

The next meeting will be held in conjunction with Double Bubble held at the Busch Farm



**Saturday July 11th,
During dinner ~ 6:00pm
2643 Keith Rd.
Winnebago, IL**

**Interested in letting the members of VCOI know about your dogs or services?
Please contact Shelly at skliefoth@yahoo.com to get your ad in the next Bulletin!**

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Midwest Vizsla Field Futurity
Does your breeding have what it takes?

2009 Futurity Winner Kick 'Em Up Bullet
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American Field Registered Event

"Let's keep them litters nominated!"~ Hank Rozanek

Rodney Albin, Standing Secretary
Nomination forms and rules available at
Vizslafuturity.com ***New Website!!

The Vizsla Club of Illinois, Inc
Bulletin Editor
Shelly Kliefoth
135 Lakeview Avenue
Edgerton, WI 53534



The Vizsla Club of Illinois, Inc

July 2009

BULLETIN

A bimonthly newsletter for the members and friends of the VCOI

FC AFC Rebel Rouser Kemberly



I bought Kember when she was 3 years old in 2004, right around the time we were selling our home in Wheaton. That gave us 4 dogs and I thought my wife was going to kill me. It's hard enough selling a house with just one dog but with four, well that's really tough.

Kember was bred by Hank Rozanek of the famed Rebel Rouser Vizslas. She had a very successful Puppy/Derby career achieving all of her championship points. In 2003, Kember won the prestigious Midwest Vizsla Field Futurity and held her birds in that event steady to wing and shot, which is unusual for a derby dog. That same year she won a gun dog stake and was well on the way to her field championship. My fellow field trialers have described her to me in many ways. Rob Tomczack said to me when he thinks of Kember he thinks of style. The first time Rob saw Kember she was running down a tree line at a VCOI field trial held at Des Plaines where she swung around on point while sliding on the ice and ending into a perfect point. Another time, Vic Barger was scouting for me when I ran Kember at the Wisconsin Field trial in the pouring rain. Kember had 7 or 8 finds and handled them just perfect (she won). Vic said to me "that is the best gun dog performance I ever saw - she is just a machine". That is how Kember is when she is "on" just one bird after another like clockwork. Like most field trial dogs she has had her issues, but once she is in that zone she is fun to watch. She achieved her Field Championship in 2005. In 2008 I was breaking Kember's daughter Kayla to wing and shot and was running Kember to simulate competition. I could see Kember's confidence growing and in the fall of 2008 she won 3 of her first 5 stakes that she was entered in and finished her Amateur Field Championship title.

Kember has had 2 litters with us and has produced some very talented pups. Out of Kember's first litter Wegler's Kember Kayla won the prestigious 2007 Midwest Vizsla Futurity, earned her Puppy/Derby points, and has won a 3 point gundog stake all by age 3. Her second litter produced Rivr Runs Thru It, and Tommy's Dixie Chick. Both dogs landed on the top ten list and Dixie went on to win the 2008 Midwest Shooting Dog Derby Classic.

What next for Kember - maybe a Master Hunter title! For the time being, she is retired from field trial competition. She does a great job working my younger dogs on backing as she won't move an inch while on point and will hold forever.

You can't achieve a FC and an AFC without a lot of help along the way and I want to thank some very special people. First I want to thank my wife Sharon for her understanding and partnering with me in this great sport of field trialing. I would like to thank Gina Ordonez for recommending that I buy Kember. Thanks to Hank Rozanek for breeding such a great dog. Special thanks to Jim and Linda Busch for getting me involved in field trialing, mentoring, allowing me train on their farm, and supporting me through the many \$40 now \$50 lessons in numerous field trials. Thanks to Jim Gingrich for allowing me to train on his farm. To all the rest of my field trial buddies too many to list here and you know who you are - thanks for the advice, encouragement, camaraderie, and all the fun! God Bless.

