

The Gun Dog Supreme

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings:

We're right in the middle of our spring testing season. The Rocky Mountain chapter recently concluded their test, the Heartland test, as well as the annual Board of Directors Meeting and Judges Seminar will be held this month, and the Northeast Chapter will be testing in May.

Even if you're not personally testing a dog, please join us if you can. For folks thinking of getting a dog, seeing them in action and meeting owners is the best way to learn about the breed. I'd also remind everyone that photos and videos of tests and training days are available on our web page: <http://bohemiangriffon.org> and on our club Facebook pages.

We have some breedings underway and puppy imports lined up, so this should be an exciting spring. We hope to have details on breeding activity to report in the June issue. I also want to put in a plug for a fledgling exposure/training day happening soon in the Southeast U.S. See the back page for details.

Rem DeJong, Editor

On the Cover:

"Just Me and My Mom"

A Roc of Mount Timpanogos with Mom Helena of Dutchman's Hollow.

Vince Esposito recently completed the challenging task of raising a litter of one. With no littermates, Vince had to work extra hard to create a healthy environment for A Roc.

(photo by Breeder, Vince Esposito)

For information requests or to join the WPGCA please email Robin at:
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Or visit our web page at
<http://bohemiangriffon.org>

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Editor's Note: The following article by Dr. Ed Bailey originally appeared in Gun Dog Magazine. It is reprinted here with gracious permission of the author. Ed Bailey is a regular contributor to Gun Dog Magazine, and his column there covers a variety of canine behavioral issues that you may find relevant to you and your dogs. For more of his writing, please check out <http://www.gundogmag.com/author/ed-bailey/>

Alpha Wolf R.I.P.

by

Dr. Ed Bailey

It seems we have become enamored with the idea that the dog is a pack animal having the same social structure as its wolf pack forebears. From this assumption we make a cosmic leap to the place where humans and dogs form a pack with the human in charge, giving orders, doling out the discipline — the alpha member of the pack.

After all, wolves have the alpha male and the alpha female to keep the lower ranking wolves in line. Therefore the people-dog pack must do the same. The term “top dog” for someone who has reached a high place on the social or business ladder derives from this thinking.

The next leap of logic is that to train the dog, the owner/handler/trainer has to be the alpha member of the person-dog pack, with the person dominant and the dog subordinate. I went looking for where all these “alpha wolf equals alpha dog equals alpha trainer” leaps of logic came from.

When a random group of wolves, or any species of animal, is grouped together in an artificial situation, they will naturally compete and eventually form some type of dominance hierarchy. This idea was observed in flocks of chickens and a “pecking order” was described. This came to be called a social hierarchy or dominance hierarchy.

Those individuals that emerged as top ranking were referred to as the alphas, implying that they fought or somehow competed to gain the position. High rank presumably gave them preferred access to all the select resources, including mates for breeding. Those next in the rank order, primarily their offspring, were the betas and the lowest, usually lesser ranking parents and their offspring, were called omegas.

In the mid-1940s, Rudolph Schenkel published his classic monograph on how wolves interacted, based on randomly chosen groups of wolves placed in artificial enclosures. He stated that a top ranking male and top ranking female emerged from all the interactions and he referred to them as the alpha pair. Schenkel's monograph became the reference all wolf literature cited.

Twenty years later David Mech published his popular book, *The Wolf, Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species*. The paperback version hit the popular market with all the alpha pair citations from Schenkel's population of captive wolves. Dog people, thinking today's dog is descended from today's wolves, grabbed the scientific-sounding alpha concept and misapplied it to everything.

But then Mech spent several years studying wolves on Ellesmere Island, observing the interactions of free-living wolf parents and their offspring. What he saw changed his thinking. He decided the existing literature on alpha status, including his own book, was misleading.



A Dog and His Family

Although it's an appealing analogy, a dog and his human family are not a wolf pack with a human Alpha member. Here Benny of the Midnight Sun takes a break from testing with his family, Jen Lachoweic (left) and Zeb Breuckman (right) .

