

The 32nd Annual HWA Airedale Field Nationals

September 8-10, 2017



At every dog event, we hope for good weather and good company, and that we had at the 32nd Annual HWA Airedale Field Nationals, held this September at Holly Hills Game Preserve near Chillicothe, OH. In addition, this year we were able to add some accomplishments to Airedale history as one Airedale won a spot of the Joan Shea Gordon Memorial Trophy – only the second dog to do so in the last 14 years – and two other Airedales earned the title of Master Hunter Versatile, thereby joining the five other Airedales who have earned that highest title during the club’s history.

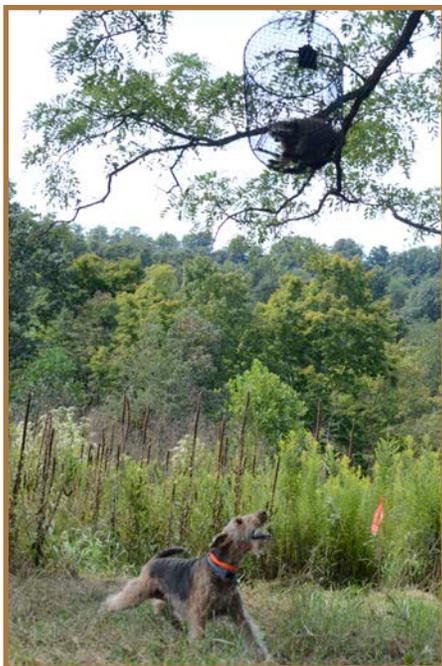
In addition, a number of Airedales and owners coming out of our past years’ workshops and Fun in the Field practices entered HWA Hunt Tests this year, with several first-time qualifiers. The group of five puppies entered in our Hunting Instinct Test were called “the best group ever” by their evaluator. And a group of workshop participants took their first beginning steps towards training for field work. All in all, a worthwhile weekend, but the real fun was watching the Airedales and their people who made it memorable. Let’s get started.

The **Hospitality Suite** at our headquarters hotel on Thursday evening prior to the field action is our chance to settle in, greet old friends and welcome newcomers. This year’s Hospitality Suite was sponsored in full by HWA members Pamela Tanner and Mike Logsdon. Their generosity was greatly appreciated as anticipation for the weekend’s events built.



“Let’s get started!” Maggie, a pup owned by Kim and Linda Bache, is ready for her first Nationals.

Friday, Sept. 8th



Higgins, owned/handled by Mary Wright, found and worked the caged raccoon in the Junior Fur Test.

Friday morning’s main event was the **Airedale Terrier Club of America [ATCA] Fur Test**, held as part of the HWA’s Nationals for the third year. Scott Lichty, chair of the ATCA’s Hunting and Field Committee, was on hand to announce that the AKC had recently approved the club’s long-standing request to recognize the ATCA Fur Test as parent-club title tests. That means dogs who qualified at these tests could be eligible for a new AKC Fur title on their pedigree and AKC certificates. We had a good entry of 2 Airedales entered in the Master Fur Test, 2 Seniors, and 8 Juniors for judges Lawrence Alexander with Kim Master (Master Test) and Chris Halvorson (Seniors and Juniors).

Fur Tests traditionally have a raccoon-scented track through the woods, but the impenetrable undergrowth of prickly brushes through much of Holly Hills’ woods made for some creative tracking. The Master dogs had a 300 yard track that skirted the woods, then turned into a section of the woods manageable for dogs rather than people, then more turns to arrive at the caged raccoon. The Senior dogs had a 200 yard track following the same pattern. The Master and Senior tracks also had “tricks” like a cross-trail of deer scent as a distraction.

