



# VHDF News

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Versatile Hunting  
Dog Federation (VHDF)

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## Chair and Vice-Chair's Messages

We hope your hunting season was/is a satisfying one, and that your dogs found ample birds that held well for them. We wish you, your family and your dogs all the best in 2009.

This will be our last message as Chair (Bodo Winterhelt) and Vice-Chair (Joe Schmutz) of VHDF. We know that VHDF is now on a firm footing, and we both will continue to support the organization as VHDF members, judges and Sub-Committee members.

Bodo is recovering well from his stroke, but even at the best of time, he was better with a shotgun than a computer keyboard. Especially now post-stroke, he finds high tech computer windows difficult to negotiate. He's not been able to respond to organizational e-mails as he'd like to and would like for someone else to take on the Chairmanship. Bodo was pleased to help VHDF develop to this stage and expects VHDF to move forward from here.

Bodo has replaced his computer keyboard with a good old-fashioned typewriter and is busy with it. He's started work on his book, to share his experiences with versatile dogs, their development and their owners in Germany and North America. We can look forward to hearing more about that in the future.



## Message on the Vice-Chair (cont. from page 1) - Submitted by Joe Schmutz

For myself, I have taken on a new teaching responsibility, and lest this plus my position as breed warden of LMCNA eats seriously into my hunting and dog-training time, I need to lighten my load a bit. This will also give VHDF a new executive dynamic and new ideas. Should Bodo and I detect any faltering in VHDF, you can bet we'll be blowing the horn to correct it, but we don't expect that it will be needed.

In these short two years of VHDF's existence, VHDF has virtually exploded into a remarkably mature organization. Now VHDF has a test structure that addresses ability from puppy-hood to polished hunting dog. This in itself is a huge accomplishment, achieved remarkably quickly.

Others have asked Why do we need VHDF? We needed it for several reasons. To my mind, because

it copies the best of what the European breeders have learned over a century of versatile dog development. To me as a North American breeder of versatile dogs, that experience is now available for my benefit via VHDF. Furthermore, the VHDF system is more useful to me because it is adapted to our conditions, for the hunting I do.

Recently, Sheila and I sat down and considered our breeding plans for 2009. We are seriously looking at a sire that has an 11 in an area where our dam needs balance. Knowing what I know about VHDF, that 11 score says a lot to me. It was earned under rigorous conditions and it was given to reflect the high quality work observed. We can't always see for ourselves how these potential mates work. VHDF provides that service, to help me as a breeder. Keep up the good work!



Large Munsterlanders point and back in the grouse-woods.

## Secretary's Report - Submitted by Lynda Kieres

As your Secretary and Membership Officer I am pleased to report on the membership status for VHDF. Our members are the heartbeat of the organization and it is extremely heartwarming for me to see the continued support of loyal members. Our membership has grown each year from the inception of the organization, but it is truly those folks who have stuck with us from the very beginning that I want to recognize. We have 39 members who have been with us since the beginning. Thank you!

We also owe special thanks to those "Supporting Members" who have generously donated not only in time, but financially to support the club.

- \* Joe Schmutz
- \* Sheila Schmutz
- \* Jeff Funke
- \* Chuck and Blanche Johnson
- \* Silke Alberts
- \* Joy Bennett
- \* Etta Burnu
- \* Ed Erickson
- \* William Wessels
- \* Bill Wichers

We had only 7 non-renewals from 2007 – which is amazing to me. So many organizations suffer a tremendous turnover in membership. Often people join – test their dogs – and then move on. It appears to not be so with VHDF. Having only a >1% non-renewal rate our first year vs a 47% GROWTH in 2008 is testimony that people subscribe to our philosophies and therefore are sticking with the organization.

At the close of 2008 we had a total of 86 active members which includes 40 new members. Welcome to those folks!

Lifetime \_1\_  
 Single Members \_52\_  
 Family Members \_23\_  
 Supporting Members \_10\_

This past year we purchased new membership software to help manage our membership data. It's taken some getting used to, but I think it will give us the capability to extract a lot of data about our members. So, when you get that renewal notice in the mail, be sure you fill out ALL the information. It's actually useful data.

Consider this – if you are thinking about holding a test in your area – or maybe even starting your own club; would you like to know who else belongs to VHDF in your area? Who knows – you might already have enough people in your area to justify either putting on your own test – or starting a club. Just contact me and I can give you a list of members near you.

Would you like to see the membership list on our website? There has been much discussion back and forth about posting our membership list on the Internet. If you would like to see that, please let either me, or any other officer, know. I know this will come up in the discussions at the annual meeting in Phoenix.