Greg Wegler

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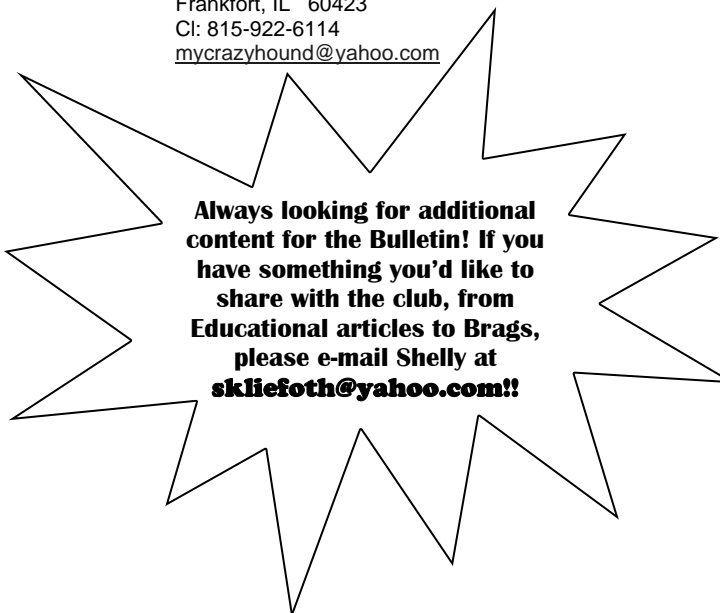
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Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not constitute endorsement by the editorial staff, the VCOI or it's Board of Directors. The VCOI endorses the efforts of the VCA and the OFA to eliminate hip dysplasia in dogs, and encourages it's members to use only normal breeding stock. Advertising Rates Per Issue: Half Page \$10.00 Quarter Page \$5.00 Business Card \$2.50 Color ads, any size, will require a price quote before printing. Ads are limited to one half page per family per issue. Editor may limit advertising due to space limitations. Ads CANNOT be run until payment is received. All ads must be paid in full before printing and contain the full OFA rating of the sire and the dam. Copies of the OFA certificate must be sent with the ad. Deadline for submission to the Bulletin is on the first of each even numbered month. Deadlines are non-negotiable! Cover stories are limited to one per family membership in a 12 month period. Color covers are available, please ask the editor for a price quote to cover additional printing costs. All brags, articles, and submissions must be submitted in writing either through the minutes or directly to the Editor. All photos submitted to the Bulletin must include a Self Addressed Stamped Envelope. Photos without return postage will remain the property of the VCOI. Exception to the cover photo, which will be returned at the VCOI's expense. Digital photos are preferred.

BULLETIN COVERS!

If your dog has completed a prefix title (CH, FC, AFC, CT, MACH, OTCH, etc.) and you would like to reserve a cover, please contact Shelly Kliefoth at skliefoth@yahoo.com. Next available cover is July 2010. Obviously we have many very talented members!! As soon as your dog completes the title, please let me know if you would like a cover.

Virtual Vizsla

VCOI Website: www.vizslaclubofillinois.org
Subscribe to the VCOI e-mail list: VCOIinc-subscribe@yahoo.com



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To 11/09

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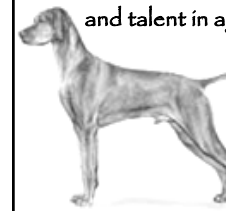
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To 11/09

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Here is a quick shot of help needed for upcoming club events. These events are a great way to get involved and help out the club.

We are looking for an Education Chairperson
If interested contact Jeff Parise for details.

VCOI Fall Hunt Test—September 7th
Contact Jeff or Kathy Engelsen for more information
They will be looking for gunners, bird planters, and line marshals

VCOI Fall Field Trial—September 19th & 20th
Contact FT Chairman Mike Dalby or FT Secretary Kim Barker For more information

Si Cisco. Si Cisco Run. Si Cisco Win. Finish, Cisco, Finish!

MIDNIGHT RUN VIZSLAS



Needing only a single retrieving point to earn his Amateur Field Championship, Cisco finished in grand fashion by winning a 3-point AGD retrieving major at the Fort Detroit GWP Walking Field Trial on May 23, 2009.

The following day, needing only two points to finish his Field Championship, Cisco earned his final points with a 4-point OGD major win at the Vizsla Club of Michigan Walking Field Trial. What a weekend!

Cisco won six gun dog majors in twelve months, including two 4-point Open majors and a 4-point Amateur major, at both horseback and walking trials. Cisco never won a broke dog stake with less than 14 dogs entered, and five of his six major wins were against all-breed competition.

While FC AFC Si Cisco JH was chasing his titles, his daughter Bela (Silent Bell) spent 8 months at #1 on the VCA's Top Ten Puppy/Derby list. Cisco has exceeded even my highest expectations and I could not be more proud of him and his offspring.

Si Cisco at a trial near you this fall!

