



## MHGDC EVENTS

Board Meetings for 2008

Dec 16, 6:00pm

Board Meetings for 2009

Feb 17, Apr 21, Jun 16, Aug 18, Oct 20, Dec 15

## WILD GAME FEED

DECEMBER 16TH

Board meeting 6:00pm

Wild Game feed/

Christmas party 7:00pm

Bring your best wild game dish, or dessert.

**Please no alcohol.**

**ANNUAL MEETING:**

**Friday FEB 6TH 2009**

King Tool building, on Love Lane

### Board of Directors

**President** - Randy Setzer 285-6724

**Vice President** - Greg Johnson 586-6323

**Secretary** - Scott Benowitz 585-7101

**Treasurer** - Julie Kirkland 582-7376

### Retrievers

Pat Dillon 995-2415

Kyle Barner 995-4319

### Pointers

Wil Avril 522-0997

Peter Bakun 388-6829

### Spaniels

Al Gadoury 586-3806

Jeff Squire 587-1840

Donation items now  
being collected for  
the February 6th,  
2009

Annual meeting

## President's message

Hello Everyone,

We recently became aware that FWP does not allow alcohol in their meeting room. One of the officers contacted them to see if there was any provisions for exceptions. We found that no exceptions are allowed so we will not be able to have alcohol on the premises.

All of the officers and board members have agreed to stay on for another year with the exceptions of Wil Avril and Kyle Barner. The pointers have found a nominee to fill the pointer vacancy. We now need to fill only a retriever board member position. If you are interested in being a retriever board member or know someone that might, please contact Kerri Payne.

The slate of board members and officers will be presented to the club at the general meeting Dec 16th at the FWP building. At that time additional nominations can be made. Nominees must be present to accept the nomination or you must have a signed letter of acceptance at the time if you wish to nominate someone.

Hope to see everyone at the Wild game feed and the Annual meeting.

Randy

## MHGDC Board Meeting Minutes

10/20/08

The meeting of the MHGDC Board of Directors was called to order at 7:00 PM.

**Board Members Present:** Al Gadoury, Julie Kirkland, Greg Johnson, Randy Setzer, Jeff Squire, Wil Avril, Pat Dillon, and Scott Benowitz.

**President's Report:** None

**Secretary's Report:** Minutes from the 8/19/08 meeting were approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Income/expense statement for month and year-to-date was presented. Balances: checking - \$3,216, savings - \$18,434.

**Pointers:** Quail ordered for next year. Wil Avril will continue to be pointer contact to bird supplier.

**Spaniels:** Fun trial dates for 2009 are set. Cocker trial report to be in newsletter. The fall hunt test report will also be in the newsletter

**Retrievers:** Club membership in Masters National will not be renewed based on recommendation from Pat Dillon. Should a club member request this membership to be renewed in the future, the Board can act at that time.

### Unfinished Business:

Annual meeting Friday, February 6, 2009, 6:00 PM at King Tool. Meal from Famous Daves.

Nominations for 2009 Board: Randy Setzer-President, Greg Johnson-VP, Julie Kirkland, Treasurer, Scott Benowitz-Secretary, Al Gadoury-Spaniel, Jeff Squire-Spaniel, Pat Dillon-retriever, Peter Baukin-pointer. Need nominations for retriever and pointer representative. Nominating committee is Jack Weiss, Kerri Payne, and Wil Avril.

Porta-potty rental will be from March 1-September 1.

### New Business:

The Montana Wildlife Foundation has grants available for 2009. If anyone in the club wants to apply for a grant for club business, please contact MW Foundation directly and also let one of the Board members know of your efforts.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

To: All Spaniel Breed Clubs July 2008

Subject: **SPORTSMANSHIP**

One of the great traditions of our field events is sportsmanship. Indeed it can be argued that good sportsmanship is a factor that has contributed to the sports long term strength and popularity. Recently an increasing number of participants have expressed concern about what is happening to the culture of sportsmanship. It is worthwhile to periodically re-visit the importance of sportsmanship to the future of the sport.