I also want to remind folks – if your email address changes, PLEASE let me know. Being able to send out our newsletters via email (as opposed to the Postal Service) saves the organization tremendously in postage. But if we don't have your correct email address – you won't get the newsletter and other important announcements. Also – please, I have a few emails that, for the life of me, I cannot decipher. Is it a number 1 or an L; \_ underscore or – hyphen? We've tried every possible combination. So – if you are NOT getting the newsletter, please email me at [topperlyn@hotmail.com](mailto:topperlyn@hotmail.com) so I can update your information.

I also want to thank the other officers and board members for their support over the past year. These folks are so dedicated to the cause of VHDF and it is a privilege for me to work with them.

I hope to see you either at the annual meeting in Phoenix, or at a test this year. Thanks again for your support!

## **Treasurer's Report** - Submitted by Jeff Funke

As of December 31, 2008, the Versatile Hunting Dog Federation's financial condition is sound. Income exceeded expenses by \$2201.64. The VHDF Officers, Board of Directors, and Judges should be applauded for their fiscal prowess and very generous donations; thereby, keeping the VHDF Treasury solvent. Judges donations for travel expenses have exceeded test income. This trend should decrease in the near future as we appoint new judges in a variety of geographical areas. Financial contributions from Members for postage and printing, specifically Secretary Lynda Kieres and Promotions Officer Chuck Johnson, have also had a positive impact on the Treasury. Thank you to The Wisconsin Spinone Club, The German Longhaired Pointer Club of America, Snake River Versatile Gun Dog Club, Autumn Breeze Kennel, and Herz Kennel and Seele Kennel for their significant financial contributions.

The majority of our income comes from Annual Dues: \$3550.00 from US members in 2008. Second to member dues, our next highest source of future income will be Test Sanctioning Fees. VHDF charges host clubs a \$400 Test Sanctioning Fee for each weekend of testing. This fee is waived for each host club's first test. This fee is in place to cover the variable costs of each test, such as judge's travel and lodging, as well as a portion of the postage, printing, and data entry costs associated with each test. Although this fee may sound like a large burden for host clubs, keep in mind that judges travel expenses are paid by VHDF and not by the host club. It is actually an effective way to solve the common problem of unreasonable high testing cost for outlying host clubs. Test sites in central locations where many judges are available are inexpensive or even profitable; whereas outlying areas may have to pay for two or even three judges. Under many venues, if a club in BC Canada were to host a test, judges travel expenses would likely exceed \$1500 since they have no judges in that province. Since VHDF is primarily concerned the proper evaluation of the dogs being tested, we have attempted to equalize

testing costs across North America. Lastly, we receive income from Donations from individuals and clubs as mentioned above.

Currently our largest expense is judging related: \$1835.42 in 2008. Other expenses related to operating costs such as postage, office expense, and annual meeting expense is minimal at this point in time. Again, your Officers and Board of Directors have donated the majority of their expenses, including the cost of travel, meals and lodging at the General Convention and Annual Meeting.

The VHDF Treasury has created an annual budget for operations, testing, annual meeting, and membership expense. While I am confident that we can operate within our budget, we have had to supplement our income with donations since we are a new organization and our treasury started at zero. If membership trends and testing trends continue, VHDF should be operating entirely within the budget without donations by the end of 2009. Donations can then go towards a reserve for emergencies.

VHDF took the necessary steps to become incorporated with nonprofit status under the laws of the State of Idaho in 2008. Since VHDF is primarily an educational service organization with no paid officers or directors, we are eligible for IRS nonprofit status. I am currently working with a financial representative to obtain IRS 501(c) 3 nonprofit status for VHDF. The IRS nonprofit status will provide VHDF with significant advantages in the future. With IRS nonprofit status, sponsors and donors of VHDF will enjoy favorable tax deductions.

VHDF is in the process of obtaining a broad coverage liability insurance policy. In the past, our insurance was limited to test related activities. This new policy is specially crafted for sportsmen's groups and will cover Officers and Directors liability, Fiduciary liability, and Internet liability among others. This

**Treasurer's Report (cont. from page 4)** - Submitted by Jeff Funke

insurance policy will also allow our clubs and hosts to purchase insurance and add additional insured parties for their events at a minimal cost.

Many members may not be aware that VHDF has the ability to accept US and Canadian currency as well as the ability to pay expenses in both US and Canadian funds. We maintain one US checking account, and one Canadian checking account. New members and renewing members can send their checks in US funds or Canadian funds to VHDF Secretary Lynda Kieres. Those funds are then routed to the proper accounts through the Treasury. Judges may also request reimbursement from the treasury in either US or Canadian funds. We think this convenience is necessary for all of our members and judges; in

particular, our Canadian members and judges who frequently only have the option of paying or receiving in US funds because of the larger population base in the US.