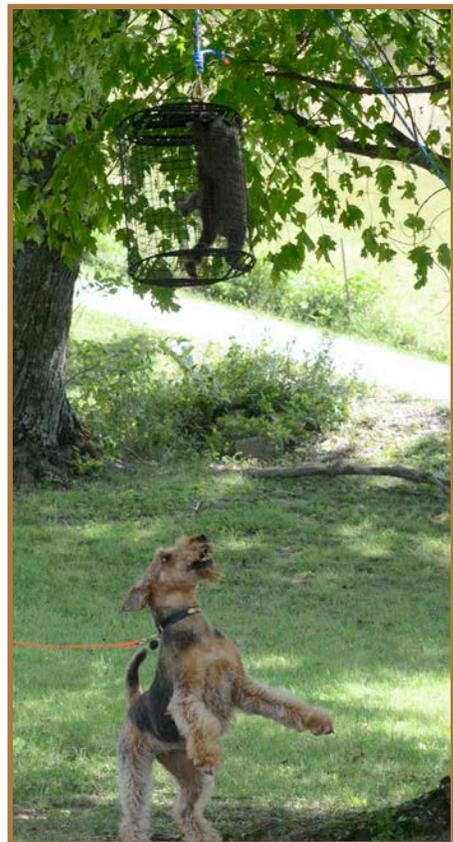
Laser, owned and handled by Linda Sorak, was the first Master dog. Laser tracked well and started the day off right by locating and barking at the caged raccoon to be the first qualifier of the weekend. Mike, owned and handled by Chris Halvorson, also navigated-by-nose to find the raccoon. Next up, two Senior dogs who made a good effort, though they didn't qualify.

The Junior Test dogs ran a 100 yard track in a different scenario and location. Their track went through tall grass up a hillside towards a clump of trees behind a hedgerow. Three of the eight Juniors qualified in this test. You'll find a complete list of all qualifiers at the end of this article.

The **Barkathon**, a fun event for all Airedales, followed the Fur Tests. How many barks can an Airedale bark at a caged raccoon in one minute? 21 Airedales took their individual turns at barking and jumping at the raccoon, who was safely suspended out of reach. The winner of the division for dogs with Fur Test titles was Linda Sorak's Laser, who barked 99 barks in 60 seconds. The winner of the division for dogs without previous Fur Test titles was Mary Wright's Higgins, who sounded off 87 barks in his 60 second turn.

For the record, it should be noted that at the end of the day's events, the unharmed raccoons were released back into the woods.

The **Hunting Instinct Test** on Friday brought together a promising group of five pups. This informal test evaluates pups on their reactions to meeting a live caged raccoon and game bird, tracking and finding a dead bird, chasing a lure, retrieving a bumper, swimming, and sensitivity to gunfire. Test evaluators Sherri Glass and Diane Cullen were impressed with the aptitude and enthusiasm of this year's group. In fact, when Sherri passed out the qualifiers' certificates at Saturday's Banquet, she called this "the best group ever," quite the compliment since Sherri has evaluated more Airedale pups than most of us will ever meet.



Jake, owned/handled by Lillian Elliott, enjoys the Barkathon.

Dawn Schuster's Beginners' Workshop also started on Friday with two sessions that focused on how wind affects a hunting dog's nose. By the Saturday afternoon session, owners with dogs were putting some training tips to work.

Friday's day ended with the **HWA Annual Meeting**, held outdoors at Holly Hills. As well as Financial and Committee reports, welcoming our incoming Treasurer John Noland and Secretary Elizabeth Morrill was as important as thanking our past Treasurer Michael Sites and past Secretary Pat Bell for their valiant service to our Board.



Go, a pup owned/handled by Patricia Gintilas, chases a lure in the Hunting Instinct Test.

Saturday, Sept. 9th

Saturday morning brought nicely cool temperatures and some breezes for the land series of the **Upland (Flushing) Test**. Dogs that successfully found, flushed and retrieved their chukar during this part of the test would be “called back” to complete their test in with water retrieves tomorrow morning. AKC-licensed judge Dawn Schuster and Jamie Lands had judged our tests before, so they were familiar with Airedales in the field.



Roxie, owned/handled by Diane Cullen, knew no handicap in her Junior Upland Test.

The group of four Senior dogs ranged from 2 ½ to 9 years old. While all the dogs did well, an outstanding flush involving a double leap into the air to almost catch a bird in flight helped earn Euro, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, the Gunners’ Choice Award. This award is given to the dog that our Upland gunners Brent LeMaster and Louis MacFarland selected as the one they would most like to hunt over.

And finally, Kira, owned/handled by Michael Sites, ran her Master Upland test in her steady, true-blue style that she’d used to earn her AKC Master Hunter title --- always a pleasure to see.