(Photo by Rem DeJong)

To formally correct and dispel all the published misinformation he published his 1999 article, "Alpha Status, Dominance and Division of Labor in Wolf Packs," in the Canadian Journal of Zoology. This was followed a year later by an article in Canadian Field Naturalist, "Leadership in Wolf, *Canis lupus*, Packs," further elaborating the parent role in wolves and in the social order of the pack.

The leader-follower relationship has replaced dominant-subordinate in the modern wolf literature. The word alpha has not been used for at least 10 years except to explain why the concept is outdated.

Science now understands that rather than being organized with a dominant “top dog” that fought its way up or a male-female pair that dominates by aggression, wolf packs are family groups which are formed in exactly the same way human family groups are formed. Boys and girls reach sexual maturity, leave the nest, find a suitable partner and start a family.

Unfortunately the dog behavior wannabes who love the alpha concept, either haven’t read the updated literature, haven’t grasped the concept of wolf social ordering, or accepted it and are still flitting around spouting 40-year-old misconceptions.

Dog training, especially among the hunting dog fraternity, is usually based on the dominant-subordinate model, which in turn supposes that you must be the alpha member in order to be the leader of the pack. Many pet obedience trainers still preach the alpha patter (because it sounds so knowledgeable) but actually use the leader-follower relationship in their training.

As wolves really do, these trainers reward desired behavioral responses and mildly correct or simply do not reward undesirable behavior. Obedience trainers have found that leader-follower models for training work better because dominance-submission training models have to be frequently reinforced with forceful correction to maintain the handler’s dominance status.

Most dog owners are a lot less capable of meting out correction as forcefully or as efficiently as a professional trainer. So their dogs are sent to a pro, are made “perfect” in a month or two, but quickly revert to misbehavior after a few weeks back at home. Or worse, the dog becomes aggressive because it quickly learns a threat works to keep the owner off its back.

Another reason the leadership model works better for training most dogs is a function of the dog’s social make-up. Dominance is established in any species by force or by aggression with the purpose of getting controlling access to resources such as food, a preferred resting place or mates.

For training dogs, dominance is not appropriate for most things that people want from their dogs, such as coming when called, walking on a leash, or retrieving a dead gamebird. Dogs are not social climbers in that undesirable behavior is not motivated by the desire to become dominant in a situation.

A dog growling at a family member is not trying to displace that person in the family order, but rather, is defending what he sees as his; and he has learned that a threatening growl is going to get him space. Most perceived dominance aggression toward people has little to do with dominance. It is primarily the dog defending his stuff, not attempting to get yours.

Though a dominant individual may have priority in accessing desirable resources, they have to be present to keep subordinate individuals from sneaking the preferred resources.

When a subordinate sneaks some resource from a dominant, it is not attempting to increase its rank, only trying an alternative way of getting a desirable resource.

In the person-dog interaction where the person has established a dominance training model, being dominant over the dog does not give the person control when out of sight or at a distance from the dog. Out of sight, out of mind is very apparent. That is why we often have dogs burying game, or eating it when retrieving from a long dragged track, when out of sight in a hunting type test.

Certainly, leadership can be gained by dominance, but it must be continuously reinforced with aggressive gestures, signals or outright force to maintain the stability of the relationship. The dominant one must always be right on top of every situation, always ready with the properly forceful correction given at the exact right time. Leadership gained by dominance is often transient at best.

The leadership model requires the leader to be in control of all the desirable resources.

For our dogs this is food, quality attention such as praise or petting, water, preferred rest sites, the things necessary for the care of the dog. The dog wants these resources and is willing to work for them. The leader-follower relationship therefore parallels a care-dependency type of relationship.

When the dog does the desired task it gets paid by receiving some of the desired resources. The dog is working for a living, but because he is getting paid with something positive, he is willing to repeat the desired task. When the dog does something undesirable or refuses to do the desirable thing, the pay is withheld. Gradually the dog does only the correct thing because it pays off and the undesirable drops out because there is no pay-off.

In this situation, the dog corrects itself. A mild correction such as a “no” or “ah-ah” can speed things along and even a heavier correction when required can be beneficial. But the need for any correction gets less frequent as the dog learns that “If I do this I get something good and if I do something else it’s just not worth it.”

