

## Northwest Flat-Coated Retriever Club



### Important Dates:

**\*March 10/11: Meet the Breed at the Seattle Show. Contact Rick Oswald for more info. Rick Oswald204@gmail.com**

**\*March 31/April 1: Supported Entry at Albany. Contact Lura Dunn for more info. turalura@comcast.net**

# Flat-Coat Times

Winter 2018

## Therapy Dogs: Working to Improve the Lives of Others

Flatcoated retrievers, with so much love to share, make excellent therapy dogs. Many of our dogs volunteer regularly at schools, nursing homes, hospitals, libraries, and senior facilities. In this article, Mary Aykens tells us her dogs' stories of therapy work and we take a look at the how to certify dogs for therapy programs..

Even as a young dog, CH MACH Rainshadow's Summer Breeze CDX RE "Bree" loved children. She has logged hundreds of therapy visits.



Vicki Peterson's Dax wears his TDI scarf and nametag for this 2018 therapy visit. Both of Vicki's dogs are certified with Therapy Dog International.



Dogs receive identification cards after they certify with TDI. When kids ask Chris Cornell why his dog is wearing a nametag, he responds "That's no nametag! That's my dog's driver's license!"

## *More About Therapy Dogs*

Mary Aykens relates Mario's story:

Being part of a therapy dog handler/dog team is one of the most rewarding ways to help in your community. For me it all began when Mario and I took the certification test at the 2014 FCR Specialty in Albany, OR. Once he passed the test and became certified, we connected with the other teams in Kitsap County. We are lucky because there are many teams and many places to visit.

We began going to nursing homes and assisted living sites as well as schools and libraries. Mario loved visiting "his" people, especially the kids. The nursing homes are usually kept quite warm and the dogs are encouraged to put their front paws up on the side of the beds of those patients who are in bed. Mario wasn't a huge fan of "paws up", but usually obliged. In one room, a man had both legs amputated and was lying in bed under a sheet with his legs spread.

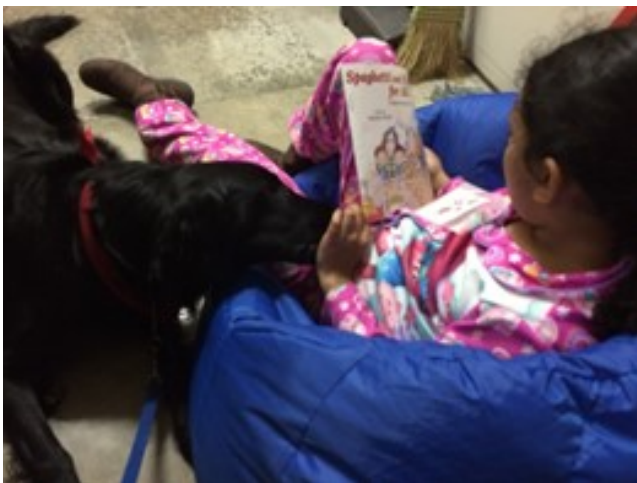
He was warm and so was bare-chested. He wanted Mario to get closer. Finally, Mario leapt up on the bed between the man's legs, then plopped down and put his head on his chest giving him a kiss on the chin. I was horrified but the man was ecstatic! He loved cuddling with Mario, his new favorite dog. While Mario enjoyed visiting his peeps there, he loved the children the most.

We visited West Hills Stem Academy after school Success! Program once each week to read with kids. We also visited the Sylvan Branch of the Kitsap library System twice each month. He was very popular at both places. He had a heart for all kids and seemed to instinctively know how to interact with each one to meet their needs. Mario and I also visited the Sylvan Branch of the Kitsap Library System twice each month. At the library he had his regulars who came to read to him. He was very patient with their little sibling toddlers who flopped on him and hugged him a little too hard. He'd just lick them and let them cuddle.

At Success! a boy named Nate had serious behavior problems and had difficulty getting along with the other students and the staff. He exhibited none of these problems with Mario. Nate often would see us arrive and would slink from his chair to the floor and then crawl under the desks to reach Mario to cuddle. He often was caught doing this and finally learned that if he would wait until instructions were given, he could read to Mario first. Nate read to him every week and we all noticed that he was improving socially. He began to make a couple of friends and his interactions with the staff had improved. The staff gave Mario most of the credit.



Mario at the library.



Mario reading at the Success! Program and Maggie visiting a nursing home.



