

The Whoa Post

March 2026

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March Issue

How many of you complain, “The weather is too cold or too hot.” Maybe you complain about your boss or coworker or even a loved one. Some of us complain in person, while others do their complaining behind a screen. Thank you, Father Hal, for this topic from Sunday’s sermon, “Going from Complaining to Conversation!” Complaining is easy and if it’s a common complaint, you’ll find some eager listeners. But imagine how much better we could be if we went beyond complaining and use courage to have a meaningful conversation. Those meaningful conversations are not always easy.

In the dog world, people are passionate about their dogs, events, judges at trials, and even the rules. And sometimes we can get emotional. Emotion and participation are good things. It demonstrates commitment. But here’s where things can go off the rails. As a person, it’s your job to read and understand the rules. If after reading, the rules don’t make sense to you, ask an experienced judge your question so they have the opportunity to explain the rule to you. The judges have studied the rules, attended seminars so they are able to provide explanations to participants and novice judges.

When you attend a trial for the first time, take some initiative and introduce yourself. This is not kindergarten where the teacher greets each student at the door. Trial officials have jobs to do, making sure the event runs smoothly, but they are happy to say hi and answer questions. Remember, everyone at the trial has a common interest, dogs. Generally, they are friendly people and want to meet you and your dog. I can’t count the number of dogs and their people I have met at trials and still call them friends today.

Lastly, if you are worried about fitting in with the old guard, don’t be afraid! The elders of the trialing fraternity came up the hard way and learned from experience. They have lots of stories, some not fit for mixed company, and offer advice freely if you are willing to start a conversation instead of complaining. You’ll make new friends, learn a little and maybe gain some valuable experience

Sherry Niesar

Whoa Post Editor





Ask the Trainer

Editors Note: We hope you enjoy this new addition to the Whoa Post. The Big Sky Club is lucky to have three professional trainers on our board of directors. In an effort to give back to our membership and readers, Colin Johnston, Touchstone Kennels, Todd Lehner, pro trainer in Circle, Montana, and Butch Nelson, our senior trainer and owner of Hyalite Kennels will answer your questions each month in the Whoa Post. They are seasoned and experienced trainers that have proven track records. If you have dog training or behavior questions, submit them at thewhoapost@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

I have a 6-month-old pup. I like her very much and have been working on obedience in the house, but don't know much about training a dog to hunt. At what age should I consider sending my dog to a pro trainer for bird dog training? Untrained in Minnesota



It's never too early or too late to train a bird dog however dogs started early are more likely to realize a substantial amount of their potential. Ideally a young dog is 6months to a year old during their first season. This first season is a developmental time where the young dog or pup learns how to hunt. This is not really training but exposure. A fair amount of exposure precedes training no matter the age of the dog/pup.

Late summer/ fall born puppies unfortunately get a late start on a real first season. By the time they are physically and mentally ready the bird season is ending or just behind them. It's important to get a dog of this age out into the field to experience all the scents and textures of wild places.

There is a window between when bird season closes and nesting season begins. These surviving birds are tough for a pup to find and fully experience but still provide stimulus and value for exposure. Exposure to the field is something a pup owner can easily do themselves assuming they have the time and some access to property though a trainer is certainly capable. If this is something you can do yourself now is the time. If so, I would recommend seeking out a trainer to help with gun exposure before next fall. If not, I would recommend finding a trainer this spring to help with development and a plan for later training.

Colin Johnston, Touchstone Kennels

Send your training questions to **Ask the Trainer** at thewhoapost@gmail.com.
With Ask The Trainer in the subject line. If you would like to remain anonymous, please let me know and we will honor your request. We look forward to hearing from you!