Thank you for electing me and entrusting me with the Treasury. I appreciate the opportunity to serve you. I would also like to commend my fellow officers and board members who have worked so diligently to turn the Versatile Hunting Dog Federation into a vibrant, well-balanced, strong and focused organization; allowing us to offer an extremely high-quality Aptitude Performance Testing Program for versatile hunting dogs.

Warmest Regards and Best Wishes~

**Director of Testing Report** - Submitted by John G. Smith

There were 12 tests run in 2008. At the tests I attended, there was interest and enthusiasm by participants and observers for the testing procedures and scoring system offered by the VHDF.

At this time, there are 12 tests scheduled for 2009. While the Idaho, Washington, Minnesota, and Saskatchewan sites still dominate as the test locations, 2009 also has tests scheduled for British Columbia, Montana, Maine, and Wisconsin. This is great news as the organization grows and strives to provide a testing service to owners of hunting dogs across North America.

At Phoenix, there will be discussion of the direction to take with Testing instructions and forms. See you there.



Ed Erickson sending Blizzard for the duck search.

## Judging Coordinator's Report - Submitted by Barry Wild

It is hard to start informing our members about the progress and state of the VHDF Judges without first thanking them for their time and diligence. We are very fortunate to have our apprentice judges willing to donate their time and travel expenses to get the required experience to become a judge. Our judges have also had 39 days judging time, as well as some even donating their travel expenses to the organization to make sure we are solvent and that our tests run smoothly and profitably. Without their support and effort we would not have the great progress that we can show you today.

We are currently in our 3rd year of existence and we are showing growth every year. Throughout our existence we have tested 96 dogs. We have expanded our testing sites across the United States and also have a site in Canada with another showing strong interest. In 2009 we have 12 tests scheduled. I don't think there is another organization that has had this kind of success in their early years, those statistics would be fun to look at.

At the current time we have:

Approved Judges	17
Apprentice Judges	13

During the last year we accepted 9 new Apprentice Judging applications. All Apprentice Judges are subject to review at this meeting for possible Judgeship.

The Judging Committee has been working hard on the Judging Requirements and the Board will be voting on those at this meeting. We have also developed a score card for scoring our apprentice judges. This has been working very well for the judges in the field. We decided to score the apprentice judges on a 12 point system like the scoring of the tested dogs. This makes it very easy to make notes during the day on each

apprentice instead of waiting until the end of a very long day in the field to try and recall the areas in which the apprentice needs more experience. Targeting these areas will produce the type of judges we are looking for.

The Judges Guidelines are next on the agenda for drafting as soon as the Judges Requirements are complete and passed by the Board. There have been numerous ideas and notes made for the Guidelines but all effort has been put into the Requirements at this time. We will be developing a continuing education program for all Judges to make sure that the high standards we have set are held in place and that all of our judges adhere to the same scoring rubrik. Also being implemented are a set of basic requirements for all judges to maintain their judging status with VHDF. The largest requirement will be remaining actively judging and testing dogs within the organization. Remember all forms, Requirements, Guidelines etc will be on the website for viewing by our entire membership as soon as they have Board approval.

Speaking for all of the Judges and Apprentices, we would like to thank everyone that has taken the time to train and test their dogs with the Versatile Hunting Dog Federation. We have been very fortunate to be able to work with such dedicated handlers and breeders. If you have any comments or concerns, please feel free to talk to the Judges or myself, we will be glad to help. I look forward to serving you in the upcoming year.

## Evaluation Record Report - Submitted by Dennis Carlson

I'll begin this report with some statistics you might find interesting.

Throughout our existence we have tested 96 dogs. We've run 77 HAE (Hunting Aptitude Evaluations), 25 AHAE (Advanced Hunting Aptitude Evaluations), and 11 PE (Performance Evaluations).

HAE scores varied between 26 and 75 points with an average of 56 points and a standard deviation of 11 (for you statisticians).

AHAE scores ran between 100 and 192 points with an average of 165 and a standard deviation of 20.

PE scores were between 166 and 204 with an average of 187 and a standard deviation of 12.

Here are the numbers of all three evaluations we have made sorted by breed:

Deutch-Drahthaar	22
English Pointer	1
English Setter	1
Epaqneul Breton	1
German Longhaired Pointer	5
German Shorthaired Pointer	21
German Wirehaired Pointer	13
Gordon Setter	1
Irish Setter	2
Large Munsterlander	36
Longhaired Weimaraner	1
Pudelpointer	3
Small Munsterlander	1
Weimaraner	3
Wesslpinter	1
Wirehaired Pointing Griffon	1

In 2008 we ran 45 HAE, 18 AHAE, and 5 PE evaluations during 6 weekend events across the continent. The tests were hosted by:

Saskatoon Gun Dog Club, the Snake River Versatile Gun Dog Club, Autumn Breeze Kennel, Herz & Seele Kennel, and the Central Washington Pointing Dog Club.