FC AFC Si Cisco JH

Co-Owner/Handler: Jon Peck

Co-owner: Linda Busch

Ad by Mira Designs

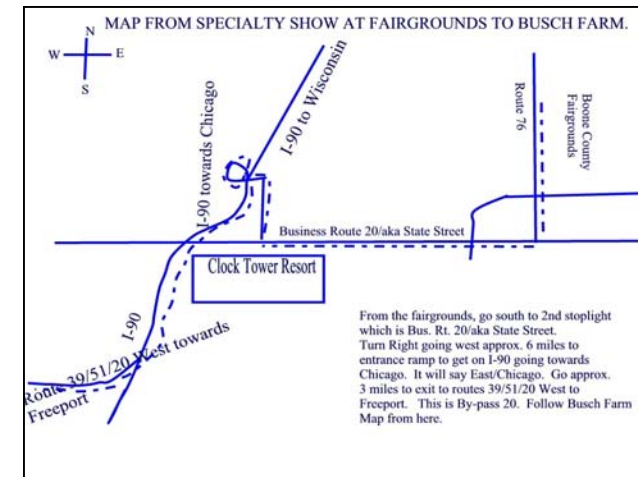
VCOI Specialty Show

Saturday July 11th, 2009 at the Kishwaukee Kennel Club show, Belvidere, IL. There will be **SPECIAL PRIZES AND GIVEAWAYS** this year at the specialty show.

FREE LUNCH.....on the show grounds for all Vizsla folks. Check ringside to get the location of where the luncheon will be held. Bring your own chairs and join us for socialization, good fun, and good food.

Check the VCOI web site after July 1st for our ring number and what time we will be showing. We should be showing around 8:00 or 8:30 a.m. Even if you aren't entered, come out and help cheer our dogs.

Special Thanks to VCOI member Jennifer Catalanotto for the beautiful artwork on the trophies!



Map to Double Bubble from Specialty

President's Message

I hope you enjoy this edition of the VCOI Bulletin. Here you will see examples of where our members have recently won in competition on the agility course, in the conformation ring, and in the field. So many of the best dogs in the country are from right here in our own backyard.

May gave us a fantastic walking Field Trial on a new date in an attempt to avoid the December weather. We also hosted another highly successful Training Day and Hunt Test with huge numbers of participants in early June. In July, make plans to attend the Kishwaukee Kennel Club Conformation Show which features the VCOI Specialty Show. That same weekend is the Double Bubble with the Club meeting.

I hope that you are enjoying the summer with your dogs. I look forward to seeing you at one of our Club events soon.

Jeff Parise

Welcome New VCOI Members!

Megan & John Looby IV
707 Cherry Ave
Lake Forest, IL 60045

Lee Chencinski & John Schumacher
511 W Division #311
Chicago, IL 60610

Jerry & Lynn Simek
14138 S Camdan Rd
Homer Glen, IL 60491

CORRECTION:

* In May's Brags we reported that Saginaw Diamond Dan owned by Mark Johnson was the 2009
* VCA National Champion ~ he actually won at the NVA National Championship (National Vizsla
* Association) not the VCA (Vizsla Club of America).
*

John Bacik from Strongsville, Ohio at NSTRA Ohio Region Elimination competition.



Bailey is out of Si Cisco

The weekend of May 2-3, the NSTRA Ohio Region Elimination was held, in Wooster Ohio, with 56 dogs entered. It was comprised of past champions & placement dogs from the past year from the Ohio region. There were 21 GSP's, 15 ES's, 13 EP's, 5 GWH's, 1 Britt & 1 Vizsla entered. Bailey made the cut on Saturday, by matching a 3x NSTRA champion setter. The other handler said it was the best Vizsla he'd ever seen (apparently NSTRA doesn't see too many). The judge liked him also, commenting that on one of his finds "that was the best he'd seen all day". On Sunday they ran 32 dogs in 2 fields & we drew the last brace in "A" field. By the time we ran, the gallery of 20 had dispersed, & only the Field Marshal & the handler I ran against on Saturday, were watching. Bailey shot out & we had 3 finds & 3 retrieves in the first 5 minutes. We ended with 5 finds & 5 retrieves for a 985.75 score. The next best dog, in "A" field, had a 3 & 3 (we smoked em!). Bailey was the "A" field winner. It also put Bailey in the top 6 for the weekend & into the next round. There was a break after our brace, so I went into the clubhouse for lunch. There was a buzz going around about our run. All I could hear was Vizsla this & Vizsla that. It was the judges, the Field Marshal, & the two handlers I ran against the last 2 runs describing our run. Wow, Its' like they never saw a Vizsla before. (Of course, we were the only one in the trial) The region president told me we made history, as no other Vizsla had made it into the top 6 before in the Ohio region. Next was 3 braces, with the top 6 dogs. We ran in the last brace, & had a 3 & 3 run for a 623 score. Our brace mate had a 3 & 2 + a back & beat us by only 18 points (they had a find in the final minute of the run). We ended up in third place. A few more points & we would have been in the hour long run off for first place. Our brace mate went into the finals & won it. All this, & we had only ran in 2 braces (placing in one of them) for the entire year leading up to this trial. My work was non-existent, so I had put NSTRA on the back burner. Hopefully, things will pick up & I'll be able to run in more next year. Prizes received were a nice trophy, 4 bags of Pro-Plan, & a silver engraved belt buckle. Needless to say, John is very proud!



