quail Classic logo, overlaid on a black and white photograph of a pheasant in flight. The text "2015 National PHEASANT FEST &amp; Quail Classic" is visible.

Coming to Des Moines, Iowa | February 20, 21, & 22, 2015

Volunteers needed for WPGCA booth at Pheasant Fest & Bird Dog Parade. Contact Kirk Dilly for details.  
 320-304-2212 or  
[kirk.dilly@mortonbuildings.com](mailto:kirk.dilly@mortonbuildings.com)