## *Even More About Therapy Dogs*

### Therapy Dog Groups:

There are therapy dog groups in many communities. For example, Chris Cornell and two friends started “Olympic Gentle Paws” in 2000. They are very popular and often requested for school events such as read-ins. They visit over 20 facilities, including hospitals, the public library, preschools, elementary schools, senior centers, and nursing homes. Mary Aykens belongs to such a group in the Kitsap area. From their Christmas party picture below, you can see that all breeds of dogs can work as therapy dogs.



To find a group in your area: Do a quick internet search. Ask at your vet’s office. Ask at the elementary school!

### Certification:

Much like a Canine Good Citizen (CGC) test, the Therapy Dog International Test contains exercises that simulate a therapy visit. The TDI test consists of 13 individual situations. For example, your dog will encounter a person in a wheelchair, or perhaps a person using a walker or crutches. The dog will see food on the floor, and must “leave it!” In another scenario, a helper holds the dog for one minute while the handler goes out of the dog’s sight. In another situation, the dog will be placed in a bustling “crowd” situation. And of course, your dog will meet a child. The total time involved depends on the number of dogs being tested.

The test is given by a licensed evaluator at many dog shows, club events, and training facilities. Our very own club member Chris Cornell is a licensed evaluator and administers the test frequently.

To find date/location for a test in your area, go to <http://www.tdi-dog.org> and select the “How to Join” tab, and then choose “Upcoming Tests.” From the same page you can download the actual test requirements.

## *President's Message*

### President's Message

As we enter 2018, I hope that all our club members, their human and furry family members are healthy and eager for what the New Year will bring us! 2018 brings a new slate of Board of Directors to the NWFCRC. I want to thank Joyce Brackney and Pat Boydston for their dedication to the club and for serving on the Board as they have decided to take a break from the Board. During the recent election, the club membership has elected Lizzy Ramhorst and Lynda Spangler to the Board! Our Board membership consists of the following:

President: Lura Dunn

Vice- President: Lizzy Ramhorst

Secretary: Jennifer Stanley

Membership Secretary: Linda Monroe

Treasurer: Mary Aykens

Newsletter editor: Jo Chinn

Board members: Adora Lamphere, Lynda Spangler and Susan Kravit-Smith

We had a busy 2017 with a field education event, a WC/WCX test, Dock Diving introduction, supported entries at conformation shows and social events. Our Board will be planning for 2018 events soon and welcome your ideas! It is exciting that our club has grown and we had so much participation in our various events.

Our Supported entry at the Chintimini Albany show is March 31st. Even if you don't plan on attending any of the show events, come on over for our annual dinner at the Cascade Grill, which is adjacent to the hotels by the Fairgrounds. We will have a social hour from 5:30-6:30 and dinner around 6:30pm. Dinner and drinks are a no-host event. Please RSVP to Lura Dunn at [turalura@comcast.net](mailto:turalura@comcast.net) or at 206-310-9199. Our Sweepstakes Judge, Roland (Hatch) Hatchel has been approved to judge FCRs since 2008 and is always eager to learn more about our breed. He has been invited to stay for our dinner!

Lura Dunn, NWFCRC President



## *Supported Entry*

The Northwest Flat-coated Retriever Club

Cordially invites you to attend the

### Spring 2018 Supported Entry, Dinner, and Annual Members' Meeting

Saturday, March 31

The Cascade Grill, 5:30 p.m.

110 Opal Ct. SE (adjacent to Comfort Inn and Holiday Inn Express)

Everyone will order and pay for their own meal.

Held in conjunction with the Chintimini Kennel Club All-Breed Show,

with Rally and Obedience Trials

and three days of Agility Trials sponsored by

The Columbia River Agility Club

Linn County Fair & Expo Center

3700 Knox Butte Rd.

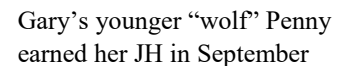
Albany, OR

Please RSVP to Lura Dunn

via email: [turalura@comcast.net](mailto:turalura@comcast.net) or phone: 206-310-9199

Note: Veterans entered in sweepstakes may be spayed or neutered.