The research by David Mech showed wolves train their young pups using this technique.

Teachers in grade school train their charges this way. Wild animal trainers and psychology rat researchers give a pay-out for every small increment of correct steps toward forming a complex behavior and have termed this process “shaping.”

There is a lot of evidence that animals that have been taught how to learn using shaping techniques are far better at solving novel problems and will work harder at it than control animals that were not taught how to learn. Hunting dogs respond the same way.

Wolf scientists moved away from the alpha concept long ago. They have re-evaluated the dominance-submissiveness model in parental care of pups and are now seeing it as a leadership model. Dog people, taking an opposite tack, seem to be getting more enthralled with alpha dominance as the way to go.

Dog people should catch up to the wolf people and drop the whole alpha thing from the vocabulary. And, like the wolf researchers, dog people need to rethink the dominance-submission model for training and realize that it can be counterproductive, cause problems, and that it may be good for making automatons but not thinking dogs.

They need to be teaching a dog to think, to put two and two together to get more than four. Why? Because for real hunting situations, a dog has to learn to think outside the proverbial box.

For solutions to your dog’s behavior problems or behavior-related training problems, contact Ed Bailey at edbailey@uoguelph.ca

Read more: http://www.gundogmag.com/training/training_gd_wolf_1109/#ixzz4YCPFQVWw

Field Testing: A Grand Experiment

by
Rem DeJong



Let the Track Begin

Under the watchful eye of Judge John Pitlo, owner Michael Houge sets **Brady of Blackberry Briar** off on the track of a live pheasant.

(Photo by Jerry Yeast)

As I write this, our spring testing season is in full swing. I thought it might be a good time for us to think about our testing program, particularly why we test and what our responsibility for testing is as club members and dog owners. I'm writing about the big picture, not the details of scoring or individual test elements. Perhaps you're a new member with a pup about to attend your first Natural Ability Test, or maybe you're a prospective member who is thinking about getting a dog and wondering: Why do I need to go through all this testing rigmarole anyway? Seasoned veterans can benefit by revisiting this topic too.

What Testing Is Not

Our testing program is sometimes confused with field trials. Lots of hunting dog owners, especially newbies, aren't sure what the difference is between a field trial and a field test. Basically, field trials are competitions and field tests are evaluations. In a field trial, one dog wins, or depending on the structure of the trial, one dog in each division wins. In a field test, each dog is judged individually, not in comparison to other dogs, but to a set of performance criteria and is awarded a score based on its performance. At the end of a field test, there may be several dogs with perfect scores, several not passing, and all possible combinations in between. The objective of a field trial is to pick a winner; the objective of a field test is to assess each dog independently. Both field trials and field tests are used in the sporting dog world to guide breeding practices. In general, versatile dog breeds have traditionally relied on field tests. Our club is not the only venue for field testing. The North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association (NAVHDA) offers field tests, as does the Versatile Hunting Dog Federation (VHDF). Some club members have run their dogs in NAVHDA and VHDF tests. Our club has debated the value of incorporating these testing programs into our own system. On the surface, the various programs are similar in terms of test elements and scoring criteria, but there are subtle distinctions. By conducting our testing program in-house, the Breeding Committee and judging personnel all have personal experience with each dog, and that can be invaluable when making breeding decisions. The main point is that testing centers on comparing each dog to a set of performance criteria, not a competition to find a winner.