National Shoot-To-Retrieve competition—Ohio

VCOI 2010 Calendar Contest

We're looking for the next Calendar Boy/Girl for our 2010 VCOI Calendar Contest!!

*****VCOI Calendar Contest Entry Rules*****

Each entry must be submitted with a \$10 entry fee.

Checks should be made payable to VCOI.

**Voting will take place at the Double Bubble only!
You must be present to vote!**

The photo receiving the most votes wins a cash prize based on the number of entries!

Photos meeting the following requirements will be accepted:

- « The photo must have been taken by a VCOI Member.
- NO PROFESSIONAL OR COPYRIGHTED PHOTOS
- « Vizslas ONLY—No other breeds please!!
- « Humans may be present in the photos—NO FACES!
- « All entries must be made in 8x10 print AND digital format via e-mail or CD
- « Photo submissions must be labeled on the back to include:
 - « Photographer Info—include your phone number and e-mail address
 - « Dog Info—name(s), owner(s), and a caption describing your photo that we may choose to include in the calendar

Entries may be submitted by mail to: **Shelley Gabriel**
106 Coghill Street
Joliet, IL 60435

Mailed entries must be received by July 7, 2009

8x10 print & digital copy on CD may be submitted at the Busch Farm Saturday, July 11th

Questions: shebbykay@hotmail.com



Upcoming Events

Photo~Calendar Contest—July 7th is the deadline to submit entries or pictures can be brought to Double Bubble.

VCOI Specialty Show —July 11th

Kishwaukee Valley Kennel Club
Boone County Fairgrounds, Belvidere, IL.

Double Bubble—July 11th—12th

Busch Farm, Winnebago, IL

VCOI Fall Hunt Test—September 7th

Des Plaines Wildlife Area, Joliet, IL

VCOI Fall Field Trial September 19th & 20th

Des Plaines Wildlife Area, Joliet, IL

VCOI Awards Banquet ~ Holiday Dinner—January 16, 2010

Gibson's Steakhouse, Rosemont, IL

More Brags

From Jeff & Kathy Engelsman:

We have just received confirmation from the Vizsla Club of America to acknowledge our foundation bitch: CH Quantum Abbey-Dabbey-Do SH ROM Top Producer and her three daughters in earning their Registry Of Merit (ROM) Certificates too! In order to qualify you have to have a certain number of offspring, and have at least 2 out of the 6 AKC venues of titles earned. Our Dams offspring had 5 out of the 6 venues titled.

As you can imagine, we are totally just on cloud 9!!

JNEK's New Registry Of Merit Dams (ROM's)

CH JNEK's Little Miss Swing Kat JH ROM
CH JNEK's Sweet Charity JH ROM (Top Producer)
CH JNEK's Royal Elegance JH ROM #1 Top Producing Dam 2008

And-----

AKC 2008 Top Sporting Sire and Dams in their breeds.

#1 Top Producing Sire in 2008 for Vizslas:
BIS MBISS VBISS CH JNEK's King Ralph JH ROM
#1 Top Producing Dam in 2008 for Vizslas:
CH JNEK's Royal Elegance JH ROM

From Jim & Linda Busch:

Friday, May 15th - Show Me Vizsla Club Specialty - JB's Asker Bout Birds, owned by Jody Beckley from Kansas won Best in Specialty Sweepstakes. "Kinze" is an Archiee daughter nine months old.

Friday, May 15th - Sunflower Kennel Club of Olathe, KS - JB's Asker Bout Birds, owner Jody Beckley, also won Winner's Bitch and Best of Winners from the Puppy Bitches 6 to 9 months old class.

Saturday, May 16th - Sunflower Kennel Club of Olathe, KS - JB's Asker Bout Birds, owner Jody Beckley, again won a four point major going Winner's Bitch and Best of Winners.

Saturday, May 16th - Sunflower Kennel Club of Olathe, KS - Archiee's No Doubt, owned by Carla and Bob Mayhew from Kansas, won a four point major going Winner's Dog from the American-Bred class - Another Archiee kid.

FC O Mega, owner Jim Busch, won Winner's Reserve handled by Sheila Stahr.

Sunday, May 17th - Sunflower Kennel Club of Olathe, KS - JB's Asker Bout Birds won Winner's Bitch for one point.

(THAT WAS A TOTAL OF 9 POINTS WON BY "KINZE" FOR THE WEEKEND!)

We also wish to thank all those involved in the training and handling of FC/AFC Si Cisco, JH to his recent new titles: Lee Sienkowski for breaking; Jerry Jordan for pattern improvement; and co-owner Jon Peck for continuing training and superb handling at field events. And, thanks to all the field trial scouts who have been a part of this winning team.

