

The Whoa Post

December 2024

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December Issue

A few weeks ago, Pete and I ventured to the forest. Yes, there are a few forests in North Dakota! Why? To see the trees! Actually, North Dakota boasts a whopping 2% of the state as forests!

The U. S. Forest Service issues Christmas Tree permits for a small fee. Once purchased, permit holders can cut a tree for Christmas. In North Dakota you can cut Juniper, Pine, Spruce and Fir species.

Aside from a fresh tree that hasn't been cut and stored for four months, you have an adventure in the forest and the gift of spending time with family .

We loaded up the dogs and took a two hour drive in an almost blizzard to the forest. The dogs got to stretch their legs and I looked and evaluated every tree. The cold temperatures limited my consideration period. As many of you know, I don't like cold temperatures. In the end, we selected the perfect tree for our family. Thorn at 14 years old was the wisest of us all and went back to the truck to warm up.

In spite of the winter storm, the tree adventure has become part of our family tradition, just like hunting, dogs, and camping. According to Robert Louis Stevenson, " Every heart that has beat strongly and cheerfully has left a hopeful impulse behind in the world, and bettered the tradition of mankind." Whatever your traditions are this holiday season, enjoy them with family and friends. I wish you a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year.

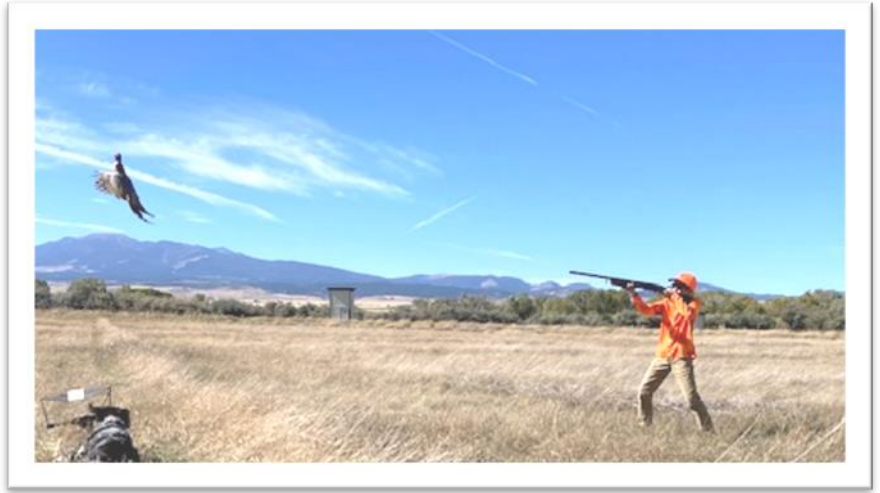
Sherry Niesar
Whoa Post Editor



Take a Kid Hunting Part 2 by Ken Bruwelheide

During the fall 2024 upland bird season in Montana, I had the pleasure of taking my 13-year-old grandson afield for a pheasant hunt. My friend Mel Kotur came along to spot birds and to be a safety observer. Mel has raised two sons to be avid ethical outdoorsmen for hunting and fishing. Thus, Mel was the perfect companion for the special hunt for my grandson.

For my grandson's first real pheasant hunt as a participant instead of an observer we went to a local hunting preserve to ensure



dog and bird contact. My Epagneul Breton, Dottie age 3, was our only dog in the field that day. We had four birds available for harvest during an afternoon hunt. With hunter orange on and a 20-gauge in hand the fun began! Dottie is a very fast-moving energetic dog, so it takes her a bit of time to settle down and focus on the job, but she does.

The first rooster was a flash point and a very quick shot, not a hard hit, and the bird coasted a long way into some brush. A long search with Dottie did not find the bird.

The second bird was placed at some distance and Dottie was released. The second bird was located, and a quick point took place. My grandson walked in, and the rooster jumped vertically at some distance. The 20-gauge barked and the bird spiraled into some brush. This time Dottie went into the brush and retrieved proudly. The third bird was found in some very dense brush by Dottie. She had a difficult time getting to the rooster since it was holding tight. As Dottie moved closer the bird broke out of the brush and flew to the next patch of brush which was down in a small gravel pit. The search was on, and Dottie eventually found the bird near the water. Unfortunately, this bird took a hard blast to the chest. As the bird was later cleaned it was found to be unusable.

Bird number four was the last rooster of the afternoon. Dottie was moving fast, perhaps too fast. This bird rose up quickly and was hit hard. Again, into the brush it went, ran a few steps, and fell.