Sportsmanship is expressed in the nature of one's conduct while associated with a sport. Good sportsmanship includes not only abiding by the rules but also conducting oneself with proper consideration for fairness, ethics and respect for other participants, officials, and those hosting the event, as well as respect for the traditional conventions of the sport. Good sportsmanship expresses an aspiration that the sport should be enjoyed for its own sake.

Sportsmanship is closely related to character. Character refers to one's dispositions, values and habits that determine the manner in which a person responds to desires, fears, challenges, opportunities, failures and successes. A person with a strong, positive character will usually conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner.

There is an additional, more subtle side to sportsmanship. Studies refer to it as "full commitment to participation." This means more than just running your dog. It means embracing the sport in a broader sense through a willingness to contribute time and effort to the sport's success. We all know individuals who participate but never contribute. They are often the first to complain when something goes wrong. This is a subtle form of poor sportsmanship.

Good sportsmanship contributes to the pleasure one experiences at an event and helps build support for the sport in general. The lack of sportsmanship works to undermine support for the sport. The experienced participant realizes the vagaries of an event may sometimes result in a less than desired performance. Never the less, if he feels he was given a fair chance and was treated respectfully, he will leave anxious to try again another day. If a participant leaves feeling he was not treated fairly or with respect, he will question if he should enter that event again.

For the enjoyment of everyone involved and the future interest of the sport, please consider the importance of sportsmanship and demonstrate it through your actions and words. We would all do well to remember the words posted in the clubhouse at Branched Oak, Nebraska – "To brag little, to lose well, to crow gently if in luck, to pay up, to own up, to shut up if beaten. These are the virtues of a sporting man."

Oliver Wendell Holmes

Sincerely,

Doug Ljungren

# The 2008 National Cocker Championship

was held on October 18, 19 & 20 at the foothills of the Bridger Mountains. We had multiple properties to run the 5 land series as well as the water series. From open fields with tall grasses to scrub brush to an old aspen forest the cover was varied and very challenging for the dogs and handlers. 47 English Cocker Spaniels from the east to the west coast descended on Montana for a training day and social on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup>.

The trial kicked off on Saturday morning with a flag raising ceremony and the release of over 200 racing pigeons. The participants were betting on which pigeon was going to get home to his coup the fastest.

The first dogs took off down their course a few minutes after 8:00 am. We completed the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> series on Saturday. 42 dogs came back to the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 37 dogs came back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 26 dogs came back to the 4<sup>th</sup>. Pheasants were used throughout the trial and during the 3<sup>rd</sup> series the gunners were only shooting the roosters. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> series were completed on Sunday and 11 dogs were invited back to the 5<sup>th</sup>. Monday morning was cold and frosty so we began with the 5<sup>th</sup> series on land and 9 dogs proceeded to the water series. We had a great pond for the water series and the gallery made themselves comfortable on the front porch of the property owner's house to watch.

We wrapped up the trial by mid afternoon and the results were as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	FC Shelmar's Rudh Lowarn "Lucy" Owner/Handler: Martin Bell
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Warrener's Great Crested Flycatcher "Snickett" Owner: Vicky Thomas, Handler: Paul McGagh
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	FC Ballymena Lucky Shamrock "Cassie" Owner: Hobson Brown, Handler: Tom Ness
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	CNFC/FC Warrener's California Quail, MH "Storm" Owner/Handler: Paul McGagh
Gun's Award	CNFC/FC Warrener's California Quail, MH "Storm" Owner/Handler: Paul McGagh

Certificates of Merit were awarded to the following 4 dogs:

FC Warrener's Craveri's Murrelet, MH "Annie"  
Owner: Robert & Dede Griffin, Handler: Robert Griffin

NFC/FC Chyknell Red Kite "Midge"  
Owner/Handler: A.R. Ginn

FC/CFC Warrener's Yellowhammer "Sydney"  
Owner: Vicky Thomas, Handler: Paul McGagh

Parkhouse Nimrod "Nim"  
Owner/Handler: Nigel Murray

If you would like to check out pictures and get more info from the NCC please visit [www.bigskyecs.com](http://www.bigskyecs.com).