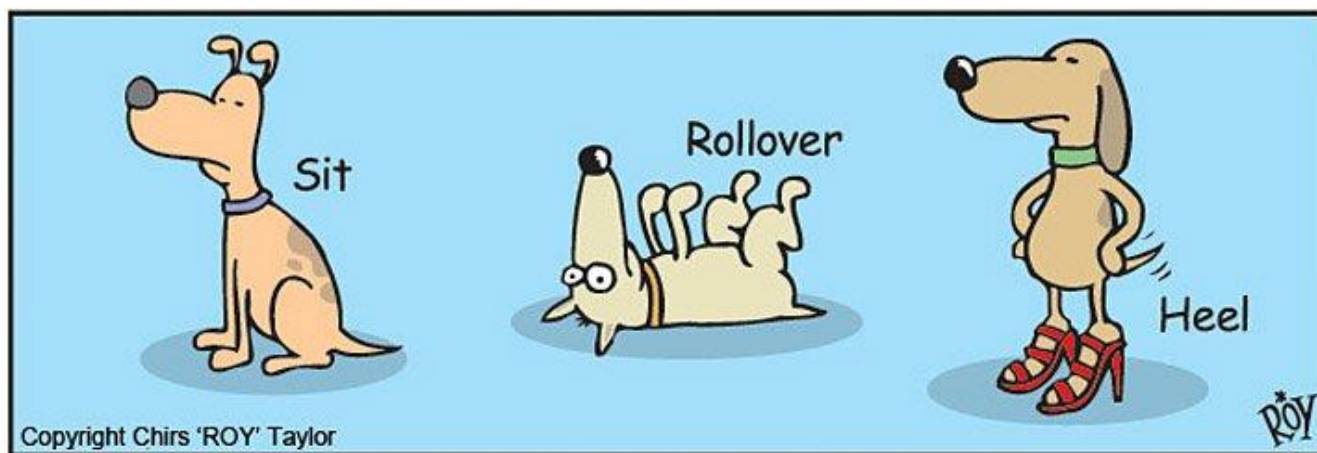
Ask the Trainer - Continued from page 2



My dog is always pulling on the leash. How do I break her of this bad habit? One long arm in Kansas

In my experience there are two parts to think about on this topic. The first is the physical and functional portion. When pressure is applied on the lower part of a dog's neck, they will naturally resist that pressure by pulling against it. So for that reason I find it much easier to utilize a point of contact high on the neck, and also to never apply constant tension, but rather momentary tugs and releases as many times as necessary until the dog gives and properly responds. Releasing gives the dog a window within to respond to the tug and if they respond correctly no more pressure is needed, if they respond incorrectly they will require pressure again in the form of another momentary tug followed by a release. I personally prefer a tool like the Command Lead (also known as Wonder Lead). It's not the only tool that can get the job done, but I find it to be the most effective for me as it stays high on the neck and allows for a quick release of pressure. The second part to this topic is the mindset portion. When I'm asking a dog to walk on a loose lead, I want them to be paying attention to me as their leader and for them to willingly comply because they are bought into our arrangement and are happy to work for me. Fast, free movement is easy for bird dogs, remaining calm focused and still is much harder for them, but for many of them slow, focused, controlled movement is even harder. That said, don't be discouraged, although achieving quality loose lead work can be challenging, if you're properly communicating what you want through the functional, physical point of contact, and you are also displaying calm, confident leadership that promotes the proper mindset of the dog, this is something you can accomplish with your dog!

Todd Lehner



Copyright Chirs 'ROY' Taylor

Before Puppy Arrives By Peter Wax

Before your puppy comes home you should prepare him/her a proper environment to live in. Things to consider are where the pup will eat, sleep, spend the day and defecate. An 8-week-old Breton puppy cannot survive outside in cold climates and an adult cannot survive outside in sub-freezing temperatures without a dry, insulated, and ideally heated shelter. So, if you are planning on keeping your pup outdoors for extended periods of time you will either need to make or purchase appropriate accommodation or find a different breed.

A yard with a chain-link fence tight to the ground with a chicken wire flooring or a chain-link run on a concrete slab are safe places for pup to go potty and hang out. If neither of these are possible, your pup will do fine on a chain or wire tie out for short periods of time as long as there is shade. Even in North Dakota the sun can and does kill puppies.

