

The Gun Dog Supreme

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

<http://www.wpgca.org>

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I'm a Gun Dog!
Aris od Blatskeho rybnika

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings:

The weather's warm and the water is inviting, so it's a great time to jack up your pup's enthusiasm for water by getting him out there swimming. On the back page, you'll see a number of training events. I really hope that you can take advantage of one, but if you're too far away, don't forget our videos on the Bohemian Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club of America YouTube Channel for some aids to training.

This issue reports on the spring BOD meeting in Jerome. I especially draw your attention to the article by Laurie Connell on her recent trip to the Czech Republic. It's a very informative piece on our breed's homeland environment.

We have several more imported pups and we're eagerly awaiting reports on the outcome of three recent breedings. Pup owners are urged to share some photos with us. Posting them on the club Facebook page, enables our Czech friends to follow the development of the pups they send to us.

Hope you and your dogs have a great summer.

Rem DeJong

On the Cover:

Aris od Blatskeho rybnika a.k.a. "Sach", carries a quail that he more or less tracked down at a Michigan training day for owner Roger Wegner. Sach is a Czech import, brought to the U.S. by the BWP GCA in cooperation with Klub chovatelů českých fousků. We're eager to watch Sach's progress as he grows to be a versatile hunting dog.

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

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Rem DeJong
John Pitlo

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WEBSITES

E&R Foundation:
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Bohemian
Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club:
www.wpgca.org

BWP GCA Photo Gallery:
<http://wpgca.smugmug.com/>

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2016 BWPGCA Judges Seminar and Annual Meeting

by Anita Andrus

On March 18, the Rocky Mountain chapter hosted our annual judge's seminar and membership meeting in conjunction with their spring performance tests.

Friday morning began with the introduction of the new officers of our board of directors (BOD). Jim Crouse (OH) is our new President and commented he was "still negotiating his pay" for taking over the job from Gary Pool (ID). Other officers include Andy Rupp (CO) vice-president, Zeb Breuckman (MI) treasurer, Robin Strathy (MT) secretary and Anna Artz (CA) member-at-large. (See Feb. GDS for new officer bios.)

Jim Seibel (SD) and John Pitlo (IA) thanked all the outgoing board members for their service to the club.

Zeb Breuckman gave his treasurer's report next and stated the Education and Research Foundation part of our club had a current balance of \$36,029 and the BWPGCA \$15,081. He mentioned the detailed summary of yearly expenses/income is always published in the December issue of the E&R Foundation newsletter, *The Gundog Supreme* (GDS).

Laurie Connell (ME), our new registrar and archivist, reported on our status with the Federation Cynologique International (FCI), the organization that registers the Czech club dogs. She stated all our dogs imported from the Czech Republic came with FCI registration. Laurie is currently working with the Czech Fousek club to have FCI recognize and register our club's American bred dogs.

She also said she was disappointed to report that the NAVHDA board of directors had declined to recognize our club bred dogs' pedigrees and allow them to participate in their hunt tests. NAVHDA has said that they will only accept registrations from dogs that the FCI will recognize. After the FCI recognizes our registrations NAVHDA should also follow suit.

Laurie noted that The United Kennel Club (UKC) as well as the American Rare Breed Association said they would accept our dogs and register them as Cesky Fouseks. The UKC has a number of FCI type hunt-tests in which we can participate.

Next, representatives from each of the regional chapters gave brief reports. Dennis Carlson (OR) from the Northwest Chapter said their 2015 fall test had to be canceled due to drought conditions causing inadequate water in the testing ponds. With this past winter's adequate snow pack, he was confident they could have a 2016 fall test in Washington.

Rem DeJong (MI) spoke for the Heartland Chapter and reported 63 paid members and told about their upcoming monthly exposure/training days. The Rocky Mountain chapter report was given by chapter president Angie McDunn (MT). As of today they have 41 paid members and are planning a summer exposure day for July. Last September six club dogs and handlers participated in the Bozeman, Montana Pheasants Forever youth pheasant hunt along with 15 teens. Laurie Connell reported for the Northeast chapter and said they only tested 2 Intermediate dogs last fall.