Four birds were shot by my grandson in various settings. From the smiles in the accompanying photos, you can see that this young man was pleased! So was his Papa. Mel and I were both impressed with the accuracy, safety awareness, and care for Dottie displayed by this young man. There will be more hunts to come with wild birds and hunting preserves. We plan to serve the birds as a starter for a special meal soon.

Remember to take a kid hunting!



The Epagneul Breton at the 2024 NAVHDA Invitational

by Peter Wax

Congratulations to Madeline Schopf, Jacob and Brooke Bartells and their Badass Versatile Champions. Double for first timers Ms. Schopf and Ms. Bartels.

As fanciers of “the breed” we should thank them for showing “*on the international stage*” that the Breton can perform at the same level of versatile breeds that are substantially larger and emotionally harder. Do not misunderstand me, the Invitational is not about brutish strength and a hard head but rather a big heart, fine mind, even temperament, and athleticism.

The Epagneul Breton (Breton) was well represented at the 2024 North America Versatile Hunting Dog Association (NAVHDA) 2024 invitational with three dogs qualifying, and three dogs achieving the title Versatile Champion (VC). The VC designation is the highest designation in the NAVHDA testing system. All dogs attending were already awarded a “Prize I” in a Utility Test the previous year. No small feat.

The NAVHDA system is the ideal partner testing program too your UKC competition titles. Nothing says “great dog” better than one that can out compete all comers and perform to the highest standards in an unbiased versatile hunting test.

Table 1 shows a steady increase in representation by Bretons at the Versatile Champion level. While the handlers list is shallow, the breeders list is not. Owners of American Brittany (Brittany) are also more common in the NAVHDA system. For example, in the first 28 Invitationals (1988 -2023) only nineteen (19) Brittany and five (5) Bretons were awarded a VC title and this year three (3) Brittany and three (3) Bretons.

Table 1. Epagneul Breton Versatile Champions

| Year | Versatile Champion | Owner | Handler |
|------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 2008 | Ubu De L'Escarbot | Jed Kees | Jed Kees |
| 2011 | Canelle Du Parler | Jacob Bartells | Jacob Bartells |
| 2016 | Fragon Du Parler | Kimberly Bartells | Jacob Bartells |
| 2019 | Larue De Cache D'Or | Charles Becker | Jacob Bartells |
| 2021 | Libertas Sur Le Delavan | Jacob Bartells | Jacob Bartells |
| 2021 | Lost Highway's Nobel Pete | Charles Guyer III | Charles Guyer III |
| 2024 | French Kissin Life de R'Hannahatchee | Madeline Schopf | Madeline Schopf |
| 2024 | Mighty Sur Le Delavan | Jacob Bartells | Jacob Bartells |
| 2024 | S'Talent Du Dieu D'Hokumpoke | Jacob Bartells | Brooke Bartells |

(Note: If your dog was left off this table please forgive me, and send me the information and a notation will appear in the next Whoa Post)

In North America the NAVHDA testing system is the gold standard for testing all dimensions of the versatile dog. The tests are not competitions, but an evaluation of a dog's ability to perform standardized acts of a

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Rocky Mountain Cup - Continued from page 3

versatile hunting dog (i. g., searching, pointing, retrieving, tracking and swimming) in a cooperative and a properly trained manner.

There is nothing in the NAVHDA testing system that stretches the basic abilities of the Epagneul Breton. The limiting factors are appropriate training grounds, training birds, and guidance from more experienced handlers. These three limiting factors are responsible for the shallow owner and handlers list of Versatile Champions.

My personal enthusiasm and support of the NAVHDA testing system stems from the primary benefit of a trained hunting dog; everything else is ancillary. A Utility Prize III (the lowest passing score) dog is a better versatile hunting companion than 99% of hunters will ever know.

The Utility Test (UT) trained dog smartly tracks a wounded pheasant out of sight 200 plus yards, through a barrier, and brings it back to hand. A UT dog swims blind across a pond to find a duck and brings it back to hand. A UT dog hunts to the front, points convincingly, remains steady until sent, and when sent retrieves to hand. A UT dog will heal through the field or at unsafe locations, remain steady at a blind while the hunter walks to a new spot to shoot from a better angle, and when sent to retrieves swims straight out and back and holds the duck until asked to deliver. Through many hours, days, weeks and months of training a UT dog is known to the handler and knows the handler.