A nylon or cotton rope is not appropriate to tie out a puppy as eventually the pup will chew free. A lesson that once learned is impossible to unlearn and now you will have a lifetime of trouble when it comes to leashes, check cords and even safety-belts in your vehicle.

Additionally, a bored puppy in your back yard is a mischievous menace of unlimited proportion. A bored puppy left to his or her own devices will dig a hundred holes (some over two feet deep and three feet long), escape the 5-foot chain-linked fence, destroy the flower bed, partition the garden hose, and disturb the entire



neighborhood. You will reinforce all of these behaviors when you return to show attention for the wonderful things he or she has learned. So, while a fenced in backyard is a great place to hangout and potty it should not be used as a puppy daycare or your pup will turn it into a yard of misery.

If your pup is going to be a housedog "the best kind of dog" your most important purchase will be a small kennel that will be replaced as puppy grows. If you are getting your pup by airplane the kennel it comes in will work for a while. If you do not want to purchase multiple kennels, a cardboard box too tall for pup to jump out of will function for the first couple weeks.

Initially the kennel needs to be small enough that if the pup soils it, he/she cannot escape its own mess. This trains pup to hold it and trains you to quickly run your pup outside whenever you get them out. Both aid in house breaking.

Continued on page 5

Before Puppy - Continued from page 4

As your pup grows (even after being house broke) you should continue to have pup stay in the kennel for extended periods. Over time it becomes pups safe place to retreat into. Never use the kennel for punishment. Use it when pup is a nuisance, when you have company, at night to sleep, when you run to the store, go to work, or to escape into when he or she reaches sensory overload. A dog that is well conditioned to the kennel as a pup, will be easily kennel broke as an adult and a better home companion overall. Done correctly, your pup should think of the kennel as “theirs” and retreat into it for safety, to rest, and eventually on command.

Before puppy arrives, you should acquire some of the same chow the breeder is feeding. It is not required to feed the same food as the breeder, but it is easier on pup’s digestive system to keep them on familiar chow for a few days after arriving and to gradually change to your preferred chow by mixing.

Purchase separate spill proof food and watering dishes of adult size. Your dog will quickly outgrow anything designed for a puppy.

Feeding schedule. You can feed on demand. It is convenient but if you have a glutton it will lead to a fat pup. It also deprives you of a trainable moment so this decision should not be based on convenience alone. If you feed on a schedule, start out by feeding three times a day until pup is 6 months, then twice a day for the remainder of pup’s life. As an adult your pup will manage on a once a day feeding schedule, but you will use less food and get a higher percentage of absorption at twice a day.

While feeding can be a training tool, all puppies and dogs must have continual access to clean fresh water.

Before your puppy arrives, you should purchase a puppy collar with your name, address and telephone number on it and a light leash. You will find the setup invaluable for taking your puppy out to do his or her business on the way home as well as other activities once you get home.

Last but not least, you should schedule a trip to your local veterinarian within the first two weeks for a physical and to make arrangements vaccinations and worming.

Having taken care of all this in advance, will allow you plenty of free time to play with and enjoy the new puppy.



Dog Poisoning Reported by the Northwest Pointing Dog Association by Leslie Like

Important Safety Warning – Boyce Corral

Editors Note: While this did not happen in “our backyard”, it is worth noting and being aware.

There has recently been an instance of drug poisoning involving a member’s dog at Boyce Corral. Mel Luecks’ dog ingested what is believed to have been drugs—likely methamphetamine—directly off the ground while on a stakeout.

If something like this happens to you or one of your dogs in the Madras area, **Cascade Vet Clinic** has experience treating these types of emergencies and should be contacted immediately.

Unfortunately, this is not entirely surprising. We are all aware of the presence of tweakers in the area and the devastation they can cause. There has even been a murder on or around these grounds while we were there.