Ok, they're entering the hunting ground, a small garden patch at the end of his house. The Neanderthal stealthily slides up next to a tomato plant where he whips out a knife and, with no warning, severs a hapless tomato from its vine. He slices it open, sucks the raw innards from it and throws the shriveled husk to the wolves, who greedily slurp it down. Next he grabs a handful of cherry tomatoes and throws a tomatoes and throws a couple to the wolves, which wolf them down (great pun if I do say so) the red juice squirting from between their slavering fangs. Next he drops to his knees, what's he doing. Zoom in camera three. Now we can see that he has cornered a patch of strawberries and is ripping them from their homes, eating many and throwing some to the wolves who ravenously consume them. While it would appear that the wolves would be perfectly able to hunt and capture their own vegetables, they seem to be content to sit, drooling copious amounts of slime, and watch him do the work and then take a share. It makes you wonder who is the master in this relationship. Ok, it appears the hunt is coming to an end. The Neanderthal has filled a small bowl with his kills and then captures an extra-large zucchini which he tears in half and gives each wolf a piece. They bound joyously back into the yard where the begin ripping the entrails from the unfortunate squash and consuming them.



## ***Gary's Observations, cont'd.***

As the Neanderthal is makes his way back to his abode with a bowl full of vegetables and the wolves are happily disemboweling the zucchini, it's time for us to return to our time where we can see the results of thousands of generations of vegetarian wolves happily gobbling down fruits and vegetables in our own back yard.

And so, once again, from Mutual of Ohmygosh's Wild Queendom, it's Sailfish Perkins signing off.....

Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzip

I've gotta start buying higher quality wine.

Gary Simpson

*Gary is owned by Bond, Coastalight Itza Dbl Oh Seven JH, and Penny, Coastalight Tlakwa Money Penny JH,*

## ***Meet the Breed***

Rick Oswald is coordinating a group for "Meet the Breed" at the Seattle Kennel Club show on either March 10 or 11th. The event will take place on the main floor of the exhibit hall, in rings that are divided into sections for the various breeds. Dogs and handlers will greet visitors in the ring. Rick says he can use about six flatcoats. If you and your dog would like to participate, please contact Rick via his email: [rickoswald204@gmail.com](mailto:rickoswald204@gmail.com)

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## *Our Dogs*



### Lura's Brags:

We have been bitten by the Dock diving bug! Coulson (Wyncliff's Agent of SHIELD RATO DM) earned his Dock Senior title in September and also earned an invite to the North America Diving Dogs National Championship. In October he earned his Dock Master title. With two dogs, crates and luggage, we flew to Orlando in December for the Dock Diving championships, the Orlando cluster shows and the AKC National Championships! Ronin participated in the Dock Diving last chance qualifier and qualified to jump in the Championships! It was a busy 6 days of dock diving and conformation shows. Sometimes we barely had time to dry off the dogs for the conformation show after they were in the pool! At the end of the 6 days, Coulson earned a 4 point major at the Central Florida KC show and jumped a personal best of 21'9" inches in the championship. Ronin won Select Dog and Best Bred By at the AKC National show, 6<sup>th</sup> place in the Veterans Junior category, jumped a personal best of 14'10" and earned his Dock Junior title!





## *Our Dogs*

From Mary Aykens: I have a brag from the Puyallup show. WaunaRun's Joe Cool picked up his second 5 point major. He turned 9 months on January 6th .

From Lizzy Ramhorst: Icarus has a big year in 2017, earning his MX, MXJ and GCH titles and qualifying to compete at the 2018 National Agility Championship (doing so in the first year of master-level agility competition for both of us and less than two years out from our Novice A debut).

From: Lisa Anderson: On October 14 at the Boise dog shows Revan finished his championship going WD/BOW for 5 points. All of Revan's points were obtained owner handled and he is my first champion and first flat coat. In November he finished his CD title going 3/3. He is now CH Wingover's Potentium Philosophy BN CD JH CGC WC



And brags from Barb Fowler:

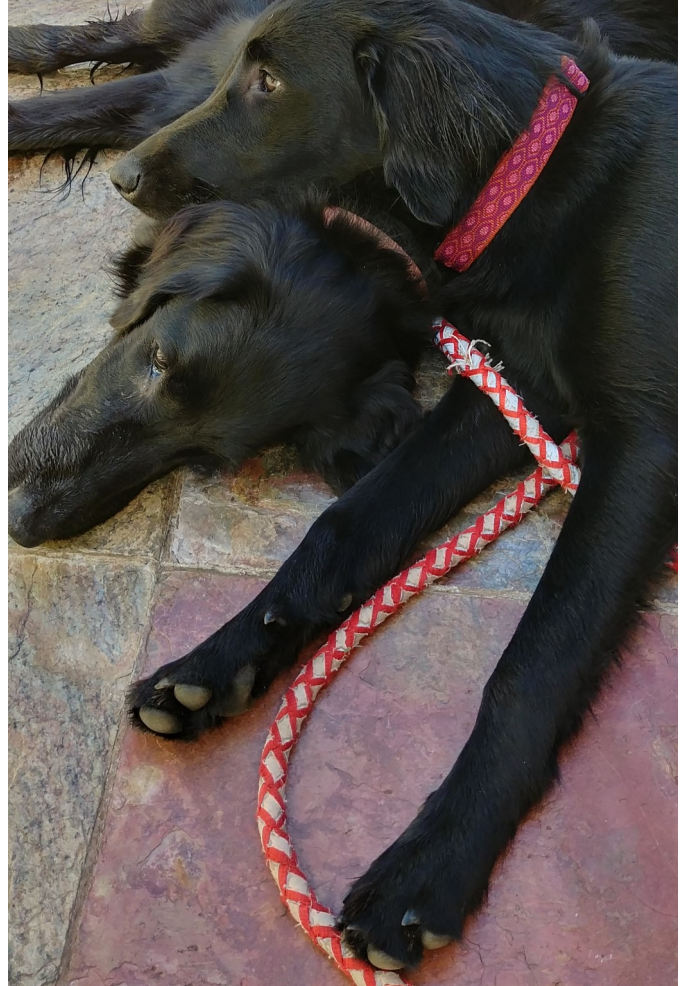
Hiya got some Trick Dog titles in October at the Del Valle show in Pleasanton. We were just going to go for the Novice Trick Dog (TKN) and the Intermediate Trick Dog (TKI) but we were just able to scrape up enough tricks to get the Advanced Trick Dog (TKA) title too.

For the Novice title, if you have a CGC, you only need 5 tricks but we did not, so had to perform 10 skills. Then 10 more for the Intermediate title. Then 5 more for the Advanced title. So 25 tricks! But a lot of them are skills used in training like going and sitting on a box, or sit, down, stand, go to a crate, stay in an open crate, retrieve, etc.. Our last trick was one she created herself mostly, picking up her food bowl. She picks up her and Mole's food bowl after breakfast every morning for a treat.

They were also doing FAST CAST so we also tried that and ended up 12th on the FAST CAT list for 2017.

## *Our Dogs*

Pamela Hill sends us this sweet photo, and a sad note. Pictured are Pearl, a few weeks before her death from joint cancer, and Opal, who was just six months old but seemed to sense changes ahead. Pearl died at home in September. She was eight. Opal is working toward her canine good citizen certification. Pearl's registered name was Fowl Play's Life's Treasure and Opal is Oregon Black Opal.



A brag from Pat Boydston:

New Champion: CH Brighton's Diamond in the Ruff (Dia). Thanks to Rick and Dinah Baggenstos, Dia earned her last major at the April Albany show. It was so much fun to see everyone and cheer on the wonderful group of Flat coated Retrievers.





## *Our Dogs*

Susan Kravit sends lots of news:

Swiftwater News:

At the Ridgefield Show in October Swiftwater Redwing Blackbird, "Pai" won a 5 point major out of the 6-9 month bitch class handled by her owner Liz Knight. Pai is Liz's first flatcoat and this was Pai's first weekend of showing!

At the Ridgefield Show in December Swiftwater My Foolish Heart, "Juno", completed her championship with a 5 point major, by going Winners Bitch/Best of Winners from the Bred By class. Juno has earned all of her points from Bred By, a considerable feat considering that I was the handler! At the same show her half brother, Swiftwater Issaquah Osprey, "Izzy" won a four point major by going Winners Dog at just 10 months, handled by owner Ragan McHone. Juno's brother Swiftwater Steadfast Fool, "Fred" was reserve winners dog. Juno had gone reserve the prior day, for her 6th reserve to a 5 point major, you can imagine how pleased I was that she actually got the points on Sunday. Swiftwater Jude's Phoenix, Lincoln, did not attend this show as he is busy training in Search and Rescue with owner Jon Izant.