Congratulations to the 2024 Versatile Champions:

French Kissin Life de R'Hannahatchee, Mighty Sur Le Delavan, and S'Talent Du Dieu D'Hokumpoke!



Tiny Tick in October? Uh-Oh! By Kim Kotur

After a fun and productive pheasant hunt in Eastern Montana in October 2023, we came home and were shocked to discover an unusual tick on our 7 year-old EB, Maisie. It did not look like the Rocky Mountain Wood Ticks and American Dog Ticks we usually see in Montana and it was alarming because it was tiny, only 4 mm, even though it was fully engorged. The body was a pale tan color and had a dark spot just behind the head. It was so tiny that we had not seen it despite thorough dog grooming daily for 4 days while camping. After removing the tick, we froze it in a baggie and checked with our veterinarian who said to monitor Maisie for signs of illness and that sometimes dogs don't get ill from Lyme's. Maisie didn't get sick. She recommended we call Montana State



Dept. of Health and then we submitted the tick to the Schutter Diagnostic lab at Montana State University for identification. It was examined by Marni Rolston, MS Arthropod Diagnostician, identified as the genus *Ixodes*, the genus of the Black Legged Tick or Deer Tick that carries Lyme disease, but she could not definitively identify the species because the mouth parts were missing. Well, to make a long story short, the tick is now at the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Maryland getting genomic testing because the *Ixodes Scapularis* tick species that carries Lyme disease, has not been known to exist in Montana. It has been thought that Montana climate is too dry for it to live here. The verdict is still pending, but if it is the kind of tick that carries Lyme Disease, it will be the first one ever identified in the state of Montana, and will be important to hunters, dog owners and the health of the public.

According to the CDC 95% of all vector-borne diseases (that is transmitted by mosquitos, ticks or fleas) in the US are transmitted by ticks. 62,551 cases of Lyme disease were reported to the CDC in 2022. We have all heard of Rocky Mountain Spotted fever and other nasty tick-borne diseases, but to me, Lyme disease is a whole different ballgame. Five to Ten percent of Lyme patients have debilitating long term symptoms, (that will keep you from bird hunting) even after being treated with two to four weeks of antibiotics. In the nymph stage, deer ticks are as small as a poppy seed, so preventing the ticks from getting on a person or a dog is essential because you might not even know you've been bitten.

So, what are we doing differently? We will be more proactive about preventing tick bites of all kinds. We spray our hunting shirts, pants, socks and boots with permethrin 0.5% spray. (Another CDC recommendation.) It lasts for 6 weeks or 6 washings, does not hurt the clothes, has no odor, and does not change the texture or appearance of clothing. Permethrin spray has been used by the US Army for over 20 years and is deemed safe by the EPA for children's clothing as well. It repels and kills ticks, mosquitos, chiggers, mites, ants, flies and over 50 other kinds of insects. It is available at outdoor stores. Permethrin treated clothing by Insect Shield is also available and your own clothes can be mailed in to Insect Shield to be professionally

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Ticks - Continued from page 5

treated. Permethrin is highly toxic to fish and bees, but it can be sprayed on dogs.

Mel found a sale on Sitka Equinox Guard pants with Insect Shield permethrin imbedded in the fabric. They have an inner stretchy pant leg attached to the outer pant at the knee. The theory is to tuck the inner pant leg into your socks. Since ticks crawl up, they hit a dead end at the knee. I am duplicating the trick by sewing similar extra pant legs in my favorite hunting pants. (I admit I can be a geek but I don't like looking like one with my outer pant legs tucked into my socks!)

We also use "Sawyer Family - low absorption formula DEET" which is user friendly, in that it has very little absorption into the body, lasts 11 hours and does not have an odor. The controlled release formula also minimizes the usual DEET's effects on plastics and synthetics. We use it on exposed skin. If you decide to use a DEET spray, be cautious not to get it on your binoculars because it can take the finish off the lenses. 20% picaridin is equally effective for ticks but not as effective for mosquitos. We are now using systemic tick killer and repellent on our dogs year-round, because deer ticks do not die from the cold and are found year-round. Yes, our wonderful veterinarians Jennifer and Scott Baumgardner told us to do this last year, but we only used tick meds on the dogs in May through August in the past. Guess the vets know best, huh?



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

from the Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club

Board of Directors!