Whenever using public grounds—no matter where you are—it is critical to stay alert for signs of drug activity and other bad actors. The residue and debris left behind by drug users can be ingested by your dogs, your children, or even you. Exposure can be extremely dangerous and is often fatal for animals.

Please watch carefully for evidence of drug activity or careless behavior. Warning signs include broken glass, human waste, drug paraphernalia, and other debris. Before staking out your dogs or horses, **inspect your spot carefully** and make sure the area is clean and safe.

It is unfortunate that we have to think about these risks when using public grounds, but this is the reality we are facing. Staying alert is the best way to protect ourselves, our animals, and others using the area.



Gear Review: Oxford Blue Game Keepers Jacket by Pete Wax

My favorite hunting jacket is the Oxford Blue Gamekeeper Jacket. I am on my third one. The first one, purchase over 30 years ago lasted 20 years with many repairs by the inhouse seamstress. I wore it for hunting, camping and every day until my seamstress told me it was not a “public” jacket anymore. The second jacket would have lasted just as long but my seamstress was out of business, so at 10 years I bought a third one.

The Oxford Gamekeeper Jacket is designed for practicality. The tight weave 8 oz cotton duck is waxed and waterproof (an additional tin of wax comes standard for periodic touchups) and all the zippers and hardware is brass (no cheap nylon). The jacket is cut generous through the shoulders and it hangs straight to below the pants pockets where two large bellow pockets with lids reside on each side. These pockets are big enough for a box of shotgun shells or a generous handful along with a collapsible dog bowl and candy bar. They have a top flap to keep everything inside, dry, and tidy. Above these are hand warmer pockets for when you are standing around, and on the inside a chest pocket big enough for a silk bandana and a snare cutter. Best of all, it has a large double zippered blood proof game bag at your back.



The back game bag is wonder or wonders. It is generous enough to stuff in four snow geese (five if carefully stacked), or a half dozen partridge and some interesting rocks with fossil you found on a mountain top 6 miles from camp. I have used the pouch multiple times to carry up to four ½ gallon water bottles when hunting near the tree line for blue grouse and still have room for a limit after they were near empty. A very functional design indeed.

My last jacket on sale cost me \$236 US dollars (including shipping) and 10 days to get to my door. Contact information for Oxford Blue is: 60-62 Constitution Hill Birmingham, B19 3JT, England; Telephone: +44 (0) 121 233 1372; Email: <https://>





Recipe: Creamy Pheasant Orzo Bake, Tuscan Style (One-Pan)

from: <https://mallorythedietitian.com>

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 lb pheasant breasts *or*
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt *more to taste*
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- ½ cup sun-dried tomatoes
- 3 cup baby spinach
- 1.5 cup orzo pasta, dry
- 3 cup chicken broth *or chicken stock*
- ¼ cup Greek yogurt or sour cream
- 1 cup shredded parmesan cheese



Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Prepare a 9x13 inch baking dish with cooking spray. Dry the pheasant breasts with a paper towel and use a sharp knife to cut it into cubes about 1 inch in size. Add the pheasant to the large baking dish and coat it in the olive oil and seasonings. Be sure all the pheasant pieces are coated.

Add fresh garlic, herbs, and sun-dried tomatoes. Then add the cherry tomatoes and spinach.

Top with the dry orzo and chicken broth. Add the Greek yogurt and whisk it into the chicken broth until it's dissolved. Then stir everything together with a wooden spoon.

Bake in the preheated oven for 35-40 minutes or until the orzo is tender and the pheasant reaches an internal temperature of 165°F (75°C). Bake time will vary.

Stir in the parmesan cheese when it comes out of the oven and give it a quick taste. Add more salt as needed then let it set for 10-15 minutes before serving. *The sauce will be very liquidy when it first comes out of the oven. This is normal. It'll thicken as it sets!

Hint: *If you want to add a bit more flavor and have time, sear the pheasant in a large skillet with the olive oil and seasonings on medium heat to medium-high heat for 2-3 minutes until its golden brown. Then add to the baking dish with the other ingredients.*



Share your recipes with the readers of the Whoa Post.

