For much of my adult life I have been an avid big game hunter. I did not pay much attention to those around me who were bird hunters. My interest and hunting energy went to deer, elk, moose, antelope, bears, bighorn sheep and Rocky Mountain goats.

Over time I had been invited to occasionally hunt birds: ducks and geese from a blind, pass shooting for doves, and the occasional upland experience. So I had the opportunity to experience retrievers with water fowl and a host of flushing dogs and pointers with upland birds. And so it was that I gradually moved away from big game to bird hunting.

During my professional working years, I did not think that I had the time to train and field a bird dog. I realized, though, that I was missing out on a great pastime.

After my last Rocky Mountain elk hunt I also realized that upland bird hunting may be more civilized than elk hunting…I would not need to get up at 3:30 AM, experience minus 10 degree weather, icy roads, and 18 inches of snow. I could sleep to a reasonable hour, have a good breakfast, walk throughout the morning, stop for lunch and a nap, and then hunt again in the afternoon. The evening might bring a nice meal from the day’s take if we had been lucky to find birds. As I grew older this activity appealed to me.

In reality the only thing that I knew about bird dogs was that I wanted one. In my own naïveté
Ask Butch

Dear Butch, I have 2 questions.
1. Why do dogs place their paw or stand on a person’s foot?
2. But what I really need to know is how does a dog know EXACTLY which big toe to stand on that has a bout of gout flared up in it???

Yours Truly,
Glen

Glen...Your two-part question is very interesting. Why does a dog place their paw on a person's foot? BECAUSE IT CAN! I do believe it's either dominance or dominatrix. My uncle "Ernie" used to practice his field goal kicking when his old flea bag would attempt this but today we teach bad behavior a little differently. A real quick solution would be to have me send you a patch of Montana prickly pear cactus and you glue this to the top of your boot. Now when Fido steps on that toe, let the whaling begin. The problem will be solved.

Now for the second part of the question: How does it know to always stand on your gouted toe? Well Glen, it's because you show the most reaction with this stimulus. Dogs are so smart. I'm sure the dog painted a target right there for future landing. Dumb dogs would never figure this out. I have a question for you: why do you have gout? In layman's terms, gout is when in the elimination process you can't get rid of all the uric acid. Look to your diet for this culprit. Upon further investigation I've uncovered your problem; catsup or ketchup. Glen, this is not a food group. I've never heard of catsup milk shakes till now. And you thought you had hemorrhoids. Too much of one thing is always bad for you, except chocolate. Glen, broaden your horizons. Because you are my friend I'm going to hide the bottle when you come next spring. Try scotch, bourbon, or whiskey but lay off the red stuff. Good luck with your puppies...

Put Butch’s many years of experience to work for you. Don’t be shy and if you want your name left off we can make the questions anonymous. Send you questions to: Butch Nelson PO Box 858, Denton, MT 59430 or hyaliteknls@yahoo.com
I thought that the reason you had a bird dog was to harvest more birds…and you do. But I soon realized that it is all about the relationship with your dog. My dogs are my constant companions and my hunting partners. They are also, with apologies to my wife and daughter, the loves of my life (furry ones, that is)!

Given my age and the future my selection of dog led me to a close-in pointing dog. I began to explore breeds and characteristics. Then I met Butch and Karen and later, Fred. I had never heard of a French Brittany but upon introduction I was hooked. I also met some good and helpful friends that assisted me in getting started in the bird dog world and “trained me” so that I could understand the dogs. First came Daisy (Ambra du Hyalite) and then two years later Cassie (Cassandra du Hyalite) joined the family.

Admittedly I may not have the most polished and best performing dogs (my fault, not theirs) but we go hunting. One year we hunted 56 days in three states. The dogs find birds so we go for a walk and enjoy the day. Frequently my wife Janis comes along with her camera to make the day more enjoyable.

But, there is a problem - as what began as a simple pastime with a compact truck, one dog and one shotgun has gone bad. Now there are two dogs, a new diesel pickup which tows the all season travel trailer, too many shotguns, lots of gear and a partridge (pheasant?) in a pear tree.

Say, Janis, what are your thoughts on a third bird dog?? (Janis and Daisy say hxxx no!!) Oh, well, never mind…

Join **Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club** Facebook page. If you have a Facebook page, request to become a friend, its that easy. You can post your pictures, hunting stories or just events that you share with your Epagneul Breton.
**Fresh Salsa**

5 large tomatoes diced  
1 bunch of green onions thinly sliced  
1 small can diced black olives  
4 Tbs. Lime Juice  
1 Tsp. Salt  

Combine tomatoes, green onions and black olives in bowl. Add lime juice and salt. Stir. Let rest in refrigerator for about 60 minutes. Serve with tortilla chips.

Do you have a favorite recipe you would like to share in the newsletter? Send it to me at:  
[sniesar@msn.com](mailto:sniesar@msn.com)  
so it can be included in an upcoming issue.