President: Ken Bruwelheide

Vice President: Peter Wax

Treasurer: Jim Hoschouer

Secretary: Sherry Niesar

Board Members: Butch Nelson & Todd Lehner

Holiday Pet Safety from: <https://www.avma.org/>

Plan in advance

Keep your pet emergency numbers posted in an easy-to-find location:

- Your veterinarian's clinic phone number
- 24/7 emergency veterinary clinic (if different)
- Pet Poison Helpline: 855-764-7661

Food

- **Chocolate** is an essential part of holidays for many people, but it is toxic to dogs and cats. It's safest to consider all chocolate off limits for pets, even though the harm it can cause varies based on the type of chocolate, the size of your pet, and the amount eaten.
- **Other sweets and baked goods** also should be kept out of reach. Not only are they often too rich for pets; they may contain the artificial sweetener xylitol, which has been linked to liver failure and death in dogs.
- **Table scraps** – including gravy, sauces, dressing, and meat or poultry fat or skin – should be kept away from pets. During the holidays, when our own diets tend toward extra-rich foods, table scraps can be especially hard for pets to digest and can cause pancreatitis. Bones can cause choking or intestinal blockage. Plus, many foods that are healthy for people are poisonous to pets, including onions, raisins, and grapes.
- **Unbaked yeast dough** can cause problems for pets, including painful gas and potentially dangerous bloating.



Decorating

- **Ornaments** can cause hazards for pets. Breakable ornaments can cause injuries, and swallowed ornaments can cause intestinal blockage or illness. Keep any ornaments, including those made from salt-based dough or other food-based materials, out of reach of pets.
- **Tinsel, ribbons, wreaths, and other decorative materials** also can be tempting for pets to play with and eat. These items whether swallowed in whole or in part can cause choking or intestinal blockage.
- **Christmas trees** can tip over if pets climb on them or try to play with the lights and ornaments.
- **Water additives for Christmas trees** can be hazardous to your pets if swallowed. Avoid adding anything to the water for your tree if you have pets in the house.
- **Flowers and festive plants** can result in an emergency veterinary visit if your pet gets hold of them. Poinsettias, amaryllis, mistletoe, balsam, pine, cedar, and holly are among the common holiday plants that

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Holiday Safety for Pets - Continued from page 7

can be dangerous and even poisonous to pets who eat them.

- **Potpourris** should be kept out of reach of inquisitive pets. Liquid potpourris pose risks because they contain essential oils and other ingredients that can severely damage your pet's mouth, eyes and skin. Non-liquid potpourris containing flowers, leaves, bark, herbs, and/or spices could cause problems if eaten.

Hosting parties and visitors

- **All pets** should have access to a comfortable, quiet place indoors if they want to retreat. Make sure your pet has a room or crate somewhere away from the commotion, where your guests won't follow, that your pet can go to anytime they want to get away.

- **Inform your guests** ahead of time that you have pets or if other guests may be bringing pets to your house. Guests with allergies or weakened immune systems (due to pregnancy, disease, or medications/ treatments that suppress the immune system) need to be



aware of the pets in your home so they can take any needed precautions to protect themselves.

- **Guests with pets?** If guests ask to bring their own pets and you don't know how the pets will get along, you can either politely decline their request or plan to spend some time helping the pets to get to know each other, supervising their interactions, monitoring for signs of a problem, and taking action to avoid injuries to pets or people.
- **Pets that are nervous around visitors** should be put in another room or a crate. If your pet is particularly upset by houseguests, talk to your veterinarian about possible solutions to this common problem.
- **Watch the exits.** Even if your pets are comfortable around guests, make sure you watch them closely, especially when people are entering or leaving your home. While you're welcoming hungry guests and collecting coats, a four-legged family member may make a break for it out the door and become lost.
- **Identification tags and microchips** reunite families. Make sure your pet has proper identification with your current contact information – particularly a microchip with registered up-to-date, information. That way, if your pet does sneak out, they're more likely to be returned to you. If your pet isn't already micro-chipped, talk to your veterinarian about the benefits of this simple procedure.
- **Clear the food** from your table, counters and serving areas when you are done using them and make sure the trash gets put where your pet can't reach it. A carcass or large quantity of meat sitting out on the carving table, or left in a trash container that is easily opened, could endanger your pet if eaten. Dispose of carcasses and bones – and anything used to wrap or tie the meat, such as strings, bags and packaging – in a covered, tightly secured trash bag placed in a closed trash container outdoors (or behind a closed, locked door).