AKC Hungarian VIZSLA Ten weeks old female and male puppies for sale, Call from details... 406 587-6392 or e-mail to [mestervizsla@yahoo.com](mailto:mestervizsla@yahoo.com)

**Greycliff Ranch Shooting Preserve**  
**Call Chris Pfadt for more information**

**@**

**285-6512 H**

**579-2584 C**



### **Lab needs a home**

Tobie is a nice two year old male yellow lab who's owner is going into the Army, he has had some hunting experience, Tobie is not registered, he came out of registered dogs but his owner didn't do the paper work. Tobie is currently residing at Madison River Kennels and needs to find a home and family who will spend time with him. Please call Randy or Tracey for more info or to see Tobie. 285-6724

## Ask The Vet Summer 2007 – Foxtails

At the parent club meeting this past May, several club members brought forth concern over infections spread by plant awns. Although any dog can be affected by this syndrome, the springer spaniels used in hunting competitions are at an increased risk by virtue of working out in fields that contain high numbers of the problematic grass awns.

“Wild barley” is scientifically known as *Hordeum murinum* but is most commonly called a “foxtail” because of the unique shape of the seed cluster. It can also be called Downey Brome grass, cheatgrass or speargrass. When the grass awns are green, they pose little threat, but as they dry out (usually around May or later) the seeds fall off the plant as animals brush past them. The seeds are “V” shaped and have a sharp point at the tip, with microscopic barbs along the “V”. These barbs allow only forward movement of the awn as it pierces some part of the dog’s anatomy- it can’t easily be moved backwards, and very efficiently moves forward. Unfortunately, the plant awns are covered with several bacteria that can cause infection anywhere they can gain access to. The most common bacteria carried by foxtails are Actinomyces and Nocardia. Occasionally, foxtails may also spread fungal organisms.

Foxtails are found very commonly in some parts of the country, such as Southern California. It is an everyday occurrence to see a dog with a foxtail at most veterinary clinics in that part of the country. Elsewhere they are less common, but based on the discussion at the parent club meeting, many locations that are used for hunting purposes are being seeded intentionally with plant material to provide good cover for the birds. The mixture of plant seeds used to provide good ground cover has unfortunately been found to contain foxtail seeds as well, so now *Hordeum murinum* is being found more and more commonly in the Midwest and other areas that commonly hold field trials or hunt tests.

So what do grass awns do? A better question is what *don’t* they do? Depending on what part of the dog they gain access to, they can cause all sorts of problems- some obvious, some extremely hard to diagnose.

Commonly, the grass awn will catch on hair around the dog’s ears and end up in the ear canal. Usually, the owner would notice a very sudden onset of painful ears- shaking the head, pawing at the ear, whining. Examination by a veterinarian including being able to see well into the ear canal will identify the foxtail and it can be removed with forceps. An unidentified foxtail in an ear can lead to infection and/or a ruptured ear drum.

The eyes are another place foxtails commonly end up. As a dog moves through brush, the eyes are at a perfect level to come in contact with the foxtails. Usually a foxtail in the eye will end up underneath the eyelids or the third eyelid, where they cause severe pain, a scratched or ulcerated cornea and infection. Sudden onset of squinting, pawing at the eye, redness, discharge and pain are good clues that a foxtail may be in the eye. A veterinarian can remove the foxtail with the aid of topical eye anesthesia. Failure to identify and remove the foxtail could potentially lead to rupture of the eye.

One very obvious location for a foxtail is the nasal cavity. This will cause immediate and unrelenting sneezing which will become bloody very quickly. If the foxtail is not removed quickly, it can get sucked into the lungs where it can cause even more problems. Any dog suspected of having inhaled a foxtail into its nose needs emergency veterinary care immediately.