John Pitlo and Jim Seibel gave the breeding committee report which included the appointment of Dr. Laurie Connell to the group. Jim stated the importance of blending genetics with performance evaluations in breeding decisions and said Laurie's professional expertise will be extremely valuable. Dr. Connell is a research professor at the University of Maine and has a doctorate in genetics.

Other appointments included Anna Artz as breeding committee apprentice and Andy Yeast (IA) and Dave Finley (IN) becoming field test judges.

Jim also added that the committee is reviewing the field test judging forms with the goal of standardization so that all important qualities of our dogs are evaluated.

Next Rick Sodja (MT) announced our club will import nine pups from the Czech Republic in 2016, four of which have already arrived. He said we have a good relationship with the Czech breeders and some Fousek club representatives may come to our 2017 mid-west test/seminar.

Jim Seibel spoke on our domestic breedings. He said they have decreased due to less hunters reserving pups. To address this issue the board secretary Robin Strathy will refer prospective buyers to chapter members in their area to acquaint them with our dogs. To date, three domestic breedings have been approved, six have been identified and we have twelve people on the waiting list. He added the breeding committee is hesitant to schedule breedings without buyers on the waiting list.

The Gun Dog Supreme (GDS) report was given by Rem DeJong (MI) who has been editor for over ten years and done an outstanding service to our club. He said he has enjoyed the work but would welcome someone with good computer skills to assist. He also noted the GDS is expensive to print at approximately \$3.00 per copy but in his opinion was valuable as hard copy. There was discussion about going to an e-copy option in the future.

Later in the meeting Rem gave a web site report. He noted we have four web sites plus a you- tube channel with videos of each portion of our Intermediate test that people can use as a training tool.

Laurie Connell reported on our club data base. She said we have an on-line searchable database for Cesky Fousek (Bohemian Griffon) that can be found at ceskyfouseknorthamerica.org. Pedigrees, photographs test scores and relationships can be found there. Currently there are about 7000 dogs in the database.

She is also in process of archiving historical club documents and memorabilia and requested members send appropriate "swag" and documents to her. She mentioned the club now has a three volume set of bound GDS magazines beginning with 1990. Many thanks to Jen Lachowicz (MI) for doing this and to the Northeast Chapter for footing the bill.

Next came a discussion concerning the continuation of the General Rogers Award. This award began in 1972 in memory of Brigadier General Thomas DeForth Rogers who founded the Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club of America in 1951. The roving plaque lists the names of the highest scoring Utility tested WPG of the year in North America. It was decided the award will continue but to qualify, the dog must be tested in our club's Utility test and the owner must be a club member. Anita Andrus (ID) agreed to be in charge of the award which for



How Does He Measure Up?

John Pitlo and Jim Seibel led a portion of the judges seminar gave judges some hands-on experience with measuring conformation standards for the Intermediate Hunting Dog Test. In the above photo, Jim Crouse (left) and John Pitlo (right) illustrate measure technique on **Bohdan Fousek Z Sakered** owned by Monica Redmond.

2015 goes to Andy Yeast (IA) and Prize I Utility dog, **Gabby of Dutchman's Hollow**.

The judges' seminar began after lunch with a presentation by Dr. Laurie Connell focusing on how best to continue improving the genetics of our breed. Our biggest problem, she said, is having such a small population to work with. This results in reducing our breed's genetic diversity. In Dr. Connell's opinion, in order to maintain a healthy population we need to make sure that we have a long term plan that takes the genetic diversity into account when we make breeding choices. (For more on this topic, see Dr. Connell's article "Breeding Program Developments" in the Feb. 2016 GDS.)

John Pitlo and Jim Seibel next led a seminar on our breed's conformation focusing on front and rear angulation measurements. This is important because to have a fluid gait in the field, the front and rear angulation must be close

to equal and around 110 degrees for our breed. We also want the length and height of the dog to be almost equal or "square" for the same reason. They demonstrated how to first "stack" or position a dog for accurate measuring. Judges each got to test their hands-on skills using various dogs perched on tables.

The day ended with a great dinner prepared by Angie McDunn, Tawna Skinner and Anita Andrus as well as contributions from other club members. It's always fun to be with our friends and our four footers.