Continued on page 9

Holiday Safety for Pets - Continued from page 8

- **Trash** also should be cleared away where pets can't reach it – especially sparkly ribbon and other packaging or decorative items that could be tempting for your pet to play with or eat.
- **Holiday travel Interstate and international travel** regulations require any pet you bring with you to have a health certificate from your veterinarian – even if you are traveling by car. Learn the requirements for any states or countries you will visit or pass through, and schedule an appointment with your veterinarian to get the needed certificate within the timeframes required by those destinations.
- **If you're traveling by air** and considering bringing your pet with you, talk with your veterinarian first. Your veterinarian is the best person to advise you regarding your own pet's ability to travel.
- **Pack for your pet** as well as yourself if you're going to travel together. In addition to your pet's food and medications, this includes bringing copies of their medical records, information to help identify your pet if they become lost, first aid supplies, and other items.
- **Boarding your dog** while you travel? Make sure your pet is up-to-date on vaccines.

Merry Christmas!

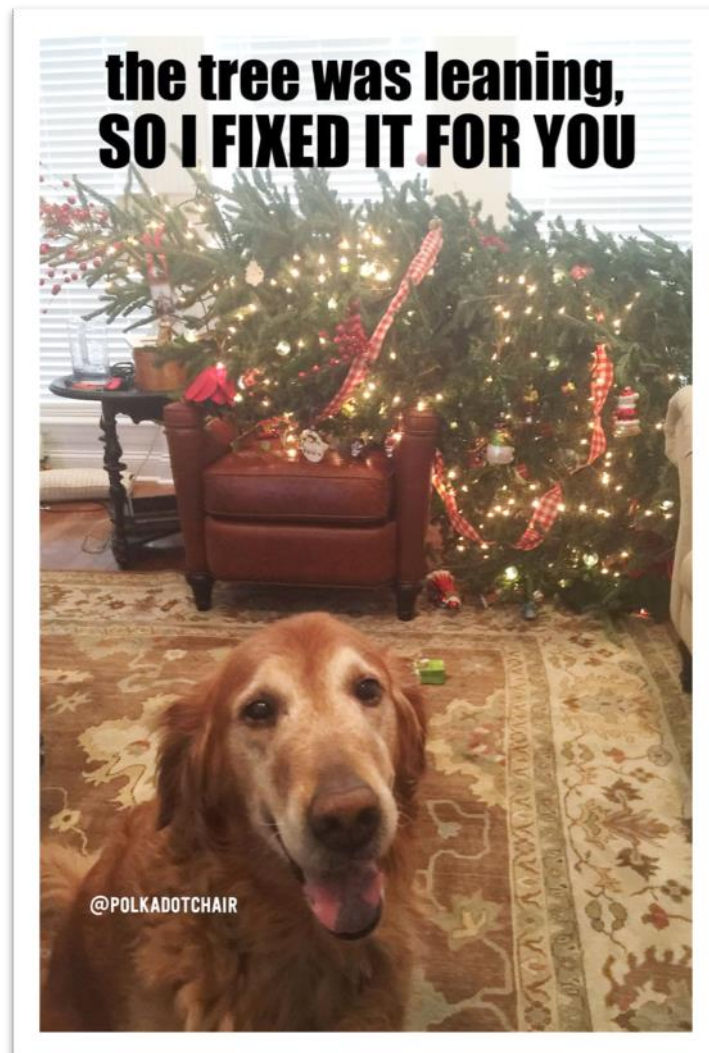
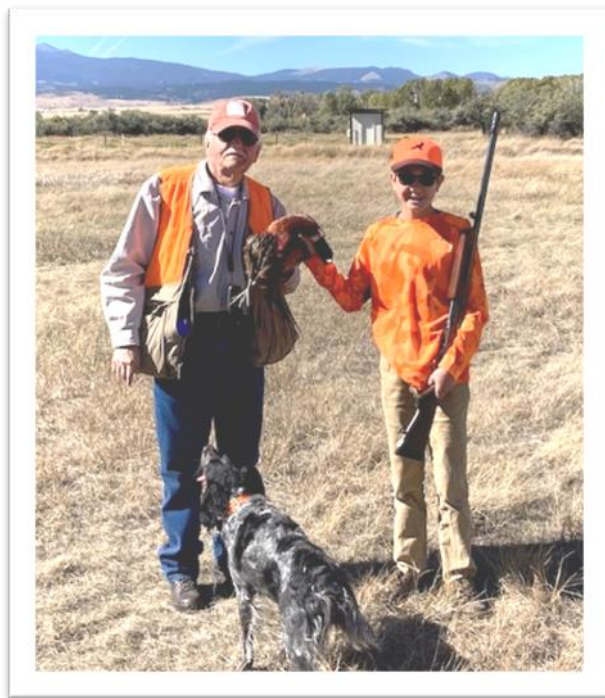