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**Out of the Office**

After a full spring and summer of trialing, judging, testing and training dogs, we are ready to take them afield and enjoy our dogs and what they were bred for - hunting. Grouse and partridge season opens on September 8th (in North Dakota) with ducks and pheasants following weeks after. Not only are our dogs ready, but the editors are ready to walk a few miles in the cool fall air in search of feathers game. We will be taking a break from the *Whoa Post* during this time. The next edition will be published in November. So, write down your hunting stories and take lots of pictures to share with the readers of the *Whoa Post*.

Happy Hunting!

*Pete & Sherry*  
*Whoa Post* Editors


The Picture Gallery is a regular feature in the Whoa Post. If you have a picture you would like to share with the club, please email it to Sherry at sniesar@msn.com

Pictures provided by Lynda Kieres, & Pete Wax
**Starting Water Work** by Lynda Kieres

Although I realize some parts of the country are desperately short on water – we here in the Northwest are more fortunate, so now is the time we start introducing puppies and/or young dogs to water – while it’s HOT. It makes the chilly ponds and streams far more palatable to the youngsters.

The very first time PUP experiences the water – I go in first and try to encourage him to follow. I may put a leash on him – but NEVER NEVER EVER DRAG the puppy into the water. If he won’t come with a little encouragement, pick him up and carry him in. Don’t go out too far, but make it far enough so he has to swim if you let him go. Slowly lower him into the water, keeping a good hold on him so he knows you’ve “got him.” (Just like you would introduce a child to the water.) When he starts to relax, release your hold a little and let him float and hopefully he will try to swim. He probably will not be Michael Phelps first time out. Most likely he will do a lot of thrashing and splashing, but that’s okay.

Ironically swimming does not come naturally to every dog, as it does not with people either. Short-tailed or no-tailed dogs sometimes suffer “butt-sink” without a rudder. If that happens I put my hand underneath his belly and balance him until he figures it out. Once he gets going that usually goes away. Let the little guy swim to shore and praise him profusely. Do that a few times until he starts to get the hang of it. Don’t OVER-do it and don’t let him get cold. Just think about how you would feel if this was your very first experience. You want to make it FUN!

Sometimes you will get lucky and PUP will be encouraged to follow an older buddy into the water; often a little competition over rides their inhibitions. If the older dog always gets to the bumper or bird first, once PUP is swimming on his own, hold the older dog back and let the little guy get the prize. Don’t expect Championship performance. If he swims to the bumper but doesn’t grab it – don’t worry about it, praise him anyway (and send the older dog to get it later). (And make sure it’s a size that fits in his mouth – don’t start out with a goose-sized dummy.) If he DOES grab it, try to intercept him at the shore and catch him before he runs off with it. But if he dodges you and runs around with it – don’t worry, that can be fixed later (and don’t screech at him or punish him – try to get him to bring it to you with lots of encouragement – run the other way and he’ll follow you). The important thing is whoop – holler – clap – jump up and down and let PUP know he is the greatest water dog of all time. MAKE IT FUN FUN FUN FUN!

A couple things to keep in mind when you decide to take PUP to the water; the entry area should have firm footing. Gooey sticky mud is as yucky to PUP as it would be to you. Ewwww – mud between the toes . . . . The water should get deep gradually – not a steep entry or sudden drop off where the ground drops out from under him. And above all – make sure the water is CLEAN (not swamp water) and clear of dangerous obstacles.

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Starting Water Work - Continued from Page 6

ALWAYS check the water before you send ANY dog out – you don’t want him to impale himself on a submerged tree branch, or get tangled in a mass of floating water weeds. Always remove his collar as well.

If PUP isn’t all that interested in a dummy – a wing-clipped pigeon often will do the trick. It’s amazing how well the birds can cover the water efficiently, even with their wings taped. The thrashing of a pigeon doing the breast stroke across the water is often more than PUP can stand and he just HAS to go for it.

If you start PUP out right, and let him learn that water is FUN, when it comes time to start formal training you will be leaps and bounds ahead of the game.

Another note: with a new litter (when the time of year is appropriate) I put a shallow pan of water in their kennel to start, and then move up to a wading pool. I toss a toy that will float in the water, and before long the puppies are going in and out of the water all on their own.

I’m not a died in the wool duck/goose hunter, so I’m not out there in January when its below Zero in the blind, but EBs are efficient versatile hunting dogs and water work is definitely part of the game. In France they utilize the REEP test, and in Germany and other countries that utilize the JGHV system of testing, those tests include a LOT of complex water work.

Frequently when we are out pheasant hunting we will come across a slough or pond covered with a bevy of ducks. It truly rounds out the day when you can send PUP out to retrieve that Mallard or beautiful Bufflehead or Pintail to add to your collection of mounted birds (or to the cooking pot). And it certainly goes without saying that occasionally a pheasant will drop over a body of water as well.