One of the more difficult places to identify and repair damage from foxtails is the skin. Very commonly, foxtails will lodge between the toes and work their way up the leg. They can also burrow into skin anywhere on the body. If caught quickly, a small wound is noted, and probing with forceps will retrieve the foxtail. However, often times the wound is not noted until the grass awn is a considerable distance up the leg. It can be nearly impossible to find a foxtail that has made it a significant distance from its entrance wound. In some cases extensive exploratory surgery is needed to remove infected tissue and to look for the grass awn. Sometimes, antibiotics are prescribed to control most of the infection, and the actual location of the plant awn can be narrowed down by locating where swelling persists after the antibiotics have had a chance to work (basically, antibiotics won’t be able to eradicate infection at the level of the foxtail if it is still inside the dog). Prevention is the best cure for foxtails in the skin- check your dog’s feet and coat frequently and remove all plant material before it gets a chance to migrate into the skin. Seek medical help quickly if you notice any break in the skin, especially if any drainage is present.

The throat can be affected if the dog chews on grass that contains awns, or if the dog grooms himself to remove foxtails from his coat (another good reason to groom the dog immediately after he has been exposed to a location known to contain foxtails). If a grass awn lodges in the throat or the esophagus, you might notice gagging, choking, coughing, extension of the head and neck, reverse sneezing, and possibly vomiting or dry heaving. The risk of inhaling the foxtail into the lungs exists, and also the risk of serious infection at the site of the foxtail is very real. A foxtail lodged in the throat needs to be removed immediately. Part of your grooming routine should be to look in the dog's mouth, especially way back in the corners and remove any foxtails noted.

One of the most classic and difficult to deal with infections caused by foxtails is called a Pyothorax. This occurs when a foxtail penetrates the chest cavity, either through the skin or by migrating through the lungs if inhaled or the esophagus is swallowed. No symptoms would be noted at first, but as time goes by, the foreign material containing bacteria festers and produces a tomato soup like fluid that surrounds the lungs making it hard to breathe. Early signs could include a mild cough that might be overlooked or diagnosed as "kennel cough". The dog might become easily fatigued, and then grow lethargic, and might run a fever. **The symptoms can be very vague until the disease gets well established.** A chest radiograph is imperative and will show fluid in the chest cavity surrounding the lungs, and might show consolidation of a lung lobe or an area of abscess formation. Treatment of pyothorax is a huge undertaking, involving surgical placement of drainage tubes to allow removal of the tomato soup like pus (which usually contains granules of bacteria that resemble minced garlic, which are known as sulphur granules). Besides draining the pus, usually procedures are done at least daily to lavage in sterile fluid to "wash" the chest cavity, and then this fluid is drained as well. Often the chest has to be opened up to allow removal of damaged lung and to remove as much infection as possible. The dog is on antibiotics for months or longer. One "tongue in cheek" reference noted that antibiotics should be continued for "eons". Antibiotics should be based on culture and sensitivity results, but in general, penicillin type drugs and Clindamycin are a good place to start.

Other infections that can be caused by foxtails include pneumonia, diskospondylitis (infection of the bone of the spine), peritonitis (very similar to pyothorax, except the infection is in the abdomen), urinary or genital tract foreign bodies or infection, and pericardial infection (infection of the sac that surrounds the heart). Really, any part of the body that a foxtail can migrate to can be infected by the bacteria they carry.

So what can you do to cut down on the chance of having to deal with foxtail related infections? Be vigilant- obviously if the dog is out hunting, you would check frequently for plant material on the coat, in the eyes and ears and in the mouth. Be aware of where the dog goes and if there is any chance that foxtail type grasses might be present. Be aware of your dog's behavior and attitude. If the dog has been anywhere that a foxtail could have been picked up, and you note that he seems a bit quiet, or is off his food a little, or has a slight cough, etc., seek medical help! Voice your concerns to your veterinarian that the dog could have been exposed to a foxtail. Request radiographs and blood work even if the vet thinks they are not necessary. Avoid the easy syndrome of "let's try some antibiotics and see how he does". All that will do is give the foxtail more time to migrate deeper into the dog. Be prepared that you might have to spend a significant amount of money and accept referral to a specialist if your vet determines that your dog has a serious infection from a foxtail. Don't try to cut corners on treatment. Successful outcome is dependent on aggressiveness of therapy.