Photo Gallery



Successful pheasant hunt with Mel Kotur and Maisie.
Photo by Kim Kotur



Young hunter, Halden with mentor and grandfather Ken Bruwelheide and Dottie.
Photo by Janis Bruwelheide



Rosie and a limit of pheasants!
Photo by Jim Hoschouer



Share your great photos with the readers of the Whoa Post.
Email them to thewhoapost@gmail.com

UKC Events

January 25th & 26th

Cumberland, VA

Carolinas Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club

Wild Open and Wild Gun

Species: Quail and Woodcock

Judges: Grayson Guyer, Fred Overby, Larry Ellison,

Rob Winchester, Will Crowe

Event Secretary: Will Crowe | CarolinaEBGDC@gmail.com

February 15th & 16th

Sonoita, AZ

Epagneul Bretons of the Southwest / Korthals Griffon

Desert Southwest

Liberated, Open Class (B and S), Gun (S), TAN/WRT

(on 15th)

Event Secretary: Trisha Wherley | eb-softhesw@gmail.com

April 5 & 6, 2025

Delavan, IL

EB Club of Illinois

Wild, Liberated, TAN, WRT

Event Secretary: Suzanne LaFary | surledelavankennel@gmail.com



William Harrison Fine Art



bill@bill-harrison.com 630-235-9382

<https://www.williamharrisonartist.com/>

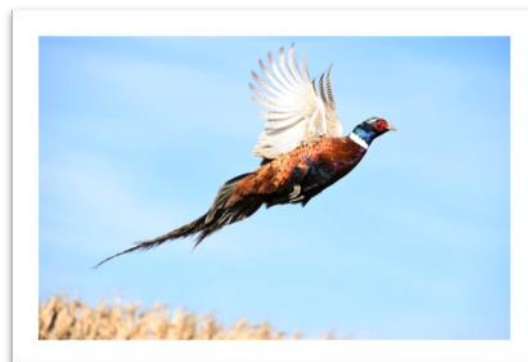


Recipe: Pheasant Enchilada's

Provided by Sherry Niesar

Ingredients

- ◆ 2-3 cups Pheasant Breasts Cooked, chopped or diced
- ◆ 1 jar Alfredo Sauce
- ◆ 1 pint Sour Cream (Not low fat)
- ◆ 1 Can Chopped Green Chiles
- ◆ 1 cup chopped onion
- ◆ 3 cups Shredded Cheddar Cheese
- ◆ 10 Flour Tortillas



Instructions

- ◆ Mix pheasant breasts, 1/4 jar Alfredo sauce, sour cream, green chiles, 2 cups of cheddar cheese in a bowl.
- ◆ Pour 1/2 jar Alfredo sauce into bottom of casserole dish- about 9x 13 inch size.
- ◆ Put the mixed ingredients into tortillas and roll up, place in dish.
- ◆ Pour 1/4 jar Alfredo sauce over top and sprinkle with the other cup of shredded cheese.
- ◆ Bake at 350 degrees F for 30-40 min.
- ◆ Enjoy!



Got a great recipe to share? Please send to the editor at thewhoapost@gmail.com

Renew Your Membership

Membership to the Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club is due at the beginning of each calendar year in January. Each member is an important component to the club, adding to the newsletter with articles and photographs and at the clubs annual field trial. If you are not a member, then consider joining. Aside from becoming a part of a group of talented, friendly and likeminded dog owners, members:

- Receive the Whoa Post
- Are eligible to place ads in the Marketplace at no charge
- List Breeder and Stud Dog information (newsletter and web site) at no charge
- Have access to dog training professionals and mentors
- Receive advance notice of special events
- Have opportunity to participate in UKC sanctioned field trials
- Join a fellowship of like minded individuals

Dottie says,
"Hey Boss,
it's time to
pay our
membership
dues!"



Complete your membership form today and help support the UKC trial system.

Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club Membership Form

Name _____ 2nd Family Member _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Membership Category \$20 Individual _____ \$30 Family _____ \$50 Business _____

Make Check out to: **Big Sky Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club**

Return form & dues to: Jim Hoschouoer 3575 Pasha Lane, Bozeman, Montana 59718