On Saturday afternoon, Airedales entered in the land series of the **Retriever Test** had to switch gears to demonstrate their skills in marking (noting where a thrown dead bird falls) and memory (remembering where it fell, even when two or three birds are thrown for the Senior and Master dogs to retrieve consecutively). AKC-licensed Retriever judges Robert Samios and Patricia Rose took care to put their entry of 12 dogs and handlers at ease.

But every hunt test has highlights of memorable moments. Beginning with the Junior Test dogs, we watched first-time handler Mary Wright stand in to handle Libby while owner John Bell attended a class reunion. Libby came through for Mary and John. We watched Roxie, our breed’s only three-legged hunting dog (far as we know) power through the tall grass with determination to find and successfully retrieve her birds for owner/handler Diane Cullen. Then we also enjoyed watching Michael Sites with his young Reeva, just over 6 months old, “see how she’d do” in her first test and nicely bring in her birds.



Euro, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, won the Gunners’ Choice Award due to his exceptional style in his Senior Upland Test.

After handlers took turns taking a deep breath and sending the dogs after their birds, we had only to wait in suspense until the call backs were announced at the Banquet to see if our scores would allow us to continue in Sunday's Retriever water series. Judge Pat Rose, who has handled her Standard Poodle to AKC Master Retriever level, remarked that many of the Airedales and handlers were inexperienced in

Retriever skills, being "just about where the Poodle people were ten years ago" when they were new in the AKC test system. In the end, we heard that both Master Retriever entries, Kira and Bruce, as well as Juniors Libby, Cole and Mike would advance to Sunday's water series.

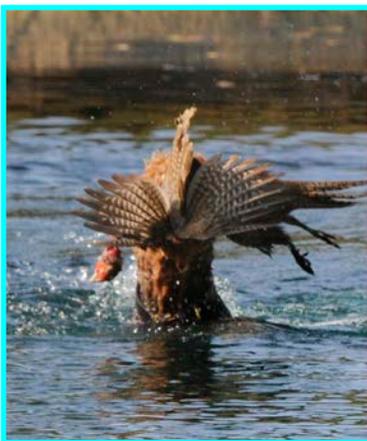


Annie, owned/handled by Scott Lichty, makes a retrieve in the Junior Retriever test land series.

Saturday evening's **Annual Banquet and Silent Auction** brought a welcome break from the action in the field. The carved roast beef and chicken buffet vied for attention with tables full of auction items and raffles ready for bids. The Limited Raffle, a one-of-a-kind painted wood box by artist Diane Orange, was on display as its winning ticket was pulled. HWA member Jackie Peebles was the winner. Once again, Corally Burmaster, Pat Reed and assistant Kim Zaborniak put together an evening that entertained and financially supported our club.

Sunday, Sept. 10th

Sunday morning started with the sun sparkling on the pond at Holly Hills as we gathered for the **Upland Test water series**. Watching the variety of swimming and water entry styles that Airedales come up with is part of the spectators' enjoyment. As Roxie, the previously-mentioned three-legged Junior entry owned/handled by Diane Cullen, got ready for her water retrieve, the big question in most minds was "How can a dog who's missing one front leg swim?" Roxie demonstrated that she could swim in a straight line very well, and though she didn't swim quite far enough to complete her retrieve, the gallery was impressed by her effort.



Euro, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, has a hold-'em-high water retrieving style.

Euro, whom owner/handler Linda Sorak jokingly calls her "over-achiever," leaped into the pond with such enthusiasm that only the tip of his nose remained above water for the instant until he paddled. Euro's retrieving style of holding his bird so high above water that his head is tilting straight up is an unusual but effective way of keeping the bird high and dry.

By the end of the Upland water series, a good group of four Juniors, three Seniors and one Master dog had successfully completed their retrieves. See the complete listing of qualifiers at the end of this article.