Braggs Page



Double Bubble—July 11-12, 2009



Saturday morning is the dog show at the Boone County Fairgrounds in Belvidere. Vizslas show early (usually around 8 a.m. or 9 a.m.) if you are interested in attending and watching. Time will be posted on the club's web site later. Dogs are not supposed to be on the grounds unless they are entered in the show. The vizslas will be in the ring for about 1 1/2 hours. There will be all breeds of dogs at the show so you can enjoy watching other breeds as well. However, it's really best not to take a dog to the show unless it is entered. If you are not going to participate in the hunt test training at Busch Farm at noon, then it is best to leave your dog at home on Saturday.

If you have to take your dog with you Saturday to the show, then have it on a normal collar and leash but not a pinch collar as this is not acceptable at a show. It will most likely be too hot to leave it in a car during the show. If you have enough time, you can go to Busch Farm first and leave them in crates in a shady spot somewhere until you return from the show. Be sure to bring a crate for any dog you bring whether it's Saturday or Sunday as there will be times when you will want to put the dog away. It will probably be hot that weekend and there will be plenty of places where you can put your dog in the shade in a crate.

Saturday noon at Busch Farm there will be a hunt test demonstration and training activity. It will most likely last for three or more hours.

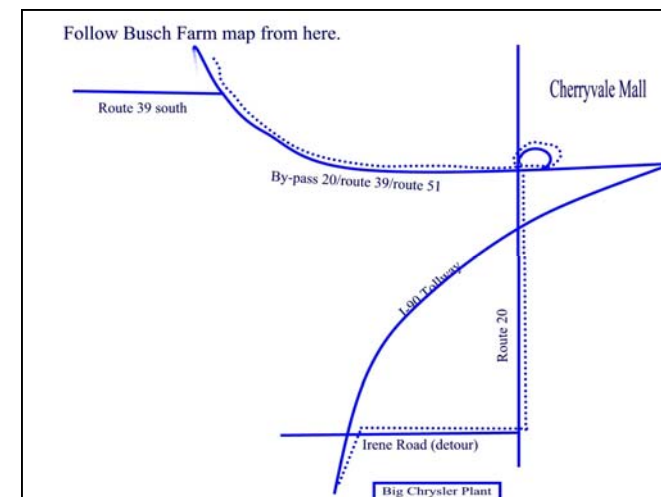
About 6:00 p.m. if you are a club member you will get two steak dinners. If you are not a club member, there is a charge of \$10 per person. The club provides the steaks. Ladies bring a dish to pass, so it is a feast of food. Then about midway through dinner we will start the club meeting. It might be interesting if you've never been to a meeting. If you can bring a dish to pass, that would be great. Bring your own lawn chairs too. There will be some chairs, but the more the better.

Sunday is the day when most people show up and there is a huge variety of things going on all from 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. at Busch Farm. It is a great family day for kids and dogs.

Sunday we start at 9:00 a.m. Locate and point goes on in the field behind the barn and you sign up when you arrive. At various times during the day there are a variety of activities going on. There will be some rally/obedience equipment set up in one area of the yard and people can try it and then someone will give a talk about rally and how to get involved. There will be a conformation ring and someone will be discussing how to get involved in shows and what is required. There will NOT be CGC testing this year. We will have a wing and string contest for the little pups, bird planting contests for the kids, pigeon races, rubber duck races, silly fun things for dogs, Search and Rescue demonstration, people selling vizsla stuff, and a vizsla photographer. The calendar photo contest is the highlight of Sunday. If you have a cute 8 x 10 photo of your dog (no people in pictures unless faces cannot be seen) and want to submit it for the contest, the cost is \$10 per photo and they must be printed in landscape format. They must be given to the calendar chairman early Sunday morning. Everyone gets four votes if they are a member.

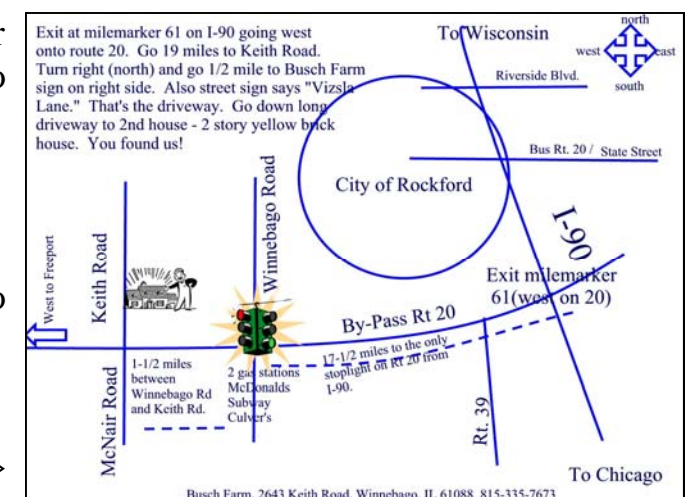
**Contact Linda Busch, Event Chairman if you have questions.
815-335-7673 or lbusch@aeroinc.net**

DIRECTIONS: The normal route here off I-90 around mile marker 61 has been changed from the west (north) and closed coming from the suburbs or Chicago—east (south).