With aggressive care, and early detection, full recovery from foxtail induced disease, even full blown pyothorax, is possible. I speak from the experience of having my own springer "Gunther" (who had none of the risk factors for exposure to foxtails) suffer from pyothorax when he was 10 years old. He recovered fully after aggressive therapy with multiple surgeries including having a lung lobe removed.



Sadly, in recent years, the Springer Spaniel Field Trial world has become more aware of illnesses befalling some of our dogs—sometimes fatally—due to infections attributable to barbed grass awns. These seeds can penetrate a dog’s body through the skin or enter by swallowing or aspiration. Once in a dog’s body, the barbed seed typically migrates, all too frequently leaving a trail of infection. Diagnosis and treatment are sometimes complicated, partly due to the fact that a dog does not always show specific symptoms until seriously ill and partly due to the fact that some veterinarians are unfamiliar with the types of infections these barbed seeds produce which, in turn, leads to delays in diagnosis and treatment. Some instances of these infections have led to the deaths of some fine Springers, the incidence of which seems to have greatly increased in just the past five to eight years.

The common denominator of these “mean seeds” is their barbs, which are analogous to fish hook barbs and which lead to the oneway migrations. Various species of plants entail these barbs, the most prevalent being so-called “Canadian Wild Rye,” “Virginia Rye,” and some varieties of foxtails.

A common belief in Springer Field Trial circles—not yet substantiated by “hard evidence”—is that the escalation of this “mean seeds problem” in recent years is primarily attributable to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s inclusion of several varieties of the problematic plants on the approved list for CRP lands (as cover plants so as to provide protection for native grasses). Use of CRP lands has been important for decades for the running of Springer Field Trials or for training purposes; and, far more frequently than years ago, potential trial or training sites have had to be discarded because of the discovery of “mean seeds” on the sites. Indeed, sometimes such a discovery occurs at the last minute (as occurred at the 2007 Springer National Open, near Rochester, Minnesota).

Also on the basis of purely anecdotal information, there is a common belief in Springer Field Trial circles that, particularly in the Midwest, various governmental bodies are using mixtures of “CRP approved seeds” for other areas, which may account for some reports about Canadian Rye sprouting on land adjacent to highway rest stops. Practically speaking, all dogs (including pets) that romp through cover infested with the plants bearing the “mean seeds” are at risk, not merely gun dogs.

So as to organize efforts to mitigate the “mean seeds problem,” the Springer Parent Club in 2007 formed a “Grass Awn Committee,” which is currently concentrating on educational steps. One such step has been the posting of key materials on the Parent Club’s website. Included in the presentation are downloadable (a) articles providing medical information, (b) non-scientific articles focusing on heart-wrenching case studies, and (c) illustrative color photographs of some of the plants that entail the barbed seeds. This presentation is captioned the “Grass Awn Project” and can be brought up on the English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Association’s website (i.e., [www.essfta.org](http://www.essfta.org)).

There are, of course, various ways the AKC could be helpful in terms of mitigating this problem. In particular, the AKC could play an important role in educating the public about the problem, especially in terms of informing all concerned as to some of the available diagnostic and treatment information, as well as in terms of gathering more data relative to the incidence and nature of the problem. Ultimately, the AKC might be helpful in terms of leading a dialog with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the goal being the elimination of the “mean seeds” from the approved list for CRP lands. In all events, the Field Trial and Hunting Test Events Committee is analyzing numerous aspects of this problem, welcomes all input and questions, and will keep the Delegate Body advised of developments.

Be sure to check out the dog club website on this.

USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Hitchcock, A.S. (rev. A. Chase).

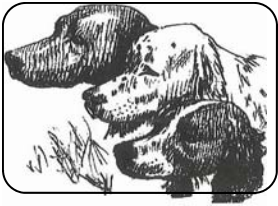
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