Banding woodcock is like catch and release hunting

by Brad Dokken

"Reprinted with permission of the Grand Forks Herald,"



Club member Kyle Kessler (right) and his dog, Ammo, teamed up with Donna Dustin (left) with her Small Munsterlander, Kira, for this banding operation.

Photo by Brad Dokken

TAMARAC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, Minn.—Donna Dustin knew the woodcock was there somewhere--hunkered down in the brush, most likely with eggs or a brood of chicks.

Knowing and finding, though, are two different things when it comes to woodcock.

Dustin, of Detroit Lakes, Minn., and her 2-year-old Small Munsterlander, Kira, a German versatile breed, had flushed the bird earlier in the morning, and Dustin had marked the spot with an orange ribbon. Judging by the way the woodcock looked and acted on the ground, with its wings spread out like it was offering shelter, Dustin assumed the bird was a hen on a nest.

Now she was back, scouring the brush hoping to find the bird and band it.

"When we find a hen that looks like she's on a nest, if she hasn't flushed already, the best thing to do is leave for a little while and come back like this," Dustin said. "If it's a new nest and you flush her, she will often abandon that nest. The longer she's been sitting there, the less likely she'll leave, but it's always a risk."

A fisheries biologist by trade, Dustin oversees Minnesota's woodcock banding program, a volunteer-driven effort launched in 1993 to learn more about the odd-looking migratory birds with long bills and a knack for blending into their woodland surroundings. Dustin estimates she spends about 100 hours every spring as a volunteer bander, busting through brush and putting up with ticks in her hunt for the difficult-to-see birds. "It depends on the season, but I probably average 15 to 20 days," Dustin said. "I burn up a lot of my vacation time."

Dogs are crucial

Because woodcock-or "timberdoodles," as they're often called—are masters of camouflage and concealment, licensed volunteer handers such as Dustin and Kyle Kessler rely on hunting dogs to find the birds. Kessler, who lives near the refuge north of Detroit Lakes, had joined Dustin on this late April woodcock quest along with his 4-year-old Bohemian wirehaired pointing griffon, Ammo. The opportunity to work their dogs in the name of research is a big part of the attraction, Dustin and Kessler say.

"Catch and release hunting is what it's like," Dustin said. "It's a rush. If I had to pick hunting in the fall or this in the spring, I would pick this in a heartbeat. Unless something goes wrong, you don't have that moment of mixed feelings where you killed this beautiful bird."

Dustin and Kessler are among about 20 volunteers across Minnesota with federal permits to band woodcock, which as migratory birds are regulated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A New Hampshire native, Dustin says she got her start banding woodcock under the tutelage of Earl Johnson, a former wildlife manager for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in Detroit Lakes who worked in the same building.

"When I moved to town in 1998, I wanted to get more into training dogs, and I wanted my dog to have a job to do," Dustin said. Johnson helped Dustin find an English setter, and that was her start with pointing dogs. When Johnson retired, Dustin eventually took over the state's banding program. "Earl was kind of my mentor from the beginning," she said. "The first spring I was there, he told me about woodcock banding and, of course, I thought that sounded pretty cool, and so he took me out a few times." Dustin says the English setter didn't work out as a woodcock dog, but small Munsterlanders have proven to be very adept at finding the birds. Her first small Munsterlander, Annie, died last October at age 12Y2, and Kira now is learning the ropes. "She's showing the potential to be even better, but I think the breed is just suited for this," Dustin said. "They're really strong trackers and so they'll sort of switch back and forth between sniffing the air and then following a track on the ground."

Flushing the hen

Trying to find the woodcock Dustin had spotted earlier didn't go quite according to plan when Kira flushed the bird and took off in pursuit across a clearing. Still, Dustin and Kessler managed to find four tiny chicks concealed in the grass. Woodcock never lay more than four eggs, so they knew they had found the entire brood. Kessler, who works at BTD Industries in Detroit Lakes, says he got started banding woodcock through a relative and has been licensed for two years; this is his third season.

Volunteers must complete a weekend training session and spend at least one season with an experienced bander before the federal Bird Banding Laboratory will issue a permit.