Email them to thewhoapost@gmail.com



Photo Gallery

Do you have photos you would like to share with the readers of the Whoa Post? Please send them to thewhoapost@gmail.com

Kaycee relaxing after a morning quail hunt in January.

Photo by Jim Cassara



Same day, different perspective. Training on the North Dakota winter prairie.

Photos by Pete Wax

UKC Events

March 28th & 29th

Spencer, IA

Great North Epagneul Breton Gun Dog Club

Type of Events: Type W, TAN

Contact: Tasha Pleskac at 320 420 2442 ta-sha@hhfgundogs.com

April 14-18, 2026

CEB-US National Conclave

Eureka, KS

Liberated Trial, TAN, WRT

Contact: Jeff Pleskac Jeff.Pleskac@ceb-us.com



***"If you think dogs can't count, try putting three dog biscuits
in your pocket and then give him only two of them."***

Phil Pastoret



**Madison River Anglers
Rest & Retreat**

Ric Haulenbeck, owner/operator

PO Box 569
Ennis, MT 59729
714-402-5344



ric33lbp@aol.com

Stud Dogs



Gun Noir Tuxedo Machine a Chase WRT

Breeder- Dave Flynn of Sugar Creek

Tux originates from the Cliathen Line

DOB 5-30-17 OFA Good

Ric Haulenbeck 714-402-5344

ricflyfish@aol.com

Breeders

Coteau Kennel

Pete Wax & Sherry Niesar

Bismarck, North Dakota

sniesar@outlook.com

701-222-8940

www.coteaukennel.com

Hyalite Kennel

Butch Nelson & Karen Paugh

Denton, Montana

406-567-4200

hyaliteknl@yahoo.com

Touchstone Kennel

Coln Johnston

cejohnston@touchstonekennels.com

Touchstonekennels/Facebook

940-642-1037



Are you interested in listing your kennel or stud dog on the Breeders or Stud Dog page of the Whoa Post?

All listings part of a paid membership only. For more information, contact the editor at sniesar@outlook.com

Regional Events

April 11 and 12, 2026

NSTRA Open/ Novice

Fargo, ND

Contact: John Wickenheiser, 701-715-0180,
jpwick4@yahoo.com

April 18 and 19, 2026

Mid North/Big Sky Challenge Trial - NSTRA

Acton, MT

Contact: Brent Underdahl, 406-799-2108

April 25 and 26, 2026

NSTRA

Williston, ND

Contact: Erick Bauer, 218-290-4931, bauereick@yahoo.com

May 1-3, 2026

Acton, MT 59002

Montana Brittany Club – AKC

Field Trial

Contact Tommie Dahl, 406-827-1827

May 3, 2026

Fargo, ND

All Amateur Single/ Double - NSTRA

Contact: Logan Wickenheiser, 701-412-3774, Wildgoose-
chase110@gmail.com

May 23, 24, 25 2026

Regional Championship - NSTRA

Dickinson, ND

Contact Chad Norpel, 701-571-8433, cnorpel@hotmail.com

May 16 -18, 2026

German Wirehaired Pointer Club of Wisconsin - AKC
Field Trial

Sheyenne National Grasslands, Hankinson, ND 58057

Contact: Elizabeth Barret-Dixon 612-865-7556

May 22-24, 2026

German Wirehaired Pointer Club of Wisconsin - AKC
Field Trial

Sheyenne National Grasslands, Hankinson, ND

Contact: Elizabeth Barret-Dixon 612-865-7556

May 29 – 31, 2026

Billings, MT

Yellowstone NAVHDA

NA/GDT/UT

Contact: SARA BAIER, (406) 380-0250

June 13 – 14, 2026

Bismarck, ND

Central Dakota NAVHDA

NA/GDT

Contact: KARA BRAYKO (701) 339-8435

June 20 – 21, 2026

Kindred, ND

Red River NAVHDA

NA

Contact: STEVEN BUCK (701) 729-6483



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