Swiftwater Steadfast Fool sired a litter of 13 on Vancouver Island BC with Thyme, a girl bred by Catherine Preece. I got to see the pups at their 8 week evaluation Dec 1st, they were lovely pups and have all gone to new homes. That evening I got to help Swiftwater Fooled You By a Day, "Pepper", whelp a litter of 8 (5 boys, 3 girls). Mama and pups are all doing well, this litter is bred and raised by Alana and Graham Nielsen with Anna Daly of Eagletarn Kennel, as it was sired by her Eagletarn Merry Man Jax, "Jax". All of the other Swiftwater dogs are busy making the lives of their people happier, the thing they do best!





## *Our Dogs*

Cathy Johnson sends us the fabulous news that “Kasey” MBIS MRBIS IntCH Can GCH GCHP Windy Hill God Of Fire RN JH CGC HOF achieved his Grand Champion Platinum on June 13, 2017 and is the #1 GCHP Flat-Coat with 885 points. To see pictures, go to his website at [www.blacklacemagic.com](http://www.blacklacemagic.com).

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CH Flyway Farms Down in the Valley TKN finished her championship at the Saturday Monroe show, moved up to Best of Breed for the Sunday show, and won! She earned her championship with 3 five-point majors and 17 points. She's shown in this picture with handler Jennifer Holmberg Baggenstos. She is now lounging at the Chinn house, working on her obedience skills and field training. She particularly enjoyed pheasant hunting in the fall and loved duck hunting in December.



Not to be outdone by the young whipper-snapper at home, GCH Rainshadow Rollin' on the River CDX TD RA BN SH JHU WCX “Flo” got her own Best of Breed win at the Puyallup shows. She garnered Best of Opposite Sex on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, then went for the purple and gold on Monday.

She enjoyed the pheasant hunting in chilly Oregon much more than duck hunting in frigid Washington. That water was COLD!



## *Our Dogs*

News from Rick Oswald: 2017 was a great year for Wycliff's Wild VIOLET. She finished her AKC championship title at the Seattle Kennel Club show last March, & has earned several more points toward her grand championship.

We started doing HRC hunt tests last summer at Pepper's Retriever Grounds & finished 3 of them.

We ran in several agility trials last year & most recently Jan 20-21 2018. Completed titles in NADAC include: novice & open regular, novice weavers, novice & open tunnelers, novice & open jumpers.

We also had a lot of fun doing UKC nosework trials. She earned her novice titles in: vehicle; containers; exterior & interior, including several High in Trial. We have a trial coming up on Feb. 17.

We have been out duck hunting about 6 times this season & she has enjoyed herself immensely. There has been several times where she starts running around in a rampage doing a butt tuck! Her owner has not been too successful, but my step son Jordan has managed to provide her with 5 ducks to retrieve.

We hope to do more of the same in 2018!



## *Our Dogs*

An update from Vicki Peterson: “Dax” GCH CH Saudades’ Daily News of Denmark BN RA AX OAJ OF, earned her Agility Excellent title and her Trick Dog titles (Nov., Inter. & Adv.) at our local agility trial in October; then November 3 earned her Beginner Novice Obedience title at the Southern Oregon K.C. show.



Our boy “Popper” CH Saudades Jalapeno RA CGC earned his trick dog titles (Nov. & Intermed.) in October, just after his second birthday, then followed that up with his Rally Advanced title on November 4th at the Southern Oregon K.C. show.



## *Our Dogs*

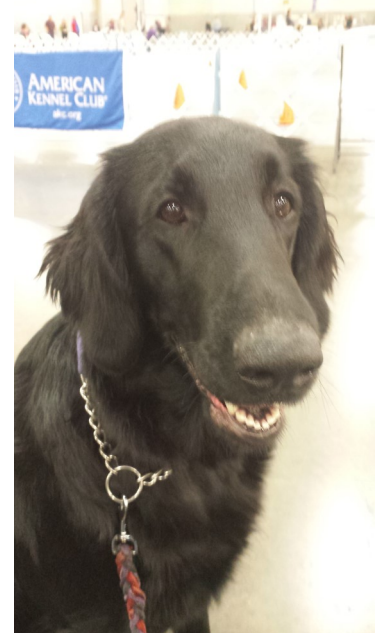
Good news from Jeanne Allen: Whazthat's Wild Thang! "Willow" finished her Novice Rally title way back in June 2017. Whazthat's Collector's Edition "Petals" also finished her Novice Rally title in November along with her Novice and Intermediate Trick Dog titles at the same time. Petals was RWB to the 5 point major at the recent Portland shows. One more brag. Another new champion "Legend " is now CH Whazthat's Remember the Past. He is owned and loved by Bobbie Mebius. Both Nancy Harger and I are so proud of these accomplishments. To have two new championships in less then a week is very special.