What Our Testing Program Is

The most accurate name for our program is PROGENY TESTING. Think of it as being similar to quality control for a manufacturing firm. Our goal is to evaluate each and every puppy that our breeding program produces to monitor the quality of our product, guide future breeding, and to confirm that the pups we produce are high quality hunters with stable temperaments and sound structure. In some breed organizations, only a few pups with high potential for breeding go through testing. But it's not enough to see some good dogs; assessing quality requires seeing all the dogs. We run the dogs through a series of hunting related elements, but we also examine teeth, eyes, size, coat, gait among other qualities. The data from the tests is used by the Breeding Committee to not only select dogs for breeding, but to identify potential problems such as temperament issues that may be surfacing in the breed and that we must consider in all breedings. For progeny testing to be an effective management tool, it is imperative to test ALL pups, not just those that an owner thinks might win a prize. It is just as important to see timid, gun sensitive, water-aversive failures as it is to show off the next great super star. (Obviously, we hope poor quality pups are few and far between, but we need to see them.) We sometimes encounter owners who are reluctant to sign up for a test because they fear that their pup won't perform well. Not testing such a dog is the least constructive action that an owner can take. In general, good, bad or indifferent, the Breeding Committee needs to see every dog, and we appreciate every owner who makes the sacrifice to prepare for and travel to our tests. Progeny testing is basically an on-going field experimental study, and like any experiment, having a representative sample is critical for obtaining accurate results. When the study population is small as in the Cesky Fousek population, then an evaluation study should include every dog.

One of the principles of any good experimental design is that the researchers eliminate

or hold constant all sources of extraneous variability, so that the only thing that varies is the experimental stimulus. So, in our progeny testing program, in an ideal world, the only variable would be the dog. The testing environment, the weather, the birds used, the handler's behavior would all be the same. If achieving that were possible, we wouldn't need judges, just a set of written criteria that one observer could apply. Obviously, many of these factors are beyond our control, so we need judges who can not only compare a dog's performance to a standard, but who can also factor in such issues as weather, scenting conditions and unanticipated incidents such as a wild bird crossing a planted pheasant track. Our club works very hard to secure quality testing grounds that offer dogs a good environment in which to demonstrate their abilities. Judges often give handlers and their dogs a second opportunity to perform a test element if they suspect that testing conditions are adversely impacting dog performance. So there are many things that judges do to give each dog a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate its ability. That patient assessment of each and every pup is what makes our progeny testing special. Remember, the judges are not out to eliminate dogs and pick a winner; their goal is to accurately evaluate each dog's abilities. Through a judging apprentice program and guidance by senior judges, the judging group attempts to sort through all the uncontrolled variables and divine out an accurate assessment of dog performance.

Reducing Extraneous Variability

When designing an experimental study, researchers strive to reduce extraneous variability. When a dog is performing poorly in a test, a question always lurking in the background is this: Is what we are seeing a fault of the dog or are other factors to blame? One of the biggest unknowns beyond the judges immediate control is dog preparation leading up to the test by the handler. To be most effective, our testing depends on every owner preparing their dog through exposure and basic training.

So what's the solution? Obviously, we can't have a few skilled handlers raise all our pups just to reduce handler error for our testing program. Nor would we want to. A goal of our breeding program is to produce cooperative hunters, dogs with strong desire to please their owners, and dogs that an owner can train themselves without shipping their pup off to a professional trainer armed with a shock collar. Given that we want owners to handle their own dogs, then our program depends on getting those owners to all meet the basic expectations of preparing their dogs.

Over the years of filming training days and club field tests, I've observed hundreds of dogs and handlers go through their paces. Photographing provides an excellent vantage point for unobtrusive observation, not only of dogs but of handlers and judges deliberating on what they have just witnessed. One of the most frustrating experiences for a judge is scoring a young dog that appears promising, but that clearly never had exposure to the elements of the test. Hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars go into each breeding, and running each of our tests. Each pup carries the hopes of the club for successfully advancing the breed.

Every pup deserves and requires adequate exposure to game and field conditions. Too often, the first time a dog tracks a duck is when he arrives, bewildered, at the test. After judges launch a pocketful of rocks in the pond, maybe he starts to discover tracking. So now the judges have to cope with an unwanted extraneous variable. Does this dog lack the capacity to do it's job due to genetics or is it inadequate handler preparation? When a dog has not received adequate exposure, it's pretty obvious to the judges. This simply should not happen. Sometimes I hear the excuse; "Well, I really don't hunt ducks, I just

want a pointer for pheasants.” Everyone has different hunting priorities, but testing is not about your hunting, it’s about each owner doing their part to help develop the breed. That’s what we sign on for when we become club members and request a dog; we are expected to give our dog a reasonable dose of exposure and training in preparation for our quality control experiment. It’s the only way to make our testing system really effective.