Many thanks to these hosting organizations, without whose efforts and financial contributions we would not have been able to accomplish what we did last year.

The way we currently publish evaluations on the Web is simple, effective, and convenient. I am grateful to Chuck Johnson and Brad Lookhart for providing this service to us free of charge.

Jeff introduced me to Richard Nugen at last year's evaluation in Washington. Richard and I have corresponded about ways to access the database on the Web. He has a copy of our current database and says he can work with it. He and I will meet at the annual meeting in Phoenix to see what we can come up with and present it to the board of directors for review.

I'm just dreaming here, but it might be possible for regular folks to query the database directly or at least access a greater number of specialized reports. Somebody might be interested in seeing all the evaluation data for every dog ever tested, sorted alphabetically, by breed. A click on a particular dog could take you to all the dog's evaluations. Another click could take you to that dog's parents, then to their evaluations, or to the dog's littermates and their evaluations. Let's dream big. Somebody else might like to see all the dogs tested in HAE sorted by total score, or sorted by tracking score, or any other score, and it would include the dog's breeder. The data is all there and Richard tells me it's fairly well organized. It's just a matter of getting at it and presenting it in a report. If there are any particular reports that you would be interested in, please let me know.

## VHDF-Canada Report - Submitted by Joe Schmutz

A VHDF-Canada account was established at the Saskatoon Credit Union in Aug. 2007, in advance of the first VHDF test that was held in the Saskatoon area. In addition to test fees, this account, also received some VHDF membership fees paid in Can\$. VHDF memberships in future will be sent to the U.S. account. The VHDF-Canada account will continue to serve as an account for local tests.

Joe Schmutz has been managing this account and Vance Lester has cosigning authority. As of 31 Dec. 2008, income and expenses were as follows.

<b>Income</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Donation	130.00	0.00
Food income	175.00	45.29
Interest	0.53	2.39
Membership	80.00	310.00
Test entries	<sup>1</sup> 1225.00	<sup>3</sup> 1130.00
Subtotal	1610.53	1487.68

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Bank charges	20.20	41.80
Judge cost	<sup>2</sup> 0.00	<sup>4</sup> 431.49
Supplies	167.69	0
Bird expense	643.00	557.00
Test host/insurance	<u>0.00</u>	<u>169.97</u>
Subtotal	830.89	1200.26

<sup>1</sup> Includes HAE entry for Boise test, Aug. 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Travel costs donated by Jeff Funke and Etta Bernu.

<sup>3</sup> Not including one HAE entry in US\$ sent to US account.

<sup>4</sup> Includes cost for Joe Schmutz's travel (\$373.49) to Minnesota test May 2008. Does not include Chuck Johnson's travel cost to Alvena, SK, in 2008, paid from US account. Jeff Funke donated his travel costs to Alvena, SK, in 2008.

On 31 Dec 2008, the VHDF-Canada account contained \$1067.06.

## Call for Submissions - Submitted by Cortney Schaefer

We are always looking for new articles and photos for the VHDF news and I would like to invite each of you to contribute to our newsletter. If you have a really great photo of your versatile dog doing what it was bred to do, please share it with us. Or if you would like to write an article about your experience running through a VHDF test or training for a VHDF test, we would love to hear about it.

We would also welcome updates from the various breed clubs associated with the VHDF. If you would like to submit an update on your club happenings to the VHDF, that would be great. This organization was developed to assist the breed clubs in evaluating dogs and we definitely want to maintain a close relationship with the different breed clubs.

Thanks for your help and I look forward to hearing from you. Please send all photos/articles to me (Cortney) at [langhaars@gmail.com](mailto:langhaars@gmail.com).

## VHDF Purpose Statement

The purpose of VHDF is to promote ethical hunting practices and conservation of game animals by enhancing the quality and ability of versatile hunting dogs through breeder and handler education, performance based testing, and by facilitating continuing education and information exchange regarding health and genetics. This purpose is accomplished through the following objectives:

1. Conducting field tests designed to evaluate versatile hunting qualities of breeds registered by any recognized registry or studbook.
2. Encouraging the involvement of youths in hunting as dogs add a dimension to hunting that may attract young hunters, and advance education and personal growth among youths.
3. Promoting public education, appreciation and understanding of the necessity of a useful versatile hunting dog and ethical sportsmanship.
4. Fostering knowledge and experience of judges, hunters, breeders, breed clubs, and individual owners of versatile hunting dogs in the breeding, training, and testing of versatile hunting dogs.
5. Supporting pure-breeding but not excluding periodic out-crossing that is strategically designed to broaden genetic diversity and thus health and ability.

### **VHDF Officers:**

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