Wild Willow



New champion Legend



Trick dog Petals



## *Our Dogs*

A very proud Nancy Harger sends us this brag:

Ben Nevis is a very special dog, the son of my first Flat-coated Retriever, Kootenai (CH Evensong Harmonic Sweep) [utilizing 14 year old semen] and my good friend Jeanne Allen's bitch Willow (Whazthat's Wild Thang! RN), named after the highest peak in the British Isles and a Scotch Whiskey and the boy that carried us through with love and mischief the loss of our last Golden Retriever, Whitney.

Ben Nevis became CH Whazthat's Time in Harmony at the Rose City Classic Dog Show (1/20/18) with a 5-point major awarded by Judge Mrs. Claire K (Kitty) Steidel, competing against some beautiful Flat-coated Retrievers, all as an owner handled, home bred team - my first! So AWESOME. We achieved his Championship (at 1 year-10 months) with limited local showing, including another incredible win at the Greater Clark County Kennel Club Dog Show (12/9/17) with a 5-point major, BOS (over 3 Specials), Best Bred-by-Exhibitor and Best Owner-Handled, awarded by Judge Mr. Richard William Powell. His other points included a 3- point major, 2 & 1 points.

Thanks must be made to the Judges, friends Jeanne Allen and Rose Cervanak for helping me improve my handling skills, Scott Eckert for his support/muscle and Kootenai & Willow for giving us this most wonderful pup (and his siblings). One can only smile.

Just wait for what he can do in performance sports... he is already an effective CJ, creek jumper!





Editor's note: I received this email from Nancy, and wanted to share it with club members. She echoes my thoughts exactly. Our club is exceptionally supportive and of its members.

Here's what Nancy writes: I just wanted to express my appreciation to our NWFCR community for their support, patience and grace on this journey. From people helping me get my numbers changed between dogs/bitches, to reminding me to stay near by for the next judging, for those that helped handle one of the girls who had won their class while I showed another and for all of their encouragement. It does take a village. Can't tell you how happy we are to be a part of this group.... looking for help as we move to performance, especially Field!!!

Editor's 2nd note: Nancy is a very proud breeder, and owner/handler. Make sure you read Susan Kravit-Smith's comments about owner/handlers on page 22 of this newsletter.



## *Rainbow Bridge*

Jo and Steve Chinn write: We are still saddened by the loss of our Dinah dog, GCHB Blackstone Someone's in the Kitchen with Dinah CDX TD RE NA NAJ JH JHU WC in September. To quote so many of our friends who have traveled the same path: "Cancer Sucks".

We'd like to share how Dinah changed our lives:

Dinah Dog introduced us to the world of competitive dog sports, which opened up a world of new friendships, learning experiences, and traveling adventures.

First, Dinah took us to the breed ring where we met and made friendships with the Baggenstos clan, Darcie Cantor, Ashley McClure, and Stacy Duncan. They became Dinah's favorite people in the whole world, probably because of the unlimited snacks coming from their hands. She and Jen brought home so many pretty ribbons and posed for so many pictures. Dinah adored Jen, and loved the applause and accolades she found in the breed ring. With her best friends, she added "GCHB" to her name.

When she was pregnant, Dinah took us to Dr. Linda Allen's office for an ultrasound, and we've been visiting them quite regularly since. We thank them for their courteous, kind, loving care, not just of Dinah, but of Steve and me, too!

She took us to Georgia Towle's house for tracking, where we laughed and laughed at our own limited sensory capabilities. She took us tracking with Anne Andritsch and Chris Cornell, where we laughed and laughed at the "Three Stooges" method of training for tracking. Georgia and I tracked in the blizzard, Anne and I tracked in the monsoon, but the best adventure was tracking in the thunder and lightning with Chris. Dinah figured Chris was so tall that he would be struck by lightning first, so she just kept her head down and tracked to the glove. She and Steve added "TD" to her name.



She took me back to Sharon Johnson and Nancy Tinker, who tried mightily to train me in obedience and agility. After Dinah and I ran Open Agility 24 times, with only 2 qualifying runs, I realized that whereas she was a spectacularly talented athlete, I was not. It only took Steve 5 runs with Dinah to determine that he could not run agility, even though he was a good athlete. He simply could not keep up with her. We were able to add "CD, RN>RA>RE" and NA, NAJ to her name.