"Once I got hooked, it's pretty addicting to do this time of year," Kessler said. "Being out in the woods and working with dogs is the main thing. (Woodcock) are tough to see. You can stare at a hen all day and not see it or be able to make out the shape."

Ideally, Kessler says, they'll catch and band adult birds, but it's more common to band chicks because they're easier to catch once located.

"I can have a dog pointing right at the hen and sometimes you just can't make them out, and all of a sudden they'll just bust out right in front of you," Kessler said.

"The chicks are born with legs and feet big enough to accommodate the bands even as adult birds," Dustin said.

"If your dog gets a good point on a hen, some hens are so reluctant to leave those chicks that you can actually lower a net over her and catch her and band her, too," Dustin said. "With me anyway, that's the exception rather than the rule. Even when everything else works out right, there'll be sticks and twigs in the way, and you can't maneuver the net or she just skitters out from underneath as soon as you kind of make your move, and so catching a hen is a big deal."

Dustin says she once caught a hen she'd banded the previous year as a chick. In the miraculous way of nature, the hen had migrated south, perhaps to Louisiana or the Texas Gulf Coast, and found her way back to northwest Minnesota.

"I had put the band on her when she was 1 day old-50 yards away from where I found her with four chicks the next year," Dustin said.

Banding begins

After rounding up the four chicks and putting them in a mesh sack, Dustin opened the bands and jotted down the numbers in a notebook for reference. Woodcock chicks are born with 14 millimeter beaks that grow 2 millimeters a

day for the first two weeks. Dustin measured the beaks at 15 millimeters, which told her the chicks probably had been born the previous night. Woodcock hens lay one egg a day, but they don't begin the 21- day incubation period until all four eggs are laid.

"They build a little bit of a nest, but it's basically just a little bowl in the ground," Dustin said. The hen that flushed likely was watching the banding process, Dustin said, and so she and Kessler wasted no time returning the chicks to the forest floor, where they instantly blended in with their surroundings.

The chicks can fly after about 25 days. "This fuzzy stage they're in now is when they're most vulnerable, but the mother does a pretty darn good job of keeping them covered," Dustin said.

Most years, woodcock eggs don't hatch until early May, but this year Dustin already had banded 12 chicks, including the four she and Kessler found on this day. Her best spring, she says, she banded 93 birds.

"You really have to be out here looking-both to find birds and to get any good at it," Dustin said. "And then the other thing is, the more time you spend looking, the more broods you find. You get your spots that have been productive and you keep going back to those and that makes it a lot more productive than when you're first learning."

....

Dustin said that there's room for more volunteers in Minnesota's banding program, which recorded its 2,000th woodcock last year. "There's more dog people and hunters out there that would love this and particularly women," Dustin said. "I do think there's probably a lot of women who love the dog training end of it but don't care so much about the killing, and this is perfect for that.

"It's important research, and the more people we can get doing it, then the more important research we can do."

Dustin and Kessler concede woodcock banding is a volunteer labor of love-even if it means getting snapped in the face by twigs and picking ticks, sometimes by the dozens, after a day in the field. "I think it's pretty obvious that I just love it," Dustin said. "It's that combination of the dog work and the chance to be out and the teamwork to get what you're looking for. "Bottom line is that rush when the dog slams on point."

Brad Dokken is editor of the Herald's Northland Outdoors section
BDokken@gfherald.com

See more of his work at: <http://www.grandforksherald.com/outdoors/>

Visits to the Czech Republic by Laurie Connell

I have had the opportunity to visit with our Czech collaborators three times during this past year. First, I need to say that the Czechs have been wonderful hosts! I have also seen a beautiful country and many talented owners and their dogs. During my trips I was able to visit Central and Southern Bohemia. The landscape in Central Bohemia is low rolling hills with large plots of farmland, much like parts of northern Ohio or Iowa. As in many other parts of Europe, the towns and villages are condensed and surrounded by farmland with very little sprawl. Each town or village has its own hunting club that hunts in their district. I spent some time with Dr. Pavel Horák and his family in one of these villages, Dřísy. Their hunting club has access to about 2000 hectare (almost 5000 acres) for hunting. This is farmland as well as managed forest. Wild pheasants, hare, fox, roe deer, and wild boar are in the area and the forest is full of bird song. Each hunting club must have a minimum number of specific types of dogs per area. For example 1 pointer, 1 blood tracker and 1 underground dog is needed per 500 hectare. The Český Fousek can count as both the pointer and the blood tracker to fulfill this requirement.