As a club, we also must ask: What steps can we take to give handlers the support they need in order to bring their pup along? Most handlers really want to do the right thing. I’m fortunate that in Michigan, where I live, we hold a training day once a month where handlers have access to training grounds, birds, ducks and experienced handlers to help guide neophyte along. Everyone isn’t so fortunate, and as a club, we need to look at how we can make sure that every handler has reasonable access to the tools and guidance needed to develop their pup.

About Scoring and Prizes

I began by stating that we are doing progeny testing, not running a field trial to pick a winner, so why do we have prizes? Unfortunately, even seasoned veterans and senior judges who should know better, sometimes get caught up in prizes. We should not obsess over winning a prize. A field test is one snapshot of a dog’s performance on a given day under rather artificial conditions. Test performance is one indicator of ability and readiness, but poor performance on one day is hardly a death knell. Your dog may test poorly, but still be a wonderful hunting companion.

Prize I, II and III can be thought of as shorthand for weighted scores. All elements of a test are not equally important, (Go look at a test booklet and see how a prize score is calculated.) A Prize I means that the dog has not only achieved a high overall score, but has achieved certain benchmarks in key elements, e.g. pointing and tracking a duck. Achieving a prize IHDT score is required for a dog to be selected for the breeding program, but even that rule is not ironclad. Sometimes an owner is invited to bring a promising dog back to retest certain elements or to be observed in hunting situations. For example, a dog that has had a lot of hunting exposure over wild birds may not point a soggy, injured, planted bird at a test. Such a dog, that is otherwise an excellent specimen, would not be excluded from the breeding program without giving it a chance to demonstrate pointing ability in another venue.

Instead of the dogs, sometimes I think that we should award prizes for handlers who have done a complete job exposing their dog and working diligently to train their dogs, particularly in retrieving. There are no shortcuts, and a handler who has worked daily with their pup to cover the basics and deal with the problems that do arise deserves credit and is an invaluable resource for our club. Even with a great handler, every dog is not going to be great, especially on test day. Everyone appreciates a dog that performs well, but for my money, I most admire the handler who has worked hard every day with their dog and who patiently and graciously accepts the outcome—good bad or indifferent. That person is truly outstanding.

Lastly, it’s important to remember that preparing your dog for its tests is a lot of fun. After all, one of key elements of test preparation is to take your dog hunting. Is that a great job or what? Every dog is different and presents its own challenges, but at the end of the day, its rewarding to work with a dog and see it reach its potential. So do your best to get your dog ready and then just go have fun. We’re all in this together.



Tess Brings a Whole New Meaning to “Blind “Retrieve”

Robin Strathy supplied the above photo of **Angie Vallis Baptismi (Tess)**, owned by Gary and Ann Pool. Tess was completing a retrieve following the track of a live bird, but had a few problems finding Gary given her limited view..

The results of the Spring 2017 tests won't be available in the GDS until the August 2017 issue, but you can view the full color version of this photo and lots more from the Rocky Mountain Test on our website. Photos from this test and other spring tests will be posted as they arrive. Go to <http://bohemiangriffon> and click on the link for gallery/videos/

Speaking of videos, you'll find a link here to the club's YouTube channel where there are over 40 videos, covering hunting and all the elements of our tests. If you are testing your pup, you can watch tracking, blind retrieve, duck tracks and pointing.



Competitive Hunt Tests: Are They for You?

Argo ze Stoprounských vinic a.k.a. “Books” and his owner, Lucas Wendl, recently teamed up to compete in a hunt test. In case you’re not familiar with such events, unlike our BWPGCA progeny testing program, hunt tests are competitive events. Sometimes called a bird dog challenge, these events pit hunters and their dogs against the clock to see which hunter/dog team can bag the most birds in the specified time slot. They’ve been getting more popular in recent years.

One of the main organizations for this type of event is the National Bird Dog Challenge Association. According to their website <http://nbdca.com/>, the organization was founded in 1995, by local Iowa game farm owners to provide their members an opportunity to draw to an end the grillroom debate of who in fact owned “the best upland hunting dog”. That year 23 competitors attended their inaugural championship and the game was started.