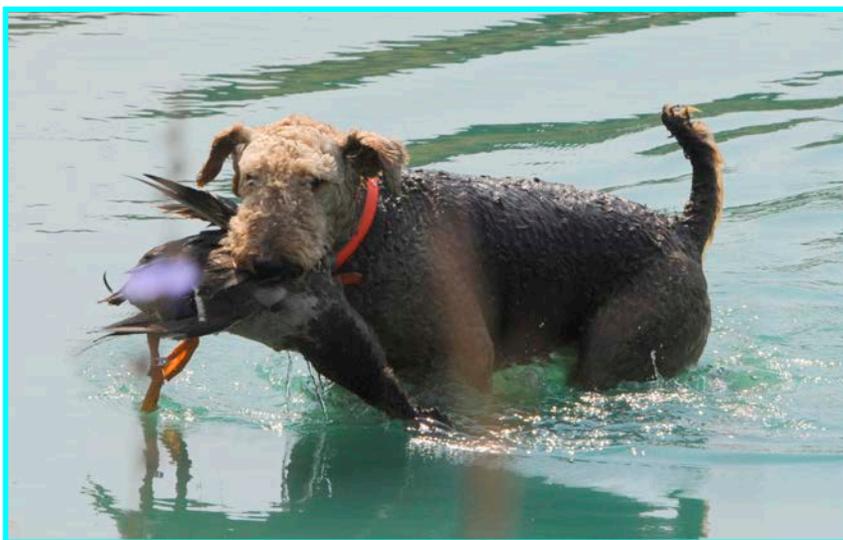
And then it was on to the **Retriever Test water series**. We changed ponds, switched from Upland to Retriever judges, and also switched from using chukars, which we had used all weekend, to ducks for the Retriever water work, so as to more closely simulate waterfowl hunting. In the past, this switch to ducks could be challenging for dogs not accustomed to ducks' size and smell.

So though the pond looked cool and inviting, the heat was on for the handlers, especially the handlers of the two Master entries. Both Kira, owned/handled by Michael Sites, and Bruce, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson had attempted the Master Retriever test last year without qualifying. Both Kira and Bruce had HWA titles of Master Hunter Fur and Master Hunter Flushing (Upland), so if they qualified in this Master Retriever test, they would have the trifecta of three Master titles (Fur, Upland, Retriever) needed to complete the Master Hunter Versatile [MHV] requirements. Only five previous Airedales have earned the MHV titles. It would be unprecedented if two dogs earned that title the same year, even moreso as Kira and Bruce are half-siblings, having the same sire.

The Master Retriever test requires the dog to be steady on the line, that is sit/stay without restraint, while two ducks are flung in the pond. The dog is sent to retrieve both ducks, but a third "diversion" duck is thrown into the pond while the dog is returning with second bird. The dog must mark (notice) where the third duck fell, but continue to retrieve the second duck before going back in for the diversion duck. Neither Kira or Bruce completed these maneuvers flawlessly, so without an apparent sure qualification, the handlers were left in suspense to wait for the judges' scoring decisions.



Kira, owned/handled by Michael Sites, eyes her "diversion" duck while correctly bringing in her second retrieve in the Master Retriever Test.



Cole, owned/handled by Stuart Eavenson, brings in his duck in the Junior Retriever Test.

Next up in the Junior Retriever Test were littermates Libby, owned/handled by John Bell, and Cole, owned/handled by Stuart Eavenson. Both dogs had come up through the HWA workshops and practice sessions into AKC Upland competitions. This weekend, Cole had earned his Junior Fur title, and a qualifying score here would give him a second ribbon for the Junior Retriever Test. Likewise, Libby had earned a Junior Upland title this weekend, so a qualifying score in the Junior Retriever Test would be two new titles for her.

Both Libby and Cole completed their Junior Retriever tests with style, which made for two happy handlers, as well as a very pleased Lawrence Alexander, breeder of both dogs.

The last Junior Retriever dog was Mike, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson (full disclosure, this writer). Mike brought with him even more suspense, at least for those who remembered what happened last year. At last year's Nationals, when just 18 months old, Mike had qualified in his Senior Fur Test and Junior Upland Test and needed just two simple water retrieves in the Junior Retriever test to get his name on the prestigious Joan Shea Gordon Memorial Trophy. That trophy, awarded to a dog who qualifies in all three of hunt tests (Fur, Upland, Retriever) had been won by only one dog, Kate Ostrowski's Filson, in the past thirteen years. But last year Mike, in his Airedale puppy way, chose to blow his most important retrieves by taking his ducks to the far bank and playing with them.