I was privileged to attend one of their Memorial tests, the MFH, named after one of the early club organizers, František Houska. The test was held at Hluboká in the České



A Rich Tradition

More than just obtaining puppies—our collaboration with the Czech Republic involves developing an appreciation for the culture and hunting dog heritage that has maintained the breed that we have come to love in the U.S. (Photo by Ann Pool)

Budějovice district. This is a utility test for pointing dogs and included 17 Český Fousek. The two-day test has many disciplines we do not have or are done quite differently. For example, they have a discipline where the hunter walks slowly through the forest and the dog must walk quietly behind, drop to the ground with a silent command while the hunter walks on and shoots and returns to the dog. No movement or noise from the dog is allowed. I was able to meet Pavel Kacl and his dog Jasněnka od Pitné vody. Jasněnka received a prize I and is the mother of one of our new imports, Aron z Jasněncina podluží. I also saw Dyk z Oslavského údolí, the ultimate winner of the MFH. Dyk is the sire of another new 2016 import Aron ze Stráže (AKA Benz).

During that visit I met with the Czech club head breed advisor, Ing. Jaroslav Havlát. Pavel Dostál, Pavel Horák, and František Viktorin were able to translate our conversation. František is the grandson of Dr. Jaromír Dostál and has taken over the Fešandy kennel name. We discussed our various breeding goals and challenges and I was able to get advice on selection of stud dogs for semen importation to be used on the “H” Dutchman’s Hollow females as well as a few other females we have coming along.

Pavel Horák is one of the breed wardens for the central Bohemian district and he gave me a bit of insight into numbers based on his experience. The numbers below are approximate.

- 400-500 puppies are born each year.
- 90% of puppies go to hunting homes (and pass their Autumn test).
- 20% enter the breeding program although not all are bred.

The number of dogs going into hunting homes is important for us as well, but the scores for their dogs are higher overall. There is one major reason for this. For a dog to be used as a hunting dog it must pass a hunting test with a minimum of a Prize III. This is the Autumn test (PZ). This is a great motivation for people to make sure that their dogs are trained well before going to a test.

Several of my visits included time with Ing. Silvie Neradilová at her University office in Prague. Silvie (pronounced Silva) has been working on a gene flow study for several versatile hunting dog breeds and she has included our club dogs as one of the groups. Additionally, I was able to get a number of Korthals Griffon owners to submit samples so that relationship of the various breeds can be deciphered. Silvie is now working on one of the Czech clubs most important genetic studies, trying to find gene markers associated with alopecia. We hope to see her here in the US in the not too distant future for some work with Cornell University.

My most recent visit was timed so that I could be at one of their dog shows. I was interested in how they do their assessment of exterior (our coat and conformation) and how they determine which dogs go into the breeding program. The owners arrive with groomed and trained dogs. The dog show is what you might typically see here in North America, but with the difference in that each dog has height measured and a description of each dog is given for their individual record. At this particular show at least 30% of the dogs were ranked as “very good”, similar to our Conformation 3. This might indicate that we need to do more to train our judges on conformation and movement to get more accurate assessment of our population. At both the dog shows and the hunting tests the owners receive their award certificate on the spot. The owners also bring the

(Continued on page 11)



ČF Dyk z Oslavského údolí, 1.místo, 492b. l.c., nejlepší ohrádka a voda. Laurie got to see Dyk, winner of the MFH. Dyk is the sire of 2016 import **Aron ze Stráže** (AKA Benz), now placed with Curt Rapp family in Sioux City, IA.

(Photo adapted from: <http://www.cesky-fousek.cz/>)

(Continued from page 9)

official pedigree to all tests where they have scores entered and stamps affixed for significant events. This is efficient and saves on postage!