She took me to Sharon Colvin, the obedience genius, who helped me learn how to work with Dinah to achieve her CDX title, and work for her utility title. Along the way, we discovered a wonderful cadre of fellow obedience trainers and their dogs. Training together once or twice a week provided a lot of laughs and head scratching at the goofy things our dogs did. They helped us so much, and finally CDX replaced the CD after Dinah's name.

And then, she took us to the field, to Matt Nolan. Dinah discovered a love for birds at her first outing. "Retriever" and Dinah just didn't fit together at that time. She raced out, grabbed her bird, and headed west. We picked her up in Woodinville. That wasn't the last time she took charge of the bird. She pressed Steve's patience to the limits during her junior hunt tests, when she would eagerly charge out for her bird, scurry right back with it, and then tease Steve by chomping on it and refusing to hand it over. Steve hung in there, and she added JH and WC to her name. Then they easily earned the Junior Hunter Upland title.

Because she loved to hunt, Steve took a couple hunting trips with Gary Simpson and his dog, Bond. Dinah quickly told Bond that she would eat her breakfast, his breakfast, and then, when Gary presented his dog with another breakfast, Dinah impersonated Bond so she could get that food, too.

Dinah Dog introduced us to Joyce Brackney, a flatcoat breeder from Yreka, because she thought Joyce's boy Stoney was kinda cute. We arranged a very successful marriage between the two, but also launched a fabulous friendship with Joyce. We became traveling buddies, flying Dinah, Stoney, Riley and baby Tanner to Maryland. The next year we met up in Wisconsin. And we took the ultimate roadtrip of all time: the journey to Purina Farms in St. Louis with nine dogs. Dinah and Stoney rode in crates next to each other. How appropriate that now they crossed the Rainbow Bridge just two days apart. Hopefully, they are chasing birds and having a romp together.



## *Rainbow Bridge*

Dinah introduced us to new friends in the northwest flatcoat club, and the national club. We see each other a few times a year, but have so much fun when we get together!

Dinah's name ended up: GCHB Blackstone Someone's in the Kitchen with Dinah CDX TD RE NA NAJ JH JHU WC, but her life wasn't about the quest for titles. It was all about making friends, exploring, and journeying. It was about working in a loving partnership; we loved her and she loved us back. She was a dog who never gave up or gave in to a challenge.

On her last day, Dinah insisted on a trip to the Dungeness River, which was probably her favorite place on earth. She stumbled awkwardly down the trail and soothed herself in the water. We will spread her ashes at that bend of the river.

To all our friends in the NWFCRC: We want to thank you for the role you played in Dinah's life. We're so glad she brought us to you, or you to us. We're thankful for our friendship.



## *Hooray for Owner-Handlers*

Written by Susan Kravit-Smith

When I first got involved with flat-coated retrievers in the show ring in 1996 many of the dogs out there were owner-handled. Seeing “just plain folks” doing their best to show off their dogs made it seem plausible that Kathy and I might try our hands. The few handlers out there were mostly on” specials”, dogs who already had championships, but showed us what we might aspire too if we worked at it.

Over the years I have seen more and more handlers in the ring, and there is no doubt about it, they do a beautiful job making our dogs look their very best. Starting with my second flat-coat I had handlers on my dogs as well, feeling too intimidated to do the job myself. And of course some of us cannot do it ourselves due to age or physical limitations, or simply choose not to handle ourselves, so handlers will always have an important role to play.

But as I have been breeding more, and wanting to see some of my pups out in the ring I have encouraged my puppy people to try showing their dogs. These are folks who may never have thought of showing a dog before, but become intrigued, just as I did. And I am seeing other owner handlers out there too, which helps create an environment which seems welcoming.

I am really enjoying this involvement, I think it brings more new people into the show world who couldn't necessarily afford to start out a puppy with a handler. Later they may choose to continue to handle themselves or may choose to have a handler take over, either can be a good option. I am proud that in my last two litters 5 puppies have been owner handled, two others had handlers. Not all of these dogs will be used in breeding programs of course. But the owners may well become more involved with the breed and more informed about health and structure, which I think helps us all.





## About Us



*Northwest Flat-Coated Retriever Club*

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