So this year was a second chance for Mike. He'd qualified in his Master Fur Test and his Senior Upland test. A qualifying score in the Junior Retriever Test would earn him a spot on the big trophy. With an additional year of training and sporadic maturity, what would happen?

Fortunately, this year Mike did two decent duck retrieves, so when all scores were added up, Mike would have his name on the Joan Shea Gordon Memorial Trophy.



Mike, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson, qualified in all three of his Tests (Fur, Upland and Retriever) to win the Joan Shea Gordon Memorial Trophy.

The weekend concluded with our **Awards Ceremony**, which included the awarding of *two* hard-sought Master Hunter Versatile [MHV] titles, to both Michael Sites' Kira and Chris Halvorson's Bruce. So heady was the atmosphere that we completely forgot to award one trophy, which for the record, is announced here. The winners of this year's Road Dog Trophy, which is awarded to the dog(s) who qualify at the most AKC or HRC hunt test weekends since the last Nationals, was a three-way tie between Laser and Euro, owned by Linda Sorak; and Mike, owned by Chris Halvorson. Laser, Euro and Mike each qualified at three AKC test weekends since last year's Nationals. Please see the list of all trophy winners and qualifiers at the end of this article.

And so wrapped up the 32nd HWA Airedale Field Nationals. With so many dogs moving up to titles and more advanced work, it's good to reflect on the role this club has in their development. Since HWA stresses

having fun with our dogs and welcomes those who just want to try it out, we have sometimes been dismissed as just "a social club." On the contrary, all the handlers and dogs who did well this weekend have benefited from their participation in previous HWA events. HWA is proud of its role in making Airedale history happen.

Please **Save the Dates** for our 2018 HWA events:
Fun in the Field, April 14-15, 2018 and
33rd Airedale Field Nationals, September 14-16, 2018
both at Holly Hills Game Preserve.

2017 HWA Nationals Hunt Test Qualifiers

ATCA Fur Test

Junior Fur Test:

- Hilltop's Storm King Cole, (Cole) JHFur, JHR, UH-N (GLSDA), owned/handled by Stuart Eavenson, Troy Michigan; bred by Lawrence Alexander
- Heart of Gold Henry Higgins, (Higgins) JHFur, NA NJW RN, owned/handled by Mary Wright, Toledo, OH; breeder unknown
- Joval Clan Elliott Jacob, (Jake) JHFur, owned/handled by Lillian Elliott, Enon, OH; bred by Valeria Rickard

Master Fur Test:

- UOCH, URX, ARCHEX Eclipse Light My Fire, (Laser) JH, UD, GO, GN, VER, BN, OAP, OJP, OFP, RAE, MHFur, JHV, BH, RATO, RL2X2, RL3X, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, Normal, IL; bred by Christie Williams
- Coldstream Make My Day, (Mike) JH, MHFur, SHF, JHV, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson, Lockport, NY; bred by Corally Burmaster

HWA Upland (Flushing) Test:

Junior Upland Test:

- Hilltop's Liberty Belle, (Libby) JHF, JHR, owned/handled by John Bell (with Mary Wright), Newark, OH; bred by Lawrence Alexander
- Attagirl Annie, (Annie) JHF, BN, CDX, GN, owners/handled by Scott Lichty, Bloomington, MN; breeder unknown
- UOCH, URX, ARCHEX Eclipse Light My Fire, (Laser) UD, GO, GN, VER, BN, OAP, OJP, OFP, RAE, MHFur, JHV, BH, RATO, RL2X2, RL3X, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, Normal, IL; bred by Christie Williams
- Stillwaters Reeve Mia, (Reeva) JHF, owned/handled by Michael Sites, Eureka, MO; bred by Sherri Glass

Senior Upland Test:

- Coldstream Make My Day, (Mike) JH, MHFur, SHF, JHV, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson, Lockport, NY; bred by Corally Burmaster
- Imprimis Triumph Maximus Emperor, (Triumph) JH, JHFur, SHF, BH, CGC, owned/handled by Patricia Gintilas, Lemont, IL; bred by Lisa Berglin
- UCD, URO1 Dollar von Erikson (Euro) CD, PCD, TD, VCD1, NFP, NAP, NJP, BH, AD, IPO1, SHF, JHR, RATO, RL2, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, Normal, IL; bred Harriet Rosenthal