Dogs with “excellent” and “very good” exterior scores are allowed to enter the breeding program. By the time of the dog show most of these dogs have already passed their working tests for breeding, the PZ test for females and a Utility test for males. If the owner is interested in breeding they then continue to the tent where the Breed Advisor does an assessment and marks their pedigree with a “breeding approved” stamp. Here the dogs are again measured for official height, asked to trot around the ring so that they can be assessed for movement, and have their coat, skeleton, and bite ranked. The Breed Advisor has the ability to include dogs that would normally not pass all the breeding tests. For example, dogs with an exterior ranking of “good” are generally not entered into the breeding program, but in rare cases may be allowed for the good of the gene pool. This might be to support one of the lines that have fewer dogs or to bring in/maintain much needed genetic diversity.

These three visits have given me a great experience and I have met some wonderful people and I have learned a great deal about the Český Fousek breed and the great breeding program the Czech Club has developed.

World Cup 2018

Save your pennies and start to train your dog! During discussions about the process of getting our club registrations accepted by the FCI so that our club members can compete in many other organizations activities, such as NAVHDA, one of our Czech collaborators, Pavel Dostál, came up with the idea of a Český Fousek World Cup. The Czech and Netherlands Cesky Fousek clubs are beginning plans and we now must find a test format that can accommodate all of our different hunting styles. This is not too crazy, I have spoken with the French Brittany club (Club de l'Epagneul Breton of the United States) and they often bring dogs to France to participate in trials. One format possibility is a test similar to the St. Hubertus Cup for pointing breeds (<http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/activities/field-trials-working-gundogs/world-championship-for-pointing-dogs-and-the-st-hubertus-cup/>).

We might include a section of tracking of a live duck as well. Our club board of Directors (and any one interested in participating) needs to help in determining the rules soon so that some of our members can make the trip to the Czech Republic in 2018. This is a beautiful area of the world with wonderful people so it would be great trip regardless of the outcome. —Laurie Connell



Dear Rick and all of American Fousek club!

Thank you for nice greetings card which we received at the end of last year. We are glad that collaboration between our clubs is intensive and we hope that everything will go in a right direction.

Our new kennel was honoured that we could have choose one of our puppies. We hope that Aimy will make her owner happy and she will be good hard worker. Her siblings look great, they are energetic, with fine nose, they retrieve with zest.

We wish to you and us that Fousek will be good companion in life and work and makes you and us happy. God save Fousek!

Best regards, Alena and Mira from Kennel od Lesa Borkovniku

God Save the Fousek

Yesterday, I received the nicest note via Czech and US mail from Alea Truhlarova and am attaching it. She sent us: Aimy_od_Lesa_Borkovniku. Her photos stress the point to me about how similar the Czechs are to us --young families in the woods with kids and dogs in tow.

Sometimes in all our efforts and busy-ness, we forget the nice things in life. Alea's note made me remember why we are involved in all this Czech whiskers stuff.

—Rick Sojda

Aimy now lives with the Jeff Beauregard family in Maine. Photos at left show Aimy od Lesa Borkovniku with her breeder family, Miroslav Suchacek & Alča Truhlářová above and littermates and dam,

Photos by Alča Truhlářová

What's Happening

Training Days:

Rocky Mountain:

August 6, near Livingstone MT.

Contact: Angie McDunn
mcdunnk9@hotmail.com
(406) 410-0565

Heartland—Michigan

June 25 Marshall, MI. (held monthly)

Contact: Jim Crouse
(614)562-1860
jcrouse01@yahoo.com

Northeast:

August 13-14, Winterport ME

Contact: Laurie Connell & Scott Craig
laurie.connell@umit.maine.edu
(207) 827-2202

Heartland—Iowa

August 5,6,7, Bellevue, IA

Contact: John Pitlo
563-599-2487
jvpitlo@iowatelecom.net

Fall Tests

Northeast Chapter:

Sept 10-11, 2016

Test Chairman Laurie Connell & Scott Craig Winterport ME 4496-4611

Ph:207-827-2202 email: laurie.connell@umit.maine.edu

Heartland Chapter:

Sept 9-11 Location: Mazomanie, WI

Test Chairman: Dave Read PH (616) 836-5304

email: readgriff@att.net

Northwest Chapter

Sept 17-18 Location: Silver Creek, Washington

Contact: Dennis Carlson

Ph: 541-386-4830

Email: carlson@gorge.net