Detour
Map to
Busch
Farm

Map to
Busch
Farm



Cisco (FC AFC Si Cisco JH), who is co-owned by VCOI members Jon Peck & Linda Busch, was named the Vizsla Club of Michigan's Amateur Gun Dog of the Year for 2008.



Ch. Siennapointe's See Ya Polarkap " Hannah "
CWVC Specialty -- Best of Opposite
60 entries - 20 Champions
Breeders Cathy Gallagher --Sharon Misiak
Owners--Kathy Harmer -Sue Barnes -Cathy Gallagher



On March 19, 2009, VCOI member Phil Rohs and his dog, Bela (Silent Bell), took 2nd Runner-Up in the Derby Classic at the National Vizsla Association's National Championship in Grovespring, MO. This year's Derby featured 41 dogs, the largest in NVA history. Bela also spent the better part of the last year as the Vizsla Club of America's #1 Top Ten Puppy/Derby Dog before aging out in March 2009. Congrats Phil & Bela on their accomplishments! Bela is sired by FC AFC Si Cisco JH, who is co-owned by VCOI members Jon Peck & Linda Busch, and was bred by Jon Peck. Bela's Dam, Rio Le Rouge, was the VCA's #1 Top Ten Puppy/Derby Dog in 2006.



Tricky (Midnight Run Won't Get Fooled Again), who is owned and handled by VCOI member Jon Peck, won the Open Puppy stake at the Vizsla Club of Michigan Spring Field Trial in April, in her very first field trial run. Tricky was bred by Jon Peck, and her sire is NFC FC Berry's Bad Boy, who is trained and handled by VCOI member Jerry Jordan, and her dam is Rio Le Rouge.



From Victor & Colomba Barger:
Hi-Spirit "Spirit" had a successful
spring field trial season with the following placements:
1st in AWP @ VCOI FT, 1st in OP @ VCOI FT,
2nd in OP @ VCA FT, 1st in AWP @ VCEI FT
1st in OP @ VCEI FT + 2 Derby placements

From Amy Wukotich: Vicky (ARCHX UCD URO1 UAG2 FO Priden Joy Twilight Victoria CD RE JH OA NAP OAJ NFP CD-H RL1X RL2X RL3 NAC CL4-R CL4-H CL3-S CL3-F) was High in Trial dog at the April 19 UKC Rally trial under Judge Ron Bidstrup with a perfect score of 100.

VCOI FIELD TRIAL REPORT FOR MAY 23-24, 2009



This past Memorial Day weekend was a weekend to remember. The club hosted its first Spring FT at the Gingrich/Bush Farm. The weather was fantastic, accommodations extraordinary, with camaraderie and respect throughout. Not to mention the presence of high caliber big running dogs.

The weekend began with the sun rising and the smell of fresh muffins, pastries, donuts, and coffee. Jim and Carol Gingrich provided one of their steel buildings as the central hub for the weekend's events. The building was huge with three large retractable doors that were open to allow the moderate breeze in. This gave front row seating to the days cast-offs while sipping your fresh coffee. Michelle Princer continued to do an unbelievable job as secretary and provided pizza for lunch, and the evening's dinner highlighted with chicken and BBQ ribs all catered from her restaurant.

To me, the most important part of the event was the volunteers. It all started with the donation of the Gingrich's and Busch's to allow the club to hold this event at their home. They both provided/donated space, electricity, horses, horse accommodations, water, gallery transportation, skunk removal spray, and more to everyone that needed it. The line marshals, captained by Greg Wegler, were Kim Barker (Sat.), Sharon Wegler (Sat.), and Mary Heinz (Sun.). All did their job flawlessly with only minor shouting at Mike Dalby (it's Dalby - so pretty much the norm—just kidding). The bird planters, headed by Victor Barger, included Tim May (Sat.), Jim Busch (Sat.), Eric Kliefoth (Sat./Sun.), Jaden, Eric and Shelly Kliefoth's grandson) (Sat./Sun.), and Jason Tunks (Sat.). Let me add that Eric and Jaden planted all day Sunday and I wouldn't be surprised if Jaden becomes more of a regular on the scene at the ripe age of 8. Let's also not forget the gunners too, captained by Mike Dalby, were Marty Hull and Chad Morsch.