Master Upland Test:

- Airecraft Kira Stella Sites, (Kira) MH, MHV, CGC, GD, owned/handled by Michael Sites, Eureka, MO; bred by Kim Burrier and Corally Burmaster

HWA Retriever Test:

Junior Retriever Test:

- Hilltop's Liberty Belle, (Libby) JHF, JHR, owned/handled by John Bell (asst. by Mary Wright), Newark, OH; bred by Lawrence Alexander
- Hilltop's Storm King Cole, (Cole) JHFur, JHR, UH-N (GLSDA), owned/handled by Stuart Eavenson, Troy Michigan; bred by Lawrence Alexander
- Coldstream Make My Day, (Mike) JH, MHFur, SHF, JHV, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson, Lockport, NY; bred by Corally Burmaster

Master Retriever Test:

- Airecraft Kira Stella Sites, (Kira) MH, MHV, CGC, GD, owned/handled by Michael Sites, Eureka, MO bred by Kim Burrier and Corally Burmaster
- Coldstream Born in the USA (Bruce), MH, MHV, CD, RA, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson, Lockport, NY; bred by Corally Burmaster and Margo Dupre

New Versatile Titles

Versatile titles are awarded to dogs who have earned titles in all three tests (Fur, Upland, Retriever) on the Junior, Senior, and Master levels. Titles earned this year were combined with previously-earned titles to give us four new Versatile title holders this year.

- UOCH, URX, ARCHEX Eclipse Light My Fire, (Laser) UD, GO, GN, VER, BN, OAP, OJP, OFP, RAE, MHFur, **JHV**, BH, RATO, RL2X2, RL3X, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, Normal, IL; bred by Christie Williams
- Coldstream Make My Day, {Mike} JH, MHFur, SHF, **JHV**, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson, Lockport, NY; bred by Corally Burmaster
- Airecraft Kira Stella Sites, MH, CGC, GD, **MHV**, owned/handled by Michael Sites, Eureka, MO; bred by Kim Burrier and Corally Burmaster
- Coldstream Born in the USA, MH, **MHV**, CD, RA, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson, Lockport, NY; bred by Corally Burmaster and Margo Dupre

Hunting Instinct Test Qualifiers

- Joval Kisses of Fire (Terra), owned/handled by Lillian Elliott, Enon, OH; bred by Valeria Rickard
- Largo Vom Bilstein, (Go) owned/handled by Patricia Gintilas, Lemont, IL; bred by Harold and Vera Kurschinski
- Airecraft Enola Gay, (Nola) owned/handled by Kim Burrier, Newton Falls, OH; bred by Kim and Dale Burrier
- Stillwaters Clover Blossom Honey Bee, (Honey Bee) CGC, owned/handled by Kim Bache, Norwalk, OH; bred by Sherri Glass
- Stillwaters Walk Through the Valley, (Maggie) owned/handled by Kim Bache, Norwalk, OH; bred by Sherri Glass

2017 Trophy Winners

Priscilla Cree Memorial Award

for the dog passing the Fur Test with the highest score, offered by Lawrence Alexander:

- UOCH, URX, ARCHEX Eclipse Light My Fire, (Laser) UD, GO, GN, VER, BN, OAP, OJP, OFP, RAE, MHFur, JHV, BH, RATO, RL2X2, RL3X, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, Normal, IL; bred by Christie Williams

Sandhill Brown Bess Memorial Award

for the dog passing the Upland Test with the highest score, offered by Henry Johnson, Jr.

- Airecraft Kira Stella Sites, MH, MHV, CGC, GD, owned/handled by Michael Sites, Eureka, MO; bred by Kim Burrier and Corally Burmaster

Road Dog Trophy

for the dog(s) with the most weekends with passing scores at AKC/HRC events since the last HWA Nationals. Offered by HWA . 2017 winners are a three-way tie:

- UOCH, URX, ARCHEX Eclipse Light My Fire, (Laser) UD, GO, GN, VER, BN, OAP, OJP, OFP, RAE, MHFur, JHV, BH, RATO, RL2X2, RL3X, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, Normal, IL; bred by Christie Williams
- UCD, URO1 Dollar von Erikson (Euro) CD, PCD, TD, VCD1, NFP, NAP, NJP, BH, AD, IPO1, SHF, JHR, RATO, RL2, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, Normal, IL; bred Harriet Rosenthal
- Coldstream Make My Day,(Mike) JH, MHFur, SHF, JHV, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson, Lockport, NY; bred by Corally Burmaster

Gunners' Choice Award

for the dog selected by the Upland gunners as the dog they would most like to hunt over. Offered in 2017 by John and Pat Bell.