PUP can DO IT – if you start him out right – and it’s sure a LOT better to send PUP out for that retrieve than shedding your boots, dropping your trousers and wading out to fetch the bird yourself. The point is – Preserve Game – no matter what.
Bird Hunting Season -
Preplanning for Safety Guidelines  By Ken Bruwelheide

Most of us will be spending a lot of time in the field this fall and winter. We may be far away from towns that provide emergency resources of all types and out of cell phone coverage. Thus, we need to be prepared for the unexpected and be somewhat self sufficient when it comes to emergencies for humans and dogs. The time I have spent working in the public safety sector causes me to do some preplanning. The following are some guidelines which work for me.

Most of the time I use the same vehicle for my field activities so it is easy to keep it equipped. I will admit that it is easy to carry too much equipment and this affects space and weight. My primary concern is what is needed to address human and canine accidents and injury emergencies.

Communications

In many parts of the country a person can be out of cell phone coverage, so if one needed to call for help, it would not be possible. How many of us have hunted alone? As I have grown older I think about this situation more and now carry “the Spot.” This gadget is a small satellite GPS messenger device that you carry with you and if you break a leg in a badger hole, you hit the red button and it is like dialing 911 and emergency services finds you with satellite GPS technology. Folks at home can also track you on a computer with the right software. This item can be purchased for about $100 depending on the model and there is an annual subscription fee.

Voice communication in rural areas can be problematic. This is one reason that I have a General Motors vehicle because it has OnStar which is a satellite based technology that allows you phone contact (purchased minutes) and help services if needed. I have used Onstar twice in emergencies for other people needing medical attention. The website is https://www.onstar.com and there is now an option of OnStar FMC available for additional vehicles.

First Aid Considerations

It is a good idea for all of us to have some sort of first aid training. Most communities have one of several ways to obtain it:

- American Red Cross
- Hospital Auxiliary
- Volunteer Fire Department/Ambulance
- Adult Education

Remember that you could save a life, perhaps your own. That also means that you need to carry a first aid kit that is current (look at expiration dates) and stocked.

Continued on page 9
Canine Emergencies

I think that most of us would agree with a statement made by my veterinarian, Dr. Sue Geske which was “If you put dogs in the field enough days, you will have injuries.” Four years ago one of my dogs, Daisy, was injured in the field and I was able to call the closest veterinary hospital (63 miles) using Onstar and drive her there for a 4 PM Friday appointment. Pheasant season opened the next day which she missed. For most of us, distance and time are not our friend when dogs are injured. The following items are canine first aid considerations.

Our Humane Society occasionally offers a two hour class on canine trauma and illness which is worth attending.

Books and articles are plentiful on the subject. A few of my favorites are:

- *First Aid for the Active Dog* by Sid Gustafson, DVM (2003)
- “First Aid Afield” by Brad Fitzpatrick. *Gun Dog Magazine* (August 2012)

Canine First Aid Supplies

Canine first aid kits are available from several suppliers such Ugly Dog Hunting catalog. I have put my canine kit in a small hard-sided cooler.

The September 2011 issue of this newsletter at our website has a list of necessary canine first aid supplies suggested by Dr. Sue Geske, DVM. See the archives at: [http://montanabreton.com/newsletter%20September%202011.pdf](http://montanabreton.com/newsletter%20September%202011.pdf)

Suggestion

Whenever you go afield, take along the phone numbers and addresses of local veterinarians and pet trauma centers. Check the Internet for towns and geographic locations. Keep them in the first aid kit and perhaps a second copy in your vehicle for quick reference if the kit is left behind. Keep some 4x4 absorbent packs and gauze in a zip lock bag in your bird vest and perhaps a bootie or two. Finally…update your first aid supplies annually. It is tough to need a supply that is not there or has expired when your dog needs it.
Preseason Conditioning -
*It means something different to just about everyone*

A stroll on the beach works for both dogs and owners!

Pictures by Ken & Janis Bruwelheide

Learning patience (on a chain gang) is also good conditioning!

Picture by Pete Wax
Dogs and their masters use fitness equipment in the preseason!

Picture by Fatmi Anders

Training birds make fashion statements - red sweaters!

Picture by John Hannington

Always, Always, Always, make sure all dogs in your pack have enough water to drink after a summer run. Dogs should be thoroughly cooled down before being kenneled.

Picture by Sherry Niesar
Congratulations!

Azure has received her “Grand Champion of the Field” from UKC. She is the only female to achieve "CHF " or “GrCHF” UKC Field Trial tiles.

Club Membership

You are an important component of the Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club. Your dues go towards important programs in dog training education, trials and social events for club members and their dogs. Membership dues are important to the financial health of the club. Please complete the membership form below and return it with your payment to Fred Overby.

Send dues to: Fred Overby 
c/o Overby Law Office 
101 E. Main Street, Suite C 
Bozeman, MT 59715

Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Club Membership Form

Name_______________________________________________ 2nd Family Member _____________________________
Address_____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Telephone __________________________________________ Email ___________________________________________

Membership Category
$20 Individual Membership _____ $30 Family Membership _____

Make Check out to: Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Club

Return form & dues to: Fred Overby c/o Overby Law Office, 101 E. Main Street, Suite C, Bozeman, MT 59715
Send General Correspondence to: Kenneth Bruwelheide,1406 Robin Lane, Bozeman, MT 59715