The judges did an outstanding job too. They consisted of Victor Barger, Mike Booker, Jim Busch, Jim Gingrich, Marty Hull, Jeff Parise, and Greg Wegler. Most were in the saddle for more than one stake with Mike Booker judging four and still managing to graciously dismount from his horse as it stumbled and fell.

Finally, Brad LePoudre came through and made sure all the birds were accounted for and provided bird planting and pictures of all the retrieving stakes.

As the trial came to a close, fun was had by all. Some earned their first blue ribbon and others their first ribbon to date. Brian Gingrich had a great weekend handling Jake to two blues, even though Jim tried to steal some of his thunder.

I sincerely would like to thank everyone for their patience, generosity, and guidance, especially Linda Busch. I must have sent her what seems like a million emails to try to make sure everything was perfect. I truly had a great time and can't wait to see you all again.

Brian Johnson
Spring FT Chairman



Results:
Open Gun Dog (Ret.)
1. Cheyenne Tim May
2.-4. Withheld

Open Derby
1. Jake Jim Gingrich
2. JR Rodney Albin
3. Meeka Jim Gingrich
4. Hemi Chad Morsch

Amateur Limited Gun Dog (Ret.)
1. Jake Jim Gingrich
2. Stella Laura Miller
3. Rusty Mike Dalby
4. Rockit Dog Jeff Parise

Open Puppy
1. Bogart Dan Maurer
2. Magnum Tim May
3. Rudi Scott Vogel
4. Deuce Dawn Heintz

Amateur Gun Dog
1. Greta Mike Dalby
2. Stella Laura Miller
3. Gracie George Haines
4. Rockit Dog Jeff Parise

Amateur Walking Derby
1. Jack Jim Gingrich
2. Bull Laura Miller
3. Spirit Victor Barger
4. Hoss Ron Chenoweth

Open Limited Gun Dog
1. Rusty Mike Dalby
2. Rock Mike Dalby
3. Rockit Dog Jeff Parise
4. Withheld



were more likely to develop hypothyroidism.(2) This study is consistent with the results of another study in which neutering and spaying was determined to be the most significant gender-associated risk factor for development of hypothyroidism.(17) Infectious diseases were more common in dogs that were spayed or neutered at 24 weeks or less as opposed to those undergoing gonadectomy at more than 24 weeks.(18) Finally, the AKC-CHF report demonstrated a higher incidence of adverse reactions to vaccines in neutered dogs as compared to intact.(12)

I have gathered these studies to show that our practice of routinely spaying or neutering every dog at or before the age of 6 months is not a black-and-white issue. Clearly more studies need to be done to evaluate the effects of prepubertal spaying and neutering, particularly in canine athletes.

Currently, I have significant concerns with spaying or neutering canine athletes before puberty. But of course, there is the pet overpopulation problem. How can we prevent the production of unwanted dogs while still leaving the gonads to produce the hormones that are so important to canine growth and development? One answer would be to perform vasectomies in males and tubal ligation in females, to be followed after maturity by ovariectomy in females to prevent mammary cancer and pyometra. One possible disadvantage is that vasectomy does not prevent some unwanted behaviors associated with males such as marking and humping. On the other hand, females and neutered males frequently participate in these behaviors too. Really, training is the best solution for these issues. Another possible disadvantage is finding a veterinarian who is experienced in performing these procedures. Nonetheless, some do, and if the procedures were in greater demand, more veterinarians would learn them.

I believe it is important that we assess each situation individually. For canine athletes, I currently recommend that dogs and bitches be spayed or neutered after 14 months of age.

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Early Spay-Neuter Considerations for the Canine Athlete

One Veterinarian's Opinion

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Those of us with responsibility for the health of canine athletes need to continually read and evaluate new scientific studies to ensure that we are taking the most appropriate care of our performance dogs. This article provides evidence through a number of recent studies to suggest that veterinarians and owners working with canine athletes should revisit the standard protocol in which all dogs that are not intended for breeding are spayed and neutered at or before 6 months of age.