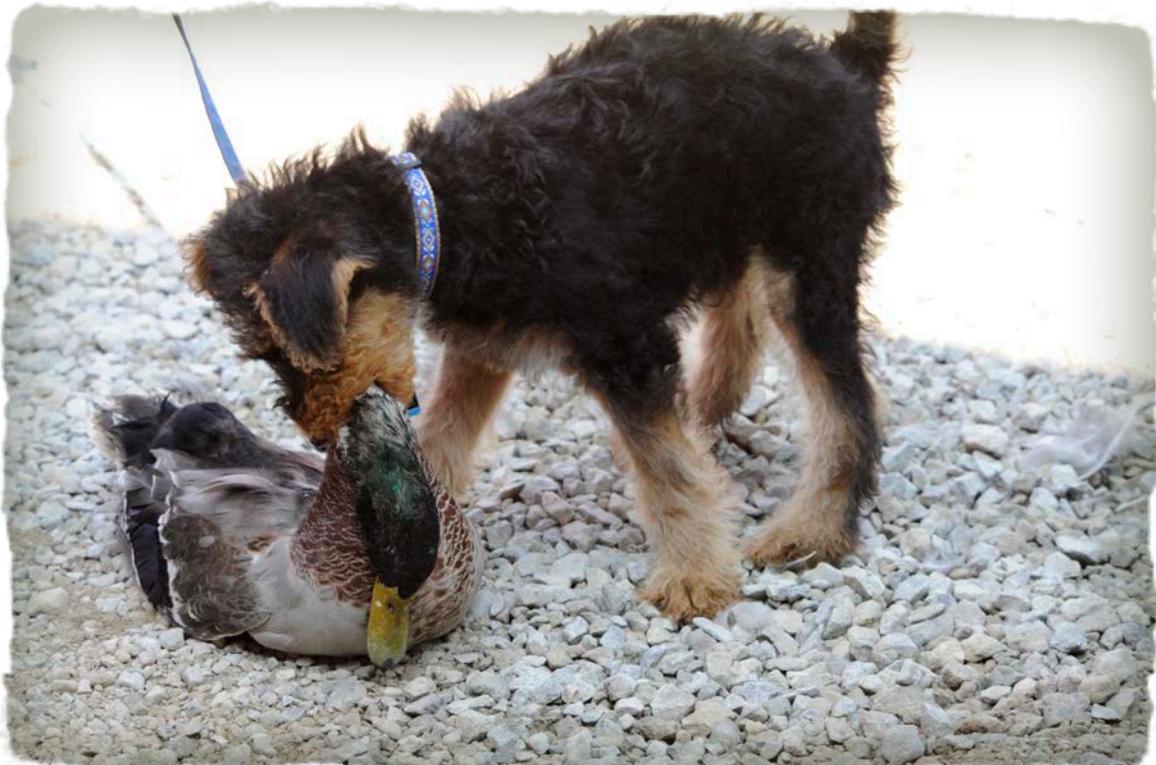
- UCD, URO1 Dollar von Erikson (Euro) CD, PCD, TD, VCD1, NFP, NAP, NJP, BH, AD, IPO1, SHF, JHR, RATO, RL2, owned/handled by Linda Sorak, Normal, IL; bred Harriet Rosenthal

Joan Shea Gordon Memorial Award

for the dog passing all three tests (Fur, Upland, and Retriever) at the Nationals, at a level not previously passed.

- Coldstream Make My Day,(Mike) JH, MHFur, SHF, JHV, owned/handled by Chris Halvorson, Lockport, NY; bred by Corally Burmaster

See you next year!



Oliver, a 12 week old puppy owned by Deb Todhunter, meets his first duck and tries to retrieve it.