By the year 2000 50 tournaments were needed to meet the growing popularity of the game. 650 members joined the N.B.D.C.A. and attempted to qualify for the National Championship where that year 220 competitive runs were scheduled. Eventually, a Champions Club Dog Registry was formed, World Rankings for both Dog and Competitor created and The Hall of Fame recognizing a dog’s lifetime achievements was born.

The Bird Dog Challenge Series (BDC) began broadcasting on The Outdoor Channel in 2005, anchoring their Thursday Night Flights segment.

Books and Lucas were entered in a more modest, local event, but it gave them a flavor of what the competition is like, and they walked off with a blue ribbon to boot! In relating their experience, Lucas writes that Mike, the event coordinator, posted an advertisement a few weeks beforehand and it created quite the buzz on the Facebook machine. He originally wanted 15 teams on Saturday and Sunday, 30 total teams, to compete for a cash prize plus the door prizes. There were a lot of people saying they wanted to do it, but in the end there were only 5 teams that showed up. So my team decided we wanted to go as close to the end of the day as possible, because there could be some left over birds, and because one guy had to work Saturday until 1:00 PM.

Books and Lucas’ start time was about 4:30pm, and he says that by the time we got finished it was dark. The weather was perfect. Sunny and about 35 degrees. Books probably made 20 points and more retrieves. Lucas says that his vest was completely full, “I couldn’t bend over to grab a bird without a chukar rolling out of my vest.”

Books has already completed his Natural Ability and Intermediate Hunting Dog Test., and these hunting competitions are intended for trained dogs. This type of event is not endorsed or promoted by our club. It doesn’t play a role in our progeny testing, but it is a venue by which interested dog owners can get out and enjoy hunting related activity. You might want to give it a try.

Opposite:

Lucas Wendl and Books Show Off their First Place Ribbon

Congratulations on a great performance, and thanks for sharing your adventure with the club.

(Photo by Ashley Wendl)

Editor's Note: The Bohemian Wirehaired Pointing Griffon (Cesky Fousek) is a relatively rare breed. We are producing less than 50 puppies per year here in the U.S. and about 400 per year are whelped in the dog's homeland, the Czech Republic. Consequently, one of the challenges facing our Breeding Committee is how to maintain healthy genetic diversity. The article reprinted below provides a fairly nontechnical overview of the problem.

Small Population Breeds and Issues of Genetic Diversity

Tufts' Canine and Feline Breeding and Genetics Conference, 2011

Jerold S. Bell, DVM

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Issues of genetic diversity are a concern to dog breeders, and this can especially be so for breeds with small populations. The concern is whether there is enough genetic variation within a breed's gene pool to maintain health and vitality. Breeders should be concerned about genetic diversity, because there are examples where damage has been done to a breed due to breeding practices. Restriction of genetic diversity can also occur in large population breeds.

All genes come in pairs: one from the sire and one from the dam. Each gene in the pair is called an allele. If both alleles in a pair are of the same type, the gene pair is homozygous. If the two alleles are different, the gene pair is heterozygous. While each dog can have a maximum of two different alleles at a gene pair, many different alleles are potentially available to be part of the gene pair. The greater the number of alleles that are available at each gene pair (called genetic polymorphism), the greater the genetic diversity of the breed.

If there is no breed diversity in a gene pair, but the particular homozygous gene that is present is not detrimental, there is no negative effect on breed health. The characteristics that make a breed reproduce true to its standard are, in fact, based on non variable (that is, homozygous) gene pairs.

The origins of breeds have a lot to do with genetic diversity. A breed established with a working phenotype tends to have diverse founder origins, and significant diversity. Even with substantial population bottlenecks, the breed can maintain considerable amounts of genetic diversity. This was shown in a molecular genetic study of the Chinook breed, which was reduced to 11 modern founders in 1981. Breeds established by inbreeding on a limited number of related founder individuals could have reduced diversity. Many breeds have also gone through diversity reducing bottlenecks, such as occurred during World War II. For most of these breeds, their gene pools have expanded through breeding for many generations, resulting in a stable population of healthy dogs.