Orthopedic Considerations

A study by Salmeri *et al* in 1991 found that bitches spayed at 7 weeks grew significantly taller than those spayed at 7 months, who were taller than those not spayed (or presumably spayed after the growth plates had closed).(1) A study of 1444 Golden Retrievers performed in 1998 and 1999 also found bitches and dogs spayed and neutered at less than a year of age were significantly taller than those spayed or neutered at more than a year of age.(2) The sex hormones, by communicating with a number of other growth-related hormones, promote the closure of the growth plates at puberty (3), so the bones of dogs or bitches neutered or spayed before puberty continue to grow. Dogs that have been spayed or neutered well before puberty can frequently be identified by their longer limbs, lighter bone structure, narrow chests and narrow skulls. This abnormal growth frequently results in significant alterations in body proportions and particularly the lengths (and therefore weights) of certain bones relative to others. For example, if the femur has achieved its genetically determined normal length at 8 months when a dog gets spayed or neutered, but the tibia, which normally stops growing at 12 to 14 months of age continues to grow, then an abnormal angle may develop at the stifle. In addition, with the extra growth, the lower leg below the stifle likely becomes heavier (because it is longer), and may cause increased stresses on the cranial cruciate ligament. In addition, sex hormones are critical for achieving peak bone density.(4) These structural and physiological alterations may be the reason why at least one recent study showed that spayed and neutered dogs had a higher incidence of CCL rupture.(5) Another recent study showed that dogs spayed or neutered before 5 1/2 months had a significantly higher incidence of hip dysplasia than those spayed or neutered after 5 1/2 months of age, although it should be noted that in this study there were no standard criteria for the diagnosis of hip dysplasia.(6) Nonetheless, breeders of purebred dogs should be cognizant of these studies and should consider

whether or not pups they bred were spayed or neutered when considering breeding decisions.

Cancer Considerations

A retrospective study of cardiac tumors in dogs showed that there was a 5 times greater risk of hemangiosarcoma, one of the three most common cancers in dogs, in spayed bitches than intact bitches and a 2.4 times greater risk of hemangiosarcoma in neutered dogs as compared to intact males.(7) A study of 3218 dogs demonstrated that dogs that were neutered before a year of age had a significantly increased chance of developing bone cancer.(8) A separate study showed that neutered dogs had a two-fold higher risk of developing bone cancer.(9) Despite the common belief that neutering dogs helps prevent prostate cancer, at least one study suggests that neutering provides no benefit.(10) There certainly is evidence of a slightly increased risk of mammary cancer in female dogs after one heat cycle, and for increased risk with each subsequent heat. While about 30 % of mammary cancers are malignant, as in humans, when caught and surgically removed early the prognosis is very good.(12) Luckily, canine athletes are handled frequently and generally receive prompt veterinary care.

Behavioral Considerations

The study that identified a higher incidence of cranial cruciate ligament rupture in spayed or neutered dogs also identified an increased incidence of sexual behaviors in males and females that were neutered early.(5) Further, the study that identified a higher incidence of hip dysplasia in dogs neutered or spayed before 5 1/2 months also showed that early age gonadectomy was associated with an increased incidence of noise phobias and undesirable sexual behaviors.(6) A recent report of the American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation reported significantly more behavioral problems in spayed and neutered bitches and dogs. The most commonly observed behavioral problem in spayed females was fearful behavior and the most common problem in males was aggression.(12)

Other Health Considerations

A number of studies have shown that there is an increase in the incidence of female urinary incontinence in dogs spayed early (13), although this finding has not been universal. Certainly there is evidence that ovarian hormones are critical for maintenance of genital tissue structure and contractility. (14, 15)Neutering also has been associated with an increased likelihood of urethral sphincter incontinence in males.(16) This problem is an inconvenience, and not usually life-threatening, but nonetheless one that requires the dog to be medicated for life. A health survey of several thousand Golden Retrievers showed that spayed or neutered dogs

FROM THE AGILITY RING..

Melissa Thomas the Agility reporter from the Vizsla Club of America has posted the current standings for 2009 on their website. Two of our member's dogs are in the Top Ten. CH Jnek's Royal Legacy RA JH MX MXJ (Lexi) owned and handled by Tamara Sparks is currently #1 and Smooth Rebel's Autumn Jewel RA MX MXJ OF (Ruby) owned and handled by Elizabeth Barshack is #2 in the Excellent Classes. Both teams are also in the running for the AKC Agility Invitational held December 2009 in Long Beach, CA.

Let's wish both of these dedicated handlers the best of luck! For more information on current standings please visit <http://clubs.akc.org/vizsla/agility.html> For information on the AKC Agility Invitational please visit <http://www.akc.org/events/agility/invitational/>



Ruby ~ AD Smooth Rebel's Autumn Jewel RA MX MXJ OF on May 17, 2009 at Agility Ability in Plano, IL running Excellent Standard. She took 2nd Place. Photo courtesy of Kris Garra.

VCOI Field Trial Pictures



"Gracie" holding point while dad George Haines kicks up the bird.



Jeff Parise getting ready to run with "Rockit Dog".
Field Trial photos by Shelly Kliefoth



Vizsla Club of Illinois, Inc. Bulletin

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Start of one of the braces. We had large galleries for most of the braces. The location was perfect for spectators. It truly was a great weekend!!



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