There are two factors that must be considered when evaluating genetic diversity and health issues in a breed: the average level of inbreeding, and detrimental recessive genes. With a small population, there is a tendency to find higher average inbreeding coefficients due to the relatedness between dogs from common ancestors. There is, however, no specific level or percentage of inbreeding that causes impaired health or vigor. The problems that inbreeding depression cause in purebred populations stem from the effects of deleterious recessive genes. If the founding population of a breed produces a high frequency of a deleterious recessive gene, then the breed will have is-

sues with that disorder. This can be seen as smaller litter size, increased neonatal death, high frequency genetic disease, or impaired immunity. If these issues are present then the breed needs to seriously consider limited genetic diversity.

The issue of high average inbreeding coefficients is one that all breeds go through during their foundation. As the population increases and the average relatedness of dogs goes down (based on a fixed number of generations), the average inbreeding coefficient for the breed will go down. The effect of initially higher inbreeding coefficients in small population breeds will depend on the presence of deleterious recessive genes that will be expressed when homozygous.

Some breeders discourage linebreeding and promote outbreeding in an attempt to protect genetic diversity in their breed. It is not the type of matings utilized (linebreeding or outbreeding) that causes the loss of genes from a breed gene pool. Rather, loss of genes occurs through selection: the use and non-use of offspring. If a breed starts narrowing their focus to breeding stock from a limited number of lines, then a loss of genetic diversity will occur.

The process of maintaining healthy lines, with many breeders crossing between lines and breeding back as they see fit, maintains diversity in the gene pool. If some breeders outbreed, and some line breed to certain dogs that they favor while others linebreed to other dogs that they favor, then breed-wide genetic diversity is maintained. It is the varied opinion of breeders as to what constitutes the ideal dog, and their selection of breeding stock based on their opinions, that maintains breed diversity.

The most important factor for diminished genetic diversity in dog breeds is the popular sire syndrome. The overuse of a popular sire beyond a reasonable contribution through frequent breedings significantly skews the gene pool in his direction, and reduces the diversity of the gene pool. Any genes that he possesses - whether positive or negative - will increase in frequency. Through this founder's effect, breed-related genetic disease can occur. Another insidious effect of the popular sire syndrome is the loss of genetic contribution from quality, unrelated males who are not used for breeding. There is a finite number of quality bitches bred each year. If one male is used in an inordinate amount of matings, there will be fewer females left for these quality males that should be contributing to the gene pool. The popular sire syndrome is a significant factor in both populous breeds and breeds with small populations.

The best methods for ensuring the health and diversity of any breed's gene pool are to: 1) Avoid the popular sire syndrome; 2) Utilize quality dogs from the breadth of your population to expand the gene pool; 3) Monitor genetic health issues through regular health surveys; 4) Do genetic testing for breed-related disorders; 5) Participate in open health registries, such as CHIC (www.caninehealthinfo.org) to manage genetic disorders.

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What's Happening

New Puppy?

Are you considering getting a puppy next year (either Czech import or domestic breeding)? The first step is to go on-line and complete a puppy request form. That will assure that the Breeding Committee has your contact information and will get the process started. Go to:

<https://bohemiangriffon.org/puppy-request/>

Spring 2017 Test Dates

Heartland Chapter Judges Seminar & Test April 21,22,23

Board of Directors Annual Meeting April 21

The Coach House

114 W Broadway,

Rock Springs, Wisconsin 53961

Northeast Chapter

May 6-7th

Monthly Michigan Training Days:

Marshall Michigan. Meet at the Country Kitchen Restaurant at 7:30 AM at Interstate 94 & Old U.S. 27. Contact Jiom Crouse to get on the mailing list for dates and to reserve birds.

jcrouse01@yahoo.com (614) 562-1860

Southeast USA Training Day April 22, 2017

Buckthorn Plantation 3528 Harris Springs Rd Crosshill, SC

See <https://www.facebook.com/griffon.fan> for details on this and other training events throughout the year.

Reminder: Membership dues should have been paid by January 1st. Please go on-line to complete your membership form ASAP. Those who have not paid by April will be purged, and we don't want to lose you:

<https://bohemiangriffon.org/join-renew/>